

Perceptions Regarding Employment Prospects among Final Year Students as Determined by Field of Study, Gender and Race

Hillary Tomu

Department of Industrial Psychology, University of Fort Hare, King William's Town Road, P.Bag, X1314, Alice, 5700, South Africa

Abstract

This study investigated university student perceptions regarding their employment prospects and the extent to which differences exist regarding perceptions of employment prospects among beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of the South African government's affirmative action policies. A quantitative research design was used in which self administered questionnaires were distributed to respondents. A purposive sampling procedure was utilised. The data was subjected to a number of statistical analyses including one way ANOVA and T-test of independent samples. Results indicated that final Accounting and Pharmacy students reported positive perceptions about their employment prospects than final year sociology students. As hypothesised, female final year students were significantly more confident than male final year students about employment prospects. Also, black final year students were found to be significantly more confident than their white final year counterparts (non-beneficiaries of employment policies) about their employment prospects. It is concluded that differences regarding employment prospects among final year students can be accounted for by factors such as gender, field of study, race and whether or not one is a beneficiary of the SA government's affirmative employment policies.

Keywords: Employment Prospects. Field of Study. Gender and Race.

1.1 Introduction

The affirmative action policy was introduced about 13 years back by the South African government. According to Madi (1997), the policy was introduced in order to promote gender and racial equality in the workplace by providing equal opportunities to those who were previously disadvantaged during the apartheid regime. However, the policy also has a direct effect, either negative or positive, on particular individuals who are either beneficiaries or non-beneficiaries of the policies.

According to the South African government, the creation of employment opportunities for previously disadvantaged groups in South Africa is at the centre of affirmative action policy. The affirmative action policy raises a lot of questions for many relating to perceptions of one's employment prospects, for different individuals from the different racial and gender groups

and for students doing different programs in South Africa tertiary institutions. Individuals may ask themselves that, “am I getting the job because of my gender and race or because I am sufficiently qualified” and some may ask themselves that, “am I not getting the job because I am white or female or is it because I don’t have enough skills”. These questions are vital in asserting the perceptions of students.

The effects of affirmative action policy may be catastrophic in cases where one has invested time, money and effort into studying for a particular program only to find that at the end, due to certain policies, one has a small chance of getting a job. According to Furnham (2002), people beliefs about the potential barriers facing them may influence their behaviour during job interviews. This means that the affirmative action policy, although it may have an advantage of advancing previously disadvantaged groups, it seems like it’s reversing the benefits of the other group. In an interview or when one is writing a test to determine his/her ability, if one believes that one has a small chance of being employed, due to government policies, one will not perform well in the interview or the test. Lower expectations of employment may act as a self-fulfilling prophecy in that those who perceive themselves as being unlikely to find employment will be less likely to adopt proactive job-seeking strategies.

Affirmative action and Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) policies were introduced by the South African government in order to deal with the high unemployment rates that exist among individuals from the previously disadvantaged communities. This has inevitably resulted in some groups being more likely to receive job opportunities than others. It is, therefore, important to investigate the impact that such policies have had on the benefiting groups and those groups that can be said to be non-beneficiaries (Lawless, 2006) Therefore, one may ask the following questions:

- Are female final year students more hopeful of finding employment than their male counterparts?
- Are black job seekers more hopeful of being employed than their white counterparts?

The current study will also investigate whether the concern (or lack of concern) about the employment prospects can be attributed to external factors such as personal competencies or skills. The kinds of attribution made by an individual will, to a certain degree, contribute to how one handles the perceived possibility of employment. For example, if one is concerned about the possibility of not being employed and attributes this concern to a lack of skills on their part which is determined by the type of qualification they obtained and their field of study, they are more likely to study another course or enroll into postgraduate studies in order to stand a better chance of being employed. However, if one attributes negative prospects of employment to external factors, for example government policies, they are more likely to feel hopeless and to be less proactive because they might feel that nothing can be done to increase their chances of employment (Sonni, 1993).

The type of degree that one obtains is an important potential determinant of one’s perceptions on chances of being employed. Moleke (2005) argues that black students are more likely to

graduate in fields with lower employment prospects (e.g. social sciences) than whites. Hence, it has been reported that the majority of unemployed youth with tertiary qualifications are black (Development Policy Research Unit, 2006).

According to Koen (2003), although the labour demand for students with qualifications in the Social Sciences is relatively low, enrolments in these fields of study remain high. Moleke (2005) found that university graduates with qualifications in fields with a more professional focus, such as medical sciences found employment faster than graduates with a more general degree. The skills mismatch in South Africa is an important part of the graduate unemployment issue and one way of solving this problem is through improvements in the responsiveness of labour supply to the characteristics of labour demand (Koen, 2003).

1.2 Problem Statement

South Africa, which is a fast developing and transforming country, is faced with high levels of unemployment (ASGISA, 2006). This has an effect on students who found themselves without a job after completing their studies. Furthermore, after the apartheid regime, South Africa introduced different policies meant to promote equality and removal of discrimination in the workplace. Such policies include the affirmative action and Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) (Goldsmith & Venum, (2000). With this in mind, this has led to different perceptions of employment prospects from different group including both black and white students about their chances of getting employment. Although numerous studies regarding perceptions of employment prospects have been conducted, they were done in developed countries. To my knowledge, no study has investigated the effects of high unemployment rate and employment policies in South Africa on final year students' perceptions of their employment prospects. Therefore, this study serves both an exploratory and an explanatory purpose.

1.3 Objectives

The primary objective of the study is to investigate the extent to which gender, race and field of study affect final year students' perceptions regarding their employment prospects.

1.4 Hypotheses

1. As beneficiaries of employment policies, black final year students are significantly more confident than white final year students (non-beneficiaries of employment policies) that their degree will ensure employment.
2. As beneficiaries of employment policies, female final year students are significantly more confident than male final year students about their employment prospects.
3. As beneficiaries of employment policies, black final year students are less likely to experience feelings of hopelessness than white final year students (non-beneficiaries of employment policies).

4. Final year students who are classified as non-beneficiaries of employment policies in South Africa are more likely to attribute negative employment prospects to external factors, such as employment policies than the beneficiaries of employment policies.
5. Non-beneficiaries of employment policies are significantly more likely to rely on social networks and groups they belong to when seeking employment.
6. Final year students in Accounting and Pharmacy are more likely to report positive perceptions about their employment prospects than final year Sociology students.

1.5 Significance of the study

According to ASGISA (2006) a contributing factor to the skills shortage problem that persists in certain fields of study such as Natural Sciences, Healthy and Medical Sciences and Management Commerce professions is that a great number of graduates possess degrees from fields such as Social Sciences and Arts in which job opportunities are scarce in these fields. The study, therefore, will help students to choose the right field with more job opportunities when making decisions about which program to study. Furthermore, the study will enlighten the final year students in different fields of study, on what to expect in terms of employment opportunities when searching for employment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In the literature, the theoretical framework will open the discussion. There are two different theories underpinning this study. The first one is the attribution theory which states that individuals attribute certain causes to certain events. The second one is the expectancy theory, in which individuals are motivated to pursue a course of action if it leads to favourable outcomes. Since the study seeks to compare different perceptions of students from different races and sex, affirmative action will be discussed focusing solely on the impact it had on different races and sex. Thereafter, a look on the perceptions regarding employment prospects further adds to the review. The chapter will close by looking at the rising graduate unemployment in South Africa.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Attribution theory

Attribution theory concerns people's causal explanations for events. According to Heider (1958), attribution theory is about how common sense operates or how the man or women in the street explains events and the psychological and behavioural consequences of such explanations. Inspired by Heider (1958) writings, social psychologists and researchers have become increasingly concerned with and interested in the processes by which people explain their own successes and failures (Weiner, 1995).

According to Heider's basic assumption, people have an innate need to understand and control their immediate environments; hence individuals develop causal explanations for significant events as they experience them. As postulated by Rotter (1996), these beliefs about causality influence expectations which in turn influence subsequent behaviour. These theorists are, therefore, concerned with the perceived causes rather than the actual causes of events and consequences of those perceptions (Fostering, 2001). For example, possible consequences that might occur in the current study are that a graduate student who attributes low employment prospects to affirmative action policies is less likely to perform well during most of job interviews, while someone who attributes low employment prospects to an inappropriate field of study (field of study that does not belong in the scarce skills category) may change his or her study area to ensure better employment prospects.

