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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Description</b>
BCEA	Basic Conditions of Employment Act
CDE	Centre for Economic Development
CHEC	Cape Higher Education Consortium
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration
EEA	Employment Equity Act
HAI	Historically Advantaged Institutions
HDI	Historically Disadvantaged Institutions
GCIS	Government Communications and Information Systems
HSRC	Human Science Research Council
ICASA	Independent Communications Authority of South Africa
IMC	Integrated Marketing Communication
ISAD	Information Society and Development
LRA	Labour Relations Act
NDP	National Development Plan
NEMISA	National Electronic Media Institute of South Africa
NSF	National Skills Fund
NYDP	National Youth Development Programmes
PEST	Political, Economic, Social and Technological
PNC	Presidential National Commission
Q1	Quarter 1
Q2	Quarter 2
REC	Research Ethics Committee
SA	South Africa
SAAA	South African Accreditation Authority
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SAPO	South African Post Office
SET	Sector Education and Training
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authorities
SETABs	Sector Education and Training Advisory Boards
SDA	Skills Development Act
SDLA	Skills Development Levies Act
SMRC	Sender Message Receiver Channel

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Description</b>
STATSSA	Statistics South Africa
TV	Television
TVET	Technical Vocational Educational and Training
UNISA	University of South Africa
USAASA	Universal Service Access agency of South Africa
ZADNA	.zaDomain Name Authority



## CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

### 1.1 Introduction

At the outset, it is important to note that disciplines involved in the development, implementation, and assessment of communications by organizations include management, marketing, public relations, technical communication, political communication, and information/social marketing campaigns, etc. This study focuses on establishing a communication strategy and it is backed by public relations because it is concerned with information communicated to the public (Hallahan, et al 2007:3). The goal here is to render explicit the fact that media receives a lot of attention as well as its link with integrated communication and communication strategy.

The study moves from the premise that public relations cannot be divorced from communication management. While communication management refers to the management of a wide range of relations between a business and its stakeholders (Meintjes 2012:4), public relations refers to the management of communication between organisations and its publics (Grunig 1992:4). Therefore, one could say both communication management and public relations refer to the management of communication. Public relations has the potential to influence public opinion through sound character and proper performance based on mutually satisfactory two-way communication (Seitel: 2007: 4).

While communication is understood as a dialogue for enabling people to understand the key factors of their physical, social, economic and political environment and their interdependence so that rising problems can be solved competently (Oepen 2006:12), strategy is understood as finding the best way to apply general rules to win the game (Nothhaft & Scholzel 2015:28). The two will be brought to bear on one dimension of the unemployment problem: graduate unemployment.

In response to rising graduate unemployment, this study establishes a communication strategy that will be used as an enabling tool for increasing graduate employment potential. Graduate unemployment is one of the issues that raises debates (Hanapi & Nordin 2014:

1056) in many areas such as politics, education, media, etc., It is the intention of this study to demonstrate that such debates can be strategically mediated through relevant media.

Media is incorporated in this study because of its power to disseminate information. South Africa has a vibrant and diverse media environment in which people have a range of choices about where they get their information, entertainment or education (Chronis 2012:11). This study regards media as one of the communication tools that can contribute to the effective implementation of communication strategy that would, in turn, contribute to the alleviation of graduate unemployment.

Diverse authors highlight the significance of communication strategy. For instance, Sewestianiuk and Voitovici (2013:7) maintain that communication strategy enables dialogues with different target groups. Taking this further, Niemann (2005:59) states that communication strategy focuses on relationships, symbolic actions and communication, and also stresses attitudinal and cognitive complexities among diverse stakeholders. In emphasizing the significance of communication strategy, it is necessary to highlight that graduate unemployment results from the inability to create a relationship between graduates and the professions they subsequently choose. The said inability invariably informs their future, albeit negatively.

To bridge that gap between graduates and professions is to acknowledge that communication platforms rest on enabling technologies. In the same breath, it is worth noting that changing technology has the potential to direct the future of professions. According to Susskind and Susskind (2015:271) professions will in future be dominated by innovation whereby capable systems will transform the work of professionals, giving birth to new ways of sharing practical expertise. Graduate unemployment also results from failure to fully leverage the processes and systems that inform individual's future aspirations.

Within the context of this study, it is in and through education, media, labour market or workplace industry and government—all of which have the potential to guide the choice of future professions—that such processes and systems are directed. The latter point is further cemented by Nemček, Kremenova and Fabus (2015:2396), who highlighted that creating feedback between universities, government, labour market and business environment is

necessary. This is especially true in terms of facilitating the coherence between student preparation and future graduates of certain universities through matching with actual needs and requirements of national economy. This would ensure the tracking of individuals from university to the labour market and elsewhere.

The researcher argues that any issue that can be communicated. If it is not resolved or addressed to the satisfaction of all parties involved, it constitutes a failure in communication. Unemployment proves to be one of suchlike issues. The question that begs to be asked is: If unemployment is an issue that can be effectively debated or communicated, why is it still a problem in this country? Why are there people who are still experiencing poverty due to unemployment? It is with this in mind that a communication strategy is established and expected to play a crucial role, until graduate unemployment issues are resolved.

From both political and personal perspectives, unemployment is generally considered a worrisome issue that still affects the majority in this country. Despite two decades of the democratic dispensation, South Africa is still dogged by high unemployment. It is ironic that the country is democratically free without the employment expression of economic benefits. Although this study focuses on graduates, the unemployment of those that are not educated cannot be wholly ignored either. Youth unemployment is not only a South African issue, but a global one.

Obtaining a qualification from a higher education institution creates the expectation of a better future and, through such a qualification, one's basic needs can be addressed. Education itself has the potential to shape the future of the individual. Skills development constitutes one of those solutions that can bridge the gap between the labour market and unemployment. Skills development could ensure that graduates also have not just acquired the necessary educational skills, but also the entrepreneurial skills.

This aforementioned entrepreneurial dimension is recognized by Stamboulis and Barlas (2014:365) as they note that 'the high quality of education in innovative fields provides a great opportunity for the establishment of new entrepreneurship'. It is important to determine which media is preferred and accessible to the target audience, in order to establish a communication strategy that will be used as an enabling tool for increasing employment

potential. For this reason, this study has targeted the graduates of a University of Technology. It is important to note that the study was approved on condition that the name of the University of Technology where data was collected remained anonymous.

## **1.2 The significance or importance of the study**

It has become common cause that communication strategy is significant. Communication strategy provides the focus and direction for an organisation's communication with its stakeholders – determining the “what” rather than the “how” – the mechanism that leads the function towards effectiveness rather than towards efficiency (Niemann 2005:58). This determination stresses the mission and the vision of the organisation. The researcher sees a gap here because the emphasis is on the organisational inward focus and its stakeholders in the form of built relationships rather than the beneficiaries. A singular focus of communication on students on courses their studies unfortunately ceases at the point of graduation and only continues inwardly with current students.

The key problem that the organisations (such as universities of technology) are trying to address through their vision and mission does not clearly communicate to those that are affected by the problem. The problem that is referred to here is “graduate unemployment”. Despite the articulation of communication strategies in driving organisations mission and vision, which focuses on practical benefits of communication strategy in addressing problems that are specific to the country has been limited. For example, graduate unemployment is one of the national problems in this country. It is obvious that the interaction with the unemployed graduates is not sufficient.

The high levels of unemployment still affect the educated and the uneducated populations. The primary objective of this study is therefore to propose a communication strategy that will be used as an enabling tool for increasing the potential for graduate employment. It is also important to identify relevant media that will be used to disseminate information about the proposed communication strategy.

The types of relevant media under study included print, social, audio and visual media. Although such media are popular accessed and used, there is little emphasis on reviewed

literature about their objectives especially in relation to addressing graduate unemployment. Communication strategy focuses on what and strategic communication focuses on how.

While communication strategy focuses on communicating (what) in a way to achieve an organisation's vision and mission, strategic communication focuses on how an organization presents itself to society. Overall, strategic communication constitutes purposeful use of communication by an organization to fulfil its mission. To be effective, a strategic communication perspective will be marshalled.

### **1.3 Relevance of the topic**

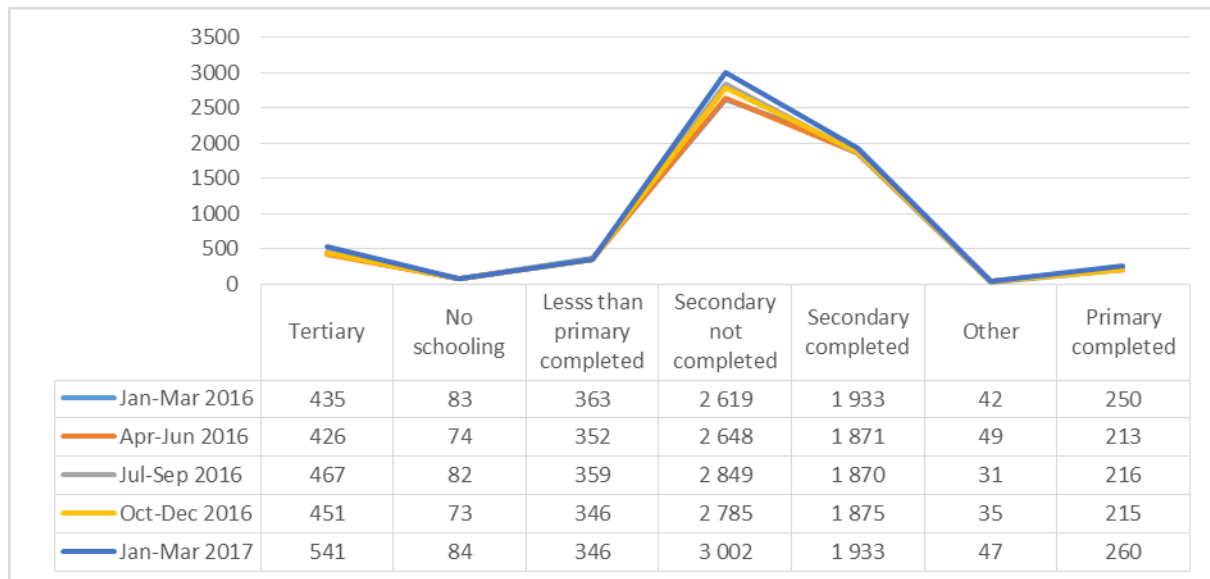
The researcher believes that communication strategy for increasing graduate employment potential is dependent on the availability, accessibility and the strategic use of a relevant media. In this study, media is key in disseminating information and creating awareness about unemployment factors, specifically to the graduate in their preparation for future professions. That will help them to penetrate the job market and strengthen their skills.

While investigating the strategy that will be used as an enabling tool for increasing graduate employment potential, this study investigates whether unemployment as a problem that acutely affects the graduate students at one of the University of Technology in South Africa can be attenuated by other communication means. The unemployment rate of graduates in South Africa is reflected in the figure below.

The figure is an indication that unemployment is a challenge for graduates and it raises uncertainties about the education system and the future of the professions of this country (South Africa). Reinforcing this view, Susskind and Susskind (2015: 271) argue that with innovation, professions will be dismantled and some new roles for professionals will arise.



**Figure 1-1 Highest level of education of the unemployed (between January 2016 and January 2017)**



(Source: StatsSA - Quarterly Labour Force Survey Q1:2017)

In Figure 1.1 numbers are presented in thousands (000). Based on the above figure, the unemployment rate is increasing for all categories. The unemployment rate for those with tertiary qualification has increased from 435 000 to 541 000. Regardless of education or not, the pattern is the same.

**1.3.1 Why is a University of Technology chosen as an area of study?**

Universities of technology in South Africa are listed as follows:

- Cape Peninsula University of Technology
- Central University of Technology
- Durban University of Technology
- Mangosuthu University of Technology
- Tshwane University of Technology
- Vaal University of Technology
- Walter Sisulu University of technology and science

The study was conducted at one of the universities of technology in South Africa. The researcher obtained the necessary approval to conduct the study at the University of Technology. The permission to do the study was granted on condition that the name of the University of Technology remains anonymous. This is one of the reasons the geographic details of the University of Technology understudy are not revealed. The choice of the University of Technology was influenced by its accessibility to the researcher.

### **1.3.2 Gaps in the literature that will be addressed by this study**

Several studies have been conducted on graduate and youth unemployment, specifically in South Africa. However, such studies are not specific to graduates (honours, masters and PhD) such as they emanate from particular educational institutions (Altman 2007; Cape Higher Education Consortium 2013; Moleke 2006; Van der Berg & Van Broekhuizen 2012). Hence, this study focuses mainly on the University of Technology and the targeted audience were mainly the honours and the masters' graduates.

While the reviewed literature places emphasis generally on youth and graduate unemployment in South Africa and higher education institutions, this study specifically focuses on establishing a communication strategy that will be used as an enabling tool for increasing graduate employment potential.

### **1.3.3 Relationship of the chosen topic to the discipline of communication**

The factors that contribute to graduate unemployment in South Africa can be discerned through the effective dissemination of information, strategically through media. This topic contributes to strategic communication. According to Bellou (2014: 579), strategic communication refers to the synchronisation of words and deeds, and how they are likely to be perceived by selected audiences. This strategic thrust covers programmes and activities deliberately aimed at communicating and engaging with intended audiences.

This study is primarily concerned with the communication strategy and media interventions, sustainable and improved communication practices that would ensure that graduates

immediately find jobs that are relevant to their studies. Through the lens of strategic communication, it is possible to see that media shapes the audience's social behaviour, ideas and communication behaviour (Ndiayea & Ndiayea 2014:72; Ngai, Tao & Moon 2015:33). In this study, message efficiency, knowledge sharing and learning networks are deemed crucial for recognizing unemployment factors through media. The study makes the apt contribution of leveraging strategic communication as for increasing the potential of employment.

#### **1.4 Formulation of the research problem**

The section below gives a description of the research problem, problem statement and the formulation of sub-problems or research questions. The problem statement comprises of the research questions (Van der Merwe 1996:289). The research questions determine whether the research problem is addressed or not.

##### **1.4.1 Research problem**

A research problem refers to a difficulty a researcher observes or experiences in the context of either a theoretical or practical situation, for which obtaining a solution drives inquiry (Kothari 2004:24). In a practical situation, the concept of unemployment is well known and prevalent amongst graduates of various higher education institutions. The study done by the Cape Higher Education Consortium (CHEC) confirms that: "most higher education graduates do end up in employment, often after a long period of job searching and many take jobs where they are under-employed in terms of qualifications. This under-employment in low-work is also an international consequence of leaving the job early (CHEC 2013:10). It is one of the reasons that employees change jobs often within the short period of time. The CHEC study was conducted in the four Western Cape universities, namely Cape Peninsula University of Technology, University of Stellenbosch, University of Cape Town, and University of Western Cape.

The CHEC study made reference to the HSRC Student Retention and Graduate Destination study, which was done with the purpose of determining graduate destinations, and in

particular, whether or not they find employment (CHEC 2013:10). The HSRC study was conducted at seven selected public higher education institutions. The University of Technology under study was also included in the study, hence the researcher aims to further explore the developments around this institution. The study established that the demographic constraints are, amongst others, the reasons for graduates not being able to find employment, as they are affecting graduates from poor and rural regions. Allied to this is the inequality of resources between institutions and the poor quality of tuition in certain institutions, which incur high failure rates (CHEC 2013:10).

The researcher's view is that some of the unemployed graduates find themselves continuing or furthering their graduate education (for example, honours, masters and doctoral studies) not because they planned to do so, but because they are struggling to find suitable employment. Furthering their studies beyond undergraduate qualifications somehow keeps them busy while they are in search of suitable employment.

Graduate unemployment is also a global issue. The study conducted in China by Xing, Yanga and Li (2017:1) about unemployment of young college graduates states that unemployment of the educated labour force often results in a waste of human capital and leads to serious economic and social problems, and thus has attracted much attention of policy makers and researchers. The same applies to this study: graduate unemployment, especially of the University of Technology cohort, has attracted the researcher to pay attention to the communication strategy that could increase graduate employment potential.

In his article, Van Broekhuizen (2016:3) confirmed that graduates who attended historically disadvantaged institutions (HDI) have significantly poorer labour market prospects than graduates from historically advantaged institutions (HAI). Given the findings of studies conducted as exemplified above, the researcher is of the opinion that there is a need for the media to strategically place strong emphasis on the dissemination of information about skills that are required in the labour market in order to ensure that, after completing their studies, all graduates immediately find suitable employment. The researcher argues that the consequences of not addressing this problem is that the country will continue having unemployed graduates, because their qualifications may be irrelevant to the labour market. Affected individuals end up being discouraged and, in retrospect, do not see the value of

studying and become depressed. They could end up becoming involved in establishing dangerous and unacceptable means of income, such as selling drugs, stealing, human trafficking, etc.

#### **1.4.2 Problem statement**

The problem identified by this research is post-graduation unemployment. Based on figure 3.1 (fully illustrated on page 40 below), between January 2008 and January 2017 the unemployment rate for those with tertiary qualifications has increased from 5% to 7.3%. A relevant question to ask is “what is the future of the current professions”. Although the % seems small, the researcher believes that it is unacceptable, taking into account that the total number of the unemployed after attaining a tertiary qualification is far lower than those without a tertiary qualification.

Within the context of this study, an integrated communication strategy is required as an enabling tool for increasing graduate employment potential. Media is regarded as the strategic role-player whereby different media are integrated and used in the dissemination of information about the future of the professions, skills required in the job market, and at the same time, the creation of awareness about the consequences of studying or following careers that are either less demanding or irrelevant.

For example, graduates may remain jobless for a very long time, relent and seek out any form of employment, end up employed for something else other than what they are being trained for, and decide to further their studies due to lack of employment. These are stark possibilities. Some of the students may decide to study further, not because they planned to do so, but due to their failure to find appropriate employment. For example, a psychology graduate might themselves employed as a call centre agent.

#### **1.4.3 Formulation of sub-problems**

The sub-problems for this study are informed by the research questions below:

- Which unemployment factors are recognised by the graduate students?

- How can media address graduate unemployment challenges?
- What are types of media are used to disseminate information about factors contributing to graduate unemployment?
- Which unemployment factors can confirm if unemployment is a challenge facing students who are currently studying at the University of Technology?
- How could media for disseminating information about unemployment factors be confirmed?
- How best can a communication strategy be established for increasing graduate employment potential?

## **1.5 Research aim and objectives**

### **1.5.1 Research aim**

The aim of this study is to establish a communication strategy that will be used as an enabling tool for increasing graduate employment potential. This study is based on applied research. According to Brown and Hale (2014:25), the purpose of applied research is to understand and help to solve practical problems. In this study, graduate unemployment is regarded as one of the practical problems facing graduate students of a University of Technology. Such graduates will be accessed in order to identify factors contributing to their unemployment with a purpose of establishing a communication strategy. It is expected that such a communication strategy would increase the employment potential of graduates.

### **1.5.2 Research objectives**

The research objectives for this study are as follows:

- Identify factors contributing to graduate unemployment;
- The role of media in addressing unemployment challenges;
- Identify types of media that are used to disseminate information about factors contributing to graduate unemployment;

- Confirm if unemployment is a challenge faced by the graduates at the university of technology;
- Confirm the media that is relevant for disseminating information about unemployment factors;
- Establish a communication strategy for increasing graduate employment potential.

## **1.6 Anticipated findings**

### **1.6.1 Anticipation of findings**

It is anticipated that the meaningful dissemination of information with a view to achieving greater performance in isolating unemployment factors, and addressing graduate unemployment, could be made possible if a suitable communication strategy is established. Media is anticipated to spread the messages about factors contributing to unemployment, until the results are visible. It is anticipated that media can also be used to monitor the effectiveness of various stakeholders in disseminating information about unemployment factors. It is also anticipated that the qualitative views of the participants will be beneficial in establishing the proposed communication strategy. This is important as the participants were given the opportunity to express their thoughts about the establishment of the communication strategy.

### **1.6.2 Anticipated contribution of the study to the discipline of communication**

While communication strategies focus on directing the mission and the vision of the organisation, they do not clearly articulate the nature of the problem that the communication strategy is targeting. For example, “graduate unemployment” is one of many well-known and persistent problems. While graduate unemployment affects society and the economy of this country, communication is seen as a powerful tool to create awareness and disseminate information about factors contributing to unemployment. The communication strategy proposed in this study contributes to the discipline of communication by effecting

the change that would increase the employment potential of University of Technology graduates.

## 1.7 Definition of terms

The terminology that forms the basis for this study is as follows:

- Communication - the process whereby people express their ideas and feelings in a way that is understandable to each of them (Hamilton 2008:5).
- Communication strategy - the integration of technology with communication skills in order to communicate with people who have diverse backgrounds, and a wide range of goals and expectations (O'Hair & Friedrich 1992:26).
- Media – the tools that are used in sharing knowledge and aimed at reaching a consensus for action that takes into account the interests, needs and capacities of all concerned (Servaes 2008:15). Media refers to channels of transmitting messages in various formats. Visual, audio, social and print media are the core media under scrutiny and call for integration in this study.
- Unemployment - the Independent Labour Organisation (ILO) defines unemployment according to the guidelines which state that a person is unemployed if the person is (a) not working, (b) currently available for work and (c) seeking work (Byrne & Strobl 2001:1). This definition reflects the characteristics of graduate as they are expected to find work after studying. According to Babbie (2008:145) unemployed people would be those) members of the labour force who are not employed.
- Graduate - individuals with bachelor's degrees or equivalent, and higher educational qualifications, such as honours, master's, and doctorates (Van der Berg & Van Broekhuizen 2012:2). This definition fits well within this study, because it refers to those students having already completed their first qualification. According to Statistics South Africa (2017:15), graduate includes post-higher diploma, bachelor's degree, post-graduate diploma, honours degree and higher degree. This study researched honours and masters students who are studying further.



- Graduate unemployment - based on the above two definitions, a basic definition of graduate unemployment is simply the unemployment of those who attained a post matric qualification.
- Public relations - is a distinctive management function which helps establish and maintain mutual lines of communication, understanding, acceptance and cooperation between an organisation and its publics (Seitel 2007:4). It is a management function that evaluates the public attitudes.

## **1.8 Structure of the thesis**

The structure of this thesis is presented as follows:

Chapter 1 (Introduction and background to the study) - provides an introduction. This is followed by the relevance of the topic, the research problem, the research objectives, anticipated findings, definition of terms, and structure of the thesis.

Chapter 2 (Theoretical framework) - this study is theorized on the basis of three concepts, namely strategic communication, unemployment and media. Strategic communication is supported by the constitutive model of communication, systems theory and the situational theory of publics. Unemployment is defined according to unemployment approaches and the Maslow Hierarchy of needs theory. 'Media' is elucidated through the prism of communication theories and media richness theory.

Chapter 3 (Identification of factors contributing to graduate unemployment) - graduate unemployment is discussed and the unemployment factors affecting graduates are identified. The study also discusses the general South African context of unemployment. Furthermore, the study is conducted in a higher education institution in South Africa. This chapter also provides a broader context with regard to the role of the workplace in addressing unemployment issues.

Chapter 4 (Communication strategy and the role of media) - in this chapter, media is defined. This chapter provides a conceptual background to the definition of communication strategy. Various communication strategies are discussed. This chapter clarifies the role of

media within the South African context. There is a related discussion of types of media that are used to disseminate information about unemployment factors.

Chapter 5 (Research methodology and design) - the methodology for this study includes research design. Mixed research methodologies will be discussed along with data collection methods and the procedure for data collection.

Chapter 6 (Data analysis and interpretation) - research findings led to data analysis and interpretation. The findings link back to the reviewed literature, the research objectives and the theories relevant to the study. Data sets are analysed and interpreted through frequency tables and descriptive statistics.

Chapter 7 (Discussion of results) - the results of the study are discussed, incorporating the conclusion of results, literature integration, theoretical integration, and an original intellectual contribution by the researcher.

Chapter 8 (Communication strategy) - the communication strategy that is proposed in this study is presented. The research findings (from the 6<sup>th</sup> objective of the study) are used to guide the communication strategy. What is highlighted here is the relationship between the education system, communication, government and workplace: each is a function of an integrated strategy. The research objectives are confirmed as elements of the strategy.

Chapter 9 (Conclusion, conclusion, and recommendations) - this chapter provides a conclusion and conclusions of the study based on the research objectives. The limitations of the study are also presented. Recommendations for further research are also discussed here.

## CHAPTER TWO – THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1 Introduction

Kothari (2004:24) sees a theory as an instrument for understanding the source of a problem. Since the objective of this study is to establish an integrated communication strategy as an enabling tool for increasing graduate potential, it is contextualized around public relations, integrated communication, media and unemployment. Relevant theories and approaches in this regard are discussed in a fashion depicted by the table below.

Concepts	Public relations	Integrated communication	Media	Unemployment
Approaches / models	Two-way communication model	Constitutive model of communication	Mass communication approaches	Unemployment approaches
Theories	Situational theory of publics	Systems theory	Media richness theory	Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory

### 2.2 Public relations

#### 2.2.1 Two-way communication model

##### 2.2.1.1 Overview of the two-way communication model

Two-way communication represents an interactive communication process concerned with establishing a balanced dialogue between the organisation and strategic stakeholders in order to stimulate transparency and sincerity (Lubbe 1994:9). Niemann (2005:4) lays emphasis on the two way communication which put emphasis on the movement towards

strategic integrated communication in order to build relationships between these areas and their stakeholders. The two-way communication model consist of a two-way asymmetry and symmetry. While the two-way asymmetry allows an organisation to put out its information and to receive feedback from its publics about that information, the two-way symmetry advocates free and equal information flow between organisation and its publics based on mutual understanding. It is also important for sharing meaning between the organisation and strategic stakeholders.

### **2.2.1.2 Relevance of the two-way communication model to the communication strategy**

This model is relevant to communication strategy because it highlights that all parties in communication have the opportunity to express themselves. Feedback is very crucial to reach mutual agreement. Communication strategy makes communication relevant in the strategic management process through its focus on communication with strategic stakeholders, aligning communication goals to organisational goals (Niemann 2005:59).

### **2.2.1.3 Criticisms of the two-way communication model**

Critically, the two-way communication model lacks strength in presenting the outcome or the results of communication. However, the researcher sees such lack of strength being compensated through the constitutive model of communication. In communication there is a need for evaluation. In evaluation, a follow-up is conducted in order to confirm not just the messages communicated between the sender and the receiver but also the end results of the communication. In some cases, this end-result is neglected because the end-result may not be realized immediately: it can even take years. For example, it can take years for one to find employment after graduation or obtaining qualifications.

## **2.2.2 Situation theory of the publics**

Kruger-Ross and Waters (2013:176) maintain that the situational theory of publics is devised for strategic communication situations. The situational theory is built more from an explanation of why people communicate than they are mostly likely to communicate (Grunig

2015:778). It uses the concepts of active and passive communication behaviour to segment the general population into publics likely to communicate about one or more problems that are related to the consequences of organisational behaviours.

### 2.2.2.1 Overview of the situation theory of the publics

According to Kruger-Ross & Waters (2013:176), the situational theory of publics states that an individual's ability to recognize the value of a situation and the desire and ability to remove obstacles in that situation will lead to greater involvement in that situation. The four main dimensions proposed by the situational theory of publics include awareness of an issue, involvement in the issue, constraint recognition and removal, and information seeking (Kruger-Ross & Waters 2013:178). Within the context of this study, these dimensions are explained as follows:

- Awareness of an issue—awareness is already created about the graduate unemployment and several study are already done.
- Involvement in the issue—this study has attempted involving graduate students to provide inputs for the establishment of a communication strategy that has the potential to address graduate unemployment as the main issue.
- Constraint recognition and removal—constraints that are related to graduate unemployment that are also identified. Consider, for example, the socio economic and demographic characteristics that are seen as constraints affecting graduates.
- Information seeking—this study maintains that graduates and the publics need to seek information in order to address the matter.

The theory is situational because problems come and go and are relevant only to specific people who experience a specific problematic situation. Publics often want consequences from organizational decisions that organizations might be reluctant to provide—such as lower prices, stable employment, or less pollution (Grunig 2015:778). The situational theory is similar to theories of market segmentation because it provides a method for segmenting the general population into groups that are relevant to public relations practitioners (Grunig

2015:778). Situational theory also helps to explain the nature of public opinion (Grunig 2015:779).

Individuals can be classified into different groupings based on their level of awareness about a particular topic and the extent to which they do something about the topic, whether that be inaction, seeking additional information, or removing obstacles preventing them from becoming more involved (Kruger-Ross & Waters 2013:77). The communication strategy within the context of addressing graduate unemployment is regarded as constitutive of a public opinion. The theory states—and research has confirmed—that high problem recognition and low constraint recognition increase both active information seeking and passive information processing (Grunig 2015:779). Level of involvement increases information seeking, but it has less effect on information processing.

Because people participate more actively in information seeking than in information processing, information seeking and the independent variables that precede it produce communication effects more often than information processing (Grunig 2015:779). In particular, people communicating actively develop more organized cognitions, are more likely to have attitudes about a situation, more often engage in a behaviour to do something about the situation and are more likely to develop a relationship with an organization (Grunig 2015:779).

#### **2.2.2.2 Relevance of situation theory to communication strategy**

Situation theory is the theory aimed at addressing public problems. In South Africa, unemployment is regarded as a public problem, hence this study sees graduate unemployment as a public problem. The fact that (as shown in figures in chapter 3) the level of graduate unemployment is lesser than those people with matric does not assume that the graduates are better. Since unemployment indicates the health of the economy of the country, even those that are not employed should be concerned about the economy as a whole.

### 2.2.2.3 Criticisms of situation theory

According to Grunig (2015:779), within the context of situational theory, people seldom seek information about situations that do not involve them, yet they will randomly process information about low-involvement situations, especially if they also recognize the situation as problematic. This theory is criticized for putting emphasis on the less involvement of people in specific situations, especially the situations that do not affect them. For example, graduate unemployment should not affect and interest the graduates more than other beings. Consequently, those that are not affected should not be less interested. For the sake of the country's economic stability, an issue such as "graduate unemployment" should affect everyone regardless of employment or economic status.

## 2.3 Integrated communication

Grunig (1992:6) sees the purpose of public relations as the dissemination of information. Integrated communication appears to have emerged in the public relations/corporate communication literature (Niemann 2005:88). Communication strategy, as it is proposed in this study, puts emphasis on strategic communication and is viewed from the context of public relations models. This study shows how the constitutive model of communication complements the two-way communication model to the, backed by systems theory and the situation theory of publics. Strategic communication is an effort to connect the organisation's vision, mission and business goals to the forces and opportunities that exist in the market place and that give purpose to the work that people perform (Duffy & Chance 2007:4; Falkheimer, et.al. 2017:92; Torp 2014:44). It is also a unifying framework for coordinating communication functions and their plans, strategies, and tactics to achieve organizational goals (Molleda & Kochhar 2015:561).

### 2.3.1 The constitutive model of communication

Before delving into the constitutive model of communication, the researcher first looked at other models so that the reader understands why the constitutive model is used as a framework of this study. Whilst communication is defined by different authors and scholars

from various perspectives such as models, theories and approaches, it is noteworthy that such perspectives are historical, emergent and changing with times.

### **2.3.1.1 Overview of constitutive model of communication**

It is apparent that most of the communication models put emphasis on the message being sent by the sender to the receiver, hence they lacked the vision. Propounding a mathematical model of communication, Shannon and Weaver (1968) perceive communication as analogous to a telephone system with

- (1) An information source that created a message to be communicated to the receiver;
- (2) a transmitter that encoded the message into a signal that is transmitted over a channel;
- (3) the channel, or the medium that carried the signal from transmitter to receiver and that may be degraded by noise;
- (4) the receiver that decoded the message from the signal; and
- (5) the destination, which is the person for whom the message is intended.

This model is criticized for misrepresenting communication because it portrays a one way process in which information flows in a linear sequence from the sender to the receiver (Wood 1997:47). It did not allow interaction of those that are involved in the communication process and it cannot fully grasp the complex process of human communication (Fenech 2013:10).

Schramm's interactive model was introduced in order to address the weaknesses of Shannon and Weaver's (1968) mathematical communication model. It highlighted that useful information must allow for differences among the communicators and for changes that relates to changing times (Schramm, 1964: 177). Although Schramm drew on the work of Osgood to highlight the circularity of communication and introduce the process of encoding and decoding, the central issues of communication had the effect on the receiver (Oyieke 2008:24). The researcher argues that whereas the message was intended for the receiver, the interaction between the received and the sender was the focus; however, there has been no attempt to ascertain the change that is intended by the message because the message could have been sent to the receiver but intended elsewhere.



An interesting development is the emergence of Niemann's conceptual model of integrated communication. It is based on a two-way communication model that recognizes that the organisation must learn from its environment and stakeholders in order to build and nourish profitable relationships with the organisational brand. The model is based on the strategic intent of the organisation and learning organisational principles that continuously reposition the organisation (Niemann 2005:245). In the case of this model, the intention of the use of the systems theory is that the phenomenon of integrated communication implementation is viewed holistically as a set of interacting forces between the organisation, the stakeholders and the changing environment, and in the three dimensional, systems-based graphical depiction of the model (Niemann 2005:272). The model proposes imperative areas of integration as organisational stakeholder and environmental integration (Niemann 2005:245). It is important for these imperative areas to allow the flow of communication.

The constitutive model of communication focuses on the importance of communication to bringing about actual change and action (Holtzhausen & Zerfass 2015:7). According to Cooren (2012:5), the constitutive model of communication recognizes the effects by which people in interaction manage to act and speak for or in the name of specific beings to which they feel (consciously or unconsciously) attached, whether these beings be principles, values, beliefs, attitudes, ideas, ideologies, interests, and organizations.

It represents a dialogical-dialectical disciplinary matrix which focuses on how meanings are shaped through the communication process (Holtzhausen & Zerfass 2015:7). This is seen by the researcher as a strategic role. It conceptualizes communication as a constitutive process that produces and reproduces shared meaning (Craig 1999: 125).

It can be argued that the constitutive model of communication relevant to communication strategy and media includes all forms of internet and electronic communication. The constitutive model is presented as a practical response to contemporary social problems, such as those arising from the erosion of the cultural foundations of traditional ideas and institutions, increasing cultural diversity and interdependence, and widespread demands for democratic participation in the construction of social reality (Craig 1999:126). From the perspective of constitutive model of communication, the role of the communicator is to send information that can act as the point of departure for meaning creation between a

communicative entity and its stakeholders with a potential to lead to social change and social action.

It is important for communication practitioners to be aware of how media are and can be used to shape social and cultural realities (Holtzhausen & Zerfass 2015:8). A strategic communication programme must present a fair and balanced assessment of the challenges of transformational change and the design communications that describe those challenges in a positive and accurate way (Duffy & Chance 2007:15). Communication strategy is evitable for change, growth, motivation, and development. This position is in line with Nair and White (1993:89), who state that through human communication, communication strategy prioritizes the transformation of the nation as a whole.

### **2.3.1.2 Relevance of constitutive model of communication to the communication strategy**

The communication strategy that is proposed in this study is backed by the confirmed media programmes that are aimed at implementing it. For instance, Holtzhausen and Zerfass (2015:7) ascertain that strategic communication as a tool for implementing communication strategy focuses on the process of communication which might take place over long periods of time and stretch over time after the message has been transmitted through a particular media platform. In this study a media platform simply means a “programme” that could be used to drive a communication strategy. Different media may have more than one programmes for driving a communication strategy.

In relation to the models mentioned above, the constitutive model of communication is seen as more relevant to this study because other models solely focus on sending the message to the sender as well as looking at the interaction between the communicators (the stakeholders). Communication strategy provides the strategic approach required by organisations to identify issues and stakeholders proactively, and to manage communication with strategic stakeholders through strategic organisational communication (Niemann 2005:60).

It is noteworthy that Craig (1999:126) takes the constitutive model to be a meta-model that opens up a conceptual space in which many different theoretical models of communication can interact. This means that the example of the models described above can interact in order to give rise to a shared meaning and contribute to the implementation of the strategy in many contexts.

### **2.3.1.3 Criticisms of the constitutive model of communication**

The constitutive model of communication is criticized for not emphasis on addressing specific problems. While this study is aimed at establishing a communication strategy for communicating messages about graduate unemployment as a key problem facing the graduates of a University of Technology, the constitutive model is seen as a meta-model because it lacks the emphasis in terms of contributing to the theoretical aspect of communication. In this study, this gap is addressed by bringing the context of contributing to the implementation of communication strategy.

### **2.3.2 Systems theory**

Within the context of media communication, a system includes information from the external environment. While the external environment may include laws and regulations, processes that include policies, programs, methodologies, etc., outputs result from the outcome of the processes and feedback is provided by the external stakeholders as they value and evaluate the quality of those outputs. People within the media communication system include graduates (Duffy and Chance 2007:96).

#### **2.3.2.1 Overview of systems theory**

Duffy and Chance (2007:24) confirm that understanding organisations as a system assumes that:

- The whole has one or more defining properties or functions;

- Each part in the system can affect the behaviour or properties of the whole;
- There are subsets of the system parts that are essential for carrying out the main purpose of the whole but they cannot by themselves fulfil the main purpose of the system;
- There are also subsets of parts that are not part of the core work process but are needed to support the core work process;
- Because the system interacts with its core external environment, it is said to be an open system;
- The way in which an essential part of a system affects the whole system depends on its interaction with at least one of the other essential part;
- The effect that a particular subset of essential parts has on the whole system depends on the behaviour of at least one another subset of its parts;
- A system is the whole entity that cannot be divided into individual parts without loss of its essential properties or functions;

According to Mersham and Skinner (2001:29) Systems theory regards society as an integral whole, whose components work together. From the systems innovation point of view, most of the technologies that will transform the professions will be innovative technologies, systems that will make practical expertise available in ways that generally would have not been possible without it (Susskind & Susskind 2015:112). In this study, the researcher maintains that various media have to be integrated holistically and work together in order to disseminate information to the target audience in various formats. To reach this goal, the system must maintain dynamic equilibrium or balance.

### **2.3.2.2 Relevance of systems theory to communication strategy**

This theory is relevant to the communication strategy and media in such a way that communication is regarded as an integrating factor, which regulates and organizes subsystems and the primary function of the system and its subsystems are to maintain themselves (Mersham & Skinner 2001:29). Strategic communication is seen as being strengthened by the systems theory. This is endorsed by Duffy and Chance (2007:5) as

they highlight that strategic communication requires to be implemented as a system rather than a collection of fragmented communication programs.

In the context of the systems theory, human beings will always have value to add as collaborators with machines. However, as machines become more capable it is not at all clear why professionals will be able to secure their place indefinitely. With the technologies in place, the quantity, complexity and changeability of source materials becomes less of a challenges for lay people because systems will far more accurately pinpoint relevant materials for them (Susskind & Susskind 2015:152). Capable systems will come to solve problems and offer advice rather than just retrieve and present potentially relevant documents.

Since the whole social system is made of integrated parts, it is the role of communication to cohere all the parts. According to Angelopulo (1989; 1990), through a communication system the complex system may be analysed and a framework to look at a broader theory may be offered. The pace of change for human created technology is accelerating and its powers are expanding at an exponential pace (Susskind & Susskind 2015:157).

Communication is therefore seen by the researcher as a system for addressing such complexity within a theoretical framework. Some tasks that today require human expertise such as communication are complex and yet can still be routinized. When the knowledge is required for a given professional service in an intimate familiarity with a large, complex web on interrelated rules, then the systems are often better placed than human experts to meet the needs (Susskind & Susskind 2015:279).

### **2.3.2.3 Criticisms of the systems theory**

Critically, in a system, negative changes are introduced that endanger the system's survival and feedback (communication), which becomes the means used to restore equilibrium between humans and the technology (Mersham & Skinner 2001:30). Although innovations provide new and different forms of service, they do not replace existing people or working practices, instead they provide access to practical expertise where it was affordable or possible to offer help in the past (Susskind & Susskind 2015:113).

Fundamental to a systems theory perspective on new media technology is the notion of complexity and feedback (Mersham & Skinner 2001:30). The systems will anticipate people's needs and offer guidance and forewarning even before we know that a problem or opportunity has risen (Susskind & Susskind 2015:152). The focus of the systems theory is not what media do to people, but what people do with media (Mersham & Skinner 2001:30).

## **2.4 Media theories**

Considering that unemployment is a problem facing the majority of the population in this country, media has the potential to reach the majority of the population. Media theories in this study are discussed within the context of mass communication because media in most cases is aimed at addressing the majority of the population, or disseminating the messages or information to the majority of the population.

### **2.4.1 Media richness theory**

Media richness refers to a channel's relative ability to convey messages that communicate rich information, and therefore explains how and why people choose a particular medium to communicate with others (Sewestianiuk & Voitovici 2013:8). Media richness theory asserts that different channels have different capacity to convey different kind of information and different amount of information (Fenech 2013:33).

#### **2.4.1.1 Overview of the media richness theory**

Media richness theory offers a set of objective characteristics that determine each medium's capacity to carry rich information, with rich information being more capable than lean information of reducing equivocality in a message received. According to the theory, a rich medium is one that allows direct feedback and multiple communication cues as non-verbal expressions, language variety and permission for the messages to be fitted to their receivers (Sewestianiuk & Voitovici 2013:8). The richer media are relevant for more

ambiguous information and less richer media for very explicit content (Sewestianiuk & Voitovici 2013:8).

#### **2.4.1.2 The relevance of media richness theory to the communication strategy**

For communication to achieve its purpose, meaning must be shared between the communicators. This is a strategy way of confirming the certainty in ensuring the effectiveness of communication, the absence of confusion and the richness of media. Rich media are those with the highest capability to encourage shared meaning between communicators and they include the availability of instant feedback, the possibility to transmit multiple cues and a personal focus of the medium (Sewestianiuk & Voitovici 2013:44). The theory differentiates between rich and lean media. Communication that uses rich media will clear up ambiguous issues and change the perspective of the recipient in a shorter time frame than lean, less rich, media (Fenech 2013:33).

#### **2.4.1.3 Criticisms to the media richness theory**

The theory is critiqued for its emphasis and focus on face to face communication as a medium of communication. The theory stresses the individual degree of involvement in the communication process by including personal details such as facial expressions, posture or other non-verbal cues which can also be displayed through television. Television can also be integrated with video in order to present facial expressions, posture and non-verbal cues. Due to interpretations from different viewers, non-verbal cues may change the nature of the messages or presentation.

#### **2.4.2 Theories of mass communication**

Mass communication is relevant to different aspects and topics, such as advertising, broadcasting and telecommunications, economics and media industries, film and cinema, journalism, media effects, media ethics, media policy and regulation, popular culture, public relation (Rubin, Rubin & Piele 2005:8).

#### 2.4.2.1 Overview of the theories of mass communication

Theories of mass communication are seen as suitable for analysis in this study, in the dissemination of information about the unemployment factors affecting graduates, because “unemployment” is a problem that affect the majority of the population. Through mass communication, homogenous messages are sent to a large heterogeneous groups, or scattered and diversified audience through a medium (Chikandiwa 2013:12).

Mass media are significant in shaping public perceptions of issues through the choice of information disseminated and interpretation of the information as well as the choice of the media that is used to communicate information or messages. Mass communication is the result of connecting people using mass media technology to relay informative, entertaining and persuasive information to a large population all at once.

Technology increases human ability. Humans who uses technology are said to be “connected”. They are able not just to communicate, but also to research, socialize, share, build communities, cooperate, crowdsource, compete and trade. They are able to communicate with one another in many ways and on a larger scale (Susskind & Susskind 2015:176).

Mass communication exerts significant influence on people’s behaviour. Mass communication is made possible through mass media. Mass media are intermediaries that provide and select information as well as send a message about human actions (Ndiayea & Ndiayea 2014:74). Any subject of interest could be negatively or positively affected by how it is portrayed in media. Mass media exert a great deal of impact on social life and people’s perception of reality (Ndiayea & Ndiayea 2014:72). Since this study focuses on the media that address the majority of the population, the theories of mass communication are key. In this study agenda setting theory, media dependency theory and the ‘Uses and Gratifications Theory’ are all used to express the importance of the topic under study.

**Agenda Setting Theory** - Agenda Setting Theory (AST) explains how individuals come to regard certain events (DeFleur & Dennis 1998:272). Some situations that the individuals encounter through news reports in the media are more important than others (DeFleur &



Dennis 1998:272). Critically, this theory focuses on the individual aspect of the situation. If the individuals are unemployed the impact on the country's economy will not be visible. Even the individuals who are affected will not be noticed. The agenda should be set on the larger population (the mass) instead of the individuals. This will avoid a situation where by certain individuals benefit in a particular environment. For example, although the country's larger population is affected by poverty as a result of unemployment, certain individuals are extremely richer than the poorest in society.

The researcher regards employment and any form of income as aspects that affect not only individuals because too many people are unemployed (graduates and those that are not educated). This is a national problem because it affects the economy of the country. While DeFleur and Dennis (1998:272) viewed this theory from the individual perspective, Hanson (2005:383) regards this theory as the instrument that sets the public agenda. The researcher supports this stance, since it is generally known that a proliferation of unemployment leads to poverty, crime, death, etc. Unemployment is an issue that needs more concerted and consistent attention, especially by the government.

**Uses and Gratifications Theory** - Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) is a popular way of explaining and interpreting media usage in communication research (Lewis & Nichols 2015:547). It explains that people seek out and attend to content consisted with their interests, which provides gratifications and fulfil their needs (DeFleur & Dennis 1998: 274). According to Hanson (2005:256), this theory seeks to determine what uses people make of media, and what gratification or benefit they gain from it. This theory posits that individuals actively seek out information that will enhance their knowledge or provide companionship or will allow for relaxation, diversion or escape from reality (Lewis & Nichols 2015:547).

**Media Information Dependency Theory** - Media Information Dependency Theory (MIDT) occurs when certain kinds of media content are used heavily (DeFleur & Dennis 1998: 3; Mersham & Skinner 2001:225). People do not depend on any given forms of media equally. An individual who relies heavily on the media may have a different perception of a particular subject or situation as compared to other people. It is for this reason that the researcher perceives a user who is concerted in search of employment to depend on all possible manner of media content related to employment.

The MIDT states that if an individual became dependent on mass media to fulfil his or her certain needs and goals, the mass media would become more important to that individual. This theory stresses that mass media audiences depended on mass media to satisfy their daily information and socialisation needs. In its relevance to the communication strategy, according to the MIDT, information transmitted by news media affects individual knowledge more extensively when less information is available from alternative sources (e.g. personal experience, interpersonal communication). In this regard, it is important to realize that unemployment is a complicated problem, in such a way that it affects the nations, the individuals, and the country (Garz 2013:157).

