

Examining Career Development Approaches to Address Youth Unemployment in Ixopo, KZN: Community-Informed Perspectives.

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DECLARATION

I, Lindokuhle Simphiwe Dlamini declare that **Examining Career Development Approaches to Address Youth Unemployment in Ixopo, KZN: Community-Informed Perspectives** is my work, and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged employing complete references.

Signature Date: Lindokuhle Simphiwe Dlamini Date: 6 December 2019

ABSTRACT

Youth unemployment in South Africa has significantly increased in the last few years. While youth unemployment rates have increased across all racial groups and geographical areas in the country, the black youth from rural areas seem to be carrying more burden of unemployment. Ixopo town in Kwa Zulu Natal province, which has a predominantly rural African population was selected for this study. The rural village was chosen because, like many rural areas in South Africa, it is facing enormous challenges of youth unemployment. The study aimed to examine the career development approaches and practices used to address youth unemployment in rural areas.

A qualitative study was undertaken at the Ixopo community to examine the career development approaches and practices used. In collecting the data, semi-structured interviews, a focus group discussion and documentary sources used. A sample population of twenty-three (23) participated in the study through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. Semi-structured interviews administered to 4 local teachers, 2 community members, 2 community development workers, 1 municipal official and 4 university students who originate from the community. A focus group discussion was held with ten (10) Grade 12 learners from the local high school — thematic data analysis employed to analyse the collected data.

The findings show that the rate of youth unemployment is very high in rural areas. It is also evident that there is an increasing rate of unemployed youth which is not in education, employment or training (NEETs). Meanwhile, the rising number of young unemployed graduates is also becoming a massive concern to the rural communities and the country. The research concluded that some of the major causes for the high rural youth unemployment include: Low levels of education due to early exit from the schooling system; high levels of poverty resulting to high rates of school dropouts; unavailability of industries to employ in the rural communities; as well as the lack of adequate career development and guidance to prepare youth for future careers and employment. The study also found that learners in rural areas lack career ambition and inspiration because they often struggle to balance their severe socio-economic condition and studies.

In terms of career development approaches and practices, it emerged that the schooling system is weak in the delivery of career development and guidance.

The study revealed that teachers not equipped to deliver career guidance to learners; they lack sufficient training on career guidance and counselling, and there is a lack of resources and relevant updated information for them to the effective delivery of career guidance in the rural schools. The study also shows that the schools and the local municipalities are making an effort to provide career guidance services through annual career exhibitions, roadshows and other interventions. However, these do not seem to achieve the desired outcome because the responses often compete with socio-economic challenges like poverty, which distract the youth from focusing on their education and careers. Hence, the study also scrutinized the socio-economic, environmental and individual factors that affect the delivery of career development and guidance in rural areas.

The study shows that the socio-environmental and individual factors have massive influence in the delivery of career development and future employability of rural youth. These factors include the influence of family; poverty; peers; career gender and stereotypes; lack of role models, lack of self -confidence and lack of access to information, communication and technology (ICT), among others. The effect of these influences is that they either limit or increase future employment prospects for rural youth. The recommendation from the study that, to alleviate and address rural youth unemployment, career development approaches for youth in rural communities should be tailor-made to accommodate their unique, disadvantaged socio-economic situations.

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CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Youth unemployment has been declared a global problem by the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The international organisation warns that if this global crisis is overlooked and left unattended, it will have significant implications for future economic growth, development and instability (International Labour Organization, 2015). Globally, about 61 million young people aged between 15 – 24 years old are either not in education, employment or training. Also, an estimated 75 million of these young people are trained but have no job. About 90% of these unemployed youth live in developing countries (International Labour Organization, 2015).

South Africa is not immune to this crisis, as the country has been experiencing an increasing rate of youth unemployment since the advent of democracy in 1994 (The Presidency, 2015). In South Africa, young people constitute 41.2% (20.5 million) of the total population, and about 4 million of this population is unemployed (Stats South Africa, 2017). The youth in rural communities are most affected by the unemployment crisis, and this situation has a substantial negative impact on the socio-economic development of the communities and the country in general (Stats South Africa, 2017).

Inadequate or absence of career guidance is cited as a significant contributor to youth unemployment in South Africa (Graham & Mlatsheni, 2015). Career guidance refers to the provision of sufficient support and information, to enable individuals to select a career path leading to their future occupations (Watts, 2009; Gibson & Mitchell, 1999). Career guidance is a critical process in assisting young people in planning for their occupational future; it also motivates them to look forward to a brighter future (Ali & Graham, 1996).

Hence, the absence of career guidance may result in un-informed career choices and qualifications that are irrelevant in the labour market, leading to unemployment (Mokgohloa, 2006). Also, the absence of career guidance contributes in the increase of school dropouts because it limits the youth's motivation to pursue post-secondary education, resulting to early exit from school, which further reduces their chances for employment (Mokgohloa, 2006).

The historical apartheid era in South Africa partly contributed to the provision of inadequate career guidance. This is because, during the apartheid government, career guidance was a privilege of the minority white South Africans (Stead and Watson, 2006). The apartheid policies intended to limit access to specific careers according to race, whereby the black population was channelled to low-income professions and occupations (Du Toit & Van Zyl, 2012; Stead & Watson, 2006). Moreover, the rural communities were intentionally excluded and not provided with quality educational facilities, including career guidance (Flederman, 2011).

However, post-democracy the South African government established legislation, policies, and strategies to redress the issues of the past by enabling the black youth to receive quality education and actively participate in the mainstream economy (The Presidency, 2015). Through the National Youth Policy 2015- 2020, the government aims to provide the necessary support to develop all youth by addressing their needs, including educational and employment provisions to increase their employment opportunities (The Presidency, 2015). Despite the efforts by the government, the delivery of career guidance in the rural areas is still a challenge (Singh, 2016). Many schools in the rural and disadvantaged areas still have limited or no access to educational support facilities and resources, resulting to the inadequate provision of career development (Flederman, 2011).

Youth unemployment in South Africa seems to have more impact on the rural youth. Poverty and other socio economic challenges faced by rural youth, and the lack of employment opportunities in rural areas puts them in a worse situation than their counterparts in urban areas (Presidency, 2015). This situation is also creating severe

social problems such as increased risky behaviours including promiscuity, drug abuse and crime among the youth (Freeman, 1999).

The study seeks to examine the career development approaches that are used in rural areas to address youth unemployment. In reviewing these approaches, the research focuses on the community perspectives to be able to understand the socio-economic dynamics that impact on the delivery of career development and employability of rural youth. The focus on community perspectives is based on the understanding that young people are the products of their communities. They exist within a social, environmental system, which has a significant influence on their life choices, career decisions and prospects for future employability (McMahon & Watson, 2008; Brennan & Barnett, 2009).

1.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH SITE

Ixopo town in KwaZulu-Natal

Ixopo is a small town situated in the midlands of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. The town is under the Ubuhlebezwe Local Municipality, which is located within the Harry Gwala District. The main city of Ixopo is positioned approximately 85km south-east of Pietermaritzburg, the administrative capital of KwaZulu-Natal (Ubuhlebezwe Local Municipality, 2019). The coordinates for the city are 30°09'26"S 30°03'53"E, and it covers an area of approximately 1604 km². The city is characterised by large agricultural plantations, natural vegetation and traditional authority land (Ubuhlebezwe Local Municipality, 2019). Figure 1 below shows that Ixopo is one of the major towns within the Harry Gwala District Municipality. Umzimkhulu town, also shown in Figure 1, is the only other town in the district, but it is a smaller town than Ixopo.

Ixopo has a population of about 122 860 people who reside in rural villages scattered throughout the municipal area. Demographically, there is a domination of young society and a higher representation of females compared to males, which indicates male absenteeism (Ubuhlebezwe Local Municipality, 2019). Females account for 53.1% of the total population and males are 46.9% of the total population. The majority of the population is dominated by Black Africans, with a total population of 97.9% of the total

population (Ubuhlebezwe Local Municipality, 2019). Research indicates that the area has high levels of poverty and that unemployment is one major cause of poverty. This may be a result of the high levels of illiteracy, in which 10.3% of the population has no schooling in any form, while 41.35% has some primary education and only 0.74% have a tertiary education (Ubuhlebezwe Municipality, 2017).

Ixopo falls under the rural area category. Rural areas in South Africa have common characteristics which include poverty, inadequate essential services like water, electricity, educational facilities and employment opportunities (Molefe, 1996). The most prominent employment sector in the area is mainly agriculture, including dairy cattle, poultry, sugar-cane, citrus, fruits, and forestry, followed by community services, trade and domestic employment (Ubuhlebezwe Municipality, 2017). About 9% of the working population is in construction and small scale manufacturing, which is dominated by males. Given the lack of an established economic base, there are high levels of unemployment among the economically active members of the community (ages between 16 -60 years). Only 13,72% of the population is employed, and 83,47% classified as unemployed (Ubuhlebezwe Municipality,2017).

According to the Harry Gwala Youth Development and Empowerment Plan 2015 report, youth unemployment is a severe challenge in the area. The high illiteracy rates and insufficient training makes it difficult to find suitable employment for the local youth and their unemployment situation aggravates the poverty cycle (Harry Gwala District Municipality, 2015). Other reported youth challenges in the area include juvenile delinquencies, high school dropouts, alcohol and substance abuse, and lack of participation in development by the youth (Harry Gwala Municipality, 2015).



Figure 1. Harry Gwala Municipality. Retrieved from <http://www.harrygwalamunicipality.gov.za>

1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM

South Africa is faced with a massive crisis of youth unemployment, resulting in the triple challenge of unemployment, poverty and inequality (Department of Labour, 2014). The black rural communities are mostly affected by youth unemployment due to historical disparities as a result of apartheid. The impact of unemployment for rural youth is high, given the severe living conditions and socio-economic difficulties experienced in their communities (Presidency, 2015). Unemployment also leaves the youth in a vicious cycle of poverty that daily erodes their self-confidence and hope for a bright future (Ajufo, 2013). Moreover, the situation creates severe social problems such as increased risky behaviours including promiscuity, drug abuse and crime among the youth (Freeman, 1999).

Inadequate and absence of career guidance is cited as one of the significant causes for rural youth unemployment. Yet, career guidance is critical in assisting the youth in making the right career choices for future occupations and employment (Ajufo, 2013; Mahlangu, 2011). The importance of career guidance is that it promotes lifelong goals, counteracts school dropouts and provides motivation and hope for success. These provisions are also

essential for rural youth to alleviate their complicated socio-economic difficulties (Mahlomaholo, 2012; Buthelezi, Alexander, & Seabi, 2009). Hence, the study seeks to examine the career guidance approaches and practices that are used in the rural area of Ixopo, KwaZulu Natal to address rural youth unemployment.

1.4 AIM OF RESEARCH

The study aims to identify and examine career guidance approaches and practices used to address youth unemployment in rural communities.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTION

What are the career guidance approaches and practices used to prepare the rural youth for post-secondary education and future employment?

1.5.1 Sub-questions

- What is the state of youth unemployment in rural areas?
- Which career guidance approaches and practices that are used to prepare the youth for future careers and employment in rural areas?
- Does the socio-economic environment of the rural youth have influence or effect in the delivery of career guidance and youth unemployment?
- What are the possible solutions to improve career guidance and alleviate youth unemployment in rural areas?

1.5.2 Research Objectives

The objectives of the study are:

- To determine the magnitude of youth unemployment in rural areas.
- To identify the career guidance approaches and practices used to prepare the rural youth for future careers and employment.
- To determine if the socio-economic environment has any influence in the delivery of career guidance and youth unemployment.

- To identify possible solutions for improving career guidance to alleviate youth unemployment in rural areas.

1.6 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Numerous factors motivated the current study. The researcher has spent many years at two different universities as a student, where she interacted with students from diverse backgrounds and realised the challenge faced by students in choosing the right careers. The researcher also realised that this confused situation is dominant with students from rural and disadvantaged communities. This condition triggered the interest of the researcher to investigate whether young people from disadvantaged areas receive career guidance or not? And if there is a gap in this area, is it contributing to the high youth unemployment?

Also, having practised as a tutor at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, the researcher also realised that some students that are enrolled at the university are uncertain about their career choices and that those have graduated are finding it difficult to secure employment. The confusion experienced by these learners and the increasing youth unemployment in South Africa prompted the researcher to pursue this study.

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study will provide an understanding of career development practices, issues, and social factors to address youth unemployment in rural communities. The study will also contribute to the community development discipline by providing insights on various youth challenges and opportunities, thereby contributing to the alleviation of youth unemployment.

The literature also suggests that there is limited research in South Africa on career development, hence the reliance on international research (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2014). Therefore, the study aims to provide additional data to assist scholars and researchers in understanding the role and application of career guidance within the context of rural communities, to develop appropriate creative methods

and approaches to suit the South African context, and in particular, in the rural environment.

1.8 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study focuses on the career guidance approaches and practices that are used to prepare rural youth for post-secondary education to address youth unemployment. However, the study is limited to the geographical community of Ixopo which covers an estimated population of about 122 860 people residing in this rural town. Even though the study focusses on the youth, the parameters of the study extended to other sectors, including teachers, municipal officers and community members as they equally relate to the objectives of the study.

The limitations in the case study chosen is that, only the rural town of Ixopo has been selected within the entire Harry District Municipality. The other surrounding areas were excluded due to time and resource constraints. Also, like many qualitative case studies, the limitations of the study relate to the generalisation of the findings given that case studies involve the behaviour of an individual or community hence it is difficult to generalise findings. Findings of this nature may only advise on what may be found in similar communities, and additional research may be needed to verify the findings (Simon & Goes, 2013)

1.9 RESEARCH PARADIGM

The study is informed by the transformative paradigm, which is concerned with social justice to address political, social, and economic issues (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). This paradigm analyses the experiences of marginalised communities and the power differentials that have led to the marginalization, and then link the research findings with possible mitigation actions (Mertens, 2009). The transformative paradigm is highly recommended for those who conduct research in culturally diverse and marginalised communities because it questions the power relations and why other social groups have more power and opportunities than others (Mertens, 2009).

The paradigm argues that, should research fail to address a social problem effectively, it perpetuates conditions that violate human rights and hinders progress towards social justice (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The paradigm also argues that funded research addressing social issues, while the social problem continues to persist, presents serious ethical implications (Mertens, 2009). Hence, researchers are advised to strengthen the moral character of social research, by conducting research that is based on philosophical positions aiming to bring about positive change and liberation (Mertens, 2009).

This study adopted the transformative paradigm to address the social problem of youth unemployment in marginalised societies like rural areas. By doing so, the study seeks to redress social justice through historical knowledge – as prescribed by the paradigm; and by applying action-research to bring about positive change and liberation to the affected communities and the youth (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Mertens, 2009). Chapter 3 of the study elaborates further on the application of the paradigm in the research process.

1.10 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a plan of how a researcher intends to conduct the study being undertaken (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). It follows a set of guidelines to be able to address the research problem in the most effective system (Mouton, 1996). The social sciences are dominated by two broad research design approaches, the quantitative and qualitative approaches.

The qualitative approach is described as an effective method to assess an insider's perspective on a particular social phenomenon, because it can examine the feelings, opinions and attitude, from an insider who has experienced or observed a specific social phenomenon (Rubin & Rubin, 1995; Babbie & Mouton 2001). On the other hand, the quantitative approach described as a method that is obsessed with numbers and the 'yes or no' questions on a particular theme (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). This method intends to establish, confirm, validate and develop generalisations for specific findings (Leedy, 1980). It is mainly used to make generalised assumptions from results collected, and the

findings are usually applicable to a general population (Leedy, 1980; Babbie and Mouton, 2001)

While the quantitative method has its merits in social research, this study followed the qualitative design because it allows the researcher to get elaborate understanding and experience on the way the participants feel or live in their natural setting (Creswell, 2009). Given that the study is aimed at addressing issues at the community level, the qualitative approach was regarded as appropriate because it is based on human behaviour. The procedure will enable the researcher to understand a range of social human behaviour and perceptions of specific issues, which can be either political, social or individual based (Creswell, 2009)

1.11 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The data collection methods below were used to identify and examine the career development approaches and practices in the community under investigation. These include semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and documentary sources.

1.11.1 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Semi-structured interviews serve as interview guidelines that guide the researcher in leading the interview process through relevant questions (Flick, 1998). These questions seek to achieve the objectives of the study. The semi-structured interviews are a useful qualitative data gathering technique, designed to obtain information about peoples' views, opinions, ideas, and experiences (Patton, 1990). The chosen method allows the researcher to gather greater insight and knowledge on the topic and enables the participants to respond in their own words (Du Plooy, 1995). The method is also able to gather broad information on peoples' beliefs, feelings, motives, and present and past behaviours (Leedy & Ormorod, 2005). These interviews uniquely structured for the learners, youth, teachers, community members and municipal officials.

1.11.2 Focus Groups

Focus group discussions administered to collect data for the research study. These are widely used in qualitative research as a bridging strategy between scientific research and local knowledge (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995). A focus group is a small but demographically diverse group of people whose reactions are studied through open discussions to determine results expected from a larger population (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995). The participatory nature and ability to engage participants in their natural setting influenced the researcher to choose this method.

1.11.3 Documentary sources

The researcher used various public and municipal documents as a basis for the research, to gather information and to verify the findings. This technique was applied to assist the study with background information on the topic and for the researcher to check and support the research findings without any obstruction. The advantage of this method is that it is non-reactive and does not require the cooperation of participants; it, therefore, provides the researcher with an objective view (Du Plooy, 1995).

1.12 SAMPLING

Purposive sampling, also known as a selective sampling or judgment is a sampling technique, whereby the researcher relies on his or her experience in choosing the population to participate in the study (Patton, 2002). Purposeful sampling was applied in this study and consisted of participants who have the characteristics that are required by the researcher. According to Struwig & Stead (2001), purposeful sampling is usually applied where the participants reveal characteristics that the researcher needs.

Grade 12 learners, teachers, community members, university students from the community and municipal authorities selected as sample participants for the study. These are the people who have known characteristics, which are related to the research topic (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Moreover, these are considered to be information-rich participants, given their roles in the day to day life of the youth and within the community.

1.13 DATA ANALYSIS

The term data analysis refers to the process of sorting the collected data by the researcher into categories and themes; and formatting the data into a coherent story and writing the qualitative text (Mouton, 1996). In analysing the data obtained from interviews and focus groups, data coding used. This process enabled the researcher to organise and bring meaning to the large amount of data collected (Struwig & Stead, 2001).

By using data coding, the researcher was able to group the information into themes by using codes to which units of meaning were assigned (Struwig & Stead, 2001). Content analysis was used to analyse data from documentary sources to enable the researcher in identifying patterns and themes in the text. Findings from all the data collection methods were then integrated and reported.

1.13.1 Validity and Reliability

Issues of both validity and reliability were considered in the data analysis process. The role of validity in research is to ensure that there is a fair, honest and balanced account of social life from the view of those living in it, by trying to create a tight fit between the researcher's understanding, ideas and statements about social life and what is occurring in it (Neuman, 2006). Reliability refers to consistency, and it is very critical in research because if the measures are not reliable, then the study cannot produce useful information. The concept suggests that if the same thing is repeated under similar conditions, it should provide consistent results (Neuman, 2006).

In validating the analysed data from the sources, the triangulation process used. Triangulation is used in qualitative research to test the consistency of findings obtained through different instruments (Carvalho and White, 1997). It facilitates validation of data through cross-verification of various sources (semi-structured interviews, documentary sources, focus groups) to minimise bias in the research results.

1.14 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In order to comply with the ethical issues when conducting research and interviewing participants, the researcher adhered to all the ethical procedures relating to confidentiality and voluntary participation of the subjects.

Concerning confidentiality, the interviewees were guaranteed by the interviewer that the information or data they provide would be treated with privacy and also used only for the study. As per the guidelines by Arksey and Knight (1999), researchers should follow the procedure to implement confidentiality in qualitative interviews. In implementing the confidentiality procedures, the real names of the participants and other personal details were disguised. However, the researcher mentioned the locations, places, titles and representation of the participants. The participants in this study were also informed before their participation that the process and their participation is voluntary.

1.15 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study is informed by the Systems Theory Framework (SFT) as outlined by Patton & McMahon (2006), based on social thinking in career development. The theory advocates that individual influences serve as an anchor for intrapersonal influences in career development, such as personality, ability, sexual orientation, and gender. Furthermore, since individuals do not live in isolation, external influences such as the broader environmental or societal systems such as family, peers, community and political forces should also be considered and assessed in delivering career guidance and development (Patton & McMahon, 2006).

This sociological thinking asserts that career decisions and future occupations are not only influenced by personality factors but also anchored in a social environment where the people live and experience life (Brown & Lent, 1996). This suggests that the socio-environmental factors have influence in shaping one's career and future employment prospects (Brown & Lent, 1996). The relevance of this theory to the study is that it brings understanding that young people do subscribe to the community values and beliefs in which they live, and those are very influential in their career development. Hence, the community perspectives and the socio-environmental context of the youth in the delivery

of career development is essential and cannot be ignored. The STF theory is further explained and used in Chapter 2 as a guideline to the study.

