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R. RENA, Prof., Dr. Professor of Economics,
NWU Business School, North-West University, Mahikeng Campus
Private Bag: X 2046, Mmbatho, 2745, South Africa,
E-mail: ravinder.rena@gmail.com
ORCID: 0000-0002-4156-8693
Scopus ID: 56441653000

B. T. T. DIALE, MBA Student
NWU Business School, North-West University, Mahikeng Campus
Republic of South Africa
E-mail: theremudiale@gmail.com
ORCID: 0000-0001-8253-7482

EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE PROGRAMME IN SKILL DEVELOPMENT OF UNEMPLOYED GRADUATES IN THE NORTH WEST PROVINCE OF SOUTH AFRICA

For the last 3 decades, youth unemployment has been a major challenge in South Africa. Education and training has been considered as a solution to this challenge in the country. The South African Government introduced skills development programs focusing on the youth to reduce unemployment and poverty. However, the youth unemployment among the skilled has been persistent. Given this background, an attempt is made in this study to evaluate the effectiveness of the National Youth Service Program (NYSP) in skill development of unemployed Graduates in the North West Province of South Africa and determine stakeholder involvement in the conceptualization, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the skills development program. The research methodology used in this study was both quantitative approach aimed to fill in the knowledge gap, which is achieved through critical reading and analysis of what other researchers have identified, and qualitative method. A cross-sectional survey was conducted to collect data. Questionnaires were self-administered to obtain primary data from (90) graduates and (10) stakeholders who took part in the NYSP. The main finding of the study indicates that 83 % of the

NYSP graduates are unemployed since completing the skills development program in the 2017 fiscal year. The study alluded that lack of stakeholder participation and commitment in the NYSP was attributed to the high rate of NYS graduate unemployment. Stakeholder engagement and participation will also play a critical role in ensuring that learners completing the skills development program are linked to employment opportunities and are self-reliant. The study recommends that stakeholder identification should take place before the program is being implemented.

Keywords: *Graduates unemployment, national youth service program, national youth development agency, corporate social responsibility, entrepreneurial attitudes, South Africa.*

Introduction. For the last three decades, increasing youth unemployment has become a crucial challenge in South Africa despite the fact that the government has embarked several programs that provide necessary skills to the young people, and ensure linking graduates with work opportunities. Despite initiatives by the Government to address youth unemployment, there is a growing gap between the firms' required skills and the acquired skills of unemployed graduates. Youth unemployment is a global phenomenon which does not only affect South Africa (Dagume, Agyapong and Gyekye, 2016:59). Statistics South Africa (2016) highlights that both developing and developed countries are encountering this challenge. This is as a result of the global financial crisis experienced in 2009 which led to a long-term unemployment, particularly amongst individuals between the ages of 15-35 years (Oluwajodu and Greyling, 2015). In the future, the state is unlikely to change, looking at the trend globally, indicating 12.7 % youth unemployment in 2017, 12.2 % in 2018, and 12.5 % in 2019 StatisticsSA (2019). The United Nations Organisation (UNO, 2019:39), indicated that the global youth unemployment rate is estimated at 13.2 %.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2020:44) indicates that the unemployment rate of the youth in North Africa is at 30 % compared to an aggregate rate of 12.5 % in South Africa. In Sub-Sahara Africa, in contrast, this cohort unemployment rate was 8.7 %. In South Africa, this challenge is rather acute (Oluwajodu and Greyling, 2015). Concerning StatisticsSA (2019) fourth-quarter labour force report, there was approximately 10.3 million youth in South Africa, of which 40.1 % were unemployed and not in education or training, 55 % possess matric certificates, 58.10 % are graduates. The statistics show that youth unemployment in South Africa is high irrespective of educational level. Some scholars refer to youth unemployment in this country as being a policy matter (Dagume et al., 2016:60). In North West Province, the unemployment rate of young men in 2016 was 36.8 % compared to 44.4 % of the female counterparts (StatisticsSA, 2016). The status called for investments in skills development programs by all government, business, and educational institutions (Ariene De Lannoy, 2018:14). According to the National Youth Development Agency (2017:5), the government had to develop policies for crafting effective interventions to address youth unemployment as the youth employment interventions in the

