

# **An exploration of Lavender Hill youth's pathways to employment**

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## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the participants in this research who dared to be different and believed that their future is not determined by where they come from. Their bravery and audacity is an inspiration to many young people.

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## PLAGIARISM DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## ABSTRACT

The world is confronted by a worsening youth unemployment crisis. Young people are more likely to be unemployed than adults. Youth employment is important for economic and social stability and growth. Though youth face numerous challenges, many are determined to succeed and are using varied approaches to ensure their **'survival'**. The purpose of this qualitative research study was therefore to explore these varied approaches employed by young people to gain access into the world of work. Seventeen face to face interviews were conducted with young people who matriculated from Lavender Hill High School in Lavender Hill community. The study focused specifically on how the research participants negotiated their pathways to employment in the labour market. The study indicated attitudes and sources of motivation for youth towards finding employment which were driven by several factors. The main factor was the need to improve standards of living and escape the social ills that are plaguing Lavender Hill community. Such ills include gang violence, crime, substance and alcohol abuse, lack of positive role models, financial constraints, school dropouts as well as teenage pregnancies. These ills also came up as the challenges faced by the young participants on their pathways to employment. The participants managed to utilise a range of support systems that were available to them, from government interventions, social networks from school, churches, NGOs and private companies, to recruitment agencies for them to be able to access employment. The importance of personal and technical skills was highlighted as the youth needed to have those skills to be able to get jobs. Recommendations included the need for, NGOs to advance their services for youth in career information and support them with instant education and training decisions; private companies partnering with local schools and post-secondary institutions to create platforms where the companies can speak to students about career opportunities and expected skills as well as mentoring them and offering placements that give young people the much needed skills and experience while they complete their high school, college, university or apprenticeship programs. Additionally, it was recommended that community members play their role in their societies through caring, serving, connecting, supporting and helping; government ministries to strengthen safety nets for youth in poor townships for them to counter the hindrances they face towards accessing jobs.

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## ACRONYMS

CDE	Centre for Development and Enterprise
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
FETC	Further Education Training Colleges
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ILO	International Labour Organization
ICLS	International Conference of Labour Statisticians
KMPS	<b>Khayelitsha/Mitchell's Plain Survey</b>
LHHS	Lavender Hill High School
NDP	National Development Plan
NEET	Neither Employed, nor in Education or Training
NGOs	Nongovernmental Organisations
NWF	New World Foundation
NYDA	National Youth Development Agency
NYP	National Youth Policy
RSA	Republic of South Africa
StatsSA	Statistics South Africa
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UN	United Nations

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Learners all over the world at **some point are asked the question, 'What do you want to do when you grow up?' Very few or no one answers "I want to be unemployed"**, yet youth unemployment is a visible phenomenon that cannot be hidden across the world. Reports, both evidence-based and anecdotal, reflect high numbers of youth or young adults who are neither employed, nor in education or in training (NEET) as evident in the literature. The rising numbers of unemployed youth in the world is alarming and becoming an increasingly challenging phenomenon especially for the poor youth in African townships and locations such as Lavender Hill in South Africa. The effects of long-term youth unemployment are well known at individual, community and societal level, affecting both human and economic development. As reflected in recent literature, this phenomenon signifies a severe loss of human potential just at the time that young people should be becoming economically active (Arends & Cosser, 2012).

This introductory chapter offers a background understanding of the research context and explores the research problem, the rationale and significance of the study, research topic, main research questions and objectives, as well as clarification of the key concepts used in the research study. The chapter closes with a presentation of the structure of research report.

### 1.2 LOCATION OF STUDY: LAVENDER HILL

Lavender Hill is the geographical location of this research study. The data for this research was collected through 17 individual face to face interviews with young people who live or once lived in Lavender Hill, and attended Lavender Hill High school between the period 2002 and 2014. All participants were raised and spent their young adult years in Lavender Hill community. Out of the 17 participants, 11 still live in Lavender Hill and 6 have moved out. The City of Cape Town census (2011) indicated that, 32,598 people live in the Lavender Hill community, in which 29.1 % of the residents are children under the age of 14 and 20% of the population are youth between the ages of 14-24. Based on existing data as supplied by Statistics South Africa (2011), the unemployment rate in Lavender Hill community was at 42,03%. Youth unemployment rate in Lavender Hill is above 60% (New World Foundation (NWF), 2011). Lavender Hill is a suburb in the Southern Peninsula of Cape Town. It replaced Hardvlei/Rondevlei community (NWF, 2003). It was constructed under the Group Areas Act of 1969, together with other communities such as Manenberg, Bontehewel, Parkwood Estate and Hanover Park

(Wonnacott, 2005). Coloured and Indian people were forcibly removed from their homes around the Cape Peninsula and relocated to these areas (Salo, 2004). Lavender Hill is characterized by poverty, a high rate of unemployment, domestic violence, drug and alcohol abuse, gangsterism and crime (Wonnacott, 2005). Housing is condensed and mostly apartment style, with limited access to recreational facilities (Carrier et al, 2002; Woodward et al, 2002). Violence in the home and neighbourhood is common with 39 percent of children having witnessed gang-related violence resulting in them being more likely to begin perpetuating such violence (COPES, 1996; Mapham et al, 2004). It has also been found that youth in Lavender Hill are exposed to conflict and physical, emotional and sexual abuse within dysfunctional families (Galvaan, 2004b).

### 1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM

The phenomenon of youth unemployment is not only a South African challenge, but has become a global crisis. It is a difficult phenomenon that has worsened recently as policy-makers around the world have constantly struggled to come up with strategies to address this problem (Turton & Herrington, 2012). Statistics South Africa (2015) indicated that 36,9 % of the youth aged 15 to 34 years in South Africa are unemployed. It is therefore important to uncover the experiences of young people who had the resilience to find jobs despite all the adversities they might have faced. Such adversities encompass living in a period of massive developments in technology, shifts in family and community life, in addition to grasping skills linked with developing productive relations (Frydenburg, 2004).

Several young people in poor communities such as Lavender Hill are jobless, obtain poor quality education, fall into chronic poverty, are socially excluded, live in unhealthy, dirty environments, and grow up in troubled households (Bloch, 2009; Kekana & Richter, 2003; Ramphele, 2002). Young people from communities such as Lavender Hill carry a negative self-image. They are mostly labelled as being criminals, lazy, unconcerned about politics, drug addicts, materialistic, apathetic to society's needs, and uneducated (Jobson, 2011; Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006; Morrow, Panday & Richter, 2005; Roche & Tucker, 1997). This negative identity isolates young people from the larger society and exacerbates their challenges in life (Roche & Tucker, 1997). Herein lies the reason why it is important for this research to unpack experiences of those who have managed to get employed and escaped such stereotypes and the meanings those experiences hold for them. Although there are studies on the phenomenon within the current research context, none of them included the voices of those who are affected. Therefore, this study is significant and that is the problem it seeks to address by including the voices of the research participants.

## 1.4 RATIONALE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

From a few studies, it appears that there is need for a high involvement of young people in programs and studies that develop the youth to reduce the challenges they face and improve social and economic development (Davids, Theron & Maphunye, 2009; Sen, 1999). Researchers in South Africa are urged to pay attention to youth as they need to be better understood to be able to tackle the development challenges they face (Everatt, 2005). Even though numerous studies about youth from poor communities have been done, most of these studies concentrate on what goes wrong with youth and less consideration is given to what goes right (Del Felice & Wisler, 2007; McEvoy-Levy, 2001). There is need to identify and deal with the challenges faced by the youth such as unemployment to curb social delinquencies. The high unemployment rate especially in Lavender Hill helps to explain why youth are drawn into crime, violence, and gangs. Communities that are plagued with high levels of youth unemployment are at greater risk of crime, drug abuse and vandalism. This is the epicentre of this research which aims to examine how the employed youth from Lavender Hill overcame these hindrances.

It is crucial to investigate and understand how youth who are currently employed managed to be where they are from the constraining socio-economic challenges within their communities, so that strategies and policies to help the struggling youth in those areas can be explored and implemented in future. Be it as it may, this study can benefit a wide array of institutions such as policy-makers, researchers, social development practitioners, community-based NGOs, local government officials, political parties, and social movements. The information in this study can also be beneficial to young people looking for employment or still in high school to make right choices and try similar avenues that were used by the participants in this study. The study contributes to youth social and economic development through shedding a positive light on young people, and through giving the young people a platform to air their views.

## 1.5 RESEARCH TOPIC

**An exploration of Lavender Hill youth's pathways to employment.**

## 1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

### 1.6.1 BROAD RESEARCH QUESTION

How did youth who matriculated from Lavender Hill High School negotiate their pathways to employment?

## 1.6.2 RESEARCH SUB-QUESTIONS

1.6.2.1 What was the vision of these young people regarding employment at the time they matriculated?

1.6.2.2 What process did they follow to become employed?

1.6.2.3 What are the main challenges they faced to get where they are currently?

1.6.2.4 What are the experiences of support for youth regarding finding employment in Cape Town?

1.6.2.5 What do the research participants think are the reasons why many Lavender Hill youth are unemployed?

## 1.7 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1.7.1 To explore the vision of young people regarding employment at the time they matriculated.

1.7.2 To investigate the process they followed to become employed.

1.7.3 To ascertain the main challenges they faced to get where they are currently.

1.7.4 To examine their knowledge and experience of sources of support for youth, regarding finding employment in Cape Town.

1.7.5 To explore their thoughts on reasons why many Lavender Hill youth are unemployed.

## 1.8 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

This section defines some of the key terms that were used in this study. These are contested terms but the researcher explained how they were used in the context of this study. The terms were used often throughout the study and a detailed discussion around them can be found in Chapter Two. It is undeniable that there is more than one way of defining them, therefore it is vital that such terms be clarified in a way that is consistent with how they are understood in the research.

### 1.8.1. YOUTH

**It is imperative to define the term 'youth' when discussing issues of youth and employment. The definition of the term varies across contexts. The African Youth Charter defines youth as people between the ages of 15 and 34 years of age (African Union, 2006). The National Youth Policy 2009–2014 (2009:12) defines young people as men and women falling within the age group of 14 to 35 years. Youths are also**

recognised as those between the ages of 15 and 25 years old by the United Nations. In this report, youth will be defined as all people falling within the age group 18 to 35 years, as in SA, they are within the group most affected by unemployment and since most of them at this age should be becoming economically active.

### 1.8.2 UNEMPLOYMENT

The ILO (2001:3) defines unemployment as the proportion of persons who during a given period were (a) without work, (b) currently available for work, and (c) actively seeking work. Unemployment occurs when a person who is actively searching for employment is unable to find work. The expanded definition, includes everyone who desires employment, irrespective of whether they have actively tried to obtain employment or not (StatsSA, 2012). In this research, the broad definition is used in relation to the issues being discussed, whether the youth are seeking jobs or not.

### 1.8.3. YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

The National Youth Policy (2015-2020:10) defines youth development as a deliberate inclusive approach that provides space, opportunities and support for youth to maximise their personal and collective creative energies for individual development and the development of the society of which they are an integral part. This research study will use this definition as it is broad and clarifies what and how youth development should be negotiated in the South African context where the current study has been conducted.

### 1.8.4 EMPLOYMENT

According to Stats SA (2015:2) the definition of employment captures main components of those who were involved in market production activities in the week prior to the survey interview (even if only for one hour) as well as those who were temporarily absent from their activities. Market production employment refers to those who:

a) Worked for a wage, salary, commission, or payment in kind.

b) Ran any kind of business, big or small, on their own, or with one or more partners.

c) Helped without being paid in a business run by another household member.

In this study, the researcher used the term employment to refer to people who were formally employed for more than a week.

## 1.9 STRUCTURE OF RESEARCH REPORT

This report consists of the following five chapters:

- **Chapter One: Introduction**

Chapter one of this report introduced the background of the study, the geographical location of the research, the research problem, rationale and significance, the research topic, broad research question, research sub-questions, research objectives, clarification of key concepts, and the layout of the research report.

- **Chapter Two: Literature Review**

Chapter two outlines a discussion of the literature relevant to this research. It serves mainly as a review of existing international and South African literature on studies around youth exploring pathways to employment, policies and legislation, as well as the individual problems one faces as a youth growing in a community where unemployment is pervasive.

- **Chapter Three: Research Methodology**

The chapter presents the research approach, research design, research methods, data collection procedure and tools as well as the data analysis method which was employed. The chapter ends with the limitations of the study and ethical considerations section.

- **Chapter Four: Presentation and Discussion of Findings**

Chapter Four presents an analysis of data collected from the interviews. The analysis brings out the individual experiences and challenges faced by the youth on their pathways to employment.

- **Chapter Five: Conclusions and Recommendations**

The final chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations showing the extent to which the objectives of the study were achieved.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes how the literature review was conducted, identifies the relevant policies and legislation pertinent to the study and indicates the theoretical models that have been drawn upon, and uses objectives stated in Chapter 1 to highlight significant research previously done on this topic. The literature review has been collected from various information sources. The researcher accessed information from journal articles, internet websites and books which have been published within the last six years to ensure that the literature is still relevant and valid. Where it was necessary to substantiate further, older sources were consulted. In presenting the literature review, a funnel approach has been used, whereby globally applicable literature was presented before narrowing it down to youth in the South African context. Policies and legislation are presented first, followed by various theoretical models pertinent to the research study before discussing literature related to the objectives.

### 2.2 POLICY AND LEGISLATION

In South Africa, more than two-thirds (68.3%) of the population comprises individuals below the age of 35 years. The 15–34-year age cohort (youth) comprises 37% of the total population and is estimated to number 19.1 million and their proportion continued to increase (StatsSA, 2012). Youth unemployment has been identified as a critical problem in South Africa that needs to be addressed with urgency to alleviate poverty that continues to obstruct the youth from becoming productive citizens (Republic of South Africa (RSA), 2015). As mentioned in the preceding section, Statistics South Africa (2015) indicated that 36, 9 % of the youth aged 15 to 34 years in South Africa are unemployed. The South African government has formulated and enacted several Acts, policies and programs to respond to these challenges experienced by the youth that need urgent and holistic interventions. One of the regional policies, the African Youth Charter informed the development of South African youth policy, the National Youth Policy 2015-2020 (RSA, 2015). Some of the policies include National Youth Development Agency Act (NYDA) (NYDA, 2013), and the Further Education and Training Colleges Act of 2006 which is now known as the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) (RSA, 2006). The above mentioned have been identified as some of the policies and programs relevant to this study because they give a background information to the issue of youth employment. These policies point out the challenges that are faced by the youth and possible strategies that could be implemented to curb the challenges and promote youth participation in social and economic activities. The policies and legislation are discussed to provide a background understanding of what strategies of interventions are offered and what their

existence means to the young people in this study. It must be noted that there are still challenges faced by the youth despite the existence of these interventions, which could be due to gaps in these programs, ever-changing social and economic **conditions which influence young people's lives, and a lack of** effective implementation and monitoring and evaluation of these programs.

### 2.2.1 THE AFRICAN YOUTH CHARTER (2006)

One of the regional policies is the African Youth Charter. The States Parties **to the present "African Youth Charter" pointed out the major aspects that need to improve for African youth. The Charter comprises of** rights and duties of the youth as well as African states, to address the socioeconomic concerns faced by African youth. Africa is challenged by a range of problems one of the issue is of youth joblessness. Noting with concern the situation of African youth, many are relegated from majority society through disparities in income, affluence and power; joblessness; infected and affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic; living poverty and starvation (African Union, 2006). Many are also experiencing illiteracy and poor quality educational systems; limited access to health services and to information; exposure to violence including gender violence; engaging in armed conflicts and experiencing various forms of discrimination (African Union, 2006). Therefore, the Charter obligates the state parties in article one of the Commission to recognize the rights, freedoms and duties enshrined in this Charter (African Union, 2006). The *shabab* (meaning youth in Arabic) armed group in Somalia is an alarming example of young people lured to join armed groups for monetary reward, due to lack of other opportunities (Barsoum, 2012).

Unemployment proliferates armed conflict which in turn limits the economic opportunities in the country. In article 12, the Charter obligates every State Party to develop a comprehensive and coherent national youth policy that would be a guide to the youth development programs for each state (African Union, 2006). South Africa developed its first national youth policy that responds to the changing conditions of young people in 1997 and was recently amended in 2015. In relation to the research, this policy highlights some of the key points that are crucial to pay attention to when addressing the issue of youth employment. It also indicates the consequences of ignoring the challenges that are faced by the youth, such as violence, armed conflicts and never ending inequality.

### 2.2.2 NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY 2015-2020 (NYP) (2015)

This policy responds to the changing conditions of young people in the 21st Century. It was designed in the South African context to support the South African youths and address the various challenges obstructing youth development. This is achieved through integrating youth development into mainstream

of government policies and programs. The goal of the rights-based South African National Youth Policy (2015) is to enhance the capacities of young people by addressing their needs. It seeks to promote positive outcomes, and provide integrated coordinated package of services, opportunities, choices, relationship and support necessary for holistic development of all young people, particularly those outside the social, political and economic mainstream (RSA, 2015:6).

The National Youth Policy (RSA, 2015) is based on the understanding that young people should be both beneficiaries and drivers of their own change and not as passive recipients of government services. Some of the principles underpinning this policy include diversity, integration, accessibility, non-discrimination, transparency, sustainable development, social cohesion, participation and social inclusion (RSA, 2015:8). The National Youth Policy (RSA, 2015) is a vital planning tool guiding the country in its approach to youth development. This policy depends on information of the specific needs and conditions of the country's youth to address identifiable gaps and challenges (RSA, 2015:5–6). The principles of this policy speak to the research as they highlight what could improve youth employment apart from what has been done already in the previous years.

