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# Youth who are Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEETs) in the King Sabata Dalindyebo MunicipalitEastern Cape: perspectives of youth regarding challenges experienced and the way forward

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# Youth who are Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEETs) in the King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality, Eastern Cape: perspectives of youth regarding challenges experienced and the way forward

**A report on a research study presented to**

**The Department of Social Work**

**School of Human and Community Development**

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**University of the Witwatersrand**

**In partial fulfilment of the requirements**

**For the degree Master of Arts in Social Development**

**By**

**GCINA MTENGWANE**

**September 2019**

**DECLARATION**

I, Gcina Mtengwane, declare that this research report it is my own original work and where I have used the ideas and works of others, I have referenced these using the American Psychological Association (APA) referencing style. The reproduction and publication thereof by the University of the Witwatersrand will not infringe any third-party rights. I have not previously in its entirety, or in part, submitted this research report for obtaining any other qualification at the University of the Witwatersrand or any other university.

**Date:** ……...

**Signature:** ……...

## DEDICATION

This research report is dedicated to the memory of

Siyabonga Mzamo

(1986-2016)

*Thank you for being a big brother, a friend and my everlasting voice of reason.*
*Thank you for always supporting my dreams and believing in me.*

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- Last, but not least, to my partner Thobekani Pali, and our daughter Hlulela Likuwe Othimna Pali. You two make it all worthwhile. You are my reasons to dread failure. Thank you for being blessings in my life.

## ABSTRACT

South Africa has a remarkably high number of youths that are not in employment, education or training (NEETs) who consequently face many socio-economic challenges. The King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality in the Eastern Cape is no exception. In order to explore the socio-economic challenges faced by NEET's and their perspectives regarding the way forward in the King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality, a qualitative approach was adopted, and a case study research design was implemented. The case study 'boundaries' were three townships in the King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality, namely Waterfall Park, Ngangelizwe and Mdlekeza. The population for the study was NEETs living in these three townships. The sample, purposely selected, was 15 NEETs between the ages of 18 – 35 years. The researcher conducted in-depth, one-on-one interviews with the participants to gather meaningful data related to the research topic. Thematic analysis was used to analyze data gathered. The theoretical framework underlying the study was the Social Exclusion theory and Linday and McQuaids (2005) Integrated model for Employability. Findings regarding the challenges faced by NEETs included: lack of financial support, poor school performance, nepotism, lack of recreational facilities and lack of awareness regarding skills training programmes. Work opportunities not requiring post-matric qualifications, recreational facilities, social cohesions, information sharing, promotion of arts and crafts and entrepreneurship emerged as some of the things necessary to improve the plight of NEETs in King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality. Recommendations are made based on the findings.



**KEY WORDS**: King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality; Social exclusion; Integrated model for Employability; coping mechanisms; challenges; NEETs.

**ACRONYMS**

| | |
|---|---|
| Youth NEETs | Youth who are not in employment, education or training |
| KSDM | King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality |
| TVET | Technical and vocational education and training |
| OECD | Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| LED | Local Economic Development |
| Stats SA | Statistics South Africa |
| ILO | International Labour Organization |
| AsgiSA | Accelerated and Shared Growth initiative of South Africa |
| BEE | Black Economic Empowerment |
| BBEE | Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment |
| GEAR | Growth, Employment and Redistribution |
| NDP | National Development Plan |
| SETAs | Sector Education and Training Authorities |
| EPWP | Extended Public Works Programme |
| YES | Youth Employment Service |

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Youth NEETs in KSD Municipality are not a homogenous group. There are varying reasons for both their low work skills and educational attainment. Youth NEETs in South Africa have so much potential for social development but require intensive intervention strategies by the State and private business alike to ensure that they can become employable. Many of these youth have faced many challenges in life and these past experiences have been exacerbated by unemployability even though they are commitment to becoming employable. They need to become

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# CHAPTER ONE

# INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter commences by providing the background of the problem of youth who are not in employment, education and training in the King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality (hereafter KSD municipality). Key words and concepts used in the study are then defined and/or described. This is followed by a description of the problem statement and the rationale for conducting this study. The main research questions, research objectives and methodology are summarized. In conclusion, the structure of the research report is also outlined in this chapter.

## 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Unemployment is a major problem in South Africa, particularly in the Eastern Cape Province. According to Statistics South Africa (2018), the Eastern Cape has the fourth highest unemployment rate out of the nine provinces in South Africa. A large proportion of youth in the King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality in the Eastern Cape, are without employment (Msi, 2009; Kheswa, 2015; Tele, 2017).

Compounding the problem of not being employed, is that most of these youth are also not enrolled at institutions to receive education or training. They fall into a category of community members referred to as NEETs (i.e. an international acronym usually used when referring to Youth Not in Employment, Education and Training). All over the world, the acronym ‘NEET’ is used to describe persons, usually young people, who are not in employment, education and training.

At the international level, NEETs are described as youth between the ages 15 and 24 years who are ‘Not in Employment, Education and Training (Benerjee, Galiani, Levinsohn, McLaren & Woolard, 2006, p. 4). However, this definition is not applicable in South Africa in terms of age criteria as South Africa extends its definition of youth from age 15 to age 35 years. Therefore, a more appropriate definition of NEETs for the South African context is one that is inclusive of youth who are not in school,

technical and vocational colleges, university, internships or learnerships, who are also not in employment in the informal, formal, government or private sector (Nasstras 2015, p. 12).

NEETs are typically youth residing in South Africa's townships and rural areas, which are the hubs of poverty in the country. The state of NEETs in a country implies a stagnation or decline in human capital, which is particularly worrying if it affects low-educated youth with little or no work experience (Carcillo, 2015). This is a critical concern as the subject of persons not in employment; education or training adversely affects youth.

Additionally, Carcillo (2015) contends that youth lack the financial cushion in the form of savings or benefit entitlements to cope with temporary spells of low income or unemployment. Periods out of employment or education can have negative long-term consequences by giving rise to potentially 'scarring' effects, by permanently reducing a young person's future employment and earnings potential (O'Higgins, 2014, p. 5). Although unemployment is not entirely a youth phenomenon, in South Africa it largely affects youth.

Mlatsheni and Rospabi (2002, p. 12) make the argument that "unemployment largely affects youth in any country, regardless of whether it is industrialised, developing or in transition, than it does the older population". This is because youth "suffer from lower access to the labour markets than the adult active population" (Mlatsheni & Rospabi, 2002, p. 14). Though this is the case, literature suggests that youth unemployment has in the past received little attention in South Africa, thus leaving unemployment, especially youth unemployment, unexplained (Bhorat & Osthuizen, 2000; Mhone, 2000; Mlatsheni, 2016). Consequently, there is a scarcity of empirical data explaining unemployment as far as youth are concerned.

One of the key variables in youth development is the creation and sustained existence of employment opportunities. Mlatsheni and Lebrandt (2011, p. 19) identify employment as a "key factor in the transition from youth to adulthood and from dependence to independence". Likewise, unsuccessful or prolonged transitions from school to work impose high psychological and social costs far in excess of the loss of income associated with the unemployment (Mlatsheni & Lebrandt, 2011). The above is especially true with the NEETs. The NEETs are often characterised by stigma,

depression, hopelessness, despair and a host of other psychological distresses These psychological distresses, accompanied by material deprivation, further perpetuate the social exclusion of NEETs (Du Toit, 2003).

This study focuses on the socio-economic challenges experienced by NEETs in KSD and what they perceive as they way forward in addressing these challenges. However, before focusing on the problem-situation and rationale for conducting the study, definitions and descriptions of key words and concepts underpinning the study are provided.

## 3. DEFINITION AND DESCRIPTION OF KEY WORDS AND CONCEPTS

### 3.1. NEETs

As explained above, the concept NEET refers to persons 'not in employment, education or training (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2017).

### 3.2. Socio-economic challenges

The United Nations Department of Economics and Social Affairs indicates that socio-economic issues/challenges are factors that have a negative influence on an individual's economic activity, including lack of education, culture and religious discrimination and unemployment (UNDP, 2017, p. 54).

### 3.3. Unemployment:

The extended definition of unemployment provided by Statistics South Africa (2014, p. 5) defines an unemployed person as anybody without a job between the ages of 15-65 years, who wanted to work, was available to take up employment in the reference period; irrespective of whether they actively looked for a job 4 weeks prior to the reference week.

### 3.4. Social exclusion

According to the Fact Sheet on NEETs by the Department of Education (2017), NEETs are considered as "disengaged from both work and education". Furthermore, they are usually socially excluded. Social exclusion is a persistent occurrence for youth who are not employed and those who are not in education or training.

According to the South African Human Rights Commission, (2014, citing Hinkey & Du Toit, 2004, p. 18), social exclusion is defined as the process that excludes individuals or groups from full participation in the society in which they live. This has dire consequences as youth are at risk of both economic inactivity and lack of access to skills that could enhance their employment prospects. Furthermore, social exclusion has been described as a scenario in "… which individuals or groups are wholly or partially excluded from full participation in the society within which they live. The concept has two main defining characteristics. First, it is a multi-dimensional concept. People may be excluded, for example, from livelihoods, employment, earnings, property, housing, minimum consumption, education. The concept focuses on the multi-dimensionality of deprivation; on the fact that people are often deprived of different things at the same time. It refers to exclusion (deprivation) in the economic, social and political sphere. Second – less discussed in the literature but perhaps more relevant for the theoretical contribution of the concept – social exclusion implies a focus on the relations and processes that cause deprivation (De Haan, 2000, pp. 25-26).

### 3.5. Youth development

Young people are a major human resource for development, often acting as key agents for social change, economic expansion and innovation. Their imagination, ideals, energy and vision are essential for the continuous development of society. The National Youth Policy 2020, in recognition of the vital role youth play in building South Africa, seeks to ensure that there are processes and opportunities that allow youth to develop and realize their potential. The policy avoids quick fixes that divert attention from the complex institutional and systematic issues that need to be addressed. Instead, it seeks to develop capabilities as part of a long-term solution, which will open opportunities for the youth to participate in and take advantage of what South Africa has to offer (National Youth Development Agency, 2015).

### 3.6. Coping mechanisms

Involves a conscious, purposeful effort with the intention of managing or solving a problem-situation (Cramer, 1998).

3.7. The KSD municipality falls under the OR Tambo District Municipality (ORTDM), in the Province of the Eastern Cape (EC). The Eastern Cape is located on the South-Eastern seaboard of South Africa and is the second largest province in terms of land mass (ORTDM Growth and Development Summit Economic profile, 2006, p. 4). Mthatha is the main administrative centre of the King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality. According to Siyongwana (2014, p.9) “Mthatha evolved in the 1960s in response to request by white colonists for protection by the Cape colonial government. Msi (2009, p. 25) re-counts that Mthatha became the capital of the Transkei when it acquired status as an independent state in 1976. Most of the inhabitants in KDS are Africa and Xhosa speaking.

## 4. PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RATIONALE FOR THE RESEARCH

Unemployed youth in South Africa frequently lack access to skills and training outside the formal schooling system. What further exacerbates the problem is that even in cases where youth have undergone formal education and skills training, the skills and knowledge attained are not necessarily matched with the demands of the labour market (Honwana, 2014, p.9). The inherent implication of this persistent unemployment and a lack of access to information and resources to ensure economic participation for youth is that it has a profound negative impact on the lives of youth.

The profound negative impact of unemployment and lack of access to information and resources to ensure economic participation for the youth include, hopelessness, depair and prolonged future unemployment (Tambulu, 2018).Research studies (Sweeny, 2009; Tambulu 2018) underscore the fact that for education and training to be successful, it is important to engage with community members. Insight on a grassroots level is necessary to promote successful strategies to improve livelihoods (Ndlovu, 1999). Balwanz (2014) also highlights the importance of adopting a constructive stance when exploring the circumstances surrounding youth NEETs. Balwanz (2101, p.32) stated:

> …many youth are looking for positive ways to engage in the community; others are beginning to explore ways in which education can improve self-knowledge, expose youth to new ideas and offer alternative ways of conceptualizing livelihoods. A re-

> imagined post-school sector can support these educative goals (Noble, Ntshongwana & Surrender, 2008, cited in Balwanz , 2014, p. 29).

Although some studies have focused on NEETs generally, both internationally and in the South African context, a rigorous literature review indicates that there is limited qualitative research addressing how youth cope with unemployment and lack of education and training opportunities in the King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality. There is an overall scarcity of research explaining the socio-economic challenges experienced by NEETs in KSD municipality and their perspectives of a way forward in overcoming those challenges.

The KSD Municipality is situated within the OR Tambo District in the Eastern Cape Province. It is the largest of the five municipalities in the district, accounting for a quarter of its geographical area. The municipality was formed before the local government elections in the year 2000, when the Mqanduli and Mthatha Transitional and Rural Councils were merged (Msi, 2009). The majority population of the municipality resides in the rural areas, where they still practice cultural tradition. The unemployment rate among young people in the Eastern Cape is particularly high. The youth unemployment rate is approximately 38%, implying that more than one in every three young people in the labour force did not have a job in the first quarter of 2018 (Stats SA, 2018).

It is against this background that this study investigated the socio-economic challenges experienced by NEETs and their perspectives of a way forward in overcoming these challenges. The study further sought to investigate how any constructive socio-economic coping mechanisms can be strengthened and supported in the King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality.

## 5. RESEARCH QUESTION

The main research question on which the study was based is:

What are the socio-economic challenges faced by NEETs in King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality and what do they perceive as the way forward in overcoming these challenges?

