A SOCIAL JUSTICE APPROACH FOR COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY IN SOUTH AFRICA: LESSONS FROM A COLLABORATIVE ACTION RESEARCH INTERVENTION.

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ABEGAIL FARAJA SCHWARTZ

Supervisor: Professor Jacqueline Akhurst

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Abstract

In the past decade, increased attention has been paid to the changing role of counselling psychology in South Africa. The aim of this study is to contribute to the debates about the social responsiveness, scope and focus of the field. The following research question was formulated: What lessons about a social justice approach can a counselling psychologist learn from a youth unemployment community engagement activity? Through engagement with a group of unemployed young people about their status and exploring the role that a counselling psychologist might take, a collaborative action research approach was employed. Data were generated through collaborative action research cycles, semi-structured interviews, social media communications and the researcher's reflective journal. Template analysis was used to make sense of the data and generate preliminary themes. Process findings illustrated the supportive and constraining role of the academic research process, the time frame and the characteristics of the target group. The content-related findings illustrated the impact of contextual and demographic factors on the participants' unemployed status. The findings confirmed the negative effect of unemployment on psychological well-being despite support from family, friends and community members. Factors such as education and socio-economic status influenced the job seeking behaviour of participants and although participants were aware that societal change is needed, there was evidence of internalised self-blame. Recommendations emphasise the inclusion of relevant social justice models for the context of South Africa in the training of counselling psychologists; and a pressing need to engage in micro-, meso- and macro-level advocacy to collaboratively debate the identity and scope of practice of the profession and the review of professional and ethical guidelines.

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Declaration

I declare that **A SOCIAL JUSTICE APPROACH FOR COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY IN SOUTH AFRICA. LESSONS FROM A COLLABORATIVE ACTION RESEARCH INTERVENTION** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references and that this work has not been submitted for any other degree at any other institution.

Signed: ..... Date: .....

Abegail Faraja Schwartz (g15S5787)

Chapter 1 - Introduction

1.1. Chapter Overview

The chapter commences with explaining the motivation for the present research. The research question, sub-questions and chosen approach are briefly introduced. The chapter concludes with an outline of the chapters of this research report.

1.2. The Motivation for the Research Study

The aim of this research project is to contribute to the debate about counselling psychology in South Africa by considering the possible lessons about a social justice approach that can be learnt from a collaborative action research engagement, which aimed at enhancing, empowering and developing the individual capacities of a group of unemployed young people.

In South Africa, more than half of the population lives in abject poverty (Statistics South Africa, 2014). The bi-directional link between poverty and compromised mental health has been established (Lund et al., 2011). Similarly, the direct link between mental health challenges and social injustices such as unemployment has also been confirmed (Mabela, 2013). Statistics South Africa (2016) indicated that the official unemployment rate has increased from 24.5 % in the fourth quarter of 2015 to 26.7 % in the first quarter of 2016. In particular, the youth unemployment rate was 53.7 % in the second quarter of 2016. A diagnostic overview by the National Planning Commission (2011) suggested that young people (15-34 years) in South Africa experience increased levels of unemployment because they are

generally poorly prepared for work. Mlatsheni and Rospabé (2002) suggested that the explanation for the increase in youth unemployment can be sought from both macro and micro economic factors. Macroeconomic factors include issues of supply and demand, cost effectiveness considerations, the size of the youth labour force and the lack of appropriate skills. Microeconomic factors include the quality of education and the socio-economic status of young people. Regardless of the reason for the unemployment, prolonged unemployment is regarded as very stressful as it has negative effects on the psychological and physical well-being of those affected (de Witte, Rothmann & Jackson, 2012). Youth unemployment is a particularly negative experience because of its impact on self-esteem, life satisfaction and job seeking behaviour (Letsie, 2009; Willemse, 2015). The interest of this paper will be on the role that counselling psychology can play in mitigating the psychological impact of youth unemployment.

Despite the impact of poverty and unemployment on mental health, more than three quarters of those experiencing mental health challenges do not have access to adequate, efficient and quality mental health services in South Africa (Petersen & Lund, 2011). Over the last three decades an array of critical academic literature has debated, re-constructed and challenged the role of psychology in the midst of the changing and not entirely positive political, economic, social milieu (Cooper, Nicholas, Seedat, & Statman, 1990; Kagee & Price, 1995; Ahmed & Pillay, 2004; Young, 2013). Young (2013) makes specific reference to the "nebulous" (p. 422) state of counselling psychology in South Africa. Watson and Fouche (2007) postulate that this crisis is born out of the disconnection that seems to exist between counselling psychology and the "macro environment" (p. 162) in South Africa. Maree and van der Westhuizen (2009) go further to say that professional counselling practice in South Africa

should focus on researching and developing counselling practice and theory that best suits the needs of the majority.

Prominent counselling psychologists in South Africa have suggested that a commitment to a social justice approach might just be the unique contribution that counselling psychology can make to the field of psychology in South Africa (Young, 2013; Young, Bantjes & Kagee, 2016). The adoption of a social justice approach in South Africa might however be contentious due to the explicit link to activism (Young, 2013). Vera and Speight (2003) suggested however that one key method by which a social justice approach can be integrated into counselling psychology is to train the next generation of professionals as social justice change agents, through for example, service-based learning opportunities. This research aims to learn more about a social justice approach, with the hope of contributing to the construction of the professional identity of counselling psychologists in South Africa.

1.3. The Research Question, Sub-Questions and Chosen Methodological Approach

Inspired by the minimal input on a social justice approach in counselling psychology the following collaborative action research question was conceptualised:

What lessons about a social justice approach can a counselling psychologist learn from a youth unemployment community engagement activity?

This inquiry will be situated within a constructivist, qualitative research design since it is well suited to a counselling approach. The method allows for an in-depth understanding of complex phenomena, in a way that is coherent with an open, therapeutic relationship (Morrow, 2007).

The planned research is for the researcher and the participants to engage in a collaborative action research (CAR) process. CAR focusses on bringing about change (Koshy, Koshy & Waterman, 2010) through the implementation of four critical phases: action, evaluation, critical reflection and change. Other strengths of this process include collective reflection and action with participants rather than for participants (Akhurst & Lawson, 2013). The approach also generates data that meets trustworthiness criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Shenton, 2004).

1.4. Outline of the Chapters of this Research Report

The research report consists of six chapters, including the present introductory chapter. Chapter 2 provides a review of the relevant literature. The research methodology is discussed in Chapter 3 and the research results are presented in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 provides a discussion of the main findings as well as a brief discussion of the limitations of the study. Finally, Chapter 6 present recommendations based on the lessons learnt from the collaborative action research intervention.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to examine the literature to develop an understanding of the theoretical and practical application of a social justice approach in counselling psychology. I will set the stage by highlighting the political context and historical development of counselling psychology in South Africa. The current situation of counselling psychology will then be discussed with particular emphasis on the debates around the transformation of the profession in order to be more relevant for the disadvantaged majority population. One of the main aspects of the transformation debate in counselling psychology is the recommendation that a social justice approach be adopted (Young, 2013; Young et al., 2016). While no particular detail is available in local literature on what the adoption of such an approach would entail, this chapter will highlight the main aspects of the approach by drawing on the limited number of publications that pertain to it. In addition, it will explore possible practical implications that the adoption of a social justice approach might have for counselling psychologists in South Africa.

2.2. The South African Context: Poverty, Unemployment and Mental Health

The Republic of South Africa is the second largest economy in Africa and the 34th largest globally (International Monetary Fund, 2015). South Africa is, however, also one of the most unequal societies in the world. According to the Global Wealth Report (2013) the wealth gap between the rich and the poor in South Africa continues to grow, with 2% of the richest people

owning the same as 50% of the rest of the population. In South Africa, like in many developing countries, poverty is visible not just in the shack dwellings that surround cities such as Cape Town and Johannesburg, but also in homelessness, unemployment, poor infrastructure and the lack of access to basic services such as primary health care and education (Triegaardt, 2006).

Triegaardt (2006) notes that poverty is generally discussed in reference to absolute (extreme) poverty, moderate poverty, and relative poverty. The author further elaborates that absolute poverty signifies that households are unable to meet the basic needs for survival leading to chronic hunger, inability to access health care and quality education for some or all children. Moderate poverty implies that basic needs are met to some degree but generally households are struggling. Relative poverty can be interpreted as the household poverty level in relation to the average national income. In 2014, Statistics South Africa reported a rate of 20.2% for extreme poverty and 45.5% for moderate poverty according to the data extracted from the 2011 census. The implication is thus that more than half of the population of South Africa struggles to make a daily living, having to make tough choices to ensure survival, in addition to being further disadvantaged by inaccessible and poor basic services (De Coninck, Culp & Taylor, 2013)

In South Africa, the position of an individual or group of people in a community is also denoted in terms of socio-economic status (SES). Nwachukwu (2011) notes that socio-economic implies two scopes, namely social and economic. The social scope includes authority, occupational prestige, education and standing in the community while the economic scope includes employment income, home ownership and financial assets. SES could also be divided into three categories which are low, middle and high SES. Taylor and Yu (2009) assert

that in South Africa, SES is distributed along racial lines, with the black[1] majority population mostly situated in the low SES category.

The education system is generally viewed as the means to transform existing patterns of racially based inequality and discrimination experienced by the majority black population. Taylor and Yu (2009, p. 2) however remark that the relationship between education and improving the lives of the disadvantaged majority has an "element of circularity", implying that education is both an opportunity to overcome poverty, as well as, specifically in relation to low SES communities, forming a barrier to accessing, for example, the labour market.

Despite the hope that is placed in the education system, the Minister of Education openly admits that the schools in South Africa are in a state of crisis (Nkosi, 2016). This assertion is however not new, since Van der Berg (2011) argued that the education system perpetuates inequalities such as unemployment, as the system's output is not in-tune with the current realities of the labour market, which demand skilled and semi-skilled workers. Spaull (2013) also concurs by stating that the current educational system lacks the ability to educate most of the youth in South Africa as it is ineffective, inefficient, and unfair. In 2014, Statistics South Africa confirmed that 34 % of those with a matric certificate are unemployed. The alarming reality is that there has been an increase in the unemployment rate in South Africa. In 2015 the official unemployment rate was 26.40 % in 2015 and in the first quarter of 2016 the unemployment rate was at 26.7 % (Stats South Africa, 2016). Of significance is that the age group most affected by unemployment in South Africa is the group between 18 and 24 years of age. Almost 50% of this group is out of school and out of work (Altman, Mokomane & Wright, 2014). Illustrating the arguments of Taylor and Yu (2009) about the link between SES

[1] In this document "black people" will refer to African, Coloured or Indian persons in accordance to the definition provided in the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act of 2003

and education, the group most affected by unemployment is black students, from low SES and who attended disadvantaged schools.

Such alarming statistics have associated emotional and psychological costs. Prilleltensky (1999) asserts that psychological problems are connected to people's reduced social support, employment status, housing conditions, history of discrimination, and overall lack of personal and political power. Lund et al. (2011) confirmed the bi-directional link between poverty and compromised mental health in South Africa. According to the authors the question is no longer whether there is a link between common mental disorders such as depression, anxiety and somatoform disorders and poverty but rather which particular dimensions of poverty carry the strongest (or weakest) associations with mental health. The authors found that limited education, employment status, socio economic status, housing and food insecurity had high positive associations with common mental disorders. A positive correlation implies an increased prevalence as well as an increase in the severity, the duration and the worsening of the treatment outcomes. Ratele (2012) concurs by stating that the inequality, poverty and developmental failures have a direct impact on the optimal psychological development of the majority black, disadvantaged communities of South Africa.

