Factors influencing youth unemployment in the Eastern Cape, South Africa.

Name Surname :[1] Jaqueline Nthabiseng Seima

[1] Department of Population Studies and Demography, North-West University, Mahikeng Campus, South Africa
[2] Population and Health Research Focus Area, Faculty of Humanities, North-West University, Mahikeng Campus, South Africa

[*]**For correspondence:**
Email: *nthabiseima@gmail.com* **Phone:** (+27) 81 86 31999

Abstract

Background: South Africa is battling the highest youth unemployment rate and one of the provinces with the highest rate is the Eastern Cape. Youth unemployment is influenced by lack of skills, work experience, educational qualifications and the number of people looking for work compared to availability of jobs.

Objective: The main objective of the study is to determine factors influencing youth unemployment in the Eastern Cape.

Methods: The study used secondary data from quarterly labour force survey that was collected in the first quarter of 2022 by Statistics South Africa. The study focused on 1102223 young people aged 15-34 years. Univariate, bivariate and binary logistic regression was used for data analysis. The data was analysed using Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27.

Results: The findings indicates that young people aged 20-24 were 1.317 times more likely to be unemployed compared to those aged 15-19. Young people aged 25-29 and 30-34 were 0.702 and 0.465 times less likely to be unemployed compared to age group 15-19 years. Females were 1.346 times more likely to be unemployed compared to males. Coloured young people were 0.692 times less likely to be unemployed compared black young people. Other population group was 0.143 times less likely to be unemployed compared to black young people. Young people, who were married, cohabiting and no longer married were 0.612, 0.535 and 0.377 times less likely to be unemployed compared to never married young people. Young people who obtained primary, secondary and higher education were 0.339, 0.248 and 0.164 times less likely to be unemployed compared to young people with no education. Youth in Buffalo City metro were 0.772 times less likely to be unemployed compared to young people residing in non-metro areas. Young people residing in Nelson Mandela Bay were 1.127 times more likely to be unemployed compared to those residing in non-metros. In terms of geographical type, young people residing in traditional areas were 2.070 times more likely to be unemployed compared to young people residing in urban areas. Those who resided in farms were 0.190 times less like likely to be unemployed compared to young people in urban areas

Conclusion: The findings showed that age, sex, population group, marital status, education, metro/non-metro and geographical type were associated with youth unemployment in the Eastern Cape. The findings of the study will help the government to increase the capacity of government departments that deal policies that were implemented to reduce youth unemployment.

Keywords: Youth unemployment, Eastern Cape,

Introduction

One of the biggest problems around the world is unemployment among young people. According to Escudero et al. (2018); Idris (2016), unemployment has primarily been ascribed to how challenging it is for majority of youthful individuals to enter the industry owing to a lack of work experience; this is known as the "experience trap." A study done in Spain looking at youth unemployment and its impact on health and lifestyle, showed a higher than 27% unemployment rate at the start of 2013 for young people under 25 years old, this figure rose as high as 57% (Aguilar-Palacio et al., 2015). On a yearly basis since 2013 in Turkey, there has been growth in youth unemployment reaching 18.9% in 2016 due to lack of skills and high rates of rural to urban migration by young people (SEVER & İĞDELİ, 2018).

In various African countries, there are different factors influencing unemployment among young people. Nigeria's young unemployment rate increased from 12.6% to 20.7% between 2014 and 2016, making it the highest it had been in the previous 30 years (Olubusoye et al., 2023). The main causes of youth unemployment in Nigeria are rising population, high levels of regional mobility, lack of skills that are marketable, poor youth involvement in the process of making choices, and perceptions about job opportunities among policymakers and young people themselves. According to a study done by Mukosa et al. (2020), youth unemployment prevalence stands at 27.5 % in Zambia. Zambian's high rate of youth unemployment has been associated with political conflicts and crime, similar conflicts that are affecting unemployment among young people in Pakistan (Mukosa et al., 2020).

