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I hereby declare that the included dissertation, consisting of two articles for the degree Magister Educationis, submitted to the University of the Free State, is my own and independent work and has never been submitted to any other university or faculty. I forfeit the auditoria right on this dissertation in favour of the University of the Free State.

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.…………………………….
T.LIGUORI
November 2007

You work that you may keep pace with the

earth and the soul of the earth.

For to be idle is to become a stranger unto the seasons,

and to step out of life's procession that marches

in majesty and proud submission towards

the infinite.

When you work you are a flute through whose

heart the whispering of the hours turn to music.

Which of you would be a reed, dumb and silent

when all else sings together in unison?

Kahlil Gibran

DEDICATED TO:

ALL THE SCHOOL LEAVERS IN THE EASTERN FREE STATE WHO DESERVE THE RIGHT AND OPPORTUNITY TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF OUR REGION

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THE EFFECT OF INSUFFICENT JOB OPPORTUNITIES ON

SCHOOL LEAVERS IN THE EASTERN FREE STATE

by

TERSIA LIGUORI

Dissertation (two articles) submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree

MAGISTER EDUCATIONIS

in the

DEPARTMENT PSYCHOLOGY OF EDUCATION

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

at the

BLOEMFONTEIN

Promoter: **Prof.C. J. Kotzé**

November 2007

THE EFFECT OF INSUFFICENT JOB OPPORTUNITIES ON

SCHOOL LEAVERS IN THE EASTERN FREE STATE

T. LIGUORI

**THE EFFECT OF INSUFFICIENT JOB OPPORTUNITIES ON SCHOOL
LEAVERS IN THE EASTERN FREE STATE**

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Education is the right of all South Africans (The White Paper on Education and Training,
1994) and aims to ensure that all learners will become productive and worthwhile citizens
of the future.

With a basic education, school leavers are on the threshold of becoming part of the
productive generation of tomorrow. When selecting a vocation, or embarking on a
course of study with a particular career in mind, an adolescent contributes to an important
part of developing a sense of self. Having a job that is perceived to be worthwhile and
valued by society, and doing well in that job will enhance personal self-esteem.

As developing adults, adolescents expect to contribute to the economy and secure
stability to provide for themselves and future families, sharing in the economic growth
and development of the country. Without employment, basic needs cannot be satisfied
and therefore will higher needs remain unsatisfied (Maslow, 1970). Work (Jordaan and
Jordaan, 2000: 715) is part to human existence. As part of the social context of human
life, it influences, and is influenced by situations and events in the environmental context
as well as the context of international relationships, group functioning and society.

1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Despite a growing economy very few school leavers are in fact absorbed into the
workplace. Labour minister Membathisi Mdladlana (Cokayne, 2007: 4) claimed that
South Africa was "sitting on a time bomb" because of high unemployment rates
amongst the youth. He continued that despite the country producing 400 000
matriculants a year 60 percent of them were not in tertiary institutions or at work.
This often resulted in youths stoning cars and demanding houses in protests
though they were not in need of a dwelling and might be standing next to
their own mother. There are many school leavers who are job hunting, applying for work

and then being informed that they are not skilled or qualified enough or do not have the necessary experience. During the months May, June and July 2004 thousands of mine workers were retrenched while scores of unemployed people were daily protesting for better wages while Trade Unions were demanding more job opportunities (Archibald, 2004). A survey conducted by the Human Science Research Council in 2006 shows that two thirds of those wanting to work simply would not find a job. HSRC spokesperson Michael Cosser remarked that for thousands of matriculants throughout the country, job hunting would not be easy (Sangotsha, Sowetan, Dec. 29, 2006: 6). Criminal activities are an increased risk while many young South Africans leave the country in droves to find employment abroad.

From this problem statement the following questions may arise:

- To what extent does the lack of job opportunities have a negative influence on the social and emotional development of adolescents as future adults and citizens? What is the magnitude and impact on society?
- What can be done to enable our learners to cope with the given situation and to prevent them from becoming negative and unmotivated in their expectations, future plans and prospects in South Africa?

1.3 PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

The main aim of the research is to determine the effect and influence of the lack of sufficient job opportunities on school leavers (Grade 9 – Grade 12) attending private or public schools, as well as those individuals receiving home schooling.

Further objectives would be to establish plans and strategies for future school leavers to cope with the situation of lack of opportunities and provision of employment in South Africa in order to prevent adolescents simultaneously from becoming negative and discouraged. A further aim of the research would also be to formulate recommendations, strategies and guidelines towards assisting the Department of

Education and educators in their responsibilities to guide and prepare school leavers for the demands that will be made on them after school. Lastly the study aims at assisting learners in alternative choices and vocational options to provide educational experts with insight into the expectations of learners and the long-term impact this might have on the social development op the next generation.

1.4 NECESSITY OF RESEARCH

In November 2005, 508 363 matriculants wrote their final exams (Pandor, 2006:2). In total 6.8% passed with 17% of the learners obtaining matriculation endorsement while 31.7% failed of which the number of learners returning to school remained uncertain. MacFarlane (2006) states that newspapers publish advertisements for job opportunities and the qualifications needed, but at the same time newspapers, together with national television reports on the small percentage of learners who manage to find employment after school. The author voiced concern on what happens to the 83% of learners who failed to obtain university exemption: "Do they join the unemployed? Do they try to find funding to enroll at a further education and training college that might provide them with a vocationally orientated qualification and perhaps render them more employable?" Garrum (Sowetan, 2006) echoes the same concern in his address to school leavers: "Statistics tell us that the majority of people in your position (i.e. those who completed school) will not be able to find a job in the traditional sense of the word." He emphasizes that the changes in the work place and global competition, left little time for training and experience. Matric results in 2006 indicated that the pass rate dropped by 1.7% to 66.6%, for the third consecutive year. A total of 528 525 students wrote the final exams, more than 20 000 than in 2005. The number of students who passed, increased from 347 184 in 2005 to 352 503 in 2006. For the first time national papers were set for all provinces (Cembi, 2006: 1).

"Mandela's Children" or "Born Frees" the matriculants of the year 2006, were the first learners who began high school after 1994's first democratic election but the exemption rate of this group was lower than the previous years. Causing further concern, is the fact that there was a decent in the number of learners who passed their examinations with distinction. In the Free State there was a drop in the pass rate from 77.8% in 2005 to

72.2% but an increase in learners attaining senior certificates. There were therefore more school leavers to enter the work place, but Statistics SA (September 2002) revealed that 65.5% unemployed youths had no Grade 12 qualification, while 29.1% unemployed had a Grade 12 qualification.

Bhorat (2006: 6) argued that the unemployed rate was about 40%, indicating an unemployment rate of 30% in the age group 15 to 24 and 41% in the age group 25 to 34, resulting in a 70% unemployment rate among the youth. In the first group (15 to 24 years of age) 75% without a secondary education was jobless while the percentage dropped to 66% unemployment for those who passed matric. People with a tertiary qualification have a 50% chance of unemployment while those with a degree had a 17% chance.

Cosato, when quoting the minister of Finance, Mr. Trevor Manual's statement:"… that the youth unemployment rate of 70% was horrendously high" agreed with the Minister of Labour, Membathisi Mdladlana, that the protests from the youth about employment, job opportunities and exclusion from the economy has been noted (Cosatu, 2006: http://www.cosatu.org.za/press/2006/june/press7.htm).

Potgieter (2007:9) states that: "*the immensity of this problem is particularly daunting when looking at the challenges facing school-leavers, and the pathways available to young people upon leaving school. Of the more than one million people leaving school every year, only 18% of them have opportunities to immediately enter further and higher education or post training (the figure is higher for Gauteng at 30% of school leavers). Of those who leave school and immediately join the labour market after school every year, 51% join the ranks of the unemployed and only 31% find employment in either the formal or informal sector.*"

1.5 EXPLANATORY NOTES ON KEY WORDS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Adolescence

Adolescence is the phase between childhood and manhood or womanhood. The physical development of an adolescent ranges from the age 12 to about 21 years (Mwamwenda, 1996: 63).

Adult

An adult is described as a mature person who attained *physical maturity* that is an adult body. An adult is likely to have reached full height and generally looks mature. Their various bodily structures are all fully developed. *Legally* at 18 an individual is considered "adult" to vote but not "mature" enough to marry without parental consent. S*ociologically* a 20 year-old school learner would not be regarded as adult, whilst a 19-year-old employed and economically independent person would be. In *psychological* terms it is difficult to establish criteria according to which a person may be judged to be an adult, since no absolute criteria exist for the determination of psychological maturity. Moreover, psychological maturity tends to be considered in terms of optimal well-being and functioning, which may often only be attained only late in life (Gerdes, 1988: 8).

Affirmative action

J.F. Kennedy first used this term in March 1961 in a presidential decree. In the most neutral sense, the term affirmative action is aimed at redressing historical inequalities and injustices by introducing special measures for certain groups. These included blacks, women, the deaf, the blind and other handicapped people who have been denied free access to jobs and full participation by means of discriminating practices (Jordaan and Jordaan, 2000: 708).

BEE

The acronym is used for the concept of Black Economic Empowerment (Act: 53 of 200).

Career

This term course literally describes a course through life. In the context of this investigation it refers to the sequence of jobs in which a specific person engages during the course of his or her life, based on his or her occupation and qualification.

Equity

The term equity is used for fairness or the use of principles of justice to supplement the law. The Equity Employment Bill Published in 1997 requires employers to set fixed targets for affirmative action and report progress towards these to the department of labour. All companies employing more than 50 people are expected to change to a more representative staff within five years.

FET College

This abbreviation is used for Further Education and Training referring to a college, which provides further education on a full time or distance basis after school.