Mabela (2013) asserts that prolonged unemployment has very stressful effects on psychological and physical well-being, leading to high levels of depression, anxiety, pessimism, apathy and a decreased self-esteem (Griep, Baillien, Vleugels, Rothmann & De Witte, 2014). Du Toit (2003) warns that youth unemployment is particularly damaging as the "inhumane dilemma" (p. 20) affects all aspects of the lives of those affected. Given the pervasiveness of poverty, unemployment and common mental disorders in South Africa, it is pertinent to explore the position of counselling psychology in this context.

2.3. Counselling Psychology in South Africa: Historical Context

Leach, Akhurst and Basson (2003), Watson and Fouche (2007), Maree and van der Westhuizen (2009) and Bantjes, Kagee and Young (2016) have written extensively on the history of counselling psychology in South Africa. Leach et al. (2003) make an explicit link between counselling psychology and the destructive apartheid political system, which was based on classifying people by race and language, underpinned by the belief that the majority black population was inferior to the minority white population. The authors assert that the appointment of H. F. Verwoerd, one of the major architects of apartheid, to the position of Applied Psychology at the Stellenbosch University in 1927, was a significant point of alignment of counselling psychology to serve political ends. With career counselling as its main focus, the discipline was geared towards enhancing the career and job prospects of struggling poor white Afrikaner families. Psychologists commissioned to work on the Carnegie report (1932) recommended job reservation and training to ensure certain unskilled work for Whites and to minimize the effects of competition from Blacks.

During the apartheid years, psychology and specifically counselling psychology was therefore rightly viewed by the majority black population as a tool of the minority white regime to enforce the socioracial hierarchy in favour of the minority white population (Cross, 1999; Mda & Mothata, 2000 in Leach et al., 2003). Naidoo (1996) postulates that traditional psychology practice in South Africa, with its origin in Eurocentric values, has been ethnocentric in its orientation, training and application. Watson and Fouche (2007, p. 157) summarised the situation well when they stated that "…in addressing the needs of a minority, white, Afrikaner, and predominantly male population, counsel[l]ing psychology remained inaccessible for most of the last century to the majority of South Africans".

Traditional counselling psychology has therefore largely neglected the mental health concerns and socio-political injustices endured by the majority black population of South Africa. One implication of this neglect is that three quarters of those experiencing mental health challenges do not have access to adequate, efficient and quality mental health services in South Africa (Petersen & Lund, 2011). Bantjes et al. (2016), Leach et al. (2003) and Watson and Fouche (2007) concur that the history of counselling psychology in South Africa reflects the country's colonial past and the socio-political and economic consequences of apartheid. The authors also assert that the current status of the profession has to be discussed with this history in mind.

2.4. Counselling Psychology in South Africa: Current Status

Over the last three decades, psychologists and researchers in South Africa have actively engaged in challenging applied psychology to be more relevant and accessible to those most in need (Berger & Lazarus, 1987). During the 1990s and to date an array of critical academic literature has debated, challenged and re-constructed the role of psychology in the midst of the changing political, economic, social milieu (Cooper, Nicholas, Seedat, & Statman, 1990; Kagee & Price, 1995; Ahmed & Pillay, 2004; Young, 2013). Kagee and Price (1995) asked the central question of how counselling psychologists in South Africa might contribute to the psychological wellness of people without colluding with individualism and/or perpetuating the status quo.

Watson and Fouche (2007) lamented the slow response to adopting a socially responsive professional identity. The reality is that transformation has been slow. Despite inspiring academic and professional debates, conferences and a multitude of research papers, the profession continues to struggle to find and agree on its professional identity and niche (Young,

2013, Bantjes et al., 2016). The preferred mode of intervention remains one-on-one psychotherapy that is mainly remedial in focus.

Career counselling is a pillar of counselling psychology that aims to provide guidance on how to choose suitable careers, design successful lives and make social contributions (Maree, 2013). In the context of South Africa, career counselling either supported the white, minority dominated status quo (Carnegie report, 1932) or, with its emphasis on objective approaches, alienated the majority of school going South Africans due to irrelevant content and the ignoring of personal and societal contextual factors. Patton and McMahon (1999) are known for expressing criticism of the theory and practice of career counselling in that, as postulate, it addresses only the needs of white, western, able-bodied, middle-class males. Herr (2008) concurs that career guidance is an interactive process that takes into consideration the micro context of the counsellor and the counselee, as well as the socio-political, macro-level processes that are influenced by historical context, the politics of the day, legislation and economic factors. The experiences of unemployed young people will be evaluated against the role that career guidance might have played in shaping their decision-making.

The pertinent question that counselling psychology will have to embrace is how and in what way the profession needs to adapt and change, to respond more positively and appropriately to the psychological needs of the majority black, economically and socially disadvantaged population of South Africa. Watson and Fouche (2007) suggested that if counselling psychologists were to adopt a more preventative approach, thereby targeting groups, communities and macro social systems rather than individuals, it might produce the elusive 'relevance' that has been lacking in the profession. Young (2013) supported this view by suggesting that a commitment to a social justice approach might be the unique contribution that

counselling psychology could make to the field. Young et al. (2016) imply that the adoption of social justice agenda would work towards addressing injustice, discrimination and inequality in society. At this stage it is appropriate to explore further the meaning of a social justice approach.

2.5. Developing an Understanding of a Social Justice Approach

The earliest notion of 'justice' can be traced back to the ancient Greeks, who essentially equated the notion of justice with the virtues of a good life (Smith, 2005). Since then a diversity of theoretical perspectives has attempted to articulate just distribution or social justice as it is commonly referred to. Vera and Speight (2003) elaborate on the libertarian justice model of John Locke, which postulates that injustices in society are acceptable as long as equal opportunities exist. Rousseau (undated, cited in Vera & Speight, 2003) however argues that this view of justice is unacceptable as it implies that inequity should become structurally embedded within a society. Rousseau's liberal reformist approach to justice underscores that the role of government should be to create and enforce laws that prevent social injustices, while promoting liberty and freedom of choice.

The socialist approach to justice, commonly associated with Marx, argues that society should be structured in a way that guarantees equality, even at the expense of personal freedoms (van de Veer, 1973). Vera and Speight (2003) indicate that the criticism against the above models centres on their apparent focus on outcomes (i.e. the distribution of resources), leading to the conceptualisation of the communitarian model of justice or deliberative justice that emphasises the process of decision making and interaction that occurs at an individual and systemic level. Smith (2005) also highlights that communitarianism stresses the relational nature of human

life, which is contrary to the liberalist approach that tends to evaluate different parts of the individual without taking into consideration the social context.

Smith (2005) asserts that it is more comprehensive and useful to identify justice as a social concept, implying that it happens in society. De Coninck et al. (2013) argue that term 'social' in social justice denotes social injustices as society-wide problems rather than individual occurrences. The authors also assert that 'social' implies that individuals or groups might experience multiple levels of injustice underscoring that human rights are an inherent aspect of social justice. Having said that, Nussbaum (2003) argues that formally recognising, for example, political participation as a right, does not imply that one has the capability to function optimally in that area. She refers to the capabilities approach as the next step, after one's rights have been secured. The next step involves the recognition and breaking down of obstacles that prevent individuals from claiming their rights. Nussbaum (2003) identifies ten capabilities as central requirements of a life with dignity. A capabilities approach to social justice therefore implies that each person, regardless of social status and/or community, is worthy of a dignified life.

On a practical level, Goodman et al. (2004) propose that 'social justice work' occurs on the micro-level, including the individual and families, the meso-level, including communities and organizations, and the macro-level including social structures, ideologies and policies. The authors also assert that social justice work is interested in changing social structures. Gormally (2012), who writes from a critical change perspective, asserts that the application of a social justice approach requires critical consciousness and social action. Critical consciousness denotes an awareness that starts with self-awareness followed by social and

global awareness. Self-awareness emphasises that counselling psychologists must be aware of their own social status, privileges and cultural identities (Vera & Speight, 2003).

Freire (2005) also postulates that critical understanding or *conscientization* leads to critical action. He argues that critical action or social action stems from the idea of reflective action or 'praxis' in the world in order to bring about transformation. Smith (1999) makes three important statements about praxis. He says that praxis is not simply action based on reflection. It is action that embodies a commitment to human well-being and the search for truth, and respect for others. He also states that praxis is always risky in that there is a continual interplay between ends and means since there is no prior knowledge of the right means by which we may realize the end in a particular situation. Thirdly the author states that praxis is creative in that it is other-seeking and dialogic. 'Dialogue' refers to the horizontal, empathic relationship between persons that fosters joint engagement and a critical search for something that is not self-sufficient or arrogant (Freire, 2005). The emphasis on being responsive to the needs of others, including the gendered individual, and the importance of understanding social context is also evident in the feminist perspective as presented by Gilligan (1982, cited in Smith, 2005). South African Feminist writers Bozalek and Carolissen (2012) concur with Gilligan when they postulate that needs are political and as a result it should be located publicly and not in the individual as argued by neoliberal discourses. Motulsky, Gere, Saleem and Trantham (2014) also refer to the feminist emphasis of fostering development through mutuality and growth-producing relationships.

Winter (2015) highlights four social justice principles that find common ground between social justice, multiculturalism and feminist paradigms. These principles are equity, access, participation and harmony. According to Winter (2015) equity refers to fair distribution of

rights, responsibilities and resources. Access underscores the capacity to make use of services, resources and information. Participation denotes the right of each individual to be involved in decision-making processes that impact on their lives. Harmony refers to the balance between the needs of the individual and the benefits/outcomes for the society. The concept of social justice is therefore closely linked to basic human rights and the capabilities to achieve these. A social justice approach can be linked to critical social action, prevention, and awareness - raising practices that focus on addressing the systemic root causes of injustice. Speight and Vera (2004, p. 110) say it eloquently: "Social justice work is critical, controversial, political, and perhaps quite removed from our typical counsel(l)ing psychology practice".

2.6. A Social Justice Agenda for Counselling Psychology

Prominent local counselling psychologists (Young 2013; Young et al., 2016) have been consistent in their articulation of the need for a social justice approach to be adopted by counselling psychologists in South Africa. Counselling psychology in South Africa has however not yet professionally embraced a social justice approach, perhaps as Young (2013) suggests, because of its explicit link to activism. With the emphasis on critical reflection, political, social action and systemic change, a social justice approach might be considered to be foreign to the established professional identity of counselling psychologists in South Africa (Young, 2013). It is the contention of this study that another reason for the approach not to be adopted might be the lack of understanding as to the practical implications that the adoption of a social justice approach in counselling psychology might entail in the context of South Africa.

Vera and Speight (2003), postulate that the goal of a social justice approach is equitable distribution of resources ensuring the full and equal participation of all groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs. The adoption/implementation of a social justice agenda

in counselling psychology therefore requires fundamental changes to the traditional way in which we conceptualise our role as counselling psychologists (Speight & Vera, 2004). It is therefore disappointing to note that in South Africa, social justice advocates have not yet provided written guidance, in the same manner as for example, Ratts, Anthony and Santos (2010), Burnes and Singh (2010), or Motulsky et al. (2014), to bridge the gap between the rhetoric and action in relation to a social justice approach both in counselling psychology training programmes and in practice.