#### **2.4.2.2 The relevance of the theories of mass communication to the communication strategy**

Interaction with the majority of the population is somehow not easy because people have different views and they need the opportunity to express their views. When interacting with the majority of the population, communication is key and needs to be planned carefully; hence it may not be possible to address specific individual issues. For example, when communicating about graduate unemployment it is obvious that unemployed graduates will be more interested in the news or information that pertains to employment issues at their personal level rather than at the majority of the population or general level. Graduate unemployment needs a specific communication strategy since it is an issue that affects an individual's personal space, thinking, ability, economic freedom, etc.

#### **2.4.2.3 Criticisms of the theories of mass communication**

Theories of mass communication are likely to be relevant in a one size fits all context, however, people's differing thoughts have to be considered. For example, the uses and gratifications theory is criticized for claiming that media has a little influence on people due to their autonomy of thought (Pitout 2009:397). The thoughts of the majority of the population are likely to be dependent on each other. The choice of the media relevant to one individual cannot be applicable to others.

## 2.5 Unemployment

Unemployment is here discussed from the perspective of Maslow's hierarchy of needs and the unemployment approaches identified by O'Brien. From the psychological point of view, in his book *Psychology of work and unemployment*, O'Brien (1986:240) identifies four approaches to unemployment, which, according to the researcher, elaborate the difficulty of strictly conforming to the theory of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. These approaches include unemployment as a stressor, expectancy valence theory, Jahoda functional theory, and Bakke's theory of tasks, income and personal control.

### 2.5.1 Unemployment approaches

#### 2.5.1.1 Overview of the unemployment approaches

**Unemployment as a stressor** - Unemployment is viewed as a life stressor that may lead to physical and physiological illness (O'Brien 1986:240). This, according to the researcher, is linked to what Maslow's hierarchy is described as a physiological need, which places emphasis on the satisfaction of the physiological needs. When the human basic needs are not satisfied, it is likely that stress may increase. Generally, unemployed males tend to suffer more stress than unemployed females due to their natural role as providers and protectors.

**Expectancy valence theory** - This theory assumes that a person's actions are predictable from the perceived attractiveness (positive valence) or averseness (negative valence) of expected outcomes (O'Brien 1986:241). The researcher believes that some of the people who are described by this theory could be seen by presenting anger or very quietness.

Men and women behave differently in this situation. A man is generally expected to be a provider and protector for the family and when unemployed, most men resort to anger and aggression. If this goes unnoticed and untreated, such behaviour may lead to danger such

as suicide, homicide and physical abuse to oneself or others. Women's behaviour in this aspect is different, because they are able to talk and express their feelings to a greater socialized degree, and when they cannot provide, they are able to ask for help elsewhere.

**Jahoda functional theory** - It is generally expected that employment, or an income, enables one to fulfil his or her functions (O'Brien 1986:242). According to this theory, employment imposes a time structure, enlarges social experience to compliment close family attachment, unite the individual with the collective purposes, and provide identity and enjoin activity (O'Brien 1986:242).

The researcher maintains that it is very true that income may determine one's social practices in choosing and socializing with friends and family. Generally speaking, it is unlikely to find people with different social status mixing together, e.g., wealthy people mixing with the poor. In certain cultures and communities, a person is even described through his or her assets or properties. Those that do not have particular assets are excluded from a particular community or social group.

**Bakke's theory of tasks, income and personal control**—Bake's theory place emphasis the distress of the unemployed in terms of past work experiences, loss of income, and reduced personal control over life satisfaction (O'Brien 1986:243). The abilities of the unemployed are limited when it comes to performing certain tasks. Income and personal control involve decision-making; hence, it is difficult or impossible for the financially weak person to make certain decisions.

#### **2.5.1.2 Relevance of the unemployment approaches to the communication strategy**

In relation to unemployment approaches, the researcher sees the need for a communication strategy to deal with the management communication that has a potential to address stress related issues, personal control over life satisfaction and how one should function regardless of economic status. Communicating about issues related to unemployment is psychosocially regarded as part of healing.

### **2.5.1.3 Criticisms to the theory of the unemployment approaches**

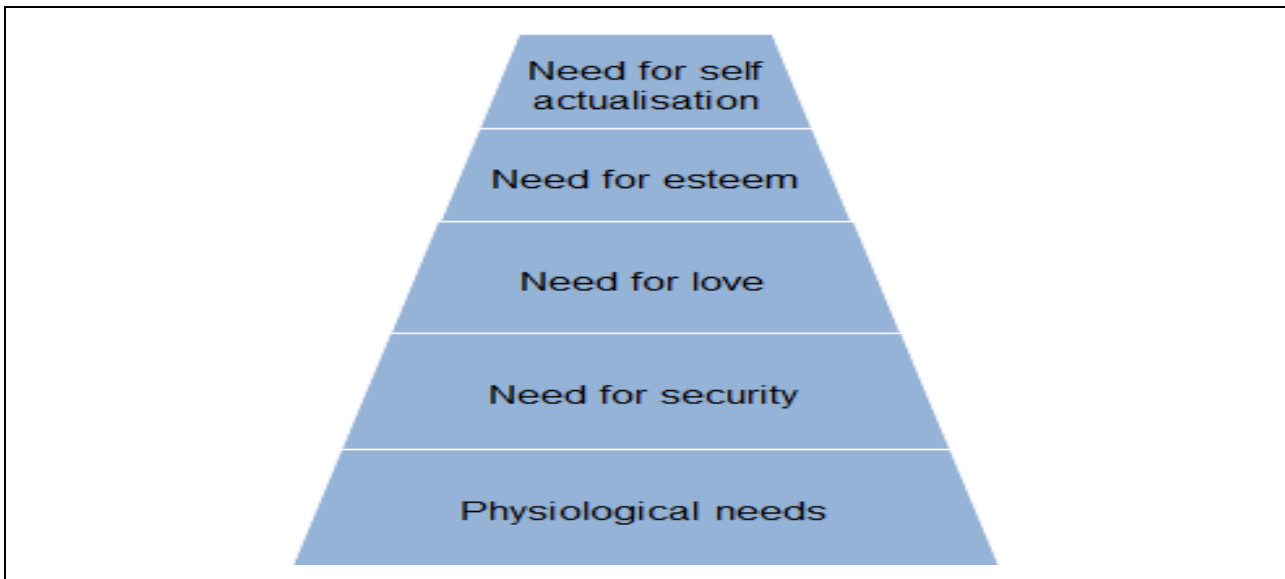
Unemployment approaches highlight that the unemployed individual is unable to function accordingly, loses personal control over tasks and action, and is likely to be stressed. It is criticized here for individualizing the unemployment aspect. It is true and obvious that unemployment affects those that are unemployed, but it is also prudent to consider the implications to the larger society, the whole community and the whole country.

## **2.5.2 Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory**

### **2.5.2.1 Overview of the Maslow hierarchy of needs**

In this study, Maslow's hierarchy of needs is utilized as the underlying approach for addressing unemployment, while systems theory is discussed as the underlying approach for the mass communication theories and the integration of media. The physiological needs, as explained through the Maslow's hierarchy of needs, are linked to factors of unemployment, because the researcher is of the opinion that without the satisfaction of the physiological needs, it is pointless to satisfy other needs.

It is therefore stressed that unemployment is the main enemy to physiological needs, and ultimately, to the whole identity of the human being. Unemployed individuals are likely to express depression and stress. These are a result of losing self-confidence and self-esteem. Unemployment can make it difficult for one to meet needs such as they are defined according to the Maslow hierarchy of needs approach. This approach states that one has to satisfy the physiological needs, security needs, need for esteem and appreciation, need for self-actualisation and growth needs.

**Figure 2-2 Maslow hierarchy of needs**

(Source: Jordaan & Jordaan 1984:652)

For the purpose of this study, one must satisfy physiological needs before other needs are given due attention. From the above figure, the physiological needs are perceived to be the greatest. It is through employment that one is able to put food on the table and satisfy these basic needs.

### **2.5.2.2 Relevance to the communication strategy**

In terms of its relevance to the communication strategy, the hierarchy of needs has impact on how a communication strategy responds to such baseline needs through solving the unemployment problem. This theory is relevant to this study since the theory is applicable to communication strategy and the emphasis on motivating employment seekers (graduates) on using media effectively for searching employment. The hierarchy of needs theory can be also be used to determine the extent to which graduates can become self-actualized.

Communicators and graduates can readily determine which media is best suitable to address the unemployment gaps and employment needs. The policies developed by government and media industry should regard graduates' physiological and security needs

as a priority. When such needs are prioritized the economy of the county will improve positively.

### **2.5.2.3 Criticisms of the Maslow hierarchy of needs theory**

In a manner similar to unemployment approaches, the Maslow hierarchy of needs put emphasis on the individual. Yet it also demands to be understood at the organisational level of both the potential employer and the University of Technology that produces the graduates. Its emphasis at the organisational level is offered by Jerome (2013:39) as he presents the organisational culture context of the Maslow hierarchy of needs.

The Maslow hierarchy of needs theory does not recognize or put emphasis as to what happens to others if one individual in the organisation, society, community, etc. is needy. This means that the need has to be communicated, so that others will act. Where the need is not communicated, no one will act simply because they are not aware. This is evidenced by the interventions of the organisations such as the “Gift of the Givers”, “Red Cross”, etc., for they act as they receive information about human needs in specific situations.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

This chapter has introduced theories that are related to this study through a confluence of the concepts of unemployment, media, and communication strategy. In particular, the systems theory was discussed as the underlying theoretical framework for this study. Allied to this, unemployment approaches and the mass communication theories were also discussed. The next chapter is a discussion of the research methodology. It involves a description of the type of the research that is conducted and the associated methodology that underpins the study.

## **CHAPTER THREE – IDENTIFICATION OF FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO GRADUATE UNEMPLOYMENT**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents a discussion of the first objective of the study, namely, the identification of factors that contribute to graduate unemployment. It also addresses the research question: What are the factors contributing to graduate unemployment? In this study, unemployment factors refer to those aspects that cause or lead to unemployment. The definition of unemployment is described by way of contrast with employment. Unemployment will firstly be described from a general perspective, then followed by specifics related to the phenomenon of graduate unemployment.

Whereas Chapter 1 anticipates that the study focuses on graduates of a university of technology, the strategies and plans that are developed in this study do not merely benefit graduates alone. They may also benefit people who are not graduates, for example, unemployed youth—regardless of the level of educational attainment. Unemployment is an issue that affects most people (e.g. graduate and non-graduate, the young and the elderly), not only in South Africa, but in the world at large.

High levels of unemployment in South Africa are related to high population, low economic growth, lack of economic development, and a declining number of production processes that require labour, all of which result in poverty and inequality. Economic growth is the most important factor in reducing such unemployment (Singh 2007:336).

In this study, the South African context of unemployment will also be discussed in a broader context. Whereas research and statistical data are gathered for different reasons by the individual or the specific organisation, it is evident can be argued that the rate of unemployment varies from year to year. Such statistics largely depend on and is the nature of the population sample used for the statistics or research, e.g., those that are affected by unemployment in general, unemployed youth, unemployed graduate, etc. Statistical



outcomes also depend on the type of research methodology followed for gathering data. The definition of what counts as unemployment also plays a greater role when gathering data.

### 3.2 Defining employment and unemployment

Babbie (2008:145) states that “if we want to describe and report unemployment rate in a city, the definition of being unemployed is obviously critical and it depends on the definition of the labour force”. Employment refer to all persons who are 15 years and older who during a specified brief period (e.g. seven days) have worked for five hours or more for a wage or salary for profit as well as family gain, in cash or in kind (Erasmus, Loedolff, Mda & Nel 2006:53). According to this definition, the self-employed are included as they are persons who have been temporarily absent from work but still have a formal job attachment.

Erasmus et al. (2006:53) describe unemployment according to the following criteria:

- People within the economically active population who did not work during seven days prior to the interview;
- People who want to work and they are available to start work within a week of the interview; and
- People who have taken active steps to look for work or to start some form of self-employment in the four weeks prior the interview.

The above definitions and criteria exclude those that are in voluntary unemployment (with or without pay). Unemployment is the absence of labour power. Labour power is described by Willis (1977:2) as the human capacity to work on nature with the use of tools to produce products for the satisfaction of needs and the reproduction of life. Young people are the ones who are most affected by unemployment, because if a person is unemployed at his or her young age, it means that the full scope of his or her future is doomed and is unable to produce things for the satisfaction of need and the reproduction of life.

In Southern Africa, middle-income countries that experience low job creation and demographic pressures, youth unemployment is a key challenge (Brixiova, Ncube, & Bicaba

2015:11). It is even worse when these young people are qualified or have graduated. Some of them decide to study further while they are applying for jobs, or looking for better jobs. Some of them take any job after graduating, albeit that it could not be in any way related to their qualification. Some of them, while qualified, they are still unemployed.

### **3.2.1 Graduate unemployment**

Several authors, such as Altman (2007); Cape Higher Education Consortium (2013); Moleke (2006); Van der Berg and Van Broekhuizen (2012), have researched the factors contributing to unemployment in South Africa and in other international countries. The study conducted by Altbeker and Storme (2013) highlighted that graduate unemployment is a much exaggerated matter and confirmed that the unemployed graduates are outnumbered by the unemployed that have not graduated. This observation is corroborated by the results of the study done by Broekhuizen (2016:1) which revealed that graduate unemployment in South Africa is not rising significantly over time and that it is, in fact, low in relation to overall unemployment in the country.

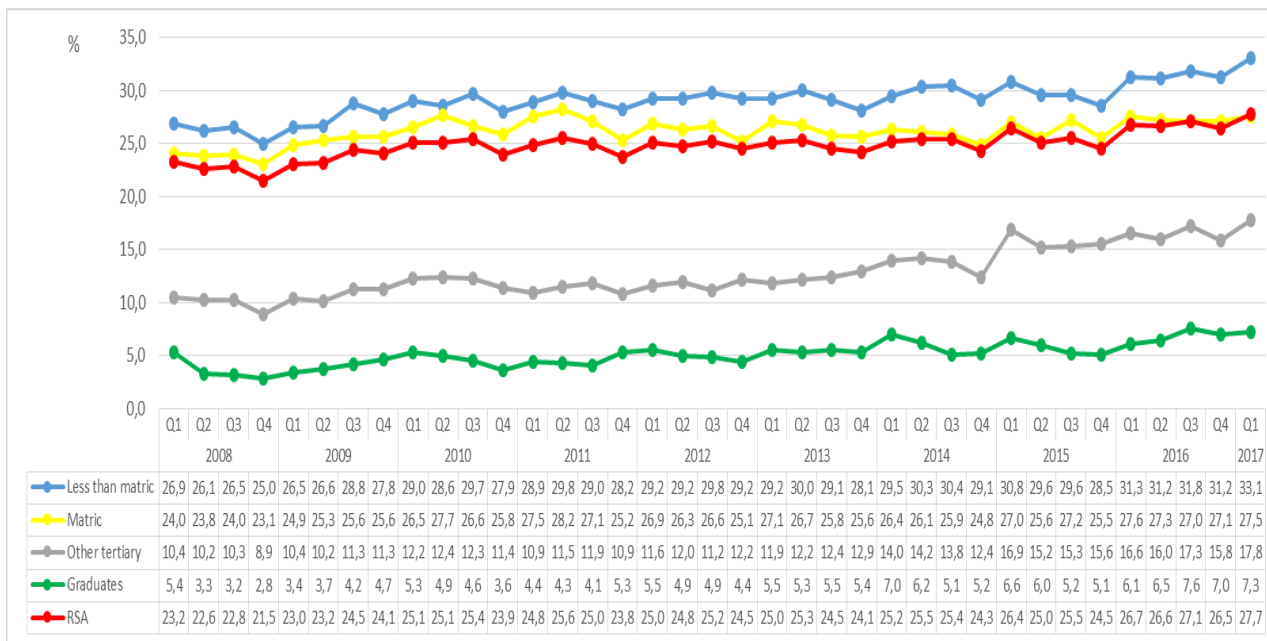
The researcher holds a different view. Based on the figure 3-1 below, it is clear that instead of declining down to zero, the graduate unemployment levels are fluctuating. These fluctuations as important indicators are highlighted by the Statistics South African Quarterly Labour Force Survey reports. Unemployment levels are slightly changing from low to high, and vice versa. This shows that solution that have been established such as internships, skills development, etc. are not sufficient.

Since the figures shows the low levels of graduates' unemployment, this is not surprising because there are low levels of graduates. In other words, graduates are lesser in number than the number of those with matric, etc. This perhaps needs a different discussion than merely increasing the number of graduates. Furthermore, a singular focus on increasing the number of graduates without creating employment pathways would be a negative development for the economy of the country. The researcher is also of the opinion that no graduate should struggle to find employment regardless of how small or big the number of

unemployed graduates. The Department of Higher Education and Training needs to ensure the provision of quality education in order to address graduate unemployment.

The researcher also concurs with the view of Oluwajodu et al. (2015:2) that unemployment amongst graduates is potentially damaging to the economy, regardless of how small they are. The damage is severe to the black graduates. When addressing a section of the population on the 16th June 2015, the President of Southern Africa, Jacob Zuma, stated that “the economy is not growing as fast as we want it to and is not creating as many jobs as we need. Many of our graduate sit at home without jobs” (Address by President Jacob Zuma 2015). Hence, this study has chosen the University of Technology as a focus area in order to crystallize this problem. Since the focus of this study is unemployed graduates, the figure and the table below indicate that the rate of unemployed graduate is increasing. Although the figure of individuals with tertiary qualifications is less, it is disappointing because it may send the message to those that are not educated, that education is not worthwhile.

**Figure 3-3 Unemployment rate by education status, Q1: 2008 to Q1: 2017**



(Source: StatsSA - Quarterly Labour Force Survey Q1:2017)

The above figure provides evidence that, although the level of unemployed graduates is low, it is however increasing. This is clearly visible from the year 2016. The studies

conducted by Moleke (2006); Altman (2007); Van der Berg and Van Broekhuizen (2012) reflect generally on graduate unemployment. These researchers have studied various institutions hence the researchers sees this as an advantage of generalizing all the studied institutions. The current study focuses on one of the universities of technology, with a view to addressing what it specifically considers the key issues.

Why do graduates struggle to find employment? It is apparent that graduates may have qualifications, but lack the requisite applied skills to do the job that they are qualified for. Skills mismatch is a serious factor contributing to the unemployment problem, and graduate unemployment is an example. This happens because the graduate produced by the education system are either not in demand by the labour market, or are already in abundant supply, based on their area of study; this in turn creates unemployable graduate (Festus et al. 2015:4). Unemployment is generally linked to poverty and the absence of basic resources such as health, food, water, etc. These are the basic needs fundamental to sustain life.

### **3.2.2 Graduate unemployment factors**

Unemployment can be caused by a number of factors. This part of the study identifies unemployment factors that are affecting graduates. Most of these factors are also a function of socio-economic status and the demographic background. For one to apply for employment, there is a need for basic communication resources such as telephone, money for making copies of Curriculum Vitae and important documents, a vehicle, driver's licence, etc. which are accessible only as a result of socio-economic status.

Despite the achievement of macro-economic stability and an increasingly open market, there are still some concerns in South Africa, which, amongst other things, include skills shortage and entrepreneurial capacity (Annual Review of Small Businesses in South Africa 2008: xxiv). This study detailed the unemployment factors below.

### 3.2.2.1 Age

There are some job advertisements that specify the age range of the applicants (e.g. where the advertisement state that the applicant should be between the age of 18 and 35). This is more common in the internships advertisements. Although such age restrictions may be placed for particular and valid reasons, they discriminate and close doors, especially for those who are above the specified range.

Age distribution is where there is greatest divergence, with public providers' modal group being pre-employed youth; whilst more than half the learners in the private sector are between 23 and 35 years old, these are regarded as young people who fall within the category of youth used in this study.

Age, in some cases, is compared with job performance. There is a perception that the more the employees grow in age, their job performance is deteriorating. This is as a result of ill-health, as well as that when they are injured, it may take longer for them to get better. Contrary to this, Ritter (2012) maintains that older workers look forward to going to work each day, making them more likely to be punctual, dedicated, and apt to do a good job. Plus, many of them spent the bulk of their careers during a time when changing jobs was less prevalent. This enhances their loyalty.

According to O'Brien (1986:215) the economic impact of unemployment is likely to be much greater on adults than on young people because adults have more financial responsibilities. The researcher believes that this view is biased in its isolation of the young and adults as two separate groups.

The researcher has a different opinion because, when looking at this from a family perspective, the young are necessarily dependents, where an adult's responsibilities are broader as a result of the demands and interests of the young. Therefore, priorities about employment need to be communicated by both adults and the young as career choices are made at a young age, and manifest at an adult age.

### **3.2.2.2 Gender**

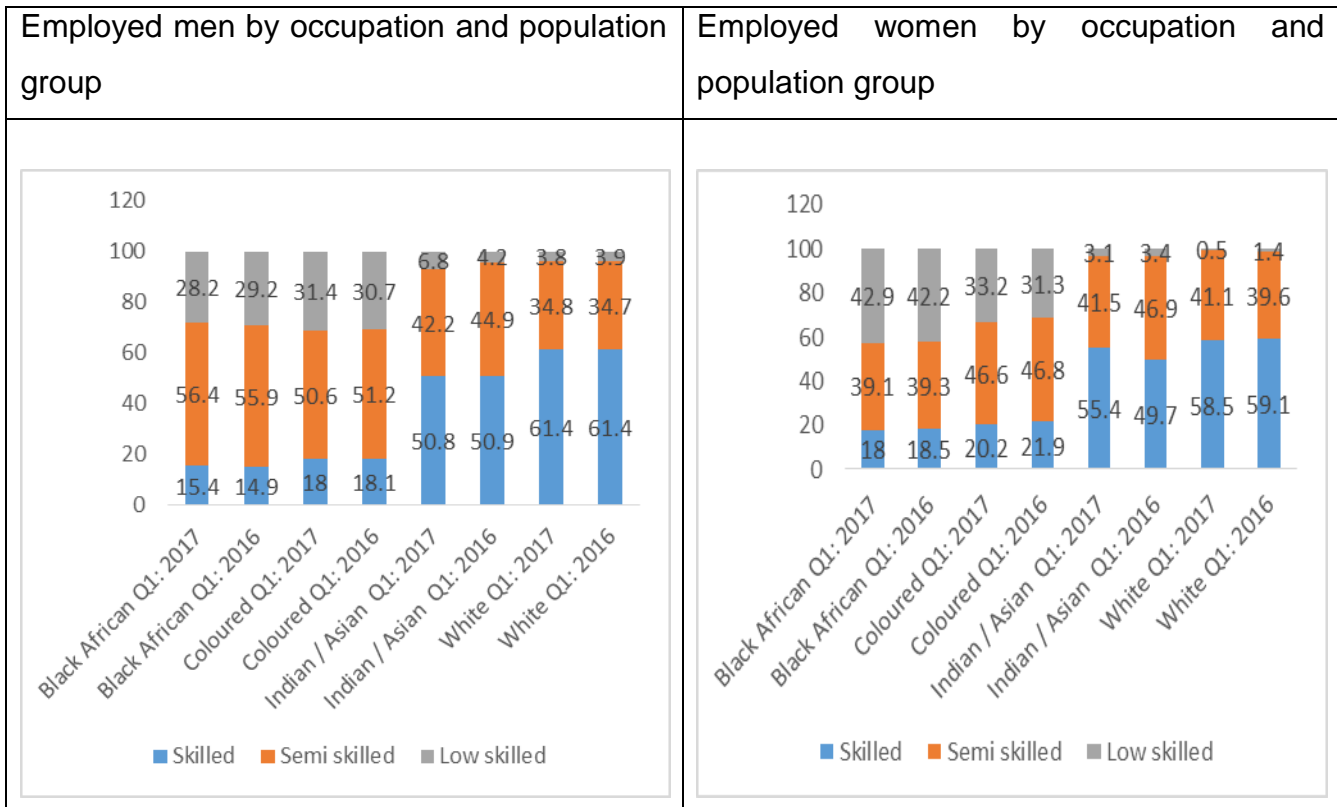
In the early years before 1994, women were denied certain opportunities in the workplace. The corporate and non-corporate worlds were dominated by patriarchy. It is also a cultural notion from certain ethnic groups that the workplace is not meant for women, which is one of the reasons only men as the head of families were expected to occupy the space of the workplace. However, this is changing with times. The change has been significant especially in the advertisements of jobs, where the “previously disadvantaged”, such as women, individuals with disabilities, etc. are actively sought out.

### **3.2.2.3 Skills shortage**

It has been argued that skills shortages have been the key to other challenges, including poverty, unemployment and uneven development (Akojee 2012:675). There is a strong relationship between poverty, inequality and unemployment in South Africa, and the incidence of unemployment is uneven according to education, age and race (McGrath & Akojee 2007:423).

Furthermore, in studying the relationship between education and employment, Dias and Posel (2007:3) have confirmed that skills shortages are attributed to a shift in the composition of labour demand towards skilled labour, in the context of the inherited educational disparities and backlogs of apartheid. Skills shortages highly affect black Africans. This is reflected in the figure below.

**Figure 3-4 Employed men and women by occupation and population group (race)**



Source Quarterly Labour Force Survey Q1:2017)

It is important to note that the above figures refer to skills in general, not the skills of the graduates. "Skilled" includes Manager, Professional and Technician occupations; 'Semi-skilled' includes Clerk, Sales and services, Skilled agriculture, Craft and related trade and Plant and machine operator occupations; 'Low-skilled' includes Elementary and Domestic worker occupations. The above figures confirm that black Africans are the majority in this country, they are less uneducated, they are the most poor and low paid, hence the graduated black Africans are minimal.

Persistent skills shortages have largely resulted from a divergence between the types of skills that individuals chose to acquire at the graduate level and the skills that employers require. Emphasizing the importance of skills, Van Broekhuizen (2016:26) mentions that the apparent significant rise in graduate unemployment and the extent of emerging skills-mismatches according to which the skills that new graduate labour market entrants possess deviate from the skills that employers demanded. Willis (1977:128) argues that it is

appropriate to question whether it is sensible to invest the self and its energies in qualifications when both their efficacy and their objective must be held in great doubt.

#### **3.2.2.4 Work experience**

Some of the employers prefer more experienced, older employees than more qualified, younger employees (Van der Berg & Van Broekhuizen 2012:11). This is one of the reasons age could be a barrier to finding employment. This is also confirmed in the study done by Festus et al. (2013:20), who observe that experienced older workers are still more likely to be employed, where meanwhile, in the short-term, younger generations will have to deal with poverty. In the long-term, problems surrounding generating economic growth will eventuate in social unrest.

#### **3.2.2.5 Misaligned education and training**

The increasing mismatch between the programme offerings of colleges and universities and the demands of industry is also regarded as one of the factors of unemployment (McGrath & Apogee 2009: 152). This is also confirmed by Festus et al. (2013:3), who note that skills mismatch is a serious factor contributing to unemployment, and this happens because the graduates produced by the education system are either not in demand by the labour market, or are already abundant in supply, based on their area of study.

There is always a tension in career education that it is essentially a supply-side solution, driven by socio-political concerns about youth unemployment rather than a reflection of immediate demand for skills, which may be limited (McGrath & Apogee 2009: 153).

### **3.3 The humanities**

#### **3.3.1 The humanities as a profession**

According to Susskind and Susskind (2015:15) professions refer to the occupational groups and institutions to which professionals currently belong.



Susskind and Susskind (2015:09) predict two possible futures of the professions. On the first future, professionals continue working much as they have done since the middle 19<sup>th</sup> century but they heavily standardize and systematize their routine activities. The second future involves transformation in such a way that the expertise of professionals is made available to society.

Based on the above discussion, Susskind and Susskind (2015:09) maintain that in the long run the second future will dominate and make the new and better ways to share expertise with society and the professions will steadily be dismantled.

### **3.3.2 Challenges of the humanities**

Humanities are increasingly viewed as useless frills and are rapidly losing their place in curricula and in the minds and hearts of parents and children (Miller 2012:7). Van der Berg and Van Broekhuizen (2012:2) argue that there is a perception that certain segments of graduates really struggle to find jobs, particularly black students from historically disadvantaged (and often rural) universities, alongside those students who have majored in Arts and the Humanities.

As a solution to this, Van Broekhuizen (2016:2) suggests that suggest that graduate unemployment in the country is not a general problem and that interventions aimed at improving the employment prospects of historically disadvantaged graduates should be targeted at improving the functionality of historically disadvantaged HEIs, rather than entailing wide-scale reform of South Africa's HE system as a whole. It is very likely that the residual gap in employment can be explained largely by differences—real and perceived—in the quality of the qualifications produced by historically disadvantaged HEIs.

The quality of degrees offered by historically black institutions is put up to scrutiny (Altbeker & Storme 2013:2). The humanities needs to transcend their traditional role to get the support it craves (Miller 2012:15). The need to apply knowledge gained in the humanities is key. To be a professional practitioner is not simply to know and lot and to have an intimate grasp of the substantive teachings of a discipline. It requires the ability to apply knowledge.

In relation to the international insights, Miller (2012:2) describes two kinds of humanities in the United States as follows:

“Humanities one dominates rhetorically and focuses on literature and history while humanities two dominates numerically and focuses on media studies and communication. One is the venerable, powerful humanities of private universities; the other is the humanities of state schools, which focus mainly on job prospects. These two humanities must merge in order to survive and succeed in producing an aware and concerned citizenry. There is a class division between the two—both in terms of faculty research and student background—and it must end”. This brings an understanding of combining arts and humanities instead of separating them, which is, bridging the gap between the two.

The arts and humanities create social and economic benefits directly and indirectly through improvements in social and intellectual capital, social networking, community identity, learning, skills and quality of life (Miller 2012:75). The arts and humanities are powerful in enhancing public debates, participation and engagement, informing developments in performance, professional practice or public policy and contributing to regeneration, community cohesion and social inclusion (Miller 2012:75).

### **3.4 Consequences of unemployment**

In delivering his address to the public on the 16th June 2015, the President of South Africa, Jacob Zuma quoted the triple challenge in South Africa being “poverty, inequality and unemployment.” Hence, this study focuses on the issues related to unemployment while poverty and inequality are regarded as consequent to it.

The consequences of unemployment can grow from an individual, to a family at large and eventually to the society or the community and the whole country. Wage rigidity due to legislated minimum wages contributes to increased levels of unemployment, and this occurs when minimum wages are set above market clearing levels, which limits the ability of employers to adjust their consumption of labour efficiently (Festus et al. 2015:4).

### **3.4.1 Inequality and ill health**

Being unemployed deprives one of the ability to belong in society, and leads to a state of a lack of self-confidence and assurance; hence, the prevalent lack of wellness are amongst those who are unemployed. The psychological conditions that are related to stress, depression, high blood pressure, heart disorder, etc. may be even more prevalent among those who are unemployed. Inequality is amongst other things influenced by cooperation between employers and employees, the flexibility of wage determination, the nature of the rules governing hiring and firing, and the link between pay and productivity (CDE 2013:3).

### **3.4.2 Poverty**

In simple terms, money is never enough and poverty is attributed to the lack of money or insufficiency. When the society is experiencing unemployment issues, which bear consequences due to lack of income, it is likely to experience poverty as well. A social security system is one of the means for addressing poverty in South Africa. In support of this, Ritzer (1996:166) says the needy have the right to receive aid and the giver has the obligation to give to the needy. Society requires aid to the poor so that the poor will not become active and dangerous enemies of society (Ritzer 1996:166), which could happen through crime.

### **3.4.3 Crime**

The researcher highlights that it is without any doubt that some crime results from lack of income and joblessness. Hence criminal activities can also be linked to lack of education, which eventually gives rise to unemployment. The relationship between education and crime shows that the prevalence of crime increases in conjunction with unemployment rates and decreases with wage increases (Jonck et al. 2015:142). Unemployment can also lead to violence.

#### **3.4.4 Violence**

It is doubtful that unemployment may lead to violence, particularly domestic violence. High unemployment could provide the “trigger point” for violent situations in the home (Anderberg, Rainer, Wadsworth & Wilson 2013:2). The main reasons for the widespread violence are economic in nature, and are related to poverty, primarily attributed to unemployment and income inequality (Jonck et al. 2015:141). Employment gives an ability to provide for families. In the absence of employment, anger can arise. This can also be fuelled by substance abuse.

#### **3.4.5 Substance abuse**

When families go through difficulties, if someone loses their job, or they have financial problems, it can escalate stress, and lead to alcohol or drug abuse (Anderberg et al. 2013:2). Substance abuse has some influence on the individuals and their families. Such influence is likely to result in peer pressure (particularly among young persons) and communal drinking among adults; the availability of alcohol is a problem particularly in more disadvantaged communities (MRC 1998:10). Individuals abuse substances for various reasons. Generally speaking, there is a perception that substance abuse temporarily takes away the perpetrator’s sense of guilt and pain.

#### **3.4.6 Economic downturn**

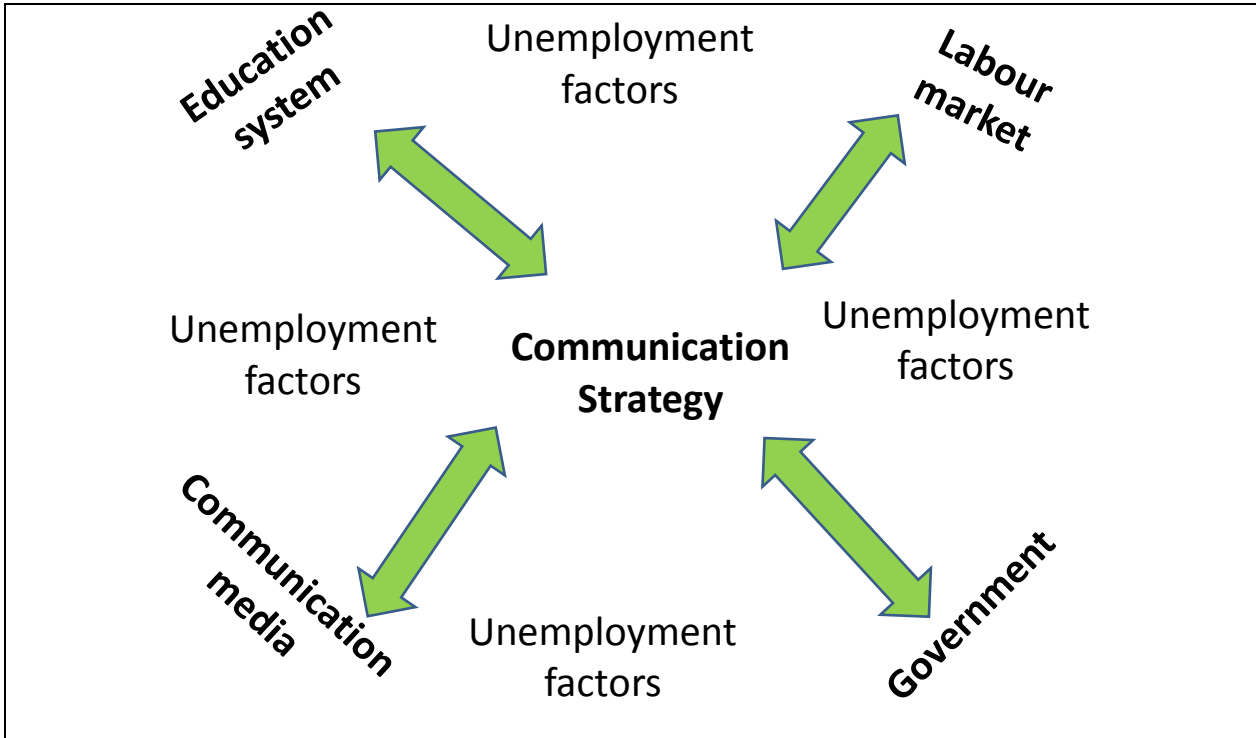
Unemployment is one of the factors negatively affecting the economy in different ways and at different levels. Unemployment is potentially a matter of serious concern, for its effects on economic welfare, production, erosion of human capital, social exclusion, crime, and social instability (Kingdon & Knight 2004:391). Generally, the economy of any country is dependent on the growth of its labour force.

### 3.5 Role players in addressing graduate unemployment with South African context

The factors and consequences of unemployment are discussed above. It is important that they are addresses in various ways with the involvement of the key role players in the South African context. For the purpose of this study such key role players include government, the education system, media and labour market and they are key in identifying factors that contribute to graduate unemployment as well as seen as having powers in implementing a communication strategy that is proposed in this study.

Such role players are presented in the figure below and discussed thereafter. It should be noted that communication strategy at the centre of the role players below is regarded as a solution for addressing graduate unemployment. However, the details of the communication strategy are discussed in chapter 8.

**Figure 3-5 – Key role players ideal for addressing graduate unemployment**



The key role players that are ideal for addressing graduate unemployment are also regarded as the systems of the communication strategy. They are government, labour

market, media and education. They are all perceived as being affected by vectors of unemployment. They are also discussed below and viewed from the South African context.

### **3.5.1 Government**

It is noted that communications in government has increased dramatically and formalized as a strategic communications in its operations (Kozolanka 2015:396). The South African government has the potential for addressing graduate unemployment. Key programmes such as National Development Plan 2030, ASGISA, etc., have been established in order to address unemployment. That explains why this study sees an opportunity to bring a communication strategy to advance such programmes. The Skills Development Act is already in place. Amongst others, the purposes of the act include ensuring the quality of education and training in the workplace, and the employment of persons who find it difficult to be employed (Erasmus et al. 2006: 77).

It is somehow not clear how the quality of education can be achieved because graduates who attended historically disadvantaged institutions (HDI) have significantly poorer labour market prospects than graduates from historically advantaged institutions (HAI), both in terms of initial absorption into employment and the ultimate incidence of unemployment (Van Broekhuizen 2016:3). Educational attainment in conjunction with skills development fosters not only formal labour market proficiency, but also increases employability and income, as well as socializes individuals so that they prefer not to engage in crime (Jonck et al. 2015:142).

Institutions of higher education are not matching their curriculum design effectively enough with the labour demand needs of employers, and the skills deficit issue is attributed to the graduate unemployment, which in turn indicates a serious structural break in the South African labour market (Festus et al. 2015:4). It is important that the programmes that drive the Skills Development Act be audited on continuous basis in order to ensure that whatever training courses or studies taken by students are already certified and serve the purpose of closing the unemployment gap.

It is important that entrepreneurial skills be made compulsory for all the learners and students by the educational institutions, at levels of both higher and basic education. This would sharpen the youth at a very early age, and increase the opportunities of establishing business, rather than searching for employment, which would further create jobs.

Erasmus et al. (2006:285) highlight that economic growth and job creation is the key to achieving employment growth worldwide. It is stated in the Annual Review of Small Business South Africa (ARSB) of 2005 to 2007 (ARSB 2008:xxiv), that while economic growth has increased in recent years, it remains insufficient to reducing unemployment, especially when compared with other middle income countries.

The South African Department of Labour has established internship programmes that are funded through Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs). SETAs are organisations that ensure training of good quality happens in a specific sector of the economy, for example, the construction sector, health sector, etc. The internship programmes could also be a solution to the unemployment problem. This study researches graduate because most fall within the category of youth. The purpose of the internship programme is to equip unemployed graduate with the necessary skills, knowledge and work experiences to improve their chances of employment within and outside of the Public Service (DPSA 2015:11). Internship programmes give students workplace experience, or an opportunity to practice the work skills that they have studied and will practice in future in their chosen occupations (INSETA 2011).

### **3.5.2 South African context of labour market**

The report on Skills and Demand in South Africa produced by Reddy et al (2016:8) states that:

*“The South African labour force is made up of 15 million employed and 7.5 million unemployed people. Three quarters of the employed and 90% of the unemployed are from the African population group. Unemployment is also particularly high amongst youth (15 to 34 years) and this is increasing as more young people join the labour force. The education level and skill base of the labour force is lower than that of many other productive*

*economies. Of the employed population, 20% has a tertiary qualification, 32% has completed secondary education, and close to half of the workforce do not have a grade 12 certificate. Sixty percent of the unemployed has less than a grade 12 certificate. This translates to 11.75 million of the labour force with less than a grade 12 certificate.”*

Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) conducted a survey in the labour market which included the mining and quarrying; manufacturing; electricity, gas and water supply; construction; wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles, motor cycles and personal and household goods; and hotels and restaurants; transport, storage and communication; financial intermediation, insurance, real estate and business services; and community, social and personal services (Stats SA 2017:3).

The samples are drawn from private businesses such as factories, firms, offices, and stores, as well as from national, provincial and local government entities (Stats SA 2017:3). The figures presented in the table below are quantified in “thousands- 000”.

**Table 3-1 Labour market survey**

Industry	Mar 2016	Dec 2016*	Mar 2017	Q/Q Change	Q/Q Change %	Y/Y Change	Y/Y Change %
Mining	458	456	464	8	1,8	6	1,3
Manufacturing	1 191	1 191	1 187	-4	-0,3	-4	-0,3
Electricity	62	61	61	0	0,0	-1	-1,6
Construction	614	596	608	12	2,0	-6	-1,0
Trade	2 057	2 124	2 092	-32	-1,5	35	1,7
Transport	474	457	456	-1	-0,2	-18	-3,8
Business services	2 187	2 197	2 174	-23	-1,0	-13	-0,6
Community services	2 659	2 610	2 602	-8	-0,3	-57	-2,1
<b>Total</b>	<b>9 702</b>	<b>9 692</b>	<b>9 644</b>	<b>-48</b>	<b>-0,5</b>	<b>-58</b>	<b>-0,6</b>

(Source: StatsSA - Quarterly Labour Force Survey Q1:2017)



The key findings of the employment for the quarter ending March 2017 indicate that “employment has decreased by 48 000 quarter-on-quarter, from 9 692 000 in December 2016 to 9 644 000 in March 2017. This was largely due to decreases in the following industries: trade (32 000 or -1.5%), business services (23 000 or -1.0%), community services (8 000 or -0.3%), manufacturing (4 000 or -0.3%) and transport (1 000 or -0.2%). The electricity industry remained unchanged. However, there were increases in the following industries: construction (12 000 or 2.0%) and mining (8 000 or 1.8%). Employment decreased by 58 000 or -0.6% year-on-year between March 2017 and March 2016” (Stats SA 2017:4).

Although the findings are not specific to organisation within industries, also not specific to graduates or non-graduates, it is important to note that the rate of unemployment is increasing. The assumption here is that graduates may be affected because they are applicable in each industry.

According to National Development Plan 2030 (NDP 2030 2013:41), “in moving towards decent work for all, the short-term priority must be to raise employment and incentivise the entry of young people into the labour market, while taking due care to prevent substitution or the diminution of existing working conditions.”

While the South African labour market plays a significant role in improving the economy of this country, Festus et al. (2013:4) observe that “economic growth has been unable to provide the necessary employment opportunities required by population growth and rising labour force participation rates, resulting in a rapidly rising rate of unemployment.” The NDP 2030 has been put in place to ensure that South African citizens work together to address poverty. The plan presents a long-term strategy to increase employment and broaden opportunities through education, vocational training and work experience, public employment programmes, health and nutrition, public transport and access to information (NDP 2030 2013:44). Several laws have been amended and established, post-apartheid, which have contributed to the improvement of the labour market. Such laws include, but are not limited to the following:

- Labour Relations Act (LRA) of 1995, which outlines processes regarding collective bargaining in the labour market and the resolution of labour disputes;
- Equity Act of 1998 encourages affirmative action, namely the need for employing more non-white workers in order to reduce societal inequalities; and
- Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA) of 1997, which stipulates the minimum wages applicable to certain sectors, as well as specifies minimum working conditions for labourers, and outlines some of their rights.

The above laws indicate that some interventions are being put in place to address unemployment. Yet, the implementation is still very slow. This slowness is also visible in the education system.

### **3.5.3 The education system in South Africa**

The results in the education systems in South Africa show South Africans to be performing below average when compared to global results (Festus, et al 2013:2). This is laid bare by Dias and Posel (2007:8) who explain that, given the legacy of apartheid in South Africa, educational attainment remains repressed.

This study highlighted that the integration of education and the labour force could provide solutions in a South African situation. It is important to evaluate the suitability of the implementation of a curriculum of the study area in order to ensure the implemented curriculum can produce human resources, which are qualified, skilful and can fulfil the need of the industries and the current market (Hanapi & Nordin 2014:1056).

The paper written by Reddy et al (2016:8) for the Department of Higher Education in South Africa confirms that the South African economy has been characterized by low economic growth rates, leading to poor employment growth. In the South African context, there is a mismatch in terms of the skills and qualifications which eventually lead to graduate unemployment. The mismatches can be categorized into three main types: demand mismatch, educational-supply mismatch and qualifications-job mismatch.

Demand mismatch examines the shape and trajectory being followed by the economy, the types of jobs being created, and the skills set and expectations of the working-age population. A structural mismatch between labour demand and supply is the most significant type in the South African context, in that the economy and labour market show a demand for high-skilled workers, but there is a surplus of low-skilled workers.

Educational supply mismatch examines the type of skills produced by different levels of education and training systems, and the degree to which they respond to skills demand in specific occupations. This study's analysis of the education supply mismatch currently experienced highlights the need to enrol and graduate higher numbers of graduates from both universities and Technical Vocational Educational and Training (TVET) colleges. Further, there is a need for higher enrolments and completions rates in the building and construction, metal machinery and related trades programmes qualification-job mismatch is comprised of two dimensions: firstly, the qualification gap which examines the match between the type of qualifications required by workers in medium and higher level occupations to perform their job effectively, and the actual type of qualifications held by those in such occupations. Secondly, it traces the sectors and occupations that the educational qualifications are absorbed into. This analysis revealed that there is a qualification gap in that less than half of managers, senior officials, technicians and associate professionals had a tertiary level qualification (Reddy et al 2016:10).

