





Labour market interventions to assist the unemployed in two townships in South Africa



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Dates:

Received: 13 Oct. 2018
 Accepted: 27 Feb. 2019
 Published: 27 May 2019

How to cite this article:

Paver, R., Rothmann, S., Van den Broeck, A., & De Witte, H. (2019). Labour market interventions to assist the unemployed in two townships in South Africa. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology/SA Tydskrif vir Bedryfsielkunde*, 45(0), a1596. <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajip.v45i0.1596>

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Orientation: Given the absence of organised and accessible information on programmes relating to unemployment in South Africa, it may be difficult for beneficiaries to derive value from existing programmes; and for stakeholders to identify possible gaps in order to direct their initiatives accordingly.

Research purpose: The purpose of this study was to conduct a review of existing employment initiatives within two low-income communities in South Africa, with the aim of identifying possible gaps in better addressing the needs of the unemployed.

Motivation for the study: Unemployment in South Africa does not appear to be the result of a lack of initiatives or a lack of stakeholder involvement, but rather the result of haphazard implementation of interventions. In order to intervene more effectively, addressing the identified gaps, organising and better distribution of information for beneficiaries is suggested.

Research approach, design and method: The data were collected via documentary research complemented with structured interviews. Relevant documents ($N = 166$) and participants ($N = 610$) were consulted during the data collection phase, using convenience and purposive sampling.

Main findings: A total of 496 unemployment programmes were identified. Most of the interventions were implemented by the government. Vocational training followed by enterprise development and business skills training were the most implemented programmes. Less than 6% of programmes contained psychosocial aspects that are necessary to help the unemployed deal with the psychological consequences of unemployment. Finally, in general, benefactors involved in alleviating unemployment seem unaware of employment initiatives in their communities.

Practical and managerial implications: The compilation of an inventory of employment programmes may be valuable, as it will assist in identifying the most prominent needs of the South African labour market.

Contribution or value-add: This study contributes to scientific knowledge regarding the availability of existing unemployment programmes, projects and interventions, and the need for specific interventions.

Keywords: Interventions; unemployment; government; civil society organisations; private sector; township; Gauteng.

Introduction

Unemployment has a detrimental effect on a nation's success, development and prosperity (Feather, 2018; Klehe & Van Hooft, 2018). In South Africa, several role players have started initiatives to deal with the detrimental effects of unemployment. Solely from a government perspective, 27% (ZAR 1.5 trillion) of the annual gross domestic product (GDP) was spent on but a few of the largest, best-funded employment programmes in 2018 (Ramaphosa, 2018). This amount does not include the cost of any other initiatives implemented by the government or other key stakeholders. Yet, despite the major efforts, expenditure and the considerable impact of these interventions, actions seem inadequate as the issue of unemployment remains unresolved and increasingly concerning.

From a report written by the Independent Evaluation Group, it seems that employment programmes in general are somewhat uncoordinated and functioning in isolation (IEG, 2013). Given the absence of organised and accessible information on programmes relating to employment

in South Africa, it may be difficult for stakeholders to identify possible gaps in order to direct their initiatives accordingly (National Treasury, 2011). Likewise, beneficiaries may also be unaware of (and may have limited access to) the available resources (Dieltiens, 2015a). Therefore, the problem with employment initiatives in South Africa does not appear to be a lack of initiatives or a lack of stakeholder involvement but rather the haphazard implementation of interventions. As a result, valuable time and money are invested, without a clear indication of the impact thereof (Cloete & De Coning, 2011).

The aim of this study was to identify existing interventions aimed at helping the unemployed in South Africa. A meaningful way to approach the task at hand is to determine the 'who' and 'what' regarding unemployment initiatives by studying current literature and available documentation. Relevant interventions will be clustered according to the involved role players ('who') and the types of programmes that have been implemented within the selected communities ('what'; based on the aim of the intervention).

To date, some inventories of employment initiatives in South Africa have been published (see Centre for Development and Enterprise [CDE], 2008a; Development Bank of Southern Africa [DBSA], 2011; Economic of Regions Learning Network [ERLN], 2015; Graham et al., 2016; International Labour Organisation [ILO], 2012). However, some limitations should be noted. South Africa has undergone substantial economic and social change in the last couple of years. Therefore, reports older than 5 years may be considered obsolete. Furthermore, these reports mainly focus on large-scale interventions, whereas many employability programmes also operate on a smaller scale (Dieltiens, 2015b). Such smaller-scale programmes often deliver more hands-on services, such as providing information about jobs and looking and applying for jobs.

Another noteworthy observation from the above-mentioned documents is that employability programmes are mostly driven from an economic perspective, neglecting the psychosocial aspects of being unemployed (Patel, Noyoo, & Loffell, 2004; Van den Hof, 2015). People generally take up work not only to be compensated (also referred to as a manifest function of employment; Jahoda, 1982) but also to benefit from other latent functions (time structure, social contact, common goals, status or identity and enforced activity) while being employed (Jahoda, 1982). Consequently, when people are (or become) unemployed, it leads to deprivation of both functions, which has been found to negatively impact one's psychological well-being (Jahoda, 1982). By applying interventions that solely focus on easing financial hardship, the psychological aspects, which may contribute to making unemployment bearable, are deliberately left out of the equation, which may result in the unemployed remaining in a state of joblessness.

In general, research regarding programmes aimed at alleviating unemployment within the low-income communities is limited. Identifying existing employment interventions may

not only be valuable in recognising the most prominent needs in the labour market but also to promote more focussed action, and make an important contribution to rethink and redesign strategies in addressing employment encounters in South Africa. Based on the above statement of the research problem, the main aim of this study was to make an inventory of employment interventions in two South African townships. The specific objectives were:

- to determine the primary stakeholders involved in addressing unemployment in the involved communities
- to develop a framework to classify active labour market programmes
- to identify labour market programmes in Orange Farm and Emfuleni, implemented by included stakeholders, according to the framework, as a means of relieving unemployment; and
- to make recommendations for future research and practice.