GET

This abbreviation is used for General Education Training.

HET

This abbreviation indicates Higher Education and Training.

ILO

This abbreviation is used for International Labour Organization.

Job Opportunity

This concept refers to a job as a set of tasks in a specific situation, for example teaching mathematics at a school (Gerdes, 1988: 243). Opportunity indicates "favourable juncture" or having a good chance to find a job, which could be full time, temporary, shifts or piece jobs.

Matriculant

A matriculant is a learner writing an examination to be admitted as a student at a university or college

Nepotism

Nepotism indicates favouritism shown to relatives or friends in conferring offices or privilege (Encarta, Encyclopedia: 1999).

Occupation

Occupation is the main activity performed by employees for extensive service. This could be domestic workers, professionals, technicians or cleaners.

School leavers

School leavers are learners who are by law allowed, to leave school at the age of 15 years, or at the end of the Senior Phase or any following grade. These learners will therefore be available for work.

Skilled

This term indicates a state of being trained or possessing a practiced ability.

SNA

This abbreviation is used for System of National Accounts

Work

This concept indicates a person's employment or occupation, referring to purposeful service or productive activities, especially as a means to gain one's livelihood.

White Paper

The White Paper is a government report providing information or proposals on an issue.

Youth

This concept indicates the period during which individuals prepare themselves for adult responsibilities and roles, relating to their occupation, marriage and parenthood and define their identity, values and goals in respect of these. The period extends from approximately 18 to 22 years (Gerdes, 1988: 276).

1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN

A literature study was undertaken implementing relevant sources including books, academic journals, official documents, the inter-net, newspapers and other media.

An empirical research (done during the third term in 2006) comprised quantitative research consisting of a self-structured questionnaire in order to obtain information that could not be obtained elsewhere. This focused form of questionnaire was compiled to target Grade. 9 learners because they are allowed to leave school, and Grade 12 learners (between 15 and 19 years). Learners provided valuable input on views regarding job opportunities, career and future expectations as well as the employment status of their families. Collected data was process by the computer center of the Free State University. The analysis, interpretation and findings will be presented in the second article.

Qualitative research was done by: interviewing principals of schools and an educational expert, to assist in recommendations that have been made.   This is addressed in the second article.

Ten schools, situated in the Eastern Free State, were randomly selected. These included five high schools, two special schools providing schooling to learners with special needs, (leaving school a t the end of Grade 9), as well as learners from three independent

schools. The objective was to analyze the expectations, fears and concerns of school leavers in the rural Eastern Free State.

1.7 THEORIES ON WORK

Adolescence has been interpreted in various ways such as the "transition" stage with no accomplishment nor completion and a "historical accident". Experts do not agree on the onset of adolescence (most use the age of puberty) and when it ends (some argue that an extended adolescence is possible up to the age of 25 to 30 years) while others state that there is an "early" (12 to 14) stage, a "middle" stage (15 to 17) stage and as "late" stage (18 to 19) (Adolescence, 2007: http//faculty.ncwc.edu/TOConnor/301/301lect069a.htm.).

According to Gerdes, (1988: 290), Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory takes into consideration factors that impact on the social and cultural components of an individual's developmental experiences.   In the stage *Identity versus role confusion* (Erikson, 1968: 131) Erikson argues that adolescents build on all earlier experiences to develop a sense of self-identity. Failure to reach this goal may cause confusion in sexual identity, the choice of an occupation and the roles adolescents perform as adults. As cognitive development changes to abstract thinking, the adolescent is expected to take on responsibilities, therefore he or she would naturally seek answers to "who am I?", "what am I?" and "what do I want to be?".   This leaves the adolescent (school leaver) to review options and occupational choices. Job opportunities will therefore have a great influence on occupational choices. The failure to obtain or to have no prospects of a job could result in an identity crisis, an inevitable conflict that accompanies the growth of a sense of identity in late adolescence.

Muus (1975: 63) argues that: "… if the child fails at this stage to acquire a feeling of success and recognition of usefulness, he may not develop the feeling of enjoyment and pride of work well done. He will be plagued by feelings of inadequacy and inferiority and he may become convinced that he will never … be 'any good'.

 Maslow, founder of humanistic psychology in America, holds society responsible for the fulfillment of human needs and identified the following basic needs:

- Physiological needs for food, to sleep, to quench thirst and sexual desire. These needs are relatively interdependent on each other and when well gratified, a new set of needs emerges.

- Safety needs include security, stability, dependency, protection, law limits, freedom from fear, anxiety and chaos. Maslow (1970: 41) claimed: "… that the healthy and fortunate adult in our culture is largely satisfied in his safety needs".

- Belongingness and love needs - with physiological and safety needs fairly well gratified, these needs emerges. The individual looks for love, an affectionate relationship with people in general, a place in a group or society and he will strive with great intensity to achieve this goal.

- Esteem needs - most people in society have a need or desire to be stable and firmly based, strive for a high evaluation of themselves, for self-respect, or self-esteem and for the esteem of others. These needs can be classified into two categories. First the desire for strength, achievement, adequacy, for mastery and competence, for confidence in the face of the world and for independence and freedom. Secondly, we have the desire for reputation or prestige (defining it as respect or esteem from or of other people), these will include recognition attention and appreciation. Satisfaction of self-esteem leads to feelings of self-confidence, self-worth, strength, capability and adequacy, of being useful and necessary in the world. Lack of these needs produces feelings of inferiority, of weakness and helplessness (Maslow, 1970: 45).

- The need for self-actualization and aesthetic needs - with the above-mentioned needs satisfied, the need: " to be what a man can be, he must be" may develop. These might differ from person to person and depends on prior satisfaction of the physiological, safety, love and esteem needs while aesthetic needs may include the need for beautify, symmetry and structure.

Kohlberg's Cognitive-Developmental Approach to Adolescent Morality is based on three levels, each subdivided into two stages. The third level, the post conventional or autonomous level is subdivided into stage five (*social contract orientation)* and stage six: (*universal ethical principle orientation).*

During stage five, moral development is defined in terms of general rights such as individual rights, human dignity, equality, contractual agreement and mutual obligations. Moral behaviour is motivated by a concern for the welfare of the larger community and a desire for community respect. During stage six, moral development is viewed as a decision of conscience that is based on self-chosen ethical principles that place the highest value on human life, equality and dignity. These abstract ethical principles are characterized by consistency, logical comprehensiveness and universality (Muus, 1975: 215).

One may therefore argue that to work and provide, is a basic need which without one could possibly never acquire the discovery of self-respect, a positive self-esteem and a sense of responsibility. This leaves the need for self-actualisation, the desire to know and understand and aesthetic needs unfulfilled. Moral behaviour may be influenced by a lack of respect from the community, being denied one's place in society and the inability to maintain one's dignity.

Economic changes could influence the prolongation of adolescence where, due to the pressure of labour unions, older people are employed longer therefore creating fewer opportunities for adolescents to be absorbed into the economy. Automation in certain industries allow older people to remain employed for longer but they will not be replaced by younger workers thus limiting employment possibilities for adolescents. Schools and colleges play an important role in keeping adolescents longer resulting in prolonged compulsory education due to unemployment (Powell, 1971: 8).

1.8 ADOLESCENTS AND CAREER EXPECTATIONS

Job expectation and vocational choices manifests as self-examination, role try-outs and occupational exploration progresses. These activities take place in school, through leisure activities and part time work (Powell, 1971: 451).

 During adolescence, sub-stages of exploration are identified as:

- The tentative stage (15-17 years) where needs, interests, capacities, values and opportunities influence tentative choices which are tried out in fantasy, discussions, courses and work experiences.
- Transition (18-21 years) when reality consideration is given more weight as a youth enters the labour market or professional training and attempts to implement a self-concept.
- During the trial period (22-24 years) a seemingly appropriate field has been located, a beginning job is found and tried out as a life work.

Haviland (1981: 75) states that thoughts about a career changes considerably during adolescence. Younger children fantasise about a job as a part of being an adult. Children want to "turn into" a firefighter, doctor or even a princess while during adolescence career concepts become more realistic. Decisions made by 13 and 14 year olds will take into account own skills and talents. Finally the individual's values become a criterion. At the end of their career, school leavers should be able to make realistic compromises, balancing interest, abilities and values against job opportunities.

There is a strong relationship between self-concept and career choice. The adolescent develops career aspirations and it is found that boys tend to have better career aspirations while girls, despite women's movements, might still see themselves as future wives and mothers. A realistic self-concept of this sort would include the recognition that the role of wife and mother are a substantial career commitment as has been stated as far back as the fifties (Super, 1957).

Differences in social class might influence adolescents to have different job expectations. Adolescents from the upper class generally aspire to management and professional careers like their parents while youngsters from the lower class will, due to lack of information, financial problems and low self-esteem, often not aspire to a college or university education.

According to Powell a large percentage of adolescents use the following requirements as criteria to select an ideal job: meaningful (70%), friendly (70%), an opportunity to use

one's mind (65%), visible results (65%), good pay (61%) and the chance to develop skills (61%). These statistics support the notion that career choices are linked to self-concept.

To the younger high school learner (who might be a potential school leaver) making a career choice is a fearsome, complex and bewildering thought. Interest and work motivation are in a beginning stage, knowledge of the economic external world is limited and choices are normally transitory. More mature adolescents are able to specify career objectives and are generally surer about future careers.

The reality of their choices depends on three considerations:
- Firstly, the degree of relation between the adolescent's personal characteristics and the requirements and demands of the preferred career.
- Secondly, the current and projected employment "supply and demand" status.
- Thirdly, the adequacy of the educational plan by which he intends to implement his career choice.