### 2.2.2 NATIONAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AGENCY ACT (NYDA)

This agency is a unit that took over from the National Youth Commission Act of 1996 and Umsobomvu Youth Fund. It gives significance to youth development in South Africa, because it promotes youth development, through supporting growth and effect in the provision of youth facilities (NYDA, 2013). The NYDA-Parliamentary Monitoring Group (2013), however, argues that NYDA is not putting adequate effort to reach out to the mainstream youth. Most of its offices are not operative and those that are, are inaccessible. This contradicts to the principles of the National Youth Policy which includes accessibility as one of the cornerstone principle of the policy. Some of the principles of this act include promotion of **youth's participation, transparency, accountability and sustainability among others. The functions and services of the NYDA for it to achieve its objectives include establishing competencies and capabilities in its functioning. This involves areas such as National Youth Service and social cohesion; economic participation; policy, research and development; governance, training and development; youth advisory and information services (NYDA, 2013).The agency must, within its available resources, "provide career guidance services; provide access to information regarding products and services of the National Youth Fund; create and administer databases of employment opportunities; provide financial assistance to youths to enable them to further their careers"** (NYDA, 2013:9).

## 2.2.4 FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING COLLEGES (FETCs) ACT OF 2006

The Further Education and Training Colleges Act of 2006 which is now known as the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) offers eligible learners with practical skills to support them in the transition from school to work and to also provide them with a foundation for further learning. The name change of public FET colleges to TVET colleges was a process that started in 2012 with the passing of the “Further **Education and Training Colleges Amendment Bill**” (RSA, 2012). The change to TVET intended to align the national educational system with an international trend in post-school education (RSA, 2012). The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) has prioritized strengthening colleges to improve access, output rates, management capacity especially regarding planning, financial and human resource management (RSA, 2013). Some of the **DHET’s key objectives include improving** the quality of teaching and learning, developing their responsiveness to local labour markets, improving student support services, and developing their infrastructure (RSA, 2013). For potential learners to enrol in a TVET they should have at least grade 9, and be holders of the General Education and Training Certificate (RSA, 2006). Enrolment levels are still low even though FETCs have increased in enrolment between 2010 and 2012– from 345 566 to 657 690 students (SA Government News Agency, 2013). Several youths in South Africa who are not able to go to university could benefit from this route as they can acquire theoretical knowledge as well as practical skills which could qualify them to gain access into the world of work.

The following section will explore the theoretical framework that links to the principles, implementation and effectiveness on the above-mentioned policies to address the youth unemployment challenge.

## 2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section discusses the theoretical frameworks that underpin this study. Theoretical frameworks were used as ports of analysis on why youth are unemployed and how the employed youth accessed jobs. Social capital theory, social inclusion theory, ecological systems theory and the capability approach formed the theoretical framework.

### 2.3.1 SOCIAL CAPITAL THEORY

This theory by Bourdieu (1984) enables the researcher to analyse the issue of youth employment using the lens of networks as a resource for accessing employment opportunities. **Bourdieu’s social capital** theory can be used to understand Lavender Hill youth exclusion from employment opportunities due to

poor social networking for those that have been looking for work with no avail for a long time. It can be used to understand how the youth in employment used it to access employment opportunities. Social capital refers to the features of social organization that form the value and extent of a society's social relations and involves institutions, relationships, norms and links that facilitate coordination and co-operation or allow people to act collectively (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). One can think of social capital as the networks, shared values and understandings in society that enable individuals and groups to trust each other and to work together (Bourdieu, 1984). Information around existing employment vacancies, prospective vacancies and additional vital information that are useful to one getting a job are shared through social networking (World Bank, 1999). The importance of social networking for Lavender Hill youth is for access to information about employment opportunities. Social networks can benefit individuals in terms of access to employment vacancies, it is possible that employed youth from Lavender Hill utilized the benefits of social networks to be socially included in social and economic development.

### 2.3.2 SOCIAL INCLUSION THEORY

Social inclusion is a collective response to challenges and change; it involves inclusion of all, equally and without discrimination (Woolcock, 2013). The theory of social inclusion is grounded on principles of social justice, social cohesion and empowerment, where the most vulnerable must be given access to opportunities to create equal opportunity in socioeconomic participation and capabilities building (Woolcock, 2013). The core idea of social inclusion is to develop capacity of societies to peacefully and collectively manage societal challenges. If implemented properly, social inclusion can reduce inequalities, enhance opportunities and promote mechanisms for improved meaningful participation (Woolcock, 2013). The notion of social inclusion as a right originates from the Constitution of South Africa of 1996, in which the Bill of Rights specifies the rights of the citizens of South Africa. The human rights entail equitable access to economic opportunities which include labour participation in employment. Everyone should have equal chance to participate in the labour market and be able to benefit from it and through it. The participants in this research are a vivid example of youth who could utilise the available resources and managed to be socially included in economic participation in South Africa.

### 2.3.3 ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THEORY

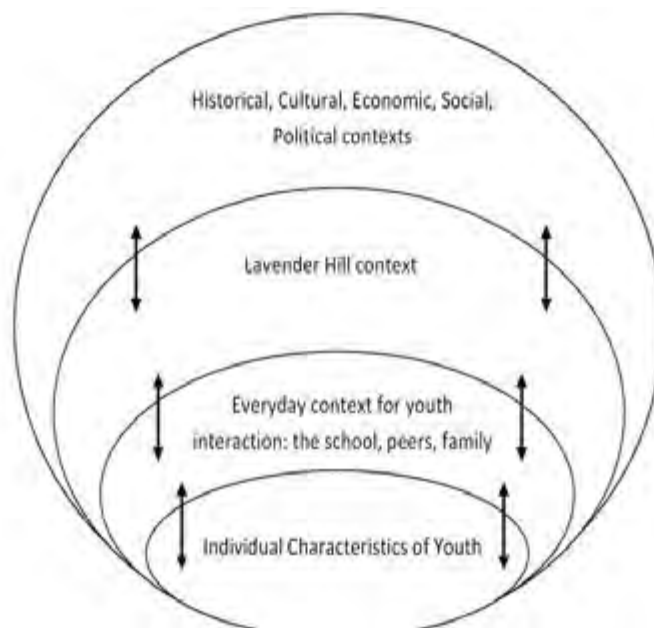
The ecological systems theory reflects the linkages between youth and their environment including family, community and/ or state. It focuses on the shared interacting factors within the social, political, and economic environment. Whenever one part of that system changes all other parts of that system are

affected, so it is important for government to adopt a holistic approach when addressing challenges faced by the society. **Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory helps in understanding how the individual character and the surrounding community influence one's attitude and own experiences in the settings in which they learn to develop and interact.** These settings are those in which they have frequent interactions with others (such as the school, youth centres or church). The settings in which young people learn to develop and interact are subject to change due to cultural and socioeconomic shifts within the larger community setting they operate in (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The attitudes of youth from Lavender Hill who are in employment have been influenced by their experiences and the surrounding community. Both positive and negative experiences of youth from Lavender Hill were a push factor for them to be where they are currently.

The disadvantage of the negative influence of the surrounding community for Lavender Hill youth is when the youth are unable to turn the negative experiences into positive outcomes. The youth from Lavender Hill can be seen as disadvantaged because of issues such as violence, gangs, poor living conditions to **mention but a few, which inhibit youth's full participation in socioeconomic activities.** The participants in this research, however, have used those social ills as a motivation to work hard and escape poverty and the poor living conditions through getting employed.

As mentioned in the preceding sections, Lavender Hill area was established by the Apartheid regime to **pursue the objectives of the Group Areas Act (1950) to separate people according to their "races" (Rogan, 2006).** They were mostly marginalized which makes it difficult for them to enjoy the human freedoms such as better living conditions, access to health, education and employment (Sen, 1999). Regardless the historical period, socio-economic factors such as unemployment and poverty in a context of substantial economic disparity and aggravated by poor-quality schooling, low retention rates, and family vulnerability, have been regarded more important in explaining why youth are drawn more into crime, violence, and gangs than into employment (Ward, van der Merwe, Dawes, 2012). It is important to look at how youth in employment managed to overcome these socio-economic challenges and acquired jobs. Most importantly it is vital to look at how these youths were influenced by their surrounding community to be where they are now. Figure 1 depicts the linkages between youth and their environment in the form of family, community and/ or state using ecological systems theory.

Figure 1. Linkages between youth and their environment in the form of family, community and state



#### 2.3.4 THE CAPABILITIES APPROACH

The capability approach is explained as “a broad normative framework for the evaluation and assessment of individual well-being and social arrangements, the design of policies and proposals about social change in society” (Robeyns, 2005: 94). Capabilities refers to the abilities or competencies to be able to perform or execute tasks or activities. Sen (1999) argues that policies should be mainly centered on what people are able to do and to be, about the quality of their life such that they are able to remove obstructions and have freedom to live the kind of life they value (Robeyns, 2005). This approach is a theory that is in the liberal school of thought that values individual freedom. It questions the impact of policies on people’s abilities, whether people have access to health facilities such as, “clean water, access to doctors, protection from infections and diseases and basic knowledge on health issues” (Robeyns, 2005:95). It investigates whether people are well nourished; if people have access to a high quality educational system, to actual participation in politics and community activities. It also asks if people can access financial resources and economic production. In other words, it looks at all dimensions of human well-being, thus development, well-being and justice are integrated into economic, social, political, and cultural dimensions of life (Robeyns, 2005). The rationale of the capability approach is its focus on the competencies of the people to build the kind of lives they want themselves. This approach

was appropriate to use in analysing the kind of opportunities needed by Lavender Hill youth to be employed and what capabilities they developed, because it is concerned with the prospects that people should improve the quality of their lives.

The following section presents some of the themes linked to the objectives. These include an overview of youth employment and a discussion on the factors that assist or hinder youth to access employment. A discussion on pathways to formal employment, successful transitioning to formal work and available support systems is provided.

## 2.4 OVERVIEW OF YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Youth employment is important for economic and social stability and growth as mentioned in the preceding chapters. Central to youth development, is the human development theory apart from the previously mentioned theories, which has two elements, that is, the development of human capabilities and the development of opportunities for people to use these capabilities (Taylor, 1999). The ILO has been taking many initiatives to promote action on youth employment as evident from the developed policy network on youth employment that draws on innovative leaders in private industry, economic policy and civil society to explore resourceful approaches to the youth employment challenge (ILO, 2001).

The ILO (2001) pointed out that the issue of youth joblessness is not simply caused by the absence of jobs or too few decent and productive jobs to go around. There may be multi-faceted structural problems that are not removed by a general economic expansion. The presence of many unemployed youth in countries such as in the United Kingdom and the United States support this point of structural problems (ILO, 2001). The most striking aspect about youth unemployment is the fact that it is equally higher than overall unemployment in almost all countries (ILO, 2001). The youth unemployment rate saw its largest annual increase on record between 2008 and 2011: it rose from 11.8 to 12.6 percent (ILO, 2012). Therefore, it is imperative to identify the accessible resources and determine where strength and opportunities lay in development processes to promote youth employment. Currently, many young people are not pursuing straight line routes from high school to a post high school program, but rather take time off from studies at some point to find work (Saunders, 2008).

### 2.4.1 PATHWAYS TO FORMAL YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

This section looks at how youth can negotiate their pathways to employment in this fickle labour market. Youth in post-apartheid South Africa appear to be well-versed in the opportunities available to them that

were not available to their parents during their young adult years. For that reason, many feel pressure to dream broadly and achieve accordingly (Barrar, 2010). De Lannoy (2007:13) stated **that, “the positive belief that education is the route to success, is not always constructed on positive examples in the youngsters’ environment”**. **Some** youth show their ardent belief in the rewards of education even without having experienced the educational fruition (Barrar, 2010). It must be noted that creating job opportunities requires more than successful completion of a matric or degree certificate. It requires a shift in identity so **that the youth’s values become more closely aligned to those of the workplace** (Abbott-Chapman, 2007). Nevertheless, one cannot overlook the important role of obtaining the requisite skills and qualifications to access employment opportunities.

#### 2.4.1.1 Educational qualifications and skills attainment

A good education is an essential building block for youth development (World Youth Report, 2007). It is unequivocal that youth with post-secondary qualifications do better in terms of employment and earnings than those without such qualifications. It is not only university graduates that do well, but also graduates from vocational training colleges (Saunders, 2008). Skills needs in the 21st Century have changed in a way that makes it harder for some youth to access the labour market. Skills relevant to the growing ICT sector will be mainly important in determining employment outcomes for young people (Industry in Education, 1999). This could be very difficult for the youth that are marginalised in terms of access to quality education and skills development institutions that leads to employability. Otherwise for them to achieve higher goals of educational and skills attainment, they might have to work twice as hard compared to their counterparts who come from privileged backgrounds.

Learning happens in different environments, including home, school and at work, although most critical values are learnt at school (World Bank, 2006). One needs to obtain the appropriate knowledge and skills to become a useful employee or business owner, good parent, and active citizen. Such skills include thinking skills – critical and innovative thinking; behavioural skills – determination, discipline, teamwork, problem solving and risk management; knowledge – including numerical competence and literacy; occupational skills; and a combination of knowledge and skills to execute jobs that depend on clearly defined tasks (World Bank, 2006). After entering the labour market, the youth begin to realise the importance of their earlier investments in education and health, and work towards advancing the skills **needed for a productive livelihood (World Bank, 2006)**. **Young people’s economic stability and successful** integration in the labour market are closely tied to their capabilities, life opportunities and other life transitions, particularly marriage (Robeyns, 2005; Sen, 1999). Young people need to develop personal qualities, that are required to function in the modern workplace, such as an orientation to work, an

appreciation of the notions of enterprise and interpersonal skills – all of which are best learnt at an early age in schools or tertiary education (ILO, 2000). Language skills improve the chances of employability of the young person within and beyond national boundaries. **The young person's employability improves as education and training are enlarged by experience within a working environment.** The youth are more likely to serve as positive role models for their peers which would yield more highly educated and skilled youth.

The importance of vocational skills, which employers can use as the basis of on-the job education and training is not to be overlooked as it provides young people with necessary skills and working experience. It is through working experiences that young people grow competencies such as problem-solving abilities and the ability to think creatively. Employers often need to count on **their employees'** decision and power of initiative (ILO, 2001). Fundamental abilities and competencies are imperative not only for meeting the existing demands of employers, but also for meeting the possible market demands of the future (ILO, 2001).

#### 2.4.1.2 Job search methods and types of jobs searched

The Centre for Development and Enterprise (CDE) (2012) indicated that most youth acquire their first jobs through guidance and support of someone close to them or by replying to adverts. Yet several young people looking for jobs are unable find jobs through existing links (which they may not have) or by replying to adverts. Consequently, they depend on a range of mechanisms that in some way or another intermediate between the job-seeker and the world of work (CDE, 2012). Some do holiday jobs volunteering or internships; others enter formal learnership programs; some work in government initiatives such as the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP); and some register with a temporary employment agency hoping to eventually transition into full-time employment. The purpose of these transitional steps is two-sided. The first is to expose the job-seeker to prospective employers more efficiently than she can do on her own; the second is to obtain the work experience and skills needed to help open more doors to employment (CDE, 2012).

#### 2.4.1.3 Social networks

The importance of social networks in securing jobs should not be underestimated. Evidence from an array of surveys conducted in 2000 shows that most people access jobs through relatives and friends. Some examples include the **Khayelitsha/Mitchell's Plain Survey (KMPS) conducted in Cape Town in 2000**, which revealed that more than 55% of the participants got their current job through friends and relatives.

The Cape Area Panel Survey also shows that the most common way of attaining work for youth is through networks in the form of friends and relatives (Lam et al, 2008). For job seekers, this indicates the importance social capital (people who they know that might connect them to their career) in the form of a **“sociogram” made up of family members**, neighbours, academic colleagues, church members, professional bodies, political party, social media, workplaces, random people on plane, buses, conferences and events. These people are important links that can connect youth to their careers.

#### 2.4.1.4 Attitudes of the youth towards employment

The other crucial aspect towards promoting youth employment is the attitudes of the youth while exploring their pathways into the world of work. The first step must be taken by the youth themselves to want to be employable through aspiring and then putting an effort into learning and acquiring new knowledge to achieve their goals. Spera et al (2013) mentioned the importance of volunteering as a pathway to employment. They argued that having the spirit of volunteering increases the odds of finding a job for the out of work through various connections from volunteering centres. If youth have the drive to participate in unpaid work, they are more likely to perform even better in paid work. Swartz (2007) indicated the strong self-perceptions of the youth in Cape Town townships and the belief that through doing what is **“right” and “good” and avoiding what is “bad” and “wrong” one can be successful** despite the challenges of their environments. Having the right attitude, such as the willingness to work for free can be seen as helpful in discovering pathways to employment.

Young people especially from poverty-stricken communities could benefit from having courage, determination and resilience in their search for employment. The aspect of urgency and resilience of youth is crucial to young people growing in distressed communities, characterized by poverty, crime and family troubles which make them particularly vulnerable. It assists young people in navigating through these challenges towards independent living. Youth from poor communities need to have willpower to work hard and have the resilience to overcome challenges in various sites such as their homes, youth care centres, schools and workplaces. If one lacks the drive and resilience to navigate their way towards better living conditions, they would be trapped in the poverty cycle, facing unemployment and human insecurities. Youths that develop resiliency are more likely to achieve progressive outcomes when confronted with risk and adversities such as poverty, inequality, crime and unemployment which are prevalent in Lavender Hill.

#### 2.4.1.5 Institutions supporting youth employment

School is one such context for maximum growth to occur within the area of youth development (Johnson, 2006). Both teachers and other educational professionals are valuable adult influences within young individuals' lives, this shows how schools can set the platform for both the framework and foundation of youth development (Johnson, 2006). Schools also have an important role to play in teaching working skills. In several countries, schools permit appropriate scholars to go into professional or work-based courses during their final years of schooling, often safeguarding credit towards educational credentials and working towards technical qualifications (ILO, 2001).