Role players

Intervening to promote employment is regarded as a major challenge (IEG, 2013). Consequently, different role players execute initiatives. Organisations such as trade unions, banks, economic development agencies, universities and research entities have been found to be involved in addressing the issue of unemployment. While all the role players make valuable contributions, reports documenting labour market interventions consider the main role players to be the government, civil society organisations (CSOs – including international development organisations) and the private sector (CDE, 2008a; IEG, 2013; Mayer et al., 2011; National Treasury, 2011). Therefore, we elaborate on these role players next.

South African government

Definition: Government is described as the people who have the authority to govern a country (Oxford Dictionary, 2017). *Form:* The South African government consists of three spheres, namely, national, provincial and municipal (local), as well as state-owned enterprises (SOE; Republic of South Africa, 1996). *Regulated by:* According to South Africa's latest macro policy, the New Growth Path, it aims to develop effective strategies to reduce poverty, inequality and unemployment, by means of making job creation the focal point of the policy. The government aims to create a million jobs by involving role players such as the private sector and trade unions (National Treasury, 2011). *Contribution to unemployment:* As a means of achieving the desired goals, the national government has implemented several job creation programmes, such as the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP; Department of Public Works, 2009), the Community Work Programme (CWP) (Department of Cooperative Governance, 2011) and the Jobs Fund (CDE, 2016). Concurrent with the national policies and initiatives, both provincial and municipal governments have implemented numerous programmes and centres providing services such as skills training and entrepreneurship development, job placement services, career guidance and workplace readiness services.

During the literature review, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) were also identified as a role player. As both Orange Farm and Boipatong are located close to five relatively large institutions, who are all actively involved in community projects, HEIs seemed important to consider. Higher Education Institutions are classified as a SOE, and were therefore included as government initiatives.

Civil society organisations

Definition: Civil society organisations can be defined as non-government organisations mainly established to help vulnerable interest groups (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD] and United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 2014). *Form:* CSOs come in various forms, such as non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations (CBOs) and faith-based organisations (FBOs). Because of the similar humanitarian nature, International Development Organisations have also been classified under this category. *Regulated by:* Although somewhat regulated by codes, such as the *Non-Profit Organisations Act of 1997* (Non-Profit Organisations Act, 1997), these acts are unrelated to and have no impact on the purpose of CSOs' existence. Therefore, because of the voluntary, humanitarian nature of CSOs and international development organisations, they are under no obligation to perform certain duties. *Contribution to unemployment:* CSOs invest a great deal in the development of communities, which often include services for the unemployed, such as job training programmes, vocational rehabilitation, vocational counselling and guidance (Chitiga-Mabugu et al., 2013). Similar to CSOs, the purpose of international development organisations is to provide support to developing countries, by means of financial aid, usually aimed at human development, sustainability and alleviating poverty in the long term (Venter, 2015).

Private sector

Definition: The private sector refers to that part of an economy that is not ruled or owned by the government (Merriam-Webster, 2017). *Form:* The private sector comprises the Small, Medium and Micro Enterprise sector (SMMEs) and larger corporate enterprises. *Regulated by:* Labour market legislation such as the *Employment Equity Act* and the rise of Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment regulations, although initiated by the government, may impact private sector involvement. Furthermore, organisations may also become involved in community projects for the sake of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) reputation. However, according to the *South African Companies Act*, South African organisations do not have a legal obligation to engage in CSR projects (South African Companies Act, 61 of 1973). *Contribution to unemployment:* There are various ways in which the private sector can contribute to the plight of unemployment. Firstly, it contributes funds for skills development and workplace training through the Skills Development Levy (Skills Development Act, 1998). Secondly, it employs workers and claims a tax allowance through

recognised learnership and apprenticeship programmes (Levinsohn, Rankin, Roberts, & Schöer, 2014). These initiatives are essentially government initiatives; therefore, except for their involvement in these government initiatives and the odd CSR project, the private sector's participation in unemployment initiatives seems minimal and heavily underutilised (ILO, 2012).

Development of labour market intervention framework

There are different ways of categorising employment interventions. One of the objectives of the current study was to create a framework according to which the different types of employment interventions can be categorised.

Much of the available literature on labour market programmes distinguishes between 'active' and 'passive' labour market policies (see Kluge et al., 2016). Passive labour market policies are described by the ILO as generosity policies that replace labour income (ILO, 2010). Unlike other countries that offer unemployment grants, South Africa only has one such policy, the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF), which provides temporary relief to those who are financially distressed owing to losing their job (Bhorat, Goga, & Tseng, 2013). Whereas active labour market policies are strategies that emphasise labour market (re)integration, these policies focus on reducing unemployment by creating and improving employment opportunities and increasing the employability of the unemployed (National Treasury, 2011).

Furthermore, active labour market policies are often subdivided into labour 'demand' and 'supply' side. Demand-side initiatives are crucial in influencing economic growth, as they are primarily designed to create decent jobs and to incentivise the private sector by means of subsidies to create employment and training opportunities for the unemployed who are also inexperienced. It generally lies within the governments' responsibilities to manage and implement such macroeconomic policies (Altman & Potgieter-Gqubule, 2009; Ernst & Berg, 2009). The South African government has implemented a few programmes (e.g. EPWP, National Treasury's Jobs Fund and the youth wage subsidies) to serve as demand-side policy measures (Altman & Potgieter-Gqubule, 2009). Given the fact that South Africa has only one passive labour market policy, and limited demand-side interventions, covering only a narrow scope of this study, it was omitted from the study. Most government interventions have been directed at the supply side (initiatives promoting and enhancing the employability of the unemployed; Levinsohn et al., 2014). Therefore, the emphasis of the study was mainly on active labour market policies focussing on supply-side interventions.

