



**An investigation into the psychological impact of unemployment and
coping mechanisms amongst graduates in Pietermaritzburg**

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Declaration



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DECLARATION:

In accordance with Rule G5.11.4, I hereby declare that the above-mentioned treatise/ dissertation/ thesis is my own work and that it has not previously been submitted for assessment to another University or for another qualification.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nonjabulo", written over a light blue horizontal line.

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Abstract

Graduates expect to find employment after completing their tertiary qualifications, but they often face various challenges in finding employment. These challenges may be due to a variety of factors such as the type of qualification, structural changes in the economy, lack of experience, or the lack of relevant social networks. This has the potential to affect a graduate's psychological well-being. The current study explored the psychological impact of unemployment in 100 unemployed graduates between 21 and 35 years of age in Pietermaritzburg. The study was quantitative and used two questionnaires, the GHQ-12 and a self-designed questionnaire, to collect data. Purposive sampling was used to obtain research participants. The Excel spreadsheet and a statistical software package called JASP (2020, version 0.12) was used to analyse data. The findings revealed that unemployment had a negative impact on the participants' psychological well-being. Participants experienced feelings of high anxiety and depression, and felt stigmatised. Participants also felt shame and experienced lower self-esteem. Unemployment had a financial impact on participants, including financial dependency on family and friends. Some participants blamed themselves, the government system, and the education system for their unemployment. Participants reported to have a positive attitude towards employment, including remaining optimistic about their chances of finding employment. Participants used adaptive coping mechanisms, such as keeping a positive attitude, and maladaptive coping mechanisms, such as hiding their feelings. Further research needs to focus on psychological services that could assist unemployed graduates to find employment through building and maintaining their self-esteem and confidence which are key factors when initially seeking and obtaining work. Unemployment and its impact on psychological well-being has been shown to be a complex subject that requires intervention from different parties such as employers and health-care workers, as well as the education system.

Keywords: Coping, graduates, psychological impact and unemployment

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

APA	American Psychological Association
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BRUSO	Brief, Relevant, Unambiguous, Specific, and Objective
BSc	Bachelor of Science
BSocSc	Bachelor of Social Science
CAES	College of Agriculture, Engineering and Science
CDE	Centre for Development and Enterprise
CDEI	Centre for Development and Enterprise Insight
CHUM	College of Humanities
CLMS	College of Law and Management Studies
CV	Curriculum Vitae
GHQ-12	General Health Questionnaire
GTS	Graduates Training Scheme
HEMIS	Higher Education Management Information System
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INSEP	Industrial Skill Enhancement Programme
IWH	Institution for Work and Health
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
MEC	Member of the Executive Committee
NDP	National Development Plan
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SADAG	South African Depression and Anxiety Group
SONA	State of the Nation addresses
Stats SA	Statistics South Africa

TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
WEF	World Economic Forum
WHO	World Health Organisation
YES	Young Executive Scheme

Chapter One: Introduction

Introduction

The increasing graduate unemployment rate is one of the socio-economic issues that has been of increasing concern in South Africa over the years. Graduates expect to find work after completing their studies, yet they frequently encounter difficulties in finding employment. These difficulties may arise because of a range of variables, including the type of qualification, economic structural changes, a lack of experience, or a lack of appropriate social networks. This has the potential to affect a graduate's psychological well-being. The current study explored the psychological impact of unemployment amongst graduates in Pietermaritzburg. This chapter presents the background to the problem that was investigated, the problem formulation, motivation for the study, research questions, research aim and objectives, and definition of concepts.

Background

The increasing graduate unemployment rate is one of the socio-economic issues that has been of increasing concern in South Africa over the years. Every year the institutions of higher education are crowded by thousands of first year students chasing a better future, wanting to be independent and to take care of their relatives (McKeown & Lindorff, 2011). At the same time, every year these institutions produce thousands of graduates who are increasingly likely to end up unemployed. According to the Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS) (2019), in 2008 South African institutions registered up to 118 000 students. In 2017 South African institutions produced almost 190 000 new graduates. Simultaneously, the formal sector seemed to be absorbing an additional 41 000 graduates every year on average (Statistics South Africa, 2017). Fallows and Steven (2000) argued that a decreasing transition into the labour market for graduates has been caused by the higher education system which produces an ever-increasing number of graduates, while at the same time traditional routes into graduate employment have

been shrinking as employers downsize and postpone their hiring decisions. Most companies prefer to hire people who have worked before. This means that a graduate's employment experience is regarded as the most essential component of their curriculum vitae, which in turn makes job hunting difficult for graduates without such experience (Fallows & Steven, 2000). The lack of a balance between the graduates supplied by academic institutions and the high unemployment rate in South Africa makes employers increase their selection criteria during the recruitment process (McKeown & Lindorff, 2011).

Oluwajodu et al. (2015) indicated that regardless of the increasing growth in the graduate labour force, unemployment among graduates continues to rise with overall unemployment rates in South Africa. Exploring the psychological impact of unemployment among graduates is a critical area of study as unemployment among graduates has the potential to damage the economy. Graduate unemployment remains a key challenge because it wastes the scarce skills, knowledge, and experience possessed by graduates, which in the long term is detrimental to the economy (Oluwajodu et al., 2015). Higher unemployment amongst graduates may cause a burden to the public fiscus due to less revenue collection because there are fewer people paying income tax. The state would have to spend more on unemployment and associated compensation (Pettinger, 2019). As noted by Mmesii (2015), this will inevitably result in lower salaries, hazardous working conditions, and a lack of social security.

There has been a disconnection between what employers want from universities and what universities provide. It is necessary to recognise and embrace the fact that companies are seeking for qualities other than qualifications. Employers are seeking a range of employability skills in a graduate, which are sometimes considered as the generic skills during the recruitment process. McKeown and Lindorff (2011) found that graduates believed that once they graduated they would get the job they desired irrespective of the discipline,

and occupy a senior, permanent appointment with high earnings, but without these employability skills.

These employability skills have been seen as a significant determinant for a graduate to secure employment opportunities (Lau & Pang, 2000). University career service centres have been expected to play a major part in this area, as they are meant to be a starting point for knowledge, resources, and programmes that can assist graduates and final-year students with job opportunities. This is an area where university career centres are expected to play a crucial role, as they are designed to serve as a hub for information, resources, programmes and employment opportunities. In other words, the employers view the achievements of a graduate as relevant to the subject discipline as necessary, but not appropriate, for them to be employed (Lau & Pang, 2000).

Unemployment is considered to be one of the most stressful and painful situations an individual can experience because of the shortage of major material and psychological resources that are offered by employment (Westman et al., 2004). Therefore, unemployment challenges among graduates may be due to a lack of skills and experience required by employers and a lack of support. Young graduates may feel isolated and depressed, have decreased self-esteem, and experience dependency, discontentment, loneliness, a loss of social status, and poverty as a result of their unemployment (Magagula, 2017).

Rafi et al. (2019) stated that University graduates who are searching for employment are more likely to suffer from common mental illnesses like depression, anxiety, and stress. Kidwai, and Sarwar (2015) provided evidence that unemployment exposure leads to psychological impairment. Kidwai, and Sarwar (2015) confirmed that unemployment is likely to influence unemployed productivity in future, which then results in significantly high levels of anxiety and depression. Perrone and Vickers (2003) summarised life after graduation as “a very uncomfortable kind of world” (p. 70) graduates are facing with challenges such as

readjusting to higher expectations and adjusting to possibility periods of unemployment. According to Coetzee and Esterhuizen (2010, p.01), "Youth unemployment in South Africa poses a variety of obstacles for young unemployed graduates, necessitating a variety of psychological coping abilities.". It is within this context that the researcher explored the psychological impact and coping mechanisms of unemployed graduates in Pietermaritzburg.

Unemployment and mental health

In most countries around the world, unemployment is a severe problem. Employment is very important to maintain good mental health. If employment is not accessible it can have a negative effect on psychological well-being (Ahmad & Khan, 2018). Unemployment can have a devastating impact on individual's lives and human development in general. This affects not only the unemployed person, but also the entire family and the wider community. The impact of unemployment can be long-lasting on both human development and the economic system at large (Kidwai & Sarwar, 2015)

According to Perrone and Vickers (2003), the graduate labour market today is very different to what it was 10 ten twenty years ago. Obtaining a university degree has long been regarded as a key to professionalism and a measure of societal achievement in the fight against unemployment and poverty. However, the Centre for Development and Enterprise Insight (CDEI) (2013) argued that a university degree is no longer holds a guaranteed promise for a job, especially for the youth in South Africa, as hundreds of thousands struggle to find jobs. It is believed that even those unemployed who are highly qualified would face some level of employer rejection and stress as a result of the job hunting process. (Perrone & Vickers, 2003).

After completing their tertiary education, graduates are expected to find work, but they frequently confront a variety of challenges in finding employment. The job market is not growing fast enough to keep up with the growing number of graduates and greater competition. Consequently, this has increased the number of university graduates who are

unemployed, with more new graduates entering the employment market. Rising unemployment is likely to have negative psychological implications that are not always treated properly or adequately (Rafi et al., 2019).

Graduates also feel the pressure to go straight into the work force to pay off their undergraduate debt and take care of their relatives. Lim et al. (2018) found that graduates with student loans reported higher job-search stress, including family environment stress and employment market environment stress, compared to those who did not have student loans. This has been supported by Mutambara et al. (2018), who stated that graduates experience stress because they feel obliged to compensate the family financially for the sacrifices they have made to send them to higher education, especially in the African context.

Being unemployed can be a difficult and emotionally draining experience. Therefore, unemployment-related stress calls for the unemployed to develop effective coping mechanisms to avoid the negative impact and to assist graduates to find employment (Mutambara et., 2018). People cope with unemployment differently, depending on the resources available, and the coping mechanism utilised (Julkunen, 2001). Coping is also related to gender, age and qualifications (Julkunen, 2001). The current study explored the psychological impact of unemployment and coping mechanisms amongst graduates of both genders with a variety of qualifications in Pietermaritzburg.

Problem Formulation

Due to the prolonged economic struggles in South Africa, large companies employing many people in Pietermaritzburg such as Rainbow Chicken, Interpak Books, BSI Steel, Timber Door Manufacturers, and several restaurants have closed. Some have reduced their labour force through retrenchment, such as Hulamin, Eddels Shoes, Rainbow Chicken, Standard Bank, Absa and Group Five (Khanyile, 2019).

According to Bennie and Mkhize (2019), Hulamin is South Africa's largest manufacturer of rolled aluminium products and is the largest industrial employer in Pietermaritzburg, and this is one of the sectors that excels in exporting aluminium products. In 2016, the Technology Hub Pietermaritzburg confirmed that Pietermaritzburg's economy is broad, with a strong industrial sector that excels in exporting to markets. The exports include products such as aluminium products, automotive components and furniture. This region is also home to established footwear, textile and electronics industries. Therefore, if companies like Hulamin and Eddels shoes have retrenched their employees, this has contributed to unemployment rates in Pietermaritzburg (Technology Hub Pietermaritzburg, n.d). This was confirmed by KwaZulu-Natal Member of the Executive Committee (MEC), Ravi Pillay, when he tabled the KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) budget speech for 2020/2021. He indicated, "The province's sluggish economic performance contributes to the province's alarmingly low employment rate, since the economy is unable to provide enough jobs to meet the rising labour force, particularly for new entrants" (KZN Provincial Treasury, 2020, p.5). This shows that the economy is not growing at a rate that is able to absorb an increasing labour force, which also contributes to high unemployment rates.

The two fundamental macroeconomic problems that have been mentioned above have the potential to affect graduates' psychological well-being. The evidence has been provided by De Witte et al. (2012), who found that 80 percent of youth are more distressed from unemployment than middle-aged persons. In South Africa, youth have experienced unemployment as unpleasant. As a result, 70 percent of them would take any job available, irrespective of their qualifications. According to Mabela (2012), unemployment has a detrimental influence on the psychological well-being of the employed-age population of South Africa. Individuals with a tertiary qualification were reported to be more prone to experience multiple types of mental illness such as depression, anxiety, stress, anger, fear, despair, loneliness and social isolation, and decreased self-esteem, life satisfaction,

aspiration levels, concentration and personal identity illness, compared to those with no qualification or a very low level of education (De Witte et al., 2012; Mabela, 2012). It is possible that possessing a qualification carries with it the belief that a high level of education will guarantee employment with high remuneration (Mabela, 2012).

Pietermaritzburg, known as Umsunduzi Local Municipality, falls under the Umgungundlovu district. It is the capital city of KZN and it is amongst the economic hubs of the province. According to the KZN Socio-Economic Review and Outlook (2020), this region has an estimated population of 750 845, which is about seven percent of the total population of the province. Due to lack of unemployment data for Pietermaritzburg, a figure for the district has been used to reflect the level of unemployment rate in this region. The unemployment rate in the Umgundlovu district has been estimated to be 16.9 percent. This is lower than the provincial rate of about 28 percent. However, the unemployment rate for youth represents about 66.1 percent (ages 16-24 is 43% and 24-34 is 22%) of the total unemployed people in the region (Treasury Economic Outlook, 2020). This is a high unemployment rate as it is noticeably higher than the average unemployment rate, even at the provincial level. This provides evidence that unemployment is exceedingly high among youth in the country, compared to those aged 35 years and above.

Motivation for and significance of the study

The researcher is an employment counsellor. She provides employment counselling to work seekers, including unemployed graduates. During her interaction with work seekers she has observed that some of unemployed graduates experience anxiety, frustration, and stress during their job search. This may be the result of difficulties they have experienced in securing job opportunities. The graduates realise that jobs are getting scarce and difficult to find. Therefore, the motivation for this study stemmed mainly from the experiences of these graduates. Thus, conducting research into the psychological impact of unemployment amongst graduates might offer relevant stakeholders information that could be useful in

Pietermaritzburg. Graham and Mlatsheni (2015) looked at the influence of unemployment on psychological well-being and poverty in South Africa as a source of concern that required to be investigated further. According to McKee-Ryan et al. (2005), there is a need for further research on the well-being of unemployed individuals and how individuals cope with unemployment. This includes the different forms of coping methods used, and why people in similar conditions throughout unemployment may appraise their circumstances differently.

Griep et al. (2012) indicated that future research should consider that the concept of unemployment might have a different interpretation for individuals in other regional settings. Griep et.al (2012) believed that the impact of long-term (one year or more) and short-term (one year or less) unemployment might be different in other regions. Therefore, future studies should differentiate between short-term unemployment long-term unemployment when conducting a study on unemployment.

Blanchard (2018) indicated that there is a need for further investigation among unemployed graduates regarding types of stressors that are encountered by graduates. One of the researcher's objectives for this study was to identify types of psychological problems amongst unemployed graduates.

According to Mutambara et al. (2018), unemployed graduates are subjected to a variety of stressors. Previous studies have focused on unemployment among persons who were formerly employed because of job loss while the focus of this research was on unemployment among graduates who had obtained degrees and higher but had never employed before. Given this context, the current study is aimed at exploring the psychological impact of unemployment amongst graduates.

Research Questions

To explore the psychological impact of unemployment amongst graduates, this study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. How does unemployment have an impact on graduate's psychological well-being?
2. What are the types of psychological impact of unemployment amongst graduates?
3. How do graduates cope with unemployment daily?

Aim and Objectives

The aim of the present study was to explore the psychological impact of unemployment amongst graduates aged between 21 and 35 years of age. The specific objectives were:

1. To identify the types of psychological impact of unemployment amongst graduates.
2. To explore the coping mechanisms of unemployed graduates

Hypotheses

- 1. Unemployment would result in high levels of anxiety, depression, and self-destructive behaviour amongst participants**
- 2. There would be significant differences between unemployed graduate and post graduate participants on how they respond to being unemployed.**
- 3. No differences would be noted between males and females on all variables considered for the study.**

Definition of Concepts

This section presents conceptual definitions of 'unemployment', 'graduate', and 'psychological impact of unemployment'. These serve as the foundation for the study of the problem of graduate unemployment and its psychological impact in Pietermaritzburg.

Unemployment

In South Africa, the most used definition of employment status is the one stated by StatsSA. According to Statistics South Africa (2008, p.5), the unemployed are those people within the economically active population who are: “...aged 15 to 64 years; were not employed within the reference period; actively looked for work or tried to start a business in the four weeks preceding the survey interview; and were available for work, that is, would have been able to start work or a business in the reference week”.

Pettinger (2019) defined unemployment as a “...situation where someone of working age is not able to get a job but would like to be in full-time employment” (para.1). For this study, unemployment applied to unemployed graduates with a bachelor’s degree and higher, obtained through university study, who were able to work and preferred to work, and were currently searching for paid employment.

Graduate

Van Broekhuizen (2016) defined a graduate as “...someone who has a bachelor’s or higher degree from a higher education institution such as university” (p.2). According to the Oxford Dictionary (2016, p.500), a graduate is a “...person who has a college or university qualification”.

In this study, ‘graduate’ refers to a person who has obtained qualification from university, has been actively involved in a job search for least for two years at the time of the survey, who wants to work, but cannot get job in alignment with his or her qualification. The unemployed graduates included in this study were those between the ages of 21 to 35 years.

Psychological Impact

Psychological problems originating out of unemployment have been identified in South Africa. The psychological problems include fear, frustration, irritability, declining self-

respect, sense of time losing its meaning, action being futile, loneliness, apathy, resignation, depression, anxiety, and feeling demoralised (Flyer, 2002).

The researcher explored the impact of unemployment on unemployed graduates' psychological well-being. Psychological well-being of graduates comprises a positive relationship with others, personal mastery, independence, a feeling of purpose and meaning in life, personal growth and development. Freud's approach to normality and pathology was that love and work are the cornerstones of humanness (Midgley, 2011). This means that being employed is important because it satisfies the necessities of life.

Coping

According to Snyder and Dinoff (1999, p. 5), coping is "...a response aimed at diminishing the physical, emotional and psychological burden that is linked to stressful life events and daily hassles". Lazarus and Folkman (1984, p. 157-158) said that coping is a "process evolving from resources". Resources can be factors that are readily available, such as money, tools, people who can provide help, or relevant skills. They can also be capabilities to find needed resources that are not readily available. Coping mechanisms are remedial actions undertaken by individuals whose survival and livelihood are jeopardised or threatened (World Health Organisation, 1999b).

Structure of this dissertation

This chapter has been introductory in nature. As part of its content, the chapter opened with the background of the study. This background is necessary to establish the context for the study. Attention was also paid to the issue of the problem formulation of the study. The motivation and significance of the study was covered in this chapter, based on the researcher's experience and recommendations from the previous researchers. The aim and the objectives of the study and research questions were formulated. Lastly, the concepts of the study were defined.

Chapter Two is the literature review literature. It focuses on the theoretical and conceptual framework regarding psychological impact of unemployment. The views of various researchers and scholars who have carried out research on the psychological impact of unemployment amongst graduates are documented in this chapter. This chapter discusses the types of psychological impact of unemployment and the coping mechanisms of unemployment. The aim of this section is to provide a thorough understanding of psychological impact of unemployment amongst graduates. As the focus of this study is on graduate youth, efforts have been made to present findings that are not only relevant to youth in general, but to graduate youth in particular.

Chapter Three describes the methodology. It includes the quantitative research approach, participant recruitment, questionnaires used, data collection methods, data analysis, and ethical considerations.

Chapter Four is the results and discussion. It presents the results and discussion of this research. It presents evidence for the large psychological impact of unemployment on graduates.

Chapter Five presents the conclusions and recommendations arising from this study.

Chapter Two: Literature review

Introduction

Unemployment is one of the present problems facing South African society. South Africa's unemployment rate remains at 29 percent, six times the rate for the rest of the world. When President Ramaphosa delivered his 2020 State of the Nation Address (SONA), he said, "You would anticipate the increasing unemployment crisis to be a main issue" (State of the Nation Address, 2020, p.2). However, while there has been a lot of discussion about the crisis, there has been no resolution for real engagement and innovation to support workseekers (Belling, 2020). In 2014, Meyer's (2014) study, 'Job Creation, a Mission Impossible', indicated that unemployment and job creation have been identified as a main concern since 2011 in the National Development Plan (NDP). However, the implementation of this priority requires strong leadership and well-formulated policies, that are detailed enough to be implemented locally. Monitoring and control are important aspects of effective leadership. (Meyer, 2014).

According to Statistics South Africa's (StatsSA, 2020) freshly released quarterly labour survey, in the second quarter of 2019, 57 percent of unemployed South Africans had an education level lower than matric, with 33.4 percent having matric. Only 2.2 percent of the 6.7 million unemployed South Africans were graduates, while 6.9% held other tertiary certificates as their highest level of education (Stats SA, 2020).

Unemployment remains one of the most persistent and controversial economic complexities in South Africa. Unemployment is not only increasing in South Africa, but is becoming a global problem (Du Toit, 2003). The problem exists in both emerging and developed countries and is thus a universal issue. According to Jeanette et al. (2018) unemployment is a worldwide issue; yet, in some economies, the situation is more severe. South Africa is among the countries with the highest unemployment rates. Unemployment

in South Africa is unfairly spread, with respect to age, ethnicity, type of qualification, and, to some extent, gender.

Unemployment is a major life event and one of the most common socio-economic challenges affecting many countries across the globe. Unemployment can have a devastating impact on individual lives and human development in general. This does not only affect the unemployed individual, but also the entire family and society at large. The impact of unemployment can be long-lasting for both human development and the economic system at large (Kidwai & Sarwar, 2015).

According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) (2019), the global unemployment rate was estimated to be around five percent in 2018, a decline from the 5,4 percent for the period since 2000. However, there are several countries that have experienced an extremely high rate of unemployment over a long period. Currently, Venezuela is regarded to have the highest level of unemployment in the world, followed by South Africa. South Africa's unemployment rate is almost six times the global average rate and has remained at high levels for the longest time. Part of the economically active population who are unemployed include the increasing number of graduates.

Despite some improvement in figures of employed individuals in South Africa, the unemployment rate has remained amongst the highest in the world. South Africa's rate of unemployment increased from 22,9 percent in 1994 to 28,7 percent in 2019. The continued economic policy adoption and implementation that seeks to create jobs has proved to be less effective as the absorption rate has remained low. One of the key objectives stipulated by the National Development Plan (NDP), which was adopted in 2012, was to reduce the unemployment rate to 14 percent by 2020 and further reduce it to six percent by 2030. Despite the creation of about two million jobs since the adoption of the NDP, this has fallen far from the target to off-set the current alarming unemployment rate. Instead, the unemployment rate increased significantly from 24, 9 percent in 2012 to 28,7 percent

recorded in 2019. Contrary to government plans to reduce the unemployment rate, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) projections point to an upward trajectory as South Africa's unemployment rate that is expected to remain at high levels. This is a strong indication that the current economic policies are unlikely to yield the outcomes that can achieve the unemployment targets stipulated in the Vision 2030 document (ILO, 2020).

Currently, the world is faced with the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic is more extreme than a health disaster, it also has an impact in communities and may have significant impact on the labour market. While the pandemic's impact may differ from country to country, it will almost certainly exacerbate poverty (Fasih et al., 2020). The pandemic has already made it harder for the youth to find their ideal jobs and graduates may have to lower their expectations and standards. The problem of employment in general and youth unemployment in particular will loom large as one of the key challenges arising from this crisis (Philip, 2020). The unemployment rate in South Africa is expected to reach up to 50 percent and above (Marvin, 2020).

Due to the above economic challenges, students have enrolled for their studies with the expectation that a having a qualification would assist them to find better employment. To acquire a university degree was once considered a guarantee for securing better employment in the public or the private sector (Kruss, 2004). This is no longer the case. According to the CDEI (2013), a university degree or diploma no longer holds a guaranteed promise for a job, especially for the youth in South Africa, as hundreds of thousands struggle to find jobs. The problem of high unemployment, even amongst graduates, is not unique to South Africa. Graduates who are young are twice as likely to be unemployed compared to older graduates, where older graduates defined as those over the age of 35 years (CDEI, 2013).

Unemployment periods on someone's curriculum vitae (CV) have been considered to be a key weakness, such as perceived low productivity, so increasing the chances of a

person not being employed or offered a job (McQuaid, 2017). The social-psychological theory of hysteresis by Darity and Goldsmith (1993) has confirmed that a long duration of unemployment, especially for working-age individuals, is likely to yield a variety of adverse wellbeing experiences including loss of self-esteem and depression. They stated that unemployment leads to helplessness in such a way that the unemployed do not have the strength, drive and persistence in searching for employment, and they are not motivated. This results in persisting unemployment.

Helplessness also reduces cognitive efficiency. People who are not working are likely to perform badly in the job interview setting compared to those who have escaped feelings of helplessness such as new jobseekers, re-entrants (those going in again), and employed workseekers (Darity & Goldsmith, 1993). Some people assume that they are to blame for their unemployment. This also results in very poor performance in interviews (Darity & Goldsmith, 1993). Helplessness might also decrease motivation to learn skills that will improve one's chances of getting employment. Unemployed individuals experiencing helplessness believe that acquiring a new skill will not increase their chances of being employed (Darity & Goldsmith, 1993).

Theoretical Framework of Unemployment

The current study focused on different theories and models that can assist in investigating the psychological impact of unemployment. There are a number of economic and psychological philosophies that can be applied to the subject of why unemployed persons may experience psychological distress. Five theories are considered here. The first three are from psychology and are the deprivation theory proposed by Jahoda (1981), the agency restriction theory suggested by Fryer (1986) and the vitamin theory proposed by Warr (1987). The remaining two theories are from economics and are the skills atrophy model and the reverse causation theory. All these theories are important and applicable to investigating the psychological impact of unemployment.

Deprivation Theory

Jahoda (1982) argued that employment fulfils a variety of psychological needs. Unemployment is damaging people's mental health since it inhibits them from encountering the manifest and latent benefit of employment, which can have a detrimental effect on the growth of human well-being. Jahoda believed that the important part of human well-being is employment (Jahoda, 1982).

According to Jahoda's approach, remunerated work offers both a manifest benefit linked with income gain and a latent benefit connected with addressing psychological necessities. (Creed & Macintyre, 2001). Jahoda (1981) said, "People execute paid jobs largely for the purpose of gaining manifest benefits and profit from the five latent benefits of time structure, social contact, common goals, status and activity" (p. 188). The central theme of this theory is that these latent functions are essential for human development and needs. Jahoda and Rush (1980) argued that any form of employment would provide these benefits, even if the employed do not like their jobs. According to McKee-Ryan et al. (2005, p. 55), "[Jahoda suggested that] paid work enforces a time structure on the day, consents people to interact with others, offer individuals with a sense of purpose, enables individual to improve their status, and promotes engagement in activities. [Jahoda] retained that time structure was the most crucial of the latent benefits."