2.2.2 Expectancy theory

Individuals have different sets of goals and can be motivated if they have certain expectations according to the expectancy theory (Vroom, 1968). This theory focuses on outcomes and it explains the processes that an individual undergoes to make choices. Vroom's (1968) theory is based upon three variables. These variables are Expectancy, Valence and instrumentality. Expectancy refers to the strength of a person's belief about whether or not a particular performance is attainable. This means that a person is more likely to be motivated when he/she perceived that a task is attainable. Instrumentality is a belief linking one outcome such as high level of performance to another outcome such as reward. On the other hand, valence refers to the emotional orientations people hold with respect to outcomes. In this study, if students believe that they have higher chances of getting employment after their studies, they are more likely to put more effort in their studies. On the other hand, if they perceive themselves as having low prospects of getting employment, they are likely to put less effort in their studies. Furthermore, if students believe that they have less chances of getting a job either because of perceived internal factors (e.g. luck) or external factors (e.g. government policies) they are more likely to put less effort when searching for jobs and in interviews. For example, if white students perceive the government policies such as the affirmative action as providing them with low prospects of getting a job, they are more likely to put less effort in searching for jobs. On the other hand, if they believe that they have higher abilities in what they do they are likely to work hard and attain their target goals. If, on the other hand, black students in scarce skills fields believe in their abilities and that they can get the job easily, they will put more effort in their studies and even perform better in interviews.

2.3 Affirmative Action

According to Mandela statement issued in (1991), "To millions, affirmative action is a beacon of positive expectations. To others, it is an alarming spectrum which is viewed as a threat to their personal security and a menace to the integrity of public life".

Madi (1997) states that affirmative action involves policies that take gender, race, or ethnicity into account in an attempt to promote equal opportunity. Affirmative action focuses its

attention more in the sphere of employment. Affirmative action was introduced to promote equality in the work place by removing barriers to employment in all the employment policies. Such barriers include direct and indirect discrimination. According to Adams (1993), Affirmative action may mean different things to different people. It may refer to racial preferential treatment for good reason; it could mean the redistribution of resources and opportunities. It can also refer to preferential financial assistance by business to institutions in communities that have been traditionally disadvantaged.

Affirmative action has varied definitions which indicate that people have different attitudes and perceptions toward affirmative action. These attitudes lead to different behaviours and perceptions in the workplace and in school. These attitudes tend to have an influence on one's emotional well being and the way that one perceives oneself and one's life.

2.4 Perceptions regarding employment prospects

It appears that there is very much limited research conducted regarding the perceptions of employment prospects held by final year graduates students. Most of the research found in the literature relates to comparisons of employment /unemployment attributions between those failing to find employment and those that happen to find employment (Feather & Davenport, 2000). These studies do not necessarily focus on graduate students and do not take into account variables such as gender, race as well as the type of field of study. A further observation is that many of the studies on unemployment tend to focus on the psychological effects of being unemployed (Donovan & Odd, 2002). Some studies have also examined the causal attributions and consequences of unemployment as well as perceptions of being unemployed. For instance Furnham (2002) compared the causal attributions concerning unemployment made by employed and unemployed respondents. Another example of such a study is that of Gurney (2001), who used a questionnaire that was based on the ideas of the neo-psychoanalytic thinker. Gurney (2001) looked at over 400 unemployed school-leavers. It was hypothesised that having a job helps school-leavers to clarify their perceptions of their identity and that not being able to get work leads to a confused perception of the self. It was concluded that unemployment has the effect of inhibiting development among school-leavers rather than inflicting trauma, as is sometimes popularly supposed. Furthermore, it was found out that over a four month period after leaving school, self-esteem increased only for those young people who obtained work.

2.5 The growth of graduate unemployment

South Africa is facing a high rise in unemployment. The unemployment rate stands at more than 30%. Most unemployment in South Africa is structural. This is whereby most employees in the labour market have skills; they are not needed in the economy. This, therefore, leads to a serious shortage of high-skilled workers in South Africa. The average shortfall in the public sector alone is about one in three senior managers (Robinson, Gedye, Mabanga & Tabane, 2005).

The other reason why unemployment rate is increasing is because many South Africans are being enrolled at tertiary institutions. There now seems to be more graduates in the economy more than the labour demand. Labour supply has outstripped the labor demand. According to Mlatsheni (2005), Young South Africans have become better educated over the last decade partly in response to the adverse labour market conditions for low-skilled workers and the high monetary returns to education.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter was the literature review concerning the relations of the variables in question. This chapter concerns the research methodology employed in this study. Methodology refers to the body of methods used in a particular activity or research process. Research methodology constitutes variables such as the population, size and description of the sample, as well as the research instruments used. It is the blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data in order to achieve the objectives of a research (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

3.2 Research design, population, sample and sampling procedure

A quantitative approach was used in this research. A quantitative design has been chosen because the aim of the study is the collection of primary data from a large number of individuals with the intention of making descriptive projections of the results to a wider population.

The population consisted of all the white and black final year Sociology, Accounting and Pharmacy South African students at a tertiary institution in South Africa. The approximate population was 550 students.

The actual sample size was 111 white and black female and male students from three different degree study programs; Accounting, Pharmacy and Sociology. The participants were final year students in one of South Africa's Universities. Participation in the study was done voluntarily. Participants were approached at the end of one of their final year module sessions to ensure that the sample consisted only of final year students and had the choice of participating in the study.

Of the 111 participants, 57% (n= 63) were males and 43% (n= 48) were females. Approximately 49.5 % (n=55) were blacks and 50.5% (56) were whites. 32% (n=35) belonged to the Faculty of Commerce and were studying Accounting. 33% (n=37) belonged to the faculty of Health Sciences and were studying Pharmacy while 35% (n=39) were from Social Sciences and were studying Sociology.

The research at hand used the convenient/purposive non-probability sampling procedure. Convenience sampling involves the researcher simply requesting volunteers from a group of people who meet the general requirements of the study.

3.3 Data collection and data Analysis

A questionnaire was used to collect data for this study. The questionnaire consisted of 4 sections. Section 1 consisted of demographic questions related to the participant's race, gender, field of study as well as whether he/she wants to continue with his/her studies or to start a business or to look for employment. Section 2 consisted of questions related to attribution. Section 3 consisted of questions related to job-seeking activities that the students perceived to be important when seeking employment. Section 4 of the questionnaire comprised of a short section designed to measure the level of concern regarding the possibilities of being unemployed.

A quantitative approach was used in this research to analyse data. The Statistica Analysis Software (SAS) version 9 was used to analyse and present data in this study and it involved descriptive statistics, use of t-tests and one way ANOVA.

3.4 Ethical considerations

Ethics are defined as a set of principles prescribing behaviours that are morally correct (Goodwin, 2002). Several ethical issues were addressed while collecting data. Permission to carry out the study was sought first from the dean of students and registrar of the tertiary institution used. This means there was honest and open declaration of the study project to the relevant authorities and participants. Furthermore, participation by respondents was done voluntarily and confidentiality was also maintained.

3.5 Concluding remarks

This chapter discussed the methodology used to conduct the present study. Indicated in the discussion was the population selected for the study, a description of respondents, sampling procedures, the variables investigated, the instrument used for data collection and the data analysis procedure. The next chapter will present the analysis of the results.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the results of the study are presented. The results will include a description of the respondents' career plans. It should be recalled that the purpose of the study was to investigate final year university students' perceptions regarding their employment prospects. In particular, the study sought to examine the extent to which perceptions regarding employment prospects would differ across gender, race and field of study.

4.2 Descriptive statistics

Results of descriptive statistics analysis are presented in the form of graphs and tables below. The demographic variables under consideration are gender, race, age, faculty, degree program, year of study and career plans for next year.

