Youth of South Africa: Comparing those in education, training and employment with those who are socially excluded

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Abstract

Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) and the Education Policy Unit (EPU) of Witwatersrand University are collaborating on studying the interface between education, training and work. As part of the programme, this paper compares the youth of the country (aged 15-34 years, divided into four equal age groups), who are socially excluded (they are not in education or training and they are not gainfully employed – also known as NEET youth) with those who are not-NEET (those who are in education or training, or gainfully employed). It uses the data of the General Household Survey of July 2010 for this comparison. The logistic regression analysis has led to some notable differences between NEET and non-NEET youth groups. The previously disadvantaged under apartheid continue to be disadvantaged. Whilst overall, NEET youth tend to be African, female, aged 20 -24 years and living informal areas or in traditional rural areas, they are less likely to have access to services such as reticulated water, safe sanitation and electricity. However, a change may be occurring in the age category 15-19 years. In future, further analysis will be undertaken using various Stats SA and other data sets to gain a better understanding of the links between education, training and work.

1. Introduction

Unemployment in South Africa remains a major challenge; particularly among the youth of the country (aged 15-34 years). South African youth make up 58.7% of the working age population (those aged 15-64 years). According to Statistics South Africa's General Household Survey (GHS) of 2010, 57.4% of households reported salaries/wages/commissions as their main source of income, followed by social grants at 22.0%. This signifies the importance of employment for household survival and sustainability in South Africa.

The Labour Market Dynamics in South Africa 2010 report indicated that youth unemployment is particularly high in this country, since the unemployment rate stood at 50.5% among those aged15-24 years and 28.9% among those aged 25-34 years with corresponding labour force absorption rates of 12.8% (15-24years) and 51.1% (25-34years). Over 90% of new entrants in the labour market are below the age of 35 years and over two thirds of the unemployed are aged between 15-34 years. These figures compared to that of adults (aged 35-64 years), show the vulnerability of the youth in the labour market. This also shows the vast differences that exist in unemployment rates between the 15-24 year and the 25-34 year age groups. While some youth may be engaged in education and training activities to enhance their job-prospects rather than face unemployment, among those aged 15-34 years there remains a substantial number not in employment education or training (37.3%) as opposed to those in either education or employment (62.7%).

The study utilises Statistics South Africa's General Household Survey (GHS 2010) data. It focuses only on youth aged between 15-34 years of age, using logistic regression model to calculate the odds of being NEET. The GHS is a household survey that has been collected annually by Stats SA since 2002. The survey in its present form was instituted as a result of the need identified by the Government of South Africa to determine on a regular basis the level of development in the country, and the performance of programmes and projects regarding service delivery. The survey was specifically designed to measure multiple facets of the living conditions of South African households, as well as the quality of service delivery in a number of key service sectors. The GHS covers six broad areas, namely: education, health and social development, housing, household access to services and facilities, food security and agriculture.

2. Results

The total population of South Africa during the time of the survey was 49.8 million. The youth (15-34 years), made up 19 million (37.5%) of the total population. Among these youth, about 7 million were classified as NEET and about 12 million classified as NON-NEET. Results in tables of the appendix indicate significant differences between he NEET and NON-NEET across all variables referred in this paper.

Age group

The results on table 1 and table 2 show that after the age of 24, the proportions of NEET people gradually decline with an increase in age. People in the age groups 20-24 (Odds Ratio 1.56:1) and 25-29 (1.42:1) are more likely to be NEET than those aged 30-34 years. But those aged 15-19 years are less likely (0.22:1) to be NEET than those aged 30-34 years.

Population group

The results in table 3 and 4 of inform that there are still major differences by race in terms of labour market participation and/or educational institution attendance. The chances of being NEET are the highest for Coloured people, with an Odds Ratio of 3.48:1, followed by Africans, with an Odds Ratio of 3.40:1, in comparison to Whites. Indian youth are also more likely to be NEET compared to White youth, with Odds Ratio of 1.80:1. These results show that while people from all population groups are faced with some degree of being classified as NEET, Coloured and Black/African people are at a higher risk of being NEET than Indian/Asian (Odds Ration: 1.80:1) and White people. However, there is a change in the 15-19 years age group, where coloured young people were more likely to be NEET.