Conversely, this was contradictory to the results of studies conducted by Creed and Machin (2002) and Creed and Macintyre (2001), where they evaluated the comparative impact of each of the five benefits on the unemployed. They suggested that loss of status may be the most damaging to well-being. They also indicated that not all employment is beneficial and did not provide appropriate level of access to these benefits (Creed & Machin, 2000; Creed & Macintyre, 2001). Indeed, there are jobs where at least some of these benefits result in extreme stress. Some companies may enforce strict time schedules or there may be too much interaction with others, and this may lead someone to resign or

leave the job. Jahoda (1997) insisted that employment is preferable to non-employment even when conditions are bad as it supports the manifest and latent consequences for unemployed psychologically. This implies that any employment is preferable to being unemployed. However, Winefield et al. (1991) suggested that employed young people who work with unsatisfactory jobs do not report better health than unemployed young people. Henwood and Miles (1987) tested Jahoda's theory in number of studies in 1983 and 1984, and found that unemployed persons reported having much less social contact, status, activity, collective purpose, and time structuring than employed ones.

Creed et al. (1998) demonstrated that the latent functions can also be fulfilled by attending work-related training, or educational institutions, or going to church or places other than employment because they reduce stress, improve self-esteem and improve life satisfaction. Johada insisted that even such social institutions could provide some of these benefits but not all of them. One criticism of deprivation models is that they ignore individual qualities like temperament, morals, and life experiences (Creed & Evans, 2002).

Winefield et al. (1991) also outlined some limitations of Johada's theory. They proposed that the theory did not take the differences between employment and work into consideration. They said that Johoda's theory assumed that even retirees, housewives, students, those who volunteer and unemployed persons would experience psychological problems because the manifest and latent benefits were not imposed upon them through an employment institution or establishment.

To sum up, it has been shown that unemployed people with little or no access to the manifest and latent advantages of jobs have been linked with having poorer mental well-being. According to the Institution for Work and Health (IWH) (2009), there is also strong evidence that individuals with mental health issues are more likely to become unemployed than others. This could affect their psychological wellbeing further if unemployed graduates remain unemployed. That will make it even harder for them to be employable.

Vitamin Theory

Warr (1987) highlighting nine “vitamins” representing various environmental factors that are thought to have a positive impact on the psychological well-being of the jobless. These include the opportunity for control, the opportunity for skill use, externally generated goals, variety, environmental clarity, availability of money, physical security, interpersonal contact, and a valued social position. The nine categories may be used in the case of unemployment to identify, describe and explain the psychological impact of unemployment between the employed and unemployed environments (Ezzy, 1993). Like Jahoda’s model, it is clear that these vitamins are coinciding and intertwined in many ways (Davies, 1992). Many of Warr’s environmental features, such as financial rewards, social contacts, social purposes, and status and identity, have also been included in Jahoda’s analysis of the functions of employment (Ezzy, 1993).

Warr’s (1987) vitamin model is related to Jahoda’s (1981; 1982; 1997) in that the deprivation theory assumes that an individual’s environment is the primary predictor of psychological well-being. While both theories are environment-centred, Warr’s (1994) vitamin theory is concerned with the capacity of the person to influence the environment, while Jahoda referred to the environment-controlled individual. The negative impact of unemployment may thus be described in terms of the poor environment of the unemployed (Ezzy, 1993).

Warr (1987) indicated that both too low quantities and too high quantities of the vitamins could be assumed to reduce the mental well-being of the unemployed. Jahoda failed to quantify the amount needed for a latent benefit. Thus, psychological well-being would be unlikely to be affected by an abundance of money or physical protection, but too much control or variety might be harmful.

Warr (1987) developed the vitamin model, which includes experiences of unemployment, while Jahoda ignored individual qualities like temperament, morals, and life

experiences (Creed & Evans, 2002). The deprivation model “...disregards the fact that people react differently to the same events and that they assess environmental conditions depending on the individual expectations, values, prior experiences, and personalities” (Ezzy, 1993, p. 47). The vitamin model has established a set of formal assessment standards for describing diverse work conditions and unemployed situation. This suggests that the positive effects of escaping oppressive employment and the detrimental impact of working in miserable employment can be accounted for by the vitamin model. These have been explained by referring to the relative disparities between unemployment and job environments. “In other words, an oppressive work environment may have fewer ‘vitamins’ than the unemployed environment. Consequently, moving into the more ‘healthy’ environment of unemployment should result in increased psychological well-being (Ezzy, 1993).

Unemployment damages the above-mentioned environmental features, and hence damages psychological well-being (Piovani, & Aydiner-Avsar, 2015). The vitamin model has been criticised by Feather (1989) who questioned whether the nine environmental features are the true reflection of basic human needs.

Agency Restriction Theory

The third major theory proposed to explain the reduction in well-being as a result of unemployment is the agency restriction theory (Fryer, 1986). Jahoda’s model has been criticised from several angles by (Fryer, 1986). In disparity to Jahoda's views, Fryer (1986) stated that the primary psychological impact of unemployment is connected to the financial suffering caused by the lack of income (Piovani & Aydiner-Avsar, 2015). Fryer argued that the major impact of unemployment was the loss of the manifest function of the loss of income not the loss of the latent functions, as claimed by Jahoda (Creed, & Macintyre, 2001). Fryer argued, “[The] loss of financial income limits the individual's ability to exercise personal agency, making it hard or not possible to plan, control, and organise the personally

rewarding lives that are important for the growth and sustain the well-being” (Creed et al., 2001, p. 05). Moreover, their psychological well-being deteriorates because of poverty. According to this analysis, each person has their own agency, making the experience of unemployment unique and personal, making it impossible to remove a specified set of psychological categories connected with jobs or the lack of them (Piovani & Aydiner-Avsar, 2015).

Pauline (2015) found that unemployed graduates experienced financial problems that put them in financial stress as a result of unemployment. This was largely due to the inability of these graduates to meet up with their financial responsibility and fulfil their aspirations, which they initially thought that going to tertiary would guarantee them. These graduates had been restricted from the agency of planning their life which has resulted in a deterioration in mental health. Paulin’s (2015) findings showed that financial stress is widespread amongst unemployed graduates in such a way that graduates perceive 71% of financial stress as a caused by unemployment.

The agency restriction model argues that unemployment enforces limitations on people rather than depriving them of benefits. Davies (1992) indicated that Fryer's view is treasured in that it emphasises the significance of the people's personal possessions in dealing with their circumstances rather than depending on a solely environmental explanation of unemployment distress, while Jahoda claimed that unemployment deprives the person of time structure. Fryer argued that unemployment limits the person's chance to prepare for the future. Paul and Moser (2009) criticised the agency theory by stating that the theory disregards frequent attributes of people who are not employed and stressed a strong dedication to employment and the need to have a job.

The significance of this theory is the financial hardship experienced by most people without jobs, which has a negative impact on psychological well-being.

Skills Atrophy Model

The model of skills atrophy is an economic theory of hysteresis developed by the John Maynard Keynes during the 1930s and revived by (Palley, 2018). The model of skills atrophy suggests that the employment skills (human capital) of the unemployed can become obsolete and outmoded during periods of unemployment, making them less employable (De Grip & Van Loo, 2002; Palley 2018). Reneflot and Evensen (2014) and Kieselbach (2003) confirmed that long periods without work can also contribute to the loss of skills that are important in the workplace. As indicated by Heang et al. (2019), most employers these days do not employ based only on academic qualifications but also possession of the right soft skills and generic competencies. The model of skills atrophy involves the loss of general skills, such as computer literacy, which over time can become rusty or redundant (De Grip & Van Loo, 2002). This makes it difficult to return to work even when there are jobs and opportunities are offered and accessible. The unemployed may progressively lose the enthusiasm, self-confidence or the self-esteem that is necessary to get to the place of work and meet employment criteria (Quiggin, 1995). The loss of skills and demoralisation increase the risk of being marginalised, and as a result the unemployed may continue being unemployed at any salary offer and become unemployed for a long time (Quiggin, 1995).

Reverse Causation Theory

Kasl's (1982) theory of reverse causation argued that unemployment has a negative impact on the self-esteem of an individual, and is a determinant of being a source of chronic unemployment. In other words, self-esteem tends to be a psychological attribute that helps people gain and retain jobs (Dooley & Prause, 1997). In turn, this interferes with the willingness or desire of the unemployed to find jobs. The lengthier the person stays out of the workforce, the further the harm that occurs to his or her self-esteem, producing a recurring adverse effect between psychological well-being and work seeking behaviour

(Bowles, Gintis, & Osborne, 2001). Consequently, the individual remains jobless for a prolonged long period.

Summary

All of these theorists believed that employment is crucial for the psychological well-being of an individual, and when people are unemployed they frequently become psychologically distressed. All of the theories have been applied when discussing the results of this study as they are interlinked. However, each has its own weaknesses or critics and strengths.

While Jahoda and Warr have been criticised for emphasising the importance of environmental factors, Fryer has been criticised for ignoring the institutional constraints that restrict individuals as well as the latent benefits associated with employment (Vobeme & Eunicke, 2015).

Both Jahoda's and Warr's models are environment-centred, unlike Fryer's model which is individual-centred. The agency restriction theory was based on a view of humans as proactive and intrinsically driven creatures. Like agency theory but unlike deprivation theory the vitamin model drew a clear difference between employment and unemployment, and instead focusing on the general feature of the environment. All of these theories argued that unemployment actually causes distress and distress is not a cause of unemployment. All these theorists are consistent with the fact that employment is a necessity to meet human needs and that fulfilment of them is likely to increase a person's feelings of well-being. Employment is thus of great importance for people's mental health.

The limitation for above theories is that, when people are deprived of significant latent and manifest benefits which are related to employment, this may result in a negative impact on their mental health, such as depression, anxiety, fear, stress, drug abuse, etcetera. Poorer psychological well-being adversely affects the willingness of the individual to participate in job-search activities. Therefore, such people are likely to continue to be unemployed for

lengthier periods of time, which in turn has an adverse impact on their latent and manifest benefits and well-being.

If graduates do not enter the labour market after graduation, they may experience the psychological impact of unemployment. Their skills may become obsolete and irrelevant, making them less employable. This could increase the unemployed rates of graduates, as indicated by the Institution for Work and Health (IWH) that people with psychological illnesses are more prone to become jobless than others (IWH, 2009).

Furthermore, economic theories such as the reverse causation theory of Kasl (1982) and the skills atrophy model have been centred on how poor mental health such as low self-esteem and the loss of skills among people who are not working interfere with the willingness or motivation of individuals to look for jobs, that is, the discouraged concept of job seekers, and how this concept decreases the potential labour supply of a country as people drop out of the labour force. The increasing number of economically inactive people is having a negative influence on the economy, particularly in countries with emerging economies like South Africa.

The Psychological Impact of Unemployment

The role of employment in a person's life

To understand the psychological impacts of unemployment, one must first comprehend why employment is such a crucial component of one's life, as well as the functions of employment. The researcher adopted the psychology of work theory by Duffy and Blustein, (2016) in order to comprehend the function of employment in lives of people. Understanding the function of work in the lives of peoples has been a central point of counselling psychology (Duffy & Blustein, 2016).

A main part of this approach focuses on decent work as a crucial element of human well-being (Duffy & Blustein, 2016). Work is necessary for human experience, development, and having a positive impact in people's lives and organisations (Blustein, 2006; Savickas &

Baker, 2005;). According to the ILO (2008a, pp.9-11), decent work involves the following attributes:

“Increasing employment through long-term institutional and economic frameworks; defining, establishing, and improving social protection for employees, such as social security and labor protection, that is developed in accordance with the culture of a society; Promoting social dialogue through deliberate ties between governments, labor unions, and employers; Defining a dignified and just workplace by affirming, developing, and fulfilling fundamental rights.”

Cohen and Moodley (2012) defined the concept of decent work as more than merely income, but as a “...more essential source of personal self-worth, family solidity, community harmony, and economic expansion that provides chances for productive employment” (p. 320).

However, it is difficult to obtain and access decent work for graduates. Mok and Jiang (2018) confirmed that the demand for graduates continues to decrease. Many university graduates have experienced difficulties in finding employment after graduation, so they neither continue to further their education nor receive training to find work (Mok & Jiang, 2018). According to Duffy and Blustein (2016), the decline of job opportunities has been shaped by contemporary economic conditions. Pettinger (2019) stated that high unemployment is an indication of the fact that the economy is operating below maximum capacity and is inefficient; this will lead to lower output and incomes or revenue. Mok and Jiang (2018) also stated that macroeconomic development is also an important factor in the reduction of the employment capacity of graduates.

Rus (2012) stressed the value of work as developing the identity of an individual, as it is the connection between individual and society, and between the personal objectives and social goals. This is similar to Erikson’s (1959) theory of the stages of development, where the healthy development of the psychological ego of the person rely on each stage's

successful completion. Youth departing tertiary are in the middle of the fifth stage, called the industry stage. During this stage, the increase of ego identity formulation occurs (Darity & Goldsmith, 1996). At this point in the lifespan cycle there is a healthy change from youth to old age, but this only occurs upon the achievement of a required occupational identity (Darity & Goldsmith, 1996).

This means unemployment indicates loss of identity or a variation in roles. This also relies on the dedication and intensity to the role as a worker (Reneflot & Evensen, 2014). Hence Reneflot and Evensen, (2014) stated that unemployment can lead to a changed self-perception. This means identity and status is the foundation for achieving an independent occupation or employment status (Damian et al., 1997).

Work gives people the opportunity to be connected to something greater than the self, to use their strengths and energy in the service of something greater than oneself, which contributes to meaning in life (Park et al., 2009). It provides a vital relation between the person and society and enables people to contribute to society and achieve individual fulfilment (Naik, 2016).

Blanch (1989) considered work as a survival mechanism. Workers are able to make their own choices about how they want to live their lives. "Work has the ability to satisfy three basic human needs: the need for survival and power, the need for social connection, and the need for self-determination" (Duffy & Blustein, 2016, p. 128).

Survival needs

According to Duffy and Blustein (2016), Individuals with decent work can meet their basic survival needs by gaining access to resources such as food, housing, and social relationships. The first and most basic of all necessities, according to Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs, are those related to physical survival. This includes the necessities of food, water, shelter, sleep, and oxygen. People's interest and worry are influenced when they are unable to meet their basic survival necessities. A person who is sick or hungry is

unlikely to want to socialise, study, or work (Taormina, 2013). The more the physiological needs are satisfied, the more other needs will be satisfied, such as the need for safety and security (Taormina, 2013). Linn et al. (1985) also believed that for most people, basic life needs are fulfilled through work.

Need for social connection

Human beings have an innate desire for communication, connection and belonging (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). In other words, social interaction involves feeling cherished, cared for, and respected and is as important as food or water to one's well-being. According to Roberts (2018), humans are born with a wired connection as deep as a desire for food, water and warmth in their DNA (Baumeister & Leary, 1995).

Employment can assist to meet these fundamental human desires for social connection, which are largely established in the workforce. In this way social association is a result of decent work (Duffy & Blustein, 2016). Work provides a path for social connectivity in addition to survival demands. Colleagues, clients, supervisors, and supervisees can all benefit from direct interpersonal contacts at work. Positive work environments frequently give employees relationships that help them find purpose and connection in their lives (Duffy & Blustein, 2016). Through employment, people engage with groups outside of their families, which is beneficial for establishing social skills and gaining social support (Kitiashvili & Sumbadze, 2019).

Self-determination needs

Finally, employment can lead to self-determination, which is defined as "...the capability of being involved in activities that are intrinsically or extrinsically motivating in a meaningful and self-regulated manner" (Duffy & Blustein, 2016, P. 139).

Types of psychological impact of unemployment

According to Huppert (2009, p. 137), "Psychological well-being is defined as the balance of feeling good and functioning effectively." Well-being is a broad notion that can

be defined as a subjective assessment of one's own feelings and experiences in life (Kitiashvili, & Sumbadze, 2019). Feeling good includes positive emotions like happiness and fulfilment, as well as emotions like excitement, involvement, confidence, and affection. Successful functioning, from a psychological perspective, comprises reaching one's full potential, having some control over one's life, having a sense of purpose, such as working toward important goals, and having meaningful relationships" (Huppert, 2009, p. 138).

From the 1930s to the present, several studies have been conducted on the influence of unemployment on the psychological well-being of the unemployed. Amissah and Nyarko (2016) stated that unemployment can affect mental health and issues with mental health can reduce the likelihood of a person being employed. Unemployed people regularly experience higher levels of psychological distress and depression, as well as lower levels of self-esteem, than working people (McKee-Ryan et al., 2005; Waters & Moore, 2001). Paul and Moser (2009), observed that people who are not employed exhibit more anxiety than working individuals.

Social psychologists Erikson (1959), Jahoda (1979; 1981; 1982) and Kidwai & Sarwar (2015) believed that experience of situations such as unemployment is capable of damaging people's psychological well-being. Social psychologists emphasise that involuntary unemployment harms the psychological well-being of individuals and can lead to a decrease in motivation, cognitive performance and perception of self-confidence (Goldsmith et al., 1997). These researchers have repeatedly demonstrated that unemployment has a negative impact on a person's psychological well-being (Creed & Macintyre, 2001). Therefore, it seems unlikely that the damage could be hidden by job applicants whose current exposure to unemployment and has left them psychologically impaired (Goldsmith et al., 1997).

Obtaining employment that is aligned with a university graduate qualification is a key worry for numerous graduates after completing their studies. Failure to find work may have a negative psychological impact, which is frequently permanent, not only for the

graduate, but also for the community and the entire nation (De Witte et al., 2012 & Oluwajodu et al., 2015).

The psychological impact of unemployment includes increased hostility, depression, anxiety, stress, anger, fear, despair, loneliness and social isolation, and decreased self-esteem, life satisfaction, aspiration levels, concentration and personal identity amongst job seekers (De Witte et al., 2012; Naik, 2016). Naik (2016) applied the sub-scales of mental health to employed and unemployed group to examine the impact of unemployment among youth in India. His results showed that the two groups differed significantly. In comparison to those who were employed, the unemployed reported higher levels of anxiety and depression, a loss of behavioural emotional control, psychological distress, and lower levels of life fulfilment and psychological well-being.

The psychological impact of unemployment experienced by individuals with tertiary qualifications includes depression, anxiety, stress, poor sense of personal identity, anger, feeling stigmatised, despair, loneliness and social isolation, and decreased self-esteem and life satisfaction (Mabela, 2012). Her study focused on the mental well-being among the unemployed, looking at the duties of government involvement.

Stress

According to Nikoloski and Pechijareski (2017), unemployment is believed to be a key source of stress. Nikoloski and Pechijareski (2017) demonstrated that unemployment represents a stressing situation and causes other health problems.

Unemployed people often feel that all their psychological problems may be resolved if they become employed (Schob, 2016). Oswald (1997), in his study of happiness and economic performance, found that unemployment was identified as the primary reason of unhappiness. One of the most common causes of individual stress is unemployment.

Unemployment is one of the most difficult problems and experiences for young people, and feelings of bitterness that can worsen their psychological stress can lead to a loss of identity

and a sense of helplessness. All of these can lead to mental illness as a result of an individual's inability to cope with the stress of being unemployed (Arnout, 2020).

Rafi et al. (2019) said that depression and stress disorders are common among university jobless graduates due to familial and societal constraints linked with job-search activities, as well as increased expectations from university graduates.

Lim et al. (2018) stated that levels of job-search stress vary in graduates depending on their academic major. For instance, Lim et al. (2018) stated that graduates who majored in humanities or social science had greater levels of job-search stress than those who majored in natural science or engineering. Dunga (2016) expressed the same view, that one important aspect, especially when considering graduate unemployment, is the degree the graduate holds.

Depression

According to the South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG) (2020), the more one cannot find employment, the more depressed one becomes, and one is less motivated to seek employment. The risk for depression in individuals who are experiencing unemployment is nearly doubled (Brody, 1982). Unemployed persons are more prone to suffer from psychological stress, primarily depression and anxiety, which has a negative impact on their health, their families' well-being, and society's overall stability (Ahmad & Khan, 2018).

According to Ahmad and Khan (2018), the impact of unemployment on mental health could rely on family contribution or funds towards graduate's studies, which typically have different meanings for men and women. It has been confirmed by Lim et al. (2018) that one of the causes of distress is the lack of funds to payoff after having spent in other resources for that specific purpose. Young graduates are a group of people who have put a lot of effort, money, and time into their studies and seeking pursuing potential access to labour market relevant to their level of education (Lim et al., 2018; Groot et.,1990).

Lim et al. (2018) found that females were more likely than men to experience job-search stress, depression, and suicidal ideation. Therefore, gender was regarded as a critical variable. When the respondents were interviewed, Lim et al. (2018) found that participants with the expenses of student loans experienced more job-search stress, including family environment stress and job market environment stress. This was also found in an earlier study where Lim et al. (2014) found that university graduates who had loans and other related financial difficulties experienced more stress. Lim et al. (2018) studied 124 former university graduates who were vigorously looking for work. A total of 39.5 percent of respondents who took part in the study had clinically significant depression. Moreover, due to the social stigma associated with mental illness, unemployed graduates were unwilling to seek medical or therapeutic assistance. Young work seekers therefore left depression untreated, thus increasing the challenge of finding jobs and the possibility of suicide (Lim et al., 2018). The unemployed are highly predisposed to depression which makes them isolate themselves from others and look for alternative means to take away the pain such as taking drugs, committing crime, and even attempting suicide (Hussainat et al., 2013).

Self-esteem

According to Fieldn and Davidson (1999, p. 80), "Self-esteem may act as a safeguard against the negative psychological impacts of unemployment because of the level to which we want to rate ourselves." The psychological impact of unemployment is likely to appear in a variety of ways, such as lack of self-esteem (Goldsmith et al., 1997). Holland (2012) viewed unemployment to be a result of lack of self-esteem, and self-doubt. To explore issues of self-esteem amongst unemployed graduates, Beaumont et al. (2016) interviewed graduates on the barriers to gaining employment, and self-esteem was mentioned as one of the barriers. Self-esteem was seen by Pool and Sewell (2007) as a significant moderator of graduate employability alongside self-efficacy and self-confidence. "If self-efficacy is defined as the belief that one has the potential to succeed in a given scenario, self-confidence is the way

that belief is projected to the outside world, and that an increase in self-efficacy should be accompanied by an increase in exhibited self-esteem” (Pool & Sewell, 2007, p. 286).

Kasl (1982) argued that unemployment has a negative impact on person’s self-esteem. Kasl (1982) stated that the longer the period of unemployment, the more damage occurred in one’s self-esteem for both genders (Georgiou et al., 2012). Kasl (1982) proposed that, while unemployment has an impact upon self-esteem and psychological health in general, poor esteem might in turn negatively influence an individual’s chances of gaining employment.

Kanfer et al. (2001), in their meta-analysis, argued that self-esteem has a positive relationship with job hunting behaviour and outcomes. Therefore, self-esteem is an important characteristic during the job hunting period (Georgiou et al., 2012). Lim and Lee (2019) said that self-esteem is a crucial component for improving the likelihood of avoiding unemployment. Graduates with low self-esteem are less likely to have well established or demonstrated employability skills compared to graduates with high self-esteem (Potgieter, 2012). In spite of the difficulties or obstacles they can encounter during the process, individuals with high self-esteem are likely to cope more successfully with the difficulties they face in finding a job, retaining a positive self-image (Potgieter, 2012).

Furthermore, a loss of self-esteem has been commonly linked with severe psychological distress experienced throughout the period of joblessness (Kelvin & Jarrett, 1985). Lower self-esteem raises tension, placing people at significant risk as unemployment advances. With reduced self-esteem, self-dissatisfaction, self-rejection, and self-contempt appear to rise (Kates, Greiff & Hagan, 1990). Individuals with low self-esteem have little or no hope of succeeding, and consequently, they do not make use of their skills (Huyse-Gaytandjieva et al., 2015). People with low self-esteem, when facing challenges such as unemployment, have few coping resources or choose passive ways of coping with a perceived stressful event and consequently become more vulnerable to spiralling downward

into depression (Orth, & Robins, 2013). Low self-esteem may be a reason for unemployment since it promotes a significant susceptibility for both genders to depression, anxiety, stress, and maladaptive behaviours such as alcohol and drug use, all of which can lead to health problems and involuntary unemployment (Sorensen, 2001).

Winefield et al. (1991) showed unemployment among youth has been linked to low self-esteem and increased emotional depression, especially among those who have been not working for a lengthy period. Lackovic-Grgin et al. (1996) argued that there is a connection between graduate unemployment and poor self-esteem, as unemployment reduces a person's sense of accomplishment throughout his or her education.

Identity

“Unemployment not only roots from material suffering but can also affect an individual’s sense of identity such as the feeling of belonging to a specific social group and, consequently, feelings of personal fulfilment and subjective well-being” (Schöb, 2016, p. 1). In other social contexts, such as being a parent, spouse, housewife, breadwinner and volunteer worker, the absence of work can also signify a loss of purpose, fulfilment and identity (Schöb, 2016). This means the unemployed lose self-respect and feel devalued by other people. Employment develops a part of one’s self-concept and provides people with a sense of who they are and where they belong (Kitiashvili & Sumbadze, 2019).

Graduate identity is identical to professional identity. “A key issue in the careers literature has been one's professional self-concept, which is built on traits, beliefs, values, motives, and experiences” (Ibarra, 1999, p. 560). Professional identity construction has often been associated with career success, which is essential for the formation of a professional identity (Hall et al., 2002). West and Chur-Hansen (2004) also viewed employment as more effective in the origin of professional identity than universities. According to Henkel (2005), graduate identity includes having a sense of meaning, self-esteem and confidence.