According to Yu (2013), when it comes to South African unemployment, young people are the most discouraged population age group to enter the labour market. Because of the nation's youthful bulge, that presents both chances for progress if young individuals get employed in substantial positions an opportunity for severe societal breakdown if they do not, youth unemployment is a most notably significant issue in the Republic of South Africa (Fine et al., 2012; NPC, 2012). In South Africa, youth unemployment is often caused by a lack of access to non-formal educational and vocational opportunities. The fact that the young people's knowledge and abilities aren't always in accordance compared to what employers need further intensifies the problem, particularly in circumstances where young people have completed formal training and educational attainment. The situation has worsened over the years since the country was hit by the global financial crisis. According to von Wachter (2020), majority of private companies do not want to risk investing in young people to avoid less productivity and loss of profit.

What is the major issue on this topic?

Zizzamia (2020) states that, South Africa has expensive entrance into the job market costs, especially for transportation, and the employment opportunities that are made available do not typically provide opportunities for advancement or even an escape out of poverty**.** Young people are less equipped to handle unexpected periods of low income or unemployment due to a shortage of savings or utilization of benefits

(Carcillo & Königs, 2015). Time spent unemployed or not completing school can have unfavourable lasting consequences, such as "scarring" effects that permanently lower a young person's possible future earnings and work opportunities. According to Makhubu and Magome (2012), not only is unemployment perceived as an economic concern, but it is also viewed as a moral one, with young people who are unemployed are frequently being referred to as a "time bomb" on the verge of exploding in a widespread and disastrous protest.

According to the Eastern Cape Socio Economic Consultative (2021), unemployment rate in the Eastern Cape Province accumulated to 47.4 % and the number of individuals who were employed decreased to 1.5 million in 2021. Furthermore, youth unemployment rate in the Eastern Cape was 62.6% in 2021 (Eastern Cape Socio Economic Consultative, 2021). According to Meyers-Mashamba (2021), one of the main concerns in society is the level of unemployment among young people. A number of social problems, particularly high levels of poverty, illegal activities and acts of violence, as well as additional mental wellness problems have been associated with the rate of joblessness. In the Eastern Cape, law-breaking and violence have increased among young people without jobs because there are no sustainable livelihood plans, recreational opportunities, or programs that enhance their abilities and keep them employed (Lauder & Mayhew, 2020). Even though this is the reality, research demonstrates that South Africa's rate of youth unemployment has historically gotten minimal attention, leaving it unaccounted for. As a result, there are only a handful of empirical investigations that provide an explanation for youth unemployment in the Eastern Cape**.**

What is the gap?

According to Meyers-Mashamba (2021), the most concerning aspect about the Eastern Cape's unemployment pattern is that it demonstrated the extent to which the rate has been in the province for more than ten years. Low percentages of skilled and educated youth contribute to poor the earnings of households and unsustainable livelihoods, which worsen the issue of unemployment among young people (Meyers-Mashamba, 2021)**.** The study has implications of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the country. By the year 2030, the Sustainable Development Goal 8 aims to provide decent work for all, full and productive employment, and sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth. Target 8.5 within the goal comprehend young people by 2030, attain full and worthwhile employment, decent employment for all women and men, including youth and individuals with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.

Despite the South African government coming up with different initiatives and policies to tackle youth unemployment, it continues to increase at higher rate every financial year. The aim of the study is to distinguish the causes of youth unemployment in the Eastern Cape Province. It is important to highlight these characteristics that hinder youth employment before implementing policies that can tackle youth employment. The study will contribute to existing literature about youth unemployment in the Eastern Cape and possible suggestions that might add to the eradication of unemployment.

Major recent literature on this issue

Gender and youth unemployment

Youth unemployment in Botswana has been viewed as a major factor to the country's economy. According to Sechele (2015), Botswana youth unemployment increased from 13.6% in 2000 to a present level of 33.3%. Botswana is currently experiencing an increased youth population but majority of young people have minimum skills and work experience with more than two-thirds of youth never had a job. Matandare (2018) indicated that young people enter late in the labour market compared to their older cohort. Botswana has experienced higher female youth unemployment rate compared to the male counterparts from year 2000 to 2016. The gap between female unemployment and male unemployment was 9.3% in 2003 to 12.9 % in 2010 indicating that Botswana has not worked hard to reduce youth unemployment inequalities (Matandare, 2018). However, Botswana has a relative lower male youth unemployment rate compared to South Africa and Namibia. While South Africa has a lower female youth unemployment compared to Botswana and South Africa (Matandare, 2018). Countries like turkey and Egypt, young women tend to be unemployed longer than males (Kherfi, 2015). Youth unemployment in Tunisia has a female and male youth unemployment of relatively 34% to 37% (Berhe, 2021).