Critical community psychology practice might also be another applied psychology pillar from which possible lessons could be extracted in relation to the adoption of a social justice approach in counselling psychology. Kagan et al. (2011) postulate that critical community psychology practice is based on three values: social justice, stewardship and community. Of interest is the value of social justice, which underpins the right to equal and equitable distribution of resources, the right to live in peace and in freedom from constraints, the right to equality and fair treatment and the right to self-determination. Bantjes et al. (2016) argue that the challenge for counselling psychologists is to adopt the agenda of community psychology that will allow the profession to promote the rights as underpinned by a social justice agenda. The next section will discuss some of the practical implications of adopting a social justice approach.

2.7. Practical Implications

The first practical implication that stands out is that a commitment to a social justice approach is a commitment to bring about change on societal level. Vera and Speight (2003) argue that a social justice informed counselling psychologist should seek to transform the world, and not just understand the world. This transformation agenda requires a social consciousness with an

imperative that requires us to go beyond the current conceptualisation of counselling psychology as imposed by our socialization (training) and the boundaries set by the professional scope of practice (Martín-Baró, I., Aron, & Corne, 1994). Prilleltensky (1999) breaks it down further when he argues that psychologists, informed by a social justice approach, will have to be guided by the value of distributive justice in pursuit of the psychological well-being and human welfare of their clients. The target of social justice interventions is therefore the social context in addition to, or instead of, the individual (Goodman et al., 2004). The authors assert that the sources of individual distress are located in these social conditions and through a collaborative process the counselling psychologist works with the individual or group of individuals to bring about change. This requires counselling psychologists to be directly involved in advocacy for and with individuals or groups and to be willing to go beyond understanding the context to facilitating action in that context.

The second implication relates to the training of counselling psychologists. Vera and Speight (2003) assert that a commitment to social justice can be integrated into the training of the next generation of counselling professionals. Buckley (1999) suggests that training that is committed to a social justice agenda should endeavour to foster a counselling psychologist that is aware of, and sensitive to, injustices, has the knowledge and understanding of the causes/conditions that cause and perpetuate injustices, and has tools and skills that will allow him or her to effectively intervene at multiple levels for clients and communities. Psychology training programmes, however, continue to reinforce individualistic, competitive and elitist values (Stevens, 2001). The focus is generally on one-on-one counselling that focuses on individual deficit and remedial action rather than on development and preventative systemic interventions. Prilleltensky (1999) is highly critical of remedial therapeutic methods since they imply passivity and retrospection rather than proactive and preventative action that

is focused on bringing about systemic change. In the context of training institutions in South Africa, Ahmed and Pillay (2004) argue that by emphasising remedial interventions, psychology positions itself as a value-laden, political enterprise that maintains relations of power and domination. More explicitly, Hooks (2004) and Mkhize (2004) argue that by prioritising 'Western' values, such as individual-level interventions, within psychological training programmes in South Africa, the profession ensures that it continues to function independently from social and contextual factors of the majority.

A reliable and valid model of psychological counselling for South Africa might embrace the following four main ingredients as suggested by Moursand (1990, cited in Kagee & Price, 1995). The first ingredient is the need to develop a careful understanding of the characteristics of the target population. Griffin and Steen (2011) concur by suggesting that practitioners develop an understanding of the cultural contexts within and between groups. The second ingredient is that there should be a closer link between the therapeutic role of the psychologist and the broader political context, implying that there is a demand for the therapist to be willing to step outside or away from traditional roles of practice that perpetuate exclusion. The third ingredient mentioned is in relation to the therapeutic process. The author suggests that the adoption of a systems approach that includes the contexts in which an individual function, ensures a more holistic view of the aetiology of particular psychological distress, allowing for the establishment of a variety of mutually beneficial alliances and collaboration with and within communities. The final ingredient is the formation of realistic expected outcomes, particularly since psychological process is limited in its ability to bring about social change. Complementary to the latter idea is Griffin and Steen's (2011) suggestion that the facilitation of direct, open and honest dialogues at all levels of society can enhance the application and relevance of the social justice approach in psychological counselling,

Lastly, the implications of the approach on the professional scope of practice and related ethical guidelines of counselling psychology will be explored. Amid the ongoing debates regarding the recently revised scope of practice for counselling psychologists in South Africa, Bantjes et al. (2016) re-emphasise the lack of consensus about the professional identity of counselling psychologists in the post-apartheid South Africa. Pretorius (2012) argues that the re-definition of the professional scope of practice comes at a time when psychology has changed and that there should accordingly be a different emphasis on the kinds of skills needed by psychologists. The purpose of psychology in South Africa thus needs to be reviewed to make it more relevant to what is needed by the country rather than what is wanted by psychologists. Pretorius (2012, p. 516) also states this revision provides an opportunity to expand the "armamentarium of skills to include curative, preventative and developmental skills". He argues that the methods and techniques whereby these curative, preventative and developmental services are delivered should be expanded from one-on-one therapy to group work, programme development and community interventions. In this context, it is therefore conceivable that counselling psychologists committed to a social justice approach should make use of this window of opportunity to revise and include principles and values that will make the profession more relevant.

Local research offers little guidance on the implications that the adoption of a social justice agenda might have for counselling psychology in general and hence very little consideration has been given to the ethical implications of such an approach. Winter (2015) suggests that lessons can be drawn from the American Psychology Association (APA) and the British Psychological Society (BPS). Hage and Kenny (2009) acknowledge that the American Psychological Association Code of Ethics makes reference to issues related to social justice.

However, they lament that these references are meant to be inspirational guidelines rather than enforceable standards. Winter (2015) highlights cautious optimism as well as limitations in relation to the BPS addressing social justice issues. Both sets of authors agree, however, that in addition to regulating professional behaviour, mandatory or aspirational ethical codes provide the opportunity for reflection and decision-making within an agreed moral framework.

Vera and Speight (2003) contrasted mandatory ethics as action taken to avoid breaking the rules with aspirational ethics that are actions taken toward attaining the highest possible standard. In the absence of relevant ethical guidelines, the authors suggest that counselling psychologists should confront issues of injustice by increasing personal self-awareness and "then do what one can via counselling and psychotherapy" (p. 258). Giroux (1994, cited in Vera & Speight, 2003) provides support for this view in that he describes ethics as a sense of personal and social responsibility to the other that requires accountability beyond professional obedience. In the context of South Africa where the debate is still focused on the revised scope of practice and the search for an agreed professional identity, it might be necessary to follow the suggestion of Vera and Speight (2003) to increase one's self-awareness. In the context of training aspirant counselling psychologists, this process of self-discovery could be supported by providing the space to consider the presence of professional and ethical guidelines in relation to the adoption of social justice principles into our practice.

2.8. Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to foster an understanding of a social justice approach within the current context of counselling psychology in South Africa. The contextual, political and developmental history of counselling psychology in South Africa was briefly discussed. Social justice as concept and approach was discussed allowing for the formation of a working

understanding of the approach. It was found that whilst there has been support for the ideas embedded in a social justice approach, there appear to be no existing guidelines that operationalise the implementation of such an approach. In the absence of such, it is likely that the status quo will be perpetuated rather than be challenged in the training of counselling psychologists. The chapter concluded with a discussion of some of the practical implications for counselling psychology in the process of adopting a social justice approach. The next chapter describes in detail the research design and methodology of this research study.

Chapter 3 - Research Design and Methodology

3.1. Introduction

The selection of a research design and the accompanying methodology and tools is influenced by the research aim/question and the character (including, skills and experience) of the research participants, which includes the researcher (Creswell, Hanson, Clark & Morales, 2007). In the next paragraph, I hope to share personal and contextual information that will illuminate the research choices as outlined in the remainder of this chapter.

3.2. Inception of the Inquiry

This inquiry was conceived through the joining of two, at the time, very distinct moments of 'wonder'. The first, intrigued and stimulated by the debate around the changing role of counselling psychologists in South Africa, left me concerned and wondering about my professional ability to adopt a social justice approach, as advocated by local and international proponents of change within counselling psychology (Vera & Speight 2003; Young, 2013). I was concerned about my competence given the lack of emphasis on social justice issues in my previous five years of graduate studies including the first year of my Masters course in counselling psychology in which the adoption of a social justice approach in South Africa was discussed during one seminar session and with reference to two articles, Vera and Speight (2003) and Young (2013).

The second moment of 'wonder' occurred at a local organisation working with children and young people. The local organisation offers educational, psychosocial and developmental activities to 200 Grade 1 to Grade 12 children of disadvantaged families. In a general

discussion about the possible role and involvement of the Rhodes University Psychology Clinic, the management of the local organisation expressed concern about the high level of unemployment amongst young people when they complete their schooling (matric, Grade 12). It was suggested that one of the Masters students could start a group activity to support the young people in addressing the obstacles to gaining full time employment. Although immediately interested I was concerned that, as postulated by Greenleaf and Bryant (2012), my training as counselling psychologist had primarily focused on intra-psychic perspectives – i.e. the problem is with the individual. Keen to work with the group of unemployed young people, I was aware that there might also be a strong correlation between the unemployment problems of the young people and their environment (social, economic, cultural, and political). Inspired by the minimal input on a social justice approach in counselling psychology and in consultation with my supervisor, the following action research question was conceptualised:

What lessons about a social justice approach can a counselling psychologist learn from a youth unemployment community engagement activity?

Based on my specific learning needs the question was further broken down as follows:

a) What lessons can be learnt about a social justice approach from the collaborative action research intervention process?
b) What lessons about a social justice approach can be learnt from the personal experiences of the participants?

3.3. Design

This inquiry is situated within a constructivist, qualitative research design. Complementary to counselling psychology, adopting a qualitative approach allows for in-depth understanding and

meaning-making that is consistent with an open, therapeutic counselling relationship (Morrow, 2007). The qualitative nature of this research is embedded in the objective to learn from the meaning that people (unemployed young people and the researcher) make of their experiences. The constructivist nature of the inquiry is based on the in-the-moment, active, unstructured nature of the intervention with the young people, as well as the outcome informing how my 'world' as counselling psychologist is built and rebuilt as a result of the understanding gained through this inquiry (Weaver, 2008).

Collaborative action research (CAR) as a methodology and a method (also see 3.5.1) is considered to be well suited to meet the objectives of the group activity, i.e. a CAR stance promotes making sense of the experiences of the unemployed young people as well as in terms of the learning objectives of the researcher. As a research methodology, the researcher took a CAR stance in making sense of the experiences of the unemployed young people and in applying the knowledge to her practice as trainee counselling psychologist. The main strengths of CAR are that it allows for collective reflection to generate new insights and action with participants rather than for participants (Akhurst & Lawson, 2013). However, because participants are not involved in the actual research analysis and reporting, it is not participatory action research. The emphasis on collective reflection reflects a social justice approach that promotes change through collaboration.

3.4. Participants

3.4.1. Inclusion Criteria

The inclusion criteria required that any individual selected for participation had to be above the age of 18, should have completed matric and should be unemployed at the time of recruitment. Secondary criteria related to the collaboration with the local organisation as a social

development organisation located in the mixed and predominantly Afrikaans-speaking surrounding community. Although it was not a requirement for the participants to be Afrikaans speaking, it turned out that the recruitment process inadvertently targeted unemployed young people of the predominantly Afrikaans speaking community.