province were of a great concern, State of the Province Address (SOPA, 2016:7). Among others, these interventions included learnerships, youth entrepreneurial development programs, youth service programs, and short-term skills development programs implemented by government, civil society, and the private sector (Department of Social Development, 2016:32). The Government of South Africa initiated several programs to combat youth unemployment, however, there is a growing gap between the skills training and needs of the firms or businesses (Finn, 2015:4). Moreover, findings gathered from labour market data reports revealed that government-led initiatives such as Expanded Public Works Programme, Community Based Programmes and learnerships, to name a few, have not solved the overwhelming aggregate of the youth unemployment problem. Various elements such as the economic state, the number of skilled youth versus the total number of jobs available, and young people preferring paid work than starting their cooperatives influence youth unemployment (Garwe, 2014:2). This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of NYSP in skill development of unemployed youth in North-West Province of South Africa.

Relevance of Research. The Department of Social Development (DSD) in the North West Province was not an exception in developing programs to reduce youth unemployment. In order to try to solve this problem, the Department implemented the National Youth Service Program (DSD, 2016:33). The National Youth Service Program (NYSP) involves young people's participation in activities that benefit the community while developing their abilities through service and learning (DSD, 2019:34). The program was designed to address the question of skills shortage and unemployment amongst the youth. In terms of the above objectives, the NYSP must meet the elements of theoretical learning, experiential learning/community service, and exit opportunities (NYDA, 2017:3). Furthermore, on completion of the skills development program, graduates should be linked with economic and work opportunities.

The purpose of the article. South Africa has been facing a major challenge of unemployment for the last three decades and this article address some of these issues. The Small Micro Medium Enterprise (SMMEs) is of utmost importance to the graduates in offering prospective employment. However, a challenge emerges in linking graduates to this sector (Gallagher, 2015:461). There are government-led initiatives such as skills development programs to strengthen the linkages between youth graduates and Small Medium Enterprise. The effectiveness of these initiatives warrants scrutiny looking at the high unemployment of skills development program graduates in Ngaka Modiri Molema District (NMMD). The failure to link identified potential employment and entrepreneurial attitudes is emphasized to contribute to youth unemployment (Bell, 2016:2). In furtherance, the author argues that entrepreneurial attitudes assist in searching for work, preparation for entering the labour market, and ensuring that an individual's abilities are recognized. However, the author alludes that the inability

of the youth to acquire entrepreneurial attitudes increases this group's unemployment. Finn (2015:3) believes that organizations appoint employees based on skills and experiences received to determine productivity level. As such, the younger a candidate is less likely to be appointed. Contrary to that, the older applicants are more likely to be appointed because of their skills and experience.

Scientific novelty of the article. Youth unemployment is a lack of access to skills, including work experience, by this cohort required to move the economy forward. Mtembu and Govender (2015:2) believe that youth unemployment inhibits economic development and acts as a burden on the government because it must provide social assistance. Youth is not considered for employment by organizations despite obtaining qualifications from higher recognized and accredited institutions. Matsouka (2016:1) emphasizes that organizations think of the youth as being weak in applying the acquired knowledge in jobs that seek skills. In furtherance, the author explains that companies are in search of youth graduates with skills, and expect training or higher institutions to cultivate and improve youth employability. The results have indicated that 61 % more females are beneficiaries of the NYSP. It is evident that the DSD in the North West Province has ensured that there are measures in place to empower young women in NMMD.

Problem statement. The Department of Social Development (DSD) implemented the NYSP across the North West Province from 2009 to date, intending to reduce unemployment and poverty among young people aged 18-35. In the 2015/2016 financial year, the DSD upgraded the NYSP by involving Construction Sector Education and Training. This was necessitated by the fact that before 2015, the program's beneficiaries received only attendance certificates and not accredited certificates. As a result, there was no recognition when attempting to further study or apply for employment. The Department in the 2015/2016 financial year appointed Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) accredited training providers to skill one hundred (100) youth in building and civil construction NQF Level 3 in NMMD.

The DSD's attempt to address youth unemployment through the NYS skills development program has not borne as NMM district skilled youth remain unemployed (StatsSA, 2019:59). Socio-economic effects are manifested as a result of youth unemployment in the NMM district. These facts are proven by this cohort's resentment towards government-led programs as they are considered to raise hopes in getting employment, which government fails to provide. Youth unemployment impedes the development of the economy and acts as a burden on the government to ensure social assistance (Mtembu & Govender, 2015:2). Furthermore, youth unemployment frustrations are evident through violence, unrest within communities, and service delivery protests.