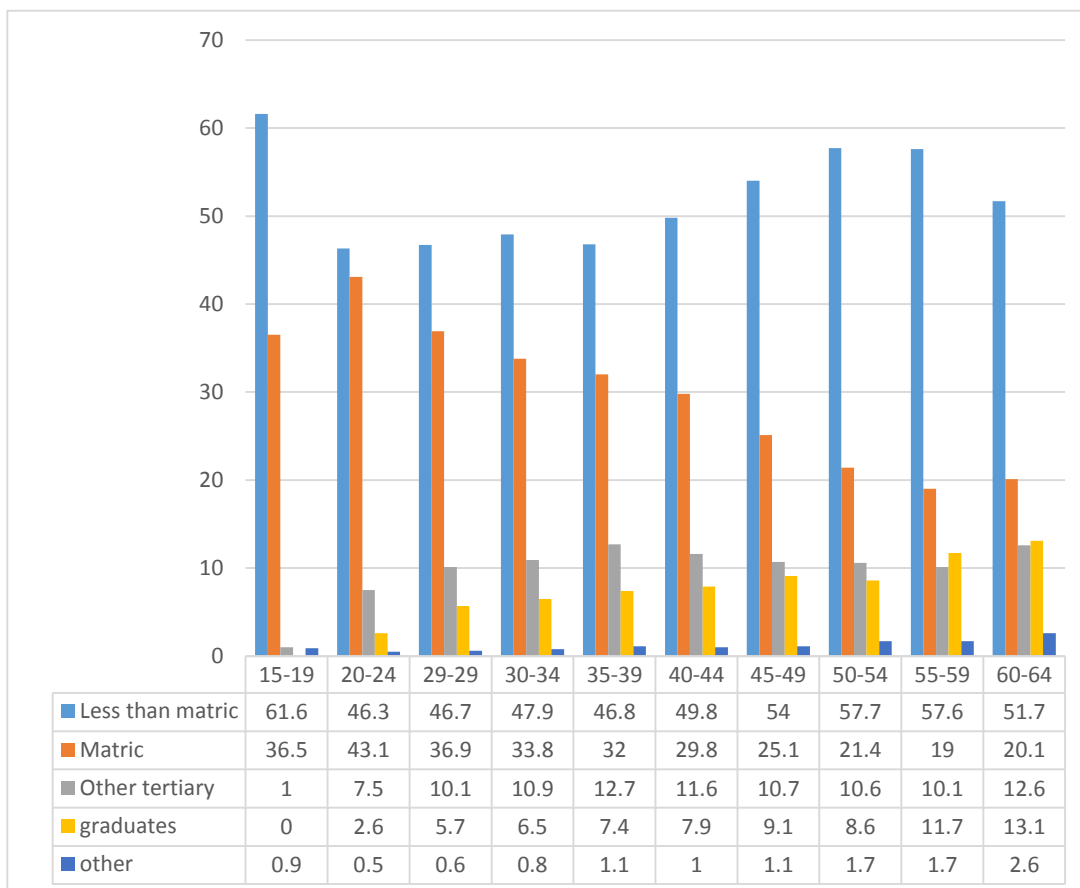
Furthermore, there is a need to establish intermediary institutions that support relationships between the post-school education, the training system and the world of work. The skills levy distribution model should propose better integration of the skills development institutional landscape into the post-school system, and ensure improved coordination of the skills levies, so as to support education and training programmes aimed at preparing people for the world of work (Government Gazette 2015:8).

The South African education system is already in the process of addressing challenges facing the labour market. For example, the National Skills Fund within the Department of Higher Education and Training has approved funding to the value of R71 million over a 2-year period for monthly stipends of placed graduates (Oluwajodu et al. (2015:8). This has

also manifested in the 2015 Government Gazette, which states the following objectives for the Sector Education and Training Advisory Boards (SETABs):

- Continue to build relationships developed by Sector Education and Training (SET) as with employers in their sectors;
- Better understand the current and future training needs in and for workplaces;
- Engage with the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), through the National Skills Fund (NSF) with regard to the proposed plans for their sectors, in order for the NSF to allocate funds to the SETABs to ensure that education and training interventions and programmes take place to address scarce and critical skills areas; and
- Facilitate the creation of workplace-based learning opportunities for learners.

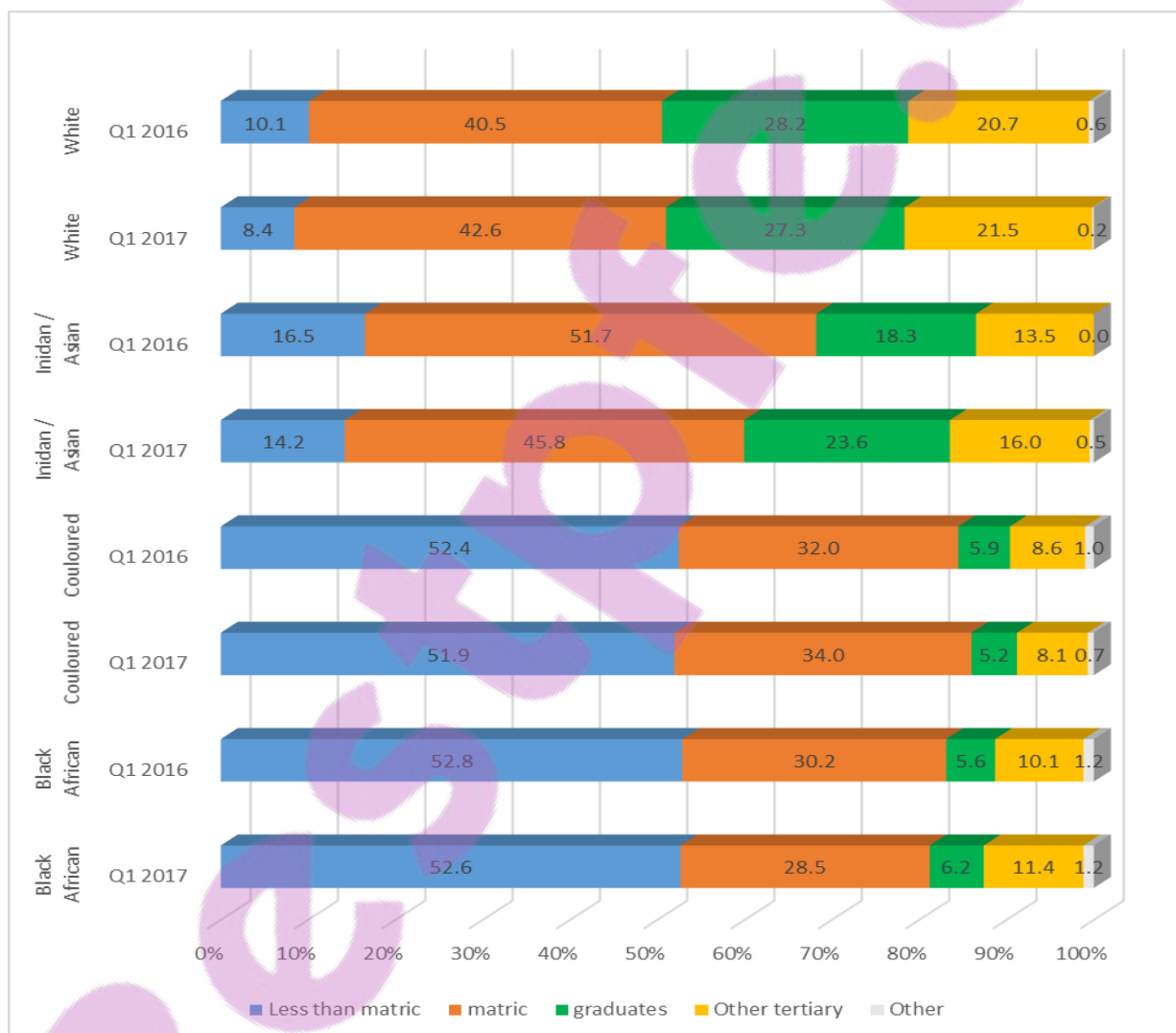
**Figure 3-6 Education levels of the South African labour force, by age - Q4: 2016**



(Source Quarterly Labour Force Survey Q4:2016)

From the picture above, graduates levels are very low; hence, the researcher believes that graduate unemployment levels should be managed to reach zero level, the only level that will be tolerated and accepted. As education levels are very low, they are worsened by the fact that blacks in South Africa are a majority yet they are the ones who are low skilled with low levels of education. This is shown in the figure below. The figure shows the comparison of 2016 and 2017 in terms of the education levels by race.

**Figure 3-7 Education levels of the South African labour force, by race – Q1: 2016 and Q1 2017**



(Source : Quarterly Labour Force Survey, Quarter 1, 2017)

There is a need for education and training to align with the needs of the labour market and thus balance the population groups. Training provided to the unemployed should form an

integral part of active labour market policies (Erasmus, et al 2006:273). The policies for improving training for the unemployed should take into considerations the following:

- Target and diversify training programmes for the unemployed based on thorough assessment of the labour market needs.
- Purchase training for the unemployed on a competitive basis in the private and public training market.
- Involve all key players at local level, viz. employers, trade unions, and educational institutions according to local need (Erasmus, et al 2006:273).

The researcher sees the last point above as most relevant to a local community. The assessment of the labour market will ensure that relevant training is provided. In some cases, the trainees do not check labour market needs. They just enrol for training that is available, according to their affordability. It is important for training institutions, if necessary, to discontinue training that would not make any positive impact on the individuals and the labour market. Government interventions are required in such decisions.

#### **3.5.4 The South African context of media**

South Africa needs to sharpen its innovative edge and continue contributing to global scientific and technological advancement. This requires greater investment in research and development, better use of existing resources, and more nimble institutions that facilitate innovation and enhanced cooperation between public science and technology institutions and the private sector (National Development Plan 2030 2013:33). Furthermore, it will become ever more difficult as time passes and machines become increasingly capable to ensure that there is enough paid employment of professionals (Susskind & Susskind 2015:290).

Media has the potential to help in building communities. 'Communities' refers to people with common interest who come together to share their everyday experiences, insights, successes, failures, hopes, aspirations and disappointments in remarkably candid ways (Susskind & Susskind 2015:178). It is critical to appreciate the broader context so as to

highlight the significant role that media can play in helping people in different communities and physical locations to communicate with each other in order to strengthen democracy, promote a culture of human rights, to enable all to participate fully in economic growth, and to speed up transformation and development. Information is knowledge and it is power. This can only be achieved if media is successfully regulated in such a way that South African citizens have access to a variety of media with manageable limitations.

The South Africa communication industry is regulated by the government in consultation and agreement with the private sector organisations which include, but are not limited to the South African Post Office (SAPO), South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), Sentec, National Electronic Media Institute of South Africa (NEMISA), the .zaDomain Name Authority (ZADNA), Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA), Universal Service Access agency of South Africa (USAASA), South African Accreditation authority (SAAA), Presidential National Commission (PNC) on Information Society and Development (ISAD). Due to the low speed of broadband access, which in turn drives access to electronic media, South Africa is rapidly falling behind when compared to other countries, and the rest of the world (Media Landscape 2012:28).

### **3.6 South African context of unemployment**

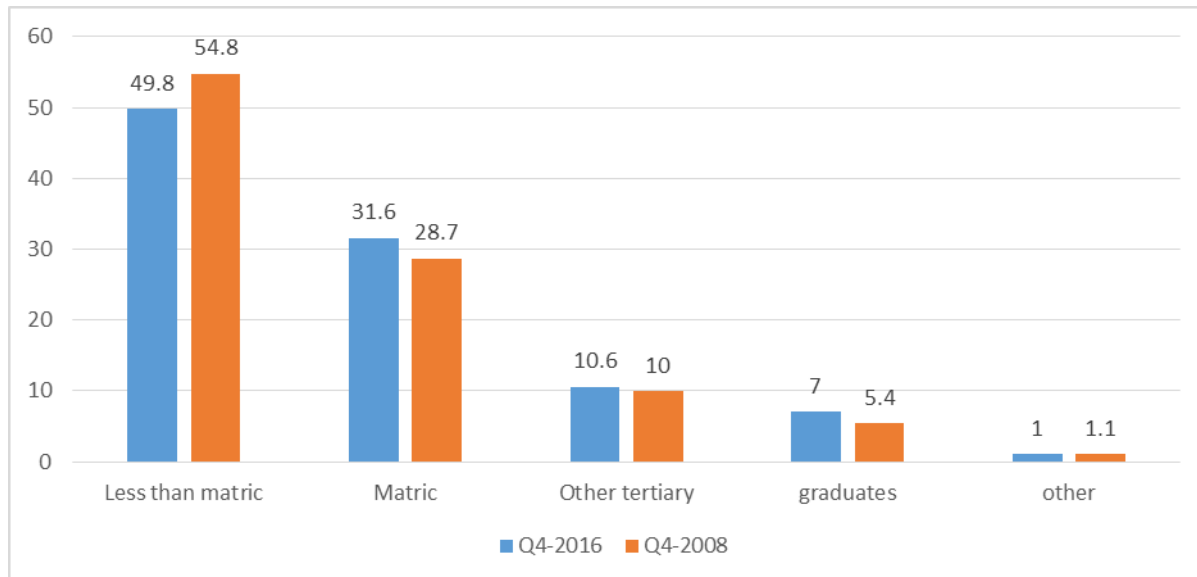
Unemployment in South Africa is exceptionally high, and is the country's most pressing policy challenge (CDE 2013:2). Policy-makers, such as those in government, must be willing to intervene where the market comes up short (Holt & Perren 2009:117). The South African context of unemployment is discussed in a broader context rather than just in terms of graduate unemployment.

High unemployment is at least partially caused by South Africa's labour market institutions and regulations, which have their roots in the historical protections afforded to white workers, and their extension to all workers in the 1980s and 1990s (CDE 2013:2). The research done in this study is specific to graduates of a particular university of Technology.

According to StatsSA, the unemployment rate has increased from 22% and 25% between the years 1994 and 2014. This is presented in the figure and the table below. The

researcher perceives that this is as a result of the growing and the production of qualifications from various institutions.

**Figure 3-8 Education levels of South African labour force, Q4: 2008 and Q4: 2016**



(Source: StatsSA - Quarterly Labour Force Survey, Quarter 4, 2016)

The above figure refers to the statistics of graduate unemployment which indicate that it has decreased between Quarter 4 in 2008 and Quarter 4 2016. Based on the above claims, the researcher again perceives that some of the qualifications are not presented in such a way as to close the unemployment gap. Therefore, it is important that the qualifications that are presented in various educational institutions be brought in line with the labour market. There is a need for educational institutions to do thorough market research about the key skills that are required in the labour market. This is to ensure that curricula are designed in order to close the skills gaps.

In certain areas, plans have already been put in place in order to address unemployment. However, the challenge is in the implementation of such policies. The Centre for Economic Development (CDE) (2013:2) cited these policies includes but is not limited the Labour Relations Act (1995), the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (1997), the Employment Equity Act (1998), the Skills Development Act (1998) and the Skills Development Levies Act (1999).



It is without doubt that resolving challenges related to inequality, crime, substance abuse and poverty in this country will require that unemployment be addressed. Millions of people, especially in rural areas, still live below the poverty line and are entangled in a downward spiral of developmental backwardness and a vicious cycle of poverty (Singh 2007:336).

The involvement of private businesses is important in the consideration of all demographics and socio-economic statuses, and is expected to reduce the unemployment rate in this country. The study takes its cues from Dias and Posel (2007), who contribute to the literature on unemployment by showing that aggregate relationships between education and employment, and aggregate changes over time, differ markedly by race, and within race groups, among both men and women.

### **3.7 Conclusion**

In this chapter the term unemployment is discussed and distinguished from the term employment. Although unemployment affects youth and adults alike, the emphasis is placed on graduate unemployment. The key unemployment factors and problems related to employment were discussed. The consequences of unemployment are presented in relation to the solutions that are ideal to address unemployment. This included the South African context of unemployment.

The next chapter presents a discussion of the theoretical framework that underpins this study. It is the integration of the four concepts, namely, integration, media, unemployment and communication strategy. The theories related to these concepts are also discussed.

## CHAPTER FOUR –COMMUNICATION STRATEGY AND MEDIA

### 4.1 Introduction

Practitioners in the communications field who report on unemployment beyond statistical information but seek to change the employment landscape will find a suitable tool in strategic communication. Against the dominance of different theoretical departures—from systems theory to Jahoda’s theory—this study harnesses their confluence at the practical level rather than find contradictions or segmented compartmentalization. While strategic communication is regarded as a tool used to implement the communication strategy, media is regarded as a tool for disseminating information or messages. Strategic communication is used as a core concept, focusing on targeted and formal communication processes planned and activated as a means for organizations to reach overall goals (Falkheimer et al. 2017:91). Strategic communication is intentional, and carried out with a specific objective (Torp 2014:44). Oepen (2006:22) attempts to understand that strategic communication is more than disseminating information, hence it is active in soliciting stakeholders’ perspectives.

In this chapter, the role of media will be discussed within the context of strategic communication. This chapter provides a conceptual background to the role of media within the context of marketing communications. Such a context is relevant since media can be used for marketing purposes. The role of media will be discussed in order to identify the types of media that are used to disseminate information about unemployment factors. The types of media that are suitable for this study will also be compared and discussed within the strategic communication point of view. This chapter answers the research questions “what role could media play in addressing unemployment challenges?” and “what types of media are used to disseminate information about unemployment factors?”

## 4.2 Communication strategies

Communication strategies are concerned about messages that are communicated. It should be noted that many authors refer to the strategy and a plan interchangeably as the same thing. However, in the context of this study the two concepts are viewed to be different. This is alluded to by Spots and Lambert (in Niemann 2005:59) in the suggestion that communication strategy is not the same as communication plans, but provides a framework for the strategic and operational communication plans necessary to carry out the strategy. The paragraph below refers to communication strategies that can be employed for different contexts.

This study provides a distinction between a strategy, and a plan, in such a way that a strategy simply refers to an idea or a proposal, while a plan refers to a roadmap used to direct and achieve a strategy. While the strategy put emphasis on a vision and a mission, the plan puts emphasis on the timeframe. While a communication strategy may contribute to the growth and motivation of a target population, a plan organizes and depicts the strategic intent, operationalizing how the strategy will be achieved, by providing a roadmap of how to direct and achieve a strategy.

According to Spots and Lambert (in Niemann 2005: 247), there is a need to incorporate the mission in the strategic intent as a call to unity, providing a common, consistent focus primarily to a given set of stakeholders. For any strategy to be effective, Ballard (2011:7) assumes that users of any media must be active and have goal-driven media usage.

In his definition of strategic communication, Oepen (2006) identifies that strategic communication is a dynamic process, integrated and a multi-disciplinary approach. According to this definition of social practice, individual behaviour and life styles are a prerequisites for change. This requires the analysis and the identification of the communication approaches and strategies that are relevant to a particular environment. Kotler & Kotler (2009) refer to two types of creative strategy for designing messages, viz. informational and transformational appeal. The former refers to products benefits or attributes and the latter refers to non-product related benefits or images. Some of the

identified public relations communication strategies include informative, identified by Informative, facilitative, persuasive, power, bargaining and cooperative problem solving strategies (Werder 2015:272).

#### **4.2.1 Informative strategy**

An informative strategy is based on the presentation of unbiased facts and assumes a rational and motivated audience. Informative messages presume the public will infer appropriate conclusions from accurate data. Informative strategies are ineffective in enhancing problem recognition and they may be used to build foundations for future learning (Werder 2015:272).

#### **4.2.2 Persuasive strategy**

A persuasive strategy is characterized by appeals to public values and emotions. It may include the selective presentation of information. It may use language that is not neutral and reflects the importance of the issue and the involvement of the source in the situation (Werder 2015:273). It is indicated when a problem is not identified or considered important by a public, when public motivation and involvement is low or when a particular problem is perceived to be effective.

#### **4.2.3 Power strategy**

Power is described as a capacity or something possessed that allows one to get things done or get others do what you want them to do (Toth 2007:222). Substantiating from this description, power strategy uses positive coercion in that it implies the source of the message controls an outcome feared or disliked by the receiver of the message (Werder 2015:273). Power strategies are more effective when the behavioural change is the goal and psychological change is not important.

#### **4.2.4 Bargaining strategy**

Bargaining strategy is characterized by an organized exchange of messages between communicators (Werder 2015:273). Bargaining strategies are indicated when interdependence is high whereby all parties to the bargaining situation are dependent on the cooperation of other parties to achieve their goals (Werder 2015:274).

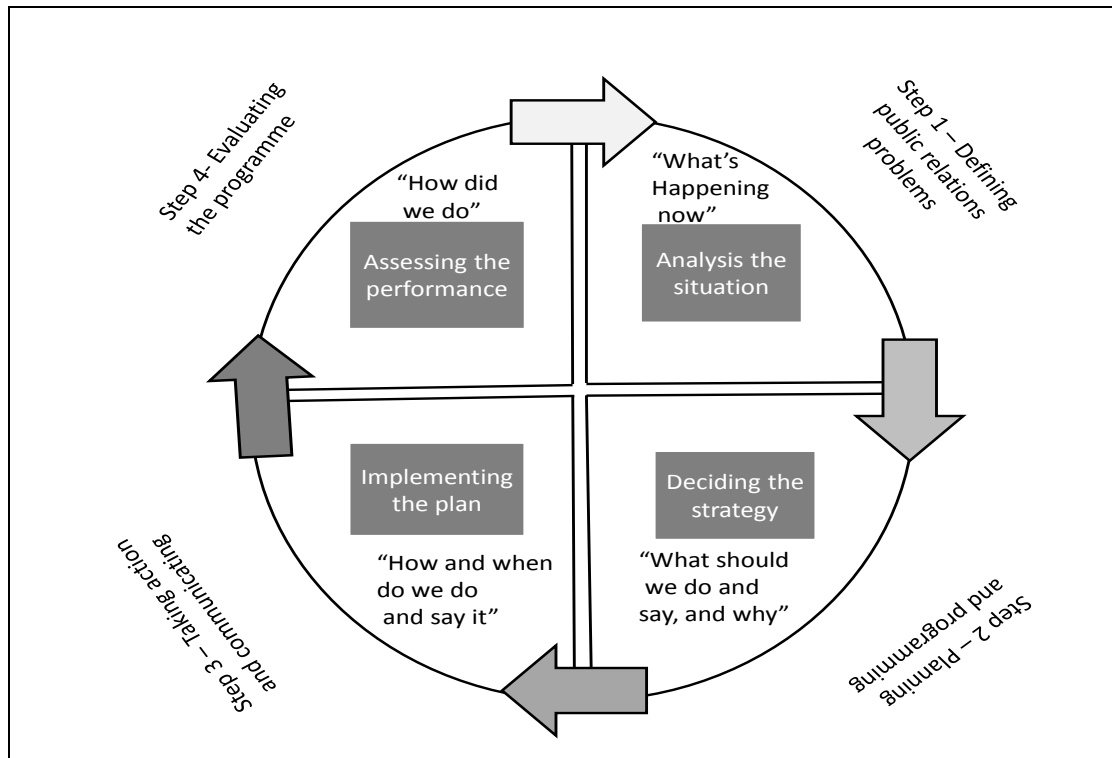
#### **4.2.5 Cooperative and problem solving strategy**

Cooperative and problem solving strategy reflects a willingness to jointly define problems and solutions to problems. Messages derived from this strategy are characterized by an open exchange of information that establishes a common definition of the problem and common goals and leads to the sharing of positions and the responsibilities about the issues.

#### **4.3 Communication strategy plan**

A communication strategy plan is a guideline necessary to drive the development of a communication strategy. The Cutlip, Center and Broom's public relations planning plan identified the elements used for crafting a communication strategy to include defining public relations problems, planning and programming, taking action and communicating and evaluating the programme (Gregory & Willis 2013:109). These elements of a communication strategy are depicted as follows:

**Figure 4-9 Cutlip, Center and Broom's public relations planning model**



(Source: Gregory & Willis 2013:108)

### 4.3.1 Defining public relations problems

This refers to problem analysis. The environment of the problem is analysed internally and externally. Environmental analysis is about conducting research about the, political, economic, social and technological (PEST) conditions that could potentially influence the effectiveness of communication. Gregory refers to this as PEST analysis (Gregory 1996:59; Gregory & Willis 2013:110). It relates to how external influences can affect the organisations as a whole. This could include exploring other existing initiatives and communication campaigns that are being rolled out, the potential for improving the communication environment, etc. Aims and objectives are also discussed.

The objectives of communication are ranging from the need, awareness, attitude, decisions, etc. (Kotler & Kotler 2009: 517). The most effective communication can achieve multiple objectives. The objective determines the success of communication with the target audience. Since strategic communication is about bringing the change, it is important to

identify audiences what will benefit from the intended change. A target audience is regarded as the potential buyer and play a critical role as they determine what to say, where to say it, when, and to whom (Kotler & Kotler 2009: 516). Hanson (2005:306) underscores that the communication strategy could be beautiful and brilliant, however, if it does not address the needs of the publics its execution is in vain.

It is important to establish the root cause for the particular attitude/behaviour in the intended audiences, identify the barriers to adopting the desired attitude/behaviour, and identify factors that encourage the desired attitude/behaviour need. It is important to identify relevant model of behaviour change that could address the behaviour.

#### **4.3.2 Planning and programming Strategy**

Planning and programming is about deciding on the strategy. The action plan serves as a strategic management and co-ordination instrument to ensure that objectives are met. The reasons for planning include effectiveness improvement, effort focus, encourage long term view, demonstrate value for money, minimize mishaps, reconcile conflicts and facilitates proactivity (Gregory 1996:49).

An action plan should include resources (human and financial) that will execute the plan. It should also include the media strategy for the dissemination of messages. Media strategy identifies which media and points of access will be used to get the message to the identified intended audiences. Personal communication channels (because they provide the opportunity to receive feedback instantly) are more effective than mass media channels, hence, mass media channels affect personal attitudes and behaviour (Kotler & Kotler 2009:523).

#### **4.3.3 Taking action and communicating**

Taking action and communicating is about communicating the plan. It is important to allow a thousand voices to communicate a single message. This will avoid confusion. This is related to knowing and understanding the creation of messages that aimed at providing

relevant information and motivate target audience to act purposefully (Spitzer & Swidler 2003; Mody 1991:55; Petterson 2002:8). Through media, coordination can occur both across and within media types, and this can be achieved by integrating personal and non-personal communications channels to achieve competitive advantage (Kotler & Kotler 2009:532).

#### **4.3.4 Evaluating the programme**

The management philosopher Peter Senge has noted, “If you can't measure it, you can't manage it” (Behn 2005:1). This will ensure that pre-campaign measurements are obtained for post-campaign comparison of identified indicators of success in achieving campaign objectives. It is important to include testing of developed communications with intended audience to ensure that communication is achieved as intended. Project management approach are introduced in the paragraph below in order to simplify and integrate the above strategies. This is done by integrating project management processes into the elements of communication strategy.

#### **4.3.5 The Project management approach**

The term ‘Project Management’ is used loosely and is well understood, however, the challenge is in the application. Project management focuses on the processes that are involved in the management of the project. It is important to define a “project” first, then define “project management”.

A project is useful for bringing the change by introducing innovations, address new challenges or find solutions for problems for which the existing procedures and routines do not accommodate (Van den Broucke 2012:2). Within the strategic context, project management is essential for managing such a change. In the term project management, ‘project’ refers to the temporary endeavour undertaken to create a unique product or service (Burke 2007:17). It is defined through its scope by determining the amount of works that needs to be done and breaking down the total work into smaller works also called activities or tasks (Koskela & Howell 2002:294). From a systems point of view a project is a



systematic, goal-oriented, temporary and one-time endeavour to create a unique product or service within clearly specified time, cost and quality constraints (Van den Broucke 2012:2).

The PMBOK project management definition as quoted by other authors refers to the application of knowledge, skills, tools and techniques to project activities in order to meet stakeholder's needs and expectations from the project (Burke 2007:18; Van den Broucke 2012:2).

Whether poor or good, project management is visible in the end-product and concludes the presentation of actions undertaken to build the end product. The project management approach reveals how action contributes to goals. In this study, the project management approach will be used to analyse the communication strategies.

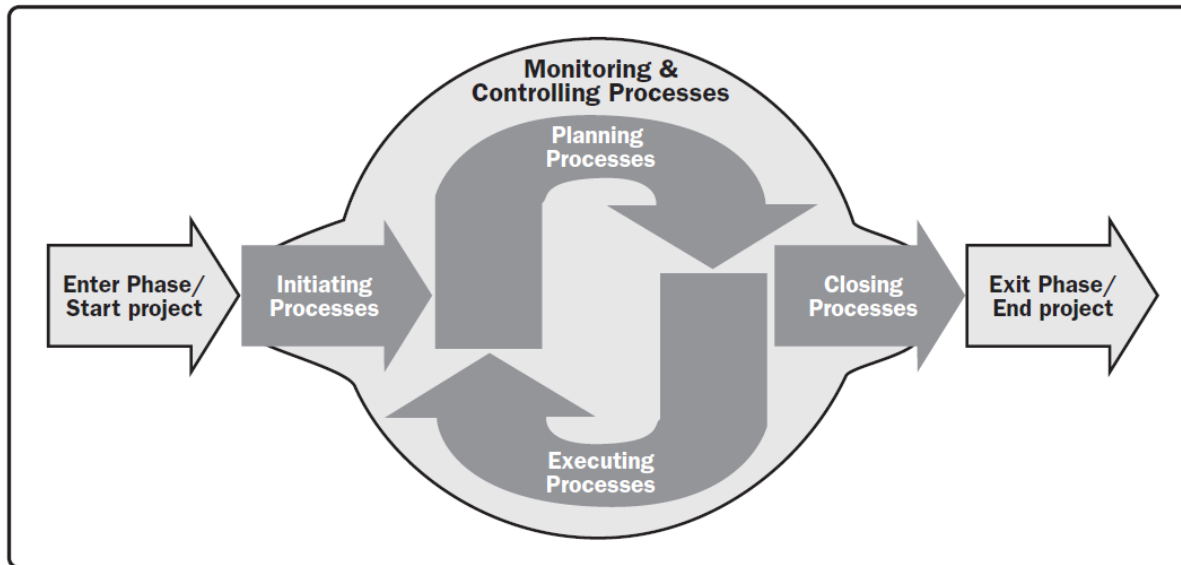
From the project management point of view, people are able to connect. Connected people are able to crowdsource, co-operate, co-operate or mass-collaborate. This means that very large numbers of internet users drawn together by some common purpose can cooperate on sizeable project (Susskind & Susskind 2015:179). This analytical approach is allied to systems theory. While the systems theory understands the components of the system to be bound to work together, through the project management approach, the project life cycle involves the design of systems employed in designing, implementation and control of those systems in order to realize the production intended and improvement of those systems (Koskela & Howell 2002:294).

#### **4.3.6 Project management processes**

Project management includes the initiation process first, before the planning process and the closure process, and after the controlling process in order to complete the cycle of a project with all processes, namely: initiation, planning, execution and control and closure. In the 5th edition of the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) presented the processes according to the diagram below.



**Figure 4-10 Project Management processes**



(Source PMBOK 2013:50)

**Monitoring and controlling** processes are required to track, review, and orchestrate the progress and performance of the project; identify any areas in which changes to the plan are required; and initiate the corresponding changes. The key benefit of these processes is that the analysis and the measurement of project performance is done at regular intervals, appropriate events, or exception conditions to identify variances from the project management plan.

The monitoring and controlling processes are effective in controlling changes and recommending corrective or preventive action in anticipation of possible problems, monitoring the ongoing project activities against the project management plan and the project performance measurement baseline, and influencing the factors that could circumvent integrated change control or configuration management so only approved changes are implemented. This continuous monitoring provides the project team insight into the health of the project and identifies any areas requiring additional attention.

The monitoring and controlling processes not only monitors and controls the work being done, but also monitors and controls the entire project effort. In multiphase projects, the monitoring and controlling processes coordinates project phases in order to implement corrective or preventive actions to bring the project into compliance with the project

management plan. This review can result in recommended and approved updates to the project management plan.

**Initiation processes** - consist of those processes performed to define a new project or a new phase of an existing project by obtaining authorization to start the project or phase. Within the Initiating processes, the initial scope is defined and initial financial resources are committed. Internal and external stakeholders who will interact and influence the overall outcome of the project are identified. If not already assigned, the project manager will be selected. This information is captured in the project charter and stakeholder register. When the project charter is approved, the project becomes officially authorized.

A project boundary is defined as the point in time that a project or project phase is authorized to its completion. The key purpose of planning process is to align the stakeholders' expectations with the project's purpose, give them visibility about the scope and objectives, show how their participation in the project and its associated phases can ensure that their expectations are achieved. These processes help set the vision of the project—what is needed to be accomplished. The most common tools or methodologies used in the initiation stage are project charter, business plan, project methodology, business case justification, and milestones reviews (Westland, 2007:2).

**Planning processes** - planning includes the management of scope, time, cost, quality, human resources (people), communications, risks, procurement, and stakeholders (Burke 2003; PMBOK: 2013; Steyn et al. 2002). The planning processes consist of those processes performed to establish the total scope of the effort, define and refine the objectives, and develop the course of action required to attain those objectives. The planning processes develop the project management plan and the project documents that will be used to carry out the project.

The complex nature of project management may require the use of repeated feedback loops for additional analysis. As more project information or characteristics are gathered and understood, additional planning will likely be required. Significant changes occurring throughout the project life cycle trigger a need to revisit one or more of the planning processes and possibly some of the initiating processes. This progressive detailing of the

project management plan is called progressive elaboration, indicating that planning and documentation are iterative and ongoing activities. The key benefit of this processes is to delineate the strategy and tactics as well as the course of action or path to successfully complete the project or phase. When the planning processes are well managed, it is much easier to get stakeholder buy-in and engagement. These processes express how this will be done, setting the route to the desired objective. The most common tools or methodologies used in the planning stage are business plan and a milestone reviews (Burke 2007:118).

**Executing processes** are being performed to complete the work defined in the project management plan to satisfy the project specifications. They involve coordinating people and resources, managing stakeholder expectations, as well as integrating and performing the activities of the project in accordance with the project management plan.

During project execution, results may require planning updates and re-baselining. This may include changes to expected activity durations, changes in resource productivity and availability, and unanticipated risks. Such variances may affect the project management plan or project documents and may require detailed analysis and development of appropriate project management answers.

The results of the analysis can trigger change requests that, if approved, may modify the project management plan or other project documents and possibly require establishing new baselines (PMBOK 2013:56). The execution and control phase is typically the longest phase of the project in terms of duration (Westland, 2007:6). The most common tools or methodologies used in the execution phase are an update of risk analysis and score cards, in addition to business plan and milestones reviews (Burke, 2007:224).

**Closing processes** - consist of those processes performed to conclude all activities across all project management processes to formally complete the project, phase, or contractual obligations. These processes, when completed, verifies that the defined tasks are completed within all of the processes to close the project or a project phase, as appropriate, and formally establishes that the project or project phase is complete. These processes also formally establish the premature closure of the project. Prematurely closed projects may include, for example: aborted projects, cancelled projects, and projects having a critical

situation. In specific cases, when some contracts cannot be formally closed (e.g. claims, termination clauses, etc.) or some activities are to be transferred to other organizational units, specific hand-over procedures may be arranged and finalized.

#### **4.4 Media**

Strategic communication is aimed at determining the appropriate content of the messages and the appropriate method for delivering the messages to the appropriate audiences through the appropriate media. Media has the potential to establish communication networks. Some networks enable and encourage people to compete with each other (Susskind & Susskind 2015:180).

Media play a key role in the dissemination of information. It is important for the messages to be communicated through the integration of different media, and to reach a multitude of audiences with the intention of changing or influencing audience behaviour. It is also through systematic processes that such media are integrated. This is confirmed by this study through systems theory and the theories of mass communication.

In this study, media is regarded as a powerful tool for promoting mass communication successfully. Within the context of this study, the promotion of mass communication means that communication cannot be separated from marketing because this study deals with the communication of messages in different forms. Such messages are marketed to the target audience, who determine effectiveness through their answers and feedback.

In mass communication, messages are quickly sent to a large number of different audiences. Ndiayea and Ndiayea (2014:72) assert that media informs reality for its recipients. People must understand how the media function in the global and local context of demographic change because of their importance for the future of employment and knowledge (Miller 2012:95). With the increasing technology, there will not be sufficient growth in the types of professional tasks in which people have the advantage to keep most professionals in full employment (Susskind & Susskind 2015:291). As machines continue to be capable they will go on eroding any advantage that people have today in performing certain types of tasks.

#### **4.4.1 Types of media relevant to this study**

Since mass communication is the focus of this study, mass media communication will be discussed as the main channel for the delivery of messages and the communication of information for identifying unemployment factors, and the ability to choose correct and relevant careers. According to Olamide and Olawaiye (2013:33), career selection is one of many important choices students will make in determining future plans. This is also informed by the types of channels that they may choose to follow or use.

New media platforms such as internet and social media allow strategic communicators to overcome communication divisions and provide them with more opportunity to follow a holistic approach that allows both persuasive and collaborative communication depending on the stakeholders involved (Holtzhausen & Zerfass 2015:8). The types of the main channels include audio (radio), social (e.g. Facebook), visual (e.g. television) and print media (e.g. newspapers).

These media platforms are chosen for their accessibility, for being cost effective, and are those used predominantly for career information and employment advertisements. They are also regarded as the popular channel for reaching massive audiences, as well as accommodating technological and non-technological areas. Very few messages will impact their audiences if only a single channel carries them. That happens because each form of media has limited strengths, where some channels are good in introducing a subject, while others are better at giving reminders, some are good at presenting concrete details, while others are better at abstractions, and each form of media meanwhile attracts a specific audience (Mody 1991:178).

##### **4.4.1.1 Social media**

Birim (2016:70) regards social media as a key source of strategic communication. He further highlighted that Social media is not regarded as a communication trend rather it enables strategic management approach (Birim 2016:70). It is important to note information

technology and the internet have combined to transform the information-creating information seeking and information dissemination habits of human beings (Susskind & Susskind 2015:151). Through the internet, media allow each individual to interact with increasingly lessening limitation (Media Landscape 2012:27). It combined electronic and social media because they are almost interrelated, and dependent on technology. These are also called digital or new media. Both electronic and social media depend on the internet.

The skills and the knowledge of the users about these media could also contribute negatively and positively to accessibility, usability, etc. They both work on electronics like computers, cell phones, tablets, i-phones, etc. In decades ago the most popular ways of communication have been through face-to-face, in writing and telephone however, today there are many more options ranging from email to tele present, from text messaging to social networks, from real-time to chat online collaborations (Birim 2016:70; Susskind & Susskind 2015:114). Social media usage indicators are considered as providing online communities, timely updates, personalized communication and tracking large scale of data (Birim 2016:70).

Advantages and disadvantages of social media are well noted. Sending emails and texts is an automated version of writing letters, whereas social networking is a way of innovative technology that give rise to ways of communicating that were not possible in the past (Susskind & Susskind 2015:114). Through the social media, knowledge is shared, information is accessed live or real-time, with no limitations in terms of location and time.

Although this has the greater advantage, it is somehow risky because it exposes some of the users and content of media messages to unintended audiences. The example of this is the access to pornography and sensitive news to the kids. It is unfortunate that this cannot be avoided no matter how hard the parents, teachers, communities, can try to avoid it. At home and school, parents and teachers can set the controls however kids may find a way to access the stuff that they are not supposed to access in their own intellectual ways.

There are certain restrictions, such as age, but they are not controlled, since it is the responsibility of the user to be cautious and responsible. It is not enough that the professionals have knowledge and skills. It is also expected that their knowledge is current

with the latest insights and techniques at their disposal. They have the responsibility to extend the boundaries of their disciplines, for generating new ideas and methods (Susskind & Susskind 2015:16). This confirms that, although electronic media have reduced communication barriers, it is not free from errors and risks. Due to information security issues, extra care is required. Such care could also be costly, or result in costly consequences.

#### **4.4.1.2 Print media**

South Africa has a long and proud history of journalistic excellence in the print media, however the amount of time that people spend on reading newspapers over the past thirty years has dropped by around a half and this is a consequence of television historical growth (Susskind & Susskind 2015:73). The use of media is relative to its consumption. Media consumption indicates our belonging to various social groups, and is central to the expression of our identities and our forms of social belonging (Straw, Gabrielle, & Wagman 2011:275).

The use of electronic media through technology can neither replace nor nullify the use of print media. This also informs that human intervention is required. Although the society is transitioning from print based industrial society to technology based internet society it is accepted that traditional professional working in conventional institutions will still be needed as the main interface between the lay person and the bodies of knowledge to which they might now have access but not yet the wherewithal to interpret (Susskind & Susskind 2015:151). This is due to challenges that may face the audience members who have no access to technology. While technology and social media are evolving, the researcher sees print media (e.g. newspapers) as still playing a prevalent role in the communication of messages to an intended audience. Potentially, print media is a space that would be very useful for University of Technology graduates to explore.

While noting its advantages and disadvantages, print media could be less costly, and is not affected by technology and electricity (load shedding). The use of print media is declining, however. Since the 1800s the print newspaper has for many people been their main window



on the outside world, but today in many places it is a decline (Susskind & Susskind 2015:71). In ten years leading up to 2017 the per capita daily newspaper circulation fell by 32%, the number of print journals fell by one third (Susskind & Susskind 2015:72). Accessibility and usability rely on user's responsibility. While print brought great change, the process of printing itself remained a specialist activity requiring heavy duty equipment and equipment run by highly skilled personnel (Susskind & Susskind 2015:150). This has at some point replaced people with the equipment / machinery.

#### 4.4.1.3 Visual media

Mass communication has traditionally been regarded as a one-way form of communication because it was perceived that the message is just sent to the audience, and that there is no feedback or response from the audience. Due to evolving technology, this perception changes overtime. The gradual change of information consumption among the users is perceived.

Mass communication allows interactivity in the communication process. Interactivity refers to two-way communication, which allows both the organisation and the stakeholders of the organisation to send and receive messages as described by Spots and Lambert (in Niemann 2005: 190). Mass communication has recently become a two-way process rather than a one-way process. For example, this is notable through the television or radio communication, where, during and after a given news reading, an audience is able to pick their topic of interest and send their comments or answers on social media (e.g. Instagram, twitter, Facebook, Youtube, Pinterest, Google, LinkedIn, etc.) to the newsreader, who is able to read the comments back to the public.

Web and social media has a potentially damaging effect on society by creating mountains of increasing information that decreases the need for specialist who reliably interpret and apply information in particular circumstances (Susskind & Susskind 2015:151). The newsreader is also able to pick some of the answers and read them instantly to the viewers.

Time is obviously not sufficient to read all the comments, but this at least shows that television is changing from being a one-way to a two-way communication medium. Through

this interaction, there is the possibility of using the audience answers to create a further platform of debate about the particular issue. This is important, because it is a way of showing the viewers or the audience that their answers or comments are not in vain. Although the biggest barrier to the watching of television is cost, just like other media, the user has the responsibility to control what is watched (where language, content and age restrictions are advised).

#### **4.4.1.4 Audio media**

Radio is a trusted source of communication, not just in non-technological areas, but also in busy working environments. One can listen to radio while busy doing other things. It is not like a television, whereby a person is required to stop doing other things and watch attentively.

#### **4.4.2 Integrated marketing communication approach**

Media is viewed with integrated marketing communication approach. This approach is incorporated in this study since media needs marketing principles for presenting messages to the audience in a selling approach. Without communication, life would be meaningless and doomed. The term “communication” is not divorced from the term “marketing”, because both terms are generally designed for visibility, expression, and the presentation of ideas. Communication and marketing both involve the integration of processes and systems.

According to Spots and Lambert (in Niemann 2005: 27) integrated marketing communication is defined as the strategic coordination of all messages (internally and externally) to create dialogue between the customer and the organisation, which will attitudinally and behaviourally move the customer towards brand loyalty.

## 4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, communication is defined from the perspective of other authors. The role of media in relation to the role players and their interaction in the communication process is deliberated. Communication is defined through various definitions from various authors. The types of media relevant to communication information about unemployment factors are also discussed. The types of media relevant to this study, as well as their advantages and disadvantages, were also presented.

Media is interesting and evolving overtime. However, it needs to be relevant. Technological infrastructure may also raise complexities that inform this relevance, yet are generally achievable. This calls for continuous monitoring and education at an individual level, in terms of how to access and use media in their variety. This also informs a continuous change and the accessibility of media as it affects individuals and human communication, hence the need for the communication strategy, which is critical to the improvement of communication at the education level, workplace level, and eventually to the impact on an individual level. The next chapter focuses on the theoretical framework of the study.

## CHAPTER FIVE - RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter is a presentation of the research methodology and research design. Babbie and Mouton (2001:74) differentiate between the research methodology and the research design by referring to the research methodology as the methods and tools the researcher will be using to complete the research, while the research design refers to the plan of how the researcher will conduct the research.

This chapter presents a paradigm on which the research methodology for this study rests. In this study, the researcher uses the mixed methods of research to collect data. The study further presents the pilot study, data analysis, reliability, validity and ethical considerations.

### 5.2 Research design

The research design is viewed from the perspectives ensconced in the definitions of various authors. It is broadly defined by Kothari (2004:32) as plan that specifies the sources and types of information relevant to the research problem and a strategy specifying which approach will be used for gathering and analysing the data. Rajasekar, Philominathan and Chinnathambi (2013:5) refer to design as the procedures by which researchers go about their work of describing, explaining and exploring the phenomena. The understanding and the knowledge about the phenomena informs the purposes of the research which include:

- Exploration: requires the researcher to examine a new interest or a study of a new subject (Babbie 2008:96) (Singh 2007:63).
- Description: requires a researcher to describe the events and answer the questions of what, where, when and how (Babbie 2008:99).
- Explanation: requires a researcher to explicate and answer the questions of how (Babbie 2008:99).

For the purpose of this study, the quantitative and qualitative research methodologies were adopted. Quantitative research is often placed in opposition to qualitative research and this is often turned into a 'paradigm war' which is seen to result from apparently incompatible worldviews underlying the methods (Sukamolson 2007:19). However, according to the researcher the quantitative and qualitative research methodologies should complement each other. In this study a survey research design, based on the mixed research methodologies whereby descriptive statistics are used to analyse the quantitative data and the thematic analysis is used to analyse the qualitative data.

Mixed methods research is formally defined here as 'the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study. Mixed methods research is an attempt to legitimate the use of multiple approaches in answering research questions' (Harwell, 2010:148).

### 5.2.1 Research paradigm

This section discusses the paradigm and the background to the study in order to understand the adoption of a mixed methodology approach. A paradigm is a model or framework for observation and understanding, which shapes both what is seen and what is understood (Babbie, 2008:34). Paradigms provide frameworks in which theories are created. The table below provides details of both paradigms informing the research approach for this study, by comparing a positivist and a phenomenological paradigms as follows:

**Table 5-2 A comparison of positivist and phenomenological paradigms**

Subject	Positivist paradigm	Phenomenological paradigm
Basic beliefs	The world is external and objective	The world is socially constructed and subjective
	The observer is independent	The observer is a party to what is observed
	Science is value free	Science is driven by human interests

Subject	Positivist paradigm	Phenomenological paradigm
The researcher should	Focus on facts	Focus on meanings
	Locate causality between variables	Understand what is happening
	Follow the deductive approach	Follow the inductive approach
Methods include	Operationalizing concepts so that they can be measured	Using multiple methods to establish different views of a phenomenon
	Using large samples from which to generalize the population	Using small samples research in depth or overtime
	Quantitative methods	Qualitative methods

(Source Gray 2009:23)

In this study the positivist paradigm will confirm the symptoms of the problem which are regarded as the factors that are informing of identifying graduate unemployment while the phenomenological paradigm will focus on the respondents' solicitation of the meaning of the proposed communication strategy, with which the lack of the communication strategy is the root cause of the problem that is investigated in this study. Mixed methods approach combining qualitative and quantitative research elements is used to integrate these qualitative and quantitative research findings within a single systematic review (Heyvaert, Maes & Onghena 2011:1). The quantitative and qualitative research methods are discussed in the paragraphs below.