3.4.2. Planned recruitment process:

As part of the organisational mandate, the local organisation's staff members conduct regular home visits to identify children of community members who are in need of the services offered by the local organisation. Initially, in line with a purposive sampling strategy (Terre Blanche, Durrheim, & Painter, 2006) and clearly defined inclusion criteria, it was agreed that during these home visits the local organisation's staff would recruit between 5 and 10 young people who had been involved in activities at the centre, who had matriculated and who were currently unemployed. The local organisation field staff were to explain the purpose of the group activity and hand out an information sheet. They would also have secured consent from each individual. Following receipt of full consent, a group, based on the shared experience of unemployment, was to be formed (Creswell et al., 2007). The group activity was to take place at the local organisation and it was envisaged that upon the first contact with the group, the researcher would confirm consent for participation and the recording.

3.4.3. Actual process

Following the granting of ethical approval by the Department of Psychology's Research Project and Ethics Review Committee (RPERC) (Appendix D) the local organisation was approached to commence the recruitment of the participants. At this stage the researcher was informed that due to a staff shortage at the organisation, field work had been suspended. It was suggested, however, that the researcher could attend the annual planning and reporting meeting

of the organisation to share the objectives of the group activity and to recruit possible participants. About fifty parents and other community members were present at this meeting. The researcher was provided a time slot to talk about the proposed group activity targeting unemployed matriculated young people. At the end of the session, it was suggested that interested young people meeting the criteria could contact the researcher via the local organisation. After a monitoring period of almost two months, only two young people contacted the researcher via the local organisation. After supervision, it was agreed that, in line with the CAR approach, it would be possible to adapt the recruitment process in consultation with the two young people who had indicated an initial willingness to be involved. Following a discussion session with the two participants, it was agreed that they would use their contacts and references to recruit more participants meeting the stated criteria. This approached is referred to as snowball sampling (Terre Blanche, Durrheim, & Kelly,2006). As a result, nine participants (three female and six males) indicated that they were willing to be contacted by the researcher. The two participants leading the snowball sampling were remunerated for their efforts.

3.5. Procedures for Data Collection

3.5.1. Methods of Data Gathering

Collaborative action research (CAR) as a method is defined as a variety of stakeholders cooperating together to explore questions of mutual interest through cycles of action, experience and reflection, in order to develop insights into particular phenomena, create frameworks for understanding, and suggest actions that improve practice (Butt & Townsend et. al., 1992). With its focus on bringing about change (Koshy et al. 2010), CAR offers four critical phases: action, evaluation, critical reflection and change. The CAR method is considered to be well suited to generate data that meets the trustworthiness criteria of

credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability as outlined by Shenton (2004). As directed by CAR, working collaboratively with the participants to make sense of their unemployed status was a process that underpinned the overall interaction with the unemployed young people from the inception to the closing phase. The diagrammatical depiction of the action research cycles serves to illustrate the practical application of CAR as a method. Diagram 1 depicts a summary of the first action research cycle that starts with the plan to recruit participants. Although depicted as a neatly cyclic process, it is important to note that the process was 'messy' in that ongoing evaluation, critical reflection and change took place due to the local and organisational complexities.

Diagram 1 – Action Research Cycle 1

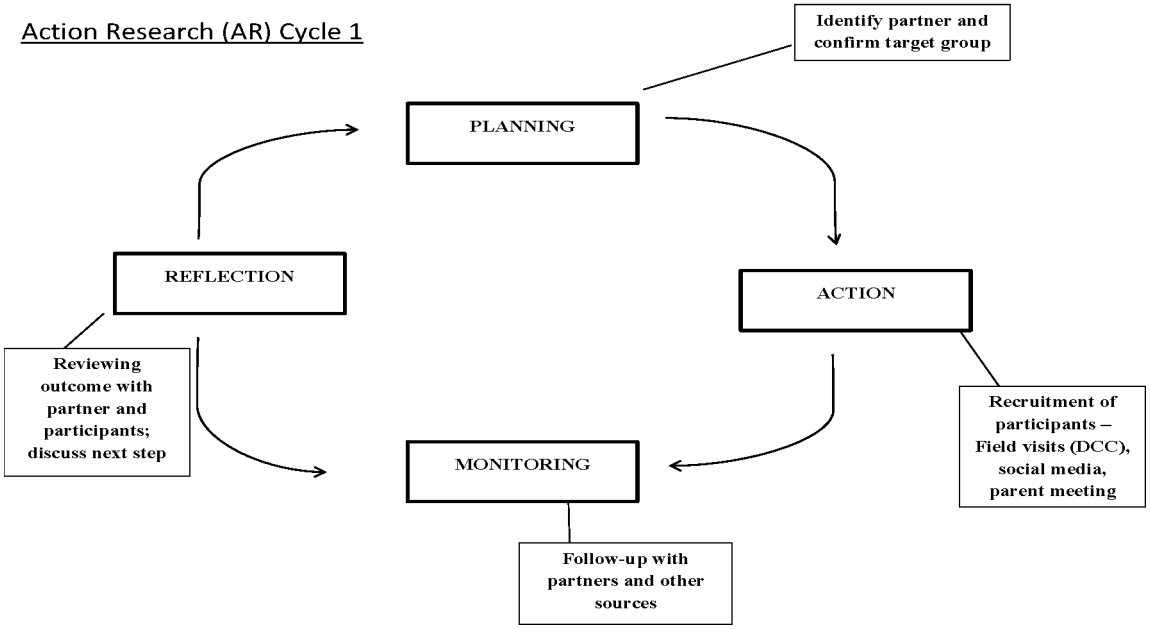
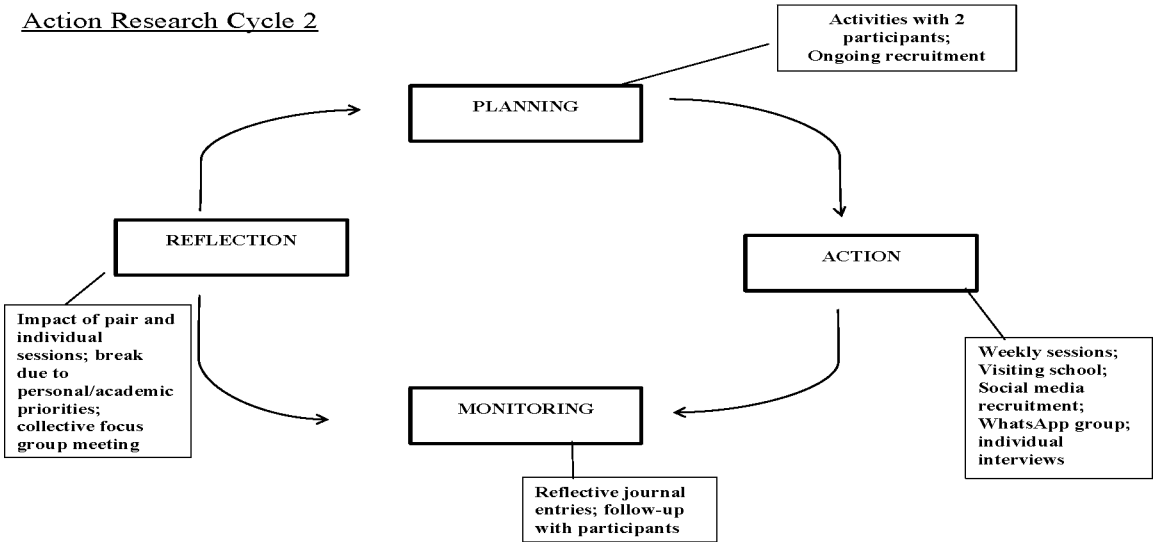


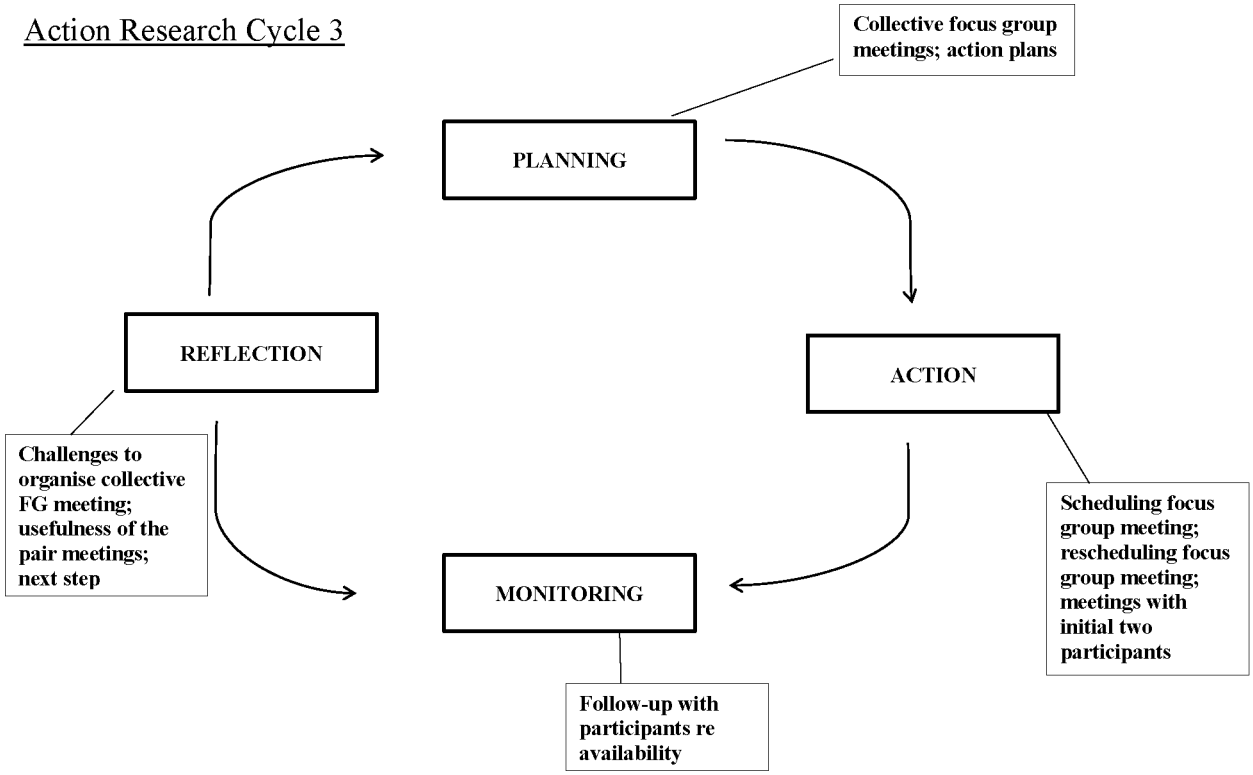
Diagram 2 depicts the process of engaging with the participants through the initial pair work, the individual interviews and the researcher's reflective journal. At the initial meeting, the participants requested the formation of a WhatsApp chat group as they consider it to be the most convenient means of communication.

Diagram 2 – Action Research Cycle 2



The final phase is depicted in Diagram 3. The main objective was to capture the collaborative attempts aimed at organising the planned focus group discussion.

Diagram 3 – Action Research Cycle 3



3.5.2. Focus Group Discussions

The initial plan as approved by the RPERC was to have notes and detailed transcripts of twelve, 90 minute, weekly focus group discussion (FGD) sessions with the group of unemployed youth. It was envisaged that the FGD sessions would enable the participants to share and reflect on experiences (Koshy et al., 2010). The plan was that participants would plan and implement action for change *vis-à-vis* the barriers to employment on individual, community and systemic levels. The FGDs were to be organized around the following tentative schedule: Weeks 1-3: Introduction and making sense of individual and group experiences; Weeks 4-6: Identifying individual (including the researcher) and group actions aimed at changing the current situation; Weeks 7-9: Implementation of action plans and reviewing of action plans; Weeks 10-11: Feedback on process; Week 12: Closure and the way forward.