**There may be no particular remedy for transforming all ailing economies such as South Africa's economy** into engines of job creation, but all employers must be broadly familiar with the fundamentals of a sound, employment-creating economy (Sanghoon & Hemmings, 2000; ILO, 2001). One way forward is for **employers to work with governments and workers' organizations to pursue collective strategies to** encourage job creation among the young (ILO, 2001). The phenomenon of youth employment is too important an issue for employers to leave to government alone. Tracking the pathways taken by youth to employment can be done through longitudinal studies that can effectively demonstrate the nodes through which young people transition, taking note of the complexity of various states (Lewis, 2012:12). The difficulties in this transition can only be effectively analysed with data sets that enable linkages across the chain, and through the various institutional types (i.e. schooling, vocational education and training systems, higher education and the labour market) (Lewis, 2012).

The World Youth Report (2007) indicates the progress and challenges in youth transition to adulthood. Though youth face numerous challenges, many are determined to succeed and are using varied **approaches to ensure their 'survival'**. **Some youth stay longer in school, other drop out and earn income** and others are setting up private business. One way of promoting youth employment in South Africa is to ensure that the mechanisms that assist youth find work when they are not capable to do so themselves **are operating optimally, and that the most effective of these 'pathways to employment' are deepened and broadened** (CDE, 2012). The ILO (2012:28-37) shed light on potential ways for government, institutions and employers can promote youth employment through **"boosting labour demand to address slow job growth using employment policies, strategies, and national action plans as avenues to address micro and macroeconomic factors impacting youth employment."** **The institutions could also address social discrimination** through specific focus on marginalised youth and youth at risk of social exclusion.

It is crucial to identify barriers to youth employment so that government and other stakeholders can address such challenges with appropriate interventions strategies. The following paragraphs highlight some of the barriers to youth employment.

#### 2.4.2 BARRIERS TO YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

There are various themes of discussion from one country to the other on the issues hindering youth to access jobs. The ILO (2012) highlighted some recurring issues identified as main triggers of joblessness among youth. These include slow job growth economies, low-quality jobs trap, skills mismatch, low educational and skills attainment, inadequate job matching, work experience trap, lack of access to capital and business training, limited youth participation and social discrimination (ILO, 2012).

##### 2.4.2.1 Labour market trends and low job creation

For decades, South Africa has been considered as having a strong economy, but high unemployment and low job creation (McCord & Borat 2003:113). The CDE (2012) argues that the main reason for high rate of unemployment is the slow pace of job creation in South Africa over the past few decades. Surveys indicated that 50 percent of unemployed people between the ages of 16 and 30 years who have given up looking for work said this was because there were no jobs in their area (CDE, 2012). Also, the South African Labour Force Survey (2011) reported that 85 percent of the jobless participants mentioned that they were jobless because they had not been able to find any work at all, whereas less than two percent said they were jobless **because they could not find 'suitable work'** – a phrase used to refer to jobs in which the wages were considered too low (CDE, 2012; Labour Force Survey, 2011).

An external factor that plays a role as a structural barrier to employment is the economy of the country which is failing to provide adequate jobs for the ever-growing number of youth and due to the poor education system failing to provide requisite skills for the youth. In most cases, it has been indicated that the root causes of unemployment for both adults and young people are that economies do not generate enough jobs, or that young people lack the skills for those jobs that are available (ILO, 2001; Miller & Porter, 2007, Booyens & Crause, 2012). The society loses out on the investment it made in educating or training the individual, whose potential productivity remains unused especially if economies do not generate enough jobs (ILO, 2001). Data sets have indicated that most youths who are unemployed, are **either "hiding out" in the education system** rather than facing the job search or idly waiting at home for prospects to improve before engaging in an active job search (ILO, 2012). Some end up being overqualified for the jobs they are applying for but with no working experience (Brisbois et al, 2008). For those youths that find jobs, they are mainly trapped in the low-quality jobs; these are low-productivity,

temporary, part-time or other types of work that fall short of their aspirations. The formal sector is not creating enough jobs and the informal economy is the largest provider of jobs for youth. For example, according to the World Bank (2006), the informal sector employs 99 percent of working teenagers in Zambia. In developing economies, a relatively high share of youth is likely to participate in unpaid family work, starting their working life supporting (informal) family businesses or farms (ILO, 2012).

#### 2.4.2.2 Low educational qualifications and skills shortages

The failure of youth to conquer the job market is triggered by various challenges ranging from social, economic, geographical and cultural to political factors. It can be viewed as a result of inadequate requisite skills, lack of employable skills, the mismatch between required knowledge and technical craftiness needed to do a job, as well as the inferior job skills and training the youths possess. Enrolment, participation, retention, throughput, completion, and graduation are common indicators used to diagnose the health of an education and training system. It is then argued that these indicators are reflecting a poor education system in the South Africa. Some studies blame the educational system in the country for the poor educational outcomes caused by the polarised ailing South African educational system (Badroodien, 2003). Altbeker & Storme (2013) indicated that unemployment increases gradually as one goes down the educational scale. Any post-school qualification increases one's job prospects, for example, for people with non-degree tertiary education, unemployment is about 16 percent; for matriculants it is 29 percent; and for those with fewer than 12 years of schooling, 42 percent (Altbeker & Storme, 2013).

Some studies refer to the legacy of apartheid as the cause of the poor education system, low retention and lack of full participation in economic activities (Badroodien, 2003). In Lavender Hill, the schools are poorly resourced and the situation is exacerbated using drugs by some of the youth, leading to violence and school drop-outs. Branson et al (2009:46) suggest that "...for all young adults' educational attainment and outcomes are still heavily dependent on financial resources", without financial resources educational attainment is inevitable. A cycle of structural poverty is increasingly maintained bearing in mind the socioeconomic profile of the Lavender Hill area. One can say that it is in dire need of educated youth or role models who are going to have the capability to improve their community in terms of social and economic development. As stated in the literature, many youths are unemployed with low skills and low education levels (NWF, 2011).

#### 2.4.2.3 Limited youth participation and social discrimination

In South Africa, Lavender Hill has high unemployment as evident from the fact that there are numerous young people and adults loitering in the streets of Lavender Hill or sitting on the pavements during the day (Wonnacott, 2005). The geographical location of the community is a structural barrier to youth in their attempts to access employment. As mentioned in the preceding sections, Lavender Hill developed from Group Areas Act in 1981 and was labelled a **'coloured' area. This community was created to** exclude, such that people who stay there have limited access to resources such as schools, job hubs, shops and so forth. The employability of youth deteriorates because he or she, when not employed, is not updating their skills in the workplace (ILO, 2001; Barsoum, 2012). In situations where the young people cannot access employment hubs, it is difficult for them to acquire the working experience and skills in the first place before they can update them. The risk increases in that with no meaningful work experience, the individual will become established in a pattern of joblessness (ILO, 2001). Most poor communities that are troubled by a range of social ills, have challenges in producing large numbers of highly educated young people, but that does not mean that there are no highly educated young people coming from poor communities.

#### 2.4.2.4 Crime and gang violence

The main structural barrier experienced by youth in Lavender Hill which interferes with the daily free movement of people to and from work places is gang violence. This issue is exacerbating challenges in accessing employment, supporting institutions cannot function properly to address the needs of young people due to these criminal activities. One might be curious to know why youth turn to violence or join gangs. Many people might blame unemployment, but there are other factors leading to youth extremism including social exclusion, corruption and lack of a system that address complaints. Gangsterism in Lavender Hill is viewed as a mechanism for meeting needs of the youth (Galvaan, 2004b). These needs are met through illegal activities such as drug dealing, gun-running, money laundering, prostitution, protection rackets, shebeen **operations and fencing stolen goods (BBC News, Cape Town's Gangs: Martin's story, 2010)**. This contribute to the escalation of problems within the community and the breaking down of social capital. Many social partners would hesitate to operate in an area with high criminal activities going on as they impede the daily routines of the community, making it difficult for organizations such as NWF to function properly. Gangs have essentially substituted council authority and occupied the space left by the lack of employment, social services and recreational facilities (Wonnacott, 2005). They arrange everything from money for school uniforms, a free taxi ride to hospital, rental fees and soccer tournaments. To most of the youth in Lavender Hill, being part of a gang brings a sense of belonging,

power and material possessions, like a pair of Jordan shoes and gold jewellery, yet destroying lives of many youths.

#### 2.4.2.5 Parenting and family dynamics

Some of the barriers to youth employment include poor parenting and poor mentoring or coaching of children from their homes. Children in Lavender Hill have fewer role models to aspire to. Most of the people in the area have no jobs and the children just grow up knowing that their parents or siblings do not go to work (New World Foundation, 2011). Therefore, it becomes normal for the child to not work, and to engage in gangs or criminal activities. It has been noted that youth joblessness is increasingly focused in households in which no member is employed, raising serious concerns for policy-makers about the continuation of generational unemployment among households (ILO, 2001).

Poor family environments characterised by deviance and drug use by family members who might be gangsters has an impact on the youth and in many cases, results in them dropping out of school. Branson **et al (2009:46) suggest that “unfavourable school and home environments overshadow individual ability”**. Some of the barriers that hinder any progress put forward for youth by organizations include drug addiction, the unending killings which might be triggered by revenge for gang killing. Identity formation is another factor especially if one chooses to be identified through gangsterism. Some drop out of school at an early age leading them to have inadequate skills to communicate, participate and perform well in job places (Miller & Porter, 2007).

#### 2.4.2.6 Age and gender dynamics

The ILO (2012) noted that young people are on average 2.8 times more likely to be unemployed than adults. The magnitude of this figure increases to 4 and 5 times in some regions. This is worrisome and may in fact indicate a labour market bias against young people. The ratio of youth-to-adult unemployment rate in South-East Asia and the Pacific was 5 in 2009, while the ratios in the Middle East and North Africa were 3.8 and 3.7, respectively. Unemployment rates for youth in Egypt, Indonesia and Sri Lanka are more than 5 times those of adults (ILO, 2012). This is perhaps because entering the labour market may be more challenging for youths due to prolonged employment searches and lack of experience or skills. Other possible explanations for the higher rates of joblessness among youth according to the ILO (2001) include the issue of minimum wages that might not match the educational qualifications of the youth. Surprisingly, in some developing countries, such as Indonesia, Jordan and Thailand, unemployment rates are higher for the more rather than the less educated (ILO, 2001; Barsoum, 2012). In South Africa, StatsSA (2015) indicated that the youth unemployment rate was 36.9 %.

According to the ILO (2001), in Indonesia, youth who left school at primary-level who may accept insecure low-income and low-quality jobs actually have considerably lower unemployment rates as compared to secondary and tertiary-level school leavers whose skills may not meet labour market demand. On the other hand, the relationship between minimum wages for young people and employment has proved to be a complex and often contentious issue (ILO, 2001; Ghellab, 1998). Some argue that where the youth salary rates are comparable to those of adults, employers usually choose an adult, as he or she will be more likely to meet or surpass job requirements than the less experienced youngster without a proven employment record (ILO, 2001). It must be noted that youth development cannot be sustainable, equitable or holistic unless it addresses age and gender disparities and the needs of both men and women.

In some instances, young women are far more likely to face even higher unemployment rates as compared to young men, or have lower participation rates, even though the situation differs significantly among countries (Barsoum, 2012; ILO, 2012). Studies have indicated that more young women are unemployed in many developing countries as well as some developed ones such as France and Spain (ILO, 2001; Barsoum, 2012). The gender difference is small or insignificant in countries such as Hungary, India, Indonesia, some Latin American countries and most developed countries. The issue of gender and age discrimination in access to education and job opportunities is far more widespread (ILO, 2001).

In some countries where girls have equal access to education, some may still be targets of gender discrimination for instance in France, Jamaica and Japan (ILO, 2000). Access to education and training for girls in some other countries such as Ghana, India and Kenya is still limited, forcing young women into the informal sector and subsistence-oriented activities (ILO, 2000). Joblessness in early life of young people may permanently damage their future employability, seeing that patterns of behaviour and attitudes established at an early stage tend to persist later in life. Their exclusion from acquiring work experience and lack of access to continuing training in their early years also increases their later difficulties to find jobs (ILO, 2001). The situation of youth joblessness is even worse for youth with disabilities as they are largely marginalized due to lack of facilities to cater for them (Freeman et al, 1991).

#### 2.4.2.7 Poor social networks

Young people seem to lack full participation in the economic activities of the country perhaps due to reasons such as lack of connection opportunities and enterprising minds to be able to see and seize the opportunities (CDE, 2012). It has been noted in some studies that half of young South Africans who complete Grade 12 and enter university, fail to graduate (Allais & Nathan, 2012). Most of the bursary

organizations suggest that most of them could succeed if they were better prepared for the school shift and were sufficiently mentored, both academically and personally through their first year of university (Allais & Nathan, 2012). It is unfortunate that, sometimes school leavers and graduates of Further Education and Training (FET) colleges face the reality that many employers do not regard their results as a good indication of their likely performance as an employee therefore they rely on their networks of family and friends to recruit new staff members (CDE, 2012).

## 2.5 OVERVIEW OF SUPPORT SYSTEMS

This section focuses on support systems that promote youth employment. As mentioned in the National Youth Policy (RSA, 2015), there is nothing for youths without youths. Therefore, any intervention aimed at improving youth outcomes should incorporate genuine youth participation in the decision-making processes. Organisations such as the UN and the World Bank highlight the significance of participation **of youth in various spheres of life and articulate the value of youth's contributions to policymaking within** their discourse. This will ensure that the youth do not face social exclusion from economic and social participation (Burchardt et al. 1999, Taket et al, 2009). The consequences of social exclusion could be intergenerational problems and privileges of groups of people which exacerbates the rise in the gap between the poor and rich (Piketty, 2014). Therefore, support systems that promote social inclusion have been put in place to improve the wellbeing of youth and for them to access to employment.

### 2.5.1 SUPPORT SYSTEMS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Some of the poverty reduction strategies that the government of South Africa has implemented are discussed. Due to the legacy of apartheid which caused a high incidence of poverty especially for the non-white group, the government put in place a plethora of poverty reduction strategies. These include the following categories: job creation measures; infrastructure programs earmarked to address household consumption basic needs; contributory and non-contributory social security measures; and asset building or redistribution measures (Mbuli, 2008). The table in appendix C illustrates some strategies adopted to respond to poverty and inequality in South Africa. The government of South Africa has put in place an array of support programs and strategies to empower youth in various sectors. Some of these high impact programs targeting youth and women in the arts include the Indoni My Heritage My Pride, the Public Art Program, the Emerging Creatives Program and the Trendsetter Initiative. All these programs aim to encourage youth to participate in arts, providing them with education, life skills training and encouragement in appreciating their culture, heritage and who they are (RSA, 2015). Furthermore,

this will give the youth skills and employ them to develop and beautify their communities using their artistic abilities.

Other initiatives that are in place include the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) that engages young people in the maintenance, renovation and rehabilitation of community infrastructure across the country (NDP, 2012). The Sector Education and Training Authorities makes learnerships and internships available to young people to raise their skills capacity. The National Youth Development Agency (2013) is a government agency put in place to initiate, facilitate, implement, coordinate and monitor youth development interventions designed to decrease youth unemployment and promote social cohesion. There are several NGOs such as New World Foundation (NWF) in Lavender Hill that are incorporating youth development programs within their scope of work. NWF is also working with other social partners like SANCA, an advice office for drug addicts and drug testing, RAPCAN, a support for children and family initiative, Greater Retreat Youth Forum and Trauma Centre for support, advice and therapy for victims of violence. The following table illustrates the target group categories, key stakeholders and the type of support offered to promote youth development.

Table 1. Sources of support towards youth employment

Category	Key stakeholders	Type of Support
Government agencies:	Ministry of Education, Finance, Housing and construction, Ministry of Public Security, Department of Higher Education and Training, Department of Social Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● access to information about products and services of the National Youth Fund</li> <li>● create and administer databases of employment opportunities</li> <li>● financial assistance to youth (small, micro and medium enterprises, and cooperatives)</li> <li>● infrastructure development</li> <li>● social security</li> </ul>

NGOs and community-based organizations	Community Groups, Youth Council, Christian Council e.g. New World Foundation, RAPCAN, Etafeni, Where the Rainbow Meet, Mothers Unite in Lavender Hill, Dreamworker in Observatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• job opportunities</li> <li>• career and life skills development</li> <li>• recreational facilities</li> <li>• holiday programs</li> <li>• crime prevention strategies</li> </ul>
Academia education	Local universities and Colleges e.g. (University of Cape Town, University of Western Cape, Cape Peninsula University of Technology) etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• education and training</li> <li>• career guidance services;</li> <li>• employment opportunities</li> </ul>
Community members	Local people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• moral support</li> <li>• peer education</li> </ul>
Private sector	Small scale and large businesses (private companies)  e.g. Woolworths, Pick n Pay, Old Mutual etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• financial assistance</li> <li>• speaking at schools and post-secondary institutions about career opportunities;</li> <li>• communicating to regional/sectoral labour market bodies and/or directly with schools and colleges about expected skill needs;</li> <li>• mentoring young people; and</li> <li>• offering co-op placements that give young people the opportunity for hands-on experience with an occupation while completing a high school, college, university or apprenticeship program (NYDA, 2013).</li> </ul>

## 2.5.2 SUMMARY STATEMENT

This chapter has discussed the methodology of the literature, the policies and programs that are pertinent to the study, the theoretical models and the themes that are related to the objectives of the study. The issue of youth employment is multidimensional in that the process is influenced by myriad factors, many of which are individualistic and subjective. The literature reviewed shows evidence of varied approaches employed by young people to gain access into the world of work, the challenges faced by young people and the support systems that could be used to assist young people to access employment.

## CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The study aimed to explore pathways taken by Lavender Hill youth into finding employment. In the quest to understand the experiences and realities of young people from Lavender Hill, the researcher had to use a methodology that allows young people to give narrations of their experiences in their search for employment. As Woodman & Wyn (2014) argued, to understand realities of young people, it is vital to make use of the right approach. The researcher had to systematically execute the research process for it to be controlled, valid and verifiable, empirical and critical for the information to have meaning linked to the issue under study (De Vos, Strydom, Schulze and Patel, 2011). The goal of the study and the questions to be explored informed the selection of the research approach, research design, sampling method and procedure, data collection methods, tools and data analysis procedure. The researcher recognised that there is no study without limitations, therefore she clarified the limitations of the study and explained how she dealt with them to avoid drawbacks. The chapter ends with a brief discourse on reflexivity and a section explaining the ethical considerations that were incorporated into this research and a summary statement.

### 3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

According to Creswell (1994: **3**) “research approaches are plans and the procedures for research that span the steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation”. This plan includes numerous decisions, and the overall decision involves which approach should be used to study a topic. The theoretical assumptions brought to the study by the researcher; procedures of inquiry (called research designs); and specific research methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation informs this decision (Creswell, 1994). The nature of the issue being **addressed or the research problem, the researcher’s personal experiences and the audiences for the** study also inform the selection of a research approach and not the preference of the researcher (Marshall, 1996). The goal of this study was to gather and understand the experiences of youth from Lavender Hill on how they explored their pathways to employment. A qualitative study deep-rooted in the interest of exploring, analysing and unfolding a phenomenon was vital (Delpont, Fouché, & Schurink, 2011). A qualitative research approach uses a more in-depth approach to the phenomenon as opposed to a quantitative research approach as its very research process permits a deeper, detailed and personal understanding of the subject matter (Higgs, 1997). It is praised for its ability to allow one to see the world

from the participants' point of view, which Blaikie (2000) argues as gaining the "insider" view rather than the "outsider" view.

This method is also effective in identifying intangible factors, such as socioeconomic status, social norms, ethnic background, religion and gender roles, whose role in the research issue may not be readily apparent. **Within the context of this exploratory study on young people's experiences** of accessing employment, the qualitative approach was applicable and helpful in the process of unpacking these **intangible factors which were eventually linked to the researcher's objectives**. The approach allowed for a greater level of richness and depth of detail, hearing the voices of the youth in this context which had an empowering objective, considering that **in today's society meanings of young people's attitudes and actions** are all often assumed or based on adult interpretations (Heath et al, 2009). Using this approach, the researcher managed to explore a wide range of dimensions like success stories, challenges faced, support structures and strategies employed by the youth in accessing employment. Even though this approach is more laborious than a quantitative approach, the researcher opted for it for its holistic, subjective and in-depth data advantages.

### 3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

This is an exploratory study because an interpretive epistemological position is considered to be the most applicable research design in this study. Babbie & Mouton (2007) define a design as a strategy or outline of how you plan conducting the research. A qualitative approach with face to face interviews was the appropriate way of engaging the youth from Lavender Hill or who once stayed there in exploring their experiences in formal employment. The qualitative paradigm is recognized and used for its data capturing abilities, creating rich data which allows one to make interpretations on social actors (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). This allows probing and clarification of statements and concepts such that the data collection could be free of bias and assumptions. The goal according to Babbie & Mouton (2007) of this research paradigm is to describe and understand rather than explain and predict human behavior.

**According to De Vos et al. (2005: 240) qualitative research is defined as a "multi-perspective approach to social interaction, aimed at making sense of, interpreting or reconstructing this interaction in terms of the meanings that subjects attach to it". Thus, one can conclude that** qualitative research methods are used in the exploration of meanings of social phenomena as experienced by individuals themselves, in their natural context. This is because it involves the systematic collection, organisation, and interpretation of textual material derived from talk or observation (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The data in this qualitative

research study was collected through once off, face to face interviews with seventeen employed youth who were raised in Lavender Hill and spent their young adult years there and attended Lavender Hill High School in the Cape Town region. Six of the participants have moved out of Lavender Hill when they got employed. This strategy allowed for a more personal understanding of the experiences of these young people who are in employment. The research followed an approach that allowed gathering data first before developing theories and patterns. An inductive approach was applied, as the researcher identified themes as they emerged to create a set of statements to develop and form concepts (Carey, 2009; Engel & Schutt, 2010). **The researcher played the researcher's role by asking questions that would make the participant expand more rather than asking closed questions so that data analysis process would not be skewed.**

Qualitative research is a way to understand human emotions such as rejection, pain, caring, powerlessness, anger and effort. Since human emotions are difficult to quantify, qualitative research appears to be more effective method of investigating emotional responses. It is imperative for various stakeholders such as research institutions, policy makers and development practitioners to listen to the voices of young people in employment to be able to understand and deal with their challenges. Applied research was utilized in this study. **This indicates that the researcher's aim was to make this qualitative research study "more humanistic and relevant to the lives of the people" (De Vos et al, 2001: 80.)** This is related to modern development trends - such as, development as freedom, a people centred development framework that respects participatory approaches and development research focused on human experiences (Sen, 1991; Davids, Theron & Maphunye, 2009). Applied research is used to answer particular, practical questions: for policy formulation, administration and an understanding of a phenomenon, it accesses and uses part of research methods, knowledge and techniques (Kothari, 1985; Birkman & Rog, 2008).

### 3.4 GAINING ENTRY

According to Feldman et al (2003), gaining access to the world of the potential participants is one of the challenges in conducting research effectively. In this study, the researcher is fortunate that the research topic is a UCT Knowledge Coop interest that aimed to unpack issues of unemployability or employability in Lavender Hill. For this reason, access to the research setting was facilitated by the UCT Knowledge Coop. A representative of UCT Knowledge Coop ensured that the researcher had access to the setting and a database of participants through the LHHS principal. The principal made the database available to the researcher so that she could formally contact the possible participants telephonically. The Principal

emphasized that if there were any concerns that might arise, the researcher could refer the participant to him directly.

### 3.5 POPULATION AND SAMPLE

A population in the realm of research refers to the aggregate or totality of all the objects, subjects or members that conform to a set of characteristics or hold the attributes in which the researcher is interested (De Vos, 2005; Strydom, 2005; Polit & Hungler, 1999). This indicates that the sample used by the researcher provides rich descriptions of the general field being analyzed. The targeted population were youths between the ages of 18 and 35 years who stay or once stayed in Lavender Hill; who attended Lavender Hill High School (LHHS) in the period from 2002 to 2014 and who are now in employment.

The principal of Lavender Hill High School, agreed to give the researcher access to the database of Lavender Hill High School. The database comprised of names and contact details of Lavender Hill High School alumni. However, the database only comprised of 190 matriculants from the period 2011 to 2014 which narrowed the chances of finding many participants from the database who were employed. It had a lot of outdated contact details of some of the matriculants which made it difficult for the researcher to get hold of the prospective participants since most of the numbers were no longer in use. Nevertheless, the researcher managed to contact five participants who then referred her to other prospective participants. The researcher desired to have a gender balanced sample since the experiences may vary on account of gender, but due to difficulties in availability of the participants and the limited timeframe she ended up having more females than males in her sample. This was also partly due to the sampling method she ended up using which is discussed in detail below.

#### 3.5.1 SAMPLE SIZE

The sample comprised of 17 young people (11 females, 6 males), between the ages of 19 and 31. Qualitative studies tend to have small samples, for reasons that they attempt to answer the why and the how. Results may not be generalised (Marshall, 1996). The researcher reached data saturation through ensuring that adequate and quality data was collected to support the study (Saumur & Given, 2008). The participants come from Lavender Hill community in the Cape Town area, although six of them have moved out of the community. For more biographical details, see Appendix B of this report.

### 3.6 SAMPLING METHOD AND PROCESS

Sampling is a process of selecting observations, it allows a researcher to make relatively few observations and generalize from those observations to a much wider population (Babbie & Mouton, 2010). Given the nature of this qualitative research, a purposive sampling method was feasible and ethical. The participants were purposefully selected based on the judgment of the researcher and purpose of the study (Babbie & Mouton, 2007; De Vos *et al.*, 2002). According to De Vos, *et al.*, (2002) and Marshall (1996), this is the most common sampling method in qualitative research that requires the researcher to actively select the most useful sample that has certain qualities that are important to the research and can answer the research questions.

Purposive sampling is also based on the fact that knowledge is contextual and situational (Mason, 2002). This type of non-probability sample as described by De Vos (2002) is the most appropriate sample choice when not all participants can be identified. Therefore, any participant qualifying can participate in the study. The purposive sampling was suitable for this research because some youth from the LHHS database were unreachable and **some matriculants' names of** years before 2011 were not recorded onto the database. The sample units are chosen because they have characteristics which enabled detailed exploration and understanding of the central themes which the researcher wishes to study (Ritchie *et al.*, 2003). Such characteristics may be socio-demographic, specific experiences, behaviours and roles. The characteristics the researcher was interested in are set out in paragraph 3.6.1 under selection criteria.

The researcher contacted the principal of Lavender Hill High School so that she could have access to the database. The principal referred her to an educator from Lavender Hill High School who was put in charge of helping the researcher. Once support and approval of study was gained from the University of Cape Town Department of Social Development Ethics Committee, the researcher hoped to have had access to the database by the end of first week of May 2015; however, it took longer than expected. This delayed the research process as the researcher was relying on that database as a starting point. She was relieved to have access to the database as this helped her as a starting point to get other possible participants. The researcher contacted the participants after getting their names and contact details from Lavender Hill High School database. It was challenging to find participants who met the selection criteria as most of the youth were either unreachable or not working. The process of calling and explaining the research purpose to the prospective participants was expensive and time-consuming. Selection proved to be more challenging than anticipated, as the LHHS database did not indicate who was employed, still alive, passed matric or the current contact details of the possible participants. The researcher thus had to adopt an

alternative sampling strategy to get appropriate participants for the study. This process will be discussed below.

From the 110 names, which the researcher attempted to contact through the LHHS database she managed to get 6 youth who were willing to participate and met the selection criteria. The researcher then set up the time and venue for the interview. For those who worked in Lavender Hill the venue that was convenient for both the researcher and the participant was New World Foundation, an NGO in Lavender Hill. From the first few interviews other participants were identified. All 17 participants were first contacted telephonically and the researcher asked them if they were willing to participate in the research after explaining to them the details about herself and of the research (aim of the research, interview process, access to the final report if desired) if they qualified and were willing to participate, issues of confidentiality, anonymity and voluntary participation with the option of choosing their pseudonyms for the interview were discussed.

After they agreed to participate, the researcher then suggested a possible venue and time for the interview and asked if it was suitable for them. There was no need to withhold any information from the participants therefore the researcher clarified everything to the participants. A follow-up call was made to the participants prior to the appointment date as a reminder and consent forms were obtained from the participants on the day of the interview. It was difficult to secure date and time with seven of the participants as they had a busy schedule at work and kept on rescheduling. The researcher eventually managed to meet with them after working hours. In all 17 interviews the researcher read the consent form to the participants before asking interview questions. Practical aspects of the research such as the use of a tape recorder, and the time that could be devoted to the interview were explained to the interviewee.

The researcher employed a snowball sampling method to get the desired number of participants. Snowballing is a sampling technique whereby participants are asked to recommend further participants who they know can fit within the study (Katzenellenbogen et al, 1997). Therefore, the researcher decided to ask these employed youths at the end of each interview, if they could suggest potential participants that they thought fitted the selection criteria. They were asked to think of employed youth who would provide the researcher with the information that she was exploring. This proved to be a more successful strategy as the possible participants were less suspicious of the researcher since she was referred by a trusted source whom they knew. After the researcher mentioned to the possible participants that the Lavender Hill high school principal knew about the research study, they became more enthusiastic. A

gender imbalanced sample was generated because a lot of female participants referred the researcher to their female friends who qualified to participate as compared to the male participants.

Strydom (2011) states that snowball sampling is utilized when studying the “can be hard-to-reach” or a hidden population. The process was slow and to speed it up, the researcher decided to use the Lavender Hill High School Facebook page to access possible participants. She started looking at the profiles of people participating on that page and she would contact them in their Facebook inbox and explain to them her request and the purpose of study. One of the members from the Lavender Hill High School Facebook page posted the advert about this research on that Facebook page. A lot of people were thrilled about the research and willing to recommend potential participants. The researcher got four participants using LHHS Facebook page, however because these were working youth with a social life, meeting them for the interviews took longer than anticipated. Once the researcher established that the recommended youth fitted the selection criteria, she once again explained the purpose of the study emphasizing the need to establish the experiences of employed youth who come from Lavender Hill. The selection characteristics are in the section that follows.

### 3.6.1. CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

According to Miles and Huberman (1994), a more homogeneous sample has higher chances of generating rich information on the issue under study. The researcher looked through all entries in the LHHS database using the mentioned selection criteria to draw the sample for a more homogeneous sample of 17 participants with features that would advance the attainment of the goal of the study and answer the research questions. It is due to this thought that the researcher preferred to use the database as a first port of call, not selecting participants randomly but instead to make a strategic selection using specific aspects. The aspects are as follows:

- South African youth
- 18 to 35 years of age for the duration of the study
- Attended Lavender Hill High School between the period 2002-2014
- Passed Grade 12
- Lives or once lived in Lavender Hill
- Employed in formal work sector

### 3.7 DATA COLLECTION

The purpose of collecting data is to gather valuable information which would help in answering the research questions that are being explored (Creswell, 1994). Data collection is a process in which the researcher gathers data from a sample population. Creswell (1998:111) defined it as **“a series of interrelated activities aimed at gathering good information to answer emerging research questions”**. The next paragraphs discuss the data collection method and tools used and the rationale for using such choices.

#### 3.7.1 DATA COLLECTION METHOD

Given the nature of this study, a qualitative data collection method was appropriate. The researcher used face to face interviews. According to Greeff (2011), face to face interviews are efforts to understand the world from **a participant’s perspective and** to unpack **the meaning of people’s experiences**. In this study, the face to face interviews assisted the researcher in understanding the experiences of youth from Lavender Hill on their journey to finding employment. A fuller understanding of the mind-set, thoughts and feelings from the young people were developed using this method, which could have been difficult to explore using questionnaires since they limit narrative responses from participants. By asking the right questions, the reality of the participants can be known (De Vos et al, 2001).

**Face to face interviews provided a good understanding of the participants’ experiences.** The researcher managed to probe where responses were unclear and guided the participant to respond to the questions. The researcher ensured that a free and comfortable venue was used for the interviews whenever **possible, for both the researcher’s and the participant’s sake**. If the participant would be free only during lunch time at work, the researcher had to utilise the opportunity and compromise on the venue and meet at the smoking section of malls such as Blue Route Mall in Tokai as long as the recorder could capture the conversations. It is important to ensure comfort for both the researcher and participant during the **interviews because in a qualitative research the main aim is to understand meanings attached to people’s experiences and social behaviours**. Interaction with people in a friendly environment is important to allow for a free and secure conversation. This also helped the researcher understand aspects from the **participant’s point of view** and probe for clarity (Babbie & Mouton, 2010).

One of the disadvantages of face to face interviews is the possibility of the participant being disrupted by what could be happening around the place of the interview which is why the researcher had to ensure

that a conducive environment for the interview was secured. Five interviews were done in Lavender Hill on five different days, four at New World Foundation which was very convenient since the researcher once worked there and a room was set aside to use for the interviews. One interview was done at the **participant's house in Lavender Hill because she felt** comfortable to do it there. Three interviews were done in Wynberg on four different days. One interview was done in Brooklyn, one in Constantia village, one in Century City, one in Fish Hoek and four in the Blue Route mall. One interview was done through skype where the researcher interviewed the participant from Dubai through a video call. The average length of the interviews was 55 minutes. After meeting with the participants, the researcher properly introduced herself and read out to the **participants'** details on the consent forms (see Appendix D of this report) on issues of voluntary participation, the option to feel free to refuse answering any question, and if they needed to withdraw from the interview at any time, without giving any reason. The researcher asked the participant to sign the informed consent form to show that she has read the contents to the participant and she kept the forms. Sometimes the participants wanted to read the forms themselves and then sign after understanding the contents. A discussion of the main research themes would then follow and permission to use a digital recorder was asked before the interview commenced. All participants were willing to be recorded. The youth participants asked questions of clarity and at times requested the researcher to elaborate, which showed their interest in sharing their experiences. To ensure good quality of data collection, the researcher conducted a pilot interview to eliminate mistakes before the actual interview commenced (see paragraph 3.7.3)

### 3.7.2 DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

#### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

A semi-structured interview schedule was used to collect the data. The interview schedule was formulated in simple and clear English with the assistance of the university supervisor. It constituted open ended questions and gave space for probing. Related questions were grouped together depending on which objective they respond to. The interview schedule led the researcher and participants into in-depth and comprehensive conversations that uncovered important and original information. It also assisted the **researcher to be consistent in asking questions. The St John's University of Tanzania Directorate of Research, Consultancy and Postgraduate Studies (n.d)** mentioned that the interview is only as good as the interview schedule/guide and the interviewer. It is vital to pay careful attention to the development of the interview schedule/guide.

As its name suggests, when conducting face to face interviews, the researcher uses a guide, rather than an inflexible instrument. This contains a series of open-ended questions and instructions as to when to prompt for further information. The purpose is to ensure that all interviewees are given the opportunity to address all issues. It is designed to be flexible and to allow a respondent to use his/her own words. Kothari (1985) defined an interview schedule as a set of questions written to guide interviews. The researcher avoided using leading questions as this could falsify data. The researcher communicated to the participants the structure of the interview schedule in a brief introduction outlining the areas to be covered, so that they would know what to expect in the conversation. The researcher did not need to use all the listed probing questions as some were already explored in the narrations of the participants. The probing questions were set simply to serve as a reminder to the researcher about what data needed to be collected.