Gender

It is evident from the results that the gender gap for NEET people increases with age. Approximately 4 in 5 women in the 15-19 years group are in employment and/or education, compared to just less than 1 in 2 in both the 20-24 years and 25-29 years group and just over 1 in 2 in the 30-34 years group. This shows that there is still evidence of gender inequalities with regards to labour market participation or educational institution attendance. In addition, Women in the late stages of their youth are more likely to be NEET compared to their male counterpart and women in the younger age categories. Results further show that when all predictors are kept constant, females (Odds Ratio1.94:1) are more likely to be NEET than males.

Highest level of education

Table 6 shows that young people with completed secondary education are on average less likely to be NEET compared to those with other education levels below tertiary qualifications. In addition, young people aged 15-19 years who do not continue in education or training are less likely to transition into employment upon completing secondary education when compared to the other three age groups. Table 7 further indicates that the odds of being NEET decrease consistently with an increase in highest level of education obtained.

Province and geography type

With regard to differences between provinces, Tables 9 indicates that if all other predictors are kept constant, people aged 15-34 years living in Northern Cape, Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, North West, and Eastern Cape are more likely to be NEET than those in the same age group living in Gauteng. On the other hand, people aged 15-34 years living in Western Cape, Mpumalanga and Limpopo are less likely to be NEET compared to those in Gauteng.

The geographical type in which one lives may play a role with regards to mobility. This affects access to employment, education and training institutions. Results in table 11 shows that people in traditional areas are more likely to be NEET than people in urban formal areas. Also, people in the rural formal areas (where commercial agricultural activities take place), are less likely to be NEET as compared to people in the urban formal areas.

Living conditions

Results in table 12 in present information about the main sources of water for households where NEET and NON-NEET people aged between 15 and 34 reside. It is evident that more NON-NEET people had access to water in their dwellings than NEET people. Results further indicate that a bigger proportion of NEET (32.3%) people lived in household which only had access to water on site or in the yard as compared to 28.1% for NON-NEET people.

Information on type of toilet facilities for households in which NEET and NON-NEET people live is presented in table 13. The results in show that; NEET people generally have more access to less advance types of toilets facilities rather than the ideal flush/chemical toilets.

Table 14 present information on access to mains electricity for households in which the NEET/NON-NEET people reside. It shows that more NON-NEET youth lived in households that have access to electricity compared to NEET people.

Table 15 presents results for sources of energy used for cooking by households in which the NEET or NON-NEET people live. It shows that;

- More NON-NEET than NEET (people lived in households in which they used electricity from mains for cooking.

Information regarding sources of energy for heating is shown in table 16. Results show that more NON-NEET people than NEET people used energy from mains for heating.

Table 17 shows information regarding sources of energy for lighting for households. Results indicate that more NON-NEET people use electricity from mains as compared to NEET people.

Table 18 shows result for the frequencies at which households have had insufficient food for adults. This result indicates that a larger proportion of NEET youth lived in households that had insufficient food for adults than NON-NEET youth.

Results shows that more households were NON-NEET people lived had never ran out of money to buy food in the past than in households were NEET people lived.

3. Conclusions

The results above show that there are big disparities in terms of labour market participation and educational institution attendance, based on province, gender, race, age group, and highest level of education of the individual.

While education continues to receive increased funding by the government and new initiatives such as "no fees", Tertiary Education Fund of South Africa (TEFSA) and National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS), the proportion (36.8%) of young people not in employment, education or training is alarming. Sixteen years post the first democratic elections, and increased government efforts to maximise social inclusion of previously disadvantaged people, Africans and Coloured people experience difficulties in finding work or being in an educational institution. It is unknown if this is by choice or by circumstances other than choice. Of greater concern should be those young people in age groups 20-24 and 25-29, more so considering the high unemployment rate in South Africa. The results further show that for people in aged 15-19 years, secondary education alone its insufficient to get employed. These young people will later experience even more difficulties to find work without work experience.