Quite a number of studies have been conducted as a means of compiling a comprehensive list of supply-side employment interventions (Betcherman, Godfrey, Puerto, Rother, & Stavreska, 2007; Bertrand et al., 2013; Burchell, Coutts, Hall, & Pye, 2015; Cho & Honorati, 2014; Cunningham,

Sanchez-Puerta, & Wuermli, 2010; Dar & Tzannatos, 1999; Kluve, 2014; Kluve et al., 2014, 2016). However, within the South African context, these inventories are somewhat more limited (see CDE, 2008a; Development Bank of Southern Africa, 2011; Economic of Regions Learning Network, 2015; ILO, 2012). Based on both national and international literature, broad corresponding themes were identified. In most studies, three broad themes were noted: skills development programmes, business development opportunities and a variety of employment services.

According to the Economic of Regions Learning Network (2015), education and vocational training are crucial requirements to facilitate entry into employment (ERLN, 2015). Because many young people drop out of mainstream education, finding employment may be especially challenging (ERLN, 2015). One approach to enhancing their employability may be programmes that focus on education (Kluve et al., 2014). These programmes can be divided into formal and informal programmes. Generally, formal programme opportunities are offered to gain a formal education (also referred to as 'second-chance programmes'), whereas informal programmes are designed to teach basic skills and/or cognitive abilities, specifically for school dropouts (e.g. literacy and numeracy programme; Betcherman et al., 2007; Dar & Tzannatos, 1999; Development Bank of Southern Africa, 2011; ILO, 2011). Another approach linking with education seems to be vocational training programmes. These programmes are generally aimed at equipping the unemployed with the necessary trade- or job-specific vocational skills and/or practical work (e.g. internships, on-the-job training, and apprenticeships; Kluve et al., 2014). The first broad category was therefore identified as *education and expertise development*, comprising education and vocational training.

Another much required skill, particularly within the South African context, where job opportunities are limited, is entrepreneurship (CDE, 2008a). Entrepreneurship programmes cover a broad variety of skills aimed at empowering the unemployed to successfully establish and manage their own businesses (Kluve et al., 2014). These skills range from basic training on enterprise development (business plan writing and development) to business skills development (such as basic finance, marketing, sales and management programmes; Puerto, 2007). Programmes focussing on enterprise development may include financial support services (such as start-up loans or information regarding finance opportunities), mentoring and consultation services from experienced entrepreneurs. The second broad category was identified as *entrepreneurship and enterprise development* and consists of enterprise development, business skills training, financing and mentoring programmes.

Lastly, it seems that certain non-cognitive skills are required to deal with the challenges of the modern labour market. Although these skills are increasingly demanded by employers, it is surprising that some inventories overlook

programmes that are not strictly focussed on labour market activities (lessening economic hardship; see CDE, 2008a; Cho & Honorati, 2014; Dar & Tzannatos, 1999; Economic of Regions Learning Network, 2015; Godfrey, 2003; Grimm, 2016; Grimm & Paffhausen, 2014; Holden, 2013; IEG, 2013; ILO, 2012). Fortunately, other inventories regard initiatives aimed at increasing participants' non-cognitive skills, such as soft skills, life skills and behavioural skills, as important aspects for gaining employment (see Bertrand et al., 2013; Cunningham et al., 2010; Economic of Regions Learning Network, 2015; Goldin, Hobson, Glick, Lundberg, & Puerto, 2015; Kluve, Lehmann, & Schmidt, 2008; Kluve et al., 2014, 2016; Mayer et al., 2011; Puerto, 2007). A distinction is often made between services aimed at preparing the unemployed for the workplace, helping them to look for a job and teaching them necessary, non-technical, soft skills (e.g. interpersonal, time management and problem-solving skills). The last category was therefore labelled *employment services* and consists of workplace readiness, job-search assistance and soft skills development programmes.

Based on the combination of the different classifications of vocational interventions, a meaningful way to classify these employment programmes is summarised below:

Research design

Research approach

A systematic review methodology consisting of documentary research was used to collect the data for this article. Documentary methods in social research involve the systematic collection of data about a particular social phenomenon for the purpose of finding and/or understanding patterns and regularities in it (Nieuwenhuis, 2010). Furthermore, documentary research is described as a technique used to identify, classify, investigate and interpret written documents (Payne & Payne, 2004). Sources of documentary research include academic articles, official reports, governmental records, newspapers and other unpublished documents. In cases where limited information was available, structured interviews were conducted with individuals from the identified government departments, CSOs and private sector organisations, which were used to complement information found in the documentary search.

Research method

Research setting

Behaviour such as lack of motivation, withdrawal from the labour market and discouraged behaviour resulting from high unemployment rates is common in South African, particularly in townships (Van der Vaart, De Witte, Van den Broeck, & Rothmann, 2018). However, two townships in the Gauteng Province are particularly well known for their high unemployment rates and lack of resources. The first township, Orange Farm, falls within the municipal area of the City of Johannesburg. The community has a population of 76767 people, of which approximately 40% are unemployed

(Stats SA, 2012). Because South African metros (such as the City of Johannesburg) dominate economic activities and job creation (CDE, 2008a), the unemployed are gradually moving to these areas. Although it may be true that job creation efforts are easier to implement and have a better chance of success in metropolitan areas, the increase in people relocating there makes addressing unemployment an increasingly daunting task. In contrast, the second township, Emfuleni, has a population of 721 663 people, and is located in a non-metropolitan municipality (Stats SA, 2012). It is one of the three local municipalities constituting the Sedibeng district and has the highest unemployment rate of the three (34.7%; Stats SA, 2016). Although Emfuleni is largely urbanised, is strategically located and has a lot of potential for economic development, non-metropolitan areas are often greatly neglected. Labour market interventions should therefore be aimed at accommodating the needs of these communities and should regard them as equally important.