Erikson (1959) considered professional identity as the most important element of identity development. Kitiashvili and Sumbadze (2019) showed that youth unemployment decreased healthy psychological development by making it difficult to acquire a professional identity. Professional identity has been defined to be a “...clear self-conception grounded on skills, abilities, experiences and identification with a profession” (Smith, 2016, p. 1). This means that forming a professional identity is a gradual process in which people engage in a variety of roles. This includes elements such as education, professional aspirations, attitudes, training, work experience, job satisfaction, and working conditions that influence this process (Smith, 2016). The identification process gives a sense of association and resemblance to a professional community, playing a role in the creation of professional identity in cases where an individual has a particular work. Holmes (2013) stated that professional identity is the combination of personal identity, social identity and institutional identity. Therefore, lack of institutional or organisational identity among graduates may lead others not to assign a graduate as being a person deserving of employment (Holmes, 2013). The development of a professional identity is widely believed to have an impact on graduate work readiness and job placement. Holmes (2013) emphasised that “... ‘to become’ a graduate, one must behave in ways that cause others to assign to them the identity of being a person deserving of employment, not merely by obtaining a degree” (P. 549).

Developing the graduate identity is a social development, emerging from active collaboration of the manifestation of identity aspiration on the part of the individual and society. A graduate identity may generate expectations that influence graduates when they are quantifying job opportunities (Perrone & Vickers, 2003). The nature of the employment an individual obtains is either affirming or disaffirming of graduate identity (Perrone & Vickers, 2003). As indicated by Jahoda (1982), one of the benefits of employment is sense of identity for the employed individual and the society. But that is not the case with

unemployed individuals, as some of them see themselves as having no sense of identity at all, which is detrimental to their well-being (De Witte et al., 2012).

Achieving a degree is viewed as young person's dream because it contributes to achieving an identity in life. Individuals gain a higher and better rank based on their degree and employment status (Hussainat et al., 2013). Graduates develop their identity as graduates from higher education and training during their studies. Graduates have been identified as highly educated (Holmes, 1999).

Suicide

According to Amissah and Nyarko, (2016), suicidality has been counted among the negative consequences of unemployment. A significantly stronger relationship between unemployment and suicide has been found compared to the relationship between suicide and other socio-economic measures. Therefore, a reduction of unemployment may reduce rates of suicide (Lewis & Sloggett, 1998). According to Gunnell et al. (1999), suicide has been more common among people who are unemployed. Blakely, Collings, and Atkinson (2003) investigated unemployment and suicide and concluded that being unemployed is associated with a risk of a higher chance of suicide death.

Joiner (2007) stated that the strongest and most reliable risk factor for predicting suicidal behaviour is unemployment. Gunnell et al. (1999) examined the correlation between unemployment and suicide in men and women aged 15 to 44 over a period spanning two significant economic recessions, 1921 to 1995. Their findings revealed that both males and females had significant connotations between unemployment and suicide. Specially, at a younger age, associations were often stronger. Blakely et al. (2003) also found out that unemployment was strongly associated with death by suicide among youth between the ages of 18 and 24 years old.

Preti and Miotto (1999) carried out a longitudinal study of suicide and unemployment in Italy from 1982 to 1994. They investigated the role of unemployment in

persons who died by suicide in Italy. They found that unemployment increased the risk of suicidal behaviour among the unemployed individuals. Suicide rates among the unemployed were consistently higher than those in the workforce, with a particularly substantial increase among those looking for their first job. Suicide rates also increased for both men and women (Mamun et al., 2019).

Milner, Page and Lamontagne (2013) discovered that unemployment was linked with 41,148 suicides in 2007 and 46,131 in 2009, suggesting that 4,983 excess suicides were associated with the economic crisis in 2008. Stark et al. (2010) discovered that more than half of those who committed suicide (267; 56.9%) were unemployed. According to Lim et al. (2018), suicidal ideation did not vary according to the academic major among graduates. The percentage of people who work full-time and were graduates with four-year university degrees in Korea declined by 10.6 percent between 2006 (63.1%) and 2015 (52.5%). This showed that there is a risk that this phenomenon could have an impact on graduate psychological well-being and lead to stress, depression, and suicidal ideation (Lim et al., 2018). This analysis of the studies mentioned above has shown a positive association between suicide and unemployment.

Stigma

Stigma is one of the reasons for long-term unemployment and its psychological impact. However, in countries with low unemployment rates, the stigma often associated with unemployment may be less since unemployment is widespread (Bretschneider, 2014). The stigma attached to unemployment is often attributed to the widespread perception that unemployed are jobless because of a personal shortcoming, the attitude of the unemployed and undesirable characteristics that have resulted in their unemployment (Furåker, & Blomsterberg, 2003; McFadyen, 1998).

Krug et al. (2019) addressed unemployment as a social stigma. Their results showed that stigma can hinder the unemployed from getting employment. This involves the

discrimination against the unemployed during the recruitment process by employers.

According to McFadyen (1998), even if the unemployed have the same credentials, skills and experience as the working candidates, the unemployed and, in particular, the long-term unemployed, are far less likely to be employed. This means the duration of unemployment has the significant impact on unemployed individual. McFadyen (1998) argued that the stigma of unemployment arises from stereotypes about attitudes to employment. People who are not working may be classified as people who do not want to work, or they are not trying harder to find employment (McFadyen, 1998).

The unemployed who do not possess the skills or attributes required by the employers may be seen as not intelligent, not competent, unwise and not productive (McFadyen, 1998). Shah et al. (2020) revealed that educated individuals are stigmatised and discriminated against due to their status of unemployment.

According to Bretschneider (2014), it may be assumed that the adverse effects of stigmatisation practices, such as unemployment stigma, are likely to have a deleterious impact on psychological well-being.

Coping mechanisms of unemployment

Coping theories focus on the ways in which people manage problems in their lives. In this section, problem-focused and emotion-focused coping are addressed. The concept of a coping mechanism has been used in this study to refer to activities carried out when unemployed, as well as emotions towards being unemployed (Julkunen, 2001).

Coping activities could include methods directed at improving the stressful event for the recovery (Grossi, 1999). These include problem-focused and emotion-focused coping. Problem-focused coping includes taking initiative to adjust the cause of the stress by engaging in activities or behaviour that aim to manage a stressful situation (Grossi, 1999; Lazarus & Folkman, 1987). Emotion-focused coping includes alleviating the negative feelings connected with unemployment such as isolation, depression, anxiety and attempting to alter

one's emotional response to the stressful situation (Leana, Feldman, & Tan 1998; Lazarus & Folkman, 1987).

In the context of unemployment, problem-focused coping mainly involves job-seeking activities, retraining, and relocation. Emotion-focused coping may include behaviours such as exercise, relaxation, and social support (Grossi, 1999).

Job seeking behaviour

Active job search is a method of problem-focused coping and is an important predictor of being employed (McKee- Ryan et al., 2005). It is a problem-focused method of coping because it aims to address the origin source of the stressful situation of not working. (DeFrank & Ivancevich, 1986; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Job search behaviour can be defined as "... the precise behaviors that are performed to get knowledge about labor market options by putting forth effort and time" (Bretz et al., 1994, p. 278). Job search behaviour involves two main dimensions, job hunting intensity and job search quality (Van Hooft., 2020). Job search intensity means that, "The time and effort people put into job search efforts, as well as the scope of these activities, are all factors to consider" (Van Hooft., 2020, p. 7). Sample practices involve speaking to others such as friends and ex-colleagues to get advice on job search methods, as well as examining job advertisements on the internet, contacting employment agencies, and filling out applications. Job search quality "...shows the level to which the job hunting is conducted in an orderly and well-prepared way, with behaviors (e.g., interacting with other people, interview behavior) and products (e.g., CV, letters for job application) that meet or surpass potential employers' expectations" (Van Hooft., 2020, p. 7). The combination of the two dimensions such as the span of time spent studying company profile before the interview has been found to be positively connected with the quantity of invitations to interviews and the number of job offers (Keenan & Scott, 1985; Van Hooft, 2020). This is consistent with Wielgosz and Carpenter's (1987) findings. They reported that the major variations in job search duration depend upon

the job search methods employed. Their findings showed that unemployed people who used multiple job search strategies found employment much faster than those who focused on only one strategy.

Saks and Ashforth (1999) found that Job search intensity was positively connected to employment status during graduation. Saks and Ashforth (1999) found that job seekers who put more effort into their job hunting in the semester before graduation were more likely to find work towards the end of the semester. An intensive job hunting enhanced the chances of landing a new job and lowered the risk of long-term unemployment (Kanfer et al., 2001).

Liu et al. (2014) identified three key theoretical approaches that have influenced the development of job search methods, behavioural learning theory, theory of planned behaviour, and social cognitive theory.

Behavioural learning theory.

Behavioural learning theory argues that the fruitful job hunting comprises of a collection of behaviours such as job opportunity search, networking, writing a resume, and attending an interview. These behaviours are more effective if they are learned and performed under the supervision and guidance of an employment counsellor or trainer (Wanberg et al., 2000). During one-on-one sessions with trainers or career counsellors, advice is given to the unemployed in order to facilitate job search skill attainment and behaviour retention (Liu et al., 2014). Guided by such behavioural principles, graduates can make use of programmes like Harambe at the Department of Employment and Labour to acquire job search behaviour that can increase the likelihood of obtaining employment. This was supported by Adeyemo and Ajufo (2005) who conducted a job-training programme in Harrisburg, Lebanon, and Pennsylvania for single parents. The women were exposed to the preparation of resumes and interviewing skills preparation. The results of the programme indicated that in the first year, 18 of the twenty women that successfully completed the programme obtained employment (Adeyemo & Ajufo, 2005). This backs the earlier findings

by Hammer (1999) and Julkunen (2001), where it was discovered that those on numerous training schemes and using a job search had better mental health.

Theory of planned behaviour.

According to this theory, "...attitudes toward the activity, subjective norms, and beliefs of individual control over performing the behavior each play an important role in behavioral intention. "A work searcher's cognitive or affective evaluation of putting effort into his or her job hunting reflects his or her attitude in a context of job search setting" (Liu et al., 2014, p. 1011). According to the idea of planned behavior, "When one's attitude and subjective norm are good, and one's perceived behavior control is high, one's intention to perform the activity is also high, resulting in greater effort being put into it" (Liu et al., 2014, p. 1011). Concerning attitude, graduates may feel that it is clever, valuable, and convenient to try hard to get a job through job search behaviour. With regards to subjective norms, graduates may get family members and friends on board for support and motivation. This will assist the graduate to enhance the intensity of a job hunting (Song et al., 2006). Finally, participating in training intended specifically to increase perceived behavioural control, such as Harambe, have also been displayed an increase in the intensity of job hunting behaviours.

Social cognitive theory.

Social cognitive theory identifies the significance of goal setting. In the context of job hunting behaviour, goal setting recognises job hunting goals and job search goals, where the individuals create performance target for themselves in their job hunting, such as sending out a particular number of applications at the beginning of each week or month (Fort et al., 2011). Bandura (1999) proposed that goal setting enlists evaluative self-reactions, that is, self-satisfaction, that mobilise efforts toward goal achievement. Therefore, goal setting may increase job search behaviour and lead to employment among graduates.

Engaging in a job search may have a positive impact on the feelings of those who are unemployed because it brings them closer to achieving their employment goal and thus

reduces the stress and anxiety about finding a job. Wanberg et al. (2010) demonstrated that people reported greater positive feelings on times when there was development in their job hunting.

It has been discovered that intentions for job search are predicted by one's optimism towards finding employment (Griep et al., 2012). "The more one's positive attitude and the greater the social pressure towards seeking for an employment, the more likely one would improve and sustain job search behaviour" (Griep et al., 2012. p. 6). Saks and Ashforth (1999) studied the impact of personality variations and job search behaviours on university graduates' employment status and found that job search was particularly important among graduates because one's first job after graduation is an important predictor in detecting the future occupational direction and earnings.

Seeking retraining on soft skills.

Retraining is a form of problem-focused coping. Retraining may help graduates to structure their time, have meaningful activities, and get to socialise with others which was shown by Haworth and Ducker (1991) and Jackson (1999) to have a positive impact on the psychological well-being of the unemployed. As indicated by Creed et al. (1998), the latent functions can be satisfied through activities other than work, such as joining work-relevant training, educational institutions, or attending church. Haworth and Ducker (1991), in the support of latent deprivation theory, found that unemployed people who spent their time meaningfully had improved psychological well-being.

Abdullah-Al-Mamun (2012) stated that it has been argued by employers that graduates lack the correct collection of soft skills that would enable them to integrate themselves and contribute effectively at the workplace, such as handling workplace pressures and demands. Pauw et al. (2006) highlighted many reasons why graduates are unsuccessful in the recruitment phase, and lack of soft skills was one of them. It was also reported that 65.3 percent of the unemployed were long-term unemployed and had been

searching for employment for a duration of one year or more. This might be a result of people who had been looking for employment lacking certain skills required by the employer (Rehman & Mehmood, 2014). Soft skills include communication, interpersonal skills, team-work, critical thinking and problem-solving, and personal development skills (Tang, 2019). These skills are sometimes referred to as generic skills (Rehman & Mehmood, 2014). Employers want to see more than just qualifications and experience when recruiting graduates (Tang, 2019). Universities are expected to produce graduates with skills, known as graduate essential skills, employable skills, graduate qualities, or generic skills (Bowden et al. 2000; Shivoro et al., 2018; Smail, 2014) based on employer expectations or the labour market.

Graham (2019) studied the barriers to the labour market for unemployed graduates in South Africa. During interviews with participants it was noted that soft skills were a critical barrier for graduates in finding employment. Participants clarified that a distinction exists between getting a degree and having the skills needed for a job. In their understanding, skills were acquired from practical experience and not having this experience meant that they lacked the necessary skills. Grunau, and Lang, (2020) also found that soft skills play an important role in determining who will be employed sooner. Moleke (2003) reported that the higher education institutions should equip graduates with the knowledge and skills required by the labour market, because the qualification alone is insufficient to survive the labour market. The advantage of retraining is that graduates acquire skills that are up-to-date which would in turn increase the likelihood of employment (Grunau, & Lang, 2020).

Hairi et al. (2011) described three Malaysian intervention programmes aimed at reskilling university graduates in soft skills, namely, the young executive scheme (YES), the industrial skill enhancement programme (INSEP), and the graduates training scheme (GTS). YES, INSEP and GTS were designed to assist graduates who had finished their degree studies at Malaysia. "The programs are much more of a re-skilling process, with the goal of repairing

or bridging the graduates' competency gaps" (p. 04). The re-skilling process usually takes a longer period of time, ranging from twelve to twenty-four months. It can be considered as one of the most appropriate initiatives to address the issue of unemployed graduates through effective university-industry collaboration (Hairi et al., 2011).

Relocation.

Most graduates move to metropolitan municipalities because metropolitan areas have been believed to have many job opportunities, and there is the opportunity for participating in job fairs to network and develop connections. However, according to Schirmer et al. (2017), some Municipalities have very little potential to generate local jobs for young people. According to the Centre for Development and Enterprise (CDE) (2017), Pietermaritzburg is not considered as metro municipality but secondary municipality. Therefore, migrating to metro cities may be used as a coping mechanism. The geographic position also plays a significant part in job hunting and finding employment (Moleke, 2005). Turok et al. (2017) backed this up when they found that, between 2008 and 2014, 385 000 people were lifted out of poverty by migrating from rural to urban areas, having access to the workforce and waged employment despite the poor economic performance of the South African economy.

Shezi (2013) mentioned, "Not all persons who migrate from rural to urban regions are unskilled; over time, trained professionals working in rural areas have begun to prefer working in largely metropolitan areas due to better working and living conditions" (pp. 110-112). Cities, and particularly the large cities (metros), are where job creation and economic growth happens in South Africa. This is largely because the majority of job opportunities are projected to be available in a metro like Johannesburg, which attracts a lot of business investment. (CDE, 2014). The ILO (2018) stated that people who live in cities are more likely to be employed and have higher living standards than those who live in rural areas. The expanded unemployment rate is the unemployment rate that includes discouraged work

seekers, it is high in rural areas (ILO, 2018). Mlambo (2018) mentioned a few implications for rural-urban migration which included overpopulation, traffic congestion, crime and so on. There is still debate regarding this strategy, whether it guarantees graduates success in finding a job.

“Between 2001 and 2011, South Africa's urban population grew by 63 percent, with people from all around the country flocking to cities like Cape Town, Durban, and Johannesburg” (Angelopulo, 2017, pp. 65-69). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2011) mentioned, “Rapidly expanding provinces, such as Gauteng and the Western Cape, witness a significant influx of people looking for work from all throughout South Africa” (p. 80). According to the World Economic Forum (WEF) (2017), poorly performing towns, a lack of job opportunities in smaller cities, low educational opportunities, drought, and an ineffective rural economy are all push factors for internal migrants. Therefore, relocating is the only hope for unemployed. They go to places where economic growth and more opportunities are concentrated. Relocation to the metro cities may be a possible method to secure employment and cope with unemployment amongst Pietermaritzburg graduates.

Social support

Social support “...is the role performed for the individuals by significant others, such as family, friends, partner and co-workers” (Thoits 1995, p. 64). Social support is “...regarded as a coping resource from which people might draw when dealing with stressors” (Thoits, 1995, p. 64). Lazarus and Folkman (1984) noticed two effects of social support. Firstly, it made people feel valued despite their lack of paid work, and they could maintain a positive attitude. Secondly, it reduced stress and the negative moral consequences of unemployment. According to Lorenzini and Giugni (2010), friends and partners appear to be the core provider of social support during unemployment, whereas family members and partners have been related to financial support (Lorenzini & Giugni, 2010). High levels of

social support from significant others, such as partners, family members and friends, are thought to reduce the impact of stressful life situation such as unemployment on psychological well-being (Crowe & Butterworth, 2016). In addition, individuals may be more likely to use problem-solving and information seeking methods (Gallie et al., 2003). These significant others reduce the stress of unemployment through emotional support and may also provide opportunities for social activities that may compensate for the stress of unemployment (Crowe & Butterworth, 2016; Lorenzini & Giugni, 2010). Unemployed people who have more social support may find it easier to cope with the strains of unemployment. The impact of social support may rely on how unemployed individuals react to their circumstances and their ability to address it, providing a barrier from the negative impact of unemployment (Crowe & Butterworth, 2016). Mckee-Ryan et al. (2005) discovered that social support has contributed to better mental health well-being of unemployed individuals and reduced the negative consequences of stressful situations such as unemployment.

Jahoda's (1981) theory of latent deprivation indicated social contact to be one of the five latent benefits of employment, and Warr's (1987) vitamin theory said that interpersonal contact accounted for well-being in occupational settings in relation to job seeking behaviours. This can also be archived through the availability of social support to unemployed graduates.

Social support has also been linked with higher expectations of finding a job. Lorenzini and Giugni (2010) indicated that family members provide assistance in finding employment through preparing application forms, CVs, or administrative documents for a job. Mokgohloa (2006) studied the views and experiences of unemployed youth graduates in Polokwane in Limpopo, South Africa, and found that the graduates were more reliant on their parents for job search activities such as attending an interview, photocopying and the

use of a fax. Their parents provided them with money for transport. The study showed that all the graduates relied on support of their parents and relatives to find work.

Lorenzini and Giugni (2010) argued that the detrimental effects of unemployment on psychological well-being can be compensated or least reduced if graduates have access to external resources such as financial help and talking to someone to overcome stress of being unemployed that may be provided by social support. De Witte et al. (2012), in their meta-analytic study, noted that the negative impact of unemployment has been intensified by a lack of social support to assist graduates to find employment. Kraak (2015) shared the same view when investigating the importance of social networks among graduates for obtaining employment in the workforce, where approximately 14.5 percent of graduates were able to find employment through friends and family.

Social support may inspire graduates to create and engage in their own career plan, instead of holding a degree with just the theory that seems irrelevant in the labour market (Magagula, 2017). This means social support should be made available to assist young graduates to become more creative in taking the initiative through the skills and abilities they may have learned throughout their studies (Magagula, 2017).

Through social support, graduates are motivated not to give up on their dreams but to chase their desired jobs and not turn out to be the 'discouraged unemployed (Magagula 2017; Pauw et al., 2006).

Dependency on family members has been confirmed by Moller (2010). Family support is the major source of social security of the unemployed youth in South Africa. This happens mostly in African communities, which carry the burden of unemployment. Despite the fact that the youth are unemployed, their families still give them support (Moller, 2010).

The acquisition of jobs in the labour market is not only based on achieving a university degree, but also on having social support such as friends and family members who can recommend employment to graduates through their social networks, which will help

them to negotiate the labour market (Adeyemo & Ajufu, 2005; Kraak, 2005). As a result, graduates who are not working may need to associate themselves with their network and resources in order to find employment.

According to Magagula (2017), unemployed graduates require social support from family and friends to cope with the negative effects of unemployment. Individuals cope better with stressful situations when they have access to social support and are a part of a social network that is seen to be supportive. As a result, social support has been highlighted as a crucial factor in protecting jobless people from stress and sustaining a healthy lifestyle (Vaux, 1985; Lakey & Cohen, 2000).

Conclusion

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) stated that the effectiveness of both problem- and emotional coping rely on the association between coping resources and cognitive appraisal. Coping resources entail internal qualities such as self-esteem, positive beliefs and external resources are material resources, and social support. All of these attributes have an impact on how a person cope with unemployment (Virkes et al., 2017). Cognitive appraisals have been described people's methods for determining the meaning of a circumstance and evaluating stress management or control solutions (Waters & Moore, 2002). Thus, coping resources and cognitive appraisals are the main factors in discovering whether experiences or circumstances such as unemployment are stressful. These factors also determine the coping mechanisms a person will use to cope with the stress of unemployment (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). As indicated by Cassidy (1994), graduates who have access to coping resources cope better with the stress of unemployment.

Problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies can be utilised together to improve the psychological well-being of the unemployed. This has been supported by the findings of a meta-analytic study which showed that both problem-focused and emotion-

focused coping have been linked with better psychological well-being among the unemployed (McKee-Ryan et al., 2005).

According to Folkman (1982), problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies can support each other, but also hinder each other. An individual could utilise an emotion-focused strategy such as controlling his or her anxiety concerning unemployment (emotion-focused coping), and after that participate in activities to resolve the problem such as a job search (problem-focused strategy). In this situation the two approaches complement each other.

Problem-focused coping may not only be inefficient in relieving stress when new job opportunities are extremely scarce, but it may also have negative consequences, such as increased self-blame and emotional distress. Interferences would then not only be concentrating on job search skills, but also on reducing these adverse health effects (Grossi, 1999).

Julkunen, (2001) conducted the study on unemployed youth's coping and emotional well-being. The goal was to see if a variety of coping mechanisms could explain the degree of mental health among young people who are unemployed. Julkunen (2001) found that both problem-focused and emotion-focused coping methods had a positive impact on the mental health of the unemployed.

Chapter summary

In this chapter, a review of the literature on unemployment and its psychological impact has been presented. This chapter focused on interacting with the literature to become familiar with what other scholars have reported on this phenomenon. This included an introduction that focused on unemployment worldwide and in South Africa, and theoretical approaches pertaining to unemployment and its psychological impact. The role of employment in person's life and the types of psychological impact of unemployment were

then discussed. Finally, the coping mechanisms utilised by unemployed individuals in coping with unemployment were discussed. Chapter three focuses on the research methodology.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

Introduction

In order to address the objectives of this study indicated in chapter one, this chapter focuses on how the research problem was investigated. In conducting the analysis, the research methodology has been established in such a manner that it includes the appropriate research design, sampling and sampling method, measures that were used to collect data, pilot study, data collection, and procedure that were used in this exploratory study. It also looks at data analysis and ethical considerations.

Research Design

Malhotra (2010) defined a research design as a blueprint for conducting research, which gives a researcher a clear description of the research process to be followed to find a solution or solve research problem. Islamia and Delhi (2016) defined a research design as a “structure of research” (p. 68). In short, it is a plan of the proposed research work. It also gives a clear indication on how researcher intends to conduct research. There are two broad research approaches, qualitative research and quantitative research. These methods are commonly accepted and used as research models (Saunders et al., 2003). In this study where researcher investigated the psychological impact associated with unemployment amongst graduates in Pietermaritzburg the researcher adopted a quantitative approach. The study was quantitative, exploratory, and descriptive in nature.

Quantitative research is guided by the philosophy of positivism. According to Yilmaz (2013), research follows the positivist paradigm uses quantitative approaches, and this form of study describes phenomena that are investigated using mathematically-based approaches, particularly figures, to analyze numerical data. “Positivism is a philosophy that focuses on problems that can be solved using the scientific method and assumes that all information is contained within the confines of science.” (Reber &Reber, 2001, p. 549). Positivists believe, "Reality is objectively given and can be measured using attributes that are

independent of the researcher and his or her tools, in other words, knowledge is objective and quantifiable." (Henning et al., 2004, p. 17). Muijs (2011) also viewed the quantitative approach as being realist or positivist, to be utilised when a researcher wants to use an objective method to uncover the existing objective reality. According to the quantitative approach, the truth exists and it is the duty of researcher to use objective methods such as questionnaires to uncover it. The duty of the researcher in this study is to be objective, neutral and distant while trying to follow strict scientific methods and procedures as far as possible (Ponterotto, 2002).

In view of this context, the decision to apply a quantitative approach in this study was based mainly on the following basic assumptions:

- The quantitative approach allows the researcher to reach a larger sample size, and this allows for the generalisation of results to the larger population;
- Quantitative research tries to establish causal relationships and explains correlations;
- Reliability estimated on the problem investigated can be attained without interference; and
- The values of the researcher are not imposed since the researcher is detached from the research (Struwig & Stead, 2001).

However, like any other methodology, the quantitative approach has some limitations as well, which include the following:

- There is a risk of some questions not being answered. To avoid this, researchers conduct a pilot study. This helps to detect potential problems in the research design and questionnaire construction;
- The generalisation of findings can also be uncertain unless the researcher takes necessary steps to avoid it (Bhattacharjee, 2012). In this study, the researcher ensured that all sample frame elements from which the sample had been drawn were included in

order to generalise the results and this was used for elements such as the gender, qualification, and background of participants; and

- “In quantitative research, sometimes the researcher overlooks the perspectives and respondents’ experiences in highly controlled settings” (Rahman, 2016, p. 107) because quantitative research lacks a direct connection between researcher and the participants. To overcome this, the researcher employed two instruments to collect data to cover the respondents’ experiences and feelings.

It was clear that the quantitative method was the most suitable investigative technique for this research, given the purpose of the study. Despite the fact that the study may have been approached from a qualitative perspective by focusing on individual interpretations of the psychological impact of unemployment, a quantitative approach was more relevant because the researcher was interested in exploring the psychological impact of unemployment among graduates with a valid and reliable method by utilising a large sample and collecting objective measures.