The interview schedule had five parts; the first comprised of an introduction of the researcher, topic and ethical considerations. The second part comprised of questions that inquire about the participant and the third part probed around experiences and main challenges faced by the participant. The fourth part questioned **around the participant's perceptions on unemployment** in Lavender Hill area, it also asked about future related questions and recommendations. **The last section inquired about the participant's thoughts on the whole interview process.** The interview schedule is included in this report as Appendix A).

## DIGITAL RECORDING TOOL

A digital recorder was used to collect the data. This recording device was used, with consent from the participant, to record the interview which allowed the researcher to concentrate on exploring the topic, noting the non-verbal cues and being more attentive during the interview process. Confidentiality of the recordings was assured by keeping the recordings in a secured place so that the participants could participate honestly and accurately. It was vital to test the digital recorder before the start of the interview to avoid the disaster of missing information. Recording the interviews was helpful because data was permanently recorded and the researcher could listen to the audio conversations numerous times for more clarification during the transcribing process (Robson, 2002).

## DEMOGRAPHIC SHEET

A demographic sheet which included details about gender, age bracket, year of matriculation, population group, household composition and so forth was administered to the participants at the beginning of the interview. This was to ensure that accurate information about the youth participants was captured. Such information was also useful to ensure that the criteria for selection were complied with (see Appendix B).

### 3.7.3 PILOT STUDY

It is risky to assume that we know in advance how participants will react. Therefore, it is essential to pilot every question and if pilot work indicates a need for improved wordings, those need to be piloted too (Oppenheim, 1992). A pilot, or feasibility interview, is a small experiment designed to test tools and gather information prior to a larger study to improve the latter's quality and efficiency (Lancaster, Dodd & Williamson 2004). The researcher conducted the pilot study to reveal possible adversities in the design, proposed instrument and data collection procedure so that they could then be addressed. The pilot interview was conducted one week before the actual study. The researcher interviewed one participant based on availability and then listened to the recorded interview to re-visit the interview and to self-reflect. The researcher set up a meeting with her supervisor to discuss the lessons learnt. The pilot study provided vital information as to the clarity of the instrument. The instrument was found to be user friendly and the questions were flowing in a coherent manner. The researcher learnt to put the recording **instrument close to the participant to improve the participant's voice projection. She also learnt** that she needed to improve her probing skills.

### 3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is a mechanism for reducing and organizing data to produce findings that require interpretation by the researcher, in other words, it is a process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the collected data (Burns & Grove, 2003: 479; De Vos et al, 2005: 333). Patton (2002) defines data analysis as a process of reducing the volume of raw information, sieving significance from trifles, identifying major patterns and building a framework for communicating the core of what the data reveal. This research used an adaptation of Tesch (1990) as cited in De Vos et al (2005) which followed the following stages:

1. After transcribing all the interviews, the researcher read each of the transcripts to have a holistic understanding of the data collected. Transcribing refers to the process of transforming data, usually

audio but also non-verbal cues like long pauses and smiles, into written text. Analysis involves labelling various texts to understand the underlying meanings in relation to the objectives of the study.

2. The researcher made notes on the ideas, themes and concepts that were common among the participants in the margins of the transcriptions using different colours for different themes.
3. The above mentioned were grouped together around the major themes from the interview schedule questions that linked to the research objectives.
4. The findings of the research were drawn from the refined coding that shows meaning out of the data.
5. The researcher formulated categories from the descriptive data that were common using direct quotes. Major categories were selected, depending on whether it contained relevant data, was descriptive and common to more than two participants, bearing in mind the objectives and theoretical frameworks in the literature review.
6. The researcher finalised the themes, categories and sub-categories that emerged.
7. The researcher then assembled data under explicit themes, sub-themes and categories.
8. The researcher compared themes, categories and sub-categories with transcripts to check for data which had been left out.

### 3.9 DATA VERIFICATION

Data verification refers to the considerations taken to ensure that the data from the research project is correct. **Morse et al (2002: 17) stated that**, “verification is the process of checking, confirming, making **sure, and being certain**”. Lincoln & Guba (1995) in Babbie & Mouton (2010) outlined the need for the data **to have characteristics of ‘trustworthiness’** (Babbie & Mouton, 2010: 276), which entails a neutral researcher.

Dependability means that if another researcher attempts to repeat the study using a similar context, the results obtained should be similar (Babbie & Mouton, 2010). Considering the small sample of this research study, this was not necessarily possible. A researcher must make sure that the project has an element of dependability such that findings can be verified or invalidated by others. To ensure verification a methodology that is clear and concise has been used to make it easy to understand and replicate.

Credibility is crucial for a study. The research can be considered credible if the data is checked to ensure that what was collected relates to the research questions (Babbie & Mouton, 2010:28). To make the data credible, the researcher used the interview schedule during the session and avoided having to memorize the questions. **Ensuring credibility is important because the aim is to make the findings “ring true”** (Babbie

& Mouton, 2010: 277).

Transferability is “the extent to which the research findings can be applied in other contexts or with other participants” (Babbie & Mouton, 2007:277). It refers to the degree to which the findings can be generalised or transferred to other areas outside the researched area. This is problematic in a qualitative study because of the small sample of 17 participants which cannot be generalised to a larger population.

Confirmability is when the researcher ensures that the data relates to what the research questions were asking and no biases can be found (Babbie & Mouton, 2007: 278). It refers to the degree to which the findings can be confirmed or corroborated by others. The researcher was aware of her own prejudices so that she could present an objective study where findings could be linked to literature and so the study can be evaluated without subjection to the researcher.

### 3.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The researcher recognises that no study is without limitations. The following are the limitations of the current study.

#### Sample size

The size of the sample was small, comprising 17 participants. The results of the study cannot be generalized as mentioned above because it is a small sample and the opinions can be biased.

#### Data collection method and instrument

The data collection process can cause bias if the researcher does not ask her questions clearly. However, in this study the researcher ensured that she probed **for clarity to gain an understanding of the participant's** views.

#### Practical problems experienced

It was difficult to secure date and time with seven of the participants as they had a busy schedule at work and kept on rescheduling even though the date and time had been set and agreed upon with them

timeously. This delayed the data collection process, as the researcher had to postpone the interviews.

### 3.11 REFLEXIVITY

McGraw et al (2000: 68) refer to reflexivity as “a process whereby researchers place themselves and their practices under scrutiny, acknowledging the ethical dilemmas that permeate the research process and impinge on the creation of knowledge”. In the qualitative model the researcher’s own preconceptions and feelings might impact on the research process. It is for this purpose that the researcher had to be conscious of these feelings and prejudices before entering the field. Some of the preconceived ideas that the researcher had include the assumption that a lot of Lavender Hill youth are forced to join gangsterism. After conducting the research, the researcher learnt that the youth had the choice to refrain from joining gangsterism and find legitimate ways of escaping poverty.

Mason (1996: 6) stated that reflexive research means that the researcher should constantly take stock of their actions and their role in the research process and subject these to the same critical scrutiny as the rest of their “data.” The researcher entered the research field knowing that research errors can be triggered by differences in age, language, personal experiences, presence of others, the media, cultural background and the general environment in which the research is conducted. These could affect the research interview process and the findings. Therefore, it was vital that the researcher considered all these aspects and be constantly aware of the effects of these factors on the process and outcomes so that she can be extra cautious and avoid soiling the research process. The researcher was fortunate that her age and language were not obstacles to the research since she could identify with the participants as a youth in South Africa and was familiar with the experiences of South African youth. The researcher made sure that the general environment in which the interviews were conducted was favorable to both the researcher and participant by agreeing to meet in quiet but safe places. The researcher is a Social Development Masters student who had done research in previous years therefore had some experience.

### 3.12 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical issues are inevitable; they arise in all research settings. Researchers should adhere to research ethics when conducting research studies. The responsibility to identify specific ethics to be considered in a study rests with the researcher (Strydom, 2005). This must be done to ensure that the physical, mental or emotional health of the participant is not jeopardized in any way through the research process. Guillemin & Gillam (2004) suggested that there are at least two major dimensions of ethics in research. These dimensions are (a) procedural ethics, which generally involves seeking approval from a relevant

ethics committee to undertake research involving humans; and (b) “ethics in practice” or the everyday ethical issues that arise in the doing of research. In procedural ethics for qualitative research that involves humans, one of the early stages of the research process is the completion of the application form for a research ethics committee, in this study, the UCT Department of Social Development Research Ethics Committee. The application was successful. Additional ethical considerations incorporated into this research are the following:

#### Informed consent and voluntary participation

Obtaining informed voluntary and signed consent from participants is a vital part of research rather than simply enlisting them. This principle emphasizes respect for participants and gives assurance that they are not coerced into participation (Halai, 2006). Informed consent is an interpersonal process between the participant and the researcher in which the potential participant is familiarised with the scope of the research and what participation would involve. She or he then makes an informed voluntary decision whether she or he wants to be part of it (American Association of University Professors, 2000). Informed consent is based on three aspects, firstly that prospective participants obtain knowledge through providing them with information they can understand; secondly that consent is voluntarily given and thirdly that the potential participant has the capacity or competence to give their consent (Beresford, 1997). This study ensured that these three aspects were adhered to. The researcher contacted the LHHS principal to get access to the contact details of the prospective participants. After acquiring approval from the University of Cape Town Department of Social Development ethics committee, the researcher made phone calls to the prospective participants. She explained to them details about her and the research as stated in preceding sections. If they qualified and were willing to participate, issues of confidentiality, anonymity and voluntary participation with the option of choosing their pseudonyms were discussed.

#### Maintaining privacy and confidentiality

It is considered good practice to highlight the limits to confidentiality in information sheets as well as providing information on how the researcher will manage disclosures (Alderson, 1995; Beresford, 1997; Davis, 1998). The researcher emphasised the principle of confidentiality at the beginning and end of each interview, letting the participant know that their name would not be disclosed under any circumstances (Love, 2012). She informed the participants that the interview recordings would be kept strictly confidential and would be available only to her and supervisor (Strydom, 2005). The researcher informed

the participants that her academic supervisor would have access to transcriptions.

#### Avoidance of harm

Babbie & Mouton (2005:522) wrote that social research must not injure the participants or the people under study. This could be caused by the revealing of information that would endanger them or embarrass their families, friendships and/or jobs. To avoid this, confidentiality was agreed upon in the consent forms and observed between participants and the researcher. No personal information would be revealed or linked to the participant.

#### Non-Deception of subjects

The researcher shared the aim of the study with the participants when she approached them for the first time and she reminded them of the aim at the start and end of the interview. Participants were informed that the study was conducted for academic purposes. The researcher did not disguise the real aim of the study, nor mask possible negative feelings that the participants could experience during the interview process (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

#### Interview recording

The researcher made sure that she had been granted permission to record the interviews before she commenced the interviewing process. This agreement was included in the consent forms (see Appendix D).

#### **Participants' access to the research report**

Participants were informed that an electronic copy of the final report would be made available to the community organization which is LHHS in this case. In addition, a copy would be lodged in the UCT Library.

### 3.12 SUMMARY STATEMENT

This chapter has discussed the methodology which was used in the research study and the rationale for choosing it. It was explained that this study applied a qualitative approach with 17 one-on-one interviews using a semi structured interview schedule. The sample was purposively selected and the data was analysed according to **Tesch's process steps**. **The data was also validated by using Guba and Lincoln's** approach that explains credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. A discussion on limitations of the study and how the researcher managed to deal with these limitations was presented. Finally, a section on ethical considerations used in this study was discussed. The next chapter focuses on the presentation and analysis of the findings.

## CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to explore and understand how youth who matriculated from Lavender Hill High School negotiated their pathways to employment. The study required the researcher to explore the **participants' understanding of the job** search methods and the fundamental skills, qualifications and attitudes needed to access employment. This chapter presents the findings generated through 17 individual interviews with youth who live or once lived in Lavender Hill, and attended Lavender Hill High school between the period 2002 and 2014. The first section provides background information of the participants (see Table 2) and a section to clarify it. The table that follows presents a framework for data analysis that helped the further analysis process. A presentation and analysis of findings follows this table.

4.1.1 Table 2. Profile of participants

Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Education level	Occupation	Religion	Year of matric	Household size	Current place of residence	Citizen
S1	23	Female	Matric	Clerk	Christian	2012	6	Lavender Hill	South African
BN2	23	Male	Matric	Baker	Christian	2012	5	CAFDA Village	South African
B3	24	Female	Diploma	Pastry Chef	Christian	2009	6	Lavender Hill	South African
CR4	24	Female	Matric	Money Market Clerk	Christian	2012	6	Lavender Hill	South African
EJ5	29	Female	Matric	Field Marketer	Christian	2006	9	Lavender Hill	South African
F6	19	Male	Post-matric course	Youth Activist	Christian	2014	9	Lavender Hill	South African
J7	30	Female	Matric	Field Marketer	Christian	2003	5	Capricorn	South African
L8	29	Female	Matric	Financial Advisor	Christian	2006	6	Lavender Hill	South African
LG9	24	Female	Diploma	Trauma Counsellor	Christian	2009	6	Grassy Park	South African
MQ10	22	Female	Diploma	Clerk in Finance	Christian	2011	6	Lavender Hill	South African
Q11	29	Male	Matric	Merchandiser	Christian	2006	5	Steenberg	South African
RM12	19	Female	Matric	Assistant Beautician	Christian	2014	8	Lavender Hill	South African
RW13	31	Male	Post-matric course	IT Engineer	Christian	2002	6	Mitchell's Plain	South African
SF14	21	Male	Matric	Merchandiser	Muslim	2012	7	Lavender Hill	South African
S15	23	Female	Matric	Receptionist	African Tradition	2010	5	Dubai	South African
T16	21	Male	Matric	Merchandiser	Christian	2012	4	Lavender Hill	South African
V17	31	Female	Matric	Student Advisor	Christian	2002	8	Lavender Hill	South African

The age of the participants ranged between 19 and 31 as stipulated from the selection criteria. Out of 17 participants, 11 were female and six were males. The researcher desired to have a gender balanced sample, however she managed to access more females than males. With regards to educational qualifications, five of the participants have acquired a post-matric qualification and 12 have matric certificates. Only six participants have moved out of Lavender Hill and 11 still reside there.

#### 4.1.2 Framework for data analysis

The following is a tabulated framework for data analysis as outlined by Tesch (1990). The broad themes which emerged from the research study are divided into sub-themes which are divided into categories arising through analysis.

Table 3. Framework for data analysis

RESEARCH THEMES	SUB-THEMES	CATEGORIES ARISING THROUGH ANALYSIS
4.2. Youth aspirations regarding employment	4.2.1 Attitudes of youth towards employment	4.2.1.1 Optimism for future 4.2.1.2 Willingness to start from below
	4.2.2 Sources of motivation to find employment	4.2.2.1 Role models 4.2.2.2 The need to be positive role models 4.2.2.3 The need for better living conditions
4.3. Job search methods and process	4.3.1 Ways of accessing job opportunities	4.3.1.1 Government initiatives 4.3.1.2 Social networks 4.3.1.3 Recruitment agencies 4.3.1.4 Extra-mural activities
	4.3.2 Employability skills and attributes required	4.3.2.1 Basic social and technical skills 4.3.2.2 Educational qualifications 4.3.2.3 Work knowledge and experience
4.4. Challenges faced in accessing employment	4.4.1 Types of challenges	4.4.1.1 Finance issues 4.4.1.2 Parenting and family dynamics 4.4.1.3 Crime and gang violence 4.4.1.4 Low educational qualifications, skills and experience
	4.4.2 Strategies employed to overcome challenges	4.4.2.1 Utilising personal skills and educational qualifications 4.4.2.2 Developing networks 4.4.2.3 Utilising available resources and networks
4.5. Existing support systems towards youth employment	4.5.1 Government programs	4.5.1.1 Municipality programs 4.5.1.2 School programs and opportunities
	4.5.2 Civil society organizations	4.5.2.1 Private companies 4.5.2.2 Recruitment agencies 4.5.2.3 Community NGOs and churches
4.6. Perceptions of youth on factors contributing to youth unemployment	4.6.1 Perceived factors causing youth unemployment	4.6.1.1 Laziness 4.6.1.2 Lack of moral support
	4.6.2 Ways to improve youth employment	4.6.2.1 Government and community partnerships 4.6.2.2 The need for youth to change attitudes

## 4.2. YOUTH ASPIRATIONS REGARDING EMPLOYMENT

Even though the aspirations of the participants were varied, what was common among all participants was the desire to have a better life than the one they were living. These aspirations proved to have played a huge role in the educational attainment and access to employment of the participants.

### 4.2.1 Attitudes of youth towards employment

#### 4.2.1.1 *Optimism for future*

All the participants demonstrated that during their matriculation year, they were optimistic that if they obtain a matriculation certificate, their chances of getting employment leading to better living conditions was high. All participants had hope that there were going to achieve more than where they are currently in terms of employment opportunities.

“Well if I think of what I want and what I want to do and what I love it makes me wanna go there and go further into what I want to pursue and my parents always motivating me and tell me **never to give up on what I want to do...I’d really love to go study admin further because I** wanna go further into that, uhm I want to work for a big company, have my own office with my own computer, yes, I believe if I set a goal I will make sure I will achieve it. And I will achieve I am climbing **like you said now, so I’m sure and I know, I believe that I’m gonna reach what I want to do”** (S1).