Data collection method

Based on the preliminary identified role players and framework developed from the literature review, an *additional* search was conducted to further identify employment programmes that exist in the particular communities. The search was executed by collecting and studying strategic documents (annual reports, development plans, budget reports and policy documents) from government departments, international development organisations and the private sector. Where insufficient information was available from the documents, the involved departments/entities/organisations were contacted (via telephone and email) to make appointments to conduct structured interviews, as a means of gaining more information regarding the programmes. In total, 467 calls were made, the majority to CSOs, followed by the government. In addition, a total of 426 emails were sent, with a general response rate of 27.7%, with the lowest from CSOs (22.6%).

Because of the nature of CSOs, specifically regarding their limited access to the internet, and availability of information on the internet, a somewhat different approach was used to collect data. A list with of all the registered CSOs was requested from the National Department of Social Development in South Africa. Inclusion was based on the CSO's objective; the aim of the CSO had to be focussed on services aimed at assisting the unemployed (e.g. youth services, adult education, employment and training services). Examples of categories that were excluded are: Services to animals, children, the disabled and the elderly, and HIV prevention and education and housing services – these CSOs were removed from the list. The remaining ($n = 389$) CSOs were contacted to schedule a meeting with the founder of the CSO. Of these, 62.9% were unreachable (called three times, no answer; no contact details; number did not exist; phone was switched off; wrong number). Another 17.7% of the programmes had indicated in documentation that they focussed on activities related to employment, but when asked about the aim of the programme, it appeared to be different than stated. Of those who could be reached, 4.6%

indicated that they were not in practice anymore, or had not yet been established, owing to financial constraints. Finally, of the initial 389 CSOs, only 26 (6.7%) CSO founders were interviewed. The interview questions used in structured interviews are available in Appendix 1.

Identified programmes had to adhere to the following inclusion criteria:

- They must have an eligible outcome variable specifically focussed on the unemployed.
- They must be implemented by the South African government (national, provincial, municipal or SOEs), CSOs or the private sector.
- They must be based in one of the identified regions; if not, they should apply to the unemployed in the regions (i.e. national incentive schemes).

Documents dated within the past 10 years that could be relevant to the study were obtained by searching general academic databases, as well as specialised databases. Academic databases included the Academic Search Premier, Business Source Premier, EbscoHost, Emerald Insight, Google Books, Google Scholar, JSTOR, ProQuest, PsycInfo, Sabinet, SACat, SAePublications, Science Direct, Scopus and Web of Science Government website. Specialised databases included Parliamentary Monitoring Group (PMG), Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) Evaluation and Publication Database, African Development Bank, Campbell Collaboration, Chamber of Commerce, Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), Development Bank of Southern Africa, Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA), ILO, Local Economic Development, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), South African Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), Development Cooperation Management and Information System (DCMIS), South African Department of Social Development database of non-profit organisations (NPOs), South African Local Government Association (SALGA), South African Regional Poverty Network, Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), World Bank Poverty Impact Evaluations and the Youth Employment Inventory (YEI).

Key terms that were used to obtain academic literature and non-academic document searches included employment interventions, unemployment, employability programmes, labour market initiatives, active labour market programmes/policies, passive labour market programmes/policies, youth interventions, employment inventory, directory, government programmes, national government, parastatals, state-owned entities, government departments, Sector Education Training Authority (SETA), provincial government, provincial programmes, provincial departments, provincial-owned entities, municipal government, municipal programmes, municipal departments, municipal-owned entities, NPOs, NGOs, FBOs, CBOs, private sector, international development organisations, skills development programmes, vocational training, life skills, education programmes, adult-learning,

entrepreneurship, enterprise development, bursary, financial assistance, community programmes, CSR, economic development strategy, integrated development plan, annual report, budget, growth and development strategy, policy, Emfuleni, Orange Farm, City of Johannesburg and South Africa.

Strategies employed to ensure data quality and integrity

After the role players were identified and the classification framework was developed, a list of people knowledgeable about employment programmes in the two communities and nearby areas were contacted. Informal interviews were held with identified experts. The purpose of the interviews was to get participants' input regarding the identified stakeholders and developed framework. After these interviews were conducted, the role players and the framework were finalised.

Furthermore, to ensure that data are accurately and reliably presented, an additional reviewer was consulted to assist with validating the data. After the framework was developed, the identified programmes had to be categorised according to the framework. In cases of uncertainty regarding the inclusion or categorisation of the selected programmes, deliberations were held and the different viewpoints were considered as a means of deciding. One researcher captured the data to ensure consistency. The collected data were reassessed by the additional reviewer.

Data recording

The development of the role player and categorisation frameworks were documented and continuously changed, until the final versions were decided on. Minutes of informal interviews held with experts were kept and referred to during the development of the frameworks. All documents pertaining to employment programmes that were accessed throughout the data collection phase were kept and documented in an excel sheet. Additional information gained from structured interviews were added to the excel sheet.

Data analysis

Possible stakeholders were identified using an inductive approach, whereas a deductive approach was used to develop the labour market intervention framework. Themes (demand and supply side) and subthemes (category of intervention) were identified, which were used to conduct a thematic analysis. Thematic analysis was applied as a means of identifying, analysing and reporting on themes within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Existing programmes implemented by selected stakeholders in the selected regions were categorised according to the relevant category within the developed framework.

Reporting style

The aim of the study is to present a comprehensive picture of the current employment initiatives in Orange Farm and Emfuleni. Findings were reported according to the identified role players and the developed framework. Such a

presentation of the findings may enable the researcher to identify possible gaps in literature and in practice.

Research participants and sampling methods

A combination of purposive and convenience sampling was utilised to identify and include interventions. Purposive sampling seemed applicable as documents were selected based on specific previously mentioned inclusion criteria. Furthermore, the researcher also held interviews and included interventions based on the access and availability of documentation and participants (Struwig, Struwig, & Stead, 2001). A total of 610 participants and 166 documents were consulted in this study; characteristics are shown in Table 1.