## 6. RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

### 6.1. Primary aim:

The primary aim of the study was to explore the socio-economic challenges faced by NEETs in KSD Municipality and what they perceive as the way forward in addressing these challenges.

### 6.2. Objectives

Three main objectives of the study were as follows:

Objective 1: Establish what level of education NEETs achieve and explore the reasons why they do not further their education;

Objective 2:

2.1. Explore what factors t hinder NEETs' efforts to further their education

2.2. Explore factors facilitate efforts of NEETs to acquire employment skills so as to secure employment;

**Objective 3:** Explore what youth NEETs perceive should be done in the KSD Municipality to meet the socio-economic needs of NEETs, and who should fulfil this responsibility

## 7. RESEARCH REPORT STRUCTURE

The research report is structured as follows:
Chapter 1 of the research report introduced the research study that was conducted by presenting the background of the problem-situation of NEETs and discussed the problem statement and rationale of the study. This chapter also defined and described key concepts and highlighted the research question as well as the aims and objectives of the research.

Chapter 2 initially presents the theoretical framework underpinning the study. It then highlights research findings of previous studies related to the research topic. Matters such as youth transition into adulthood, challenges faced by youth, policy legislative interventions from a global, African and South African perspective are also summarised.

Chapter 3 provides a thorough overview of the research design and methodological practices used to achieve the study aim and objectives. The research design, namely a case study is discussed. Information also focuses on how research participants were purposively recruited (15 NEETs) and how thematic data analysis was conducted.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the research study related to the research aims and secondary objectives. Initially research demographics are summarized and then the researcher focuses on different themes emerging based on thematic data analysis.

Chapter 5 outlines the main conclusions of the study with regards to the socio-economic challenges faced by NEETs in regard to completion of education, training and finding employment and what they perceive as the way forward in overcoming these challenges. This is followed by a discussion of the recommendations directed to institutions and individuals that are responsible for the enhancement of rural NEETs to improve their livelihoods.

# CHAPTER TWO

# THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the theoretical framework underpinning the study is discussed. This chapter further provides a literature review covering findings of previous studies, books and other publications in relation to NEETs from a global, African and South African perspective. A discussion of youth NEETs unemployment, the transition from schooling to adulthood, the state of NEETs in South Africa is also presented. A summary discussion of youth (un)employment policy and legislation in the South African context concludes this chapter.

## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Saloojee and Saloojee (2011, p. 65) suggest, “theoretical frameworks and the research based on them are very much about normative social science”. Social inclusion is about a kind of social science that is rationally motivated to engage in social transformation. It is not about change for the sake of change. It is about research that would make for a better society, a better state of affairs than exclusion (Saloojee and Saloojee, 2011).

A theoretical framework can be understood as a logically structured representation of the concepts, variables and relationships involved in a research study with the purpose of clearly identifying what will be explored, examined and measured or described (Mouton, 2013, p. 201). This study adopted the social exclusion theoretical framework. The study also drew theoretical assertions of McQuaid and Lindsey’s (2005) Integrated Model for Employability.

### 2.2.1. Social Exclusion Framework

This study has adopted the social exclusion framework because the social exclusion framework spells out both the causes and consequences of the social phenomena the

study seeks to investigate- namely, unemployment and social exclusion of youth who are not in employment, education or training in the KSD Municipality. The social exclusion framework is particularly relevant to the South African context, especially considering the social, political and economic exclusion of persons in former homelands. It is of particular relevance because the apartheid era created a great deal of inequality in terms of access to employment services and this is the case even to this day (Tele, 2017).

Jordan (1996) and Sen (2000) are among the most prominent proponents of the social exclusion framework because of its usefulness in "augmenting material deprivation and other obvious markers of poverty and underdevelopment with less obvious impacts on the developments of individuals" (Sen, 2000, p. 54). This is very important for this study as its objectives focus on NEET youth who are vulnerable in communities exposed to poverty.

According to Sen (2000, pp. 19-22), long-term unemployment is one of the most obvious and important forms of social exclusion. It is important to also note that the intended research does not exclusively focus on unemployment, but also lack of access to education and training, which can be fundamental causes of unemployment.

### 2.2.2. Mcquaid and Lindsey's Integrated Model for Employability

The (un)employment of youth in South Africa cannot be individualised. It is not only the individual and personal attributes of young people that determine their (un)employment (Tele, 2017, p. 20). McQuaid and Lindsay's Integrated Model for Employability provides a detailed account of factors that affect one's employability or unemployability. The framework suggests that three factors influence employability. These factors are "individual factors such as skills and attributes; personal circumstances such as social and household circumstances; and external factors, including labour demand conditions" (McQuaid & Lindsay, 2005, p 45).

The table on the next page summarizes Mcquaid and Lindsey's (2005) Integrated Model for Employability:

**Table 1: Integrated model for Employability**

| Individual factors | Personal circumstances | External factors |
|---|---|---|
| **Employability skills and attributes:**<br>▪ Personal competencies<br>▪ Transferable skills<br>▪ High level transferable skills<br>▪ Qualifications<br>▪ Labour market attachment<br>**Demographic Characteristics**<br>Age, gender, race, etc<br>**Health and Wellbeing**<br>▪ Health<br>▪ Disability<br>▪ Chronic illnesses<br>**Job Seeking**<br>▪ Effective use of formal search services<br>▪ Ability to complete a CV/application | **Household circumstances**<br>▪ Direct caring responsibilities<br>▪ Other household circumstances<br>**Work culture**<br>▪ Work encouragement at home<br>**Access to resources**<br>▪ Access to transport<br>▪ Access to financial capital<br>▪ Access to financial capital | **Demand factors**<br>▪ Labour market factors<br>▪ Macroeconomic factors<br>▪ Vacancy characteristics<br>▪ Recruitment factors<br>**Enabling support factors**<br>▪ Employment policy factors<br>▪ Other employment policy factors (child care, Affordable public transport) |

**Source: McQuaid and Lindsey, 2005**

The Integrated model for Employability is particularly relevant to analyzing youth unemployment in South Africa because it takes into account how individual skills, socioeconomic and institutional factors impact on employability. Taking into consideration the challenges faced by South African youth in getting employment, the individual characteristics of youth cannot be the only factor taken into consideration. There are socioeconomic and labour market factors that affect employability. A number of factors interplay with each other to directly affect youth employability. Though the model was also not developed in the South Africa where social exclusion is a strong determinant of opportunity and life chances, it greatly supplements the social exclusion framework in in-depth analysis of the deprivations that young people face because they are not employable.

## 3. YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Defining unemployment is a complex task. It is multidimensional in nature involving economic, political and social dimensions. The major reason for this complexity is that the concept is dependent on country context variables, such as the economy of a country, social setting, culture and education system (Msigwa & Kipesha, 2013).

The ILO (2015, p. 36) points out that youth unemployment is more of a critical issue in developing countries due to high levels of poverty that requires all people to work in order to ascertain survival. Lam, Leibbrandt and Maletsheni (2008) supplemented by Mahambehlala (2015) contend that the problem of youth without employment is not a South African, one but a global one. A study by Msigwa and Kipesha (2013) on the determinants of youth unemployment in developing countries reveals that gender, geographic location, education, skills and marital status are "significant factors in explaining youth (un)employment status of young persons" (Msigwa & Kipesha, 2013, p. 5).

The share of youth who are neither in employment nor education or training in the youth population is a relatively new indicator - one that is given increasing importance by international organizations and the media (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2017).

The popularity of the "NEETs" concept is associated with its assumed potential to address a broad array of vulnerabilities among youth, touching on issues of unemployment, early school leaving and labour market discouragement (Morgan, 2015). These are all issues that warrant greater attentions as youth continue to feel the aftermath of the economic crisis, particularly in advanced economies (Fatoki & Chindonga, 2011).

From a little known indicator aimed at focusing attention on the issue of school drop-out among teenagers in the early 2000s, the 'NEET' indicator has gained enough weight to be proposed as the sole youth-specific target for the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to "promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all" (United

Nations Development Programme, 2014). Within the goal, youth are identified in two proposed targets: (i) by 2030 achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for youth and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value, and (ii) by 2020 substantially reduce the proportion of youth NEETs.

## 2.3. THE TRANSITION FROM SCHOOLING TO ADULTHOOD

As stated previously, country context variables such as the economy of a country, social setting, culture and education system are some of the determinants of youth employment (Msigwa & Kipesha, 2013). It is thus resultant that young people are defined differently depending on country specific variables. Though in some countries young people are those aged between 16 and 25 (Azinga, 2017, p. 7), for South Africa the definition extends to those age 35. It is nonetheless commonly shared that young people are at "a key period of transition… wherein young people learn to engage with society and the world of work as they take on adult roles and responsibilities (Azinga, 2017, p. 7).

Findings from a study by Furstenburg, Kennedy, Mcloyd, Rumbaut and Settersten, 2004, p. 12) reveal that these roles and responsibilities of adulthood are traditionally observed as "the time in which young people are expected to finish school, secure a job with benefits, marry, have children and establish independent households". Rituals mark these transitions in some societies. Common examples of these rituals are "*ulwaluko"* –the circumcision initiation of boys in the Xhosa communities. Another is *"umembeso"* – a ritual performed by the Zulu women to mark the transition from girlhood into womanhood (Mgqolozana, 2009).

Furstenburg et al., (2004) further revealed that to some young people the transition into adulthood is marked by challenges in gaining skills and qualifications required to find employment that can support themselves and the family they wish to start - or perhaps have already started - and a struggle to have a sense of control in their lives owing to their inability to financially support themselves.

Becoming an adult involves earning a living, but it has been shown that in many countries, millions of youth are unable to access economic opportunities and suffer

widespread unemployment or underemployment (Hiker and Fraser, 2011). For most South Africans, ideally completing an education, finding a job and gaining social and economic independence are natural life stages. However, for significant groups of youth in South Africa, this is not a straightforward transition. As discussed above without access to employment or livelihood opportunities, most youth cannot afford a house, and cannot marry and their transition to adulthood is effectively blocked.

Young NEETs are at high risk of drifting into long-term unemployment and exclusion. Early childhood education and support with school-to-work transition can reduce the distance from the mainstream labour market. At the same time, adopting a wider approach by tackling multi-generational poverty, improving spatial planning to reduce isolation and strengthening local social capital, and bringing economic development and entrepreneurship to deprived areas can bring significant results (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2013).

The transition between education and work is smoother in countries with work-study programmes at upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary levels of education. The United Kingdom offers work-study programmes at these levels and programme participants are less affected by unemployment. However, compared to other countries such as Australia, the Czech Republic, Germany and Switzerland, the United Kingdom only has a small proportion of students (OECD, 2016).

The Year Up Program in the United States is an intensive, year-long education and workforce training programme for young people in transition between schooling and employment. The Programme establishes effective career pathways for urban young adults who are “at risk.” Year Up focuses specifically on building skills and employment preparation skills in financial services and information technology. Over the past decade, it has placed 2 100 low- and moderate-income young people into internships with more than 100 employers across the country, including Fortune 500 companies, such as American Express, JPMorgan Chase & Co. and State Street Corporation (Tele, 2017).

Young people looking for work need to balance the benefits of acquiring an immediate job with the need to secure a position which will offer good quality employment. The

Quang Nam province in Central Viet Nam (also referred as 'Vietnam') has designed a more integrated and multi-faceted approach to improving youth employment in response to very high youth unemployment and underemployment rates (estimated to be 76.4%). Local Economic Development (LED) is a new approach and has not been systematically implemented in any other project in Viet Nam. Adopted by the regional government and the ILO, it is a three-pronged approach which addresses three areas of intervention in an integrated, parallel manner: (i) creation of a pro-employment business environment; (ii) vocational training and entrepreneurial skills for youth; and (iii) improved job opportunities through value chain development.

Calvès, Kobiane and Martel (2007, p. 88) in a study done in Burkina Faso show that transitions of young people established that "increasing employment postponement and more informal first paid employment seem to be accompanied by a significantly postponed entry into marriage among both males and females". The process of transitioning to adulthood seems to be changing over time with many going through a variety of routes in-between. This shows that the routes into which young people take as they transition into adulthood are fluid; being delayed over time. These findings are applicable in the South African context where a large number of young people's transitions are being delayed due to high levels of unemployment (Tele, 2017)

A study by Honwana (2014) examined the challenges of youth transitions in four African case studies. According to Honwana, the majority of African youths are struggling with a lack of jobs and poor education. She continues to state that when youth leave school with minimal skills, they are unable to enter the job market and therefore struggle to become independent. As a result, they stagnate and delay their social recognition as adults as a result; they stagnate and delay their social recognition as adults.

Youth in Europe, North America and other parts of the world experience similar challenges of joblessness and liminal futures. Honwana (2014) uses the concept of 'waithood' for this liminal period. 'Waithood' was however first used by Dhillon and Yousef (2009) and Sinderman (2007) meaning, "waiting for adulthood". In short, 'waithood' refers to a suspension between childhood and adulthood. Studies have revealed that many youth experience a general sense of feeling despondent and

disempowered in finding employment. Many openly described their feelings of frustration and exhaustion in their attempts to find employment. Employment opportunities often require years of experience that many youth do not possess (Sinderman, 2007).

## 2.4. THE STATE OF YOUTH NEET IN SOUTH AFRICA

According to Statistics SA (2016), 48 per cent of South Africans between 15 and 35 years were unemployed in the third quarter of 2016. By 2017 the number had increased to more than 50 per cent. Youth unemployment was sitting at 5.9 million (Stats SA, Q4, 2017). This value is four times the Sub-Saharan unemployment rate.

