



***Dreams come true: Youth Entrepreneurs in eSikhawini  
Township, Richards Bay***

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## **Abstract**

This research project examines the emergence of youth entrepreneurs in the moments just before mining and industrial activities develop within a community. It focuses on how young people engage with the hopes and promise of opportunities engendered by the expansion of mines and industry within a particular place. Using ethnography as methodology, it looks at how young people's dreams and desires in eSikhawini, a township in the Richards Bay area within the uMhlathuze Municipality, are activated by the coming of mining activities and how they use these to create entrepreneurs. In the context of mining and industrial expansion, young people use the promise of opportunity and the pursuit of dreams and desires to create particular kinds of entrepreneurs who attempt to stabilize their lives and that of their community in the face of precarity. It argues that the interrelations emergent in the daily enterprise of creating a stable future are key resources and insurance against uncertainty that sustain "community" in the context of eSikhawini. Overall, the thesis attempts to demonstrate that by recognising and strengthening youth entrepreneurs' capacity to aspire and realise their dreams can entrepreneurship interventions and programmes foster and sustain empowering relationships amongst marginalized people living in areas affected by mining and mineral beneficiation.

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## Chapter 1 Introduction

This dissertation explores the emergence of youth entrepreneurs in eSikhawini Township, located in the Richard's Bay area within the uMhlathuze Municipality. This township, as are others located on the peripheries of the city, is marred by a perpetual limit to resources. Residents of eSikhawini, then, are often relegated to a life of precariousness. As a space rich in mineral resources, however, eSikhawini offers the promise of opportunity engendered by mining and industrial expansion. The data presented in this dissertation reveal the ways in which the promise of opportunity produces dreams and desires among youth in eSikhawini, ultimately provoking them into action, in pursuit of particular kinds of entrepreneurship.

Inspiration for this dissertation emerged while reading Muzi Kuzwayo's (2012) acclaimed book, *Black Man's Medicine*. As I read the book on the notion of true economic freedom through the concept of Self-Employment Equity (henceforth, SEE) as the new BEE, this established, and one could argue successful, entrepreneur and lecturer at The University of Cape Town's (UCT) Graduate School of Business, reminded me of my father. My father comes from the generation of black entrepreneurs whom Mabandla (2015) refers to as the third generation of middle class black people in the former Transkei. The proclamation of the Transkei as an 'independent homeland' expanded the promise of opportunity by the Bantustan institutional structure. Through the promise of new opportunity my father was able to purchase and grow a retail supermarket and added two wholesales and distribution services as the Africanisation policies of Transkei regime sought to replace white officials and entrepreneurs with black ones. My father started out at Browns, a missionary station with a small retail shop at kuChaba area in the Engcobo area. His father worked as a postman but also had a very successful business farming and selling various fruits. White professionals such as doctors and lawyers would make long trips from the town of Engcobo to purchase the famous fresh produce. It was common for black farmers to use mixed models in business where wages from occupations both funded businesses and were used to buy cattle and other livestock (Mabandla, 2015). As the Bantu homeland institutions solidified from 1976, people like my father could sustain the family (immediate and extended, including strangers) operating business without taking other employment occupations.

Reading *Black Man's Medicine* felt like having a conversation with my deceased father. Just like my father, Kuzwayo has extensive retail experience through successfully opening and personally running a franchise of Pick n Pay in Mthatha and Sterkspruit in the Eastern Cape.

My father's business, however, was not a franchise, even though it retained the name of the white family it was named after. Kuzwayo shares his experiences, drawing particularly from the franchise in Mthatha as well as from the advertising company that he owned in Johannesburg. It is from the grounded experience in business that Kuzwayo makes a compelling case for becoming and being an entrepreneur. The scope of this project does not allow me to unpack Kuzwayo's book in detail as it would deviate from the project's focus on other forms of entrepreneurship. Important to highlight, however, is Kuzwayo's support for the forms of entrepreneurship education and skills training, modelled from air-conditioned ivory towers and promoted through various MBA programmes. The mistake is the national governments' uncritical acceptance of these recommendations with very little basis. In advocating "gravel-economics", Kuzwayo writes "A statistic is like a G-sting. What it reveals is amazing, but what it hides... That's where it's at" (Kuzwayo, 2012: xii). Similar to Kuzwayo, my role is to not make recommendations. I aim to make industry and government (including academia) rethink by making the familiar a little differently. Kuzwayo's SEE framework addresses a sobering reality that those who have not managed to get a slice of the BEE deal are less likely to ever get one. Furthermore, those who have already received it are not interested in sharing. This, coupled by the inability for both industry and government to create jobs - something that will only get worse in the future - makes SEE the next best thing.

There are several ideas that would require further conversation with Kuzwayo, as a father and son would engage in debate. While Kuzwayo extensively covers the learnings from and the future of entrepreneurship for black South Africans, the book does not consider the social relationships that have a determinant effect on how ground-economics, from which entrepreneurs emerge. This dissertation, then, fills that gap about what youth in the most unlikely places are able to achieve as entrepreneurs. In eSikhawini Township in uMhlathuze Municipality, the promise of opportunity engendered in the expansion of mines and minerals beneficiation activates dreams and aspiration, creating the kind of youth entrepreneurs that seek to stabilise their future. It is in the daily enterprise of negotiating various relationships in an attempt to claim respectability, dignity and personhood that communities are sustained by the enterprise. The focus on social interactions that form the ground-economics is at the centre of the emergence of youth entrepreneurs in mining affected areas. The chapters in the dissertation have been inspired by one of the chapters in Kuzwayo's (2012) book entitled "Believe. Do. Package."

This dissertation also explores the ethics of knowledge production and thinking. It critically engages with researching people located in the margins. In most research the lived experiences of those people defined by precarity are often ignored and imposed with paternalistic forms of intervention. These forms of interventions are justified by statistics often stating *what* is rather than *why* it is. What is known about youth entrepreneurs is their failure and inadequacy. The dominant knowledge is that entrepreneurs and business must contribute meaningfully to the state and the economy (Marock, 2005; Steenkamp et al, 2011; Turton and Herrington, 2012; Youth Enterprise Development Strategy, 2011: 20; Enukwesu, 2012). Locality is understood as an environment that largely contributes to unemployment and poverty. In this regard, the kind of enterprises that the economic model enforces encourages individual entrepreneurs that are detached from the community. The epistemological foundation of this knowledge production and thinking privileges economic growth at the expense of multiple forms of interdependent achievement which are socially compact, culturally complex and internally diverse.

## **1.1 Motivation**

The topic on this dissertation – youth entrepreneurship and the promise of opportunity – emerged from observations of and encounters with various stakeholders involved in minerals beneficiation in the Richards Bay Special Economic Zone (SEZ). During a three-day visit, interviews were held with representatives in various management positions at the Richards Bay Industrial Development Zone (henceforth, RBIDZ), the City of uMhlatuze, Umfolozi College, and an induction at BHP Billiton’s Enterprise Development Centre. The conversations held, for instance, at City Planning offices are informative as an introduction to the area as an economic and politicised landscape that frames decision-making processes with potential social implications. These processes particularly impact the promise of opportunity realized through skills training and job creation. From the conversations it emerges that Richards Bay, is a one dimensional, dependent economic system where the mining and minerals industry, led by the “big six” (BHP Billiton, Tata Steel, Bell, RBM, Exxaro and Foskor), provide the dominant economy that smaller local enterprises serve as suppliers in logistical, transportation and distribution services. The City Planning official further stated that when loans were secured to start small businesses, the main form of enterprise was building plants or renting property that was contracted to industry. Such heavy dependency on industry, largely influenced by international market prices, was a risk to local business in moments such as the low cost of minerals and reduced demand. The participants concluded

that the risk of depending solely on the manufacturing industry with volatile mineral international prices to create opportunity for local business and provide jobs was too high. Regional development strategies with national government funding support led to the establishing of the RBIDZ as a Special Economic Zone. As the agency of the KwaZulu Natal Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, the aims of RBIDZ are to attract investment in export-oriented industry and to promote export of value-added manufactured products. The main promises of regional development engendered in the expansion of industry through minerals development is the creation of jobs and opportunities for local entrepreneurs. Youth participation in entrepreneurship has been identified and adapted as a national priority, as has been reflected in the New Growth Plan policy where the expansion of mining and minerals beneficiation promises job opportunities in an effort to reduce inequality and alleviate poverty. Support structures by both government and industry have focused on providing skills training associated with entrepreneurship for youth. Yet, perceptions about youth as lazy, unskilled and ineffective entrepreneurs continue to surface. According to various stakeholders in uMhlatuze Municipality, the youth are divided into two main categories; those from the rural areas and those from the township. What differs between the two was access to resources and information. Youth in townships are more active in seeking opportunities and acting on or activating their aspirations, while young people in rural areas are seen to struggle due to their perceived lack of access to vital entrepreneurial resources<sup>1</sup>. This perception contradicted my everyday interactions with young people in the area, who demonstrated passion, drive, resilience and active pursuit of opportunity engendered by the promise of mineral and industrial beneficiation. Unlike what was perceived by bureaucrats and corporates as trapped in ‘waithood’, the young people I encountered during my exploratory studies in the Richards Bay area constantly enacted opportunities and skillfully transformed existing relationships into networks of entrepreneurship. They acted on the aspirations and dreams activated by the promises of opportunity created by mineral beneficiation – hence the subject of this dissertation.

## **1.2 Research Question**

This research project proposes to address the following questions: How does the promise of opportunity affect young people who find themselves in precarity? What do they do with it? How do they imagine the promises of minerals beneficiation? This research project examines the emergence of youth entrepreneurs in the moments before mining and industrial activities

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<sup>1</sup> Interview at Richards Bay Industrial Development Zone on 15 May 2014

develop within their community. It focuses on how young people engage with the hopes and promise of opportunities engendered by the expansion of mines and industry within a particular place. It explores how young people's dreams and desires in eSikhawini, a township in the Richards Bay area within the uMhlathuze Municipality, are activated by the coming of mining activities and how they use these to create entrepreneurs.

In the context of mining and industrial expansion, young people use the promise of opportunity and the pursuit of dreams and desires to create particular kinds of entrepreneurs who attempt to stabilize their lives and that of their community in the face of precarity. Specifically, the research questions the project thus seeks to understand are: (1) What kinds of youth entrepreneurship emerge as a result of mining and minerals beneficiation activities? (2) How do young people sustain communities and create stable futures through entrepreneurship? (3) How can mining and minerals beneficiation activities use the model of youth entrepreneurship embedded in community sustaining ventures to foster better and productive relationships with people living in affected areas? The overall objective of the project is to provide knowledge and information for sustainable minerals and resources development. By focusing on the socio-cultural and political aspects of mineral beneficiation, the project seeks to provide insights into the importance of placing people at the centre of mining and industrial activities.

### **1.3 Research Problem**

As one of the Special Economic Zones, Richards Bay is located along the coast of north-eastern KwaZulu-Natal. It has evolved from a small fishing village to an international deep-water port and is home to several global corporations that have contributed extensively to the economy of the area. The local municipal area is rich in mineral resources such as ilimite, rutile, zircon, and coal. Richards Bay Coal Terminal is the largest coal export facility in the world (Cohen, B. et al, 2014). In addition to minerals, other natural qualities include the area's diverse and immensely cultivated agricultural resources, namely sugar cane and tree plantations. This infrastructure makes Richards Bay well placed to supply other material requirements of the industries located in and around the town. According to a recent report, the refractory industry operating in the area is suited to collaborate with existing South African expertise in order to beneficiate domestic minerals so that advantages may spread to other beneficiation industries (Status quo report, 2013: 44). Despite this significant development and the engendered promise of opportunity, Richards Bay's Township, like South most South African towns cities, is faced with various challenges such as poverty and

unemployment, often resulting in other problems related to the two. These include drug addiction, school drop-outs and forms of violence. In their case study on Local Economic Development (henceforth, LED) programmes in Richards Bay/Umhlatuze, Hill and Goodenough (2005) show the complexities that prevented the municipality from fully implement pro-poor LED initiatives. As one of the objectives of LED, the district and local municipalities set out to create sustainable employment through small business development within communities where they operate (City of uMhlatuze Overview, 2008). Unfortunately, LED projects had little success due to a lack of community participation and buy-in that, if successful, would activate local ownership of the project and contribute to capacity building and assist with enabling long-term success. For example, the Empangeni Arts and Crafts Centre, which was created to benefit rural women in the local area by providing a building to sell produce, had limited success (Hill & Goodenough, 2005). Budget allocation by District Municipality, Hill and Goodenough explain (2005), needed more allocation towards the implementation of such projects instead of planning. The shift in focus toward an Industrial Development Zone (IDZ) programme announced under Section 10 of the Manufacturing Development Act, (Act 187 of 1993) in Government Gazette No. 1224 of 1 December 2000, and as amended by Government Notice No. R1065, published in the Government Gazette No.29320 of 27 October 2006, led to the Schumpeterian effect. Schumpeter argues that in order for economic growth to take place new combinations by withdrawing of the same funds from other productive applications is unavoidable (Schumpeter 1936, cited in Baker and Nelson, 2005). In uMhlatuze Municipality budgets were cut drastically from local municipality and redirected with the aim to develop a profile of mainly direct investments focused on exports of value-added manufactured products in Richards Bay and the surrounding areas (IDZ Programme Guidelines, 2008). Meanwhile, collaborative initiatives between local government and corporations, through coordination by Zululand Chamber of Business (currently known as Zululand Chamber of Commerce and Industry) have had more success. Skills developments through EDP are some of the initiatives geared toward solving unemployment, particularly among youth. Under their Business Incubator programme, BHP Billiton, for instance, has established The Enterprise Development Programme which offers, among other things, entrepreneurial training to young people who are able to meet specific requirements in the selection process. Furthermore, the Zululand Chamber of Commerce and Industry has assisted in arranging support and maximising impact through the various youth entrepreneurship networking workshops (ZCCI, 2014). However, Hill and Goodenough (2005), noted that such initiatives, despite

their clear objectives, did not reach the broader surrounding areas due to limited understanding of what constitutes a community, particularly in regards to the youth and perceptions of the types of entrepreneurs they need to be in order to be successful. The enterprise development programme's commitment to maximise impact through normative business models motivated youth to embark on certain kinds of formal and recognized forms of entrepreneurship. Only through the successful establishment and sustaining of these formal businesses, were youth understood to be productive business persons and citizens. Yet, this formal model fails to incorporate forms of entrepreneurship that do not fall within the formal structures of business. Sometimes activated by the promise of opportunities as a result of the expansion of mines and industry, these 'other' forms of entrepreneurship provide insights into what and how youth engage with the promise of opportunity in the moments leading to the creation and expansion of mines and industry. Further insights reveal how they use this promise to create particular kinds of productive entrepreneurship, ultimately stabilising their precarious lives and that of their communities. There is therefore a need to understand how youth in potential minerals exploitation areas imagine the promises of mineral beneficiation, and the work that this promise of opportunity does to them. This will contribute enormously towards sustainable minerals and resources development in uMhlathuze Municipality.

## **1.4 Theory and Conceptualisation**

In this section I critically examine some of the key conceptual and theoretical frameworks that underpin this dissertation. I specifically examine 1) agency; aspiration, dignity and respectability; and entrepreneurship. These three conceptual frameworks are central to understanding how young entrepreneurs emerge and engage with opportunities, and how they create stability.

### **1.4.1 Agency**

Agency is key concept in the social sciences that refers to action and intentionality, particularly in relation to entrepreneurship as it creates various forms of value. In this dissertation, I use agency as a means of understanding action activated by people's capacity to dream. As a concept often used broadly in the discourse of sustainable development, agency has been widely debated resulting in more confusion than clarity in social theory. Though variations of political-institutions analysis and normative theory have defended, attacked and revived the concept in contradictory and overlapping ways, the core of the debate is that the term 'agency' has sustained an enigmatic vagueness despite its association with terms such as freedom, creativity, initiative and selfhood (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998).

Furthermore, in the quest to illustrate the interpenetration of structure and agency, theorists have, to a large degree, failed to characterise agency as its own analytical classification with temporary variable social manifestation and distinctive theoretical dimensions, making the concept so tightly restrained to structure that one cannot appreciate the different ways that agency really shapes social action (ibid). In an attempt to resolve this tension, Giddens' (1984) theory of structuration helps appreciate agency as its own analytical tool by positing that structure must be understood as both the medium and outcome of action. However, Nyamnjoh (2002:111) argues that 'Too much of the theory of agency merely asks about empowerment of the individual and the extent to which individuals are creators or creatures of the social structures wherein they operate'. In this regard, agency must be understood not in terms of dependence or independence, but as intersubjective and interdependent (Nyamnjoh, 2000: 111).

In this research project, the understanding of agency is located within Emirbayer and Mische's (1998) theory of *relational pragmatics* which moves beyond one-sided dimensional views, particularly focusing on 'routine', 'purpose', or 'judgement'. The theory of *relational pragmatics* reframes agency as constituted in a dynamic interplay between these three measures (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998 cited in Biesta & Tedder, 2006). They therefore suggest reframing the understanding of human agency as a temporally embedded social interplay, informed by the past (in its habitual form), but also oriented toward the future (as the capacity to imagine alternative paths) and toward the present (as the capacity to contextualise both past habits and future aspirations within the circumstance of the moment) (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). This framing led them define agency as 'the temporally constructed engagement by actors, which through the interplay of habit, imagination, and judgement, both reproduces and transforms those structures in interactive response to the problem posed by changing historical situations' (ibid: 970). This definition embraces Meads (1932 cited in Emirbayer & Mische, 1998) framing of actors 'within temporal passage, involving the continual reconstruction of their orientations toward past and future in response to emergent event' thereby moving beyond the division between normative and instrumental action (ibid: 971).

In their reconceptualisation Emirbayer and Mische (1998) provide three aspects of agency which they refer to as the 'chordal triad' made up of the iterational dimension (the past), the projective dimension (the future) and the practical-evaluative element (the present). The iterational aspect introduces the selective reactivation by actors of past actions and thought

patterns, routinely incorporated in practical activity, bringing stability and order (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). What this means is that present experiences are influenced by the past. This is manifested in the person's capacity to recall, select and apply implicit and taken-for-granted schemas of action, developed through past experiences (Biesta & Tedder, 2006). However, the agentic dimension is not merely located in the possession of such schemas (which exists as corporeal and cognitive patterns) but instead in "*how actors selectively recognize, locate and implement such schemas*" (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998: 975, authors emphasis). This locus of agency is located in the individual's orientation towards their schemas rather than in the schemas themselves (Biesta & Tedder, 2006). Identity and culture, as the interplay of references and schemas of action and communication are fluid. This plays a central orientation role by contributing representations and repertoires for individuals to draw from, in order to act in ways recognised by the collective (Nyamnjoh, 2000).

The projective aspect (dreaming and aspiration), as the second dimension of agency and the particular interest of the research project, encompasses an individual's capacity to imagine alternative future trajectories whereby past actions, thoughts and structures are reconfigured with reference to desires, hopes and fears for the future (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). This understanding moves actors beyond the iterational dimension characterised by repeated past routines, to reimagine and reconfigure alternative responses (or schemas) as inventors of new possibilities (ibid, 1998). For Nyamnjoh (2000), these inventions of new possibilities as agentive are negotiated convivially and are thereby domesticated by collective interest which may be located but are not confined to cultural dimensions. In other words, the projective aspects of the individual's creativity and self-fulfilment, engendered in dreams and aspirations occur within socially determined compositions that give priority to conviviality with collective interest (Nyamnjoh, 2000). Nyamnjoh (2000) presentation of agency as interdependent is central to this dissertation as a means of framing successful entrepreneurs through collective interest. By imagining the promise engendered in future opportunities, young people are, to some extent, able to distance themselves from the schemas and habits that constrain them. They expand their nodes and pathways from non-agentive vandals and vanguards to innovators and active entrepreneurs; as movers and shakers, makers and breakers of the tentacles of precariousness while dreams and aspirations are moved or shaken through negotiated conviviality with the society of eSikhawini (Appadurai, 2013; Biesta & Tedder, 2006; Fuh, 2012; Nyamnjoh, 2000; Utas, 2012; Utas, 2003). The locus of agency in this view is in what Emirbayer and Mische (1998) call the "hypothesization of experience" as

the actors create alternative reactions to their predicaments (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998 cited in Biesta & Tedder, 2006). This calls for constructing “changing images of where they think they are going, where they want to go, and how they can get there” (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998: 984). In this regard the researcher argues that gaining insight on entrepreneurship as embedded in social relationships in rural or township communities, and learning the capacity of youth to aspire, are important aspects of domesticated agency and subjectivity.

Even when faced with seemingly endless challenges, agency might not be readily visible in actions. If it is, it is often framed as violent and disturbs industry activity. In the absence of visible action, this does not stop young people from dreaming, and even acting to pursue such dreams of a better social life. In the context of sustainable minerals resource development, the project suggests that any effort to establish and improve the relationships between and among youth in community by both state and industry must be founded on the understanding that young entrepreneurs in townships, activated by the promise of opportunity, have the capacity to aspire to something better. More importantly, contrary to unsustainable individualised idea towards aspirations, young peoples’ entrepreneurial creativity and self-fulfilment is convivially negotiated drawing on cultural dimensions to claim recognition and legitimation within the community (Nyamnjoh, 2000). Finally, the practical-evaluative aspect of agency refers to the capacity of youth entrepreneurs to respond to the demands and contingencies of the present by making choices and judgements. In this sense the locus of agency is located in the “contextualisation of social experience” that consists of drawing on past experiences and future orientations in reacting to present situations (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998).

This research draws heavily on Emirbayer and Mische (1998), as they provide an appropriate framework for understanding peoples’ actions; looking at past actions and how these shape the future actions. Nyamnjoh (2000) grounds my understanding of agency as domesticated and subjective with heightened uncertainty and broken promises in ways that are informed by lived social experiences through the creative quest for recognition and legitimation by the collective. His framing of agency, as interdependent and domesticated by the collective promise to success, underpins my understanding and usage of the concept in this dissertation.

Seeking to understand the entrepreneurial process in environments where access to resources is constrained both economically and as a social framework in townships like eSikhawini, the concept of bricolage described as making do with “whatever is at hand” (Levi Strauss, 1967 cited in Baker & Nelson, 2005) is a useful tool to explain regularities. The construct can also

be integrated with a wide variety of concepts, including agency, which is useful for understanding how the pursuit of dreams and aspirations promote the kinds of young entrepreneurs that create something from very little and sometimes nothing in an environment mapped by constrained access to resources. The framework of entrepreneurial bricolage aids in the understanding of the processes by which agentive individuals in a social context generate heterogeneous value from supposedly similar restrictions regarding access to resources and collective interest (Baker & Reed, 2012). In this sense, the act of bricolage entails making do by applying various combinations of the resources at hand to combat new problems and maintain the promise of opportunity. Three components in the concept of bricolage require particular attention. First, “making do with whatever is at hand” implies privileging action and active engagement with a problem or opportunities rather than mulling over questions of whether a workable outcome can be created from what is at hand (Levi Strauss, 1967 cited in Baker & Nelson, 2005). However, Nyamnjoh (2000) argues that the active engagement with the promise of opportunity is negotiated convivially with the collective interest. This creative negotiation of individual and the collective, as Levi-Strauss (1966) notes, can produce “brilliant unforeseen results”. Even through bricolage, refusal to accept limitations to an individual is interdependent with the social recognition and legitimation reflecting a form of domesticated agency. In this regard, the capacity to aspire to a different future through creative negotiation of commonly accepted norms about “material inputs, practices and definitions and standards” activates actions that are facilitated by dreams (Appadurai, 2013; Emirbayer & Mische, 1998; Gondola, 1999; Mbembe, 1997).