The FGD sessions did not take place as planned. As depicted in Diagram 3, collaborative action to revise the initial plan was implemented. The researcher engaged in personal and collective reflection as to the reasons underpinning the difficulties in organising the FGDs. Prompted by the difficulties experienced during the recruitment phase, the researcher anticipated that there might be difficulties related to organising the FGDs. As a result, the objectives related to the individual interviews were slightly revised as discussed in the next section.

3.5.3. Individual Semi-Structured Interviews

The initial objective was that the individual meetings would be used to introduce the participants to the objectives of the group activity and to gain their consent for ongoing participation. It was anticipated that the meeting would be short and the outcome would be positive rapport between the researcher and the participant. Based on the difficulties experienced in the first phase and in consultation with Participant 1 (P1) and Participant 2 (P2), it was considered best to revise the structure of the individual meetings. Underpinned by the CAR approach the meetings were longer with the emphasis on creating an atmosphere that would encourage open and in-depth sharing of the personal experiences of the unemployed young people. An approach called collaborative conversations (Feldman, 1999) was used to focus on their concerns, lead them to value their experiences and emotions, help them to discover connections and differences and help them to move towards praxis. The discussion took place in the first language of the participants, Afrikaans, and the duration was between 45 minutes and an hour. Permission was sought to audio record in full and the content was transcribed verbatim (see Appendix E).

3.5.4. Reflective Journal – Researcher

Within qualitative research the emphasis is on a humanistic stance in which phenomena under investigation are examined through the eyes and experiences of individual participants, including the researcher (Creswell, 2009). As part of constructivist practice the researcher kept a reflective journal to document her experiences, opinions, thoughts, and feelings. The research journal was recognised as part of the research design, data generation, analysis, and interpretation process (Ortlipp, 2008). As an autoethnographic method (Etherington, 2007) a reflective journal is acceptable as valuable data that can contribute to answering the research question.

For the purpose of reflection, the researcher chose to make use of the reflective cycle of Gibbs (1988). This allows the researcher to record her own experience and position and a critique of the research process (Davey & Liefooghe, 2004). Gibbs's reflective cycle consist of six phases (and accompanying question prompts) namely *Description* (What happened?); *Feeling* (What were you thinking and feeling?); *Evaluation* (What was good and bad about the experience?); *Analysis* (What sense can you make of the situation?); *Conclusion* (What else could you have done?) and *Action Plan* (If it arose again, what would you do?). Appendix A provides an extract from a journal entry as an example.

3.6. Procedures for Data Analysis

The decision to use Template Analysis (King, 2012) to make sense of the data was prompted by the learning objectives embedded in the research question. When a learning objective is influenced by experience, prior research and theoretical underpinnings, template analysis is recommended as a practical approach as it allows for the application of predetermined categories of analysis. King (2004) notes that the approach allows for the thematic analysis of a large amount of qualitative data in an efficient and timely manner. Compared to the well-known Interpretative Phenomenological analysis (IPA), which is always inductive, template analysis provides similar analytical rigour and facilitates the production of similar findings (Langdridge, 2008).

The development of the initial template was influenced by the research question and sub-questions. The interview topic guide, the reflexive journal entries, the social network (WhatsApp) communication and the academic literature as reviewed and referred to in Chapter 2 contributed to the development of the mainly descriptive higher order and lower-order codes

(King, 2012). By reading through the transcribed semi-structured interviews, a set of initial higher order codes was identified as: Personal Information, Education Information, Making - Sense of unemployment, What will it take to bring about change.

After reflection, the initial template was revised to the final template as outlined in Diagram 4.

Diagram 4 – Final Template

FINAL TEMPLATE			
CATEGORY 1 – PROCESS RELATED FINDINGS	1.1. Step 1: Conceptualising the intervention		
	1.2. Step 2: The collaboration		
	1.3. Step 3: Collaborative focus group meeting		
CATEGORY 2: CONTENT ANALYSIS	2.1. Contextual factors	2.2.1. Psychological wellbeing	
	2.2. Impact of unemployment	2.2.2. Support from family, friends and the community	
	2.3. Experiences trying to find a job	2.3.1. Career Guidance	
		2.3.2. Job application process	2.3.2.1. Consistency in applying for jobs
			2.3.2.2. Adjusting expectations
			2.3.2.3. Not receiving responses on applications submitted
			2.3.2.4. Not enough opportunities available
			2.3.2.5. Lack of skills and work experience
			2.3.2.6. Not being hired because of their ethnic group
	2.4. Consciousness to bring about change	2.4.1. Experiencing and awareness of injustice	
		2.4.2. Is change possible?	
		2.4.3. Support from a Counselling Psychologist	

Making sense of the process-related information was underscored by the preliminary *a priori* themes which included elements related to Step 1: conceptualising the collaborative intervention, Step 2: The collaboration and the final step referred to as Collaborative Focus

Group Meeting. Manual coding of the data sets (reflective notes and action research cycles) was chosen to promote engagement with the transcripts on an interpretive level. The transcripts were collated and codes were organized in a matrix (Diagram 4) outlining higher order codes followed by lower-order codes (King, 2012).

Content information contained in the collated data set was categorised into three main areas based on the main interview questions. The main areas included contextual information, the psychological impact of being unemployed, experience of trying to find a job and their awareness and willingness to bring about change.

3.7. Trustworthiness of data

The interactions with the stakeholders and participants were meticulously documented and where appropriate, interactions where audio recorded. Creswell (2014) noted that the detailed documentation of interactions reduce subjectivity, promoting reflexivity and increase the level of trustworthiness of the research outcomes. Etherington (2007) also suggests that a reflexive researcher encourages transparency and dialogue with participants about the credibility of the research findings.

The interaction with the participants was conducted in their first language and the transcription of the interview data was also done in their first language. Due to the size of the whole data set, the researcher translated only the extracted data into English. The back translation from the target to the source language was done by another translator, who did not have insight to the original source language version (Brislin, 1970). The back-translation version was compared with the original version and as there was a high comparability between the back-translation version and the original version, the translation accuracy was considered high and trustworthy

(Douglas & Craig, 2007). Appendix B provides a summary of the extracted data, the first translation and the back translation.

Finally, the researcher acknowledges the influence of personal perspectives on the research process and as such recognises that other perspectives on the phenomenon are possible (Brooks, McCluskey, Turley & King, 2015).

3.8. Ethical considerations

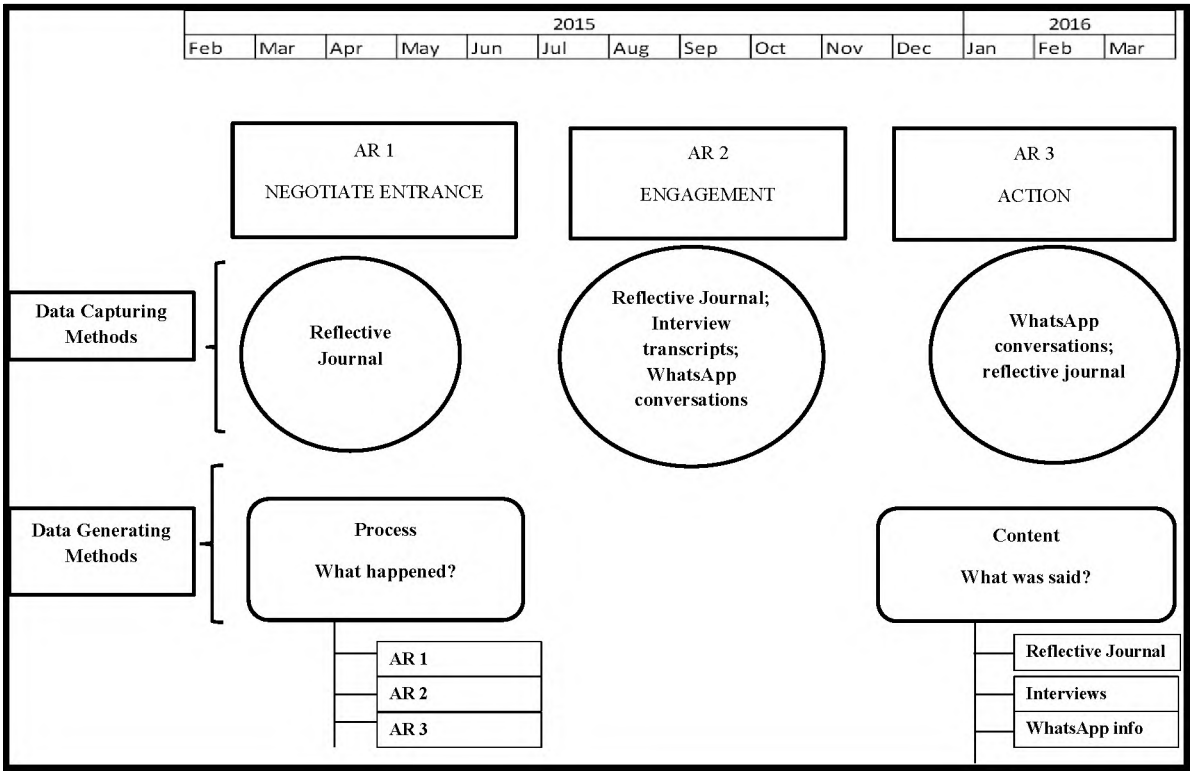
Given the collaborative nature of the inquiry, the local organisation was kept informed about progress, challenges and concerns. Appendix C outlines the planned focus group activity. The document was prepared in English and Afrikaans. On making contact with research participants the document served as a discussion prompt but it was also handed to the participants for their own reference. After introducing the research, participants were asked to complete and sign an informed consent form for participation as well as for permission and release of the audio recordings (see Appendix E). Participants were also informed that they could withdraw from the interaction at any time and that their identities would be kept anonymous in the final report. The data was kept on a password protected computer (Creswell, 2014). The final research document will be made available to the participants and the local organisation.

Chapter 4 - Results

4.1. Introduction

Template analysis allowed for the reduction of a large, complex set of data to a clearer summary from which information could be extracted in response to the research questions. Diagram 5 provides a summary of the intervention, including a time line, the Action Research Phases (AR), the data capturing and the data gathering methods. In response to the two research sub-questions, the data was divided into two main categories, namely 'process' and 'content'. 'Process' data shed light on what was happening from the inception of the research to the point of declaring the data gathering closed. 'Content' included the data that was directly communicated by the participants in the WhatsApp communication, interviews (collaborative conversations) and written in my reflective journal.

Diagram 5 – Summary of the Research Intervention



4.2. Category 1 – Process Related Findings

4.2.1. Step 1: Conceptualising the intervention

Recognising my own position as student and trainee counselling psychologist is necessary in terms of the 'meaning-making' process. In partial fulfilment of the academic requirements of my degree studies, I was bound by the Rhodes University operational and ethical procedures. The impact of these guidelines on the interaction with the research participants was evident in the timing and duration of the research. Although the interaction with the unemployed young people was agreed in March 2015, due to the ethical approval process, contact with research participants was only established in September 2015. In line with the timetable for the overall degree course, the data gathering stage of the research was completed in March 2016, seven months after inception, to ensure the completion of the research project during the 2016 academic year.