More specifically, at the end of 2016 there were just over 20 million youth (i.e. people aged between 15 and 34 years) in South Africa. Of these, 6.3 million were employed, 3.7 million were unemployed but looking for work (the definition of unemployment used to calculate the 'narrow' unemployment rate), 2.1 million were unemployed but were no longer looking for work (the 'discouraged' workers used when calculating the expanded rate of unemployment), and eight million were not economically active (Centre for Development and Enterprise, 2017). Of those who were not economically active, five million were still in school and around a million more were in some other form of educational institution or engaged in adult basic education. Overall, about 7.5 million youth (nearly 40% of all youth) were so-called 'NEETs (Centre for Development and Enterprise, 2017).

De Jongh, Meyer and Meyer (2016, p. 3) argue that unemployment is rife even among South Africa's educated youth as they fail to secure financial freedom. 2013 data released by the World Bank (2014) ranks South Africa as fourth worst globally regarding youth unemployment as more than half of the youth in South Africa are not employed.

The NEET rate serves as an important additional labour market indicator for young people. Of the 10,3 million persons aged 15–24 years, 32,4% (approximately 3,3 million) were not in employment, education or training – implying that close to one in three young South Africans between the ages of 15 and 24 years were disengaged

with the labour market in the first quarter of 2018 (Stats SA, 2018). The NEET rate declined among the black African and coloured males, while the rate increased among Indian/Asian and white males. Among females, the NEET rate increased for three population groups with the exception of coloured females (Stats SA, 2018).

The NEET rate, seen in conjunction with unemployment rates over 50%, suggests that South African young people face extreme difficulties engaging with the labour market. Certain factors, such as lack of experience and length of unemployment, may increase the vulnerabilities of these young people in the labour market (Stats SA, Q4, 2017).
According to Stats SA (2018), the burden of unemployment is also concentrated amongst the youth as they account for 63,5% of the total number of unemployed persons. The unemployment rate among the youth is higher irrespective of education level. The graduate unemployment rate was 33,5% for those aged 15–24 and 10,2% among those aged 25–34 years, while the rate among adults (aged 35–64 years) was 4,7%. Just over 30% of the youth have jobs and about half of them participate in the labour market. Within the youth, those aged 15–24 years are more vulnerable in the labour market with an unemployment rate of over 52%, an absorption rate of about 12,2% and a labour force participation rate of 25,6%. (Stats SA, 2018)

When young people are employed in the South African labour market, their employment intensity is the highest amongst the Trade, Agriculture, and Finance and other business services industries (Noble, 2015). Low and semi-skilled youth employment is concentrated in the Trade industry, while high-skilled youth employment is in the Community and social services as well as Finance and other business services industries (Mgqolozana, 2014).

South Africa has had a pervasive unemployment problem for the last fifty years (Lam Leibbrandt & Mlatsheni, 2008; Leibbrandt, 2015). Though research on youth unemployment in South Africa is not new, there is a scarcity of evidence-based research which explores the active role that unemployed youth play in actively participating in the economy while outside of employment, education or training.
Researchers in South Africa, including Furlong (2015); Quintini and Martin (2016) detail the miserable condition of unemployment among youth. They discuss the

moving account of the role that youth played in the fight against apartheid and the negative consequences of this commitment for their personal prospects.

Most pertinent for this study is the discussion of the deficiency in educational accumulation of youth and its likely negative effect on their employment prospects. Indeed, given the political turbulence and consequent educational disruption of youth in the 1980s, there were fears that this youth cohort would become a 'lost generation' (Quintini & Martin, 2016).

A number of papers have analysed various dimensions of unemployment among youth in South Africa. These include the work of Mhone (2000) who discusses issues of underemployment and marginalisation and Mlatsheni and Rospabe (2015), who highlight large inequalities between age groups, races and genders. Furthermore, Lam Leibbrandt and Mlatsheni (2013) argue that the disjuncture between youth education and labour market preparedness is still a relevant concern in contemporary South Africa. This continues to be an existing problem even today.

A common argument is that this pattern of labour market disadvantages arises because young 'inexperienced' job seekers - the focus of this study - cannot compete with older 'more experienced' labour market participants, and thus fail to develop the skills and experience necessary to make them productive adults and hence sought-after workers (Mhone, 2002; Msi, 2014).

## 2.5. YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT POLICY AND LEGISLATION

Brynard (2011, p. 67) points out that a number of policies have been introduced to deal with unemployment of youth since the dawn of democracy in 1994. In the year 2011, South African government allocated a total of R 9 billion to address unemployment. This fee has since increased annually. Programmes to address unemployment in South Africa include the Accelerated and Shared Growth initiative of South Africa (AsgiSA), Black Economic Empowerment (BEE), Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBEE), and as of late propositions of a Youth Wage Subsidy.

### 2.5.1. Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR)

The content of GEAR was influenced by the prior circulation of a 'big business'-promoted strategy document entitled 'Growth for All'. Driven mainly by then-Deputy President Thabo Mbeki, GEAR's main pillars echoed the substance of the Washington Consensus, in that it sought to generate growth via 'responsible' or 'conservative' fiscal and monetary policies, trade liberalisation, deregulation of markets, and privatisation of state-owned enterprises (Brumefeld, 2015). Moreover, at first glance, GEAR appeared to be cognisant of the aforementioned political and institutional lessons to be derived from the RDP experience. Brumefeld (2015).

By contrast, in the face of determined 'internal' leftist opposition to this 'neo-liberal assault', GEAR failed badly on the micro policy front. Leaving aside the long-term policy issues – such as promoting and diversifying the country's export profile and tackling the critical shortage of skills – which were manifestly not going to be resolved within a single generation, GEAR effectively imploded in respect of two other fundamentals, namely the labour market and privatization (Brumenfeld, 2015).

The Affirmative Action (AA), employment equity (EE) and improved employment conditions policies, including new rules on 'hirings and firings', were amongst the earliest post-apartheid legislative measures enacted by the new government. This was clearly a necessary political priority, given that the labour market was the locus of some of the worst attributes of apartheid-era policies (Brumenfeld, 2015).

### 2.5.2. Accelerated and Shared Growth initiative of South Africa (AsgiSA)/New Growth Path/National Development Plan

While GEAR has never been formally annulled, the past decade has witnessed the promulgation of three further plans, namely the 2005 Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGISA), the 2010 New Growth Path (NGP), and the 2012 National Development Plan (NDP).

ASGISA promised to increase the growth rate to an annual average in excess of 6% by 2010, and to halve unemployment and poverty by 2014.

The NGP aims to create 5 million new 'decent' jobs by 2020 – current total employment is only around 8 million – thereby reducing the unemployment rate from 25% to 15%.

The NDP – which extends to no fewer than 444 pages, with a 70-page Executive Summary – envisages the creation of 11 million new jobs, and an economy close to full employment by 2030. As with the RDP, the NDP has attracted formal support from most sections of public life including the ANC, but crucially not from the 'left' within the tripartite alliance. This fact threatens to derail the programme – which otherwise contains largely sensible and unobjectionable policy recommendations – and will likely render it incapable of implementation. The NDP emphasises a capable state, a "capabilities" approach to development, and active citizenship and participation in the economic, civic and social norms that integrate society. All of these are integral components of social inclusion (Cardo, 2014)

### 2.5.3. Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) and Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBEE)

Levinson, (2007, p. 21) argues that AsgiSA, BEE and BBEE were "economic policies that claimed to have employment consequences, but unfortunately not on a scale that was quantitatively significant in relieving unemployment".

The turn of the century brought a major new policy thrust with very substantial consequences for the domestic business and investment climates. During most of President Nelson Mandela's administration from 1994 to 1999, racial reconciliation was a primary socio-political goal, while economic policy was – as noted earlier – concentrated mostly on the elimination of labour-market discrimination instead of taking the necessary steps towards fostering a more investor-friendly and growth-enabling business environment. Except in respect of the labour market, black economic empowerment was not an official policy priority. Instead, the empowerment thrust was largely privately driven, with a range of (mostly) large and white-run corporations bestowing significant –and high profile – equity stakes on consortia of black investors who financed the deals through the medium of 'special purpose' empowerment vehicles (Noyoo, 2015).

### 2.5.4. The Employment Tax Incentive Act, 2013 (Act 26 of 2013)

South African government promulgated the Employment Tax Incentive Act, 2013 on the 1st of January 2014. Ranchhod and Finn (2014, p. 2) refer to the Act as direct interference by government in the labour market aimed at reducing the employers' cost in hiring young individuals between the ages of 18 and 29 years. The Act was presented as a "cost sharing mechanism between the private and public sectors" (De Jongh, Meyer & Meyer, 2016). The Act forms part of the actions set out by the National Youth Employment Accord, which aims to address the ongoing youth unemployment problem in South Africa (Davis Tax Committee (DTC) 2014, p. 3).

### 2.5.5. The National Skills Development Act, (No. 97 of 1998)

South Africa introduced the National Skills Development Act, (No. 97 of 1998) which was later amended in 2003 by the Skills Development Amendment Act, 31 of 2003. This Act gave rise to the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), which were mandated to charge skills levy on firms, to be repaid upon evidence that the firms were undertaking approved skills training for workers.

### 2.5.6. The Extended Public Works Programme (EPWP)

Levinsohn (2013, pp. 73-74) believes that the EPWP has the potential to employ large numbers of poorly educated youth who would otherwise be unemployed, but it lacks the skilled manpower to provide youth with training that equips them for meaningful employment.

### 2.5.7. Youth employment subsidy

In 2011, former president Jacob Zuma announced the intention of government to introduce a temporary youth employment subsidy with effect from 2012. Afterward, in in 2011-2012 budget, the Treasury, after consulting international experience and evidence of alternative forms of subsidies and their implementation, allocated R5 billion towards a three-year proposal to enable a number of youth to obtain credible

work experience while reducing the risk of employers taking unproductive young employees (Blumenfeld, 2015, p. 67). The downside of this subsidy was that there was no guarantee that these jobs would be permanent. The youth wage subsidy debate is an on-going one with political parties, civil society, trade unions and many other stakeholders taking different stances.

### 2.5.8. Further Education and Training Colleges Act (Act No. 16 of 2006)

An improved school system can positively benefit unemployed youth in South Africa. As previously stated, skills are an important factor in youth employment. According to the South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996), children from the ages of 7 to 15 years should be at school.

Azinga (2018, p. 27 ) postulates that "many out–of-school youth are at a stage in their lives where the general schooling system may not be a good fit for them because of their age". In light of this, attending a Further Education and Training institution may be the best path for such youth to take. The TVET Colleges Act (2006) provides for the establishment, governance and funding of public TVET colleges and related matters (Republic of South Africa, 2006).

### 2.5.9. National Youth Policy (2015-2020)

The National Youth Policy (NYP) 2015-2020, is South Africa's most youth specific policy. The policy builds on the National Youth Policy 2009-2014 and updates it according to the current challenges faced by the youth. According to the policy, "young people as a major resource for the development of the country including its economic expansion" (RSA, 2015).

Acknowledged and highlighted in the policy is that large portions of youth are not in education, employment or training. Involvement in re-integration of marginalised groups, such as those in the NEET group, through second chance measures and other supportive actions using a multi-sectoral approach that involves all spheres of society (RSA, 2015), could translate to economic participation.

The policy places the intent of employment creation at the centre of all youth development interventions. Tele (2017, p. 26) comments that “like many policies in South Africa this policy is well written and its intent towards the inclusion and development of young people is very clear, but it fails to highlight the heterogeneous nature of the young people falling into this category”. Tele (2017) thus argues for integrated model of employability in examining the factors that influence youth employability. It is therefore important that research informs policy on how to take into account the personal circumstances and external factors that lead to the unemployment of young people as per Mcquaid and Lindsey’s Integrated Model For Employability.

### 2.5.10. Youth Employment Service (YES) Programme

The Yes Explanatory Gazette (2018, p1. 3) defines the youth employment service as “a business-led collaboration with government and labour. Its intention is to stimulate demand side job creation through company investment and by leveraging government’s existing recognitions such as the Employment Tax Incentive and B-BBEE recognition for broad-based transformation”. This is, achieved through the placement of black unemployed youth into new, twelve-month, work experiences, training opportunities and through the development of black- owned Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMES), which are coupled to employment impact.

The three focus areas of YES are (1) the creation of new job opportunities in existing firms intended specifically for the youth; (2) promoting the capacity of SMMEs, which are South Africa’s largest employers with paid for youth labour; (3) Creating new cohorts of SMMEs, through creative value chain initiatives and knowledge spillover in collaboration with industry champions.

The YES programme is particularly targeted at black youth. This amendment refers to 12-month work opportunities with fixed term or temporary employment contracts for black youth, between the ages of 18 and 34.

As espoused in Mcquaid and Lindsay's model for employability, there is a multiplicity of factors influencing Employability. The YES programme (pp, 6-16) thus recognizes the following as key stakeholders:

- Government, for enabling the regulatory environment and contributions through the creation of appropriate recognition and partnership;
- Labour, for championing and support
- Partner agencies, for sharing resource and expertise
- Business, for investing and creating work opportunities
- Trusts and funders, for seeding and investing in our team and the required infrastructure
- The youth, for bringing energy and commitment to the work place and building their communities and laying the path to the country's future

## 2.6. CONCLUSION

This chapter covered literature related to youth employment from an international, continental and South African viewpoint. The chapter outlined the theoretical framework guiding the study. The social exclusion framework and Mcquaid and Lindsey's Integrated Model for Employability (2005) were used as theoretical frameworks to navigate the study. A discussion of youth NEET covered issues including unemployment, the transition from schooling to adulthood and the state of NEETs in South Africa. It concluded with an in-depth discussion of youth (un)employment policy and legislation in the South African context.