Exploratory Study

To meet the research objectives of this study, an exploratory study was undertaken to explore the psychological impact of unemployment amongst unemployed graduates in Pietermaritzburg. The exploratory design was appropriate to investigate the psychological impact of unemployment such as depression, anxiety, stress, anger, fear, despair, loneliness and social isolation. The researcher used an exploratory design for the reasons suggested by Leavy (2017). “These include fill the gap in new knowledge or under research topic, or approach different perspectives to generate new, emerging insight and to determine priorities for future researchers” (Leavy, 2017, p. 5). Thus, the use of an exploratory quantitative approach in this study assisted the researcher to gain an understanding of how to explore how unemployment affected the psychological well-being of unemployed graduates.

Sampling and Sampling Method

The sampling process is defined as a procedure that uses a small quantity of items or parts of a whole population to draw assumptions about the entire population (Sekaran, 2003). Sampling includes the selection of specific people to obtain data from a population to be utilised for purpose of research (Frey et al., 2000). Researchers decide on the type of sampling procedure that they would like to utilise, depending on the objectives and aim of their study.

The research sample size was calculated using an online sample size calculator to include 127 unemployed graduates. Based on the population database of 1500 unemployed graduates, for a 95% confidence interval and a 5% margin of error, the essential sample size for a 10% response distribution was 127, and for a 5% response distribution was 70.

Owing to COVID-19 restrictions and the importance of following appropriate safety protocols, the researcher was able to recruit 100 participants. There were 50 females, 42 males, and eight who did not indicate their gender. 72 had bachelor's degrees, 20 had honours degrees, three had masters degrees and five degrees were unknown. Their ages ranged from 22 to 35 with a mean age of 28. They had been unemployed on average for three years, with unemployment periods ranging from two years to nine years.

Because the study needed participants with experience as unemployed graduates, non-probability sampling was used to attain the desired sample size. There are four different approaches for non-probability sampling methods. These are convenience sampling, quota sampling, purposive sampling, and snowball sampling (Marshall, 1996). The purposive sampling method was deemed to be suitable as the researcher was consciously targeting graduates who had been unemployed for two years after they have completed their qualification. Purposive sampling involves the researcher selecting participants based on traits to give what is perceived to be the characteristics representative of the population

that is the focus of the study (Black, 2011). Non-probability sampling methods are a more subjective method when selecting a sample, but these methods can save costs and time (Swanepoel et al., 2010). While the disadvantage of non-probability sampling may be the complexity of measuring sampling errors (Singleton et al., 1993), in situations where a researcher needs to reach a targeted sample rapidly, purposive sampling may be extremely useful (Kelley et al., 2003).

Many studies indicated that purposeful sampling technique widely used in qualitative research (Leavy, 2017). Researcher used the purposive sampling because the study was conducted during COVID 19 pandemic. As it has been indicated that the method is used whereby the units are selected because they have characteristics that researcher needs in the sample, it saves time and money. This was convenient for the researcher because during pandemic, there were different levels of lockdown with different regulations. Therefore, when the lockdown levels are adjusted one had to use the time wisely. Therefore, purposive sampling does not take long time when recruiting and selecting the sample for the study. Lastly, purposive sampling techniques do provide researcher with the justification to make a generalization from their sample than a random sample where not all participants might have the characteristic you are studying (Sekaran, 2003).

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The inclusion and exclusion criteria were used to determine study eligibility or possibility. For the participants to be included in this study, the inclusion criteria were as follows:

1. Graduates from tertiary institutions who had obtained various qualifications: Graduates between the ages of 21 and 35, males and females who had attained different bachelors degrees or higher qualifications from different tertiary institutions were selected.

2. Graduates had to be residing in Pietermaritzburg: Graduates residing in Pietermaritzburg were selected due to the unemployment rate for youth representing 66.1 percent of the total unemployed people in the region. This was a high unemployment rate as it was noticeably higher than the average unemployment rate, even at the KZN provincial level.

3. Graduates had to have been unemployed since the time they obtained the qualification:

Graduates had to have been unemployed, involved in a job search for at least two years from the time they obtained the qualification. Quiggin (1995) classified unemployed for more than a year as long term unemployed. After two years and more of searching for job without any luck, the unemployed become demoralised, discouragement may occur and that may cause people to assume that they have limited opportunities of obtaining employment (StatsSA, 2014). When people quit looking for work after a long time of looking with no success, they can become discouraged job seekers (Dooley & Prause, 1995).

4. Participants who had not been diagnosed with psychological conditions were included:

Graduates who had not been diagnosed with psychological conditions were included because psychological conditions might influence the results of the study.

The exclusion criteria for the participants were graduates who were visitors to Pietermaritzburg, unemployed graduates aged less than 21 years or more than 35 years, males and females who had not experienced unemployment since qualifying, and participants who had been diagnosed with psychological conditions.

Measures

Experiments and surveys are used in the quantitative approach, and data are collected with specified instruments that create statistical data (Richard, 2009). According to Kelley et al. (2003), survey methods such as questionnaires are widely used to collect data, which can be administered online, via mail, face-to-face, or over the telephone.

In this study the researcher used a questionnaire which she administered face-to-face as a research instrument to collect data. According to Bhattacharjee (2012), a

questionnaire is a research tool that comprises of a set of questions (items) designed to obtain structured responses from respondents. The researcher used intra-method mixing which is a method that is used involving two or more instruments to collect data in research (Johnson, 2014). Mohammad (2013) advocated that using different types of tools for data collection and obtaining that information through different instruments may increase the validity and reliability of the data and the analysis. Two questionnaires were used for purposes of data collection. These included a questionnaire designed by the researcher and a pre-existing questionnaire called General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12).

Questionnaire designed by the researcher

The research tools used in this study were questionnaires. Bhattacharjee, (2012) suggested that a researcher should design question in a manner that respondents provide responses in their own words. The researcher used the brief, relevant, unambiguous, specific, and objective (BRUSO) model when constructing the questionnaire to maximise the reliability and validity of participants' responses. BRUSO meant that it would be easy for respondents to read, to understand, and respond in a meaningful way (Peterson, 2000).

A questionnaire consists of a number of sections, such as the topic covered by the questionnaire, an introduction covering the purpose of the study and ethical considerations, instructions on how to respond to questions, open-ended and closed questions, and an expression of appreciation to respondents. Questionnaires should also be submitted for verification to qualified statisticians (experts) to ensure that the structure of the questions meets research standards and that the participants would not counter problems when responding to the questions.

The self-compiled questionnaire had three sections. Section A covered demographic data, section B covered information on psychological impact of unemployment and types of psychological impact of unemployment, and section C covered information on coping mechanisms. The items formulated in the questionnaire is based and focused on the aims

and objective of the study as indicated by (Bhattacharjee, 2012). The questionnaire was constructed along the patterns of Likert-type closed questions. According to Bertram (2007), some of the advantages of Likert scales are easy construction, producing a deeply accurate scale which is simple to peruse and finish for respondents. A copy of this questionnaire may be seen in Appendix H.

Section A asked questions about age, gender, level of degree (bachelors, honours, masters), type of degree, and length of unemployment. The 'type of degree' was intended to differentiate between degrees in Arts, Social Science, Science, Engineering and so on. However, most respondents interpreted this question to mean major subjects. The original intention in analysing this section of the research was to compare actual degrees. However, almost all participants indicated major subjects in their responses.

Traditionally universities are usually divided into faculties and degrees are awarded in terms of the faculty. For example, a Faculty of Arts would award a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree, a Faculty of Science would award a Bachelor of Science (BSc) degree, a Faculty of Social Science would award a Bachelor of Social Science (BSocSc) degree, and so on. The University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), which has a campus in Pietermaritzburg where the current study was conducted, has a system where there are four colleges each made up of several schools. These are shown in Figure 1. With the original intention being to compare actual degrees and almost all participants indicating major subjects in their responses, it was difficult to identify actual degrees, so the participants could only be classified by college. The three colleges used in this research for faculty comparisons at UKZN were the College of Agriculture, Engineering and Science (CAES), the College of Humanities (CHUM), and the College of Law and Management Studies (CLMS).

Figure 1***Colleges at UKZN***

UKZN COLLEGES	
College of Agriculture, Engineering and Science	
School of Engineering	
School of Agricultural, Earth and Environmental Sciences	
School of Chemistry and Physics	
School of Life Sciences	
School Mathematics, Statistics and Computer Science	
College of Health Sciences	
School of Clinical Medicine	
School of Laboratory Medicine & Medical Sciences	
School of Health Sciences	
School of Nursing & Public Health	
College of Humanities	
School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics	
School of Arts	
School of Social Sciences	
School of Applied Human Sciences	
School of Built Environment and Development Studies	
School of Education	
College of Law and Management Studies	
Graduate School of Business and Leadership	
School of Accounting, Economics and Finance	
School of Law	
School of Management, IT and Governance	

Source: www.ukzn.ac.za/colleges

Section B of the questionnaire looked at psychological constructs such as depression, anxiety, feelings of self-worth, identity, shame, disorganisation, optimism, pessimism, isolation and stigma. Section C of the questionnaire looked at coping mechanisms which were non-adaptive such as drinking, as well as various support systems like family and religion. It also looked at where the graduates placed blame for their position. The questions in Section B and Section C were all answered on a scale of 0 to 10 basis, where 0 indicated 'nothing' or 'not at all', 5 indicated a 'middle' or 'average' response, and 10 meant 'always' or 'all the time'.

The General Health Questionnaire-12 (GHQ-12)

The General Health Questionnaire-12 (GHQ-12) questionnaire was utilised to identify psychological distress. A copy of the GHQ-12 may be found in Appendix I. The GHQ-12 was established by Goldberg and Hillier in 1970's (Goldberg & Hillier, 1979). The GHQ-12 is self-administered and is specifically used for psychological distress identification. There are twelve questions in the questionnaire that measure general health and scoring is performed using a Likert scale of four points which when answered are typically summed to produce a single overall score based a single notionally meaningful dimension (Rochat et al., 2015). Each item on the scale has four responses from "better than usual" to "much less than usual."

In most research that has used GHQ-12, the reported Cronbach alpha coefficient for reliability has ranged from 0.82 to 0.86. In terms of validity, convergent validity has been used to establish the extent to which the GHQ-12 corresponds with overall quality of life measures. Montazeri et al. (2003) predicted the GHQ-12 to have a negative relationship with global quality of life measures. "This was measured by the Pearson product moment statistic (Pearson's correlation coefficient = r) and r equal to -0.40 or above was considered satisfactory" (Montazeri et al., 2003, p.2). Therefore, this instrument has been deemed as reliable and valid, and has been translated into 38 different languages. The GHQ-12 is a commonly used screening tool. It has been proven to be a valid and reliable test for detecting an inclusive range of psychological disorders, primarily on the anxiety and depression spectrum. (Montazeri et al., 2003).

Del Pilar Sánchez-López and Dresch (2008) administered the GHQ-12 to 1001 Spanish people between the ages of 25 and 65 years to assess internal consistency and external and structure validity. A Cronbach alpha of 0.76 and external validities ranging from 0.7 to 0.82 were obtained. The validity and reliability were also tested in India with a sample of 286 tannery workers. Cronbach's alpha test was employed in this study. The alpha value

was found to be 0.93 for the entire sample tannery workers (Kashyap & Singh, 2017). Lastly, in a study conducted in Malaysia, “Each of the 12 items had a high degree of internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values of 0.37–0.79, while overall scores in the population sample were 0.79” (Quek et al., & Loh, 2001, p. 509). Test–retest correlation coefficient for the 12 items scored were highly significant. Internal consistency was excellent.

The reliability and validity of the questionnaire in South Africa has been based on a study that was conducted by John (1996) to translate GHQ-12 into a Zulu version by employing a multi-stage process. It obtained a test-retest reliability of $r=0,73$ ($p<0.001$) and a Cronbach alpha of 0.64 for the English version and 0.77 for the Zulu version. A total of 257 bilingual high school students were given a simplified English version of the GHQ-12 and a translated Zulu version. The data from this sample were used to determine whether the Zulu and English versions were equivalent. At the scale level, both versions of the GHQ-12 showed adequate internal consistency and reliability. Evidence of reasonable equivalence between the Zulu and English versions was found in the Zulu version (John, 1996).

The GHQ-12 has been validated by the World Health Organization. The GHQ-12 is a highly sensitive, validated questionnaire that has been frequently used to screen populations for stress. It has also been validated in a study that was carried out by Govender et al. (2012) to determine the level of stress experienced by medical practitioners working in public hospitals in the Ngaka Modiri Molema area (Mafikeng health region), in the North West Province. “The total Cronbach alpha coefficients for all of the items in the tool was 0.847, indicating that the research instrument was reliable.” (Govender et al., 2012, p. 43). The GHQ-12 scale was utilised to measure the existence and severity of stress among doctors. The findings revealed that stress levels and prevalence were significantly greater among medical doctors who are employed in the Ngaka Modiri Molema district in government than among general practitioners in KwaDukuza in private practice (Govender et al., 2012).

Another study at the Africa Centre for Health and Population Studies in Amagugu enlisted 281 HIV-infected women and their HIV-uninfected children (6–10 years) to study the maternal and child psychosocial impacts of HIV exposure to young children in rural South Africa. The GHQ-12 was used to measure maternal psychological functioning. The GHQ-12 had good internal consistency in this study (Cronbach's α pre=0.84; post=0.88). The goal of this research was to see how the intervention affected maternal and child psychological outcomes. The findings revealed that the number of mothers experiencing psychological distress declined following intervention (Rochat et al., 2015).

Pilot study

Bhattacharjee, (2012, p. 23) defined a pilot studies as “...mini versions of a full-scale study”. The general purpose of a pilot study is to provide knowledge, which can lead to the success of the research study as a whole. A pilot study is conducted to:

- Examine the viability of a study's methodology and uncover any shortcomings;
- Test whether the research tool asks the relevant questions, if the design is clear, and if the validated instrument is appropriate for the intended population;
- Test the data collection procedure, including the span of period it takes to finish the questionnaire and the willingness of participants to take part in the research;
- Test entry of data, coding of the items, and relevance of statistical tests; and
- Obtain initial data for the primary outcome measure and to calculate a requisite sample size (In, 2017).

Given the restrictions imposed by COVID-19 and the need to pilot the questionnaire fairly quickly, the researcher approached two graduates (workseekers) who visited the Labour Centre to fill in the questionnaire to check whether there were any ambiguities or inconsistencies, and that the questionnaire was straightforward to fill in. No problems were detected so the main study proceeded.

Data Collection and Procedure

Study setting and recruitment of participants

Purposive sampling was used to collect data. The researcher approached the manager from an organisation of unemployed graduates called 'Umgungundlovu Unemployed Graduates' to request a meeting. Specifically, the Umgungundlovu unemployed graduates was approached for the purpose of identifying suitable participants and to gain more understanding on how best the participants could be selected. This organisation is located in Pietermaritzburg and has a database of 1500 unemployed graduates. The researcher wanted maximum variation of participants with different backgrounds and qualifications in order to assist in achieving the findings for a broad understanding of the psychological impact of unemployment among graduates (Neergaard et al., 2009).

The management of Umgungundlovu Unemployed Graduates were therefore made to understand the purpose of the study, and the researcher requested to conduct the study with their graduates and to use their venue as it was convenient for data collection. She also requested assistance with notifying the participants telephonically about the researcher's intention to conduct the study before they met with the researcher. Inclusion and exclusion criteria were emphasised during the meeting with Umgungundlovu Unemployed Graduates management and during oral information given to the participants. The management agreed to discuss the research with youth graduates.

The Umgungundlovu Unemployed Graduates organisation was chosen because the researcher works at the Department of Employment and Labour (DEL) as a registered counsellor. The researcher provides employment counselling to unemployed work seekers, including unemployed graduates, and Umgungundlovu Unemployed Graduates is one of the department's stakeholders. The organisation meets with unemployed graduates once per week to carry out their activities, and some of these activities are provided by the

Department of Employment and Labour. Graduates use their own transport when attending such activities.

Besides individual employment counselling, the DEL also holds various career exhibitions throughout the year. One such exhibition by Umgungundlovu Unemployed Graduates was held over different days in June 2021. Graduates who attended this exhibition were also asked to participate in the research.

Administration of questionnaires

A clinical psychologist who worked at DEL in the Durban office administered General Health Questionnaire-12 and the questionnaire designed by the researcher to graduates on six different days, after their activities. The questionnaires were administered over six different days because of sample size requirements and the capacity of the venue as indicated in COVID 19 regulations for level 1.

The researcher requested the clinical psychologist to administer questionnaires in order to avoid bias, to minimise cost and deal with expectations such as getting employment after the participation in the study from participants (see Appendix C and D). As indicated above, DEL has a section that assists the graduates to find job. And that is the role researcher to assist graduates to find the job through employment counselling. Therefore, administering the questionnaires to graduates would have raised expectation of employment. Hence researcher requested clinical psychologist to administer the questionnaires.

The arrangements were made regarding address any emotional responses evoked immediately after completing the questionnaires. The participants were informed regarding the arrangements that had been made during the presentation of oral information. None of the participants needed counselling. During the oral presentation the psychologist explained the purpose of the research again. Participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and information completed on the questionnaire would remain confidential.

Informed consent forms were completed and signed (Appendix E). To avoid discussion of items and contamination of data, the questionnaires were completed in an examination room setting. When the participants were in the room they complied with COVID 19 regulations, such as maintaining 1.5 social distance, sanitising and wearing of masks all the time. The structure of the questionnaire, the details contained in it, the recommended estimated time for completion and return of the questionnaires for data capturing and analysis were clarified to all study participants by the clinical psychologist.

Data Analysis

In quantitative data analyses, raw data are turned into meaningful results. The researcher achieved that through using an Excel spreadsheet and a statistical software package called JASP (2020, version 0.12). "JASP includes descriptive statistics as well as common analysis methods including t-tests for one-sample, paired, and grouped designs, and ANOVA for grouped and repeated measures designs." (Love et al., 2019, p. 3).

Descriptive analyses that were performed included frequency counts of categorical data and means, medians and modes of continuous data. Results were presented in tables and graphs.

Statistical analyses included chi-squares for categorical data, while continuous data were submitted to t-tests and an analysis of variance (ANOVA) to decide whether there were significant differences between the demographic groups of gender, level of education, and type of degree. In these cases, the dependent measures were the psychological constructs of depression, anxiety, feelings of self-worth, identity, shame, disorganisation, optimism, pessimism, isolation and stigma measured in Section B of the researcher-designed questionnaire, and the coping mechanisms and apportion of blame as measured in Section C. In the GHQ-12 the measures were a composite score and scores of psychological well-being, decision-making, self-perception, and coping mechanisms.

Ethical Considerations

Before any research can commence it requires ethical clearance and gatekeeper permission. In addition, Sekaran (2003) suggested that ethical considerations should involve the behaviour of the researcher who conducts the investigation, the participants who supply the data, and the analyst who is responsible for findings. This entails the researcher clarifying how the respondents' human and civil rights will be maintained in terms of beneficence, justice, informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity.

Ethical clearance

Prior to data collection, the study complied with ethical standards of academic research. The study was reviewed and granted ethical approval by the Nelson Mandela University Research Ethics Committee, clearance certificate number H20-HEA-PSY-015, a copy of which may be found in Appendix A.

Gatekeeper permission

For gatekeeper permission, the researcher approached the manager from an organisation of unemployed graduates called 'Umgungundlovu Unemployed Graduates' at Pietermaritzburg to request permission to carry out the study. The letter of permission may be found in Appendix B.

Informed Consent

According to Bhattacharjee (2012), informed consent involves informing the participants about the purpose of the study, before responses can be recorded, that they have a right not to participate and a right to withdraw. The participants in this study were given informed consent forms to sign to indicate that they consented to take part in the research. They were informed that they were entitled to withdraw at any time during the study with no penalties. A copy of the informed consent form may be found in Appendix E. The information sheet detailing the purpose of the study, why the participants had been chosen for the study, and what would be necessary of them, may be found in Appendix F.

During the oral presentation the participants were informed about the debriefing that would be provided after administration of the questionnaire to reduce the risk of participants not responding or withdrawing from the study. The goal of debriefing was to clear up any misunderstandings or reservations the participants may have had regarding the study, and to leave them with a sense of dignity, knowledge, and time not squandered (Harris, 1988).

Confidentiality and Anonymity

This involves protecting respondent's identity and the information shared. In research, the notion of confidentiality is not to release a person's information to others unless they consent, as well as protecting their anonymity when the results are submitted (Wiles et al. 2008). This means that readers of a final research report or paper should not be able to link the identity of particular respondents with a given response (Bhattacharjee, 2012). The researcher coded the questionnaires numerically to guarantee the anonymity of the participants, should the questionnaires fall into the hands of someone else. The participants were informed that the questionnaires would be stored by the researcher in a private, locked cabinet where they would not be accessible to anyone but the research supervisor and the researcher. All data were kept for data analysis, verification and audit purposes. Data were electronically and manually. This ensured more privacy and allowed the graduates to share their experiences without any restraints.

Arrangements were also made to use a separate room to provide counselling to those who might need it after completing the questionnaires in the examination room. This was done to ensure privacy and confidentiality. After the oral presentation participants were given twenty minutes to decide to participate or not to participate to ensure the privacy of those who decided to participate.

Beneficence and non-maleficence

According to the beneficence principle, researchers must ensure the participants' well-being (Greaney et al., 2012). Beneficence indicates that individuals should be exposed

to as little danger as feasible while receiving the most benefit for participating (Cozby, 2009). This concept refers to the application of psychological knowledge, as well as knowledge acquired from research, and to the common good of participants, researchers, and community as a whole (Langdridge & Hagger-Johnson, 2013). In contrast, non-maleficence refers to doing no harm. The researcher did not use any shared information during the study against the participant. Instead, the study offered the participants the opportunity to share the impact of unemployment on their psychological well-being so that they could be acknowledged. Terre-Blanche et al. (2006) indicated that participants may gain knowledge and empowerment as a result of the research. This meant that participants might have the opportunity to gain a better understanding of the socioeconomic challenges that influence youths in terms of employment and psychological well-being.

Justice

Greaney et al. (2012) stated that justice needs the unbiased and equal sharing of benefits and risks for participation in a research study, and that no groups be exploited. The researcher ensured that informed consent was obtained before data were collected, and that there was a fair selection of participants. The researcher outlined that there was no risk of harm associated with the study. There was a general risk of the embarrassment of being unemployed and the associated issues of dignity, worth, isolation, and decreased self-esteem, but this risk was independent of the research. There was no cost to participate in the study. This was stated during the beginning of recruitment and during the signing of the consent form. There were no benefits associated with study unless any emotional reactions elicited from the participants during the administration of questionnaires required the psychologist who was there to provide counselling. Participant selection was based on the inclusion criteria that were justified by the research question.

Conclusion

This chapter discussed the research methodology that was adopted. The research methodology process covered the research design which included the choice of a positivist quantitative paradigm. This was followed by an overview of the characteristics of the research population and the selection of participants by means of non-probability purposive sampling. Two instruments were used to collect data, a researcher-designed questionnaire and the GHQ-12. Data collection and procedures were discussed, and JASP was used to analyse data. Lastly issues relating to ethics in quantitative research were discussed. Questionnaires were administered to participants and they were assured of their confidentiality, anonymity, and of their right to withdraw from the study. All the questionnaires were administered with the participants' consent. In the next chapter the findings are presented and discussed.

Chapter Four: Results

Introduction

This chapter provides the findings of the data collected through a survey on psychological impact of unemployment. Through the psychological impact of unemployment, the types of psychological impact of unemployment were identified as this was one of the objectives of the study. and followed by coping mechanisms. After this it presents the GHQ-12 results. This chapter reports on the biographics of the surveyed graduates, psychological impact of unemployment, and followed by coping mechanisms. After this it presents the GHQ-12 results.

The results are all first presented as an overall result for each part of each section. After this, comparisons are made between the three independent variables, gender (male versus female), level of education (graduate degree versus post-graduate degree), and faculty in terms of college as per the system at UKZN (College of Agriculture, Engineering and Science (CAES) versus College of Humanities (CHUM) versus College of Law and Management Studies CLMS).

Some of the questionnaire data were frequency counts and are presented as frequencies and percentages. Given that there were exactly 100 participants, the frequency counts were the same as the percentages. Most of the questionnaire data in sections B and C required the participants to indicate their perceptions on a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 meant nothing or not at all, 5 indicated an 'average', and 10 represented something always being the case. For clarity of presentation and ease of interpretation, all continuous data were converted to percentages by multiplying all scores by 10.

Biographics

A summary of the sample description may be seen in Table 1. From Table 1 it can be seen that half of participants were females 50 (50%), 42 (42%) were males and 8 (8%) were unknown. Table 1 shows that 49 (49 %) of the participants graduated from the College of

Humanities, followed by 33 (33%) percent who graduated from Law and Management 13% percent from Agriculture, Engineering and Science, with 5 (5%) unknown.

Table 1

Sample Description

Gender		<i>n</i>	%
	Female	50	50
	Male	42	42
	Unknown	8	8
College or Faculty		<i>n</i>	%
	Humanities (CHUM)	49	49
	Agriculture, Engineering and Science (CAES)	13	13
	Law and Management (CLMS)	33	33
	Unknown	5	5
Degree Level		<i>n</i>	%
	Bachelors	72	72
	Honours	20	20
	Masters	3	3
	Unknown	5	5
Age		<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std Dev</i>
	Years	27.9	3.5
Length of Unemployment		<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std Dev</i>
	Years	3.0	2.2
Attendance at Work Readiness Programme		<i>n</i>	%
	Yes	41	41
	No	53	53
	Unknown	6	6
Ever Declined a Job Offer		<i>n</i>	%
	Yes	14	14
	No	81	81
	Unknown	5	5
Job Seeking Resources		<i>n</i>	%
	Newspaper	89	89
	Recruitment Agency	50	50
	Internet	96	96
	Personal Approach	60	60
	Networking	70	70
Perceived usefulness of Qualification		<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std Dev</i>
		54.9%	20.7
The loss of income has a significant impact		<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std Dev</i>
		75.6%	25.9
Employment gives a sense of Identity		<i>n</i>	%
	Yes	66	66

No	18	18
Unknown	16	16

It was found that 72 (72%) of the participants had a bachelors degree, 20% had an honours degree, 3(3%) of participants had a masters and 5 (5%) were unknown. The mean age of participants was 28 years. The descriptive statistics for length of unemployment after graduating showed a mean of 3 years. There were 41 (41%) of participants who had attended a work readiness programme while 53 (53%) never attended and 6 (6%) did not indicate if they attended or not. Participants were asked if they had declined a job offer before, and 14 (14%) reported yes and 81 (81%) reported no and 5 (5%) did not indicate. There were 96% of participants who reported that they were using the internet to search for a job, 89 (89%) were using newspapers, 70 (70%) were networking, 60 (60%) were approaching employers and 50 (50%) were using recruitment agencies. Participants were asked if they perceived their qualification to be useful. This was rated at an average of 54 (54.9%). Participants were asked if employment would give them sense of identity, and 66 (66%) of participants acknowledged that employment contributes in creating sense of identify while 18 (18 %) indicated it did not and 16 (16%) were unknown.