Collaboration with a local non-governmental organisation was initiated at the start of the academic year. Although agreement for collaboration was established, internal organisational challenges required a change in the recruitment approach (discussed in Chapter 3). I received support from the organisation to implement the agreed changes. I gained access to the human resource pool of the organisation and I was allowed to make use of the organisation as hosting venue. It is worth noting, however, that the longer the process continued, the more independent from the organisation I worked. In order to establish contact with the participants I met them initially at the organisation but as interaction became more regular, the connection with the organisation diminished. In this regard two main challenges were experienced: Firstly, the participants were not always able to meet during the morning sessions. Meetings had to take place in the afternoon but it was not possible for the organisation to accommodate us due to afternoon activities with the school-aged children. The second challenge was my

availability in relation to my duties as trainee and intern counselling psychologist. Meetings were sometimes scheduled after working hours due to my intern responsibilities. The organisational venue was however not available after hours, compelling me to meet with the participants in public spaces.

In line with the CAR process I attempted to provide informal feedback on the progress and challenges related to the recruitment of and meeting with the unemployed young people to the organisational management on a regular basis.

4.2.2. Step 2: The collaboration

The process of collaboration took place in two stages.

- The first stage took place between mid-September and the end of November 2015. It involved the two unemployed young people (P1 and P2) who expressed interest in the collaborative group activity as outlined in Appendix C. The initial collaborative interaction was focussed on the gaining information about the personal experiences of each participant. P1 and P2 generally arrived together for the sessions and it seems that they had an established bond of friendship. Neither of them however found it comfortable to talk about themselves, their families and their lived experience as unemployed matriculated young people. Following consultation with the participants and the research supervisor, the conversation was supplemented by practical activities to stimulate thinking and to minimise feelings of vulnerability. Practical activities included a getting-to-know-myself-activity focusing on adjectives. The participants also completed a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis that focussed on their career interests and expectations. In both instances participants

collaborated through open discussion; however, they were reluctant for the interactions to be recorded.

Following these activities, regular weekly sessions were interrupted with participants citing personal circumstances. The excerpts below show date and time from the 'WhatsApp' records. These are included to illustrate the frequency with which participants were unable to attend meetings.

> 10/21/2015 1:18 AM: Researcher: Hello both. Unfortunately, P1 can't make it (she informed me early eve but my WhatsApp was off). Although disappointing I understand. With only two of you it is difficult to continue with one person only. Could we perhaps reschedule for this week?

> 11/2/2015 2:08 PM: P2: Wont able to make it on Wednesday, have an appointment at half past eight sorry.

> 11/5/2015 8:35 AM: P1: Sorry, I won't be able to meet this week as on Tuesday I am going to Port Alfred for two weeks.

After a three-week break, I once again contacted the participants. Participants were invited to discuss the way forward. A neutral venue was selected to encourage participation and minimise possible feelings of vulnerability.

> 11/9/2015 1:01 PM: Researcher: Hope still okay for 3pm today

11/9/2015 1:02 PM: Researcher: Meeting at DCC and then perhaps go somewhere to discuss progress on recruiting more unemployed youth?

During the informal meeting participants confirmed that they have been busy with personal priorities. One participant was studying for her learner driver's license. The other participant went out of town to try and find a job in another nearby town. During the meeting, I informed them of my ongoing struggle to make contact with more unemployed young people. Both participants acknowledged that they knew of other unemployed young people who might be interested in meeting with me. They emphasised, however, that regular participation could not be guaranteed. They also indicated that they could contact these young people. However due to limited financial resources, it was agreed that they would receive very modest remuneration for each participant they were able to connect with the researcher. I reflected on this arrangement as a possible ethical dilemma:

Analysis What sense can you make of the situation?	I think the reality of our situations dictated our actions. For me I am becoming more and more concerned that I will not meet my academic requirements if the group remains this small. My attempts to think about alternatives were influenced by my situation and the situation of my participants. Putting myself in their shoes, I thought that they must be in need of some kind of payment as they have families and personal needs. Coming up with the suggestion to pay them was influenced by this.

(Research Reflective Journal, Week of 26-28 October 2015)

I agreed with P1 and P2 that they would contact unemployed young people. In the event that the unemployed young people agreed to be contacted by the researcher, they had to sign a consent form and provide their contact information (Appendix E). During the second follow-up meeting, P1 and P2 submitted signed consent forms and contact information of five additional unemployed young people willing to be contacted by the researcher.

- The second stage commenced at the start of the academic year in early January 2016. A follow-up meeting was scheduled with P1 and P2. P1 indicated that she had started short-term employment at a local business and that she would appreciate assistance with updating her Curriculum Vitae.

1/6/2016 2:48 PM: Researcher: Wow so you are working?

1/6/2016 5:19 PM: P1: It is just a casual appointment; I will finish the week of the 15th.

1/6/2016 7:27 PM: Researcher: But it is something worthwhile for your CV

1/6/2016 7:28 PM: P1: Yes, but I am still trying to find someone who can help me to update my CV.

P2 indicated that she had enrolled at a local centre to improve four of her matric subjects. She hoped that with this improvement she would be able to secure adequate employment.

1/6/2016 11:41 AM: P2: Yes, but I don't know if I can meet. I am trying to sort my stuff…

1/6/2016 11:42 AM: Researcher: Ok, when do you start?

1/6/2016 11:42 AM: P2: I am starting on the 25th

This stage also included making contact with the additional participants. Each of the additional participants was contacted during mid-January 2016, at the same time as I commenced my 12 months' internship. Introductory meetings were scheduled via telephone and took place at the Counselling Centre. The introductory meeting focussed on:

- explaining the group intervention both in terms of the possible benefits for the participant and the benefits for the researcher,
- gathering information as to the participant's experience as an unemployed matriculated young person and
- exploring the participant's willingness to engage in a focus group activity that could lead to collaborative action, aimed at bringing about change to their unemployed status.

A one-hour meeting was held with each of the participants. All participants agreed to attend a three-hour collaborative focus group meeting that was scheduled for mid-February 2016. At the end of the meeting each participant was asked to link me with other unemployed young people who had matriculated within the last few years.

4.2.3. Step 3: Collaborative focus group meeting

The interaction centred around the organising of a three-hour group meeting to explore collaboratively the unemployed status of the participants and to agree on a plan of action to bring about change. I contacted the participants via WhatsApp and personal phone calls to confirm the group meeting. Three possible group meetings were cancelled due to the unavailability of participants. My reflections are captured in the following extract:

Analysis	There are several levels of understanding. At an individual level I understand

What sense can you make of the situation?	that each participant exposed him/herself to being vulnerable and that perhaps they do not feel like they want to take any more risks. This is also based on their background which suggests that they have extensive experiences of being let down and having to depend on themselves. Most of them have also been part of an education system who taught them not to expect too much as 'they are not worth it'. Perhaps they started to realise that they might be expecting too much and as such they might be disappointed. The third level of understanding has to do with my own time constraints. I could possibility have given the participants more time to consider meeting up. I could also have done individual follow-ups. I am however also constrained by time as I work full-time and as such I was not able to find the time to follow-up with the participants. Ethically, I am also not supposed to encourage participants. They have to come to meetings on their own accord,

(Research Reflective Journal, March 2016)

As agreed with P1 and P2, a final follow-up meeting with the pair was scheduled. With the two participants, I tried to discuss the difficulties in organising the group meeting. P1 and P2 attributed personal priorities (work, family) and unwillingness to make time for something that does not mean anything to them, as possible reasons for the failure to meet together. In the end the planned collaborative three-hour group meeting did not take place.

I extended an invitation to the two participants to continue the pair meetings. However, both participants indicated that they would not be able to meet weekly due to work and study commitments. They indicated that they were interested in meeting informally when time allows. I have since met P1 and P2 together and individually on an informal, non-research

related basis. P1 expressed interest in pursuing her studies in teaching. P2 discussed the progress she is making with improving her matric results.

4.3. Category 2: Content Analysis

4.3.1. Contextual factors

A summary of the main demographics of the participants are shown in Table 1.

Data pertaining to the ages of the participants confirm their developmental stage as young adulthood. The gender distribution indicates that male participants seemed more willing to take part. All of the participants identified themselves as Coloured, South African.

The majority of the participants indicated that they were raised by both or one of their parents. Most participants also indicated close relationships with siblings and their extended families. At least three participants shared background information that included experience of physical abuse and neglect, substance abuse by parents and chronic deprivation.

Table 1 - Main Demographics of Participants

Research Identifier	Age	Gender	Ethnicity	Family			Level of Education Participants	School Attended	Socio-economic status
P1	20	Female	Coloured	Mother	Father deceased	1 brother; 2 sisters	Matric	ABB	Low
P2	20	Female	Coloured	Mother	Father	1 brother	Matric failed	ABB	Low
P3	23	Male	Coloured	Mother	Father	1 sister; 2 brothers	Beyond Matric	AB	Low
P4	24	Male	Coloured	Mother	Father	1 sister	Matric	ABB	Low
P5	25	Male	Coloured	Mother	Father	1 sister; 1 brother	Beyond Matric	AB	Low
P6	19	Female	Coloured	Mother deceased	Father	2 sisters; 2 brothers	Matric	ABB	Low
P7	21	Male	Coloured	Mother	Father	unknown	Matric	ABB	Low
P8	21	Male	Coloured	Mother	Father	unknown	Matric	ABB	Low
P9	20	Male	Coloured	Mother	Father	1 sister	Matric	AB	Low

As specified by the inclusion criteria, all participants had matriculated. Notably, all participants expressed disappointment with their final examination results. One participant indicated that she failed her final examinations. Three participants indicated that they have plans to enrol at educational institutions in 2016 to improve their matric results. Two participants indicated that they had already completed post matric courses to improve their matric results. P3 decided to continue studying via distance learning and he is in the process of doing N6 in Computer Programming (National Certificate Vocational).

Participants are identified as having low social economic status due to their own unemployed status and the income, the occupational and educational levels of their parents. Table 2 provides a breakdown of the occupation and educational levels of the parents of the participants.

Table 2 - Occupation and Educational levels of the Parents

Education Level and Occupation of Parents				
Participant	Mother		Father	
	Education level	Occupation	Education level	Occupation
1	Grade 8	House wife	Grade 12	Artisan
2	Grade 9	Cleaner	Grade 10	Sales person
3	Grade 12	Home Affairs Officer	Grade 12	Clerk
4	Grade 9	Cleaner	Grade 10	Sales person
5	Grade 10	Unemployed	Grade 12	Electrician
6	Grade 10	Sales person	Grade 10	Carpenter
7	Grade 12	Sales person	Grade 10	Mechanic
8	Grade 12	Pre-primary teacher	Grade 12	Policeman
9	Grade 9	Factory Worker	Grade 12	Policeman

The above-mentioned contextual data paints the picture of a young person, developmentally inclined to being a responsible and productive adult member of society, yet experiencing

challenges through family, community and systemic barriers such as poor education and poverty.

4.3.2. Impact of unemployment

4.3.2.1. Psychological wellbeing

Most participants felt that being unemployed had been a negative experience on many levels including emotionally, financially and in terms of personal self-worth.

Participant 5 describes how he has been emotionally affected.

> Oh, despondent, very despondent. It makes one feel as if things will never fall in place for me. Sometimes I prefer to be alone. People can ask a lot of questions. I don't feel at ease with a lot of questioning. I have problems sleeping. I think it is because I am idle during the day. At night I watch a lot of movies and then I can sleep.

Participant 6 also refers to the emotional impact but emphasizes that she also felt disrespected due to the unfairness of the process.