# CHAPTER THREE

# RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter commences by providing a brief description of the philosophical foundations of the study and the main aim and secondary objectives of the study. It then describes the methodological approach used in this study and discusses the research design and method of the study. Other matters covered in the chapter are the research population and sample of the study and the process of data collection and analysis. The chapter concludes by elaborating on the trustworthiness of the study and the ethical considerations taken into consideration when conducting the research study.

## 2. MAIN AIM AND SECONDARY OBJECTIVES

### 2.1. Primary aim:

The primary aim of the study was to explore the socio-economic challenges faced by NEETs in KSD Municipality and what they perceive as the way forward in addressing these challenges.

### 2.3. Objectives

Three main objectives of the study were as follows:

Objective 1: Establish what level of education NEETs achieve and explore the reasons why they do not further their education;

Objective 2:

2.1. Explore what factors hinder NEETs' efforts to further their education

2.2. Explore factors facilitate efforts of NEETs to acquire employment skills so as to secure employment;

**Objective 3:** Explore what youth NEETs perceive should be done in the KSD Municipality to meet the socio-economic needs of NEETs, and who should fulfil this responsibility

## 3. RESEARCH DESIGN

Burns and Grove (2001, p. 223) define the research design as “the blueprint for conducting a study that maximizes control over factors that could interfere with the validity of the findings”. Designing a study helps the researcher to plan and implement the study in a way that will help the researcher to obtain intended results, thus increasing the chances of obtaining information that could be associated with the real situation. A qualitative approach was used in this study. The departure point of qualitative researchers is the “insider perspective” on social action or what is called the emic perspective” (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 270). The “insider perspective”- is defined by the lived experiences of the research subject and the meaning he/she attaches to phenomenon under investigation. In this study a case study design was used.

## 4. PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was structured around the interpretivist paradigm to social research. Interpretivism has a strong joining to qualitative research in pursuing knowledge. This is because this philosophical and research paradigm is concerned with the uniqueness of a particular situation, contributing to the underlying pursuit of contextual depth (Myers, 1997, p. 34). Neuman (2001, p. 76) asserts that “individuals have consciousness and are not just puppets who react to external forces”. Individuals have an intricate, complex and different people experience and understand the same ‘objective realities in different ways and have individual reasons for their actions” (Goldkuhl, 2012, p. 65).

The interpretivist paradigm was considered suitable for the study because the focus of the research was on studying the individual experiences of youth in relation to their subjective reality of unemployment, lack of access to education and training. Additionally, the aim of the interpretivist paradigm is to gain in-depth insight into the

lives of participants; to gain an empathic understanding of why and how they act the way that they do (Akpan, 2015).

## 5. CASE STUDY RESEARCH DESIGN

As pointed out by Baxter and Jack (2008, abstract.), “qualitative case study methodology provides tools for researchers to study complex phenomena within their contexts. Baxter and Jack (2008, citing Miles and Huberman) highlight that the concept ‘case’ can be described as a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context. In this study, the ‘case’ refers to youth NEET and within the bounded context of three townships in the KSD Municipality. More specifically, the type of case study selected can be defined as qualitative in nature because it enabled the researcher to explore the phenomenon and the real-life context in which it occurred (Baxter & Jack, 2008, citing Yin, 2003).

## 6. RESEARCH POPULATION AND SAMPLE

### 6.1. Research Population

A study population is the totality of all elements that meet the inclusion criteria (Burns & Grove, 2003). The population of the study is the totality of youth who are not in employment, education or training in the Eastern Cape. More specifically, for this study youth NEETs in the KSD municipality, namely Ngangelizwe, Mdlekeza and Waterfall Park, Eastern Cape. The population is mostly black African and Xhosa speaking. The townships are peri-urban in nature with most residents working in Mthatha’s central business district.

### 6.2. Research Sampling

A sample of 15 NEETS was purposively selected. This is because non-probability, purposive sampling is ideal in selecting “participants with specific experiences” (Akpan, 2014, p, 87). In this study, the ‘specific experience’ was youth out of unemployment, education or training.

The selection criteria specify the characteristics that people in the population have has as a whole (Youth NEETs), the sample possess the same characteristics as those of the population (Polit & Hungler 2001, p. 278).

In order to purposively select participants, the following selection criteria were implemented in the selection process:

- both men and women who were NEETs
- residents of the selected townships: Waterfall Park, Ngangelizwe and Mdlekeza townships.
- between the ages of 18 and 35 years. Eurostat (2014) points out that this age group of youth are no longer minors, and seeking independence from parental dependence, but find itself excluded from employment.

The researcher was of the view that the sample size was reasonably adequate. Saturation was reached based on 15 interviews.

## 6.3. DATA GATHERING

Bearing in mind the interpretivist foundations of the research, the researcher conducted in-depth, face-to-face interviews with research participants, and using semi-structured interview guide as the research tool (see Appendix 4).

Oral responses were recorded using a digital voice recorder. The recording was done with the intention that the researcher would be able to transcribe the interviews into written form to facilitate the process of data analysis (discussed below). A permission for recording of interview form was signed by the participants to confirm their permission for the recording. The researcher explained to the participants that the interview would be recorded and stored in a password protected computer.

In-depth interviews are by nature flexible, continuous and are not cast in stone (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 23). The interviewer must be fully familiar with the subject and potential questions, and plan so that things proceed smoothly and naturally. The

researcher understood the subject and studied the interview guide to ensure that the interviews ran smoothly; and that was indeed the case.

The advantage of this approach was that the researcher was on the sight; could listen not only to the oral responses, but also able to observe the body language and note the tone of the responses. The researcher was also able to probe participants' responses and clarify some information shared.

A semi-structured interview guide was developed to be used to direct the interviews. De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2011, p. 75) define an interview guide as "a set of predetermined questions that can be used as an appropriate instrument to engage the participants".

The structure of the interview guide helped the researcher to obtain rich qualitative data on the discourses around the socio-economic challenges faced by youth NEETs and their perspectives of the way forward in addressing these challenges. Although there was a pre-designed list of questions, this did not stop the researcher from asking further questions to deepen the conversation and understand the thought process behind each response. The ability of the researcher to listen, observe, think, analyse and ask follow-up questions at the same time was very important throughout the data collection process.

The semi-structured interview guide was pre-tested on one youth NEET before it was administered to the participants. Pre-testing was done in order to determine if the questions posed were relevant and adequate in gathering the research data or not. Delaney (2016) comments that should the pre-test indicate that the research tool requires amendments; the data collection instrument may be modified to suit the study (Delaney, 2016). However, the youth participating in the pre-test understood the questions presented to him. This youth was included as one of the research participants.

Some of the interviews were conducted at the homes of the participants and some were conducted in a mutually agreed upon meeting place. This was important because the interview venue had to be accessible to both the researcher and the interviewee.

The interviews were conducted between in July 2018. This was adequate time as it allowed the researcher to take notes and become familiar with the contents of each individual interview. It was also good for the researcher not to conduct too many interviews during too short a period of time as this could have caused confusion and disorientation.

Some of the interviews were done in isiXhosa. This helped because both the researcher's and the participants' first language is Xhosa. Many of the interviews were a mixture of both isiXhosa and English. The researcher then translated the isiXhosa into English while transcribing the recordings from the interviews.

## 6.4. DATA ANALYSIS

De Vos et al., (2011, p. 333) define data analysis as a "process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data". Data analysis plays an important role in giving meaning to the research data in that it allows the researcher to develop an understanding of what the data means.

Thematic analysis was used to analyse qualitative data. Braun and Clark (2006) maintain that thematic analysis is ideal for qualitative studies because it "provides a flexible and useful research tool, which can potentially provide a rich and detailed information. Thematic analysis identifies patterns in the data that are important or interesting, and uses these patterns to identify themes to address the research or say something about a topic being researched (Aishe, 2017).

Braun and Clarke (2006) distinguish between a top-down or theoretical thematic analysis, that is driven by the specific research question(s) and/or the analyst's focus, and a bottom-up or inductive one that is more driven by the data itself. The researcher's analysis was driven by the research question and was more top-down than bottom-up.

Braun & Clarke (2006) provide a six-phase guide which is a very useful framework for conducting this kind of analysis and thus selected as data analysis procedure for the study:

**Step 1:**

Become familiar with the data - the first step in any qualitative analysis is reading and re-reading the transcripts.

**Step 2:**

Generate initial codes - start to organise our data in a meaningful and systematic way. The researcher was concerned with addressing specific research questions and analysed the data with this in mind – so this was a *theoretical* thematic analysis rather than an *inductive* one. Given this, the researcher coded each segment of data that was relevant to or captured something interesting about the research questions. *Open coding* was used. That means that the researcher did not have pre-set codes but developed and modified the codes as the researcher worked through the coding process.

**Step 3:**

Search for themes - theme is characterised by its significance. The researcher examined the codes and some of them clearly fitted together into a theme. At the end of this step the codes had been organised into broader themes that seemed to say something specific about this research question. The themes were predominately descriptive, i.e. they described patterns in the data relevant to the research question.

**Step 4: Review themes.**

During this phase the researcher reviewed, modified and developed the preliminary themes that were identified in Step 3. The researcher then read the data associated with each theme and considered whether the data really did support it. The next step was to think about whether the themes work in the context of the entire data set. Themes should be coherent, and they should be distinct from each other (Braun & Clark, 2006)

**Step 5: Define themes.**

This is the final refinement of the themes and the aim is to '...*identify the 'essence' of what each theme is about*.'(Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.92).

**Step 6: Writing-up.**

The researcher then presented written findings in final report.

## 7. TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE RESEARCH

Morse et al., (2002, p. 1) argue that “without rigour, research is worthless, becomes fiction and loses utility”. The work of Guba and Lincoln (1989, cited in Shenton, 2004) proposes that trustworthiness is a key term in ensuring rigour in qualitative studies. Guba and Lincoln (1989) suggests that researchers need to ensure credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Credibility refers to whether the study actually investigates what it is meant to investigate. The design of the interview-guide was done with this in mind. This was ascertained by the alignment of the questions with the objectives of the study. The researcher has significant familiarity with the culture of the target participants as he is a resident of one of the townships under investigation. To further ascertain credibility, critical purposive sampling was used to select participants.

To address transferability, we look at whether the study is applicable to other situations. In the words of Merriam (1985, cited in Shenton, 2003, p. 69) transferability is concerned “with the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to other situations”. It is important to note that the researcher explored the same topic in three different townships that face similar poor socio-economic circumstances within the same municipality.

Shenton (2003, p. 71) contends that “in order to address the dependability issue more directly, the processes within the study should be reported in detail, thereby enabling a future researcher to repeat the work, if not necessarily to gain the same results”. For this reason, the researcher provides detailed information regarding the research design and methodology.

The concept of confirmability encircles around avoiding biasness in research. Objectivity can be linked to the use of research instruments that do not subject to

human skill and. In ensuring confirmability “steps must be taken to help ensure as far as possible that the work’s findings are the result of the experiences and ideas of the informants, rather than the characteristics and preferences of the researcher” (Shenton, 2003, p. 72). To deal with biasness and to ensure confirmability, the decisions made, and the motivations for them with regard to selection of research methods, were acknowledged in the research proposal as well as this research report.

## 8. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Strydom (2012, p. 63) defines ethics as a set of moral principles that are suggested by an individual or group and are subsequently widely accepted. The conducting of research requires not only expertise and diligence, but also honesty and integrity. This is done to recognize and protect the human rights of participants. To render the study ethical, the rights to no harm to participants, self-determination, anonymity, confidentiality, no deception to participants and informed consent were observed. To adhere to ethical standards, before conducting the study, a Human Research Ethics (non-medical) clearance certificate was obtained from the University of Witwatersrand’s Research Ethics Committee (non-medical).

The purpose of the research was explained in detail to the participants. The role of the participants in the research was also thoroughly explained to the participants. Written consent was obtained from the participants before conducting interviews with them. The use of an informed consent form (see Appendix 2) facilitated the attainment of this. Burns and Grove (1993, p. 776) define informed consent as the prospective subject’s agreement to participate voluntarily in a study, which is reached after assimilation of essential information about the study. The participants were informed of their rights to voluntarily consent or decline to participate at any time without penalty. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and given the assurance that there would not be any potential risks or costs involved. A participant Information Sheet was used to provide this information (see Appendix 1)

Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained throughout the study. In this study anonymity was ensured by not disclosing the respondent’s name when analysing data and transcripts. Confidentiality means that the information the respondent provide will

not be publicly reported in a way which identifies them (Polit & Hungler, 1995). In this study confidentiality was maintained by withholding participants' real names and using pseudonyms in the research report. All data collected during the study will be securely retained for two (2) years if a publication arises from the study and six (6) years, if there is no publication. Thereafter it will be destroyed accordingly (see Appendix 1).

## 9. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The limitations of the study are related to the size of the sample of participants. The research sample is admittedly quite small, and the results are not generalizable to every NEETs context. However, the study did not seek to draw generalisations, but to contribute to the body of knowledge as well as practical debates on youth who are NEET.

## 10. CONCLUSION

This chapter outlined the research design and methodology of the study. Efforts made by the researcher to ensure trustworthiness of the study were also described. Finally, a summary how ethical matters were taken into consideration were presented in the chapter.

# CHAPTER FOUR

# PRESENTATION AND DISUSSION OF FINDINGS

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the findings related to the study are presented and discussed. Data were gathered when conducting in-depth, personal, face-to-face interviews with 15 purposively selected NEETs. The main purpose of the study was to explore the socio-economic challenges faced by NEETs in King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality and what they perceive as the way forward in addressing these challenges.

Initially the demographic profile of the participants is presented.