Psychological impact of unemployment

This research was primarily interested in the psychological impact of unemployment and the coping mechanisms of unemployed graduates. This section presents the quantitative results of the psychological impact of unemployed among graduates.

Feelings about being unemployed

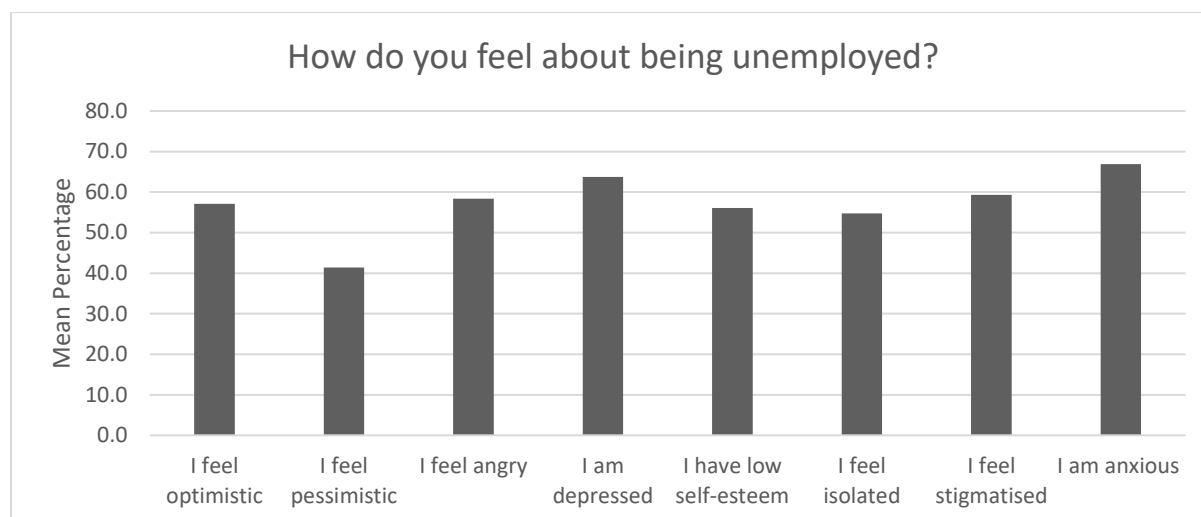
This section analyses the feelings of participants about being unemployed. In this and subsequent sections the participants were requested to rate their feelings on a scale of 0 to 10. These responses were multiplied by 10 to convert them to percentages, and the results are presented as means of these percentages.

Composite Result

The composite results are presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2

How participants felt about being unemployed



From Figure 2 it can be seen that there was a reported 66.9% feeling of anxiety about being unemployed, followed by a 63.7% feeling of depression, and a 59.3% feeling of being stigmatised.

Gender

The gender comparisons may be seen in Table 2. From Table 2 it can be seen that there was no significant difference between males and females and their feelings concerning unemployment ($p > 0.05$).

Table 2

Gender responses to 'How do you feel about being unemployed?'

	Female	Male	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
I feel optimistic	62.0	52.8	1.526	91	0.131
I feel pessimistic	40.6	43.1	-0.457	89	0.649
I feel angry	55.1	61.4	-1.101	90	0.274
I am depressed	60.6	69.1	-1.737	91	0.086
I have low self-esteem	55.2	56.7	-0.274	91	0.785
I feel isolated	50.4	59.3	-1.700	90	0.093

I feel stigmatised	54.4	63.7	-1.703	91	0.092
I am anxious	67.4	66.5	0.164	91	0.870

No significant difference ($p > 0.05$)

Education level

As there were only three participants with a masters degree, both honours and masters degrees were combined into post-graduate degrees for all analyses. The comparison of participants with a graduate degree compared to those with a post-graduate degree are presented in Table 3. From Table 3 it can be seen that there was a significantly greater impact of feelings of depression, low self-esteem, isolation, stigma and anxiety on participants with a post-graduate degree than participants with a graduate degree.

Table 3

Educational level and how participants felt about being unemployed

	Graduate Degree	Post-graduate	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
I feel optimistic	57.1	54.4	0.394	96	0.694
I feel pessimistic	41.8	37.8	0.670	94	0.504
I feel angry	56.5	66.8	-1.579	95	0.118
I am depressed	61.3	73.0	-2.096	96	0.039*
I have low self-esteem	53.5	66.1	-2.010	96	0.047*
I feel isolated	50.3	67.4	-2.922	95	0.004*
I feel stigmatised	55.7	72.3	-2.654	96	0.009*
I am anxious	64.3	77.4	-2.162	96	0.033*

*significant difference ($p < 0.05$)

It can be seen that there was 50.3% feeling of being isolated for participants with a graduate degree and this was significantly higher at 67.4% for participants with a post-graduate degree ($t(95)=2.1922$; $p=0.004$). This shows that there was a strong feeling of isolation by both participants with a graduate degree and a post-graduate degree, but post-graduates felt this more strongly.

This was followed by an average 55.7% feeling of being stigmatised of for participants with a graduate degree and significantly higher at 72.3% for participants with post-graduate degree ($t(96)=2.654$; $p=0.009$). This shows that there was a stronger feeling of being stigmatised among participants with a post-graduate degree.

Participants with a graduate degree reported a 64.3% feeling of anxiety while participants with post-graduate degree were significantly higher at 77.4% ($t(96)=2.162$; $p=0.033$). This shows that participants with a post-graduate degrees felt higher levels of anxiety compared to those with graduate degrees.

There was a mean 61.3% of feeling of depression for participants with a graduate degree and this was significantly higher at 73.0% for participants with a post-graduate degree ($t(96)=2.096$; $p=0.039$). This shows that participants with a post degree felt more depressed compare participants with a graduate degree.

There was an average 53.5% feeling of low self-esteem for participants with a graduate degree and this was significantly higher at 66.10% for participants with a post-graduate degree ($t(96)=2.010$; $p=0.047$). This shows that participants with post-graduate degrees have low self-esteem compared to the participants graduate degrees.

College

The reader is reminded that it was not possible to carry out a comparison of actual degrees (BA, BSocSc, BSc, etcetera) or faculties (Arts, Social Science, Science etcetera) as many participants interpreted the *degree* question to mean major subjects. The participants were therefore classified into colleges as per the UKZN faculty system – the College of Agriculture, Engineering and Science (CAES), the College of Humanities (CHUM), and the College of Law and Management Studies (CLMS). The results in Table 4 indicate that there were no significant differences in how participants from the different colleges felt about being unemployed ($p>0.05$). The higher scores for CHUM on stigma (66.0%) approached but

did not reach significance ($p=0.066$) as did those on anxiety (73%), also approaching but not reaching significance ($p=0.059$).

Table 4

College and how participants felt about being unemployed

	CAES	CHUM	CLMS	F	df	p
I feel optimistic	67.9	53.4	57.6	1.350	2;94	0.264
I feel pessimistic	47.9	39.2	41.6	0.635	2;92	0.532
I feel angry	53.6	64.1	53.6	1.805	2;93	0.170
I am depressed	61.4	66.6	61.5	0.546	2;94	0.581
I have low self-esteem	48.6	58.2	57.9	0.755	2;94	0.473
I feel isolated	55.7	58.4	50.0	1.042	2;93	0.357
I feel stigmatised	52.9	66.0	53.6	2.799	2;94	0.066
I am anxious	68.6	73.0	59.4	2.911	2;94	0.059

No significant difference ($p>0.05$)

What getting a job would mean

This section analyses the meaning of employment among participants. The composite results are presented in Figure 3. The survey results show that participants felt very strongly across all the options provided on the survey. This is shown by the high level of the bars in Figure 3.

Composite Result

The composite result, as presented in Figure 3, shows a 92.7 % belief that getting employment would mean providing for themselves. This was followed by an 86.4% belief that employment would give a purpose for living, and an 85.6% belief that employment would mean that participants would be able to provide for their families.

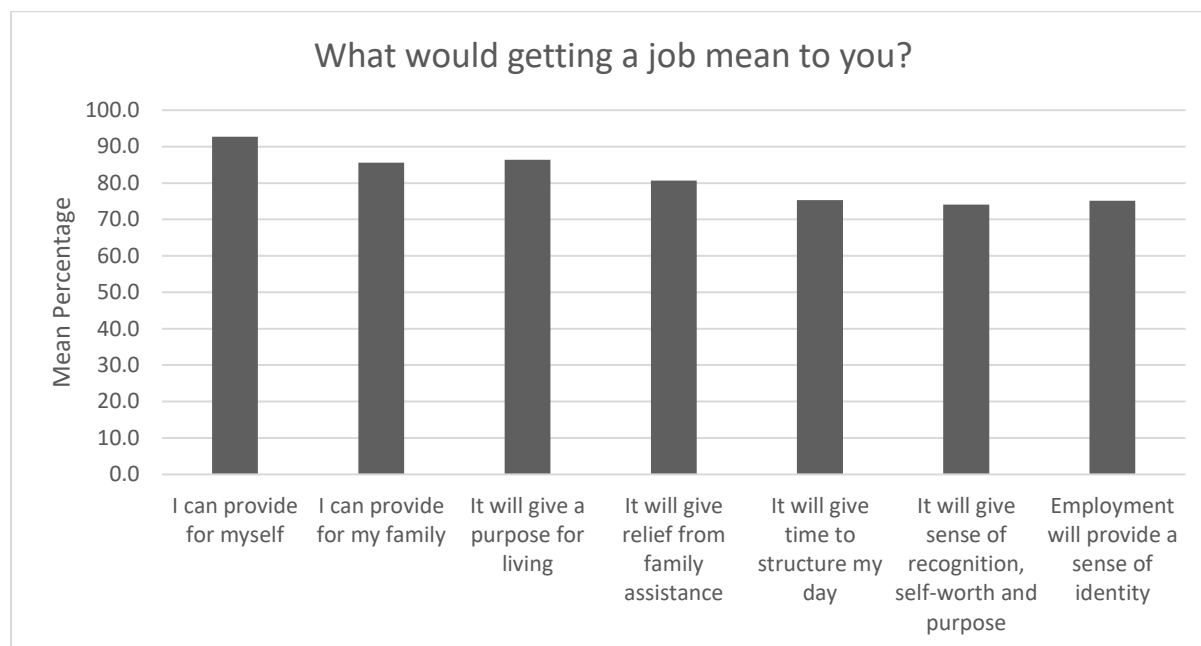
Figure 3***What getting a job would mean*****Gender**

Table 5 presents the means of what getting a job would mean for female and male participants.

Table 5***Gender and what getting a job would mean***

	Female	Male	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
I can provide for myself	93.6	92.1	0.689	91	0.493
I can provide for my family	90.00	80.1	2.158	91	0.034*
It will give a purpose for living	81.6	96.7	-0.991	91	0.324
It will give relief from family assistance	82.4	80.5	0.413	91	0.680
It will give time to structure my day	75.2	77.4	-0.483	91	0.630
It will give sense of recognition, self-worth and purpose	74.4	75.4	-0.183	91	0.855
Employment will provide a sense of identity	74.0	75.6	-0.291	91	0.772

*significant difference ($p < 0.05$)

The only significant gender difference was that there was an average 90.9% belief by females compared to an 80.1% belief by males that getting a job would mean that they could provide for their families ($t(91)=2.158$; $p=0.034$).

Education level

The comparison of participants with a graduate degree compared to those with a post-graduate degree are presented in Table 6. From Table 6 it can be seen that there were no significant differences between level of education and the items depicting meaning of employment in their lives ($p>0.05$).

Table 6

Education level and what getting a job would mean

	Graduate Degree	Post-Graduate	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
I can provide for myself	92.9	92.6	0.125	96	0.901
I can provide for my family	85.7	84.8	0.188	96	0.852
It will give a purpose for living	89.3	77.0	0.718	96	0.475
It will give relief from family assistance	80.0	82.6	-0.483	96	0.630
It will give time to structure my day	75.6	73.9	0.318	96	0.751
It will give sense of recognition, self-worth and purpose	74.3	73.0	0.208	96	0.836
Employment will provide a sense of identity	74.8	80.0	-0.869	96	0.387

No significant difference ($p>0.05$)

College

The comparison of participants from the three colleges, CAES, CLMS, and CHUM, may be seen in Table 7. From Table 7 it can be seen that there were no significant differences between colleges and the meaning of getting employment.

Table 7***College and what getting a job would mean***

	CAES	CHUM	CLMS	F	df	p
I can provide for myself	95.7	92.4	92.7	0.523	2;94	0.595
I can provide for my family	77.1	86.6	89.1	1.653	2;94	0.197
It will give a purpose for living	74.3	93.0	81.5	0.472	2;94	0.625
It will give relief from family assistance	80.0	80.6	80.9	0.008	2;94	0.992
It will give time to structure my day	72.1	75.8	76.1	0.171	2;94	0.843
It will give sense of recognition, self-worth and purpose	69.3	73.8	80.0	1.203	2;94	0.305
Employment will provide a sense of identity	66.4	75.2	80.6	1.544	2;94	0.219

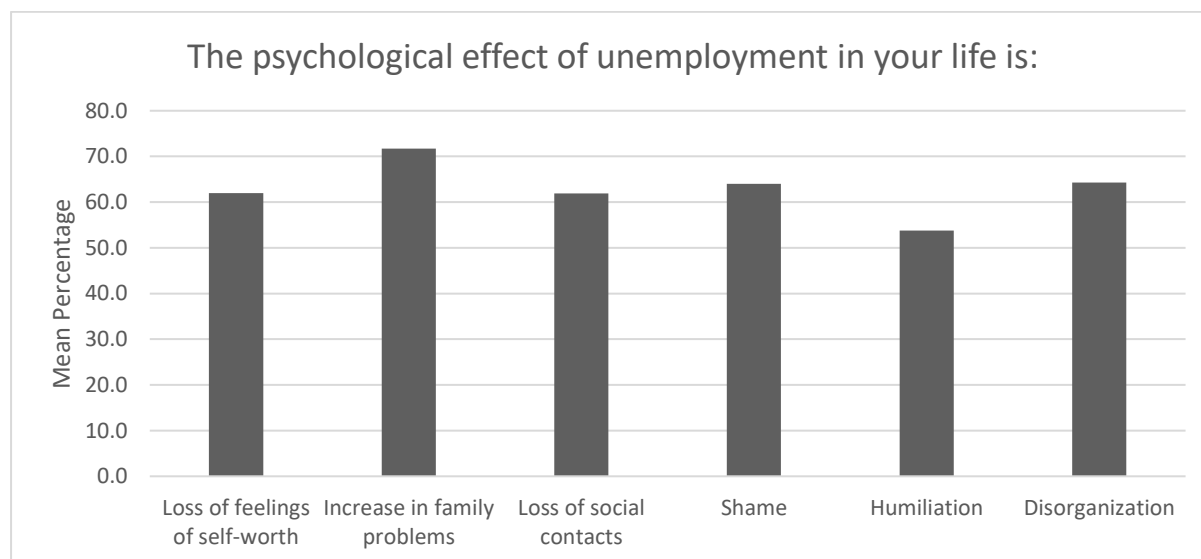
No significant difference ($p>0.05$)

The psychological effect of unemployment

The psychological effects of unemployment included loss of feelings of self-worth, an increase in family problems, loss of social contact, shame, humiliation and disorganisation.

Composite Result

The composite result is presented in Figure 4.

Figure 4***The psychological effect of unemployment***

From Figure 4 it can be seen that there was a perceived 71.7% increase in family problems followed by a perceived 64.3% sense of disorganisation and a 64.0% sense of shame in their lives as a result of unemployment.

Gender

The gender comparisons may be seen in Table 8. From Table 8 it can be seen that there were no significant differences between the genders and the psychological effect of unemployment ($p>0.05$). The means were fairly similar for both genders, and slightly, but not significantly, higher for males on shame and disorganisation.

Table 8

Gender and the perceived psychological effect of unemployment

	Female	Male	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Loss of feelings of self-worth	64.8	60.2	0.897	90	0.372
Increase in family problems	70.2	76.1	-1.023	91	0.309
Loss of social contacts	61.6	64.4	-0.556	91	0.580
Shame	62.2	70.5	-1.393	91	0.167
Humiliation	51.4	57.7	-1.019	91	0.311
Disorganisation	61.4	67.7	-1.093	91	0.277

No significant difference ($p>0.05$)

Education level

The comparison of participants with a graduate degree compared to those with a post-graduate degree are presented in Table 9. From Table 9 it can be seen that there were no significant differences between the levels of education and the psychological effect of unemployment ($p>0.05$).

Table 9***Education level and the perceived psychological effect of unemployment***

	Graduate Degree	Post-graduate	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Loss of feelings of self-worth	63.1	59.6	0.609	95	0.544
Increase in family problems	69.2	80.9	-1.769	96	0.080
Loss of social contacts	61.6	64.8	-0.548	96	0.585
Shame	62.5	71.3	-1.290	96	0.200
Humiliation	52.9	57.8	-0.710	96	0.480
Disorganisation	63.6	68.3	-0.725	96	0.470

No significant difference ($p>0.05$)

College.

The means for each college are presented in Table 10. From Table 10 it can be seen that there were no significant differences between colleges and the psychological effect of unemployment ($p>0.05$). Even the apparently higher increase in perceived family problems in the case of CHUM graduates did not reach statistical significance.

Table 10***College and the perceived psychological effect of unemployment***

	CAES	CHUM	CLMS	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Loss of feelings of self-worth	60.0	63.5	62.4	0.110	2;93	0.896
Increase in family problems	67.1	76.8	66.1	1.715	2;94	0.186
Loss of social contacts	62.1	65.0	58.5	0.703	2;94	0.498
Shame	62.1	66.8	62.4	0.286	2;94	0.752
Humiliation	57.9	53.0	53.6	0.153	2;94	0.858
Disorganisation	65.0	64.0	64.2	0.007	2;94	0.993

No significant difference ($p>0.05$)

Challenges experienced in finding a job

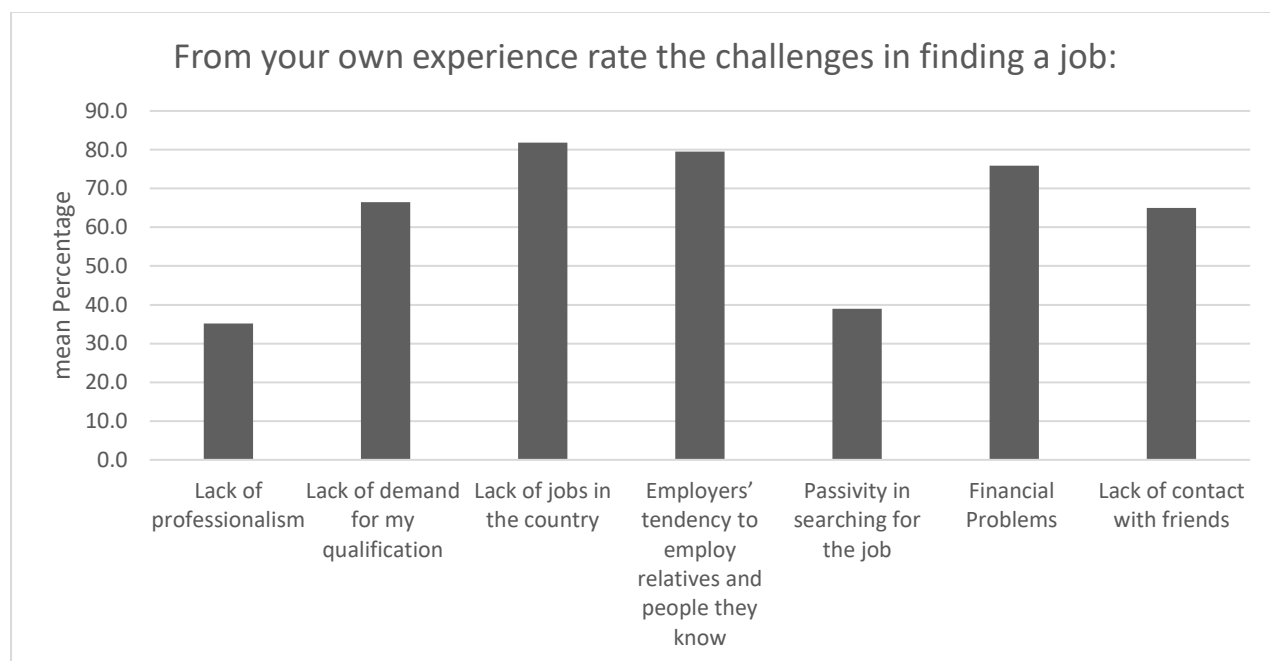
Participants were asked to rate the challenges experienced in finding a job. A number of issues were considered, such as the availability of jobs, employer preferences, and personal issues.

Composite Result

The composite result is presented in Figure 5. From Figure 5 it can be seen that no jobs opportunities in the country was rated the highest at 81.1% followed by employers employing their relatives or friends rated at 79.5%. Financial problems were rated at 75.9% and would include the costs of job-seeking such as printing multiple copies of CVs and degree certificates.

Figure 5

Challenges experienced in finding a job



Gender

The gender comparisons may be seen in Table 11. From Table 11 it can be seen that there were no significant differences between the genders and the challenges experienced in finding a job ($p>0.05$).

Table 11***Gender and challenges experienced in finding a job***

	Female	Male	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Lack of professionalism	34.2	36.5	-0.440	91	0.661
Lack of demand for my qualification	62.4	70.9	-1.565	91	0.121
Lack of jobs in the country	78.0	85.6	-1.527	91	0.130
Employers' tendency to employ relatives and people they know	78.0	81.2	-0.605	91	0.547
Passivity in searching for the job	36.7	40.5	-0.749	89	0.456
Financial Problems	71.8	81.2	-1.787	91	0.077
Lack of contact with friends	63.6	68.6	-0.905	91	0.368

No significant difference ($p > 0.05$)

Education level

The comparison of participants with a graduate degree compared to those with a post-graduate degree are presented in Table 12.

Table 12***Educational level and challenges experienced in finding a job***

	Graduate Degree	Post-Graduate	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Lack of professionalism	32.4	45.2	-2.193	96	0.031*
Lack of demand for my qualification	65.3	72.2	-1.097	96	0.275
Lack of jobs in the country	81.2	86.1	-0.868	96	0.387
Employers' tendency to employ relatives and people they know	79.2	82.2	-0.500	96	0.618
Passivity in searching for the job	40.1	35.2	0.868	95	0.387
Financial Problems	75.3	80.0	-0.791	96	0.431
Lack of contact with friends	64.3	68.7	-0.702	96	0.484

*significant difference ($p < 0.05$)

From Table 12 It can be seen that lack of professionalism was the only significant difference on educational level with an average rating of 32.4% for participants with a graduate degree compared to 45.2% for post-graduates ($t(96)=2.193$; $p=0.031$).

College

The means for each college are presented in Table 13. From Table 13 it can be seen that there were no significance differences between colleges and challenges experienced in finding a job.

Table 13

College and challenges experienced in finding a job

	CAES	CHUM	CLMS	F	df	p
Lack of professionalism	28.6	45.8	36.4	0.525	2;94	0.593
Lack of demand for my qualification	60.7	69.6	64.2	0.802	2;94	0.452
Lack of jobs in the country	75.7	80.6	86.7	1.197	2;94	0.307
Employers' tendency to employ relatives and people they know	71.4	80.8	82.4	1.025	2;94	0.363
Passivity in searching for the job	36.9	39.0	39.7	0.061	2;92	0.941
Financial Problems	70.0	74.0	81.8	1.478	2;94	0.233
Lack of contact with friends	61.4	64.6	67.3	0.247	2;94	0.782

No significant difference ($p > 0.05$)

Coping with unemployment

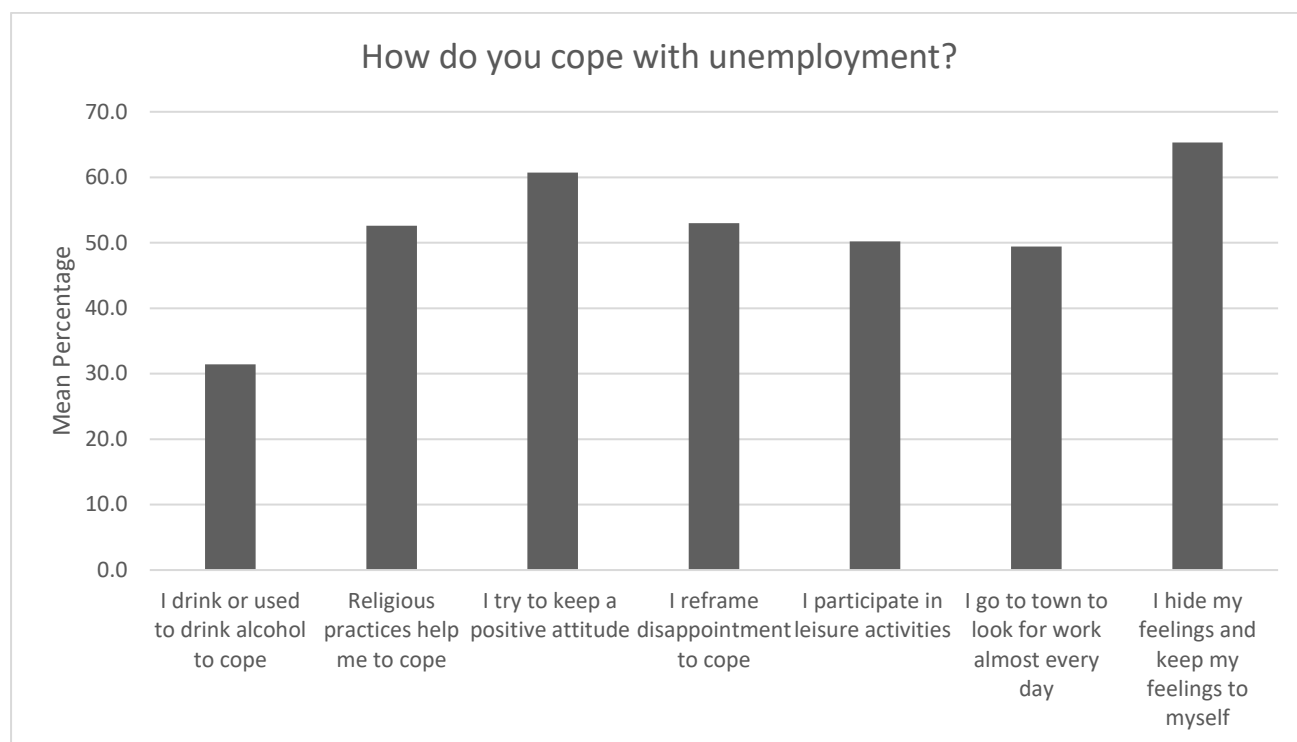
The research was primarily interested on psychological impact of unemployment and coping with unemployment. Coping includes the coping mechanisms utilised by unemployed graduates, their perceived sources of support, and apportioning blame for being unemployed.