Most of the participants contacted to obtain data were from the CSOs (66.9%), followed by the government (27.2%). Participants were contacted mainly via email and telephone. In some cases, unsolicited visits (where no prior contact was made with participants) were used to get hold of them. Not all participants' responses led to findings. Where limited information was gained from documents, structured interviews were conducted. Documents from CSOs (31.9%) yielded the most information, followed by the national government (21.1%).

Ethical consideration

Prior to conducting the interviews, permission was obtained from the Basic and Social Science Research Ethics Committee (BaSSREC) at the North-West University.

Results

In total, 496 unemployment programmes were identified. It should be noted that the number of participants contacted

TABLE 1: Framework for classifying types of interventions.

Type of intervention	Description
Education and Expertise Development	Programmes offering any form of developing the unemployed individuals' cognitive or technical skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education (1) Formal: An opportunity to complete school or gain any form of primary, secondary or tertiary education; (2) Informal: Literacy, numeracy, business, computer and skills training. • Vocational training (trade- or job-related technical skills).
Entrepreneurship and Enterprise Development	Programmes and services focussed on empowering the unemployed to start their own businesses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enterprise development – Assisting or accelerating the development, sustainability and financial independence of a business. • Business skills training – Business skills and financial literacy training. • Financing – Providing or facilitating access to start-up grants, financial capital or credit. • Mentoring – Advisory services.
Employment Services	Services rendered to make the labour market more accessible to the unemployed, while providing them with opportunities to become more employable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplace readiness – Prepare for labour market (e.g. preparation of curriculum vitae, interview skills, financial assistance for job search, information services, transport subsidy, career guidance). • Job-search assistance – Services to assist the unemployed to look for/find/apply for a job (e.g. job search assistance, job matching services, job placement, providing information on jobs). • Soft skills – (1) Behavioural skills: interpersonal, communication, stress management and time management; (2) Psychosocial: Coping, motivation, resilience and self-efficacy.

and documents viewed does not necessarily reflect the number or distribution of the included employment interventions. In Table 2, the selected employment interventions, as implemented by the various stakeholders, as well as the distribution among the different types of programmes, are presented.

Figure 1 shows that a total of 496 interventions were ultimately included in the study. To gain a better understanding of the results, it is important to take into account that each of the included interventions consists of various components. For that reason, the ‘number of interventions’ column refers to the number of programmes implemented by each stakeholder, whereas the ‘number of components’ column refers to the total number of components the included programmes consist of. The percentages provided in the shaded columns indicate the distribution of the components across the different role players and the

various intervention categories. Different shades are used to indicate the frequency of the number of components.

Referring to the number of interventions implemented per role player, it is evident that the majority of the programmes were implemented by the national government (36.9%), followed by the municipal government (23.0%). A noteworthy finding may be that 86.3% of the interventions are implemented by the government (national, provincial, municipal and state-owned entities), compared to 11.1% by CSOs and 2.6% by the private sector.

A closer look at the distribution of the components that the interventions consist of reveals that 43.8% of components are directed towards enterprise and entrepreneurship development, followed by 36.9% aimed at education and expertise development, with only 19.3% focussed on employment services. In line with these findings, the subcategories yielded results showing that interventions consist mostly of vocational training (31.7%), followed by (to a lesser extent) enterprise development (17.1%) and business skills training (16.9%) components. However, significantly fewer components (5.0%) concentrate on soft skills development.

A further investigation of the subcategories has shown that within the education and enterprise development category, a major difference exists between the number of components aimed at education (5.2%) and vocational training (31.7%). It also seems that the subcategories enterprise development (17.1%) and business skills training (16.9%) are almost equally represented in the entrepreneurship and enterprise development category. However, quite a large difference is

TABLE 2: Characteristics of participants and documents (participants: *n* = 610; documents: *n* = 166).

Item	Category	Frequency	%
Role players contacted (<i>n</i> = 556)	Government – National	36	5.9
	Government – Provincial	27	4.4
	Government – Municipal	44	7.2
	Government – State-owned enterprises	59	9.7
	Civil society organisations	408	66.9
	Private sector	36	5.9
Documents viewed (<i>n</i> = 166)	Government – National	35	21.1
	Government – Provincial	14	8.4
	Government – Municipal	19	11.4
	Government – State-owned enterprises	32	19.3
	Civil society organisations	53	31.9
	Private sector	13	7.8