The concept of dreams is also essential in this dissertation as they facilitate action. I make the distinction between dreams as a natural part of sleeping (that is not being awake) and dreams as hopes and aspirations. Dreams that can and are often done when wide awake. Focusing on the latter understanding of dreams, this concept, then, requires further explanation. Freud (1950) interprets dreams in relation to wakefulness as the reincarnation of experience. In this way, Gondola (1999) states that dreams enable African youth to shift from social dereliction to psychological redemption. Hollan (2004) understands that dreams map out our current life situations as they have the capacity to alter our conscious and unconscious sense of self and well-being. Baudrillard (1981:6), however, argues that dreams are neither real nor unreal or more real in that they reveal that there is no “real” in the world where the conscious and unconscious are fictions created in simulacrum, that is to say fiction is never exchanged for the real “but exchanged for itself in an uninterrupted circuit without reference or

circumference”. Emirbayer and Mische (1998) explain that through dreams lay our capacity to act. It can be said that dreams are produced through simulation in that they are neither true nor false since through action one produces “true” symptoms (Baudrillard, 1981; Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). The value in understanding dreams as hopes and aspirations in relation to the research objectives illuminates its capacity to activate and guide action. For most black youth such as those in eSikhawini their dreams are often framed as no different to those in the state of natural sleep. By understanding that these dreams are done when wide awake also implies that dreams encourage action. The project frames dreams as hopes and aspirations for something better. In other words dreams as agentic. The agentic power of dreams is central as it relates to the performance of bricolage where the capacity to aspire to a better future require creative negotiation of generally accepted criterion about material requirements, standard practices. Using whatever is at hand to navigate and reform resources through social relations activates actions that are facilitated by dreams.

The theoretical implication of the definition of bricolage is that the social construct of resource environment can be as influential as the objective limitations of environments in determining action. In practical terms bricoleurs test, manoeuvre and creatively negotiate institutionalised definitions of orthodox practice (Baker & Reed, 2012:335; Nyamnjoh, 2000). The second component framing the concept of bricolage involves the “combination of resources for new purposes”, which implies the disassembling and, using a term common in sustainability studies, ‘recycling’ of resources for different applications from those which they were originally intended or used (Levi Strauss, 1967 cited in Baker & Nelson, 2005). Historical, institutional, or technological change often follows a logic that may be creative while not implying assumptions of linear rationality and unrestrained agency (Nyamnjoh, 2000). Lastly, with the resources at hand the bricoleur possess a set of “odds and ends” (i.e. physical artefacts, skills or ideas) that are gathered on the principle that they might come in handy. These resources include those that are available at low or no cost, often because others judge them to be useless or substandard. In this research project the “odds and ends” as “resources at hand” are extended and particularly refer to social relationships as emergent rather than accumulated. These social relationships are commonly taken for granted but for bricolage they are imbued with new use value to form social capital with potential economic outcome (Baker & Reed, 2012:359; Bourdieu, 1977). By breaking codes and negotiating new combinations, this form of value creation does not depend on the Schumpeterian assumption that resources are withdrawn from one activity to be used in another (Schumpeter 1936, cited

in Baker and Nelson, 2005). Making do by living through social interrelations is a basis to the process by which bricolage creates something from nothing. The active construction and negotiation of environments through social relations involves reframing prevailing definitions of resources. Bourdieu's (1977) practice theory is a useful way to understand actions of continuity and improvisation as a form of social production within a structure of power relations, marked by inequality and domination. Bricolage, in this sense and as a form of domesticated agency, involves an awareness of existing cultural (but not limited to these) practices and norms, and conscious willingness and knowledge through conviviality to creatively negotiate. In this sense, it creates the kind of entrepreneurship that is competitive within shared strategies to stabilise the uncertainty that characterises local social life. This raises an empirical question addressed in the dissertation: where and how is knowledge by aspirational bricoleurs acquired and used in order to regain dignity and claim respectability?

#### **1.4.2 Aspirations, Dignity and Respectability**

Aspiration, dignity and respectability are central to the dissertation because these aspirations frame people's capacity to act. Peoples' actions are shaped by their dreams and aspirations. Aspirations are also not simply about successful business but also about being a dignified human being. In *Raw Life, New Hope*, Ross's on *ordentlikheid* (2010) tells the story of residents of The Park, a shack settlement outside Cape Town, efforts to being respectable and dignified people. Drawing on Appadurai (2013), aspirations deal with the ability to navigate an aspirational map made up of pathways and nodes in the form of wants, desires, preferences, choices and calculations. While these factors have largely been assigned to the discipline of economics, with markets and the idea of an individualised entrepreneur, they have been left invisible in the study of culture. Consequently, the construction of the duality between culture as a matter of past (tradition, custom, habit, heritage) and development as future oriented (plans, hopes, goals and targets) has become common (Appadurai, 2013). From this distinction, a cultural person is understood as a person of or from the past, while an economic actor is a person of the future. It is not surprising then that culture is opposed to development, as tradition is opposed to newness and habit to calculation (Belasco, 1980). Advances in anthropological debate over culture are important to collapse this duality. In marginalised societies what domesticate the duality are the intersubjective relationships confined within the repertoire of a specific local context which is often activated by the capacity to aspire for individual economic accumulation.

In his newly published book *Cul-de-sac Ubuntu-ism in Côte d'Ivoire*, Francis Nyamnjoh<sup>2</sup> makes a compelling case that Ubuntu-ism (in South Africa understood as the idea of togetherness as cultural that belonged in the past) is constituted through a balance of tensions between opportunity and opportunism (be this individual or collective, in the city or in the village, among blacks or whites). In other words economic accumulation achieved through unmitigated individual self-interest is the other side of the same coin as togetherness, not opposite. In this regard, culture (or tradition) is not frozen but rather involves individuals (as well as groups) that shape and reshape it through action in an interplay where traditions (or culture) are modernised and modernity is traditionalised (Nyamnjoh, 2000: 125). Appadurai's (2013) understanding of culture as future-oriented implores a contemporary understanding of the concept which must be underpinned by three dimensions. Firstly, cultural coherence is not a matter of individual items but of the relationships and the related insight that these relations are systematic and generative. Secondly, dissensus of some sort is part and parcel of culture. Shared culture is no more of a guarantee of complete consensus than a shared platform in the democratic convention. Lastly, boundaries of cultural systems are fluid where "traffic and osmosis are the norm, not the exception" (Appadurai, 2013: 180; Nyamnjoh, 2015, 2011). Therefore, in order to return the factors that have been assigned to economics into the domain of the culture, we need to begin by noting that aspirations (as forward-looking) form parts of a wider ethical and metaphysical ideas that derive from cultural norms. Aspirations are never simply individual but are formed in interaction and are in the centre of social life. Bourdieu's (1986) understanding of such social life as *habitus* is helpful to better understand aspirations as constituted through social networks<sup>3</sup> and as resources young people draw on to form social capital. Ineffective social capital has the capacity to block pathways of upward socio-economic mobility, leaving young entrepreneurs trapped in brackets of recognition, making it difficult to realise dreams and aspirations of a better life (Adato et al., 2006; Mogues & Carter, 2005). Contrary to the highly celebrated ideas about conspicuous consumption and black diamonds, aspirations to the good life heavily reflects local ideas about marriage, respectability, health, virtue friendships, leisure, work and negotiating various social relations to establish potentially productive networks that form their social capital (Appadurai, 2013; Manqoyi, 2013). These intermediate norms often lie beneath the

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<sup>2</sup> Francis B. Nyamnjoh (2015), *C'est l'homme qui fait l'homme Cul-de-Sac Ubuntu-ism in Côte d'Ivoire*, <http://www.africanbookscollective.com/books/c2019est-l2019homme-qui-fait-l2019homme>

<sup>3</sup> Social network – refers to actors defined in relation to a pursuit of dreams and linked by relationships either directly or indirectly to realise the dream through entrepreneurship (Utas, 2012).

surface and emerge only as specific wants and choices. As a “navigational capacity”, the capacity to aspire is characterised by a dense combination of nodes and pathways. However, the capacity to aspire is unevenly distributed in any society (Appadurai, 2013). For the relatively poor, this means a smaller number of aspirational nodes and a thinner, weaker sense of the pathways from concrete wants to intermediate contexts to general norms and back. It is particularly the precariousness reflecting the ever-widening gap between the rich and the poor that maps townships. This means that the pursuit of individual aspirations as a form of agency also needs to be in the interest of the community. The young people in this dissertation had very limited aspirational nodes. Therefore, normative frameworks are trapped within the social confines of the township. Drawing on Appadurai’s (2013) ideas, in the case of young entrepreneurs in eSikhawini, these pathways were more “rigid, less supple, less strived because the capacity to aspire thrives and survives on practice, repetition, exploration, conjecture and refutation” (Appadurai, 2013: 188) . In eSikhawini, where conjecture and refutation with regard to the future are limited, the capacity to aspire is trapped by the bracket of recognition or the contraption of social capital that diminishes a sense of dignity (or respectability) and personhood.

The discourse on respectability as a concept is located within South African colonial history. Drawing on archives and scholarly sources Goodhew (2000) argues that respectability as an ideology was underpinned by religion, schooling, and law and order. This notion of respectability created households headed by black (males) who had been educated through missionary schools which formed a small working group of elites in the 1930s townships. Similar social groups formed through ideas of respectability have been revealed in historical accounts of how townships were affected and resisted oppressive colonial policies across the country (Wilson & Mafeje, 1963; Posel, 2010; Bank, 2011). eSikhawini Township can also be understood as having emerged out of the notions of respectability formed by black people who were racially segregated under apartheid laws. Residents of eSikhawini Township knew that abiding the laws, following religion, pursuing education and finding employment were important aspects of regaining personhood that affected how people in a society related to each other and particularly young people in transition to social adulthood. The implications of respectability on personhood and how these affected social relations in post-apartheid townships have been written about by various scholars (see Salo, 2003; Ross, 2010; Versfeld, 2012). For Salo (2003) personhood is about who the individual is and aspires to be in relation to society, and how they fit in. In a time where promises of opportunity are fast becoming a

broken dream for young people in townships, individual pursuit for success is articulated through ideas of the collective acceptance in an attempt to create stability in otherwise uncertain lives. Aspiration of *ordentlikheid* (respectability, decency) also meant avoiding being perceived as rough, anti-social and failed (Ross, 2010). For young entrepreneurs in eSikhawini perceptions of the victim or perpetrator threaten the establishment of social relationships that enable the negotiation of productive social networks located at various convivial spaces, such as church conferences, the market and bars. The perceived notions of respectability and the capacity to establish productive relationships affect the potential investment in survival and growth of the business, thereby threatening the capacity to stabilise their future as recognised members of the community (Ross, 2010). For these people, business is not just about profit but respect and recognition as individuals who have come of age. This is why young people invest in business embedded in relationships where entrepreneurship provides a promise to the opportunity of recognition and respect by the community (Nyamnjoh, 2010). In eSikhawini as mining and industry affected area, the expansion of minerals beneficiation activate youth's capacity to re-imagine (or aspire to) promises of opportunity in ways that guide entrepreneurial activity as a form of achieving social recognition (or personhood) and claiming respectability.

#### **1.4.3 Entrepreneurship**

In sustainable minerals, the resource development discourse focused on areas where youth were more likely to express disappointment from broken promises of opportunity and affect business activity, entrepreneurship is regarded as a solution to a number of problems. It has been said that youth in mining affected areas lack internal and external factors for becoming successful entrepreneurs. These internal and external factors include on access to finance, education background, being up to speed with technological trends and management skills, and social connectivity in the form of business networks (Olawale & Garwe, 2010). While these dominant discourses of entrepreneurship promote a sense of unrestricted agency, in eSikhawini the interdependency of youth with society meant that the capacity to succeed as an entrepreneur was created by the community that one is located in (Nyamnjoh, 2002). Rather than the prevalent idea of the autonomous individual, entrepreneurs are constructed through social interdependence of a particular local context. Taking the lead from scholars like Nyamnjoh, this project serves to move the debate on entrepreneurship beyond the confines of certain individual capacities to act based on special innate abilities or skills (Schumpeter, 1939; Kirzner, 1979; Baumol, 2005). The lack of understanding of unemployed

and underemployed youth economic activities in the informal economy as communal entrepreneurs, particularly as a process embedded in interrelations, persists in intervention studies that are based on prevalent individualised ideas of entrepreneurship (Diouf, 2003). While some definitions of what it means to be an entrepreneur focus on behavioural aspects (Koellinger, Minniti & Schade, 2013) and cultural aspects (Tiessen, 1997; Morrison, 2000), these perspectives are still dominated by assumptions and methods that form the foundations of economics. Lacking from these studies is an exploration into the ways in which being an entrepreneur is produced, cultivated and negotiated through social interactions informed by reality on the ground. This is what Nyamnjoh (2000) means by interdependence and intersubjective forms of agency, where the emergence of success as an entrepreneur is dependent on the collective. Expressed as juncture, Shapero and Sokol (1982) understand entrepreneurship as a life-changing event at the moment of decision-making and action-taking. As social and material interactions have a determinant characteristics, entrepreneurship is rather emergent as a negotiation of potentially productive social interactions. For some youth entrepreneurs in eSikhawini, the cultivation and negotiation of productive social relations occurred at places such as markets, bars, sidewalks and churches. While there is no formal definition of entrepreneurship, running across such attempts is the production of value (Cromie, 2000; Anderson & Jack, 2008; Nafukho & Muyia, 2010). Although commonly reduced to money, value in the sense of what local people hold in high esteem includes notions of dignity, respectability and personhood, which locates entrepreneurship in the construction, cultivation and negotiation of productive relationships that has been activated by the promise of opportunity resulting from mining and minerals beneficiation (Graeber, 2001). These relational cultural values are particularly important for business in order to negotiate successful social networks. This form of social network differs from the commonly celebrated framing of business networking, which is disconnected from social-cultural confines of locality (Utas, 2012). For young people in eSikhawini entrepreneurship is a daily networking enterprise in an attempt to claim respect and recognition by the community within negotiated cultural dimensions. This is an aspect that economic ideas that equate value with money or currency tend to miss, and/or worse problematise (Hann & Hart, 2001; Msomi, 2002). As Muller and Becker (2012) state, inclusive narratives and discourses are required to understand a fast and changing complex world.

In entrepreneurship literature emphasis is also often placed on the distinction between opportunities and the resources required to exploit them, such as the entrepreneurial focus on the pursuit of opportunity without regard for available resources. Also revealed in such literature is the emphasis of the fundamental role of opportunities in driving entrepreneurial activity (Olomi, 2009; Gries & Naude, 2010; Desai, Nijkamp & Stough, 2011; Department of Trade and Industry, 2012). This work suggests that opportunities are pre-existing phenomena and “models” that can be discovered and evaluated (Baudrillard, 1981; Baker & Reed, 2012). Only when those opportunities are discovered can the quest for resource mobilisation follow. This research project argues that such objectivist characterisation of both resource environments and opportunity does not help understand the process by which entrepreneurs in townships mapped by constrained access to resources are able to sustain their future through business. Revealed in this study on entrepreneurs, young bricoleurs did not view opportunities as objective and external to the resource activities of the business (Baker & Reed, 2012). Contrary to fictitiously understanding opportunities as waiting to be discovered by individuals entrepreneurial opportunities are enacted through creative negotiation by youth entrepreneurs as culture heroes rather than adhering to the normative order of the local context (Belasco, 1980).

#### **1.4.4 Gender Politics of Entrepreneurship**

The distinctions between entrepreneurs are also gendered. In this research I focus on males in order to understand how, through engagement with entrepreneurship, black youth masculinities are shifted in pursuit of visibility. However, I acknowledge that Framed as failed or reluctant entrepreneurial subjects, women are often subordinated to men in theorising entrepreneurship (Ahl & Marlow, 2012). The assumptions positioning women as lacking and incomplete limit the epistemological scope of contemporary research where subjects are reproduced as subordinates. Often the growing importance of women entrepreneurs continues to be neglected in entrepreneurial studies (Brush, Bruin & Walter, 2009). If at all included in discourse or representation, female entrepreneurs are presented as an exception to the norm of how femininity is conceptualised (Achtenhagen & Welter, 2007). Subordinating women comes with the glorification of certain kinds of opportunistic men whose creative and innovative capacity is freed from organisational, institutional and cultural constraints. It is this particular representation of entrepreneurship in the discourse of the concept that defines these characteristics as masculine. It is little wonder then that men dominate as high profile entrepreneurial role models. Ahl and Marlow (2012) seek to engage

with this uncritical analysis of social injustice, particularly at the height of the celebrated notions of individualised entrepreneurship that frame women as incomplete unless they claim and adhere to masculine discourse. Such a discourse of representation of masculinity is more apparent in popular media. For instance, in the online magazine called *Entrepreneur* (accessed on 26 September 2014), the young entrepreneurs recognised as participating in the economy not only had specific kinds of enterprise, but were mostly men. Similarly on Mwebs' website (accessed on 26 September 2014), '10 South African entrepreneurs under 35' was dominated by male entrepreneurs as exemplars. And Forbes's online (accessed on 26 September 2014) '30 Most Promising Young Entrepreneurs in Africa 2014' was no different to the earlier mentioned sites, sometimes even profiling the same young male entrepreneur in all the sites. This project acknowledges the need to advance lived experiences of women as entrepreneurs and to theorise the discourse in a manner that transcends dead-end debates. However in this research project, I focus on black male youth entrepreneurs. The next section outlines the structure of the research dissertation.

### **1.5 Structure/Organisation of Dissertation**

This study is divided into six chapters. Chapter 1 provides a general introduction and framework for the dissertation. It provides the background to the research problem and outlines the research questions before stating the research problem. It builds on agency, aspirations and entrepreneurship as theoretical frameworks for examining how youth engage with the promise of opportunity created by mineral beneficiation. The chapter frames entrepreneurship as something that is constituted by and embedded in social relationships. Entrepreneurship is discussed herein as founded upon a capacity to dream and aspire, which offers young people the opportunity to reposition themselves as respectable social adults. While the participants are only male, it is by no means a reproduction of a masculine form of entrepreneurship. Rather, given the limited time in the field, finding male entrepreneurs became convenient to establish relationships. Female entrepreneurs of different ages do exist in eSikhawini.

Chapter 2 engages with the methodology employed to answer the proposed research questions. It presents the field methods used during my stay in eSikhawini. I explain how a multi-method and multi-sited approach assisted in grappling with the complexities of participants' experiences.

Chapter 3 examines the emergence of dreams and aspiration activated by the promise of opportunity through the expansion mining and minerals activities and its relation to personhood and respectability. It looks at how aspirations and dreams are created. It seeks to understand what types of aspirations are created by the promise of opportunity that comes with the expansion of mines and industries, particularly seeking to understand how these dreams and aspirations create particular kinds of entrepreneurs. Particularly, it examines how dreaming and stepping out of the ordinary help young people generate, claim and legitimate recognition and respect through entrepreneurship as a way to stabilise uncertainty. In this way the chapter provides a framework for understanding the importance of recognising and strengthening youth entrepreneurs' capacity to dream, because of its potential to activate the enacting of productive relationships and claim a sense dignity and respectability within their local community.

Chapter 4 uses the concept of bricolage as an analytical tool to explain how young people's activated dreams in eSikhawini facilitate their actions to become entrepreneurs leading up to the commencing of mining and mineral beneficiation. It further shows what characteristics are required for being an entrepreneur and what the day-to-day operations that young entrepreneurs experience in eSikhawini are.

Chapter 5 shows how success is appropriated and how, like currency, it is spent. It reveals success for youth entrepreneurs in eSikhawini as intersubjective, in that it is not about individual material wealth but rather the making and remaking of relationships and sharing with local people that seek your assistance. It is in the seeking out and recognition of an entrepreneur as having expertise that success is imbued upon the young entrepreneur as a respectable social adult.

Chapter 6 addresses the question on how mining and minerals beneficiation activities can use the model of youth entrepreneurship embedded in community sustaining ventures to foster better and productive relationships with people living in affected areas. By drawing on field visits to various enterprise development centres in Richards Bay and Rustenburg, the researcher provides insights that demonstrate how Enterprise Development Programmes distribute precarity to youth by disregarding the localised expertise and cultural (or informal) strides thereby destabilising certainty by disconnecting collective interest. The chapter argues that only by recognizing and strengthening youth entrepreneurs' capacity to aspire and realise their dreams located in cultural dimension of society, can the enterprise development of

Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives benefit and sustain empowering relationships with people living in areas affected by mining and minerals beneficiation. The next chapter of this dissertation focuses on the idea of entrepreneurship methodology.

## **Chapter 2      Methods: Ethnography as entrepreneurship**

### **Abstract**

This section explains the methods used to collect data towards the aforementioned research objectives. In seeking to understand youth entrepreneurship and the promise of opportunity in moments leading to mining and beneficiation, ethnographic fieldwork was the dominant method used. This involved travelling to and staying in eSikhawini for two months. Prior to the extended stay, exploratory visits to Richards Bay and the surrounding areas were conducted over a one-week period. I explain how a multi-method and multi-sited approach assisted in grappling with the complexities of participants' experiences. While the participants are only male, it is by no means a reproduction of a masculine form of entrepreneurship. Rather, given the limited time in the field, finding male entrepreneurs became convenient to establish relationships. Female entrepreneurs of different ages do exist in eSikhawini. The main findings in this section reveal the value in understanding ethnography as entrepreneurship in that investment in the method is risky and requires creativity and ambition, while negotiating collectivity and interdependence to all stakeholders and shareholders (as research participants along with funders of the research study).

### **2.1 Research Design – Ethnography**

In this research project, ethnography is applied within a natural science and inter-disciplinary context. Ethnography allows for the immersion of the researcher in the intimacy of the daily activities of research participants and helps provide glimpses into the meanings that underpin, in this case, the connection between the local and the national (Gupta & Ferguson, 1997; Bernard, 1995). Like entrepreneurship, ethnography can be described as a venture involving risk and creativity. Ethnographic fieldwork ventures require planning and the anticipation of risk associated with the investment of various resources, thereby taking responsibility for its success or failure. Similar to characteristics used to describe entrepreneurs, when undertaking fieldwork 'creativity' and 'seizing opportunity', which enables immersion and being at the right place at the right time are central in the real world laboratories of ethnographic research. As a qualitative research method, ethnography provides an in-depth description of everyday life and practice. The qualitative approach is a social science method used to distinguish between quantitative or statistical oriented research. The value of ethnography is its capacity to go beyond reporting events and rather aims for the cultural interpretation or explains the "webs of meaning" embedded in social interactions (Malinowski, 1960; Geertz, 1973).

Ethnography allows for the understanding of culture through the representation of emic perspectives, or what might be characterised as the “insider’s point of view”.

Reliability and validity in the application of ethnographic research within a natural science and interdisciplinary context are important limitations to address. The challenge with ethnography is that it occurs through real world laboratories of social processes (Wiersma, 1986; Burns, 1994). This makes accurate replication, consisting of procedures and findings difficult because an event in real life cannot be reproduced. But the limitation engendered in the reproduction of procedures can be overcome through the comprehensive description of methodology that enables the reconstruction of the original analysis approach. To replicate findings, Wiersma (1986) and Burns (1994), state that is difficult because ethnographic research requires an accurate description of the phenomena under study. Yet, the access to data to support the accurate description might vary. Limitations of internal validity can be overcome through triangulation, which concerns verification and validation of quality analysis. For ethnography to achieve internal validation, multiple sources of collecting data are invested to ensure sufficiency. In relation, external validity of ethnography emerging from a specific locality requires multi-sited methods to strengthen consistency (Wiersma, 1986). Wiersma (1986) argues that the external validity of ethnography is also enhanced by including variations of the research context in the same study.

In more practical terms, however, ethnography is particularly reliant on the emic perspective, using mixed tools of observation and interviewing tactics to collect data. Participation as an aspect of ethnography relies on what people say. What people say is a medium for the location, negotiation, communication and articulation of culture. In short, culture is language (and vice versa). Approaching language without critical perspective of local context can be misleading. But, this limitation can be overcome when investment in longer fieldwork grounds the ethnographic study. Through these extended stays the unfamiliar becomes familiar and the cultural roots of taken for granted words used to describe action and beliefs is gradually revealed. Yet, language as a form of agency can also be used as a means to delude, contrive, mislead, hide, and control certain information. As Goffman (1959) argues “Knowing that that individual is to present himself in a light that is favourable to him, the others may divide what they witness into two parts; a part that is relatively easy for the individual to manipulate at will, being chiefly his verbal assertions, and a part in regard to which he seems to have little concern or control, being chiefly derived from the expressions he gives off” (1959: 7). In this regard, to simply rely on answers when informants’ attitudes

are governed by the impressions they are trying to make on the researcher limits interpretation through ethnography. Observation over extended periods of time, as a way to overcome this limitation, enables in-depth descriptions of what people do in relation to their utterances and initial impressions and managed actions (Goffman, 1959). Emphasis on representation allows for critical categories and meanings to emerge from the ethnographic encounter rather than making these to fit pre-existing models, in this way, deviating from the prescription embedded in common entrepreneurial models.