“Am still into travelling Miriam, [smiles] I’m still into travelling so my future plans is to work in a well-established company, I don’t wanna be a hostess anymore I wanna be maybe facilitator, a trainer that trains people within the industry because they also travel, trainers also travel to various countries and within South Africa, so I was looking in the direction of that but I wanna be part of management HR but someone that travels because I still wanna **travel that’s why I don’t have a child and at this moment I don’t think I want a child now or a husband now because I feel I didn’t outlive myself fully, though I have reached a lot of stuff in life I still think that I need to outlive myself”** (L8).

Even though there are other choices available after finishing high school such as marriage or leisure, most of the participants indicated that they prioritized achieving their career aspirations more than anything else.

“...hopefully to study, I have to do something extra that’s what I tell myself, before I get too old because I am already comfortable, I don’t wanna lie am comfortable where I am but I need to **start something else also because I don’t see this is a lifetime job to work in a shop all my life I don’t see that I need to do something different but I do enjoy it but something bigger...** career wise omg I see myself working in a bigger job, my own place to stay, and car hopefully just to

be better off, just **a better life basically, I don't need a lot of money I just need to be comfortable** have enough just to go on yes" (Q11).

"I wanna explore the field of study because I know I am intellectually, I am very capable I want **something behind my name, I don't know why but I just want something behind my name it's** just something that I have always wanted its either BCom not necessarily a Masters but I want **something yes it doesn't have to be**, yes I want that qualification so next year I want to go **study**" (V17).

The participants expressed interest in working for themselves and having a good standard of living. They were optimistic and aspirational about their futures despite the high rates of youth unemployment even among the educated youth. This resonates with what Barrar (2010) stated, that even without having experienced the educational fruition, some youth from South African townships show their ardent belief in the rewards of education. This generate the strength needed for the government and civil society to tackle many challenges they face.

#### *4.2.1.2 Willingness to start from below*

Eleven of the participants showed that they started from doing menial jobs and worked themselves up to better positions within their careers and they are still working hard to go beyond their current positions. Most participants indicated that they were willing to start from humble beginnings in terms of employment to get to where they want career wise.

"**I got a job at Ackermans** for eight months I was working there, now imagine you coming from Italy overseas and here you have to go and work for Ackermans and am not even permanent I am a temp so they only call me when they need me, I worked there for eight months but you know in life you need to start humble, you need to start somewhere, you need to start **somewhere and if you are not willing to start at the ground then don't expect**, especially you can have a degree you can have a diploma or whatever but if you are not willing to start at the **ground then you are on your way to nowhere**" (L8).

"**Ahh that's a very good question, you know why because when they interview also they ask** you why must we employ you when there is a lot of other people what makes you so special? I just tell them am passionate and I will take any job you offer me it **doesn't matter how much the** money I will do it and I will do it to the best of my ability and I will be loyal and I have matric **most of other people don't have matric, so I am just loyal and I work as hard as the other person**" (SF14).

Contrary to what Molelemane (2014) said with regards to youth being picky when a job opportunity presents itself, 11 participants indicated that they were willing to do any job available to them before they could get into their desired career jobs. Most of the youth have done volunteer jobs and menial jobs to

navigate their pathways to be where they are currently. Molelemane (2014) indicated that with South Africa's youth ranking third highest in terms of the highest unemployment rate, young people should grab any opportunity available to them. He argued that this is not the case, most South African youth are too picky and they cite that this is not what they studied for. In this current study, most of the participants showed that they were nothing like that as they were eager to seize any opportunity that presented itself to them.

#### 4.2.2 Sources of motivation to find employment

##### 4.2.2.1 Role models

In the view of the participants in this study, they all had varied role models from teachers, parents, siblings to international artists, good and bad role models. Most of the participants indicated that Lavender Hill High School teachers were their main good role models as they provided them with inspiration and the needed support, and they provided examples of how to live a fulfilling, happy life.

**"My role models has always been my mommy and my daddy coz they were very hardworking and they help me out to finish school. Without them I don't know where I will be" (S1).**

"I had a teacher like in Lavender Hill high school, Mrs. S, she was very nice and there were a few times where I told myself no am not gonna finish matric and then Mrs S used to say you must come, she had my WhatsApp number, always used to phoning me when are you coming, **I would run home and she would text me why aren't you** in class are you not coming so she always would even now she would WhatsApp me and ask how am I doing and when I am gonna come visit so yeah **that's one of my role models" (BN2).**

**"I didn't have much role models in my life coz I grew up with my grandma only and after that we moved to Cape Town from there onwards I met my mother for the first time so I didn't have like people that I looked up to...but Mrs S, she was kinda like... she was one of my teacher we were like kinda close but she always encouraged us and told us that we can do want we want to be, we can become what we want to become in life. And then the other person I can recommend was Ms R yeah she was also like a guardian like, she will like talk to us advice about life and stuff like that but mostly yeah that's it" (B3).**

The importance of role models cannot be overlooked because they help guide young people in the right direction as they make life decisions. Bush et al (2001) highlighted that role models are important for youth as they are influential in developing educational goals and career aspirations. Almost all the participants indicated that teachers played a huge role in shaping them to be where they are currently. Five participants indicated that they did not have any positive role models from their households so they

looked up to their teachers. However, three participants mentioned that because their parents were bad role models, they were determined to do better than them.

**“At first my role model was my mommy but she was like how can I say I didn’t wanna end up like her... I wanna do better and yeah basically just she” (R12).**

**“The truth I never had any real role models, as I grew up I grew up in a house that was reckless... like in my house in my home because I grew up with my mom she was like an alcoholic at that time, drinking and stuff, on school I met my boyfriend and he was like my role model because he was there for me always and I found something new I never found you understand yeah, so the one role model that I can remember is someone in my church she finished matric and studied further” (MQ10).**

The absence of positive role models in the household did not stop the participants from aspiring to be positive role models. Most of the participants who mentioned having bad role models within their households, looked up to teachers from LHHS. Bush et al (2001) mentioned that teachers, ministers, older siblings and extended family members often function as role models. However, they can also motivate youth to unhealthy activities such as substance abuse, crime and gangsterism.

#### *4.2.2.2 The need to be positive role models*

Due to a lack of positive role models within some households and the community of the participants, all participants were determined to work hard so that they can be positive role models to their family and community as a whole.

**“I think that yeah it also makes you feel like you are a good representative of Lavender Hill I think you know because you persevere and you determined and not like the label of Lavender Hill, Lavender Hill is not all gangs, there are good people and good people have come from Lavender Hill I mean there has been lawyers, doctors, psychologists I mean it’s not all bad” (V17).**

**“It was hard, us the kids in Lavender Hill we never have role models, people we look up to are gangsters, running on the street with drugs, robbing people so my experiences in Lavender Hill wasn’t good there are never positive role models as a young boy you tend to look up to these people because they always get the girls, have money, nice bling, nice shoes and all, so that was the role model that are there yeah...but like I said I was raised by a single mother,” (T16).**

Some of the participants wanted to be better role models to their children hence they had to work hard to be able to provide for their children and be good role models.

**“I think not wanting my daughter, my eldest daughter to think that a lady’s place is in the kitchen, I wanted her to see that her mommy because as reading books and things like that it**

teaches you that your **child looks up to you and they become you so I wanted to teach her that** (V17).

Bush et al (2001) cited that children do imitate adults and role models from the media. The participants want their children to be able to look at their efforts and want to do the same for themselves. This is another inspiration, apart from supporting their households, behind their hard work towards getting career opportunities.

#### 4.2.2.3 *The need for better living conditions*

All participants indicated that they worked hard to be where they are currently because they needed to improve their living conditions and support their families.

**“The place made me to look for something better because this place is full of drugs, gangsters, and several teenagers are using drugs, and some teenagers are just being gangsters so it showed me that it’s not worth it so it made me that inspires me to look for something better”** (S1).

**“The thing that kept me focused is that I also used to tell myself that I need to get out of here I don’t want to end up like my friends, I don’t want to end up being like others, that’s the only thing that kept me focused doing what am doing and being where I am today because as you can see like here where we stay there is like a lot of young people sitting on the corner asking for 1 rands, there is a lot of youngsters here who are not working, not doing anything with their lives they are just being at home doing whatever they feel like doing, drugs, drinking and all that other funny things so I don’t, I always tell myself that I don’t want to be like that I don’t want to end up being like that”** (B3).

Poverty is one of the driving factors for the participants to attain education and look for work. Similar to Swartz’s (2007) findings, the strong self-perceptions of the youth in Cape Town townships and the belief **that through doing what is “right” and “good” and avoiding what is “bad” and “wrong” one can be successful** in spite of the challenges of their environments. Most participants highlighted that for them, the only way they could live the kind of life that they needed was if they could be gainfully employed. This stems as the main reason why some even volunteered, worked menial jobs and did extra courses just so they could be able to have access to the world of work and find better career opportunities thereafter.

### 4.2.3 Summary of youth aspirations regarding employment

The findings in this theme illustrate that attitudes and sources of motivation of youth towards finding employment were driven by several factors. The main factor was the need to improve standards of living and escape the social ills that are plaguing Lavender Hill community. Such ills include gangsterism, crime, substance and alcohol abuse, lack of positive role models, school dropouts as well as teenage pregnancies. These appear to be the main driving forces behind the attitudes and aspirations of youth which gives them the willpower to look for any kind of jobs until they work themselves up to better positions, to be optimistic about what the future holds for them and to believe that if they acquire education and requisite skills they can be successful in life.

## 4.3. JOB SEARCH METHODS AND PROCESS

### 4.3.1 Ways of accessing job opportunities

The participants used a range of methods to access employment. In situations where the other options did not work, they did not give up but they employed other several approaches until they accessed the job positions that they have currently. It is important to keep in mind that in all the job search methods employed by the youth, a range of institutions were approached to seek assistance. These include government institutions, NGOs, private companies and recruitment agencies. In addition to that, the main key to the job seekers was the use of social networks. The following paragraphs highlight how the participants used these resources in their quest to find employment.

#### 4.3.1.1 *Government initiatives*

Several government initiatives were accessed by the youth through various institutions. For example, the Expanded Public Works Program (EPWP) which engages young people in the maintenance, renewal and rehabilitation of community facilities and infrastructure across the country.

**“I was volunteering first at New World Foundation with the court committees wanting to create a safe environment for my children not moving out of Lavender Hill, I started volunteering on the court committees with New World Foundation, wanting to make it safer and then from there**

New World Foundation gave me the chance to get employed with the EPWP contract yeah” (V17)

“The reason that I am here my sister brought me a form like this, this is for the same **training...and** I signed this contract now with **EPWP**” (LG9).

Three participants indicated that they got their jobs through the EPWP and signed their contract for their current jobs. This government initiative has proven to be helpful to the youth who are seeking to gain access into the world of work (NDP, 2012).

#### 4.3.1.2 *Social networks*

The use of social networks has proven to be very useful in the process of accessing job opportunities. All participants mentioned using social networks at some point in all their career opportunities.

“No I knew about it because my family member worked there and I just asked her for a holiday job and she got me one” (R12)

**“I phoned to the manager, there was a previous manager I phoned her, I got the number from someone who is already employed here, a friend of mine, so I phoned her she told me she gonna get back to me on Monday so she phoned me after two to three weeks and that’s how I started here”** (Q11).

Most of the participants mentioned that they heard of employment positions through friends and relatives but some of them had to do door to door walking, giving their CVs for any possible job that might be available. Evidence from an array of surveys conducted in 2000 shows that most people access jobs **through relatives and friends. Some examples include the Khayelitsha/Mitchell’s Plain Survey (KMPS)** conducted in Cape Town in 2000, which revealed that more than 55 percent of the participants got their current job through friends and relatives (Lam et al, 2008).

#### 4.3.1.3 *Recruitment agencies*

Some participants mentioned the use of recruitment agencies to access employment opportunities, however, they highlighted some of the gaps within the use of them.

**“Well obviously I was recruited by a recruitment agency and I went for an interview there and the problem that I find nowadays the recruitment agencies don’t know what the client is looking for,”** (RW13).

**“I applied through an agency and it’s called Talent from Africa and the director, what happens is she charges you about R500 registration and the only money that you give out is the registration fee and your medical and I think my medical was like R1700 so you do your blood**

test and everything ...make sure that you applying through an agency that is registered, an **agency that's legit, when I applied for S... Hotel...I had my first interview the lady that was from the agency she went with me to my first interview till when I get to know the town and she gave me a talk that your life depends on you and I did my interview also**" (S15)

The use of recruitment agencies seemed to have its good and bad side, as mentioned by the participants, recruitment agencies lighten the process of job search. It is important to make sure that one does not get duped by fake agencies. Valentina (2014) mentioned that using recruitment agencies helps both the employer and the job seeker to match the job seeker with the required skills to the appropriate job.

#### 4.3.1.4 Extra-mural activities

Participating in extra-mural activities and volunteering has seen some participants accessing free education and getting their desired career opportunities.

**"The thing is I actually never paid school fees because me** and the principal was just so because I always uplifted the children, come and then I dance, dance at assemblies and I did everything at the school I represented in my sports and my dance I give Lavender Hill High a name, a big name" (F6).

**"I think its** wanting to get experience by volunteering, its hard volunteering when you have a family **it's** very hard because you thinking of putting the food on the table but I think volunteering gives you the sense of agency it gives you the experience and it tells people that look here if am willing to, if I work hard for no money imagine how hard am gonna work for money so I think **that's what it does**" (V17).

As mentioned in the preceding sections, youth who participate in a range of programs, whether paid or unpaid have **higher chances of accessing employment as evident from the participants' experiences**. The Centre for Development and Enterprise (CDE) (2012) indicated that most youth get their first jobs based on the advice and assistance of someone close to them or by replying to adverts. Some do holiday jobs volunteering or internships; others enter formal learnership programs; some work in government initiatives such as the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP).

## 4.3.2 Employability skills and attributes required

### 4.3.2.1 Basic social and technical skills

There is some evidence that the importance of social skills and personal skills is not to be overlooked as it plays a vital part in getting youth employment. All participants highlighted that having particular skills was an advantage to them in terms of getting employment.

**“...getting employed? I am a speaker, people’s person, I ask so they saw something in me that I didn’t see myself, I have good leadership skills like I told you before, I have talking skills, presenting skills, writing skills, so I think that kind of helped me to get where I wanted to” (T16).**

**“It’s basically your attitude, the way you speak, the way you build your self-confidence, if people don’t see you as a confidence and a well-spoken person they are gonna be like why I would I want to employ you, you have no way to carry yourself you gonna have low self-esteem, you not confident enough, you know people want that stuff like mmm I can be myself but you need to be professional” (S15).**

The participants’ view of valuing skills concurs with the report of World Bank (2006). It is stated that one needs to obtain the appropriate knowledge and skills to become a useful employee or business owner, good parent, and active citizen. Such skills include thinking skills; behavioural skills, occupational skills; and a combination of particular knowledge to execute jobs that depend on clearly defined tasks (World Bank, 2006).

### 4.3.2.2 Educational qualifications

All participants specified the benefits of completing high school for access to employment. In all the interviews, the youth reiterated that having a matriculation certificate is a basic requirement for one to be able to access formal employment. This is due to the constantly changing world of work which requires critical skills and knowledge to perform certain tasks.

**“You could stay at home if you fail but then again what’s it worth, you must go back to school and finish just do your matric and you don’t have anything else at least you know you have matric and you can look for something that say you need a matric certificate kind like a decent job because nowadays there is nothing decent even if you have matric so yeah like that was like what push me” (JN7).**

Having a matriculation certificate proved to be the fundamental background to formal employment, as it opens possibilities of having a wide array of career choices if one chooses to pursue post-matric education. In a survey done in Canada, Saunders (2008) indicated that 59 percent of study participants felt that high school had helped them meet their career objectives. Even though a matriculation certificate

is a vital aspect to access job, it must be noted that a young person's employability improves as education and training are enlarged by experience within a working environment.

#### 4.3.2.3 Work knowledge and experience

It is undeniable that young adults with practical work experience are more likely to get employed as compared to their counterparts with little or no work experience. Most of the participants who got employed soon after high school struggled to find permanent employment opportunities within a reasonable period of time. Most of them managed to get jobs through referrals from their social links. This highlights the importance of work experience for young people.

“Because at the moment at the volunteering I think they actually do assess you they want to **know how you work you know what your friends are, and that's why I can say through volunteering you can also gain knowledge and gain experience and with that you can actually be better equipped for a better job or that job you are in**” (V17).

“The job when I was working during school holidays all my friends where at home but I just felt I needed to work because I had to help that was basically my motivation, and wanting to do **better and then I won't be also lazy because I know how it feels to work because then I have experienced working so that when am actually done with my matric I won't be lazy at home... I went there every school holiday and in matric I didn't go as much because I had extra classes and then December they took me and made me permanent because I worked there before**” (R12).

Some participants have had work experience acquired from the part-time jobs and volunteer experiences during their school going years. Work and volunteering experience can be instrumental, eye-opening and enjoyable experiences, hence some of the participants took part in it to strengthen their job search process. With regards to work experience, most companies want experienced employees which explains why there is high youth unemployment (NDP, 2012). This is because, young people who come out of schools and colleges might not be properly prepared or understand the characteristics of the working world (Weller, 2007).

#### 4.3.3 Summary of job search methods and process

It is worthy to note that the route to access employment is not one way, but it has many dimensions which all lead to employment. The participants in the current study managed to utilise all resources that came their way from government interventions, social networks, to recruitment agencies for them to be able to

access employment. The importance of personal and technical skills was highlighted as the youth needed to have those skills and attributes to be able to get jobs.

#### 4.4. CHALLENGES FACED IN ACCESSING EMPLOYMENT

##### 4.4.1 Types of challenges

###### 4.4.1.1 Finance issues

Almost all participants mentioned the financial difficulties they faced from high school into finding employment. In most cases, this challenges would get in the way of accessing job opportunities as they would be restricted from going to jobs hubs that are not close to their community.