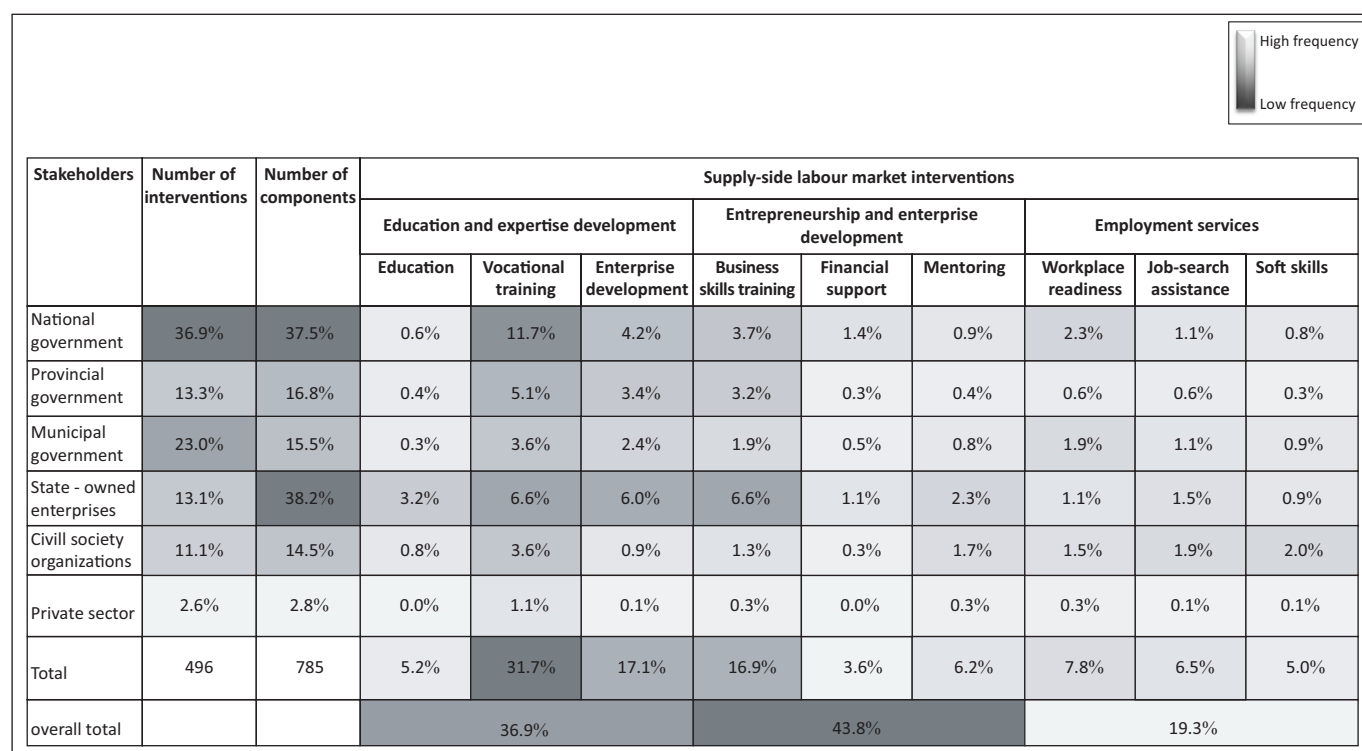


FIGURE 1: Findings of the study (*n* = 496).

evident when compared to financial support (3.6%) and mentoring services (6.2%). Lastly, no major differences between the employment services subcategories are evident; however, it is again evident that the soft skills component is the least focussed on (5.0%), compared to workplace readiness (7.8%) and job-search assistance (6.5%).

It is apparent from the shaded columns that the focus of all three government spheres – national, provincial and municipal – seems to be on vocational training (11.7%, 5.1% and 3.6%, respectively), followed by enterprise development (4.2%, 3.4% and 2.4%, respectively) and business skills development (3.7%, 3.2% and 1.9%, respectively). In contrast, only 2% of components of government interventions, combined, are directed at soft skills development, and even less (1.3%) on education. State-owned enterprises in general have similar findings to the other government bodies; however, skills development and business skills training are equally focussed on (6.6%), followed by enterprise development (6.0%). It is, however, evident that SOEs, compared to other government spheres, place considerably more emphasis on education (3.2%).

Finally, as the shaded columns give an indication of the overall distribution of the components, it seems that the employment services components of the programmes implemented by CSOs are relatively equally distributed compared to other stakeholders. This finding has led to further exploration, which yielded some interesting findings. When comparing the distribution workplace readiness, job-search assistance and soft skills development components, CSOs focus considerably more on these services (10.5%, 13.2% and 14.0%, respectively) compared to national government (6.1%, 3.1% and 2.0%, respectively) and municipal government (12.3%, 7.4% and 5.7%, respectively). If the same comparison is done with the private sector's focus on vocational training, it is indicated that 40.9% of the components of the private sector's programmes focus on skills development, compared to the national (31.3%) and provincial (30.3%) governments.

Discussion

Outline of the results

The main aim of this article was to identify labour market programmes in Orange Farm and Emfuleni, implemented by selected role players, according to the developed framework (Table 1). Three broad categories were identified as education and expertise development, entrepreneurship and enterprise development, and employment services. Based on the identified role players and categories of labour market interventions used in the framework, a total of 496 interventions, located in Orange Farm and Emfuleni, were included in the study.

The first noteworthy finding, specifically regarding the role players' involvement in implementing unemployment interventions, is that 86.3% of the interventions were

implemented by the government (national, provincial, municipal and SOEs combined). This finding should come as no surprise as the National Development Plan clearly states that employment is a key priority to all government departments (National Planning Commission, 2011). Despite these efforts, South Africa is still burdened with a high level of unemployment. Such an elevated unemployment rate may indicate that although the majority of programmes are initiated and implemented by government, the problem does not necessarily lie in a shortage of good policies and strategies but rather the lack of proper execution (Zagotta & Robinson, 2002). Consequently, owing to the lack of an execution plan from higher levels, uncertainty may be caused for other role players (including lower government spheres) regarding their roles and responsibilities in this undertaking. Not only are role players unaware of endeavours by other role players but they are also uninformed of programmes initiated by their own departments.

Civil society organisations are constantly faced with obstacles such as insufficient funding and the lack of necessary resources and proper systems coordinating funding and ensuring effectiveness. Despite these challenges, the results show that CSOs, in relation to other role players, are considerably more involved in providing employment services to the unemployed in the communities. Therefore, given the nature of CSOs, it is a remarkable finding that they are responsible for executing 11.1% of all the employment programmes. This involvement may be because it seems like a less expensive approach to have *some*, albeit limited, impact, or because of their first-hand experience in understanding the needs of the unemployed in the community. Regardless of the motive, the reality is that despite CSOs' hands-on approach in the communities, less attention is given to smaller-scale programmes, and the desired impact of their efforts seems limited.

In contrast to the government, only 2.6% of interventions were implemented by the private sector. These results are supported by a study conducted in 2011 by the International Development Organisation, in which it was found that the private sector seems uninvolved in employment initiatives (ILO, 2012). Although it was found that some organisations are involved in community programmes, these programmes were generally aimed at scholars, and limited to larger corporate organisations. It therefore seems that CSR is considered a prerogative of corporate organisations, simply because smaller businesses may not be able to afford such expenses (Perrini, Russo, & Tencati, 2007). In addition, the global economic collapse in 2008 has caused devastating job losses in the private sector. Thus, many organisations are forced to implement cost-cutting initiatives, causing the limited CSR initiatives to either be scaled down, or stopped. Because of the lack of devotion from the private sector, the benefits that may be reaped by the labour market, and ultimately by the unemployed, seem limited (ILO, 2012).