### 5.2.2 Quantitative research

Du Plooy (2001) highlights that 'the research goal or aim determines the research approach and techniques or methodologies followed'. The goal of this research is to identify the factors contributing to graduate unemployment and confirm a media that is relevant and strategy to increase graduate employment potential. The researcher first defines the goal in order to ensure that the research approach does not deviate from the research objective. Quantitative research using statistical methods often begins with the collection of data

based on a theory or hypothesis or experiment followed by the application of descriptive or inferential statistical methods. According to Brown and Hale (2014:26), quantitative methodologies focus on reducing a phenomenon to numbers by assigning numerical codes to them, and then analysing them with statistical techniques.

### **5.2.2.1 The characteristics of quantitative research**

Quantitative research is numerical, non-descriptive, applies statistics or mathematics and uses numbers. It is an iterative process whereby evidence is evaluated, the results are often presented in tables and graphs, it is conclusive and it investigates the what, where and when of decision making (Rajasekar et al 2013:9).

### **5.2.2.2 The advantages of quantitative approach**

It is noted that in data collection, there are advantages and disadvantages to be considered. The quantitative approach has the ability to make correct predictions and can measure past and current events in the social world, and use what is and has been as a basis for predicting what will be (Tewksbury 2009:41). It promotes objectivity and eliminates bias (Garbers 1996:279). It possesses less reactivity effects or interviewer bias that can be created by someone with a vested interest in the results, and it can be arranged that the answers are confidential and anonymous, such that even the researcher does not know to whom each response belongs. This creates an atmosphere of trust, and leads to more truthful answers (Gorard 2003:93).

In support of the advantages of the quantitative approach, in this study the predictions that will be derived from the responses will be used to confirm and identify the factors that contribute to the graduate unemployment as well as contributing to the establishment of the communication strategy that is proposed by this study. The confidentiality and anonymity of the responses cannot be underestimated since these are the ethical requirements of this study.

### **5.2.2.3 The disadvantages of quantitative research**

Although a quantitative research approach is chosen for this study, the researcher recognizes the disadvantages of this approach. The disadvantages of the quantitative research approach are that it does not take into account people's ability to think and argue, it excluded the notion of people's freedom, choice and moral responsibility, and also does not account for people's unique ability to interpret their experiences, constructs and their own meaning of the situation or phenomenon (Ramchander 2004:106; Tewksbury 2009:42).

### **5.2.3 Qualitative research**

Qualitative research uses a naturalistic approach that seeks to understand phenomena in context-specific settings such as real world setting where the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest (Golafshani 2003:600). Its aim is to discover the underlying motives of human behaviour (Kothari 2004:3). Qualitative research, on the other hand, is concerned with qualitative phenomenon, i.e., phenomena relating to or involving quality or kind. For instance, one can be interested in investigating the reasons for human behaviour (i.e., why people think or do certain things).

#### **5.2.3.1 Characteristics of qualitative research**

Qualitative research is non-numerical, descriptive, applies reasoning and uses words, its aim is to get the meaning, feeling and describe the situation, it is exploratory and it investigates the why and how of decision making and qualitative data cannot be graphed (Rajasekar et al 2013:9; Golafshani 2003:598).

#### **5.2.3.2 The advantages of qualitative research**

Qualitative research provides the opportunity to identify descriptive characteristics in a person in such a way that the absence or the presence of such characteristics can be easily noticed (Kothari 2004:124). In qualitative research, people under study are given the



opportunity to interpret their own view of the world (Cassel 2005:12). This type of research aims at discovering the underlying motives and desires, using in depth interviews (Kothari 2004:3).

In this study, the qualitative approach will be helpful in overcoming the disadvantages of the quantitative approach as mentioned above. For the purpose of this study, it is important that people's ability to think and argue should be considered and this will be done by giving the respondents the opportunity to provide inputs to the proposed communication strategy.

### **5.2.3.3 The disadvantages of qualitative research**

In qualitative studies that involves humans, the research results can be manipulated because the humans can change their behaviour during data collection. The subjects under study may behave in a way that would positively or negatively influence the research results. There are chances that the research results may not be a correct and a full representation of reality.

In order to overcome this disadvantage, this study is interested in gathering the views of the respondents regarding the establishment of communication strategy. Instead of making decisions on behalf of the respondents, it is advisable that the respondents be given the opportunity to provide their inputs or negate the inputs.

## **5.3 Research methodology**

The procedures followed when conducting research included delineating the area of study, targeting an accessible population, sampling, sampling size and data collection instrument.

### **5.3.1 Area of study**

The study was conducted at one of the universities of Technology in South Africa. It should be noted that the exact area or location where the University of Technology is situated is not

revealed. The study was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the University of Technology in question, on condition of its anonymity. This is to ensure the protection of the University of Technology as well as the protection of the respondents.

The researcher used the University of Technology as an area of study in order to further confirm the findings obtained by other studies. For example, the study conducted by Van der Berg and Van Broekhuizen (2012:3) highlights the perception that certain graduate struggle to find jobs, particularly black students from historically disadvantaged (and often rural) universities, usually students who have majored in Arts and the Humanities. Specifically, the University of Technology was chosen among other higher education institutions, because it is locally accessible to the researcher. This university of technology represents a large number of black people, and the so-called “previously disadvantaged group”.

### **5.3.2 Target vs. accessible population**

The population in this study is discussed under the following headings: target, and accessible population.

#### **5.3.2.1 Target population**

Target population is defined as the larger group to which the researcher wishes to generalize the results (Wilkinson & McNel 1996:158). In this study, the target population refers to the graduate students at the University of Technology.

#### **5.3.2.2 Accessible population**

Accessible population is defined as the population that is readily available to the researcher (Wilkinson & McNel 1996:158). In this study, accessible population refers to the graduate students at the University of Technology in the faculty of Humanities, in the three departments, namely:

- The Department of Applied Languages;
- The Department of Law; and
- The Department of Journalism.

### 5.3.3 Sampling

Sampling refers to the procedures followed for selecting samples from the population (Wilkinson & McNeil 1996:164). Babbie (2008:203) identifies two categories of sampling, probability (a representation of a total population) and non-probability (not a representation of a total population). In this study, probability sampling was used to select the respondents. The results are a representation of honours and masters students at a University of Technology.

Stratified sampling (a type of probability sampling) was employed in this study, and refers to the sampling technique that ensures a proper representation of the stratification variables and enhances the representation of other variables related to them (Babbie 2008:229). In this study, the sample is selected from the graduate students doing honours and master's degrees at a university of technology, in the three departments within the faculty of humanities.

According to Gray (2009:148), samples are selected from a sampling frame or a list of the population elements. Gray also (2009:148) states that while every attempt can be made to select the sampling frame that provides details of the entire population, practical circumstances can make the sampling frame incomplete. Due to the protests at a university of technology, students were not available from all the departments within the faculty of humanities. Data was collected from only three departments within the Humanities faculties, as indicated in the table below.

**Table 5-3 Population and Strata**

<b>Strata</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
Applied languages	160	59%
Law	50	19%
Journalism	60	22%
Total	270	100%

### 5.3.4 Sample size

Sample size is described as the number of items that are selected from the population (Kothari 2004:56). The sample size can be determined from the average population called the mean sample (MCSAf 2011:29). In this study a sample of 90 respondents was drawn from the population of 270 students within the three departments in the Faculty of Humanities.

### 5.3.5 Data collection instrument

For the purpose of this study, a survey questionnaire was used to collect data. According to Alreck and Settle (1995:3) researchers conduct surveys for the following three main reasons:

- To influence some audience;
- To create a product or a service; and
- To understand and predict human behaviour or conditions.

Surveys are designed to describe the characteristics of the phenomena such as demographic characteristics or complex things such as respondents' attitudes, preferences, and lifestyle patterns (Alreck & Settle 1995:5). While Groenewald (1986:54) states that the subjects involved in the survey may include demographic characteristics, the social

environment, opinions, attitudes and beliefs of many groups of people, Ramchander (2004:112) maintains that questionnaire surveys have been widely used for measuring perceptions and attitudes.

Questionnaire surveys are advantageous for this study because they are less costly and they are easier to administer. Since each item is followed by alternative answers, they are helpful when measuring attitudes and orientation in a large population, and they are convenient because the respondents can provide their answers at their own time and place, can eliminate interviewer bias, and can ask the respondents to provide their comments (Oyieke 2008:61; Babbie 2008:270; Gorard 2003:90). Furthermore, it is always advisable to monitor the process during actual data collection (Alreck & Settle 1995:215) in order to eliminate bias.

Although surveys were chosen as a method, the researcher also considered their limitations. The questionnaire surveys are difficult to construct, because the questions must be well thought out, answers are limited, the respondents are expected to respond according to the researcher's choice, where answers may be difficult to categorize as well as difficult to analyse (Oyieke 2008:62).

While surveys can determine human behaviour, they have difficulty measuring causality, because it is not possible to further question why human beings behave in a certain way in the survey format. Some respondents may not provide answers as there is no one prompting them to do so. The reason for not prompting them is that the researcher wants to maintain objectivity and avoid biases in the research. Surveys place the responsibility on the researcher to avoid bias and error to the greatest degree possible.

The questionnaires are developed from the research objectives. According to Babbie (1979:121), in surveys, a series of statements that all have the same set of response categories may be presented in the form of a matrix. Correspondingly, in this study the surveys are presented in the form of closed questions and statements. Only one open ended question was asked. In clarifying this, Babbie (2001:240) has noted that in closed questionnaires, the respondents are asked to select an answer from among a list provided

by the researcher and in open-ended questions, the respondent is asked to provide his or her own answer to the question.

The survey questionnaire (see Appendix A) was based on the objectives of the study and was made up of six parts. Part 1-5 asked the closed questions (quantitative questions) and part 6 asked the open ended question (qualitative question) as follows:

- Part 1 constituted *closed questions* for collecting information about respondents' demographic information.
- Part 2 (objectives 1 and 2). Objective 1 - identifying factors contributing to graduate unemployment. Objective 2 – clarifying the role of media in addressing unemployment challenges) constituted a Likert scale questionnaire survey for determining the role that could be played by media in addressing unemployment challenges. With the Likert scale, respondents are asked to indicate the degree of agreement or disagreement for each statement on the instrument using a scale of 1 to 5 (Mutchnick & Berg 1996:38).
- Part 3 (Objective 3) - identifying types of media that are used to disseminate information about unemployment factors, and identifying unemployment factors that affect graduate, respectively) constituted a set of Likert scale questionnaire survey for types of media that are used to disseminate information about unemployment factors. The answers will be measured on a 5 point Likert type scale questionnaire survey with a score of 5 representing 'strongly agree' and a score of 1 representing 'strongly disagree', where 'strongly agree' expresses greater favour towards the perception statements and 'strongly disagree' represent the opposite (Du Plooy 2002:128).
- Part 4 (objective 4) - confirming whether unemployment is a challenge faced by the students currently studying at the university of technology) constituted closed questionnaires for assessing whether or not unemployment is a problem affecting the graduate students.
- Part 5 (objective 5) – confirmation of a media platform that is relevant to the dissemination of information about unemployment factors) constituted empirical statements for confirming a media that is relevant to disseminate information about unemployment factors
- In part 6 (objective 6) the respondents were asked to express their thoughts by providing any additional comments (positive or negative) regarding the establishment of a communication strategy for recognizing factors contributing to graduate unemployment.

### **5.3.6 Data analysis and interpretation**

This part of the document explains how data in the next chapter will be analysed. According to Kothari (2004:18) after the data has been collected, the researcher turns to the task of analysis. Since the study adopted both the quantitative and qualitative approaches, for the quantitative approach, the thematic analysis was used to analyse the qualitative responses. For the quantitative responses, data analysis included counting of answers, tabulating the data, and coding the answers.

#### **5.3.6.1 Quantitative data analysis and interpretation**

In statistical analysis, it is important to identify the variables under study. Great care is required in measuring variables (Ragin & Amoroso 2011:174). The name 'variable' refers to the fact that this data will differ between units and this differing data is called attributes (Singh 2013:7). The variables that are studied in this study include gender, age, race, level of study and the type of study. For example, this research studied the gender of students as a variable attributed to both female and male students. This means in other words that gender is a variable, and that female and male are attributes of this variable.

Bless, Higson-Smith and Sithole (2013:395) mentioned that a variable is an empirical property that is observed to change by taking more than one value or being of more than one kind. They further differentiate between an independent variable as well as the dependent variable where by the former is observed and measured to determine the effect on it of the independent variable while the latter is measured, manipulated or selected by the researcher to determine its relationship to an observed phenomenon (the dependent variable).

In this study, the demographic characteristics of the respondents are regarded as the independent variables. The empirical statements are regarded as the dependent variables. The demographic characteristics of the respondents vary according to individual's choices or decisions (e.g. type of study) and nature (e.g. age).

Data will be analysed through the Pearson Chi-Square to determine the significance of difference between the respondents' demographic characteristics. The chi-square test will be used to determine the 5% level of significance between the variables. The research results are presented in the form of the frequency distribution tables. After counting, data will be presented in tables. Data should necessarily be condensed into a few manageable groups and tabled for further analysis (Kothari 2004:18). This will include tables presenting all parts of the questionnaire, as per the study research instrument. After presenting data in tabular formats, the researcher will classify the raw data into some purposeful and usable categories (Kothari 2004:18).

According to Singh (2013:316), descriptive statistics, together with simple graphics analysis, form the basis of virtually every quantitative analysis of data and provide simple summaries about the sample and the measures. Since data will be coded by turning the raw data into numerical representations, after coding there may be possible errors. Such errors will be cleaned through a process called data cleaning. Data cleaning is the process of detecting and correcting coding errors (Babbie 2001:392).

For the purpose of statistical data analysis, the following hypothesis was formulated:

$H_0$  (null hypothesis): There is no significance difference between the interview questions or empirical statements and the respondents' demographic characteristics

$H_1$  (alternative hypothesis): There is a significance difference between the interview questions or empirical statements and the respondents' demographic characteristics

The researcher sought to determine the most effective demographic characteristic that may contribute to the establishment of an integrated communication strategy as an enabling tool for increasing graduate employment potential based on the tested empirical statements and the interview questions.

Data was collected through empirical statements and the interview questions according to the first 5 research objectives as follows:



- identify factors contributing to graduate unemployment – 15 empirical statements;
- clarify the role of media in addressing unemployment challenges – 6 empirical statements;
- identify types of media that are used to disseminate information about factors contributing to graduate unemployment – 4 interview questions;
- confirm if unemployment is a challenge faced by the graduates at the university of technology – 4 interview questions;
- confirm a media that is relevant for disseminating information about unemployment factors – 6 empirical statements and 1 question.

It should be noted that the 6<sup>th</sup> research objective was used for qualitative data analysis.

### **5.3.6.2 Qualitative data analysis and interpretation**

While the quantitative research methodology allows for deductive analysis and qualitative methodology allows for inductive analysis, the thematic analysis provides flexibility for approaching research patterns in two ways, i.e. inductive and deductive (Alhojailan 2012:39). Thematic analysis is capable of detecting and identifying, for example, such factors or variables as may influence any issue generated by the participants. Therefore, the participants' interpretations are significant in terms of giving the most appropriate explanations for their behaviours, actions and thoughts (Alhojailan 2012:11).

The steps that are followed for applying thematic analysis are outline by Braun and Clarke (2006: 16) as follows:

1. Familiarizing yourself with your data: transcribing data (if necessary), reading and rereading the data, noting down initial ideas.
2. Generating initial codes: coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.

3. Searching for themes: collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes: checking in the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis.
5. Defining and naming themes: On-going analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6. Producing the report: the final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating the analysis back to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

The practical application of thematic analysis for this study is presented in chapter 6, under the heading "qualitative data analysis for the proposed communication strategy".

Based on the above information, data will be analysed in a four-section approach, namely:

- Section A - is the analysis and interpretation of demographic profile of the respondents
- Section B – is the analysis and interpretation of the first 5 objectives of the study according to the descriptive statistics
- Section C – is the quantitative analysis and the descriptive statistics based on the 5 objectives of the study according to the Pearson Chi-Square.
- Section D – is the qualitative analysis of the 6<sup>th</sup> objective of the study. The 6<sup>th</sup> objective required the respondents to provide comments about the establishment of the strategy.

#### **5.4 Pilot study**

The pilot study refers to a test of effectiveness of the researcher's manipulations on a small group of participants before launching the full study (Devlin 2006:248). In this study, the research instrument was piloted in the Department of Applied Languages at the University of Technology through self-administered questionnaires. At this time, the students were writing examinations and they were not easily accessible.

Twenty questionnaires were prepared and used for conducting the pilot study between October and November of 2015. The questionnaire was distributed to the seven honours students in the Department of Applied Languages. The pilot study was done in order to confirm and address any ambiguity in the questionnaire. The respondents were also asked to provide feedback about any difficulties they experienced in filling the questionnaire.

The response rate was regarded as very poor, according to the researcher. It is worth noting that data collection was done at the very busy time. Higher education institutions were all affected by the students' protests that demanded the national fall of fees. The University of Technology under study was also affected by the protests. The poor response was also due to the fact that notwithstanding the students' protests, other students were also writing examinations.

The pilot study allowed the opportunity to explore further feasibility for data collection. The pilot study was done in order to first determine any errors that may be picked from the survey questionnaire. It was used as a way of correcting errors and omissions of which the researcher may be unaware. The answers from the pilot study were used to correct the errors and amend the questionnaires where applicable. The fixed areas were as follows:

- Since the researcher wanted to include the honours, master's and doctoral students, it was realized that doctoral students are not part of the study because they are hardly available to the campus. They only come to the campus when they have appointments with their supervisors.
- The researcher wanted to collect data from all the departments within the humanities faculty. However, due to students' protests, this was not possible. Data was collected from only three departments. Accessing other departments would have necessitated postponing data collection until such time as students were available. It is for this reason that the researcher chose to collect data from the three departments included, namely: Department of Applied Languages, Department of Law and Department of Journalism.

The amended final questionnaire was issued in the New Year on the 7<sup>th</sup> March 2016. A research assistant was involved, and made it possible to collect data.

## **5.5 Reliability and validity**

Validity refers to measuring what is intended to measure, while reliability refers to how dependable, consistent and repeatable measures are in a study across several studies (Rubin, Rubin & Piele 2005:211). The questions asked by the researcher and the answers that provided by the respondents were aimed at determining the reliability and validity of the measuring instrument, namely, the survey questionnaires. Babbie (2008:157) defined reliability as a matter of whether a particular technique applied repeatedly to the same object yields the same results each time.

Validity is the extent to which an empirical measure adequately reflects the real meaning of the concept under study (Babbie 2008:160). It is the best available approximation to the truth of a given proposition (Singh 2013:24). Validity determines whether the research truly measures that which it was intended to measure or how truthful the research results are (Golafshani 2003:599)

### **5.5.1 Validity with reference to this study**

Since validity is defined by Brown & Hale (2014:176), as the extent to which the measuring instrument is measuring what is designed to measure, the use of qualitative approach over and above the quantitative approach allowed for further verification and validity of the study. For the establishment of the strategy, this study relied on the qualitative answers provided by the respondents. Only one question asked the respondents to provide comments, that is, the qualitative answers. The aim of this question was to increase validity in relation to the closed questions and empirical statements.

### **5.5.2 Reliability with reference to this study**

Since reliability is defined by Brown and Hale (2014:176) as that measure of the ability of questions to yield consistent answers, the use of various data analysis method confirmed

the consistency of the answers. Sections B and C of chapter 6 are the evidence of the reliability of study. The quantitative analysis of data through the descriptive statistics and the Pearson Chi-Square provided consistence answers. In terms of the descriptive statistics, the findings on the identification of unemployment factors are distributed according to the same pattern (Over 80% of answers strongly agreed to all the empirical statements). Similar pattern was also evident in the responses analysed through the Pearson Chi-square tests whereby Chi-Square values are computed by the SPSS program. The SPSS program uses the Chi-Square formula:

$$\chi^2 = \sum_i \frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$$

By using the number of observed (O) and expected (E) cases.

## 5.6 Ethical considerations

Ethics are generally considered to be the moral obligation of professionals to ply their trades appropriately, competently and with respect for the consumers they serve (Wilkinson & McNeil 1996:67). It has been the requirement of this study to obtain ethical clearance as well as consent from the respondents. Ethical clearance was first obtained from the University of South Africa. The clearance addressed issues related to the permission to conduct the study, participation, informed consent and confidentiality. Since this study was conducted at one of the universities of technology situated in South Africa, the university in question gave the permission to conduct the study on condition that the name of the University of Technology would remain anonymous. The researcher used the identifier "University of Technology situated in South Africa" in order to preserve anonymity. It will hereafter be referred to as the 'University of Technology'.

The targeted sample at the University of Technology consisted of the graduate students, particularly those studying honours and master's degrees in the faculty of Humanities. Emails requesting approval to be granted to continue with the study were sent out to the

ethics committee of the University of Technology. The University of Technology requested the documents listed below from the researcher to be submitted before permission to conduct the study could be granted:

- Approved, full project proposal—approved by UNISA;
- Data collection instruments and recruitment material, as per the survey questionnaire as shown in Appendix A; and
- Information leaflet and informed consent document.

The letters that were used to request permission to conduct the study as well as the one that explained to the respondents about the study are attached in appendix A and B respectively. The letters indicated that the study would be strictly confidential and anonymous, and that the study would only be conducted once permission is granted in writing by the University of Technology Research Ethics Committee.

In order to gain access to the institution, the researcher was guided by the Chairperson of the Research Ethics Committee to ensure that no members of the University of Technology should be used or assist in collecting data. Hence, the researcher was given permission to gather data. Since the study adopted a survey approach, the questionnaire survey was self-administered, firstly as part of the pilot study, with the help of the research assistant that appointed by the researcher. Through the pilot study, the researcher was able to gain access to the University of Technology students in the faculty of Humanities. Participating in the study was encouraged by attaching the permission letter received from the University of Technology Research Ethics Committee.

Respondents were given information about the study, where consent was required before one could participate in the study (refer to Appendix B - Survey questionnaire cover letter). Respondents were made aware that the results of this research serve only research purposes, their participation is voluntary, and their identity would be protected. The anonymity and confidentiality of respondents was guaranteed. The names of the respondents were required in order to increase the validity of the research by showing the evidence that data was collected from a specific individual, however, the researcher

guaranteed to keep the respondents' identities anonymous and confidential. Neuman (1997: 453) asserts the importance of this.

During data analysis all the returned data were accessed by the research analyst. After the completion of data analysis and the writing of the research report all returned data were placed safely, and were accessible only to the researcher. The research report will be made available to the University of Technology decision makers on request in the Humanities Faculty to make decisions regarding its distribution, and implementation of the recommendations.

## 5.7 Conclusion

This chapter presents the research methodology adopted for conducting the study. The methodology includes the research design, sampling technique and sample size, area of study, target population and accessible population. The pilot of the study, validity and reliability are also presented. The instrument for collecting data in this study included the way in which data would be analysed and interpreted.

The study adopted both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The researcher expected to collect the independent views of the respondents about the establishment of the communication strategy that would contribute to increasing employment potential. The next chapter presents the data analysis and presentation. Data is presented through frequency distribution tables and the statistical values. The significance difference between the variables are presented and analysed through the Pearson Chi-Square. Likewise, data is also presented according the six objectives of the study.

## CHAPTER SIX – RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

### 6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the methodology that was used to conduct the study. The survey questionnaire, which consisted of seven parts, was explained. The total number of respondents was 99. Although 90 respondents were targeted, the reason for increasing the number by nine answers is that the researcher noted that in research it is possible that not all the answers are returned. In order to set up a contingency plan, a total number of 100 questions were prepared instead of 90, with the hope that at least 90 answers will be retained. Fortunately, 99 answers were received. Data analysis and interpretation are presented in four ways.

- Section A is the quantitative analysis of demographic profile of the respondents and the findings for the first five objectives of the study. Research results are presented in the form of the frequency distribution tables. The tables are described in order to ease the readers' understanding, so as to show the frequency of the characteristics and percentages.
- Section B is the presentation of the descriptive statistics for the objectives of the study (objectives 1 to 5).
- Section C is the quantitative analysis of the answers according to the Pearson Chi-Square in determining the significance difference between the variables. The 5% level of significance determined the relationship of the respondents' answers against the demographic characteristics such as race, gender, age, level and type of study.
- Section D is the thematic analysis of the 6<sup>th</sup> objective of the study. It is done in a qualitative format since the respondents were required to provide comments about the establishment of the strategy.



## **SECTION A: RESEARCH FINDINGS, DATA ANALYSIS OF THE RESPONDENTS' DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE**

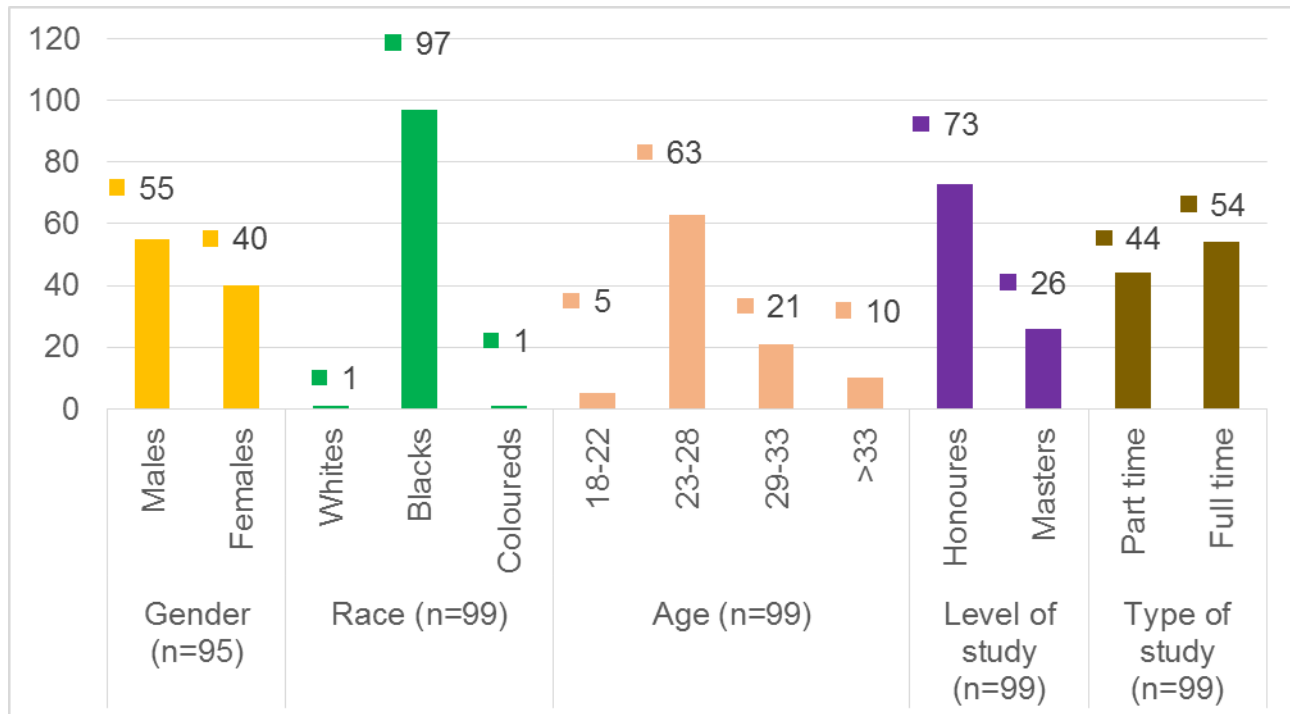
The demographic information was obtained by determining factors such as gender, age, race, level of study and the type of study. In line with this, McGrath & Apogee (2007:423) maintain that there is a strong relationship between poverty, inequality and unemployment in South Africa and the incidence of unemployment is uneven according to education, age and race. This research also included other factors such as level of study and type of study.

Valid and missing system answers are shown in the tables. Valid answers refer to the areas where respondents provided the answers, and missing system refers to the areas where answers were not provided. It is the researchers' understanding that there are reasons why the respondents would not provide answers in certain areas. This could be attributed to the fear of being identified, putting questions aside in order to respond to them later and misunderstanding of the question or confusion. The respondents may also not be in a position to know the answers.

### **6.2 Demographic profile**

The demographic profile of the respondents is depicted as follows:

**Figure 6-11 Demographic profile of the respondents**



The researcher is of the opinion that people use media in different ways and for different purposes, hence the need to determine if the demographic characteristics have effect on the use media. The respondents who answered to the questionnaire are dominated by males (55), while the majority of the respondents were between the age of 23 and 28 (63), dominated by black respondents (97).

The fact that 97 respondents are black shows the limitation of this study because 1 white respondent cannot represent the white population. The same applies to coloureds. The majority of respondents were at honours level (73) and the full time respondents were more (54) than the part time respondents. In terms of age and gender, a total number of 4 respondents did not respond.

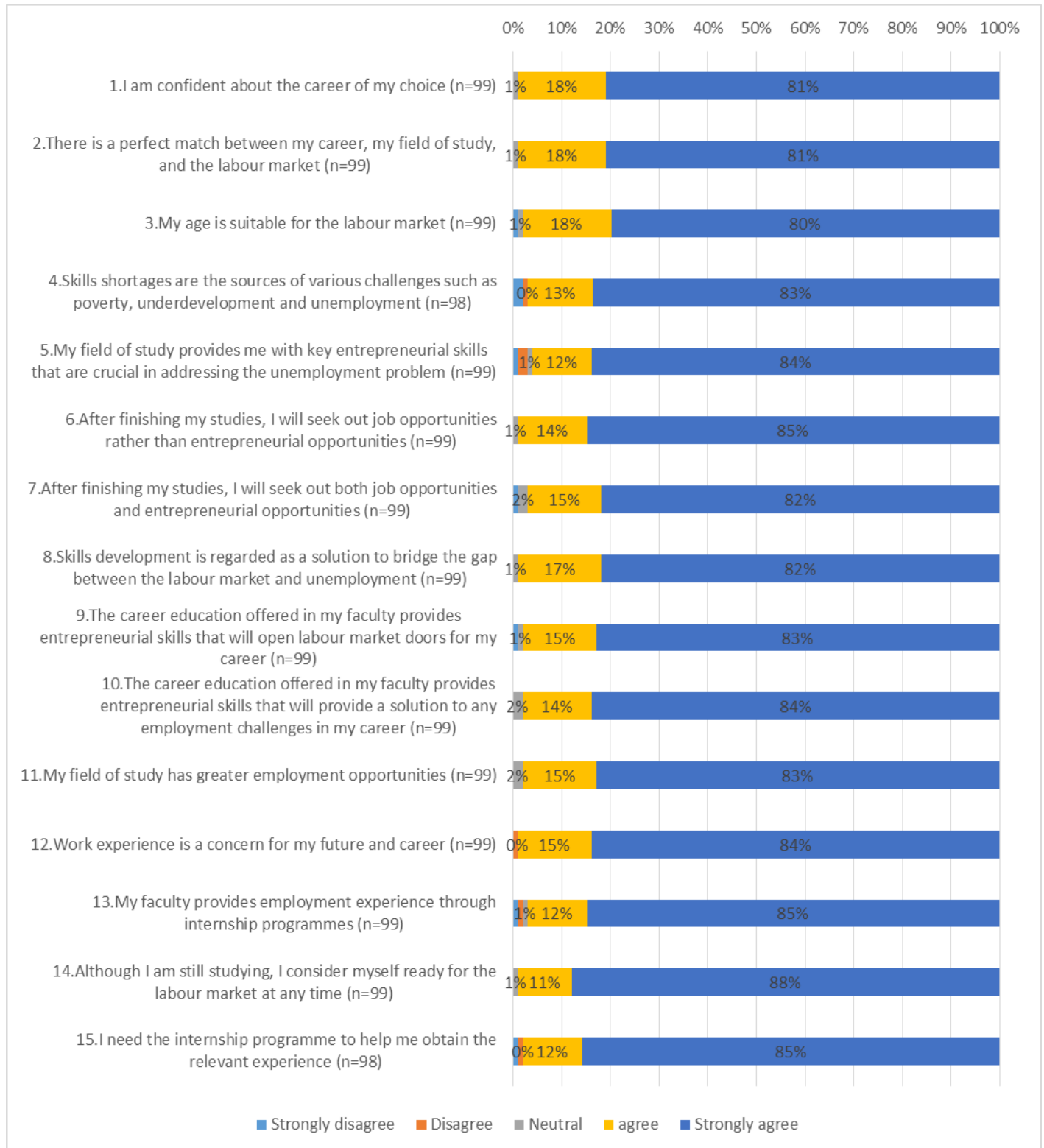
## **SECTION B: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND THE ANALYSIS OF THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The descriptive statistics was used to analyse the findings based on the objectives of the study, namely identifying unemployment factors, the role of media in addressing unemployment challenges, types of media, unemployment as a challenges facing graduate and confirming a media that is relevant to disseminate information about unemployment factors.

### **6.3 Identification of unemployment factors**

Respondents were given 15 empirical statements and requested to rank the statements on a Likert scale of 1-5, where 1 referred to 'strongly agree', and 5 referred to 'strongly disagree'.

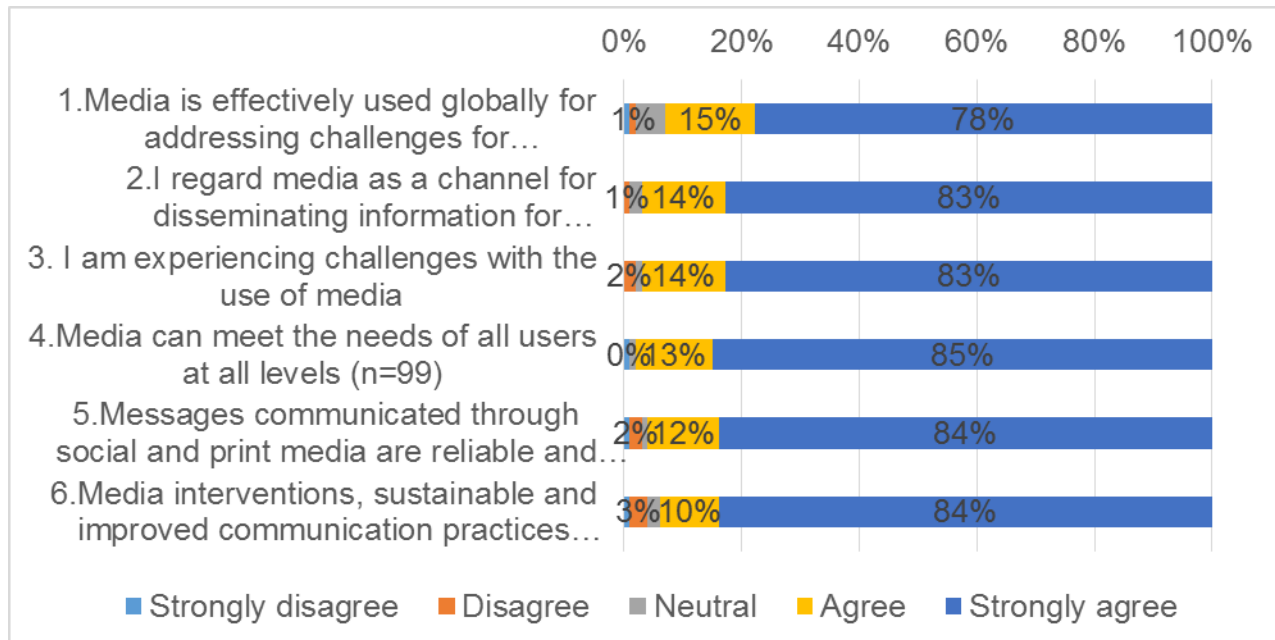
**Figure 6-12 Identification of unemployment factors**



The survey demonstrates that, in general, the respondents acknowledge the identified unemployment factors. The findings on the identification of unemployment factors are distributed according to the same pattern. The pattern about the respondents who are strongly agreeing and those who are agreeing is rather similar for all the statements. For example, amongst the 15 empirical statements for the identification of unemployment factors, answers ranging between 80% and 88% of the respondents who strongly agree, followed by the answers ranging between 11% and 18% who agreed. The answers who strongly disagree, disagree and neutral ranges between 0% and 2%.

#### **6.4 The role of media**

This part of the study aims to answer the research question “what role could media play in addressing unemployment challenges?” According to the closed questionnaire format, the respondents were given the predefined answers to choose from. Respondents were asked to confirm their perceptions regarding the role of media in addressing unemployment challenges. They were given six empirical statements and requested to rank the statements on a Likert scale of 1-5, where 1 indicated strong agreement, and 5 indicated strong disagreement. The researcher did not provide the option “I don’t know”. Instead, the option “other” was provided so that the respondent may have the opportunity to give a precise and a well thought out response, instead of the response “I don’t know”. The six empirical statements are as follows:

**Figure 6-13 The role of media**

It is worth noticing that the perception of the survey about the role of media is 'strongly agreed' for all six empirical statements. The pattern of the respondents who strongly agreeing and agreeing is again similar for all the statements. This is reflected between 78% and 85% of the answers who strongly agreed versus the range of between 12% and 15% who agree about the listed six empirical statements. This is an indication that the majority of respondents rely on media as opposed to the minority (between 0% and 3%) who do not rely or may have a different perception about the role of media.

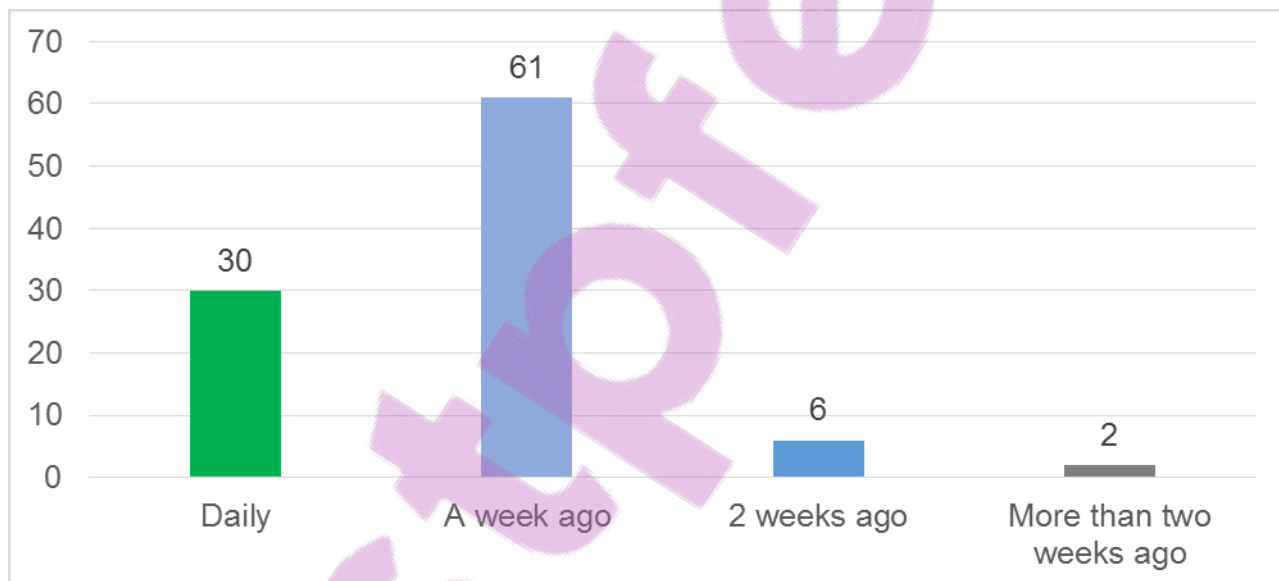
## 6.5 The types of media

This aim is to identify types of media that could be used to effectively disseminate information about unemployment factors. There is a variety of factors that could be attributed to disseminating information about unemployment. This study focused specifically on the three of them, namely: usability, accessibility and availability. There is also a variety of media that could be attributed to the disseminate information about unemployment; however, the researcher grouped these according to social, print, visual and audio media. This objective is based on the following four questions:

- When did you last use any media to search for employment?
- Which media do you prefer to use when doing employment search?
- How often in the last week did you access the following media for employment search?
- How often do you use the following media for employment search?

Respondents were asked to indicate when they last used any media to search for employment. The reason behind this question was to determine their frequency of using the media of their choice to search employment. The figure and table below establish the respondents' frequency according to their race.

**Figure 6.14 When did you last use any media to search for employment? (n=99)**

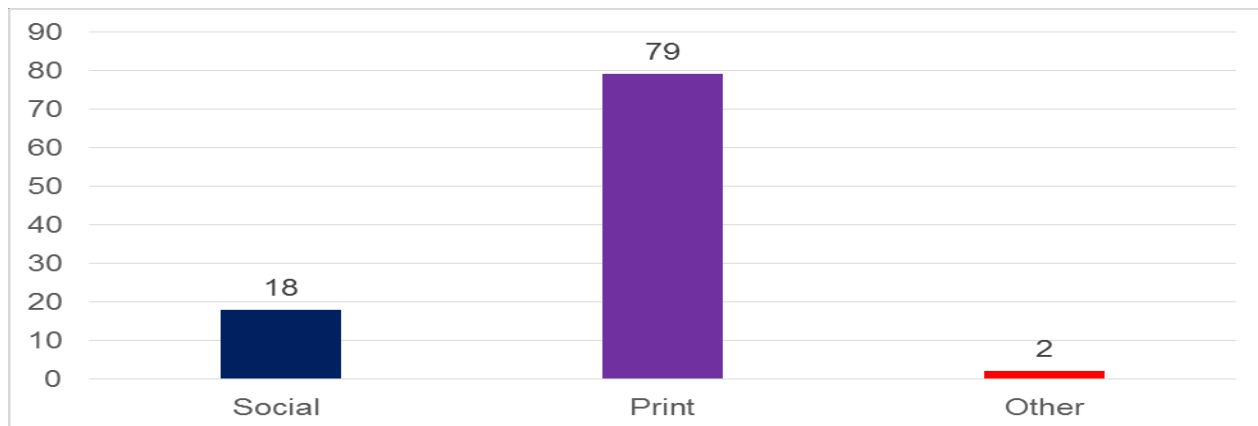


The reason behind this question was to determine which media is used frequently or not. The respondents were asked to indicate their media preference, specifically for employment search. The majority of the respondents (61) last used media to search for employment a week ago, followed by the 30 who searched for employment daily.

Since people use media in different ways, such as employment search, news, sports information, medical information, etc. It is important to note that the findings regarding the frequency for the use of media to search for employment vary from individual to individual.

However, the fact that the majority used media a week ago is an indication that respondents are indeed looking for employment.

**Figure 6-15 Which media do you prefer?**

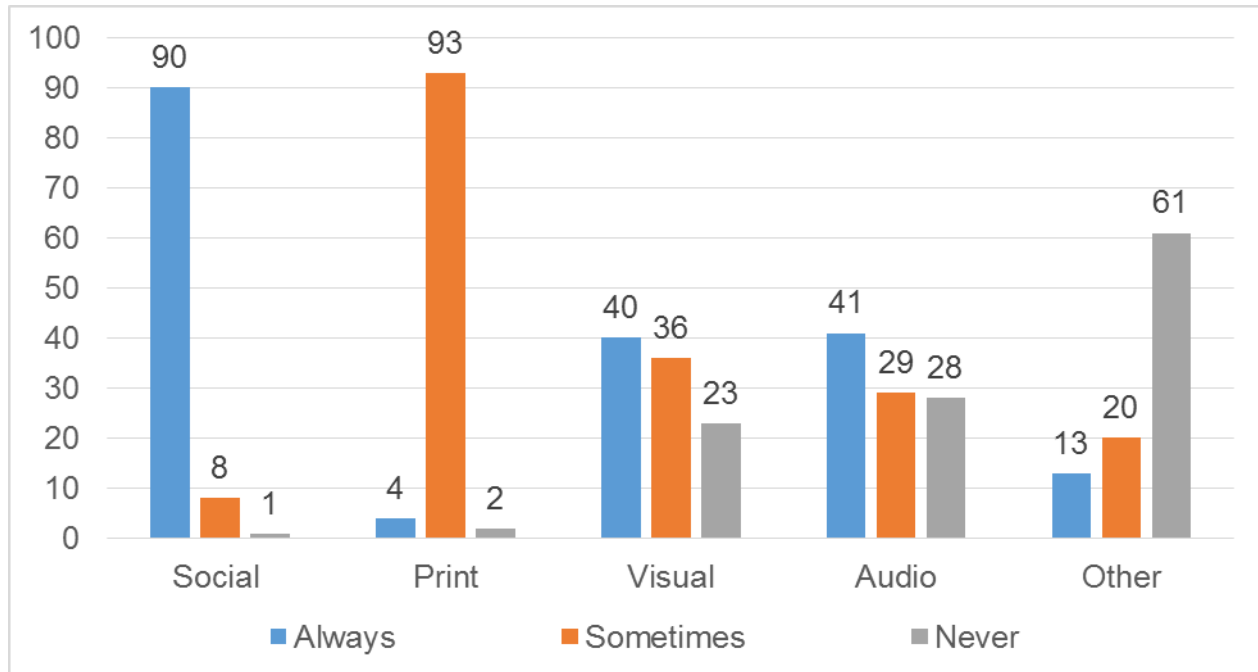


Print media is highly preferred for employment search. The respondents rely heavily on print media (79), followed by social media (18). This is also an indication that social media may be used for reasons other than an employment search.

The respondents were asked to rate: how often in the last week did you access the following media for employment search? Respondents were advised to select their answers as follows: 1. always; 2. sometimes; or 3. never. The answers below present separate results for social, print, visual and audio media.



**Figure 6-16 How often in the last week did you use the following media for employment search?**



Social media has recently become globally popular for almost any communication need. It is for this reason that the researcher wanted to determine its accessibility in these three time frames (always, sometimes, never). Respondents were asked to indicate when they access social media. The frequency of accessing a particular media can also be informed by the socio-economic status of an individual.

The study indicated that 90 respondents use social media always. This is followed by seven respondents who access social media occasionally. According to the answers there is no doubt that social media is highly regarded as a source of communication for the respondents.

Although technology is evolving, it cannot jeopardize the existence of print media. Respondents were asked to indicate their frequency of accessing print media. The reason for this question is that the researcher wanted to determine the accessibility of print media during this time of high technology usage.

Print media is highly favoured by 93 respondents, followed by the respondents who access print media always, and two who never access it. This is an indication of the high use of newspapers. It can be argued that print media is favoured more than other media for employment searches.