1.16 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS

Career Guidance

Career guidance refers to the provision of sufficient support and information to enable individuals to select a career map, a career path or decide on a field of study or future occupation (Watts, 2009). The term is used interchangeably in literature and in the study. The concept is considered as an overarching term that includes career development, career counselling, career information, and career education (Watts, 2009).

On the other hand, the term 'career development' is defined as a process that helps students choose the future careers and future occupations. It involves decision making and planning for the future (Maree, 2010). While career counselling is described as a process that involves one-on-one advice or interaction with small groups (Watts, 2009). This process allows clients to develop a clearer understanding of themselves and the broader issues affecting their career choices. Career counselling also enables an individual to arrive at a career decision supported by a counsellor (Maree, 2009). The role of the counsellor is to assist clients through various processes to explore and develop new perspectives for their future, including alternatives (Borgen & Hiebert, 2006).

The term 'career information' is often used to describe the provision of information on educational and training institutions, as well as labour markets and trends (Watts, 2009). The information could be provided by schools, training institutions, community centres like municipal libraries, and government institutions to assist learners and young people with career decisions (Flederman, 2011). However, the information has to be relevant and accurate to add value to the recipients. Families, peers and role models, among others, also play a crucial role in providing career information and guidance (Pilot & Regis, 2012).

Career education, as part of career guidance, is viewed as part of the school curriculum that aims to assist individuals in becoming competent in managing their career paths (Watts, 2009). The provision of career education at school is to prepare learners for the post-secondary environment by providing them with a variety of career options after Grade 12 (Department of Basic Education, 2011). In South Africa, the Life Orientation subject area is used as a career education to guide and equip learners with career choices in the world of work (Department of Basic Education, 2011).

Youth

The United Nations defines 'youth' as persons aged between 15 and 24. However, this definition is flexible because the experience of being young can vary substantially across the world, between countries and regions (United Nations, 2018). Youth is best understood as a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence. Hence, youth is often referred to as a person between the ages of leaving compulsory education and finding their first job.

The World Youth Report 2018 advises that there are 1.2 billion young people aged 15 to 24 years, accounting for 16 per cent of the global population (United Nations, 2018). Apparently, Africa has the most youthful population in the world, which is growing very fast. It is estimated that by 2055, Africa's youth population (aged 15-24), will be more than double the 2015 total of 226 million (United Nations, 2018). In South Africa, the National Youth Policy 2009-2014 defines young people as those falling within the age group of 14 to 35 years. This is based on the mandate of the National Youth Commission Act 1996 and the National Youth Policy 2000 (The Presidency, 2015). This definition is also consistent with the interpretation by the African Youth Charter and the United Nations which defines youth as those between the ages of 15 and 35 years, although the latter two organizations exclude the 14-year-olds (African Union Commission, 2006).

In South Africa, the youth constitutes 37.5% (18.34 million) of the South African population (The Presidency, 2015). Given these numbers, it is the vision of the South African government to produce young people who are empowered, able to realise their

full potential, and understand their roles and responsibilities in making a meaningful contribution to the development of the country (The Presidency, 2015). However, youth inequality is one of the major concerns that is hindering the vision of the government. Socio-economic disparities, which are still a challenge in South Africa post-democracy have a considerable impact on the South African youth. The youth in disadvantaged and low-income areas like rural areas, former homelands and townships face more challenges than their counterparts in urban and high-income regions. These challenges relate to accessibility and availability of services and facilities, resulting in fewer opportunities and less information for them to improve their lives (Graham, De Lannoy, Patel, Leibbrandt, 2018).

Given this situation, there has been a growing concern over the rural-urban migrants who are predominantly young. The fact that Gauteng Province has the highest proportion of youth population (22.7%) as compared to Eastern Cape (12, 6%) and Limpopo (10,4%) could be a demonstration of a tendency of youth migrating from weak rural areas to the wealthier urban provinces (Statistics SA, 2017). This results in the rural regions remaining underdeveloped. Racial youth inequality, which is the legacy of apartheid, still exist even after democracy. The black African youth have more poverty challenges than their counterparts of other races. Approximately 66% of Black African youth and 44% of Coloured youth live in poverty, compared to 16% of Indian youth and 4% of White youth (Statistics SA, 2017).

Rural Areas

In South Africa, there is no formal or accepted definition of rural areas. The concept is often defined by the characteristics that distinguish rural and urban areas (Molefe, 1996). The 1997 Rural Development Framework for South Africa sets rural areas as sparsely populated areas in which people farm or depend on natural resources, including the villages and small towns that are dispersed through these areas (Perret, Anseeuw, Mathebula, 2005). Molefe (1996) describes rural areas as those located in very remote areas, often with minimal infrastructure and services – both public and private. He further argues that these areas are characterised by low levels of employment, poor housing, low wages and a small state of living.

Other characteristics of rural areas include long distances from metropolitan areas and other large towns, lower quantity and quality of livelihoods, limited resources and infrastructure. Often these areas do not have adequate resources such as water, educational facilities and employment opportunities (Molefe, 1996). Rural communities are also characterised by economic stagnation; agricultural underdevelopment and lack of alternative employment opportunities; poor quality of life because of the security of essential goods, facilities and money; isolation caused by distance and poor communications; an unfavourable environment exposing people to communicable diseases and malnutrition; and inadequate health facilities and lack of sanitation (Molefe, 1996; Perret, Anseeuw, Mathebula, 2005).

In terms of livelihoods, many households in rural areas survive through production on household food plots and communal land, remittances from urban migrants, state pensions, local piece-work and informal sector activities (Perret, Anseeuw, Mathebula, 2005). Most people in rural areas work in agriculture either as farmers or farmworkers. Farm job opportunities are often part-time or seasonal. Individuals and households also survive through various sources including local craftwork, small-scale industries, own labour, trading and grants from government (Perret, Anseeuw, Mathebula, 2005).

Research has highlighted that in South Africa, the black population lives mainly in rural areas. According to Stats SA (2013), 43% of South Africa's population lived in rural areas. In 2013, the provinces with the highest rural communities were respectively Limpopo (87%), Eastern Cape (61%), North-West and Mpumalanga (58%) and KwaZulu-Natal (54%) (Stats SA, 2013). Historically, the socio-economic situation of the rural areas in South Africa is caused by the inequitable distribution of resources, which has resulted in urban areas enjoying a higher quality of life at the expense of the rural (Molefe, 1996).

Poverty

Poverty is defined by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), as the inability to attain a minimal standard of living, measured in terms of basic consumption needs or the income required to satisfy them. According to IFAD (2001), poverty is also linked to malnutrition, illiteracy, low life expectancy, insecurity, powerlessness and little self-esteem and frustration due to asset deprivation; inability to afford decent health and education, and lack of power (IFAD, 2001). Hemson & Owusu-Ampomah (2004) says that this description is similar to circumstances in South Africa, where no feminine can be seen, yet the people rely on social grants, have no decent houses, water, electricity and other services. In South Africa, poverty is mainly seen in rural areas and other disadvantaged low-income areas like the black townships. This situation viewed as a political construct by the apartheid government whereby rural poverty served the interest of dominant social groups (Hemson & Owusu-Ampomah, 2004)

1.17 STRUCTURE AND OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1: Background and Overview – This chapter provides an overview and background to the study, the description of the community under investigation, research problem, research aim and question, the research paradigm, the rationale of the study, the significance of the research, the scope and limitations of the study as well as a high-level description of the research methodology. The definitions of key terms, and the structure of the thesis, are also presented in this chapter.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The literature review presents and discusses youth unemployment and career guidance internationally and nationally; the state of youth unemployment and career guidance in South Africa, particularly in the rural areas; and the career guidance practices in South Africa. The Systems Theory Framework Theory, which informs the study, is also discussed and explained in the chapter.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology – The section discusses and explains the research design and the various methods that the researcher used to collect data. Procedures used to analyse the data are also described and discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 4: Research Findings – This chapter summarises and presents the findings of the study, the integration of the results with the literature, and discussion of the findings.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations – The chapter presents conclusions of the study and the extent to which the research questions have been answered. Recommendations for further research are presented in this chapter.

1.17 CONCLUSION

The chapter presented the background and overview of the research study, including the research problem, aims, and research questions. It introduced the rationale and significance of the study, as well as the research paradigm, the highlights of the research methodology, ethical considerations, the definition of key terms as well as the structure of the thesis.

The next chapter presents the literature review, which covers issues relating to youth unemployment and career guidance internationally and nationally. It also discusses the state of youth unemployment and career guidance in South Africa, particularly in rural areas. The Systems Theory Framework Theory, which informs the study, is also discussed and explained in the chapter.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This study aims to examine the career development approaches used to address youth unemployment in the rural community of Ixopo, KwaZulu Natal. The literature review in this chapter presents the state of youth unemployment in South Africa; the impact of youth unemployment; the policies and strategies in place to alleviate youth unemployment, as well as the career development practices in South Africa.

The chapter begins by highlighting international and national studies relating to youth unemployment and career guidance. It concludes by presenting the Systems Theory Framework (STF). The theory that has been adopted by the study to provide advice on the career development approaches and practices concerning youth unemployment in rural communities.

2.2 INTERNATIONAL AND SOUTH AFRICAN STUDIES

There is limited literature on career development approaches to address youth unemployment in rural communities. However, existing literature reveals that the socio-economic context of the youth has an enormous influence on their career choices and subsequently, their employability (Akhurst & Mkhize, 2006). The studies below demonstrate the connection between career development; socio-economic context, particularly disadvantaged communities and its effects for youth careers and employability.

2.2.1 International Studies

Several international studies (Bloxom *et al.*, 2008; Liu *et al.*, 2014; Mtemeri, 2017; Joshi & Bakshi, 2016) confirm that the socio-economic environment of the youth influences their career choices and their chances of being employed in future (Akhurst & Mkhize, 2006). The socio-economic environment includes the communities in which they live, their families and the environment, all of which influence their future career choices.

A large-scale study conducted in Alberta, Canada to examine Grade 12 career needs and perceptions, indicated that even though learners were satisfied with the career guidance information they received from the school. They are more comfortable to discuss their career planning with parents, and that they relied more on their parents, siblings and relatives for career-related information (Bloxom *et al.*, 2008). The participants of the study, which included career counselling professionals, all acknowledged that society, parents and families are crucial influencers on the career choices and future employability of young people. The study concluded that in as much as the school system provides career guidance, the influential role of other social systems like community, churches cannot be undermined as potential interventions in the delivery of career guidance.

Another study conducted in Taiwan by Liu, Lou & Shih (2014) explored the influence of female engineer role models to female high school students. By using the social cognitive career theory (SCCT) as a foundation for the study, participants sampled from a public girls' high school. The girls who participated indicated that, their determination to be engineers is inspired by the successful female engineers, who make them feel attracted to the profession. They also confirmed that the female engineers contribute to their enthusiasm and confidence in studying engineering (Liu, Lou & Shih, 2014). This is an indication that role models, like many other social and environmental factors, have a considerable ability to directly influence career ambitions and confidence among young people, as part of their career development.

Another study undertaken in Zimbabwe by Mtemeri (2017) on factors that influence the career choices of young people, showed that family members and peers are key factors influencing the career choices of adolescents. This quantitative survey study sampled and interviewed 1 010 high school students and 20 career guidance teachers from various schools in Zimbabwe. Mtemeri's (2017) study revealed that students found more value on career guidance received from peers, family and relatives. In this regard, the study recommended that training of peers and parents on career guidance could be valuable in supplementing schooling system in the delivery of career guidance (Mtemeri, 2017).

In terms of career guidance for the rural youth, Joshi & Bakshi (2016) conducted a study in India to examine the career-related challenges of rural underprivileged youth. The study focused on two rural regions of Gujarat and Maharashtra, Western India. The investigation collected data from 150 boys and girls (14-to-20 years old), using individual questionnaires administered in small groups (Joshi & Bakshi, 2016). The study found numerous career development challenges faced by the rural underprivileged youth, which eventually prevent them from being employable. These included:

- Limited financial resources for pursuing further education and training;
- Perceived limitations in career options due to lack of proficiency in English language and poor academic performance, due to their schools being under-resourced;
- Having family responsibilities from an early age, preventing them from focusing on education and future careers;
- Lack of educational and career support from their uneducated parents, for example, job leads; specific ideas about where to receive training and advice about vocational options (Joshi & Bakshi, 2016).

The study also revealed that rural underprivileged youth have self-development challenges that impact on their career development. These include the fear of failure; lack of self-confidence; lack of life skills to deal with their difficult socio-economic circumstances and not having definite goals for their future (Joshi & Bakshi, 2016).

Their perception of professional career guidance was that the service could assist them to quickly find employment so that they can fulfil their financial needs and those of their families (Joshi & Bakshi, 2016). This is an indication that underprivileged youth considered income or salary as a significant influence on their career choice so that they address their financial challenges. The study recommends that the career guidance profession and interventions must creatively prepared to support the unique career development challenges of rural youth (Joshi & Bakshi, 2016). The findings of the study are an indication that career development interventions for rural youth should be able to also address the complexity of their social life; And that, career guidance interventions

cannot be 'one size fits all' because of rural youth experience life differently from their counterparts in higher socio-economic communities.

2.2.2 South African Studies

A few South African studies (Buthelezi *et al.*, 2010; Matshabane, 2016; Albein & Naidoo, 2016; Mokgohloa, 2006) argue that there are discrepancies in the delivery of career guidance to alleviate youth unemployment in South Africa. The studies also argue that youth from disadvantaged communities are more vulnerable to unemployment. And that, their low socio-economic environment impacts on their career development and future employability. Hence, the need to examine career guidance approaches used to address youth unemployment in rural areas.

Buthelezi, Alexander and Seabi (2010) conducted a study on adolescents' perceived career challenges and needs in a disadvantaged context in South Africa. The study revealed that career needs for adolescents from disadvantaged backgrounds are complicated and vast due to their difficult social and personal circumstances. The study found that challenges like poverty, struggling parents, violence in schools and society affects their academic progress and career development (Buthelezi, Alexander & Seabi, 2010). These challenges result in the lack of motivation, lack of confidence and a sense of hopelessness for the youth. Furthermore, they eventually ignore their career ambitions resulting to un-employability in future (Buthelezi, Alexander & Seabi, 2010). The study participants were Grade 12 pupils, Grade 10, and Grade 9 learners from a disadvantaged background. Recommendations from the study were that career guidance interventions in disadvantaged youth must be more accommodative and be considerate of the environmental factors that affect the academic progress of the beneficiaries (Buthelezi, Alexander & Seabi, 2010).

A similar qualitative research study was undertaken in the Western Cape township by Matshabane (2016). This study examined the influence of role models on future careers of youth from disadvantaged communities. The study acknowledged that learners from disadvantaged communities face numerous social and personal challenges that affect their career decisions. Matshabane (2016) recommended that positive role models from

these communities could be a proper career guidance intervention. These could motivate and inspire youth in that, beyond their current social and economic challenges, a good career can result in a brighter future.

A study conducted in South Africa by Albein and Naidoo (2016) confirmed the findings of the Zimbabwe study by Mtemeri (2017) on the role of social and community influences in career development. According Albein & Naidoo (2016), social and community influences among Black high school learners are much stronger than formalised school interventions. The study was focusing on social career influences of Xhosa Adolescents in South Africa's townships to determine the prominent influences on career decision making of the adolescents. Family support; school environment; peers and friends; role models and cultural influences were identified as major social influencers for black youth in disadvantaged areas (Albein & Naidoo, 2016). These findings further confirm that in examining career development and practices, community perspectives are vital considerations.

In addressing the issue of graduate youth unemployment in South Africa, Mokgohloa (2006) conducted a study on the views and experiences of unemployed youth graduates Limpopo, South Africa. This qualitative study administered interviews with unemployed graduates selected from the Limpopo Province. The Province has a predominantly rural African population and a huge number of unemployed graduates. Findings of the study revealed that inadequate or absence of career guidance is a significant cause for youth unemployment in South Africa, and particularly in rural areas. It emerged from the study that, many young graduates are unemployable because their qualifications do not meet the requirements of the labour market. The study recommended that the government needs to strengthen career education in schools and collaborate with employers in order to expose learners to careers and skills that are in demand in the labour market. The study also highlighted on the role of universities to conduct outreach activities with a view to guide learners about relevant career choices (Mokgohloa, 2006).

Both the International and South African studies confirm the relationship and connection between youth unemployment and inadequate career guidance. It is also clear from these studies that rural youth, are the most vulnerable in terms of the delivery of career guidance services. And that, career guidance initiatives aimed at assisting youth in disadvantaged areas should be sensitive to the socio-economic context of these communities to achieve success (Akhurst & Mkhize, 2006).

2.3 THE STATE OF YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

The state of youth unemployment in South Africa is one of the country's significant socio-economic challenges (Department of Labour, 2014). In the first quarter of 2019, the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) reported that youth aged 15–34 years' accounted for 63,4% of the total number of unemployed persons in South Africa, meaning that the burden of unemployment is high amongst the youth (Statistics SA, 2019).

2.3.1 Characteristics of Youth Unemployment in South Africa

In South Africa, youth unemployment is characterized by the lack of employability resulting from a range of social factors. Most youths have low levels of education, having dropped out of school. Some do not have the skills needed by the labour market, or they lack the work experience required by employers (Mokgohloa, 2006, Mlatsheni, 2007 & Moleke, 2005). In some cases, their geographical locations do not offer job opportunities, and often poverty is a barrier to travel to areas where there are job opportunities (Mlatsheni, 2007, Moleke, 2005).

The situation is even described as a crisis in South Africa because more young people have also given up looking for work (Department of Labour, 2014). Youth who have become discouraged have increased by 8% between 2008 and 2015 (Graham & De Lannoy, 2017). Many of the youths between the ages of 15 to 24 years old are not in employment, education or training (NEETs). This group is described as the most vulnerable to chronic unemployment, social exclusion and poverty, since they are not improving their skills through training and are without the qualifications needed to progress into the labour market (Graham & De Lannoy, 2017).

Inequality also characterises youth unemployment in South Africa given the significant variations relating to race, education, geographical location, socio-economic status and other inequalities (Mlatsheni & Rospabe, 2012). For instance, young Africans are in a worse situation than their White counterparts; those in rural areas are severely affected than those in urban areas and those with lower education are worse off than those with skills and qualifications (Statistics SA, 2019; Mlatsheni & Rospabe, 2012). Other demographics characterizing youth unemployment, is the increasing number of unemployed graduates and the youth that are Not in Employment, Education or Training (Mokgohloa, 2006).

2.3.1.1 Racial Inequalities

Racial disparities play a significant part in the youth unemployment landscape in South Africa. According to Statistics SA (2019), the general unemployment rate is highest among black people (30.4%) and lowest among white people (7.6%). The geographical location of white people and affluent families residing in areas with job opportunities may be the attributing factor to this inequality (Mlatsheni & Rospabe, 2012). This situation is also attributed to the historical apartheid education system, which geographically isolated black people to areas without industries and job opportunities (Mlatsheni & Rospabe, 2012).

2.3.1.2 Education Inequality

The quality of public schooling system entrenches inequality in finding employment. Many schools in black communities are under-resourced and ill-managed (Barker, 2003). This is due to the shortage of skilled and capable personnel; unqualified teachers, especially in mathematics and science (Barker, 2003). The situation results in the production of ill-equipped learners who do not qualify for tertiary institutions or do not have relevant subjects that give them qualifications required by employers, like mathematics and sciences. (Mlatsheni & Rospabe, 2002; Mokgohloa, 2006).

Most schools in lower socio-economic communities are often overpopulated and have large classes which are overwhelming for teachers. There is no psychosocial support for learners at risk, like caring teachers, social workers or counsellors (Gustafsson, 2011). Even where these exist, the large number and overwhelming nature of psychosocial issues ranging from hunger, violence, drugs, pregnancies undermines their effectiveness. Hence, these schools experience a high dropout rate resulting to unqualified and unemployable youth (Gustafsson 2011; Mokgohloa, 2006). Meanwhile, research shows that South Africa's labour market favours highly skilled employees (Graham & De Lannoy, 2017). The high demand for skilled labour means that those with a post-secondary qualification have a higher chance to find employment than those with lesser education or matric certificate (Graham & De Lannoy, 2017).

Table 2.1 below shows that youth unemployment is very high for those with low education levels. The table also shows that even though the graduate unemployment rate is at 31%, it is still lower than those with less education. It is an indication that higher education increases the prospects of employment (Statistics SA, 2019).

Table 1: Youth Unemployment by education level and age group

	15 – 24 years	25 – 34 years
Less than Matric	58.4%	41.0%
Matric	55.0%	32.4%
Graduates	31.0%	12.9%
Other Tertiary	47.5%	25.25

Source: Statistics SA, 2019. QLFS Quarter 1: 2019

The apartheid system is blamed for the weak public schooling system in black communities because its policies perpetuated inequality and discrimination in the provision of quality and relevant education (Mlatsheni & Rospabe, 2002; Mokgohloa, 2006). Noteworthy is that, employers in South Africa seem to have more confidence on the quality of education received by white people than the quality of education acquired by the majority of black people (Mlatsheni & Rospape, 2012).