To have a sustainable impact on unemployment, the role players should ideally collaborate. Notwithstanding the

efforts of the government in driving current initiatives to address South Africa's unemployment crisis, there seems to be a lack of guidance from higher spheres of government to engage more with the CSOs, private sector and other government departments. Because of a lack of coordination, efforts and investments seem to be scattered, resulting in the failure to achieve the anticipated outcomes.

When exploring the content of programmes, the current study showed that interventions are mainly driven from an *economic perspective*. The results show that role players focus their time and money mainly on programmes that provide resources and that equip the unemployed with entrepreneurial and business development skills (43.8%), education and expertise development (36.9%), compared to only 19.6% on employment services.

Results indicating that entrepreneurship and enterprise development are accentuated are fortunate. However, in a country such as South Africa, it is quite understandable. Considering the shortage of job opportunities, it is crucial for people to create self-employment opportunities (Cho & Honorati, 2014), hence the strong emphasis on providing the unemployed with these types of resources (DBSA, 2011). Although financial support contributes only to 3.3% of the components, various other resources, such as developing business plans, business management skills training and consultation services, are put in place to help the unemployed develop and maintain stable enterprises. It is, however, unfortunate that the success of these initiatives may once again be put into jeopardy owing to a lack of information or a lack of dissemination of the information.

In a similar vein, this study proposes a prominent focus on the education and expertise development category (36.9%) in the included programmes. More specifically, from the vocational training subcategory, it was found that 31.7% of programmes have a component aimed at providing the unemployed with the required skills and preparing them for the workplace. Similar findings suggesting that approximately one-third of labour market programmes are aimed at skills development, are not uncommon (see CDE, 2008b; ILO, 2012; Kluge et al., 2014). Therefore, on the one hand, these results are expected. On the other hand, perhaps a less anticipated finding is the much-neglected focus on educational attainment for school dropouts (5.2%). Given the youth unemployment problem in South Africa (see Economic of Regions Learning Network, 2015; ILO, 2011), it is alarming how little is done to reintegrate these people into the system. This evidence suggests a lack of awareness and a lack of a sense of urgency of the severity of the unemployment matter (DBSA, 2011).

From the literature, it is evident that employment services are often neglected in labour market interventions (Bertrand et al., 2013; Kluge, 2014). In this study, it was found that 19.6% of elements of programmes comprise either workplace readiness, job-search assistance and/or soft skills development. A hindsight discovery is that many of these

programmes (particularly those implemented by the CSOs) mainly consist of providing the unemployed with basic life skills, such as youth recreation, HIV and family reproduction services, with few programmes focussing on employment services. Although it was known from the outset that, compared to expertise and entrepreneurship development, employment services are a neglected component in labour market interventions, finding that even less than 19.6% truly contribute to providing these services is a concern.

In a study conducted by Van der Vaart et al. (2018), it was found that 68% of unemployed people in the sample were classified as either 'desperate' or 'discouraged', indicating that they felt unmotivated and hopeless. Granting the impact of all the previously mentioned programmes, when considering the consequences of being unemployed, programmes focussing on skills such as being resilient, effective coping mechanisms and problem-solving seem crucial in helping the jobless deal with unemployment. In an experimental study conducted by Campos et al. (2017), microenterprise owners ($N = 1500$) were assigned to either a business or personal initiative training programme or a control group. Participants assigned to the personal initiative training programme managed to increase their firm's profits by 30% over a 2-year span, compared to 11% achieved by their counterparts (Campos et al., 2017). As suggested by the current study, it seems that the absence of psychosocial-driven programmes may be a much-neglected approach to solving unemployment (Patel et al., 2004).

Finally, some informative qualitative findings are worth mentioning to enhance our understanding of the context of the unemployed, particularly in Orange Farm and Emfuleni. The most time-consuming tasks of this study were to find documents containing relevant information, and to get hold of available stakeholders who are knowledgeable about the topic. Firstly, in the process of searching for relevant documents, it was evident that information regarding programmes was not readily accessible. It was challenging to find this information online, in hard copy or in correspondence with stakeholders, as responses to enquiries about information regarding employment programmes and government expenditure on these programmes indicated that not much information was available. Secondly, getting hold of stakeholders was a major barrier in the study. The average response rate, calculating all stakeholders and different approaches used to make contact, was less than 30%, and the majority could not provide any relevant information.

Findings also suggest that, in most cases, stakeholders themselves had limited knowledge of employment programmes, indicating that, even for them, information is not widely distributed. Role players' inability to provide this information is particularly concerning, as the mere purpose of their programmes is to assist those who need this information most. In order to conduct this research, ample

resources (phone lines, vehicle, unlimited internet, research funding and a research assistant who was familiar with these communities) were available, and yet it was a daunting task. Considering the severe lack of resources and the circumstances of the unemployed, an obstacle such as the absence of information makes an already challenging undertaking nearly impossible. Although substantial efforts to implement employment programmes cannot be doubted, without proper documentation and dissemination of information to stakeholders and beneficiaries, achieving the desired effects will remain difficult.

Limitations and recommendations for future research

The first limitation, and perhaps the most important, is that although the present study aimed to provide a comprehensive, broad representation of employment programmes in two communities, the list is not exhaustive. Relevant information was often unavailable, which automatically excluded some programmes.