As stated by Adams (1973: 447) a variety of factors may influence the reality of career choices.
- Inadequate information especially in rural areas to the youth who might reflect a comparatively low level of aspirations.
- Occupational "supply and demand" where high status jobs attract more.
- Parental and social pressures and inappropriate training plans when subjects choices are not suitable for careers chosen or irrelevant to job needs or availability.

Unfortunately society and schools often obligate adolescents to narrow down occupational choices prematurely and to commit themselves to specific career choices before they are mature enough to do so. Due to factors including globalization, socio economic and political status many young people become disillusioned about career options and job opportunities when they are denied the opportunity to work in meaningful and well paying jobs.

1.9 EMPLOYMENT

Statistics (Statistics South Africa, October, 2005) defines that employment covers all people, both employees and the self-employed, engaged in some productive activity that falls within the productive boundary.

Jordaan and Jordaan (2000: 693) argue that for most people to work is to perform a task in exchange for remuneration. Therefore one could be employed and get paid or be self-employed where you determine the pay. In a developing society like South Africa, formal employment could be limited and people often have to involve themselves in diverse informal activities to earn a living.

Historic Overview

Through out the ages as the human intellect and capacity of consciousness have changed, working activities changed accordingly. Four successive phases, stretching over centuries, necessitated environmental conditions and social demands (Super, 1957).

During the "Hunting and gathering" phase tribal groups all worked together. Children learnt from parents and worked and functioned according to survival tasks. Later work became more specialized and humans used animals and manufactured tools to assist and survive. The "Agricultural" phase evolved focusing on agricultural development, technology created surplus resources to feed communities. Labour became organized to supply the demand. Master–slave working classes were established. Birth and environment determined the individual's contribution to work.

Phase three, the "Industrial development" stage, known as the industrial revolution caused fundamental social changes. A blue-collar labour force performed production orientated tasks, children were employed to work, and people were regarded as "well oiled machines".

The "Information processing" stage became information intensive instead of labour intensive. The employee's usefulness now lies in value-added knowledge and skills. Labour Law No. 138 and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (section 43) prohibit employers in South Africa to employ children under the age of 15 years (SADC, 2003 ILO Article 7).

1.9.1 CHOOSING A JOB

The South African Labour Act of 1994 was modified to establish a culture of co-determination. It acknowledges the employee's right to freedom of association and to form, join and participate in any trade union of their choice.

 For the adolescent or youth the choosing and preparing for a career, according to Super's stages, starts at the age of 14 years, where the ideas of work begins to be part of a person's self-concept (Gerdes, 1988: 300). Between the ages of 18-20 vocational choices narrows and preparatory steps are taken towards an envisaged job. By 24 years of age, training and education should be completed and the young adult should embark on a future career.

Occupational choice depends on developing a realistic choice of one's abilities, values and personal characteristics. A realistic image of different careers and a clear knowledge of qualifications are needed before entering a career. The youth should be guided and different options should be considered.

According to Erikson's theory on identity crisis, a satisfactory career choice will result in the positive resolution of this crisis, where an unsatisfactory choice may aggravate a sense of confusion. Flexible goals will allow adolescents to identify possible changes in him self, his circumstances and manpower needs.

Adolescents could be influenced by the following factors when choosing a job or embarking on a career:

- Personal attributes, where the individual's cognitive, physical development, interests and values that make him or her suitable for a particular job should be considered.

- How an individual identifies with his or her choice of occupation depends on self-esteem and identity formation. The modern female's choice of career has evolved beyond that of the traditional role of wife and mother. An adolescent's birth and environment no longer prohibits his or her career.

- Academic performance for job and career opportunities might be limited to the lack of scholastic and academic performance. The adolescent's school record determines admission to certain university and college courses in order to qualify for selected professional jobs.

According to Powell (1971: 446) the ethnic and/or racial background of an individual may be a major factor in the choice of a career. Parents from different socio-economic levels usually have expectations for the career they wish their children to follow. Parents at a high socio-economic level expect their children to achieve at least at the same level. Should they have a child who has only average abilities and therefore incapable to achieve high occupational goals, parents may fail their children to make more realistic occupational choices. Above average children from lower socio-economic levels might experience that their parents see very little value for higher education and encourage youngsters to leave school early. To others, financial difficulties may limit a child's potential to achieve a professional level.

Since the establishment of a majority government in South Africa in 1994, concepts like equity, affirmative action, multiculturalism, diverse management and Black Empowerment Employment has come to feature prominently in the work place (Jordaan and Jordaan, 2000: 706). This could influence school leavers when choosing a future career in South Africa.

1.9.2 ROLE OF SCHOOL, PARENTS, ENVIRONMENT, MEDIA AND THE COMMUNITY

National policy determines the type of schooling future adults, citizens and rulers of our country, will receive. The national department of education, with a direct budget of 16 billion rand for 2007/8 and an anticipated one million learners leaving schools this year, determines that schools should be major stakeholders in preparing the youth for a future career and job opportunities (Pandor, 2007: 6).

Schools differ in numerous ways.   Each school exists in a particular physical setting and employs a staff of teachers.   The quality and effectiveness may be greatly affected by the differences in these characteristics.   To prepare the future school leaver the size of the school, the values and attitude of teachers, the curriculum and administration play an important role (Haviland, 1981: 81).

 Schools should be able to provide school leavers with suitable vocational-guidance counsellors to facilitate occupational choices by measuring aptitudes, interests and personal characteristics to fit the requirements for various occupations. Assistance in making occupational choices may also be facilitated by arranging programmes to do part time jobs and to gain insight in to what different jobs entail (Gerdes, 1988: 303). Skills and attitudes development should start at school so that school leavers can function effectively in the world of adults. The school curriculum should provide opportunities to acquire new skills.

The Revised National Curriculum Statement Policy of 2002 of the Department of Education makes provision for career guidance from Grade 1 to 9 in the Learning Area *Life Orientation* as well as career guidance as a subject from Grade 10 to 12. The policy was to be implemented in 2006 (Du Toit, 2003:16).

Against this background Mwamwenda (1996: 471) advocates Holland's theory of personality styles and occupational environments where a match should be made between the work chosen and personality. Mwamwenda also states that guidance is extremely

important for African learners as an integral component of quality education because guidance and counselling is not included in the school curriculum of some schools. Learners are being denied an opportunity of becoming better future citizens.

Haviland (1981: 84) states that alternative educational opportunities should be offered to adolescents whose needs are not met by high schools.

Technological changes leave little room for the unskilled labourer and it is increasingly necessary to help adolescents to identify the way in which they can function most effectively within the limits of their abilities, aptitudes and interests. School leavers should not be orientated into a field of study that might not be available ten years hence. Realistic subject choices should be offered (Powell, 1971: 430).

The peer group in the school characterise similarity among the majority of the learners in the school, conveying the dominant values of that school and total peer group. If the majority group in the adolescent's school is of the same socio-economic status as his or her own, the tendency will be to adhere to the norms and expectations of the dominant group.   If the dominant group is different from the adolescent's group, there will be a tendency, particularly if supported by parents, to move towards the norms of the dominant group (Manaster, 1977:22).

According to Gerdes (1988: 190) various factors influence family support. In the nuclear family where the family consists of parents and children, children are mostly born for reasons to satisfy the psychological and social needs of the parents and not economic reasons. Children are seen as non-contributors to the family and they are an expense until they are financially independent. Parents try and provide the financial means through loans and policies to support their children in their future careers, sometimes to a great extent.

In extended families, families consist of three generations: grandparents, parents, children as well as uncles, aunts and their siblings where close ties are maintained. In some large families children would be considered an economic asset seen as a provider in later years.

Some families are forced to become part of an extended family due to socio-economic circumstances, housing shortage and the inadequate facilities to care for children.

According to Gerdes (1988: 303) a study conducted in 1979 revealed male subjects from three cultural groups, namely Indian, Afrikaans and English differed regarding personal problems. Indian students were less willing to consult parents, which could include career choices while students from Afrikaans and English families saw parents as prime sources of support.

In the choice of occupation, parents' direct influence (direct in the sense of open) may have a decided effect on the adolescent's career choice. Positive or negative identifications, acceptance of identifications relationship, or rejection of the role model may equally influence career decisions and patterns (Manaster, 1977: 244).

African students have the support of more extended families. In the aftermath of apartheid, black school leavers now enjoy a more balanced outlook on career opportunities but are often still hampered by socio-economic factors including unemployment, poverty, HIV and cultural differences. If parents remain supportive and motivated this will be a stronger indication than the adolescent's socio-economic status.

We live in a technologically advanced society due to the rapidly changing media sources School leavers are now supported through various web-sites on the internet to guide them into future careers. School leavers are advised on possible career and career opportunities (www.google,youthmedia.coza). Newspapers supply information on a daily basis on job opportunities, educational institutions and loans available.

1.9.3   CULTURAL AND POLITICAL INFLUENCE

Families seldom exist is isolation. The customs of each family regarding child raising and other interactions have diverse roots in the wider community.

Jordaan and Jordaan (2000: 554) draw attention to unwritten but cogent "cultural rules". Individuals, groups and communities develop shared meanings and expectations of each other in the order of prejudices and stereotypes. While Adams (1973: 456) states that we live in an ambivalent culture, permissively seeking to promote self-actualisation and the "good life" for everyone (if middle class values are accepted and followed) but on the other hand, our culture is preoccupied with economic and technological problems which requires manpower. These problems need to be addressed regardless whether they are the individual's desires to be part of such efforts or not. Here the establishment is in control. The individual is at its best secondary. Many adolescents hate the establishment, most adults tolerate it and hardly anybody likes it.