The study evaluated the effectiveness of the NYSP in developing skills needed in the labour market, the interest of learners in the program, challenges

faced by DSD in linking graduates with economic opportunities, and the role by NYDA and critical stakeholders in ensuring the employability of these graduates.

Research objectives

i. To determine the effectiveness of the National Youth Service Program in developing skills needed in the labour market.

ii. To determine stakeholder involvement in the conceptualization, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the skills development program.

Analysis of recent studies and publications. A study by Orr and Hovdhagen (2014:47) reflects that policy developers and companies highlight that youth unemployment results from graduates' insufficient training, leading to a mismatch between skills and job opportunities. The majority of companies consider soft-skills to be of critical importance regarding the employability of graduates. These skills include adapting to new situations, understanding more than two languages, communication skills, and working in a team. Contrary to the above, Garwe (2014:2) views youth unemployment as a challenge influenced by numerous elements, including the number of skilled youth versus the total number of jobs available, the economic state, and preference for paid work over establishing own cooperatives.

Within the broader context of corporate governance, companies are obligated to warrant corporate social responsibility. The South African government introduced Employment Tax Incentives in 2014 in an attempt to scale down youth unemployment. This incentive aimed to attract companies to employ youth to return a tax payable at the end of the tax year (Finn, 2015:2). However, the study found that the program had zero effect mainly because organizations are concerned with ensuring productivity and sustainability. The South African government developed and sponsored initiated programs to relieve youth employment. These include the Second Chance Programme targeting young people who have not completed higher education. The program offers unemployed youth that dropped out of an opportunity to complete schooling. There are also programs in Further Education Training and Sectoral Education and Training Authority funded by the government to ensure that young people are skilled and employable (NYDA, 2017:42).

Finn's (2015:4) study reveals that regardless of government initiatives to address youth unemployment, the gap between skills development and business needs is growing. The study further highlights that findings obtained from labour market data reports reflect that government-led initiatives such as learnerships, Expanded Public Works Programme, and Community Based Programmes have not unravelled the prodigious aggregate of the youth unemployment problem. The graduate's work-readiness challenge is one factor that escalates the rate of youth unemployment in NMMD communities. Graduates possess accredited certificates on a specific trade. A question that comes to mind is whether these graduates are ready to enter the labour market. Prikshat Verma, et al. (2017:123)

express work readiness “as possession of skills, knowledge, attitudes, and commercial understanding intended to ensure that graduates make productive contributions to organizational objectives on entry into the labour environment.” This concept is becoming increasingly popular amongst employers as its importance is very vital in the labour market. The alarmingly high level of youth graduate’s unemployment in NMMD influenced interest in conducting this study.

The effects of unemployment are detrimental as they affect the overall country’s economy. The unemployment data also performs as one of the factors utilised to gauge investor sentiment or consumer confidence levels in an economy. The investor sentiment considers the number of jobs added in a particular period (Wise-Owl, 2016). A low level of unemployment could indicate a tight labour market with a possible scarcity of skilled labour. On the contrary, a high unemployment level could also point towards sparse employment opportunities in an oversupplied labour market.

According to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development report (OECD, 2020), an unemployed person is currently not engaged in paid employment or self-employment, presently accessible to work, and is eagerly seeking employment opportunities. Soylu (2018:94) believes that unemployment is the workforce’s availability in and out of the working environment, willing to work for the available wage, and not finding work. In comparison, StatsSA (2019:15) expresses unemployment as persons between the ages of 15-64 who were available for work and would have commenced with employment in a set week.

The ILO (2020) describes employability skills as a set of knowledge, skills, and ability to enter the job market and retain the job. Furthermore, Matsouka (2016:321) expresses the concept as a set of attainments, personal attributes, and understanding that individuals should possess to succeed in the work environment. Findings by Tanius et al. (2019:15) highlighted that the graduate’s high performance on employability skills and agreed interpersonal skills have become the most crucial skills industries require.

Moreover, if graduates lack these skills, they are likely to be disadvantaged in the labour market. Harry and Chinyamurindi (2018:2) maintain that employability skills do not ascertain to secure employment, but only enhances employment chances. An understanding of employability issues provides individuals with an opportunity to be aware of their potential, skills, attitudes, and knowledge to become influential citizens and workers (Hooley, 2017:2). However, student alertness regarding employability is overlooked, and this remains an unexplored, yet essential perspective in South Africa (Chiwara & Chinyamurindi, 2017:2).