The education provided by the South African training institutions is also criticised because of its failure to align itself with the emerging so-called '4th industrial revolution' (Buthelezi, 2017). The 4th industrial revolution presents a range of new technologies combining the physical, digital and biological worlds; and it is impacting on all disciplines, economies and industries (Buthelezi, 2017). If products of the tertiary institutions do not have these skills, they are not likely to be absorbed by the transformed labour market (Akhurst & Mkhize, 2000). Hence, the South African training system is advised to transform, by incorporating the technological changes presented by globalisation and the labour market to alleviate youth unemployment (Akhurst & Mkhize, 2000).

2.3.1.3 Geographical location

Geographical isolation brings inequality to the accessibility of employment because the majority of black youth are located in rural areas or townships which are far from business areas. The proximity to employment sources and financial constraints faced by the youth to travel, becomes a barrier in getting employment (Mlatsheni & Ranchhod, 2017). This geographical exclusion is attributed to the apartheid policies which were aimed at keeping the majority of blacks away from urban areas, to areas that have low employment opportunities (Graham & Mlatsheni, 2015).

Moreover, youth in rural areas are often disadvantaged by less access to job searching facilities and services than their urban counterparts (Mlatsheni & Ranchhod, 2017). These include internet access to search job opportunities or tertiary opportunities (Graham & De Lannoy, 2017). Unlike their middle-class peers, poor young people also lack “productive social capital” – social networks to link them to jobs, yet, these are important for navigating entry into the labour market. (Graham & De Lannoy, 2017)

2.3.1.4 Socioeconomic status

The socio-economic inequalities existing in South Africa contribute to youth unemployment (Graham & Mlatsheni, 2015). Poverty encountered by youth from disadvantaged communities prevents them from pursuing post-secondary schooling and often forces them to exit school earlier and to enter the job market earlier (Graham &

Mlatsheni, 2015; Lent et al., 1994). Even those who eventually find funding for tertiary may opt for earlier employment, to be able to supplement the family income. This further reduces their chances for decent employment (Mlatsheni and Ranchhod, 2017). In describing the poverty experienced by many young people, Graham & De Lannoy (2017) says that most African young people aged between 15-24 years old live in households with a per capita monthly income of less than R779.

2.3.1.5 Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET)

There is an increasing category of youth that are Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET). Hence, there is a growing national concern on this youth category. Research shows that if an individual remains as NEET for more extended periods, the situation may have adverse outcomes. These include substance abuse, discouragement, social exclusion, increased risk behaviour and risky job prospects like crime (De Lannoy and Mudiriza, 2019).

In South Africa, the youth Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) was 36.5% (over 5.6 million youth) in the second quarter of 2018 (Statistics SA, 2018). Recent research state that 38% of NEET are 15-24 years old; 48% have less than matric; 87% are Black; 54% are female, and 71% live in poor households (De Lannoy and Mudiriza, 2019). According to Table 2.2 below, KwaZulu Natal is among the top 3 provinces with the highest rates of NEETs, and it is not clear from the literature what the cause could be.

Table 2: Provincial rates of youth aged between 15-24 years, not in employment, education or training in Quarter 4: 2018

PROVINCE	% within the NEET group
Eastern Cape	37.1%
Northern Cape	35.4%
Kwa Zulu Natal	33.8%
North West	32.8%
Mpumalanga	30.6%
Gauteng	29.8%
Free State	28.7%
Western Cape	26.5%
Limpopo	25.9%

Source: STATS SA, 2018. Provincial NEET rate (Year on Year Change Q4: 2017 – Q4: 2018)

Even though there is concern over the increasing numbers of this youth category in South Africa, there is little recognition and engagement with the various NEETs by the government (De Lannoy and Mudiriza, 2019). Yet, other countries have designed and are implementing incentives and programs to support these young people into education, training or employment (ILO, 2015).

2.3.1.6 Unemployed Graduates

The category of unemployed graduate unemployment in South Africa is an increasing national challenge. The Quarterly Labour Survey shows that the unemployment rate for graduates was 31,0% in the 1st quarter of 2019 compared to 19,5% in the 4th quarter of 2018 – an increase of 11,4 percentage points quarter-on-quarter (Statistics SA, 2019). However, it appears that black graduates are the most unemployed, as compared to other races. Table 2.3 below shows that 80.8% of black graduates not employed as compared to 19.2% of their white counterparts. The availability of career guidance services in white schools and the right career choices by white graduates could be a contributing factor to the employability of white graduates (Moleke, 2005).

Table 3: *Race and unemployment rates for unemployed graduates*

Race	Unemployed
Black	80.8%
White	19.2%
Coloured	0%
Asian/Indian	0%

Source: Survey data, 2015 – Analysed by Mancy & Dunga, 2016: 417

Research also shows that most black graduates do not hold qualifications that are required by the labour market (Mncayi & Dunga, 2016; Mokgohloa, 2006). According to Moleke (2005), BA graduates are struggling to find employment compared to their counterparts with accounting, sciences and engineering degrees. Science graduates were most likely to be employed; followed by engineering graduates. While humanities and arts graduates had the lowest chances of being employed (Mncayi & Dunga, 2016;

Moleke, 2005). As shown in Table 4, the highest concentration of graduates in the unemployed category had a humanities degree, followed by those with a degree in commerce. The table confirms that the arts and humanities graduates had the highest unemployment rate.

Table 4: *Graduates youth unemployment rates according to the field of study*

Degree type	Unemployed
Humanities	46.2%
Commerce	42.3%
Education	7.7%
Science	3.3 %

Source: Survey data, 2015 – Analysed by Mncayi & Dunga, 2016: 417

Even though the graduates from the Humanities and Social Science faced with a high unemployment rate, there still a considerable percentage of black students who enrol for these qualifications (Mncayi & Dunga, 2016). Furthermore, only a small percentage of blacks are enrolled in the natural sciences, yet, these are on-demand in the labour market. This may be a result of the historical weaknesses of Mathematics and Science teaching in Black schools (Mncayi & Dunga, 2016).

Table 5 below shows the percentage of students enrolled for humanities per race. The chart indicates that black students are the highest enrolled in humanities, despite the limited job opportunities in this study area. Lack of information and career guidance on black learners could also be a contributor to this situation when compared with other races (Mncayi & Dunga, 2016; Mokgohloa, 2006).

Table 5: *Humanities enrolment by race*

Race	Percentage of Humanities graduates
Black	62.7%
Asian/Indian	0.0%
Coloured	0.0%
White	37.3%

Source: Survey data, 2015 – Analysed by Mncayi & Dunga, 2016: 418

Lack of work experience is another significant contributor to youth graduate unemployment. Most employers prefer experienced workers to inexperienced graduates (Mokgohloa, 2006). Young people struggle to get the entry-level experience to be employable because the education and training system rarely offers practical experience to learners (Mokgohloa, 2006). Also, many graduates, particularly from the disadvantaged communities like rural areas, do not have adequate information and internet to access job opportunities (Mokgohloa, 2006; Singh, 2016).

2.3.1.7 Unequal provision of Career guidance

The inequality in the provision of career guidance also contributes to the majority of youth unemployment. Most learners, particularly in low socioeconomic communities, have limited access to career guidance services (Mtolo, 1996; Akhurst & Mkhize, 1999; Ntshangase, 1995; Prinsloo, 2007). Learners from disadvantaged communities are more affected by the absence of career guidance services, as compared to their counterparts in the urban areas (Maree, 2009). It is because schools in higher socio-economic areas can offer learners, a more diverse selection of careers linked to market demands, while schools in rural areas lack information on the trends of the labour market (Mudhovozi & Chireshe, 2012).

This inequality dates back to the apartheid era when career guidance and counselling was a privilege of White South Africans and urban schools (Stead and Watson, 2006). The apartheid government intended to limit access to jobs and careers to the White population to promote the interests of White people while subordinating the Black South Africans (Du Toit & Van Zyl, 2012; Stead & Watson, 2006). During apartheid, traditional career options for black learners were limited to teaching, nursing, social work and office work professionals, reflecting the interplay between race and apartheid job restrictions (Maesala, 1994; Watson et al., 2010). Even though apartheid has ended, its historical effects remain, leaving disadvantaged communities without support facilities and resources for the provision of quality career education and guidance (Flederman, 2011).

It can be concluded that the state of youth unemployment in South Africa is very complex, given the diverse social and economic dynamics of youth unemployment. The unequal distribution of youth unemployment is an indication that, interventions for alleviating youth unemployment needs be tailored to address the different needs and geographical contexts of the youth to be effective (De Lannoy and Mudiriza, 2019).

2.4 IMPACT OF YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

The youth unemployment crisis has a cynical impact on society and the youth themselves. Economically, the loss of talent and skills due to youth unemployment hurts the country's economic growth and productivity (Durant & Powel, 2015). The unemployed graduates, in particular, are unable to contribute to the country's productivity, innovation and economic growth with their knowledge and capabilities (Durant & Powel, 2015).

If this category of youth remains jobless, the country losses on their tax contribution, while national costs increased when funds channelled towards providing them with social grants (Durant & Powel, 2015), the negative impact of youth unemployment also goes beyond macro-economic indicators (Polity, 2015). The youth represent the next generation of leaders in business, government and civil society. If they remain unskilled and without work experience, they continue to be excluded from the mainstream economy, resulting in the stagnation of the country's development socially and economically (Polity, 2015). Politically, their capacity to exercise citizenship and their democratic rights are simultaneously diminished (Polity, 2015).

Socially, the youth are the most active and productive members of society. Their unemployment affects their families and their communities (Nimenibo & Samuel, 2018). If the youth is unemployed, society loses the significant assets of young talents that should be improving the welfare of their families and communities (Durant & Powel, 2015; Nimenibo & Samuel, 2018). This circumstance also perpetuates socioeconomic inequality because, without income, the youth and their families remain in the cycle of poverty (Durant & Powel, 2015). Often, many families of unemployed youths, especially in disadvantaged areas, face many other socio-economic challenges. These include high

levels of poverty, unavailability of health, education and water facilities (Nimenibo & Samuel, 2018).

Another risk facing unemployed youth is that out of desperation they are eventually absorbed by the informal economy for employment, yet these businesses offer meagre wages, provide unsafe working conditions with no social security (Polity, 2015). Such inadequate employment fails to meet their financial needs resulting in the youth experiencing lower levels of health, engaging in risky behaviours like substance abuse, crime and early pregnancies (Polity, 2015).

Furthermore, there is evidence that unemployment, in general, is associated with lower levels of psychological well-being (Freeman, 1999; Nimenibo & Samuel, 2018). The experience of unemployment is dehumanizing; causes loss of self-esteem and youth eventually perceive themselves as incapable (Nimenibo & Samuel, 2018). The frustration created by joblessness among the youth contributes to increased risky behaviours including promiscuity, drug abuse and crime among others, a situation that eventually becomes a liability to society and the country (Freeman, 1999; Nimenibo & Samuel, 2018). In South Africa, most of the social crimes are perpetrated by youth and the accelerating crime rate is primarily attributed to the prevalence of youth unemployment and poverty (Clark, 2012). According to Nimenibo & Samuel (2018), youth crime compromises national security; and, the increase of criminality in the country negatively affects foreign direct investment. Instead of being a source of growth stimulation, the army of unemployed youth becomes a potential threat to the well-being of the economy and national security (Nimenibo & Samuel, 2018).

Research conducted on house robberies in South Africa found that the average age of a house robber is 19 to 26 years of age; of all arrested robbers, 90% had no matric qualification or were unemployed. The 10% employed gave up their jobs when confirming how much they could 'earn' from a robbery (Zinn, 2019). The above is a confirmation of the vulnerability of the South African unemployed youth. Noteworthy is that crime risk is higher for blacks as compared to other races.

Table 6 below shows the general population of prison inmates (offenders) in South Africa by race. The statistics shown confirm that black youth is more vulnerable than other races. It may be a result of desperation to remedy the adverse living conditions and poverty, in the absence of unemployment (Polity, 2015).

Table 6: Prison inmates by race (not necessarily youth)

Offenders by Race	Population	Percentage
Black	125 006	79.6%
Coloured	28,568	18.2%
White	2 559	1.6%
Asian/Indian	880	0.6%

Source: *Department of Correctional Service Annual Report 2016/2017*

The following section will discuss the policies and strategies already put in place to address youth unemployment in South Africa. According to UNESCO (2004), national youth policies and strategies are fundamental because they shape the present national situation; determine the future of any country; guide how a country should address its people issues; provide accountability and become a tool to measure the country's performance against its set goals (UNESCO, 2004).

2.5 NATIONAL POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

The government of South Africa is committed in addressing the youth unemployment crisis. This section has selected several pertinent legislative and policy instruments relating to youth unemployment to guide the study on the national direction.

National Youth Policy (2009 – 2014)

The policy guides governmental interventions targeted at youth development, including youth unemployment. The policy focuses on four (4) priority areas to support youth development. These are education, health, well-being, economic participation and social cohesion. The policy guideline is used by all national, provincial and local government structures as a basis in the design and implementation of youth programs (The Presidency, 2015).

The National Youth Development Agency (NYDA)

The NYDA Act 2008 makes provision for the formation of the NYDA whose mandate is to address the social and economic needs of young people (The Presidency, 2015). The NYDA is structured to address youth unemployment through various activities and entrepreneurship. It includes funding and facilitating youth cooperatives; provision of training as well as providing technical support to youth entrepreneurs. However, this structure is highly criticised because it is not visible and accessible in remote communities where the service is most needed, so it benefits few young people (Cassim and Oosthuizen, 2014).

National Skills Development Act (1998)

This act was responsible for the establishment of the Sector of Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), which are aimed at providing market-related skills to the youth. The SETA's also allow the achievement of a nationally recognized qualification through a combination of structured learning and practical work experience. It is whereby individuals are placed in workplaces to gain experience and skills (Cassim and Oosthuizen, 2014). The intervention aims to increase the employability of youth (Cassim and Oosthuizen, 2014).

The National Youth Economic Empowerment Strategy and Implementation Framework 2009-2019

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) developed the National Youth Economic Empowerment Strategy and Implementation Framework 2009-2019. The purpose of the strategy is to improve the quantity and quality of youth entrepreneurship and technical knowledge, reduce poverty and unemployment among young people in South Africa (DTI, 2009).

Youth Enterprise Development Strategy

The strategy was developed by the Department of Trade and Industry to increase youth-owned and managed enterprises. The purpose is also to increase entrepreneurial culture, business managerial capacities, technical skills and talents among young people, thereby

contributing to youth employment (DTI, 2013). The DTI asserts that the strategy is a provision for the youth to establish cooperative enterprises and other forms of the enterprise; and minimises barriers that could prevent the youth from growing their businesses (DTI, 2013).

Employment Services Act (2014)

The Employment Services Act was passed in April 2014 to promote employment and to improve the prospects of those looking for work through training to facilitate job matching (Cassim and Oosthuizen, 2014). It provides specialised services for the youth to access work with the government by registration to databases. It provides placement opportunity for the registered youth when vacancies arise. However, the effectiveness and accessibility of this system needs to be improved (Cassim and Oosthuizen, 2014). Critics are of the view that given the high cellular phone penetration in South Africa, the system should be able to improve its accessibility and effectiveness through technology (Cassim and Oosthuizen, 2014).

Municipal System Act of 2000

Chapter four of the Local Government Municipality System Act, 32 of 2000 encourages a culture of community participation, especially among the youth in the Municipal service delivery programs (Department of Cooperative Governance, 2011). The Integrated Development Plans (IDP) and Local Economic Development (LED) programs of the municipalities are critical development tools used to mainstream youth development programs. These municipal programs have considerable potential for addressing youth unemployment (Department of Cooperative Governance, 2011).

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

Most of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) publicly funded to deliver various skills and training programs. These programs aimed at facilitating entry into the labour market (Cassim and Oosthuizen, 2014). TVET institutions primarily provide vocational education programs. However, they have not been able to deliver the skills required by the labour market adequately. A major challenge facing these TVET's is that

they are not adequately funded, like universities and do not have solid partnerships with employers to facilitate youth employment (Cassim and Oosthuizen, 2014). This is seen by the decreasing apprenticeships, who can secure employment on a full-time basis after graduation (Cassim and Oosthuizen, 2014).

Internships

Given that the South African economy favours skilled workers and that most youths are not skilled and experienced; the government initiated internships and work deployment programs for the youth. These programs provide income to the youth, while additional skills developed to improve future employability (Cassim and Oosthuizen, 2014). In this regard, many government departments and state-owned enterprises offer internship opportunities to new graduates to prepare them for future employment.

The Community Works Program (CWP)

The Community Works Program (CWP) was started in 2008 to provide employment safety by providing a basic level of income through community work. This program is targeted to the most impoverished communities and complements the social grant system. The program implemented as the Extended Public Works Program (EPWP) is not necessarily targeted at the youth, even though most youths participate (Department of Cooperative Governance, 2011). The programs that are currently offered are not tailored to suit youth aspirations; hence youth not attracted to the programs. This is because the type of work done includes repairing community or school infrastructure, creating food gardens or home-based care, and it does not provide the experience required by better-paying jobs, particularly those in urban areas.

Youth Employment Subsidy

In 2011, the National Treasury introduced a youth employment subsidy. The purpose of the subsidy is to incentivise employers as a way to encourage them to absorb new entrants in the labour market. The subsidy encourages employers to create jobs for the youth and receive tax reduction as an incentive (Van Rensburg, 2016). The employment tax incentive (ETI) provides a subsidy of up to R1 000 a month to

employers of people aged between 18 and 29 earning less than R6 000 in their first formal jobs. It falls to R500 in their second year on the job and falls away in the third year (Van Rensburg, 2016). Critics of the subsidy argue that it will tempt the employers into replacing existing workers by subsidised workers. And that, it will encourage young people to leave school to look for jobs; yet these are not sustainable because the employers will discard young people once the subsidy ends (Cassim and Oosthuizen, 2014).

In terms of strategies and policies to address youth unemployment in South Africa, we can conclude that, despite numerous efforts by the government to address and alleviate youth unemployment, the plight of the youth continues to be worse, judging from the increasing unemployment rates, poverty, and the youth idleness in communities (The Presidency, 2015). It is also evident from the state of youth unemployment above that, the challenge of youth unemployment is complex and diverse. The demographics that characterise youth unemployment in South Africa is making it difficult for the policies and strategies to achieve their desired outcome (Cassim and Oosthuizen, 2014).

2.6 CAREER DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES IN SOUTH AFRICA

Historically, the provision of career guidance in South Africa has riddled with inequality (Akhurst & Mkhize, 1999; Stead & Watson, 2006). Career education only introduced into black schools in 1981 as a result of the Soweto uprisings of 1976 (Akhurst & Mkhize, 1999). The significant career education challenges in South Africa include limited access to career education services, little exposure to the world of work and a lack of knowledge regarding tertiary institutions (Mtolo, 1996; Akhurst & Mkhize, 1999; Ntshangase, 1995). However, various initiatives have been put in place to deliver career guidance and information to learners in South Africa. Below are some of the initiatives and practices that exist in South Africa.

2.6.1 Career Education

In South Africa, career education addressed in the learning area Life Orientation, which also encompasses physical education, religious education, health education and life skills (Ebersöhn & Mbetse, 2003). As part of the school curriculum, Life Orientation is the only

space in the schooling system where the career needs of learners addressed (Prinsloo, 2007). However, only 20 % of the time in the Life Orientation syllabus is allocated to career guidance for learners (Department of Basic Education, 2011).

This area of learning has been widely criticised as ineffective because the Life Orientation teachers are not qualified to deliver career counselling and guidance services (Prinsloo, 2007). The schools lack resources and relevant information to deliver a useful career guidance service (Prinsloo, 2007). A study conducted in Limpopo confirmed that educators in the rural schools lack expertise in presenting the career education content and that their community schools are understaffed, making it challenging to give attention to career education during Life Orientation (Ebersöhn & Mbetse, 2003). Many schools indicate that they apply their creativity in providing informal career guidance to assist learners in making career choices. Schools with sufficient financial resources have outsourced career education services to private practitioners (Ebersöhn & Mbetse, 2003). This situation disadvantages the rural schools who cannot afford to outsource the career guidance service.

2.6.2 Career Counselling

A limited number of schools provide career guidance counselling to prepare learners for post-secondary education and employment (Singh, 2016). This service is not practised in the majority of schools in South Africa because it is an expensive, limited, and specialised service that requires the assistance of qualified and registered psychologists and psychometrics (Singh, 2016). Due to the social inequalities that exist in the country, only privileged learners in the English and Afrikaans speaking schools can afford this service, which also delivers the balanced approach in career counselling (Maree, 2009).

2.6.3 Life Skills

Many schools also deliver life skills to learners through the Life Orientation as a learning subject (Prinsloo, 2007). The incorporation of life skills and career guidance in the subject area is to address the social challenges faced by young people because these challenges affect the success of their career development (Prinsloo, 2007).

The perspectives of teachers and principals are that learners from disadvantaged communities lack positive/productive value systems, lack of parental involvement, general disrespect of law due to inadequate community role models, language, and cultural differences among others (Prinsloo, 2007). These behaviours lead to high school dropouts and a failure to achieve career ambitions. Many teachers confirm that the guidelines for life skills are not clear, so they use their initiative to deal with the issues of learners according to what they experience daily (Prinsloo, 2007).