According to Mwamwenda, (1996: 427) the African child rearing practices have undergone some changes due to a number of factors including Christianity, schooling, westernisation and urbanization. There is often a conflict between african culture and western culture, where the object of education was to westernise Africans and alienate them from their own cultures and values. Employment brought about families being separated when men had to go to distant places to work and women had to play a double role as both mother and father. Urbanisation added to changing cultural values due to lack of facilities, materials or embarrassment, because other ethnic groups did not share the same practices. Despite this, many families still interact with their families, relatives and neighbours in African ways.

In rural areas it is still found that families live in entrenchment of shared ideas and a unified self-concept where everyone abides by the conventions of the mother culture while in urban areas there is a multicultural awareness influenced by education and training, books, newspapers, radio, television and cell phones. Urban areas, rich in diversity, evaluate themselves in terms of competition and individual success.

Global culture via communication networks such as CNN, BCC World News, Sky News and Internet are more accessible to adolescents. Music and television stars, sportsmen and comic strip heroes have become an international culture and role models are no longer confined to those in our immediate environment (Jordaan and Jordaan, 2000: 636).

Politically the prospects of choosing a career and finding a job have been influenced by The Employment Equity Act (EEA), which was established in 1998. This act can be regarded as an active labour market intervention to remove discriminatory barriers to recruitment and employment that existed in the past. The EEA aims to promote equal opportunity and fair treatment in recruitment and employment through the elimination of unfair discrimination. It activates this through implementing affirmative action measures to redress the disadvantages in employment experienced by designated groups. Employers have to implement affirmative action measures for designated groups in order to achieve employment equality (Du Toit, 2003: 19).

Jordaan and Jordaan (2000: 708) state that historical inequality and injustices evolved over decades and are clearly a complex issue when used to redress entrenched equalities. If not implemented judiciously, it can lead to new injustices and inequalities. Research in

the USA, Malaysia and Sri Lanka identified six worrying trends when implementing affirmative action. They are among others, conflict between the democratic rights of individuals and the privileges according to the target group. It could favour a small target group causing only a fraction of the masses to gain from it.

Seepe (2007: 1) reports that an estimated one million whites, many with much needed skills, have emigrated, aggravating the country's skills crisis and unemployment problem. To some affirmative action is nothing more than a ploy to offer jobs and contracts to the politically connected few. Harron Bhorat, director of the development policy research unit at the University of Cape Town, states: "African graduate unemployment rates are higher that those of white and have also increased faster than any other race groups." Seepe (2007: 2) further states that the lower class, illiterate and rural poor in far-flung areas, will not benefit from affirmative action.

1.10 UNEMPLOYMENT

Unemployed people are those people within the economically active population who:
- did not work during the seven days prior to the interview,
- want to work and are able to start work within two weeks of the interview

- have taken steps to look for work or to start some form of self-employment in the four weeks prior to the interview (Statistics. SA, 2005: 36).

The official unemployment rate in South Africa, September 2004, was estimated to be 26.2% compared to the 41.0% for the expanded definition of unemployment (Stats SA. 2005: 21), while the South African Youth Labour market (2000-2002) estimated that from the 1 1011 000 school leavers who enter the labour market for the first time each year, 51% will be unemployed (HSRC Youth Policy, 2007:10).

1.11   GLOBAL YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Young men and women are the world's greatest asset for the present and future, but they also represent a group with serious vulnerabilities. Increased unemployment has hit young people the hardest and they are faced with high levels of economic and social uncertainty.   All too often, the youth's full potential are not realized because they do not have access to productive and protected jobs.   Globally, compared to adults, the youth are more likely than three times as likely to be unemployed (EMP/TRENDS, 2004).

In 2000 the International Labour Organisation estimated that about half of the world's population was less than 25 years of age of which 66 million were unemployed that is about 41% of the total. Across Latin America, youth unemployment ranged from 36% to 66% (Melody, 2002:1).

Fares and Tiongson (Youth Unemployment, 2007) estimated that youths worldwide constitute a quarter of the working-age population, of which 47% are unemployed. According to the International Labour Organization, the global unemployment rate for youth has increased steadily over the last ten years from 11.7% in 1993 to 14.4% in 2003, from a low 7% in East Asia and 13.4% in industrial economies to a high 25% in the Middle East and North Africa.

The United Nations released a report in February 2007 stating that from 1995 to 2005 youth unemployment, increased globally from 12.1 % to 13.7 %. The study showed that

almost half of the world's unemployed are aged 15 to 24, yet they make up a mere 25% of the working-age population (Media Global, Feb. 7, 2007). It is increasingly difficult

for the youth to "get a foothold" in the labour market which are unable to accommodate the number of skilled graduates entering the labour market.

1.12   POSSIBLE IMPACT OF LACK OF JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR SCHOOL LEAVERS ON FAMILIES AND THE COMMUNITY

In a country where 50% of the nation lives in poverty, the lack of job opportunities for school leavers imply a loss of additional income to the family. The parent remains responsible for supporting the school leaver. This could lead to a breakdown of inter-family relationships. In addition, a loss of income is a stressor that may disrupt family functioning (Galambos, N. 1987: 14).

Young African women in remote parts of the country are jobless for longer periods than those in urban areas, making them more vulnerable to teenage pregnancies. (http:/www.irinnews.org/Report,aspx?ReportId=70538).

In rural areas many young school leavers will leave home to find employment in urban areas thus causing a possible breakdown in cultural and family values. Many resort to a lifestyle of crime and prostitution. Where young school leavers migrate abroad to find alternative employment, many are exposed to influences they are not equipped for, leading to moral and social decay.

Unemployed school leavers " see violence as the only viable alternative" (Mediaglobal, 2007). The latest Crime statistics implicate the high number of unemployed youth to be involved in violence and crime (Zigomo, 2007).

Potgieter (2007: 6) quotes Freeman, (2005) when he states: "young people without a stake in the system are more likely to become alienated and to engage in anti-social

behaviour". All these factors together with alienation from democratic political processes may give rise to social unrest.

1.12.2   PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS ON THE SCHOOL LEAVER

The psychological effects of unemployment are far-reaching and diverse. Jordaan and Jordaan (2000: 715) argue that the more intense the need for a job, the bigger the job seekers' loss of identity. In a community and in societal context, one's place, status and value are often measured by one's job. If one does not have a job, for whatever reason, one experiences it as a questioning of your personhood and competence. A loss of identity brings about feelings of inadequacy, self-mortification, social and emotional isolation and general existential anxiety and worry. The psychological effects of not finding employment or having job opportunities are given much cause for, which in return result in feelings of apathy, depression, drug taking, teenage pregnancies, violence and meaninglessness (Gerdes. 1988: 307).

Adolescents may also loose faith in the educational system for not being able to find a job or start a career after they have matriculated. As stated by Joy Papier (Harold Wolpe, 2006: 4) " young people leave education without the knowledge, skills and higher attributes necessary to function in the workplace or education. Furthermore, vocational programmes were criticized as being fragmented and confusing…not being perceived as worthwhile in their own right, and parents and learners being unenthusiastic about the status and quality of the learning on offer."

According to Du Toit (2003: 12) statistics of the unemployed represents an individual with his or her personal chronicle, and that this usually reflects hardship and feelings of failure and exclusion.

1.13   CONCLUSION

It leaves no doubt that the lack of job opportunities has a major impact on the individual, family and society of which the magnitude has yet to be fully realized. Despite the

increasing number of school leavers, there has been no noticeable increase in job opportunities to eradicate the growing threat of unemployment and poverty.

Although there has been a clear indication of economic growth since 1994 it did not necessarily provide school leavers with more opportunities to be included.   The current school system does not produce enough skilled school leavers to be absorbed in the labour market. Entrepreneurship needs to receive more attention and development and school leavers should be prepared and encouraged to generate work.

Political decisions like affirmative action and the equity bill have not increased opportunities for learners in the rural areas, causing an increase of school leavers to migrate to urban areas and abroad. This in return may contribute to the disintegration of family and cultural values, denying a society of potential leaders, worthwhile citizens and potential workforce.

Policies to eradicate the situation and increase job opportunities have been formulated but have yet to be successfully implemented to benefit school leavers. In the meantime school leavers are becoming more and more involved in crime, prostitution and unplanned pregnancies.

School leavers yet have to benefit from globalisation where fewer can be accommodated in a worldwide economy and are left with disillusion, apathetic, low self-esteem, no identity and no future. They are indeed a lost generation.

Findings, based on the results of the empirical research and recommendations to address the stated problem, will be discussed in the second article.

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ARTICLE 2

THE EFFECT OF INSUFFICIENT JOB OPPORTUNITIES ON SCHOOL LEAVERS IN THE EASTERN FREE STATE – AN EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

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THE EFFECT OF INSUFFICIENT JOB OPPORTUNITIES ON SCHOOL LEAVERS IN THE EASTERN FREE STATE - AN EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

2.1   INTRODUCTION

According to Pandor (Department of Education, Dec. 28, 2006: 3) there was a decline in pass rates in 5 provinces: Free State, KwaZulu Natal, Limpopo, Northern Cape and Western Cape. The number of those who obtained exemptions was lower in 2006: 85 830 compared to 86 531 in 2005. Fewer learners will be accepted into universities, more learners will stay at home simply because they cannot afford the high fees charged by universities and the perennial problem of thousands of failed matric learners, unable to do anything meaningful with their lives, will continue (Sowetan, 2006: 14).

Quail (2006: 2) spokesman on Education in Gauteng said: "A lot of candidates, schools and teachers work very hard to achieve good results, but when the matrics go to university 50% of them drop out within a year or two. The question we have to ask ourselves is whether education standards have dropped?"