4.2.1 Biographical characteristics

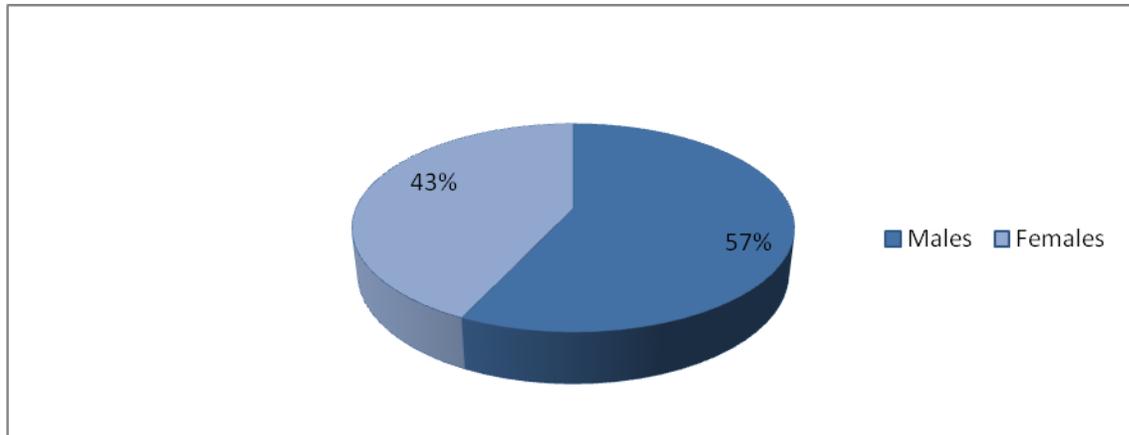


Figure 1: Gender of respondents

As shown in Figure 1, 57% (63) of the respondents were males whilst 43% (48) were females.

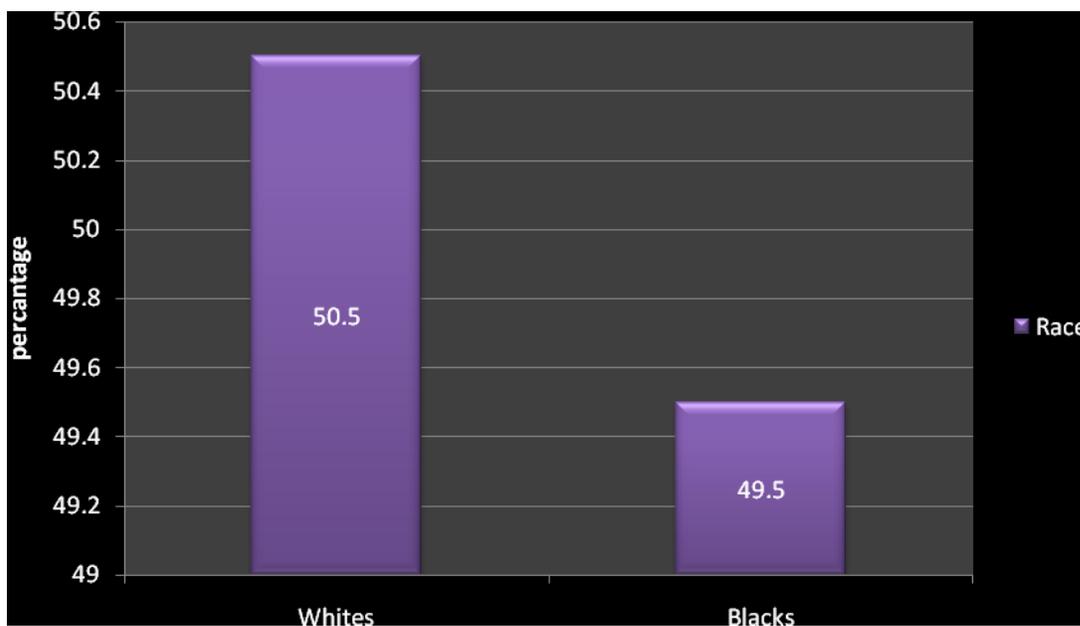


Figure 2: Race of respondents

Figure 4.2 illustrates the race distribution of respondents. 50.5 % (56) were whites whilst 49.5% (55) were blacks.

Table 3: Age of respondents

	Below 25 years	Between 25-35 yrs
Frequency	107	4
Percentage	96	4

Table 3 shows that 96% (107) of the respondents were below the age of 25, and 4% (4) were between the ages of 25 to 35.

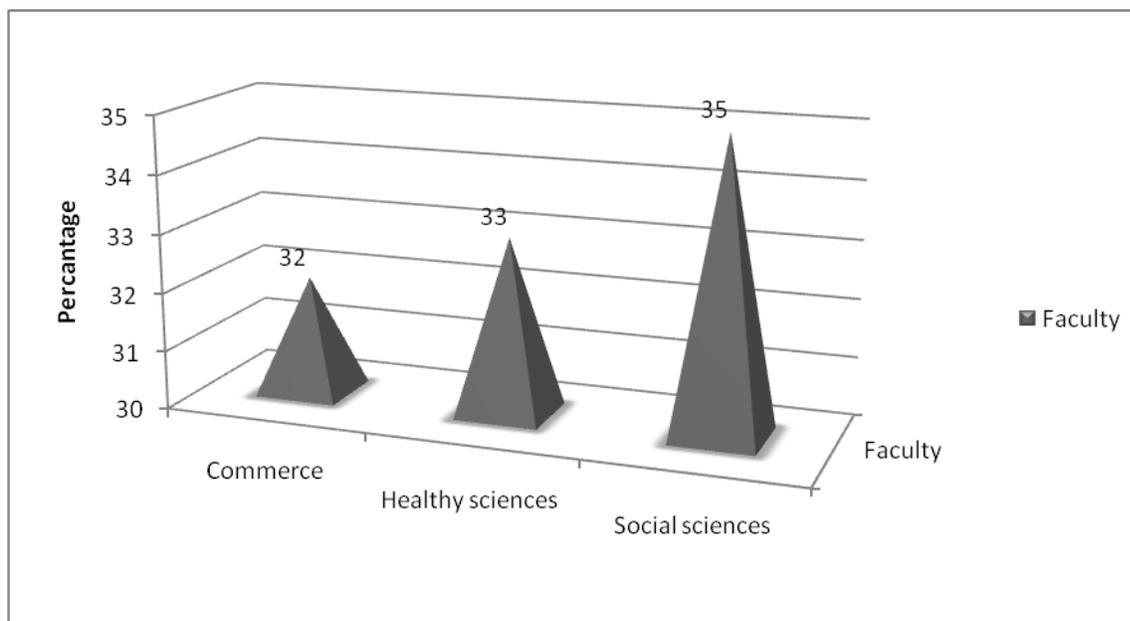
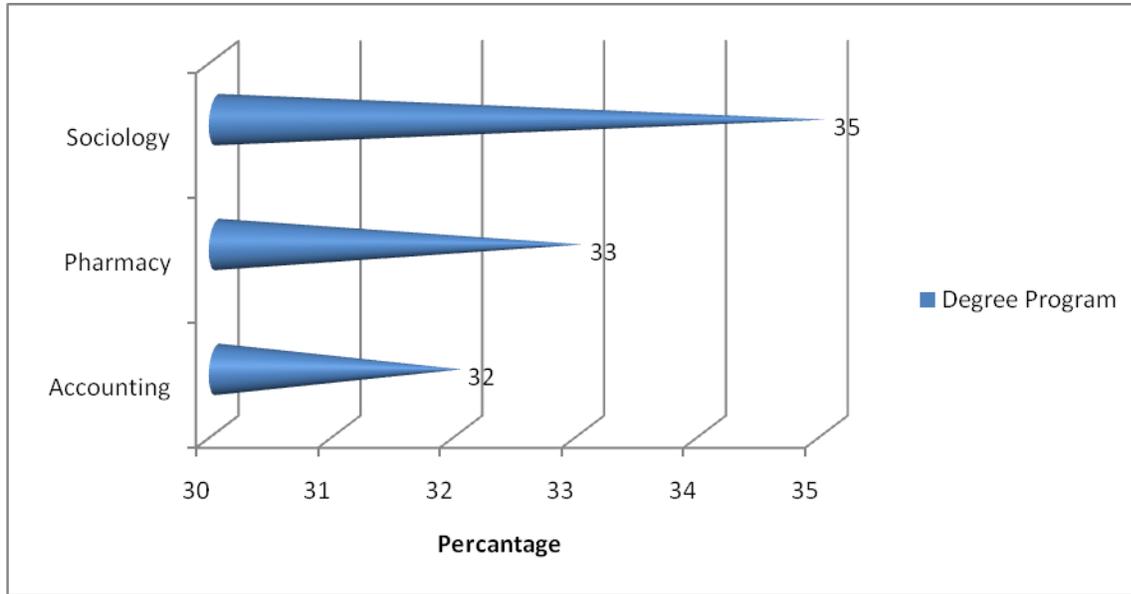


Figure 3: Faculty of respondents

Figure 3 shows that 35% (39) respondents were from Social Sciences. 33% (37) were from healthy sciences and 32 % (35) were from Commerce.