**“... want you to go find a job but you don't have travelling money so how are you gonna go find a job if you don't have travelling money because they don't have to give you or they can't give you or there is problem with money to travel, now it's raining and you can't walk so all that stuff” (S1).**

**“Financial-wise, finance was a big problem because they would never tell you when they would call you they would just call you for an interview say tomorrow and you don't even have money for the taxi you see, financial wise it was a problem to go there and stuff like that yeah that was the problem” (T16).**

It should be noted that because participants did not have enough funds for travelling money, they struggled to get to employment hubs to find jobs. What is admirable is their determination to walk long distances even when they did not have the money to go find employment. Young people from poor communities had to put an extra effort to find jobs as compared to their affluent counterparts hence they need institutional support such as employment creation within their areas (NDP, 2012).

###### 4.4.1.2 Parenting and family dynamics

Most participants mentioned the challenge they faced in accessing jobs while living in Lavender Hill. Due to the high crime levels in the area, there are a lot of illegal activities taking place which affect youth even within their households. Most participants spoke about having family members that were not supportive enough towards achieving their goals. This is mainly because the family members might be battling with their own social problems such as alcohol and drug addiction.

“Yho there were drug abuse and alcohol abuse in my family, my family where I come from ah my mother my grandmother used to drink a lot my cousins were on drugs, tik drugs, stealing **cars and all that stuff I pulled through from there I end staying I don't stay with my parents now** I stay by my aunt now they used to drink but they were not heavy drinkers” (Q11).

“Now am the only one in the family that has matric, I have oldest sister she dropped out standard 9, my brother dropped out grade 10 so I was the only one with matric but yeah. And then my younger sister she is always like no why are you studying help me here and then my brother always used to go to jail as well because he never gets anything right he is always **negative until now he is always like that**” (CR4).

Their households are mainly characterised by family members who lack educational qualifications or work experience. Three participants mentioned that, they were the first to obtain a matriculation certificate within their families. They aspired to do better, and that is why they persevered to complete their high school. **Some mentioned that it is due to their parents' recklessness that they wanted to be role models in their homes.**

“That was hard especially when I was smaller gosh, even there was nothing to eat but there **was drugs it was the sad part and after my mother used to go away and my mother's sister I wouldn't say abuse us but she was just otherwise with us**” (Q11).

Children in Lavender Hill have fewer role models to aspire to. Most of the people in the area have no jobs and the children just grow up knowing that their parents or siblings do not go to work, this is a challenge to the youth as they would lack appropriate support and career or educational advice (New World Foundation, 2011).

#### 4.4.1.3 *Crime and gang violence*

Gang violence stood out to be a major issue in almost all interviews with the participants. As mentioned in the previous chapters, it is the main structural barrier experienced by young people in Lavender Hill which interferes with the daily free movement of people to and from work places.

“In the morning they would shoot, you know like maybe six or seven am, school starts at eight, so sometimes in between then I will sit and wait until they finish so that would mean I would come late at school but the teachers would understand and sometimes they would shoot by the **time I was walking but maybe it's a little that side ...** I would like to move out of Lavender Hill **but not move out and forget where I come from but just a little better in life**” (S1).

“My father died they murdered him here in Lakeview by the river there I think he was taking the workers who worked for him and then they robbed him there and they murdered him so yeah **so now you can think he is now dead the money everything gone...like now you see** the gang

violence, people are scared to come in here so lots of white people at first they would come here, so white people come there expensive cars stuff like that now the gangsters they see now there is a little bit late at night they park their cars, they break in they steal they rob the **people someone shoot on them for nothing so they don't come anymore meaning no funds is there to help the community**" (CR4).

This finding is common to every researcher that undertakes a research study in Lavender Hill. The issues of gang violence contribute to the escalation of problems within the community and the breaking down of social capital. Many social partners would hesitate to operate in an area with high criminal activities going on as they impede the daily routines of the community, making it difficult for organizations such as NWF to function properly (NWF, 2014).

#### *4.4.1.4 Low educational qualifications, skills and experience*

All the participants that were not already undertaking studies in post-matric education, they all mentioned the desire to further their education as they indicated that for them to assume higher post in their careers they need to be highly qualified.

"When I was in grade 12 I actually wanted to be a nurse so I took subjects related to nursing and something like that, that was my dream but due to a lot of peer pressure coming in like **youngsters and others I actually didn't achieve the marks I should have achieved to actually become a nurse**" (J7).

"Ahh now am saving money coz I would like to go study further next year coz I am not sure if am going to change my career now because am thinking I must go to a hotel school am not **sure about it coz I was telling myself the other day that I am going to change to do social work,**" (B3)

For most of the participants to achieve their dream career jobs they indicated that they need to upgrade their qualifications, which they are eager to do because currently, it is the only challenge and limitation to their career goals. Most of them have not reached where they want to be because of low levels of education. Saunders (2008) supports this thought, he indicates that youth with post-secondary qualifications do better in terms of employment and earnings than those without such qualifications.

## 4.4.2 Strategies employed to overcome challenges

### 4.4.2.1 Utilising personal skills and educational qualifications

Due to financial difficulties faced by young people in poor communities, most of them decide to take a break from their studies and find work using the basic educational qualifications and personal skills that they have. They then opt to further their studies once they are financially capable to take care of their living expenses.

**“I wanted to become a journalist but when I was,** I was gonna take a gap year, and then while I was on a gap year **my father passed away then I couldn’t go and study further I had to work for my mother and my sister who is still at school so I couldn’t go and study for journalism degree or media...so it sort of changed am now a,** currently am a baker and am looking at uhh say next year I wanna go and study hospitality” (BN2).

“When I was in grade 12, I wanted to study business management, I always wanted like a permanent position so that I can be like oh yeah am earning some money here and I also can get to study because I can get a bursary so yeah... I needed money because I come from a poor family so I needed money immediately, **I don’t see myself doing work that I am doing now** for the rest of my life, this is kinda like a practical to me what am doing now, like I said I want to **go and study business management”** (T16).

This is a common trend especially to young people living with single parents, the youth tend to take up the role of taking care of the family, abandoning their own dreams. Some of them would want to achieve their aspirations at a later stage in life but most of them change their aspirations completely. This concurs with what Saunders (2008) stated that many young people are not pursuing straight line routes from high school to a post high school program, but rather take time off from studies at some point to find work or switch programs.

### 4.4.2.2 Utilising available resources and networks

All participants highlighted that they made use of the available resources to undertake their career goals. Lavender Hill High School was the main available resource to the participants as they could easily get assistance from their teachers who knew their strengths and weakness and could advise them on wise career decisions that were appropriate to their personal skills and qualifications.

“Lavender Hill high is actually a positive school because the teachers is so motivating they motivating the children they always having after classes and stuff like that you see I would give a high five **to Lavender Hill high because it is one of the most popular schools here...** you know

Richard Branson? From Virgin Active, he is the boss of Virgin Active, he came to visit our school and then I danced for them and that's when I got my bursary you understand that's where I got it that's where they wanted to employ me but then the Principal said but F is now grade 10 so they said okay when he is done with matric he is gonna study, here is the bursary that is how I got it you see" (F6).

"The process I followed I gave my CV to my friend because in this life it's very hard to get in somewhere you have to know someone to get somewhere so I gave my CV to my friend and she talk to her manager and three days after I gave my CV in then they called me in write a test and interview and then I basically started the next week yeah" (EJ5).

The findings indicate that even during post-matric period, the participants still used LHHS as a resource to access employment. The importance of social networks is revealed in how the participants used their teachers and friends to get opportunities. Even though the participants faced numerous challenges, they were determined to succeed through using varied approaches to ensure that they meet their career goals. This is a finding that was also highlighted in the World Youth Report (2007).

#### 4.4.3 Summary of challenges faced in accessing employment

It should be noted that despite the challenges faced by the participants, they were all determined to find employment at all cost. The key point for the participants was to reach out to all possible sources that could help them access employment. Although they were faced with financial challenges, they avoided joining gangs and getting involved in criminal activities. They indicated that most of the youth who get trapped into criminal activities such as gangsterism find it difficult to get out and would be entangled in it forever.

### 4.5. EXISTING SUPPORT SYSTEMS TOWARDS YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

#### 4.5.1 Government programs

##### 4.5.1.1 Municipality programs

Participants pointed out that the local government has assisted them with finding employment. Three participants have benefitted from the City of Cape Town initiatives.

"...like I said I volunteered on the court committees from there I got nominated by K and M from New World Foundation to do the EPWP contract but my hours, the 48 hours that I worked

I would work at New World Foundation so the organisation sent me for the EPWP contract then I worked within the organisation but the government paid me so that is where the link was” (V17)

**“...general worker for the City of Cape Town I was a contractor for five months, the City was employing people giving you five months or six months contract” SF14).**

As can be noted from the experiences of the participants, one could agree with the statement in the National Youth Policy (RSA, 2015) that the Expanded Public Works Programme has expanded the intake and participation of young people. The 2015 Budget Review (RSA, 2015: 27) reports that the incentive had supported the establishment of 216 000 young workers in December 2014. It states that the Jobs Fund had created 30 701 permanent jobs at the start of 2014. The National Youth Policy (RSA, 2015) indicates that at least 30 000 youth benefited from internships and learnerships in the public service ever since the decision to thoroughly implement this programme in 2009.

#### 4.5.1.2 School programs and opportunities

Lavender Hill High School played a vital part in the lives of the participants as they all have praised and appreciated the efforts of their high school teachers.

**“In shaping me, okay they especially Miss P she played a big role because she, they were always positive and there were always the teachers that taught me they were always compliment you, when you did good and **that’s what a child needs** ... they helped my sister get a bursary so yeah **that’s the stuff that really motivated me that there is teachers that wants to see a difference in kids’ life** you just have to prove yourself” (L8).**

**“Shew they played a very big role hey because everything started in high school the teachers are the best they always make a point to tell you never to give up on your dreams and how you can achieve it and you mustn’t let your background or where you come from keep you behind. So the school **played a very big role for me to be where I am now**” (S1).**

**“Mr M (school principal) told me F, **I have a job for you, bring in your CV your bank details that’s what he said**” (F6)**

As indicated by the participants, school is one such context for maximum growth to occur within the area of youth development (Johnson, 2006). Schools also have an important role to play in teaching working skills. In several countries schools allow suitable students to move into professional or work-based curriculum streams during their final years of schooling, often safeguarding credit towards educational qualifications at the same time as working towards technical qualifications (ILO, 2001).

## 4.5.2 Civil society organizations

### 4.5.2.1 Private companies

The engagement of stakeholders such as private companies alleviate the burden of youth employment. This is evident from the six youth participants working in private companies. Two participants mentioned that they got their first jobs when Pick and Pay came to Lavender Hill High School to look for prospective employees.

“People from PnP came to our school and made us fill out forms and they said in a week or two they said we must come and write a test, when people write the test after the test they phone me again to come for interview and I went for the interview after the interview they called me to come for induction they told me they were so impressed and want me to come for induction like **a training and then I got into PnP and then I worked**” (T16).

“I got the job at school there was one teacher that gave us applications to go and that was just to give me experience from that company so I went there that time... we had to write a test for **the company some didn't make it, there was a lot who didn't make it**” (BN2)

As evident from the experiences of the participants, it can be beneficial in promoting youth employment if employers can participate on school boards, lobby governments on the importance of core competencies and provide feedback on the employability of recent school graduates (Sanghoon & Hemmings, 2000).

### 4.5.2.2 Recruitment agencies

Finding employment can be a daunting task, many young people try to do it on their own and it has its own difficulties. Recruitment agencies are there to link job seekers to the jobs that they want and have skills for. One of the participants mentioned that she had good experiences with recruitment agencies.

“There is this one place in town also that is like a job search and job something something I **don't know the name but if you go to** them you give them R60 and then they will help you find a job and there agencies, there is a lot of agencies that also help but also sometimes its free, **sometimes you pay sometimes you don't**” (B3).

“Resources I know of is Kelly employment, I just heard that **they send you on training, it's like an employment agency, and Quest I don't know if you heard about Quest yes, they also do training and find jobs**” (Q11).

Valentina (2014) mentions that one of the advantages of recruitment agencies is that they are able to access open vacancies that are not advertised. Recruitment agencies are also instrumental in helping youth to present well-written CVs and motivational letters to employers.

#### 4.5.2.3 Community NGOs and churches

Participants indicated that community organisations are playing **a huge role in developing youths'** lives and career skills. **The role of religion in shaping the young people's lives is not to be ignored as most of** the participants indicated how it has helped them achieve their goals.

**"My pastor at our church he came as always he take on matriculants for the first of season and he approached me so I applied not applied he took my CV and I went the whole of December I was working in January my contact finished, the sixth of January and then I was at home in the same month of January then he came and he said there is a permanent position nothing no experience whatsoever I just go for the December I just go work and like we like do customer service account, so our pastor is passed away but I thank God every day that if it wasn't for him then I don't know where I would be" (J7).**

**"I overcame it by becoming a Christian yes God is the, I believe God is the only way and am stable today because of that I know I can't do that I should do that I should do the right things I shouldn't do the wrong things so I would say it's because of God that I am so stable today"**

The participants expressed the role of religion in their lives towards finding jobs. Church pastors appeared to play a significant role in facilitating employment access to youth as evident from the interviews. One could understand the role of religion in relation to the importance of the spiritual need from the basic human needs theory which entails discovering and giving meaningful and coherence to **one's existence** in relation to people, nature and the world (Taylor, 2014). The participants admitted that from that time they ask for guidance from God, their prayers were answered and found jobs because the Lord had heard their prayers, reinforcing their spiritual need to rely on a high power above.

#### 4.5.3 Summary of existing support systems towards youth employment

Clearly, for youth employment to improve, a range of support systems must be in place, this had been highlighted in this theme as all the participants used various sources to get to where they are currently in terms of career opportunities. Most youth use government, agencies, churches and NGOs to get assistance.

## 4.6. PERCEPTIONS OF YOUTH ON FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

### 4.6.1 Perceived factors causing youth unemployment

#### 4.6.1.1 Laziness

Almost every participant mentioned the issue of laziness among unemployed youth, they indicated that unless they abandon the lazy attitude they would not be able to find work.

**“Firstly, some of the youth are very lazy, they don’t want to stand up in the morning and they don’t to go look for work because their parents work for them give them money so that’s why and they drop out of school and they don’t have matric” (S1).**

**“They are just too lazy to go and get it, that’s the thing coz you see like if you really want to work, there is like house projects that’s happening and stuff but some youngsters is like they just want to sit in the sun and ask for one rands man that’s all they want to do” (B3)**

The participants presented the idea that idle youth are more likely to want lots of money and nice things. This builds the idea of engaging in criminal activities. The National Youth Policy (RSA, 2015) emphasises the need for youth to engage in productive roles towards youth development, creating safe spaces and avoiding criminal activities.

#### 4.6.1.2 Lack of moral support

Eight participants cited that community and family members should stop the selfishness and start thinking about building and motivating each other. They all indicated that they must improve information dissemination about job prospects to advance youth employment in Lavender Hill area.

**“Our close people they will say bad things about you like badmouth you that you will also be like they think nothing of me and then you will just go into whatever you can... not enough support within their houses, if you don’t have good support system obviously you will go look for love somewhere else” (B3)**

**“...would make that person feel so small and cut that person some, some person in the house because you wanna feel, you make the next person feel inferior because you want to be superior, I think that is the negative effect then you would feel like nothing in the household for people if you are not doing something” (V17).**

Currently, moral support seems to be lacking starting at household level. A number of youth end up joining gangs where they would feel the sense of belonging unlike in their own households. The lack of

proper guidance proved to be one of the challenges for youth to access employment as it emanates from negative role models who are parents to the youth.

#### 4.6.2 Ways to improve youth employment

##### 4.6.2.1 Government and community partnerships

Three participants highlighted the need for stronger partnerships between government sectors and community members. This would bring positive result with regards to youth capacity building and opportunities.

“The government should create more jobs and then the other thing also that should be done is like there **is this people that want to study and they don’t have the money to study they should** at least give more learnerships or scholarships or grants in schools, if they can come like once **or twice a month just to come and speak to the youth” (B3).**

“When you coming **straight from matric you don’t have experience so I think the government** they should have a how can I call it, like a training session where you can get experience on how to work like that, stuff like that so the if the government could get that into place when am **applying for a job they talk about experience if you don’t have experience ah you down again** you see, so if the government could **put that in place” (T16).**

The community members could play a role in their societies through caring, serving, connecting, supporting and helping. Provincial government could also offer corruption-free welfare services to the poor and vulnerable in partnership with stakeholders and civil society (David et al, 2009).

##### 4.6.2.2 The need for youth to change attitudes

All participants alluded that some youth from Lavender Hill should change their attitudes towards finding employment because they are too relaxed to worry about job opportunities.

“...starting with confidence, they have to be confident, believe in yourself because **if don’t** believe in yourself no one will, have self-respect because it starts by you, if you want to do **something someone else would see it and help you even if you don’t have money you don’t have nothing that’s not an excuse” (S1).**

“They should be more motivated, more goal-oriented, they should see goals from themselves **they should like I said they should dream don’t just** yeah they should tell themselves okay I stay here I stay in Lavender Hill I have two children I have a duty to feed them, **don’t set your bar aim for more” (Q11).**

The participants mentioned that youth need to be more goal-oriented, confident and have self-respect for them to succeed in life. Some of the unemployed youth dropped out of school, had teenage pregnancies or are using drugs. This exacerbates their chances of not finding jobs, so they need to rectify their past mistakes if they want to develop themselves. Since parents are still taking care of their grown-up children, some of the youth are not eager to wake up in the morning to go find work. Many of the youth are said to be loitering in the streets of Lavender Hill or sitting on the pavements during the day asking for one rand coins (Wonnacott, 2005).