## 2.2 The Field Site

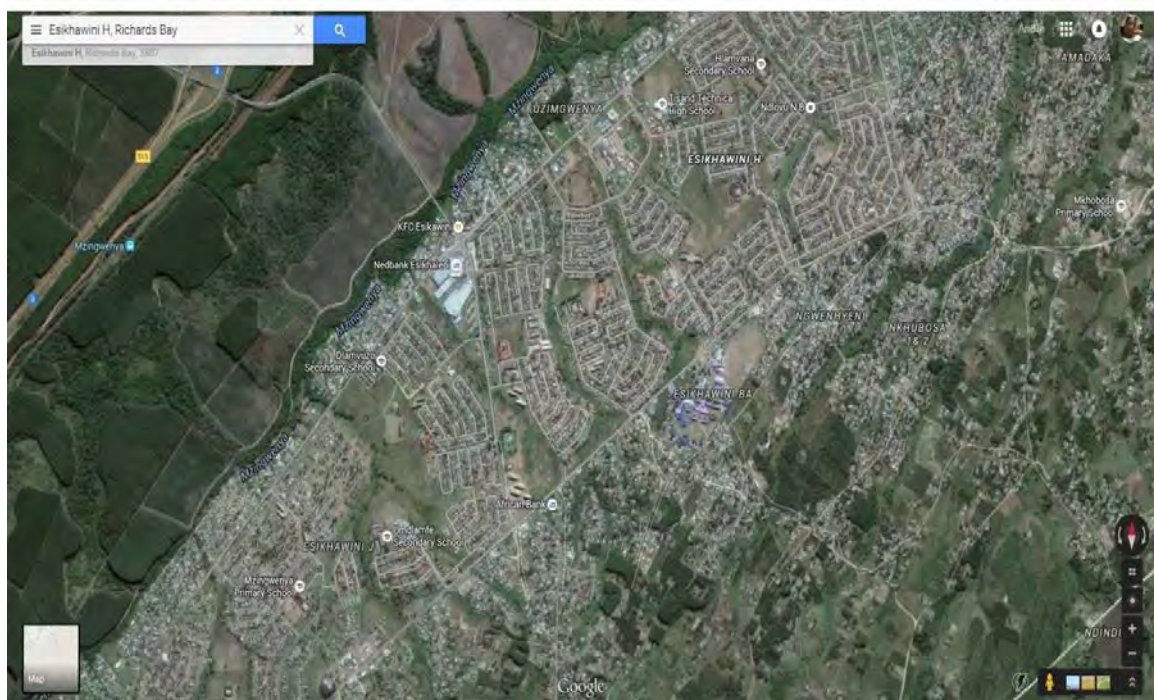
eSikhawini Township was an appropriate location for this research because of its location in the surrounding Richards Bay area as the Special Economic Zone. As a strategic region set to attract direct foreign investment, the prospect for mining and minerals beneficiation makes the area suitable to grapple with the promise of opportunity in the moments leading to industrial development and how youths' actions toward entrepreneurial activity is guided by dreams and aspirations. Broadly speaking, there are few studies done in the area beyond analysis of political violence, and violence in general. More importantly, the focus on eSikhawini as affected and activated by promises of opportunity helps focus on peoples lived experiences and the work (in this instance entrepreneurship) that stabilises lives and sustains communities as the core area for planning for minerals beneficiation activities, and more broadly mineral resource development. Much more research needs to be done on female entrepreneurs to illuminate lived experiences beyond simplistic subordinates and failures (Ahl & Marlow, 2012).

To begin filling the gap created by the lack of studies beyond violence in the area, it is necessary to provide a background on the location. eSikhawini has historical relations with the royal family through King Cetshwayo. Before his abduction by the British army, King Cetshwayo used the area as a passing route. To the local people, the passage through which the King went to the sea was held in such high regard that it was named *Isikhala senkosi* (translation: the King's passage) (Sikhosana, 2009). The passage has been imbued with symbolic value reflected in the naming of schools and music groups - *Isikhala Senkosi*. Recently, in September 2009<sup>4</sup>, the official change from eSikhawini to eSikhaleni (senkosi) further demonstrated the important symbolic significance of the areas' regional history. The leadership of Chief Dube also ensured cultural practices in eSikhawini, such as the allocation

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<sup>4</sup> Department of Arts and Culture: <http://www.dac.gov.za/sites/default/files/Geographical%20names.pdf>

of land with entrepreneurial implications on the distribution of surplus stock. Even with the annexing of property in the entrepreneurial spirit of colonial and later apartheid regional development, land outside the municipal area known by locals as *emaphandleni* (the outside) remained under local authority, even as the area had been transformed into a residence to accommodate and control cheap industrial black labour. The state's active involvement in implementing regional development policy had led to the support of industrial decentralisation from the 1950s in Richards Bay (Hill & Goodenough, 2005). Currently, a tarred road creates a triangular boarder marking inside the municipality and divides the township two into sections (J1, J2, H1, and H2). eSikhawini is an area that was claimed by the apartheid government from Chief Dube in the 1970s when large industrial business, coupled with the upgrading of the port moved into the area of Empangeni and Richards Bay, as part of the global industrial and commercial revolution in South Africa (Vall, 1999). Acting on the promise of opportunity that comes with the entrepreneurial spirit engendered in industrial development, many people migrated to Empangeni and Richards Bay seeking work as either skilled or unskilled labourers. The apartheid's official racial discourse to inhibit socio-economic mobility in support of industry's desire for cheap labour to encourage entrepreneurship resulted in most black people being employed in lower ranks that required less expertise.



**Figure 1: Map of eSikhawini**

Source: eSikhawini Public Library

The influx of people coming from further away and mostly working in the industry resulted in the need for houses to ensure control of mobile labour. In 1976 eSikhawini was established, developed and recognised as a black township according to racial segregation laws. It was a ‘middle income’ residential area with only one tuck shop<sup>5</sup> operating at the time (Ngubane, 2009). Richards Bay was and still remains the closest industrial town and also as the area for recreation.

Since 1976 when the township was erected entrepreneurial activities have grown in eSikhawini. Looking at small-scale businesses from a sociological perspective, Msomi (2002:144) concludes that in eSikhawini “small-scale business industries are interdependent with the community they are serving”. However, due to the interdependence, these mostly unregistered businesses fail because customers accrue debt that they cannot pay back. For Msomi (2002), this kind of entrepreneurship lacks ambition to grow and only starts business for public recognition. Entrepreneurial studies focus on ambition as the main motivation or activation of unemployed and underemployed youth’s economic activities in the informal economy as communal entrepreneurs. The inability to understand economic action as a process embedded in interrelations persists in intervention studies that are based on prevalent individualised ideas of entrepreneurship (Diouf, 2003; Jimu, 2008). As this is the ‘tradition’ of reproduction by entrepreneurial studies, it is not surprising that in eSikhawini, striving for public recognition is understood as contradicting individual ambition. Yet, scholars such as Nyamnjoh (2015), amongst others, make a compelling case for the entrepreneurial nature of Ubuntu-ism as constituted through the balance of tension between opportunity and opportunism. In eSikhawini, the creative negotiation of recognition and legitimation through notions of respectability and personhood are central to dreams and aspirations which activate communal entrepreneurial activity embarked on by young people.

Unlike Msomi (2002) who is particularly interested in small scale businesses as the unit of study, my interest is on people’s lived realities, particularly how the youth attempt to stabilise precarity through a form of entrepreneurship that is embedded in social relationships. Activated by the promise of opportunities as a result of mining and mineral beneficiation, I seek to understand what and how youth engage with the promise of opportunity; and how they use this promise to create particular kinds of productive entrepreneurship which also stabilizes their precarious lives and that of their communities

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<sup>5</sup> Tuck shop is a small food selling retailer usually operating from a house in South African townships

Precariousness remains prevalent in most of the communities under uMhlathuze Municipality (which includes Richards Bay, eSikhaleni or eSikhawini, Ngwelezane, eNseleni, Vulindlela and Felixton including traditional authority areas under Amakhosi Dube, Mkhwanazi, Khoza, Mbuyazi and Zungu), even with industry as the biggest employer and the promises of opportunity engendered in minerals beneficiation. Located approximately 15-20 km's from the two main employment hubs – Richards Bay and Empangeni, eSikhawini is faced with many challenges related to unemployment and poverty. From 2001 to 2011, the growth rate in uMhlathuze municipality population declined by 6.2 per cent compared to 7.7 per cent between the years 1996 and 2001. This makes the municipal population have an average growth rate of 1.45 per cent per annum from 2011. The highest distribution of the workforce is aged between 20-29 years. In terms of gender distribution, the municipality has more females than males that are outside a school environment. In 2011, the majority of the economically active population between the ages of 20 and 29 years had completed grade twelve, compared to the same age group in 2001. If 'formal' housing is to be understood as development, the municipality has increasingly recorded a reduction in 'traditional' and 'informal' housing and an increase toward building with concrete and cement material. An increase in the divorce rate coupled with delayed marriage has caused an increase in female headed household at a rate of 4.8 per cent between 2001 and 2011. There is a lack of data on the number of female entrepreneurs heading such households (Bruni, Gherardi & Poggio, 2004). The expansion of industry along with an increase in employment opportunities has seen average household income more than double over the same period. Yet even with the expansion of industry and the promise of job opportunities, unemployment remains high. Even at its lowest, 31.1 per cent in 2011, this is still a significant part of the population without jobs largely concerning those between the ages of 20 and 29. Nationally, the unemployment rate for youth remains higher than adults at 36.1 per cent. Black youth make up 39.9 per cent of the unemployed compared to other races in South Africa. At the regional level, strategic economic zone affected areas in uMhlathuze municipality such as eSikhawini remain with high rates of unemployment amongst black youth, which result in various challenges (Hill and Goodenough, 2005).

Particularly regarding black men, drug use, as related to challenges of unemployment and poverty, is an increasing concern among youth. During fieldwork, stories about young people who resorted to criminality to feed their drug addiction were common. *Nyaope* (also known as Whoonga), a highly addictive street drug was often spoken about by residents to explain

events of crime by some youth in the area. According to Crime Stats South Africa online, in 2014 there were 204 recorded cases of drug related crime in eSikhwini. This was a more than 100 per cent increase from 2013 where 100 cases were recorded. Young people living *emaphandleni* (outside the municipality run area) were often identified as the perpetrators. But drug related crimes also affect affluent households with reports of young people from prominent families in eSikhwini attacking close relatives in attempt to steal and sell valuable material. Parents openly shared strategies to mitigate addiction included sending the affected youth to outer rural areas away from the townships and cities to rehabilitate them. Not all young people were driven by drug addiction, some of the youth turned to petty crime for basic survival. Stories about attempted robberies were also common. During a taxi ride to visit a participant, a young lady speaking on her cell-phone explained to the person she was speaking to, how a young *isikhothane* (used in this context to mean tsotsi or thug) had attempted to rob her while she was on her way to the shops. Rather than understanding such stories to mean that people in the area are accustomed to and accept crime, I was instead reminded from reading Patrick Chabal's *Politics of Suffering and Smiling*, of how people smile even in the midst of suffering (Chabal, 2009). Despite these challenges, which are more widespread throughout the country and not exclusive to the area or townships in general, eSikhwini has a buzz of energy created by various entrepreneurial activities.

One gap in research on entrepreneurship is the understudy of female entrepreneurs' lived experiences (Bruni, Gherardi & Poggio, 2004). While the next section describes the kinds of enterprises that slip into reifying masculinity, this is not a form of ignoring other forms of business headed by females. During fieldwork, I acquired participants from previously established relations during exploratory visits, and from a method of walking the street; random sampling. While on the streets I observed female entrepreneurs, mostly fruit vendors operated by older women. During our conversations, younger female entrepreneurs were mentioned. Not all of these female entrepreneurs operated from the street. Many owned businesses that are often deemed masculine, such as transport services and car-washes. Outlining the kinds of businesses that I observed should not insinuate a bias to represent entrepreneurship as a terrain dominated by men.

At the start of fieldwork, I surveyed the area by walking in order to get first impressions of the various business activities, particularly those outside the shopping mall area. For example, tyre and car parts repair enterprises were numerous. These enterprises serviced other forms of businesses that relied on vehicles such as driving schools. Other vehicles used

to transport school kids and traders stock are serviced at these repair workshops. The tyre repair shops often had no less than three people, generally males working as mechanics. Car washes as service stations for taxis and other vehicles occupied strategic locations. While the ones with built structures and signage were visible to outsiders driving cars, some car wash enterprises were only visible when walking. Other kinds of businesses such as brick-making enterprises had more than four people working. This type of business required large pieces of land and large amounts of machinery. Along the side walk of the road, small braai stands sometimes placed within a few metres from each other, selling beef and chicken kebab sticks, as well as chicken pieces (locally known as chicken dust) were clearly visible. These stands came alive from 3pm or 4pm in the afternoon each day creating a different kind of sense-scape rhythm indicating a change in the time of day as well as the closure of some businesses and the erection of others (Ross, 2010). Also builders, window panel installers (almost all made from aluminum) and painters were found across hardware stores. *Imiqesho* (rented rooms), where self-development of land by building rooms rented out to individuals or families was visible just about everywhere in the area (Zhu, 1994). Many more *imiqesho* remained under construction alluding to the lucrative potential benefits from the rising rental prices as an effect of urban mobility of people to areas such as eSikhawini, activated by promises engendered in the expansion of industry and minerals beneficiation activities in Richards Bay as the Special Economic Zone (Zhu, 1994; Lian, 1999; Jimu, 2008; Census 2011 Municipal report-KwaZulu Natal, 2012). As a place affected by mining and industrial development, this case study is useful for learning how youth engage with the promise of opportunity leading to minerals beneficiation. Particularly, how youth in eSikhawini use this promise to create the kinds of entrepreneurship not recognised by industry and state. Focusing on these ‘other’ forms of entrepreneurship provides important insights on the action that youth embark on to stabilize their precarious lives whilst sustaining communities. At a national level, the research is unique in that people are central to the potential success of sustainable mineral resources development.

### **2.3 Methods, Tools and Techniques**

This study is framed by ethnographic fieldwork and draws on qualitative research through participant observation, informal conversations and semi-structured interviews. Data in the form of field notes, interviews, a journal and a diary were transcribed and thematically analysed to uncover trends. Formal interviews were held with representatives at Richards Bay Industrial Development Zone (RBIDZ), Mfolozi College, City of uMhlathuze Municipality,

and BHP Billiton's Enterprise Development Centre. The goal for exploratory interviews was to further research in combination with secondary data and analyse the main topic that emerged – youth entrepreneurship.

This project focuses on personal stories about experiences in the area, as a way to uncover the kinds of relationships that members construct and upon which they depend forming socio-economic and cultural background (Jimu, 2008). Through life stories, we learn from Emirbayer and Mische (1998) that past actions are drawn upon and reconfigured, enabling the capacity to reinvent new possibilities, dreams and aspirations for a better life. Although I did not get the opportunity to stay at participants homes, there was great value and learning gained involved in participating in daily activities and hanging out beyond the business environment while living in the area. Such activities included attending church sessions, cultural celebrations, parties and sports events. Other informal interviews took the form of conversations with residents in order to better understand the social activities that made up entrepreneurial interactions.

## **2.4 Scope of the project**

## **2.5 Roadmap**

As mentioned above, the project involves close interaction with youth entrepreneurs as informed participants of eSikhawini, as well as representatives from various stakeholder organisations as the main method for collecting data. The process for collecting data occurred over a number of planned visits that are explained in the following section. Following the visits, the collected data was analysed and emergent theoretical frameworks inform the manner in which this dissertation is presented.

## **2.6 Time scales**

This study on youth entrepreneurs involves establishing relationships and interacting with various individuals who are, in some respects, representatives of stakeholders. The process of getting to know people and to become known by them well enough to be open with information involves trust and is described as participant observation. Since trust is established through longitudinal studies, repeated visits were done.

During the research period, I conducted three visits between 2014 and 2015. The first visit was exploratory, lasting four days from 13 to 17 May 2014. In this visit, I met with various stakeholders from different organisations such as RBIDZ, Mfolozi College, and BHP

Billiton's Enterprise Development Centre. My second visit, from 9 to 23 August 2014 focused on the residential areas, specifically eMzingazi, eNgwelezane and eSikhawini communities. The main objective for this visit was to secure a particular field site for the long-term engagement. Also important, was meeting and engaging with young people involved in various entrepreneurial activities of which some later became the main research participants or interlocutors for the project. The last visit involved an extended 2 month stay in eSikhawini from 6 February to 9 April 2015. During fieldwork, I resided in eSikhawini; accommodation that was paid for through my research funds. I lived in walking distance or a local taxi ride away from participants. The close proximity helped me spend extended time in various social settings. Occasionally, I was able to accompany participants to local social spaces in the evenings as well as day activities. At the end of each day, I updated the data that was collected, listening to recorded conversations and reviewing interview questions. After the fieldwork period, interaction with participants was maintained through phone calls and text messages. I returned to eSikhawini on 1 September 2015 for one day. The day was spent updating the participants on the progress of the research project and seeking additional information from the municipality.

## **2.7 Participant observation**

Ethnography relies on several sources of data. As one of these sources, participant observation involves the long-term engagement in the field. To develop an understanding of what it is like to live in a setting, the researcher participates in the local social life while also maintaining the position of an observer (Gupta & Ferguson 1997; Bernard 1995: 344). This involves describing the experience with a certain capacity of 'detachment'.

During the fieldwork I used various forms of research methods common to ethnographic research, in what Geertz (1973) calls "deep-hanging out". Participating in peoples' business involving the exchange of money and the possibility of learning more than what the participants would have liked me to learn was not easy. Two months was too short a time to build enough trust to the extent that these entrepreneurs allowed me to get involved in their business. However, I offered assistance, though I was careful not to insist on this request. Accompanying participants on after sale consultations also provided rich data. My participants who are business people included in the dissertation provided consent and asked that their names be used in writing this dissertation. Firstly as small business entrepreneurs' they wanted visibility and stories told. Secondly, being young entrepreneurs they wanted to be part of history and provide knowledge that in future could be useful. For instance,

observations on the manner in which one of the young entrepreneurs addressed older clients brought about a lively conversation on our drive about the importance of the local notions of respect (*ukuhlonipha*) in business. In some instances, participating in business such as in Fanele's bin cleaning enterprise came with no challenges. On two occasions, I spent the collecting, cleaning, and returning the green municipality bins at the J1 and J2 sections of eSikhawini. On one occasion, I accompanied Sifundo on a trip to Richards Bay to stock up chicken in preparations for the weeks' trade. During the trip conversations on creative strategies to prevent theft and natural fires by means of accumulating shopper points informed data analysed in the project.

## **2.8 Study Participant: Finding Youth Entrepreneurs**

### **2.8.1 Broad demographics**

This section provides a brief introduction to socio-demographic information of the participants. The decision to focus only on five participants was important to ensure deep immersion. As a result of this restriction, and given the restricted time of two months, the ethnographic undertaking through participant observation was possible over the period of the study.

The economic structure in uMhlathuze municipality hinges on the promise of opportunity through the operation and expansion of mining and minerals beneficiation. If not employed by industry, local entrepreneurial activities are intimately linked to industry taking the form of added value to the manufacturers supply chain (Vall, 1999; Hall 2000). Given this context, local businesses established through Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) programmes and business incubators are encouraged to seize the opportunity as the kind of enterprise that is useful to the manufacturing company. This does not only mean limiting the kinds of entrepreneurial activities to those related to procurement, but locating such business closer to the clients, mostly in Richards Bay.

Contrary to this depiction, all but one of my informants' enterprises was located in eSikhawini. None of the entrepreneurs target manufacturing companies but rather direct business at the people that work in the industry. The table below outlines and summarises the main demographic factors mapping the social-economic structure of the participants in the study. Four of the five participants are within the ages commonly categorised as youth.

Though Makamu is 43-years old he is included in the study to support the understanding of youth as a fluid social construct rather than simply in terms of biological life stage (Seekings, 1996; Utas, 2012; Fuh, 2012; Honwana, 2012). Makamu is the only participant who was married with children. Only one of the younger participants had a partner who was expecting a child. Apart from Makamu, the rest of the participants do not live with their partners in instances where one is in a relationship. Three of the participants live with family. However one participant was expected to contribute toward rent and other expenses hence in table 1 the tenure is emphasised as ‘Rent\*’. The other three participants either rented a room within a house, or rented a larger, separate one-bedroom flat in the joint style single floor structure, in what is locally known as *imiqasho* (literally translation: the rented). Senzi, Ndumiso and Fanele grew up and studied their primary in eSikhawini. Senzi and Ndumiso also went to the same primary school, while Fanele and Ndumiso played for the same soccer team in secondary school. At the time of the research, Sifundo had just graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in education from the University of Zululand (UniZulu). Even though he started working in as a student, he was, at the time of research, actively looking for formal employment related to the degree. Senzi works in the family business and trained as a paralegal. After an eight month course in social entrepreneurship he obtained a business qualification from the UCT Graduate School of Business. Ndumiso, a graduate from Richtek (now known as Umfolozi College), is only focused on the business with no plans of seeking employment in the industry or the municipality. Makamu and Charles attended some classes in secondary school level, while Fanele completed high school. The dissertation does not focus so much on Senzi as an emergent youth entrepreneur because he works in the family business even though his prize-winning business idea exists on paper. It is the rest of the entrepreneurs who rely fully on the income from the enterprises they started that the research project centres on.

Table 1:

**Table 1: Distribution of Participants Demographics by age, gender, marital status, child, level of education and tenure**

	<b>Makamu</b>	<b>Senzi</b>	<b>Ndumiso</b>	<b>Fanele</b>	<b>Charles</b>	<b>Sifundo</b>
<b>Age</b>	43	24	24	23	30	26
<b>Gender</b>	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male
<b>Marital status</b>	Married	Not married	Not married	Not married	Not married	Not married
<b>Child</b>	Three	No child	No child	No child	No child	Girlfriend Pregnant
<b>Level of education</b>	Some secondary	Higher Education	Higher Education	Grade 12	Some secondary	Higher Education
<b>Type of tenure</b>	Rent	Occupied rent free	Occupied rent free	Rent*	Rent	Rent

Finding young entrepreneurs occurred through snowball sampling (that is one participant introduces the researcher to their extended network of relations), and illuminates the relational interdependence of business in the area. On 7 February 2015, I met my first participant Senzi, the manager of the bed and breakfast where I lived for the duration of the fieldwork. After explaining the nature of the research, I was introduced to Ndumiso by Senzi who had come to the bed and breakfast to assess and give a quote for a shattered sliding glass door. In addition to the glass and aluminum panel installations enterprise, the 24 year old entrepreneur owned a solar geyser installation business. It was during the initial conversation that Ndumiso spoke of another young entrepreneur with a bin cleaning business. At that time Ndumiso was assisting the young entrepreneur as he set up accounting systems for the enterprise. I met these participants through long established relationships that brought us together. These initial connections and interviews helped me to grow comfortable and confident in the area. Makamu encouraged me to return to eSikhawini following our introduction at the flea market in the Mzingazi area. Although he was older than the conventional youth limit of 35 years old, I still wanted to meet and chat with him. This led to a visit at the Mkhoboza section of eSikhawini, where his business – selling beauty creams and paper towels for various use – is located, outside a busy tshisa-nyama (generally refers to a business that combines a butchery, liquor store, and car-wash and offers a braai area, which is all located on one property). I met the other two entrepreneurs, 30- year old Charles, and

26-year old Sifundo during my walks around the area. Charles operates a glass cutting enterprise from a stand located across from a hardware shop. Working with a partner, they alternate manning the stand because they take on private jobs installing windows and contract work in building construction. Sifundo's chicken dust braai stand is located on the busy main road of Mdlembe Street, feeding into the mall and taxi rank. Though my participants welcomed me to spend time with them, my positionality remained somewhat uncertain.

## **2.9 Positionality**

My position and interest in entrepreneurship emerges from growing up within a family business household. Entrepreneurship as embedded in social relationships cultivated my own father, a successful businessman in the late 70s and 80s with values rooted in the collective. While he had mastered the ways of successfully running a large business, there had been no point in his journey where there was no connection to family, friends or even strangers. Many of the people employed in the family business were related to the family. However, this was by no means simply an exercise of the power, money and opportunity through employment. The ability to have a successful entrepreneurship and abide by the rules of a wider collective was not exemplified by my father. Female entrepreneurs in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape such as Aunt Laura Mphahlwa as she was popularly known owned boutique stores and built schools while maintaining roles as mothers and wives (Mabandla, 2015). The private school I attended until matriculation was built in the 1970s by a collective of black entrepreneurs, some in influential government position, who were all women. My journey to understand youth entrepreneurship draws on the stories of the women and my fathers' passing on the knowledge of individual success that is in line with collective aspirations. In addition to passed on knowledge, accumulated education at university added a different kind of prestige when amongst informants and people of eSikhawini (Fuh, 2012). As a result some local people would engage me in conversations on subjects on the socio-economic and political climate of the country.