2.6.4 Career Exhibitions and Festivals

The Department of Higher Education and Training in South Africa, claims to be delivering various career guidance activities in schools, colleges, universities and municipalities (The Department of Higher Education and Training, 2012). These include career exhibitions and festivals, career booklets, guides and resources; career videos; student support services at TVET colleges and universities; psychometric assessments; peer education programmes, mentoring and career planning, among others (The Department of Higher Education and Training, 2012). These activities offered by a wide range of stakeholders, including government departments (national and provincial) and their entities, SETAs, private sector service providers, NGOs and employers, among others.

However, Singh (2016) observes that these activities provided by the government fail to accommodate the youth out of school. There is limited assistance to the post-secondary learners who are no longer in the school system. These youth miss the opportunity for career guidance, including the access counsellors or educators within schools that had previously supported them (Singh, 2016). To address this gap, the government has created initiatives to cater for out of school youth. These include municipal libraries, TVET colleges, SETA's and PACE careers (Singh, 2016). In contrary, Du Toit & Van Zyl (2012) says that the quality and consistency of these services is deficient. And, institutions of higher learning are also criticised for not providing adequate career guidance to the out of school youth, although they are well positioned and better resourced to offer career counselling to learners through their registered and qualified psychologists (Du Toit & Van Zyl, 2012).

2.6.5 The Career Advice Service (CAS)

The government of South Africa established the Career Advice Service (CAS) to make career guidance accessible and affordable to the majority of South African citizens. It is an information and communications technology (ICT) based telephone helpline to provide career guidance to all South Africans (Singh, 2016). This service is via telephone, email and a walk-in service to assist the users in mapping their career paths and to receive information on educational and occupational opportunities (Department of Higher Education, 2012). This free service is also delivered through social media and an interactive website which includes a call back service that responds to SMSs from learners (Department of Higher Education, 2012).

This approach based on the assumption that most South Africans have access to cell phones or telephones.

The system is applauded by scholars in that it is accessible to all learners despite their backgrounds and socio-economic disadvantages (Singh, 2016). It accommodates learners from rural areas, and out of school youth, and the helpline allows the advisers to interact with learners in assisting them with their career decisions (Department of Higher Education, 2012).

In concluding the discussion on career development practices, it is imminent that career guidance services not equally delivered in South Africa.

It is also evident that the education and training system contributes significantly to the inefficiency of the service. Moreover, the youth from black rural and disadvantaged communities seem to be the casualties of inadequate career development.

2.7 HISTORY OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Career development concepts emerged in the 18th century as a response to the Industrial Revolution, which had created a considerable demand for the labour force and mass production in Europe and the United States (Watts, 1996). This period created a need for career counselling for employers to acquire an efficient workforce and increase production (Watts, 1996). Over the years, the career development approaches have evolved, given the ever-changing nature of the working world and society. The

psychological and sociological theories to career development are the most dominant approaches in the practice of career development (Watts, 1996).

Psychological approaches to career development

The psychological approaches often referred to as traditional career development theories mainly use counselling, instruments and psychometric assessments to determine career choices of individuals (Osipow, 1983). Towards the end of the 20th century, these approaches were being highly criticised for their psychological focus and their narrow perspective, by ignoring the fact that a career choice is also a result of an individual's relationship with a particular socio-cultural context that may include family, peers, socio-economic situation, community and the labour market among others (Frizelle, 2002).

Sociological approaches to career development

The criticism of the psychological approaches resulted to the emergence of sociological approaches in career development. These approaches hold the view that career decisions are not only influenced by personality factors but are also anchored in a social environment (Brown & Lent, 1996). Sociological approaches emphasize the environmental factors, the individual's social status and social experience as key influencers in the career decision process of an individual (Brown & Lent, 1996). Their view is that, in examining career guidance to address youth unemployment, it is essential to recognise that while youth career choice are individual decisions, the social and environmental context where the youth live and experience life, has a considerable influence in their career development and subsequently their future chances of employment (Buthelezi *et al.*, 2010).

The systems theory framework, as presented and discussed below, is a sociological approach to career development. Given that the study is based on community perceptions, the theory provides guidance on the community influences and consequences on career development.

2.8 THE SYSTEMS THEORY FRAMEWORK (STF)

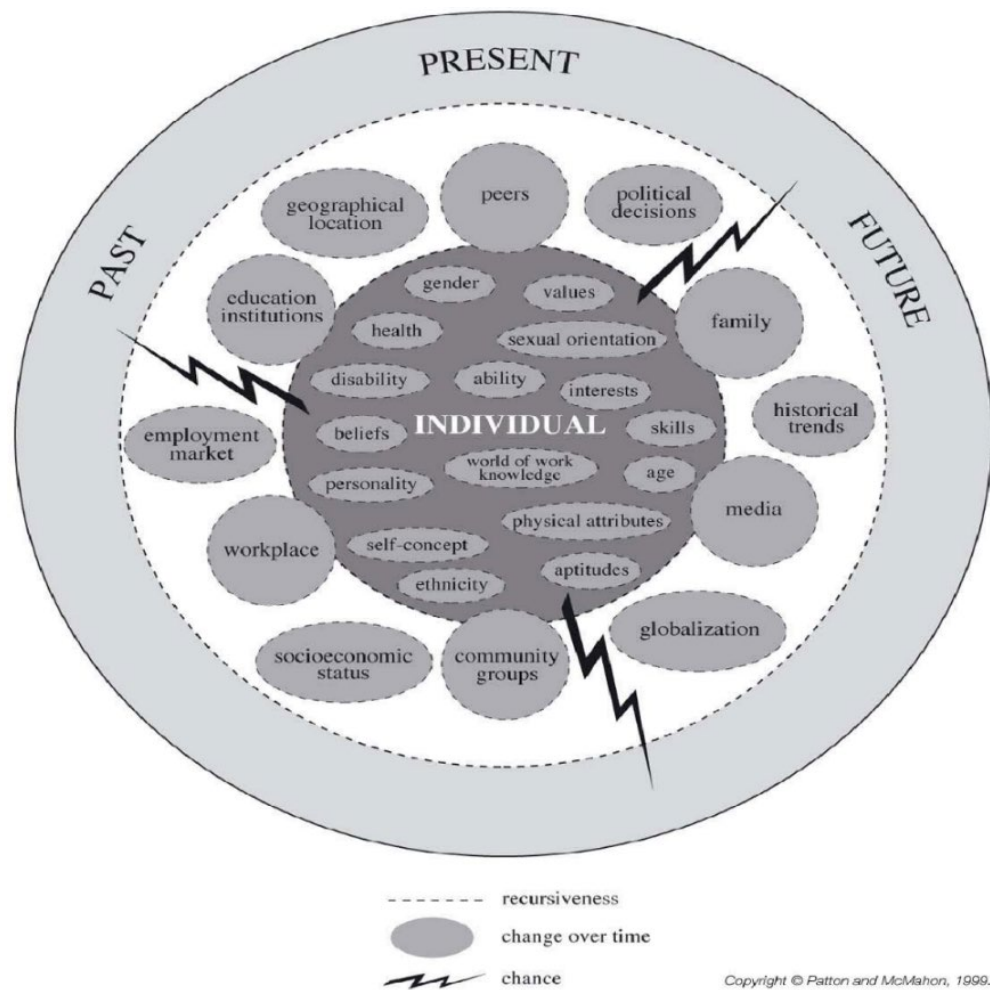
Patton and McMahon (2006) developed the Systems Theory Framework for career development to address the convergence of the psychological and social theories in practice. The STF was not designed as a career development intervention, but it was developed to present an overarching framework that allows the traditional and new theories to be efficiently applied in the practice of career development (Patton & McMahon, 2006).

The STF is informed by the constructivist thinking in career development (Savickas, 2002; Watson, 2006). This thinking offers alternative approach to career development and counselling by recognising the holistic and contextualised nature of career development. Constructivist approaches view a person's career choice as a re-construction of self and the social environment, to make it possible to understand specific contexts and system in the career decision process (Watson 2006). Perry (2009), asserts that it is not possible to accurately comprehend career guidance or apply it effectively without understanding the construction of the individual with his/her context. The Systems Theory Framework (STF) therefore presents career development as a dynamic process, depicted through its process of system influences. The framework assumes that specific influences experienced by individuals in their lifetime can either be barriers or enablers in their career development (Patton *et al.*, 2006).

The STF uses the term 'systems' to describe the individual and contextual factors that are responsible for influencing an individual's career choice (Patton and McMahon, 2006). The *individual system* comprises of intrapersonal influences like personality, values, and interests. It may also include gender, ethnicity and sexual orientation (Patton & McMahon, 2006). While, the *contextual system* refers to the social and environmental influences with which individuals interact, such as family, school, peers and community (McMahon & Watson, 2008; Patton & McMahon, 2006). Given that these social structures are a source of beliefs and values, their influence on individuals can be long-lasting, but they can also change during the individual's lifetime as the person moves between social influences (Patton & McMahon, 2006).

According to the framework, the interconnection of these systems results in the career choices of individuals (Patton & McMahon, 2006). Watson (2006) advises that career guidance initiatives should not undervalue or ignore this interconnection, because career development is a complex and a dynamic process that exists in a continually changing socio-environmental context, like the ever-changing world (Watson 2006).

Figure 2: Systems Theory Framework of Career development



Source: Patton & McMahon, 2006. p154.

Figure 2 above shows that, central to the STF is the individual system consisting of the intrapersonal influences (personality, ability, beliefs and interests). These influences differ

for each individual as people construct their unique career understanding, of who they are, and what they want to be in future (McMahon & Watson, 2008). However, the individual system does not function in isolation, but it is also a representation and a part of a larger social system (peers, family, society) as illustrated in the second layer of the image (McMahon & Watson, 2008; Patton & McMahon, 2006). This larger social system enables individuals to construct a sense of self through interaction with their social context, depicted in circular shapes (Patton & McMahon, 2006).

Figure 2 also shows that the individual and the social systems function within the broader system - the environment context (globalisation, employment market, political decisions). Also, depicted in oval shapes in the image (McMahon, Patton & Watson, 2004). These circumstances may be beyond the person's control, but they influence the individual's career decisions and choices (Patton & McMahon, 2006; McMahon & Watson, 2008).

The STF further presents the interaction and changing nature of these influences, described as a dynamic, open system (McMahon and Watson, 2008). These depicted in Figure 2 as *Recursiveness*, *Change over time* and *Chance*. The term *recursiveness* refers to interaction within an individual, between the individual and his or her context (McMahon *et al.*, 2004). Each of the different systems and subsystems is open to influence and thus accessible to influence (McMahon, & Watson, 2008). Hence, the different systems and subsystems bordered with a broken line in Figure 2. *Change over time* represents the fact that an individuals' career development happens throughout their whole life; decision making becomes an ongoing process on an individual's career development (Patton & McMahon, 2006). The dimension of *time*, therefore, refers to this process of ongoing decision-making and accounts for change over time (Patton & McMahon, 2006).

In Figure 2, *time* is presented as a circular drawing to emphasise that the journey of career development is a continuous development. It may include forward and backward movements; movements that are multi-directional and multi-levelled and the role of the past, present and future influences (Patton *et al.*, 2006). The complexity of career development influences, as presented in the STF, is not logical or predictable (Patton *et al.*, 2006).

Chance refers to unforeseen or unpredictable events or a chance that may lead to an employment opportunity or a particular career — described as 'being at the right place at the right time' or when a particular unplanned incident leads one to a particular career path or employment (Watson 2006). Such incidences have a significant influence on career decisions and choices. Figure 2 shows the random flashes as *chance*. The STF asserts that only the individual may only experience *chance*; hence, chance is viewed as subjective from an outsider's perspective. At times, the individual may not even be aware and not experience it as chance (Watson 2006).

Critics of the Systems Theory Framework argue that the constructivist thinking presented by the theory appears vague since it does not provide step-by-step strategies to direct the career counselling process (Hoskins, 1995). According to Hoskins (1995), this is a frustrating approach for the linear, task-oriented career counsellor. On the other hand, advocates of the approach find it very useful in that the approach also empowers the clients through increased awareness of self, particularly on socio-environmental issues that influence their career choices, which can significantly enhance the effectiveness of the traditional career counsellor (Hoskins, 1995). Thomsen (2018) asserts that the STF is an appropriate framework to address youth career development because it acknowledges that young people's lives lived in communities and that the decisions they make to shape their futures entangled in the multiple communities in which they live (Thomsen, 2018).

The following section discusses the social, environmental and individual systems responsible for career development to happen, particularly on young people as advised by the SFT.

2.8.1 The Social, Environmental and Individual Systems

2.8.1.1 The Social System

Literature suggests that, even though young people are able to make autonomous decisions, their career development primarily influenced by sociological factors (Holland, 1997). The social system represents the principal social influences with which individuals interact (Watson 2006). These social factors are a source of beliefs, values, and attitudes

that are learned by individuals throughout their lives and they are ever-changing as the person moves between other social influences (Patton & McMahon, 2006). It is through interaction with social structures such as school, family, friends, and culture that young person learns about and explores careers, which ultimately lead to their career choices and future occupations (Holland, 1997).

2.8.1.1.1 School

Schools are a social environment where young individuals spend a significant amount of time and, therefore, have a critical influence in the learners' experience and self-perception, which eventually impacts on their future careers and professional lives (Baker *et al.*, 2003). Schools can instil the values, attitudes, career choices, and decision-making skills necessary to plan for the learners' future (Kniveton, 2004). The school environment is well-positioned to deliver career development and other life skills that may assist young people in tackling their everyday challenges socially and emotionally, including assisting learners to discover their interests, aptitudes and personalities (Kniveton, 2004). However, schools in rural and disadvantaged communities struggle to deliver active career development as compared to schools in higher social-economic areas (Maree, 2009). This is due to the challenges faced by the schooling system in disadvantaged areas, including inadequate resources like qualified teachers and libraries, lack of thorough parental monitoring, poverty and other social and cultural factors that have negative implications to career development (Buthelezi *et al.*, 2010; Maree, 2009).

2.8.1.1.2 Community

The different communities in which young people grow can influence their careers through the information and experiences they receive from these communities. The values and beliefs shape the future lives of young people around them in communities, including what they seek in their future working lives (Duane & Associates, 2002). Accordingly, communities that have positive role models and youth empowerment programmes increase the youths' ability to succeed in life and to make positive career choices (Bogenschneider *et al.*, 1998). The role of community authorities in career development is to provide positive support, opportunities for skill and competency development. Also, they could partner with young people to develop them morally, socially and intellectually

with relevant skills to face their future career lives and face the rapidly advancing world (Bogenschneider *et al.*, 1998). Suggested career development initiatives in rural and disadvantaged communities include providing youth development opportunities to build essential competencies and life skills; and providing access to multiple opportunities for youth to develop assets in the physical, intellectual, psychological, emotional, and social domains (Rao & Rao, 2014).

2.8.1.1.3 Family

The family's influence on career choices is stronger than the influence of the individual personality trait (Bollu-steve & Sanni, 2013). Information and influence received from parents, siblings and relatives shape the career decision and choices of young people (Bollu-steve & Sanni, 2013). The influence of family values, beliefs, economic and social status of the family or parents: are influencing factors considered. The family's beliefs, financial and social status, shapes the occupational values of their children because it determines the school attended, where the person lives, available opportunities and occupational expectations (Abiola, 2014). A study by Abiola (2014) in Nigeria confirmed that highly educated parents have more resources, both financially and in terms of academic advice to support their children than more impoverished parents. So, the higher the socio-economic status of parents, the more likely they are able to afford and engage positively with the young person resulting in positive outcomes on career development (Mortimer & Finch, 1986).

In the case of rural and disadvantaged communities, family influence is minimal in terms of financial support and career advice. Many young people in rural areas experience parental absence in their homes, especially the absence of fathers in the household and stay with guardians or extended family members (Albien & Naidoo, 2016; Dodge & Welderufael, 2014). In many instances, they are also exposed to parental substance abuse and other economic hardships, resulting in difficulty to make sound career decisions and choices (Albien & Naidoo, 2016; Dodge & Welderufael, 2014). These family challenges impact negatively on their wellbeing and career development (Chuong & Operario, 2012).

2.8.1.1.4 Peers

Peer relationships and career choice influence is common among young people through peers. Adolescents are usually influenced by their peers because they rely on their friends for the confirmation of choices that they make in their lives, including career decisions (Felsman & Blustein, 1999). This is because young people utilise close peer relationships as support networks in exploring life, including career choices (Felsman & Blustein, 1999). Literature reveals that in the absence of proper career development and guidance, learners resort to peer advice (Orkiro & Otabong, 2015; Odirile, 2012). Hence, peer mentorship programmes implemented by many countries as a career development approach (Odirile, 2012; Orkiro & Otabong, 2015). In countries like Uganda, Kenya and Nigeria, programmes for peer counselling were established in some schools to assist learners with their career decisions and choices (Odirile, 2012; Orkiro & Otabong, 2015; Walaba & Kiboss, 2013). The role of the peer counselling programs is to enable learners to motivate each other and to share relevant information on career choices among each other (Odirile, 2012).

2.8.1.1.6 Role models

The positive role models are found to have a considerable influence on career decisions and choices of young people. A role model is defined as an individual whom people can identify with as she, or he may have qualities that other individuals may aspire to have (Matshabane, 2016). Exposure to a positive role model may influence the career decisions and overall life plans of young people leading to a higher feeling for learners to engage in proactive career behaviours, such as career planning, setting goals, and exploring options (Matshabane, 2016). Role models could be parents, media role models, and successful individuals in communities.

Studies reveal that individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds who achieve success in careers are often seen as role models by other members of their community (Lockwood, 2006). For example, a doctor from a small community may inspire other youths in the community to believe that they can also achieve professional success (Lockwood, 2006). Hence, role models in disadvantaged communities may assist young people to overcome

perceived barriers from the community to improve their self-efficacy and their careers (Dodge & Welderufael, 2014). Positive role models can be used in disadvantaged communities to motivate young people towards positive career development because often, the youth is demotivated by their socio-economic situations leading to lack of confidence, motivation and a sense of hopelessness all which contribute to adverse career decisions (Buthelezi *et al.*, 2010).

2.8.1.1.6 Gender and occupational stereotypes

Gender and occupational stereotypes, to a large extent also influence the career choices of young people. Often, society sees certain types of work as appropriate to either men or women (Sears & Gordon, 2011; Hewitt, 2010). Women may be discouraged from seeking education and training in trades such as construction, manufacturing, and transportation (Hewitt, 2010) which are perceived to be for males. While females are seen to be more suitable for occupations like nursing, teaching and clerical duties based from their traditional or social roles as mothers and caregivers. Stereotypes can create limited career options for the youth, as they see themselves not capable of undertaking some careers as determined by their gender (Sears & Gordon, 2011). It also results in an inaccurate judgement and becomes a barrier to career choices and decisions because many young people would neglect specific career fields due to stereotype insights (Hewitt, 2010).

2.8.1.1.7 Culture

Cultural values and societal relationships also play a significant role in career decisions and choices of young people. The influence of culture is that it determines how to view the world; which religion to follow; which profession to follow; where to live; and many other cultural values and beliefs (Strohnschneider, 2002). These cultural concerns can either complicate or lessen career decisions, depending on the persons' cultural background. The influence of culture on career decisions could either be through individualistic cultural values, or collectivism cultural values (Aslinia *et al.*, 2011)

Individualistic values refer to the individual's values, behaviours and thoughts as they relate to the person and not the society or group (Aslinia *et al.*, 2011). Collective values

are more concerned with the group's practice of cultural values, to fulfil the necessities of the group, and mutual respect highly emphasised (Aslinia *et al.*, 2011). Literature asserts that young people whose cultural values are individualistic demonstrate self-independence, competitive attitudes in planning and deciding on their careers (Brown, 2002). On the other hand, young people within collectivistic cultures are more likely to follow the group's decision in planning and deciding on their career and would make decisions that will satisfy their families or communities values and expectations (Bolles, 2008). It is confirmed that individualist cultures are typically found in urban, higher socio-economic areas, while collectivistic cultures typically found in rural areas (Aslinia *et al.*, 2011; Brown, 2002). Hence, youth from rural areas become more vulnerable in terms of employment because they lack independence in deciding their careers and occupations.

2.8.1.2 Environmental System

The environmental system refers to circumstances beyond the person's control, which may include the person's socio-economic status, media, information technologies, among others (Patton & McMahon, 2006).

2.8.1.2.1 Socio-economic status

The influence of socio-economic status is that specific financial and other resources enable or influence the choice of careers and future occupation (Bolles, 2008). Young people from disadvantaged and lower socio-economic areas are often vulnerable to multiple challenges, such as absence of unpredictable supply of electricity, inadequate educational resources, unsupportive home environment, technological delays, including limited access to computers and the Internet; sexual and substance abuse and a loss of hope for a brighter future (Dodge & Wolderufael, 2014). Many of these risks are related to poverty, and they create serious barriers that influence the youths' career decisions and choices (Dodge and Wolderufael, 2014). The poverty experienced by these communities also limits the resources they allocate to their children for them to be successful in school. It deprives the learners of occupational choices and decreases opportunities for the youth to further their education and training (Dodge & Wolderufael, 2014). Those with higher socioeconomic status are often exposed to many career

opportunities that are available and are more likely to be knowledgeable when deciding on professional occupations (Bolles, 2008; Dodge and Welderufael, 2014).