## 2. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE PARTICIPANTS

In Table 2, on the following page, the demographic profiles of the participants are presented with a view of providing context to the research. Eight of the participants were female and seven were males. All the participants were black, Xhosa-speaking residents of Waterfall Park, Ngangelizwe and Mdlekeza Townships in the King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality, Eastern Cape. Eight of the participants were between ages 18-25 years, four were between 26-30 years of age and one was between 31-35 years.

It is not surprising that most of the participants were between 18 and 25 years of age because youth falling into this age category generally have a more difficult time gaining employment. Woodman and Wyn (2013, p. 5) attribute this to “the impact of social, economic and political changes” in the lives of young people at that time period.

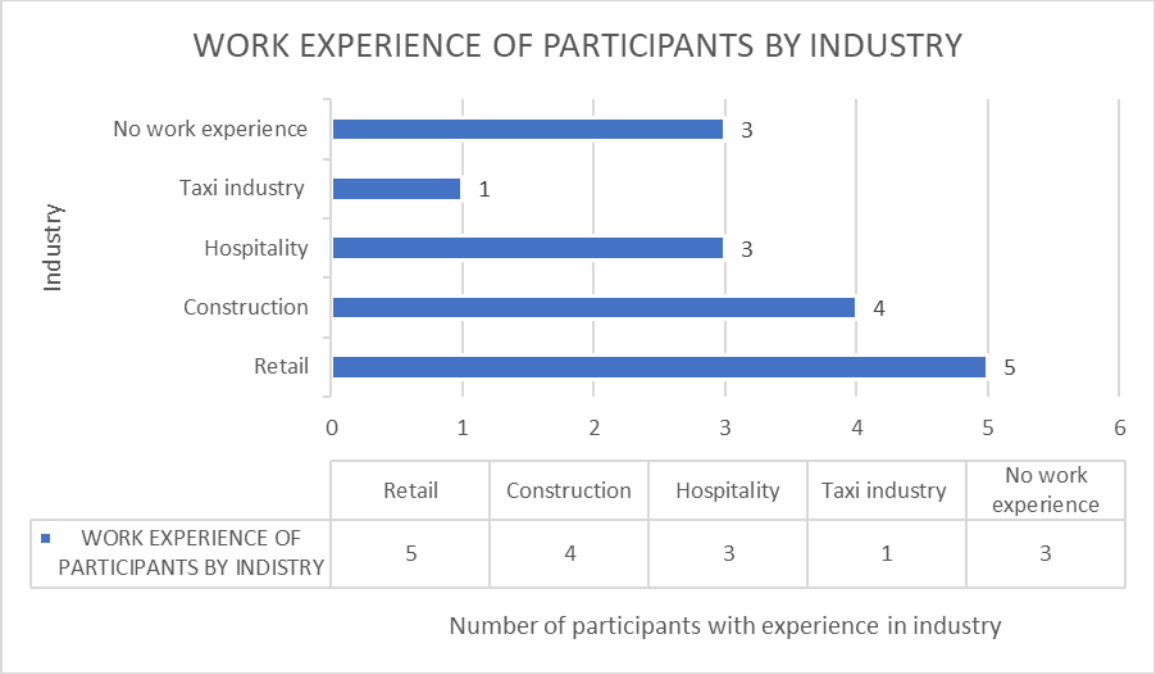
Five of the participants had competed Grade 10 and six had completed Grade 12. Seven of the participants were also from single-parent homes. Five of the participants stayed within a nuclear family

## Table 2: Demographic profile of research participants

| Variable | Number |
|---|---|
| **Gender** | |
| Male | 7 |
| Female | 8 |
| **Age group** | |
| 18-25 | 8 |
| 26-30 | 4 |
| 31-35 | 3 |
| **Highest grade completed** | |
| 9 | 2 |
| 10 | 5 |
| 11 | 1 |
| 12 | 6 |
| Higher | 1 |
| **Family composition** | |
| Nuclear | 5 |
| Single parent | 7 |
| Extended | 2 |
| Living alone | 1 |
| **Total= 15** | |

## Table 2: Work experience of participants in industry

Table 2, on the following page provides information about the different work experience of the participants.




Four of the participants had experience in the construction industry. This can be attributed to the fact that there are housing projects in the communities, which often prioritise employing people from the local communities as labourers.

Three of the participants had worked in the hospitality industry as waiters and laundry assistants. One of the participants had work experience as a taxi marshal[1]. Three participants had no work experience.

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Three of the participants had worked in the hospitality industry as waiters and laundry assistants. One of the participants had work experience as a taxi marshal[2]. Three participants had no work experience.

[1] A taxi marshal assists passengers find taxis to their respective destinations. The marshal is responsible for collecting taxi fare, loading of groceries and luggage onto the taxi. Taxi marshalling is often used as an entryway into becoming taxi drivers.

## 3. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

As explained in Chapter 3, data were thematically analysed. Table-3, on the following page, summarizes the categories and sub-categories of themes emerging based on thematic analysis. The categories and sub-categories of themes were structured around the main aim and secondary objectives of the study.

**Table 3: Framework for Analysis**

| OBJECTIVES | REFINED THEMES | CODING AND CATEGORISING DATA |
|---|---|---|
| **Objective 1: Establish what level of education NEETs achieve and explore reasons why they do not further their education** | 1. Lack of financial support from family | Family experiencing financial problems<br>Desire to ease financial burdens being experienced at home<br>No money for school fees<br>Dependent on social grant |
| | 2. Poor school performance | Dropped out of school<br>Pass marks too low to qualify for tertiary education |
| | 3. Lack of awareness of available skill training programmes for youth | No opportunity to further skills<br>The community is not focusing on meeting the needs of youth |
| **Objective 2:**<br>**2.1. Explore what factors facilitate NEETs' efforts to further their education and acquire employment skills facilitate NEETs'**<br>**2.2. Explore what factors hinder NEETs' efforts to further their education and acquire employment skills** | Objective 2.1 | |
| | 1. Youth Centres can play a meaningful role | Training received to generally empower and have the opportunity to further skills |
| | 2. Commitment to improving level of education and skills deemed important | Determined to improve assets |
| | 3. Location of townships | Affordable transport available if living near CBDs |
| | 3. Work opportunities not requiring post-matric qualifications are appealing | SAPS offers jobs<br>Military<br>Correctional |
| | Objective 2.2. | |
| | 1. Formal English language skills inadequate | |
| | 2. Nepotism is a reality | Hire people they know<br>Waste of time to apply |
| | 3. Financial support from the State not sufficient | Social grants inadequate<br>Only source of income |
| **Objective 3: To investigate what youth NEETs think should be done in the KSD Municipality to meet the socio-economic needs of NEETs, and who should fulfil this responsibility** | 1. Upskilling needed | Skills training necessary<br>Business development training<br>Financial management training for startup business owners |
| | 2. Involvement of private businesses needed | Provide Financial support for start ups<br>Provide mentorship and coaching<br>Create a fair competition environment |
| | 3. Entrepreneurship | Startup businesses<br>Arts and crafts businesses<br>Get assistance in accessing markets to sell products<br>Get training in business and financial management for sustainability of businesses |
| | 4. Access to youth recreational centres can hold many benefits | Access to resources and knowledge<br>Access to amenities for job seeking and applications<br>Allows access to a platform to showcase talent<br>Creates a space where youth can engage on their issues and find solutions |
| | 5. Government must listen instead of imposing on communities | People know what their problems are and the solutions to them<br>Government interventions are often detached from realities on the ground<br>Planning with the people instead of planning for them |
| | 6. Arts and Crafts skills should be promoted | Turning arts and crafts into sustainable businesses<br>Creating markets for artists and craftsman/women to showcase and sell their arts and crafts |
| | 7: Social cohesion, information sharing and mutual aid | Dealing with the NEET problem as a community rather than as individuals<br>Sharing of information about scholarships and job opportunities<br>Helping each other with transport money and applications to both school and work |
| | 8. Learners should attend Technical and Vocational Training Colleges | They give training that makes one able to start and run her/his own business<br>They provide technical skills that are a requirement for employment<br>Matric is not a requirement, thus opening up alternative access to education apart from universities and universities of technology |
| | 9. Learners should attend Technical and Vocational Training Colleges | |

**Objective 1: Establish what level of education NEETs achieve and explore reasons why they do not further their education**

Theme 1: *Lack of financial support from family.*

Most of the participants had completed Grade 12 but had not furthered their education. They had also not sought any skills training. When asked about the reasons for not furthering their education or engaging in training, one point was repeatedly emphasized: lack of financial support. For example:

> There was a problem with money at home. We had a lot of other problems at home, which I would not like to discuss right now. However, I can tell you that I had to drop out, look for work or other ways to make money so I could help out at home. My parents were unemployed. It was very difficult time. I had to help out at home (Lizo, Ngangelizwe Township)
>
> I have not made any efforts to further my education. ……the situation was difficult at home, so I also had to make some difficult decisions about my life. I had to leave school, so I could decrease the burden at home and contribute to the family. For now, I would to help at home. I do, however, consider the possibility of going back to school. (Siphe, Mdlekaza Township)
>
> I had no money for school fees….. I had no support financially (Zola, Mdlekeza Park).
>
> There was no money for me to go to university or college. There are five of us here at home and we depend on a social grant; so, money is always scarce (Sira, Ngangelizwe Township).

The narratives above show that personal financial circumstances as per Mcquaid and Lindsey (2005) do affect employability status. If the families of the participants had been able to support them financially, they would have probably been able to further their education.

Furthermore, although government has introduced 'No-Fee' schools, it still seems that there are still barriers that prevent young people from completing their education. Tele (2016, p.40) argues that "even though the South African government might have introduced no-fee schools as a way to make sure that young people attend school, there are other financial needs that school-going youth have, including money for transport to school, school uniforms and other necessities".

Raftu (2017, p. 4) points out that “school dropout of students is important criteria that shows education quality, and this is regarded as an important predictor of current and future issues of the education system”. Nowadays, societies are confronted with school dropout problems that have personal, social and financial dimensions and this was the case among the participants.

Only one of the participants had a higher education. She, however, was unable to find employment within her field of study. She explained:

> I have an N5 certificate in hospitality and catering and 6 months training in from Russel Road College, which is now known as PE College in Port Elizabeth. I did further my education but I could not go further because I no longer had the money to continue and my family could no longer continue supporting me so I started a sewing and dressmaking business which I now run from my house (Nqoba, Ngangelizawe Township)

Oluwajodu, Blaauw, Greyling and Kleynhans (2015) point out the problematic nature of unemployment. They argued that graduate unemployment is problematic, because it “wastes scarce human capital, which is detrimental to the economy in the long run”. This is the case with unemployed youth as they invest in their education and yet still find themselves without work. The majority of students in South Africa are funded through the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS). NSFAS is the government student bursary and loan scheme that receives its funding budget from, and reports to the Department of Higher Education and Training. NSFAS also raises funds in order to increase the funding pool for student bursaries and loans. The high unemployment of NSFAS funded graduates puts a strain on the national economy as NSFAS is largely government funded

Theme 2: Poor school performance

Quite a few of the participants pointed out that the reason they did not further their education was because they were not performing well. They sounded despondent when expressing:

> …I was also failing a lot in school, so I decided to drop out (Zola, Mdlekeza Park).

> I was failing a lot. I then decided to drop out. I was struggling at school, so I decided to drop out and focus on something else (Sivu, Waterfall Park)

In line with the findings of this study, a study by Branson, Hofmeyer and Lam (2014) revealed that youth tend to drop out of school, not because of living in poverty circumstances, but because they are not coping well at school. The challenge of not coping well at school can be attributed to a myriad of causes. These may include family problems, personal views on education, teaching staff behaviors, a negative school atmosphere, teacher-student relationships and individual reasons (Oluwajodu et al, 2015).

The problem of not qualifying to meet the minimum point requirements to enter university was voiced by some participants. For example:

> What made it difficult for me to continue with school was that I did not meet the requirements to be admitted into a university so as to qualify for the course. I wanted to study. I wanted to do civil engineering, but I did not have level 4 mathematics, so my marks were below the qualifying minimum. (Jola, Mdlekeza Township)

This is expressive of the fact that the bulk of students in South Africa do not perform very well in mathematics and science. Mncwango (2016, p. 6) points to “poor school infrastructure, poorly qualified teachers, low work ethic among teachers, discouragement and dissuasion among learners” as some of the causes for low attainment in mathematics and physical science. Additionally, McDonald (2008) postulates that these factors have long standing consequences for learners as they are unable to access post-school education and struggle to gain access to the labour market. The results from this study are indicative of the difficulties faced by NEETs who have done poorly in mathematics and science in accessing higher education and the job market.

Theme 3: Lack of awareness of skills training programmes

Only four out of the 15 participants had received work skills training. The following snippets from the raw data provide insights into why such a few of the participants engaged in skills training programmes.

> I have never had the opportunity to train for anything because there is no-one offering training. Universities and colleges train their students. I am not a

> student of any; so I am unable to get those employment skills (Siphe, Mdlekeza Park)
>
> There is nothing talking about youth centres and even sports facilities. Even if someone wanted to come train us here… where would she/her do it? There is no care at all for youth. That is why we sit in taverns. That is the only entertainment available" (Odwa, Waterfall Park)
>
> I do not have any training nor skills that I believe can make me employable at the moment. I have not undergone any skills training" (Ntombi, Ngangelizwe Township)

It became obvious to the researcher that participants who had not received any work skills training were not aware of any skills training programmes being run in their areas of residence. They tended to feel dejected; rather despondent about the possibility of securing employment. According to Daniel (2007), the lack of relevant skills causes unemployment and underemployment due to a mismatch between skills acquired (supply) and skills required (demand).