> Oh, it is very frustrating. Truth be told, I get very angry. It is a strange feeling that develops inside of me. I mean, if I make the effort to write the motivational letter stating that I am hard working and so on, the least they can do is to call you for an interview to see what kind of person you are, how you view the world. After this they can decide if they want you for the job…

Participant 7 indicated that his stress levels increased notably as a result of him not finding a job. Unemployment also impacts on his self-worth as he is conscious of his financial difficulties and the related impact on, for example, personal hygiene.

> Yes, a lot. We are stressed because we can't buy basic toiletries. We can't continue asking from our parents. It does have a negative impact on us. I refuse to walk around in public. If I work, then I will be able to buy myself clothes and toiletries. One needs money for these kinds of things.

Participant 8 also noted that he cannot sleep as he ruminates a lot about being unemployed.

> I sometimes wonder why I don't have a job. Why do I not have a job? I am looking, I am making an effort. I make a lot of effort to make some money so I can buy things like clothes and toiletries…

The above extracts indicate low levels of psychological well-being as expressed by the young unemployed participants. In particular, the experiences of the participants can be linked with symptoms of psychological disorders such as anxiety and depression. With family histories of substance abuse and violence, one might also expect the presence of such symptoms.

4.3.2.2. Support from family, friends and the community

Participant 9 emphasized that during the time that he had no job, he received unconditional support from his parents.

> My parents support me 100%. Yes, it is true that we went through difficult times, but we supported each other and we work together as a family.

Participant 4 noted that the support he received from his father also motivated him to find a job so he can take care of his family in the same way his father takes care of him.

> My father was the kind of person that would go out of his way to make sure that I have what I need. Through his actions, I developed the understanding that life is not just about myself. I have to take care of my sister and my mother…

Participants 7 and 9 noted how they rely on friends to stay motivated and focused on finding a job.

> Yes, we are childhood friends. We encourage each other. We have to as no one else will. If we are supposed to submit CVs for a job and he is a bit lazy, then I help him to get dressed or I tell him to go and get ready.

> I have a best friend who also grew-up with challenges in his childhood. He grew up without a father and his mother was struggling financially. I am close to him and I take him as my brother. We share similar circumstances and as such we motivate each other

Most participants commented on how their community, especially church members, supported them by telling them about possible jobs and by verbally motivating them. Participant 6 noted how she goes to church so she can stay positive. Participant 5 indicated that the help was more concrete:

> There are many people in our church who support me. They assisted me to find a few odd jobs. For example, one of the church brothers helped me to find a job during the graduation with Company X. Although only for a week, I have done it for three years and the money is not bad.

The availability of support structures on the micro- and meso- levels seems to have had a positive impact on participants coping with being unemployed. The excerpts suggest a

generally positive supportive environment, fostering personal reflection, collaboration and a sense of community.

4.3.3. Experiences trying to find a job

4.3.3.1. Career Guidance

Participants who attended ABB school in the disadvantaged area (P1, P4) indicated that they had very little to almost no career guidance input. Some of them recalled that they attended a career guidance fair at one of the schools in the advantaged area; however, the content of the career fair did not meet their expectations.

> No, we only had one career day in matric. I did not find it useful as there were many speakers and it did not resonate with me as it was a lot of information on technology.

> No not really. There was something in matric. We were taken to one of the other schools and we were given career information.

On the other hand, the advantaged AB school participants (P3, P5, P9) indicated that they had positive experiences of career guidance provision. They expressed appreciation for the insights it provided. Some however indicated that although the career guidance information was inspiring, it was not attainable due to financial constraints.

> Yes, yes, I remember we completed a few surveys. The purpose of the surveys was to help us find our preferred profession. Incidentally, my results suggested a preference for media, music and radio presenting.

> Yes, some people from a few universities came to speak to us. I know UPE was present and a few others. The courses were very expensive so I said no thank you, I unfortunately can't afford this.

> Yes, we did a few tests to guide us in identifying our strengths. I can say, I started to enjoy life in high school as a result of this.

The above extracts provide insight into the availability of career advice services. However, it also confirms the different experiences of such services based on where the young people schooled. Pragmatically, it is clear that when offered, the benefits of such advice were noticed. The difference in the experiences of the unemployed young people illustrates the injustice of not offering this service in some schools and questions the relevance of the service provided given that some of the participants found the career advice to be inappropriate to their needs. The extracts also suggest that the lack of career guidance could be compounding the negative impact of their unemployed experiences.

4.3.3.2. Job application process:

4.3.3.2.1. Persistence in applying for jobs

Important components of the definition of 'the unemployed' refer to the involuntary nature of the unemployment and the active search for job or career opportunities. The extracts below indicate the persistence with which the participants engage in the job search.

Participant 4, a young man who has been unemployed for four years, is determined to become a Police Officer and as such he applies every year. He says he sometimes gets angry because he does not get a response. However, he keeps trying.

> Yes, I was very angry. I could not understand why others are able to go to the Police College and I am not. As time went on, people told me to continue applying. Perhaps people react differently to disappointments. Some might sit at home and do nothing. I can't do that. I won't allow these disappointments to get the better of me. I continued to go out to see what kind of job I can find for myself.

Participant 5 also indicated that despite disappointment, he also feels that he has to continue.

> Yes, last year (2015) I send away many CVs. I started again this year (2016) as I have not heard any feedback from the CVs I submitted in December 2015. I apply mainly for government posts, but I am starting to think that the government do not want to employ me. I applied for Correctional Services Warden posts. I applied for administration posts in the Police on account of my background working for a bank. I also applied for posts at the Home Affairs Office in Xtown and I applied to Sassa. After this meeting I, will take my CV to the Home Affairs office as a friend of mine saw that they advertised posts on the internet.

The information suggests consistent action to find a job or to commence a chosen career path. Participants make use of various strategies to find a job, including official application processes, the internet and word-of-mouth. The evidence of persistent searching, despite frequent disappointments, might be linked to a strong desire to be relevant and responsible.

4.3.3.2.2. Adjusting expectations

Table 3 – Job Expectations of the Unemployed Young People

Job Expectations of Unemployed Young People		
Participant	Initial expectation	Jobs applying for now
1	Doctor	Seamstress - temp
2	Nurse	Waitress
3	Doctor	Musician
4	Policeman	Artisan - General
5	Lawyer	Artisan - General
6	Cardiologist	Waitress
7	Social Worker	Shop Assistant
8	Doctor	Shop Assistant
9	IT Technician	Not applying

Table 3 shows the initial career aspirations of participants. The second column indicates that the reality seems to be very different for all the participants. Most of the participants opted for improving their matric results as they did not pass well enough to enter the tertiary education system.

4.3.3.2.3. Not receiving responses on applications submitted

Participants generally expressed disappointment in not receiving a response, positive or negative, from any of their applications. The extract below confirms this, as well as bringing to attention the emotional and personal impact of the lack of feedback.

> I applied to Company Z but no answer. I just want a phone call as I know that I will pass the interview or if I have to write a test, I will pass it. I am just waiting on phone call but nothing comes. I applied for jobs in Durban and same thing, no feedback. I know they received my application but I do not know if they opened it. I do check my emails regularly but nothing so I do not know what the problem is.
>
> (Participant 6)

4.3.3.2.4. Not enough opportunities available

Several participants reasoned that they might be unemployed because of the lack of job opportunities available in Xtown. Participant 5 for example wonders "if there are too many people in Xtown and too few jobs" since in addition to himself, he knows several other young people who are unemployed. One of the participants who also self-identifies as a person with a disability, disclosed that he has never applied for a job as he knows that there are limited opportunities for people with disabilities in Xtown.

> I know there are only a few employment possibilities for people with disabilities in Xtown. Leaving home to find a job is a big step that I am not prepared to take again. So, I am not really interested in applying for jobs in Xtown as there are not enough disability friendly workplaces
>
> (Participant 3)

It is noteworthy that participants are willing to consider reasons outside of themselves, when trying to understand their unemployed status. It is however concerning that the awareness leads to demotivation to apply for jobs instead of perhaps action to find ways to address this contextual limitation.

4.3.3.2.5. Lack of skills and work experience

All the participants have completed at least 12 years of formal public school education. Many participants have no work experience, whilst others have a variety of unskilled labour experience gained during brief periods of temporary, casual appointments. Most participants noted that they felt constrained by their lack of skills and work experience when applying for higher level jobs. One participant noted that he got fired after he made a mistake at work. He

blames the mistake on his lack of experience. The extract below speaks to the lack of basic computer skills.

> I applied for an internship at Y Company that was supposed to start this year. I was not accepted. Unfortunately, I could not do the computer exercise. My sister completed the application form for me, and on the form, she indicated that I am proficient in Microsoft Word. In fact, she showed me a few basic things but I could not do these things in the interview.
>
> (Participant 6)

The extract underlines the concerns related to the relevance of formal education in South Africa. It is evident that there is a mismatch between, on the one hand, the completion of formal education and on the other, the absence of basic skills and practical experiences that could assist the process of finding a job.

4.3.3.2.6. Not being hired because of their ethnic group

All of the participants expressed concern that they might not be considered for jobs due to their ethnicity. Participant 2 wonders where she could have been if "things were different". She thinks that she might be disadvantaged because she is identified as a Coloured. Although she is a Christian, she also wonders if her surname might suggest that she is a Muslim and as such she might be discriminated against.

> My understanding is that most army bases are looking for Coloured people. But here in Xtown it is a different situation. Some bases do not accept one just because one is a

> Coloured. I think my surname also count against me. Most people look at my application and think I am a Muslim. Based on that, they decided not to consider me.

Participant 6 feels strongly that there should be fairness in job selections:

> I mean, I hear them talk about them not being racists. If I was a business owner and I was looking to employ thirty new staff, I will make sure to take 10 of each group. That would be equal. I won't take more of one group as there are sure to be people with qualifications in the other groups. However nowadays the one group just want their people in and that is how I see it.

Participant 7 is more direct in expressing his concern about possible discrimination against him because he is not Black.

> I am not racist but I have noticed that they only look out for their own people, mostly black people. A black person will be offered a job, despite the fact that I have a matric and he only has Grade 9. He gets the job just because he is black. I think this is the main issue we are facing at the moment.

The perception that one's unemployment status is directly linked to one's ethnicity is a concern that demands attention in the context of non-racial South Africa that proclaims equal access to services and opportunities in its constitution (Constitution, 1996) and affirmative action requiring people from designated groups (which includes all these participants) be given preference.

4.4. Conscientization to bring about change

Change can be initiated when one has the awareness that 'something' can be different from what is presently experienced or from what was experienced in the past. Change also stems from the awareness that one's experience of a particular phenomenon is contrary to another person or groups' experience. The excerpts below confirm that these participants have a positive sense that change is needed.

4.4.1. Experiencing and awareness of injustice

Participants had strong opinions about the quality of education they had received. Some participants who attended the mixed neighbourhood school felt that their school did not enforce discipline, they did not have good relationships with the teachers and they experienced a lot of time-wasting due to teacher shortages. The excerpts below underscore these themes.

> We could leave school at any time. There were no rules. In fact, there were rules, we just did not follow them.... At our school, the only thing that happens is that one gets sent out of class. Getting sent out of class is not punishment as one can go and sit in the sun.
>
> (Participant 1)

> I had only a few good relationships with teachers. But not with Xhosa teachers as they never gave me the impression that they care. I had good relationships with Coloured and White teachers. They at least made us feel comfortable and they assisted us when we needed help. They did not make you feel that you were disturbing them.
>
> (Participant 2)

I want to be taught by someone who knows the subject. I was once in an EMS class and the teacher could not explain a certain accounting concept to us. We had to go to a different teacher so she could explain it to us. I think that is time wasting.