Research method. The study followed a quantitative approach aimed to fill in the knowledge gap, which is achieved through critical reading and analysis of what other researchers have identified (Bryman & Bell, 2014:36). Unemployment of national youth service graduates is a gap that has been identified within the broader scope of graduate unemployment. The study data was collected in a

cross-sectional survey. Primary data was collected for the study. It is described as first-hand information to be collected by the researcher on a specific field. As such, a self-developed questionnaire was used to collect the data. Closed-ended questions were structured to guide respondents in answering, including enhancing the comparability of answers in showing the relationship between variables (Bell, 2016:6).

Study sample. The targeted population for the research was NYS graduates residing in NMMD and the stakeholders who were involved in the program. These are the beneficiaries of a skills development program funded by the Department of Social Development (DSD) in the North West Provincial Government in the 2015/2016 financial year. The size of a sample for this research study was ninety (90) graduates and ten (10) stakeholders involved in the program. Two different questionnaires were designed separately for graduates and stakeholder. Calculations were based on the Confidence Level of 95 % and the Margin of Error of 5 %. The study's total population is one hundred and twenty-five (125) with a sample size of one hundred (100). The large sample size represents the population much better, and the research finding is more accurate.

Sampling method. The method of sampling for the study was simple random probability sampling. Each member of the national youth service graduate population and stakeholders stood a chance to be selected to participate in the study. The technique provides accurate estimations, and its relevance is determined by the methodology of this study, which is quantitative.

Data analysis. The researcher used the Statistical Package Social Science (SPSS) software to analyze the data collected. The analysis used a comparison of means, cross-tabulation, Chi-Square, regression analysis to examine the relationship between variables, bivariate analysis, including descriptive statistics (Bryman & Bell, 2014:312).

Results and discussion. The study's findings were established from ninety (90) graduates and ten (10) stakeholders who participated in the NYSP in NMMD municipality in the North West Province. All questionnaires distributed were collected from the respondents, although some questions were not answered.

Table 1 shows that the dispersal for gender and reveals a higher percentage for female graduates (67.78 %) in NMMD relative to that of male graduates (32.22 %). These are the beneficiaries of the NYSP who have graduated from the program in 2017. The respondents have SETA accredited certificate in building and civil construction NQF level 3. The higher percentage of females in the skills development program shows that the DSD recruited more females in the NYSP to part the skills and ensure self-reliance of this group.

Table 1: Graduates' gender

| Gender | Percentage |
|--------|------------|
| Male | 32.22 |
| Female | 67.78 |
| Total | 100 |

Source: Primary data.

The age category of the NYSP graduates is presented in Table 2. The 26-35 years of age group was the majority, represented by 61.11 % of respondents. The 18-25-year-olds are the second highest with 30 %, while the 36-49 years of age group occupies the third position with 8.89 %. The NYSP is a program that targeted youth and was implemented in the 2016 financial year. All beneficiaries were between the ages of 18-35 when recruited to the program.

The employment status of the surveyed graduates in NMMD is presented in Table 3, where 83 % of the study respondents are unemployed; these are graduates of the building and civil construction NQF Level 3 and, 16.67 % are employed on a part-time basis. The high percentage of unemployment indicates that the NMMD is one of the highly affected by graduate unemployment within the North West province.

Table 4 gives a brief description of ten (10) stakeholders involved in the NYS program. Stakeholders include community development practitioners from the DSD, control works inspectors from the DPW, liaison officers from the traditional council, construction SETA training provider, community development workers from the municipality and skills development manager from the NYDA. It is imperative to determine the effectiveness of the National Youth Service Program in developing skills that are needed in the labour market.

Table 2. Age of National Youth Service Program graduates

| Age | Percentage |
|-------|------------|
| 18-25 | 30.00 |
| 26-35 | 61.11 |
| 36-49 | 8.89 |

Source: Primary data.

Table 3. Employment status of National Youth Service Program graduate

| Employment Status | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|
| Unemployed | 75 | 83.3 |
| Part-time employed | 15 | 16.67 |
| Total number | 90 | 100 |

Source: Primary data.