There are few television programmes currently seen addressing issues that are related unemployment or which can be viewed as source of employment seeking opportunities, for example, Mindset, Ispani, Zola 7, You are hired, Daily Thetha, Expressions' etc. The researcher wanted to determine the number of respondents who may benefit from such communication programs. Respondents were asked to indicate their frequency of accessing visual media. The reason for this question is that the researcher wanted to determine the accessibility of visual media. The study confirmed that 38 respondents used the visual media always, followed by the 36 who used it sometimes, and the 23 that never used it.

Radio is traditionally regarded as the most accessible media. This study seeks to determine the frequency of its use, despite the advent of digital era. A report entitled "*A baseline study of youth identity, the media and the public sphere in South Africa*" conducted by Malila (2013) confirmed that South African youth favour radio over television. Respondents were asked to indicate their frequency of accessing audio media (such as radio), in order to determine its accessibility.

This study has indicated that the use of radio varies widely, as compared to other media mentioned above. A total of 41 respondents always access and use audio media, and 29 respondents access it sometimes. Although it is still used as a means of communication, some respondents (28) indicated that they never use it.

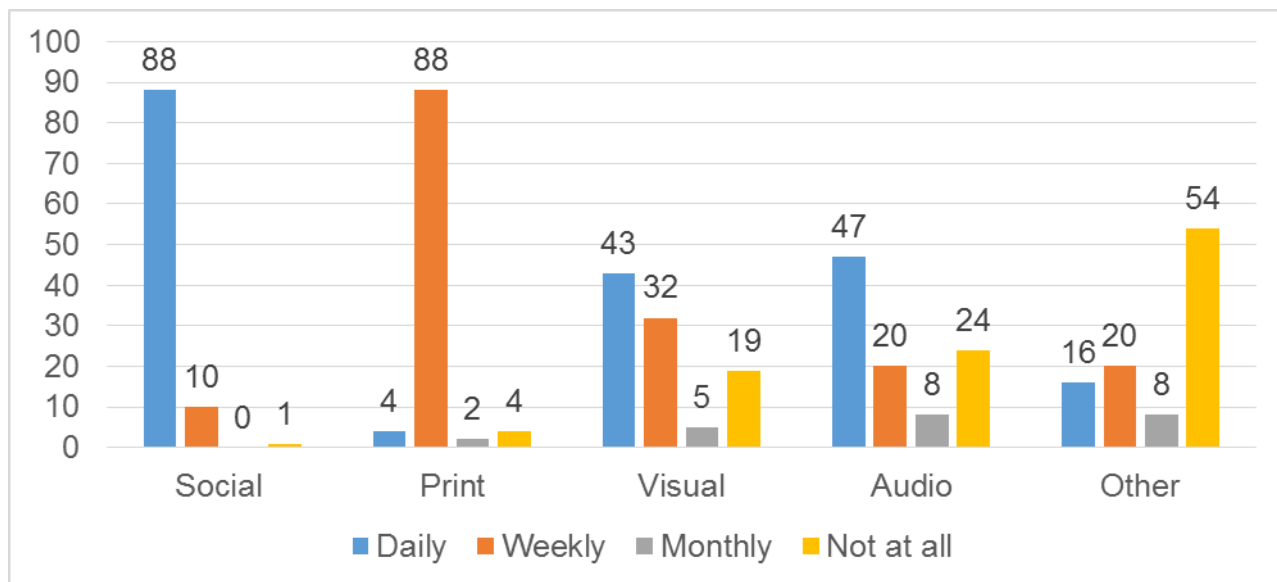
Although social, print, visual and audio media are specifically identified for communication discussion, the researcher wanted to determine whether there are other accessible media that do not form part of these ones. Respondents were asked to indicate their frequency with which they accessed other media, towards determining their accessibility.

A total number of 61 respondents never accessed means of communication beyond those used in this study. This is followed by 20 respondents who accessed it sometimes, and 13

respondent, who access it always. There is an indication that although the identified means of communication are core, some of the respondents still rely on other sources of communication.

The respondents were asked to rate how often they use media for employment search. Respondents were advised to select their answers by selecting 'daily', 'weekly', 'monthly', or 'not at all'. The answers below present separate results for social, print, visual and audio media.

**Figure 6-17 How often did you access the following media for employment search?**



It is noted that social media is used to a great extent, especially by the youth. Respondents were asked to indicate their frequency of using social media for employment search. The reason for this question is that the researcher wanted to determine the usability of social media. A total number of 88 respondents indicated that they used social media daily, followed by 10 respondents who used it weekly, and one who did not use it at all.

Respondents were asked to indicate their frequency of use of print media for employment search. The reason for this question is that the researcher wanted to determine the usability of social media. A total number of 88 respondents indicated that they used print media weekly, followed by four respondents, who used it weekly, two who used it monthly, and

four who did not use it at all. It is noted that that young people spent most of their time watching television.

Respondents were asked to indicate the frequency with which they used visual media for employment search. The reason for this question is that the researcher wanted to determine the usability of visual media. A total number of 43 respondents indicated that they used visual media daily, followed by 32 who used it weekly, 5 who used it monthly and 19 who did not use it at all. With the invention of technology, radio could be associated with the old or traditional media.

Respondents were asked to indicate their frequency of using audio media for an employment search. The reason for this question is that the researcher wanted to determine the usability of audio media. A total number of 47 respondents indicated that they used audio media daily, followed by 20 who used it weekly, 8 who used it monthly, and 24 who did not use it at all.

Respondents were asked to indicate their frequency of using other media (apart from the print, social, visual and audio media) for employment searches. The reason for this question is that the researcher wanted to determine the usability of other media. A total of 54 respondents formed the majority who don't use other media at all, followed by the 20 who use it weekly, then 16 who use it daily, and 8 who use it monthly.

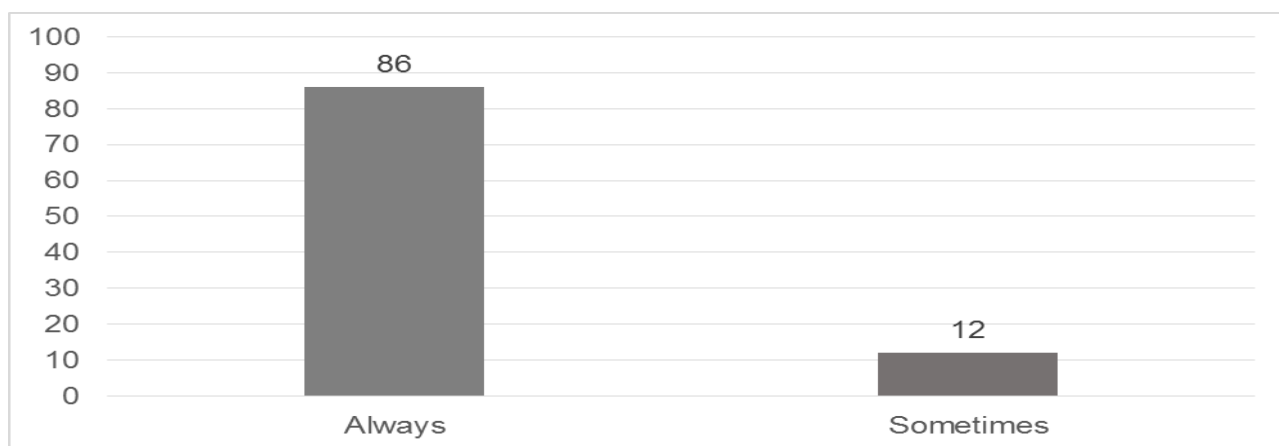
## **6.6 Unemployment as a challenge facing graduate students**

This objective is to confirm whether unemployment is a challenge facing graduate students. It was based on the following four questions:

- Would you advise someone to study further while looking for employment?
- For how many years have you been seeking employment?
- How do you apply for employment?
- What are your reasons for studying further?

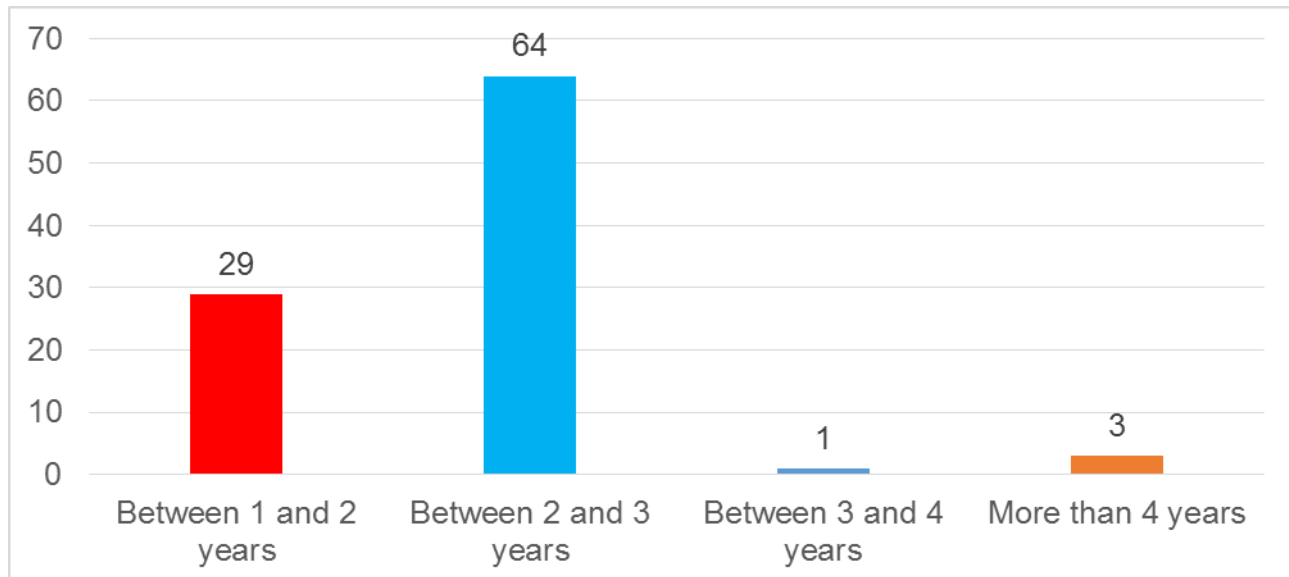
Respondents were asked to confirm whether they would advise someone to study further while looking for employment. The reason for this question is that the researcher wanted to determine their interest in seeking for employment, as well as their likelihood of advising others about the interests for searching employment.

**Figure 6-18 Would you advise someone to study further while looking for employment? (n=98)**



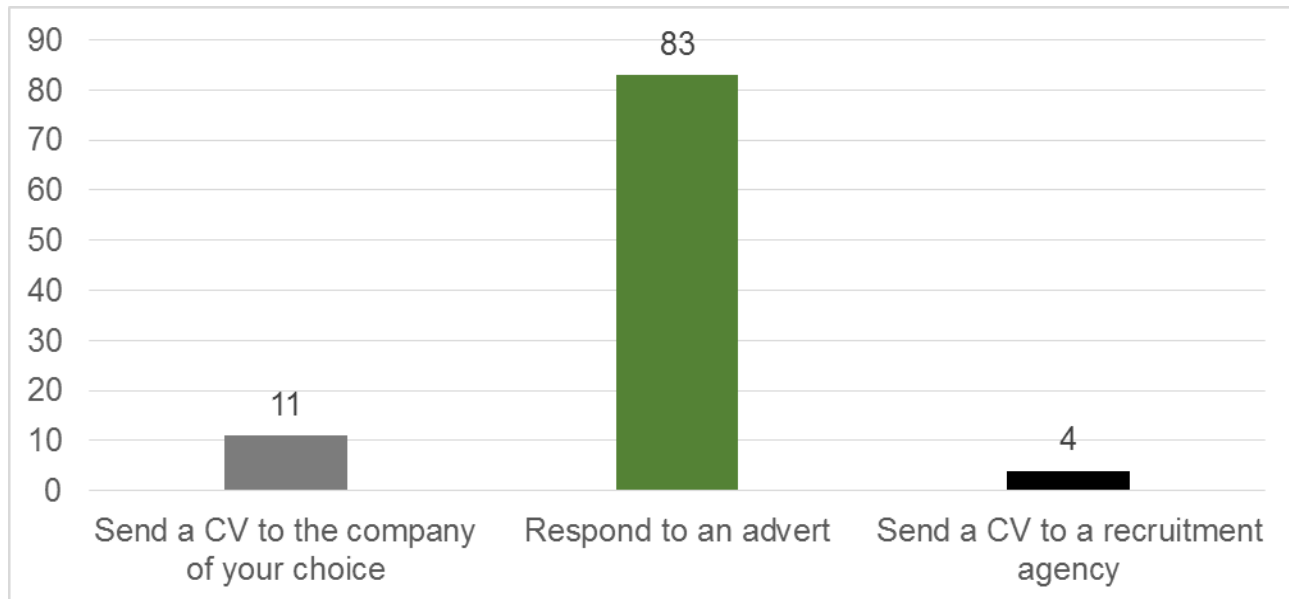
A total number of 86 respondents confirmed that they would always advise someone to study further while looking for employment. This is followed by the 12 respondents who would sometimes give an advice. There is a perception that one can find employment immediately after graduating. This is in fact a wish for every graduate. Many indeed are under the impression that they would be able to work in the public or private establishments as soon as they complete secondary school education (Olamide & Olawaiye 2013:33).

Respondents were asked to confirm how long had they looked for employment. The reason for this question is that the researcher wanted to determine the duration of employment seeking for the graduate students in the faculty of Humanities, specifically those who studied at this particular University of Technology.

**Figure 6-19 For how many years have you been seeking employment? (n=97)**

The research results confirm that 64 respondents have been searching for employment for the duration of between two to three years. This is an indication that the majority of graduates are unemployed. This is followed by 29 respondents who have been seeking for employment for the duration of between one and two years, one respondents searching for at least one year, and three respondents searching for more than four years.

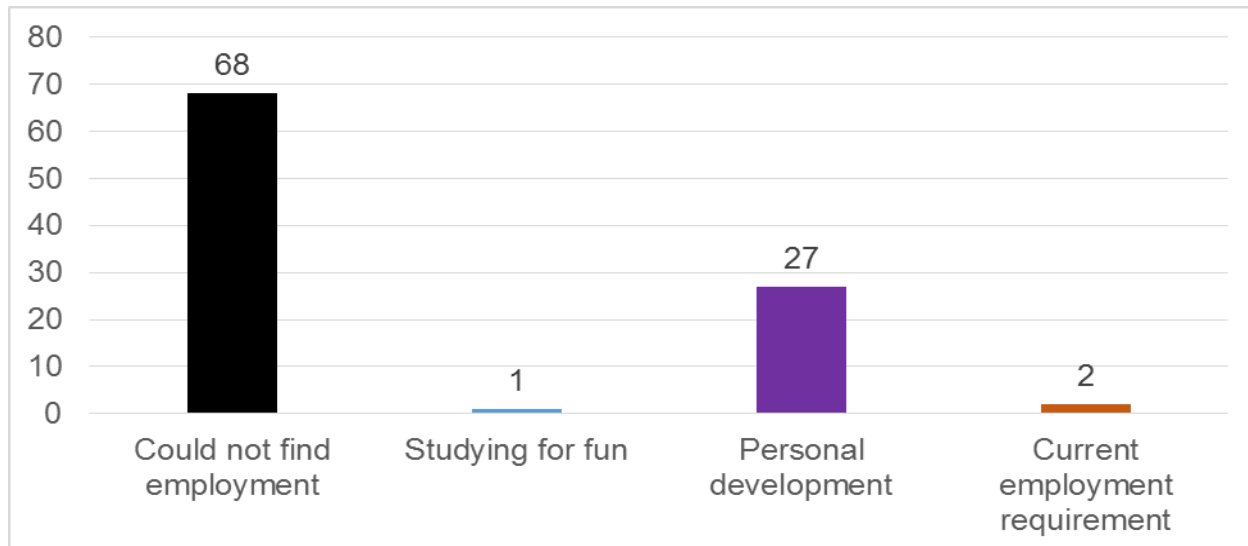
Noting the variety of media, the researcher wanted to determine how the respondents apply for employment. Respondents were asked to confirm this, and whether they would advise someone to study further while looking for employment. The reason for this question is that the researcher wanted to determine means of employment other than using media.

**Figure 6-20 How do you apply for employment? (n=98)**

Responding to an advert is regarded as the most widely used mechanism of applying for employment. This was confirmed by 83 respondents, who confirmed that they respond to an advert, followed by 11 respondents who send a CV to the company of their choice, and 4 respondents who send a CV to a recruitment agency.

Reasons for studying further vary from one individual to the other. The lack of employment could also be one of the reasons for studying further. This is confirmed by asking the respondents about their reasons for studying further. The researcher wanted to determine the reasons the graduate students at the University of Technology choose to further their studies.

**Figure 6-21 What are your reasons for studying further? (n=98)**



The results indicate that 68 respondents are furthering their studies because they could not find employment. This is followed by the 27 who are studying further for their personal development.

## **6.7 Confirming a media that is relevant to disseminate information about unemployment factors**

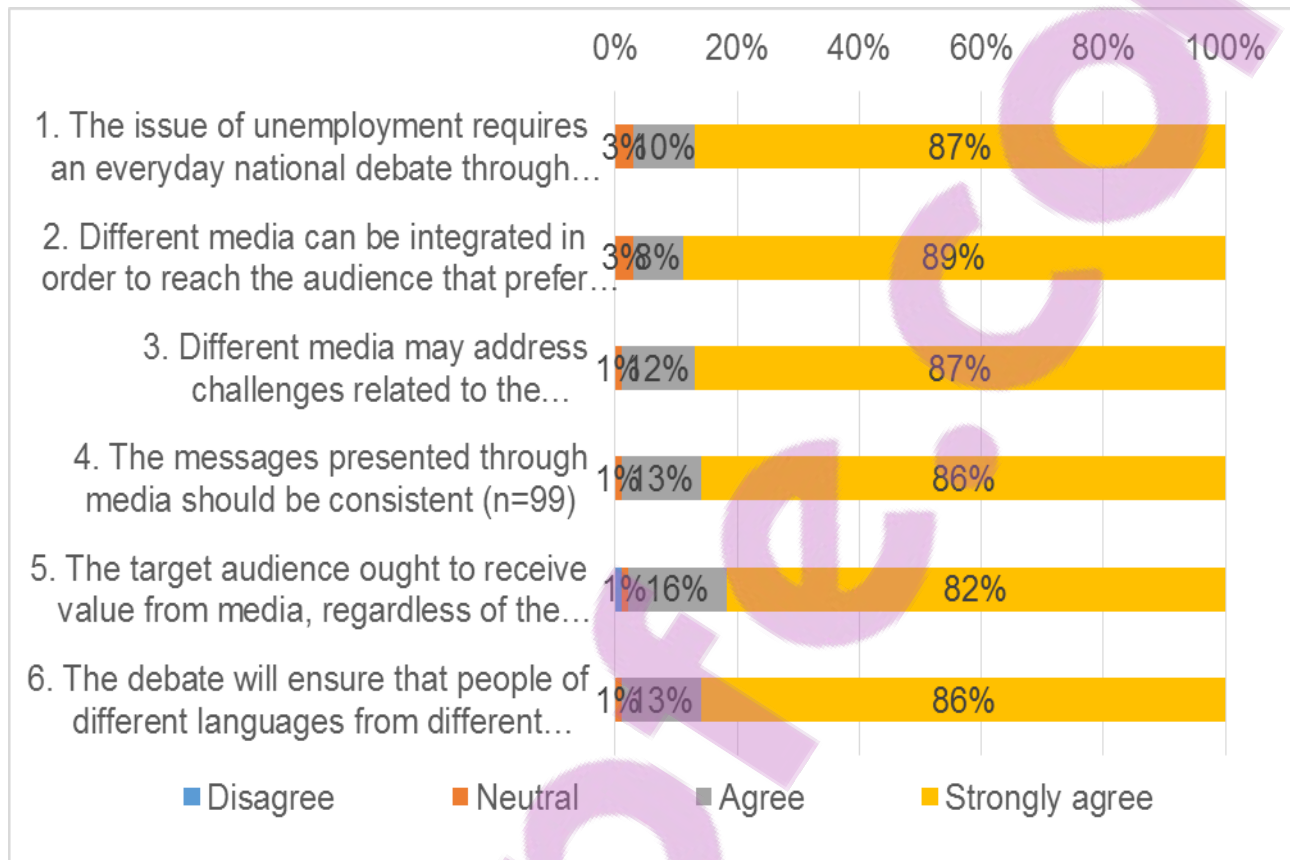
This objective consists of two (2) subsections. The first subsection consists of 6 empirical statements about confirming a media that is relevant to disseminate information about unemployment factors. The second subsection is based on the question as to “which messages should be mostly communicated/debated through the integrated media”.

### **6.7.1 Confirming a media that is relevant to disseminate information about unemployment factors**

In this study, confirming a media platform simply refers to a “programme” that could be used to drive a communication strategy. Confirming a media requires a strategy for planning, organizing, leading and controlling that particular media. This cannot be achieved by one individual. It requires collective ideas from different people, and from different perspectives.



**Figure 6-22 Confirming a media that is relevant to disseminate information about unemployment factors**



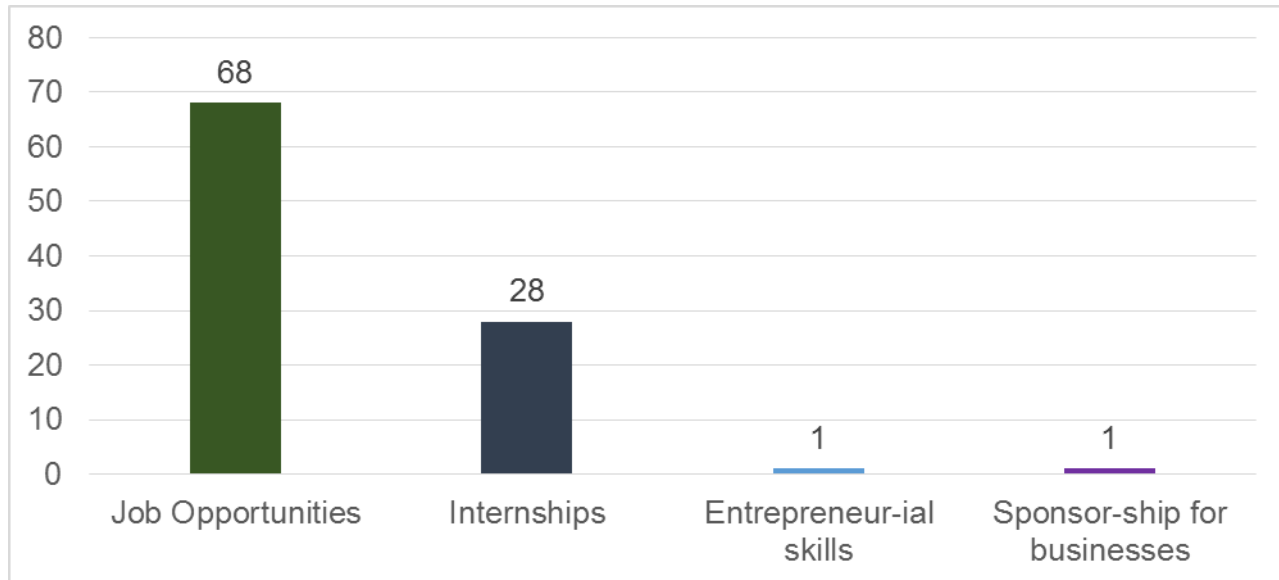
Between 82% and 89% strongly agree to all six empirical statements about confirming a media that is relevant to disseminate information about unemployment factors. Regarding the statement “The target audience ought to receive value from media, regardless of the location and environment” only 1% disagree to this single statements while all statements received less attention for neutral.

**6.7.2 Which messages should be mostly communicated/debated through the integrated media?**

Different messages can be established to drive discussions that would prompt solutions to unemployment. The respondents were asked to confirm the kind of messages that ought to be communicated through different media. The reason behind this confirmation

was to determine the type of messages that may be communicated in order to address graduate unemployment.

**Figure 6-23 Which messages should be mostly communicated/debated through the integrated media?**



68 respondents indicated that job opportunities ought to be mostly communicated/debated through integrated media. This followed by internships at 28 respondents, who indicated that internships ought to be communicated. The fact that only two respondents indicated the need for entrepreneurial skills, and sponsorship for businesses shows that there is a need to educate graduates about the importance of how to establish businesses. This would eventually create more jobs.

## SECTION C: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS THROUGH THE PEARSON CHI-SQUARE

### 6.8 The Pearson chi-square

The Pearson chi-square is applicable in two ways, namely Chi-Square "Goodness of Fit" test and Chi-Square Test of Association between two or more variables. The Chi-Square "Goodness of Fit" test is used when there is categorical data for one independent variable, and there is need to see whether the distribution of data is similar or different to that expected (i.e. comparing the observed distribution of the categories to a theoretical expected distribution). The Chi-Square Test of Association between two or more variables is appropriate to use when there is a categorical data for two or more independent variables, and there is a need to see if there is an association among them.

In this study the Chi-Square Test of Association between two or more variables is applied. In verifying the significance difference between the variables through the Pearson Chi-Square, the findings of empirical statements were analysed in relation to the 5 demographic characteristics or independent variables, namely age, gender, race, type of study and the level of study. The value of the significance that is lower than 0.05 confirms that there is a statistically significant difference between the variables. The Chi-Square test ( $X^2$  test) is a family of tests based on a series of assumptions and is frequently used in the statistical analysis of experimental data (Bolboacă et al 2011:528).

While the Pearson Coefficient confirms that the positive values of the Pearson coefficient indicate a significant difference, it is observed in all the tables below that there is a significance difference in most of the variables. It can be argued that the lesser ( $<0.05$ ), the value the higher is the significance difference (the null hypothesis is rejected), and the bigger ( $>0.05$ ) is the value the lesser is the significance difference (the null hypothesis is accepted).



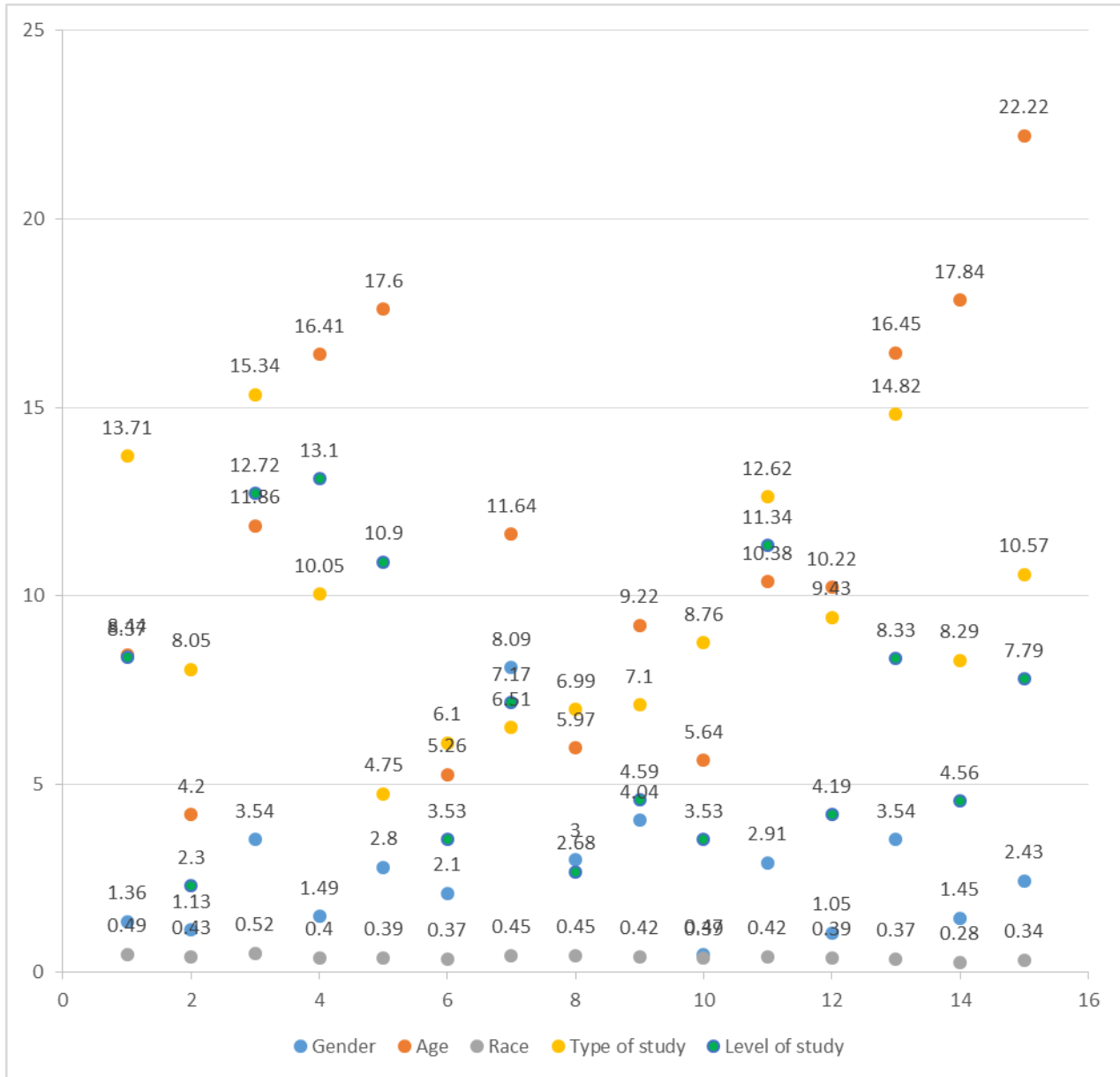
The researcher examined the objectives of this study on demographic characteristics (age, gender, race, type of study and the level of study). The researcher sought to determine the most effective demographic characteristic that may contribute to the establishment of an integrated communication strategy as an enabling tool for increasing graduate employment potential based on the tested empirical statements and the interview questions. While the results showed the values greater than 0.05, this is the indication of lesser significance difference. This also means accepted or positive confirmation of the empirical statements or interview questions in most cases. The Pearson Coefficient is used to analyse the findings based on the objectives of the study, namely:

- Identifying unemployment factors;
- The role of media in addressing unemployment challenges;
- Types of media;
- Unemployment as a challenges facing graduate; and
- Confirming a media that is relevant to disseminate information about unemployment factors

### **6.8.1 Identifying unemployment factors**

Respondents were given 15 empirical statements and requested to rank the statements on a Likert scale of 1-5, where 1 referred to 'strongly agree', and 5 referred to 'strongly disagree'. The fifteen (15) empirical statements are presented in the table below. The Pearson Chi-Square was used to determine the significance difference between the given statements and the respondents' demographic characteristics (gender, age, race, type of study and level of study).

**Figure 6-24 Identifying unemployment factors**



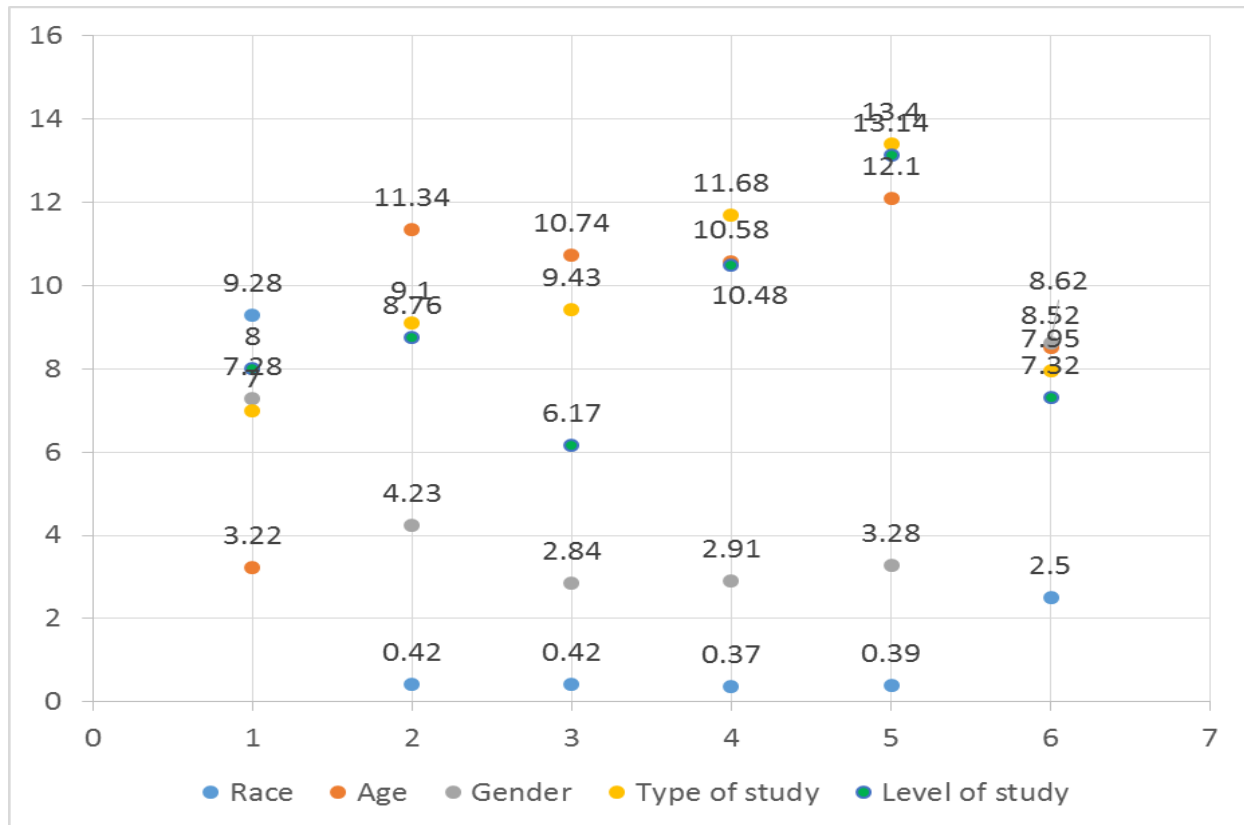
At the 0.05 level of significance, the findings show the strong evidence of the lesser significance difference between the empirical statements and the demographic characteristics (race, age, gender, type and the level of study). This is correlation to the presentation of the results in figure 6.2 as it shows the pattern about the respondents who are strongly agreeing and those who are agreeing being similar for all the statements. In all the statements and all the responses, there is no value which is less than 0.05. This is also the indication that the respondents did not see any problem about their career choices.

From the figure above, race is highly concentrated at the bottom part of the figure, which shows the closeness to the lesser significance difference. Race is considered as the most important variable in the study. Considering the distribution of data among the respondents, the results are generalized to the black respondents only. An increasing number of professionals must be absorbed in a decreasing range of types of tasks (Susskind & Susskind 2015:290). This could be attributed to the fact that the majority of the respondents are blacks.

### **6.8.2 The role of media in addressing unemployment challenges**

This part of the study is aimed at answering the research question “What role could media play in addressing unemployment challenges?” Respondents were given six empirical statements and requested to rank the statements in a Likert scale of 1-5 where 1 referred to strongly agree and 5 referred to strongly disagree. The 6 statements are shown in the table below. For the test of independence, the assumptions (H0) that there is no relationship, and (H1) that there is some relationship between respondents’ race, age, gender, type of study and level of study and the perception about the role of media in addressing unemployment challenges.

**Figure 6-25 The role of media in addressing unemployment challenges**



For the cross classification of Table 6.2, Chi-Square values were computed by the SPSS program, using the number of observed and expected cases, and the Chi-Square formula. At 0.05 significance, where the computed values are less than the critical values, the null hypotheses is accepted. This shows the evidence that the type and the level of study have less significance difference.

### 6.8.3 Types of media

This objective is aimed at identifying types of media that could be used effectively to disseminate information about unemployment factors. There is a variety of factors that could be attributed to disseminate information about unemployment. This study focused specifically on the three of them, namely: usability, accessibility and availability.

There is also a variety of media that could disseminate information about unemployment and employments possibilities; however, for the purpose of this study, the researcher referred to social, print, visual and audio media because they are perceived to be more relevant to the audience (the graduates). This objective is based on the following 4 questions as presented in the table below.

**Figure 6-26 The types of media**

	Questions	Race	Age	Gender	Type of study	Level of study
1	When did you last use any media to search for employment?	1.27	13.13	1.26	11.70	5.49
2	Which media do you prefer to use when doing employment search?	4.78	3.65	1.09	3.06	0.74
3	How often in the last week did you <b>access</b> the following media for employment search?					
3.1	How often in the last week did you access <i>social media</i> for employment search?	11.57	6.46	0.83	0.90	6.18
3.2	How often in the last week did you access <i>print media</i> for employment search?	24.04	2.41	3.24	3.10	5.82
3.3	How often in the last week did you access <i>visual media</i> for employment search?	3.01	12.01	2.59	4.85	6.58
3.4	How often in the last week did you access <i>audio media</i> for employment search?	3.79	15.59	4.07	4.18	13.53
3.5	How often in the last week did you access <i>other media</i> for employment search?	12.73	6.57	1.58	3.55	17.85
4	How often do you <b>use</b> the following media for employment search?					
4.1	How often do you use <i>social media</i> for employment search?	9.10	2.90	1.66	1.79	9.68
4.2	How often do you use <i>print media</i> for	23.84	2.65	4.75	5.60	5.71



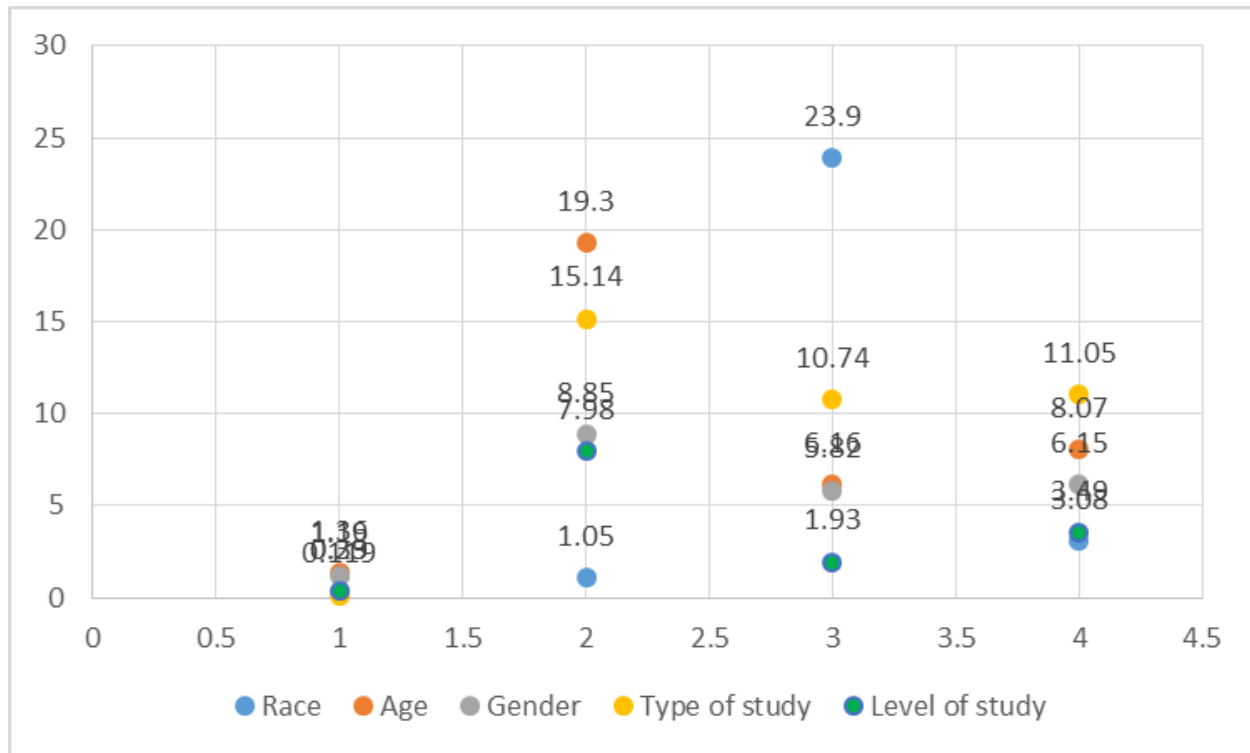
	Questions	Race	Age	Gender	Type of study	Level of study
	employment search?					
4.3	How often do you use <i>visual media</i> for employment search?	2.66	22.36	9.87	2.91	6.04
4.4	How often do you use <i>audio media</i> for employment search?	12.59	16.07	2.71	1.29	9.32
4.5	How often do you use <i>other media</i> for employment search?	10.46	8.32	1.19	10.84	28.27

At the 0.05 level of significance, while the type of study rejected the hypothesis for “When did you last use any media to search for employment?” all the demographics factor accepted the null hypothesis for the question “Which media do you prefer to use when doing employment search?” In terms of the question “How often in the last week did you access the following media for employment search?”, the hypothesis was accepted for the race, except social and print media, the level of study accepted the hypothesis except visual, audio, and other. Age was accepted except audio. Race was accepted except social and print.

#### 6.8.4 Unemployment as a challenges facing graduate

This objective is aimed at confirming if unemployment if a challenge facing graduate. It was based on the 4 questions as presented in the table below. For the cross classification of Table 6.4, Chi-Square values were computed by the SPSS program, using the number of observed and expected cases, and the Chi-Square formula.

**Figure 6-27 unemployment as a challenge facing graduate**



At 0.05 significance, where the computed values are less than the critical values, the null hypotheses is accepted. To the question “Would you advice someone to study further while looking for employment?”, the null hypothesis is accepted for all the demographic characteristics. To the question “How do you apply for employment” and “What are your reasons for studying further?” the null hypothesis is accepted only for age and gender. In terms of the years the respondents spent applying for the job the null hypothesis is accepted only for the race.

### 6.8.5 Confirming a media that is relevant to disseminate information about unemployment factors

At 0.05 significance, where the computed values are less than the critical values, the null hypotheses is accepted.



## **SECTION D - QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS FOR THE PROPOSED COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

### **6.9 Establishing a communication strategy**

Through data collection instruments, the respondents were asked to express their thoughts by providing additional comments (positive or negative) regarding the establishment of a communication strategy for recognizing factors contributing to graduate unemployment.

In order to ensure anonymity of respondents, codes were assigned to their answers. According to Saldana (2013:3), a code constitutes a critical link between data collection and an explanation of meaning. Out of 99 answers, only 45 respondents provided comments. The respondents are linked to the code, instead of to their names. The answers/comments provided are shown in Table 6.11. Out of 45 respondents, only three provided no comments. The answers provided are satisfactory and are used as a guide for establishing a communication strategy. A surveyed open-ended questionnaire was used to gather comments from the respondents about the proposed communication strategy.

Before commencing with the analysis, data was cleaned. The transcripts for the respondents who did not provide their views about the establishment of the proposed integrated communication strategy were omitted. The names of the participants were also deleted. The implications of this on the findings ensured the protection of the participants' identity.

#### **6.9.1 The application of thematic analysis**

The steps that are followed in thematic analysis for analysing qualitative data are explained in the paragraphs below.

### 6.9.1.1 Data familiarization

The researcher familiarized herself with the data by typing and putting together all the data on paper. All the answers were transcribed from the respondents' questionnaire answers into one document. Forty-five answers were transcribed in tabular format as shown in Table 6.62.

### 6.9.1.2 Generating initial codes

A code is a critical link between data collected and the explanation of their meaning (Saldana 2013:3). According to Bless et al. (2013:342) coding is the core component of qualitative analysis where the text is broken into fragments which share some common characteristics. Coding can be done either physically by using simple word processors and spreadsheets or electrically by using software packages. In this study the codes are developed physically by looking for themes and patterns within the data itself. This is regarded as data coding. The four main themes that were identified are communication media, employment barriers, training guidelines and career.

In order to ensure the anonymity of the respondents, data clearing was done by removing any information that could easily identify the respondents. Codes were assigned to the 45 answers. In this study, there were 99 answers. It is important to note that the answers are presented verbatim. This means that the researcher presented the answers as they are, without correcting or reshaping the statements of the respondents. Out of 99 answers, only 45 respondents provided the comments. The respondents are linked to the code instead of their names. Out of 45 respondents that provided comments, only three answered with no comment. In total, there are 42 comments that were used as input for the proposed communication strategy. The codes are shown in the table below.