Type of residence and youth unemployment

According Ding and Tay (2016), young people who are situated in rural areas of Malaysia tend to be unemployed due to lack of jobs opportunities, income, job skills compared to those who are found in urban areas. Young people in rural residences lack access to proper information about job opportunities that were available, absent close contact for available jobs and lastly earning low income (Ding & Tay, 2016). Due lack of education, most young people left school early to look for jobs compared to those who are situated in urban areas. This has led young people to flock in urban areas causing rapid urbanization. Even when unemployed rural young people had moved to bigger cities, they tend to increase urban unemployment due to lack of skills. According to Berhe (2021), there has been unequal distribution of youth unemployment among regions in Ethiopia due to the available of job opportunities and economic activities. Small districts such as Gambela has a lowest duration of finding a job compared to large urban cities like Addis Ababa. Western regions such as Gambela has a lower incidence of youth unemployment and at the highest in the Dire Diowa and biggest in the South Region (Berhe, 2021). Young people living in big cities like Addis Ababa experienced high unemployment rate due to migrants from rural areas who were school dropouts and first time job seekers.

Education and youth unemployment

According Education (2015), the overall NEET rate in the EU in 2017 was 10.9% (men: 10.6%, women: 11.1%), with considerable variations depending on region. Greece, Italy, and Bulgaria continue to have rates above

15%, although in 2013 they surpassed 20%. Rather than being as a consequence of absence of activity, the rise in youth unemployment rates was the main factor responsible of the rise in NEET rates throughout the majority of the countries of the European Union (Education, 2015; Papadakis et al., 2020). According De Lannoy et al. (2020), when compared to their parents, young South Africans have considerably higher levels of educational achievement. Still, job opportunities for young people chances have not gotten better as a result of this academic performance. The country still has a relatively high percentage of students who leave school before completing their final year of secondary education, nearly 50% of every class of first-grade learners (De Lannoy et al., 2020). According Martínez-Morales and Marhuenda-Fluixá (2020), more than forty percent of young people who worked in jobs that were requiring low or medium skills were young graduates. Schools had offered school based training only and in Spain, only 4% of the schools had offered school and work based training (Martínez-Morales & Marhuenda-Fluixá, 2020).

Marital status and youth unemployment.

According to SHAKUR et al. (2020) young people who got married traditionally at the east coast of Malaysia affected the availability of job opportunities towards them especially young women. Young women who played the role of a homemaker did not have time to look for employment because they took care of their families. According to Singh (2019) in Ethiopia, young people from unmarried household were found to be more jobless compared to those who are married and 73% of unemployed youth were single compared to 27% of married young people. In addition, young people living in urban areas of Ethiopia had the lowest level of youth unemployment compared to young people who were not married. Axelrad et al. (2018), states that youth that were widowed or divorced had the highest percentage of unemployment compared to their counterparts and young people who were single experienced long time youth unemployment compared to those who were married. While in Botswana, young people who were married or in cohabited relationships experienced lowest unemployment compared to those who were not in any time of a relationship. Young people who were in relationships or married were hired mostly because they gave a sense of stability and responsibility (Gaetsewe, 2019).

Poverty and youth unemployment

According to Surajo and Karim (2016), poverty and youth unemployment is highlighted by high rates of crime that were caused by young people. In Nigeria majority of young people had taken part in criminal activities to feed themselves. Studies had shown that majority of people who were caught by police officials committing crime were young people. More than nighty percent of young people between the ages of 15 to 25 years where caught in Abuja committing criminal acts. Young people joined vigilant and gangs in Nigeria to reduce the amount of poverty and unemployment that they faced on a daily basis (Adam et al., 2021). Poverty, lack of jobs and development was associated with high numbers of young people in South Nigeria participating in rebellious groups that had distracted economic activities by destroying oil pipes.