#### 4.6.3 Summary perceptions of youth on factors contributing to youth unemployment

The participants described some of the factors that they perceive as contributing to the youth unemployment in Lavender Hill. Some of the factors include gangsterism, drug and alcohol abuse, teen pregnancy, laziness, lack of self-respect or motivation. Some of the ways that were suggested by the participants for the unemployed youth to access jobs include developing sense of urgency, and to stop being lazy, to be determined to go an extra mile and not wait on government support. Also, the participants suggested that the community members must stop being selfish and share information about possible job opportunities that they might know. Parents were encouraged to take responsibility of their children and discipline them so that when they grow up they know the principles and values to a happy and fulfilling life. Lastly, parents need to be positive role models for their children so that they can have good aspirations stemming from their households and communities.

#### 4.7 OVERALL SUMMARY

This chapter has analysed and presented the findings of this study. The main reasons that stood out from **the interviews regarding the participants' determination towards their career goals is the need to live a comfortable life and to be positive role models of their community.** The participants indicated that they explored all avenues in their quest to access jobs but LHHS and NWF seemed to be the easily accessible support systems for many youths. In accessing jobs, youth face a plethora of challenges such as financial constraints, crime within their community and lack of family or parental support. Skills and educational qualifications seemed to be an issue, considering that only a five of them had post-matric certificates. Some of the youth indicated that they were already advancing their education and attaining skills which they encouraged the unemployed youth to do, for them to overcome the unemployment challenge within their community. The following chapter highlights the conclusions and recommendations informed by findings.

## CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

This concluding chapter presents conclusions and recommendations established from the research findings. Recommendations are provided based on the findings and conclusions for the advancement of youth development through promoting youth employment. The recommendations are targeted at the currently unemployed youth, parents in the community, government and all stakeholders that are involved in youth development program.

### 5.2 CONCLUSIONS

5.2.1 Objective 1: To explore the vision of young people regarding employment at the time they matriculated

The findings indicated that the visions of young people at the time they matriculated varied among the participants. Almost all the participants knew what they wanted to do in terms of career choices, only three did not have specific career choices. What was common to all participants was the need to find work and to improve their standards of living as well as helping their struggling families when they get employed. Only one participant has fulfilled his vision that he had during matric, the rest changed their visions due to various circumstances or they are still in the process to achieve them through advancing their qualifications. The majority participants faced financial challenges which hindered them to realise their dream careers, but some fell pregnant and others lacked the skills and credentials for their dream jobs. Despite the various circumstances the participants chose to pursue different pathways which guided **them to find other job opportunities. It is noteworthy that the participants' attitudes** and sources of motivation towards finding employment remained the same even though their career choices changed over time. The common factors among all participants that drove them to unceasingly look for jobs include gangsterism, crime, substance and alcohol abuse, lack of positive role models. These appear to be the main driving forces behind the attitudes and aspirations of youth which gave them the willpower to believe that if they acquire education and requisite skills they can be successful in life, to be optimistic about what the future holds for them and to look for any kind of jobs until they work themselves up to higher positions.

### 5.2.2 Objective 2: To investigate the process they followed to become employed

This objective was met as evident from the findings that illustrates the various methods employed by the participants to access jobs. The findings show that the route to access employment is not one way, but has many dimensions which all lead to employment. The participants in the current study managed to utilise all resources that came their way from government interventions, social networks, to recruitment agencies for them to be able to access employment. All participants demonstrated that having a qualification or skills was a huge advantage to them during their job search process. Having work experience was also a vital component towards their odds of finding jobs. Such experience was gained from volunteering, recreational activities or part time jobs undertaken during school holidays at the time they were in high school. Eight participants indicated that they got their current jobs through their previous school, volunteer or part- time work links. Five participants mentioned the use of social networks such as friends, relatives or high school teachers to find jobs. Four participants showed that they had to put a lot of effort, going to work places dropping in their CVs, walking long distances in cases where they did not have travelling fares to get to employment hubs before they could find jobs. Government initiatives, local NGOs, churches and private companies appeared to have helped the participants in getting where they are currently employed.

### 5.2.3 Objective 3: To ascertain the main challenges they faced to get where they are currently

The participants indicated the challenges they faced in their quest to access jobs. Common challenges to all participants included financial constraints, which restricted their free movement to access jobs elsewhere since there were no much jobs within their community. Lack of moral support and parental guidance within family households proved to be a hindrance to youth employment as six participants indicated that they did not have proper family support because some of their parents and siblings were trapped in alcohol and drug abuse. This led to a lack of family role models that the youth could look up to and would rely on school teachers for moral and career support. Gangstersim and violence was and still is a huge structural barrier to youth accessing jobs, the participants mentioned that it is difficult to have free movement any time due to the ongoing shootings that happen in their community. Sometimes the shootings disturbed school activities as they also took place around school area. Six of the youth moved out of Lavender Hill because of that and to get close to their job places. Low skills and educational qualifications has been mentioned as a challenge, however fifteen youth mentioned that they needed to further their qualifications beyond what they have now to be able to secure higher positions within their workplaces or elsewhere. One participant mentioned that she is now prioritising her child's education so

that he does not have to go through the same challenges that she went, thus she has given up furthering her education and is focusing on providing for her son. It should be noted that despite the challenges faced by the participants, they were all determined to find employment at all cost. Strategies to overcome the challenges were implemented, with the aid of available support systems, the participants managed to overcome them. Even though the challenges are persisting, the participants indicated that they are now better able to deal with them as they now have jobs as a point of their strength. The key point for the participants was to reach out to all possible sources that could help them access employment. Although they were faced with financial challenges, they resisted the peer pressure of joining gangs and getting involved in criminal activities. The participants indicated that most of the youth who get trapped into criminal activities such as gangsterism find it difficult to get out and would be entangled in it forever.

5.2.4 Objective 4: To examine their knowledge and experience of sources of support for youth, regarding finding employment in Cape Town

Seeing that the youth participants are employed, this objective has been met as the participants detailed the sources of support that they used to access jobs. For participants who have had more than one job, they also have experience of a wide range of sources of support that they might have used or heard about. Government programs such as the Expanded Public Works Programme has been used by three participants, it has been a starting point to explore the world of paid work for them. The use of recruitment agencies has also been indicated in the findings, two participants have made use of the recruitment agencies and it was a good experience. Three participants mentioned the role of church in their mission to get jobs, they relied on church for spiritual support to strengthen their hope and persevere in job search. The majority of the participants spoke about how they made use of private companies that reached out to their school and community such as Pick and Pay to get jobs. Use was made of local NGOs, like NWF to do free computer courses, access to information on further educational and career opportunities. Lavender Hill high School was a widely-used support system because of its open-hearted and supportive teachers that constantly offer moral and career support. It is unequivocal that, for youth employment to improve a range of support systems must be in place, this has been highlighted in the findings as all the participants used various sources to get to where they are currently in terms of career opportunities. The youth used government, agencies, churches and NGOs to get assistance. The youth employment issue is a huge area for stakeholders to leave to government alone.

5.2.5 Objective 5: To explore their thoughts on reasons why many Lavender Hill youth are unemployed

The participants described some of the factors that they perceive as contributing to the youth unemployment in Lavender Hill. Some of the **participants' perceptions on** factors leading high levels of youth unemployment in Lavender Hill include gangsterism, drug and alcohol abuse, teen pregnancy, laziness, lack of self-respect or motivation. The participants suggested some of the ways that can be used by the unemployed youth to access jobs. These include developing sense of urgency, and to stop being lazy, to be determined to go an extra mile and not wait on government support. The participants suggested that the community members must stop being selfish and share information about possible job opportunities that they might know. Parents were encouraged to take responsibility of their children and discipline them so that when they grow up they know the principles and values to a happy and fulfilling life. Parents were urged to be positive role models for their children so that they can have good aspirations that emanate from their households and communities. The conclusions are in line with the objectives of this study.

### 5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

From the above conclusions, the following recommendations are made.

#### 5.3.1 Recommendations for government

The researcher recommends that relevant government departments offer safety nets for youth in poor townships for them to counter the hindrances they face towards accessing jobs by working together with local citizens, communities and businesses, and adopting a developmental approach. For example, the department of Social Development must ensure that programs that foster resilience, creative families and communities are functioning properly.

#### 5.3.2 Recommendations for NGOs

Community NGOs are recommended to advance their services for youth in career information and support them with instant education and training decisions.

### 5.3.3 Recommendations for private companies

The researcher recommends the partnership of private companies and local schools and post-secondary institutions to create platforms where the companies can speak to students about career opportunities and expected skills as well as mentoring them and offering placements that give youths the much-needed skills and experience while they complete their high school, college, university or apprenticeship program.

### 5.3.4 Recommendations for the youth and community members

The researcher recommends community members to play their role in their societies through caring, serving, connecting, supporting and helping. Young people are recommended to refrain from drug abuse, alcoholism, joining gangs, having early unprotected sex, and dropping out of school.

### 5.3.5 Recommendations for further research

Basing on the **findings presented**, it can be noted that there is need to understand the educators' perceptions on what facilitates or hinders **young people's access to employment**. Considering that the educators spent most of the time with the youths, they understand better the gaps and weaknesses in **the youths' lives** that need to be filled to ensure high employment rate in the community.

## CONCLUSION

This study was a great experience for the researcher, both personally and professionally. It helped her understand the qualitative research process and the intricate details needed to ensure that the most appropriate methodology was used to meet her research objectives. The study was eye-opening to the researcher to some of the struggles that are faced by youth in accessing employment. Nevertheless, it was also a good experience to understand how the employed youth have explored their pathways to be employed and how other unemployed youth could use the same routes to access jobs.

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## LIST OF APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR LAVENDER HILL EMPLOYED YOUTH UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN



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#### DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

•Private Bag •Rondebosch 7701 •South Africa

#### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PARTICIPANTS:

#### SOUTH AFRICAN EMPLOYED YOUTH FROM LAVENDER HILL

##### INTRODUCTION

- Introduce self
- Thank for participation
- Purpose of research
- Ethical considerations:
  - Digital recording
  - Confidentiality - link to choice of pseudonym
  - Voluntary participation
  - Access to findings
  - Referral if necessary
- No right or wrong answers
- Estimated time frame of interview
- Sign consent form
- Fill demographic information (separate sheet)

#### SECTION A: Getting to know the participant

*I want to know a little bit more about you and your life:*

1. What three words would those who know you well use to describe you as a person?(*Probe main strengths*)
2. Tell me about your role-models (if any) when you were growing up.

3. What activities did you do during your school holidays (*Probe: volunteering, part-time employment, hobbies.*)
4. What was your main aspiration/vision in respect of employment while you were in grade 12? (*Explore whether this vision on employment has changed over the years and if so, in what respects and why*)
5. Tell me about the role played by your household members for you to be where you are today. (*Probe nature of relationships, type of support they offered in relation to employment aspirations*)
6. What motivated you to be where you are currently? (*Explore sources of motivation; explore what kept them focused on achieving their vision*)
7. What do you think are the factors that have contributed to you being employed while many others are not? (*Probe around what she did to make herself employable, probe around role played by Lavender Hill High School*)<sup>1</sup>
8. What process did you follow to get employed? (*Probe each step of the process including the job hunting procedures, application process, interview process, training for the job, retaining the job, probe nature of challenges of each step*)
9. Where else have you been employed apart from your current job?
10. What (if any) are your future plans regarding employment? (*Probe where she sees herself in 10 years' time, if she plans to change nature of job/career or not*)

#### SECTION B: Life and living in Lavender Hill

- 1) What have your experiences been of growing up in Lavender Hill community? (*Probe around challenges and how she dealt with them*)
- 2) Linked to this, what do you see as the advantages (if any) and disadvantages of living in Lavender Hill community?
- 3) What are your views on what it is about the community that facilitates and that hinders access of its residents to social and economic opportunities? (*Probe: geographical location, social networks, recreational facilities; housing, structure of households*).
- 4) What are your views on the main factors that contribute to the high levels of youth unemployment in Lavender Hill?
- 5) What do you think should happen to reduce levels of youth unemployment in Lavender Hill?
- 6) Please talk to me about resources in Cape Town that assist youth to find employment (*Probe: knowledge of these resources; experiences of them; views on level of effectiveness*).

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<sup>1</sup> The word 'she' will be used to refer to both male and female

## SECTION C: Recommendations

1. What are your views (if any) on how life and living in the Lavender Hill community could be improved to promote youth employment? (*Probe: what role the participant may be prepared to play, what role should the government play, what role community members should play to improve youth employment*)
2. What are some of the characteristics that youth need to possess to access employment?
3. If you had the power to change one thing to improve chances of youth employment in Lavender Hill, what would it be?

### Termination

1. Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to interview you and sharing with me your knowledge and experience.
2. Do you have anything else you would like to add on your journey to employment?
3. Do you have any questions for me?
4. How has this interview been for you?

□□□□

APPENDIX B: PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

Department of Social Development

PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

SOUTH AFRICAN EMPLOYED YOUTH FROM LAVENDER HILL

Kindly complete the form below. Either write a response or place a circle around the appropriate response:

Pseudonym (please specify):					
Gender	Male		Female		Other :( please specify):
Relationship status	Single	Married	Live together	Divorced	Widowed
My age in years	18-25		26-30	31-35	
My employment status	Full-time Employed	Part-time Employed	Self-employed/ Business	Other (please specify).....	
If employed:	What is your occupation/profession? (please specify): .....				
Population group	Black African	'Coloured'	Asian/Indian	White	
Religious grouping	Christian	Muslim	African traditional	Other (please specify): ..... .....	
Size of household during matric	Please indicate the total number of people who lived in your household, including yourself: .....				
Household Composition during matric	Please indicate your household composition: ..... Guardians: ..... Siblings: 1) Older than you.....2) Younger than you..... Other (please specify).....				
Current place of residence					
Year moved out of LH (if applicable)					
Year matriculated					

My highest level of education	Matric (Grade 12)	Post-matric certificate or diploma	Degree	Other post-matric education and/or training.....
Disability	Yes		No	
Citizenship	South African citizen	Permanent resident	Refugee	

APPENDIX C: A FRAMEWORK FOR POVERTY REDUCTION IN THE POST-APARTHEID ERA  
A framework for poverty reduction in the post-apartheid era

Trickle-down effect	Job creation	Basic needs	Social safety nets	Asset building/redistribution
<p><i>Macroeconomic stability:-</i></p> <p>(i) Budget deficit reduction</p> <p>(ii) Restrictive monetary policy</p> <p>(iii) Managed trade liberalisation</p> <p>(iv) Exchange rate and price stabilisation</p> <p>(v) Regulated flexibility of the labour market</p> <p>(vi) Productivity improvements.</p>	<p><i>Human resource development:</i></p> <p>(i) National skills development strategy (learnerships &amp; SETAs)</p> <p>(ii) Further education and training</p> <p>(iii) Adult Basic Education and Training</p> <p><i>Special pro-employment programs:</i></p> <p>(i) Clean Cities Campaign;</p> <p>(ii) Working for Water;</p> <p>(iii) Coastal Care;</p> <p>(iv) Land Care Campaign;</p> <p>(v) Municipal Infrastructure Programme;</p> <p>(vi) Welfare Programs;</p>	<p>(i) Pre- &amp; primary education</p> <p>(ii) Primary health care</p> <p>(iii) Water &amp; sanitation</p> <p>(iv) Housing</p> <p>(v) Electrification or other alternative sources of energy</p>	<p><i>Occupational insurance:</i></p> <p>(i) Unemployment insurance Fund (UIF)</p> <p><i>Social assistance:-</i></p> <p>(i) Social grants, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Old-age</b> pensions</li> <li>• <b>Disability</b> grants</li> <li>• <b>War Veterans'</b></li> <li>• <b>Foster Care</b></li> <li>• <b>Care</b> Dependency</li> <li>• <b>Child Support</b></li> <li>• <b>Grant-in-Aid</b></li> </ul> <p>(ii) Other poverty alleviation initiatives: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>School Nutrition</b> Programme</li> <li>• <b>Social Relief of</b> Distress Programme</li> <li>• <b>Disaster Relief</b></li> </ul>	<p>(i) Land Reform Programme</p> <p>(ii) The delivery of housing</p>

	<p>(vii)community- Based Public Works Programs; Extended Public Works Programme;</p> <p>(viii)Arts and Culture poverty relief projects Extended Public Works Programme;</p> <p>(ix) Arts and Culture poverty relief projects</p>		<p>Programme • <b>Food Relief</b> Programme</p>	
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Adapted from (Mbuli, 2008)

APPENDIX D: **'INFORMED CONSENT' FORM**

**'INFORMED CONSENT' FORM**

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

My name is Miriam Kanengoni. I am conducting research on the topic of “An exploration of Lavender Hill youth’s pathways to employment”. This research forms part of the qualification of a Master of Social Science (MSocSc) degree in Social Development.

Dr Margie Booyens is my Dept. of Social Development, UCT supervisor and can be contacted at:

Tel: 021 650-3481 Email: [margaret.booyens@uct.ac.za](mailto:margaret.booyens@uct.ac.za)

My email address is: [mkanengony@gmail.com](mailto:mkanengony@gmail.com)

You can contact me or my supervisor should you have any questions.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the project. I would like to emphasise that:

- Your participation is entirely voluntary, thus no one has forced you to take part in this project;
- You are free to refuse to answer any question;
- You are free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason, with no negative consequences of any kind.

The interview will be kept strictly confidential and will be available only to the researcher (myself) and my supervisor. Extracts from the interviews will form part of the final research report, but your pseudonyms will be used. Under no circumstances will your name or any identifying characteristics be included in the report. A copy of the report will be kept in the UCT Libraries.

Please sign this consent form to indicate that I have fully informed you about the nature, purpose and process of the research and that I have your consent to include you as a research participant.

Name of participant.....

Date.....

Signature .....

Researcher.....

Date.....

Signature.....