How participants coped with unemployment

This section analyses how often the coping mechanisms were employed by the unemployed participants to cope with unemployment. The survey had seven items for participants to indicate their coping mechanisms, both adaptive and maladaptive.

Composite Result

The composite result is presented in Figure 6.

Figure 6***Coping with unemployment***

From Figure 6 it can be seen that the maladaptive coping mechanism of participants hiding their feelings was rated the highest at 65.3%, while the other maladaptive coping mechanism of drinking alcohol to cope had the lowest rating of 31.4%. Hiding feelings would tie in with a sense of isolation and perceived stigma. While the use of alcohol was relatively low, it is still a concern that it even occurred at all, and occurred almost one-third of the time. In contrast, the most-used adaptive coping mechanisms were keeping a positive attitude (60.7%), reframing disappoint to cope (53.0%) and relying on religious practices (52.6%).

Gender

The gender comparisons may be seen in Table 14. From Table 14 it can be seen that there was a significant gender difference for reframing from disappointment to cope where females (59.4%) used this coping mechanism at significantly more than males (44.9%)

($t(90)=2.062$; $p=0.042$). This shows female reframed disappointment to cope with unemployment more than males.

Table 14

Gender and coping with unemployment

	Female	Male	t	df	p
I drink or used to drink alcohol to cope	28.2	36.5	-1.184	91	0.240
Religious practices help me to cope	54.8	48.8	0.868	91	0.388
I try to keep a positive attitude	62.0	58.4	0.609	91	0.544
I reframe disappointment to cope	59.4	44.9	2.062	90	0.042*
I participate in leisure activities	51.2	51.2	0.008	91	0.994
I go to town to look for work almost every day	52.2	45.1	1.083	91	0.281
I hide my feelings and keep my feelings to myself	66.4	61.7	0.862	90	0.391

*significant difference ($p < 0.05$)

Educational level

The comparison of participants with a graduate degree compared to those with a post-graduate degree are presented in Table 15.

Table 15

Education level and coping with unemployment

	Graduate Degree	Post-graduate	t	df	p
I drink or used to drink alcohol to cope	32.4	30.0	0.301	96	0.764
Religious practices help me to cope	49.9	61.3	-1.457	96	0.148
I try to keep a positive attitude	63.3	52.2	1.659	96	0.100
I reframe disappointment to cope	52.6	54.8	-0.274	95	0.785
I participate in leisure activities	50.1	50.9	-0.134	96	0.894
I go to town to look for work almost every day	50.5	46.1	0.595	96	0.553
I hide my feelings and keep my feelings to myself	65.6	64.6	0.166	95	0.869

No significant difference ($p > 0.05$)

From Table 15 it can be seen that there were no significant differences between the levels of education and coping with of unemployment ($p > 0.05$).

College

The means for each college are presented in Table 16. From Table 16 it can be seen that there were no significant differences between colleges and coping with unemployment.

Table 16

College and coping with unemployment

	CAES	CHUM	CLMS	F	df	p
I drink or used to drink alcohol to cope	29.3	38.6	23.0	2.288	2;94	0.107
Religious practices help me to cope	50.7	58.4	44.6	1.858	2;94	0.162
I try to keep a positive attitude	55.0	58.4	66.4	1.088	2;94	0.341
I reframe disappointment to cope	48.6	50.6	60.0	0.923	2;93	0.401
I participate in leisure activities	48.6	48.2	53.0	0.461	2;94	0.632
I go to town to look for work almost every day	35.7	54.4	46.7	2.162	2;94	0.121
I hide my feelings and keep my feelings to myself	66.4	68.8	59.7	1.197	2;93	0.307

No significant difference ($p > 0.05$)

Sources of support during unemployment

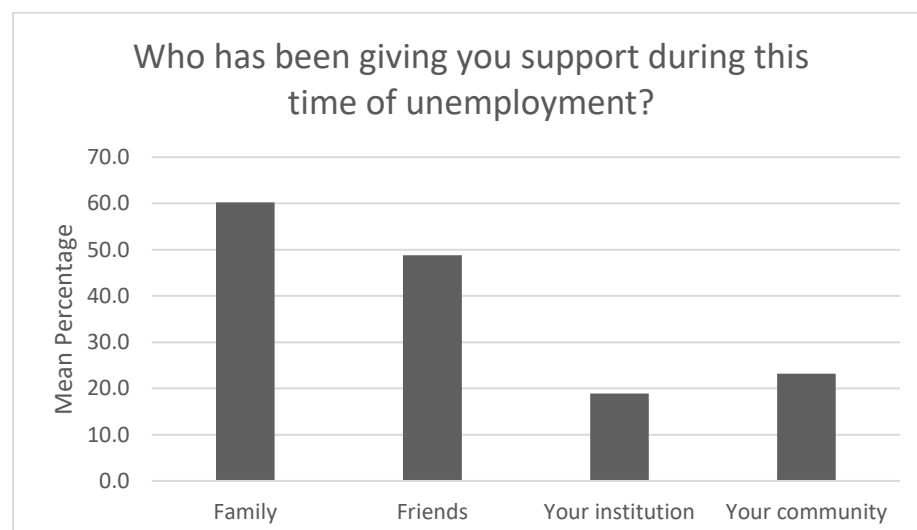
This section analyses the sources of support provided to participants.

Composite Result

The composite result is presented in Figure 7.

Figure 7

Sources of support during unemployment



From Figure 7 it can be seen that family support was rated at 60.2, friends at 48.2% and the community at 18.2%. The institution was seen as least supportive at 18.9%.

Gender

The gender comparisons may be seen in Table 17.

Table 17

Gender and sources of support during unemployment

	Female	Male	t	df	p
Family	66.8	53.7	1.937	91	0.056
Friends	52.6	46.1	1.160	91	0.249
Your institution	23.2	16.3	1.430	91	0.156
Your community	26.2	22.8	0.631	91	0.530

No significant difference ($p>0.05$)

From Table 17 it can be seen that there were no significant differences between the genders and sources of support during unemployment, although females did rely slightly more on family and friends ($p>0.05$). Female reliance on family approached but did not reach statistical significance ($p=0.056$).

Educational level

The comparison of participants with a graduate degree compared to those with a post-graduate degree are presented in Table 18. From Table 18 It can be seen that there were no significant differences between levels of education regarding sources of support during unemployment ($p>0.05$). There was a slight tendency for those with a graduate degree to rely more on friend and their institution for support compared to those with post-graduate degrees.

Table 18***Education level and sources of support during unemployment***

	Graduate Degree	Post-Graduate	t	df	p
Family	59.1	63.0	-0.508	96	0.613
Friends	50.8	42.2	1.360	96	0.177
Your institution	20.0	14.8	0.939	96	0.350
Your community	23.9	23.2	0.554	96	0.581

No significant difference ($p > 0.05$)

College

The means for each college are presented in Table 19.

Table 19***College and sources of support during unemployment***

	CAES	CHUM	CLMS	F	df	p
Family	76.4	56.6	58.5	2.094	2;94	0.129
Friends	51.4	49.6	46.1	0.253	2;94	0.777
Your institution	25.0	17.4	17.0	0.675	2;94	0.511
Your community	25.0	20.6	25.8	0.439	2;94	0.646

No significant difference ($p > 0.05$)

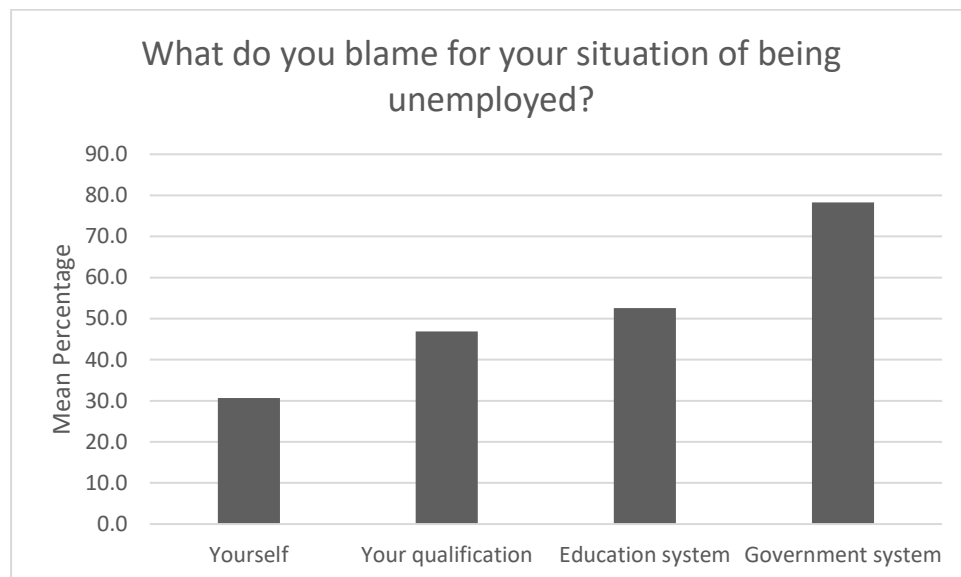
From Table 19 it can be seen that there were no significant differences between colleges regarding sources of support during unemployment ($p > 0.05$). CAES graduates showed a higher reliance on family, but this was not statistically significant.

Apportioning blame for being unemployed

This section analyses apportioning blame for unemployment.

Composite Result

The composite result is presented in Figure 8.

Figure 8***Apportioning blame for being unemployed***

From Figure 8 it can be seen that participants apportioned a 78.3% blame on the government system, 52.6 % on the education system, 46.9 % on their qualification, and 30.7% on themselves. Therefore, the tendency to blame looked at outer factors rather than looking inward. It can be seen that the highest blame was placed on the government system.

Gender

The gender comparisons may be seen in Table 20. From Table 20 it can be seen that there were no significant differences regarding gender on the blame for unemployment ($p > 0.05$).

Table 20***Gender and Blame for Unemployment***

	Female	Male	t	df	p
Yourself	28.0	32.8	-0.805	91	0.423
Your qualification	48.4	42.1	1.014	91	0.313
Education system	54.0	49.5	0.611	91	0.543
Government system	82.8	72.8	1.610	91	0.111

No significant difference ($p > 0.05$)

Educational Level

The comparison of participants with a graduate degree compared to those with a post-graduate degree are presented in Table 21.

Table 21

Educational Level and Blame for Unemployment

	Graduate Degree	Post-Graduate	t	df	p
Yourself	26.7	45.9	-2.840	95	0.006*
Your qualification	44.0	58.3	-1.997	96	0.049*
Education system	47.5	71.3	-2.956	96	0.004*
Government system	77.1	83.0	-0.841	96	0.403

*significant difference ($p < 0.05$)

There was a significantly higher tendency for participants with a post-graduate degree blaming themselves for being unemployed (45.9%) compared to participants with a graduate degree (26.7%) ($t(95)=2.840$; $p=0.006$). This shows that participants with a post-graduate degree blamed themselves more than participants with a graduate degree for their unemployment

The tendency to blame the qualification for unemployment was also significantly higher for participants with a post-graduate degree (58.3%) compared to those with a graduate degree (44.0%) ($t(96)=1.197$; $p=0.049$). This shows that the participants with post-graduate degrees blamed their qualifications more than participants with graduate degrees for their unemployment.

There was also a higher tendency on the part of participants with post-graduate degrees to blame the education system for unemployment (71.3%) compared to participants with graduate degrees (47.5%) ($t(96)=2.956$; $p=0.004$). This shows that post-graduate participants blamed the education system more than the participants with graduate degrees for their unemployment.

College

The colleges comparisons may be seen in Table 22. From Table 22 it can be seen that there were no significant differences between colleges and blame for unemployment ($p>0.05$).

Table 22

College and Blame for Unemployment

	CAES	CHUM	CLMS	F	df	p
Yourself	28.6	34.5	20.6	0.870	2;93	0.422
Your qualification	40.7	49.2	46.4	0.425	2;94	0.655
Education system	42.9	56.4	53.0	0.823	2;94	0.442
Government system	70.0	80.4	81.8	0.877	2;94	0.419

No significant difference ($p>0.05$)

GHQ-12

Responses to the GHQ questions were coded between 0 and 3, where 3 was always the worst outcome, and 0 indicated a better than usual status. As the GHQ-12 contains 12 questions, the scores can range from a minimum of 0 to a maximum of 36 depending on the selected scoring method. In this study a descriptive analysis was performed. The totals, means, standard deviation, along with the minimum and maximum scores on the GHQ, were calculated. Thus, the independent t-test analysis and analysis of variance (ANOVA) to determine whether there were significant differences between the demographic groups of gender, level of education, and type of degree. The overall GHQ-12 results are presented in Table 23.

Overall Result

In the descriptive analysis, the potential range of scoring was 0 to 36, and the actual scores ranged from 5 to 36. Seven (7%) participants scored at the maximum. The mean, median and mode were similar.

Table 23**GHQ-12 Scores**

GHQ-12					
Descriptive Statistics					
	Range	5 - 36			
	Mean	24.28			
	SD	6.89			
	Median	24			
	Mode	24			
Gender		Mean	t	df	p
	Female	24.2	-0.863	91	0.391
	Male	25.3			
Educational Level		Mean	t	df	p
	Degree	23.7	-1.240	96	0.218
	Post-Graduate	25.8			
College (Faculty)		Mean	F	df	p
	CAES	22.9	0.822	2;94	0.443
	CHUM	25.2			
	CLMS	23.7			

No significant difference ($p>0.05$)

The descriptive analysis showed that the mean GHQ score for the sample was 24.28 ($SD=6.89$). Various thresholds for the GHQ-12 have been reported, and the GHQ-12 score for a population of participants suggested as a rough indicator for the best cut-off point by Goldberg et al. (1998) was between 5 and 5. As a result, the cut-off point for determining the participant's psychological well-being was set at 5 to 6 based on the mean GHQ-12 score for this sample. A mental health impact was indicated by a GHQ-12 score of 5 or above (such as depression and anxiety, while lower scores indicated normal mental health. A mean of 24.28 was therefore very high for the current unemployed participants.

Gender

These results showed that male participants had a mean of 25.3 which was higher than the female participants with a mean of 24.2 on psychological health, but this difference was not significant ($p>0.05$).

Educational Level

These results showed that participants with a post-graduate degree had a mean of 25.8 compared to the mean of 23.7 for participants with graduate degree. This difference was not significant ($p>0.05$).

College

These results showed that means for participants from humanities (25.2) were highest, followed by law and management science (23.7) then agriculture, engineering science (22.9). This difference was not significant ($p>0.05$).

Categories within the GHQ

The GHQ questions can be grouped into categories. One group includes stress-related indicators and questions for general well-being such as:

- In the last couple of weeks have you...
 - lost much sleep over worry?
 - felt constantly under strain?
 - been feeling reasonably happy, all things considered?
 - been feeling unhappy and depressed?

Another category tests the decision-making capacity of individuals, such as:

- In the last couple of weeks have you...
 - been able to concentrate on whatever you are doing?
 - felt capable of making decisions about things?

Another category contains questions about individual self-perception such as:

- In the last couple of weeks have you...

- felt you were playing useful part in things?
- been thinking of yourself as a worthless person?
- been losing confidence in yourself?'.

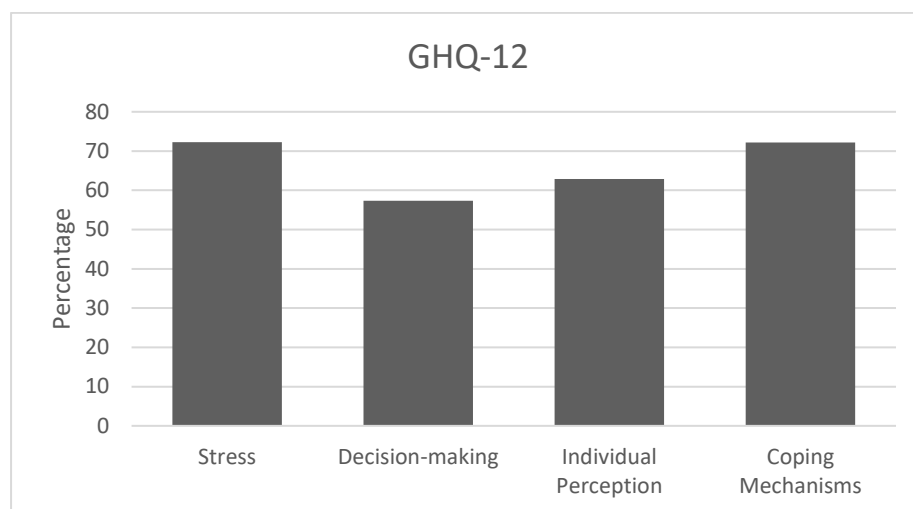
It was therefore decided to use the categories of response items shown in Table 24 for further analysis.

Table 24

GHQ-12 Categories

Item	Stress-Related Indicators (Psychological Well-being)
2	Lost much sleep over worry
5	Felt constantly under strain
9	Been feeling unhappy and depressed
12	Been feeling reasonably happy, all things considered
Decision Making	
1	Been able to concentrate on what you're doing
4	Felt capable of making decisions about things
Individual Self Perception	
3	Felt you were playing a useful part in things
10	Been losing confidence in yourself
11	Been thinking of yourself as a worthless person
Coping Mechanisms	
6	Felt you couldn't overcome your difficulties
7	Been able to enjoy your normal day-to-day activities
8	Been able to face up to your problems

The composite result of these categories may be seen in Figure 9.

Figure 9**Composite results for GHQ-12 categories**

As already shown, there was a high overall feeling of psychological ill health where the mean of 24.28 out of 36 translates to 67.44%, about two-thirds of the sample.

All of the category scores were converted to percentages to have a common base for comparison. Looking at the categories, the highest was stress at 72.3% and coping mechanisms at 72.2%, followed by individual perception at 62.9% and decision-making at 57.3%.

Stress.

The gender differences on stress showed males to score slightly higher than females, but these differences were not significant ($p>0.05$). The level of education differences on stress showed post-graduates to score slightly higher than those with graduate degrees, but these differences were not significant ($p>0.05$). The differences between colleges on stress showed CHUM to score slightly higher than CLMS, which was in turn slightly higher than CAES, but these differences were not significant ($p>0.05$).

Decision-Making.

The gender differences on decision-making showed males to score slightly higher than females, but these differences were not significant ($p>0.05$). The level of education

differences on decision-making showed post-graduates to score slightly higher than those with graduate degrees, but these differences were not significant ($p>0.05$). The differences between colleges on decision-making showed CLMS to score slightly higher than CHUM, which was in turn slightly higher than CAES, but these differences were not significant ($p>0.05$).

Individual Perception.

The gender differences on stress showed females to score slightly higher than males, but these differences were not significant ($p>0.05$). The level of education differences on stress showed post-graduates to score slightly higher than those with graduate degrees, but these differences were not significant ($p>0.05$). The differences between colleges on stress showed CAES to score slightly higher than CHUM, which was in turn slightly higher than CLMS, but these differences were not significant ($p>0.05$).

Coping Mechanisms.

The gender differences on stress showed males to score slightly higher than females, but these differences were not significant ($p>0.05$). The level of education differences on stress showed post-graduates to score slightly higher than those with graduate degrees, but these differences were not significant ($p>0.05$). The differences between colleges on stress showed CHUM to score slightly higher than CLMS, which was in turn slightly higher than CAES, but these differences were not significant ($p>0.05$).

Conclusion

The chapter presented the findings of the study which emerged on account of the questionnaire that was administered to 100 unemployed graduates. Given the findings, the next chapter is chapter 5 which presents the discussion of results to ascertaining whether the research objectives were met or not.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

This chapter presents the discussion of the findings obtained; it illustrates why the findings are relevant to the research and relates the findings to other studies conducted.

The first section of this chapter reports on the biographics of the surveyed graduates, and this is followed by a section of psychological impact of unemployment which also identifies the types of psychological impact of unemployment, coping mechanisms in unemployment, and comparisons between the three independent variables, gender (male versus female), level of education (graduate degree versus post-graduate degree), and faculty in terms of college as per the system at UKZN (College of Agriculture, Engineering and Science (CAES) versus College of Humanities (CHUM) versus College of Law and Management Studies CLMS). Lastly, the GHQ-12 results are discussed.

Biographics

The biographic profile presented in this chapter includes gender, college or faculty, degree level, age, length of unemployment, attendance of work readiness programme, declining job offers, job search resources, and perceived usefulness of qualification and other variables.

The results showed that there were slightly more female participants than male participants. This might also have attributed to the reason indicated by KZN Provincial Treasury (2021) that unemployment increased notably for both genders. However, it remained higher among women at 34.3 percent in the fourth quarter of 2020 compared to men at 22.6 percent in KwaZulu-Natal (Stats, 2020).

The results of the study revealed that the majority of participants were from the College of Humanities, followed by participants from College of Law and Management and lastly the College of Agriculture, Engineering and Science. These results contradict the results found by Van Broekhuizen and Van Der Berg (2016) who found that that

unemployment rates were low among graduates who enrolled courses in arts and humanities. However, they are in line with those of Yu (2013), who compared the faculties of engineering and medical sciences with the faculties of arts and education. Those results showed that graduates from arts and education faculties are less likely to find work. This has a direct bearing on employment opportunities. These findings are in line with those of Ndebele and Ndlovu (2019), who found that people in the humanities (Faculty of Arts) are less likely to be absorbed into the labour market than those in education, science, and commerce. This is due to the fact that the number of graduates from the College of Humanities exceeds the number of job opportunities available in the discipline (Mncayi, 2016). A further explanation could be the fact that “...certain humanities qualifications do not directly prepare graduates for a profession” (Mncayi, 2016, p. 74).

The majority of participants had a bachelors degree, followed by honours and lastly masters. This shows that there is a gradual decline in unemployment with increased education level. Therefore, graduates who have a masters or honours degree are more likely to be employed when looking for employment compared to graduates with a bachelors degree. Oluwajodu et al. (2015) also found that graduates with an honours qualification had a better chance of finding employment because a degree alone was insufficient. This has been supported by Ndebele and Ndlovu (2019), who found that obtaining higher postgraduate qualifications will increase the chances of employment for unemployed graduates. However, Meyer and Mncayi (2021) still believe that educational level is non-guarantor of employment, there are times when an individual is employed but is in a job that is not satisfying the time graduate spent studying or do not match graduates’ skills and qualifications. Meyer and Mncayi (2021) referred such a situation as underemployment. The COVID-19 pandemic has also worsened the situation for graduates, leaving the majority of the youth unemployed or forcing them to settle for low-paid and low-productive jobs in the informal sector to make ends meet.

The mean age of participants was 28 years. The descriptive statistics for length of unemployment after graduating showed a mean of 3 years. According to Dunga (2016), different degree choice may have impact on the length of time graduates take to find employment in their field of study.

There were 41 (41%) of participants who had attended a work readiness programme while 53 (53%) never attended and 6 (6%) did not indicate if they attended or not. This raises concerns as McKee-Ryan et al. (2005) stated that participating in work readiness programmes has been found to resolve the main cause of unemployment. During work readiness programmes graduates may acquire the employability skills required by employers. As indicated by Lau and Pang (2000), employability skills are perceived as a significant determinant for graduates to secure employment. Perhaps being work-ready could be the solution to the high unemployment rates. University career service centres are expected to play a vital part in this area as they are meant to be a starting point for knowledge, resources, and programmes that can assist graduates and final-year students with job opportunities. This is an area where university career development centres are expected to play a major role. They are designed to serve as a hub for sharing information, resources, programmes, and job opportunities. However, most of these centres at universities cater for registered students, not graduates.

The results revealed that most participants never declined a job offer. This means that there have been no job opportunities.

It was noticeable that almost all participants were using the internet, even though Baldry (2013) suggested, "Graduate employers should be mindful that their online application procedures are costly, especially for those who live far away from an internet cafe, and that online staffing methods are often too expensive for poor graduates, resulting in a sequence of poverty in which poor graduates are not able to apply for these job opportunities and thus are less likely to secure employment" (p. 84). The current survey

revealed that the internet was the most preferred method used to search for employment. This relates to the fourth industrial revolution developments which promote the use of advanced technology. Internet use was followed by newspapers as the second preferred method used to search for jobs. It can be seen that networking, approaching employers and using employers and recruitment agencies were used less to search for a job. It could be that graduates incur expenses in accessing job opportunities through such methods.

Participants were asked if they perceived their qualification to be useful. This was rated at an average of 54 (54.9%), meaning that they perceived their qualification useful just over half the time. This may mean that obtaining a degree as the means to a better life has not fulfilled these expectations.

Participants were asked if employment would give them sense of identity, and the majority participants acknowledged that employment contributes in creating a sense of identity. Work plays a major role in the growth and maintenance of an individual's sense of identity. Rus (2012) found the value of work to be developing the individual's identity, since it connects the individual to society, and connects personal objectives and social aspirations. The influence of work is manifested in discovering the identity. Jahoda et al. (1982) indicated the benefits of employment to include "...salary benefits, having structured time, contact with other people, and a sense of identity" (p.77). Therefore, a failure to find work might jeopardise the very foundations of one's identity (Hayes & Nutman, 1981). People are identified by their occupation or type of work that they do. The analogy of a doctor was used by Hayes and Nutman (1981) to demonstrate how a person's identity is defined by their employment; the fact that someone is a doctor permits others to project their own ideas onto him or her and have preconceptions about him or her, such as educational background, money, and lifestyle. The findings clearly show that joblessness has an impact on the formulation of identity.