Likewise, another limitation may be that the study was conducted only in two geographical areas in the Gauteng Province. As a result, findings cannot be generalised to other South African communities. The selected role players were limited to the government, CSOs and the private sector. These results may not be applicable to other organisations such as trade unions, banks, economic development agencies, universities and research entities. Given that a meaningful way to solve unemployment is an integrated, multi-sectoral, and multi-stakeholder approach, it is unfortunate that the study did not include other role players. It is therefore suggested that future studies broaden the scope and include a wider variety of role players.

In a similar vein, convenience sampling was used to collect data. Consequently, participants and documents included were based on their availability. Owing to the lack of response from participants and the unavailability of documents, collecting relevant and necessary information was quite a challenging endeavour. Because a response rate of less than 30% was obtained (although supplemented with documentation), an accurate reflection of what was intended to be reviewed may not have been achieved. Findings may, as a result, give a false representation of employment interventions, as well as role player involvement, again impacting on the generalisability of the results.

Information regarding evaluations and cost-effectiveness of programmes was exceptionally difficult to access. Therefore, some interesting avenues that future research could consider may be to explore evaluation approaches of the employment programmes. Information regarding the number of programmes that implement evaluative measures, the financial costs involved in implementing the programme

and the impact of the programme may lead to some valuable findings in the effectiveness and success of employment interventions.

In conclusion, the findings provide evidence that the intended objectives of the study have been achieved. Even though some limitations have been identified, the outcomes of this study hold practical implications for role players involved in addressing unemployment, and for future studies.

Conclusion

Although many programmes exist to assist the unemployed, these programmes are uncoordinated. Consequently, neither the involved role players nor beneficiaries are aware of the numerous available programmes. The compilation of an inventory of employment programmes may be valuable as it will assist in identifying the most prominent needs to the South African labour market (for the role players). Once the employment constraints have been recognised, interventions to assist the desired population to overcome those barriers can be identified and implemented (Cunningham et al., 2010). Such a comprehensive document not only promotes concerted action but also encourages and empowers stakeholders and possible policymakers to learn from one another, make informed decisions regarding further initiatives and reform misaligned strategies. As a means of addressing this gap, this article explored existing unemployment programmes, projects and interventions implemented in two Gauteng Province townships: Orange Farm and Emfuleni.

It was clear that there is a lack of programmes focussed on the psychosocial aspects of being unemployed. Finally, the findings suggest a lack of not only cooperation between role players but also communication and structures providing resources and information to the supposed beneficiaries, the unemployed. It seems that efforts need to be directed to creating systems where role players, and the unemployed, can be informed of the existing programmes.

Acknowledgements

The authors are grateful for the support of the Flemish Interuniversity Council, University Development Cooperation (VLIR-UOS), for awarding funding that enabled the research, authorship and publication of this article.

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no financial or personal relationships which may have inappropriately influenced them in writing this article.

Author's contributions

R.P. wrote the literature review and interpreted the results. S.R., H.d.W. and A.v.d.B. guided and edited the manuscript.

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Appendix starts on the next page →

Appendix 1

Interview protocol

Name of programme:

Inclusion criteria:

	Yes(mark with X)	No(mark with X)
Does the programme focus <u>strictly</u> on helping the unemployed?		
Is the programme implemented by either the government, private sector, or a civil society organisation?		
Is the programme based in Orange Farm or Emfuleni? (If not, is it applicable to the unemployed in Orange Farm or Emfuleni?)		

(The answer to all three questions should be 'yes' in order to continue, use own discretion)

1. What is the goal of the programme?

	Primary goal (mark with X)	Secondary goal (mark with X)
• Education and expertise development:		
▪ Education		
▪ Vocational training		
• Entrepreneurship and enterprise development:		
▪ Business skills training		
▪ Mentoring		
▪ Financing		
• Employment services:		
▪ Career development:		
o Workplace readiness		
o Job search		
▪ Non-technical/behavioural skills		

2. Description of programme (in case of an overlap in question 1).

3. Who are the involved stakeholders?

	Primary goal (mark with X)	Secondary goal (mark with X)
• Government		
▪ National		
▪ Provincial		
▪ Municipal		
▪ Parastatal		
• Higher Education Institution		
▪ Civil society organisation		
▪ Non-government organisation (NGO)		
▪ Non-profit organisation (NPO)		
▪ Community-based organisation (CBO)		
▪ Faith-based organisation (FBO)		
▪ International Development Organisation		
• Private Sector		

*In some cases programmes are driven in collaboration with another. Indicated primary and secondary stakeholder.

4. In what year was the programme implemented/registered?
5. Who are the beneficiaries of this programme (age and gender)?
6. How do you recruit these participants?
7. Is this programme aligned with specific government policies? If yes, can you elaborate?
8. Do you by any means measure the effectiveness or any possible impact of the programme? If yes, can you elaborate?
9. Do you by any means measure the costs involved in obtaining employment for participants? (General information on costs of the intervention, specific information on costs to society, specific information on costs to beneficiaries) If yes, can you elaborate?
10. As you most probably know, such a project has various phases, such as planning, development, implementation, and evaluation. Did you experience any problems during the planning phase of the programme? How did you address these problems/how would you suggest solving these problems?
11. What were the positive aspects during the planning phase of the programme?
12. Did you experience any problems during the development phase of the programme? How did you address these problems/how would you suggest solving these problems?
13. What were the positive aspects during the development phase of the programme?
14. Did you experience any problems during the implementation phase of the programme (either with content of the programme, or with the procedure in setting up and guiding unemployed through the process and reaching targets)? How did you address these problems/how would you suggest solving these problems?
15. What were the positive aspects during the implementation phase of the programme?
16. (Determine if applicable). Did you experience any problems during the evaluation phase of the programme? How did you address these problems/how would you suggest solving these problems?
17. What were the positive aspects during the evaluation phase of the programme?
18. Contact number:
19. Email address:
20. Organisation website:
21. Physical address:
22. Are you aware of any other programmes in Emfuleni or Orange Farm that is focussed on assisting the unemployed? If yes, can you elaborate?