Figure

4: Degree program of respondents

Figure 4 illustrates that 35% (39) respondents were from Sociology. Pharmacy had 33% (37) respondents whilst 32% (35) of the respondents were from Accounting.

Table 4: Respondents' year of study

Year of study	Final year of 1 st degree	Honours year	Masters year
Frequency	96	9	6
Percentage	86	8	5

Table 4 indicates that 86% (96) were in the final year of their first degree. Final year respondents doing honours degrees were 8% (9). Those doing masters final year were 5% (6).

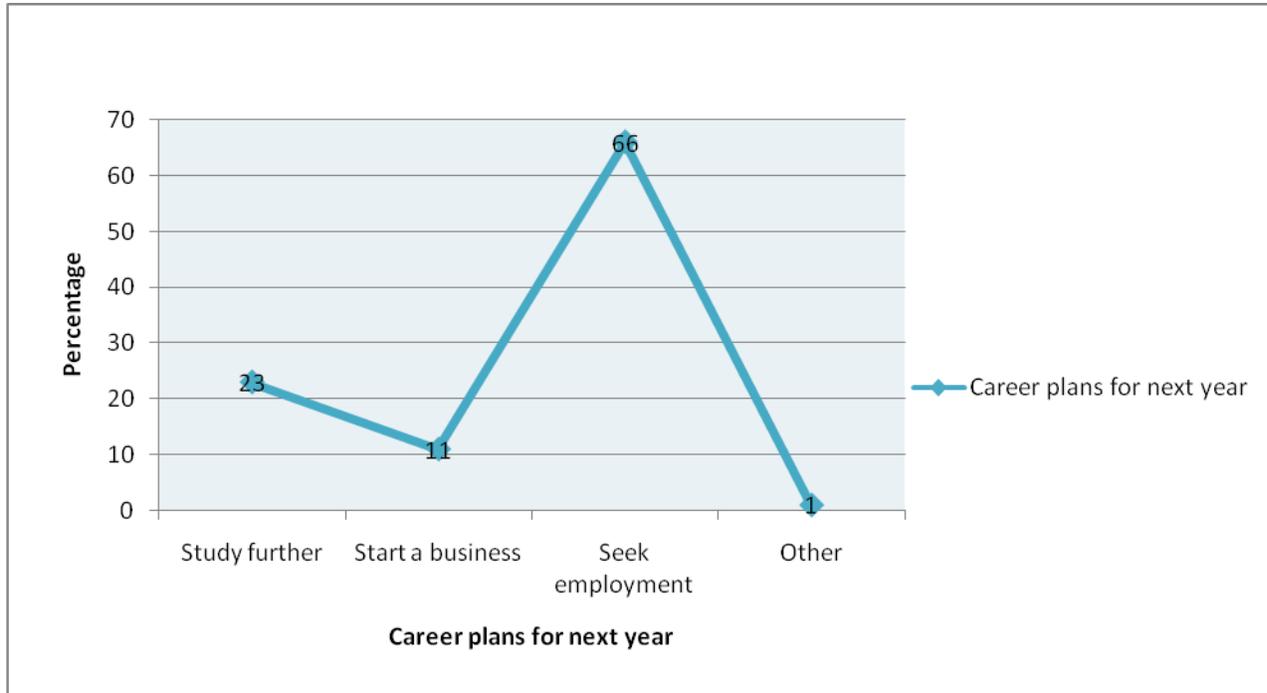


Figure 5: Respondents career plans

Figure 5 indicates that respondents wishing to seek employment were 66% (73). Those who wanted to study further were 23% (25), while those wanting to start a business were 11% (12). There was only 1% (1) who indicated interest in doing other things besides seeking employment and studying further.

4.3 T-test Analysis

A T-test for independent samples was used to determine whether there were any differences between female and male respondents on their perceptions regarding employment prospects. It was also used to determine differences between blacks and whites on their perceptions regarding employment prospects. Using T-tests, the means between groups are said to be statistically different when the p-value is less than 0.05, when the confidence level is 95%. The results are shown in Tables 5 and 6 below.

Table 5: T-test results for gender differences

T-tests; Grouping: Gender (Spreadsheet 2.sta) Group 1: females Group 2: males					
	Mean - females	Mean males	t-value	df	p
mter of lucky	1.750000	1.587302	0.67945	109	0.498294
qualifications	2.562500	2.380952	0.91591	109	0.361734
look hard	3.041667	2.936508	0.56283	109	0.574707

pul strings	3.250000	3.063492	0.79668	109	0.427368
right place	3.458333	3.380952	0.31715	109	0.751735
no jobs	3.354167	3.523810	- 0.73384	109	0.464625
black get work	3.208333	3.444444	- 0.98835	109	0.325171
hvnt tried hard	3.354167	3.428571	- 0.31431	109	0.753887
not good enough	3.625000	3.269841	1.47716	109	0.142517
afirmatve action	3.666667	3.158730	2.22267	109	0.028302
good luck	3.395833	3.126984	1.10287	109	0.272513
wel qualified	3.562500	3.285714	1.12839	109	0.261631
right varsity	3.625000	3.111111	2.17695	109	0.031641
competence	3.083333	3.190476	- 0.43115	109	0.667211
Gender factor	3.504167	3.126984	2.17180	109	0.027027
Race no role	3.395833	3.126984	1.13551	109	0.258651
field of study factor	3.354167	3.333333	0.08893	109	0.929303
CV	2.229167	2.403226	- 0.58644	108	0.558802
newspaper	2.604167	2.920635	- 1.33018	109	0.186234
aptitude test	3.041667	3.238095	- 0.89404	109	0.373272
Send emails	3.291667	3.460317	- 0.77241	109	0.441542
from lecturers	3.437500	3.476190	- 0.15315	109	0.878565
volonteer work	3.500000	3.825397	- 1.38010	109	0.170381
seek help	3.625000	3.571429	0.20923	109	0.834662
part time empl	3.458333	3.619048	- 0.66246	109	0.509075
internet job sea	3.562500	3.539683	0.09230	109	0.926627
job placement	3.604167	3.492063	0.44646	109	0.656154
employ prspcts	2.041667	2.031746	0.03535	109	0.971864
difficult	2.333333	2.476190	- 0.61471	109	0.540029
degree easier	2.770833	2.984127	- 0.94442	109	0.347042
whites less anxi	3.229167	3.539683	- 1.46104	109	0.146880

empl policies	3.458333	3.523810	- 0.27724	109	0.782121
not diff fin job	3.666667	3.650794	0.07864	109	0.937464
black less anxi	3.395833	3.333333	0.27140	109	0.786596
unfair	3.041667	3.174603	- 0.56396	109	0.573938
degree mke it diff	2.875000	3.031746	- 0.65284	109	0.515236
female les anxi	2.795833	2.277778	2.61283	109	0.039110

*significant at the 0.05 level

Table 5 indicates that, as compared to their male counterparts, female respondents (1) believe that government policies and affirmative action are to blame the young people being out of work (mean scores 3.67 vs 3.16, $t = 2.22$, $df = 109$, $p = 0.03$) (2) agree that going to the right university and having the right contacts is a big part of getting a job (mean scores 3.63 vs 3.11, $t = 2.18$, $df = 109$, $p = 0.03$) (3) believe that gender is a major determining factor to whether one is employed or not (mean scores 3.13 vs 3.50, $t = 2.17$, $df = 109$, $p = 0.02$) (4) agree that female final year students are probably less anxious about finding employment (mean scores 2.78 vs 2.29, $t = 2.61$, $df = 109$, $p = 0.04$).

