

**UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG RURAL YOUTH IN SOUTH
AFRICA: A CASE OF VHEMBE DISTRICT OF LIMPOPO
PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA**

By

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ABSTRACT

Unemployment rates have increased from 53.4% in 2010 to 58.4% in 2011 respectively in the Vhembe District of South Africa. This state of affairs has caused concern among various sectors of the country hence studies focusing on youth employment issues are very necessary and urgent. The purpose of this study therefore, was to investigate the nature and causes of rural unemployment amongst the youth in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province, and the extent to which socio-demographic factors influence the choices of job search methods used by the unemployed youth when searching for a job. The importance of the study rests on by the fact that the results from this research will inform policy development and strategic planning for a range of stakeholders, including government, municipal authorities and employers in the private and public sectors in relation to job creation and the reduction of unemployment. The study used a cross-sectional study design. Primary data were collected from 580 youth who were randomly and systematically selected from four local municipalities within the Vhembe District comprising of Makhado, Thulamela, Musina and Mutale Municipalities. Data were collected using structured interviews.

The data collected included the demographic and socio-economic profile of respondents under the headings age, gender, marital status, race, geographic location, educational level, training or skills and work experience. These details were presented using figures and tables. Data analysis was performed using SPSS Version 22 and verified using the R. Version 3.0.1 and STATA Version 13 at three levels. The logistic regression model results showed that lack of training and work experience had a major influence on youth unemployment in Vhembe District Municipality. Educational attainment, marital status, age, gender and race were also found to be insignificant in relation to youth unemployment. On the other hand, the results obtained from the multinomial logistic regression model showed that only education had a bearing on youth employment search methods. The recommendations are that the South African government must come up with strong laws and policies which will help the youth to get work experience and more training. Both the government and private sector should offer youth internships of at least 24 months and not 12 months as is the case currently that the youth are well equipped with the necessary experience which companies normally ask for when employing the youth. In addition, any youth offered internships must do career - specific training. In order to reduce the youth experience gap, government must design and implement the dual education principle, which ensures that high school students have general education and formal focused training at the same time within the apprenticeship system.

Keywords: *Youth unemployment, Vhembe District, SA, SPSS, STATA*