Young people are employed to commit criminal activities such as kidnapping, taking hostage of women, kids and political figures (Otu et al., 2018) . Young people are used in political violence by powerful politicians to eliminate the competition, destruction of voting areas and killing the opposition for a certain fee to feed their families. Other ways that the youth of Nigeria had fed themselves was by taking part in drug trafficking, human trafficking and prostitution. According to Moshood et al. (2018), young women were used as mules to traffic hard narcotics such as cocaine and heroin from one country to the next in order to feed their families. Majority of these young girls came from poor backgrounds and some did not finish school and some migrated from villages to big cities but they did not find jobs and ended as drug mules. Some young girls participated in prostitution in Nigeria while others were trafficked to European countries to be employed as prostitutes (Moshood et al., 2018; Oyefara, 2016).

Population group and youth unemployment

A further component of unemployment that merits significant, if straightforward, thought is the ethnic component in Malaysia (Aun, 2020). Graduate unemployment among Bumiputeras often receive the most attention, and a number of measures have either reached out to them without specifically targeting them or have clearly labelled Bumiputeras as recipients of unemployment (Aun, 2020). Youth unemployment of Bumiputeras exceeds the Chinese working force. According to Manlove and Lantos (2018), another factor that affected young people from completing school was teenage pregnancy even though the was a decreased rate in teenage pregnancies across all races, African Americans and Latinos continued to have the highest teenage pregnancies compared to white youth Black females between the ages of 20 to 29 years who had children during their high school years tend to struggle when it comes to employment because they dropout before receiving their high school diplomas in America (Manlove & Lantos, 2018).

Age and youth unemployment

According to Akande (2014), younger age group tend to find it to get proper jobs, especially young individuals aged 15-19 years because of not having tertiary qualifications. Nearly 60% of Africans are under 35 years old, and more than half of these individuals are located in rural areas without jobs (Castañeda et al., 2018). According to Mayekiso and Obioha (2021), youth between the ages of 15 and 24 bear the highest percentage of unemployment, with an unemployment prevalence of 55.2% in the first quarter of 2019. Meanwhile in Malaysia, unemployment of young people between the ages of 15-19 years was higher compared to the age group of 20-24 years (Cheng & Mohamad, 2020). The 15-19 years age cohort was five times likely to not find jobs compared to the 20-24 years because it was not easy to find job opportunities with a basic high school education compared to tertiary education. According to Musa and Basir (2019), Brunei experienced the highest rate of youth unemployment situated at 23.40% for the age group of 15-24 years. Brunei is a country situated at Southeast Asia; it depends on the exports of oil and gas. The availability of job opportunities to

young people in Malaysia and Brunei were affected by the difference in educational attainment, gender disparities, mismatch of skills obtained by young people.

Which theoretical framework helps explain this issue?

Keynesian theory: The general theory of employment, interests and money.

According to Jahan et al. (2014), a British economist John Maynard Keynes coined the general theory of employment, interests and money in the 1930s, when he tried to explain the causes of recession. The theory states that high unemployment takes place when the is inadequate aggregate demand in the economy of a country to produce sufficient jobs for everyone who wants to be employed (Jahan et al., 2014). The economy will experience a decline in majority of goods and services, which will result in a decrease in production. When a decline in production takes place, fewer people are going to be employed earning wages that are unsecured which will lead to mass unemployment.

The theory can be associated with cyclical unemployment, where the is an exchange in businesses cycles when it comes to unemployment for example when an economy of a country does well cyclical unemployment will be low but when the economy doesn't do well cyclical unemployment would be high. The theory showed that unemployment was persistent during the Great Recession of 1930s. This theory also can been used to explain unemployment that occurred during the financial crisis or recession of the 1930s and again in 2007/2008-2010 where the was a decrease in goods and services of many countries that led to people losing their jobs and unemployment increased especially youth unemployment (Forsythe & Wu, 2021). The number of people who looked for jobs exceed the number of job opportunities that were available and also if the jobs where all taken high number of people would be still searching for jobs. According to Jahan et al. (2014), the theory indicated that in order to reduce high unemployment, the government should fully intervene.