McLaren (2016, p. 54) points out that "cognitive and non-cognitive skills can be tracked during early school years and these skills are key drivers of subsequent economic and social success or failures". This demonstrates that early age is the ideal stage at which interventions need to be planned. Early identification of cognitive and non-cognitive skills of youth at an early would allow planning and implementation of training to be tailored to the abilities of the youth being trained.

**Objective 2:**

**2.1. Explore what factors facilitate NEETs' efforts to further their education and acquire employment skills so as to secure employment**

Theme 1: Youth Centres can play a meaningful facilitation role

Some of the participants in the study who were familiar with youth training centres indicated motivation to make use of the opportunities provided:

> I have undergone training at the Love Life Youth Centre in Ngangelizwe. There I wanted to study basic computer skills, but I was advised that they had reached their maximum intake and that there was thus no space for me at the time I went there. I was advised that I should come back at a later time when there was space. I have not been able to go back there since. I, however, do plan on going back again. I cannot really say I had any challenges because I went to

> the LoveLife Youth Centre because it is nearby. It is only ten minute walk away (Kuhle, Mdlekeza Township)

Youth centres are argued to have a host of benefits. These include basic computer skills, CV development and free WIFI access, entrepreneurship skills, development of like skills and job market preparedness, career guidance and educational career pathing, referral related information including contact details of employment agencies and youth service providers that offer job search assistance, and information on employment, self-employment, education and training, health and wellbeing and government opportunities in support of young people.

Another participant who had received work skills training, highlighted the benefits thereof; both materially and emotionally. She recalled:

> I underwent training in capacity building, which I did with the KSD in 2016 and also training in textiles and manufacturing, which I did this year (2018) through the Eastern Cape Craft Hub also here in KSD, Mthatha. The training has affected my life in a positive way because I am now able to understand different fabrics better. I am also able to work with fabrics and I know which fabric to use and what fabrics to put together to come up with a design that will best fit the needs of the client. I am hopeful that it is going to grow my business and satisfy my customers even more so that they can suggest me to their friends and family (Nqoba, Waterfall Park)

Although this participant was unemployed at the time of being interviewed, she presented as being positive about the future. This indicates that unemployed youth who have undergone education and skills training tend to view themselves as having better prospects of employment, than those who have not.

Although the youth centre is no longer operational due to poor funding, the sentiments by the participants are indicative of the role that youth centres can play in improving skills, training and employment prospects of youth.

Theme 2: Commitment to improving level of education and skills

Some NEETs in the study recognised the importance of furthering their education and develop their skills. They presented as committed to doing so, even though they experienced challenges in this regard. For example, one participant showed determination to upgrade his school marks so that he could qualify to enter university.

> … I am still trying to improve my marks, so I can reach those minimum requirements …. I need to show more seriousness and put more effort in to upgrading my school Grades. I think I will be able to do that because I need to improve my marks for two subjects. The workload is a lot less. I will only be doing Maths and Science only (Odwa, Ngangelizwe Township)

Ryan and Deci (2000) contend that intrinsic motivation and thus higher quality learning, flourishes in contexts that satisfy human needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness. This is particularly true of the participant as he acknowledges that his personal determination and effort are central to him completing his education. Additionally, he is taking personal responsibility for his own academic success. Doing something because it is inherently interesting, enjoyable and rewarding, has been argued to lead to greater chances of success (Urdan & Paris, 2014; Fields & Hoffman, 2016)

Two of the participants had security guard certificates. One pointed out:

> I struggled a lot through my security training. The cost of the training was a lot for me. I struggled to pay for it but because I could not quit, I had to make a way to make things happen. I had money for half of the course. The course is divided into the theory and the practical part. I passed that challenge because one of my friends paid for me because he could see how determined I was to do well in life. I will always be grateful to him. (Sivu, Waterfall Park)

Some participants were making every effort they could to save money so that they could pursue trying to secure employment.

> I also use the money I make from my media work to pay for the cost of looking for work. It is not a guaranteed job kind of thing. We get work only when there are events. It is wise to use the money make to look for better work (Jola, Mdlekeza Township)

Findings suggest that youth NEETs are diverse in nature. The snippets above indicate that although youth are unemployed and also not engaged in education or training, they are making an effort to change their plight there seems to be an ongoing drive in some of them to better their education and training in order to secure good employment.

Theme 3: Location of townships

The location of townships was considered by some of the participants to play a role in determining whether one could secure employment. For example, if one stayed near enough to the central business district (CBD), one did not need money for transport.

> With regards to the financial side; my township is close to town. Transport is not a big issue for a young person like me. I am fresh and young. I can walk to and from town. It is very close. Walking to town and back can help you save about R20 and R20 can go a long way in photocopying, printing and posting applications … although I do admit that it is very little. It may not be enough, but you can do something with it (Small, Ngangelizwe Township)

The close proximity of townships to the Central Business District (CBD) may definitely play an important role in upscaling chances of finding employment. Research has shown that people from afar, especially rural areas move into townships searching for employment and better employment opportunities. Malik (2015) argues that one of the key drivers of rural to urban migration is an attempt by the rural population to claim space and a role in the urban main economy which is often located in urban areas.

Theme 4: Work opportunities not requiring post-matric qualifications are appealing

A few participants indicated that they had applied for positions in the public service for training in the police force, the military and correctional services. The reason for this is that they do not need a post-matric qualification to join those forces and they believe that they qualify for such posts.

> I have submitted applications to join the police force, correctional service and the military. I have also applied for other jobs that I have been seeing on the newspapers, but unfortunately, I have not received a positive response since (Athi, Ngangelizwe Township).

The South African Police service (SAPS), the South African National Defence Force (SANDF), the Department of Correctional Services (DCS) and the Department of Roads and Transport (DRT) offer training followed by employment to youth with a matric, but without a post-school education. They offer opportunities to train as police officers, military officers/soldiers, prison warders and traffic officers, respectively. These opportunities allow those who have not had post-school education to receive training and find permanent employment. Though these opportunities may uplift some young people out of unemployment, they only absorb a small number of youth in

comparison to those who apply. Jackson (2016) points out that the volumes of applicants are numerously higher than those of spaces available. There is also tight competition in that educational attainment in terms of grades in Math and Science subjects get preference. This means that NEETs who have attained low grades still face the risk of having their applications rejected.

Objective 2.2.

Theme 1: Formal English writing skills are inadequate.

A good curriculum vitae (CV) is important because it is the first platform through which a person looking for employment makes a first impression to potential employers. Without a favorable initial impression, a prospective employer is likely to stop considering you as a suitable candidate for the job on offer and move on to other candidates who have provided better CVs. Without CV writing skills the young person's ability to find employment is weakened. The CV is often the first impression a potential employer has of the person looking for employment. For this reason, it is the most crucial steps taken during a job search (Shober, 2013). It thus came as no surprise when some participants pointed out that following basic procedures to secure employment proves challenging, for example, compiling a curriculum vitae and submitting a covering letter to possible employers had its own complications.

> It is only now that I sometimes struggle with putting together a CV and an application letter. My writing and my English are not that good. I can speak English, but I struggle with writing in it formally (Zola, Mdlekeza Township)

The issue has recently been brought to the public's attention by an international news organisation, namely Education Week. Schools are under growing pressure to make sure that students are ready for work or job training, as well as college, when they graduate from high school. But employers say their young hires haven't learned the reading, writing, and verbal-communication skills that are most important to a successful working life." Proper preparation for high school students acquire necessary skills seems to be lacking. (Gerwetz, 2018, para. 1).

Surveys have shown that Black South African parents see English as a means to better their livelihoods and that their families' ability to speak, read and write in English is perceived to open the doors to prosperity (Banda, 2017, citing De Klerk, 2000 & Kamwangamalu, 2004). Consequently, educated black parents take their children to

English-medium private schools (if they can afford the heavy cost) where they are taught to speak, read and write in English.

This preference for English is, however, not matched by proficiency in spoken and written English. Banda (2017, citing De Klerk, 2000 and Kamwangamalu, 2004) pointed out that surveys have shown that Black South African parents see English as a means to better their livelihoods and that their families' proficiency in English is perceived to open the doors to prosperity. It is therefore not surprising that educated Black parents send their children to English-medium private schools where they are taught. However, this preference for English is not matched by proficiency in spoken and written English.

On the contrary, research by Alexander (2005) revealed that even in cases where black learners have attended English-medium schools, some struggle with English academic writing. The findings from the study exposed that these learners suffer inequalities in education, as they do not have easy access to powerful English-based homilies in their social surroundings. It is students from communities and schools that suffer material and resource neglect under apartheid who find themselves in a precarious situation. The communities they live in do not use English as a medium of communication. The only contact they have with the language is at schools that deny the learners the opportunity to learn to speak and understand the English language. Their ability to speak, write and understand the language is limited by factors that they have no control over. To them English is used in a foreign, non-homely environment, hence their problems with distinguishing between conversational and formalized English.

Theme 2: Nepotism is a reality

Participants pointed out that the practice of nepotism also hindered their ability to secure employment. They explained that recruiters hire people they know instead of the best qualified people. While looking for employment is costly, there appears to be very little incentive in spending money looking for employment if the recruiters know who they will appoint. Two participants made this point clear:

> People hire only people they know and that leaves people like me out because I do not have connections. Submitting your CV is sometimes a waste of time because they already know who they want to employ. You submitting your CV is just a formality for them. I doubt if these recruiters even read our CVs. They probably throw them into the dustbin. (Small, Ngangelizwe Township)
>
> I do not know how to deal with the nepotism element. People need just to be more honest in following the correct procedures. I also do not think that stopping nepotism would be an easy task because we do not know the procedures followed by recruiters and we do not have hard evidence that proves that in reality they are hiring people that they know. We see it but we are unable to prove it. (Athi, Ngangelizwe Towship).

Nepotism is one of the most serious forms of conflict of interest on the part of recruiters. According to Baodi (2017, p. 89), Nepotism "applies to a situation in which a person uses his or her public power to obtain a favour – very often a job – for a member of his or her family". Quite often nepotism also applies to people known to the recruiters. These can include friends, family members of friends and people generally known to them (Baodi, 2017).

Nepotism often happens in the private sector, mainly in the context of promoting family members in family-owned corporations, where it is seen as legitimate. The impact of any preference is ultimately felt by those looking for employment, especially in a context where they feel that they are not finding employment chiefly because they are not known by those responsible for recruitment (Klein, 2008).

A study by Tambulu (2018) revealed that nepotism denies the best suitable candidates the opportunity to apply their skills, experience and knowledge, thus rendering governments, private organizations and the corporate space unproductive as those who get employed are employed not on the basis of their knowledge but rather on the basis of them knowing or being known to employers. Several newspapers and other news outlets have reported on numerous 'sex for jobs' and 'sex for good marks' scandals which are indicative of the vulnerabilities experienced by NEETs. The far-reaching implication of this in the South Africa milieu, according to Tambulu (2018, p. 65) is "an incompetent work force, low productivity, discouragement and a loss of qualified, skilled, experienced and abled persons from the labour force".

Theme 3: Financial support from the State not sufficient

South Africa has a Child Support Grant administered by the Department of Social Development (DSD) through the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA). The purpose of this grant is to assist poor, improve standards of living and redistribute wealth to create a more equitable society. Sections 24 through to 29 of the Bill of Rights in the South African Constitution recognize the socio-economic rights of citizens, including the right to social security. Unfortunately, a young mother had to use part of the grant to make an effort to secure employment:

> I have one child, so I would take some of the grant money and use it to cover the costs of looking for work. However, that is a challenge on its own. Children have a lot of needs and the rand money is not enough to cover these. Using the money from the grant to look for work puts a bigger financial strain. You cannot take money for baby food and use it for something else. When a child is hungry, she/he has to eat. You cannot use the grant money for any other use if you have no backup plan (Ntombi, Ngangelizwe Township)

The democratic government of South Africa introduced the Child Support Grant, which has since become the best social protection system in Africa (UNICEF, 2012). At first the grant was targeted at children between 0-16 years but was later extended for greater coverage of children between 0-18 years.

The Child Support Grant is meant to assist poor, improve standards of living and redistribute wealth to create a more equitable society. It is used to look after the needs of the child in terms of items such as food, clothes and other basic necessities. However, abovementioned participant is an example of a participant who is actually pressurised to use some of the Child Support Grant to help her secure employment. Although it may be a positive step that the mother is using part of it to find employment, some may argue that doing so is misuse of the grant. This debate reveals the sensitivity of the issue as young mothers are encouraged to find employment, yet there is no support offered to help them find employment in their local communities. Although people are encouraged to find employment, it often involves sacrifice in meeting other basic needs.

**Objective 3: To investigate what youth NEETs think should be done in the KSD Municipality to meet the socio-economic needs of NEETs and who should fulfil this responsibility**

Theme 1: Upskilling needed

Training to upskill (i.e. teaching youth additional skills and expand their capabilities) was deemed important; not to secure employment, but also for helping those running their own businesses to have prospects of succeeding. There was a strong emphasis on business training, financial management training and training on business sustainability.

> For me, nothing beats training. Training opens your mind to awareness of what is happening and allows you to make the decision of how to respond to the problems around you (Nqoba, Ngangelizwe Township)
>
> Capacity building, financial management, skills training and all other forms of training are necessary (Small, Ngangelizwe Township)

Skills training is very important in facilitating the transition of youth into employment. Vocational training is a crucial element as it can link young people's competences with employers' needs. This will require awareness of what the employers' needs are so that the training could be tailored towards these. While formal education and vocational and educational training offer theoretical and practical work skills, they fall short of soft skills that are prerequisite for success in the workplace. Research by Mabasela (2015) suggests that a large number of both university and technical and vocational training lack communication, writing, group dynamics, conflict resolution and problem-solving skills mandatory to succeed in the workplace. It is with that view both universities and technical and vocational colleges include soft-skills as part of their curriculum. In cases where it appears that youth entering the job market are without those skills, the employer should offer such training.