2.8.1.2.2 Media

Media has a significant influence on career decisions and choices of young people. It shapes how young people perceive the world by creating a coherent picture of future occupations for young people (Sharma, 2015). Movies and television shows tend to focus on individual careers which influence and shape peoples' ideas of those careers by portraying work-related activities of fictional characters (Lipscomb, 2015). Research reveals that many young people are influenced by television programmes when choosing a career. Entertainment options like law enforcement, advertising and journalism are often glamorised, making them seem like popular options (Lipscomb, 2015). Mass media, especially television, newspapers, and social media, are frequently used to seek information regarding various professions, the job market, and knowledge about the world (Lipscomb, 2015). Even though the media cited as one significant influence on young peoples' career choices, the literature is not clear on whether these young people are choosing particular careers based on media exposure (Sharma, 2015).

2.8.1.2.3 Social media

The use of social media in career-related activities has increased dramatically in recent years, and it is a popular communication platform for the youth (Bimrose, Hughes, & Barnes, 2011). Even though social media is mainly used to network with friends and catching up with events; it is also widely used for keeping abreast with career paths, employment and business opportunities. Social platforms enable young people to engage in career discussions and inspired by significant career decisions (Oluwole, 2018). Kettunen, Sampson & Vuorinen (2015) recommends that career practitioners should gain competence and confidence in using the existing and emerging technologies to provide efficient an efficient career guidance service. These latest wave of technologies, have huge potential to improve career development services (Kettunen, Sampson & Vuorinen, 2015).

2.8.1.2.4 Information and Communication Technologies

The significance of Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) in career guidance is that it presents a range of digital devices that enables communication and opportunities availed (Kelles-Viitanen, 2005). They efficiently avail career information to users, facilitate application processes to tertiary institutions and employment, and enables youth to explore various career opportunities (Heeks, 2009). The lack of ICT in rural areas results to isolation and unemployment. Heeks, 2009 suggests the critical need for ICT in rural areas given the fact that most public services, career and occupational opportunities are far from these areas. ICTs also have a potential to remove the social, economic, and geographical isolation by enabling youth access to information, education and other opportunities in the comfort of their communities (Ranga & Pradhan, 2014).

2.8.1.3 Individual System

Patton & McMahon (2006) advises that the individual system is central in the career decision process. These are the qualities and personality traits that make individuals to make decisions on particular careers and occupations (Sears & Gordon, 2011). The individual system consists of intrapersonal influences, such as personal interests, personal values, skills and self-concept (Sears & Gordon, 2011; Patton & McMahon, 2006).

2.8.1.3.1 Personal interests

According to Hewitt (2010), personal interest is an essential factor in decision making as most people want to do what they enjoy most. Personal interests are acquired from lifelong experiences, including school, parents, and friends. As one continues to acquire personal interests throughout a lifetime, career decisions and interests also evolve (Hewitt, 2010). Also, as the individual meets new people and new experiences, the person's interests also change and are replaced by the new interests (Hewitt, 2010).

Therefore, the personal interests of the youth influenced by their social and environmental exposures.

2.8.1.1.3.2 Personal values

Personal values are the individual's fundamental beliefs that the person holds dearest (Sears & Gordon, 2011). These are a source of motivation; hence, individuals tend to pursue more forcefully the values that have more meaning to them than those that are less important to them. Young people are more likely to actively pursue education and certain careers if they relate to their beliefs and values (Hewitt, 2010). Social institutions like family, schools, church, and community play a huge role in instilling and influencing these particular values on individuals to the extent that many young people would choose careers and occupations that would not undermine their values (Sear & Gordon, 2011).

2.8.1.3.3 Positive self-concept

Positive self-concept or self-esteem is one of the major influencers on career decisions and choices of young people (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987). Self-esteem refers to how individual judges or feels about oneself (Woolfolk, 2004). Positive self-esteem determines how well a person fits with the social and working world and the readiness of the person to participate in life by balancing their social demands and personal desires (Hewitt, 2010). Young people with low self-esteem are more likely to display poor psychological adjustment when faced with stressful situations and making career decisions (Zeigler-Hill & Wallace, 2012). Empowerment programs on problem-solving and life skills are highly recommended for increasing the self-esteem, to enable the individuals to face challenges and effectively adjust to complexities in the social environments (Mruk, 2013).

Youth in rural and disadvantaged areas are likely to have low self-esteem resulting from the various socio-economic challenges they face. Hence, career development approaches for the rural and disadvantaged youth should also incorporate life skills programmes to continually motivate and inspire the youth towards future careers despite the hardships they face (Chuong & Operario, 2012). These programmes also ensure that the emotional, recreational, academic, mental, and physical health, career and vocational needs of the youth explicitly addressed holistically (Chuong & Operario, 2012).

2.9 CONCLUSION

The chapter started by highlighting international and national studies relating to youth unemployment and career guidance. It also covered the state of youth unemployment in

South Africa; the impact of youth unemployment; the national policies and strategies addressing youth unemployment as well as the career development practices in South Africa. The chapter also presented the Systems Theory Framework (STF) which has been adopted by the study to guide the investigation of career guidance approaches to alleviate youth unemployment.

The following chapter presents and discusses the research process followed by the study. Presented is the research paradigm, research design and methodology; the data collection techniques; data analysis and the approach applied to address the validity and reliability of the research process.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented and discussed the state of youth unemployment and career development in South Africa. It also highlighted some international and national studies relating to the role of career guidance to alleviate youth unemployment. The career development approaches and practices in South Africa were also discussed in the chapter, as well as the Systems Theory Framework, which provides a basis and guidance for the study. This chapter presents the research methodology that was followed in conducting the study. This includes the research paradigm; research design; the data collection techniques; the research process; data analysis and the approaches applied in addressing the validity and reliability during the research process.

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

A research paradigm is defined as the researcher's 'worldview' or school of thought that informs the meaning of the research data (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). It is the guiding framework that informs practice in a field of study, including the assumptions, concepts, values, and beliefs that create a way of viewing reality (Willis, 2007). Paradigms are significant in research because they dictate the beliefs and moralities for scholars in a particular discipline, prompting what should be studied and how the results should be construed (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). The researcher was motivated by the transformative paradigm, which is driven by social justice and human rights agenda to conduct this study (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). The paradigm targets marginalized communities such as racial or ethnic minorities and the poor (Mertens, 2009). Hence, highly recommended for those researching in culturally diverse and marginalized communities.

The advantage of the paradigm is that it guides and engages the researcher to work inclusively with these communities and to challenge and analyse positions of power and privilege in pursuit of social justice and human rights (Mertens, 2009). The paradigm is referred to as transformative because it seeks to change situations and confront social oppression to improve social justice (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Mertens, 2009). In doing so, it treats research as an act of construction rather than discovery. It is more concerned with uncovering hidden social practices that will result in liberation and emancipation (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Hence, it positions the researcher as a promoter of human rights who can address issues of power, oppression, and trust among research participants (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Mertens, 2009).

This study adopted this paradigm in line with the aim of the study to address youth unemployment in marginalized communities. The framework guides the researcher in gaining insight into why and how the rural youth marginalized. Moreover, how the socio-economic environment contributes to the marginalization of the community and the youth? The understanding of this local context and the linkage with the research assists the study in identifying possible solutions to mitigate these disparities as prescribed by the paradigm.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

Akhtar (2016) describes a research design as the plan, structure and strategy which the researcher develops and use to guide the research process. A research design provides advanced planning of the methods to be adopted for collecting the relevant data and the techniques to be used in the analysis; guided by the research objective of the research and resources required to achieve a credible research (Akhtar,2016)

3.3.1 Qualitative Approach

Qualitative research refers to any type of research that produces findings not derived from statistical procedures or other methods of quantification(Rahman,2017). This methodology relates to research on people's persons' lives, experiences, behaviours,

emotions, including their social movements, cultural influences and interactions (Rahman,2017).

The approach was adopted by the study because it enables the researcher to produce a comprehensive description of the participants' feelings, opinions and experiences, as well to understand a range of social human behaviours and perceptions of specific issues. These could either be political, social or individually based (Rahman,2017; Creswell, 2009). One of the main advantages of using the qualitative approach is that it permits the researcher to understand how people make sense of their lives and experiences and then be able to formulate interpretations (Merriam, 2002). It also analyses peoples' lives, beliefs and behaviours, so, it is appropriate for research in natural settings where human behaviour and human life events happen naturally (Creswell, 2009; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

The study adopted the qualitative narrative design because of its ability to extract a rich understanding of youth unemployment and career guidance practices; and, to be able to understand the issues and the subjects under investigation in all their complexity. Given that, the study is engaging learners, teachers, community members and the youth at their locality where they experience these social issues; the qualitative narrative design enables the researcher to observe and analyse relationships, processes, people and the environment in which the events happened to reach to a sound conclusion (Rahman,2017; Struwig & Stead, 2001).

3.3.2 Case Study Research Design

Literature defines a case study as a form of qualitative research in which the researcher explores and conduct a complete examination on a single "case "in a real-life setting, by intensively describing and analysing the social phenomenon such as groups or communities (Yin, 2014, Fàbregues & Fethers, 2019). A distinctive feature of a case study is that it concentrates on particular characteristics of the case being studied, by applying various methods and data sources to explore and explicate a group or community as well as the contextual features, relationships and practices influencing it (Fàbregues & Fethers,

2019). Its purpose is to know precisely the factors and causes responsible for the complete behavioural patterns of a unit and the place of the unit in its immediate social environment (Yin 2014, Fàbregues & Fetters, 2019, Akhtar,2016).

Given its potential for understanding complex processes as they occur in their natural setting, the researcher adopted a case study research design for this study. It is a suitable research design for answering 'how' and 'why' questions like why youth there is such high levels of youth unemployment and how career guidance is delivered to address youth unemployment in this case and context. This research design assists the researcher to examine the specific phenomenon in detail by performing an in-depth and intensive analysis of the selected case (Fàbregues & Fetters, 2019, Yin,2014); Conduct the study in natural settings where the people interact and exchange their perceptions over time. The natural setting is important in this case to maintain the naturalness of the research situation and the natural course of events; to understand the context in which the case under investigation is tangled and the interconnected processes that cannot be disassociated from the case (Yin, 2014).

The researcher in this instance, is interested in understanding how and why such processes take place and, consequently, uncovering the interactions between the case and its context (Yin,2014). The questions concerning how and why phenomena occur are particularly important in this study.

3.4 SAMPLING

The study employed the purposive sampling procedure in selecting a suitable population to participate in the study. Sampling refers to the process of choosing an appropriate sample, or a representative part of a community, to determine characteristics of the whole population (Struwig & Stead, 2001). The purposive sampling technique was employed because it is mainly interested in acquiring data from information-rich participants, related to the research study (Struwig & Stead, 2001). The method only includes subjects selected based on specific characteristics or qualities and eliminates those failing to meet the criteria (Wimmer & Dominick, 1994; Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

The study participants with specific characteristics and qualities drawn from the following social groups:

- University students – The four (4) selected university students are from the community of Ixopo. These students are studying at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal in Durban, South Africa. The reason for their selection was that; they would be able to share their experiences on how they received career guidance towards their qualifications of choice; the career guidance they received in high school and their community; their socio-economic situation of their community and how it impacts on their future careers. Also, on how they perceive youth unemployment in their community, its impact and possible solutions.

The four (4) students were selected because they were the only ones available to participate in the interviews. In terms of their recruitment, the researcher was a mentor and supervisor for an undergraduate class at the university. So, she was able to identify one student from the community through an announcement, who then referred the researcher to the other students.

- Local Teachers - The four (4) teachers that were selected are from Ncomani High School and Thelamuva High School, both located at Ixopo community. From each school, two teachers selected because of their roles in career development and life orientation at the schools. The criteria for choosing schools was that they are the only ones that were within the jurisdiction of the community being investigated.

The researcher visited the schools to get permission from the Principals and allocated these teachers to work within the project. The life orientation teacher from Ncomani High school also organized the focus group for the researcher. However, there was no focus group at Thelamuva High School, but the teachers participated in the research. These teachers were also information-rich participants because they are community members and parents residing in the community under investigation. So, they were able to provide information and insight on career guidance practices, the state of youth unemployment in the community as well as other challenges faced by the community in general.

- High School Learners x 10- The selected ten (10) high school learners were the Matric (grade 12) learners who are on their last year in high school. These learners attend school at Ncomani High school. The reason why chosen is that they would be able to provide relevant information on career guidance practices as they have experienced them throughout their high school life. These were also essential participants to ascertain whether they are ready for post-high school and how they have prepared for tertiary or employment. The criteria for their recruitment was coordinated by the life orientation teachers, who also organized for the focal group. The group consisted of equal numbers of males and females. The decision on the quantity of the participants was to allow the researcher to have a productive focal group with manageable numbers. It also allowed all the learners to participate equally in the focal group.
- Municipal Official, was selected because of his role in the development and implementation of youth programmes. Officials of the local municipality have vast knowledge on the policies, strategies and development plans for youth development. They are considered as information-rich participants because they also have experience and information on career guidance initiatives, youth unemployment initiatives and the socio-economic environment of the community. The criteria for selecting the official based on his role as head of youth programs in the municipality. To be able to recruit the official, the researcher contacted the municipal manager and presented her interest of research in the area; the municipal manager then allocated the official as the relevant person to participate in the study. Since it is a small municipality, there were no other officials that could be available to participate because of work commitments.
- Community development workers (CDWs) - The two (2) community development workers consisted of youth from the community. These are deployed by the local authority to facilitate the communication between the local government structures and the community. They were selected because they have a comprehensive

knowledge and experience on the community, local youth development initiatives, including youth unemployment alleviation programs. These CWD's also represented the youth out of school in the research, given that there is no organized youth out of school groups that could participate in the study. In terms of recruitment, these were referred by the municipal official as information-rich participants concerning the community and youth. The rationale for the number of participants is that they are the only ones working with the targeted community as community development workers.

- Community members - The two (2) selected community members have community leadership roles in the community. They also represented local parents in the study. They are considered to have rich knowledge of the community dynamics and youth development issues, including youth unemployment, its impact and possible solutions. Their recruitment was also a referral from the local municipality as active community members who have shown interest and leadership in the overall development of the community and youth development in particular.

There were 23 participants in total, whose characteristics and qualities as information-rich participants described above.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

There are various techniques available for collecting data, depending on the nature, scope, and object of inquiry. Data collection is how measurement is realized (Du Plooy, 1995). In collecting data for the study, the researcher used semi-structured interviews, focus groups and documentary sources, which are standard data collection techniques in qualitative measurement.

3.5.1 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews are a qualitative data-gathering technique designed to obtain information about people's views, opinions, ideas and experiences (Patton, 1990). The interviews allow the researcher to be free to follow up emerging ideas, to probe responses and to ask for clarifications or elaboration because they are flexible and more likely to

yield spontaneous, unplanned information (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005). The use of semi-structured interviews also allows the researcher and the participants to gain trust with each other and to understand better how they both think and feel (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). In the study, the semi-structured interviews were used by the researcher to elicit information from the participants through open-ended questions. These type of questions allowed the interviewer to get productive responses and to introduce other related topics not included in the interview guide. A separate notebook used to record those responses. Specific interview questions designed for each of the sampled population in the study. The questions asked related to the following issues, in line with the study objectives:

- State of youth unemployment in rural areas;
- Career guidance approaches and practices used to prepare the youth for future careers and occupations;
- The influence of the socio-economic environment in the delivery of career guidance for the rural youth.
- Possible solutions for improving career guidance to alleviate youth unemployment in the rural community.

3.5.2 The Focus group

A focus group is a small but demographically diverse group of people whose reactions are studied through open discussions to determine responses expected from a larger population (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995). The researcher chose this data collection method because it is inexpensive given that the group was in the same location and space and because it is participatory, which allows the researcher and the participants to engage freely. Focus groups widely used as a data collection method in qualitative research, as a bridging strategy between scientific research and local knowledge (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995).

This data collection method, highly recommended because it allows the researcher to gain insights into people's lives through shared understanding of everyday life and how others influence individuals in a group situation (Mahesh & Neena, 2011). However, critics of this data collection technique are of the view that focus groups can be challenging to

control as group discussions can get out of hand and stray from the topic of the initial consultation. They argue that this situation requires the facilitator to powerfully manage the focus of the conversation without being too rigid so that participants do not feel that they cannot express themselves (Mahesh & Neena, 2011). During the interview, the facilitator also needs to protect other participants from ensuring everyone has an equal opportunity to speak and participate (Mahesh & Neena, 2011).

3.5.3 Documentary Sources

The researcher also collected data from several public documents, mainly published by the municipality to enrich the study with relevant information on the community. According to Mason in Steyn and Nunes (2001), text-based documents found to be useful by researchers because aspects of the social world can be traced or read through them and the method is un-obstructive because it does not require the cooperation of participants (Du Plooy, 1995). The documentary sources used were:

The Integrated Development Plan 2017/18 – UBuhlebezwe Local Municipality:

The IDP is the overall strategic plan of the municipality that aligns resources of the municipality with the agreed-on objectives and outcomes. It provides insight into the municipal development programs, including planned youth development initiatives and youth unemployment alleviation programs. The IDP is one of the essential tools for assisting the municipality in coping with its developmental role and seeks to redress past imbalances by meeting the basic needs of communities, particularly the most disadvantaged groups and those people living in the most underprivileged areas of the municipality. The IDP also recognizes that there is a need to promote economic growth through investment and strategic planning (UBuhlebezwe, 2018)

The Youth Development and Empowerment Plan 2015 Report – Harry Gwala District Municipality:

The youth development and empowerment plan is an essential document that guides the district municipality on its approach to youth development. The program presents interventions and services implemented for the effective and efficient mainstreaming of

youth development in the socio-economic development of the district. Ixopo community is part of the program as it falls under the Harry Gwala District Municipality.

Ubuhlebezwe Local Municipality website:

The official website for the municipality that provides information on the structure, mandate and programmes for the municipality.

The Local Economic Development Strategy and Implementation Plan for Ubuhlebezwe Municipality, 2017:

The Municipality's LED Strategy and Plan is a document that is developed by the municipality in partnership with local stakeholders, to stimulate local commercial activity and to improve the lives of the community. The plan suggests how local stakeholders should establish alliances and work together to address local economic barriers. The program is an excellent resource for understanding local business and economic opportunities; as well as the economic challenges and needs.

Ubuhlebezwe Annual Report 2017/2018:

The annual report for the municipality is a comprehensive report on the municipality's activities and expenditure throughout the preceding year. The purpose of the annual report is to promote accountability to the local community and stakeholders. On the performance of the municipality against the allocated budget. The report is an information-rich document because it shows the performance of the development programs, including youth issues under investigation by the study.

3.6 THE RESEARCH PROCESS

The research process refers to the practical investigation of the study by the researcher. The section discusses how the actual data collection process was undertaken. In collecting the data, the researcher used three techniques of data collection: Semi-structured interviews, Focal group and documentary sources.

3.6.1 Interviews

3.6.1.1. Conducting the interviews

In preparation for the interviews, the researcher developed an interview guide. The guide consisted of the questions and general topics that the interviewer wanted to explore during the interview, to save time and to keep the interactions focused. At the beginning of each interview, the researcher started by receiving the interviewee's consent by informing the participants about the aims of the study and that the information shared with policymakers, scholars and relevant academics with a view to address issues of career guidance and youth unemployment.

During the interviews, all the participants were informed that their participation was voluntary. Each interview lasted for an average of 30 minutes, depending on the respondent's role in the topic investigated, experience, and feelings. The researcher also ensured that all the questions were clearly understood by rephrasing them if the respondent did not understand. This process allowed the participants an opportunity to give relevant answers to the study to get meaningful results. During each interview, the researcher recorded detailed notes for analysis.

3.6.1.2 The interview process

The interviews with the participants conducted as follows:

University Students from the community

The four University students from Ixopo interviewed between the 11th to the 15th of September 2018 at the University of KwaZulu-Natal where they are studying. The aim was to give students the platform to share their experiences of career guidance and practices in their communities. Besides, sharing with the researcher how they made their career choices. It enabled the researcher to get an understanding of the career development practices in the community, and the factors that influence the career choices of the young people in rural areas.

Municipal Official

An interview with the municipal official took place on the 7th of June 2018 at the local municipal offices, Ixopo municipality. The interviewed municipal official is responsible for youth development initiatives within the local authority and, therefore, well informed about youth programmes, issues, and challenges in the community. The interview focused on the state of youth unemployment in the area; youth challenges and opportunities; career development programmes and other youth development activities. The official was also able to provide background on the socio-economic environment of the community under investigation.

Community Members

The interviews with two community members were conducted individually on the 7th of June 2018. These community members, who are also parents, were interviewed on issues relating to the state of youth unemployment in the community, including the causes, effects, and possible solutions, their knowledge of career development, their perceived role in career development and their proposed solutions or interventions.

Community Development Workers

The interviews with two community development workers were conducted individually on the 7th of June 2018. The community development workers also represented the youth out of school because they are also youth from the community. The interview was concerning the state of youth unemployment within the community; challenges and opportunities for the youth; career development activities in the community; as well as youth development activities aimed at preparing the youth for their future careers and occupations.