What is the main objective of this study?

The main objective of the study is to determine factors influencing youth unemployment in the Eastern Cape.

Methods

Data source

The study is based on the secondary data that was obtained from the quarterly labour force survey that was collected in the first quarter of 2022 by Statistics South Africa. The quarterly labour force survey data was collected from the labour market activities of people aged between 15 years and above who reside in South Africa (StatsSA, 2022). The data was downloaded in a raw format and decoded using Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27.

Study variables and definitions

The dependent variable used in this study is employment status in which the respondent was asked that if they are employed or unemployed. The variable was recoded from four options to two options of employed =1 and unemployed =2 which was recoded from (unemployed, discouraged job seeker and other not economically active) to fit the study.

Explanatory variables

Seven explanatory variables were used in the study namely age, sex, population group, marital status, level of education, metro / non-metro and geographical type.

Variables	Description	Coding
Age group	The age of the respondent within the youth category	1=15-19, 2=20-24, 3=25-29, 4=30-34
Sex	Whether the respondent is male or female	1=Male, 2=Female
Population group	Population group where the respondent fall under	1=Black, 2=Coloured, 3=Other
Marital status	This is the marital status of the respondent	1=Never Married, 2=Married, 3=Cohabiting, 4=No longer married
Level of education	Educational attainment of the respondent	1=No education, 2=Primary, 3=Secondary, 4=Higher
Metro/non metro	Whether the respondent reside in a metro or non-metro area	1=EC-Non-metro, 2= EC= Buffalo City, 3= EC-Nelson Mandela Bay
Geography type	The type of geographical area where the respondent reside	1=Urban, 2=Traditional, 3= Farms

Statistical analysis

The study used univariate, bivariate and and binary logistic regression regression for analysis.

Univariate analysis is used to describe each variable at a time to show how the data will be distributed in the population sample and made it easier to be interpreted. The outcome of the univariate analysis is presented in a form of frequency distribution and percentages. Bivariate analysis will be the second method to be used in the study, it describes the statistical association between two variables. The analysis will be used to check if the is a link between the dependent variable which is employment status with the independent variables such as age group, sex, population group, marital status, and education, metro/non metro and geographical type. Logistic binary regression analysis was the third method used to identify which variables had an impact on the study. Regression analysis is used to source out change in the relationship between the employment status and socio-demographic factors in a form of prediction, estimation, and description. The values of the dependent variable and independent variables are estimated, than the outcome and changes of the dependent variable was predicted and finally a description was given between the independent and dependent variable.

Logistic regression model

The binary logistic regression model applied to this study is given by:

$$ln\left(\frac{p}{1-p}\right) = \alpha + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \beta_3 x_3 + \beta_4 x_4 + \cdots + \beta_i x_i$$

This model is represented by more than one independent variable that is either binary, ordinal, nominal and so forth. The dependent variable in this model is employment status ($\frac{p}{1-p}$). The regression coefficient ($\beta_i x_i$) increases the natural logarithm (log-odds) for a one-unit increase in the predictor variable (x_i) when all other variables (x_i) are constant. It measures the relationship between x_i and natural logarithm (log-odds) adjusted for all other (x_i) variables.

Ethical considerations

Quarterly labour force participation survey followed ethical requirements conducted by the department of Statistics South Africa. The department of Statistics South Africa permitted authorization for the data to be downloaded.

Results

Background characteristics

The table 1 presents the background characteristics of the the study population. The results indicate that the highest unemployment is situated among young people aged 25-29 (37.6%) followed by age group 30-34 (34.9%) and least number are those aged 15-19 (3.2%). Males made up the highest number of young people with 55.9% and females made up the lowest number of 44.1%. In terms of population group, black young people dominated with 88.7%, followed by Coloured with 8.8% and lowest was other (2.5%). Highest proportion of young people were never married (82.0%) and the least number of young people were no longer married (0.4%). Majority of young people had secondary education with 79.2, higher education (10.3%), primary education (10.0%) and the least number of young people had no education (0.5%). Majority of young people resided in non-metro (69.1%) and the least number of youth resided in metros such as the Nelson Mandela Bay (19.4%) and Buffalo City (11.5%). Furthermore, majority of young people resided in urban areas (57.0%) and the least number of young people resided in farm areas (2.9%).