Ethnography, similar to entrepreneurship, as an exercise that builds trust requires hard work and deep investment. While invited by participants, my positionality changed over the course of my fieldwork. Msomi (2002) concludes that small enterprises were highly competitive with one another. My position as a stranger is not only that there are no relations to eSikhawini as a way to claim locality. To have no relations in the local area and the introduction as a researcher seeking to learn about youth entrepreneurs along with trade secrets had the potential to be interpreted not only as a competing neighbour but possibly a

representative of industry and government – which I was - with ulterior motives. My position as a stranger calling to make appointments to learn about young people and their business was “suspect”. This became evident when, after having had two extensive and intimate conversations with Ndumiso, he still asked the same questions as if not fully satisfied my answers: “What is it in it for you? What are you going to gain from this and how do I benefit”? He was not the only participant that asked these questions on more than one occasion. In fact all my participants asked these questions in various ways throughout fieldwork. It was a fair entrepreneurial question. Exchange in the sense of negotiating positionality and conviviality took the form of offering assistance such as providing transport when there was a car rental at the beginning and the end of the fieldwork. Honesty about my master’s dissertation fulfilment and my desire to graduate informed the research. At the same time a passion for issues related to black youth as a collective ignites a sense of activism informed the research. My positionality continues to be negotiated and shifting as an “outsider” and “insider” with participants even after fieldwork.

## **2.10 Life histories**

During fieldwork, participants described important events and experiences in their lives. Similar to Jimu (2008) in *Urban Appropriation and Transformation: Bicycle Taxi and Handcart Operators in Mzuzu, Malawi*, the aim of focusing on life stories was to capture socio-economic and cultural backgrounds of the individual entrepreneurs. For this research project life histories have provided necessary accounts of how the youth entrepreneurs started their businesses. Although the stories are personal and not necessarily representative of every young person, the accounts provide insight on the fabric of youth entrepreneurs as a social group. The accounts reveal feelings and perspectives of youth entrepreneurs regarding the promise of opportunity and the challenges of life. These accounts made it possible to make sense of the ways that entrepreneurs situate themselves in relation to people they interact on a daily basis.

In order to capture the dreams and aspirations of youth entrepreneurs activated by the promise of opportunity in eSikhawini ethnographically, it was important to understand if and how those dreams acted as contours of the self and shaped relationships with objects and people. This requires a good understanding of what Hollan (2004) calls the “current life situation” of people. From Emirbayer and Mische’s (1998) chordial triad (see Chapter 1, page 9 of this dissertation) the capacity for young people to dream and aspire to future trajectories calls upon the reconfiguring of past life stories. The open interviews and conversations with

participants' included early memories. Some of the participants were more open than others about past experiences. For instance, during conversations Fanele revealed really personal aspects to include controversies that surrounded her mother's pregnancy. It is particularly these hard personal records from which future dreams and aspirations emerged, in this instance activated by the promise of opportunity that guided entrepreneurial activities to stabilize the future of the youth in eSikhawini. Through personal life records, participants gave meaning or substance toward some wholeness. Dreams and aspirations for a better future reconfigure the past and life stories and (have the potential to \_ guide action dealing with emergent challenges (Taylor, 1989; Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). Life stories, among other things, reveal the entrepreneurial nature embedded in the venture to invest on a narrative with the interest to reap future benefits thereby reconstructing the past.

### **2.11 Field-notes**

Field notes take the form of written notes during the interviews. In instances where informal conversations occurred within public spaces or during taxi rides (and randomly), notes were written at the end of the day, relying on memory. At the end of each week, notes were updated and organised in ways that made it possible to revise questions when clarity was required. A digital voice recorder was used during formal interviews with two of the five participants. Information of the area is not accessible in the local library in eSikhawini, except for the map used in the dissertation. The same can be said for Richards Bay library. The Town Planning section of the City of uMhlatuze provides maps and additional secondary data on the area. This information was stored on an external hard-drive and informs the field notes, which are used in triangulation with the primary data collected.

### **2.12 Photographs**

Photographs were taken of three of the five enterprises and participants researched. For the protection of the participants, these photographs are restricted in use and circulation. Several have been used for presentation purposes at various conferences. These photographs provide a distilled image of the location, which is then given life and continuity by the ethnography.

### **2.13 Data Analyses**

Data in the form of field notes, interviews, and journal and diary entries has been transcribed and grouped to uncover themes that frame the dissertation. This process enabled the identification of the exact words or themes that are similar in meaning (Jacobson 1991:7-9, 12). Emergent theoretical frameworks inform the ethnographic analysis of the data.

### 2.13.1 Transcription

The conversations captured with the digital recorder are stored in files marked by date and the participants' name. Upon returning to UCT, a total of eight hours of conversation were transcribed. One of the conversations did not record during the interview due to a low battery. This was realised in the evening after the informal interview but this did not compromise the analysis because the themes covered during the interview were already captured.

### 2.14 Ethical Dilemmas

From this ethnographic research new relationships have emerged between me and the participants. This makes writing this dissertation more challenging as the people included in the document have become friends. Even with the brief period of two months fieldwork, I was to some extent able to establish a level of trust after having been allowed into their lives. Based on trust, there is an ethical obligation to represent them in ways that are respectable while at the same time activates positive responses from influential stakeholders. Presenting results at various conferences with influential scholars, specialists and government officials has given me the opportunity to dignify their lives. During fieldwork, I have learnt much more than what has gone into this dissertation. Some of the knowledge omitted is aligned with the ethical responsibility to protect the participants (my friends) who do not enjoy the benefits of citizenship. Reflecting on myself as being in a constant state of becoming resonates with the sense of incompleteness that Nyamnjoh (2015a) argues we all must embrace and negotiate through notions of conviviality. As an incomplete being, even as I enjoy the benefits of citizenship, I am also a *makwerekwere* (term –sometimes used derogatively to refer to African foreigners) (Nyamnjoh, 2015b). I have decided to protect the status of some of the participants by not emphasising those whose umbilical cords are buried elsewhere across the Limpopo River, despite their having a home in eSikhawini. I also remain concerned about how much positive difference this dissertation will make in their lives. Since fieldwork ended my own interest to successfully complete this dissertation also hinges on how they collectively perceive their representation as something that brings respect and dignity and contribute towards the work to stabilise their lives and the community of eSikhawini (Nyamnjoh, 2000).

The guidelines established by Anthropology Southern Africa (ASnA) and that the researcher must abide by, stipulate that the main responsibility of anthropologists is to their participants. Participants for this project also include individuals from various institutions and stakeholders. The researcher attempts to represent their invaluable contributions to the

dissertation in a manner that does not compromise anonymity where specified. As individuals these representatives share personal opinions that reveal the extent to which regional institutions and policy are the outcome of regular entrepreneurial human relationships (Vall, 1999). The final document will be circulated among the participants. The instances where participants are not able to read and/or understand the information, verbal explanations will be arranged. Additionally, “[anthropologists] have the responsibility to ensure that [their] relationships with [participants] accord with the highest disciplinary standards and with local understandings of respect and dignity” (“Ethical guidelines and principles of conduct for anthropologists”, 2005, p. 142). Where and how the information is reproduced continues to concern the researcher. Particularly in instances that such reproduction creates tension between the participants and members of the local community. Repeated visits and continued research at PhD level in the locality is one way to continue the longitudinal study and keeping up with any major changes. In the case where further studies occur in a different locality, continued contact with participants along with occasional visits will assist to stay informed on any significant reactions related to the information presented. Lastly, “[anthropologists] have a responsibility to ensure that the products of our research and teaching are not misleading” (2005, p. 142). The detailed method section outlined above is transparent about the manner in which this research project was carried out. Participants were informed of the various ways the researcher might represent them. This includes at conference presentations and forms of media and social media summaries. In the case of any strong disapproving reactions, it is my responsibility to review the evidence in the data presented and make any necessary revisions.

## **2.15 Conclusion**

The section has framed ethnography as entrepreneurial to illuminate commonalities of risk and creativity involved in venturing on fieldwork. The form of entrepreneurial activity draws on successful women who remained part of a collective in their investments. Investment of various resources in ethnographic fieldwork means personalised responsibility and accountability for the returns. The high stakes requires building of investor trust (research participants and stakeholders) whose agreement to the venture and the unintended consequences determines the extent ethnographic fieldworkers’ can immerse themselves in the locality. eSikhawini as the locality chosen as a field site is central to the potential returns engendered in the sustainable development of minerals in the broader uMhlathuze Municipality as a Special Economic Zone. Data collection methods related to the

entrepreneurial activities embedded in ethnography have been triangulated, transcribed and analysed. The themes emergent from the analysis frame the chapters that make up the dissertation. The next chapter examines the local context of entrepreneurship created by the promise of opportunity engendered in the expansion of mining and minerals beneficiation. It further locates the socio-economic context in relation to other people and with whom young people interact with on a daily basis. Given the socio-economic context and the forms of social capital, the chapter further examines how young people's imagined opportunities activate the confined nodes of dreams and aspirations and how the use of dreams and aspirations guides social interactions that cultivate youth entrepreneurs. The following chapter discusses the spirit of entrepreneurship.

## Chapter 3 Believe: Spirit of Entrepreneurship

### Abstract

The overall objective of the dissertation is to examine the kinds of youth entrepreneurship that attempt to stabilise their lives in the face of uncertainty. This chapter contributes to the overall argument by examining how forms of transformation such as spirituality and religion shape the dreams and aspirations that youth have and how this impact entrepreneurship. The chapter examines religion as one such personal form of transformation and its impact on entrepreneurship. In this context of religion, used to act on dreams and aspiration in order to become a success for these kinds of youth entrepreneurs is in more ways than just monetary. This chapter focuses on the life trajectory of one young man to examine how spirituality/religion embodied in entrepreneurship is a vital aspect to maintain focus in order to not only become, but to be an entrepreneur. The chapter builds on the case of Ndumiso embarking on a solar geyser trade and installation enterprise called Solar Living that marked a turning point or personal transformation in not only self-awareness but also personhood. It is more important for him to be respectable and recognised as a ‘Christian entrepreneur’ by the society than one known simply as an economic entrepreneur (Salo, 2003). Rather than understanding the two as opposites, in this chapter Christianity and economic success, through entrepreneurship, are complimentary and negotiated through various relationships that are not limited to a church. In this way the chapter complicates the dominant favour of producing economic entrepreneurs where young people define success in other forms such as spirituality.

In the context of the chapter “spirituality” and “religion” are used interchangeably. Religion and its impact on entrepreneurship are located in the colonial history and social formations in South Africa. The extension of the colonial rule in the Cape and Natal does not only signify the widespread dispossession but is also significant for the influential role of the mission stations in implanting capitalist social and economic conventions among black converts (Bundy, 1988 in Mabandla, 2015). It is the British humanitarianism underpinned by the extension of Christianity and British civilisation which produced complex intersections of cultural and economic institutions, while at the same time prevented and activated new dreams and aspirations that guided creative entrepreneurial strategies to access land by black people. The effect of the colonial conquest, Mabandla (2015) states destabilised precolonial systems of production through extensive dispossession of African land. What followed were the colonial land reforms leading to large tracts of productive land privatised and consolidated in European possession. Meanwhile, mission stations increasingly became

influential, facilitating restricted land accumulation by Christian converts (Mabandla, 2015). The impact of the cultural and economic factors from the land reforms disrupted chiefs' authority in a way that those land-poor adherents could by-pass traditional structures and access land by turning to missionaries and conversion to Christianity. Through mission stations, the establishment for education-based stratification by training converts in new agricultural techniques, numeracy and literacy in order to further economic transactions meant that aspirations and dreams for social mobility and stability became a question of not only access to land but negotiation of complex relationships through education. Both religion and the new commercial form of production were not accepted in the model form imparted by missionaries but rather domesticated within the local context. Adopting a mixed model of subsistence and commercial agriculture laid the foundation for the development of black Christians as entrepreneurs. By the 1880s controversial entrepreneurs such as Cecil Rhodes of De Beers mines supported the process of amalgamation to form large companies. This was in order to achieve the objectives by two key features: underground mining to replace open cast, and secondly the barracking of black workers that will eliminate competition for labour and regulate of supply. Even with these changes a significant number of black entrepreneurs continued to exist in mining towns such as Kimberly. Although not limited to them, black Christians that had been the majority of resident black population of artisans and property owners used ideals of individual enterprise to renegotiate relations with chiefs. They had become prominent business people who were already skilled in brick-making, carpentry and owned property and wagons, which had become in demand in Kimberly. Historical evidence shows that the "individual free enterprise" of the first generation of missionary trained entrepreneurs carried on a mixed method "of subsistence and commercial farming, combined with salaries from professional jobs", as intra-generational continuities by black landowners (Mabandla, 2015: 81). In Nigeria's early adopters of entrepreneurs, Belasco (1980:138) states that "the notion that traders were 'new men' or entrepreneurs dissolves under scrutiny, for they remained closely associated with their kin groups and with a more generalized functioning in the traditional community". Mabandla (2015) argues that social formations of middle class black South Africans are a consequence of intra-generational transmission dating back to the mid-nineteenth century rather than the widely accepted post-1994 phenomena. Furthermore, the complexity embedded in the social production and cultivation marked by mixed strategies for social legitimation by entrepreneurs to include religion as forms establishing and maintaining respectability, dignity and personhood is historical evidence that refutes monolithic understanding of the concept and the practice of

entrepreneurship. Religion, as a domesticated component through which aspirations and dreams for dignity, personhood and success in the context of precarity, is rarely discussed in studies on entrepreneurship (Audretsch, Boente & Tamvada, 2007). Classic Protestant themes focused on the hope for personal guidance during uncertainty has been overshadowed by the global charismatic faith which addresses the spiritual, physical and financial (Coleman, 2000). The spread and success of the faith style of preaching in the African context has been due to unrelenting economic recession and political disillusionment as people seek other ways to stabilise and transform their lives. A shift from the personal to a more public faith reflected in teachings on health and accumulation of wealth through material things have attracted thousands of followers giving rise to a ministry embodied by the missionaries (Coleman, 2000:). The ministers' appearances exemplify their followers' aspirations as successful entrepreneurs in the material accumulation such as expensive cars, jewellery and clothing, and in spiritual wealth.

Ndumiso was born in a family that combined entrepreneurship and ministry. While his mother's side of the family are conventional entrepreneurs in the kinds of businesses that sell products and services, his father is a minister that has established a new gospel church in Mzingazi, another township approximately 20km's from eSikhawini. Ndumiso's father worked at one of the industrial plants before starting up the church. Since then more branches have opened in other townships. Even though Ndumiso cultivated the entrepreneurial spirit selling sweets in school, his faith in Christ and how it impacted his approach to business came much later. It is through the interview conversations with Ndumiso and how people spoke of his transformation and entrepreneurial achievement that I argue for a concept grounded on real lived experiences as well as a more inclusive definition of success.

Transformation followed by focus in business is at the centre of Ndumiso's story. Before becoming a born-again Christian Ndumiso described himself as being like most young guys in the township; chasing girls and drinking alcohol. On separate conversations held with two childhood friends, Senzi and Fanele spoke about how Ndumiso was and his transformation. Senzi came to the accommodation where I lived on the first day of my arrival in eSikhawini. After speaking briefly about my research project on black youth entrepreneurs, Senzi told me about a school friend that ran businesses in the area. Ndumiso was to survey a broken sliding glass door at the accommodation and provide Senzi with a quotation. In partnership with his mother, Ndumiso ran a glass and aluminium installation business. The enterprise also tailor fitted and cut aluminium and glass, operating from a rented space. Upon our introduction I

was immediately struck by Ndumiso's calmness and articulation. He was precise in response to my request for a meeting, even suggesting areas that he would like to show me. After having read much literature and engaged in conversations on discourses around the perception of youth as a problematique – that is as either victim or perpetrators, the confident and humble attitude of Ndumiso surprised me. This element of surprise and sense of being impressed was also expressed by Fanele in another conversation a couple of weeks into the fieldwork. Ndumiso was a guest-speaker at a church congregation attended by Fanele. Since playing soccer together at the age of thirteen, the two had not seen each other until the day of the talk. The talk was centred on encouraging youth to pursue their aspirations and dreams through the framework of the benefits from spiritual transformation. In telling his personal story and achievements such as building a solar geyser installation enterprise, Fanele was impressed at how articulate and confident, as well as transformed “Ndu” (his nickname from the soccer playing days) was.

In most of the youth leadership talks and business studies that focused on empowering youth, there was a strong emphasis on self-motivation, particularly in enterprise development. The focus on the individual through self-motivation is privileged as the main transformative process. However, data drawn from interviews contradict the artificial separation of mind, body and soul. In this case spirituality collapsed such a separation in a process of social embodiment reflecting economic, political and religious elements that constitute the local uncertainties in eSikhawini (Csordas, 1994). Ndumiso's story provides an example that at least begins to show the complex nuances of such artificial separation. Before his spiritual transformation, Ndumiso struggled to achieve focus and needed to operate the business through self-motivation alone. During his first year at Richards Bay Tech (now called Umfolozi College), Ndumiso opened a mobile kitchen where he sold deep fried chips and grilled Russian sausages. The family supported Ndumiso financially to purchase the gas griller equipment, and also worked at his stall every Saturday at the local flea market. The market attracts traders as far as Durban, which is two hours away by car. On four occasions I visited the market and spent a day with one of the participants who operated a stall. Located at the first commercial hub built by local businessmen known by residents as *ecomplex* (.at the complex), the space transforms from a deserted shopping experience to one buzzing with approximately one hundred traders selling a variety of products such as clothing items, beauty products, equipment, arts and crafts, groceries, fresh fruit produce and various food stalls and mobile kitchens selling various deep fried and grilled foods. During the week the

commercial area had gotten quieter since the opening of a new shopping mall that also accommodates the main local taxi rank 2km's away. It was at the flea market at *ecomplex* that Ndumiso's business gained popularity. He described how they had to develop a ticket system with the order number because the queues got long. The system enabled customers to place orders, and with their tickets on hand, they could continue shopping at the flea market collect their food later by showing their tickets. It is through the experience of the profitability of the business that Ndumiso dreamt of running a restaurant on property he owned. Yet, there was no focus. In his words during a conversation on 12 February over lunch he expressed that "So we were quite busy. But what was actually happening, I didn't have much of a focus of some sorts, you know. Growing up I didn't have much focus when it comes to the business" (2015). Biological age is often understood as part of a stage that teenagers must transcend on the way to adulthood (Honwana, 2012). Lack of resources and skills training are often depicted as important elements attributed to self-motivation for youth in townships. From this view the result is the excessive drinking and acts described as irresponsible or ambiguous forms of agency such as chasing girls (Bordonaro & Payne, 2012). Such an understanding is accepted as the reason youths' failure to establish profitable businesses. The skills training centres, and leadership talks commonly advocated by supporters of such unjustified information as ways to transform "unrestricted" agency into "responsible" agency are not available in eSikhawini. Even when leadership talks occur, often hosted by Zululand Chamber Commerce and Industry, they are costly and require young entrepreneurs to sacrifice a day of making money to attend with little guaranteed benefits. In Ndumiso's case the simplistic logic did not follow in the same way as the grilling enterprise continued to do well, despite his inability to focus.

At the age of nineteen, Ndumiso's had more money than most friends. The enterprise continued to do well. He also operated a braai-stand selling flame grilled Russian sausages in the late afternoons. Fanele described how he would see Ndumiso operate under a street light in the evening, selling to local people returning from work. During fieldwork observations the braai-stand enterprises along the side walk of the road were prominent. At approximately 3pm and 4pm everyday braai-stands are placed within metres of each other, where they sell beef, chicken kebabs and chicken dust. One evening I went on a walk with the intention to observe the kinds of enterprises that operated after "business hours". From the process of walking and observing it was evident that braai-stands operate under street lights for visibility as well as safety. There was money coming from the enterprise that resulted in Ndumiso

being popular among friends as the provider of alcohol and sharing his earning among girls. During this time spent many hours drinking with friends in the shared apartment, sometimes even skipping classes. The apartment the fridge was often stocked with beers and hardly any food, he explained in our first interview. As the success of the open kitchen business grew, so did his popularity among friends and girls. Although the business continued to do well during this time, Ndumiso explained that there still was no focus. The routine of drinking in social surroundings meant using money made from the business that could have been used for other things. An offer to purchase property *ecomplex* came up. Working in the food service industry activated a dream to open a “proper” restaurant on property he owned. On different occasions Ndumiso attempted to stop drinking but the social relations with friends made this difficult. He could not stay sober for more than a week. By then his friends would ask to hang-out at bars at which point Ndumiso would buy everyone drinks. The question then is what and how did the personal transformation come about. Furthermore, how did this impact the business?

Aspirations for personal forms of transformation and empowerment engender teachings in the national promotion to develop entrepreneurs by industry and government supported initiative. However, the ever-widening gap between the rich and poor community, as a result of economic recession and political disillusionment, make these initiatives inaccessible due to cost and the perception that young are to blame for their own struggles. This gap has given rise and success to faith-style teaching gospel which encourages prosperity in health, physical, personal, economical and spiritual being without such blames (Coleman, 2000). Receiving gospel teachings carries transformative power that Ndumiso describes as “spontaneous” and as “something much more divine [that] comes”. Ndumiso got saved as a born-again Christian at home. His father, a pastor, carried out the process. The most difficult part was sharing the news of having become a born-again Christian with his friends. To be a Christian and seen by the public hanging out at bars diminishes legitimation in the society of believers. It is through associations with the gospel church, operated by his father, that Ndumiso was eventually accepted by other Christians in the area. The transformation to becoming a Christian also required acting in acceptable ways of “being” of the faith. What followed, Ndumiso explained, was the ability to focus. He stated: “That’s when it [focus] came along. And from there onwards, [handing out and drinking was] cut off. And really cut off”. Ndumiso ended the relationship with his then girlfriend no longer socially interacted with the friends he drank with. Instead he spent time going to church and establishing new

relationships within the Christian society. The personal transformation and the act of cutting off established relationships, while creating new ones related to church was brought up in conversation with people that knew Ndumiso before being saved. For example, in more than two occasions, Fanele spoke in disbelief when reflecting on Ndumiso. Still addressing him by his nickname Fanele reflected “Ndu, we used to play soccer together. He was a goalkeeper. He was good”. Fanele looked up to Ndumiso as an achieved person with whom he shares the same ideas on entrepreneurship shaped by the values of the Christian faith.

### **3.1 Cultivating Entrepreneurship**

Conventional concepts of entrepreneurship and development do not capture the essential features of venturing in depressed areas such as townships, as the literature assumes the primacy of individual and economic goals (Peredo & Chrisman, 2006:). Running across such debates is the importance of individualized form of education, training and skilling. In Africa, individualised forms of youth entrepreneurship, despite their acknowledgement of agency, seek to transform socially domesticated agency into ‘responsible agency’, which is individualised through various forms of education and skills training (Marock, 2005; Steenkamp et al, 2011; Turton and Herrington, 2012; Youth Enterprise Development Strategy, 2011: 20; Enu-Kwesu, 2012). Focusing on young people in township secondary school and their attitudes towards entrepreneurship and their future plans, Steenkamp et al (2011) for instance, call for an urgent effective entrepreneurship training programme at school level. The difficulty by young people to enter informal trade is further constrained by, among other things, informal skills training (Hart, 1973). Bordonaro and Payne (2012) add that, this way of understanding youth intervention initiative enforces modes of disciplinary control or ‘child protection’ measures that are designed to bend youth’s conduct toward morally and socially approved goals, transforming social agency into ‘responsible agency’ – such interventions are noticeably paternalistic, directive and supervisory in approach. The implicit focus on the individual in common theories of entrepreneurship ignore the possibility that entrepreneur's social relationships may be vital in shaping the decision to start up a business. What misses from these studies are the ways in which being an entrepreneur is produced, cultivated and negotiated through social interactions informed by reality on the ground. The informal conversations held with Ndumiso during fieldwork became valuable, particularly when we spoke at moments that were not necessarily planned. For example, during a site seeing drive of the extended eSikhawini areas, Ndumiso shared detailed stories about growing up and his ideas that entrepreneurship is best known by doing.