Table 4. National Youth Service Program stakeholders

| Organisation | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Department of Social Development | 2 | 20 |
| Department of Public Works | 2 | 20 |
| Skills Development Training Provider | 2 | 20 |
| Local Municipality | 2 | 20 |
| Tribal Authority | 1 | 10 |
| National Youth Development Agency | 1 | 10 |
| Total number | 10 | 100 |

Source: Primary data.

Table 5 indicates that 71.1 % of the study participants maintain that they have not been involved in construction work after graduating from the NYSP, whereas 28.8 % agree that they have been construction work experience after graduating from the skills development program.

The results shown in Table 6 indicate that the p-value is greater (0.493) than the significance level of 0.05, there is no relationship or association between graduates and construction work.

Table 5. Involvement of graduates in construction work after completing the skills development program

| Construction work experience after graduating from the NYSP | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|-----------|------------|
| Yes | 26 | 28.88 |
| No | 64 | 71.12 |
| Total number | 90 | 100.00 |

Source: Primary data.

Of unemployed graduates, 22.22 % agree that NYSP's acquired skills are in demand within their respective municipalities, which are Tswaing and Mahikeng. On the contrary, a high percentage at 61.11 % are in disagreement. A small percentage, 6.67 % of those who are part-time employed also agree that built

Table 6. Association of NYSP graduates and construction work

| Chi-Square Tests | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------|----|-----------------------------------|
| | Value | df | Asymptotic Significance (2-sided) |
| Pearson Chi-Square | 87.566 ^a | 88 | 0.493 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 105.435 | 88 | 0.099 |
| Linear by Linear Association | 1.213 | 1 | 0.271 |
| Number of Valid Cases | 90 | | |

Source: Primary data.

Table 7. Association of skills acquired from the NYSP and the demand within local municipalities

| Chi-Square Tests | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------|----|-----------------------------------|
| | Value | df | Asymptotic Significance (2-sided) |
| Pearson Chi-Square | 1.082 ^a | 1 | 0.298 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 1.030 | 1 | 0.467 |
| Linear by Linear Association | 1.070 | 1 | 0.301 |
| Number of Valid Cases | 90 | | |

Source: Primary data.

ding and civil construction skills are in demand in NMMD municipality, however 10 % of casual workers disagree.

The results presented in Table 7 show that the p value (0.298) is greater than the level of significance, $p = 0.05$. There is insufficient evidence to conclude the relationship. There was no effect observed between the NYSP skills demand within Tswaing and Mahikeng service points. The majority of the study respondents who are unemployed, represented by 71.91 %, disagree that the municipality in which they stay has contracted them in building low-cost houses, whereas 12.36 % agree that the municipality has given them an opportunity to build houses. Of those appointed on part-time basis, 6.74 % also agree to have worked in the NMMD local municipalities housing projects. Contrary to that, 8.99 % disagree.

The results presented in Table 8 show that the p-value 0.014 is less than the level of Significance level, which is 0.05. The results are statistically significant. Results have shown that 44.44 % of the unemployed graduates have indeed marketed their skills within the local municipalities of Tswaing and Mahikeng and the district in general, whereas 38.89 % have not. Those who are part-time

Table 8. Association between graduates and the municipality in building low-cost houses municipalities and NMMD

| Chi-Square Tests | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------|----|-----------------------------------|
| | Value | df | Asymptotic Significance (2-sided) |
| Pearson Chi-Square | 6.067 ^a | 1 | 0.014 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 5.154 | 1 | 0.023 |
| Linear by Linear Association | 5.999 | 1 | 0.014 |
| Number of Valid Cases | 89 | | |

Source: Primary data.

Table 9. Association between graduates and the marketing of NYSP skills in local municipalities and NMMD

| Chi-Square Tests | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------|----|-----------------------------------|
| | Value | df | Asymptotic Significance (2-sided) |
| Pearson Chi-Square | 3.644 ^a | 1 | 0.056 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 3.929 | 1 | 0.047 |
| Linear by Linear Association | 3.603 | 1 | 0.058 |
| Number of Valid Cases | 90 | | |

Source: Primary data.

employed show that only 13.33 % have considered marketing Building and Civil construction skills in the NMMD municipality.