According to Van Lill (Free State Youth Commission: 2994: 3) a baseline study done involving young people in the Free State, indicated that only 17.8% of all the youth who were eligible for employment was employed. The situation was worse amongst the black youth: only 16.3%. A total of 24.65% of the respondents said that they would like to improve their skills if they could not find a job in the near future.   The study further reflected that 9.8% of the youth in the Free State lived in households earning no income at all.

Respondents also indicated that 15.7% of black youth have been involved in criminal activities, with the trend almost similar amongst the coloured youth, 11.1%. However none of white youth claimed to have been involved in criminal activities.   The majority of the respondents believed that lack of jobs (59.4%) is the major reason why criminal activities occurred. There were also 29.85% of young people who believed that crime was committed as a result of the lack of morals.

The lack of skills (2.5%) and limited access to finances (8.8%) was also regarded as reasons why youths were involved in crime.

More (2004:13) states that of the total workforce in the Free State 44% are aged between 15 and 65 and therefore employable, when compared to the national average of 38%. The level of unemployment averaged 39%, which is slightly less than the national average of 41%, while unemployment among people with disabilities amounted to 50%. The male unemployment rate equaled 29.4%, while the female unemployment rate equaled 56.6%. District economies showed the following unemployment rates: Motheo 31%, Lejweleputsa 27% and Thabo Mofutsanyana 37%.

The researcher, as a remedial teacher, guidance counsellor and principal at a school in the Ladybrand area has close contact with learners of all ages, parents, teachers and principals in the community. It appears that education, employment, future careers and opportunities for school leavers in the eastern part of the Free State, is a serious concern for all. This problem may have far reaching and long lasting effects on the rural society of the Eastern Free State and South Africa if the problem is not addressed.

2.2   PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Despite a growing economy very few school leavers are in fact absorbed into the workplace. There are many school leavers job hunting, applying for jobs and then being informed that they are not skilled or qualified enough or do not have the necessary experience. During the months May, June and July 2005 thousands of mine workers were retrenched while scores of unemployed people are daily protesting for better wages and Trade Unions demand more job opportunities. A survey conducted by the HSRC in 2006 reveals that two thirds of those wanting to work simply would not find a job. HSRC spoke person, Cosser, argued that for the thousands of matriculants throughout the country, job hunting would not be easy (Sowetan, 2006: 6). Criminal activities, for example: house breaking, robberies, drug trafficking and other criminal activities are at risk to increase, while many South Africans leave the country in droves to find employment abroad (Steenkamp, 2006, Edigheji, Feb. 2007: 4).

Against this background the problem statement is formulated in term of the following questions:

- What is the influence of the lack of job opportunities on the social and emotional development of adolescents as future adults and citizens? What is the magnitude and impact on society?
- What can be done to enable learners to cope with the given situations and to prevent them from becoming negative and unmotivated in their expectations, future plans and prospects in South Africa?

2.3 PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

The main aim of the research is to determine the effect and influence of insufficient job opportunities on school leavers (Grade 9 – Grade 12, ranging between 15-19 years) in the Eastern Free State who attend private or public schools and certain individuals receiving home schooling.

Further objectives were to establish plans and strategies for school leavers to cope with these unfortunate and demanding situations due to insufficient job opportunities. Further objectives were to have measures in place to prevent adolescents from becoming negative and discouraged. Lastly the investigator attempted to formulate recommendations, strategies and guidelines in assisting the department of education and educators in preparing school leavers for the demands that will be made on them after school. In addition, the researcher also aims at assisting learners in alternative choices and vocational options and possibly providing educational experts with an insight in to the expectations of learners in the Eastern Free State and the long-term impact this might have on the social development of the next generation.

2.4   RESEARCH DESIGN

An empirical research was done during the third term of 2006 and comprised of a quantitative questionnaire to school leavers and qualitative interviews with teachers and principals. The research was conducted in the Eastern Free State because of its rural location and because very little is known about the perceptions and expectations of rural school leavers in comparison to urban areas.

The self-structured quantitative questionnaire was compiled to target Grade 9 learners, who after passing the senior phase can leave school and Grade 12 learners who wrote the national matric examinations in October 2006. The average age of the learners ranged between 15 and 19 years. Learners provided valuable input regarding parents' education, occupation and employment status as well as views regarding job opportunities, career and future expectations and other comments on employment. Collected data was processed by the computer center of the Free State University. The analysis and interpretation will be discussed and the findings will be reported in this article.

Qualitative research, through structured questions regarding problems experienced by school leavers was done by interviewing principals, teachers and educational experts at schools to assist in recommendations that will be made in the conclusion.

2.4.1   TARGET GROUP FOR RESEARCH

To support the quantitative research ten schools (from as possible twenty schools) situated in the Eastern Free State were randomly selected from Tweespruit, Ladybrand, Manyatseng, Clocolan, Ficksburg, Bethlehem as well as learners from various home school systems in the Eastern Free State. The research area included five high schools, two special schools providing schooling to learners with special needs (thus leaving school at the end of Grade 9) as well as learners from three independent schools, which include the Accelerated Christian Education (ACE) independent system, Cambridge and ACE - home schooling system.

Principals and teachers of selected schools were contacted telephonically and permission was requested to conduct the research.

A letter granting the researcher permission for research, together with a letter to the principal and questionnaires to learners were sent by post or delivered by hand.

An accompanied letter attached to the questionnaire, informed participants concerning the purpose of the research, the date of collection and assurance of anonymity. A total of 324 questionnaires were dispatched of which 214 were returned, indicating a 66.04% response rate.

2.4.2   MEASURING INSTRUMENT AND EXECUTION OF RESEARCH

Qualitative research was conducted by arranging meetings with principals, teachers and educational experts including Life Orientation or guidance teachers.   The list of interview questions was provided beforehand via fax or by hand. All interviews (except one who responded by fax) were recorded for research purposes to be transcribed later. All interviewees received assurance that views and recommendations made will be treated in an unbiased way and with confidentiality. Ten interviewees were selected and nine participated in the research indicating a 90% response rate. The respondents reflected the diversity of our society and interviews were conducted out of school time.

2.4.3   COMPILING OF QUESTIONNAIRES

A self-compiled questionnaire was designed divided into three sections, totaling 23 questions of which 17 were closed questions providing the participant to select a response from options given.   The remaining 6 questions were open questions allowing participants to give their own perceptions, views or comments.

The three sections comprised of:
- Biographic information regarding the learner: grade, schooling system and location of school as well as gender, age and racial group.

- Parent information regarding employment, occupation, education and position in family.
- Future plans on completion of schooling and choice of study.
- Career expectations and rationale including personal expectations concerning job opportunities in South Africa.
- Information concerning guidance given related to jobs and feelings regarding their future and job opportunities.
- Opportunity to provide personal comments regarding employment in South Africa.

Clear instructions were given concerning the process of completion; assurance was given that all respondents will remain anonymous and that information will be treated with confidentiality. Questionnaires were available in English and Afrikaans. The respondents were informed that results of the survey would be available on request.

After the questionnaire was compiled, samples were submitted to the promoter of this dissertation, two guidance teachers, individual learners, as well as three schools where a sample of learners and teachers participated in giving feedback on quality and validity of the questions as well as the comprehensibility of the contents. The necessary minor changes were made as suggested by the participants.

2.5   REGISTRATION OF RESEARCH PROJECT

Registration for the research project was done at the Department of Education who granted permission under the following conditions:

- educators and learners participated voluntarily in the project
- the names of all schools, educators and learners involved remain confidential
- questionnaires are completed and the interviews are conducted outside normal tuition time;
- and the letter of registration be shown to all participating persons.

The researcher had to confirm acceptance and was made aware the possible invitation to present findings to the relevant persons in the Free State Department of Education.

2.6   INTERVIEWS

The researcher conducted interviews with principals, teachers and educational experts to contribute additional information regarding their experiences with school leavers as well as problems experienced by these learners. This was also done to add value and quality to recommendations made by the researcher. Principals were contacted and the purpose of the interview explained. The lists of questions were presented to the participants before hand and appointments were arranged for after school hours should they wish to participate.

During the interview the questions were repeated and the replies were recorded. Recordings were transcribed afterwards to assist in formulating and motivating recommendations.   Transcriptions were kept to proof reliability of information obtained from interviews conducted.

Twelve participants were approached and nine interviews were conducted which represents a 75% response rate.

2.6   LIMITATIONS IN RESEARCH

Notable limitations in quantitative research were:
- learners did not always know their parents' level of education
- open questions were not always answered coherently and legibly.

The only notable limitation in the qualitative research was that principals were not willing to commit themselves to interviewing, suggesting a senior teacher instead.

2.8 DATA FROM QUESTIONNAIRES

The questionnaires were collected from the various schools. Questionnaires were then numbered and marked (in red pen) according to instructions received from the computer center of the Free State University.   All given reasons and opinions were noted and numbered for processing.

After processing, the data was analyzed under the following headings:

- biographic information:

  - learners

  - parents

  - family members

- difficulties in finding a job

- future plans

- career expectations.

2.8.1 BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF LEARNERS

The respondents consisted of 50% male and 50% female learners of which 1.4% were 16 years old, 23.1% 17 years, 44.4% 18 years and 31% 19 years and older.   Asians represented 1.9%, black learners 63.8%, coloured 1.9% and white learners 33%. Secondary schools accounted for 70% of the respondents, specials schools for 20,8%, private schools 2.8% and home schooling/correspondence 0.9%.   Information indicated that 78.2% of the potential school leavers were in Grade 12, 20% in Grade10 and 0.9% in Grade 11 with 65.4% of participants from the rural area of the Eastern Free State, 28.8% from Bethlehem and 5.8% were home based.   Of the 214 received questionnaires 153 (71.5%) were completed in English and 61 (28.5%) in Afrikaans.