Local Teachers

Interviews with two teachers conducted on the 8th of June 2018 at Ncomani High School, Ixopo community. Also, the interviews with teachers from Thelamuva High School undertaken on the 6th of June 2018. The researcher administered the teachers' semi-structured interviews conducted on a one-on-one basis and a specific set of open-ended

questions. The issues and topics during the interviews related to the status of youth unemployment in the community. Youth challenges for the in and out of school youth; career guidance activities delivered by the school; other youth development initiatives in the community and their proposed solutions or interventions.

3.6.2 Focus group discussion

3.6.2.1 Conducting the focus group discussion

The Grade 12 learners of Ncomani High School at Ixopo community, were organized into a group of 10 learners with equal representation of five girls and five boys. The group discussions took place in an allocated classroom where a series of open-ended questions and topics were facilitated to the participants by the researcher. The focus group discussions took place on the 8th of June 2018 and lasted for an hour. The researcher was the primary facilitator of the discussion sessions. The researcher was able to take notes of the discussion for analysis.

3.6.3 Documentary Sources

3.6.3.1 Conducting data collection from document sources

Below are the documents that were consulted and analysed:

- *The Integrated Development Plan 2017/18 – Ubuhlebezwe Municipality:* The researcher was able to obtain insight into the development issues of the communities being researched through this document, as well as learn about the youth development activities planned.
- *The Youth Development and Empowerment Plan 2015 Report – Harry Gwala District Municipality:* The researcher was able to understand the context of youth development in the district, including the Ixopo community which falls under this district municipality. The document assisted the researcher to formulate interpretations and appreciation of the local youth context; the government's commitment towards youth development and alleviation of youth unemployment; and how the local authority views and plans for youth empowerment.

- *Ubuhlebezwe Local Municipality website*: The official website for the municipality that provided information on the structure, mandate and programmes for the municipality.
- *The Local Economic and Development Strategy and Implementation Plan for Ubuhlebezwe Municipality*: The document assisted the researcher by providing information on the economic activities, opportunities and barriers to local economic development in the community, including opportunities for the youth. The researcher was then able to establish interpretations relating to the study.
- *uBuhlebezwe Local Municipality Annual Report 2017/2018*: The annual report provided a comprehensive understanding of the community's activities as driven by the local municipality. It also shows the performance of the development programs, including youth issues under investigation by the study. This information added value to the contextual understanding of the issues under investigation.

These documentary sources provided the researcher with in-depth insight into the socio-economic environment of the community, as well as the youth challenges and plans in the area from the local authority's perspective.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

The term data analysis refers to the process of sorting the collected data by the researcher into categories and themes; and formatting the data into a coherent story and writing the qualitative text (Mouton, 1996). This process allows the researcher to organize and bring meaning to a large amount of data collected (Struwig & Stead, 2001). In analysing data, the researcher extracted sentences and paragraphs and themes from the raw data for the data to make sense. Hence, Schwandt (1997) advises that even though this process is very time-consuming, an analysis has to be rigorous, systematic, disciplined and methodologically documented to bring order, structure and meaning to the volumes of collected data.

3.7.1 Thematic Data Analysis

In analysing the data, the researcher applied the thematic data analysis method for extracting the raw data into meaningful content. Thematic analysis is the process of identifying patterns or themes within qualitative data to create meaning (Maguire &

Delahunt, 2017). The researcher followed six steps in thematic data analysis process as recommended by Braun & Clark (2006) to analyse the collected data.

Data familiarisation and immersion

The researcher started by familiarizing herself with the collected data. It is the first step in any qualitative analysis to become familiar with the collected data by reading the transcripts over and over again to understand the entire data (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). This step also ensures that the researcher has gathered all the needed data and becomes knowledgeable about the collected data before it is analyzed (Creswell, 2009; Braun & Clarke, 2006). During this step, the researcher was also able to make notes of early impressions.

Generating Codes

At this stage, the researcher started to organize the data systematically by identifying and generating codes. The role of coding in data analysis is to reduce the data into small chunks of meaning (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). The coding method informed by the research questions and the nature of the research. The researcher in this study used open coding, which is used to determine the concepts and categories that fit the data (Berg, 1998). The advantage of open coding is that it can identify themes and does not only focus on the naming of the categories and their supporting data, but also focuses how in the coding process these categories are related (Strauss, 1987). During the coding process, the original aim of the study was kept in mind for the researcher to remain open to multiple or unanticipated results that may emerge from the data (Berg, 1998). The researcher also jotted down ideas and themes emanating from the coding process.

Inducing themes

At this stage, the researcher had compiled a long list of codes that had across the data. The researcher focused on sorting the different codes and identifying themes. Themes were characterized by their significance to the research questions (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). In developing the themes, the researcher created a table to place the codes into themes as advised by (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Using a table made it easier for the

researcher to start seeing relationships between the codes and themes, and the different levels in the themes.

Elaboration - Reviewing themes

The process of elaboration in data analysis is whereby the researcher explores themes, codes, and how they interrelate with each other (Patton, 1998). During this stage, the researcher reviewed, modified, and developed the preliminary themes created in the previous stage (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). This was to ensure that the themes are coherent and distinct from each other, whether they make sense or whether the data supports the themes and also to create subthemes if necessary. Given the interdisciplinary nature of the study, the researcher was very cautious to avoid putting too much data in one theme, but instead created subthemes to make the analysis of the data less complicated.

Interpretation and generation of meaning

It is the final refinement of the themes, whose aim is to identify the essence of what the theme is about, and how they relate to each other to create a coherent story (Braun & Clarke, 2006). At this stage of the analysis, the researcher further refined the themes that he presented in the analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). During this stage, the researcher did not just paraphrase the content but identified areas of interest and how they relate to the study. Braun & Clarke (2006) advise that it is at this point that the researcher writes a detailed analysis of each theme and the story told by the theme.

Writing up

This stage relates to the endpoint of the data analysis that is incorporated into the study. The researcher, at this point, had started writing the stories emanating from the data analysis, which would include the analysis of data obtained in the documentary sources as described below.

3.7.2 Analysis of data obtained from documentary sources

The researcher applied the content analysis approach to analyse data from the documentary sources. The content analysis enables the researcher to sift through large volumes of data with ease in a systematic fashion by identifying patterns and themes in the text that are relevant to the study (Stemler, 2001). The content from the documents was analysed to identify their salient themes, and the analysis then integrated with the evidence gathered during the interviews and focus groups.

3.8 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Issues of both validity and reliability were considered in the data analysis process. The concepts of validity and reliability related to the trustworthiness of data in qualitative research.

Validity is the process of ensuring that there is a fair, honest and balanced account of social life from the view of those living in it, by trying to create a tight fit between the researcher's understanding, ideas and statements about social life and what is occurring in it (Neuman, 2006). While *reliability* refers to consistency, by suggesting that should the same study be repeated under similar conditions, it should be able to provide similar consistent results (Neuman, 2006). Reliability is critically important in research because if the measures are not reliable, then the study cannot produce useful information (Graziano & Raulin, 2000). The study has applied credibility and transferability to accommodate the validity and reliability of the study, as suggested by Krefting (1991).

Credibility

Credibility refers to the extent to which the findings are a true reflection of the life and world of the participants as experienced and described by them (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). To achieve credibility, the researcher used triangulation (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). The application of triangulation method to synthesize and validate the analysed data from the sources (interviews, focus groups, and document sources). The triangulation approach can examine existing data to strengthen interpretations based on the available evidence, and by examining information collected by different methods and different groups, findings can be corroborated across datasets, reducing the impact of potential biases that can exist in a single study (Global Health Sciences, 2008).

Transferability

Transferability in research means the degree to which findings applied to other settings, other than the one the researcher is studying (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). Smaling (1992) and, Babbie and Mouton (2001) state that in order to allow other researchers to use the findings and compare it with their work, a research study must contain an accurate description of the research process, including details of research situation and context. Providing detailed information allows the findings to be generalized to other settings.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher needs to understand the ethical issues of conducting research and interviewing participants. During the study, the researcher adhered to the ethical procedures relating to confidentiality and voluntary participation.

Confidentiality

In terms of confidentiality, the interviewer guaranteed the participants that the information or data they gave would be treated with confidentiality and used only for the study. Literature advises that researchers must follow the procedure for implementing confidentiality in qualitative interviews (Arksey & Knight, 1999). In this study, the researcher followed confidentiality procedures by using pseudo names for the participants. However, the researcher is mentioning the locations, places and titles or representation of the participants.

Voluntary Participation

All participants during the study were informed that the process and their participation is voluntary. And, they were informed that the information they shared was for the purposes of this study only.

3.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter was able to present and discuss the research methodology followed in conducting the study. It also presented the transformation research paradigm, which was adopted as a guide to the research study. The chapter also presented and discussed the data collection methods, sampling, and the research process – to show how the research

practically conducted. The procedures followed to analyse the data, as well as the ethical issues and strategies used to ensure validity and reliability data were also presented. The next chapter presents the findings of the study about its aims and objectives.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the researcher reported on the practical investigation into career development approaches at Ixopo using various qualitative research methods. This chapter presents and discusses the findings according to the aims and objectives of the study. These findings include the state of youth unemployment, career development practices and the socio-environmental factors that influence career development in rural areas and the proposed solutions to improve career development in rural areas.

These findings present the community perspectives, views and experiences of the participants from the community under investigation. These are also presented in the form of response quotations from participants, and biographical details of research participants shown in the table below.

4.2 RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

The findings presented have been derived from the engagement with the study participants as described below. In compliance with the confidentiality clause of the study, the real names of the participants disguised. In this study, the names given to the participants are not real names. Padgett (1998) indicated that using code numbers or pseudonyms rather than real names is a method for assuring confidentiality.

Table 7: Biographies of study participants

Source: Author

Participants	Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Highest Qualification	Occupation
1	TC 1	Female	28	BEd degree	Teacher, Ncomani High School
2	TC 2	Female	32	BEd degree	Teacher, Ncomani High School
3	TC 3	Male	34	BEd degree	Teacher, Thelamuva High School
4	TC 4	Female	52	Teachers diploma	Teacher, Thelamuva High School
5	MO	Male	30	National certificate	Municipality officer
6	CDW 1	Male	25	Matric	Community Development Worker
7	CDW 2	Male	29	National certificate	Community Development worker
8	Community Member 1	Female	55	Grade 4	Farmer
9	Community Member 2	Male	62	Grade 3	Farmer
	Pseudonym names				
10	Zanele	Female	20	3rd-year student	University Student
11	Melusi	Male	23	3 rd -year student	University Student
12	Neliswa	Female	19	1 st -year student	University Student
13	Muzi	Male	24	3 rd -year student	University Student
14-19	Learners 1-5	Female	17-19	Grade 12	High School learners
20-25	Learners 6-10	Male	17-19	Grade 12	High School learners

4.3 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

4.3.1 The State of Youth Unemployment in the Rural Areas

The findings reveal that there is a high rate of youth unemployment in the rural community. The community and the neighbouring towns have no industries that can absorb young job seekers. Commenting on the challenge of high youth unemployment, the local Municipal official said: *"As a municipality, we faced by a huge challenge of unemployment and poverty in our communities. We do not have industries here, so people go to Durban and other areas to get employment; it is terrible, especially for the youth"* (MO, Interviews, 07 June 2018).

The absence of job opportunities in rural areas is confirmed by Graham & Mlatsheni (2015) in that youth unemployment in rural areas is higher because most industries are in urban areas, so the rural youth geographically excluded. The proximity to employment sources and financial constraints to travel becomes a barrier in getting employment for the youth (Mlatsheni & Ranchhod, 2017). This situation attributed to the legacy of the apartheid government; whose policies were to keep the black majority in areas far away from job opportunities (Graham & Mlatsheni, 2015).

Youth that is Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs)

Findings reveal that there is an increased rate of unemployed youth which is not in education, employment or training (NEETs). Most of the youths NEETs in the community have resorted to alcohol, crime, drug abuse and have become a menace to the society. According to De Lannoy and Mudiriza (2019), this category of unemployed youth is very vulnerable to risk behaviour and risky job prospects like crime.

One of the interviewed community members confirmed that this category of youth is problematic in the community due to their idleness. A teacher who was interviewed also raised concern on this category of unemployed youth in that they tend to sell drugs to the learners.

According to De Lannoy and Mudiriza (2019), this category of youth is a high risk to themselves and the communities. Scholars warn that, if these remain unoccupied for more extended periods, the chances of them engaging in risky behaviours and risky job prospects like crime increases (De Lannoy and Mudiriza,2019). Nationally, there is concern over the increasing numbers of this youth category, yet, there are little recognition and engagement with the various NEETs. Other countries are said to have designed NEET strategies and are implementing incentives and programs to support the youth into education, training or employment (ILO, 2015; De Lannoy and Mudiriza, 2019).

Unemployed youth graduates

There is an increasing number of qualified youth in the community who cannot find employment. Most of them qualified in humanities, which could be a contributing factor to their employability. They even indicate that they did not get career guidance before tertiary; that is why they are facing employment challenges.

The teacher's comments on the unemployed graduates was that: *"The unemployment of graduates is disturbing and discouraging to current learners. The learners we teach are losing confidence and see no value in education. What society are we going to become if young people hate education?"* (TC3, Interviews, 6 June 2018).

Comments of a grade 12 learner when asked about future career plans told me that: *"I do not think it is worth it going to university because even the graduates are sitting at home and not working. Instead, those who have not gone to university get jobs from the shops". "Eish, I am confused if it is worth it to go to tertiary because many others have acquired their degrees but cannot find jobs"* (Learner 4, Focus Group,8 June 2018).

Moleke (2005) is of the view that most graduates from disadvantaged backgrounds tend to pursue saturated professions resulting in rejection in the labour market. Lack of career guidance is blamed for this situation in that most learners enter University with no idea about job prospects in the different sectors (Moleke, 2005).

The quality of public schooling system blamed for graduate unemployment. Many schools in black communities are under-resourced with unqualified teachers, especially in mathematics and science (Barker, 2003). The situation results in the production of ill-equipped learners who do not qualify for tertiary institutions or do not have relevant subjects that give them qualifications required by employers, like mathematics and sciences. (Myasthenia & Rospabe, 2002; Mokgohloa, 2006).

4.3.1.1 Causes of youth unemployment

Lack of local job opportunities

The findings indicate that the community and the neighbouring towns have no industries that can absorb young job seekers. Instead, there are a lot of informal businesses and Chinese shops in the area where the youth usually get job opportunities. However, this industry is said to be underpaying the youth. According to findings, the youth working in this sector is underpaid, and the working conditions are harsh. Moreover, the youth eventually resort to alcohol and crime because these jobs cannot fulfil their financial needs.

The absence of local job opportunities is confirmed by Graham & Mlatsheni (2015) in that youth unemployment in rural areas is higher than in urban areas, because most industries are in urban areas, so this youth is geographically excluded. This situation attributed to the legacy of apartheid government; whose policies were to keep the black majority in areas far away from job opportunities.

Low levels of education

Findings also reveal that most of the youth in the community has a low level of education due to their early exit from the schooling system. It makes them more unemployable. Many of them drop out of school due to their parents being unemployed to afford school fees. Some respondents indicated that learners abandon school earlier to get employment so that they can feed themselves and their families.

Findings further reveal that the high rate of school dropouts perpetuated by the lack of parental guidance and value systems. Most of the parents are uneducated and unemployed, and they put no value of education to their children. Most of the youth are also from single-parent families, stay with relatives, and often their parents are alcoholics. This results in the early exit in the schooling system.

Comments of the high school teacher on parental involvement was that: *"Many learners abuse alcohol and drugs at school and home. Their families who are often alcoholics themselves do not discipline them. When we call parents to discuss behavioural issues of their children, they send uncles or siblings to the school, and this does not help address the behaviour and school performance of the child."* (TC3, Interviews, 6 June 2018)

Comments of another high school teacher on youth unemployment was that: *"We experience many school dropouts for many reasons. Most of the times we are told parents cannot afford to maintain the children in school, so they leave school; sometimes they copy from their friends who are out of school and start by being absent for days and them eventually drop out of the school; for the girls, most times it is about pregnancy. Since poverty is high here, the girls get pregnant quickly so that they have someone feeding them and also qualify for social grants. So how can they be employed even if there could be industries because they do not have schooling and qualifications?"* (TC4, Interviews, 6 June 2018).

Literature also confirms that the academic progress and employment prospects of the rural youth is mainly affected by their social and personal context, including poverty, struggling parents and violence in society and schools (Buthelezi, Alexander & Seabi, 2010). These learners lack ambition and inspiration because they often struggle to balance their economic condition and studies. Literature suggests that career counselling is crucial for these learners, to assist them with balancing their socio-economic challenges and motivation for brighter future careers (Buthelezi et al., 2010).

Comments from the Grade 12 learner on the school dropout rates: *“Many of the people I started within Grade 8 dropped out along the way, some because of pregnancies, some got married, some see those who do not come to school and think it is cool and they start absenting themselves till they do not come any more”* (Learner 5, Focus Group, 8 June 2018).

Limited access to information and communication technologies

Findings reveal that the lack of access to ICT is also affecting the career development and job prospects for the rural unemployed youth. The study participants indicated that there is only one internet café in town and that the network data is expensive for them to search and apply for jobs. The learners also showed that this is a huge challenge to them when they want to search for tertiary institutions and apply for entrance. It is because most job opportunities and tertiary applications were now done online. And, this facility is not affordable for them.

According to literature, lack of access to information and communication technologies (ICT's) is a severe issue for rural youth and a contributor to youth unemployment. Moleke (2005) & Sharma (2015) say that rural youth are more disadvantaged than their counterparts in urban areas because they have inadequate resources, services and technologies to facilitate and pursue employment opportunities.

Lack of career guidance

The findings reveal that the absence or inadequate provision of career guidance in rural schools contribute to youth unemployment. According to the results, community schools are not well equipped in providing career guidance to learners. Hence, the learners have no career ambitions to keep them in school and motivated. Those that eventually go to tertiary institutions tend to choose qualifications that are not required by employers. And, they ultimately become unemployable.

Literature proclaims that inadequate provision of career guidance contributes to rural youth unemployment. Learners from rural communities are more affected by the absence of career guidance services, as compared to their counterparts in the urban areas (Maree, 2009). It is because schools in higher socio-economic areas can offer learners, a more diverse selection of careers linked to market demands, while schools in rural areas lack information on the trends of the labour market (Mudhovozi & Chireshe, 2012).

4.3.1.2 IMPACT OF YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Deviant youth behaviour

Findings reveal that youth unemployment in the community has contributed to socially abnormal behaviour among the local youth, including an increased level of alcohol, drug, and substance abuse. These idle youths have also become a menace in the community. Comments of a community member on the effects of youth unemployment: *"Our children here are swimming in alcohol, it is sad. It looks like they have lost hope in life and are also becoming a threat to us; they demand money and steal a lot to feed their habits."* (CM1, Interviews, 7 June 2018).

Comments from the Municipal official on effects of unemployment: *"The youth crime is very high in the community. It includes livestock theft and other robberies, including violent crimes to the extent that the Mayor has initiated a crime awareness campaign to be undertaken in July 2018. Youth will be encouraged to be involved in fighting against crime instead of being perpetrators"*. (MO, Interviews, 7 June 2018)

The finding agrees with literature in that youth unemployment is creating severe social problems such as increased risky behaviours like promiscuity, alcohol and drug abuse, as well as crime among the youth (Freeman, 1999). According to literature, most of the social crimes in South Africa perpetrated by youth, and the accelerating crime rate primarily attributed to the prevalence of youth unemployment and poverty (Clark, 2012).

Instead of being a source of growth stimulation, the army of unemployed youth becomes a potential threat to the well-being of the economy and national security (Nimenibo & Samuel, 2018). Literature also agrees with these findings in that youth unemployment is creating severe social problems such as increased risky behaviours like promiscuity, alcohol and drug abuse, as well as crime among the youth (Freeman, 1999).

Effects of the informal economy

The findings also reveal that, due to the absence of the formal economy in the area, qualified and unqualified youth eventually absorbed by the informal retail economy. These include the Chinese shops in the area and vendors on the streets. However, the youth become very frustrated in these jobs because of low income and unsatisfactory working conditions.

Literature asserts that the informal economy offers meagre wages, provide unsafe working conditions with no social security (Polity, 2015). Moreover, this poor employment results to the youth engaging in risky behaviours and crime because it fails to fulfil their financial needs (Polity, 2015).

Psychological effects

According to literature, there is evidence that unemployment, in general, is associated with lower levels of psychological well-being (Nimenibo & Samuel, 2018). The experience of unemployment is dehumanizing; causes loss of self-esteem and youth eventually perceive themselves as incapable (Freeman, 1999; Nimenibo & Samuel, 2018).

Findings indicate that unemployed youth are psychologically affected by unemployment. The frustration is even causing them to resort to alcohol and drug abuse, a behaviour that is very prevalent with the unemployed youth in the rural community. The study found that the unemployed graduates, in particular, have feelings of disappointment and discouragement because they are not able to fulfil their desired goals, and they feel like they have wasted their time pursuing tertiary education.

Comments of the Community development worker on unemployed graduates: *“It is so sad to see our sisters and brothers sitting at home for years after completing college. Our government is not doing enough, and I am scared they will commit suicide the way they are so frustrated”* (CDW1, Interviews, 7 June 2018).