Table 6: T-test results for race differences

T-tests; Grouping: Race (Spreadsheet 2.sta) Group 1: white Group 2: black					
	Mean white	Mean - black	t-value	df	p
mter of lucky	1.696429	2.618182	2.32925	109	0.042600
qualifications	2.500000	2.418182	0.41531	109	0.678728
look hard	3.089286	2.872727	1.17543	109	0.242385
pul strings	3.250000	3.036364	2.92188	109	0.048629
right place	3.410714	3.418182	-0.03087	109	0.975426
no jobs	3.285714	3.618182	-1.46199	109	0.146622
black get work	3.496429	3.790909	2.24731	109	0.014957
hvnt tried hard	3.321429	3.472727	-0.64596	109	0.519660
not gud enough	3.375000	3.472727	-0.40647	109	0.685193
afirmatve action	3.392857	3.163636	2.12623	109	0.029786
good luck	3.250000	3.236364	0.05614	109	0.955331
wel qualified	3.464286	3.345455	0.48661	109	0.627511
right varsity	3.303571	3.363636	-0.25146	109	0.801932
competence	3.125000	3.163636	-0.15679	109	0.875698
Gender factor	3.089286	3.145455	-0.22810	109	0.819992
Race no role	3.178571	3.309091	2.55386	109	0.040809
field of study factor	3.285714	3.400000	-0.49286	109	0.623105
CV	2.178571	2.481481	-1.03219	108	0.304290

newspaper	2.714286	2.854545	-0.59115	109	0.555644
aptitude test	3.017857	3.290909	-1.25872	109	0.210822
Send emails	3.160714	3.618182	2.15310	109	0.033515
from lecturers	3.303571	3.618182	-1.26586	109	0.208261
volunteer work	3.714286	3.654545	0.25358	109	0.800298
seek help from groups	3.714286	3.472727	0.95591	109	0.341234
part time empl	3.660714	3.436364	0.93515	109	0.351781
internet job sea	3.642857	3.454545	0.77086	109	0.442460
job placement	3.535714	3.545455	-0.03911	109	0.968872
employ prspcts	1.964286	2.109091	-0.52141	109	0.603140
difficult	2.375000	2.454545	-0.34503	109	0.730740
degree easier	2.892857	2.990909	0.00867	109	0.993099
whites less anxi	3.303571	3.509091	2.97068	109	0.033858
empl policies	3.546429	3.445455	-0.42336	109	0.672867
not diff fin job	3.678571	3.636364	0.21107	109	0.833225
black less anxi	3.421429	3.600000	-2.34441	109	0.031205
unfair	3.089286	3.145455	-0.24020	109	0.810629
degree mke it diff	2.767857	2.163636	-1.68175	109	0.095481
female les anxi	2.589286	3.072727	-2.16175	109	0.032825

*significant at the 0.05 level

Table 6 shows that as compared to white respondents, black respondents (1) believe that it is mainly a matter of luck whether a graduate gets a job or not (mean scores 2.62 vs 1.69, $t= 2.33$, $df= 109$, $p= 0.04$) (2) agree that it is mainly black graduates who have been able to get work (mean scores 3.79 vs 3.49, $t= 2.25$, $p= 0.01$) (3) believe that race plays no role in one being employed or not (mean scores 3.30 vs 3.178 $t= 2.55$, $p= 0.04$) (4) agree that sending emails of enquiry are important when one is seeking employment (mean scores 3.61 vs 3.16, $t= 2.15$, $df= 109$, $p= 0.03$) (5) believe that white final year students are less anxious about finding employment (mean score 3.50 vs 3.30, $t= 2.97$, $df= 109$, $p= 0.03$) (6) agree that black final year students are probably less anxious about finding employment (mean scores 3.62 vs 3.40, $t= 2.34$, $df= 109$, $p= 0.03$) (7) believe that female final year students are probably less anxious about finding employment (mean scores 3.07 vs 2.58, $t= 2.16$, $df= 109$, $p= 0.03$).

Compared to black respondents, white respondents (1) believe that most graduates who have got a job had someone “pulling strings” for them (mean scores 3.25 vs 3.03, $t= 2.92$, $df=109$, $p= 0.04$) (2) agree that government policies such as affirmative action are to blame the young people being out of work (mean scores 3.39 vs 3.163, $t= 2.12$, $df= 109$, $p= 0.02$).

4.4 One way ANOVA

One way analysis of variance was used to determine whether there were any significant differences among Commerce (Accounting), Healthy Sciences (Pharmacy) and Social Sciences

(Sociology) respondents on their perceptions regarding employment prospects. Using ANOVA, the means between groups are said to be statistically different when the p-value is less than 0.05, at 95% confidence level. The results are shown in table 7 below.

Table 7: One way ANOVA results for program differences

Variable	Mean (Commerce: Accounting)	Mean (Healthy sciences: Pharmacy)	Mean (Social sciences: Sociology)	F Value	P Value
Mater of lucky	3.000000	5.000000	3.500000	1.608026	0.205084
Qualifications	3.375000	3.666667	4.000000	1.904365	0.153930
Look hard	2.625000	3.000000	3.000000	1.179274	0.311466
Pull strings	2.916667	3.333333	4.000000	1.278275	0.282736
Right place	3.458333	2.000000	4.250000	0.955285	0.387959
No jobs	3.708333	4.000000	3.333333	1.186956	0.309134
Black get work	3.291667	3.500000	3.000000	0.003462	0.996544
Haven't tried hard	3.571429	3.333333	2.000000	0.188958	0.828097
Not good enough	3.041667	1.000000	3.250000	0.042409	0.958494
Affirmative action	2.916667	3.000000	3.500000	0.681298	0.508141
Good luck	3.000000	3.166667	3.500000	0.921889	0.400903
Well qualified	3.775000	3.666667	3.650000	0.430810	0.651105
Right university	3.333333	1.000000	3.333333	0.454517	0.635974
Competence	2.916667	2.000000	3.333333	0.889739	0.413780
Gender no factor	2.958333	3.333333	3.000000	0.935732	0.395485
Race no role	3.041667	2.000000	3.500000	0.631397	0.533818
Field of study factor	3.041667	3.466667	3.600000	3.324619	0.023512
CV	2.208333	3.500000	2.250000	3.837075	0.024583
Newspaper	2.458333	3.000000	2.250000	0.628534	0.535331
Aptitude test	2.666667	3.000000	3.250000	0.707806	0.495016
Send emails	3.083333	1.000000	2.750000	0.191074	0.826352
Help from lecturers	3.857143	3.000000	2.833333	0.730533	0.484039
Do volunteer work	3.341667	3.333333	3.550000	3.677924	0.028524
Help from groups	3.416667	3.500000	3.250000	1.059359	0.350285
Part time employ	3.208333	3.166667	2.000000	0.812965	0.446261
Internet job	3.208333	3.166667	3.750000	1.176947	0.312176

search					
Job placement	3.375000	3.666667	3.750000	1.508249	0.225964
Employ prospects	1.708333	3.166667	3.000000	8.894905	0.000267
Difficult	2.571429	2.500000	4.000000	1.749101	0.178866
Degree easier	2.916667	3.750000	2.333333	4.466127	0.009728
Whites less anxious	3.583333	3.666667	3.500000	0.412456	0.663070
Employ policies	3.791667	1.000000	3.250000	2.308754	0.104316
Not diff finding jobs	3.833333	3.000000	3.500000	1.061198	0.349654
Blacks less anxious	3.541667	3.000000	3.000000	0.140272	0.869282
Unfair	2.958333	5.000000	2.750000	1.140776	0.323426
Degree make it diff	2.875000	3.166667	3.500000	3.056956	0.044664
Female less anxious	2.875000	2.000000	2.500000	0.187070	0.829656

*Significant level at the 0.05 level

Table 7 shows that, compared to Pharmacy and Accounting respondents, respondents studying Social Sciences (Sociology) degree (1) believe that the chances of being employed will depend on the field of study that one has graduated in (mean scores 3.60 vs 3.46 vs 3.04, $f= 3.32$, $p= 0.02$) (2) agree that doing volunteer work related to chosen job is important when one is seeking employment (mean scores 3.55 vs 3.34 vs 3.33, $f=3.67$, $p= 0.02$) (3) believe that the degree that I am studying for will make it difficult for me to be employed (mean scores 3.50 vs 3.16 vs 2.87, $f= 3.056$, $p= 0.04$).