Table 9 shows the association between graduates and marketing of NYSP skills in the local municipality and NMMD. The p-value (0.056) is greater than the level of significance $p = 0.05$. As much as 63.96 % of the study participants agreed that the NYDA has indeed conducted cooperatives development workshops during the roll-out of the NYSP, including assisting young people with cooperatives registration. On the contrary, 36.05 % of the respondents disagree. Of unemployed respondents, 54.44 % agree that the NYSP stakeholders have assisted them in developing business plans mainly because they wanted to establish construction cooperatives as workshopped by the NYDA. These are the graduates who have registered cooperatives, on the other hand 28.89 % of the unemployed disagree to having being provided the assistance. Of the part-time cohort, 14.47 % alluded that indeed the stakeholders have supported them, but 2.22 % disagree.

The correlation results in Table 10 show that the p-value is 0.103 and is more than the level of significance $p = 0.05$. The results show that even though the stakeholders assisted graduates in developing business plans, the business plans are not funded. Of the study respondents, 100 % have indicated that their business plans were not funded.

The results have indicated that 61 % more females are beneficiaries of the NYSP. It is evident that the DSD in the North West Province has ensured that there are measures in place to empower young women in NMMD. For the DSD, it means achieving its strategic objective of building sustainable communities through youth and women empowerment programs (DSD, 2016).

The results also reflect that the age of the graduates is between 18 and 49 years. According to the NYP (2015), youth are those between the age of 18 and 35. The variation shown by the results are attributable to the implementation of the NYSP in 2016 fiscal year. The graduates who took part in the study were then

Table 10. Association between stakeholders and assisting graduates with developing business plans

| Chi-Square Tests | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------|----|--------------------------------------|
| | Value | df | Asymptotic Significance (2-sided) |
| Pearson Chi-Square | 2.654 ^a | 1 | 0.103 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 3.014 | 1 | 0.083 |
| Linear by Linear Association | 2.625 | 1 | 0.105 |
| Number of Valid Cases | 90 | | |

Source: Primary data.

in the age cohort of youth as prescribed by the NYP. The high unemployment rate of NYSP as reflected in the results shows that NMMD municipality is highly affected by lack of job creation and employment opportunities despite the initiatives by the South African government to skill the youth. This is likely to emerge from the fact that, in the North West Province, in particular, municipalities, there are high irregular, wasteful and fruitless expenditures. As a result, funding of youth cooperatives becomes a challenge. Absorption of these graduates by the DSD, or any social sector department or partner with a mandate of ensuring youth development in the North West Province, to alleviate poverty and ease the effects of graduate unemployment is also a challenge. The results in Table 2 show stakeholders involved in the NYSP.

However, it is evident that not all social sector stakeholders were involved in the program. For example, the Department of Human Settlement, South African Association of Youth Clubs, Youth Desk, Department of Education, Department of Rural Development, Department of Traditional Affairs, Department of Local Government and the Office of the Premier. It is in this stage that the relevant key sectoral stakeholders should be identified. The results have also indicated that 70 % of stakeholders involved in the NYSP were line managers. These are needed in all programs and projects, however, the absence of senior managers in the NYSP from the conceptualisation stage had detrimental effects on the employment opportunities of the graduates even funding of the business plans. Senior managers are critical stakeholders, particularly for decision making and making commitments. It is likely that participation of these managers in the NYSP could have ensured that there was an exit strategy for the graduates. Evident from the analysis is a high percentage of respondents indicating that they have not been involved in construction work after since completing the skills development program to date. This is likely to have been condoned by the failure of identification of critical stakeholders such as the Department of Human Settlement, Department of Rural Development, the Office of the Premier and new venture creations focusing on construction work opportunities.

The Department of Human Settlement is mainly responsible in ensuring habitable homes throughout the province. It achieves its primary objective through the appointment of construction companies. The inability by the DSD to identify this Department as a stakeholder for the NYSP has indeed compromised the chances of graduates being involved in construction work in NMMD. Participation of the Department of Human Settlement in the skills development program would have ensured that the beneficiaries are utilised in building RDP (Reconstruction and Development Program) houses in the NMMD municipality, mainly because building and civil construction skills are required in building low-cost houses. The Office of the Premier as the leading department in youth development would have probably ensured cooperatives development and funding of the entrepreneurial initiatives. The skills of building could have been

employed from within the NMMD to ensure job creation and poverty alleviation among youth.

It is apparent from the results that 71.11 % of the study participants maintain that building and civil construction skills are not in demand in the NMMD municipality labour market. The results might be true mainly because the skills these graduates have obtained are basic. Others might not consider obtaining a certificate for the skill. Also, there is a large number of existing and emerging construction companies in NMMD municipality. On the contrary, the North West is a rural province, and NMMD municipality is semi-desert.