The questions of availability and accessibly of education and work in traditional and urban informal areas remain a concern as we realise that for people residing in the traditional and urban informal areas, the chances of NEET are higher, compared to those living in the urban formal and rural formal areas. The smaller proportions of NEET people in the rural areas may be due to the availability of commercial farming jobs and "no fees" schools. This poses a concern for young people in the traditional areas and urban informal areas. It could be the case that being NEET has clear spatial dimensions; the farther people reside from economically active areas, be it rural farms or urban factories, the greater the odds of being NEET.

This paper is a starting point in understanding social exclusion in South Africa in relation to their life circumstances with regards to their locations, ages, qualifications and race and living conditions such as access to services. It points to the need for further research into the interactions between education, training and employment with emphasis on young people, their experiences (or lack of it) in the workplace and their labour market outcomes thereof.

4. References

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5. Acknowledgement

Appendix

Table 1: Age groups by NEET and NON-NEET

Age category in years	NEET		NON-NEET		TOTAL	
	N (000)	%	N (000)	%	N (000)	%
15-19	870	12.5	4379	37.3	**5249**	**28.1**
20-24	2504	35.9	2528	21.6	**5032**	**26.9**
25-29	2075	29.8	2397	20.5	**4473**	**23.9**
30-34	1519	21.8	2418	20.6	**3937**	**21.1**
Total	**6968**	**100.0**	**11722**	**100.0**	**18691**	**100.0**

Table 2: Age groups 15-19; 20-24 and 25-29 years compared with those aged 30-35 as the reference level

Odds Ratio Estimates			
	Point	95% Wald	
Effect	**Estimate**	**Confidence Limits**	
Age group 20-24 years vs. 30-34 years	1.558	1.553	1.562
Age group 25-29 years vs. 30-34 years	1.420	1.416	1.424
Age group 15-19 years vs. 30-34 years	0.227	0.227	0.228

Table 3: Distribution of NEET and NON-NEET youth by Population Group

Population Group	NEET		NON-NEET		TOTAL	
	N (000)	%	N (000)	%	N (000)	%
African/Black	6193	88.9	9324	79.5	**15517**	**28.1**
Coloured	536	7.7	1012	8.6	**1548**	**26.9**
Indian/Asian	103	1.5	367	3.2	**470**	**23.9**
White	136	1.9	1020	8.7	**1156**	**21.1**
Total	**6968**	**100**	**11723**	**100**	**18691**	**100.0**

Table 4: Population groups compared with those classified as white as reference level

Odds Ratio Estimates		
Effect	**Point Estimate**	**95% Wald Confidence Limits**
Coloured vs White	3.479	3.454	3.504
African/Black vs White	3.404	3.384	3.425
Indian/Asian vs White	1.802	1.785	1.819

Table 5: Distribution of NEET and NON-NEET youth by Gender

Gender	**NEET**		**NON-NEET**		**TOTAL**	
	N (000)	**%**	**N (000)**	**%**	**N (000)**	**%**
Male	2867	41.1	6345	54.1	**9212**	**49.3**
Female	4101	58.9	5378	45.9	**9479**	**50.7**
Total	**6968**	**100.0**	**11723**	**100.0**	**18691**	**100.0**

Table 6: Distribution of NEET and NON-NEET youth by Highest Level of Education

Highest Level of Education	**NEET**		**NON-NEET**		**TOTAL**	
	N (000)	**%**	**N (000)**	**%**	**N (000)**	**%**
No Schooling	127	1.8	66	0.6	**193**	**1.0**
Less than Primary	599	8.6	635	5.4	**1234**	**6.6**
Primary Completed	378	5.4	600	5.1	**978**	**5.2**
Less than Secondary	3492	50.1	6062	51.7	**9554**	**51.1**
Secondary Completed	2251	32.3	3688	31.5	**5939**	**31.8**
Tertiary	83	1.2	514	4.4	**597**	**3.2**
Total	**6968**	**100.0**	**1123**	**100.0**	**18691**	**100.0**

Table 7: Highest level of Education compared with No Schooling as reference level