Theme 2: Involvement of businesses necessary

Many of the participants emphasised that there is a definite need for financial support for youth to be exposed to different ideas of how to achieve their aspirations:

> Business people must also donate money. We buy from their shops. They owe it to us to help us just as much as we help them. We have young people who

> play soccer and other sports on the road. It is unsafe and there is no place put aside for them to play. There should be recreational facilities and even a youth centre where young people could be exposed to opportunities. The business people around here must contribute to that (Kuhle, Mdlekeza Township*)*

There should also be sponsorships for our local people to go attend career expos, workshops and training so they can get exposure to opportunities (Esinako, Ngangelizwe). Some participants suggested that youth starting their own businesses definitely need networking and developmental support:

> Organisations like the Small Enterprises Development Agency (SEDA) must show more visibility and offer support to unemployed youth who are starting business so that they could grow. It is sad seeing a person who was trying coming back to sit in the township because the business has failed due to lack of support knowing very well that there are agencies that have a mandate of offering that support (Nqoba, Ngangelizwe Township).

SEDA provides business development and support services for small enterprises through its national network, in partnership with other role players in the small enterprise support. SEDA also implements programmes targeted at business development in areas prioritised by the government. It is mandated to implement government's small business strategy; design and implement a standard and common national delivery network for small enterprise development and integrate government-funded small enterprise support agencies across all tiers of government.

Van Kesteren (2016, p. 1) identifies four types of interventions for promoting youth employment (on both the supply and demand) that the private sector could be involved in. These are "skills training, entrepreneurship promotion, employment services, and wage and employment subsidies."

Mahambehlala (2015) points out that skills training can benefit from private sector involvement as private training providers improve the efficiency, quality and coverage of job skills trainings, thus ensuring that the skills are matched with the demands of the labour market. According to Van Kesteren (2015, p. 2) "entrepreneurship promotion through entrepreneurship training or microcredit programmes for entrepreneurs can benefit from private sector delivery, which generally leads to better outcomes than delivery by public programmes sides, and in the formal and informal sectors".

Employment services, such as job search assistance, are considered more cost-effective than other interventions. However, the agencies providing these services generally lack resources. The most effective employment services rely on private providers. Therefore, the private sector could play a larger role, especially given that the private sector serves more highly-skilled workers, operates in urban areas and often specializes in specific fields, increasing their potential outreach. However, given that marginalized groups are often low skilled and work in rural areas, the extent to which these groups will profit from private sector engagement is small (Van Kesteren, 2016).

Wage subsidies have the potential to create employment in the short term, but are not inevitably beneficial in the long run. Wage subsidies also have negative effects because “some hiring would have occurred even without the subsidy (deadweight loss), subsidized workers replace unsubsidized ones (displacement effects), and because youth replace older and more skilled workers (substitution effects)” (Van Kesteren, 2016, p. 2). In South Africa, providing a tax reduction to firms instead of subsidies was found to be more promising as a private sector contribution to youth employment.

Theme 3. Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship was proposed as one of the vehicles that should be better supported by the municipality and big business.

> Entrepreneurship is the best option right now if you look carefully at the situation. We cannot sit and wait for appointment letters that are not coming. There are simply no jobs. This does not only apply to youth. It also applies to older people. (Small, Ngangelizwe Township)

Iloanya and Udunze (2014, p 1) point out that “youth empowerment and entrepreneurship are the backbone of economic development all over the world and play important role for employment, income and societal changes, particularly in transition economies”. Researchers Ogundele et al., (2013) also highlight that the role of entrepreneurship in national development cannot be undermined as it is a panacea for youth development and poverty eradication.This applies in South Africa as it is a developing economy with a myriad of challenges in youth employment as exposed by the high rate of youth out of employment, education and training.

Students who start their own start-up businesses and companies have three time the chance of succeeding in business after having participated in an entrepreneurship programme at school. This is evidenced by 'Entrepreneurial Learning Evidence' programme of the European Union (EU). This data is the impetus for the EU's 2020 entrepreneurship plan to advocate for 'entrepreneurship experience' to be compulsory for all youth through the schooling system. This is perhaps a useful model in countries that face high youth unemployment. It would be useful for South Africa to consider 'entrepreneurship experience' as part of the curriculum considering the view that even in cases where youth have undergone some form of education and training, the skills learnt and the education acquired are not in line with the demands of the labour market. More attention needs to be given to entrepreneurship as a 'key competence' to build the entrepreneurial mindset of the next generation.

Entrepreneurship encompasses the ability to have the correct cognitive ad behavioural acumen. It includes the ability to identify opportunities; identify, take and manage risks; creativity; improvisation; solution-based thinking; people management and problem solving (Binks & Vale, 2017, p. 123). These are traits that are not universal to every young person. Having them form part of school curriculum from an early age could perhaps inculcate these traits into youths early in life thus lessening their risk of being unemployed in their early adult life (Chigunta, 2012). This transformation in schooling would of course need teacher training and practical exposure through informal trading and some mentorship from successful business people.

<u>Theme 4: Access to youth recreational centres can hold many benefits.</u>

Many participants emphasised the need for recreational facilities to be opened in their communities, not only for leisure but also a place to interact and exchange ideas.

> We need a community facility that can identify skills, talents and abilities of young people. Right now, there is no coordination. There is no way to identify who among us can do what. That means if there is no knowledge of what young people are doing, then there is no way the municipality can know who to support in what. We need a youth centre to coordinate and facilitate skills training and to support those of us who are skilled already to make their skills financially beneficial (Buhle, Waterfall Park)

> There must also be facilities where young people can train each other and also build networks among each other so that they can support each other and work together more (Lizo, Ngangelizwe Township).

> There are no facilities like grounds, halls and other recreational facilities. There isn't even a youth centre anywhere around here. The youth cannot even meet and discuss a way out of the changes they face. There is also no involvement in sports. Sports can be another career path. Sports also teaches important life skills and keeps both the body and mind busy. We don't get to have are not there. The people at the municipality must just do their jobs (Sivu, Waterfall Park).

Sport has been proven to increase social cohesion and to have positive spin offs for both physical and mental wellbeing (Bogopa, 2015). Holt and Neely (2011) coined the phrase 'Positive Youth Development (PYD) to describe the role that sport plays in youth development. PYD is a strength-based approach to child and adolescent development based on the assumption that all youth have the potential for positive developmental change (Lerner, Brown, & Kier, 2005). Hence, PYD is way to view development rather than a specific construct, and it is used as an 'umbrella term' referring to ways in which children and adolescents may accrue optimal developmental experiences through their involvement in organized activities (Holt & Neely, 2011, p. 14).

Theme 5: Government must listen instead of imposing on communities

It was suggested by the participants that government must listen and be more responsive to the needs of young people. This could be facilitated through surveys or other baseline studies with a view of finding out the skills that are available among youths within communities. Knowing what skills are available could be instrumental in helping the KSD municipality.

> The municipality must find out what people are doing and help them with that, instead of telling young people what to do. (Lizo, Ngangelizwe Township).

Although not stated explicitly, the people-centred approach appears to be perceived as the ideal method to community development as viewed by the participants. The key principle of the people-centred approach is that "development requires that the people themselves - who are meant to be the beneficiaries of development initiatives - be placed in the forefront and fully involved in any projects or programmes which aim to assist them" (Schenck & Louw, 1995, p. 1). The people-centered approach sees the community not only as passive recipients but also as active participants and partners in development. Furthermore, the people-centred approach is best suited in resolving

the challenges faced by NEETs in KSD because it allows a free-flow of information between the municipality as well as NEETs.

The concept of 'people-centredness' is used to give emphasis to the fact that development requires that the people themselves - who are meant to be the beneficiaries of development initiatives - be placed in the forefront and fully involved in any projects programmes which aim to assist them (Schenk & Louw, 1995). Youth development projects fail when an outside agency imposes its views on local communities. This is because in any and every community, the community members are the masters of their own realities. Development concerns people, it effects their way of life and is influenced by their conceptions of the good life, as determined by their cultures" (Hettne, 1982, as cited by Burkey, 2013)

Theme 6: Arts and Crafts skills should be promoted

Some participants pointed out that some people have arts and crafts talents and so even if they did not perform well academically, they still have the ability to make a profit if provided with the necessary guidance.

> There are also people who do creative arts among us, but they are still unable to earn a decent living out of it. These people doing arts are there and they are good at it, but they do not know what to do with it that will make it profitable. The obstacle for those in arts is that everything needs money for it to reach the market. The biggest difficulty is funding and access to the market where those with skills can sell those skills and those with artefacts can sell those artefacts. The municipality can step in and help put the skills available here into use that will allow those who have the skills to earn a living. It is better to invest in something that you know people are interested in (Kuhle, Mdlekeza Township)

The researcher is of the opinion that the CBD of the urban centre of KSD (Mthatha) should have a flea market where artists and craftsmen can sell their arts and craft. There is, however, too little space. As a result, you find people who sell arts and crafts doing so on sidewalks and pavements. This leads to conflicts with the authorities as doing so is a contravention of the town’s by-laws. There are events where hawkers are harassed by authorities and at times have their stock confiscated. This is very detrimental to business.

Theme 6: Agricultural co-operatives

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) defines a co-operative as an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their mutual economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise organised and operated on co-operative principles (DTI, 2016). In recent years, agricultural co-operatives have played an important role in rural development and poverty reduction through the development of agriculture (Bne Saad, 2013). Farmers producing crops and marketed by co-operatives are gainfully employed because they can account for their labour input by the revenue they earn during the marketing seasons. Agricultural co-operatives are critical to the general rural development because they provide employment of accountants, book-keepers, managers, as part of direct employment.

As far as market development is concerned, it has been evident that agricultural co-operatives have been responsible for introducing the exchange economy in remote rural areas in Africa (Gibson, 2016). As far as market development is concerned, it has been evident that agricultural co-operatives have been responsible for introducing the exchange economy in low income areas in Africa (Gibson, 2016). Moreover, in order to enhance their economic market power, farmer often form co-operatives. Co-operatives also play an important role in the uniform preparation of a commodity for a buyer.

The participants spoke very positively about agricultural co-operatives; they described them as offering good employment opportunities for NEETs. Apart from offering economic spinoffs, they pointed out that agricultural co-operatives also provide household food security.

> I believe that agriculture and farming can help everybody in several ways. With farming you do not only work for the sake of working. You also produce the food that you need for your daily wellbeing. If you farm, it means there is a lesser need for money because you will be producing the food for yourself (Jola, Mdlekeza Park)

> These days there are no jobs. Government has no work opportunities for young people. It is even worse for those who dropped out of school without completing their Grade 12. I think projects can help them. Farming projects can help them earn a living, we have some vacant land there next to the Mthatha River. They can use that. Farming does not need a lot experience. It doesn't need any high-

> level education or skills. Anyone can plant vegetables and even start her/his own vegetable garden in the yard. What is needed more in farming is not a high-level university degree or Grade 12. It is the will and the physical strength to work the land (Buhle, Waterfall Park)
>
> If farming is done on a large scale, it creates jobs both for highly educated and low educated people. With farming everyone benefits. When people farm, they can produce food for themselves and also sell the left-over, so it can fund their other needs (Esinako, Ngangelizwe Township*)*

Other challenges identified were related to poor sponsorships for farming tools, seeds and other resources needed to farm successfully.

> Farming is good, but it also needs money for tools, and shears. You cannot have a farming cooperative and expect people working in it to use their hands. Part of the reason why the idea of cooperatives sometimes fails is because people do not have the necessities to farm successfully (Sira, Ngangelizwe Township).

From a different perspective, one of the participants emphasised that farming is not the answer for all NEETs; that some NEETs do not view farming co-operatives as a meaningful way of addressing the need for job satisfaction.

> It is always suggested that we start co-ops, but for some of us it is not easy. They should also sponsor individuals. It is not easy to run a co-op if you are in the creative arts. It just doesn't work out because everyone has her/his aspirations, which are not necessarily in sync with those of others (Athi, Ngangelizwe Township).

<u>Theme 7: Youth must play an active role in addressing the socio-economic challenges they face.</u>

Quite a few of the participants emphasised that NEETs need to acknowledge the challenges they face and should play an active role in addressing the challenges they face:

> People must learn to accept change. One of the things that block development is refusal to embrace change. You cannot help people who do not know and accept that they have problems. Our youth must be active in defining and defeating the challenges they face (Siphe, Mdlekeza Township)
>
> There is nothing the community can do for me. I do not even expect them to do anything for me. It is up to me to look for vacancies and apply for them. It is also up to me to apply to universities and colleges to study. I do not think anything could

be done in the community. Only I can make the steps necessary to change my life (Odwa, Waterfall Park).

Maybe others could feel that a community level approach would assist, but for me- only I can change my own life. Even with financial aid … it is up to the individual to apply, so for me, there is really nothing that can be achieved through a community approach which cannot be achieved by an individual approach (Esinako, Mdlekeza Township

Theme 8: Social cohesion, information sharing and mutual aid

It was suggested by quite a few participants was that if the community comes together and shares information and resources, the needs of NEETs can be met better:

> We need to help each other. We have people who are working, educated and are enjoying meaningful lives. If we could help each other things could get better. If those who are educated and working could be a ladder for those who are not, things could change, and this would be a better place. For example, if you can see that your neighbour is struggling, or you hear that they have passed and qualified for university or college, and they need registration money or funding, you can help them get access to bursaries or even pay for them if you can (Jola, Mdlekeza Township)
>
> Maybe the community would be better suited for those who are without parents. Orphans have no-one, so they are children of the community. The community can help them (Kuhle, Mdlekeza Township).