In primary, school Ndumiso was the kid often known to sell sweets. He was known as ‘sweets guy’. Selling sweets was encouraged by his parents so Ndumiso could earn enough money to buy the things. This value of unplanned conversations also surfaced with Senzi. What was meant to be a brief meeting with Senzi at the family business office in Richards Bay turned into a lively conversation that took a life of its own. It is during this unplanned, extended conversation that Senzi spoke about Ndumiso. They attended the same primary and former model C high school in eSikhawini and Richards Bay, respectively. Senzi described Ndumiso as the “guy always selling things” at school. Selling sweets did not only teach him how to make and spend money. For example Ndumiso explained that the sweets business taught the importance of managing money and the business. While it was at first exciting to have access to sweets, which he loved, he also learned the importance of limiting the amount of sweets to enjoy as this meant losing money from sales. This kind of discipline, however, came with time and concretised through making mistakes and receiving guidance from his parents. This assertion deviates from the over-emphasis of entrepreneurship training programme at school level advocated by Steenkamp et al (2011). Ndumiso’s mother and her family are long established entrepreneurs. The assistance and encouragement to become and operate as the ‘sweets guy’ at school taught Ndumiso the foundations of business by actually doing the work that signify intra-generational transmission. It is also during this time that Ndumiso learnt the importance of managing money. At first, it was tempting to use money to buy the things he wanted without considering the expenses of the business. As a young bricoleur, making do with what was on hand, Ndumiso acquired the knowledge of business through the collective interest of kinship relationships (Levi-Straus, 1966; Nyamnjoh, 2000). Along with the family experience in business, cultural norms and identity as schemas of action for Ndumiso have been inculcated through local understanding of entrepreneurship as cultivated and negotiated through relationships (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998).

### **3.2 Relations in raising capital by an entrepreneur**

The focus necessary to be a transformed Christian impacted Ndumiso’s perceptions and actions toward business. Following having ended relationships with social drinking friends and his girlfriend, as well as attending church on a regular basis, Ndumiso focused on finding ways to raise money to be able to buy property. It is the capacity to focus on the aspiration through spiritual actions and relations that Ndumiso describes as the start and growth of the solar-powered product enterprise which was “more related to the spiritual sense” when

compared to the inspiration to start up the mobile kitchen business. Ndumiso's commitment to church was evident in moments when he did not respond to phone calls and text messages following an appointment to spend a working day with him. Following our second interview we agreed to meet again on another day. Ndumiso promised to pick me up in a car on the way to work yet, I was unable to contact him. Three days passed without my getting through to him. On the third day I walked to the business office, two kilometres from my accommodation. One of the employees at the office said that Ndumiso was on a church retreat with the family. It lasted for a couple days during the week. This meant missing days working in the business. Ndumiso came across as a person that did not miss a day of work because he was hands on. For instance, during one of my visits to the Solar Living, I observed Ndumiso sorting out a discrepancy with the order delivery for solar panels by the courier company. The number that the courier company charged for the weight of each item did not coincide with the number of boxes delivered. During the time of the delivery Ndumiso was also assisting one of his employees, teaching him how to calculate and check that the charges on the delivery note matched with the individual weighted cost of each box. The only other time that Ndumiso was not at work was on 30 March 2015. He was attending a solar power seminar targeted at entrepreneurs in Durban for three days. I offered to give him and my other participant, Makamu, a lift to Durban as I was going to drop off a friend who had visited for the weekend at the King Shaka Airport. The focus brought by and through spiritual transformation meant attending retreats that related to the faith as well as those that would help the business grow. Drawing on Emirbayer and Mische's (1998) idea, it is the mixed transformation in religion and enterprise as projective agency that focused actions guided by Ndumiso's dream to open up a restaurant business on a property he owns. There had to be another way of money and fast.

Ndumiso narrates the story over a long lunch in Richards Bay, on how the idea to raise money culminated the beginning of Solar Living. One day while driving through Mtubatuba further north east of KwaZulu Natal, Ndumiso noticed the number of locally built houses that had solar panels and geysers on the roof. At that moment he wondered if that was a lucrative business. What *was* clear to him was the absence of products in eSikhawini. While he learnt about solar systems and their functionality in a lecture room at college, Ndumiso did not know about the business of such an industry. After doing research he found the details of a man that sold solar products in Richards Bay. After making contact with a man he called Donald Jones (pseudonym), he expressed an interest to learn about the solar enterprise and

the possibility to expand into the eSikawini area. Ndumiso told Jones that he had a long list of potential clients in the area. Jones thought this was great idea. But, in reality, there was no long list of potential customers. Ndumiso went built his client base by advertising possible jobs. There was an overwhelming response to the A4 sized stickers reading ‘if you want *umsebenzi* (a job), we don’t care whether you don’t have a grade 10, does not matter. At Solar Living we can give you the right job’, he explains. At this point Solar Living did not exist. He had made up the name. To address the potential employees he arranged a meeting at a community hall where he did a presentation on how the work would operate. The candidates would be employed as agents that worked on commission; R200 for every potential customer signed on the data base. What followed was a brief training on the solar system: ‘how they work, and how to do the presentation when they get to the customer’. The door-to-door work of agents helped Ndumiso establish such a large client base that Jones was pleasantly surprised. The arrangement was that Ndumiso would add a mark-up on the solar products that cost R2000 including installation. It was from the sales of marked up products that a year later Ndumiso was able to raise enough money to establish Solar Living. Ndumiso’s dream and aspiration to own a restaurant on a property he owned guided the creative action negotiating his relationship with Jones (Appadurai, 2013; Emirbayer and Mische, 1998). As Nyamnjoh (2000) notes, Ndumiso’s success at securing a client base that enabled the productive relationship with Jones, was possible by negotiation of cultural norms of the collective interest. It was known in the area, particularly within the religious networks, that Ndumiso was a Christian, and that his father was a pastor. Some people came through church social networks. There is no denying that many came in search of employment. The audience consisted of people from various ages; some older some younger. There are ways of addressing a crowd that comprises of older people, which is grounded in cultural norms. It is at the intersection of political institutions and the economy, which is the inability of government and industry to provide respectable jobs; those ideas of *ukuhlonipha* (to give respect) reclaim local forms of dignity and personhood. It is embedded in the way young people address their elders, which reflects the collective interest of society. Another example of how culture determined how young people addressed adults was learnt while observing Ndumiso address an older client when he attended to an after sale service.

During the first interview conversation, Ndumiso described a simple but effective system of work. Through referrals, door-to-door sales and direct promotions, customers would call or walk into the office enquiring about the product. The employees in the office explained how

the product worked and used brochures with more information on the solar system. When the customer is interested a 50 per cent deposit of R3500 is required upfront. Details of the client, including name, address and phone number are taken and a date for installation is given. The technical staff travel to the client's house, install the solar product and the outstanding balance is settled on the same day of the installation. In the case of an unsatisfactory product, the technician fixes the problem without any additional charge. Although usually relying on the technical staff to deal with the customers when installing, Ndumiso prefers to handle calls by clients himself, after the products have been installed. For instance, after our second meeting and conversation Ndumiso invited me to accompany him to do follow up visit on a client that recently had a solar heater installed. We drove in the afternoon taking a more sight-seeing route so that Ndumiso would show me a small mining plant hidden behind eSikhawini in Dlangezwe. We then branched off from the route I had come to know forming a ring around the different sections of eSikhawini, toward the coast. As we were driving on this part of the area outside eSikhawini Ndumiso explained about the increase in the number of people that chose to live outside the main township. These were newly built houses with large yards. The house we arrived at was no different to this structure.

We walked to the door and Ndumiso asked to speak to the father of the teenage children that answered the door. While we waited outside Ndumiso explained the importance of respect in the area, as an aspect that is central to the making of Zulu culture. This was particularly important, he went on, when dealing with client service after the installations have been done. As a younger person there is a particular manner in which to address elders that does not simply reflect customer-business ideas but rather a father and son relationship. The man coming out of the house looked to be in his late 40s. When he came to talk to us Ndumiso greeted and spoke softly to the man, at moments with both his hands held together in a gesture to signify a sense of humility among the familiar. But neither man knew each other. Ndumiso explained who he was and that he came regarding the installation. The man was calm and addressed Ndumiso as *ndodana* (young man) when replying that there was nothing wrong with the installation and that everything was working fine. As it turned out his details had been left when the man inquired as to when we do the initial installation. On our way back to eSikhawini, Ndumiso explained the importance of interacting with local people 'in a way they understand'. In this case, the way people understand is related to local social rules on how the young are expected to address their elders even in business. This example of Ndumiso as a "cultural hero" reveals the notion of multiple forms of being an entrepreneur,

which at close scrutiny dissolves the “newness” advocated in management studies of a kind modern or opportunity entrepreneur, for they remain associated with kin groups and with the generalized function in the cultural community (Belasco, 1981; Nyamnjoh, 2000).

### **3.3 Spirit of successful entrepreneur**

Too often there are unjustified claims that many young entrepreneurs in townships are not successful. The analysis, and sometimes judgement is related to business and the monetary value. Adornment in material things is often framed as a form of personal transformation in order to position oneself as a brand, in addition to the business. At the leadership convention championed by well-known celebrity turned entrepreneur Dj Sbu, fellow motivators constantly made reference to driving expensive cars and wearing suits as markers of successful entrepreneurs. In these seminars the importance of surrounding oneself with like-minded people and living a life fitting of the transformed entrepreneur has similarities to the charismatic gospel church. The actual performance of the hosts at a seminar called “Tomorrow’s Leaders Convention 2015 – Leadership 2020” has great resemblance to the American inspired faith churches where the host talks in a preaching style, moving from one side of the stage to the other. Testaments often related to stories of past struggle and irresponsible actions such as drinking and spending money on girls are said to have been due to age and lack of exposure. Transformation through being at spaces exposing to important networks are constructed, in the case of the convention, at prestigious educational institutions. Similarly to charismatic Christians, being a transformed entrepreneur comes with cutting off certain relations and establishing new ones within the new social networks. This focus has rewards, particularly in the material form such as the consumption of new cars and clothes. As social entrepreneurs, the hosts at such conventions also make clear that they do the motivational work to serve and for the number of lives that can be changed, in traditional religious terms; it is about converting spirits from darkness toward the promised land of entrepreneurial prosperity (Coleman, 2000).

However, it is rare to read what young people think of their achievement and in what terms they measure success. Townships such as eSikhawini are often taken to have aspiring youth entrepreneurs who are, for whatever reason unable to succeed. The models of entrepreneurship championed by education do not only problematize youth but also the location. The conversation with the manager at BHP Billiton’s Enterprise and Supplier

Development Centre in Richards Bay on 16 May 2014 alluded to just as much. During an induction on a Friday afternoon, Dumisa, who is also associated with Zululand Chamber of Commerce and Industry, made a distinction that the centre produced successful entrepreneurs because their candidates moved from the townships and operated from facilities where they established new markets and customers with industry and government. The youth entrepreneurs who remained and operated in the townships were unable to succeed as a result of not moving out of the townships. Location at office buildings with great architecture and air-condition signified traits for a successful entrepreneur. By virtue of remaining in the township, rather than operating in the city only returning to “give-back” through leadership talks of painting schools, as well as not adorning suits and cars, youth entrepreneurs in township are perceived to lack success, albeit economically. This dominant understanding does not only simplify notions of success, it is judgemental and misses crucial understanding of how the youth consider themselves. In Soweto, Phadi and Cerruti (2011) reveal other elements that people in that local context such as self-sufficiency, responsibility and social mobility used to define as middle class. Mabandla (2015) notes that the intersection of cultural and economic factors through colonial reforms that made education and commercial production along with old customs such as the number of cattle and herd, defined success in Mthatha during the nineteenth century. This mixed model of success with black entrepreneurs is the context that I was also raised in. Even though my father had made enough money and owned various properties and expensive cars, the ownership of cattle and maintaining strong connections with the rural community he grew up demonstrates the importance of success confined in cultural and even religious context of the locations (Nyamnjoh, 2000). The domestication of agency as an entrepreneur by the collective interest does not run in contrast to individual pursuit but rather sits on the other side of the same coin. In this sense, the capacity for social mobility through interpersonal relations that cultivate an entrepreneur resembles an aspect of *Ubuntu*. The *Ubuntu* I refer to is not one of a past reality of togetherness which is in opposition to the individualised idea of accumulation and success. The observations and conversations from the time spent with Ndumiso provide supporting insight that contradicts the simplistic understanding of successful entrepreneurs.

When I first met Ndumiso, he was dressed in shorts and t-shirt. Understandably, this was during the weekend. On weekdays, however, he always dressed smart casual. In leadership seminars addressing young entrepreneurs dressing for business meetings is constantly featured. Articles in magazines, online searches and talks on what it means to be successful

are all likely to have sections titled “Dress for success”. Suits are the penultimate symbols of how to dress for success. As dangerous as it is to assume that everyone subscribes to the definition of dressing for success, it is also just as limiting to generalise that all or even most youth entrepreneurs in eSikhawini did not aspire to dress for success celebrated designer clothes. For example Senzi introduced me to lady that hosted business networking events between young black entrepreneurs in Richards Bay and surrounding areas. As a way of encouraging a meeting between us, Senzi showed me a section of the local newspaper that featured one of the business networking events hosted by his friend. The pictures of the young people that attended the event were “dressed for success” in tailored suits and fashionable dresses with stilettos. However, for youth entrepreneurs like Ndumiso that established and ran their business in eSikhawini dressing in tailored suits was not the practice mere circular relation between people and society as founded in practice theory (Bourdieu 1997). To dress in appropriate manner for local business person indicates rules of continuity and improvisation that inform social reproduction within a context of a structure of power relations marked by inequality and uncertainty.

Forming a sense of self-hood or internalised belief, Ndumiso defined success, for him, as a more holistic sense. At one of our conversations after spending an afternoon at Ndumiso’s office I asked if he regarded himself as successful. The reply indicated no hesitation when he indicated “Me?” “Success as such, an individual?”... “Definitely”. “...to me success is...actually being who you are as an individual”. The definition of success for Ndumiso was a sense of bringing various aspects together, underscored by what he states as “a whole package. Full package of how you feel, how you act, what have you accomplished according to your targets and goals”. He carried on unpacking the concept and how it informed what his dream and aspirations were through the business. I learned more from the response than I had anticipated. My expectation was that the conversation would revolve more on economic definitions of success as an entrepreneur. But his articulated explanation proved me wrong. I listened on as Ndumiso stated that in both theory and practice “success cannot just be a measure of income. It cannot just be a measure of money”. A successful individual, to him, does not only consist of monetary accomplishments but included actions and feelings. To be successful as a young person in eSikhawini (and elsewhere – rural areas, suburbs and even as a white person) happiness in the daily enterprise is central. Success begins with a vision or dream. One attains that dream by doing what they have set out to do and not take “another route that you might see [as] easier”. The act could be a “small role...in the world” as an

entrepreneur, but one that makes the individual happy to be doing it. The vision consists of “targets” and “goals” that make the individual to continue to act by doing. While acting in way directed toward achieving such dreams and aspiration the successful entrepreneur has less regrets while constantly reflecting and looking back at actions that should be understood “as a puzzle that added up to bring me to where I am”, he explained. There were other ideas that make up the “atmosphere of that [a successful] person” as a whole package which determined success. Spirituality, for instance, is central in the making of Ndumiso as a successful individual. He admitted that the “number one [success] drives back to my spiritual being”. His life story, particularly his transformation after becoming a born-again Christian, reflects success in the “spiritual sense”. In some instances, dreams and aspirations for unrelenting spirituality also shape actions in business leading to success as an entrepreneur. According to Ndumiso successfully starting off Solar Living was more related to the spiritual sense. He believes that “[business] has a spiritual sense”. From this understanding to define a success is to embody dreams and aspirations informed by cultural schemas that make up an entrepreneur engendered in the individual, business of spiritual “whole package” negotiated in convivial manner through social interaction that adhere to the collective interest (Appadurai, 2013; Nyamnjoh, 2000). As an “individual” entrepreneur Ndumiso’s success is embedded in the various aspects of society to include business, culture and religion that make up the collective in eSikhawini. To be approved as a successful entrepreneur is interdependent with recognition and legitimation as a respectable productive, spiritual citizen (Appadurai, 2013; Salo, 2003; Nyamnjoh, 2000).

### **3.4 Conclusion**

This chapter argues that the promise of opportunity in mining and minerals beneficiations affected area of eSikhawini creates the kind of youth entrepreneurs that creatively negotiate relationships in a manner that is productive and resourceful. Acting on dreams and aspirations in order to be successful, for these youth entrepreneurs, takes more than monetary accomplishments. For Ndumiso, embarking on the Solar Living enterprise marked a turning point in self-awareness. For him, becoming a born again Christian changed his world view on what and how the dream to open and own a restaurant could be achieved. Family support was also central to Ndumiso becoming and being an entrepreneur. This was evident from his early years of being the ‘sweets guy’ at school to the support in the form of labour and advice from family that led to the start and growth of his success in eSikhawini. As a young Christian entrepreneur, Ndumiso achieved a sense of personhood that is evident in invitations to give

talks at various church economic conferences. Through church, Solar Living has received many clients and, indeed, a young man in the congregation secured work as a manager at Solar Living. Other young entrepreneurs have been able to seek assistance from Ndumiso through the church. While seeking to achieve his dream and aspirations, Ndumiso sustains the community through employment and other forms of assistance. Such an understanding of the daily networking enterprise by youth in eSikhawini contradicts general perceptions of their laziness and lack of skills. The chapter also complicates the dominant favour of producing economic entrepreneurs where young people define success in other forms such as spirituality. People like Ndumiso enact opportunity regardless of the fulfilment of promises by government and industry. These actions are guided by dreams and aspirations to be a respectable 'Christian entrepreneur'. However, in the context of eSikhawini, a place located on the unfortunate side of the ever-widening gap between the rich and the poor, conjecture and refutation with regard to the future are limited where the capacity to aspire is weakened and trapped by the bracket of recognition diminishing the sense of respectability and personhood. This, unfortunately, makes success stories like Ndumiso's few and far between. As a follow-up, Chapter 4 focuses on the dreams of entrepreneurs.

## Chapter 4      **Entrepreneurs as big dreamers**

### **Abstract**

This chapter demonstrates the agentic power of dreams as facilitators of action. It examines the emergence of dreams and aspirations. It seeks to understand what types of dreams and aspirations are created by the promise of opportunity in a mining and industry affected area. Particularly, this chapter focuses on how these dreams and aspirations create particular kinds of entrepreneurs. By analysing the representation of dreams as centred on individual material accumulated in popular media, the chapter brings into focus the slippage leading to understanding youth as mere replicas of conspicuous dreams. In doing this, the chapter argues for an understanding of how, by dreaming and stepping out of the ordinary, young people generate, claim and legitimate recognition and respect through communal entrepreneurship as a cultural capacity.

### **4.1 Common perceptions about dreams**

The Hansa Pilsner advert on Vuyo's Boerewors Business Mogul provides a platform for entering the conversation of dreams and their role in creating entrepreneurs. The advertisement presents Vuyo, an entrepreneur, as an individual who starts off selling boerewors (braai hot dog sausages) from a small stand on the side of the road in a city. After seeing a man dressed in a suit talking on his cell phone while riding in the back of a luxury car, Vuyo dreams of making a success of the business. Vuyo's Boerewors business becomes a global phenomenon in a very short time. He achieves international celebrity status, travelling the world and lives the ultimate good life. Still, in the height of such global success, his sister notes, "[Vuyo] never forgets his roots". The advert ends off with Vuyo in a space craft making contact with people from *eMzantsi* (South Africa). At the end of the advert a voice over says "Nobody dreams ordinary... Step out of the ordinary..."

In this advert dreams and aspirations of black entrepreneurs are depicted in the material and economic sense. An individual interest in the pursuit of riches centres the advert. In the commercial Vuyo's Boerewors enterprise success is realised and inscribed through clothing as he moves from wearing an unrecognised plain shirt to more tailored designer suits. Vuyo travels the world, visiting various places. He ends up on a yacht with a private chef while entertaining his friends. The commercial depicts black aspirations bottled 'into the single, simplistic, superhuman rags to riches narrative of "magic blacks"', Lwandile Fikeni

criticised. Fikeni reflects after “retiring” from advertising at the height of his career where he worked with the (white) creators insisting on commercials with single narratives such as “Vuyo the business mogul”. Representations in media and other popular imagery have the power to produce culture. That is this production of culture does, to some extent, effect the perceptions of black people in particular, and black youth in general. Vuyo’s big dreamer enterprise as a single dominant narrative financed by large corporations served as a “social engineering project” that entirely premises democracy on self-interest which is at the expense of particular populations, Fikeni argues. One of the state’s promises in a democratic post-apartheid South Africa was the creation of jobs and economic opportunity bringing upward socio-economic mobility for the majority<sup>6</sup>. The majority of those left behind by such dreamers premised on self-interest are those in townships from where Vuyo lives. However, like Vuyo, few are recognised as employed, much less exploding into overnight sensations. It is with this reality that Fikeni states that such commercials are dishonest and meant to “bamboozle instead of empower South African blacks”<sup>7</sup>. The social engineering project depicts dreams and aspirations that are unrealistic. Theorists such as Baudrillard (1981) might argue that Vuyo’s dream was more “real” because it demonstrates that the concepts and models used to explain his current life represent the discourse of simulacrum where signals of real life were exchanged in circulation without empirical reference. Vuyo’s precarious life would have been normalised as real life representing young black entrepreneurs dreaming of material things that they are less likely to achieve, informed by abstract economic models. The material sense of these dreams in a country like South Africa, where an increasingly growing gap between rich and poor communities often results in an unwillingness to act, making Fikeni’s argument so compelling. However, this chapter based on life histories of youth within a particular township, reveals a dangerous slippage in the sense that in townships characterised by political disillusionment and economic recession, dreams can become powerfully agentive while simultaneously legitimating exploitative economic interests. Dreams are not simply replicas of media images but rather reverberate and interact with pre-existing life experiences to construct imagined alternative realities that supersede those portrayed in popular representations. Scholarly analyses of marginalised youth often focus on their constrained agency in the context of various forms of structural inequality. The gender bias in popular representation of role models in entrepreneurship is painfully evident

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<sup>66</sup> See article titled *A reflection from being on the inside of the South African badvertising industry* in [www.africasacountry.com](http://www.africasacountry.com)

<sup>7</sup> See article titled *A reflection from being on the inside of the South African badvertising industry* in [www.africasacountry.com](http://www.africasacountry.com)

in commercials like Vuyo's. Theorising and representing entrepreneurship as masculine renders women invisible and positions them failures (Ahl & Marlow, 2012; Brush, Bruin & Welter, 2009). Broadly speaking, women and particularly black male youth are too often depicted as inadequate failures in their quest as entrepreneurs. Such accounts fail to apprehend the agentive power of practices such as dreaming among township youth. In this sense the chapter argues for the centrality of dreams and dreaming as forms of agency or action.