Odds Ratio Estimates			
	Point Estimate	95% Wald Confidence Limits	
Effect			
Education Other (specify in the box below) vs No schooling	1.425	1.389	1.461
Education Grade R/0 vs. No schooling	0.771	0.743	0.801
Education Some Primary Education vs. No schooling	0.689	0.681	0.696
Education Passed Grade 7/Standard 5/ABET 3 vs. No schooling	0.492	0.487	0.498
Education Some Secondary Education vs. No schooling	0.362	0.358	0.365
Education Passed Grade 12/Standard 10/Form 5/Matric vs. No schooling	0.332	0.328	0.335
Education Do not know vs. No schooling	0.22	0.214	0.227
Education N4/NTC 4-N6/NTC 6 vs. No schooling	0.201	0.197	0.204
Education NTC 1/ N1/NC (V) Level 2-NTC 3/ N3/NC (V)/Level 4 vs. No schooling	0.153	0.15	0.156
Education Certificate/Diploma with/without Grade 12/Std. 10 vs. No schooling	0.135	0.134	0.137
Education Higher Diploma (Technikon/University of Technology) vs. No schooling	0.098	0.095	0.1
Education Post Higher Diploma (Technikon/University of Technology Masters; Doctoral) vs. No schooling	0.095	0.092	0.097
Education Unspecified vs. No schooling	0.09	0.088	0.092
Education Honours Degree vs. No schooling	0.077	0.074	0.079
Education Bachelor' s Degree vs. No schooling	0.074	0.073	0.075
Education Bachelor's Degree and post-graduate diploma vs. No schooling	0.069	0.067	0.071
Education Higher degree (Masters; Doctorate) vs. No schooling	0.046	0.043	0.049

Table 8: Distribution of NEET and NON-NEET youth by Province

Province	NEET		NON-NEET		TOTAL	
	N (000)	%	N (000)	%	N (000)	%
WC	621	8.9	1328	11.3	1949	10.4
EC	1007	14.5	1530	13.1	2537	13.6
NC	171	2.5	226	1.9	397	2.1
FS	411	5.9	660	5.6	1071	5.7
KZN	1715	24.6	2377	20.3	4092	21.9
NW	512	7.4	721	6.2	1233	6.6
GP	1225	17.6	2710	23.1	3935	21.1
MP	523	7.5	888	7.6	1411	7.6
LP	783	11.2	1283	10.9	2066	11.1
Total	6968	100.0	11723	100.0	18691	100.0

Table 9: Provinces in which youth lived compared with those living in Gauteng as the reference level

Odds Ratio Estimates			
		95% Wald	
Effect	Point Estimate	Confidence Limits	
Northern Cape vs. Gauteng	1.298	1.289	1.308
Free State vs. Gauteng	1.221	1.215	1.227
KwaZulu-Natal vs. Gauteng	1.196	1.192	1.2
North West vs. Gauteng	1.114	1.109	1.119
Eastern Cape vs. Gauteng	1.034	1.03	1.038
Western Cape vs. Gauteng	0.943	0.939	0.947
Mpumalanga vs. Gauteng	0.898	0.894	0.903
Limpopo vs. Gauteng	0.815	0.812	0.819

Table 10: Distribution of NEET and NON-NEET youth by Type of Residential Area

Type of Residential Area	NEET		NON-NEET		TOTAL	
	N(000)	%	N (000)	%	N (000)	%
Urban Formal	3185	45.7	6697	57.1	9882	52.9
Urban Informal	611	8.8	923	7.9	1534	8.2
Traditional Areas	2922	41.9	3536	30.2	6458	34.5
Rural Formal	251	3.6	566	4.8	817	4.4
Total	6969	100	11722	100	18691	100.0

Table 11: Geographical place of residence compared with urban formal as reference level

Odds Ratio Estimates			
		95% Wald	
Effect	Point Estimate	Confidence Limits	
GeoType Traditional areas vs Urban formal	1.707	1.702	1.712
GeoType Urban informal vs Urban formal	1.091	1.087	1.096
GeoType Rural formal vs Urban formal	0.685	0.681	0.688