Sharing of information can have several benefits for young people looking for employment. These can range from exchanging business ideas, better ways of job searching, knowledge on new sources of information, and general ways of meeting their socio-economic needs in light of their unemployment.

According to Weyers (2011), in the asset-based community development (ABCD) approach (which is strongly influenced by the strengths perspective) it is believed that local individual and collective assets should be mobilised as the primary building blocks in a community driven development effort. It uses a participatory approach and the principles of empowerment and ownership of the development process to exploit the talents and skills of local residents, the power of local associations and the supportive functions of local institutions to enhance community economic development and strengthen civil society.

Theme 9: Learners should attend Technical and Vocational Training Colleges

Although there are technical and vocational training colleges (TVET) available in and around the KSD Municipality. However, a participant pointed that these institutions are not promoted for youth.

> We have a lot of schools and (TVET) colleges here in Mthatha and youth from Waterfall, Ngangelizwe and Mdlekeza could be skilled there, but I do not think our community prepare learners well enough. We need to improve the way in which schools work here so that they are able to advise learners about colleges (Sira, Ngangelizwe Township).

It is quite evident that the South African TVET College landscape is not the most popular educational set ups within the South African working class and the poor. The people of South Africa are still of the view that university education is the only option for human and economic development. TVET colleges train artisans who are needed by the South African economy considering the advances in technology. Additionally, the high unemployment of university graduates may be an indication that in reality, the university route is not necessarily the way to go

## 4. CONCLUSION

This chapter presented several refined themes relevant to each of the three objectives of the study. Under each of these themes, relevant issues were highlighted. In the following chapter, conclusions drawn, and recommendations based on research findings are covered.

# CHAPTER FIVE

# SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMENDATIONS

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter highlights the key findings of the study. In doing so, McQuaid and Lindsey's (2005) threefold employability model will be applied. This will be followed by an enunciation of the key recommendations of the study.

## 2. SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

In Table 4 on the following page the key findings of the study are presented by summarised by using three columns based on the employability model; namely individual factors, personal circumstances and external factors.

Table 4- Application of McQuaid and Lindsey's integrated model of employability in relation to the challenges and coping mechanisms of NEETs in KSD

| INDIVIDUAL FACTORS | PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES | EXTERNAL FACTORS |
|---|---|---|
| **Employability, skills and attributes**<br>▪ Low skilled, have the ability to work (healthy, willing and able)<br>▪ Have some work experience in low skill fields such as construction, retail, taxi industry, and security.<br>▪ Have no formal qualifications but have received informal job skills training and experiential learning<br><br>**Demographic characteristics**<br>Gender is both male and female, between ages 18-34<br><br>**Health and wellbeing**<br>Good<br><br>**Job Seeking**<br>▪ Actively job seeking but requiring training and CV writing skills.<br>▪ Lack of money to pay for job searching costs due to high data costs and lack of access to information about available jobs<br><br>**Adaptability and Mobility**<br>▪ Willingness to learn<br>▪ Good attitude towards looking for employment<br>▪ Lack of knowledge blocking access to available resources | **Household circumstances**<br>▪ Poverty , not enough money to pay for education and training contributed to the participants becoming NEETs.<br>▪ Financial commitments other than education led to NEETs status<br><br>**Work Culture**<br>▪ Work is desired and its significance is recognized<br>▪ Work is seen as having personal significance beyond meeting social and economic needs<br><br>**Access to Resources**<br>▪ There is good access to transport and all three townships are close to town<br>▪ Lack of access to information, internet and other sources of job listings<br>▪ Lack of access to capital to start own business<br>▪ Lack of knowledge on entrepreneurship and self-employment | **Demand Factors**<br>▪ Job scarcity<br>▪ Skills not in demand<br>▪ Jobs require qualifications from universities and TVET colleges<br><br>**Enabling Supporting Factors**<br>▪ Enabling Youth employment policy and legislation<br><br>**Recruitment factors**<br>▪ Unfair recruitment procedures (nepotism)<br>▪ No employment opportunities<br>▪ No job-fit skills<br>▪ No formal certification of skills possessed |

### 2.1. Individual Factors

The larger proportion of the participants viewed themselves as having the skills prerequisite for employment, even though some of these skills were developed in an informal manner. This is because they learnt from experience and did not have certificates to prove that they can do the work. Because they had some work experience; the participants believed that they do possess skills for employment. Work experience that they have is in retail, construction, hospitality, the taxi industry and one has never done any work to earn an income. There also appeared to be no appropriate training on job searching skills. It was highlighted that some of the participants were unable to write a good CV and a cover letter. This means that they cannot look for work if they do not have a proper CV. There is also the challenge of not having access to information about both funding options to further education. Though the government has introduced no fee schools there appears to still be other needs that prevent youth from succeeding in school. There needs to be money for transport, school uniform and other essentials for which there is no money in the households of some of the participants. A lack of this money leads to some youths dropping out of school.

### 2.2. Personal Circumstances

The participants referred to lack of money/ financial support as the main reason why they were unable to complete their secondary and tertiary education. This was mainly because the family had other younger siblings to take to school and there wasn't enough money to keep the participants in school. In some cases, there was not enough money to go around. Money had to be used for other necessities like food, clothing and other household necessities. The participants further revealed that they made a personal choice to drop out of school. This was because they were failing and thus became demotivated to continue with school. They opted to rather stay at home and try looking for jobs because their school performance was dismal, some of the participants had personal circumstance that were beyond their control that ultimately led them to dropping out of school. According to Mcquaid and Lindsey's (2005) integrated model of employability, personal circumstances such as household financial struggles, lack of access to resources and lack of family support are some of

the factors that affect (un)employability. The participants who did not finish school would have had a different fate if they had had the financial and family support to complete their studies and have better prospects of employment. One participant was able to finish a security guard course because of help and financial support from a close friend of his. Although he did not have the money himself- he was still able to finish his course. That is testimony of the importance of support and access to support from loved ones.

### 2.3 External Factors

Apart from the personal and individual factors, there are also external factors that can affect NEETs employability. These are factors that are outside of the control of persons looking for employment. The scarcity of jobs is a factor causing unemployment of NEETS. Though NEETs may be actively looking for employment, the scarcity of jobs is outside of their control. Additionally, there is a mismatch between the skills possessed and the demands of the labour market. Although the participants believe that they have work skills, the reality is that there is no demand for those skills in the labour market.

Unfair recruitment processes were also identified as a factor in the condition of NEETs. The participants alluded to nepotism as one of the reasons why they are struggling to find employment. Another external factor identified in the study was lack of information: lack of information about alternative pathways such as self-employment, entrepreneurship and lack of information regarding funding opportunities made available through government, business and other private funders.

## 3. CONCLUSION

Youth NEETs in KSD Municipality are not a homogenous group. There are varying reasons for both their low work skills and educational attainment. Youth NEETs in South Africa have so much potential for social development but require intensive intervention strategies by the State and private business alike to ensure that they can become employable. Many of these youth have faced many challenges in life and these past experiences have been exacerbated by unemployability even though they are commitment to becoming employable. They need to become aware of existing sources in their community in order to develop their skills and become self-reliant.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presents recommendations by the researcher based on the key findings. The focus of the recommendations is on providing suggestions on what could be done to prevent the barriers that block NEET youth in KSD from completing their secondary and higher education. The recommendations also focus on the role that could be played by NEETs themselves, their families, the community, local government/the KSD Municipality, local agencies, businesses and potential employers to help meet the social and economic needs of youth who are not in employment, education or training in the King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality:

- *Policies, plans and programmes must therefore be tailored in cognizance of this reality.*
- *The KSD must offer support to young entrepreneurs*. This can be in the form of business and financial management workshops and seminars. This will allow those with talents and abilities in arts and crafts to be able to make a living out of their talents and to manage money better and in a sustainable way.
- *The KSD municipality must make the deliberate effort to coordinate career guidance expos for learners in primary and secondary schools*. For this purpose, the municipality could collaborate with local universities and TVET colleges, National Youth Development Agency (NYDA). Non-government organizations and other stakeholders with the necessary personnel to conduct those workshops and expos.

- *TVET colleges in KSD municipality should start a system where information about what they offer is available to everyone in the communities that they serve.*
- Libraries, youth centers and other recreational and developmental facilities bring knowledge closer to young people. *The KSD municipality must invest more in those and bring them closer to local communities instead if town so that the cost of searching for employment could be significantly decreased.*
- *Training in CV cover letter writing and interview skills should be offered through community workshops*. This will assist youth in being able to market themselves to the job market
- *There is a need to carry out further research on a larger scale*. This would provide a broader grasp on the issues relating to the coping mechanisms of youth NEETs in in the KSD Municipality.

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## APPENDIX 1: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET




**Hello,**

My name is Gcina Mtengwane. I am doing research that is titled: NEETs in the King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality, Eastern Cape: perspectives of youth regarding challenges experienced and the way forward. I want to learn how young persons in King Sabata Dalindyebo who are not in employment, education or training (usually referred to as NEETs) cope with the financial and life-style challenges they face. The study is done in partial fulfilment of my Masters degree in the field of Social Development at the University of the Witwatersrand. It is envisaged that the research will contribute to knowledge about youth unemployment.

I am inviting you to take part in the study. If you agree to participate in the research, your participation will be entirely voluntary with freedom to withdraw at any time without any consequences. There are no personal benefits to participating in the research. If you agree to participate, I will arrange to interview you at a time and place convenient for you. The interview will take approximately one hour to complete.

You may withdraw from the research at any time and you may refuse to answer questions you are not comfortable with answering. Furthermore, if you agree to participate I will ask your permission to record the interview and no one other than myself and the supervisor will have access to the recordings.

Personal information will be treated in the strictest confidence and will only be available to myself- the researcher and my Supervisor. Please be assured that your name and personal details will be kept confidential and no identifying information will be included in the final research report. The results of the research may also be used for academic purposes (including books, journal and conference proceedings) and a summary of findings will be made available to the participant on request. All data collected in the course of the study will be securely retained for two (2) years, if a publication arises from the study and six (6) years, if there is no publication. Thereafter it will be destroyed accordingly.

This study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical) of the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg ("Committee"). The main purpose of this Committee is to safeguard the rights and dignity of all human subjects who agree to participate in a research project and the integrity of the research. Please feel free to ask any questions regarding the study. I shall answer them to the best of my ability. I may be contacted at the following number. Alternatively, you can email me at 1370158@students.wits.ac.za. You can also make contact with my research supervisor, Dr. Priscilla Gerrand at Priscilla.Gerrand@wits.ac.za. Should you wish to receive a summary of the results of the study a summary will be made available on request. Thank you for taking the time to consider participating in the research study.

Thank you for reading this Participant Information Sheet.

Date: June, 2018

## APPENDIX 2: CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN A RESEARCH STUDY




**TITLE OF STUDY: NEETs in the King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality, Eastern Cape: perspectives of youth regarding challenges experienced and the way forward**

I hereby consent to participate in the research study. The purpose and procedure of the research study have been explained to me and I have understood these.

I understand that:

- My participation in this research study is voluntary and I may withdraw from the research study at any time without any consequences or disadvantages in any way,
- I may choose not to answer any specific questions asked if I do not wish to do so.
- My identity will be kept strictly confidential, and any information that may identify me, will be removed from the interview transcript.
- A copy of my interview transcripts without any identifying information will be stored permanently in a locked cupboard for two years if there are any publications in accredited journals or for six years if there are no publications;
- My responses will be used in the write up of a research and may also be presented in conferences, book chapters, journal articles or books, but I will remain anonymous.
- I will not receive any direct benefit from participating in this study.

Name of Participant: ……

Date: ……

Signature: ……

## APPENDIX 3: CONSENT FORM FOR AUDIO-RECORDING OF INTERVIEW




**TITLE OF STUDY: NEETs in the King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality, Eastern Cape: perspectives of youth regarding challenges experienced and the way forward**

I hereby consent to the audio-recording of the interview.

I understand that:

- The recording will be stored in a secure location (a password-protected computer) with restricted access of the researcher and the research supervisor,
- The recording will be transcribed and any information that could identify me will be removed,
- When the research study has been completed, the audio-recording of the interview will be kept for two years following and publications or for six years in no publications arise from the study,

Name of Participant: _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

Signature or _____

## APPENDIX 4: INTERVIEW GUIDELINE




**<u>Title of Study:</u> NEETs in the King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality, Eastern Cape: perspectives of youth regarding challenges experienced and the way forward**

- What is your highest level of education and training?
- Why did you not further your education or training?
- Please tell me about any work skills training you have undergone and how this has affected your life.
- If you did not receive any work skills training, please explain why this was so. How has not receiving skills training impacted on your life?
- Please share with me any efforts you have made to further your education and/or work skills? What challenges have you experienced regarding the efforts you have made?
- What work experience do you have?
- What efforts have you made to find employment in light of the fact that you are now unemployed?
- What are the challenges and obstacles you have you faced when trying to find employment?
- What efforts have you made to avoid or address these challenges and obstacles of trying to find employment?
- Have you done any work to earn and income? If so, what sort of work did you do and how effective are they in helping you satisfy your physical needs and emotional well-being?
- What do you think can be done in your community to help you meet your financial needs of NEETs?
- What opportunities are there in the community to satisfactorily address the needs NEETs?