## **4.2 Entrepreneurs: Dreams in theory and practice**

Dreams are often implicitly perceived of as unrealistic and therefore not action (Steenkamp, van der Merwe & Athyde, 2011). From this point it is little wonder that dreams often are seen as unattainable. What this reflects is an inability to achieve them despite pursuing them, particularly when living in the townships and being trapped in an oppressive structural organisation of power. However, it is not simply the action and structure that enables young people in townships to achieve their dreams through entrepreneurship. It is in the creation and maintenance of relationships that connections between individuals are established, which forms *habitus* as enablers or restrictors of action. Bourdieu's (1986) understanding of social life as *habitus* help understand dreams as cultivated through social networks as resources that young people draw on to form social capital. The double tragedy for young entrepreneurs with big dreams in townships is that in addition to oppressive structural organisation which prevents them from accessing bank loans, ineffective social capital has the capacity to block pathways (or "steps") of upward socio-economic mobility (Kuzwayo, 2012). This leaves young entrepreneurs trapped in brackets of recognition – that is both in the exclusionary form; rules of political and financial institutions, and social networks - making it difficult to realise dreams and aspirations to a better life (Adato et al, 2006; Mogues & Carter, 2005). Vuyo's advert, for example, reflects industry's disinterest in dismantling the socio-economic structure perpetuating this ineffective social capital. On the one hand, dreams discourage many black youth as their actions are met with disappointment. On the other hand the very act of dreaming can be understood as agentive in itself in communities where precarity frames the local context. The construction of dualism, where dreams are understood as internal versus action which is performed, youth in townships (and rural areas) are often perceived as victims with no agency. In an analysis of black entrepreneurs, Kuzwayo (2012) argues that beliefs are nothing without action. This common thread is reflected by Kirsch (2004:701) when he states that "most scholars do not understand internalized believing (or

dreaming) to represent an action by itself". As was suggested in the advert above, the act of dreaming demonstrates an agentive capacity that enables the stepping out of ordinary lives and imagining a better future. For the real Vuyos' represented and produced by the advert, the young entrepreneur, his dreams mapped out his current life situations, where dreaming big had the capacity to alter his conscious and unconscious sense of self and well-being (Hollan, 2004). The unconscious self is characterised by the past in its habitual form (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). In reframing the understanding of human agency as a temporally embedded social interplay, informed by the past, present and future, Emirbayer and Mische (1998) argue that dreams and aspirations lay our capacity to act even in places that seem bereft with precarity such as townships. In other words, dreams, as the act of stepping out of a precarious life, have agentive power. Precariousness remains prevalent in eSikhawini despite industry as the biggest employer and the promises of opportunity engendered in minerals beneficiation as the regional development plans for uMhlathuze Municipality. Typical of South African townships, eSikhawini is faced with many challenges related to unemployment and poverty (Hill and Goodenough, 2005; Msomi, 2002). At 39.9 per cent, black youth are the most affected by the inability to get absorbed as the workforce. This is also the most active group to express disappointment at promises not met by government and industry (Seekings, 1996). The common understanding is that youth in such context lack the capacity to dream which would lead them to act in ways that improve their lives. While there are instances of dreaming which do not lead to action, the extent to which agentive power of dreams has the capacity to facilitate positive action remains largely undermined. When not being described as perpetrators with uncontained social agency or as victims of unemployment and structural exclusion, township youth are characterised as people with no agency and in need of rescue (Warnier, 1996; Marock, 2008; Steenkamp, van der Merwe & Athyde, 2011; Youth Enterprise Development Strategy, 2011).

In the face of uncertainty, the capacity for the projection of dreams enables young people to imagine alternative future trajectories whereby past actions, thoughts and structures are reconfigured with reference to their hopes and fears for the future (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). Dreams shaped by the promises engendered in future opportunities; youth in eSikhawini distance themselves from the schemas and habits that constrain them. In the context of seemingly never ending challenges, agency might not always be visible in actions. But this does not stop young people from dreaming, and even acting to pursue such dreams, of a better social life. These dreams are not simply replicas of popular imagery but interact

dynamically with existing ones forming the experiences informed by the practices of negotiating social relations.

### **4.3 Conceptualising Dreams**

In this section I frame the concept of dreams and relate this to the method of collecting data during the fieldwork. This informs the analysis of their agentic power in the making of entrepreneurs. As mentioned in chapter one, dreams as facilitators of action are central to an understanding of the relation to becoming an entrepreneur in eSikhawini. In order to capture the dreams and aspirations of youth entrepreneurs activated by the promise of opportunity in eSikhawini ethnographically it is important to understand if and how those dreams act as contours of the self, shaping relationships with objects and people. This requires a thorough understanding of what Hollan (2004) calls the “current life situation” of people. The remaining sections of this chapter build on open conversations that I had with Fanele, an entrepreneur in eSikhawini. I draw on Fanele’s experiences to demonstrate how dreams are conceptualized through a selective reflection on past experiences and therefore pre-exist. The life story also reveals the extent to which dreams are strengthened through interdependent relationships.

### **4.4 Dreams map out Life history**

Fanele grew up in eSikhawini and owns a bin cleaning enterprise. The enterprise comprises of a rented van, generator that pumps water stored in a green Jojo brand tank. The tank and generator are placed on a trailer attached to the van. Since the early memory, Fanele was a source of shame for his family as his biological father denied responsibility when his mother was pregnant. Fanele explained “I was supposed to have been aborted because my sister and I are just a few months apart”. It was Fanele’s grandmother that stopped Fanele’s mother from terminating the baby. She then proceeded to raise him as her own. The love Fanele got from his grandmother often caused jealousy with the other siblings in the household. This meant that if his grandmother could not buy him something then no else would. It is from such events that Fanele believes that he was neither recognised nor respected. Efforts to reconnect with his biological father were unsuccessful as the man refused to play a role in his life. Fanele felt he brought a sense of disappointment and shame in the form of inappropriateness or lack of *ordentlikheid* (Salo, 2003; Ross, 2010; Versfeld, 2012) onto his mother from conception. At home, he felt that “no one else appreciated” him. He further explains that, “we always strive to be appreciated and to be loved”. For Fanele, an individual must discover a

formula to be loved and to be appreciated. It is this selective past framed by lack of recognition as a person with something to offer, legitimation and love that would inform Fanele's practical activity thereby bringing stability (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). The dream and aspiration to be appreciated and loved reconfigures alternative responses to create and project a better life onto the future. The dream was not only to change his life but also those of people around him. Even though Fanele claims to have discovered the formula as an individual, it was through the help of people in the community that the new possibilities "to turn a broken pot into a shining trophy", as he eloquently put it, were strengthened (Nyamnjoh, 2000). The reader will note the centrality of a conception of collectivity as part of his formula, which rejects the celebration of individuals as the loci of dreams.

#### **4.5 Dreaming a formula**

Soccer was the formula through which Fanele pursued his dream. However, there was no point that society was not involved in the making of the formula. Even though Fanele did not explicitly attribute his soccer skills to anyone else, it was the coaches' attention that encouraged him. As a teenager Fanele caught the attention of his coach as a skilled player. One day while walking with him, he pointed to a field where he and his teammates used to train. It was at this field that the coach selected him as a star player in the team. Fanele was often the example used by the coach to reprimand other players for not pulling their weight during practice. One of the teammates in the soccer team was Sthe (pseudonym) whom I met on a visit working with Fanele in his bin cleaning enterprise. Sthe was one of the employees. It was during work that Sthe told stories of how great a player Fanele was. Sthe would jokingly say how bad Fanele made everyone in the team look to the coach during training. "The guy would run around the field and overlap us three or even four times... When we slow down, the coach would shout at us pointing to Fanele that he had run the field four times", he explained before we all broke to laughter. On the field Fanele got recognition, appreciation and love. It was his coach, teammates and the local community that believed in him and strengthened his aspirations and dreams of becoming a professional soccer player. One of the local residents that used to watch Fanele play bought him soccer boots in order to improve his performance. This continued commitment encouraged him to perform well during soccer matches and to consistently lead training sessions. One of the people he knew from church was particularly interested in him playing football to such an extent that he financed Fanele's trip in 2007 to play at trials for the under seventeen of the Premier Soccer League team called Tuks in Pretoria. Through Fanele's life-story, this section demonstrates

how dreams that map out the past are strengthened through inclusive relationships. In spite of such support, lived experiences help ground youth in reality so that they do not naively accept any dreams that they are sold.

#### **4.6 Dreams and disappointments as lesson and reality**

Disappointment often produces dreams based on experiences that entrepreneurs build on in pursuit of stable futures. Reflecting on the reasons that resulted in quitting the soccer trials and returning to eSikhawini, Fanele explained, “Firstly, fear was killing me. Fear of not making it. What will they say; the coach, my teammates, if I made a mistake”. He further stated “Even though the potential was there. It was a lot. But if you have fear you end up not knowing yourself. You even forget the good things you have; the things that would enable you to change the world because of the fear which controls you at the time. So I was overwhelmed by fear”. When he returned home, not only did he feel like he let himself down, he had also let down the people that believed in him and strengthened his own dreams and aspirations. He did not know what would happen to his dream of changing his life and those of the people in the area through playing soccer professionally. In his words he states “The painful thing about your dream is that it only shows you the brighter side and not the pain you will experience down the line; the challenges and circumstances”. The experience taught him a lot about himself, particularly that even though his “background was not right”, the dream to change his own life and those of other people required commitment, and a formula with a commitment where “to quit is not an option”. Unlike the concern that the cultural production of dreams depicted in mainstream media are naively replicated by black youth in townships indicating a lack of agency, the story of Fanele reveals how dreams map out a life history of precariousness (Hollan, 2004). It is also the political distribution of precarity that characterises a need for interdependence as a means to strengthen dreams through formulas such as soccer, where coaches, intimate strangers and fellow church members contributed as individuals to collective interests in ways that reflect the practicality of Ubuntu-ism (Nyamnjoh, 2000, 2015). Apart from celebrating the virtues of *Ubuntu* as a philosophy of togetherness, Nyamnjoh’s critique of the limits in the philosophy of *Ubuntu* argues that individual interests coexists with collectivity in inclusive forms of negotiation. In other words, the dreams through individual self-interest are inclusive of the community in everyday life. Human life as a network of interconnectedness means that agency is both a dream and constant negotiation or domesticated real life, for both individuals and collectivities (Nyamnjoh, 2015). This section uses Fanele’s failed formula, to demonstrate that youth

pursue dreams in various ways. It is in the trials of such formulas that young people reflect on obstacles that stand in the pursuit of dreams such as fear. This goes against the sense that youth lack experience to know how their dreams can be attained.

#### **4.7 Dreams create communal entrepreneurs**

This section sets out to demonstrate how the pursuit of dreams creates entrepreneurs. Young people's capacity to dream guides practices that inform the making of entrepreneurs through relationships. The common understanding of an entrepreneur promotes a dream of unrestricted agency such as Vuyo's Business mogul commercial as the promise of opportunity. Common among existing scholarship is the implication that youth in townships only realise their dreams through entrepreneurship by accessing finance, education and by establishing business networks (Olawale and Garwe, 2010). However, the structural set up of finance excluded youth from any possibility to access loans. Kuzwayo (2012), who is now a successful entrepreneur (materialistically and otherwise), makes no excuses about the difficulty to raise loans as black entrepreneurs when he states that the adage that "banks only lend money to people who do not need it" is true (Kuzwayo, 2012: 22). The state paradoxically encourages entrepreneurial training to get youth to participate in mainstream economy while simultaneously discouraging certain kinds of enterprises (Kuzwayo, 2012). The brackets of recognition that exclude youth from accessing finance through structural rules and the disillusionment by the state makes interconnectivity a way of life in eSikhwini (Mutisya, 2015). The dreams of youth are domesticated where the emergence of an entrepreneur is dependent on the collective (Nyamnjoh, 2000). Fanele's story serves as an example that I use to show the agentive act to pursue his dream saw him reframe the relationships to get a van that helped expand the business. In order to convince the owners to rent out the van to the enterprise, Fanele created relationships with one of his employees relatives. With support of the relative working in the business, the owners allowed, although under strict conditions, for the usage of the van to operate the enterprise. Prior to the agreement, the van was not rented out. Rejecting and reframing of resources occurs when Fanele, whilst trying to get the business registered through an old friend, he seeks to reassemble relationships, including those in his church as potentially productive for the business. These relationships were precarious but that did not mean new relationships that could be more stable were not pursued. When the brackets of recognition meant the inability to register a business in order to gain access to finance, youth entrepreneurs turned to other young entrepreneurs as middlemen with whom they have a history to consult in the pursuit of

other strategies to get access to finance (Mutisya, 2015). This section argues for the centrality of dreams as facilitators of action for young people like Fanele are excluded from access to finance through bank loans, but education from experience enables them to act by negotiating productive interrelationships as resources in order to become entrepreneurs.

#### **4.8 Becoming an entrepreneur**

After not making the team during trials for a prominent national soccer team, Fanele returned to eSikhawini feeling like he had not only let himself down but the community because “you become hope to many people”, he explained. Since those football trial days, Fanele promised himself that “anything I get next I will not quit and see where it will land me”.

The idea to start a bin washing enterprise came with no prior experience in the industry or having run a business before. When Fanele brought the idea to a friend living on the same street, the friend coincidentally expressed that he had the same idea in mind, even showing Fanele a flyer as evidence. Fanele believed in his friend because they seemed to share a dream. During one meeting, Fanele explained, in more detail, the early days of learning the about the game and becoming an entrepreneur. Fanele and his friend introduced a few other guys living on the same street to the idea. These relationships were valuable for the much needed labour during the beginning stages of the enterprise.

At the time they used household detergents, brooms and mops to render their bin cleaning services to their very first clients. Though there was progress, the money they made was not enough to do anything besides replenish the detergents they used from their homes. What they needed was a water pressure machine that would enable a more thorough washing of bins. In our first conversation I asked how he managed to get the pressure machine. Fanele exclaimed and whistled before saying “if you communicate with people *mfethu* (my brother). You speak your vision to people *mfethu*. You know some people... You know when you have reached rock bottom and [they] can see [in your] face; that [you] just need to be given a chance. They will not disappoint”. Fanele had arranged a meeting with prominent a local businessman whom he knew from church. The purpose of the meeting was to ask for financial assistance in order to buy the pressure machine. After presenting his plan the man had not been able to help because of other commitments. During the presentation, however, the businessman’s son had overheard Fanele speak about the plans for the enterprise. When outside he approached Fanele and offered to help with the capital. As a result of this new relationship, Fanele was able to buy the parts and assembled them into a functional pressure

pump. The pressure pump is generated by an engine that now sits on a trailer. Through similar forms of establishing productive interrelationships, Fanele secured access to a trailer. In the Mkhobosa section of the area there is a businessman known for making and selling trailers. One of the participants explained that the enterprise is busiest, renting out trailers to travellers during major vacations such as Easter and Christmas. Fanele needed a trailer to carry the new equipment. After speaking to the owner of the trailer-making business he secured an old trailer for free but it kept breaking down which made running the daily operations of the business difficult. Fanele would return for months to the owner pleading for an arrangement where they could get a new trailer. For some time the owner would not agree because of previous incidents where he gave people trailers on condition that they pay in instalments but they often defaulted on payments. Fanele persevered, however, by selling the dream through the cleaning business would become a reality. Following the relentless persistence the man agreed to make him a trailer on condition that he left surety. The decision was between a pair of Nike Airmax sneakers and a cellular phone. He left a cell phone that was worth, at least, three thousand rand. I discovered he had no cell phone during our first conversation. Following the interview, I bought him a relatively cheap phone from Pep. This was for his business as well as a way to keep in contact with him during the interview. Fanele was able to construct and transform relations into productive resources such as the previously mention example with one of his employees' families. As a bricoleur, Fanele's capacity to aspire to a different future through creative negotiation of commonly accepted norms about "material inputs, practices and definitions and standards" activated actions that were facilitated by dreams (Appadurai, 2013; Emirbayer & Mische, 1998; Mbembe, 1997; Gondola, 1999).

#### **4.9 Dreams of changing individual life and that of community as a daily enterprise**

This section demonstrates the extent to which popular cultural production conceptualises dreams and how this, in real life, can trivialise youth entrepreneurs' achievements. The single story of black youth as starting from "rags" is told all too often and informs the dominant narrative influencing perceptions relating to dreams of a better future. Kuzwayo (2012) tells a similar story of a dream as a young black person attempting to access money from banks in order to go into business with his partner. The institutional structure of the finance industry and lack of social capital made it impossible for them to secure funding. Media stories of a similar narrative have come to characterise how dreams are conceptualised by black

entrepreneurs<sup>8</sup> . At leadership conventions aimed at developing future leader and entrepreneurs, celebrity presenters and celebrity entrepreneurs often speak of coming from difficult backgrounds and how working hard transformed dreams into reality. Self-acclaimed social entrepreneur and celebrity Dj Sbu stands out in the sense that when sharing his story he mixes street Zulu with English. What is interesting to note at one of the leadership conventions on YouTube is his use of street language to describe his struggles and mistakes, with a more dominant use of English when describing how social networks, MBA education, and appearances transformed his dreams. All the presenters at the convention described the entrepreneurial success with the current motivational work as giving back to the community. This dominant idea of dreams by black entrepreneurs packaged in a single narrative as the pursuit of individual interest through hard work and little regard for others (especially those that do not help you reach your goal) can be a powerful destructive force particularly when represented in media. Fikeni (2015) analyses the reality as a political matter where the project of promoting dreams conceptualised through self-interest do little to undo the terms that produce and reproduce the struggles of precariousness because they serves to protect socio-economic structures that maintain white privilege. In many ways, I agree with Fikeni, particularly how the focus of individual effort implies that young people are responsible for getting themselves out of struggles without government and industry responsibility and obligation. However, conversations with Fanele expanded the analysis to reveal how youth do not uncritically appropriate dreams of a better future as depicted in media. But rather a mix of these representations of dreams is domesticated and negotiated through lived experiences that also sustain local community (Nyamnjoh, 2000). For Fanele often spoke of the self-interest narrative of understanding the conceptualisation of the dreams to change his own life and those of the community as an individual effort. Fanele's spoke in many ways that are similar to the way presenters at leadership conventions spoke. In response to the question of what encouraged him to change after feeling defeated and worrying about what would happen to his dream when he did not complete the soccer trials, he replied "Sometimes you just need to be sick and tired of being sick and tired". This was the same quote Dj Sbu used to describe what encouraged him to better his life through entrepreneurship, at Tomorrow's Leaders Convention 2015 Presented by Old Mutual. The quote was also made popular by the American civil right leader Fannie Lou Hamer as she shared light on the conditions of black people and the injustices they lived through in fifty years ago in

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<sup>8</sup> Youtube, Tomorrow's Leaders Convention 2015 Presented by Old Mutual

Mississippi<sup>9</sup>. The popularity of the phrase has spread far and wide. An internet search for similar quotes indicates not only media representation of realities but the power of media to produce cultural realities. How the narrative of dreams affects the culture of producing entrepreneurs in eSikhawini has been evident in that it weakens the achievements of youth as it does not recognise the kinds of enterprises as well as their impact on local society. The following section explains how power seminar talks that prescribe the appropriate kinds of enterprise are adopted not only by young people but society. For Fanele, society would draw on the grammar forming the foundation of such seminars as measures sometimes used to disapprove of the kinds of enterprises that do not fit the dominant models.

#### **4.10 Weakened Dreams of Unrecognised entrepreneurs**

This section looks at how such dominant messages are internalised by young entrepreneurs. In particular, Fanele did not believe that he made an impact on society through the bin cleaning enterprise. Fanele's conceptualisation of the dream to change his life and that of the community was related to a framing of entrepreneurship. For him entrepreneurship addressed a sense of individual ownership and collective impact. When I had asked if he regarded himself a successful entrepreneur, he replied no because the dream also involved "*ukushintsha impilo zabantu ngaso sonke isikhathi*" (changing people's lives all the time). Fanele employed four guys in his bin cleaning business and serviced around 200 clients in eSikhawini. I went on to ask whether he did not consider being able to start a business from nothing a success, particularly as he employed people that would have otherwise, been unemployed. At this point I felt sad that he did not recognize the extent to which his personal achievements helped sustain the lives of others, in no small measure. The employees received wages of R1.200 per month when the business collected the service fees from most of the 200 clients. To my ranting he replied "Wow, I would have to reconsider the definition of a successful entrepreneur". The way Fanele viewed himself indicated the belief or lack thereof that some people in area had toward his business, which he understood to be a reflection of him as a person.

Speaking about reputation, Fanele taught me that "*Ibisinisi yireflection yakho ngaso sonke isikhathi*" (the business is a reflection of you at all times). Salo (2003) states that personhood

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<sup>9</sup> See The Daily Beast. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2014/09/02/remembering-civil-rights-heroine-fannie-lou-hamer-i-m-sick-and-tired-of-being-sick-and-tired.html>

is about who the individual, through the business, is and aspired to be in relation to society and how they fit in. These aspirations are constituted through social networks as resources that young entrepreneurs like Fanele draw on to form social capital (Bourdieu, 1986). But, pursuing dreams and aspirations through entrepreneurship, takes a particular kind of person, Fanele explained. Unlike the common depiction of the kinds of entrepreneurs commonly celebrated as acceptable, Fanele explained “What people don’t understand about entrepreneurs is that you must embrace being misunderstood [that] you will be criticised, [that] you will be mocked”. It was not only that enterprise like Fanele’s was not recognized, but they were also made fun of. For Fanele self-motivation was vital in order to maintain the dream and become an entrepreneur. Surrounding yourself with people that shared similar aspirations is equally important; Fanele expressed when he said “Another thing that helps is being with people that are like you, who share the same ideas, the same morals [and] ethics”. Such an environment is important for him become a better entrepreneur, he explained. I later returned to, and asked for examples, on the notion of being misunderstood as an entrepreneur and having to overcome those challenges. Fanele explained, “For instance many people will say ‘why does he not go to tertiary [but instead he is] busy chasing after bins when his age mates are studying; getting degrees left-right-and-centre. And he’s doing something like this”. I followed by asking who made such comments. With very little hesitation he answered, “Society. They will say ‘You know there have been posts advertised. You must take here and apply’”. As if addressing ‘society’ directly, he said “No, I don’t do that! I wasn’t designed to work. I’m designed to hire people. That’s my goal”. He continued with annoyance in his tone, “You know what I’m doing so why would you ask me that. I’m not just doing it for fun. I’m not bored. For the fact that you tell me that the department of justice needs wards and here is a post shows that you don’t respect what I’m doing. That you do not recognise what I’m doing”. Earlier Fanele suggested that the business was a reflection of personhood in that it also reflected how society perceived of him (Salo, 2003). Entrepreneurship provided pathways and nodes from which Fanele claimed respectability as means to regain a sense of dignity in how society recognized him. This section demonstrated how popular messages as cultural production can affect some parts of society. In instances where such popular narratives, influenced by privilege of education, set out to look-down upon certain forms of entrepreneurship, the dreams of youth are weakened by society. As exemplified in the case of Fanele, these other forms of enterprises are mocked and not recognized as forming achievement. Even though youth entrepreneurs persevere when

pursuing their dreams through unrecognized and undermined forms of entrepreneurship, it diminishes their sense of accomplishments and contributions to society.

#### **4.11 Conclusion: Underlying conspicuous dreams**

But these dreams and aspirations, Appadurai (2013) reminds, are a cultural rather than psychological or economically rational choice. In the case of Fanele, the effect of assigning dreams and aspirations to the discipline of economics and normative business models with markets and individualised ideas of entrepreneurship leave them weakened as backward or a waste of time. The single narrative, which carries some power of cultural production, excuses the political distribution of material exclusion that excludes youth entrepreneurs from business loans. For youth entrepreneurs such as Fanele the lack of recognition, and even worse to be recognised in ways that bring about limited improvement in the way of respect and dignity further distribute uncertainty in their lives. This makes the perception of dreams as lacking action easy to accept. Yet, this chapter demonstrates the agentive power of dreaming in the sense of guiding practices that negotiate productive interrelations in the context of life in a mining affected township. Mining or no mining, people in marginalised communities have the capacity to become entrepreneurs with the support of the collective and embedded communal relations. The coming of mines expands the capacity to dream. In the context of enduring high unemployment, youth entrepreneurs' capacity to dream and aspire is a cultural capacity whose strengthening reflects socio economic exclusion (Appadurai, 2013). Fanele's dreams and aspiration were formed in interactions forming networks that produced social capital. While the unintended slippage meant that youth are understood as replicating conspicuous dreams as depicted commercially centred on material accumulation, but society cannot see the reflections of local ideas such as, health, virtue, friendships, dignity and respectability hidden underneath such imaginations of a better life. At the end of the chapter I have added photos just to offer an exhibition rather than have them in conversation with the text. The next chapter looks at how success is appropriated and spent just like currency.



**Figure 2: Fanele's rented van with trailer and water tank. All these material inputs were achieved without money but rather through relations.**



**Figure 3: Even the money to buy the generator pumping water was a donation by a local resident.**



**Figure 4: Mopping inside the bin after spraying chemical water. This was the first day spent working in Fanele's enterprise.**



**Figure 5:** The image features the employees cleaning the clients' bins. My duty was to wipe the bins dry.



**Figure 6: After the final wipe, the bins are returned to the households.**

## **Chapter 5      Local ideas of success**

### **Abstract**

This chapter demonstrates how success as an acceptance of cultural repertoires reforms personhood and legitimation by the community. Building on the chapter 4 relating to the capacity to dream and aspire for economic achievement, success as an entrepreneur includes managing money as one function of operating an enterprise. But more important for an entrepreneur is to pay close attention to changing environments by maintaining communal interest as a way to combat uncertainty that comes with independent accumulation. In this sense, this chapter seeks to show how success is appropriated and how, like currency, it is spent. Success for youth entrepreneurs in eSikhawini is intersubjective, in that it is less about individual material wealth and more about the making and remaking of relationships and sharing with local people that seek your assistance as a buffer for potential failure. It is in the seeking out and recognition of entrepreneurs as having expertise that success is imbued upon the young entrepreneur.