Table 1: background characteristics of the study.

		Frequency	Percent
Age group			
	15-19	35137	3.2
	20-24	267120	24.2
	25-29	414803	37.6
	30-34	385164	34.9
Sex			
	Male	615826	55.9
	Female	486397	44.1

Population group			
	Black	977559	88.7
	Coloured	97131	8.8
	Other	27534	2.5
Marital Status			
	Never married	904109	82.0
	Married	107906	9.8
	Cohabiting	86265	7.8
	No longer married	3944	0.4
Level of education			
	No education	6000	0.5
	Primary	110101	10.0
	Secondary	873088	79.2
	Higher	113035	10.3
Metro/non-metro			
	EC - Non Metro	761580	69.1
	EC - Buffalo City	126331	11.5
	EC - Nelson Mandela Bay	214312	19.4
Geography type			
	Urban	627827	57.0
	Traditional	442442	40.1
	Farms	31954	2.9
Total		**1102223**	**100.0**

Prevalence of youth unemployment in the Eastern Cape

Table 2 shows the prevalence and association of employment status and background characteristics. Findings indicates that there is an association between employment status and background characteristics such as age group, population group, marital status, and metro/non F metro and geography type. These variable were statistically significant at $p<0.000$. Age group 20-24 years had highest prevalence of unemployment with 74.8% followed by age group 15-19 years with 65.1%. Females had the highest prevalence of youth unemployment with 60.9% compared to males with 59.7%. Black population group had the highest prevalence of youth unemployment with 62.6% and the lowest prevalence is found in other population group with 15. 8%. In terms of marital status, prevalence of unemployment was highest among never married youth with 64.2% and least prevalence is found among young people who were cohabitating with 36.0%. Highest prevalence of unemployment was found among young people with no education with 80.9% and the lowest prevalence of unemployment was found among young people with higher education (47.5%). Prevalence of unemployment was high among young residing in non-metro areas with 64.6 and lowest in Buffalo City metro with 46.6 %. The type of geographical area that had the highest prevalence of

youth unemployment was traditional areas with 74.1% and the least prevalence of unemployment was found among young people residing in farm areas with 22.0%

Table 2: Distribution of respondents and prevalence of employment status

		Employment status					
Characteristics		**Employed**	**Unemployed**	**Total**	**(%)**	**Chi-square**	
						Value	**P-value**
Age group						**34.5**	**0.000**
	15-19	12267	22870	35137	65.1		
	20-24	67284	199836	267120	74.8		
	25-29	168922	245881	414803	59.3		
	30-34	190096	195067	385164	50.6		
Gender						**0.2**	**0.682**
	Male	248351	367475	615826	59.7		
	Female	190218	296179	486397	60.9		
population group						**21.2**	**0.000**
	Black	365751	611808	977559	62.6		
	Coloured	49631	47500	97131	48.9		
	Other	23187	4346	27534	15.8		
marital status						**16.9**	**0.001**
	Never married	323463	580646	904109	64.2		
	Married	58044	49862	107906	46.2		
	Cohabiting	55195	31070	86265	36.0		
	No longer married	1868	2076	3944	52.6		
Level of education						**6.6**	**0.085**
	No education	1146	4854	6000	80.9		
	Primary	37423	72678	110101	66.0		
	Secondary	340670	532418	873088	61.0		
	Higher	59331	53704	113035	47.5		
Metro/non-metro						**24.5**	**0.000**
	EC - Non Metro	269310	492270	761580	64.6		
	EC - Buffalo City	67416	58915	126331	46.6		
	EC - Nelson Mandela Bay	101843	112469	214312	52.5		
Geography type						**48.5**	**0.000**
	Urban	299232	328595	627827	52.3		
	Traditional	114421	328021	442442	74.1		
	Farms	24916	7039	31954	22.0		