On the other hand, compared to Social Sciences (Sociology) and Commerce (Accounting) respondents, Healthy Sciences (Pharmacy) respondents (1) believe that thinking about the prospects of employment can be stressful at times (mean scores 3.00 vs 3.16 vs 1.70, $f= 8.89$, $p= 0.000267$) (2) agree that the degree they are studying for will make it easier to find the employment (mean scores 3.75 vs 2.91 vs 2.33, $f= 4.46$, $p= 0.0097$) (3) believe that writing up and sending CV is important when one is seeking employment (mean scores 3.50 vs 2.25 vs 2.20, $f= 3.83$, $p= 0.02$).

4.5 Hypothesis Testing

The present study had six hypotheses. In order to test the hypotheses, items from the questionnaire measuring the key aspects stated in each hypothesis were grouped together. One way ANOVA was then used to test the hypotheses.

Hypotheses 1: As beneficiaries of employment policies, black final year students are significantly more confident than the white final year students (non-beneficiaries of employment policies) that their degree will ensure employment.

Table 8: One way ANOVA that degree will ensure employment

Variable	Mean blacks	Mean whites	F value	P value
Field of study factor	3.151515	2.982142	3.10700	0.038268
Degree make it difficult				
Degree make it easier				

Table 8 shows that black final year students were significantly more confident than the white final year students (non-beneficiaries of employment policies) that their degree will ensure employment (mean scores 3.2 vs 3.0, $F = 3.1$, $p = 0.0$). The hypothesis was, therefore, not rejected.

Hypothesis 2: As beneficiaries of employment policies, female final year students are significantly more confident than the male final year students about their employment prospects.

Table 9: One way ANOVA for confidence

Variable	Mean females	Mean males	F value	P value
Gender factor	3.1523785	2.700000	3.108000	0.048737
Female less anxious				

Table 9 shows that female final year students were significantly more confident than the male final year students about their employment prospects (mean scores 3.2 vs 2.7, $F = 3.1$, $p = 0.0$). The hypothesis was, therefore, not rejected.

Hypothesis 3: As beneficiaries of employment policies, black final year students are less likely to experience feelings of hopelessness than the white final year students (non-beneficiaries of employment policies).

Table 10: One way ANOVA for feelings of hopelessness

Variable	Mean blacks	Mean whites	F value	P value
Black get work	3.503733	3.343344	3.54210	0.036545
Race no role				
Blacks less anxious				
Employment policies				

As shown in Table 10, black final year students were less likely to experience the feelings of hopelessness than the white final year students (non-beneficiaries of employment policies) (mean scores 3.5 vs 3.3, $F = 3.5$, $p = 0.0$). The hypothesis was, therefore, not rejected.

Hypothesis 4: Final year students who are classified as non-beneficiaries of employment policies (whites) in South Africa are more likely to attribute negative employment prospects to external factors, such as employment policies, than the beneficiaries of employment policies.

Table 11: One way ANOVA for the influence of external factors

Variable	Mean blacks	Mean whites	F value	P value
Jobs not there	3.263524	3.209375	0.54793	0.918420
Affirmative action				
Matter of lucky				
Sheer good lucky				
Employment policies				
Unfair				
Right place, right time				
Right University & contacts				

Table 11 illustrates that there was no significant difference between blacks and whites in terms of attributing negative employment prospects to external factors, such as employment policies (mean scores 3.3 vs 3.2, $F = 0.5$, $p = 0.9$). The hypothesis was, therefore, rejected.

Hypothesis 5: Non-beneficiaries of employment policies (whites) are significantly more likely to rely on social networks and groups they belong to when seeking employment.

Table 12: One way ANOVA for social networks and groups

Variable	Mean blacks	Mean whites	F value	P value
Pulling strings	3.3794642	3.390909	0.102940	0.323421
Help from lecturers				
Help from groups				
Right University				

Table 12 shows that there was no significant difference between blacks and whites in terms of relying on social networks and groups they belong to when seeking employment (mean scores 3.4 vs 3.4, $F = 0.1$, $p = 0.3$). The hypothesis was, therefore, rejected

Hypothesis 6: Final year students in Accounting and Pharmacy are more likely to report positive perceptions about their employment prospects than the final year Sociology students.

Table 13: One way ANOVA for positive perceptions

Variable	Mean Acco	Mean Phar	Mean Soc	F value	P value
Qualifications	3.616600	3.543334	3.416666	3.068940	0.046840
Well qualified					
Field of study factor					
Degree make it easier					
Degree make it difficult					

Table 13 shows that final year Accounting and Pharmacy students reported positive perceptions about their employment prospects than the final year Sociology students (mean scores 3.6 vs 3.5 vs 3.4, $f = 3.1$, $p = 0.0$). The hypothesis was, therefore, not rejected.

4.6 Concluding remarks

In this chapter, the results of the current study were presented. The chapter presented demographic characteristics of respondents using descriptive statistics. Differences between the female and male respondents and also differences between blacks and whites on their perceptions regarding employment prospects were determined using T-tests. To determine differences among Commerce (Accounting) respondents, Healthy Sciences (Pharmacy) respondents and Social Sciences (Sociology) respondents on their perceptions regarding employment prospects, one way ANOVA was used. Lastly, different hypothesis were tested using one way ANOVA. A discussion of the results will be presented in the following chapter.

DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the results of the study. In this chapter, the discussion of the outlined results is presented.

5.2 Discussion

It should be recalled that the purpose of this study was to investigate final year students' perceptions regarding their employment prospects. It was hypothesised that non-beneficiaries of affirmative action policies would be more likely, than the beneficiaries, to make external attributions when making judgments regarding their chances of employment. As mentioned in chapter 3, the second section of the questionnaire was designed to assess the perceptions regarding the roles that specific external and internal factors such as luck, qualifications, government policies and responsibility play in determining the employment prospects. Also of interest in the current study, was whether perceptions regarding employment prospects would differ significantly by race, gender and field of study.

The analysis showed that black final year students are significantly more confident than white final year students (non-beneficiaries of employment policies) that their degree will ensure employment. This finding is consistent with Furnham (2002) studies, who found that blacks had better chances of getting employment because of affirmative action. According to Furnham (2002) the affirmative action was introduced to redress imbalances and advancing previously disadvantaged groups thus giving them an upper foot in the job market. Black participants were, therefore, more likely to support statements such as, *“Chances of being employed will depend on the field of study that one has graduated in, “The degree that I am studying for will make it easier to find employment”*. On other hand, white participants are more likely to support statement such as, *“The degree that I am studying for will make it difficult for me to be employed”*. This finding is in contrast to Moleke (2005) study which found that African blacks are still finding it difficult to find employment in the labour market. This is because they are more likely to choose study areas with lower employment prospects such as Social Sciences, thus making it difficult for them to get employment as compared to whites. Furthermore, Moleke (2005) states that because of continued discrimination favouring whites in the job market, blacks are disadvantaged in the labour market, thus making it difficult for them to find employment.

Results indicated that female final year students are significantly more confident than the male final year students about their employment prospects. This is likely because of the gender based affirmative action which gives women first preference in the labour market as a way of redressing imbalances created in the apartheid period. Females, therefore, endorsed statements such as, *“Gender is a major determining factor to whether one is employed or not, “Female final year students are probably less anxious about finding employment”*.

There was a significant difference between females and males that government policies such as affirmative action are to blame the young people being out of work. This can be related to why females feel more confident about their employment prospects. If affirmative action is blamed for making other groups like males struggle to find employment, then it makes sense for women to recognise that affirmative action has led to some other people being out of work. It is also of particular interest to note that females endorsed that going to the right university and having the right contacts is a big part of getting a job. This is, however, in contrast to popular belief that it's easy for females to get employment, thus there will be no need for them to rely on having good contacts or having a qualification from the right university in order to get the employment.

As beneficiaries of employment policies, black final year students are less likely to experience feelings of hopelessness than the white final year students (non-beneficiaries of employment policies). This has been shown by the findings of the current study and is also supported by Lawless (2006) who asserts that black job seekers are more hopeful of being employed than their white counterparts. This has also been indicated by the more number of black respondents who endorsed the statement, *“It is mainly the black graduate who has been able to get work”*. The fact that it is blacks who have been able to get work indicates that they are unlikely to experience feelings of hopelessness. This was further enhanced by the endorsement

by blacks of the statement that, *“Black final year students are probably less anxious about finding employment”*. However, Kingdon and Knight (2000) beg to differ with the results of the current study. Kingdon and Knight (2000) argue that high unemployment is often associated with social problems such as poverty, crime, violence and can create a sense of hopelessness, uselessness and idleness among the black youths.