The district is mostly affected by unemployment and poverty. Mahikeng and Tswaing local municipalities are the worst affected in the NMMD. As a result, the skills possessed by the NYSP graduates are arguably in demand in the NMMD municipality. Due to the nature of these municipalities and the fact that they are socially and economically excluded, there are high possibilities that communities cannot afford to pay for housing. However, this does not mean that the skills acquired from the NYSP are not in demand. An argument that can be brought forward is that the Department of Human Settlement is rolling out a project of building RDP houses throughout the North West Province on a yearly basis. This shows that the skills acquired from the NYSP are indeed in demand in NMMD municipality. Highlighted in the results, the NMMD municipality has not provided the graduates with opportunities in building of low-cost houses despite marketing the acquired skills. The results are valid mainly because the municipality does not budget for building of RDP houses, instead it identifies families that are in need of proper housing and liaise with the Department of Human Settlement and Local Development as these are key stakeholders in ensuring housing for communities. The failure in identifying these stakeholders has jeopardised the opportunity for graduates to be contracted in building houses for own communities.

The findings show that there is no association between the graduates' skills and the building and civil construction level 3 and the demand in the NMMD labour market. These findings concede an argument by Dagume, et al. (2016:61) that young graduates might be possessing the skills or qualifications not required in the labour market. Also, Daniels et al. (2017:2) posit that young graduates have acquired skills not in demand, which shows a vast gap between what the graduates possess and what the businesses are looking for.

The findings also confirm Bejokovic and Mrnjavač's (2018:1848) argument that job-specific skills can be acquired and used only in specific, depending on the post's actual professional content. The study also found that the main aspects of youth unemployment are weak productivity growth and insufficient employment capacities of an economy. Furthermore, the findings confirm conclusions by Ayhan (2016:269) that a mismatch between skills and the labour market is the most problematic cause of youth unemployment increase. Coinciding with

the authors and study findings is Young (2014) and Wobst (2014:6), who argue that education systems do not provide young people with appropriate skills. It is possible that graduates lack employability and work readiness skills required in the labour market. When graduates lack these skills, they are likely to be disadvantaged.

Lack of association between the NYSP graduates and the municipality in building low-cost houses is evident from the findings despite initiatives by the graduates in marketing their skills. The results find expression in Obisanya (2017:19) argument that the inability to implement corporate social responsibility by the municipalities affects the employment status of young people. Similarly, Mavundla (2018:170) as well as Chetty and Naidoo (2015:204) maintain that when organisations do not implement corporate social responsibility communities will experience social exclusion, evident by poverty and high unemployment rate.

It is imperative that municipalities utilize the skills from within than outsourcing, mainly because these graduates were identified by the municipality to be skilled in the NYSP. As such, contracting the same beneficiaries will soothe the effects of unemployment and significantly contribute to the economy of NMMD. Social responsibility includes adopting a position of support for public issues, especially among the young unemployed. Economic organizations must have social responsibility department programs to provide jobs for young unemployed.

Findings reflect that 68.88 % of the NYSP stakeholders have assisted graduates with the development of business plans, whereas 32 % disagree. The variation might be due to a lack of entrepreneurial attitudes. The findings are similar to Bell (2016:3), Soomro and Shah (2015:307) argument that, when individuals have entrepreneurial attitudes, they will identify opportunities and take a step further in making things happen such as looking for assistance in pursuing interest. Similarly, Galvao (2017:721) study emphasises that entrepreneurial attitudes indicate how much individuals are willing to try and how much effort they plan to achieve the desired goal. As such, stakeholders involved in the NYSP only assisted graduates with interest in developing business plans. The findings coincide with Omar and Rajoo (2016:372) that changes in graduates' attitudes, a partnership amongst employers and universities to promote a beneficial environment for the growth of entrepreneurship among graduates, can decrease unemployment among this cohort. The results also indicate that these business plans were not funded. This concludes an argument by Ali and Jabeen (2016:103) that youth are willing to take up self-employment, but due to a lack of capital, they are unable to start economic activities. Governments have tried to identify measures and implement policies to stimulate young people, to develop their businesses even though the entrepreneurial ecosystem is not favourable for young people, according to Homolova and Riel (2014).