2.8.2 BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON PARENTS

Information regarding parental employment indicated that 41% of the parents were both employed, 18% only the father, 22.4% only the mother and 18.1% both parents were unemployed.

The government provided employment to 38.4% of fathers and 31.3% mothers; the private sector provided employment to 39.5% of the mothers and 34.2% of the fathers while 27.4% of the respondents' fathers were self employed and 29.3% of their mothers.

2.8.3   FAMILY MEMBERS' DIFFICULTIES IN JOB FINDING

School leavers indicated that 22.4% of their fathers and 12.1% brothers had experienced difficulties to find a job, while 45% of their mothers and 19.8% of their sisters had difficulties to find a job. This proves similarities to national statistics where the female unemployment rate at 30.2% is higher in comparison to the male unemployment rate of 23.1% and provincial level, indicating figures 33.6% (females) and 24.7% (males) (Statistics South Africa, Oct.2005: 24).

2.8.4 FUTURE PLANS

On completing their current schooling 65% of school leavers indicated that they planned to further their studies, 22.9% would try and find employment in South Africa while 12.1% wanted to find work overseas for the following reasons:
- better work opportunities
- they can earn more money
- taking a GAP year (taking a year off between studying or starting a job)
- less problems e.g. crime
- exposure to different cultures
- they see no future in South Africa.

Of those school leavers wanting to further their studies 33.2% intended to study full time at a college or technikon, 34.2% intended to study full time at university, 18.1% wanted to find work while part time studying and 14.6% chose in-job training.

On completion of their studies 55.5% intended to join their family business, 33.7% contemplated finding employment with the South African Government, 23.6% wanted to become self employed and 15.6% wanted to move abroad because they visualised:
- More job opportunities.
- Earning more money.
- Not being able to find a job due to affirmative action.
- Having a fixed income.

- Gaining experience to contribute towards South Africa.
- For better job opportunities because they were tired of competing and loosing out to those whose work is inferior.
- Achieving aspirations.
- A better future overseas as there was no future in South Africa for white citizens.

Of those respondents who did not intend to continue their studies, 50% felt that they could not further their studies because their current schooling did not allow them to do so, 25% indicated financial obstacles and 25% indicated that they did not qualify for financial assistance due to the following reasons:

- subject choices,
- poor academic performance,
- home circumstances.

2.8.5 CAREER EXPECTATIONS

Learners' responses to the question whether they could find a job just out of school were as follow: 64.3% were unsure, while 17.9% felt positive about the prospects of finding a job and the same number (17.9%) felt very positive on finding a job.

Personal opinions on job expectations in general in South African indicated the following: 15.2% felt very positive, 28.4% positive, 27% were unsure, while 29.4% did not feel positive.

On possible reasons why they felt that job opportunities were not good, 49.4% of school leavers in the Eastern Free State perceived that not enough work was available in this area, 20.9% believed that more jobs were available in the cities, 14.6% indicated that limited jobs were available to school leavers, 5.1% identified the Equity Bill as a reason, 3.2% felt that schooling did not prepare them adequately and 7% stated the following reasons:

- being white limited job opportunities,
- businesses failed easier in the Eastern Free State,

- job opportunities are not monitored.
- no job opportunities for school leavers.

Regarding support to possible jobs and career opportunities, 42.1% indicated that their parents assisted them, 21.4% were assisted by teachers, 19.5% consulted their friends, 6.9% used the internet, 5.2% made use of the services of a guidance counselor and 4.9% had no assistance.

2.8.6   RESPONDENTS' JOB OPPORTUNITIES AND FUTURE

In response to their feelings regarding their future school leavers indicated that 37.5% were excited, 18.8% experienced fear, 13.2% experienced stress, 12.9% were uncertain regarding prospects after school, 11.7% were optimistic, 4.1% suffered feelings of depression while 1.8% indicated the following feelings:
- Suicidal tendencies.
- Aggression.
- A need of change in environment.

Respondents indicated the following regarding job opportunities for school leavers in South Africa:
- more technical jobs should be made available,
- the government should create more job opportunities,
- equal opportunities for all,
- a good qualification should provide one with a good job,
- nepotism should be eradicated - opportunities should be available to all,
- better advertising of possible jobs and future careers because some sectors are flooded and economic needs should be identified,
- studying should be more affordable,
- white children deserve a fair chance,
- minimum wages for unskilled jobs should decrease so that everybody can work,
- salaries in South Africa should be equal to the rest of the world,
- the lack of job opportunities discourages black children, because they do not believe in themselves therefore they do not further their studies.

2.9 INTERVIEWS WITH PRINCIPALS AND EDUCATORS

Interviews were conducted with experienced principals and senior educators. They assisted in giving information and sharing their knowledge and insight by answering set questions, which were subsequently analyzed by the researcher. Questions focused on the following:

- Whether school leavers experienced problems regarding job opportunities and future expectations.
- Type of problems experienced.
- The effects that lack of job opportunities have on school leavers.
- The causes resulting in learners experiencing problems regarding job opportunities
- Social and emotional problems.
- Possible assistance to cope with these problems.

Noted responses indicated that 88.8% believed that school leavers experienced more problems while 11.2% indicated that learners were more positive about their future but wanted to be recognized for their abilities, skills and knowledge and not because they were from a previous disadvantaged group.

Interviewees indicated the following as types of problems experienced by school leavers:

- Financial problems - the school leavers from impoverished backgrounds were not being assisted.
- Lack of job and career opportunities for school leavers.
- Unrealistic career expectations resulting in negative feelings towards the current matriculation system - they did not have any experience or the necessary technological skills needed to contribute to the economy.
- Affirmative action and not benefiting from the new democratic system.
- Nepotism where a selected few benefit because of who they know and not because of their skills.
- HIV positive learners who see no future
- Illegal immigrants taking their jobs.

According to the principals and teachers the lack of job opportunities affected school leavers socially and they displayed increased tendencies of:

- aggressive and violent behaviour and disregard for discipline;

- misuse of drugs and alcohol;

- increased criminal activities; and

- prostitution and teenage pregnancies.

Emotionally learners appeared to be unmotivated and demoralised, with an increasing number suffering from stress and depression, frustration and aggression. Learners from poor socio-economic backgrounds at times appeared apathetic to having any future at all.

Possible causes influencing school leavers' negative attitudes towards job opportunities could be contributed to:

- the media and society painting a negative picture on employment and job opportunities;

- affirmative action and the Equity Bill;

- the curriculum not providing opportunities to gain in-school training, work experience and developing entrepreneurial skills;

- society too "degree orientated" with too much emphasis on subjects in humanities and too little attention given to commercial subjects; and

- the number of school leavers leaving the country to look for employment abroad.

Causes to influence social and emotional problems among school leavers were contributed to the:

- lack of discipline in schools and society;

- lack of guidance on social skills and realistic career options;

- lack of parental involvement;

- lack of financial support; and

- lack of positive role models in the media and society.

Participants in the interviews suggested that school leavers could be assisted to cope with job opportunity related problems by:

- more extensive research being done into possible long term labour shortages,

- involving the community and private sector,

- appointing trained career guidance teachers in all the schools to assist in realistic career options,

- training counselors to assist with emotional, social and academic problems,

- implementing practical work experience while learners are still at school,

- providing better emotional and motivational support to learners who are HIV positive,

- implementing a structured curriculum, focusing more on technical subjects and basic social skills to ensure better job opportunities,

- giving financial support to learners.

2.10 FINDINGS

With reference to the formulated purpose of the research the following findings were obtained through the empirical research:

- School leavers felt excited about their future but unsure whether they would find a job immediately after school.   They indicated that not enough opportunities were available in the Eastern Free State and job opportunities in South Africa were not good.

- Most school leavers intended to further their studies full time at tertiary institutions. After completion they plan to find employment in the private sector. Those intending not to study felt that they were not equipped by their schooling to further their studies while others lacked financial support.

- The government must create more opportunities and provide financial support for school leavers. Economic needs should be identified and more technical training and technical career opportunities must be made available. These should be well advertised and promoted in rural schools.

- The private sector should become more involved in job creation for school leavers.

- School leavers felt that job opportunities should be made available to all. Affirmative action, nepotism and the Equity bill should be addressed because it affects all school leavers.

- In comparison with other possible sources, parents provided the most assistance regarding a future career or possible job.

- Lack of opportunities influence criminal, violent and promiscuous behaviour.

- HIV positive learners feel unmotivated and see no future.

- Respondents and interviewees felt that school leavers were not adequately skilled to cope with the economic and social demands after school.

2.11 RECOMMENDATIONS

After analyzing the above findings the following recommendations are made to assist school leavers in the Eastern Free State:

- The Government, in collaboration with youth commissions should adopt a policy of promoting realistic job and career development among all school leavers. Training artisans, technicians and assistants should receive first priority. Policies should be implemented as a matter of urgency and filtered through to school and educational institutions.

- The national media should take responsibility to provide positive input and responsible media reports, educational programmes raising awareness for economic needs in career shortages should be screened.

- The Department of Education in collaboration with economic analysts should reassess subject choices in high schools. Technical and commercial subjects should receive more exposure and attention.

- Schools could be used as information centers for learners who do not have access to inter-net. Learners should complete basic computer programmes and should have access to updated information on career possibilities.

- Programmes and short courses to be implemented in conjunction with Life Orientation and Economic Management Systems on social skills, for example, social etiquette, office management and developing work ethics.

- Trained guidance teachers and counselors to assist learners with job opportunities. Schools could share a team consisting of a guidance teacher, counselor and psychologist.