### **5.1 Defining success for an entrepreneur**

There is no such thing as an individual entrepreneur. At least not in the sense of a special individual with traits that fundamentally differ to the ordinary person – as the trait approach would like to have us believe (Ahl, 2002). Put differently, everyone is entrepreneurial. Black youth during the 1970s political protest leading to the commemorated Soweto Uprising were heroes and termed the Young Lions. Often, these young people were described as risk takers and daredevils (Seekings, 1996). Reminiscent of the Schumpeterian individual, the ‘entrepreneurial personality’, distinguishing the entrepreneur from the rest, continues to be defined as having the same traits for success. Schumpeter’s (1936) entrepreneur, however, is associated with growth, economic change, and development. In this sense, the entrepreneurial function is framed as a necessity and a good thing for society. For the most part, the examples of individuals with special entrepreneurial traits who have made positive contributions to society are often the likes of Bill Gates, Steve Jobs and Richard Branson. In the South African context, mining magnate turned billionaire Patrice Motsepe and founder of Pick n Pay Raymond Ackerman, as successful entrepreneurs, immediately come to mind. Youth are taught that these entrepreneurs have not only established large innovative businesses but contributed to the Schumpeterian idea of economic development (Ahl, 2002). Either framed as failed or lazy entrepreneurial subjects, black youth are often subordinated to curbing other

forms of creativity into mimicry in theorizing entrepreneurship. These assumptions frame youth as lacking and incomplete in the epistemological scope of contemporary research and media representations of entrepreneurial personality. While debates and definitions of what it means to be an entrepreneur focus on behavioural aspects (Koellinger, Minniti & Schade, 2013) and cultural aspects (Tiessen, 1997; Morrison, 2000), in South Africa it is not only the kinds of enterprise that get you recognized as a potential candidate for “start-up” programmes and big deals, but the packaging of the individual through consumption is an unrelenting obsession (UCT’s Global Enterprise Monitor, 2011; Posel, 2010). Writing on Self-Economic Empowerment, Kuzwayo (2012:63-69) dedicates a section of the chapter on Etiquette to prescribe the dos and don’ts for entrepreneurs who aim to be successful. The problematic construction of black South Africans, mainly through consumption, has created a wave of traits along the same lines as dressing for success as a form of performance for an audience (Goffman, 1959). For Goffman (1959), the performance of success makes sense when recognized and legitimated by an audience or a collective. As the audience, for industry and state the concept of growth and success and earning a good personal profit are implicit in the contribution to the economic growth of the state. For the young people living in the fractures of urbanization defined by the inability for state and industry to meet promises of opportunity, the collective interest is central as insurance against uncertainty for an individual. In townships like eSikhawini, the entrepreneur, as an individual, is embodied through the collective. That is the only constant in terms of securing sustained success as an entrepreneur is the collective. Even for individuals who selfishly or otherwise have thought of themselves in terms of success, the uncertainty of the promise of opportunity is dreamt with and through collective interest as a safety-net.

## **5.2 Political economy of successful entrepreneurship**

Entrepreneurship is understood as a solution to a number of problems. Subsequently, entrepreneurs are perceived as the drivers of economic growth and transformation (Langevang et al., 2012). In South Africa, specifically, entrepreneurship is perceived as the main solution to the rising youth unemployment problem (Anderson & Jack, 2008; Steenkamp, van der Merwe, & Athayde, 2011). The South African context reflects similar challenges and approaches as some parts of Africa where youth participation in entrepreneurship have been identified and adapted as a national priority, reflected in the New Growth Plan policy, in an effort to create jobs, reduce inequality and alleviate poverty (IDC, 2013). As a shared responsibility with government and directly affecting business activity

and profits, mining companies have made efforts to gain community support and establish lasting relationships by creating what they have described as ‘sustainable community development programmes in the mining areas affected by their operations’. For instance, Anglo Zimele, with an initial R50 million fund started by Anglo American and De Beers, continues to facilitate economic empowerment in South Africa through the creation of commercially viable and sustainable enterprise (Anglo Zimele, 2014). BHP Billiton has also established a trust which operates in all areas of CSR- covers charity and donor related initiatives as well as an implementing agency. BHP Billiton, for example constructed The Enterprise Development Programmes in order to advance entrepreneurial training particularly related to the industrial supply-chain.

While monetary accumulation is important, in Chapter 4 I have demonstrated how other forms of success can rank far more important than simply economic achievement. Popular representation in media often depict an entrepreneur is an individual removed or disconnected from the community. These representations of the isolated black entrepreneur receive prominence and are reproduced in scholarship and media. In the previous chapter, the advertising expert Fikeni, critiques and warns against the dangers of such a single story (Adichie, 2009). While I have exhausted the character of Vuyo as the entrepreneur turned business mogul according to the creators in advertising agencies, however success as a shared responsibility with the collective and insurance against the impermanence of independent success deserves attention. Particularly, due to the uncertainties of life, it is sometimes important to be modest about personal success given the temporality of individual success in a world of ever-diminishing opportunities, regardless of talent and age. Dreams and aspirations as a cultural capacity reveal how youth act in a manner that is within or part of people who will legitimate and recognise their achievements (Appadurai, 2013; Nyamnjoh, 2000). In this sense, culture and identity provide skills, tools and representations for young people to draw from, so that they may act in unison with the expectations recognised by the appropriate social groups. To accept these tools and representations the individuals assert their belonging while pursuing their own interest. In this sense Nyamnjoh (2000:114) defines culture as “the whole repertoire of action, language and styles which enables a person to recognise their belonging to a given social group and to identify with the group in question, without necessarily being confined to it”. As a future oriented concept, culture changes as it is entangled in the turbulence of history. Furthermore, the change in culture comes as each act (even by dreaming) potentially opens new meanings and possibilities (Nyamnjoh, 2000).

### 5.3 Collective success for the individual

Along with individual success as an entrepreneur is the domesticated agency and intersubjectivity aligned with the collective interest. It is in this sense that social visibility, as facilitated by interconnectivity to the communal interest, obligates assisting intimate strangers by rendering service. Collective success, by means of domesticated agency and interdependence, does not contradict economic accumulation by the entrepreneur. Given the growing uncertainty in areas such as eSikhawini Township where one is always a step away from struggle, to privilege interdependence is to prevent the temporality of success. There is little meaning to achievement when it is not recognized and endorsed by the collective. It is by making success collective that individuals make their failures a collective concern (Nyamnjoh, 2000). Rather than concern only with how much money is spent, domestication of success emphasizes negotiation and conviviality over maximization of pursuit by individuals or by particular groups in a context of plurality and diversity. Those born outside of the social group yet, accept and appreciate the social mannerisms that demonstrate engagement with collective interests are recognized and legitimated as belonging to the community. This section draws on Makamu to illustrate what tools and representations ensure the appropriation of success in eSikhawini. It then shows how offering services and expertise to the local community is one way in which success is spent as a currency.

Makamu makes for an interesting case as person who is older than the commonly accepted maximum for youth. At the age of 43, Makamu is the oldest of the participants that I met during fieldwork. Another reason that Makamu is particularly relevant for the chapter is because of where he was born. Originally born in Mozambique, Makamu arrived in eSikhawini in the early 1990s working in the industry. The industrial history of South Africa relied on cheap labour from within the country and nearby nations. Black people were forced to live together in ways that allowed for the hybridity of cultures even where certain social groups dominated (Ferguson, 1990a; Ferguson, 1990b). Over the years Makamu has not only learnt but demonstrated an acceptance of the cultural repertoires that form the fabric of kwaZulu. At first introduction there was no telling from talking to Makamu that he was not born umZulu. He did not speak with an accent. Always carrying a *knobkhere* (carved from a branch thick enough to form the knob, the rest whittled down to create shaft), Makamu fitted the conventional symbol of a prominent umZulu warrior. But rather than this being mimicry, Ferguson (2002) argues for an understanding of cultural flows that reflects a turbulent history of domination. The accelerated flows of interaction of diverse cultural products due to

globalization have opened the remaking of new meanings, views and possibilities. At the inception of democracy Makamu was amongst those who were given legal, permanent status in South Africa. It was during this time that he met and later married his wife from eNseleni, kwaZulu Natal. They have three children aged; fifteen, twelve and two. Although Makamu visits Mozambique often, none of his family has been there. Makamu explained that the finances from the enterprise made it impossible to take his family home. During my exploratory visit in 2014 Makamu invited me to visit him in the Mkhoboza area of eSikhawini, a place I would later visit four times during my extended stay. On Saturday's Makamu operates as a trader at a local flea market in eSikhawini at the complex area. On three occasions I spent a full day at the stand conversing with the family and helping out whenever it seemed appropriate. I was able to observe Makamu and the interactions he was involved in.

In 1997 Makamu started working on a business, selling a series of products including brand clothes. The decision came as a result of retrenchments from the industry along with other colleagues. When he started a family it was impossible to embark on business that required extensive travelling. This has been the case with the previous enterprises where he had to move from house-to-house and to people's places of work in Richards Bay to make sales. At the time of the fieldwork in 2014 and 2015, Makamu ran a stand that stood no larger than a two metre tent. He has used the same tent since 1997 when the enterprise started. Here, I present an excerpt of my field notes, detailing the layout and products sold:

In front there are two tables. The first one has on display: earrings, wire for sewing shoes and a hand-held part that fits the needle used to repair shoes. Right next to that are lip glosses in stylish packaging in a clear glass and black lid. Located on two tissue rolls are four mirrors; two the size of A5 notebooks and the other two even smaller. The second table has beauty products that I recognise from the flea market in Mzingazi. The products range from facial creams of various makes and sizes. These are nicely spaced out to cover the space of the slightly bigger table. In between the tables are two stacks of tissue paper. The first stack has around 8 packs of tissue paper with 12 individual rolls. On top of the stack are individual rolls with ingrained print as decoration. These are sold for R3 each and the packet for R30. In the second stack are only packs of plain tissue paper. These packets are not branded or decorated like the ones in the first stack. These are only sold as a packet for R10. Makamu has given me his camp chair and he sat on a large green box where he stores some personal valuables, food and water. On the floor is a large roll of tissue paper that looks more for use in industrial spaces for office cleaning purposes. For the time I spent with him, he has used the roll to rest his bare feet as the heat reached over 30 degrees. We have a piece of empty sack carefully tied on top the tent steel bar in front to prevent the sun from penetrating straight into our faces. There is a second roll the size of the one of the floor that stands on the side of the camp chair-almost marking the side of the space<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> Field notes from exploratory visit on 19 August 2014 in Mkhoboza area, eSikhawini

During my extended visit what stood out was that there was far more stacks of tissue paper in the various packs and in different sizes. The stand only had one table that accommodated the beauty creams. Even these were reduced. Another observation was that of a similar style stand displaying only tissue paper in packs and singles two kilometres away as one enters eSikhawini from Richards Bay. Makamu explained that this stand also belonged to him. It was operated by one of his brothers and his family. To use the concept of brother to refer to the man was not simply to indicate a fellow home-boy (born in the same area even though not related by blood), but rather pointed to kin relations. However he was not Makamu's biological sibling but one from his extended family. Makamu's own family worked in the business. Every day after school, his son would come to the stand. This occurred until his son entered grade 10 where students were expected to attend afternoon classes following the official end of school. On Saturdays, however, his son would set up the stand at the flea market and operate it the whole day from 6:30am until 6:00pm, sometimes later. I observed this one morning as I went for a jog. Makamu's wife also worked at the stand with their two year old son on certain days. During the fieldwork, I referred to her as Ma (mother). Ma was equally entrepreneurial often able to soft talk customers who complained about price increases. There was nothing Makamu could do that Ma could not do, including setting up the stall and arranging for transportation to deliver the stock. On every visit to the stand in the Mkhoboza area there was someone visiting Makamu sitting under the tent. Makamu was generous to explain the nature of the relationship with some of the visitors. Most times the explanation would not be prompted by questions. At other times I would arrive during conversations and would later ask the nature of their relationship when the visitor seemed particularly younger.

#### **5.4 Appropriating success**

This section explains how success was appropriated by persons with expertise and productive networks. The people that came to visit Makamu included fellow a countryman, who also lived in eSikhawini. Upon arriving at the stand, Makamu would encourage the visitors to speak isiZulu in order to accommodate me. It was not only home-boys (from the same area of birth) that came to visit Makamu but also those born in eSikhawini. eSikhawini residential was established to accommodate industrial labour, Makamu explained to me and the visitors. Even though Makamu arrived in the area as worker he knew a great deal about the history of the land. It was Makamu who explained the historical significance of eSikhaleni (official name that has replace eSikhawini) in relation to King Cetshwayo. It was not only a history of

the land but that of the renowned business owners in the area that I learned about. One of these was a fellow home-boy from Mozambique, who also married a woman from kwaZulu Natal. As a young man this entrepreneur managed a liquor store, butchery and a braai area. Makamu told stories of how the business had truckloads of deliveries from South African Breweries (SAB). The liquor store was even voted as the most profitable of the SAB vendor. This achievement was often shared with the local community. On many occasions the owner invited everyone to enjoy meat and alcohol all at his expense. Makamu described the entrepreneur as humble. A few years ago three men held up the owner at gunpoint one evening as he closed for the end of business day. The robbers shot him dead after he refused to hand over the keys to the safe. Since then the business was never the same. In telling these stories Makamu also played the role of the gatekeeper. This I observed also in the way he was the one who would explain to visitors how the importance of my research project was for the benefit of the local residents, particularly entrepreneurs. None of the visitors would further interrogate after having explained. They seemed to trust Makamu because I observed how they would speak openly about business ideas and challenges as entrepreneurs. It is learning and sharing knowledge that Makamu creatively legitimated a role as a person with wisdom. To speak the language with no accent was one aspect to appropriating the local repertoires however the knowledge of history and sharing legitimated Makamu as knowing the land more than even those born on it. Makamu did not only acknowledge but participated and demonstrated understanding of the importance of collective interest (Nyamnjoh, 2000).

One of the areas in which Makamu managed to demonstrate collective interest was his involvement in the local flea market as a trader. The local flea market at *ecomplex* has operated every Saturday for over seven years. It was started by a local entrepreneur who wanted to bring local traders from eSikhawini and other surrounding areas together. As the market increased in popularity so did the greed and selfishness of the owner. He quickly built a reputation for bullying the traders often demanding rent with interest, Makamu went on to explain. The traders complained about the ever-increasing rent. Makamu was amongst those who organised and spoke out against the unfair treatment. When the owner got in trouble with the law, he subsequently lost ownership of the market. Makamu explained that no one was willing to help him with bail money following the arrest. Since his release from jail the once successful entrepreneur had no support and lived in isolation from the eSikhawini community. When the local municipality took over the market Makamu led the organisation of traders to ensure that they were no longer charged rent. Similar organisation of traders

where Makamu was also involved established a market in Mkhoboza which operates every Sunday. Another example of active collective involvement by Makamu was in the project to provide shelter for local traders near the newly built shopping mall. uMhlathuze Municipality planned to build sidewalk stands for local traders. The organisation of traders put forth requests to have space that sheltered from the blistering sun in summer and the harsh rain in winter in which to run their enterprises. None of the traders could afford the rent to operate inside the mall. Besides, most of the products they sold competed with Spar (a local, upscale supermarket) which built the shopping mall as the anchor tenant. As part of the organization, Makamu had first-hand knowledge of the plans and requirements to get onto the list of traders seeking space. The only requirement was that the traders produce relevant identity documents or legal documents that legitimised their residency. During this time Makamu played a key role in sharing and translating these requirements not only in a language familiar to the locals but in terms of what such information meant for traders like him. For instance, Makamu advised other local traders not to close the stands at the various locations where they operated even with the promise of new stands. Makamu was always interested in matters related to politics and the economy. *Isimo somnotho* (economic climate) was a constant feature in the conversations that I took part in. The worsening economic climate directly impacted their lives. Even though the flea market had traffic, for instance, the local residents did not buy as much as in the previous years, Makamu lamented. Even at the stand in Mkhoboza, I observed on at least five occasions where customers could not buy a single roll of tissue paper because the price increased by R1. While Msomi (2002) outlines personal favours to local residents as one of the reasons small businesses failed, the worsening economic climate has brought stricter conditions by local traders. Institutional bureaucracy often accompanied talks about *isimo somnotho*. When municipality promised the local traders the stands, Makamu explained that various forms of favouring and inside connection would most likely slow the implementation of the plans. The sharing of these predictions along with their reality legitimised Makamu as an individual whose economic pursuit was aligned with the local community's interest. In this sense Makamu's achievements as a local trader are recognised and legitimised as part of the social group. By accepting the cultural repertoires of action, language and styles, Makamu was recognised as belonging to eSikhawini and identified with the group's notions of personhood even though he was not born in the area (Salo, 2003).

## **5.5 Giving now: Entrepreneurs obligations of success to the collective**

To be recognised as an individual with achievements also means sharing it when the community requires it. The uncertainty of success requires practices that ensure support from the collective interest in the event that fortune disappears. Makamu's recognition is facilitated by interconnections with the collective interest. Though there is space to make individual choices, one is not expected to refuse to provide service to those that are not family, passing strangers and from a distant land (Nyamnjoh, 2000). As a resident of eSikhawini, Makamu, as a recognised successful entrepreneur, had to continuously negotiate for legitimation and claim respectability by spending the currency to ensure the success of the collective. Makamu was "recognised" as a potential collaborator or partner as well as a connected person in the business of selling tissue rolls of various sizes and uses. I observed a number of people of different ages that would seek advice from Makamu about business. One of these was a young man that also lived in the Mkhobosa area in eSikhawini. The first day I saw this young man was when Makamu and myself were about to eat our usual lunch consisting of braai meat with pap. The young man spoke to Makamu about an idea to collaborate and buy a tissue-making machine; cutting out dealing with suppliers. Makamu listened and added how such a machine would make a difference but seemed to caution on some of the challenges they could face such as the high cost of the machine. But Makamu was interested in the idea. I was to see the young man in my next visit with a brochure of the machine. Although Makamu did not mind continuing the conversation with me around, I sensed the young man was not as comfortable as he wrapped up the conversation very quickly. The story Makamu told me was that the young man ran a couch repair business in eMpangeni. The young man continued with the business after his father passed away. Not so long ago, the young man expanded into selling tissue paper, buying from Makamu as the supplier. At some point the young entrepreneur tried to by-pass Makamu by purchasing from the factory. This was even after Makamu had told him he could only get cheaper stock from him. But the young man could not negotiate a better price with the supplier thereby returning to Makamu. Now the two share information about which products sell where and when. While Makamu understood the importance and terms to negotiate legitimation, the young entrepreneur faced the challenges where individual interests are placed above collective interest. Even though Makamu continued to support the business by supplying the stock, socially acceptable cultural repertoires would suggest that the young entrepreneur to be isolated from the productive relationship.

## 5.6 Across borders: Chasing the money

The above example does not imply that the accumulation and use of money was not an important aspect for success as an entrepreneur. In the *Mail and Guardian* (28 March 2013), the financial sector identified “proper financial management and effective banking” as a critical factor that is ignored by Small Micro and Medium Enterprises in order to access loans (M&G, 2013). According to consultants from various banks and finance institutions, Small Micro and Medium Enterprises (SMMEs) are not able to separate their proprietors’ personal life from their businesses. As one managing consultant put it “Many [SMMEs] are not financially astute, or they are too busy putting food on the table to keep their accounts up to date”. But these dominant preconceived ideas do not only consider the precarity of places such as eSikhawini and challenges faced by residents, these notions contradict what actually happens in real lived experiences. For Makamu, as an example, success in the business is embedded in the capacity to use money and ones awareness of the changing environment. According to Makamu, a business person should not look at the stock that they have and use the money earned for things have nothing to do with the business. A business needs to be taken care of by investing the money made back into it. Throughout my visits there had been countless moments Makamu engaged with his teenage children about money and the business when they asked for something that requires buying. Often this would be a request to buy drinks or sweets. Although at some moments Makamu gave them money from the plastic lunch box where change was kept, this came with lessons telling the children about the scarcity and the importance of money. Even Ma would sometimes get told about the importance of money. But she always could justify and even sometimes joke that Makamu was being too stingy. But this suggested a more intimate input from Ma than her less strict value on money. After all, Ma was equally entrepreneurial and knew very well about money. This reminded of my own father, an entrepreneur, who similarly would give a long lecture about the importance of money and how it was for the business and not for our personal leisure and entertainment. Awareness of other aspects is central when managing small enterprises. Makamu states “For businesses like ours, unlike large businesses and those supported by government, you need to be aware of your changing environment”. By depending on your stock and not having cash, one would not be able to force customers to buy stock. When customers want something else, he exclaimed, you will not be in a position to stock the items they are demanding at the time. For Makamu, entrepreneurs in the same trade did not have money because of their inability to provide products that customers want.

He made a comparison with Spar and how they only make their money on products sold. When the item was not sold or if it expired, it was not the responsibility of the brand's merchandisers to replenish the product. If the product was not selling, a large company like Spar would simply inform the delivery trucks not to deliver the stock. Responding to changing environment by providing what customers want even means crossing the borders on a day trip to fulfill the promise to customers. Makamu, for example, secretly left the country to stock up on a beauty cream that was no longer available in Durban. The product was in demand and the suppliers in Durban could not find any stock in the country. The customers always requested this particular skin-lightening cream. Makamu tried to sell another brand cream that came with a special soap, but the pressure of succeeding by selling what customers want led him to seek the product in Mozambique. On one Saturday I arrived at the stand and found Makamu's son and daughter. We were later joined later by his wife - Ma- with the youngest son. I was told that Makamu had gone across the border to stock up on that specific brand of beauty cream. When a customer came looking for the beauty cream, during Makamu's absence, Makamu's son explained that they were out of stock. Makamu's wife informed the customer that her husband was on the way back from eMpangeni (20 km's away) with the cream. The customer explained that she had been waiting for the cream because it was the only product she used that lightened her skin. Ma agreed and shared her own testament on how good the product was also but tried selling the alternative cream to the customer who refused. Ma's ability to smooth talk even the most upset customer suggests established entrepreneurial skills. I had observed on a number of occasions during the visits how Ma was able to speak convincingly to anyone regardless of gender and age. This was different to Makamu's more stern but polite sales approach. The customer said that she would wait for Makamu as she had placed orders for herself and two of her friends. After waiting for 30 minutes she decided to leave but left enough money for three skin-lightening creams. Makamu appeared shortly after lunch time carrying a bag. The customer came back with her friends and succeeded at buying not three but four containers of the desired skin-lightening cream. The women celebrated and cheered as they drove off, praising Makamu for getting them their skin lightening creams. Shortly after, Makamu sold the two remaining containers of skin-lightening cream that he got from Mozambique. When Makamu had settled down I asked him about the cream. Joined by the rest of the family, they explained how popular the cream had been. This, unfortunately, had been coupled by the decline of its availability in Durban and other towns nearer to eSikhawini. Maputo had been the only place where you could still find it but even there it was very limited. This section outlined the extent to which

local traders were responsive to changing environments. Lessons about the use of money came from a grounded understanding of their own enterprises and the stakes that require crossing borders in order to succeed.

## **5.7 Conclusion**

Success as an appropriation of cultural repertoires that includes knowledge about the local area to claim personhood and legitimation obligates sustaining community. Obligations embedded in collective success applied to all entrepreneurs regardless of gender, age and place of birth. While including managing money by paying close attention to changing environments, maintaining communal interest was a way of combatting the uncertainty that comes with independent accumulation. Additionally, the capacity to go the extra mile to provide products thereby build trust with local residents enabled trust, recognition and legitimized that underpinned success. This recognition and legitimation was central for entrepreneurs in order claim personhood and respectability, which had to be acknowledged by the local community. These are the grammars of entrepreneurship embedded in what Kuzwayo (2012) terms ‘ground-economics’. Just as the previous chapter, I have added more photos as exhibition for a visual sense of the site. In the final chapter I discuss the problem in both the absence of this knowledge in the universal modelling of entrepreneurship when applied in local context. Also I argue that the process of translation is political and favours the dominant.