Table 12: Main source of water of the household where NEET and NON-NEET people live

| Main source of water | | Thousands | | Total |
		NEET	NON-NEET	
Piped (tap) water in dwelling	Frequency	2 204	4 924	7 128
	Col Pct	30.1%	43.3%	
Piped (tap) water on site or in yard	Frequency	2 361	3 189	5 550
	Col Pct	32.3%	28.1%	
Other	Frequency	2 754	3 258	6 012
	Col Pct	37.6%	28.6%	
Total	Frequency	7 318	11 371	18 689

Table 13: Type of toilet facility in the households where NEET/NON-NEET people live

| Type of toilet facility | | Thousands | | Total |
		NEET	NON-NEET	
Flush/Chemical Toilets	Frequency	3 522	6 815	10 337
	Col Pct	50.8%	62.5%	
Pit latrine	Frequency	2 920	3 548	6 468
	Col Pct	42.1%	32.5%	
Other/None	Frequency	495	549	1 044
	Col Pct	7.1%	5.0%	
		6 937	10 912	17 849

Table 14: Access to mains electricity supply for households in which NEET/ NON-NEET people live

| Mains electricity supply | | Thousands | | Total |
		NEET	NON-NEET	
Yes	Frequency	6 002	9 744	15 746
	Col Pct	82.0%	85.7%	
No	Frequency	1 316	1 625	2 941
	Col Pct	18.00%	14.3%	
Do not know	Frequency	0	0	1
	Col Pct	0.0%	0.0%	
Total	Frequency	7 318	11 369	18 688

Table 15: Energy for cooking in households in which NEET/NON-NEET people live

		Thousands		Total
		NEET	NON-NEET	
Energy for cooking				
Electricity from mains	**Frequency**	4 652	8 324	12 976
	Col Pct	63.6%	73.2%	
Wood	**Frequency**	1 736	1 732	3 468
	Col Pct	23.7%	15.2%	
Other	**Frequency**	910	1 265	2 175
	Col Pct	12.4%	11.2%	
None	**Frequency**	20	50	70
	Col Pct	0.3%	0.4%	
Total	**Frequency**	7 318	11 371	18 689

Table 16: Energy for heating for household in which NEET/NON-NEET people live

		Thousands		Total
		NEET	NON-NEET	
Energy for heating				
Electricity from mains	**Frequency**	2 567	5 142	7 709
	Col Pct	35.1%	45.2%	
Wood	**Frequency**	2 147	2 304	4 451
	Col Pct	29.3%	20.3%	
Paraffin	**Frequency**	751	1 097	1 848
	Col Pct	10.3%	9.6%	
Other	**Frequency**	399	636	1 035
	Col Pct	5.4%	5.6%	
None	**Frequency**	1 453	2 191	3 644
	Col Pct	19.9%	19.3%	
Total	**Frequency**	7 317	11 370	18 687

Table 17: Energy for lighting for households in which NEET/NON-NEET people live

		Thousands		Total
		NEET	NON-NEET	
Energy for lighting				
Electricity from mains	**Frequency**	6 044	9 837	15 881
	Col Pct	82.6%	86.5%	
Candles	**Frequency**	980	1 022	2 002
	Col Pct	13.4%	9.0%	
Other	**Frequency**	274	463	737
	Col Pct	3.7%	4.1%	
None	**Frequency**	21	47	68
	Col Pct	0.3%	0.4%	
Total	**Frequency**	7 319	11 369	18 688

Table 18: Frequency at which households have had insufficient food for adults

		Thousands		
		NEET	NON-NEET	Total
Insufficient food for adult				
Never	**Frequency**	5 041	9 158	14 199
	Col Pct	70.7%	82.4%	
Seldom	**Frequency**	541	589	1 130
	Col Pct	7.6%	5.3%	
Sometimes	**Frequency**	1 172	1 088	2 260
	Col Pct	16.4%	9.8%	
Often	**Frequency**	294	216	510
	Col Pct	4.1%	1.9%	
Always	**Frequency**	84	60	144
	Col Pct	1.2%	0.5%	
Total	**Frequency**	7 132	11 111	18 243