Psychological impact of unemployment

The psychological impact of unemployment was the main focus of this study. This section presents a discussion of the psychological impact of unemployment among graduates, which involves focusing on feelings about being unemployed, the psychological effect of unemployment, and what getting a job would mean. Through the psychological impact of unemployment, the types of psychological impact of unemployment were identified as this was one of the objectives of the study.

Feelings about being unemployed

This section discusses the feelings of participants about being unemployed. In this section the participants were requested to rate their feelings of being unemployed. Most of the participants experienced unemployment as very unpleasant. The majority of participants experienced a feeling of anxiety followed by depression and feeling stigmatised. Based on these findings, hypothesis 1 was accepted.

These results concur with the results that were found by Rafi et al. (2019), who addressed the link between depression, anxiety, and stress among unemployed graduates. Rafi et al. (2019) found high rates of depression and anxiety among unemployed graduates with no measurable differences between genders. This has been also reported by Crossley and Stanton (2005) who found that that the combination high levels of depression and anxiety have a negative impact on job search success.

There was a high indication of feeling stigmatised which is in line with the findings of Shah et al. (2020) who revealed that educated individuals are stigmatised due to their status of unemployment and they become angry. However, it was also seen that participants indicated higher feelings of optimism than pessimism. This supports the findings of Griep et al. (2012) who said that success in finding employment is determined by one's optimistic attitude.

There was no significant difference between males and females and their feelings concerning unemployment ($p > 0.05$). Based on these findings, hypothesis 3 was accepted.

There was also no significant difference between the three colleges, CAES, CHUM and CLMS). The higher scores for CHUM on stigma (66.0%) approached but did not reach significance ($p = 0.066$) as did those on anxiety (73%), also approaching but not reaching significance ($p = 0.059$).

There was a significantly greater impact of feelings of depression, low self-esteem, isolation, stigma and anxiety on participants with a post-graduate degree than participants with a graduate degree. These findings support the hypotheses 2.

These results are consistent with results reported by De Witte et al. (2012), that the psychological impact of unemployment includes depression, anxiety, anger, isolation and low self-esteem.

Isolation showed the greatest impact on unemployed participants. People can feel excluded for a variety of reasons, including their educational status, housing, job status, and unemployment (Sen, 2000). According to Ahmad and Khan (2019), isolation has been associated with loneliness and loneliness has been found to be a significant predictor of depression, pessimism, anxiety and low self-esteem among unemployed graduates. Depression was reported as one of the most prevalent mental health problems among the unemployed post-graduates.

In relation to stigma, the unemployed isolated themselves from the community and significant others and they felt stigmatised, and that lowered their self-esteem which in turn had an impact on their unemployment. Campbell (1997) and Thaler (2010) reported that the unemployed feel socially isolated and humiliated by the community, and they think that they are stigmatised by community. Unemployed people are more prone to depression, which causes them to isolate themselves from others and seek alternate ways to relieve their misery, such as using drugs, engaging in criminal activity, or committing suicide (Hussainat et

al., 2013). According to Motimele and Dieltiens (2005), unemployed graduates are sometimes ridiculed by the communities in which they reside. Some members of the community spread rumours that some eligible people cannot be hired because they feel they have fraudulent qualification. Others disseminate false information about them, such as that they had failed their studies or had a criminal record. This stigmatises, shames, and embarrasses unemployed graduates.

Stigma also depends on the level of education and duration of unemployment. The results revealed a greater feeling of stigma among the post-graduate participants. Stigma has a negative impact on the unemployed as indicated by Krug et al. (2019). They addressed unemployment as a social stigma. They found that stigma can hinder the unemployed from getting employment. According to Bretschneider (2014), the adverse effects of stigmatisation processes, such as unemployment stigma, are likely to have a detrimental impact on mental health.

The higher level of depression for participants with a post-graduate degree can be explained by the graduate's investment in studies, such as money and time. Post-graduates reported a higher level of depression compared to participants with a graduate degree. Lim et al. (2018) explained that the root cause of distress is the shortage of resources payoff after having invested in other resources for that specific purpose. Another reason is that graduates enrol their studies with the hope that a qualification from tertiary institutions would enable them to find better employment. However, the inability to find work has been linked to depression (Atkinson et al. 1986; Baum & Payea, 2005). Jackson (1999) also revealed that people who were unemployed were more depressed than those who were employed.

With respect to the feelings of low-self-esteem among participants, Huyse-Gaytandjieva et al. (2015) reported self-esteem to be a significant predictor for future unemployment. Kasl's (1982) reverse causation theory argued that unemployment has a

negative impact on an individual's self-esteem. Bezuidenhout (2011) indicated that a degree alone does not guarantee employment. There should be employability traits such as higher self-esteem. The longer the person is out of employment, the lower the self-esteem. This shows the strong relationship between anxiety and low self-esteem – the higher the anxiety the lower the self-esteem. This contradicts Edayi's (2015) findings which revealed that the fact that graduates hold qualifications alone gives them self-esteem.

Meaning of getting employment

This section analyses the meaning of employment among participants. The survey results showed that participants felt very strongly across all the options provided on the survey. A large percentage of the participants found it important to have work. Indeed, a large number of participants regarded work as the most important aspect of life. The meaning of getting a job included providing for oneself, providing for one's family, having a purpose for living, having relief from family assistance, having time to structure one's day, having sense of recognition, self-worth and purpose, and providing a sense of identity.

Participants believed that employment would enable them to provide for themselves. This is consistent with Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs theory. Maslow's hierarchy of needs illustrates that individuals must initially meet their basic needs for food, water, shelter, sleep, and oxygen. Employment is seen as a basic necessity since it allows a person to earn money to meet basic human needs. This means some of these needs can only be fulfilled or met through having a salary from employment. Being employed would mean that they would not have to ask anyone for money to buy necessities of life.

Participants indicated that employment would give purpose for living. If people have money and they can provide for themselves, they will definitely have a purpose for living. Jahoda's (1982) deprivation theory indicated that employment offers individuals a sense of purpose. Johada's theory was tested by Henwood and Miles (1987), who found that people who were currently employed reported having significantly more collective purpose than

people who were unemployed. De Witte et al. (2012) also discovered that 87.7% of people who were not working reported that employment contributed to a meaningful life. This means that for a person to find purpose in life, he or she has to work. This has the potential to affect well-being. Wong (2014) said that discovering meaning in life is critical for a person's psychological well-being.

Graduates also felt compelled to enter the workforce right away in order to pay off their student loans and support their families. The majority of participants reported that they needed employment so that they could provide for their families. This supports Mutambara et al. 's (2018) results that graduates experienced stress because they felt obliged to be providers in their families.

There was a high percentage of participants who reported that employment would mean that they can structure their day and have a sense of identity. Jahoda's (1982) deprivation theory said the same, that employment enforces a time structure on the day. Jahoda (1982) also stated that adults need to structure their time in order to fill their days with planned activities. These graduates have been restricted in planning their lives which has resulted in a deterioration in mental health.

Thus these results have shown that employment would mean providing for themselves and their families, being able to structure their time (such as attending work meetings and training, or partying with friends) and that would give them purpose in life. This might reduce the depression, anxiety and feeling of low self-esteem as reported in the last section.

The results were also broken down to show the meaning of getting an employment when comparing three variables, gender, level of education, and college. The only significant gender difference was that there was a strong need to support families by both female and male participants, but significantly more for females. Based on these findings, hypotheses 3 was accepted.

This supports McKeown and Lindorff's (2011) results that every year the tertiary institutions are crowded by thousands of first year students chasing a brighter future, eager to be independent and to provide for their relatives. Mutambara et al. (2018) found that graduates felt obligated to compensate their families financially for the sacrifices they had made to send them to tertiary institution, especially in the African context. The current results showed that there was a stronger need to support the family by female compared to male participants. This supports Smith's (2015) findings that women's contributions to family income are fundamental for most households. This is obviously true for the growing number of families headed by a single mother.

There were no significant differences between level of education and the items depicting meaning of employment in their lives ($p>0.05$). Based on these findings, hypotheses 2 was rejected.

Even though not statistically significant, it was interesting to see that the CAES graduates indicated slightly lower than participants from other colleges that having a job would mean a sense of providing for their families, having a purpose for living, and having a sense of identity.

The psychological effect of unemployment

The psychological effects of unemployment included loss of feelings of self-worth, an increase in family problems, loss of social contact, shame, humiliation and disorganisation.

The participants indicated that there was a perceived increase in family problems followed by a perceived sense of disorganisation and a sense of shame in their lives as a result of unemployment. This demonstrates that unemployment did not only affect the unemployed, but also for the entire family. This agrees with Hanisch (1999, p. 189) in that "[a] reduction in family unity can occur due to unemployment." It has been discovered that a

lack of money is the serious issue and a major source of individual and family difficulties and obstacles.

In relation to being disorganised, Blustein (2006) noted that work is necessary for human organisation. Disorganisation was reported as the second highest psychological effect of unemployment. Pauline (2015) found that graduates were disorganised due to the inability meet up with their financial responsibilities and fulfil their aspirations, which they initially hoped that a tertiary education would guarantee them.

Shame was indicated by participants to be third highest effect of unemployment. This supports Magagula's (2017) findings that graduates experienced shame during the period of their unemployment. Magagula (2017) stated that unemployment may cause the unemployed to feel ashamed because they perceived themselves as failures. Shame results from daily judgment and comments by society and family members because of their unemployed status, such as the comment by McFadyen (1998), that the unemployed are not working because they do not want to work.

There were no significant differences between the gender, level of education and college on psychological effect of unemployment.

There were also no significant differences between the genders on the psychological effect of unemployment ($p>0.05$). Based on these findings, hypotheses 3 was accepted.

The means were fairly similar for both genders, and slightly, but not significantly, higher for males on shame and disorganisation.

The comparison of participants with a graduate degree compared to those with a post-graduate degree yielded no significant differences between the levels of education and the psychological effect of unemployment ($p>0.05$). This means, hypotheses 2 was rejected.

There were no significant differences between colleges and the psychological effect of unemployment ($p>0.05$). Even the apparently higher increase in perceived family problems in the case of CHUM graduates did not reach statistical significance.

Challenges experienced in finding a job

Participants were asked to rate the challenges experienced in finding a job. A number of issues were considered, such as the availability of jobs, employer preferences, and personal issues.

In relation to employers employing their relatives, Baldry (2013) conducted a study on the prevalence, characteristics and perceived causes of graduate unemployment in South Africa, and found evidence that discrimination in recruitment existed and it affected poor graduates. Kraak (2015) studied the impact of social networks in assisting graduates find work, and discovered that 14.5 percent of graduates were able to find work through friends and family members. The results showed that if one's family members were unemployed, it might take longer for unemployed to be employed. This is called nepotism. Asaju et al. (2014) found that nepotism and corruption has contributed to rising levels of unemployment in both the public and private sectors. That means nepotism has a negative effect on unemployment. One of the reasons might be that there has been a lack of enforcement of job recruitment labour policies.

The current research revealed that a shortage of money was one of the greatest challenges. This is consistent with Fryer's (1986) agency restriction theory where lack of finance was considered to be the most serious adverse effect of unemployment. Fryer (1986) argued, "The loss of financial income limits the individual's ability to exercise personal agency, making it hard or impossible to plan, control, and organise the personally satisfying lifestyles that is required for the growth and improvement of well-being" (Fryer, 1986, cited in Creed et al., 2001, p. 05).

Pauline (2015) discovered that unemployed graduates face financial difficulties as a result of their unemployment, and that leads to financial stress. Pauline (2015) revealed that financial stress was common amongst unemployed graduates in such a way that graduates experienced a 71 percent level of financial stress due to unemployment. Creed and Macintyre (2001) provided confirmation that financial difficulties play a significant part in the lives of people who are not working. Graduates struggle to make applications due to a shortage of money. Mokgohloa's (2006) study on the views and experiences of unemployed youth graduates in Polokwane in Limpopo in South Africa yielded similar results in that the graduates were more dependent on their parents for job-search activities including attending interviews, photocopying, and faxing.

The lack of professionalism was the only significant difference with respect to level of education. Based on these findings, hypotheses 2 was accepted.

The results of this study showed that a lack of professionalism was perceived to be a bigger challenge in finding unemployment for participants with post-graduate degrees than participants with graduate degrees. Moleke (2006) included professionalism as one of the soft skills needed in the world of work and job search process. Mncayi (2016) said that one of the absence of job-searching skills is one of the main causes of graduate unemployment, this includes the professionalism that is needed during recruitment processes.

Hypothesis 3 was accepted because there were no significant differences between the genders and the challenges experienced in finding a job ($p>0.05$). There were also no significant differences between colleges and challenges experienced in finding a job. Based on these findings, hypotheses 2 was accepted.

An added challenge currently experienced by graduates that may be the case now that the world is facing with COVID-19 restrictions, and many employers are retrenching, and others are shutting down. There has been an increase in the unemployment rate,

especially for youth. According to Stats SA (2021), the official unemployment rate among youth aged 15-24 years was 63.3% and for youth aged 25-34 years it was 41.3% in the first quarter of 2021. The rate was 9.3% among university graduates. This is very high compared to the first quarter in 2020 where it was reported that for youth aged 15-24 years it was 59% and for youth aged 25-34 years it was 37.3%.

Coping with unemployment

The research was primarily interested on psychological impact of unemployment and coping with unemployment. Coping includes the coping mechanisms utilised by unemployed graduates, their perceived sources of support, and apportioning blame for being unemployed.

Coping mechanisms

This section analyses which coping mechanisms were used and how often the coping mechanisms were employed by the unemployed participants to cope with unemployment. The survey had seven items for participants to indicate their coping mechanisms, both adaptive and maladaptive.

It was noted that most participants use the maladaptive coping mechanism such as hiding their feelings, while the other maladaptive coping mechanism of drinking alcohol to cope had the lowest rating. Based on these findings, it means that hypotheses 1 was accepted.

The tendency to hide their feelings is line with the findings from Lim et al. (2018) who conducted the study on 124 university graduates who were actively looking for work. The general results showed that 39.5 percent of the respondents revealed clinically significant levels of depression, but unemployed graduates were unwilling to seek medical treatment or therapy because of the social stigma associated with mental illness. As a result, untreated depression among young job seekers makes it more difficult to find work and increases the risk of suicide (Lim et al., 2018). Hiding feelings would tie in with a sense of

isolation and perceived stigma. While the use of alcohol was relatively low, it is still a concern that it even occurred at all, and occurred almost one-third of the time.

In contrast, the most-used adaptive coping mechanisms were keeping a positive attitude, reframing disappointment to cope, and relying on religious practices. Despite a decreased quality of mental health, life satisfaction, and objective physical well-being participants kept a positive attitude and reframed disappointment to cope. Positive reframing has been shown to alleviate depression and other negative emotions by allowing people to focus on the more positive aspects of their experience (Kraft et al., 1985). Schlossberg (1999) revealed that coping reactions that control the significance of the situation in order to neutralise the stressful event cognitively, such as maintaining a positive attitude in the face of a stressful situation like unemployment, are evidence of coping reactions that govern the meaning of the situation. Furthermore, positive reframing may motivate people to adopt problem-focus techniques (Folkman & Maskowitz, 2004). Therefore, maintaining a positive attitude may have encouraged participants in continuing with their job searches.

Mohanty (2010) investigated the impact of optimism and a positive attitude on employment and discovered that a positive attitude and optimism have an influence in securing employment successfully in the labour market. This means that unemployed graduates need to maintain their optimism about finding employment, despite the difficulties they face as a result of their unemployment.

Hypothesis 3 was rejected because there was a significant gender difference for reframing from disappointment to cope where females used this coping mechanism significantly more than males.,

This shows that females reframed disappointment to cope with unemployment more than males. Smari et al. (1997) discovered a variety of gender differences in the link between coping efforts and psychological well-being throughout unemployment. Mckee-

Ryan et al. (2005) indicated that women rely on different types of coping behaviours compared to men, such as more symptom-focused coping. Symptom-focused coping refers to actions taken to alleviate the negative effects of unemployment, such as seeking out social support, financial assistance, and community support.

There were no significant differences between the levels of education and coping with unemployment ($p > 0.05$). Even though not significant, it was interesting to see that those with a post-graduate degree used religious practices more to cope, and those with a graduate degree relied on keeping a positive attitude. There were no significant differences between colleges and coping with unemployment.

Sources of support during unemployment

This section analyses the sources of support provided to participants in order to cope with unemployment.

Participants received support from family, friends, and the community to cope with unemployment. The tertiary institution was seen as least source of support. This demonstrates that obtaining a job on the labour market is reliant on not only on attaining a university degree, but also on having social support in the form of friends and family members who can recommend jobs through their social networks to help graduates navigate their way through the labour market (Adeyemo & Ajufo, 2005; Kraak, 2005). Magagula (2017) stated that unemployed graduates require social support from family and friends to cope with the negative effects of unemployment.

The participants reported the community to be less of a source of support. Magagula (2017) found that participants who had links with society-based organisations such as churches, local schools, and non-profit organisations received support during their unemployment. These groups offered support as well as work opportunities to the participants. Sadly, perceived institutional support was very low. This would suggest a need

for universities to consider expanding their services to include support for graduates seeking employment.

There were no significant differences between the genders regarding sources of support during unemployment, although females did rely slightly more on family and friends ($p>0.05$). Female reliance on family approached but did not reach statistical significance ($p=0.056$). Based on these findings, hypothesis 3 was accepted.

There were no significant differences between levels of education regarding sources of support during unemployment ($p>0.05$). There was a slight tendency for those with a graduate degree to rely more on friend and their institution for support compared to those with post-graduate degrees.

There were no significant differences between colleges regarding sources of support during unemployment ($p>0.05$). The CAES graduates showed a higher reliance on family, but this was not statistically significant.

Apportioning blame for being unemployed

This section analysed apportioning blame for unemployment. The tendency to blame looked at outer factors rather than looking inward. The results showed that participants apportioned a blame high on the government system, followed by the education system, blaming their qualification, and the lowest blame was on themselves.

It was seen that the highest blame was on the government system. Lie (2007) argued that graduates should not be held solely responsible or blamed for their unemployment condition as employers, the government and tertiary institutions are all involved. Oluwajodu et al. (2015, p. 28) suggested that the "...government might assist by offering graduate recruitment subsidies to increase the opportunities for young graduates to find employment". This implies that the government and corporate sector must collaborate to reduce unemployment in South Africa. Another reason for the high blame on government is the high unemployment rates in South Africa which have escalated to a new peak of 32.6

percent (Stats SA, 2021). However, since 2011, the government has made employment creation a high priority in the State of the Nation addresses (SONA).

In relation to the education system and blaming their qualification, Fallows and Steven (2000) mentioned another reason why the unemployed blamed their education when they investigated the reasons why the unemployed blamed their education and their qualification. They mentioned that the higher education system is producing an ever-increasing number of graduates and also reducing traditional channels into graduate employment. There has also been a mismatch between the graduates' qualifications and skills that they possess and those needed by employers (Graham & Mlatsheni, 2015). Moerane (2016) revealed that graduates have been finding themselves pursuing qualifications that the labour market does not need. Therefore, their skills and qualifications have been irrelevant, leading to unemployment.

On the other hand, other fields which do not face with such difficulties are available in limited numbers and admissions are frequently regulated by external independent professional bodies. According to the CDEI (2013), a tertiary qualification no longer guarantees a job, especially for the South African youth, as hundreds of thousands struggle to find jobs. This opportunity allows higher education institutions to collaborate with the government and commercial sector not only to identify areas of need, but also to devise solutions to the problem of unemployment among young graduates.

There has therefore been a mismatch between the graduates' qualification and skills that they possess and those needed by employers (Graham & Mlatsheni, 2015). Moerane (2016) revealed that graduates have been finding themselves pursuing qualifications that the labour market does not need. Therefore, their skills and qualifications have been irrelevant, leading to unemployment.

There were no significant differences regarding gender on the blame for unemployment, or between colleges and blame for unemployment.

There was also a significant difference between the level of education and the blame for unemployment. Post-graduate participants blamed the educational system (71.3%), their qualification (58.3%), and themselves (45.9%) more than participants with a graduate degree. This shows that blame also relies on the duration of unemployment as there were higher levels of blame among participants with a post-graduate degree. This contradicts the results found by Pultz et al. (2020), that unemployed people are more prone to blame themselves rather of blaming the system. Their results revealed that self-blame was adversely related to the importance of subjective well-being and outweighed the importance of system blame.

Naong (2011) conducted an investigation into education system blame and self-blame among unemployed graduates and found that the majority of graduates were unable to obtain work since they had selected the wrong field of study and because of other flaws in the educational system of South Africa. To address the problem, he recommended promoting an entrepreneurial culture in schools.

Pultz et al. (2020) said that the unemployed blamed themselves, they believed that their own incompetency caused their failure to find work, and this affected their psychological well-being and job search process. This means that participants who put more blame on the government and education systems for their failure to find work coped better with unemployment than those who blamed themselves and had a better chance of securing a job.

GHQ-12

The mean GHQ-12 score in this study was 24.28. This was very high for the current unemployed participants. These findings seem to indicate that the number of the participants who were psychologically healthy was lower than those who were vulnerable to developing and experiencing psychological problems. Thus, the independent t-test analysis and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were carried out to determine whether there were

significant differences between the demographic variables of gender, level of education, and type of degree. However, the differences were found to be statistically insignificant.

The GHQ questions were grouped into categories such as stress (psychological well-being), decision making, individual self-perception and coping mechanisms. The composite result of these categories showed that there was a high overall feeling of psychological ill health where the mean of 24.28 out of 36 translates to 67.44 percent, about two-thirds of the sample. This demonstrates that unemployment can affect mental health and issues with mental health can limit the person's chances of finding work (Amissah and Nyarko, 2016). This supported the study conducted by Schob (2016) which revealed that unemployed people tend to believe that if they can get employment all their mental health problems will be reduced and disappear. Mabela (2012) reported that the psychological impact of unemployment on Individuals with a tertiary qualification is worse and they were reported to have a higher chance of having more than one mental health problem. All of the category scores were converted to percentages to have a common base for comparison.

Looking at the categories, the highest were stress at 72.3% and coping mechanisms at 72.2%, followed by individual perception at 62.9% and decision-making at 57.3%. This supports the findings of Mutambara et al. (2018), that unemployed graduates experience a variety of stressors, and that unemployment-related stress necessitates the development of appropriate coping strategies in order to prevent the detrimental effects of unemployment. The high stress and coping scores meant that participants could not cope with unemployment and this had effect on how they perceived themselves. There was a high perception of having no value as a person. This is consistent with Goldsmith et al. (1997) who emphasised that involuntary unemployment harms the perception of self-worth.

Decision-making skills were also perceived to be 57 percent impaired. One of the employability skills that might be seen as a crucial determinant for a graduate's potential to acquire career prospects is decision-making skills (Lau & Pang, 2000). If graduates lack the

requisite skills to meet employers' needs, the unemployment rate will increase unnecessarily (Hwang,2017).

Conclusion

The study aimed to provide evidence that unemployment results in an adverse impact on psychological well-being of unemployed graduates. Indeed, the results of the study showed that unemployed graduates experienced feelings of anxiety, depression and stigma. Different coping mechanism were reported, both maladaptive and adaptive coping. The next chapter will present the limitations, recommendations and conclusion of the study.

Chapter Six: Limitations, Conclusion and Recommendations

Introduction

This is the final chapter of this study. This study explored the psychological impact of unemployment and coping mechanisms used by graduates in Pietermaritzburg. In this chapter the limitations, recommendations and conclusion of the study are addressed.

Limitations of this study

The study sample involved a limited number of participants, compared to the total population of unemployed graduates in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal. With respect to access to participants, the researcher could have reached more than one hundred participants, but due to COVID 19 regulations it was not easy to reach participants. Moreover, only volunteers participated in the survey and not every characteristic of the entire population of unemployed graduates could be taken into account.

The survey was conducted after strict level four of lockdown in South Africa, and the psychological state of the unemployed graduates may have changed since then, as they are likely to have experienced more psychological issues or mental health problems.

The survey used a self-designed questionnaire as well as an established psychometric measure, the GHQ-12. It was beyond the scope of this study to establish the reliability and validity of the questionnaire. It also only became apparent when capturing data that major subjects rather than actual degree were given as answers. This resulted in only being able to compare colleges, and limited establishing which specific degrees may be in less demand on the labour market.

While the advantage of the quantitative approach is that it is possible to survey many participants and it is time-effective, providing objective numeric data, the potential richness of in-depth subjective data yielded by qualitative research was lost. However, qualitative research is time consuming and would have reached far fewer participants.

Recommendations

Job hunting or job preparation should be included as one of the modules for final-year students in order to acquire employability skills. Employability skills have long been seen as a key factor in a graduate's ability to find work. (Lau & Pang, 2000). This will also prepare them for the world of work as indicated by Perrone and Vickers (2003) who summarised life after graduation as "...a very uncomfortable kind of world" (p. 70).

It is recommended that graduates should be encouraged and educated on the significance of volunteering their knowledge while completing their final year at university. This would give exposure to the workplace and could open doors to potential employment.

One of the findings of this study was that the graduates from College of Humanities made up 49 percent of the sample. This would include degrees such as BA and BSocSc. This shows the impact of the education system on employability among graduates. The researcher proposes that higher education programmes or courses be reviewed to see whether they're in line with what is needed in the labour force.

It was also clear that there is a disconnection concerning the function of psychologist and registered counsellors on how they can help graduates who are not working to cope with the psychological impact of unemployment and assist them to find employment. It is suggested that future studies be conducted on the psychological services available for unemployed graduates. The psychological support services could assist the graduates to find employment through building and maintaining their self-esteem and confidence which are important characteristics when initially seeking and obtaining work.

The majority of the participants showed stress, depression, anxiety and stigma. The participants did not feel that they had support from the government and education system or their institution, although participants felt that they had support from friends and family to cope with unemployment. Upcoming research would be to have follow-up studies of a qualitative character. This strategy may yield more detailed and rich data describing how

government and education system provide support to graduates during unemployment. This could include psychological support and job opportunity creation. A qualitative approach is also needed to validate the findings of this study.

Future research should focus on examining university graduates' attitudes towards founding their own non-profit organisation and self-employment as a means of finding work after graduation.