- HIV programmes should run in conjunction with short training courses so that learners could develop feelings of self-worth, self-confidence and positive future aspirations.

- Principals and teachers should identify learners who could qualify for financial assistance at the beginning of the GET Phase. These learners could be assisted and motivated towards completing schooling in preparation for after school training or future studies.

- The Department of Education can compile task teams to research regional labour needs and future economic prospects.

- The Department of Education could make use of existing infrastructure, for example available hostels to implement training programmes. Local experts and professionals can be involved to assist in developing programmes and training.

- Community centers to be developed in rural areas for training in the hospitality industry, home - management skills and child care, building construction and agriculture. Local restaurateurs, nurses, mechanics, building contractors and farmers could act as consultants and tutors.

- The private sector could be involved in short in-training programmes for school leavers to gain experience and to identify possible employees. Banks could run programmes on entrepreneurial skills, small loans and financial management.

- The Department of Education could introduce workshops for parents regarding support and guidance to school leavers.

- The curriculum should make provision for activities do develop entrepreneurial skills and training.

- Affirmative policies should be re-assessed because learners from different race groups feel that those who are benefiting are not the youth or the underprivileged:

- Above mentioned policies are excluding school leavers to realise their future economic potential, causing them to doubt their abilities and their future.

2.12 CONCLUSION

The theoretical research indicated that to work develops a sense of self-identity and self-actualisation while the lack thereof could result in an identity crisis, influencing moral development while feelings of the lack of respect, uncertainty of one's place in society and the inability to provide for oneself and one's loved ones.   This could be accompanied by feelings of inadequacy, inferiority and the lack of independence.

During mid-adolescence teenagers develop certain career expectations. If not guided, supported and adequately informed, this could result in unrealistic career choices where young school leavers are often left disillusioned and unmotivated resulting in a variety of emotional and social problems. These problems include aggression, anxiety, depression and suicidal thoughts. No place in society, fosters disrespect for society. Politics, economical growth, cultural background and the attitude of parents influence school leavers and their career choices which could prevent them from achieving their full potential.

Globally the lack of work and career opportunities for school leavers, are increasing. School leavers are excluded from the economy and are left with social uncertainty.   A

growing number of unskilled and skilled graduates world wide are not being accommodated in the labour market.   Rural school leavers globally, nationally and regionally are increasingly affected by the by the lack of opportunities.

During the last three years the number of school leavers in South Africa has increased, while the pass rate has dropped.   Many of those who have passed do not attend tertiary institutions due to poor academic performance, inadequate knowledge, lack of skills and limited financial support.   There has been an alarming increase in violence, crime and unwanted teenage pregnancies amongst school leavers unable to find   employment. The lack of job opportunities hampers self-actualisation and emotional maturity. This contributes to social problems that could have a lasting effect on the economy of the country.

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GENERAL ORIENTATION

1. INTRODUCTION

This dissertation complies with Regulation: G7.5.5.2 of the Faculty Humanities at the University of the Free State, which determines that a dissertation can be alternatively written as two related articles on an approved research topic submitted in publication format.

As is indicated on the title page the dissertation is entitled: **The effect of insufficient job opportunities on school leavers in the Eastern Free State.** The dissertation deals with two themes:

Article 1: The effect of insufficient job opportunities on school leavers in the Eastern Free State.

Article 2: The effect of insufficient job opportunities on school leavers in the Eastern Free State – an empirical research.

The conclusion at the end of this dissertation summerises findings and outcomes derived by the researcher in the two articles.

The purpose of this orientation is to briefly supply information regarding the following:
- Statement of problem and the purpose of investigation.
- Research design and research area.
- Theoretical overview and choice of research subject as included in the first article.
- Research findings as summerised in the two articles.
- Remarks on the presentation of the dissertation.

2. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Education is the right of all South Africans. At the end of their school career and with a basic qualification school leavers are on the threshold of becoming adults of tomorrow

and expect to contribute to the economic growth of the country and to secure stability by being able to provide for themselves, for their families and share in the economic growth of the country.

Despite this, few school leavers are in fact absorbed in the work place. Many school leavers are job hunting and apply for jobs but are then told that they are not qualified, have no work experience or lack the necessary skills. The purpose of this research was to determine the effect the lack of job opportunities have on school leavers from the Eastern Free State. The objective was to analyze their expectations and concerns regarding their future.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND RESEARCH AREA

Qualitative research was done by the distribution of questionnaires to ten schools in the Eastern Free State. Schools included high school and special school, as well as learners from independent schools, which included ACE schools and a school from the Cambridge Comprehensive system. Qualitative interviews were conducted with school principals and teachers.

The research design included:
- An overview on existing literature in daily newspapers for example: Business Day, The Citizen, The Star, Sowetan and *Die Volksblad*. Weekly newspapers included: The Mail & Guardian, Post, Sunday Times and Rapport. Additional research was optained from quarterly editions of Finance Week as well as the internet and television news reports.
- Further theoretical research from books and journals especially regarding theories on adolescent development, human behaviour and the concept of work and work ethics as researched by E. H. Erikson, A. Maslow, Kohlberg and Super.
- Information that was collected from school leavers and interviewees.
- The data processed by the University of the Free State.
- Analyses and report of the processed data.
- Findings and recommendations (included in second article).

4. THEORETICAL OVERVIEW AND CHOICE OF RESEARCH TOPIC

The approved research topic: "The effect of the lack of job opportunities on school leavers in the Eastern Free State" was selected to include the views of school leavers in the rural areas.

The theories of Erikson, Maslow, Kohlberg and Super were researched and included. An overview on work concept, work ethics and the history of work provided valuable information on human development. This was addressed in the first article.

The researcher was involved in the research project for a period of two years, which resulted in the written report of this dissertation.

5. RESEARCH AND RESEARCH FINDINGS

Article 1

This article provided insight in the development of adolescents regarding identity, morals and future expectations.   Key words defined terms and concepts used in the article. Adolescents' expectations and career choices within the context of family, political and environmental settings were reported.

Article 2

The results of the empirical research were reported providing valuable insight in the perceptions and the expectations of school leavers in the Eastern Free State.   Findings obtained from the respondents in the interviewees were reported and the recommendations made to assist teachers and future school leavers.

6. REMARKS ON THE PRESENTATION OF THE DISSERTATION

The most important criteria for the presentation and submission of the articles is that it must be submitted in a format acceptable for publication, not necessarily ready for publication. The necessary changes according to prescribed regulations on publication of journals will be made.

7. THE ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER

As a remedial teacher, councellor and also the principal of a school, the researcher encounters on a daily basis the frustration and uncertainty experienced amongst teachers, parents and school leavers regarding the lack of job opportunities. To remain unbiased in executing the research the following values determined the success of the study:

- Respect and care towards learners, teacher and parents.
- Integrity – to maintain integrity towards participants and honesty in the selection and reporting of data.
- Disciplined subjectivity during the involvement in the research process.
- To remain open and humble and to cope and manage the unexpected. To keep in mind that findings and recommendations must be to the benefit of the learners, parents, teachers and society.

ARTICLE 1
SUMMARY

The lack of job opportunities for school leavers has a major impact on their future aspirations and adult development, affecting their emotional and social behaviour. The global phenomena to exclude a great number of school leavers to be absorbed in the country's economic growth foster feelings of detachment, lack of aspirations and motivation with no aim or future prospects. The purpose of the research is to investigate the effect of lack of opportunities through the use of selected information, as well as an overview on the theories on work according to Erikson, Maslow and Kohlberg. Erikson's psychosocial theory takes into consideration factors that impact on the social and cultural components of an individual's developmental experiences. Maslow, the founder of humanistic psychology in America holds society responsible for the fulfillment of human needs while Kohlberg's Cognitive Developmental Approach to psychology advocated by some that emphasise feelings and emotions and the better understanding of the self in terms of evaluation of oneself and one's relations with other. Adolescent Morality describes the nature of general rights such as individual rights, human dignity, equality, contractual agreement and mutual obligations. Moral behaviour is motivated by a concern for the welfare of the larger community and a desire for community respect. During adolescence sub-stages of explorations are identified regarding work and career expectations indicating a strong relationship between self-concept and career choice. Differences in social class might influence adolescents to have different expectations. The reality of their choices depends on the degree of relation between personal characteristics and the requirements and the demands of the preferred career, the current and projected employment supply and demand status, and importantly, the adequacy of the educational plan by which this would be implemented. A variety of factors may influence the reality of career choice. Inadequate information to youths, especially in rural areas might reflect a comparatively low level of aspiration. To most people to work is to perform a task in exchange for remuneration in order to take care of themselves, families and society. In a developing country like South Africa, formal employment could be limited and people often have to involve themselves in diverse informal activities to earn a living. A historic overview indicated four successive phases stretching over centuries. The "Information Processing" stage has become information

intensive, instead of labour intensive; the employee's usefulness now lies in value-added knowledge and skills. Various factors could influence adolescents choosing a job or embarking on a career including personal attributes, self-esteem, identity formation and scholastic and academic performance. Ethnic and/or racial background might be a major factor in the choice of a job or a career. Cultural beliefs and political decisions regarding equity, affirmative action and black empowerment equity influence the choice and future aspirations of school leavers. The media plays an active part in perceptions and the aspirations of school leavers. Both government and private sector benefit form school leavers and should collaborate towards creating opportunities for school leavers. The lack of job opportunities in the Eastern Free State is a reality that causes emotional and social problems, which should be urgently addressed.

Key terms: job opportunities, school leavers, adolescence, employment, cultural beliefs and environmental factors, emotional development, social development, future aspirations, global factors, rural influences, government policies, private sector involvement.