**Figure 7: Makamu's enterprise with Tshisa-nyama at the property behind**



**Figure 8: Rear view of Makamu's enterprise**



**Figure 9: Makamu's stock of tissue paper and the chairs where the visitors would sit, including me.**



**Figure 10: Traders next to Makamu's enterprise**

## **Chapter 6      From nothing to R50: Dreams do come true**

In the introduction I note that the capacity to write the dissertation was activated by Kuzwayo's (2012) book *Black Man's Medicine*. The book reminded of where my personal interest in entrepreneurship comes from. Just like Kuzwayo, my father was a third generation of black middle class that got the opportunity to purchase and grow the retail and wholesale business with proclamation of the Transkei. It is the lived experiences in actions of continuity and improvisation that black entrepreneurs, like my father, demonstrate collective success. In other words, just as personal profits was a serious matter, the investment in the collective by sharing success through adherence of cultural processes to reinforce interpersonal relationships was more important. The main criticism towards Kuzwayo is the lack of attention given to interdependent relationships, confined by cultural process (these also apply in rural areas, suburbs, white people etc.) from which entrepreneurs emerge. It was also through interpersonal relations that the topic on black youth entrepreneurs was emergent on an exploratory visit to Richards Bay Special Economic Zone (SEZ). The main promise of regional development engendered in the expansion of industry through minerals development is the creation of jobs as well as the opportunity for local entrepreneurs. The involvement of youth in entrepreneurship has become of national interest particularly linked to the supply chain as potential benefits to be realized through industrial expansion strategies such as minerals beneficiation and mining. Unfortunately, perceptions about youth as lazy, unskilled and ineffective entrepreneurs emerged. Unlike what was perceived by bureaucrats and corporates as trapped in 'waithood', the young people I encountered during my exploratory studies in the Richards Bay area constantly enacted opportunities and skillfully transformed existing relationships into networks of entrepreneurship to act on the aspirations and dreams activated by the promises of opportunity created by minerals beneficiation – hence the subject of this dissertation.

The dissertation proposed to address three specific questions: (1) What kinds of youth entrepreneurship emerge as a result of mining and minerals beneficiation activities? (2) How do young people sustain communities and create stable futures through entrepreneurship? (3) How can mining and minerals beneficiation activities use the model of youth entrepreneurship, embedded in community sustaining ventures to foster better and productive relationships with people living in affected areas? The lack of empirical data on youth entrepreneurship in developing areas can undermine well-intended efforts by both industry

and government to establish relationships in the areas affected by their operations. In particular, conventional concepts of entrepreneurship are unable to capture the nuances of doing business as a daily enterprise in marginalised areas. Understanding communal entrepreneurs requires frameworks that go beyond normative economic business models. The three conceptual frameworks central to understanding the kinds of youth entrepreneurs that emerge include: agency as projected through dreaming and aspirations but domesticated by collective interest which may be located but are not confined to cultural dimensions. Aspirations, dignity and respectability are the next concepts that frame people's capacity to act. Lastly, the dissertation frames the concept of entrepreneurship as produced cultivated and negotiated through social interpersonal relationships informed by reality on the ground.

Chapter two examined ethnographic fieldwork as the main method of collecting data, which involved travelling and staying in eSikhawini for two months. The main findings in this chapter was the value in understanding ethnography as entrepreneurship in that investment in the method is risky and requires creativity and ambition, while negotiating collectivity and interdependence to all relationships formed during – or as a result of – fieldwork. Such high stakes requires building trust among research participants and stakeholders whose agreement to the venture and the unintended consequences determines the extent ethnographic fieldworkers' can immerse themselves in the locality (Geertz, 1973; Gupta & Ferguson, 1997). eSikhawini as the locality chosen as a field site is central to the potential returns engendered in the sustainable development of minerals in the broader uMhlathuze Municipality as a Special Economic Zone (SEZ). Data collection methods related to the entrepreneurial activities embedded in ethnography have been triangulated, transcribed and analysed.

As a way of contributing to the overall argument, chapter three examined how forms of transformation such as spirituality and religion shape the dreams and aspirations that youth have and how this impact entrepreneurship. The chapter examined religion as one such personal form of transformation and its impact on entrepreneurship. Through spirituality and religion I demonstrated that acting on dreams and aspirations in order to be successful for these kinds of youth entrepreneurs requires more than just monetary stability. As a case study the chapter builds on the life trajectory of one young man to examine how spirituality/religion, embodied in entrepreneurship, is a vital aspect to maintain focus in order to not only becoming but being an entrepreneur. The narrative reveals how a turning point or personal transformation in self-awareness and personhood as a 'Christian entrepreneur

enabled claims and recognition of an individual that is respectable and dignified by people in the society. This importance of living up to and achieving recognition as an entrepreneur with unrelenting faith complicates the dominant drive to produce economic entrepreneurs. The chapter's main contribution is that rather than understanding the two as opposites, Christianity and economic success through entrepreneurship are complimentary and negotiated through various relationships that are not limited to church. In this way the chapter complicates the dominant favours of producing economic entrepreneurs where young people define success in other forms such as spirituality.

Chapter four demonstrates the agentic power of dreams as facilitators of action. It examines the emergence of dreams and aspirations, particularly that the enterprise of assigning dreams and aspirations to the discipline of economics and normative business models with markets and individualised ideas of entrepreneurship relegate certain kinds of enterprises that have been weakened and considered backwards or a waste of time. Yet, this chapter demonstrates the agentic power of dreaming in the sense of guiding practices that negotiate productive interrelations in the context of life in a mining affected township. In the context of enduring high unemployment, youth entrepreneurs' capacity to dream and aspire is a cultural capacity whose strengthening reflects socio economic exclusion (Appadurai, 2013). In doing this, the chapter argues for an understanding of how, by dreaming and stepping out of the ordinary, young people generate, claim and legitimate recognition and respect through communal entrepreneurship as a cultural capacity.

Following from the previous chapter, chapter five seeks to show how success is appropriated and how, like currency, it is spent. Success for youth entrepreneurs in eSikhawini is intersubjective by the appropriation of cultural repertoires to claim personhood and legitimation, which then obligates collective interest. These obligations which are embedded in collective success apply to all entrepreneurs regardless of age and place of birth – to include those from the other side of the Limpopo River. While including managing money by paying close attention to changing environments, maintaining communal interest was a way of combatting the uncertainty that comes with independent accumulation. But the gap in such knowledge influences abstract prescriptions on normative forms of entrepreneurial success.

Where researchers examine entrepreneurship support policies, they tend to question particular interventions, but do not question the underpinning philosophies and assumptions. Along with government and industry, researchers share the belief in the objective view of the world

with entrepreneurs represented as having a function in an economic system. As a nail in the economic machine, black youth entrepreneurs are driven to contribute to achieving societal equilibrium through adaption, goal attainment, integration and latent pattern maintenance - told to provide "economic" return, to "grow", to be a source of "vitality" (Perren & Jennings, 2005). Government, along with industry, imposes its wishes and desires without considering and prioritising personal aspirations and dreams. The discourse of imposed functions of entrepreneurs and their life-worlds to strive for growth and profitability validate facts, competition and legitimate knowledge. Knowledge is legitimated by statistics through rhetoric on contribution to the economy and job creation which provides "facts" that subjugate entrepreneurs as a subsystem of an economic machine. Framing of the needy, subordinated, dependent entrepreneur and the superior, independent economic system reduces the dreams and aspirations of youth entrepreneurs' life-worlds into the machine individualising their creative interdependent agency that is important for sustaining society (Perren & Jennings, 2005).

The study of entrepreneurship in economics spans the whole spectrum from very abstract market and pricing mechanisms, to the very concrete phenomena such as the individual entrepreneur. Rather than the Schumpeterian notion of creative destruction, communal entrepreneurship is a process of creative construction of productive relationships that - implicitly and explicitly - sustain communities. As precocious entrepreneurs, once described as risk takers and daredevils, black youth were once framed as heroes and 'Young Lions' (Seekings, 1996). As doubling perceptions youth are simultaneously included as potential and excluded as risks and dead-weight. Growth, success, and personal profits are implicit in the contribution to economic growth in society. The notion of entrepreneurial personality as different from the ordinary person; suggests that youth can be identified and trained as contributors to the economy - trait approach (Ahl, 2002). Socio-economic inequalities generated by new configurations of financial markets in the neoliberal moment has activated, in anthropology, an approach towards understanding finance that could block out the cultural analysis of influential financial actors and re-produce power-laden assumptions about the "winners" and "losers" in the global economy. Assuming that financial capital is abstract and abstracting - in other words – decontextualized and separated from lived experiences while, at the same time reforming and corroding social relations in mystifying ways, allows us to uncritically allow more space to define and translate socio-economic lives (Ho, 2009). In non-western societies anthropology has been guilty for spearheading the culturalisation of the

economy, in particular, critiquing neoclassical economic theories as narrow ideological models divorced from and preventing them from representing the on-the-ground complexities of economic reality. Consequently, formulation binaries of concrete/abstract, embedded/disembedded, and culture/economy are implicit and reproduced uncritically. Market ideology is intimately tied to British and American notions of individualism, property, and neoclassical economics. At stake in the evolutionary narrative of increasing abstraction, Ho (2009) explains, obscures the heterogeneous particularities industry's practice and effects and prevents the interrogation of investment in regional development with a particular focus on industry driven progress. Also, at stake is the marketing schemes embedded in reports and hyped representation of development initiative programmes and role models through specific models; testaments, leadership seminars, promoting social entrepreneurship (Ho, 2009). Notions of money as abstract are a dominant "Western folk theory". There is little question that particular economic measures such as prices and interests shape our lives, that powerful knowledge producers from financial economists to corporate executives have over the decades used and relied even more heavily on these indicators to make top-down decisions about jobs, policies and the kinds of entrepreneurship required. The move to greater abstraction and virtualism in economic thought is precisely that is creating a prescriptive model for reality, a "virtual reality", and virtual entrepreneurship that is reductive, dislocating, and divorced from responsible and engaged social relationships (Ho, 2009). Abstraction becomes more central as diagnosis, particularly now that we live in a business environment where corporate decisions are based less on the strategic knowledge produced within the organisation on the ground, but rather is dictated by financial measures, stock prices, and the expectations of investment banks. External forces, disembedded from a local and organisational context, with allegiances only to abstract financial markets like stock price and profit accumulation, not only loosen social ties but also generates conditions of supreme socioeconomic inequality by eradicating any concern for the daily lives and dilemmas of everyday people (Ho, 2009). When interrogating the powerful, what get framed as abstract are very particular values, interests, and origin myths. In my reading of Vall (1999), regional development with growth and profit as the primary measure to evaluate corporations is not about heralding abstraction but about reclaiming the "rightful" capitalist unity between ownership and control over corporations. As Ho (2009) notes, a discussion of abstraction and power is incomplete without an analogy to the power of whiteness as a racial construct. For Dryer the representational power of whiteness - its flexibility, productivity, covetedness, and exclusivity - stems from its ability "to be everything and nothing, literally

overwhelmingly present and yet absent" (Dryer, 1998 cited in Ho, 2009). Part of the erratic power of the financial market is its representation as an abstract, its seeking to be everywhere and claiming to be nowhere along with its missions and claims to freedom, democracy, and prosperity .

The dominant knowledge is that entrepreneurs and their business must contribute meaningfully to the state and the economy. These are the only forms that address unemployment and poverty. Through this idea the individual entrepreneur, detached from institution and culture, is formed as a concept and representation. Meaningful contribution to the state and the economy provides the framework of the concept for entrepreneurship that can be "counted". The count is not only in the number of registered business that can also be taxed, but ones that can be recorded statistically. These statistics reveal far more than they hide. For both the state and industry the numbers serve to justify budget allocations and have given birth to new departments as well as development programmes. Reporting either the shortage of meaningfully contributing enterprises defines a problem; a master discourse or master narrative. Regardless of the number of the enterprises that get started or no matter how long they have been in operation; it is the lack of "meaningful" contribution that renders these forms of "other" businesses and their many ways of contribution as irrelevant and incomplete. Meaningful contribution, in other words, can be measured only in economic terms and those that justify budget allocation. The irony is that this further spreads feelings of uncertainty. It diminishes dignity and forms of respectability and personhood forming dreams and aspirations as cultural contexts. Creativity through meaningful relationships, shown in the chapters to sustain communities in daily existence, is relegated irrelevant and "not enough". The persistence to reduce the concept of entrepreneurship to the economy and state contribution is what makes translation a dominant process. The grammar and shared values used to verify the facts followed by action dictates certain forms of action as irrational and misses the agentive power dreams and aspirations have. What I have attempted to do is to further open up the concept of entrepreneurship beyond the economy of numbers and state. That is to domesticate the finance capital as occult where the magic of numbers operate. In essence I have attempted to demonstrate how people seek ways to domesticate and navigate this faith in probability ([a] notoriously poor way of predicting the future from the past), monetary system that depends for its existence on "confidence", a chimera knowable, tautologically, only by its effects (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2000: 310). People find new scripts and new grammar to articulate all forms of entrepreneurs which are sustained by and

embedded within community interrelations. By including forms of spiritual faith, dreams and aspirations of dignity and respectability is to locate the entrepreneur and the enterprise in social relationships that have their own set of shared values and process – culture. Culture is not stagnant but rather fluid and changes as the flows of globalisation carry new forms of knowing and being routed in a turbulent history that domesticates the success of entrepreneurs. The strength of dreams and aspirations as success are recognised and legitimised by the people living in the local context and not the state of the economy. These rules, values and knowledge contest any dominant form of master narrative and relegates numbers and the paying of taxes as failures and incomplete without adhering to social systems. The contestation comes from many creative ways by people dominated by colonialism, apartheid and neoliberal policies as ways to claim dignity, respectability and personhood in the ever-increasing gap between the rich and the poor (Nyamnjoh, 2000). It is the failure of scholars, state, industry and popular representations to translate these forms of cultural capacity to dream and aspire by youth and women that the tensions continue. Any form of contact continues to be a threat that stands a chance of being met with resistance.

### **6.1 Want to help: Buy the ice-cream**

I was given the opportunity to speak with one of the executives at Anglo Platinum who is very committed to improving company-community relationships. Following a vibrant conversation about the history of the middle class black people in South Africa, Derrick (pseudonym) asked an important question inspired by a story. At the family holiday home on the coast of kwaZulu Natal, the family heard a faint sound of a bell. As the sound got louder a figure of a person became visible to them. A black woman walked along the private beach with a cooler box selling ice-cream. They all watched with curiosity and a sense of confusion. What was confusing was that in the long stretched beaches the next neighbour was easily more than a kilometre away. A few hours later his wife saw the same woman walking toward the only town in the area, which is a couple of kilometres from where they had seen her. Driven by the same curiosity and disbelief the wife gave the woman a lift and engaged her in conversation. The woman sold ice-creams to support her children. During this time she was raising money for school fees in preparation for the beginning of the new term. The entrepreneur was selling the ice-cream at R2 each, walking to wherever there were people. On that day she sold nothing. This was the usual walk to town and then to her household after a days' work. Derrick and his family were genuinely concerned and this spoke to his passion in working to build empowering and sustainable relationships between industry, government

and community –tripartite stakeholder engagement. The question he asked was meant to have been something for me to ponder deeply about; food for thought. Looking compassionately in my eyes before heading to another meeting Derrick asked me “How do we assist someone like that?” I was rather surprised by the question because the answer could not be more obvious. I politely replied, “Buy the ice-cream”. Furthermore, the family could even go as far as driving to neighbours and encourage them to try the product. But I wonder now how often initiatives such as Corporate Social Responsibility programmes through EDP take the time to ask the right questions. When such programmes receive these answers, how willing are they to accept them as knowledge? Do they find the difference in ways of knowing a problem and/or even a threat?

In his Ted Talk (November 2012) titled *Want to help someone? Shut up and Listen*, enterprise facilitator Ernesto Sirolli shared how he learned a big lesson from hippos. Sirolli’s first project in Zambia was teaching the local people how to grow tomatoes and zucchini along with other Italian favourites. Rather than asking the people why they were not growing anything, “We simply said, ‘Thank God we’re here’”, he laments. Even though failing to attract local people to farm with paid wages, Sirolli and the people in the project were thrilled to see the crops grow so well. However, when harvesting season came, they watched with horror as 200 hippos emerged in the evening from the nearby river and ate everything on site. It was only then that Sirolli understood what the locals knew all along. One of the learnings Sirolli draws on is E.F. Schumacher’s (1939) book, *Small Is Beautiful*, which is that the first principle to aid is respect. As an interventionist it is crucial to listen and leave people alone if they do not wish to be helped. But the way western development initiatives deal with people has been in two ways: to patronise by treating anyone from a different culture as if they were a servant; and paternalist where the “other” are considered children. This, however, is not unintentional but a continuation of the dominant knowledge system of education that inculcates fact as basis for knowing and prescribes a set of values to judge the knowledge in question (Nyamnjoh, 2012).

## **6.2 Hegemony of knowledge style**

Through education true knowledge is presumed to be the foundation of effective action. More specifically, this form of education system enforces the understanding that only true knowledge can be effective action. It follows, then, that if you must know before acting you would naturally care about truthfulness of knowledge representation. This is the epistemological foundation of the common-sense model of knowledge and action adopted by

both government and industry. The economic system as a science launches from this foundation. It is this hegemony in the knowledge system that forms the foundation from which EDP must fulfil through statistical reports. BHP Billiton's Enterprise Development and Supply Centre in Richards Bay, for example, measure its success not on how broad the initiative reaches communities but rather how well models informed by statistics have been implemented – the numbers game (Hill & Goodenough 2005). It is within this context that knowledge and action which does not align with, or provide alternative representations of the world to the common-sense model is perceived as a problem. Farquhar (2012:153) adds that although we claim multi-culturalism about idea however “where world of action seem to be at stake-we are quick to become dogmatically about knowledge”. As the previous chapters have shown, in reality people, act all the time, even by dreaming and aspiring. These forms of agency are effective and ethical without relying on fact. Education through skills training as encouraged by EDP and endorsed by leadership seminars encourage mimicry even when luxuriously dressed as creativity. The hegemony is the transplantation of knowledge forms in local settings which have emerged in other local communities, the west. It is through the involvement of political interests that the approved forms of knowledge are materialized in dictionaries, media such as the commercial of Vuyo, the business mogul, (Farquhar, 2012). In South Africa, transplanting knowledge forms continues to wreak havoc in violence – bodily and conceptually. The violence is not only upon bodies of those branded as noncompliant and uncomprehending, but the violent engendered in translation is now prominent in a world where everything that moves transforms knowledge itself. In South Africa, for instance, the rise of the American inspired charismatic church along with unfulfilled promises by politicians and the economic recession; faith does not only promise transformation of the spirit but provides alternative sources of power and economic life-style (Coleman, 2000; Kuzwayo, 2012). Along with forms of creative domestication of the hegemonic knowledge system, efforts to establish relationships with affected communities in mining areas, which is the core of the research project, are further affected by the politicised nature of translation.

Youth Entrepreneurship as a youth development strategy is increasingly supported by both government and industry with a particular focus on building skills associated with entrepreneurship that include the ability to take initiative and creatively seek out and identify opportunities, develop budgets, project resource needs and potential income, communicate effectively and market oneself and one's ideas (Awogbenle & Iwuamadi, 2010). In South Africa the wave of entrepreneurship had long taken shape with people taking up self-

employment and owning their businesses evidenced in pre-colonial accounts but increased in number and organisation during independence and coupled with the taking on and shortcomings of neoliberal policies (Mabandla, 2015). These entrepreneurs were first described by Keith Hart as the informal sector to illuminate how unemployed and unemployable people took initiative to creatively enact opportunities that established a parallel economy to the one understood by economists and recognized by the state (Hart, 1974; Meagher, 2005; Minnis, 2006; Coulson, 2013). It is the worsening inability for both government and big business to provide jobs (coupled with mining operations whose impact worsens poverty) that those losing their jobs are seeking to empower themselves through business. The ones that had long lived uncertain lives marked by unemployment and poverty had long empowered themselves by cultivating their businesses and sustaining them. In South Africa, as well as other parts of Africa, Enterprise Development Programmes (EDP) have just awoken to the challenges of unemployment, but without understanding how the businesses that have sustained operating in economies parallel (some within even formal economy though not recognised) have long established a world of business from very little or nothing. It is that very act of making something from nothing that expertise has been formed (Baker & Reed, 2012). While EDP is able to provide youth with some insights into a kind of entrepreneurship, such development programmes do not have the understanding and knowledge about emergent entrepreneurship and enterprise through uncertain realities and social relationships in a localised context. In this sense, as one of the EDP's aims, helping youth engage with realities is out of context and has not made significant changes in stabilising young people's lives and sustaining their future in townships (Awogbenle & Iwuamadi, 2010: 4). The reasons for the importance of promoting youth entrepreneurship in intervention programmes is impregnated by the perception of defining youth as a socio-economic problem to be solved underpinned by characterising them as either 'victims' or 'perpetrators', and stuck in waithood having failed to successfully transition to adulthood.

As a short term approach to the problem of unemployment, EDP seeks to cater for the out-of-school youth and the increasing number of jobless graduates. In the long run, it is understood that EDP has the potential to bring desired results of reducing poverty and fostering development. EDP seeks to move youth entrepreneurship into the mainstream of the economy by promoting the kind of businesses that are growth-oriented and sustainable. The shortcoming of this narrow future orientation is that youth entrepreneurs operating businesses in economies parallel to the mainstream are ignored with research and knowledge about the

sustainability of such businesses not informing the realities that determine the outcomes of such a long term outlook (Awogbenle & Iwuamadi, 2010). A consequence of the lack of recognition and empirical knowledge is that learning entrepreneurs institutes modelled by EDP treats all young people as new entrepreneurs that need introduction to basic elements about starting a business. Four of the young entrepreneurs I spoke to expressed that there was very little that skills training through EDP could teach them about making money, particularly making money from nothing. For example Fanele attended only one class that was hosted by Small Enterprise Development Agency (Seda) in Richards Bay, and had this to say "It was just an introduction to business, to register... I attended for one day and didn't return. It was a waste of money and time". Ndumiso, who was registered with Zululand Chamber of Commerce and Industry and having attended network session hosted in collaboration with BHP Billiton's Enterprise Development Centre expressed similar sentiments saying that there was very little such programmes could teach an entrepreneur about growing a business when such institutions have no idea how and what it takes to make R50 from nothing, to grow from that to R500 and reach R1000. His response was a reaction to one of the Enterprise Development Centre's requirements that applicants wanting to enroll in the business incubator had be making a minimum monthly turnover of R10 000. Sifundo acknowledged that there is a place for education in business but that "a lot of things that are happening in business you learn by doing". Even established entrepreneurs that have gone through EDP training complained that when applying for tenders in mining companies, it was assumed and enforced that they sit in on introductory classes simply because they were black. During fieldwork in a township in Rustenburg, a much older business man with many years of experience shared with me a story of how he walked out of one such class and expressed that this was just a way of keeping black entrepreneurs from getting and doing the work in the mining and minerals industry. This reveals the static and outdated (if not politicised) foundation of EDP institutes and institutionalisation (in a way of making black entrepreneurs constantly start over when it comes to training and application to do business in the mainstream economy). In this regard the project also argues for the updating and in some instances reformulating of the EDP models that are meant to create tools focused on encouraging youth entrepreneurs to recognize the businesses started from nothing, and build on the knowledge of these unlicensed 'professionals' to effectively identify, nurture and develop emergent entrepreneurs.

In summary, entrepreneurship is not in the formal training programmes as popularly advocated by industry and the state. Instead, what the study has shown is an extensive knowledge and experience through a resilient commitment of youth to dreaming and aspirations even in the absence of resources. Rather than distribute resources with the intention to develop, enterprise facilitation must provide assistance only in the areas of business that youth entrepreneurs seek help. There is no better way to articulate this than through the words of Ndumiso: “there is not much that these programmes can teach us [entrepreneurs] about growing a business when they don’t know what it takes to make R50 from nothing, to grow from that to R500 and then reach R1000”. So, where we need to place our focus is not on social entrepreneur role models and motivational speakers (or leadership talks), but rather to strengthen the dreams and aspirations by making visible the people able to grow from nothing whether from selling various sizes of tissue paper, cleaning bins or cutting hair on the side of the road.



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