With regard to employment policies, more whites as compared to blacks believe that they create a sense of hopelessness in them. This is probably because of the creation of affirmative action and black empowerment policies which have led to black groups being given an upper foot in the labour market. These results suggest that non-beneficiaries, more specifically whites, were more likely to perceive employment policies as an obstacle that prevents them from finding employment. These individuals would, therefore, be more likely to argue that affirmative action is mainly based on a purely preferential approach where it is simply a matter of preferring black employees to whites (Turner & Pratkanis, 1994). This kind of thinking can lead some non-beneficiaries to believe that their employment prospects are completely out of their control and can therefore lead them to not invest much effort in trying to obtain employment. This will, therefore, lead to idleness and feelings of hopelessness by the non-beneficiary group.

Whites further assert their belief that blacks are given more preference in terms of employment when they disagreed with the statement that, *“Race does not play a role in one being employed or not*. This means that they believe that being white or black plays a major role if one is to be employed. In other words, being a black person means being in a position to get employment because of government policies. More blacks were in support of the statement, thus one can safely say that because of affirmative action and other government policies, whites are at a disadvantage in the labour market. In this case, whites disagreed with the statement that, *“White final year students are probably less anxious about finding employment”*. The fact that whites attribute negative employment prospects to employment policies means they are likely to be more anxious about finding employment than their black counterparts.

It was hypothesised that final year students who are classified as non-beneficiaries of employment policies in South Africa are more likely to attribute negative employment prospects to external factors, such as employment policies, than the beneficiaries of employment policies. However, results indicate that there was no significant difference between whites (non-beneficiaries) and blacks (beneficiaries) and hence the hypothesis was rejected. It is expected that whites are likely to endorse statements such as, *“Getting a job depends on sheer good luck”*, *“Employment policies create a sense of hopelessness in me about being employed”*. This is because, according to Madi (1997), whites blame employment policies for being responsible for their being unemployed. It is, therefore, expected that one is likely to attribute getting employment to luck in the event that he/she manages to be employed when such policies are prevailing. It is actually surprising that whites in this instance tend to be silent about the negative impact of employment policies and other external factors on their chances of getting employment.

Results indicated that whites endorsed the statement that, *Government policies such as affirmative action are to blame the young people being out of work*". These findings support the argument that affirmative action, although it may have an advantage of advancing previously disadvantaged groups, it is at the same time reversing the benefits of the other group (Furnham, 2004). The perception that government policies such as affirmative action play a big part in the unemployment of young white graduates leads to this group of graduates to use a less pro-active approach when seeking employment. Furthermore, Furnham (2004) states that people's beliefs about their potential barriers facing them may influence their behavior in job interviews. In an interview, if one believes that one does not stand a chance of being employed due to government policies, it is likely that one will not perform well.

It was also found out in the study that there was no significant difference between non-beneficiaries of employment policies (whites) and beneficiaries of employment policies (blacks) on their perceptions regarding their job seeking activities such as relying on social networks and the group that one belongs to when seeking employment. Thus, the hypothesis that, non-beneficiaries of employment policies are significantly more likely to rely on social networks and groups they belong to when seeking employment was rejected. Both groups seem to seek help from lecturers and groups they belong to in almost the same way. Lecturers seem to have good contacts and links with former students who are now employed in different organisations and it is through lecturers at different universities that different organisations advertise employment. In such instances, lecturers play an important role in helping students of both race and sex in securing employment. Lecturers usually have a good relationship with students of all races, thus, the results show no significant difference between blacks and whites in their use of social networks when seeking employment.

Results show that there is a significant difference between whites and blacks on the statement, *"Most graduates who have got a job had someone pulling strings for them"*. White participants endorsed this statement more than the black participants. The fact that whites perceive government policies as being responsible for them being out of work means they are left with no option but rather to rely on others, be it friends, relatives or colleagues when seeking employment. These findings are consistent with Pauw and Edwards (2005) findings, who assumes that even though whites may believe in their abilities and that they can be successful in the workplace, they feel as being discriminated and blame external factors such as the government policies for leaving them with no choice but to rely on someone else for employment.

However the findings are inconsistent with Papier (2006) study which specifies that white students are ready for the workplace because they have the soft skills and practical knowledge required in most organisations. In that case, whites have an upper hand both in interviews and in the workplace, thus giving them better chances of getting employment. Furthermore, more whites are found in many science subjects such as Pharmacy, Accounting and Engineering which have got higher prospects of employment. This, therefore, means that whites are in a better position to get employment earlier without relying on someone else.

As hypothesised, final Accounting and Pharmacy students reported positive perceptions about their employment prospects than final year Sociology students. It is, therefore, not surprising to hear Accounting and Pharmacy students to support the statement that, *"The degree that I am studying for will make it easier to find employment"*, as is shown by the results of this study. Furthermore, Sociology students support the statement that, *"if they had better qualifications, most of the unemployed will soon get the jobs"*. On the other hand, Accounting and Pharmacy students were in agreement that you can get a job if you are well qualified. This is possibly because graduates in scarce skill fields are usually guaranteed of employment when they have higher and good marks. The findings tally with Koen (2003) research findings. In the study, Koen (2003) posits that social sciences studies have got a higher percentage of unemployment for graduates. This is because the labor demand for these qualifications is less acute. Furthermore, enrolments in these fields of study remain high in Universities. In such instances, graduates in these fields of studies will take longer time to find employment.

It is interesting to note that Sociology students were of the belief that doing volunteer work related to the chosen job is important when one is seeking employment. This could be possibly because since it is difficult to get employment in the Social Science field, Sociology graduates prefer doing volunteer work in order to get experience and enhance their chances of getting employment. Furthermore, doing volunteer work will give one a chance to demonstrate his/her abilities, thus prompting the organisation in which the graduate is doing volunteer work to employ the graduate after the volunteer period.

As shown in the study, Pharmacy students more than students in other fields admitted that thinking about the prospects of employment can be very stressful at times. This is surprising given Moleke's (2005) argument that graduates in Healthy Sciences find it very easy to find employment since it is a scarce skill field. It may be expected that sociology students should be the ones' to be stressed when thinking about the prospects of employment since it is in their Social Science field where it is difficult to find employment.

With regards to the writing up and sending of CV when seeking employment, Pharmacy students regard it as an important activity when one is seeking employment more than students in Sociology and Accounting. It is not clear why Pharmacy students' emphasize the design of a CV as important as compared to other fields especially accounting, given that both fall under the scarce skill category. It will be, therefore, interesting to explore the possible reasons for these differences.

5.3 Concluding remarks

In this chapter discussions were done regarding the results of the study. Important gender differences and differences by field of study were reported, as were the differences between blacks and whites' student's views regarding their employment prospects.

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTION FOR FUTURE STUDIES

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the results of the study. It should be recalled that the purpose of the study was to identify the perceptions of final year students regarding their employment prospects. It was hypothesized that the beneficiaries of employment (Females and Blacks) are more confident about their employment prospects and are less likely to blame the employment policies for them being out of work as compared to the non-beneficiaries (Males and Whites). This chapter provides the conclusions of the study, recommendation, limitations and direction for future studies.

6.2 Conclusion

The findings of the research can be summarized as follows:

- Black final year students are more confident than white final year students (non-beneficiaries of employment policies) that their degree will ensure employment. This is because of affirmative action introduced by the government to redress imbalances and advancing previously disadvantaged groups, thus giving them first preference in the job market.
- Female final year students are more confident than the male final year students about their employment prospects. This is because of the gender based affirmative action which gives women first preference in the labour market as a way of redressing imbalances created in the apartheid period.
- Black final year students are less likely to experience feelings of hopelessness than the white final year students (non-beneficiaries of employment policies). The fact that it is blacks who have been able to get work indicates that they are unlikely to experience feelings of hopelessness.
- Non-beneficiaries of employment more specifically whites perceived the employment policies as an obstacle that prevents them from finding employment. The non-beneficiaries of employment believe that their employment prospects are completely out of their control and can, therefore, lead them not to invest much effort in trying to obtain employment.
- There is no significant difference between non-beneficiaries of employment policies (whites) and beneficiaries of employment policies (blacks) on their perceptions regarding their job seeking activities such as relying on social networks and the group that one belongs to when seeking employment.
- Final Accounting and Pharmacy students reported positive perceptions about their employment prospects than the final year Sociology students. This is due to the fact that Accounting and Pharmacy belong to the scarce skill category in which demand for

graduates is high whilst Sociology belongs to the Social Science category in which job demand is low and employment is difficult to find.