ARTIKEL 1
OPSOMMING

Die tekort aan werksgeleenthede vir skoolverlaters het 'n groot impak op hulle toekoms, aspirasies and volwasse ontwikkeling, wat hulle emosionele en sosiale ontwikkeling affekteer. Die globale verskynsel om 'n toenemende aantal skoolverlaters uit die ekonomiese groei van 'n land uit te sluit, kweek gevoelens van afsondering, die tekort aan aspirasies en motivering met geen doel of toekomsvooruitsigte nie. Die doel van hierdie navorsing is om die effek van die tekort aan werksgeleenthede te ondersoek deur die gebruik van geselekteerde inligting, sowel as 'n oorsig oor werk na gelang van die teorieë van Erikson, Maslow en Kohlberg. Erikson se psigo-sosiale teorie neem in aanmerking faktore wat 'n moontlike impak het op die sosiale and kulturele komponente van die individu se ontwikklingservaring. Maslow, die vader van menslike sielkunde in Amerika, hou die samelewing verantwoordelik vir die vervulling van menslike behoeftes, terwyl Kohlberg se Kognitiewe Ontwikkelingsbenadering tot Adolossente Moraliteit, die terme van algemene regte soos indivudele regte, menswaardigheid, gelykwaardigheid, kontrakterende ooreenkomste en wederregtelike aanspreeklikhede definieer. Morele gedrag word gemotiveer deur die besorgdheid oor die welvaart van die wyer gemeenskap en die strewe na respek van die gemeenskap. Gedurende adolessensie word sub-fases van ontdekking met betrekking tot werk en loopbaanverwagtinge geïdentifiseer, wat daarop dui dat daar 'n sterk verwantkap is tussen self-konsep en loopbaankeuse. Sosiale klas verskille mag adolessente beïnvloed tot verskillende verwagtinge. Die realiteit van hulle keuse hang af van die verhouding tussen persoonlike eienskappe en die vereistes en behoeftes van die verkose loopbaan, die huidige en geprojekteerde werkvoorsiening en aanvraag status, en belangrik, die bevoegdheid van die opvoedkundige sisteem waarin dit geïmplementeer moet word. Verskeie faktore mag die realiteit van loopbaankeuses beïnvloed: 'n gebrek aan inligting, veral onder die jeug in die platteland, kan dui op betreklik lae vlakke van ambisie. Vir die meeste mense beteken om te werk die verrigting van 'n taak waarvoor hulle vergoed word sodat hulle na hulself, hul familie of hul gemeenskap kan omsien. In 'n ontwikkelende land soos Suid-Afrika kan formele werksverskaffing beperk wees en moet mense hulle eie diverse, informele werk skep. 'n Geskiedkundige oorsig dui op vier opeenvolgende

fases wat oor die eeue strek. Die " Inligtingsverwerkingsfase" het inligting-intensief, in plek van arbeids- intensief geword: die werknemer se waarde lê nou in bruikbare kennis en vaardighede. Verskeie faktore mag die jeug beïnvloed in die keuse van werk of loopbaan: insluitende persoonlikheid, selfagting, identiteitsvorming, skolasitese vermoë en akademiese prestasie. Etniese en /of rasse-afkoms mag 'n bepalende rol speel in die keuse van werk of 'n loopbaan. Kulturuele "oortuiginge" en politieke besluite met betrekking tot gelykheid, regstellende aksie en Swartbemagtiging beïnvloed die beroepskeuse en aspirasies van skoolverlaters. Beide die regering en privaat sektor baat by skoolverlaters en behoort saam te werk in werkskepping vir skoolverlaters. Die tekort aan werksgeleenthede in die Oos-Vrystaat is 'n realiteit wat beide emosionele en sosiale probleme veroorsaak en behoort dringend aandag te geniet.

Kernwoorde: werksgeleenthede, skoolverlaters, adolessente, werk, invloede en faktore, emosionele ontwikkeling, sosiale ontwikkeling, toekomsverwagtinge, globale faktore, plattelandse invloede, regering, privaat sektor betrokkenheid.

ARTICLE 2
SUMMARY

Over the last three years, an increasing number of learners have written national matric examinations but fewer have passed and fewer learners are accepted into tertiary institutions. Many more remain at home because they cannot afford the high tuition fees. The perennial problem of thousands of failed matric learners, unable to do anything meaningful with their lives is increasing. A baseline study indicated that in the Free State only 17% of all youths who were eligible for employment were in fact employed. Many were involved in criminal activities and a survey by the Human Research Council revealed that two thirds of those wanting to work simply could not find a job. An empirical research consisting of quantitative questionnaires to school leavers and qualitative interviews with principals and teachers was conducted to determine the influence of the lack of job opportunities the social and emotional development of adolescents and the impact thereof on society. The investigation also addressed possibilities to enable learners to cope with the given situation. The self-structured questionnaire was compiled to target Grade 9 learners, who after passing the senior phase could leave school and Grade 12 learners who wrote the national matric examinations in October 2006. A total of 214 school leavers from ten schools in the Eastern Free State participated. The age of these learners ranged between 15 and 19 years. Learners provided valuable input concerning biographical information about themselves, their parents and employment as well as career expectations and their perceptions on employment prospects in South Africa. An alarming 49.4% of school leavers felt that job opportunities in the Eastern Free State were not good and 56.4% felt either unsure or not positive about job opportunities in South Africa. Interviews conducted with principals and educators indicated that school leavers experienced more problems than in the past. Principals and educators gave reasons for possible causes of emotional and social problems amongst school leavers. Participants indicated that the lack of discipline, inadequate schooling, the lack of skills and insufficient preparation and guidance and support regarding possible careers, were the main causes contributing to uncertainty and frustration.

Financial problems and limited support and involvement from parents, also played a major role in future aspirations. The information from the respondents and interviewees was analyzed and the findings were used to assist in making recommendations towards y improving the position of school leavers and assisting in their inclusion in the labour market. It is important that both the government and private sector should realize that in order to prevent the increase in social problems, urgent steps should be taken to address the lack of opportunities for school leavers.

Key words: employment, school leavers, questionnaires, principals, teachers, interviews, schooling, aspirations, social problems and emotional problems.

ARTIKEL 2

OPSOMMING

Gedurende die laaste paar jaar het 'n toenemende aantal leerders die nasionale matriekeksamen geskryf, maar minder leerders het geslaag en is toegelaat tot tersiêre instellings. Baie meer leerders bly tuis omdat hulle nie die hoë fooie kan bekostig nie. Die toenemende probleem van duisende matrikulante wat nie geslaag het nie en niks betekenisvol met hulle lewens verrig nie, word groter. 'n Agtergrondstudie het aangedui dat slegs 17% van alle jeugdiges wat vir werk geskik is, wel werk het. Talle was betrokke by kriminele aktiwiteite en 'n ondersoek deur die "Human Research Council" het aangedui dat twee derdes van diegene wat wil werk, geen werk kon vind nie. 'n Empiriese ondersoek bestaande uit 'n kwantitatiewe vraelys aan skoolverlaters en kwalitatiewe onderhoude met skoolhoofde en onderwysers is onderneem om te bepaal of die tekort aan werksgeleenthede 'n negatiewe invloed het op die sosiale en emosionele ontwikkeling van jeugdiges. Die studie het verder die impak van die tekort aan werksgeleenthede op die sameleweing asook ondersoek wat moontlik gedoen kan word om leerders toe te rus om dit te kan hanteer. Die selfopgestelde vraelys was daarop gemik om inligting te verkry van leerders in Graad 9 en Graad 12 (wat die 2006 nasionale matriekeksamen geskryf het). Graad 9 leerders was ingeluit omdat hulle ook die skool kan verlaat aan die einde van die Senior Fase. 'n Totaal van 214 skoolverlaters van tien skole in die Oos-Vrystaat was deel van hierdie ondersoek. Die ouderdomme van leerders was tussen 15 en 19 jaar. Waardevolle biografiese inligtigting is verkry aangaande leerders, hulle ouers en werk, asook hul loopbaanverwagtinge en persepsies oor werksgeleenthede in Suid-Afrika. 'n Onrusbarende 49.4% skoolverlaters het gevoel dat werksgeleenthede in die Oos-Vrystaat nie goed was nie en 56.4% was óf onseker óf het gevoel dat die geleentheid om werk te kry in Suid-Afrika, nie goed was nie. Onderhoude met skoolhoofde en onderwysers het aangedui dat skoolverlaters tans meer probleme ervaar as in die verlede. Inligting is voorsien oor moontlike oorsake wat kon lei tot emosionele en sosiale probleme onder skoolverlaters. Deelnemers het aangedui dat die tekort aan dissipline, onvoldoende skoolopleiding, die tekort aan bekwaamhede, ontoereikende voorbereiding, leiding en ondersteuning aangaande moontlike loopbane, grootliks bydra tot onsekerheid en frustrasies onder skoolverlaters. Finansiële

probleme en onvoldoende leiding en ondersteuning van ouers dra ook by tot die tekort aan toekomsaspirasies. Die inligting verkry van respondente en van onderhoude met skoolhoofde en onderwysers, is ontleed en die bevindinge is gebruik om aanbevelings te maak aangaande moontlike oplossings om die posisie van skoolverlaters te verbeter, asook bystand tot insluiting in die arbeidmark. Dit is uiters belangrik dat beide die regering en privaatsektor sal moet besef dat om die toename in sosiale probleme in die gemeenskap te voorkom, dringende stappe gedoen sal moet word om die tekort aan werksgeleenthede vir skoolverlaters aan te spreek.

Kernwoorde: werksverskaffing, skoolverlaters, vraelyste, skoolhoofde, onderwysers, onderhoude, aspirasies, sosiale probleme, emosionele probleme.