**Table 6-4 Generating codes**

Respondent number	Respondent code	Answers



Respondent number	Respondent code	Answers
1	1	Bring media in action to the people - in the communities, e.g. Sunday times to visit high schools in the rural areas and townships to gather information about unemployment issues.
4	2	Messages to be conveyed for the higher education training institutions to partner with services SETAs in providing relevant skills.
5	3	No comments.
6	4	Communication can focus on training institutions to provide job opportunities to the students after completing their studies. This could be done by communicating with various organisations.
9	5	Communication can help in ensuring that higher education institutions communicate the limitation of training areas where certain skills are not a demand, e.g. It is pointless to train excess number of nurses if there are fewer employment opportunities in the field of nursing.
12	6	Communication strategies ought to relay discussion regarding the consolidation of all the small colleges, getting rid of fly-by-night institutions so as to ensure that only institutions that comply are allowed to provide training. This has already been done with technikons, Universities of Technology and TVETs, but more is required.
13	7	No comments.
14	8	Television appears to be the most popular source of communication. Other means of communication should be explored. Community visits, especially in the rural areas, should be conducted. Some days should specifically set up as days for addressing unemployment by all media channels, e.g. just as we have the World Aids day, such that it crosses multiple media platforms at once for optimal

Respondent number	Respondent code	Answers
		exposure.
15	9	Discussions and debates regarding unemployment issues are likely to be undertaken during elections. These ought to be done on daily basis until issues of poverty and inequality are addressed.
17	10	Tertiary institutions must terminate all subjects that do not add value, and that are not attracting employment.
20	11	A policy ought to be established and communicated for driving the organisation to run the internships as part of a compulsory Corporate Social Responsibility.
22	12	Messages ought to be driven for choosing school subjects, where we need to be guided according to the relevancy of the job market.
23	13	Universities and any other training institutions should provide training according to the guidance of job market experts.
25	14	Increase employment-seeking programmes through TV, newspapers, etc.
28	15	It is a challenge to understand as an individual the connection between what you are searching for and what the job market requires, however, it is better to choose your career according to what the job market wants.
30	16	Topics ought to be relevant to a particular industry, so that those who want employment in those industries are well informed/advised.
33	17	The correct use of media can increase performance in creating awareness by ensuring that even cell phone service providers allow for marketing messages that address unemployment. More of these messages should provide information about available job opportunities.
36	18	Through media, students should be encouraged to do

<b>Respondent number</b>	<b>Respondent code</b>	<b>Answers</b>
		multiple studies, and avoid specializing in one area, so as to ensure maximum possibilities for employment.
39	19	Communication should drive a specific agenda at a particular time e.g., if there are less mathematicians in the country, it ought to be communicated to schools that learners be encouraged to take mathematics. This can be monitored over time, until students reach the tertiary and the workplace level.
41	20	All the SABC programmes should at least once a day have a topic or a message that addresses unemployment, not just for the graduate, but at all levels. This will help the nation to realize that unemployment is a serious issue, even to those that are ignorant.
43	21	Government intervention is required to draw up policies that will oblige all the higher institutions to partner with organisations in order to provide job opportunities for students after completing their studies.
46	22	Training institutions should conduct follow-up with students to determine their employment status. This would help them to be aware of the relevance of their training to the market.
49	23	All training providers ought to find a way of partnering with organisations so as to provide skills that would help students in obtaining jobs after studying.
52	24	Higher institutions ought to add value and provide a guarantee that students will get the job after studying.
56	25	High schools are easily accessible in order for the media relay advice or provide career counselling.
58	26	Face-to-face communication with the learners at schools or at tertiary institutions is important.
66	27	Through media, the emphasis can be put on training providers, to provide training that is best suitable for the job



Respondent number	Respondent code	Answers
		market.
70	28	Media is the best tool for reaching larger communities and is not fully utilized.
74	29	The problem of unemployment starts at the high schools. Learners ought to be encouraged and made aware of the consequences of taking certain subjects or following certain career choices.
77	30	Education regarding employment searching and the pitfalls involved in choosing careers ought to be more available through different media programmes.
78	31	All training provided at higher education institutions ought to be skills and employment focused, and relevant.
80	32	I personally put the blame on training institutions that provide training for the sake of making money, and not following up as to whether those who trained with them are indeed employed or not.
82	33	The content of messages should always be relevant, e.g. to everyone, learners, tertiary students, parents, teachers, organisations, etc.
84	34	Increase is required in media programmes for creating employment awareness.
87	35	It might be too late to communicate with students at universities, where most have already made career choices prior to arrival.
90	36	Since poverty and inequality is known in this country, parliamentary debates should frequently focus on addressing employment solutions.
91	37	Media ought to encourage learners at high school level to choose careers that are relevant to the labour market. This may not be taken well by others, because it ignores the

Respondent number	Respondent code	Answers
		personal career choice and interests of an individual.
92	38	No comment
94	39	I think media have tried to improve their strategies regarding to the issue of unemployment.
95	40	Career education ought to be provided to a greater extent at schools in order to ensure that students are aware of their careers and avoid following accidental careers.
96	41	Still consider manual applications for internships, don't focus only on electronics, which is internet.
97	42	Create more awareness about pitfalls for making incorrect careers decisions.
98	43	Students must be provided with an opportunity to go to the workplace and do practical work rather than teaching them skills. There is a need to be more practical, and students need to apply the skills they are taught in the environment so that when they finish, they would benefit from having gained experience, thus, students should be given the opportunity to gain practical experience in the workplace before they finish their studies. Communication strategies need to be integrated so that it might be easier for students to access media for employment searches.
99	44	Other challenges that we face are the experience of work that is required from the candidates when they have just finished the study/qualification. Some students are not skilled, as they claim they are for the work they have applied.
100	45	In my opinion, the main problem is the nepotism. Companies (private and public) should advertise vacancies for themselves and not through the agencies. Government should become serious about its citizens, and supply the jobs they have publicly promised. Companies should allow

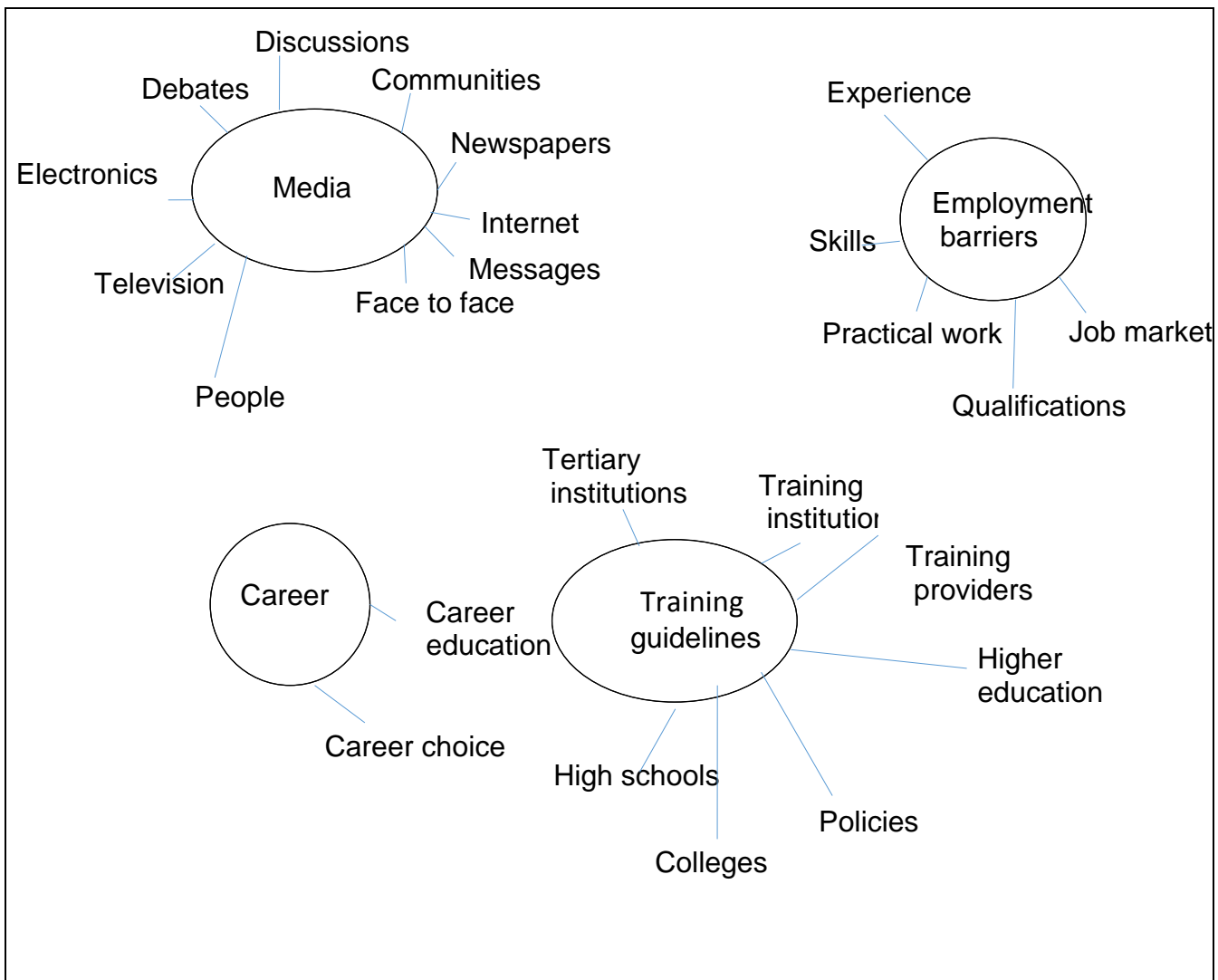
Respondent number	Respondent code	Answers
		applicants to apply using relevant technological means such as email rather than fax.

From the above table, it should be noted that there were 100 questionnaires, 99 respondents provided answers, and only 45 provided comments. The above table is a presentation of 45 answers. Below is the description of how themes were identified from the answers.

### 6.9.1.3 Searching for themes

The coded answers were used to search for themes. Four themes were identified, namely, media, career, training guidelines and unemployment challenges. The identification of these themes is also an indication of how data was code. A mind map of such themes and their subthemes is shown below.

### Figure 6-29 Searching for themes



From the above diagram, the subthemes that are identified through the answers included face-to-face communication, debates and discussions (which can also be regarded as focus group discussions), electronic media (such as internet-related media), newspapers, and television. People and communities are also identified, who, according to the researcher, can be regarded as role-players in the communication process.

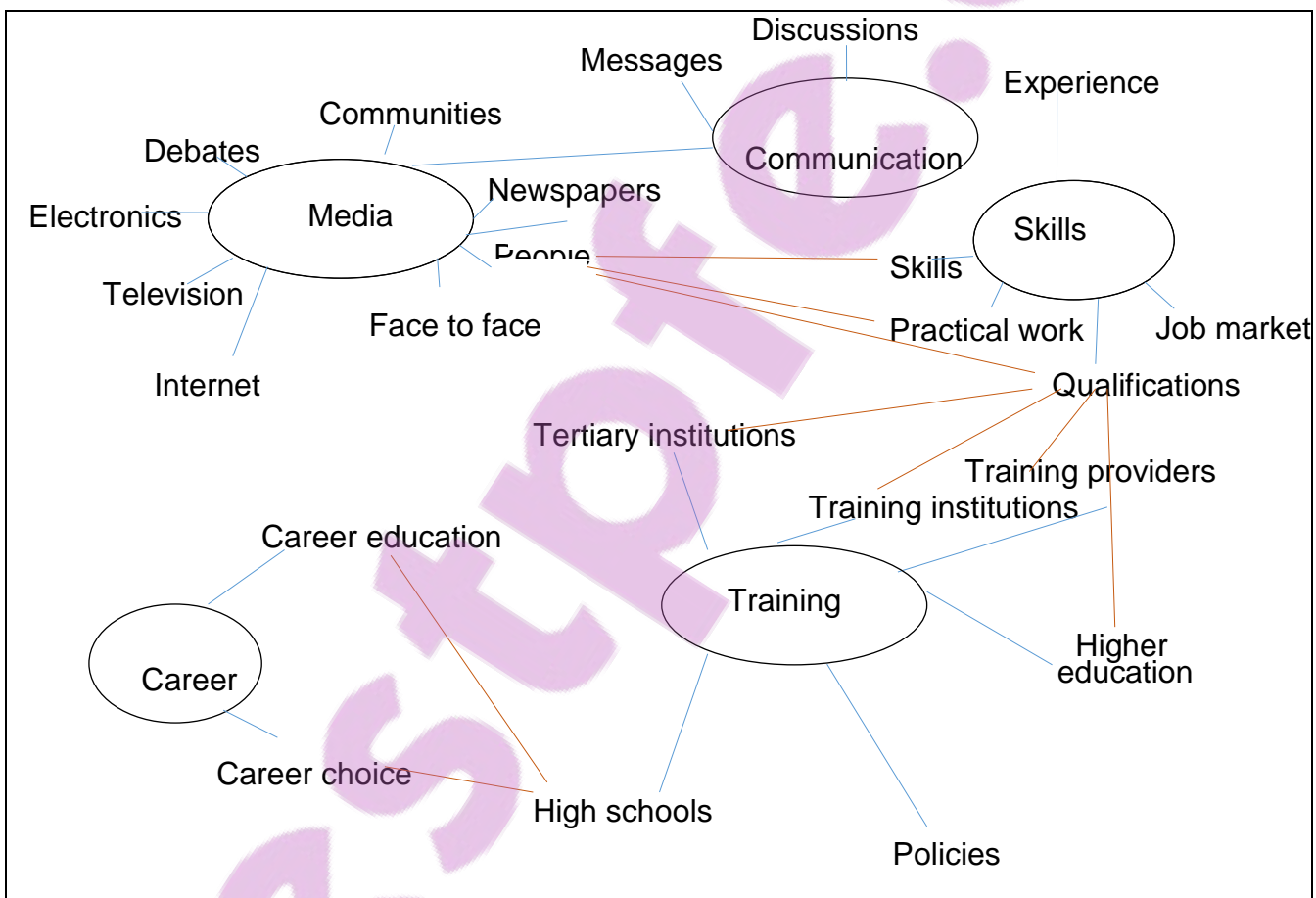
#### 6.9.1.4 Reviewing the themes

In reviewing the themes, the researcher identified the level subthemes (indicated with the blue line) and Level 2 subthemes, indicated with the brown line. The Level 2 subthemes indicate subthemes that directly influence each other. For example, people need relevant

qualifications, skills and the ability to do practical work, in order to break employment barriers.

It is important to consider that career education and career choice or selection should take place early at the high school, rather than at the higher education level (universities, colleges, etc.). Higher education (also called tertiary institutions, training institutions, training providers) need to provide qualifications that would allow for breaking employment barriers. This is shown in the figure below.

**Figure 6-30 Reviewing the themes**



### 6.9.1.5 Defining and naming themes

Based on the steps identified above, six (6) themes were identified, where their definitions are as follows:

- media: tools or conduits that are used for disseminating messages;
- Communication, messages and discussions
- Programmes: events that are presented to the audience
- Career: decision that is made by an individual to follow a particular career;
- Skills: expertise or talents that are possessed by an individual
- Training guidelines: guiding principles provided by education and training institutions and government in order to advise on and regulate training.

## 6.9.2 Thematic report

This section applies guidelines of thematic reporting as a method of qualitative data analysis. This study identified the lack of communication strategy as a reason for graduate unemployment. The themes identified which further provided a platform for the analysis of the responses include media, communication, messages and discussions, career, skills and training. The paragraphs below provide only the analysis of the themes.

### 6.9.2.1 Theme 1: Media

Media channel is identified as one of the themes regarded as a tool or a mechanism for obtaining information from various sources for the purpose of designing messages that will create awareness for unemployment factors. The respondents' views towards media contributes to the establishment of the communication strategy, through different media channels. It is important to consider that media organisations are expected to bring media into communities in order to gather information from the people, specifically those who do not have the resources to communicate electronically, and those that are in the rural areas and underdeveloped societies. This is evidenced by nine (9) responses below which summarizes the theme "media". It is necessary for the reader to note that all answers are presented verbatim.

- Respondent Code 1: "Bring **media** in action to the people - in the communities, e.g. Sunday times to visit high schools in the rural areas and townships to gather information

about unemployment issues.” The respondents are aware that media has the potential to reach people wherever they are.

- Respondent Code 27: “Let through **media** the emphasis be put on training providers to provide training that is best suitable for the job market.”
- Respondent Code 17: “The correct use of **media** can increase performance in creating awareness by ensuring that even the cell phone service providers allow for the marketing messages that addressing unemployment. E.g. sometimes when receiving a miss call, there are messages that are promoting insurances or any product. More of these messages should provide information about available job opportunities.”
- Respondent Code 28: “**Media** is the best tool for reaching larger communities. I think it is not fully utilized.”
- Respondent Code 25: “High schools are easily accessible for the **media** to bring messages or information to the leaners for advising them or providing career counselling.”
- Respondent Code 45: “In my opinion, the **media** in search of employment, I think, is doing well for now, but the main problem is the nepotism. Companies (private and public) should advertise vacancies for themselves and not through the agencies. Government should start being serious about its citizens because they mostly preach about millions of job opportunities; when you look at them because you have studies, you cannot even try to apply for those jobs. Companies should allow applicants to apply through email addresses and not by fax, because that is the old system.”
- Respondent Code 20: “All the SABC **programmes** should at least once a day have a topic or a message that is addressing unemployment, not just for the graduate but at all levels. This will help the nation to realise that "unemployment" is a serious issue, even to those that are ignorant.”
- Respondent Code 34: “Increase **media programmes** for creating employment awareness.”
- Respondent Code 14: “Increase more employment seeking **programmes** through TV, newspapers, etc.”

The above responses indicate that media is being used with passion and with a specific objective. It is being used in different ways and different context. This study stresses that in terms of the promotion of the messages about employment seeking, media is underutilized.

Although in Chapter 7 (discussion of results), the accessibility and the usability of televisions for employment seeking purposes is identified as a low priority, Respondent 14 saw the opportunity to increase employment seeking programmes through television as a communication medium. This is seen as a good communication strategy, taking into account the generally high consumption of entertaining television programmes, especially by young people as the target group.

### 6.9.2.2 Theme 2: Communication, messages and discussions

In theoretical terms, the message passes between the sender and the receiver through the communication medium (Robbins et al. 2001:2004). People are the obvious role-players in the communication process. Based on the definition of communication, namely the process whereby people express their ideas and feelings in a way that is understandable to one another (Hamilton 2008:5), the emphasis here is that it is the public itself that can inform the type of media that is appropriate to a particular community. This is evident in the 9 responses below.

As verbalized by “Respondent Code 2: **Messages** to be conveyed for the higher education training institutions to partner with Services SETA’s in providing relevant skills.”, this is the essence of information sharing and it should be visible in the communication strategy.

- Respondent Code 12: “**Messages** should be driven for choosing school subjects we should be guided according to the relevancy of the job market.
- Respondent Code 8: “**Community visits**, especially in the rural areas, should be conducted. Some days should specifically set as days for addressing unemployment by all media channels, e.g., just as we have the “World Aids Day”. I don’t know how could a day be named but that should specifically be a specific day so that when you switch to any channel there should be one topic that is taking about unemployment solutions.”
- Respondent Code 33: “The **content of messages** should always be relevant, e.g. to everyone, learners, tertiary students, parents, teachers, organisations, etc.”
- Respondent Code 41: “Still consider **manual** applications for internships, don’t focus only on **electronics**, which is internet.”



- Respondent Code 9: “**Discussions and debates** regarding unemployment issues are likely to be debated during elections. Let them be done on daily basis until issues of poverty and inequality are addressed.”
- Respondent Code 18: “Through **communication**, students should be encouraged to do multiple studies, and avoid specializing in one area.”
- Respondent Code 19: “**Communication** should drive a specific agenda at a particular given time. E.g. if there are less mathematicians in the country it should be communicated to schools that learners should be encouraged to take mathematics. This can be monitored overtime until at the tertiary and the workplace level.”
- Respondent Code 26: “Face-to-face **communication** with the leaners at schools or at tertiary institutions is important.”

The media identified by the respondents included face-to-face, discussions (these can be regarded as focus groups), newspapers, and electronics (such as internet related media). Through communication, people express their ideas and feelings in a way that is mutually understandable (Hamilton 2008:5). This can be achieved with the use of the relevant media. The reviewed literature confirmed that communication can strategically shape individual behaviour. Yet, through this study, it is expected that individuals can change the way they use media, that it, using media to communicate messages that seek employment rather than entertainment and other reasons.

### 6.9.2.3 Theme 3: Career

The answers provided by seven (7) respondents below confirms the researchers opinion about the fact that it is through media that career information can be disseminated to the target audience. It is therefore important that career choices be made according to job market demands and also consider job security.

- Respondent Code 15: “it is a challenge to understand as an individual what do you want and what the job market wants, however it is better to choose your **career** according to what the job market wants.”

- Respondent Code 29: “the problem of unemployment starts at the high schools. Learners should be encouraged and be made aware of the consequences of taking certain subjects or following certain **career** choices.”
- Respondent Code 30: “education about employment searching and pitfalls for choosing **careers** to be more provided through different media programmes.”
- Respondent Code 35: “it might be too late to communicate with students at universities because they have already made **career** choices.”
- Respondent Code 37: “influence is required at the high school for the media to encourage learners to choose **careers** that are relevant to the labour market. This may not be well taken by others because it ignores the personal career choice and interests of an individual.”
- Respondent Code 40: “**career education** to be provided more at schools in order to ensure that students are aware of their careers and may be avoid following accidental careers.”
- Respondent Code 42: “create more awareness about pitfalls for making incorrect **careers decisions**.”

The above responses indicate that career choice is one of the most key factor in shaping one’s future. In interpreting the above answers, the researcher is of the opinion that through careers education, wrong career choices can be avoided, and there is a need for more career awareness, as high schools level and the need to use media to spread the message, especially, regarding the dangers and mistakes of wrong career choices. In the reviewed literature, it is stated that career selection is one of many important choices students will make in determining future plans (Olamide and Olawaiye 2013:33).

#### 6.9.2.4 Theme 4: Skills (employment barriers)

The answers are provided by two (2) respondents as follows. It is necessary for the reader to note that all answers are presented verbatim.

- Respondent Code 43: “students must be provided an opportunity to go to the workplace and do work practical rather than teaching those **skills**. The need to be more practical, they need to apply the skills they are thought in the environment so that when they finish

it would be easier for them to have experience of which they do not have an, thus students should be given opportunity to do practical in the workplace before they finish their studies. Communication strategies need to be integrated so that it could be easy for students to access media for employment search.”

- Respondent Code 44: “other challenge that we facing is the **experience of work** that is required from the candidates when they have just finished the study/qualification. Some students are **not skilled** as they claim they are for the work they have applied.”

In interpreting the above answers, the researcher is of the opinion that practical skills and work experience are the main barriers for employment. Those who want to choose their career may not be aware of what the labour market demands. This is also highlighted in the findings of a study conducted by Olamide and Olawaiye (2013:33) on “The Factors Determining the Choice of Career Among Secondary School Students”. The study indicates which clearly indicate that respondents are concerned about early entry into the occupational world and finding productive and rewarding places in and out rapidly, in fast changing societies, where employment wages are unlikely to be available on a scale sufficient to absorb more than a small fraction of the youth arriving in the labour market.

#### 6.9.2.5 Theme 5: Training (institutions)

Through guidance from the South African government, it is noted that organisations (for example, private and public organisations), acts and policies are established for guiding organisational training. These may include the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, National Skills Development Framework, Umsobomvu Youth Development Programmes, etc. Respondents highlighted the contribution that is expected from higher education training institutions, including a University of Technology, in providing relevant learning.

- Respondent Code 4: “Communication can focus on **training institutions** to provide job opportunities to the students after completing their studies. This could be done by communicating with various organisations.”
- Respondent Code 5: “Communication can help in ensuring that **higher education institutions** communicate the limitation of **training** areas where certain skills are not a

demand, e.g. it is pointless to train excessive nurses if there are fewer employment opportunities in the nursing field.”

- Respondent Code 6: “Communication strategies should communicate about consolidating all the small colleges, get rid of flight by night by flight institutions and ensure that only **institutions** that comply are operating. This has already been done with **technikons** but more still need to be done.”
- Respondent Code 10: “**Tertiary institutions** must terminate all subjects that do not add value, that are not attracting employment.”
- Respondent Code 11: “A policy to be established and communicated for driving the organisation to run the internships as part of a compulsory Corporate Social Responsibility.”
- Respondent Code 13: “Universities and any other **training institutions** should provide training according to what the job market experts.”
- Respondent Code 21: “Government intervention is needed to draw policies that will oblige all the **higher institutions** to partner with organisations in order to provide job opportunities for students after completing their studies.”
- Respondent Code 22: “**Training institutions** should do a follow with the students to find if they got employed or not. This would help them to be aware if the training they are providing is relevant or not.”
- Respondent Code 23: “All **training providers** must find a way of partnering with organisations so that they provide skills that would help students obtaining jobs after studying.”
- Respondent Code 24: “**Higher institutions** should add value and give guarantee that student will get the job after studying.”
- Respondent Code 31: “All trainings provided at **higher education institutions** be skills and employment focused and be relevant.”

In interpreting the above answers, the researcher understands that high schools are accessing media and regard such media as the key point of entry for securing a place for higher education institutions, organisations that want to offer bursaries, organisations that want to offer internships, etc., to disseminate career information, hence, media agencies also have the opportunity to spread the message in schools regardless of the information already available. It is not necessary for the learners in schools to do the tours to faraway

places, such as SABC in Johannesburg, in order to obtain information about relevant careers.

### **6.9.10 Conclusion**

In this part of the study, data analysis was done according to the objectives of the study. This began with the analysis of the answers for the demographic data followed by the analysis of the answers for the objectives of the study. Data was distributed according to frequency to determine the frequency of answers, as well as through the Pearson Chi-Square to determine the significance difference between the variables. Since the respondents were offered a means of providing their own views on how media can be established, the analysis of their responses was done through a thematic analysis.

## CHAPTER SEVEN - DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

### 7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the results are discussed. Subsequently, these are presented according to the demographic responses followed by the responses according to the demands structured by the six research objectives. The results confirmed extent to which the research questions were answered. The results confirmed that while the respondents are furthering their studies, it is important that they obtain relevant skills. There is still a gap between the career choices of the respondents, and the skills demanded by the labour market. This is evident in the answers regarding the number of years the respondents have been looking for employment. It can be argued that the respondents study further because they want to obtain more skills, ones which would make them employable.

In Chapter 6, data analysis is presented according to the objectives of the study. Data was presented in the form of tables, indicating the frequency of the characteristics, percentages, and cumulative percentage. Since the 6<sup>th</sup> objective of the study required the respondents to provide their own comments about establishing a communication strategy for increasing graduate employment potential, these comments were coded in the form of thematic analysis.

This is followed by the discussions and interpretations of results, which are presented from the demographic answers, as well as the answers based on the six objectives of the study, as follows:

- identify factors contributing to graduate unemployment;
- clarify the role of media in addressing unemployment challenges;
- identify types of media that are used to disseminate information about factors contributing to graduate unemployment;
- confirm if unemployment is a challenge faced by the graduates at the university of technology;

- confirm a media that is relevant for disseminating information about unemployment factors; and
- establish a communication strategy for increasing graduate employment potential.

## 7.2 Demographic profile

Since the main aim of this study is to identify the factors contributing to graduate unemployment and confirm media platforms that are relevant and strategy to increase graduate employment potential, the results show that the demographic characteristics described in this study are also influential in the identification of factors that contribute to graduate unemployment. These confirm a media that is relevant and communication strategy to increase graduate employment potential.

The respondents were asked to indicate their personal details. This was important in order to determine whether personal details of the respondents had any influence over the identification of factors contributing to graduate unemployment, and confirm a media that is relevant and communication strategy to increase graduate employment potential. The demographic profile included gender, age, race, level of study and type of study.

It is important that the discussions regarding unemployment factors consider individual demographic characteristics in a relevant context. For example, there are certain working conditions that are not favourable to certain people, under certain conditions, for example, pregnant women working in heights. In some instances when certain jobs opportunities are advertised, the age is specified as a requirement. For example, this is more applicable in the advertisement of the internships.

### 7.2.1 Gender

Insofar as gender is concerned, the study established that more males answered to the study than did females. This came as a surprise, since one of the challenges facing the South African labour market, is that women fall within the range of exceptionally high

unemployment who want to work, and in particular, who are young, unskilled and inexperienced (Altbeker & Storme 2013:3).

### 7.2.2 Age

Also, with regard to age of respondents, the study was dominated by those who were between 23 and 28 years of age. This suggests that young people are keen in shaping their lives, and they have an understanding that education is the key to their success. In support of these results, Altbeker and Storme (2015) argue that younger graduate are also more likely to be unemployed than older graduate. Likewise, Statistics South Africa (2015) reports that the unemployment rate among youth is more than twice that of adults each year. Age is highlighted as the most significant factor by a few respondents. This could be qualified by the answers to Objective 1, namely that only 10% of the respondents are categorized as being over 33 years of age. These respondents could be regarded as adults, if compared to the majority who are between the age of 23 and 28 years.

Age distribution shows that young people are concentrated in this institution. The answers confirmed that black students are highly concentrated, particularly in the Faculty of the Humanities. These findings concur with the Statistics South Africa report that, unemployed black graduate are more than other nationalities (Statistics SA 2014:11). Age could be seen as a barrier preventing one from accessing employment opportunities, and as a result, could be linked to an individual performance. Dreyer's (2006:3) view confirms that older workers bring to the work place qualities such as experience, judgement, reliability, strong work ethic and commitment to quality.

Unemployment has a greater impact on individual health. The health-related effects of unemployment result in to numerous factors, such as age, sex, duration of unemployment, previous illness, socio-economic status, education, personality, social support and individual coping resources (Weber, Hormann & Heipertz 2007:1). This is viewed from the perspective of the Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, which addresses basic human needs (Jordaan & Jordaan 1984:652), and makes clear that unemployment compromises these factors.



### **7.2.3 Race**

Van der Berg and Van Broekhuizen (2012:3) highlighted perception that certain segments of graduate are really struggling to find jobs, particularly black students from historically disadvantaged (and often rural) universities and these are students who have majored in Arts and the Humanities, hence the need to determine the race of the population being studied. In terms of race, it is not surprising that blacks are dominating because the University of Technology where the study was conducted is dominated by blacks. Again, blacks seems to be dominating in the humanities faculties.

### **7.2.4 Level of study**

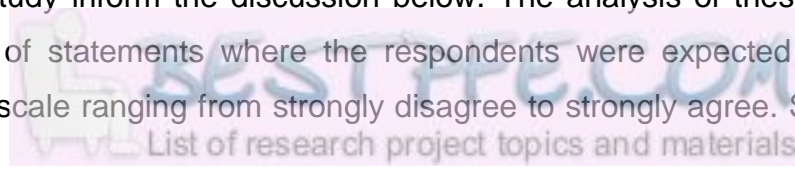
Studying at a postgraduate level may be informed by different reasons, amongst which unemployment might feature. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of study. The researcher wanted to establish whether, at their level of study, the respondents are affected by unemployment.

### **7.2.5 Type of study**

The researcher is of the opinion that there is a possibility that post graduate students may study full time or part time due to various reasons. For example, their interest in studying further is driven by the inability to find employment after completing undergraduate studies, etc. It appears from the above table that although there is not much difference between the part time and full time respondents, the number of those that are studying full time is higher.

## **7.3 Unemployment factors recognized by the graduates**

The objectives of the study inform the discussion below. The analysis of these objectives was done in the form of statements where the respondents were expected to rate the responds from a Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Since all the



statements were rated, some of these statements were rated or chosen more often than the others. This means that statements that were rated by most of the respondents contributed to the identification of factors contributing to graduate unemployment. The answers to the statements in this section are a reflection of how the respondents view the factors contributing to their careers.

### **7.3.1 I am confident about the career of my choice**

It could sometimes be a challenge to strike a balance between what is required by the labour market, and what is a career choice of an individual. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of confidence in relation to their career choices. Despite a high number of respondents who indicated that they are furthering their studies because they could not find employment, the survey gives an indication of the confidence that the graduates have in their career choices which is strongly agreed by 81% and agreed by 18%.

### **7.3.2 There is a perfect match between my career, my field of study, and the labour market (n=99)**

It could be argued that not all students choose their studies according to the needs of the labour market. Respondents were asked to indicate their perception whether their career match their field of study and the labour market. The reason for this perception was to confirm whether the respondents considered the needs of the labour market when choosing their careers.

Notably, 81.8% strongly agreed that “there is a perfect match between my career, my field of study and the labour market”. Hence, from the reviewed literature, Festus et al. (2013:3) confirmed that skills mismatch is a serious factor contributing to the problem of unemployment, while confirming skills mismatch.

### **7.3.3 My age is suitable for the labour market**

Age could be a barrier in finding employment. Respondents were asked to indicate their perception as to whether they are suitable for the labour market. The reason for seeking clarity on this perception was to confirm whether the respondents considered their age as being suitable for finding employment. The researcher wanted to determine the awareness of age as one of the factors recognized by the respondents for the suitability in the labour market.

In relation to the statement “my age is suitable for the labour market”, only 79.8% strongly agreed”, where the results confirm that the variable “age” received less attention, as the majority of respondents believe that their age is suitable for the labour market. This is also confirmed by the results in Objective 1 of the study, which find that the majority of the respondents are young, between the age of 23 and 28. The 18.2% of the respondents who just “agree” could be an indication that they are not sure, and that they could regard their age as a barrier to the labour market.

### **7.3.4 Skills shortages are the sources of various challenges such as poverty, underdevelopment and unemployment**

It could be argued that not all students choose their studies according to the needs of the labour market. Respondents were asked to indicate their perception regarding skills shortages being the sources of challenges related to unemployment. The reason for this perception is that the researcher wanted to confirm whether the shortage of skills could be regarded as one of the unemployment factors also featured or recognized by the respondents.

While Akojee (2012:675) argued that skills shortages have been the key to other challenges, including poverty, unemployment and uneven development, the majority of the respondents (82.8%) strongly agreed that “skills shortages are the sources of various challenges, such as poverty, underdevelopment and unemployment”. Hence, it can be argued that skills, experience, education, etc. creates equilibrium and balance in shaping

the future for the individual. Since only three respondents disagreed (two strongly disagreed and one disagreed), this is an indication that there may be other reasons for their various unemployment challenges.

### **7.3.5 My field of study provides me with key entrepreneurial skills that are crucial in addressing the unemployment problem**

Entrepreneurial skills can sharpen and guide the thoughts of the young people. Respondents were asked to indicate their perception whether their field of study has the potential for providing entrepreneurial skills that are key in addressing the unemployment problem. The reason for this perception is that the researcher wanted to determine if the respondents regard the entrepreneurial skills as factors that are a key in addressing the unemployment problem.

The majority of the respondents (83.8%) strongly agreed to the statement “my field of study provides me with entrepreneurial skills that are key in addressing the unemployment problem”. It is a general principle that poverty and inequality are the consequences of unemployment, yet from the principle of this study, entrepreneurial skills are also regarded as the key to the creation of graduate’ employment potential. This provides an indication that nevertheless, the respondents are in some way looking for employment opportunities, where the majority (80.8%) strongly agreed that “they are confident about the career of their choice”.

### **7.3.6 After finishing my studies, I will seek out job opportunities rather than entrepreneurial opportunities**

While Erasmus et al. (2006:285) put emphasis that economic growth and job creation are the key to achieving employment growth worldwide, the majority of the respondents (84.8%) strongly agreed to the statement “after finishing my studies I will seek out job opportunities rather than entrepreneurial opportunities. This is an indication that whatever comes first, either a job or a business opportunity is deemed acceptable.

### **7.3.7 After finishing my studies, I will seek out both job opportunities and entrepreneurial opportunities**

Due to the scarcity of employment, it is not safe to rely only on employment seeking. There is a general understanding that after completing studies, one has to find a job or make an income. Respondents were asked to indicate whether, after finishing their studies, they would be looking for job opportunities and entrepreneurial opportunities. The reason for this is that the researcher is of the opinion that the respondents ought to consider both job opportunities and entrepreneurial opportunities. Likewise, the majority of the respondents (81.8%) strongly agreed to the statement “after finishing my studies I will seek out both job opportunities and entrepreneurial opportunities”; and

### **7.3.8 Skills development is regarded as a solution to bridge the gap between the labour market and unemployment**

There is a need for one to strengthen the qualifications with the related skills. Respondents were asked to confirm whether skills development may be regarded as a solution to bridge the gap between the labour market and unemployment. The reason for this is that the researcher wanted to determine whether the graduates are aware of the need to acquire the skills related to their qualifications. The majority of the respondents (81.8%) strongly agreed to the statement “skills development is regarded as a solution to bridge the gap between the labour market and unemployment.”

### **7.3.9 The career education offered in my faculty provides entrepreneurial skills that will open labour market doors for my career**

It is important for individuals to acquire entrepreneurial skills, regardless of career choice and qualifications. Respondents were asked to confirm whether the career education offered in my faculty provides entrepreneurial skills that will open labour market doors for my career. The reason for this is that the researcher wanted to establish whether the respondents regard the career education offered in the faculty of humanities as having the

potential of providing entrepreneurial skills that will open labour market doors for their career.

There may be various ways to bridge this gap. The National Development Programme of 2030 (NDP 2013:41) suggests that in moving towards decent work for all, the short-term priority must be to raise employment, and incentivise the entry of young people into the labour market. Internships and entrepreneurships may be used to close such gaps. Similarly, training provided to the unemployed should form an integral part of active labour market policies (Erasmus et al. 2006:273).

### **7.3.10 The career education offered in my faculty provides entrepreneurial skills that will provide a solution to any employment challenges in my career**

Respondents were asked to confirm whether the career education offered in their faculty was providing entrepreneurial skills that would provide a solution to any employment challenges in their career. The reason for this query is to establish whether the respondents regard the career education offered in the faculty of humanities as having the potential of providing entrepreneurial skills that might open labour market doors for their career.

Furthermore, the majority of the respondents (82.8%) strongly agreed to the statement “The career education offered in my faculty provides entrepreneurial skills that will open labour market doors for my career”. While it is noted that the majority of the respondents are fairly young, Brixiova, Ncube, and Bicaba (2015:11) note that youth unemployment is a key challenge. The study is noting that the respondents might be ignorant of this notice hence the majority of the respondents (83.8%) strongly agreed to the statement “The career education offered in my faculty provides entrepreneurial skills that will provide a solution any employment challenges in my career”.

### **7.3.11 My field of study has greater employment opportunities**

It is generally expected that one would choose a career that is attractive to the labour market. The choice of a career can be influence by various factors. According to Fizer

(2013:7), factors that may influence one's career include interest in field, academic ability, familiarity, economic stability, and influential people can all play a role in the decision. Respondents were asked to confirm whether their field of study has employment opportunities. The reason for this confirmation is that the researcher wanted to determine whether the respondents regard their field of study as having greater employment opportunities.

The National Development Plan 2030 (2013) presents a long-term strategy for increasing employment and broaden opportunities through education. This provides hope to graduate, making respondents' answers of some concern. This is seen in the answers for the following three statements:

- the majority of the respondents (82.8%) strongly agreed to the statement "my field of study has greater employment opportunities";

### **7.3.12 Work experience is a concern for my future and career**

The lack of work experience could be a challenge or a barrier to obtaining employment. This is one of the reasons for a graduate to work at restaurants and elsewhere for the purpose of building work experience. Respondents were asked to confirm whether work experience is a concern for their career and future. The reason for this confirmation is that the researcher wanted to determine whether the respondents see work experience as a concern for their future and career. This also means to determine whether work experience is regarded as something to worry about. The majority of the respondents (83.8%) strongly agreed to the statement "work experience is a concern for my future and career".

### **7.3.13 My faculty provides employment experience through internship programmes**

Not all the educational institutions are considering programmes for providing students with experience, even when degree programmes should offer opportunities for Work Integrated Learning or experiential learning. Respondents were asked to confirm whether their faculty provides employment experience through internship programmes. The reason for this confirmation is that the researcher wanted to determine whether the respondents obtain

support from the Humanities faculty regarding access and opportunities for internship programmes.

The majority of the respondents (84.8%) strongly agreed to the statement “my faculty provides employment experience through internship programmes.”

#### **7.3.14 Although I am still studying, I consider myself ready for the labour market at any time**

Respondents were asked to confirm if they consider themselves ready for the labour market at any time. The reason for this confirmation is that the researcher wanted to confirm if the respondents are ready and capable of applying what they have learned, and whether can they perform for the job towards which they are studying.

The contradiction is that the respondents have faith and hope for their career future and employment opportunities, whilst being aware that they lack experience. Work experience is still highly regarded as one of the requirements for one to enter the labour market. This is also highlighted by Dreyer (2006:3): older workers bring to the work place qualities such as experience, judgement, reliability, strong work ethic and commitment to quality. Contrary to Dreyer’s view, the majority of the respondents (87.8%) strongly agreed to the statement “although I am still studying, I consider myself ready for the labour market at any time.”

#### **7.3.15 I need the internship programme to help me obtain the relevant experience**

Internship programmes are considered as the vehicles for obtaining relevant work experience. Respondents were asked to confirm whether they need the internships to help them obtain the relevant experience. The reason for this confirmation is that the researcher wanted to determine whether the respondents consider the internship programme for helping them to obtain the relevant experience.

Work experience is a challenge facing graduate. Van der Berg and Van Broekhuizen (2012:11) argue that some of the employers prefer more experienced, older employees than they do more qualified, younger employees. The majority of the respondents (84.8%)



strongly agreed with the statement “I need the internship programme to help me obtaining the relevant experience”. While arguing that unemployment affect the majority of the population, it is important to note that addressing unemployment would lead to the improvement development of the country’s economic health and wellbeing. In support of this argument, according to Jahoda’s functional theory, employment provides identity and enjoins activity (O’Brien 1986:242).

#### **7.4 The role of communication in addressing unemployment challenges**

One of the objectives of the study that was to establish the role of communication in addressing unemployment challenges.

##### **7.4.1 Media is effectively used globally for addressing challenges for communicating unemployment issues**

Respondents were asked to indicate whether media is effective in its global use for addressing challenges and for communicating unemployment issues. The reason behind this question was to ascertain whether the use of media may potentially be used everywhere for addressing challenges for communicating unemployment issues. Since unemployment is a global issue, the researcher wanted to ascertain the effective use of media in a global context, for communicating unemployment issues.

Most of the respondents strongly agreed that the role of communication may address unemployment challenges. In support of these results, Servaes (2008:15) and Clampitt (2005:15) maintain that in communication, knowledge is shared and the social order is maintained and restored.

#### **7.4.2 I regard media as a channel for disseminating information for addressing personal and national issues related to unemployment challenges**

Respondents were asked to indicate their perception with regards to the media as a channel for disseminating information for addressing personal and national issues related to unemployment challenges. The reason behind this question was to ascertain whether the use of media could be used as a channel for addressing issues related to unemployment for individuals and the nations. It could be argued that unemployment challenges affect the whole country.

The majority of the respondents strongly agree, and regard media as a channel for disseminating information for addressing personal and national issues related to unemployment challenges. Robbins et al. (2001:223) have identified four roles of communication as being: to control, motivate, express and to inform, from these results, media is seen as a powerful source, and a channel to achieve this role. It is also noted that the results also confirmed that “media can meet the needs of all users at all levels.”

#### **7.4.3 I am experiencing challenges with the use of media**

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they experience challenges when using media for their employment search. The objective of the question was to ascertain whether media is used effectively for searching employment. Although people have different reasons for using media, the figure below aims to confirm if respondents are experiencing challenges with the use of media.

Since 82.8% strongly agreed to the statement: “I am experiencing challenges with the use of media”. This is an indication that while media is seen as playing an important role, one cannot assume that there are no challenges; hence, there is a need to further investigate the extent of such challenges.

#### **7.4.4 Media can meet the needs of all users at all levels**

It can be argued that media messages are targeted at certain users. Respondents were asked to indicate whether media can meet the needs of all users at all levels. The reason behind this question was to confirm whether media messages are applicable to all the users. Although in the previous paragraph the respondents confirmed that there are challenges in the use of communication, the answers (84) here strongly agreed that media has the potential to meet the needs of all users at all levels. This is followed by 13 who agreed.

#### **7.4.5 The messages communicated through social and print media are reliable and useful.**

Respondents were asked to confirm whether the messages communicated through social and print media are reliable and useful. The reason behind this question was to ascertain the reliability of social and print media messages. Through the use of technology, social media has changed the way the world communicates, connects, and conducts business. From the strategic communication perspective, it is important for anticipating and managing resistance to change and the negative emotional components of transformational change (Duffy and Chance 2007:15).

#### **7.4.6 Media interventions, sustainable and improved communication practices would ensure that graduates immediately find jobs that are relevant to their studies**

There is a need to determine whether media interventions could assist graduates in obtaining those jobs relevant to their studies. The researcher wanted to determine and confirm the perception that media interventions, and sustainable and improved communication practices, would ensure that graduates immediately find jobs relevant to their studies.

Noting that the majority of the respondents strongly agree that “media interventions and sustainable and improved communication practices would ensure that graduate immediately

find jobs that are relevant to their studies”, there is no doubt that “unemployment” in South Africa is an issue that concerns everyone’s interest, needs and capacities. This corresponds to Servaes’ (2008:15) definition of communication as a sharing of knowledge aimed at reaching a consensus for action, which takes into account the interests, needs and capacities of all concerned.

#### **7.4.6 Messages communicated through social and print media are reliable and useful**

The majority of the respondents strongly agreed that “messages communicated through social and print media are reliable and useful”. This confirms that there is a greater need for media to be used to communicate messages about how to address unemployment. Since there is an indication that the minority of respondents (2%) is not exposed to social and print media, this creates a perception that these may be the respondents who do not use social media often.

Established communication platforms such as twitter, Facebook, etc. enable their users to socialise online and it is good for people who want to keep in touch with one another easily and on regular basis (Susskind & Susskind 2015:177). This could also be attributed to the use of high-end technology, such as smart phones, which enables access to social media, while other respondents may not have access to such technology, which could be a basic requirement for communicating through certain media (especially social media).

### **7.5 Types of media used to disseminate information about unemployment factors**

#### **7.5.1 Which media do you prefer to use when doing employment search?**

Overall, the answers to the question “which media do you prefer to use when doing employment search?” indicated that respondents use print media and communicate through social media. Visual and audio media are less used as compared to social and print media. The fact that 23% of the respondents never use visual media is surprising because there is a perception that young people watch television for long hours.

Ballard (2011:7) argues that users of any media must have goal-driven media usage. The answers indicate that while they are studying, the respondents are constantly using media to look for jobs. In relation to the question “which media do you prefer to use when doing employment search?” visual and audio media were never used employment search. In classifying the use of media (social, print, visual and audio) according to the categorical answers (always, sometimes and never), the answers indicate that social and print media are used always and sometimes, respectively. It can be assumed that low socio-economic status can make it difficult to access certain media.

### **7.5.2 When did you last use any media to search for employment?**

Since the concept “media” is plural, it is argued that with the advent of the current technology, society may experience challenges in relying on one or a single medium, yet the term media is used. There is an opportunity for different media to be used for dissemination similar messages in order to be able cover different audience. Byrd (2002:2) has indicated that information dissemination needs to be based on a model of communication characterised by the process of dialogue, information sharing, mutual understanding and agreement, as well as collective action. Such a process of communication can be coordinated through a system. From the systems point of view communication include inputs, process, output and feedback (Duffy and Chance 2007:96). These characteristics do feature in the media that is preferred in this study, namely: social media (e.g. Facebook), and print media (e.g. newspapers).

### **7.5.3 How often do you use the following media for employment search**

The answers also indicated that in terms of the question “how often do you use the following media for employment search?” the answers indicated that the majority use print and social media for employment search is an indication of a society that is jobless. It is clear that audio and visual media are either not preferred, or the respondents are not aware that they could also benefit from these media. The fact that visual and audio media are never used

for searching employment could mean that there are no programmes that present employment opportunities through these media.

There is a need for educating the graduate to focus not only on reading newspapers and communicating through social media, hence they ought to use a combination of these media in search of employment. Systems Theory accounts for this, where it explains that the components of the society work together as a whole (Mersham & Skinner 2001:29). In relation to this study, a combination of media suggests the establishment of an integrated solution. For example, television resembles computers, books are read on telephones, newspapers are written through clouds, and films are streamed via rental companies (Miller 2012:95).

Further to the foundational mathematical model of communication by Shannon & Weaver (1968), several communication models such as transactional model of development communication, a basic communication model, Sender, Message, Channel and Receiver (SMCR) model highlight that, in order to be successful, communication must be a two-way process, where both the communicators are active role players in the communication process (Bovee & Thill 2014:49; Clampitt 2005:102; Nair & White 1993 & Robbins et al. 2001:224). This confirms that media has the opportunity to establish a platform of interaction between the media itself and the user in addressing user challenges specific to unemployment.

#### **7.5.4 How often in the last week did you access the following media for employment search?**

The answers to the question “how often in the last week did you access the following media for employment search?” confirm that there is a high accessibility of the newspapers for seeking employment. This is an indication of accessibility, where cost-effectiveness and may be the only available source in certain times and in certain places. For example, unlike social media, newspapers are available, usable and accessible, even during load shedding.