Conclusion. The study's findings find expression in the global, regional, and national context of youth unemployment, reflecting that multi-stakeholder relations are critical in ensuring graduates' smooth transition from tertiary institutions to labour markets. The following are the recommendations: stakeholders' identification by the Department of Social Development should take place before the NYS program conceptualization. This is to ensure that stakeholders are involved in the program from the initial stage. With stakeholder's participation in the skills development program's conceptualization, it is likely that they will be actively involved in the program until completion. Both the DSD and stakeholders should analyse the labour market's skills needs before conceptualizing the NYS program. Views and concerns of stakeholders should be considered for the successful implementation of the skills development program. The program's monitoring and evaluation should be carried out jointly by the Department of Social Development and stakeholders. This will help identify challenges and come with corrective measures as a collective to address the problems that might negatively impact achieving the program's intended goals. Stakeholder engagement and participation will also play a critical role in ensuring that learners completing the skills development program are linked to employment opportunities and are self-reliant.

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Р. Рена, д-р., проф. екон.,
Бізнес-школа NWU, Північно-Західний університет - кампус Мафікент
Особиста скринька: X 2046, Ммабато, 2745, Південна Африка
E-mail: ravinder.rena@gmail.com
ORCID: 0000-0002-4156-8693
Scopus ID: 56441653000

Б. Діале, MBA Студентка
Бізнес-школа NWU, Північно-Західний університет - кампус Мафікент
Південна Африка
E-mail: theremudiale@gmail.com
ORCID: 0000-0001-8253-7482

ОЦІНЮВАННЯ ЕФЕКТИВНОСТІ ПРОГРАМИ НАЦІОНАЛЬНОЇ СЛУЖБИ МОЛОДІ ЩОДО РОЗВИТКУ НАВИКІВ БЕЗРОБІТНИХ ВИПУСКНИКІВ У ПІВНІЧНО-ЗАХІДНІЙ ПРОВІНЦІЇ ПІВДЕННОЇ АФРИКИ

Молодіжне безробіття залишається серйозним викликом упродовж десятиліть, впливаючи на міжнародну, регіональну та національну економіки. Освіта визначена як вирішення проблеми, з якою стикаються молоді люди у всьому світі. Однак безробіття серед молоді впливає не тільки на освічену молодь, але й на молодь, рівень освіти якої залишається недостатньо високим. Уряд Південно-Африканської Республіки розробив та запровадив програми розвитку навичок, що орієнтовані на молодь й спрямовані на подолання бідності. Попри реалізацію цієї програми, безробіття серед кваліфікованих кадрів залишається достатньо високим. Збереження високого рівня моло-

діжного безробіття призвело до невдоволення державними програмами, скерованими на стримування безробіття, оскільки вони вважаються неефективними. Враховуючи викладене, метою дослідження є оцінювання ефективності Програми Національної служби молоді, спрямованої на формування навичок, необхідних на ринку праці, у безробітних випускників та визначення залучення зацікавлених сторін до концептуалізації, впровадження, моніторингу, та оцінка програми розвитку навичок. Методологією дослідження для досягнення зазначеної мети були кількісний підхід, націлений на заповнення прогалини у знаннях, який досягається шляхом критичного читання та аналізу того, що виявили інші дослідники, та якісний підхід. Для збору даних було проведено крос-секторальне опитування. Анкетування проводилося для отримання первинних даних від (90) випускників та (10) ключових стейкхолдерів, які брали участь у Програмі Національної служби молоді. Основні результати досліджень свідчать, що у 2017 р. майже 83 % випускників NYSP є безробітними після завершення програми розвитку навичок. Дослідження встановило, що відсутність участі та заінтересованості стейкхолдерів зацікавлених сторін у Програмі Національної служби молоді може бути пов'язана з високим рівнем безробіття серед випускників штату Нью-Йорк. Залучення та участь зацікавлених сторін також відіграватимуть вирішальну роль у забезпеченні того, щоб учні, які завершують програму розвитку навичок, були пов'язані з можливостями працевлаштування та були самостійними. Дослідження рекомендує проводити ідентифікацію зацікавлених сторін до початку реалізації програми.

Ключові слова: безробіття випускників, Програма Національної служби молоді, Національне агентство розвитку молоді, корпоративна соціальна відповідальність, підприємницькі настрої, Південна Африка.