Contribution to poverty

Findings also reveal that the unemployment of youth is severely contributing to the cycle of poverty. As productive and capable family members that are not employed, they also depend on the social grants of their older family members, a situation that further perpetuates poverty in families. Furthermore, they are adding to the burden already carried by the family.

According to literature, if the youth is unemployed, society loses the significant assets of young talents that should be improving the welfare of their families and communities (Durant & Powel, 2015). Moreover, many of their families already experience other socio-economic challenges and high levels of poverty (Durant & Powel, 2015).

4.3.2 CAREER DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES

4.3.2.1 Life Orientation at school

Findings reveal that the Life Orientation subject taught in the community schools that investigated. Life Orientation is a compulsory subject in all South African schools aimed at providing career guidance to learners to prepare them for post-high school (Maree, 2009). However, the findings show that the syllabus for this subject is not clear and that the teachers not equipped to deliver career guidance to learners. Hence, they use the period time to share health issues, alcohol, drug awareness and other social challenges faced by youth, and not only career-related topics.

Comments by the High School teacher on Life Orientation: *"We do not have adequate training and information on career development information, counselling, and guidance. Even though we share some career opportunities, we only share the little we know and also use this period to give the Grade 12 learners college application forms and assist them with filling them"* (TC4, Interviews, 6 June 2018).

Literature also confirms that teachers lack sufficient training on career guidance and counselling, and there is a lack of resources and relevant updated information for effective delivery of career guidance in South Africa (Prinsloo, 2007). Even though Life Orientation has a high potential of being a medium for career counselling and guidance, its provision in schools is problematic because of inadequate teaching methodologies and qualified teachers in career development (Prinsloo, 2007).

4.3.2.2 Counselling Services

Findings indicate that there are no formal career counselling interventions within the schools and the community. All the teachers and the learners had no idea what psychological career counselling and psychometric assessments entail.

The ignorance of the participants on such services is confirmed by literature that, career counselling is not accessible to most South Africans. These counselling services are limited to a privileged few because it is an expensive process, yet it is essential (Buthelezi, Alexander & Seabi, 2010). The literature further suggests that the inaccessibility of such services in disadvantaged communities is a legacy of apartheid where this service was intentionally not given to the disadvantaged majority (Stead & Watson, 2006)

4.3.2.3 Career guidance

The findings revealed that there is very minimum career guidance service given to learners at the schools. The teachers mainly assist learners about the provincial colleges and institutions which they can recommend or assist the learners with applications for tertiary. The teachers also indicated that they primarily support the grade 12 learners on this information.

The findings further reveal that the career information the teachers give to learners is minimal because they also do not have enough and updated information on institutions, college courses, labour market and career or occupational trends.

Comments from high school teacher on delivery of career guidance:

“Providing career guidance to learners at this final grade in high school is a problem because at this stage the learners have already chosen the subjects that determine or channel them to their career future” (TC2, Interviews, 12 June 2018).

Comments from one of the University students was that: *“I did not get any career guidance from my community at Ixopo until I finished Grade 12. I wanted to do teaching because it would give me a job when I finish my studies, but when I applied for education, it was already full. My friends advised me to take social sciences because they are still accepting new students; I do not know where I will work when I finish”* (Muzi, Interviews, 12 September 2018).

The literature agrees with this finding in that; career guidance is delivered very late for learners in many South African schools (Singh, 2016). Many learners make career choices during the registration at college, which is an indication that learners are inadequately prepared for higher education and eventually select courses or qualifications that do not meet the needs of the labour market (Singh, 2016). Also, the government is not equipping the teachers with relevant information or training to adequately prepare learners for their future careers (Prinsloo, 2007).

4.3.2.3 Community Career Guidance Initiatives

4.3.2.3.1 Annual Career Exhibition

Findings show that the local municipality hosts an annual career exhibition, where all Grade 12 learners from the neighbouring communities invited to attend. The municipal officials indicate that the purpose of the career exhibition is to present to learners the different universities and institutions, and their course offerings and information in the working world, and labour market demand. The municipality also visits the local schools to disseminate information about bursaries and learnership opportunities annually.

In response to this initiative, the teachers indicated that the activity is not enough to address the career guidance issues of the learners. Their view is that these exhibitions should be held at each school to enable the learners to engage with those presenting career opportunities intimately. They further suggest that these exhibitions must include more tertiary institutions, skills or technical colleges and employers to accommodate the youth who do not qualify for University. Also, learners from Grade 8 and 9 should be invited to attend these exhibitions so they can make career decisions earlier.

Comments from the Community Development Worker: *"Unfortunately, this service as delivered by the municipality also does not cater for the out of school youth, who no longer have access to the school environment."* (CDW2, Interviews, 7 June 2018).

Comments from the high school teacher on the annual career exhibition: *"The problem with this activity is that it combines many schools in one venue, so our learners become intimidated to ask questions and know more. It must come per school where we can involve other grades as well"* (TC1, Interviews, 8 June 2018).

The exhibition confirms the claim by the Department of Higher Education and Training that the government has crucial extensive career interventions at schools and municipalities (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2012).

4.3.2.3.2 Youth empowerment and business skills programmes

The findings reveal that business skills and other youth empowerment programmes are implemented by the municipality as part of career development to address youth unemployment. These programs seek to empower the youth with productive skills and opportunities for future occupations. However, the financial resources of the municipality are limited to introduce other essential programmes.

Findings further reveal that the municipality, in collaboration with government departments like the department of health and social welfare and community safety, has programs to empower youth with mental health and emotional health skills. These interventions aimed at reducing alcohol and drug abuse and preparing the youth for future employment.

According to the findings, the municipality offers business opportunities for the youth and have initiatives to fund those businesses. A handful of companies supported by the municipality in the areas of brick making and construction. The municipality motivates the youth through various platforms to bring forth creative and sustainable projects and business ideas for possible funding.

The findings also show that the municipality offers skills development programmes to cater for out of school youth. Targeted are the youth that did not finish school and acquired education up to Grade 10, and those that did not go to school at all. In collaboration with neighbouring Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges, these young people must be trained with skills that will enable them to be employed or self-employed.

Comments by the Municipal official on youth programmes: *"The municipality also has financial challenges, and this challenge often disrupts these services"*. (MO, Interviews, 7 June 2018).

The findings are contrary to the claims by Singh (2016) that activities provided by the government fail to accommodate the youth out of school. In this regard, literature claims that there is limited assistance for the post-secondary learners who are no longer in the school system. According to the findings, there is evidence that the municipality is making considerable efforts to accommodate out of school youth. However, Du Toit & Van Zyl (2012) indicates that, even if the government is making an effort, the quality and consistency of the government services are deficient. This view is in agreement with the findings, in that the municipality confirms that their financial capacity is meagre to improve these services and make them more useful.

4.3.2.4 National Career Advice Service Centre (CAS)

The findings reveal that the participants were also ignorant of the National Career Advice Service Centre (CAS), which is the ICT based telephone helpline initiated in 2010 by the government to provide affordable career guidance services to all South Africans across the country (Singh, 2016). The teachers, learners, community development workers and the University students from the community indicated that they have never heard of the service and its offerings.

One of the University students commented on this government service: *"I have never heard of this service before. It is my first time to hear about it"* (Muzi, Interviews, 12 September 2018). Comments from the Community development worker on this government service: *"If I knew about this service, I would have recommended a lot of young people, especially the out of school youth who struggle with career guidance information"* (CDW1, Interviews, 7 June 2018).

It is contrary to the literature, which claims that the system is accessible to all learners despite their socio-economic disadvantages and that it accommodates learners from rural areas, and the helpline allows the advisers to interact with learners in assisting them with their career decisions (Singh, 2016; Keevy *et al.*, 2012).

4.3.3. Social, Environmental and Individual influence on Career Guidance in Rural Areas

4.3.3.1 Social Factors

4.3.3.1.1 School

The findings reveal that schools in the rural areas find it difficult to instil values, attitudes, and career decision skills necessary for the learners' future because the school competes with a hostile society influence where learners are exposed and involved in alcohol, drugs, and sexual behaviours. Comments from a High school teacher on school influence was that: *"Many learners smoke and drink alcohol here. They do not take school seriously, and it is so hard to make them focus because if they engage in bad behaviours, what makes things worse is that their parents do not care about these behaviours. We are sometimes afraid of our learners, and often we feel our lives are in danger as they treat us disrespectfully"* (TC3, Interviews, 6 June 2018).

Literature suggests that schools are well-positioned to deliver career development and life skills to assist learners in discovering their interests, aptitudes and personalities in preparation for their future occupational lives and careers (Kniveton, 2004). However, rural schools struggle to effectively delivery career guidance because they often compete

with the stressful socioeconomic influences existing within the community (Buthelezi *et al.*, 2010).

Most schools in lower socio-economic communities are often overpopulated and have large classes which are overwhelming for teachers. There is no psychosocial support for learners at risk, like caring teachers, social workers or counsellors (Gustafsson 2011). Even where these exist, the large number and overwhelming nature of psychosocial issues ranging from hunger, violence, drugs, pregnancies undermines their effectiveness. Hence, the schools experience a high dropout rate (Gustafsson 2011; Mokgohloa, 2006).

4.3.3.1.2 Community

Literature asserts that the values and beliefs shape the future lives of young people around them in communities, including what they seek in their future working lives (Duane & Associates, 2002). Accordingly, populations that have positive role models and youth empowerment programmes increase the youths' ability to succeed in life and to make positive career choices (Bogenschneider *et al.*, 1998; Duane & Associates, 2002).

The findings reveal that the local municipality is making efforts to empower the youth towards positive careers and future through skills development, entrepreneurship and career guidance initiatives. However, the municipal official indicates that the local youth is not easily motivated to participate in these programs because they are looking for quick money. So they find these programs a waste of time.

4.3.3.1.3 Family

Literature suggests that family and parental influence has a significant bearing on the career choices of young people. It may include parental actions, parental values and beliefs, familial connectedness, expectations, and how they speak about a particular career (Mtemeri, 2017). Findings reveal that most of the parents in rural areas do not participate in the educational and career lives of their children. It is because many households have single parents, usually mothers who are also working and have no time to assist with school issues. Also, most of the families and parents are uneducated and unemployed. Hence, they do not value parental involvement in educational activities as

because many learners experience parental absence in their homes. Most parents, especially fathers, are working in faraway places, and the learners left with only mothers, guardians or extended relatives who might not have a direct interest in the academic life of the young person. Comments from a high school teacher were that: *"The parents have no idea of career guidance for their children, all they know is that they must go to college and get employment afterwards"* (TC2, Interviews, 8 June 2018).

Comments from the community member was that: *"As a parent, I do not have an interest of my child's career choice, it is the child's responsibility to do what she thinks will be best for her after completing school, so long as she gets employed"* (CM2, Interviews, 7 June 2018). This comment is confirmed by literature in that, parents from low socio-economic areas have less interest on educational matters, and that the more educated parents are, the more they will be able to provide appropriate guidance for the success of their children's careers (Buthelezi *et al.*, 2010).

Findings also show that families in rural areas give education less value as compared to employment and earning. They often encourage the youth to get work to make money rather than encouraging them to pursue education and professional careers. It has an effect and a significant influence on the career decisions of young people. Both parents (interviewed as community members) indicated that to them, it is vital that youth earn salaries quicker so that they can take care of themselves and their families.

Comments from a Community member was: *"So long as they can read and write they must go and look for work. We know many people who have succeeded without finishing school, they must stop being lazy and go to the mines to work. Also, the government must teach them jobs that will give them money quickly like construction"* (CM2, Interviews, 7 June 2018). Such views may be attributed to the desperation for survival in rural areas, given the high levels of poverty. It may also be that most parents in rural communities are not educated and unemployed. However, educated parents have more resources financially, so they also can positively influence their children without rushing them to earn salaries (Nimenibo & Samuel, 2018).

On the same note, the findings reveal that the desperation by families for their children to earn salaries sooner affects their choice of qualifications and occupations. They can influence the type of career or requirement their children choose, based on their expectations in that particular field. A Social Science university student commenting on family influence said: *“I wanted to do teaching badly because my family expects me to graduate and get employed. I don’t like this Social Science because I don’t think it will give me employment opportunities. So I think next year I will rather change to social work because it also will give me employment immediately when I complete my studies”* (Neliswa, Interviews, 13 September 2018). Literature also confirms that the financial status of the family shapes the occupational values of children because it determines the individual values and professional expectations (Sears & Gordon, 2011), in this case, the youth are forced to undertake certain occupations because of family expectations to earn salaries sooner.

On the other hand, the findings indicate that some family members have a positive influence on the youth. A University student from the community stated that he was influenced by the success of his brother to undertake the Law qualification at University. An LLB student at University, commenting on family influence: *“My elder brother is a politician and I always wanted to do something that has politics. That is how I chose law because I want to be in politics”* (Melusi, Interviews, 11 September 2018). The quote above indicates that, if one family member is successful, that person is likely to have a positive influence on the young person who either wants to be like that family member or better. Hence, the occupational values of family shape the professional values of the youth because it determines vocational opportunities (Sears and Gordon, 2011).

4.3.3.1.3 Peers

The findings indicate that peer influence plays a vital role in the career decisions of young people and learners. The respondents indicated that their peers highly influence learners in career development and choices. Comments from a high school teacher on peer influence: *“Even when we advise the learners on the right subjects they should choose according to their marks, the learners just decide to do the subjects chosen by their friends”* (TC3, Interviews, 6 June 2018).

Comments from another teacher from a different school was that: *“We do assist the learners in Grade 9 in choosing the subjects based on their marks, but hey these kids are influenced by their friends and decide to choose subjects chosen by their friends...when they realise what they want to study at tertiary, it is too late to change, and end up choosing careers they do not like”* (TC2, Interviews, 8 June 2018).

According to literature, reliance on peer advice usually happens when there is no formal career guidance (Felisman & Blustein, 1999). However, research also suggests that the peer influence factor used as a career guidance approach by using peers in school to support other learners on career guidance (Odirile, 2012). In countries like Uganda, Kenya, and Nigeria, peer counselling used as a career guidance strategy. These programmes enable the learners to appreciate each other and to understand the importance of education and drafting their career paths (Odirile, 2012).

4.3.3.1.4 Role models

According to the findings, there are limited role models within the community, to inspire youth on success. attributed to the fact that most successful individuals from the area are working and living in urban areas. During the interviews, the teachers and the municipal official indicated that the local youth do need role models that that will motivate, inspire and influence them with positive behaviours.

Comments from the Municipal official on role models: *“It looks like the young people here have lost hope. They are so demotivated and do not value education; they think it is a useless exercise. Moreover, this is because they do not see any successful people around them, and they think life starts and ends here. If they get a job at the Chinese shop in town and earn R500, they think they have succeeded...no big dreams”* (MO, Interviews, 7 June 2018).

Role models can motivate the youth in that, despite all the challenges, success exists. This motivation keeps them inspired to continue with education and planning for future occupations as they can relate to others within their community who have achieved success (Matshabane, 2016). Literature asserts that youth from disadvantaged backgrounds feel demotivated if there are no suitable role models to emulate, and this

results in lack of confidence, motivation, sense of hopelessness, lack of self-confidence, all which contribute to adverse career decisions (Matshabane, 2016).

4.3.3.1.5 Culture

Findings indicate that the youth in rural areas subscribe to collective cultural values, which have either a positive or negative impact on their career decisions and future occupations. During the focus group discussions, most of the respondents indicated that their dream was to work so that they build their parents houses and make their families happy. Comments from a Grade 12 learner when she responded on future dreams, commented that: *"I want a good-paying job that will improve the lives of our family. Though I am not sure of what I want to study at University, it should be something that pays well for me to build my parents beautiful home, buy cars and make my family and community proud of me"* (Learner 4, Focus Group, 8 June 2018).

Another learner responded as follows: *"Even if I do not go to university or tertiary, I can still get a job whether here or in Johannesburg. Many people here do that, and they become successful"* (Learner 8, Focus Group, 8 June 2018). Literature confirms these findings in that, young people whose cultural values based on collective values prefer to protect, honour and benefit the entire community or family, at the expense of their career aspirations. On the other hand, young people whose cultural values are individualistic will demonstrate self-independence, competitive attitudes, and high proportions of high capacity of thinking, planning and deciding on their careers (Brown, 2002). It is prevalent for youth in rural Black communities to aspire to uplift and fulfil the necessities of the family and community groups, even if this is at the expense of their careers.

4.3.3.1.6 Gender and Occupational Stereotypes

The study found that gender and stereotypes contribute to the career decisions of young people in rural areas. When the learners asked about their career aspirations during the focus groups, most female learners mentioned nursing, social work and teaching. It indicated that these occupations are still associated with females.

An interviewed University student commented that: *“When I registered for social sciences, the administration lady told me that I should have done engineering because my marks in science and mathematics are good, but I insisted on social sciences because I thought engineers are men, they are always dirty at work and wear gloves instead of suits and ties. I regret now, but I am in my final year because I have learned that engineering pays a lot and it is in demand”* (Zanele, Interviews, 14 September 2018)

According to Hewitt (2010), this is an indication that society has allocated certain types of work as appropriate to either men or women, and often women are discouraged from seeking training in trades such as construction and manufacturing, which are perceived to be for males.

The impact of stereotypes is that they create limited career options for the youth because they see themselves incapable of undertaking some careers that as determined by their gender (Hewitt, 2010).

4.3.3.2 Environmental Factors

4.3.3.2.1 Socio-Economic Status influence

The findings do reveal that poverty distracts the career focus of youth from disadvantaged communities. During the focus group discussion, some learners indicated that their families live on social grants, and even if they can pass Grade 12, they think their families will not be able to afford to send them to tertiary institutions. It is an indication that because of their family situation, they do not even see the reason for planning their occupational future.

The findings also reveal that the social, economic status of the rural youth forces them to exit school earlier so that they find employment to cater for themselves and their families. Yet, this situation reduces their prospects for employment and exposes them to low-income jobs. A high school teacher commented on the socio-economic status that: *“Most families are struggling financially; many are living on government social grants and single parentsso they cannot support the education of their children, let alone giving them career guidance”* (TC2, Interviews, 8 June 2018).

“So when I complete school, I want to get a job to feed my family and myself” (Learner 8, Focus Group, 8 June 2018). Another learner commented that: *“I will work hard to pass even though I am not sure as to who will afford to get me tertiary, maybe if I can get a bursary then I decide well on what I will study”* (Learner 10, Focus Group, 8 June 2018).

Literature confirms that children from disadvantaged families usually experience hardships that distracts them academically and make it difficult for them to focus on their studies and future careers (Buthelezi *et al.*,2010). Most of the youth from the disadvantaged communities may see the value of education but are faced with limited resources to pursue post-secondary schooling qualifications (Mlatsheni and Ranchhod, 2017). Those who eventually find funding for tertiary may opt for earlier job employment, even if it is a low paying job to be able to supplement the family income, especially when there are younger siblings in need of support (Mlatsheni and Ranchhod, 2017).

4.3.3.2.2 Social Media influence

The findings show that many young people have cell phones, and they participate in social networks. The most used social networks are the WhatsApp (messaging platform) and Facebook to chat with friends. There is little indication that they are aware of the opportunities brought about by social networks if they appropriately used. They also said that the data for the cell phones are an issue as these are unaffordable.

Social media is very popular with youth. Though it is mainly used to network with friends and to catch up with events and the world's latest trends, it is also widely used for keeping abreast with career paths, employment and business opportunities (Oluwole, 2018). Social platforms enable young people to engage in career discussions and inspired by significant career decisions (Oluwole, 2018). In terms of the traditional media like radio or television, the findings did not reveal evidence on the role of media in influencing careers of the youth in rural communities.

4.3.3.2.3 Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

Results indicate that there is limited access to ICT. Hence, youth find it difficult to access government and other services, job opportunities and additional relevant information to assist their careers and in getting employment. The Community development worker

added that: *“The only Internet café is in town and not nearby so we have to use our phones to search for information, which is also unaffordable because data is expensive”* (CDW2, Interviews, 7 June 2018)

The literature agrees that the lack of ICT access is experienced more in rural areas, compared to urban areas (Kelles-Vitanen, 2005). Moreover, this is a contributor to unemployment as the youth in rural areas are unable to access information on further education and employment opportunities. Nevertheless, most of the applications for work and tertiary education now made online (Kelles-Vitanen, 2005).

4.3.3.3. Individual Factors

4.3.3.3.1 Personal Interests

The findings show that many learners do have career ambitions and interests in some professional areas. During the focus group discussions, the learners outlined their future career dreams, some wanting to be social workers, accountants and journalists. A few also indicated their willingness to pursue careers in the creative industry, like acting. According to literature, personal interest in a particular occupation is one of the most critical factors in the official selection, as most people want to do what they enjoy most (Sears & Gordon, 2011).

However, the findings do reveal their fear that their dreams may not be achieved because of their parents' affordability. The awareness of their external environment seems to impact on their self-belief and their career decision making. A Grade 12 learner confirmed this fear by saying that: *“I don't know what I will do after completing Grade 12 because my family will not afford to pay for my tertiary, so I do not even bother about a profession so long as I get work.* This finding is in line with the view of Joshi & Bakshi (2016), that rural underprivileged youth have self-development challenges that impact on their career development. These include the fear of failure; lack of/low self-confidence; lack of life skills to deal with their difficult socio-economic circumstances (Joshi & Bakshi, 2016).