The study reveals that non beneficiaries of employment (whites) still believe that affirmative action has a negative effect on them even though studies point out that it is a fair policy meant to redress imbalances created in the apartheid period. Furthermore, the study reveals that blacks and females rely on government policies such as affirmative action when seeking employment more than whites, thus, they are less likely to be hopeless and experience anxiety when searching for jobs. Another interesting point that has emanated from this study is that students still lack career related guidance in terms of what to study as is shown by large number of students enrolling in Social Science degrees with low employment prospects.

6.3 Recommendations

- Research findings indicated that most non-beneficiaries of employment policies (whites) blame external factors such as affirmative action as being responsible for them being out of work. Government should host workshops and learning centers for teaching and explaining the origin of affirmative action, why such a policy is in place and its intended benefits so as to reduce negative connotations associated with the affirmative action.
- Government should partner with universities and create more learnership programs in order to create employment and offer graduates chance to demonstrate their abilities and gain necessary experience. Some of the graduates are unemployed because they lack experience and not necessarily because of government policies.
- Public and private companies, with the help of government, should create and make use of database for unemployed graduates. The database should contain biographical information, qualifications and future needs for unemployed graduates. Organisations in search of employees will simply search on the database and find graduates with the qualifications they need and employ them. This will help in reducing unemployment, since some graduates are unemployed, because organisations cannot locate graduates they need when such databases are unavailable.
- Universities should offer career guidance and support to students especially those enrolling for their first years. Students lack assistance in selecting the right courses and field of study which usually lead them to enroll in areas with poor employment prospects. Career guidance will help students to choose degree programs with higher demand in the job market rather than choose a program without much knowledge about its future prospects.
- Government in collaboration with organisations should promote bursary schemes. The bursary scheme is important in that the organisation can become involved more directly in the education of the student in the sense that they can provide academic support and guidance as to subject choice. Furthermore, organisations can offer relevant practical experience to bursary holders by creating opportunities for vacation work – an in-built work experience programme. This will help students in gaining relevant experience and offer them with chances of being employed after finishing their studies.

6.4 Limitations of the study

- The study was carried out in one institution only. As a result, the results in the present study are not easily generalisable. This is because there are some differences between the institution used in the study and other institutions. The culture of this institution may have contributed to the results, and the same outcomes may not be found in another organisation. In future, data could be obtained from other universities in order to ascertain whether any differences that might exist are not only unique to the particular university from which the sample was drawn.
- Personality differences among the participants could have contributed to the findings. For example, based on their personality, some of the students could have attributed external or internal factors to their positive or negative perceptions regarding the employment prospects. Future research could, therefore, assess participants' locus of control.
- The research design used is limited in the way it acquires information pertaining to perceptions of students. The study was only quantitative in nature and participants did not get the chance to explain their responses. The researcher had to use prediction in explaining employees' responses to the questionnaire. Future studies could use both quantitative and qualitative research designs.
- Research participants were limited to blacks and whites only. Indians and coloreds were not given the chance to participate in the study and indicate their perceptions towards employment prospects. Future research could also include Indian and colored respondents.

6.5 Concluding remarks

This chapter highlighted the conclusions and recommendations. Finally the chapter concluded by outlining the limitations of the study.

Acknowledgement

First and foremost, I would like to thank the Almighty God and Jesus Christ, the savior for giving me this life and their guidance throughout the whole research. A special thank you goes to my supervisor, Dr C. Chipunza for inspiring me and guiding me throughout the whole research. I would also want to thank my parents, brothers and sisters for providing me with money to pursue with my studies.

References

Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (2006). *A catalyst for accelerated and shared growth-South Africa*. Retrieved August 13, 2008 from http://www.commerce.uct.ac.za/research_units/dpru/DPRUConference2006/Papers

- Adams, C. (1993). *Affirmative Action in a Democratic South Africa*. Cape Town. Kenwyn: Juta Africa (Pty) Ltd.
- Babbie, E., & Mouton, J. (2001). *The practice of Social Research*. South Africa: Oxford University Press.
- Development Policy Research Unit (2006). *Graduate Unemployment in Post-Apartheid South Africa: Nature and Possible Policy Responses*. Research report compiled for business leadership South Africa. Retrieved August 10, 2008 from http://www.tips.org.za/events/forum2006/papers/KPauw_Graduate_Unemployment.pdf.
- Donovan, A., & Odd, M. (2002). Psychological aspects of unemployment: An investigation into the emotional and social adjustment of school leavers. *Journal of adolescence*, (5), 15-30.
- Feather, N., & Davenport, P. (2000). Unemployment and depressive effect: A motivational and attributional analysis. *Journal of personal and social psychology*, (41), 422-436.
- Fostering, F. (2001). *Attribution: An Introduction to Theories, Research and Applications*. Philadelphia: Psychology Press.
- Furnham, A. (2002). Explanations for unemployment in Britain. *European Journal of social psychology*, (12), 335-352.
- Goldsmith, A. H., & Venum, J. R. (2000). The Psychological Impact of Unemployment and Joblessness. *Journal of Socio Economics*, (25), 333-355.
- Goodwin, C.J. (2002). *Research in Psychology: Methods and Design*. New York: John.
- Gurney, R. (2001). Does Unemployment affect the self esteem of school leavers? *Australian Journal of Psychology*, (32), 175-182.
- Heider, F. (1958). *The Psychology of International Relations*. New York: Wiley.
- Kingdon, G.G., & Knight, J. (2000). Unemployment in South Africa: The Nature of the Beast. *Trade and Industrial Policy Strategies Annual Forum*. Muldersbush.
- Koen, C. (2003). The contribution of technikons to human resource development in South Africa. *DPRU Working Paper No. 03/80*. University of Cape Town: Development Policy Research Institute.
- Lawless, A. (2006). *Number and Needs. A wake Up Call to address the capacity crisis in SA Civil Engineering*. South African Institution of Civil Engineering. Retrieved August 10, 2007 from www.civils.org.za.
- Madi, P. M. (1997). *Black Economic Empowerment in the new South Africa: The rights and the wrongs*. Randburg: Knowledge Resources.
- Mandela, N. (1991). *Statement on Affirmative action: Affirmative action in a new South Africa*. Cape Town: University of the Western Cape.
- Mlatsheni, C. (2005). The youth labour market: What does it take to succeed? Mimeo.
- Moleke, P. (2005). *Finding Work: Employment Experiences of South African Graduates. Compiled by the Employment and Economic Policy Research Programme*. Pretoria: HSRC Press.
- Papier, J. (2006). FET Seminar: Youth Unemployment and Education in South Africa. *Harold Wolpe Memorial Trust and Inset Providers Coalition (IPC) 49th Open Dialogue Event*. 2 February 2006. Cape Town.

- Pauw, K., & Edwards, L. (2005). Evaluating the General Equilibrium Effects of a Wage Subsidy Scheme for South Africa. *Biennial Conference of the Economic Society of South Africa*. 17-19 September 2003. Somerset West.
- Robinson, V., Gedye, L., Mabanga, T., & Tabane, R. (2005). Shortage Confusion Mismatch Surplus.
- Rotter (1996). Generalised expectations for internal versus external control of reinforcement. *Psychological Monographs*, 80 (no. 609).
- Sonni, F. (1993). *Afrikaner Nationalism and black advancement as two sides of the same coin. Affirmative Action in a Democratic South Africa*. Kenwyn: Juta.
- Turner, M.E., & Pratkanis, A.R. (1994). Affirmative Action: Insights from Social Psychology and Organizational Research. *Basic and Applied Psychology*, (15), 1-11.
- Vroom, V. (1968). *Expectancy theory*. Retrieved January 29, 2009 from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victor_Vroom
- Weiner, T. (1995). An attribution theory of motivation and emotion: Applications of a naïve psychology. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, (5), 405-419.