Total	**438569**	**663654**	**1102223**			

Determinants of employment status and background characteristics

Table 3 presents binary logistic regression results for the relationship between employment status and background characteristics. The findings indicates that young people aged 20-24 were 1.317 [95% CI: 1.284-1.351] times more likely to be unemployed compared to those aged 15-19. Young people aged 25-29 and 30-34 were 0.702 [95% CI: 0.684-0.720] and 0.465 [95% CI: 0.454-0.477] times less likely to be unemployed compared to age group 15-19 years. Females were 1.346 [95% CI: 1.335-1.358] times more likely to be unemployed compared to males. Coloured young people were 0.692 [95% CI: 0.681-0.703] times less likely to be unemployed compared black young people. Other population group was 0.143 [95% CI: 0.138-0.148] times less likely to be unemployed compared to black young people. Young people, who were married, cohabiting and no longer married were 0.612[95% CI: 0.603-0.621], 0.535 [95% CI: 0.527-0.544] and 0.377 [95% CI: 0.353-0.403] times less likely to be unemployed compared to never married young people. Young people who obtained primary, secondary and higher education were 0.339 [95% CI: 0.317-0.362], 0.248 [95% CI: 0.232-0.265] and 0.164 [95% CI: 0.154-0.176] times less likely to be unemployed compared to young people with no education. Youth in Buffalo City metro were 0.772 [95% CI: 0.761-0.782] times less likely to be unemployed compared to young people residing in non-metro areas. Young people residing in Nelson Mandela Bay were 1.127 [95%CI: 1.127-1.141] times more likely to be unemployed compared to those residing in non-metros. In terms of geographical type, young people residing in traditional areas were 2.070 [95% CI: 2.049-2.092] times more likely to be unemployed compared to young people residing in urban areas. Those who resided in farms were 0.190 [95% CI: 0.185-0.196] times less like likely to be unemployed compared to young people in urban areas.

Table 3: Binary logistic regression results for the determinants of employment status

characteristics	**S.E.**	**Wald**	**Sig.**	**Odds ratio**	**95% C.I**	
					Lower	**Upper**
Age group		31303.690	0.000			
15-19®				1.000		
20-24	0.013	439.479	0.000	1.317	1.284	1.351
25-29	0.013	765.818	0.000	0.702	0.684	0.720
30-34	0.013	3527.845	0.000	0.465	0.454	0.477
Sex						

Male®				1.000		
Female	0.004	4662.387	0.000	1.346	1.335	1.358
Population group		13963.557	0.000			
Black®				1.000		
Coloured	0.008	2092.239	0.000	0.692	0.681	0.703
other	0.017	12805.696	0.000	0.143	0.138	0.148
Marital status		10331.301	0.000			
Never married®				1.000		
Married	0.007	4771.309	0.000	0.612	0.603	0.621
Cohabiting	0.008	6102.091	0.000	0.535	0.527	0.544
No longer married	0.034	813.059	0.000	0.377	0.353	0.403
Level of education		7416.406	0.000			
No education®				1.000		
Primary	0.034	998.530	0.000	0.339	0.317	0.362
Secondary	0.034	1711.088	0.000	0.248	0.232	0.265
Higher	0.034	2781.170	0.000	0.164	0.154	0.176
Metro/non-metro		2348.986	0.000			
EC-Non metro®				1.000		
EC-Buffalo City	0.007	1369.800	0.000	0.772	0.761	0.782
EC- Nelson Mandela Bay	0.007	335.919	0.000	1.127	1.112	1.141
Geography type		37646.228	0.000			
Urban®				1.000		
Traditional	0.005	19657.942	0.000	2.070	2.049	2.092
Farms	0.014	13136.230	0.000	0.190	0.185	0.196

Discussion

The findings showed that age, sex, population group, marital status, education, metro/non-metro and geographical type were associated with youth unemployment in the Eastern Cape. Other studies have found similar factors associated with youth unemployment (Berhe, 2021; Bertoni & Ricchiuti, 2017; Escudero & Mourelo, 2014; Msigwa & Bwana, 2014). The study indicated that young people aged 20-24 had higher odds of experiencing unemployment, similar to a study that was done in Ethiopia (Berhe, 2021). Contradicting

other studies indicating that young people aged 15-19 years exhibited high rates of unemployment compared to other age groups (Jongbloed & Giret, 2022; Liotti, 2020; Rodriguez-Modroño, 2019).