In differentiating these two theories from one another, while the former determines what uses people make of media and what benefit they gain from it (Hanson 2005:256), the latter

asserts certain events to be more important than the others. For the purpose of this study, if a person is seeking out employment, he/she will be interested in the news related or specific to employment opportunities. Both theories would apply, because if an individual is looking for employment, this means that she/he would be interested in agenda setting, as this would be more important at that time. Consequently, the uses and gratifications theory would apply, where an individual, for example, uses a particular media for the benefit of seeking employment.

Since no respondent preferred visual or audio media, this could mean that job seekers do not rely on television or even radio for their employment search. This deviated from expectation, since there is a perception that the youth watch television for long hours. This means that education is required amongst this age group and other age groups when it comes to spending time appropriately to take advantage of various media. In conclusion, based on the answers the research question, “what types of media are used to disseminate information about unemployment factors?” print and social media appear preferable and well-utilised.

## **7.6 Unemployment as a challenge facing graduate**

### **7.6.1 Would you advise someone to study further while looking for employment?**

Based on the statement “would you advise someone to study further while looking for employment?” the majority of the respondents (86.9%) would always provide advice to other students to search for employment while studying further. As presented in the previous section, most respondents use print media often, as confirmed in this section, where the majority rely on the employment opportunities advertised. It is highly probable that these are newspapers advertisements.

### **7.6.2 How many years have you been seeking employment**

To the statement “how many years have you been seeking employment”, the results show that 64.6% are in the majority of those that have been seeking employment. This could also

mean that the respondents graduated in a field that is not required or demanded by the labour market. Studying further could also enable one to change the field of study and may also promote personal development.

### **7.6.3 What are your reasons for studying further**

In response to the question, “what are your reasons for studying further”, the answers indicate that that 68.7% of the respondents were furthering their studies because they could not find employment, which could represent the percentage of respondents who are not employed at all. From a media dependency theory perspective, certain kinds of media content are used heavily. Media can provide access to the content that presents a particular individual career choice. A user who is heartily looking for employment depends on all sorts of media content related to employment.

Although it is everyone’s wish to find employment immediately after graduating, the results confirm that unemployment is still a challenge facing postgraduate students, specifically, by the group of respondents, in the Humanities Faculty at the University of Technology in question. Among those who have achieved higher education, skills mismatch is a serious factor contributing to unemployment for the graduate. It is plausible to argue that this is one of the reasons why graduates opt to study further after realizing that they have graduated in a field that has less employment prospects.

Economic growth and job creation are regarded as sources of employment. There are several ways of achieving this through the provision of internships and entrepreneurial skills and the development of skills. An increasing number of unemployed graduate could be the result of the mismatch between the programme offerings of colleges and universities and the demands of the labour market.

In the Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, physiological needs satisfy other needs (Jordaan & Jordaan 1984:652). It is argued here that the closing of unemployment gaps is the major physiological requirement of a human being. This is detailed in the Expectancy Valence Theory, which holds a person’s actions to be predictable (O’Brien 1986:241). Unemployment may lead to stress, due to an individual’s inability to provide for their



physical and physiological needs, hence it can be argued, and ought to be highlighted, that financial power has the ability to determine an individual's position or status in society.

Amongst the unemployment factors identified, skills provision and development were clearly noted, and are regarded as the first step to introducing graduate into the labour market (NDP 2030: 2013), hence, with regards to the question "which messages should be mostly communicated/debated through the media", job opportunities and internships were chosen by 68.7% and 28.3%, respectively. Internship programmes and entrepreneurial opportunities are seen as having the potential for closing the unemployment gap.

In conclusion, the results confirm that although economic growth has increased in the past decade in South Africa, the gaps that are caused by unemployment, notably of poverty and unemployment still exist. Furthermore, unemployment affects an individual's personal space, thinking, ability, economic freedom. While young people reflect a higher degree of unemployment, this is applicable to both the graduate and those that could not achieve higher education. It is important to consider that the future starts at an early stage, and manifests at a later stage, because the decisions we take today are the consequences of tomorrow. The same applies to the decisions that one is obliged to take about career choice.

### **7.7 Confirm a media that is relevant for disseminating information about unemployment factors**

The relevancy of the media was determined by identifying issues that that can be facilitated through the media as well as the use of different media. The consistency of the use of media as well as the use of the language are also key in determining the relevancy of the media.

### **7.7.1 The issue of unemployment needs an everyday national debate, through the media**

The respondents were asked to confirm the need for daily debate in society broadly about the matters concerning unemployment. The reason behind the daily debate is that the researcher is of the opinion that unemployment issues need to be debated very frequently. The results confirmed that “the issue of unemployment needs an everyday national debate, through the media”. There is an indication that most of the respondents regard job application as the significant determining the need to for recourse to media. Most respondents expect to apply and obtain job opportunities after completing their studies.

### **7.7.2 Different media such as Social (Facebook), print (newspaper), audio (radio) and visual (television) media can be integrated**

This study considers the integration of different media in order to work holistically. This is confirmed through Systems Theory, which posits that the components of the society work together as a whole (Mersham & Skinner 2001:29). The respondents were asked to confirm the perception that different media can be integrated in order to reach an audience that prefer new media and an audience who prefer old media. The objective of this confirmation is to ascertain whether respondents still have an interest in old and new media.

The answers indicated a high utilisation of social media. This leads to the researcher’s own doubt whether media is actually used for correct and relevant reasons. It is for this reason that education about the use of media is required, in order to advise and promote the use and integration of social media with other media towards establishing a good individual reputation. Inevitably, this would also increase opportunities for employment seeking.

### **7.7.3 Different media such as social (Facebook), print (newspaper), audio (radio) and visual (television) media may address challenges related to the communication of information about unemployment issues**

McGrath and Apogee (2009: 153) reflected on a challenge in career education in which the supply-side solution is driven by socio-political concerns about youth unemployment, rather than a reflection of immediate demand for limited skills. The respondents strongly agree that “different media such Social (Facebook), print (newspaper), audio (radio) and visual (television) media may address challenges related to the communication of information about unemployment issues.”

It is the researcher’s argument that addressing such challenges requires careful knowledge and management of activities for meeting the needs of the media users. Therefore, the public relations planning model may be required to manage the challenges accordingly based on the understanding that public relations has the potential to identify the policies and procedures of an individual or the organisation with the public interest.

It can also be argued that media cannot be used in isolation, where its integrated use has the potential to allow for the interaction with the majority of the population, and to seek out public opinion from the majority of the population in different ways. Media has the potential to promote success in the form of crowdsourcing. Crowdsourcing is used when a given activity is well bounded in scope and likely time scale and there is a clear commission or invitation from an individual or institution for the contribution of others (Suskind & Suskind 2015:180).

### **7.7.4 The messages presented through media should be consistent**

It can be argued that the socio-economic background may have an influence on the access and the use of media. For example, the communication content that is disseminated through social media networks may not reach those who have internet limitations. As this study confirmed that media messages should be consistent. For example, a message

communicated through a particular newspaper should be the same as the one communicated on a radio, online news, television programme, etc.

The respondents were asked to confirm the perception about the consistency of messages. The reason for this confirmation is to determine consistency of information dissemination may influence the respondents' state of unemployment. Since the majority of the respondents (85.9%) strongly agreed that "the messages presented through media should be consistent" it can be argued that this could be monitored through a particular media policy, where if such a policy is not available, it is highly recommended that it be established. While emphasizing consistency, the majority of the respondents also indicate that "the target audience should receive value from the media regardless of the location and environment."

#### **7.7.5 The debate will ensure that people of different languages from different places are aware of the opportunities that they could access through different the media**

There is an understanding that media programmes are available in all the official languages in South Africa. The respondents were asked to confirm the perception that debate on the subject of unemployment would ensure that people of different languages from different places became aware of the opportunities that they could access through different the communication, in order to ascertain whether language could be a barrier to discussions related to unemployment in certain areas or places.

The findings for the statement "the debate will ensure that people of different languages from different places are aware of the opportunities that they could access through different the media" can be interpreted by means of agenda setting theory. Unemployment negatively affect individuals, organisations, nations, etc., communicating messages aimed at addressing unemployment issues to the majority of the population is key, taking into account unemployment as a challenge that faces them.

### 7.7.6 Which messages should be mostly communicated/debated through the media

The answers to the statement “which messages should be mostly communicated/debated through the media?” indicate that Job opportunities (68.7%) are highly favoured to be communicated through communication messages. Internships (28.6%) are also factored, and recognized for their ability to provide experience to graduate as an entry and passport into the labour market.

### 7.8 The establishment of a communication strategy for recognizing factors contributing to graduate unemployment

The discussion of results for this section of the study is based on the themes identified in chapter 6, namely, media, communication, messages and discussions, programmes, career, skills and training.

#### 7.8.1 Theme 1: Media

The respondent's interest on the media has identified gaps with regard to interaction with people, creation of awareness, underutilization, accessibility and use by stakeholders and appreciation. As verbalized by *Respondent Code 17*: “*The correct use of media can increase performance in creating awareness by ensuring that even the cell phone service providers allow for the marketing messages that addressing unemployment. E.g. sometimes when receiving a miss call, there are messages that are promoting insurances or any product. More of these messages should provide information about available job opportunities.*”

The verbalisation of the quote “*Respondent Code 1: Bring **media** in action to the people - in the communities, e.g. Sunday times to visit high schools in the rural areas and townships to gather information about unemployment issues*”, the respondent is aware that media has the potential to reach people wherever they are. Media has the potential to conduct

research to locate people that are affected by problems through different programmes whether television, radio, newspaper or social media networks. This is in relation to Respondent Code 28: “Media is the best tool for reaching larger communities. I think it is not fully utilized.”

Employment search through media is stressed strongly in the following three responses:

- “Respondent Code 27: Let through media the emphasis be put on training providers to provide training that is best suitable for the job market”,
- Respondent Code 25: “High schools are easily accessible for the media to bring messages or information to the learners for advising them or providing career counselling.”
- Respondent Code 45: “In my opinion, the media in search of employment, I think, is doing well for now, but the main problem is the nepotism. Companies (private and public) should advertise vacancies for themselves and not through the agencies.

A high number of unskilled and uneducated people are located in disadvantaged areas where people in those areas could hardly afford accessibility to media programmes. The programmes in the media are identified through the following three responses:

- Respondent Code 20: “All the SABC programmes should at least once a day have a topic or a message that is addressing unemployment, not just for the graduate but at all levels. This will help the nation to realize that "unemployment" is a serious issue, even to those that are ignorant.”
- Respondent Code 34: “Increase media programmes for creating employment awareness.”
- Respondent Code 14: “Increase more employment seeking programmes through TV, newspapers, etc.”

Government should start being serious about its citizens because they mostly preach about millions of job opportunities. However, when you look at them because you have studies, you cannot even try to apply for those jobs. Companies should allow applicants to apply through email addresses and not by fax, because that is the old system.”

## 7.8.2 Theme 2: Communication, messages and discussions

Since it is through communication that broken messages can be linked and restored, from the systems point of view, there is a need for the establishment of the communication strategy. The communication strategy that is proposed in this study has the potential to improve communication that will benefit individuals in ensuring the attainment of relevant skills as well as choosing school subjects that would guide one to pursue relevant job opportunities. This is confirmed through the following two responses, *“Respondent Code 2: messages to be conveyed for the higher education training institutions to partner with Services SETA’s in providing relevant skills.”* As well *“Respondent Code 12: messages should be driven for choosing school subjects we should be guided according to the relevancy of the job market”*. It is noted that services SETA provide skills. However, the question that begs asking is whether the skills are relevant and good enough to close the skills gap in this country. This calls for a further research to be done with the services SETA's to monitor and track the where about of learners.

Since the study confirmed total number of 38 respondents used the visual media always, followed by the 36 who used it sometimes, and the 23 that never used it, " Respondent Code 8 felt strong about community visits in that: *“Community visits, especially in the rural areas, should be conducted. Some days should specifically set as days for addressing unemployment by all media channels, e.g. just as we have the “World Aids Day”. I don’t know how could a day be named but that should specifically be a specific day so that when you switch to any channel there should be one topic that is taking about unemployment solutions”*. This response is somehow contradictory to the research results. It could mean that although television is preferred by many, it is necessarily used for employment search, hence, it is popularly used for entertaining. This informs the opportunity to establish or to strengthen television programmes in the space of employment search.

Although the focus of the study is media, community visits were mentioned by the respondents as another aspect that could be used to reach the audience. Since the

respondents mentioned community visits as another means to reach people, while these are not explicitly considered in this study, they can be considered to be one of the factors in the establishment of the strategy. Individuals depend on economic news coverage, because alternative sources of information are barely available (Garz 2013:3).

Public relations puts emphasis on communication with the publics, mainly, the stakeholders that are affected by the particular subject to the public. This emphasis is evident in the “Respondent Code 33: The **content of messages** should always be relevant, e.g. to everyone, learners, tertiary students, parents, teachers, organisations, etc.” The integration of a communication strategy requires active role-players, who will ensure its success. This is highlighted by Byrd (2002:2), who notes that there is a need for the model of communication that informs the creation of the strategy by describing a process of dialogue, information-sharing, mutual understanding, agreement, and collective action. It is important that the role players work collectively to ensure the success of a communication strategy.

For some reasons, technology is still negated by some individuals, as Respondent Code 41 emphasize on the need to: “*Still consider **manual applications for internships, don’t focus only on **electronics, which is internet*****”. Due to the fact that technology is here, improving than disappearing, the new generation should be taught about the importance of technology. Through technology, communication is transforming the working practice of the professionals. It promotes the ongoing shift in the way that professionals communicate with those they work with and help (Susskind & Susskind 2015:176).

Respondent Code 9 view that “**Discussions and debates** regarding unemployment issues are likely to be debated during elections. Let them be done on daily basis until issues of poverty and inequality are addressed” seem valid since Political elections seem to be used to take the advantage of the poor. Political parties campaigns about the very problem that they know affects the country (South Africa) and it also affects the majority (youth). Since youth can be categorized under graduates, it can be easily targeted by Politicians through the promises of employment and better jobs.

Multiskilling could be one of the solutions for addressing graduate unemployment. According to Respondent Code 18, “*Through **communication**, students should be*



*encouraged to do multiple studies, and avoid specializing in one area.*” Correspondingly, this shows that qualifications without skills are incomplete, because skills provide the opportunity and the potential for one to become employable.

Respondent Code 19: “**Communication** should drive a specific agenda at a particular given time. E.g. if there are less mathematicians in the country it should be communicated to schools that learners should be encouraged to take mathematics. This can be monitored overtime until at the tertiary and the workplace level.”

Choosing the correct and relevant subjects at school is important, as this would drive the students towards the right path in terms of further study, skills development, and job seeking. As verbalized through Respondent Code 26: “*Face-to-face communication with the leaners at schools or at tertiary institutions is important*”, more school tours are required at schools to highlight the need for choosing the correct and relevant subjects at school is important, as this would drive the students towards the right path in terms of further study, skills development, and job seeking.

### 7.8.3 Theme 3: Career

Career choice or guidance need to be thought through or communicated at high schools, this is verbalized through the following responses:

- Respondent Code 15: “it is a challenge to understand as an individual what do you want and what the job market wants, however it is better to choose your **career** according to what the job market wants.”
- Respondent Code 29: “the problem of unemployment starts at the high schools. Learners should be encouraged and be made aware of the consequences of taking certain subjects or following certain **career** choices.”
- Respondent Code 30: “education about employment searching and pitfalls for choosing **careers** to be more provided through different media programmes.”
- Respondent Code 35: “it might be too late to communicate with students at universities because they have already made **career** choices.”

- Respondent Code 37: “influence is required at the high school for the media to encourage learners to choose **careers** that are relevant to the labour market. This may not be well taken by others because it ignores the personal career choice and interests of an individual.”
- Respondent Code 40: “**career education** to be provided more at schools in order to ensure that students are aware of their careers and may be avoid following accidental careers.”
- Respondent Code 42: “create more awareness about pitfalls for making incorrect **careers decisions**.”

The comments cited, often by the respondents, include tertiary or training institutions, career choice or guidance, skills, schools subjects and government interventions. The emphasis is placed on the need for tertiary institutions to consider the balance between careers offered, and the needs of the labour market.

#### 7.8.4 Theme 4: Skills (employment barriers)

The reviewed literature confirmed skills development to be one of the key training guidelines. In order to achieve it, the reviewed literature indicated that training provided to the unemployed ought to form an integral part of active labour market policies (Erasmus et al. 2006:273). In vouching for this confirmation, “*Respondent Code 43: “students must be provided an opportunity to go to the workplace and do work practical rather than teaching those **skills**. The need to be more practical, they need to apply the skills they are thought in the environment so that when they finish it would be easier for them to have experience of which they do not have an, thus students should be given opportunity to do practical in the workplace before they finish their studies. Communication strategies need to be integrated so that it could be easy for students to access media for employment search.”*

It is worth considering the response “*Respondent Code 44: “other challenge that we facing is the experience of work that is required from the candidates when they have just finished the study/qualification. Some students are **not skilled** as they claim they are experienced for the work they have applied.”* It confirms that the purposes of the Skills Development Act

include ensuring the quality of education and training in the workplace, and to employ persons who find it difficult to find employment (Erasmus et al. 2006: 77).

### 7.8.5 Theme 5: Training (institutions)

From the answers, it is clear that higher education institution ought to drive the provision of relevant skills, as part of the graduate' qualifications. Intervention from government through policies may also be strengthened, in order to ensure compliance by educational institutions. Respondent Code 4 mentioned that: "*Communication can focus on **training institutions** to provide job opportunities to the students after completing their studies. This could be done by communicating with various organisations*".

An elegant solution from training institutions is to ensure that for the number of intakes in a particular field of study, those intakes could be trained with the vision to place them somewhere at the end of their studies. It looks like South Africa is still far from achieving such an initiative. However, what gives hope is that some of those institutions that provide bursaries for the students at least do hire the students as a strategic way for recovering the cost of studies. This benefits both the student and the employer because the student acquires relevant experience and skills while the employer gets the opportunity to apply good corporate governance and corporate social responsibility.

The reviewed literature underlines that skills shortages have been the key to other challenges including poverty, unemployment and uneven development (Akojee 2012:675). This study also underlines the need for skills development, while underscoring the need for individuals to have relevant skills that might help them to close the gaps in the job market. This is confirmed through Respondent Code 5 that: "*Communication can help in ensuring that **higher education institutions** communicate the limitation of **training** areas where certain skills are not a demand, e.g. it is pointless to train excessive nurses if there are fewer employment opportunities in the nursing field*".

Statistics about the skills demand need to be issued and presented to high schools as early as possible and such information should form part of schools subjects at schools for at least

grades 10 to 12. The objective of choosing school subject should be informed by the skills gaps and the workplace demands. This could contradict with the learners person aspirations and goals. However, the researcher believes that the message should be presented in a way that will convince the learner.

The strength of the proposed communication strategy is best expressed through the following four responses:

- Respondent Code 6: “Communication strategies should communicate about consolidating all the small colleges, get rid of flight by night by flight institutions and ensure that only **institutions** that comply are operating. This has already been done with technikons but more still need to be done.”
- Respondent Code 10: “**Tertiary institutions** must terminate all subjects that do not add value, that are not attracting employment.”
- Respondent Code 11: “A policy to be established and communicated for driving the organisation to run the internships as part of a compulsory Corporate Social Responsibility.”
- Respondent Code 13: “Universities and any other **training institutions** should provide training according to what the job market experts.”

Susskind and Susskind (2015:11) state that the professions promise job security and steady career progression, which fact has contributed to the sense of solidarity that continues to encourage recipients of professional help to feel they have placed themselves and their problems in the safest hands. It is for this reason that there is a need for regulations and policies that will guide learners’ choices in order to ensure that correct subject choices are made as early as possible.

It is worth considering the following response: “*Respondent Code 21: Government intervention is needed to draw policies that will oblige all the higher institutions to partner with organisations in order to provide job opportunities for students after completing their studies*”. This points to theories of mass communication that are relevant in regulating a number of aspects such as advertising, broadcasting and telecommunications, economics and media industries, film and cinema, journalism, media effects, media ethics, media policy and regulation, popular culture, public relation (Rubin, Rubin & Piele 2005:8).

It is confirmed through the constitutive model of communication that communication should not just focus on the intentions of the sender and the receiver, but also consider the results and the change effected in the employment prospects of graduates. Respondent Code 22: “Training institutions should do a follow up with the students to find if they got employed or not. This would help them to be aware if the training they are providing is relevant or not.”

In relation the respondent code 23: “All training providers must find a way of partnering with organisations so that they provide skills that would help students obtaining jobs after studying.” Information about recommendable institutions should communicated widely. This is in relation to the communication of information about market-attractive degrees and qualifications.

Training institutions in collaboration with the labour market should present their long-term strategy whereby the intake of the students is informed by the plan to place them elsewhere after studying. This may sound difficult but the researcher thinks it is achievable. This also indicates that training providers are not just provide training for the sake of making money and presenting demographics (statistics), but they take the interest of graduates at heart. This is also considered in the respondent code 24: “Higher institutions should add value and give guarantee that student will get the job after studying” and respondent code 31: “All trainings provided at higher education institutions be skills and employment focused and be relevant.”

## 7.9 Conclusion

The study confirmed that the majority of respondents believe they are affected by unemployment factors such as career education, skills development, entrepreneurial skills, entrepreneurial skills, internship programmes, skills shortage, work experience, labour market requirements, age, and field of study. All of these hamper graduate’ readiness to enter the labour market. It can be argued that the presence of these factors contributes to poverty, inequality, under-development, etc. Unemployment factors are informed by the socio economic status and the demographic background.

Next, Chapter 8 presents the discussion about a communication strategy and plan. This will be presented through the diagrams and the explanation of the diagrams. The communication strategy and the plan will be informed by the answers presented according to the six objectives of the study.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT – THE PROPOSED INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION STRATEGY AND PLAN**

### **8.1 Introduction**

In this chapter a proposed integrated communication strategy will be presented, which takes into account the findings presented in the previous chapter. According to Torp (2014: 45) strategic communication does not focus simply on the managers; there is also a focus on the employees and the communication specialists' intentional activities with regards to the presentation and promotion of organizations. Within the context of this study strategic communication refers to graduates and the decision makers in the media, communication, education industries and government.

It can be argued that a strategy without the plan is a recipe for failure. The discussion of the strategy will be followed by the discussion of a plan as to how the media can be used to implement a strategy. This entails the conceptualisation of the communication strategy and plan; surveying the literature on communication strategy alongside the survey answers; provides and explains a diagram of the communication strategy which explained within the public relation planning model approach.

The confirmed media is also presented. It stresses that in terms of disseminating messages about the alleviation of unemployment there is no for different media programmes to compete with each other. They have the potential to disseminate similar messages through various channels at a specific time.

### **8.2 Conceptualisation of a confirmed media and communication strategy**

It is important to note that for conceptualisation purposes, survey answers integrated with the theories and the reviewed literature are used to establish and interpret the communication strategy and the confirmed media.



### **8.2.1 Role-players in the communication process**

In any communication context, barriers exist and communication processes play a key role in the sharing and transfer of information from the sender to the receiver which also involve the message and the channel. Through the constitutive model approach, communication barriers could be managed and communication processes could be made effective by ensuring that meanings are shaped and shared. Since communication is a strategic process, it flows from an organisation's strategic goals and objectives.

Strategic communication is the practice of deliberate and purposive communication that a communication agent enacts in the public sphere on behalf of a communicative entity to reach set goals (Holtzhausen & Zerfass 2015:4). In this study, the government, labour market, education system and media industry are regarded as the main role players in a communication strategy, hence, the channels in which information or messages are communicated also play a key role.

For the strategic communicator this might be occasionally be in face to face context but it mostly relates to communication through other channels (Holtzhausen & Zerfass 2015:7). It is for this reasons that this study focuses on other media channels such as visual, social, print and audio media. These role-players are explained in detail in Section 8.3.4 further below. For greater understanding of this communication strategy, theories of communication, media and unemployment are also presented below as the source of explanation.

### **8.2.2 Theories of communication, media and unemployment**

This study recognizes that from the systems point of view, communication role-players and the channels of communication all function together in order to complete a communication process, and eventually provide meaningful context to the communication strategy. It is noted that unemployment affects the majority of the population and that through the use of technology, the majority of the population can crowdsource and be reached in huge numbers regardless of location, time and channel of communication. This also indicates that



theories of mass communication are important in this study. Agenda Setting Theory, as one of the theories of mass communication, elaborates on media and its effect on society (Hanson 2005). Unemployment is an issue that requires more attention, especially by the state, and it is rather an everyday agenda instead of being handled occasionally, hence this study calls for a communication strategy, which places emphasis on the use of various media for disseminating information about unemployment.

Unemployment is regarded as a psychological disease that causes stress to an unemployed individual, who may find it difficult to function normally, hence this is confirmed through employment as a stressor theory of unemployment (O'Brien 1986:240) that unemployment may lead to physical and physiological illness. A communication strategy, through various communication channels, is regarded as a means or a tool in creating awareness of the affected individuals before they even realize the stress and the abnormal functionalities that could be experienced as a result of unemployment.

### **8.2.3 The concepts of communication strategy and plan**

This study has distinguished between the strategy and plan, and stressed that without the plan, the strategy cannot be actioned. The strategy is lacking in detail and shows direction at the higher level, while the plan provides the details. For the purpose of this study, public relations planning model steps are incorporated in order to action the plan. Within the context of this study, the communication strategy is conceptualized around media. Although there are various types of communication channels, this study focuses only on visual, audio, social and print media since these are relevant and popular in disseminating information about graduate' unemployment, and are accessible to those seeking employment. This study also places an emphasis on the integration of such media, instead of using them in isolation.

### **8.2.4 The concepts and the factors of graduate unemployment**

Although unemployment affects the society at different levels, the youth and adults alike, the educated and the uneducated, this study focuses on the graduate unemployment. It is

important to consider that the unemployment of graduate causes a strain in the education and the workplace system. The researcher is of the opinion that unemployed graduate create a stereotype to the uneducated individuals that may eventually see no value in the education system. In order to address this issue, there is a need to provide information related to skills development, internships, job opportunities etc. as much as possible to the unemployed graduate through different and media channels.

### **8.3 Communication strategy to increase graduate employment potential**

Integration may mean different things to different people in different situations. All communication occurs within a particular context and it is important to spend some time analysing the context, situation or environment within which communication takes place to establish an effective strategy for a particular situation (Walker 2006:76).

Based on the literature, communication strategy is aimed at bringing about change. It is also defined by Nair and White (1993:89) as the "...art and science of human communication applied to the transformation of a country from poverty to a dynamic state of economic growth that makes possible economic and social quality and the large fulfilment of human potential." Communication strategy may add value if it is facilitating change, instead of merely conveying a message or imparting knowledge.

Social media has broken communication barriers caused by geographic isolation, which has helped individuals develop more "friends", and to expand their social circle; especially those who have social or physical mobility restrictions (Ngai 2015:41). Communication is not as simple as mere talk. It requires careful planning in terms of what is communicated, why is communicated, and what the communicator is trying to achieve, with the purpose of expanding social networks and geographical space.

From the theoretical perspective, the integration of such media is key, as it reflects Oepen's (2006) definition of strategic communication, which refers to the dynamic process, integrated as part of a large-scale initiative, that comprises multi-disciplinary and social marketing, non-formal education and public participation, thrives on acting people, aims at the innovative and sustainable change of practices, behaviours and lifestyles, guides

communication processes and media interventions within and among social groups, and is a pre-requisite and a tool for change at the same time.

Changes brought about by communication are procedural and they cannot happen overnight. Social marketing is included in this definition, because no communication can take place in isolation of marketing. The change of the existing or the introduction of a new solution demands new arrangements, structures, coordination, etc. The so-called “change” in this study does not refer to organisational change, however, it refers to a change that is strategically aimed at influencing the majority of the population, and the use of media, in multiple places in different ways.

Amongst the comments provided by the respondents, a few common concepts highlighted included higher education institutions, media channels, career choice or decisions, communication of messages, relevancy, and specific communication.

- Higher education institutions - communication can focus on training institutions to provide job opportunities to students after completing their studies. This could be done by communicating with various organisations. Communication can help in ensuring that higher education institutions convey the limitation of training areas, where certain skills are not a demand, e.g. it is pointless to train excess nurses if there are fewer employment opportunities in nursing as a field.
- Media channels - community visits, especially in rural areas, ought to be conducted. This will assist those communities that do not have access to certain communication channels, e.g. technology-based channels such as social media, internet, etc.
- Career choice or decisions – there is a need for career education to be taught at high schools, which ought to be relevant to the changing times and the demands of the labour market.
- Communication of messages - messages to be conveyed for the higher education training institutions to partner with Services SETA’s in providing relevant skills.
- Relevancy and specific communication - the relevancy in the use of media is key. One of the respondents commented that companies ought to allow applicants to apply over

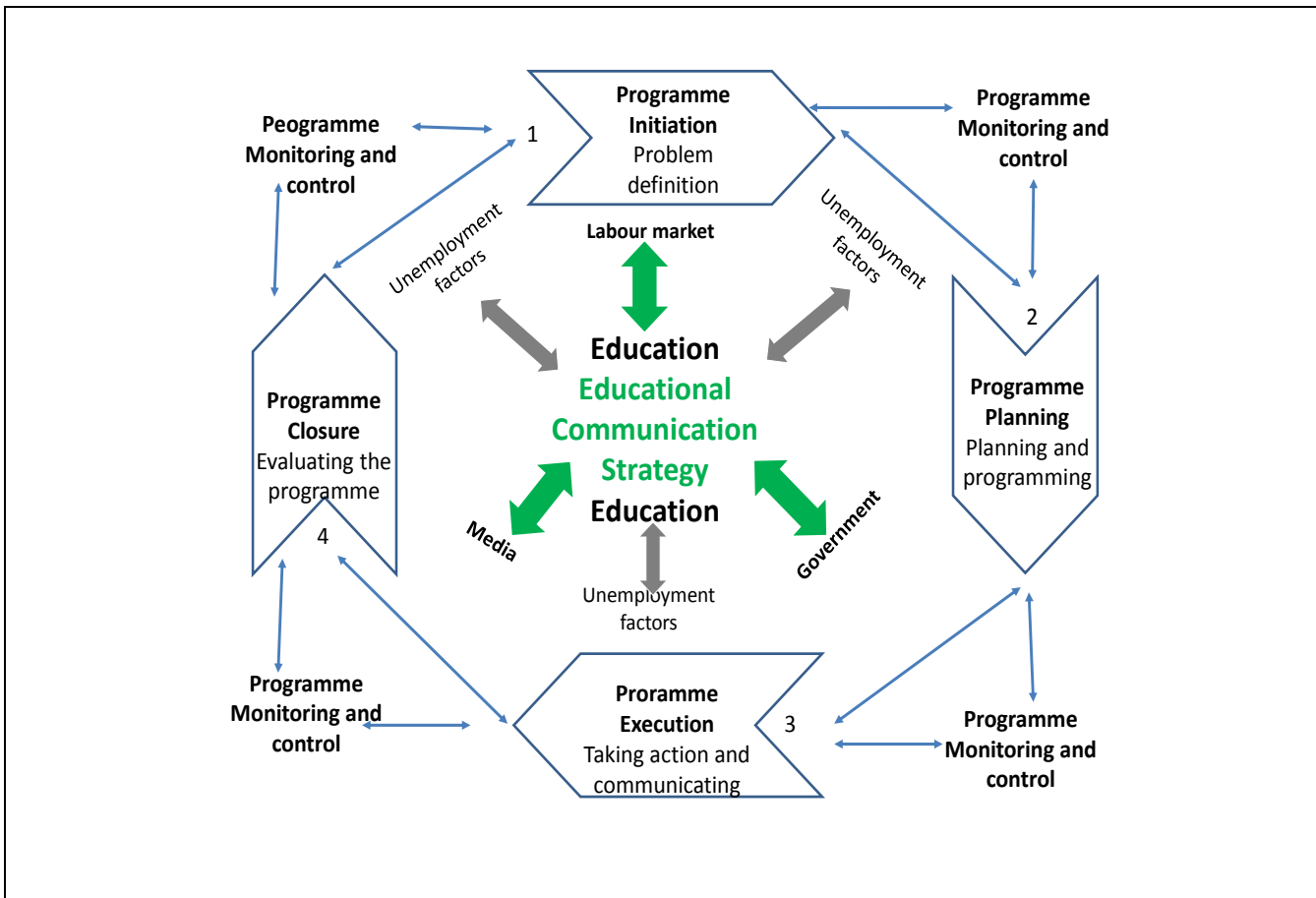
email and not by antiquated methods such as fax. This provides an indication that fax systems are not easily accessible to certain people.

### **8.3.1 The proposed integrated communication strategy**

The communication strategy proposed by this study is aimed at integrating processes and systems that are expected to drive graduate's future aspirations. Such systems are regarded as the labour market, education system, media and government. Communication, at the centre of these systems, is regarded as the glue that holds these systems together.

The figure below exists as a strategy for identifying factors contributing to unemployment. The plan linked to the strategy sets the background and the strength of the strategy. The figure shows that if one component is imbalanced, then all other components (education system, labour market, government and media) will be affected. The strategy is presented in an open system, such that the cycle is not closed. There is a free flow of communication within and outside the system.

**Figure 8-31 The proposed communication strategy – Educational Communication Strategy**



There is a need for the establishment of a permanent programme that runs not only according to a particular day and time, but instead, which runs permanently. The concept of unemployment needs to be an everyday national debate. The researcher is of the view that this concept requires a national communication programme, one that is planned to be executed permanently. Such a plan needs to have programmes that are running on television, radios, and newspapers and social media. The messages presented through media should be consistent. This means the presentation of similar content through these different media. This is to ensure that the target audience receive value from the programmes regardless of the location and environment.

### 8.3.2 Explanation of the proposed communication strategy (figure 8.1 – Communication strategy)

**Factors contributing to graduate unemployment** – factors contributing to graduate unemployment are identified and confirmed through survey responses. These factors affect the whole environment, internally and externally. A variety of opportunities for addressing unemployment are also identified. Different companies and individuals with employment opportunities may present opportunities in different ways to make the public aware of how people can receive skills, the contacts and the procedures to follow. This would include career guidance, job opportunities, workplace demand, skills development, bursaries, internships, entrepreneurial skills, sponsorship for businesses, etc.

**The flow of communication** – messages ought to be designed in such a way that the flow of communication become continuous. This is depicted by the circular or continuous presentation of communication. The researcher regards communication as an integrator of media, education system and workplace. It takes place in a top-down approach in an open system. The top-down approach is represented by the green arrows. The open system is represented by the open spaces around the communication strategy.

**Communication approach** – constitutive model of communication approach is presented by the green arrows. In a constitutive model of communication approach emphasis is put on the importance of communication and its ability and expectation to bring about actual change and action. When sensitive issues are involved, some people may prefer the anonymity or privacy of interaction with the key stakeholders. The key stakeholders in this study include government, labour market, education system and media.

**Education system** – Education is at the centre and it is the heart beat of the strategy. Higher education has the responsibility to ensure that quality education is provided. It is observed that the learners are made aware of the subjects that would lead them to the working industry of their choice mainly at grade 10. The researcher believes that it is too late. This could be done as early as in grade 7. At grade 7 the learners should be aware of the skills gap in the workplace industry and they should be encouraged to close those gaps.

Institutions such as universities, and university of technologies are noted and acknowledged. One of the respondents mentioned “communication strategies should communicate about consolidating all the small colleges, get rid of flight by night by flight institutions and ensure that only institutions that comply are operating. This has already been done with technikons (integrating technikons with universities and university of technologies) but more still need to be done”. This would lead to a review of the number of private colleges that provide higher education learning. It is noted that technikons are integrated with the universities, however, they are mentioned as such because of the quotations from the responses.

**Government** – has a key role in regulating the policies. This is evident in the response provided by one of the respondents, who mentioned that “government intervention is needed to draw policies that will oblige all the higher institutions to partner with organisations in order to provide job opportunities for students after completing their studies”. The national development plan indicates that plans are underway for addressing unemployment, poverty and inequality in South Africa, however, the gap remains in the implementation.

**Labour market** – by communicating the needs of the labour market to the societies, it is expected that unemployment can be addressed. One of the respondents noted that “it is a challenge to understand as an individual what do you want and what the job market wants, however it is better to choose your career according to what the job market wants.” It is important that the labour market consider the advancing technology and its contribution to address unemployment. As machines become more capable, the number of tasks they can take on will grow and their execution will become better and quicker (Susskind & Susskind 2015:280). This confirms that the labour market has the opportunity to secure the people who have relevant technological skills by engaging higher education.

**Media** – the role of media is the core of this study. The comments provided by one of the respondents underscores the general sentiments about unemployment: “community visits, especially in the rural areas should be conducted. Some days should specifically set as days for addressing unemployment by all media channels, e.g. just as we have the “World Aids Day”. I don’t know how could a day be named but that should specifically be a specific

day so that when you switch to any channel there should be one topic that is talking about unemployment solutions". Through the media, messages about unemployment and the employment opportunities should be communicated in all African languages. It is realized that mind set is one of the programmes that present public information about career world, skills, economic opportunities, etc. however, this is not enough. Such programmes would never be enough until unemployment is addressed. There is a need to multiply such programmes and broadcast them repetitively through various media programmes on TV, radio, newspaper and s as one of the

**Public relations planning model steps** – the establishment of all relevant programmes should be guided and monitored through public relations planning model steps.

**Project management processes** – project management processed are used to guide the implementation of the strategy as well as strengthening communication planning elements (stages).

### 8.3.3 Role players systems perspective

From the context of this study, government, media industry, education and labour market constitute a system that that support an individual from being a school learner, a graduate, a job seeker and eventually being in the market place as a worker or a business owner. This include inputs, outputs and processes within the system. The system is analysed as follows:

- Inputs include information from external environment, for example, policies, rules and regulations.
- Processes would include teaching and learnings (education), management of resources, information, etc. (government), provide tools for communication (media) and create opportunities for the graduates (labour market). Systems processes include internal organizational structure, tools, people, and communication patterns, which are collectively known as the system's internal social infrastructure. The communication setting include the internal and external systems. The internal system include communication and media specialist as role players. The external system include the



same specialists as parents, customer, viewers, audiences, etc. This emphasizes the totality of the system and it means that a communication system cannot be viewed in isolation. All the parts connected to the system are dependent on each other.

- Outputs as the result of the system processes would include managed resources (government), well communicated messages and purposeful information (media), graduates who have relevant skills (education) and job opportunities (labour market).
- Feedback as provided by external stakeholders as they evaluate the value and quality of the outputs would include learned communities, economic growth, and statistics showing zero % or lower numbers of unemployed graduates, to the acceptable levels.

#### **8.4 Confirmed media to increase graduate employment potential**

This study examines formulating a strategy integrated from social, print, audio and visual media. These media are chosen for their economic affordability and accessibility by the majority of the population at different levels.

Since unemployment is seen as a personal and a national issue, it requires the integration of several media for the dissemination of relevant information to the target audience. Such media need not be expensive or sophisticated, but rather accessible to the majority of the population, e.g. social (Facebook), print (newspaper), audio (radio), visual (television) media. Miller (2012:4) ascertained that television do not promote one's development and as such it needs to be limited. The researcher is in disagreement to this. The researcher instead, sees the opportunity to improve the television programme to be more relevant.

It can be argued that it is through strategic communication that media shape an audience's social behaviour, ideas and communication behaviour (Ndiayea & Ndiayea 2014:72; Oepen 2006; Solari 2014:1; Ngai, Tao, & Moon 2015:33). It is for this reason that the researcher sees message efficiency, knowledge sharing and learning networks are seen as crucial in recognizing unemployment factors through the role of media, and contribute to strategic communication in ensuring the efficiency of media. Consequently, media allow information

sharing such as photographs, videos, presentation slides, ideas, thoughts, experiences, etc. (Susskind & Susskind 2015:177).

For the purpose of this study, confirming a media means choosing, and auctioning different media for a particular situation. Furthermore, in this study, confirming a media means programmes that are put together and executed through a particular media. This is where the public relations model to effect. No matter how brilliant the idea or how beautiful the execution of the media is, if it does not address the needs of the target audience it can't accomplish anything (Hanson 2005:306). As highlighted in the Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the lower needs such as food, air, water, shelter, etc. must be satisfied first (Kaur 2013:1061). It is through graduate employment that such needs can be met. Within the context of this study, all the barriers of employment (leading to unemployment) should be identified and addressed.

Through the survey answers it is confirmed that the issue of unemployment requires an everyday national debate, through different media channels. Although media has transformed in the digital age, the use of media is still required, where one must take into due consideration an audience that does not have access to technology, who may still need newspapers and other form of non-technological channels. As long as unemployment remains a challenge, access to and the use of digital resources will still remain, because such a challenge is significant in the less developed communities. Machines will never replace human beings but they would limit their capabilities. Machines will never actually think or have feelings, a sense of touch and decide what the right thing to do is, whether machines will replace professionals is about whether systems can outperform human beings. Machine will be able to take on fairly straight forward reasoning and problem solving but more involved challenges will still need human experts (Susskind & Susskind 2015:278). Based on the survey answers, media are expected to consider various needs which are expressed in the responses as discussed briefly in paragraph 7.

#### **8.4.1 The confirmed media**

The programme needs to be marketed in multiple radio stations, newspapers, magazines and social media pages, and a national TV programme that is to be established. This is to

ensure that people of different languages from different places are aware of the opportunities that they could access through the programme. An example of a confirmed media is presented in the table below. This refers to the programmes that are already on stage 4 of the communication strategy (action and reflection).

**Table 8-5 Examples of media programmes**

Original programmes		
Media	Programme	Time
Social media	P1	07h00- 09h00
Audio media	P2	10h00-12h00
Print media	P3	13h00-15h00
Visual media	P4	16h00-18h00
Repeat programme		
Social media	P1	19h00-21h00
Audio media	P2	22h00-24h00
Print media	P3	01h00-03h00
Visual media	P4	04h00-06h00

#### 8.4.2 Explanation of the confirmed media

The proposed plan in this study shows the integration of various media to disseminate similar messages consistently. It shows the establishment of programmes whereby the programme is similarly presented through various media (for example: visual -TV, audio-radio, print – newspapers, and various social media platforms). It is expected that a specific organisation or an agency be established and directed by government because it is believed that the role government is beneficial to everyone.

Programmes can be presented by the same or different people, however, the emphasis is that the messages should be similar and be consistent. This is avoid the perception that certain media being accessed by people of a particular economic status is better than the other. The researcher realized that such programmes do exist however, they are available occasionally. The communication strategy proposed in this study will ensure that permanent availability of such programmes.

Regardless of the cost of a particular media, the content of the messages should be the same. This will also present the content in such a way that the audience should not be limited or restricted by a particular channel or even the date and place where such a media was accessed. This is of course a duplication of the same content, in the same format, to different audience. Programmes are represented by P1 to P4. Various programmes are expected to be presented through different media. Original programmes refers to programmes in the schedules that most of the audience will be able to access. For some reasons, some of the audiences may have their busy schedules during the day and they are therefore expected to access repeat programmes, depending on the nature of media they are using and accessing.

Types of programmes that can be represented by P1 to P4 may include the following:

- Bursaries – presentation by organisations that offer bursaries.
- Internships – presentation of organisation that offer internships.
- Government programmes aimed at addressing unemployment.
- Skills – various institutions to present information about skills that are in demand and needed by the labour market, challenges affecting labour market, organisations where such skills are needed, requirements for such skills, how such skills can be obtained, etc.
- Educational programmes – presentation of courses that are in demand.
- Career exhibitions – organisation who want to present information about career information can be invited to present their programmes. This will give the target audience (specifically the matriculants and career seekers) the opportunity to understand the subject that are intending taking and the careers they are interested in.
- Training - institutions such as SETAs will have the opportunity to present information about training opportunities that are available in various aspects.

- Marketing – Various organisation will have the opportunity to market themselves in terms of their profile, skills and how can contribute to the growth and development of the communities through bursaries, education, etc.
- Live televisions programmes - programmes presented by different institutions will have the opportunity to be presented live.

## **8.5 Conclusion**

This chapter presented the core value of the study, which is the “communication strategy and the confirmed media”. Both the communication strategy and the confirmed media are discussed within the perspectives of theory, reviewed literature and audience response. The next chapter finalizes the study. It involves the presentation of the conclusion, conclusion and recommendations.

## **CHAPTER NINE – SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **9.1 Introduction**

This chapter is a presentation of the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study regarding the identification of the factors contributing to graduate unemployment and the confirmed media, and strategy to increase graduate employment potential. Additionally, for the purpose of finalizing the study, limitations of the study and recommendations for further research are also presented. The presentation of the summary, conclusions and recommendations is done according to the objectives of the study.

### **9.2 Summary**

This part of the study summarizes the study according to the research objectives.

#### **9.2.1 Identifying unemployment factors that affect the graduate**

The unemployment factors affecting graduate are attributes to career choice, skills shortage, job opportunities, career development, work experience, skills development, entrepreneurial skills, internships, access to the labour market, etc.

It is surprising that the majority of the respondents indicated that they are studying further because they could not find employment after graduating, hence it creates contradiction in the fact that the majority are also confident about their career choices. The question that is raised by these answers is, how can one decide to study further due to unemployment, and still be confident in the same career choice?

Although career decisions are an individual's choice, there is a need for society, in the form of parents, teachers, government policies, etc. to provide input in order to encourage and support the students' knowledge about their career choices. The same applies to the above paragraph, where the study establish that the respondent strongly agreed that their career

matched their studies and the labour market. It is important that those that are affected by outcome be included or involved in the decision making processes.

The inclusion of young people in decision making could be significant in fostering their wellbeing, agency and participation. Hence there is a need to re-think education. Statistics show that student enrolment in higher education institutions in South Africa has dramatically increased over the past years, a clear indication that higher education (HE) is addressing issues of equitable access in the wake of an exclusionary apartheid past (Walker & Mkwanazi 2015:40).

The researcher realized that in some cases, when employment opportunities are advertised (for example, the internship programmes), the age limit (at least 35 years) is specified as a requirement or a qualification criteria. Although some of the employment and internship opportunities may have an age limit, the respondents strongly agreed that their age was suitable. This is also confirmed through demographic characteristics, namely that the respondents' age is between 23 and 28, followed by those between 29 and 33.

It could be argued that the respondents are studying further because, although they achieve their first (undergraduate) qualification, they may lack the relevant skills. It is indeed agreed that a shortage of skills causes various unemployment challenges. These challenges could also lead to poverty, underdevelopment and inequality.

It is noted that South Africa's policies are in place for addressing and providing skills through different SETAs, and many other initiatives and programmes. However, considering the rise in graduate unemployment, there is still a need to improve and increase such initiatives. The National Development Plan is proving to be a possible direction for such improvements. This study agrees that the respondents believe that their field of study provides them with key entrepreneurial skills in addressing unemployment.