More research is needed to determine the GHQ's reliability and validity utilising South African samples.

Finally, with the changing face of universities following the merging and transformation of over a decade ago, it is time for the universities to move beyond stopping at the conferring of degrees. The universities need to develop resources to ensure a viable career future for all their graduates. The technical, vocational education and training (TVET) colleges have vocational departments which assist with job-seeking and job-placement. This is a service that could be considered by universities. It would enable their graduates to move out into their careers with pride and confidence. When this happens, unemployed graduates and dejected job-seekers will become a thing of the past. The investment in education and training will indeed pay dividends as graduates find their place in their careers, fulfilling their dreams of a better life.

Conclusion

This research study investigated the psychological impact of unemployment and coping mechanisms amongst graduates in Pietermaritzburg, which is located in KwaZulu-Natal. A literature search was conducted on psychological impact of unemployment, coping mechanism and various sources were consulted, such as, books, journal articles and the internet. A quantitative approach was followed in this study. The findings of the study indicated that it was evident that unemployment had an adverse impact on the psychological well-being of graduates in Pietermaritzburg in a number of ways. Despite its

narrow reach, this dissertation highlighted the severity of the psychological impact of unemployment on Pietermaritzburg residents.

In this study the main research question concerned the psychosocial impact of unemployment among the graduates in Pietermaritzburg in Kwa-Zulu-Natal. It was assumed that the high rate of youth unemployment had an impact on graduates' psychological well-being and the people around them. This included friends and family. It was also assumed that graduates were not aware of the resources and mechanisms used to cope with the psychological impact of unemployment. Due to the lack of knowledge and coping mechanisms used by graduates they ended up suffering from stress, depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, as indicated in the literature review in Chapter Two.

The researcher obtained data from one hundred unemployed graduates, both male and female, who resided in Pietermaritzburg. The researcher found that graduate unemployment did influence the psychological well-being of the participants. Some reported psychosocial dysfunction, particularly depression and anxiety, and feeling stigmatised. The types of psychological impact of unemployment were identified and the coping mechanisms used by graduates were also identified, the main positive one being trying to keep a positive attitude, while the main maladaptive one was to hide feelings. This shows that there was a disconnection between the role of psychologists and counsellors and how they might help unemployed youngsters, not only with their psychological well-being, but also with their job search.

Unemployment has a lot of psychological effects that can be mitigated using a variety of strategies. These include a functioning labour market, health-care workers, and the implementation of social welfare policies. The government and education systems should collaborate to create an environment where the effects of unemployment and their impact on mental health are minimised.

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Appendix A: Ethical Clearance



PO Box 77000, Nelson Mandela University, Port Elizabeth, 6051, South Africa | mandela.ac.za

Chairperson: Research Ethics Committee (Human)
Tel: +27 (0)41 504 2347
sharlene.govender@mandela.ac.za

NHREC registration nr: REC-042508-025

Ref: [H20-HEA-PSY-015] / Approval]

29 October 2020

Prof M Ngcobo-Sithole
Faculty: Health Sciences

Dear Prof Ngcobo-Sithole

AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND COPING MECHANISM AMONGST GRADUATES IN PIETERMARITZBURG

PRP: Prof M Ngcobo-Sithole
PI: Ms N Nkasa

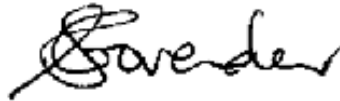
Your above-entitled application served at the Research Ethics Committee (Human) (23 September 2020) for approval. The study is classified as a medium risk study. The ethics clearance reference number is **H20-HEA-PSY-015** and approval is subject to the following conditions:

1. The immediate completion and return of the attached acknowledgement to Imtiaz.Khan@mandela.ac.za, the date of receipt of such returned acknowledgement determining the final date of approval for the study where after data collection may commence.
2. Approval for data collection is for 1 calendar year from date of receipt of above mentioned acknowledgement.
3. The submission of an annual progress report by the PRP on the data collection activities of the study (form RECH-004 available on Research Ethics Committee (Human) portal) by 15 November this year for studies approved/extended in the period October of the previous year up to and including September of this year, or 15 November next year for studies approved/extended after September this year.
4. In the event of a requirement to extend the period of data collection (i.e. for a period in excess of 1 calendar year from date of approval), completion of an extension request is required (form RECH-005 available on Research Ethics Committee (Human) portal).
5. In the event of any changes made to the study (excluding extension of the study), completion of an amendments form is required (form RECH-006 available on Research Ethics Committee (Human) portal).
6. Immediate submission (and possible discontinuation of the study in the case of serious events) of the relevant report to RECH (form RECH-007 available on Research Ethics Committee (Human) portal) in the event of any unanticipated problems, serious incidents or adverse events observed during the course of the study.
7. Immediate submission of a Study Termination Report to RECH (form RECH-008 available on Research Ethics Committee (Human) portal) upon expected or unexpected closure/termination of study.
8. Immediate submission of a Study Exception Report of RECH (form RECH-009 available on Research Ethics Committee (Human) portal) in the event of any study deviations, violations and/or exceptions.
9. Acknowledgement that the study could be subjected to passive and/or active monitoring without prior notice at the discretion of Research Ethics Committee (Human).

Please quote the ethics clearance reference number in all correspondence and enquiries related to the study. For speedy processing of email queries (to be directed to Imtiaz.Khan@mandela.ac.za), it is recommended that the ethics clearance reference number together with an indication of the query appear in the subject line of the email.

We wish you well with the study.

Yours sincerely



Dr S Govender
Chairperson: Research Ethics Committee (Human)

Cc: Department of Research Development
Faculty Manager: Health Sciences

Appendix 1: Acknowledgement of conditions for ethical approval

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CONDITIONS FOR ETHICS APPROVAL
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I, **PROF M NGCOBO-SITHOLE (PRP)** of the study entitled **[H20-HEA-PSY-015] AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND COPING MECHANISM AMONGST GRADUATES IN PIETERMARITZBURG**, do hereby agree to the following approval conditions:

1. The submission of an annual progress report by myself on the data collection activities of the study by 15 November this year for studies approved in the period October of the previous year up to and including September of this year, or 15 November next year for studies approved after September this year. It is noted that there will be no call for the submission thereof. The onus for submission of the annual report by the stipulated date rests on myself. I am aware of the guidelines (available on Research Ethics Committee (Human) portal) pertinent to the submission of the annual report.
2. Submission of the relevant request to RECH in the event of any amendments to the study for approval by RECH prior to any partial or full implementation thereof. I am aware of the guidelines (available on Research Ethics Committee (Human) portal) pertinent to the requesting for any amendments to the study.
3. Submission of the relevant request to RECH in the event of any extension to the study for approval by RECH prior to the implementation thereof.
4. Immediate submission of the relevant report to RECH in the event of any unanticipated problems, serious incidents or adverse events. I am aware of the guidelines (available on Research Ethics Committee (Human) portal) pertinent to the reporting of any unanticipated problems, serious incidents or adverse events.
5. Immediate discontinuation of the study in the event of any serious unanticipated problems, serious incidents or serious adverse events.
6. Immediate submission of the relevant report to RECH in the event of the unexpected closure/discontinuation of the study (for example, de-registration of the PI).
7. Immediate submission of the relevant report to RECH in the event of study deviations, violations and/or exceptions. I am aware of the guidelines (available on Research Ethics Committee (Human) portal) pertinent to the reporting of any study deviations, violations and/or exceptions.
8. Acknowledgement that the study could be subjected to passive and/or active monitoring without prior notice at the discretion of RECH. I am aware of the guidelines (available on Research Ethics Committee (Human) portal) pertinent to the active monitoring of a study.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Appendix B: Gatekeeper Permission

Permission for Research with Umgungundlovu unemployed graduates

RE: Requesting access for data collection

I am conducting a research study that will be ethically approved by the Nelson Mandela University for a Master of Arts degree in Research Psychology. The research aims to explore the Psychological impact of unemployment amongst graduates in Pietermaritzburg. I request permission to access database of your unemployed graduates as an essential part of the study. And to use your venue for data collection. To enable you to make an informed decision in this regard, I would value an opportunity to meet with you at a time and venue convenient to you to explain the nature of the study in greater detail.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my request. If you agree to meet with me or have any questions regarding the research, please do not hesitate to contact me at 083 374 9615/ 066 305 7818 or email nkasanonjabulo@gmail.com.

Prof Ngcobo-Sithole is supervising the project and can be contacted as well on the contact details below, should you have any questions:

Tel: 041 504 2354/2916

Email: Magnolia.Ngcobo-Sithole@mandela.ac.za

Sincerely,

N.F Nkasa

Appendix C: Referral letter to Psychologist

Dear Clinical Psychologist

My name is Nonjabulo Nkasa. I work at the Department of Labour and Employment in Pietermaritzburg as an employment counsellor. I am also a Nelson Mandela University Student, studying Masters in Research Psychology. The title of my research is *An investigation into the psychological impact of unemployment and coping mechanism amongst graduates in Pietermaritzburg*. Professor Magnolia Ngcobo-Sithole who is the Head of the Nelson Mandela Psychology Department, will supervise this study.

I am writing this letter to request your assistance with data collection and possible follow-up psychological services, please. The reason to request your services is because I work with unemployed graduates in the programme facilitated by the Department of Employment and Labour. This may cause bias and conflict of interest, and affect a graduate's willingness to participate in the study. Some of the questions in the questionnaire may elicit emotional reactions among graduates and require psychological intervention. The dates for data collection will be communicated so that the necessary arrangements on your side will be made accordingly.

I may be contacted on 083 374 9615 or 066 305 7818 or email: nkasanonjabulo@gmail.com.

Prof Ngcobo-Sithole can be contacted at 041 504 2354/2916 or email: Magnolia.Ngcobo-Sithole@mandela.ac.za

Thank you.

Yours Sincerely

Ms Nonjabulo Nkasa

Appendix D: Confidentiality Agreement

Appendix D: Confidentiality Agreement



Faculty of Health Sciences Confidentiality Agreement

According to The Protection of Personal Information Act (POPI Act) Act No 4 of 2013 which seeks to promote the protection of personal information. i.e. what is done to someone's personal information, how someone's personal information is processed or shared, who receives such information or with whom is shared, what type of personal information is processed or shared, and why such personal information is processed or shared.

I hereby acknowledge that, as a member of the research team for the project entitled *An investigation into the psychological impact of unemployment and coping mechanisms amongst graduates in Pietermaritzburg*, have access to confidential information, including but not limited to questionnaires administered to collect data. Therefore,

1. I understand that while performing my duties, I may have direct or indirect access to confidential or personal information.
2. I agree to always behave with integrity while performing my data collection activities.
3. I will act with loyalty when entrusted with confidential information, and I agree to protect the confidential nature of all information to which I have access. I shall take adequate measures to ensure the confidentiality of information. I will not disclose, or permit to be disclosed, or use to personal advantage, any confidential information.
4. I agree that upon completion of data collection I will return all confidential information to the primary researcher.
5. I have been informed that this signed agreement will be retained on file for future reference.
6. I have read the above-mentioned confidentiality statement. I agree to follow the requirements of this statement.

Full Name: M.Biyela

Signature: 

Date: 24/05/2021

Disclaimer: This Agreement is not intended to prevent disclosure where disclosure is required by law.

Page 1

Appendix E: Informed Consent

RESEARCHER'S DETAILS	
Title of the research project	An investigation into the psychological impact of unemployment and coping mechanism amongst graduates in Pietermaritzburg
Reference number	H20-HEA-PSY-015
Principal investigator	Nonjabulo Fortunate Nkasa
Address	12 Lemonwood lane, Mkamba gardens, Pietermaritzburg
Postal Code	3201
Contact telephone number (private numbers not advisable)	083 374 9615

A. DECLARATION BY OR ON BEHALF OF PARTICIPANT		Initial
I, the participant and the undersigned	(full names)	
ID number		
<u>OR</u>		
I, in my capacity as	(parent or guardian)	
of the participant	(full names)	
ID number		
Address (of participant)		

A.1 <u>HEREBY CONFIRM AS FOLLOWS:</u>		Initial
I, the participant, was invited to participate in the above-mentioned research project		
that is being undertaken by	Nonjabulo Fortunate Nkasa	
from	Department of Psychology	
of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.		

THE FOLLOWING ASPECTS HAVE BEEN EXPLAINED TO ME, THE PARTICIPANT:				Initial	
2.1	Aim:	The aim of the proposed study is to explore the psychological impact of unemployment among graduates between 21-35 years of age.			
2.2	Procedures:	I understand that my participation involves filling in the questionnaires form from the Nelson Mandela University, on the topic of an investigation into the psychological impact of unemployment and coping mechanism amongst graduates in Pietermaritzburg. The questionnaires will last approximately one hour.			
2.3	Risks:	There is a risk of embarrassment of being unemployed and the association issues of dignity, worth, isolation, and decrease of self-esteem.			
2.4	Possible benefits:	There are no benefits involved in being a participant in this study			
2.5	Confidentiality:	My identity will not be revealed in any discussion, description or scientific publications by the investigators. I understand that the content of the questionnaires will be kept strictly confidential and will be available only to the researcher and her University supervisor. Extracts from the questionnaire will be included in the final research report, but special codes will be used to protect the identity of participants. A copy of the report will be kept in the Nelson Mandela University Libraries.			
2.6	Access to findings:	Any new information or benefit that develops during the course of the study will be shared as follows: via personal telephonic contact and emails.			
2.6	Voluntary participation / refusal / discontinuation:	My participation is voluntary	YES	NO	
		My decision whether or not to participate will in no way affect my present or future care / employment / lifestyle	TRUE	FALSE	

3. THE INFORMATION ABOVE WAS EXPLAINED TO ME/THE PARTICIPANT BY:								Initial
(Clinical psychologist)								
in	Afrikaans		English	x	Xhosa		Other	
and I am in command of this language, or it was satisfactorily translated to me by								
(name of translator)								
I was given the opportunity to ask questions and all these questions were answered satisfactorily.								
4.	No pressure was exerted on me to consent to participation and I understand that I may withdraw at any stage without penalisation.							

5.	Participation in this study will not result in any additional cost to myself.	
----	---	--

A.2 I HEREBY VOLUNTARILY CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ABOVE-MENTIONED PROJECT:	
Signed/confirmed at _____ on _____ 20__	
Signature or right thumb print of participant	Signature of witness:
	Full name of witness:

B.STATEMENT BY OR ON BEHALF OF INVESTIGATOR(S)									
I,	(name of interviewer)	declare that:							
1.	I have explained the information given in this document to	(name of patient/participant)							
	and / or his / her representative	(name of representative)							
2.	He / she was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions;								
3.	This conversation was conducted in	Afrikaans		English		Xhosa		Other	
	And no translator was used <u>OR</u> this conversation was translated into								
	(language)	by		(name of translator)					
4.	I have detached Section D and handed it to the participant	YES			NO				
Signed/confirmed at _____ on _____ 20__									
Signature of interviewer		Signature of witness:							
		Full name of witness:							

C. <u>DECLARATION BY TRANSLATOR (WHEN APPLICABLE)</u>			
I,	(full names)		
ID number			
Qualifications and/or			
Current employment			
confirm that I:			
1.	Translated the contents of this document from English into	(language)	
2.	Also translated questions posed by	(name of participant)	as well as the answers given by the investigator/representative;
3.	Conveyed a factually correct version of what was related to me.		
Signed/confirmed at _____ on _____ 20__			

I hereby declare that all information acquired by me for the purposes of this study will be kept confidential.	
Signature of translator	Signature of witness:
	Full name of witness:

D. <u>IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO PATIENT/REPRESENTATIVE OF PARTICIPANT</u>	
<p>Dear participant/representative of the participant</p> <p>Thank you for your/the participant's participation in this study. Should, at any time during the study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an emergency arise as a result of the research, or - you require any further information with regard to the study, or - the following occur <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 60px; margin: 10px 0;"></div> <p>(indicate any circumstances which should be reported to the investigator)</p>	
Kindly contact	
at telephone number	(it must be a number where help will be available on a 24 hour basis, if the research project warrants it)

Appendix F: Information Sheet

Dear Participants

My name is Nonjabulo Nkasa; I am a Nelson Mandela University Student, studying Masters in Research Psychology. I am writing this letter because I am seeking potential participants for my research. The title of my research is an investigation into the psychological impact of unemployment and coping mechanism amongst graduates in Pietermaritzburg. Professor Magnolia Ngcobo- Sithole who is the head of the Nelson Mandela Psychology department will supervise this study.

You are being asked to participate in a research study. We will provide you with the necessary information to assist you to understand the study and explain what would be expected of you (participant). These guidelines would include the risks, benefits, and your rights as a study subject. Please feel free to ask the researcher to clarify anything that is not clear to you.

To participate, it will be required of you to provide a written consent that will include your signature, date and initials to verify that you understand and agree to the conditions.

You have the right to query concerns regarding the study at any time. Immediately report any new problems during the study, to the researcher. Telephone numbers of the researcher are provided. Please feel free to call these numbers.

Furthermore, it is important that you are aware of the fact that the ethical integrity of the study has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee (Human) of the university. The REC-H consists of a group of independent experts that has the responsibility to ensure that the rights and welfare of participants in research are protected and that studies are conducted in an ethical manner. Studies cannot be conducted without REC-H's approval. Queries with regard to your rights as a research subject can be directed to the Research Ethics Committee (Human), Department of Research Capacity Development, PO Box 77000, Nelson Mandela University, Port Elizabeth, 6031.

If no one could assist you, you may write to: The Chairperson of the Faculty Postgraduate Studies Committee, PO Box 77000, Nelson Mandela University, Port Elizabeth, 6031.

Participation in research is completely voluntary. You are not obliged to take part in any research. If you choose not to participate in medically related research, your present and/or future medical care will not be affected in any way and you will incur no penalty and/or loss of benefits to which you may otherwise be entitled.

If you do partake, you have the right to withdraw at any given time, during the study without penalty or loss of benefits. However, if you do withdraw from the study, you should return for a final discussion or examination in order to terminate the research in an orderly manner.

If you fail to follow instructions, or if your medical condition changes in such a way that the researcher believes that it is not in your best interest to continue in this study, or for administrative reasons, your participation maybe discontinued. The study may be terminated at any time by the researcher, the sponsor or the Research Ethics Committee (Human).

Although your identity will at all times remain confidential, the results of the research study may be presented at scientific conferences or in specialist publications.

This informed consent statement has been prepared in compliance with current statutory guidelines.

Prof Ngcobo-Sithole is supervising the project and can also be contacted as well on the contact details below, should you have any questions:

Tel: 041 504 2354/2916

Email: Magnolia.Ngcobo-Sithole@mandela.ac.za

Yours sincerely

Nonjabulo Nkasa

Appendix G: Oral information

Hello Participants

I am the clinical psychologist from Department of Employment and Labour. I am assisting with data collection of the study conducted by Nonjabulo Nkasa under supervision of Professor Magnolia Ngcobo-Sithole who is the head of the Nelson Mandela Psychology Department. Nonjabulo Nkasa is registered for a Masters in Research Psychology (Dissertation only) with Nelson Mandela University. I am seeking potential participants for her research. The title of her research is An investigation into the psychological impact of unemployment and coping mechanism amongst graduates in Pietermaritzburg.

The aim of this study is to explore the psychological impact of unemployment amongst graduates.

There are specific characteristics in the kind of potential participants I am seeking. They include:

- Participants should be residing in Pietermaritzburg;
- Unemployed graduates with Bachelor's degree and higher;
- Have been actively involved in a job search for at least two years from the time obtained qualification;
- The participant should be between the ages of 21 to 35 years old; and
- Be willing to participate.

Participants should not have been diagnosed with any psychological conditions.

On the other hand, the exclusion criteria for the participants will consider the following:

- People who are visitors in Pietermaritzburg, unemployed graduate ages less than 21 years or more than 35 years, males and females who have not experienced unemployment, Participants who have been diagnosed with psychological conditions.

The research has been through the Postgraduate Committee, Department of Psychology, and been granted clearance. The study has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee (Human) of the Nelson Mandela University.

Thank you for your time and participation. If you choose to be a part of this project, here is what will happen:

- You will be required to read the information letter to make the informed decision whether to participate or not;
- Consent forms will be distributed and you are expected to read and sign if you qualify to be part of the study and you would like to participate. This will verify that you understand and agree to the conditions;
- I will give you two questionnaires to complete within one hour; and
- You are requested to indicate after completing the questionnaire if you need to consult with a psychologist for debriefing and counselling.

Thank you for attending this presentation. I shall now leave the room while you think about participating. I shall come back after 20 minutes for those who decide to participate in the study.

Appendix H: Researcher-Designed Questionnaire

An investigation into the psychological impact of unemployment and coping mechanisms amongst graduates in Pietermaritzburg

Below are a number of questions regarding demographic information, the psychological impact of unemployment, and coping with unemployment. Please respond to all statements or questions in this booklet. Please use a pencil to complete the questionnaire as this will enable you to change an answer when the need arises. Please answer the questions by putting a tick on the option that best suits you or filling in a response

Section A: Demographic Questions

Age	Gender		Highest Level of Education			Your Degree	How long have you been unemployed?
___years	Male	Female	Bachelors degree	Masters degree	Doctorate		___years ___months

Are you part of any job readiness programme that offer help and/or advice on job search	Yes	No
If yes, what is the job readiness programme you are part of?		

Have you ever declined a job offer?	Yes	No
If yes, what was the reason to decline the job offer?		

How do you search for a job? (you can choose more than one option)					
Newspaper adverts	Recruitment agency	Internet	Approaching potential employers	Networking	Other (Please specify)

On a scale of 0-10, where 0 means not at all useful, 5 is average, and 10 means very useful, do you feel your qualification is useful in helping you to get a job?										
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Do you think employment provides a sense of identity?	Yes	No
Please explain:		

Section B: Psychological impact and types of psychological impact of unemployment

In this section, the rating scales are all 0-10, with 0 being 'not at all', 'never', etc., 5 being a 'middle' or 'average', and 10 being 'always', 'the best' etc. Please rate each aspect out of 10.

How do you feel about being unemployed?											
I feel optimistic	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I feel pessimistic	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I feel angry	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I am depressed	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I have low self-esteem	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I feel isolated	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I feel stigmatised	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I am anxious	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
The loss of income has a significant impact	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
What would getting a job mean to you?											
I can provide for myself	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I can provide for my family	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
It will give a purpose for living	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
It will give relief from family assistance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
It will give time to structure my day	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
It will give sense of recognition, self-worth and purpose	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Employment will provide a sense of identity	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
The psychological effect of unemployment in your life is:											
Loss of feelings of self-worth	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Increase in family problems	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Loss of social contacts	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Shame	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Humiliation	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Disorganization	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
From your own experience rate the challenges in finding a job:											
Lack of professionalism	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Lack of demand for my qualification	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Lack of jobs in the country	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Employers' tendency to employ relatives and people they know	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Passivity in searching for the job	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Financial Problems	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Lack of contact with friends	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Section C: Coping with unemployment

In this section, the rating scales are all 0-10, with 0 being 'not at all', 'never', etc., 5 being a 'middle 'or 'average', and 10 being 'always', 'the best' etc. Please rate each aspect out of 10.

<i>How do you cope with unemployment?</i>											
I drink or used to drink alcohol to cope	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Religious practices help me to cope	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I try to keep a positive attitude	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I reframe disappointment to cope	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I participate in leisure activities	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I go to town to look for work almost every day	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I hide my feelings and keep my feelings to myself	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>Who has been giving you support during this time of unemployment?</i>											
Family	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Friends	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Your institution	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Your community	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>What do you blame for your situation of being unemployed?</i>											
Yourself	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Your qualification	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Education system	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Government system	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Any additional information:

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix I: General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12)**Short General Health Questionnaire (GHQ 12)**

Below are the list statements/questions that contain information about your everyday thoughts and how you feel about things. You need to respond to all statements in the booklet. The questionnaire contains 12 statements. Please use a pencil to complete the questionnaire. Put (X) on the response that best describes you.

When the administrator asks you to start, answer each statement. Please keep the following things in mind:

1. Read each statement and choose the answer that best describes you. There are no “right” or “wrong” answers; just mark what is true for you.
2. You chose from better than usual, same as usual, less than usual and much less than usual.
3. If you want to change an answer, please erase the original one completely and darken the circle of the number that best indicates your answer.
4. Please answer truthfully.

Thank you.

Have you recently?		Put (X) on the response that best describes you.		
1. Been able to concentrate on what you're doing?	Better than usual	Same as usual	Less than usual	Much less than usual
2. Lost much sleep over worry?	Not at all	No more than usual	Rather more than usual	Much more than usual
3. Felt you were playing a useful part in things?	More so than usual	Same as usual	Less useful than usual	Much less useful
4. Felt capable of making decisions about things?	More so than usual	Same as usual	Less so than usual	Much less capable
5. Felt constantly under strain?	Not at all	No more than usual	Rather more than usual	Much more than usual
6. Felt you could not overcome your difficulties?	Not at all	No more than usual	Rather more than usual	Much more than usual
7. Been able to enjoy your normal day-to-day activities?	More so than usual	Same as usual	Less so than usual	Much less than usual
8. Been able to face up to your problems?	More so than usual	Same as usual	Less so than usual	Much less able
9. Been feeling unhappy and depressed?	Not at all	No more than usual	Rather more than usual	Much more than usual
10. Been losing confidence in yourself?	Not at all	No more than usual	Rather more than usual	Much more than usual
11. Been thinking of yourself as a worthless person?	Not at all	No more than usual	Rather more than usual	Much more than usual
12. Been feeling reasonably happy, all things considered	More so than usual	About same as usual	Less so than usual	Much less than usual;

Appendix J: Turn it in report

The screenshot shows a Turnitin Originality Report for a document titled 'NF NKASA'. The report is displayed in a web browser window. The top section, 'ORIGINALITY REPORT', shows a similarity index of 10%. Below this, four categories are listed: Internet Sources (7%), Publications (4%), and Student Papers (5%). The 'PRIMARY SOURCES' section lists four sources: 1. hdl.handle.net (1%), 2. uir.unisa.ac.za (1%), 3. link.springer.com (1%), and 4. www.ukzn.ac.za (<1%). The report is viewed on page 118 of 135. The browser's address bar shows the file path: 'W:\my%20documents\Esteil\NF%20NKASA%20TURNIT%20IN%2010%20PERCENT...'. The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the time as 12:40 PM on 2/22/2022.

NF NKASA

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