The study found that young women experienced higher levels of unemployment compared to males. The results are similar to a study that was done in Jordan, Italy and United Kingdom, were females experienced higher odds of unemployment compared to males (Alawad et al., 2020; Baussola et al., 2015).According to Nkwinika and Naidoo (2017), employment of young women is constrained by lack of proper wages and benefits that are equal to men, stereotypes that suggests females as housemakers and bearer of children while they submissive to their husbands and lastly labour market discrimination of females.

Another finding of the study indicated that young people who never married were less likely to be employed compared to those who are married. The study is similar to Weerasiri and Samaraweera (2021) paper which indicated that young people in Sri Lanka, who were married were more likely to be employed compared to those who never got married. Young people who are married tend to face many financial difficulties coupled with dependency responsibilities than unmarried youth, which has led them to take any job to sustain their households.

The study indicates that young people with no education are more likely to be unemployed compared those with secondary education and tertiary. The study is similar to a study done in Jordan, which young people with higher education had were less likely to be unemployed compared to young people with no education (Alawad et al., 2020). Furthermore, young people residing in traditional areas experienced higher odds of unemployment compared to those residing in urban areas.

Conclusion

More and better help is required to promote job searching, especially in the non-metros of the Eastern Cape Province where the frequency of young unemployed people that searches harder for jobs. For example, free help with Curriculum Vitae writing and interview preparation; youth career advising centres; workshops and counselling for job seekers; job search support to match the abilities of the unemployed youth with available positions. The government should work hand in hand with different Non-government organisations to bring potential employers to remote areas of the Eastern Cape Provinces so that young people can get more information about job opportunities that are available and the skills needed. The government should improve educational infrastructures and increase availability of schools in the Eastern Cape Province to increase the number of young people who are educated. There should also be a provision of skill-based schools that offer recent curriculum and it matches the requirements that are suitable for job opportunities. Programmes should be implemented that will encourage and help young people with mathematics and science to reduce number of young people who drop out before they have completed secondary school. Career guidance offered in schools should improve, so that learners can make informed decisions about schools subjects that will help in terms of career goals that align with the current availability of jobs in the labour market.

Bridging programmes are important to increase technical skills done through the expansion of access in higher and further education. Concerning higher institutions, more funding and bursaries like those that look like National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) that are in need to increase the number of students in EVET colleges and universities to decrease dropouts in the higher institutions. These bursaries should encourage practical workshops so that students can gain practical experience. Young people should be provided with skill training programmes that will give them an upper hand in the labour market because of the skills and experience they acquired from skills training programmes. Information accessibility is important and it should be accessible in all media platforms even traditional media such as hardcopy newspapers and community radio stations to reach young people in rural areas about the availability of jobs. All major companies that are involved in the private and public sectors should adhere to policies that require them to absorb graduates in terms of internships and future employment opportunities.

Promotion of rural development, which will have an impact on the reduction of youth unemployment in rural areas. Rural areas need proper infrastructure such as roads and schools this will lead to investments in agriculture, fishery and forestry. Rural areas have land that can grow subsistence farming into commercial farming with programmes that can provide proper irrigation systems, education about sustainable farming, fishing and wood production. Young people can gain skills from colleges that are situated in the surrounding rural areas that gives practical workshops about different types of farming. This will also reduce migration of young people from rural areas to urban areas searching for jobs.

Programmes should be created that will deal with entrepreneurship of young people who have business that will improve job security. Young people should not only rely on National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) for financial support towards their businesses but also creation of other programmes that can target the growth of young businesses in rural and urban areas to absorb young people who do not have skills. The government should implement properly policies, programmes and agencies that deal with corruption. Eradication of corruption the government departments can open many doors for young people with proper education qualifications. The money that government officials spent irresponsible manner, should be utilized to create jobs that are sustainable programmes and workshops that can improve the skills of young people.

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