4.3.3.3.2 Positive self-concept

Positive self-concept refers to how an individual judge or feels about oneself (Woolfolk, 2004). Young people with low self-esteem are more likely to display poor psychological adjustment when faced with stressful situations and making career decisions (Zeigler-Hill & Wallace, 2012). The findings indicate that learners in rural communities are lacking strong personal characteristics that are crucial in assisting them towards better careers and future occupations. They have low self-esteem and do not see themselves succeeding in fulfilling their career dreams because of their disadvantaged social status.

Chuong & Operario (2012) agrees that youth in rural and disadvantaged areas are likely to have low self-esteem resulting from the various socio-economic challenges they face. Hence, career development must approach for the rural and underprivileged youth should also incorporate life skills programmes to cater for their emotional, mental, recreational, career and vocational needs holistically (Chuong & Operario, 2012).

4.3.4. Solutions for Improving Career Guidance in Rural areas

One of the objectives of the study was to identify possible solutions for improving career guidance to alleviate youth unemployment in rural areas. Findings reveal that, despite all the career guidance challenges experienced in rural areas, there is an opportunity to improve the delivery of useful career guidance. The teachers indicated that if they can be thoroughly trained and attend national workshops on career guidance, they have confidence that their interventions will be useful. The teachers also suggested peer educators as a possible solution to career guidance. However, they would need assistance in training peers and providing guidelines so that the learners can be able to train each other. The consensus was that peers are very influential to their peer learners.

Another prominent suggestion was that unemployed graduates should also be trained and given an allowance or stipend to delivery career guidance. It is because they already have experience of tertiary education; some have made mistakes in their career choices. Hence they are in an excellent position to share their expertise to empower learners.

Given the absence of career guidance counsellors and psychologists, both the teachers and the municipal officials agree that Social workers are also needed, and that these are

critical to address both career guidance issues and socio-economic challenges of the youth and learners. These respondents are of the view that social workers are more affordable and many as compared to psychologists.

Delivering career guidance from Grade 8 was another prominent suggestion from teachers and community development workers. The view is that the public career exhibitions and roadshows should cater to all high school learners instead of focussing on Grade 12's. According to the respondents, this intervention will also assist in preventing school dropouts because learners will be motivated earlier.

4.4 CONCLUSION

The chapter has presented the findings of the research. The state of youth unemployment and career development approaches and practices in the community under investigation. The following chapter will present and discuss the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented the findings of the study on the career development approaches applied at Ixopo, KwaZulu-Natal to reduce youth unemployment. This chapter now presents a summary of the findings, the conclusions, and recommendations of the study. The summary, conclusions and recommendations presented in line with the study objectives which are: to determine the state of youth unemployment in the rural areas; to identify the career guidance approaches and practices used to prepare the rural youth for future careers and employment; to determine if the socio-economic environment influences the delivery of career guidance and youth unemployment, and; to identify possible solutions for improving career guidance to alleviate youth unemployment in rural areas. The chapter concludes by presenting recommendations and areas for further studies or research.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The State of Youth Unemployment in the Rural Areas

- The rate of youth unemployment is very high in rural areas. The absence of industries and formal labour sector is one major cause for rural youth unemployment. It is because rural areas are far from areas that have job opportunities. Poverty also prevents rural youth from travelling to urban areas to look for employment.
- Low levels of education and an early exit from the schooling system is also a significant reason for the un-employability of the rural youth. The high school dropout rate is mainly caused by lack of parental guidance as many learners have absent parents, and poverty because some parents cannot afford school fees and learners have to drop out to get employment to feed themselves and

their families. These learners lack career ambition and inspiration because they often struggle to balance their severe socio-economic condition and studies.

- There is an increasing rate of unemployed youth which is not in education, employment or training (NEETs). Moreover, this category of unemployed youth is very vulnerable to risk behaviour and risky job prospects like crime, alcohol and drug abuse. Also confirmed that this category of unemployed youth is already problematic in the community.
- The increasing number of unemployed graduates is a huge concern to the community. These are very frustrating category and concern to community and families who have invested in their education, yet the value not seen. Educators are also concerned with this group because if it remains unemployable, the learners are discouraged and will not value education. The choice of qualifications is a significant cause for the unemployable of graduates.

Impact of Youth Unemployment

- Youth unemployment has resulted in socially deviant behaviour among youth in rural communities.
- The absence of the formal economy and industries in rural areas makes the youth vulnerable to be employed by the informal economy. Nevertheless, this economy provides low income and unsatisfactory working conditions resulting in the youth being more vulnerable to crime, alcohol and substance abuse.
- Unemployed graduates are more affected psychologically by stress than those employed. They have feelings of disappointment and discouragement because they are not able to fulfil their desired goals, and they feel like they have wasted their time pursuing tertiary education.
- Youth unemployment severely contributes to the cycle of poverty, because the unemployed youth are adding to the burden already carried low-income families, a situation that further perpetuates poverty in families. Society is also losing the significant assets of young talents that should be improving the welfare of their families and communities if youth remain unemployed.

Career Development Approaches

- Life Orientation, which is a compulsory subject in all South African schools aimed at providing career guidance to learners to prepare them for post-high school, is not adequately delivered at schools. With teachers not adequately equipped to deliver career guidance to learners; they lack sufficient training on career guidance and counselling, and there is a lack of resources and relevant updated information for them to the effective delivery of career guidance in rural schools.
- There are no formal career counselling interventions within the schools in rural communities. It is a confirmation that career counselling is not accessible to most South Africans.
- The local municipality is making a positive effort to provide career guidance services for the citizens, particularly the youth. It is through annual career exhibitions and roadshows to local schools to disseminate information about bursaries and learnership opportunities. However, these interventions need to be strengthened and stretched to other learners and not necessarily Grade 12 learners.
- As the local community authority, the municipality also provides business skills and other youth empowerment programs as part of career development. These programs also cater to out of school youth to equip them with skills that will enable them to be employed or self-employed.
- The National Career Advice Service Centre (CAS), which is the ICT based telephone helpline initiated in 2010 by the government to provide affordable career guidance services to all South Africans across the country is not reaching or accessible to rural areas. Nevertheless, the government claims that the facility is accessible to all learners and accommodates learners from rural areas in assisting them with their career decisions (Singh, 2016).

The Social, Environmental and Individual Factors influencing career development

- Even though schools are well-positioned to deliver career development and assist learners in discovering their interests/aptitudes in preparation for their future occupational lives and careers; schools in the rural areas find it difficult to instill

values, attitudes, and the necessary career decision skills. It is because the school competes with a hostile socio-economic influence of poverty and where learners are exposed and involved in alcohol, drugs, and sexual behaviours.

- The local authorities are making efforts to empower the youth towards positive careers and future through skills development, entrepreneurship and career guidance initiatives. However, it does not seem to be sufficient because they do not address other socio-economic challenges faced by rural youth. Often the youth do not find value in these initiatives because they are desperate to earn salaries.
- Families in rural areas do not participate in the educational and career lives of their children because of various social issues like absence of parents; lack of education and ignorance. Then it is essential that youth earn salaries quicker so that they can take care of themselves and their families. They even go to the extent of forcing them to choose qualifications or careers that will get them paid quicker. Hence, the youth forced to undertake certain occupations because of family expectations to earn salaries sooner.
- However, in families where there had been a successful individual, they are likely to have a positive influence on the young person who either wants to be like that family member or better. Hence, the occupational values of family shape the occupational values of the youth because it determines occupational opportunities (Abiola, 2014).
- Peer influence plays a crucial role in the career decisions of young people and learners in rural areas. Reliance on peer advice usually happens when there is no formal career guidance (Njeri, 2013).
- Youth from disadvantaged backgrounds need suitable role models to emulate to increase their confidence, motivation, sense of hope, self-confidence, all which contribute to positive career decisions. However, the rural areas lack these role models because most successful individuals from the area are working and living in urban areas.
- The cultural values of rural youth, based on collective values, affect their career choices and future occupations. Most of them dream of working to improve the lives of their families and their communities.

- Gender and stereotypes contribute to the career decisions of young people in rural areas. Most females aspire occupations which are associated with females, like nursing, social work and teaching. It creates limited career options for the youth, as they see themselves as incapable of undertaking some careers as determined by their gender (Sears and Gordon, 2011).
- In terms of the socio-economic status, poverty distracts the career focus of youth from disadvantaged communities. Because of their family situation, they do not even see the reason for planning their occupational future.
- Youth from disadvantaged families usually experience hardships that distract them academically and make it difficult for them to focus on their studies and future careers (Buthelezi et al., 2010).
- Even though many rural young people have cell phones, and they participate in social networks. They do not seem to be aware of the opportunities brought about by social networks correctly used. Social platforms enable young people to engage in career discussions and inspired by significant career decisions (Oluwole, 2018).
- Youth in rural areas have limited access to Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). Hence, it is difficult for them to access government and other services, job opportunities and other relevant information to assist their careers and in getting employment.
- The rural underprivileged youth have self-development challenges that impact on their self-esteem and career development. These include the fear of failure; lack of/low self-confidence; lack of life skills to deal with their difficult socio-economic circumstances (Joshi & Bakshi, 2016). Youth in rural communities lack strong personal characteristics that are crucial in assisting them towards better careers and future occupations. They have low self-esteem and do not see themselves succeeding in fulfilling their career dreams because of their disadvantaged social status.

Solutions for improving career guidance to alleviate youth unemployment in rural areas

- Despite all the career guidance challenges experienced in rural areas, there is an opportunity to improve the delivery of practical career guidance. If the teachers can be thoroughly trained and attend national workshops on career guidance, the delivery of career guidance can improve.
- Training of peer educators is a potential platform for improving the delivery of career guidance in rural areas. Moreover, also utilization of the unemployed graduates as career guides could be useful because they already have experience of tertiary education, so, they are in an excellent position to share their experiences to empower learners.

Given the absence of career guidance counsellors and psychologists, social workers seem to be a necessity to address both career guidance issues and socio-economic challenges of the youth and learners.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS

The essence of the study was to examine the career development approaches to address youth unemployment in rural areas. As reflected by the findings of the study, it concluded that:

- Rural youth are very disadvantaged in terms of career guidance, appropriate education, and employment because of their disadvantaged social-economic situation. Also confirmed that rural schools and local authorities are making an effort to deliver career development and guidance activities despite limited resources. However, the magnitude of the socio-economic challenges of rural youth are overwhelming and require more holistic interventions to address these challenges.
- Inadequate and lack of career guidance in rural communities is a contributing factor to the increasing numbers of unemployed graduates, due to career choices that are not required by the labour market. Moreover, the inadequate or lack of

career guidance also contributes to school dropouts because learners are not motivated to continue with education and not inspired for better careers and occupations.

- The career guidance approaches and initiatives implemented at the community level, including life orientation, annual exhibitions, and the local youth programs present an excellent platform for engaging, educating, informing, and delivering career guidance. These career development approaches have the potential to be effective if adequately resourced.
- Social, environmental and individual factors have massive influence in career development, particularly in rural areas. Hence the need to factor these influences in career development approaches for effective results. These include the cooperation of families, peers, role models, culture, and gender issue and life skills in career guidance interventions.
- Despite numerous efforts by the government to address and alleviate youth unemployment, the plight of the youth continues to be worse, judging from the findings of this study. The government policies and strategies do not seem to be reaching out to the rural and disadvantaged areas. The demographics that characterize youth unemployment in South Africa are making it difficult for the policies and strategies to achieve their desired outcome strategies.
- The study also concludes that despite all the career guidance challenges experienced in rural areas, there are possible career guidance solutions from the community which can be utilized. These include training of teachers, peer educators, unemployed graduates, among others. And that,
- Partnerships for the delivery of career guidance in rural areas are very weak. Hence, the need for strengthening partnerships between the municipality, schools, tertiary institutions, vocational institutions and industries (employers) for the successful delivery of career guidance to the rural youth.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Department of Education in South Africa needs to review the career guidance curriculum. There is a need for career guidance interventions that are tailor-made for the rural and disadvantaged areas, an intervention that will address the career needs of these youth, while accommodating their socio-economic environment.
- The government should also provide dedicated career guidance teachers at rural schools, who will be responsible for delivering career guidance to all grades without being disrupted by other responsibilities. The government should also implement comprehensive career guidance training to equip the teachers with the necessary skills.
- Career guidance service providers at the community level need to strengthen partnerships with tertiary institutions, technical and vocational colleges and employers to expose the learners and youth on various options for future careers. These activities should also accommodate youth out of school and learners in lower grades so that they can make career decisions earlier, and be inspired to prolong their stay in the school system.
- Peers should be adopted and used as a career guidance intervention. Peer counselling and guidance is used in other African countries like Uganda, Kenya and Nigeria as a career guidance strategy. It is a powerful intervention because it allows learners and the youth to walk the journey together as they appreciate education and future career paths.
- The career guidance initiatives should also provide learners with an opportunity to engage on a one-to-one basis because they get intimidated in the groups. If more people in the community are trained in career guidance, like peers, community development workers and others, the individual engagements would be more effective.

5.5 FURTHER RESEARCH SUGGESTED

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

This study was undertaken in a particular community and in one province of South Africa; therefore, it is recommended that more research be conducted in other communities to study their distinctive career development practices. It would assist policymakers to develop appropriate, practical, and creative career development applicable to the South African context and improve the current situation faced by young people in rural areas.

5.6 FINAL CONCLUSION

The study aims to identify and examine career guidance approaches and practices used to address youth unemployment in rural communities. The stated objectives were to identify the career guidance approaches and practices used to prepare rural young people for future careers and employment; to determine if the socio-economic environment has any influence in the delivery of career guidance and youth unemployment, and to identify possible solutions of improving career guidance and alleviating youth unemployment in the rural areas. These objectives served as a guide to the researcher throughout the study.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Consent to take part in Research

Research Project: Examining Career Development Approaches to Address Youth Unemployment in Ixopo, KZN: Community-Informed Perspectives.

Researcher: Ms Lindokuhle Dlamini, *University of KwaZulu-Natal. Durban.*

Before the interview is undertaken, the participant agrees that:

- He/she voluntarily agrees to participate in this research study.
- Understands that even if he/she agrees to participate now, he/she can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.
- The purpose and nature of the study have been explained to him/her in writing and had the opportunity to ask questions about the research and his/her expected participation.
- Understands that he/she will not benefit directly from participating in this research.
- Understands that all information provided for this study will be treated confidentially.
- Understands that disguised extracts from his/her interview may be quoted in the dissertation and subsequent academic papers.

Appendix B: Interview Schedule – Community Development Workers

- In your opinion, do you think youth unemployment there is a challenge of youth unemployment in the community?
- If the answer is yes, what do you think are the causes of youth unemployment in the community?
- Does youth unemployment affect the youth and the community? How?
- In your opinion, what needs to be done to reduce unemployment among young people in the community?
- What is your understanding of career guidance?
- What do you think is the role of the community, school and municipality in youth career development?
- Do you know of any career development initiatives that are implemented at the community to address youth unemployment? What are they?
- What are your suggestions for improving career development in the community to address youth unemployment?

Appendix C: Interview Schedule: Municipal Official

- In your opinion, do you think youth unemployment there is a challenge of youth unemployment in the community?
- If the answer is yes, what do you think are the causes of youth unemployment in the community?
- Does youth unemployment affect the youth and the community? How?
- In your opinion, what needs to be done to reduce unemployment among young people in the community?
- What is your understanding of career guidance?
- What is the role of the municipality in youth career development?
- If the municipality is providing youth career development programs, in your opinion, are they useful? Explain?
- Do you see any challenges or opportunities in the implementation of career development initiatives? Explain.
- What are your suggestions for improving career development in the community to address youth unemployment?

Appendix D: Interview Schedule: Teachers

- In your opinion, do you think youth unemployment there is a challenge of youth unemployment in the community?
- If the answer is yes, what do you think are the causes of youth unemployment in the community?
- Does youth unemployment affect the youth and the community? How?
- In your opinion, what needs to be done to reduce unemployment among young people in the community?
- What is your understanding of career guidance?
- Does the school provide career guidance and counselling to prepare learners for post-high school careers and occupations?
- What are the career guidance activities that are implemented by the school?
- What are the challenges and opportunities that are brought about by these activities? Explain.
- What other career development initiatives that are implemented within the community besides at school. Do you think these are effective? If not, why? If yes, How?
- Does the school or community benefit from the national career guidance initiatives? How?
- What are your suggestions to improve the delivery of career guidance in the school and the community?

Appendix E: Community Members/Parents

- Do you think youth unemployment is an issue in the area? Explain
- Do you believe learners like yourself find challenge or opportunities when they finish matric? Explain.
- What is your understanding of career guidance?
- Do you think career guidance is essential, and why?
- What are the career guidance programs in your school or community?
- What information, guidance or skills that you think you need to prepare for post-matric life?
- Do you think career information is readily available at the community (school or other areas in the city)? Explain
- If you want to know more about what you will study at tertiary or your future career, who would you approach to talk about it? Furthermore, can you explain why that person or institution?
- Do you know what you will do after matric? If you do, explain what made you make that choice? If you have not made a career choice, explain why?
- What do you think will make you achieve the dream you mentioned earlier? Moreover, what do you think can stop or challenge you not to achieve your career dreams?

Appendix F: Interview schedule – University Students from Ixopo Community

- In your opinion, do you think youth unemployment there is a challenge of youth unemployment in the community? Explain?
- If the answer is yes, what do you think are the causes of youth unemployment in the community?
- Does youth unemployment affect the youth and the community? How?
- In your opinion, what needs to be done to reduce unemployment among young people in the community?
- What is your understanding of career guidance?
- In your opinion, what is the role of the community and families in preparing the youth for their future careers?
- What is the community doing to assist young people in their plans for the future after completing high school?
- What are your suggestions for improving career development for the youth to address their unemployment?

Appendix G: Focus Group Discussion – Grade 12 Learners

- In your opinion, do you think youth unemployment there is a challenge of youth unemployment in the community? Explain?
- If the answer is yes, what do you think are the causes of youth unemployment in the community?
- Does youth unemployment affect the youth and the community? How?
- In your opinion, what needs to be done to reduce unemployment among young people in the community?
- What is your understanding of career guidance?
- Do you think career guidance is essential, and why?
- If you do, when did you start knowing about career guidance/education?
- Who gave you information about the qualification you are currently studying and its job prospects? And how?
- In your opinion, how should learners be educated on careers or get more career information, explain?
- Do you have any knowledge on how your municipality, community and other local groups are doing regarding career guidance or work opportunities for young people in your community?
- Do you think career information is readily available in your community (school or other areas)? Explain

Appendix H: Gatekeeper's Letter

29 Margaret Street
Ixopo
3276
Tel: 039 8342074
Email: mayor@ubuhlebezwe.org.za



P.O. Box 132
Ixopo
3276
Fax: 039 8341168
Webpage: www.ubuhlebezwe.org.za

Ubuhebezwe Local Municipality

02 November 2017

Dear: Sir/Madam

Authority Letter to conduct a Research

I, Councillor B.M. Khuboni from ward 01, under Ubuhebezwe Municipality.

I wish to give Lindokuhle Dlamini permission to conduct a research in my ward.
The research title is: Examining Career Development Approaches to Address Youth Unemployment in Ixopo.

Hope you find the above in order.

Yours faithfully

Cllr. B.M. Khuboni, Ward 01
079 502 1881

Councillor Bhokuyise Mduduzi Khuboni
Ward 1 Councillor
Ubuhebezwe Municipality
P.O. Box 132, Ixopo, 3276
Cell: 079 502 1881

Appendix I: Turnitin Report

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the Turnitin Class Portfolio page. The page title is "Turnitin - Class Portfolio". The URL is "turnitin.com/s_class_portfolio.asp?aid=48838&cid=126777965&lang=en_us&session-id=e76ae023d1688cb27715c482a6300H". The page displays a welcome message and a table of assignments for the "Postgraduate Research" class.

Welcome to your new class homepage! From the class homepage you can see all your assignments for your class, view additional assignment information, submit your work, and access feedback for your papers. Hover on any item in the class homepage for more information.

Class Homepage

This is your class homepage. To submit to an assignment click on the "Submit" button to the right of the assignment name. If the Submit button is grayed out, no submissions can be made to the assignment. If resubmissions are allowed the submit button will read "Resubmit" after you make your first submission to the assignment. To view the paper you have submitted, click the "View" button. Once the assignment's post date has passed, you will also be able to view the feedback left on your paper by clicking the "View" button.

Assignment Title	Info	Dates	Similarity	Actions
PhD Thesis Submission	①	Start: 21-Jun-2016 10:17AM Due: 31-Dec-2019 12:00AM Post: 31-Dec-2019 12:00AM		Submit View Download
Masters Research Submission	①	Start: 14-Sep-2017 2:45PM Due: 31-Dec-2019 11:59PM Post: 31-Dec-2019 12:00AM	15% ■	Resubmit View Download
Honours Research Submission	①	Start: 17-Jul-2018 12:06PM Due: 31-Dec-2019 11:59PM Post: 31-Dec-2019 12:00AM		Submit View Download
Postgraduate Diploma Research	①	Start: 05-Aug-2019 10:11AM Due: 31-Dec-2019 11:59PM		Submit View Download

Task: Lindokufu Dfami...pdf Show all

Taskbar: 3636 AM 2019/12/17