In contrast to the above, while the majority of the respondents would consider either job opportunities or entrepreneurial skills, this conclusion confirms that the same majority would consider both options (job opportunities and entrepreneurial opportunities). This is an

indication of a certain desperation, where it becomes preferable to consider whatever comes first.

While skills development can be regarded as a solution to bridge the gap between the labour market and unemployment, within the South African context of the labour market and it is well known that gaps between labour market and employment are result in inequalities and poor socio-economic conditions that affect the poor majority. Since South Africa has a large number of unemployed graduate, one could argue that they are also counted among the population that is affected by inequality and poor socio economic conditions.

Career education offered in respondents chosen faculties is curtailed for providing entrepreneurial skills that will open labour market doors for their careers. This is one of the initiatives that requires improvement and development, as the researcher noted that some of the higher education institutions (such as University of Pretoria) play a vital role by sending information to schools in creating awareness through career education for the learners in early grades (for example Grade Nine) to choose their schools subject according to their career choices. Such information is still not sufficient, because it does not indicate which careers are demanded in the labour market. Before they can be recognized as fully fledged practitioners who can work independently, graduates are generally required to undergo extensive education, training and indenture and be able to demonstrate that they gained sufficient knowledge and practical experience and that they receive adequate supervision (Susskind & Susskind 2015:16).

Career choices are seen as a priority for one to pursue higher education. Nevertheless the respondents' reasons for studying further, they regard career education offered in their faculty to provide entrepreneurial skills that will provide a solution to any employment challenges in my career.

The fact that respondents regard their field of study as having greater employment opportunities shows that they may be furthering their studies due to lack of employment, personal development, career growth, etc.. They showed faith in their studies as well as in their educational institution.



The answers provided indicate either inconsistencies or confusion by the respondents, because they seem confident about the career choices, they strongly agree that their studies will provide job opportunities, etc., hence, in this paragraph, they are still regard work experience as a concern. The researcher is of the opinion that they are in denial that they might have followed careers that are not employment attractive.

The internship programme has the potential for equipping unemployed graduate with the necessary skills, knowledge and work experience to improve the graduate' chances of employment. The study agrees that respondents are able to obtain employment experience through internships provided by the faculty of Humanities. It also consider that graduates are ready for the labour market. Critically, this is a concern because it indicates that even after obtaining a qualification, these respondents are studying further in order to gain further skill. This is also an indication that that they are following careers that do not provide sufficient skills.

It stands to reason that a means of income is required after a period of study, and the respondents indicated that they are persistently searching for job opportunities. This could be achieved through finding a job or establishing a business, hence, the qualifications alone are not sufficient. Graduate are expected to have experience and relevant skills, and consider age and gender to be amongst the demographic characteristics that may still be a barrier.

Based on the above discussion, gaps identified are in the training institutions, career choices, labour market demands, and skills relevancy. The awareness of these gaps underscores the need for the communication strategy which would provide a solution in closing them.

### **9.2.2 Clarifying the role of media in addressing unemployment challenges**

This objective determined the role played by media in addressing unemployment challenges for the graduate.

Unemployment is a serious problem in South Africa, hence the study sought to establish the role of media in identifying the factors contributing to graduate unemployment and to confirm a media that is relevant and strategy to increase graduate employment potential. Media is considered to be playing a pivotal role when it comes to addressing unemployment challenges in the country, and more specifically amongst the graduate students. It is also confirmed that the use of media could be effectively used, not only in South Africa, but also globally in addressing challenges for communicating unemployment issues.

Unemployment is a challenge affecting individuals at a personal level, as well as the whole country at a national level. It is apparent that media can be regarded as a personal and a national channel that can play a key role in meeting the needs of unemployed graduate at all levels. Media has the potential for breaking through limitation, in terms space and distance and since unemployment is the global issue facing the majority of the population, media is regarded as having the potential in reaching the majority of the population.

Job seekers are assumed to rely on print media because it is still less costly and even most of the employers or agencies use it to present job opportunities. While technology is popular and preferred by the young generation for communication purposes, this study ascertained that it cannot replace or substitute the print media, because print media ensure that information reaches the majority of the population, especially those who don't have access to technology.

The use of media depends on the purpose and the needs of the target audience. It can be argued that it is obvious that no single media platform can achieve all needs at once. This is also attributed to media globally in the effective use of media to address challenges related to communicating and presenting graduate unemployment challenges at various levels.

Although the main media identified for this study included social, print, visual and audio media, through the literature reviewed, it is determined that social media is becoming popular in terms of its usability, and that this may be due to its limitless boundaries related to technology, and the use of smart cellular phones. In conclusion, although it is recognized that print media are still highly preferred, messages that are communicated through social media are reliable and useful due to instant availability.

While the South African education system is already in the process of addressing challenges facing the labour market, it is assumed that media can participate by creating awareness for the established and sustainable employment programmes. The improvement of labour practices would also close unemployment gaps in ensuring that graduates are able to find jobs in their relevant fields. Through this study it is recognized that media have the potential for communicating messages that would ensure that graduates immediately find job opportunities that are relevant to their studies.

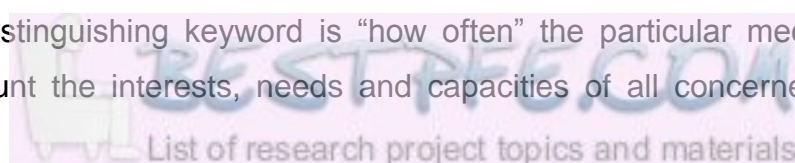
### **9.2.3 Types of media that are used to disseminate information about unemployment factors**

Depending on the graduate's seriousness of employment search, it is important for one to set aside time to search employment through different sources. Time plays an important role. This study confirmed that employment search is done "daily" and "weekly", hence it is also important to consider the sources or channels that are preferred, accessible and used by the graduate to search for employment.

In the question, the keyword "prefer" is important. In this study, it was granted that print media is highly preferred and used to search for employment. Although social media is so popular due to its technology exposure, it was the second preference. The researcher is of the view that this is due to the less cost and the local availability of the print media (e.g. newspapers). As much as technology is exciting, the fact that it may be costly should not be overlooked.

The time frame "last week" is the key predetermining factor in this question. Unlike in the previous result, social media is accessed "always". This is not a surprise because social media has the ability to entertain. Since this study is concerned about unemployment, it is however, questionable whether social media is used effectively for searching employment.

In this question, the distinguishing keyword is "how often" the particular media is used. Media takes into account the interests, needs and capacities of all concerned (Servaes 2008:15).



In conclusion, based on the previous paragraph, this study established that:

- While print media is preferred and used to search for employment,
- Social media is “always” accessed, and
- Both social and print media are chosen as the most popular means of disseminating information to the target audience considering their interests, needs and capacities; while for graduate, it is assumed that they choose such media for employment searching purposes.

The fact that audio and visual media are less preferred, accessed and used is an indication of a requisite improvement in the media to create an exposure in using such media differently.

#### **9.2.4 Unemployment as a challenge faced by the students currently studying at university of technology**

This study targeted graduate students, based on the assumption that they are could be studying further, and that they are studying for various reasons. This objective was aimed at confirming whether unemployment is regarded as a challenge facing graduate students. Unemployment was confirmed to be one of their reasons for studying further.

Studying further could be a personal decision, recommendation from an employer or undertaken on advisement. It is apparent that graduate would always advised other upcoming generations to applying for jobs while they are studying. In the reviewed literate, the recommendations made by Reddy et al (2016:11) include that students who do access post- school educational institutions must receive a quality education and achieve progress through the system and achieve higher educational outcomes.

It is a general principle that after studying, one is eager to look for employment or a way to make an income, however, this may take longer than expected. The majority of the respondents are studying further because they could not find employment, and have been looking for employment for a period of two to three years.

Although there are various ways of seeking employment ranging from word of mouth, referral, head hunting, etc. responding to an advert is recognized as the most preferred means, which the researcher sees as very reactive. The reasons for studying further may include studying for fun, career or personal development, employment requirements, etc. however, this study recognized that the more appealing reason for the respondents is that they could not find employment after obtaining their first undergraduate qualification.

### **9.2.5 Confirm a media relevant to disseminate information about unemployment factors**

This objective consists two (2) subsections. The first subsection is addressing how media could be planned and the second subsection is based on a question “which messages should be mostly communicated/debated through the media”. Confirming a media is crucial to involve various stakeholders and different levels in a debate that would help to identify key issues and gaps in order to make recommendations collectively.

The study ascertains that unemployment as a national issue requires an everyday national debate, through effective media. It is through the integration of different media that this could be made possible. As much as unemployment may affect individuals at personal level, since the economy of South is so unstable due to unemployment, it is important for unemployment to be addressed by the whole country.

The study established that different media may address challenges related to the communication of information about unemployment issues. It is noted that the audience skills for using different media may be different. Although the new media and technology is evolving, some of the audience still preferred the old media. It is confirmed in this study, that even though the smart phones that are dependent on technology, print media is still preferred.

It can be argued that since unemployment affect the majority of the population broadly, different media may be integrated so as to benefit the unemployed.

Consistency in message or information dissemination means that the target audience ought to be able to understand and comprehend what is communicated. This could be seen through their actions and answers. Consistency is thereby realized as an important factor.

Through this study it is confirmed that target audience ought to receive value from the media regardless of the location and environment. There is no doubt that information technology that promote new media have the potential to make this possible. While considering the integration of various media and the consistency of the messages the actions and the answers of the target audience will reflect the effect and the value of what is communicated.

The findings for this study indicated that media has the potential for limiting the barriers related to the language and the location. It can be argued that language and location are barriers to information sharing and communication. It is also possible to communicate to a specific group of people, and this means excluding others. The need for translating information from one language to the other is important in order to avoid the unnecessary exclusions of certain groups.

It is apparent that messages communicated through job opportunities and internships ought to be communicated/debated through media. This provided indication that, while the respondents expressed the need for entrepreneurial skills, it is important to obtain work experience through internship and job opportunities. It ought not be ignored that most of the business fail due to lack of business experience, therefore, it is important for one to start pursuing a job, and learning from others, before considering their own businesses.

The main concepts of this chapter are strategy, media and planning. A strategy without a plan is a recipe for failure. The strategy is like a destination, where media act like a vehicle or means of transport that might be used to reach a destination, and a plan is like the roadmap used to guide how to reach a destination. The purpose of this study is to identify the factors contributing to graduate unemployment and confirm a media that is relevant and communication strategy to increase graduate employment potential. The plan is required for integrating diverse media as an effective means to achieve the strategy of communicating relevant information to majority of the population.

### **9.2.6 Establish a communication strategy for the effective use of media in the search of employment in order to close the unemployment gap**

The strategy for the effective use of media is established. The proposed communication strategy places emphasis on the key stakeholders, namely, media, government, the education system and the labour market, who are expected to use communication to disseminate information and create awareness about factors contributing to graduate unemployment.

As part of achieving the purpose of communication, communication strategy is strengthened by the public relations planning model, which instil the discipline of guiding the implementation of the strategy. The researcher made a distinction between a strategy and plan in order to highlight that a communication strategy requires a plan. Public relations planning model steps are included in the plan as they are expected to provide a meaningful and a satisfactory implementation of the communication strategy.

## **9.3 Conclusions**

The section below presents the conclusion of the study. The conclusion is broadly discussed according to the objectives of the study and the headings within the objectives.

### **9.3.1 Identify unemployment factors that affect the graduate**

While unemployment is regarded as the challenge affecting the majority, it is surprising that a number of factors discussed in this study are found to have little impact on the respondents. This is confirmed through information provided in the paragraphs below.

Confidence is a self-assurance in potential achievement. This study concluded that even under the current unemployment challenges, the respondents are confident about their

career of choice. This is either an indication of faith, or respondent's denial that their field of study might not lead to employment opportunity.

It would be ideal that the labour market be considered to play a significant role in collaborating with the higher education for the purpose of using their output as the feeder to the labour market. As students hope and have faith in their studies, through the respondents' feedback it can be concluded that students' see the match between their careers and the labour market.

Although age could be regarded as a barrier for newly graduate to enter the labour market, the majority of the respondents are fairly young. It is not surprising that they consider themselves suitable in the labour market. As confirmed through the answers, as well as through the demographic assessment, it is concluded that the age of the respondents is currently suitable for the labour market.

The statistics in Chapter 3 (graduate unemployment and unemployment factors) confirmed that there is still a high number of unemployed graduate. It is concluded that although they have qualifications, the respondents' lack of skills is one of the reasons that make them unemployable.

Interventions to provide entrepreneurial skills is one of the key initiatives identified in the National Development Plan. This is suitable and is needed to encourage graduate in considering not just employment, but also, be curious about establishing their own enterprises. As supported by the reviewed literature, a key constraint for improving skills levels of the population is the quality, progression, and completion within the basic education sector. It is clear that the quality of basic education, progression rates through the system and educational outcomes must improve (Reddy 2016: 11).

As much as education and qualifications are in demand and required, there is a great need for multi-skills required for the individual. This study finds that graduate' chances of employability may increase, as the majority of the answers confirmed their interest in job seeking and entrepreneurial opportunities.



The respondents are aware that entrepreneurship provides an avenue to employment. They require the relevant skills in order to do so. This leads to the conclusion that skills development is a powerful source of bridging the gap between the labour market and unemployment.

It can be argued that qualifications that are obtained from higher education institutions are a results of career-led education. This means providing career education in such a way as to establish skills that are demanded in the labour market. To this end, this study concludes that career education open labour market doors.

Programmes are already in place for encouraging young people and graduate to establish their own business. Such programme include Umsobomvu, National Youth Development Programmes (NYDP), Independent Development Trust (IDC) etc. which provide advice for operating businesses and guidance for obtaining funds. This informs the need to focus not only on job applications, but also to establish businesses, and to develop and increase interest in entrepreneurship. To this end, this study concludes that career education provide entrepreneurial skills that assist graduate in establishing and managing their own businesses.

It is noted that respondents are looking for jobs and that this is one of the reasons they are studying further, yet they indicated that their field of study has greater opportunities. It can be argued that the answers are based the understanding that there are greater employment opportunities in the fields of the humanities. The humanities must find the common cause and reach out to colleagues and fellow travellers and the wider political economy, scientists, publishers, librarians, etc. the centrality role of humanities is to rebalance the economy and all these professions in a way that is credible to social movements, workers, and policy makers (Miller 2012:123). The respondents may have the challenge of not knowing how to apply for job or presenting themselves, or are simply ignorant about the shortage of opportunities in the humanities as opposed to other fields. Businesses and citizens need information and training acquired through humanities fields (Miller 2012:68).

While work experience is regarded as a concern, it can be concluded that the answers show awareness of the need to study further, and on the other hand, pursue some means of

gaining work experience. As the respondent confirmed that the faculty does provide internship programmes it is not possible to cater for all the graduate. This leads to the conclusion that even with the plans that are in place for the internship programmes, lot of work still need to be done to close the current unemployment gaps.

The readiness to the labour market is determined by skillset. The researcher is of the opinion that since the respondents are looking for jobs they would not accept that they may lacking skills and regard anything that they could as the barrier for entering the labour market.

While unemployment is regarded as an issue affecting some of the graduate, media is seen as the strategic role player in the establishment of communication strategy that can be effectively used to disseminate information about skills that are required in the job market, at the same time, creating awareness about the consequences of studying or following careers that are either less demanding or irrelevant.

### **9.3.2 Clarifying the role of media in addressing unemployment challenges**

The definitions of communication indicate clearly that communication is a process and it starts with the sender and ends with the receiver of the message, through the appropriate channel. The effectiveness of media could be determined through the results of the strategies established for addressing unemployment challenges. Through the answers gathered, this study concludes that media has the potential of playing an effective role in addressing unemployment challenges faced by the graduates globally, and has a greater opportunity for integrating relevant media for addressing graduate unemployment.

There is a need for media to more extensively explore alternative creative means of ensuring that relevant information reaches audience in greater numbers, through mass communication. The creativity that is brought about by technology can make this possible, by integrating social media and other media.

While technology is powerful in enabling the use of media for different reasons, it is not free from challenges. Based on the received answers, it can be concluded that there are challenges with the use of the media as a result of the means that are brought up by the cost related to technology, for example, software applications.

The outcome of communication is always expected to bring positive results to the communicators, because they may have different reasons, needs and challenges that ought to be resolved through a media. This study concludes that media has the potential to meet the needs of all users at all levels, regardless of their socio-economic background.

The popular use of social media is noted, but it has not reached the stage of replacing print media. This leads to a conclusion that both social and print media are reliable and useful. The difference between the two media is that social media is available instantly, while its cost in terms of data use may raise the issue of affordability for young South Africans.

Most graduates are unemployed, due to a lack of awareness in terms of the interventions that are already established by either government, the private sector, non-profit organisation, investors, etc. Based on this, it can be concluded that while such interventions are in place, media has the potential to add value by creating awareness about such interventions.

### **9.3.3 Identify types of media that are used to disseminate information about unemployment factors**

The choice and the preference of the media depends on the needs, use and expectations of the different individuals. This is reflected in the paragraphs below. It is noted that not all communication are effective to an employment search, hence the frequency of use is dependent on the needs and the urgency of the user. Through this study it is established that an employment search is done by the respondents daily and weekly. It can be assumed that those respondents who have been looking for employment for a longer period are likely to increase the frequency with which they undertake employment searches.

The media preference is informed by a number of reasons, such as affordability, availability, historical knowledge of a particular media, learning or encouragement from the peers, etc. The previous paragraphs confirmed that technology has not yet reached a stage of replacing or reducing print media and it is concluded that print media are still preferred.

The country's (South Africa) history of challenges related to electricity shortages may have affected the big industries, but not individuals because, media industries are still able to print the newspapers and sell them or bring them to the seller who will sell to the individuals. Contrary to the above, the accessibility of a particular media may be attributed to the instant access, rather than to affordability. This concludes that since social media is available instantly, due to its attraction to the young people it is often accessed.

By focusing on certain media to the expense of others, respondents may miss opportunities that are presented through other media. Due to the developments in the communication industry, the researcher sees greatest potential in social and print media. The use of technology is seen through the use of social media, hence, there is no evidence that social media is used effectively for employment seeking or discussing issues related to unemployment. This study concludes that less recourse is made to audio and visual media amongst the youth, where such ought to be encouraged through greater exposure.

#### **9.3.4 Unemployment as a challenge faced by the students currently studying at university of technology**

Several parts of this study confirmed unemployment as a challenge that is faced by the graduates, for example, the study confirmed that the employment search is done daily, only for some respondents through different media. This is however not a surprise, because it is what is expected from the target audience. The findings are concluded in the paragraphs below.

It is assumed that the sharing of knowledge and information serves the best interest of those in demand of it. One may not know how long it could take to find a job, and this may be opportunity to obtain further qualifications while seeking for a job. Hence, this study

reasons that it is beneficial to provide an advice about studying further even after obtaining employment.

Considering the hard work that goes into studying and obtaining a qualification, it is argued that taking between one and three years is too long for seeking employment, and this is not anticipated for the graduate because a decision to study further is regarded by the researcher as the individual's own responsibility leading to financial independence. This is demotivating for those who are uneducated, and it may create a perception that education does not add value.

Employment search is done in different ways, depending on the resources that are available to individuals. Responding to an advert is preferred and this leads to the conclusion that respondents, or those that seek out employment, wait for a job to be advertised.

As is clearly confirmed, one of the reasons to study further is a lack of employment. It can be assumed that unemployment is a challenge that is faced by graduate. It is of course better to study further rather than waiting for an unknown period for work. It can also be concluded from the answers gathered that some of the respondents would not study further if they were employed.

### **9.3.5 Confirm a media relevant to disseminate information about unemployment factors**

The two (2) subsections discussed in this objective include the discussion on “how media could be planned” and “which messages should be most communicated/debated through media”. This objective determined how the messages for addressing unemployment might effectively be communicated, and how media can be integrated to achieve this objective. The conclusions about confirming a media are presented below.

Although this study targeted a small group of graduate, it is noted that unemployment affects all parts of the country. It is an enemy to the economy of the country. While media has the ability to handle national discussions on any subject, it is argued that everyday national debate can be facilitated through media.

It is noted that references and the choices of using a specific media are informed by a number of factors, such as affordability, accessibility, familiarity, etc. Unemployment affects the larger scope of the country, ranging from youth to the elders, educated and uneducated. It is important to conclude that the integration of media would close the gap between a new and an old media.

Following from the above discussion, it is concluded that the integration of different media is regarded as one of the solution for addressing and creating awareness about unemployment, because a lack of awareness is one of the challenges that may lead to the perception that information is not available, or that it does not exist. It should be noted that information for addressing unemployment is available in many different formats in organisations.

The use of media may require different formats and consistency may address the barriers caused by time, location, language, resources, skills, etc. This concludes that consistency would also address fairness and require that, for example, a presentation done in a particular language be translated into other relevant languages, ensuring that the target audience receive similar messages.

Similarly to the above discussion, it is important to provide information consistently without disadvantaging the recipient. Considering that both developed and the underdeveloped societies are affected by unemployment. This leads to the conclusion that barriers related to location and environment may degrade the value that is expected from the media.

African apartheid history once created demarcations in terms of socio-economic status of this country in relation to race, language, an unevenly developed society, yet this has led to inequalities and poverty which translate into the current high level of unemployment. Media has the potential to create awareness for everyone and everywhere regardless of language issues.

The researcher noticed that there are various media (TV, Radio, social and newspaper) programmes that disseminate information about issues of unemployment. Until everyone

can say “I am satisfied with the economic status of this country”, it can be confirmed that unemployment remains unaddressed.

### **9.3.6 Establish a communication strategy for the effective use of media in the search of employment in order to close the unemployment gap**

The strategy for the effective use of media is established. Strategic communication connect the organisation’s vision, mission and business goals to the forces and opportunities that exist in the market place and that give purpose to the work that people perform. Within the context of this study strategic communication connects the vision, mission and strategic goals of the education, media, labour market and government to the needs and aspirations of those individuals who have graduated and who are seeking employment. Such strategic communication gives purposes to the policy makers who are involved and working in these industries.

The proposed communication strategy places emphasis on the key stakeholders, namely, media, government, the education system and the labour market, who are expected to use communication to disseminate information and create awareness about factors contributing to graduate unemployment.

## **9.4 Recommendations**

The recommendations below are discussed according to the objectives of the study and the headings within the objectives.

### **9.4.1 Identify unemployment factors that affect the graduate.**

The paragraphs below provide the recommendations for the unemployment factors that are identified in this study. It is noted that respondents are furthering their studies due to lack of employment opportunities on graduating, yet they remain confident in their initial careers choices. This reveals the need to encourage them and support their confidence by using

media to present and create awareness about challenges, as well as the available opportunities related to their career choices. As the answers confirm the match between students' career and the labour market, the study forwards that answers based on rigorous awareness should be created about the current state of unemployment for students, as well as higher education institutions.

While the age of the respondents suits the requirements of the labour market, it is recommended that information about the labour market skills demands and intake be communicated to higher education institutions. This will promote and increase the chances of such students soon than they later outgrow and outage the labour market.

The non-employability of the graduate is an indication that qualifications without skills may not add value to an individual, yet, it is recommended that higher education institutions, in collaboration with the labour market, identify the skills gap and provide support by offering skills to those that deserve them.

The existing South African policies and the interventions for addressing unemployment have the potential to recommend that higher education promotes skills development by ensuring that all fields of study include entrepreneurial skills as part of each curriculum. It is also recommended that the graduate be encouraged to seek entrepreneurial skills. This will ensure that they establish businesses and create employment opportunities for those in need. This will lead to an increase in the statistics of the young and emerging entrepreneurs.

Graduate have the opportunity to increase their economic chances, not only by seeking employment, but also by seeking entrepreneurial skill. This recommends that media has the chance of communicating such information to relevant stakeholders. This will also increase the chances of addressing other issues related to unemployment through a variety of media.

It can be argued that certain qualifications do not provide sufficient skills for one to be ready for the labour market, yet skills development is one of the ways to strengthen experience. It may also promote multiskilling for the graduate. This leads to a recommendation that once after receiving a qualification, graduate should obtain skills through companies that offer



internships, in-service training, etc. This calls for a communication channel that will promote such information and ensure that it reaches the target audience.

The initiatives that are done through career education at high schools and higher education institutions are noted, however, it is recommended that that such initiatives ought to create awareness of the risks of following careers that are not employment attractive. The awareness of information about skills are careers that are highly demanded in the labour market. Such careers should be highly considered.

The programmes for addressing and presenting entrepreneurial skills are noted. There is a likelihood that such established and existing programmes benefit developed communities. This leads to the recommendation that such programmes should also be established and developed in greater number in rural areas.

As confirmed through the answers, the faculty of humanities at the University of Technology under study may have greater employment opportunities, hence, the challenge is that how can one access them or at least be aware of them. According to Susskind and Susskind (2015:290) the professions as they are currently constituted do not and cannot provide affordable access to all who want to benefit from their services. It is the high requirement to centre the media in the humanities because they are pivotal for citizenship, work and consumption (Miller 2012:119). It is therefore recommended that information about the presence or the lack of opportunities in the humanities faculty be made known. This further suggests the need for the termination of those studies and career choices that may not have employment opportunities.

The unemployment of the graduate cannot be overlooked. It demotivates those that are not educated. It is recommended that while they are looking for employment, the graduate continue with their studies. This could be made possible if graduate studies are funded by higher education institutions, government and other possible funders. This would also increase the rate of education among the graduate.

The above paragraph highlights and encourages support to graduate by funding their graduate studies. In order to make this possible, it is recommended that government

enforce policies for ensuring corporate social investments through the provisions of internship programmes for all organisations, especially those in the private sector.

The study finds that the respondents are in denial over the viability of their careers in the labour market, where as a result they require additional skills and added years of study so that they can be made ready for entering the labour market. This recommends a need to advise the respondents to make one of two choices. The first choice is to continue studying, hoping that one day they may find a job, alternatively, to change their career choice. However, the second of these choices has huge financial implications. From the researchers' experience, this is possible, however, it requires more patience, hard work, a change in mind set, as well as a change in career goals.

Based on the above conclusion and conclusion, it is recommended that graduate be encouraged to use all possible means to close the unemployment gap, such as applying for jobs, seeking entrepreneurial opportunities, seeking internships, and participating in skills development programmes. Nevertheless, without government, the education system, and media establishing the platforms for these possibilities, the graduate' efforts may be put to waste.

#### **9.4.2 Clarifying the role of media in addressing unemployment challenges**

The discussion on the role played by media in this study has indicated that the improvements in addressing unemployment challenges are possible. For the media to be effective, it is recommended that the media development or improvements be initiated and supported globally, where a solution working for one country can also be implemented in another country.

Since media is known and trusted for its ability to reach the majority of the population, it is recommended that different media be integrated for the purpose of exploring creative ways of disseminating information, as well as reaching a larger audience. Although this study target the graduate at one university of technology, it is also recommended that information addressing unemployment be communicated to everyone, so that even those that are employed may have the opportunity to pass the message through to others.

With the use of media through technology, the challenges related to the technology use, cost, environment, etc. are noted. Professionals cannot rely on new or latent demand because most of the new tasks to which it give rise are themselves to be better and more efficiently undertaken by machines (Suskind & Suskind 2015:291). This brings the recommendation that print and other media need to be considered. This also considers that it is not only less technology-minded people who are affected by unemployment.

Technology and internet are not just improving old ways of working but they are also enabling people to bring about fundamental change and they are providing new ways to make practical expertise far more widely available (Suskind & Suskind 2015:270). Social media audiences view traditional media organisations as collaborators; that is, social media complement traditional media, they do not replace it. Television and internet synergies have transformed the way television communicates with its audience as there is increased opportunity for audience feedback and engagement with programmes. It is also recommended that print and audio media receive greater consideration for communities in underdeveloped societies.

It is noted that while the graduate share a common challenge, namely “unemployment”, their needs differ. The socio-economic background could also contribute to their use of media. This leads to the conclusion that the use of media ought to consider all relevant languages in this country, information barriers affecting underdeveloped communities, the skills that are required for accessing information through new media, etc. It also recommended that as such a list may be long, further studies ought to be done in order to determine the barriers that could impede the use of media.

The study confirmed that social media is more reliable than print media, however it can be argued that this depends on the target audience. It is recommended that the production of the content of the messages for addressing unemployment focus on both. This is based on the general understanding that users in certain areas, for example, in underdeveloped areas, may still be relying on newspapers and radio, word or mouth, etc. more than social media.

The debates and issues about unemployment ought to focus on the skills demand and the curriculum designed by educational institutions. This study recommends the need for further developments and improvements in the media and communication industries. It is recommended that instead of being used in isolation, various media be integrated to address challenges related to graduate unemployment.

### **9.4.3 Identify types of media that are used to disseminate information about unemployment factors**

Socio economic factors play a key role in the use of media. The paragraphs below are aimed at providing recommendations related to the time, preference, usability and accessibility of different media, namely social, audio, print and visual.

The daily and the weekly use of communication for seeking employment is noted amongst respondents. It is recommended that the needs and the preference of media for the unemployed graduate in different higher education institutions be assessed. This could be achieved when the media institutions and the researchers directly visit and conduct the assessments in such institutions.

Since, changes in technologies and organisational structure of the media are transforming public life these changes affect the forms of delivery of media and the ways in which the world is understood, the way of communicating and participation in public life. The print media could be regarded as an old type of media and overlooked in this twenty-first century, however, it is still preferred. Considering the adoption of changing technology and the evolving new media, it is recommended that print media still be considered and used in turn to promote the use of other media. It is important to understand that an audience is not static; it continually evolves as media offerings evolve. This will ensure that all the audience communication needs are fairly met.

In support of the last paragraph, both print and social media require more focus. Depending on the target audience, and its needs related to socio-economic status including location, affordability, accessibility, both media need a presence due to social media's instant

timeframe and print media affordability. Furthermore, visual and audio media need to be shaped in order to increase their presence, as discussed in the paragraph below.

The less access to, preference for and use of visual and audio media is an indication that relevant education and awareness of the media industry requires ballast, and that there is a need to develop communication programmes that will disseminate information about employment opportunities need to target relevant audience. It is therefore recommended that visual and audio media be shaped and improved not only for discussing and presenting unemployment challenges, but also for employment search and training for graduate.

It is also recommended that graduate be heavily exposed to technology, and that there is use of media, not just for social purposes, but for employment seeking purposes. This is also ideal for building communication networks for encouraging each other for establishing businesses so that they don't rely only on internships and job seeking.

#### **9.4.4 Unemployment as a challenge faced by the students currently studying at university of technology**

It is indeed appropriate to study further whether one is employed or unemployed. Knowledge is power. Studying equips one with current information and knowledge. This study recommends that graduate in any field of study be encouraged to study further, regardless of being employed or not. This will promote a culture of a learned, informed and knowledgeable society.

It is a concern to see a graduate seeking out and struggling to find employment. This is a deterring factor to those not educated, and it can create a perception that education is valueless. It is recommended that the graduate be encouraged to approach a mix of different studies in order to increase their chances of being multi-skilled, towards employability in different industries.

It should be noted that not all the firms advertise jobs, where some may regard word of mouth as powerful source of advertising. It is recommended that a combination of sources be used in order to improve the chances of being employed.

It is recommended that that proactive means of closing unemployment gaps be established, where government, education system and labour market and media have a greater role to play in the use of communication in order to close this gap. This refer to the gap between high number of unemployed graduate and unemployment.

The recommendations in the paragraphs below are aimed at addressing how media can be planned, and how messages ought to be communicated/debated, through the integration of media. This study highlights unemployment to be both a known and a worrying subject. Unemployment is debated to a great extent at professional gatherings and events such as media conferences, parliament, higher education conferences, etc., however, the impact resulting from this is limited, where unemployment is not declining, but only rising. This study recommends that through media, the issues, challenges and solution to unemployment be communicated rigorously.

Based on the above recommendation, everyday national debates need to be channelled through media, so that the messages proliferate and reach the appropriate audience, regardless of their media preference. This is to ensure that the promotion and the effectiveness of the old and the new media coverage.

The researcher has the strong view about the power of media. As much as media has enormous power, it can be responsible for turning unemployment struggles into victory. This can be achieved by, for example, establishing a calendar day or week or month where media dedicate to a discussion of unemployment. It is also recommended that media be integrated to debate and create awareness on a daily basis. This can be achieved by establishing media channels that broadcast only about the suggestions, solutions, plans, etc. for addressing unemployment.

Inconsistent messages may create the issues of unfairness and discrimination, which can be avoided by assessing the gaps that could inform inconsistencies. This study recommends that before designing and presenting messages, thorough research be done in order to identify such gaps.

It is recommended that communication barriers that may be related to location and environment be addressed. This could be achieved by tailoring the messages about employment opportunities for the communities that reside in a particular location. This also means the possibility to regulate and establish policies that will encourage the firms to employ people according to their location and environment. For example, people that stay in Mpumalanga could be employed in Mpumalanga and this may reduce the challenges and the cost of travelling and relocation. This may also inform the skills that are required by the members of the community where specific firms are concentrated.

While consistent dissemination of the messages is encouraged, it is recommended that the focus be placed on addressing inconsistencies caused by socio-economic factors such as language, age, gender, etc. communication programmes for addressing unemployment ought to be duplicated in terms of language coverage. This means that such programmes require translation into all local languages.

Since unemployment is a national matter, it is recommended that the unemployment programmes be strategically planned to be communicated throughout the day and week, until unemployment is addressed or its levels are reduced. It can be argued that information overload need to be avoided, however, the researcher recommends that unemployment issues be hyper-communicated and be regarded as an everyday debate, until the solutions prevail. Additionally, the researcher recommends that certain improvements are required in the media industry in order to make media the source of employment, seeking information in different ways. It is well known that “unemployment” is a challenge, not only in this country, but across the globe.

#### **9.4.5 Confirm a media that is relevant to disseminate information about unemployment factors**

Machines and systems are becoming capable and overtime they will outperform human professionals at many tasks (Susskind & Susskind 2015:272). It is therefore recommended that humans be trained and be through to challenge the new technologies. This is to ensure that technology does not become a threat to human professions and their employment.

#### **9.4.6 Establish the strategy for the effective use of media in the search of employment in order to close the unemployment gap.**

The reviewed literature has indicated the integration between education and labour market, hence, the researcher could not find the addition of media to education and unemployment. It is therefore recommended that a communication strategy be established so that media, education and the labour market find an integrated platform for addressing unemployment, such that the sources for employment searching be expanded and communicated purposefully.

The study did establish a communication strategy for disseminating information about skills that are required in the job market. The media that will be used for carrying out the strategy is also discussed. The plan on how the strategy will be implemented is also presented.

The literature shows that there are various communication strategies in different contexts, such as the organisational context, however, the researcher could not find a strategy that integrates the education system, media, the workplace and government. These four areas are summarized as follows:

- The education system: the foundation that prepares individuals for their career choices;
- Media: used by the education system to disseminate relevant messages in the planning of careers and preparations for accessing the place;
- Workplace industry: any area work regardless of the organisation, e.g. office, field, workshop, laboratory, etc.; and
- Government intervention: enforcing the policing for ensuring that organisations (the workplace) provide the opportunities to the graduate through internships.

Based on the above, it is important to note that technological developments have the advantage of integrating these four areas. According to Susskind and Susskind (2015:151) once the society has fully progresses into a fully technology based internet society, new technology will help with their interpretation and traditional professionals will no longer be dominant to apply to their own particular circumstances and problems.



It is important to consider that through the reviewed literature that strategies are established in various contexts, however, it is through economic empowerment that unemployment challenges could be addressed, where communication strategies and media are key channels for addressing these challenges.

### **9.5 Limitations of the study**

The researcher initially proposed to collect data electronically by obtaining the email addresses of the respondents. The researcher sent the questionnaires to a total number of eleven (11) honours students on the 11<sup>th</sup> November 2015. There was no feedback received. The researcher sent the reminder (follow up email) on the 17<sup>th</sup> November 2015 and there was still no feedback. The researcher then realized that collecting data direct from the students with the help of a research assistant was the better option.

The researcher planned to collect data from the postgraduate students, namely, honours, masters and PhD students. However, during the pilot study it was realized that PhD students were not easily accessible as they are not often on campus. This resulted in the data being collected from masters and honours students only.

It is noted that unemployment is not only affects graduate, but that graduate are the minority group that is affected by unemployment. Those that are uneducated or with lower levels of education are affected, yet this study focuses only of the graduate due to the assumption that the unemployment of the graduate demotivate those that are unemployed. It is also assumed that the unemployment amongst graduate creates a broader perception that education does not add value.

It is noted that while the researcher is of the view that the graduate in the Humanities Faculty are most affected by unemployment, this study did not reach across all the departments within the Faculty, thus, the results cannot be generalized within all the departments in the Humanities Faculty, instead they are generalized within the three departments (Department of Applied Languages, Department of Law; and the Department of Journalism) in which the study was conducted.

## 9.6 Recommendations for further study

Based on the results of the study, the following suggestions for further researcher are put forward:

- The study focused only on a few departments within the Humanities Faculty, and it is recommended that other faculties be researched in order to get a clearer picture about the possibility of the availability of unemployed graduate in other faculties.
- Although the University of Technology where the study was done is treated anonymous, further research would be required at all other higher education institutions to determine the extent to which media can be used to create awareness about graduate unemployment.
- Since it is confirmed that unemployment is a challenge affecting graduate, it is suggested that studies of this nature be conducted specific to faculties or areas of study, not only at universities, but also at all the higher education institutions. This will also confirm whether training can still be provided in particular areas/faculties.
- It is also recommended that higher education institutions reduce or avoid offering the qualifications that are not employment attractive. This would close the unemployment gap by ensuring that skills and qualifications are offered according to labour market demands.
- Social media is highly used but it cannot be concluded that it is effectively used for closing unemployment gaps, hence studies should be conducted to promote and encourage the use of social media, so as to integrate it with other media for employment seeking purposes and to discuss issues and solutions for unemployment.
- Studies should also be conducted more often in schools to determine the career choices of the learners at an earlier age.
- Studies should also be conducted on the subject of the private higher education institutions so as to confirm the validity of training that they provide.
- It is recommended that a study of this nature be pursued at an educational institution where white students are highly concentrated, in order to confirm whether poverty and inequality also affect white graduate.

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**APPENDICES**

	Please mark your response with X	X	Code
1.	<b>Gender</b>		
	Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
2.	<b>Age</b>		
	Between 18 and 22	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
	Between 23 and 28	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
	Between 29 and 33	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
	More than 33	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
3.	<b>Race</b>		
	White	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
	Black	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
	Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
	Coloured	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
4.	<b>Level of study</b>		
	Honours	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
	Masters	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
5.	<b>Type of study</b>		
	Part time	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
	Full time	<input type="checkbox"/>	2

**Appendix 1 - Objective 1 - Identifying unemployment factors that are recognized by the graduate students who are currently studying at the University of Technology.**

Please use the scale between 1 and 5 to provide your response:

1. Strongly disagree, 5. Strongly agree

<b>5.1 Empirical statements about unemployment factors</b>						<b>Code</b>
I am confident about the career of my choice.	1	2	3	4	5	1
There is a perfect match between my career, my field of study and the labour market.	1	2	3	4	5	2
My age is suitable for the labour market.	1	2	3	4	5	3
Skills shortages are the sources of various challenges such as poverty, underdevelopment and unemployment	1	2	3	4	5	4
My field of study provides me with key entrepreneurial skills that are key in addressing the unemployment problem.	1	2	3	4	5	5
After finishing my studies I am looking at job opportunities rather than entrepreneurial opportunities.	1	2	3	4	5	6
After finishing my studies I am looking at seeking both job opportunities and entrepreneurial opportunities.	1	2	3	4	5	7
Skills development is regarded as a solution to bridge the gap between the labour market and unemployment.	1	2	3	4	5	8
The career education offered in my faculty provides entrepreneurial skills that will open labour market doors for my career.	1	2	3	4	5	9
The career education offered in my faculty provides entrepreneurial skills that will provide a solution any employment challenges in my career.	1	2	3	4	5	10
My field of study has greater employment opportunities.	1	2	3	4	5	11
Work experience is a concern for my future and career.	1	2	3	4	5	12
My faculty provides employment experience through	1	2	3	4	5	13

internship programmes.						
Although I am still studying, I consider myself ready for the labour market at any time.	1	2	3	4	5	14
I need the internship programme to help me obtaining the relevant experience.	1	2	3	4	5	15

**Appendix 2 - Objective 2 - Determining the role that could be played by media for addressing unemployment challenges.**

Please use the scale between 1 and 5 to provide your response:

1. Strongly disagree, 5. Strongly agree

Tick the appropriate box in each of the questions below.						Code
Media is effectively used globally for addressing challenges for communicating unemployment issues.	1	2	3	4	5	1.
I regard media as a channel for disseminating information for addressing personal and national issues related to unemployment challenges.	1	2	3	4	5	2.
I am experiencing challenges with the way media is used to address unemployment challenges.	1	2	3	4	5	3.
Media can meet the needs of all users at all levels of address unemployment challenges.	1	2	3	4	5	4.
Messages communicated through social and print media are reliable and useful for addressing unemployment challenges.	1	2	3	4	5	5.
Media interventions, sustainable and improved communication practices would ensure that graduate immediately find jobs that are relevant to their studies.	1	2	3	4	5	6

### Appendix 3 - Objective 2 - Identify types of media that could be used effectively to disseminate information about unemployment factors

1. When did you last use any media to search for employment? - please mark your response with X	X	Code
Daily	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
A week ago	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
2 weeks ago	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
More than 2 weeks ago	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

2. Which media do you prefer to use when doing employment search? please mark your response with X	X	Code
Social media (e.g. Facebook)	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Print media (e.g. newspaper)	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Visual media (e.g. television)	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Audio media (e.g. radio)	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	5

3. How often in the last week did you access the following media for employment search? Please use the following scale to provide your response: 1. Always                      2. Sometimes                      3. Never				Code
Social media (e.g. Facebook, twitter, etc.)	1	2	3	1
Print media (e.g. newspapers)	1	2	3	2
Visual media (e.g. television)	1	2	3	3
Audio media (e.g. radio)	1	2	3	4
Other (specify)	1	2	3	5

4. How often do you use the following media for employment search? Please use the following scale (1 to 4) to provide your response: 1. Daily 2. Weekly 3. Monthly 4. Not at all					Code
Social media (e.g. Facebook, twitter, etc.)	1	2	3	4	1
Print media (e.g. newspapers)	1	2	3	4	2
Visual media (e.g. television)	1	2	3	4	3
Audio media (e.g. radio)	1	2	3	4	4
Other (specify)	1	2	3	4	5

**Appendix 4 - Objective 3 – Confirm if unemployment is a challenge facing students who are currently studying at the University of Technology.**

Please mark your response with X

1. Would you advise someone to study further while looking for employment?	X	Code
Always	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>	3

2. For how many years have you been seeking employment?	X	Code
Between 1 and 2 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Between 2 and 3 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Between 3 and 4 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
More than 4 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

3. How do you apply for employment?	X	Code
Send a CV to the company of your choice	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Respond to an advert	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Send a CV to a recruitment agency	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Word of mouth	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

4. What are your reasons for studying further?	X	Code
Could not find employment	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Studying for fun	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Personal development	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Current employment requirement	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

### Appendix 5 - Objective 5 – confirming a media that is relevant to disseminate information about unemployment factors

Please use the scale between 1 and 5 to provide your response: 1. strongly disagree, 5. strongly agree

6.1 Confirming a media						Code
The issue of unemployment needs an everyday national debate through effective media.	1	2	3	4	5	1
Different media can be integrated in order to reach the audience that prefer new media and the audience who prefer old media.	1	2	3	4	5	5
Different media may address challenges related to the communication of information about unemployment issues.	1	2	3	4	5	6
The messages presented through media should be consistent.	1	2	3	4	5	2
The target audience should receive value from the media regardless of the location and environment.	1	2	3	4	5	3
The debate will ensure that people of different languages from different places are aware of the opportunities that they could grab through different the media.	1	2	3	4	5	4

6.2 Which messages should be mostly communicated / debated through the media? Mark your relevant choice(s)	X	Code
Job opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Skills Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Bursaries	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Internships	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Entrepreneurial skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
Sponsorship for businesses	<input type="checkbox"/>	6





## **Appendix 7 - Permission letter to conduct the study**

Delphia Skosana  
P.O. Box 468  
Kwamhlanga  
1022  
14 April 2015

The Research Ethics Committee of  
the University of Technology

### **Re: Letter of approval to conduct the research**

I am a doctoral (PhD) student at the University of South Africa. I am here by requesting approval to conduct the research at the University of Technology. The study is aimed at identifying the factors contributing to graduate unemployment and confirm a media and communication strategy to increase graduate employment potential.

The research is aimed at collecting data through the survey questionnaire. In order to access the University of Technology graduate students, I am hereby requesting the list of the students as well as their email addresses. Such information will be treated anonymously and confidentially. The survey questionnaire will be sent to the target audience (honours and masters) students in the Humanities faculty. The questions to be asked are as follows:

- What are the factors contributing to graduate unemployment?;
- how can media address unemployment challenges?;
- what are types of media are used to disseminate information about factors contributing to graduate unemployment?;
- which unemployment factors can confirm if unemployment is a challenge facing students who are currently studying at the University of Technology?;

- how could media be planned to disseminate information about unemployment factors?;  
and
- how can the communication strategy be established, for increasing graduate  
employment potential.

Thank you in advance for giving me permission for conducting this research.

Yours sincerely,

Ms. D.S. Skosana

Bestpaper.com

## Appendix 8 – Consent letter

Dear Respondent

My name is Delphia Skosana. I am a PhD student at the University of South Africa (UNISA). I am conducting a survey about “identifying the factors contributing to graduate unemployment and planning a relevant media and communication strategy to increase graduate employment potential: The case of University of Technology”. This study is aimed at identifying factors contributing to graduate unemployment and confirm a media and communication strategy to increase graduate employment potential. The objectives of the study are as follows:

- Identify factors contributing to graduate unemployment;
- clarify the role of media in addressing unemployment challenges;
- identify types of media that are used to disseminate information about factors contributing to graduate unemployment;
- confirm if unemployment is a challenge faced by the graduates at the university of technology;
- confirm a media that is relevant for disseminating information about unemployment factors; and
- establish a communication strategy for increasing graduate employment potential.

The results of this survey will be given to the University of Technology authorities in order to make them aware of the concerns, if any that may need their intervention. Your willingness to complete the survey questionnaire is appreciated. All the answers for this study will be treated with confidentiality. Your confidentiality is guaranteed. Your participation is voluntary.

For any queries you can contact the researcher on the numbers given below.

Thanking you in advance for participating in this survey.

Yours sincerely.

Ms. D.S. Skosana

Email: [delphiaskosana16@gmail.com](mailto:delphiaskosana16@gmail.com).

Postal address: P.O. Box 468 Kwamhlanga 1022