(Participant 6)

The majority of participants indicated that the AB school classified as 'advantaged' had better quality of education as the teachers were interested in students, the school is organised with small classes and individual attention as noted in the excerpts below:

My Afrikaans and History teacher always encouraged me. When I felt a bit lazy, she would encourage me to focus on my work. When I looked a bit sad and depressed, she would enquire as to what happened.

(Participant 8)

If for some reason, I could not make it to school for one day, the teachers would ask if everything is well at home and with me. They would give the impression that they are interested in us.

(Participant 9)

Yes, it was nice at my school. I received individual attention as we were only 22 in our class. We had a Guidance Teacher who looked after us.

(Participant 5)

The findings from the excerpts confirm the young people's experiences of injustice based on where they schooled. The findings also confirm that participants are aware that their experiences are not similar to the experience of learners in other schools.

4.4.2. Is change possible?

The way participants make sense of their unemployed status provides an indication of how they might act or attempt to bring about change.

Participant 4 felt that despite his unemployment, he was still better off than his father. He recalled that his father was locked up for no reason during the Apartheid years, missing education and being with his children. The participant thinks that although he is struggling, he still has to experience real hardship and that he would be ready if it happened.

> My father was send to jail during the apartheid era. He was innocent but he was locked up for years. He missed out seeing his children during their formative years. When I think of this, I realise that my problems are not yet big. My big problems are still coming.

Participant 1 indicated that although she is negatively affected by being unemployed she does not think she can do much to change her situation. She said: "I get very angry but I just keep it in. It is not going to change anything so what is the use of getting angry".

Participant 9 feels strongly that unemployed young people should take responsibility for their situations. He is of the opinion that people are responsible for their own success.

> I believe that one has to consider carefully who one associates oneself with. There are many students who passed matric but they are not working. Some of them were well known during school years. Some were good in athletics for example. I wonder why they do not continue with that? I think success depends on the individual. I believe one should not stay in the situation as the situation cannot define who you are. One will be defined by what one is willing to do to get out of the situation.

There is a sense that participants are aware of the injustices that they are experiencing, however they choose to take personal responsibility rather than opting to challenge the injustice. Although present, the sense of helplessness and resignation is challenged by a strong view that each individual is responsible for his/her own destiny. The presence of self-blame and the lack of awareness of the impact of external forces also seemed to preclude the possibility of collective action to bring about change.

4.4.3. Support from a Counselling Psychologist

Counselling psychologists in South Africa are well placed to intervene and disrupt social structures that maintain inequality (Bantjes et al., 2016). The participants however expressed uncertainty as to the usefulness of the profession given that the living environment and circumstances of the clients generally remain unchanged.

Participant 9 indicated that he was in Grade 4 when he was referred to a psychologist. He indicated, however, that although he engaged in therapy for two years, he is unsure if the process was successful as he continued to struggle at school and the situation at home did not change.

Participant 6 expressed scepticism about the role that a counselling psychologist can play due to the absence of the profession in her community.

> I am not familiar with counselling psychology. That is the truth. I even had a bit of a shock when my friend told me that you are a counselling psychologist. I was a bit surprised as people like that never reach out to our community.

Participant 3 (a person living with a disability) emphasised that he has never considered engaging with a counselling psychologist.

> I have not yet considered to see a psychologist. It is just something that is not for me. It just is not for me. But I can say that you have given me something to think about.

The above excerpts suggest that the relevance of psychology *vis-à-vis* the different individuals and their community is being challenged. In their understanding psychology aims to address psychological challenges, without addressing the physical and personal conditions that directly or indirectly underpin the psychological distress.

4.5. Summary

The data was divided into process data and content data. The process data provide insights into the action research cycles and the lessons that I could draw on in my attempt to learn more about a social justice approach. The main findings pertain to the supportive and constraining role of the academic research process, time frame and the characteristics of the target group. In essence I found that the academic process ensured quality and ethical appropriateness of the research. However, it constrained the process, as working with communities in a collaborative approach can be time consuming and generally demands a more flexible intervention. I found

that not enough time could be devoted to the research, leading to one of the main collaborative activities not being concluded. Lessons were also extracted from the interaction with the local non-governmental organisation. For sustainability and practical reasons, it was advisable to work with organisations based in the local community. It was demonstrated, however, that internal organisational constraints can have a direct impact on the research activity and this should be taken in consideration in the planning of the academic research schedule. Finally, I found that the participants' commitment to engage with the research to be undermined by personal, family and community priorities as well the possibility that the intervention was not perceived as having any value to them.

The findings from the content data is summarised as follows:

- Contextual, demographic factors are important predisposing factors that impact on the participants' abilities to be responsible and productive adult member of their society;
- Unemployment has a negative effect on psychological well-being. Participants experience a low sense of self-worth and symptoms related to depression and anxiety. It was however noteworthy that all participants indicated that they received positive support from friends, family and the broader community.
- The experience of trying to find a job was impacted by:
    - the availability of support services such as career guidance/advice.
    - Job seeking behaviour which was characterised by:
        - being consistent and persistent;
        - all participants having different job expectations compared to the jobs they are now applying for;
        - high levels of frustration with not receiving feedback;

    - the apparent lack of job opportunities available despite the large number of people seeking jobs;
    - participants not having the basic skills and experience needed to apply for entry level jobs;
    - the perception that they cannot find jobs due to their ethnic classification.
- Participants have a positive awareness that change is needed as they have experienced, and continue to experience, injustices. I did find, however, that participants had some internalised sense of self blame as they either minimised, suppressed or claimed personal responsibility for injustices such as their unemployment. Participants also seem to discount the possibility of collective action and counselling psychology in supporting them to bring about change.

Chapter 5- Discussion

5.1. Introduction

The aim of this collaborative research project was to extract lessons that could inform the application of a social justice approach in counselling psychology in South Africa. I will discuss the implications of the findings presented in Chapter 4. In conclusion, I will make recommendations in relation to the training of counselling psychologists.

5.2. Meaning of Findings in Relation to the Research Questions

In answering the research questions, the following main conclusions can be drawn:

5.2.1. The context of the research project

Vera and Spiegel (2003) suggest that trainee counselling psychologists should be introduced to the practical application of a social justice approach. In the context of this research project, it was evident that although suggested and supported, the academic and professional context of the research project did not complement the implementation of a social justice approach. The findings for example highlighted that the time frame of the research was constraining in the context of the multiple complexities of collaboration that form part of engagements targeting marginalised and disadvantaged groups/communities (Burns & Singh, 2010). The fact that the researcher's theoretical training emphasised Western approaches that encourage one-on-one interventions rather than systemic, collaborative or action research interventions, also compounded the implementation challenges experienced.

A draft document (no date, not published) that suggests changes to the Health Professional Council of South Africa guidelines for counselling psychology training programmes states that

trainees should be able to demonstrate awareness of the principles of social justice. There are however no specific guidelines as to how this awareness should be developed. The findings indicate numerous challenges related to interaction with the community stakeholders and the participants. More comprehensive training in a social justice approach would be needed to support trainees in their reflection and collaborative problem-solving.

The findings also concur with Hage and Kenny (2009) that the implementation of a social justice approach should aim to foster social change and the elimination of injustices. The approach therefore requires ethical guidelines that take into consideration the social and cultural context of the target community and acknowledge challenges of standard ethical codes to, for example, collaborative interventions. The researcher noted that she experienced a possible ethical challenge with regards to the remuneration of the participants and informal supportive contact beyond the limits of the research activities. As was mentioned in Chapter 2, Winter (2015) argues that ethical codes should regulate professional behaviour as well as providing a moral framework for reflection and decision-making with regards to the adoption of a social justice approach.

5.2.2. The context of counselling psychology

The historical context of counselling psychology in South Africa and the fact that the majority of the population still does not have access to psychological services, have been discussed in Chapter 2. The findings in relation to the challenges experienced with the recruitment and participation of unemployed young people in this collaborative action research activity, may be explained by Berger and Lazarus (1987) as misconceptions that prevail as a result of disadvantaged communities having limited access and experience of (counselling) psychologists. In addition, this highlights the lack of job opportunities for counselling

psychologists in governmental bodies such as the Departments of Labour or Education, which may have led to better access to their skills.

Although unemployment in South Africa is a social injustice that impacts on the lives of the majority black population, the findings of this research suggest that minority groups, such as matriculants of the Coloured community, experienced discrimination when accessing job opportunities. The finding is supported by Statistics South Africa (2016) as it indicated a decrease in the unemployment rate of black African matriculants compared to an increase in the unemployment rate of Coloured matriculants. These findings are of concern because they highlight the possible unequal implementation of affirmative action policies that would require advocacy at exo- and macro-systemic levels.

The results highlighted that career guidance provision was experienced as a particular problematic as it was either irrelevant or not offered at all. The findings would seem to suggest that as postulated by Vera and Speight (2003), counselling psychologists could adopt an advocacy role to lobby for changes to the career guidance curriculum and perhaps play the role of mediator in terms of interacting with the Department of Education.

5.2.3. The psychological state and context of the participants

The results confirm the bi-directional link between mental health and unemployment (Lund, et al., 2011). In light of the development stage of the participants, concern and questions about the role of psychology and or other support services cannot be overstated.

The findings also indicate that the help-seeking behaviour of the unemployed young people is influenced by them experiencing higher levels of psychological distress, depression and low

levels of self-esteem (Letsie, 2009). Most participants expressed the availability of support from family, friends or the community. The findings however indicate that the young people show many signs of internalising the 'blame' for aspects of their unemployed positions. They do however acknowledge (but probably not giving nearly enough emphasis to) the systemic barriers such as generational poverty, poor quality education and lack of job opportunities.

The results suggest that participants had high job expectations. Roberts (2011) argues that a positive consequence of higher job expectations is the consistency and persistence with which the participants continue searching for jobs (discussed in section 3.3.2.1). In addressing their unemployed status, the young people take on levels of personal responsibility that matches the dominant neoliberal rhetoric about personal responsibility (Lovell & Akhurst, 2015). As a result, individual effort is favoured rather than considering more collective ways of engaging differently (and even not seeing the group possibilities as something that could have been helpful).

The adoption of a social justice approach in counselling psychology might, therefore, dictate that the starting point be a concerted effort to raise awareness or as noted in Chapter 2, *conscientization* of the impact of injustices such as unemployment, the relevance of counselling psychology and the power of collective advocacy and action.

5.2.4. Networking with stakeholders in the target community

Since a social justice approach emphasises the 'social', collaborative and multi-stakeholder interventions must aim at addressing injustice. The literature also critiques traditional training models that prioritise one-on-one interventions. The results of this research project confirm the researcher's attempt to work in partnership with a local organisation that had identified the

community need to implement the collaborative intervention. The researcher however underestimated the challenges faced by the partner organisation and as a result experienced challenges in collaborating with the stakeholder in a meaningful way to facilitate change on a personal and systemic level.

5.3. Limitations

The major limitation of the present intervention was the difficulties experienced in recruiting participants. It was initially anticipated that the local organisation would take the lead in making the initial connection with the participants. As was mentioned in Chapter 3, the local organisation could not take this task on due to unforeseen circumstances. Instead of postponing the research intervention, the difficulty was recorded and reflected on as one of the lessons to be learnt. The consequence was that the recruitment of participants was experienced as a major challenge.

The fact that all the participants are representative of one language and ethnic group can also limit the applicability of the findings as it is not representative of the cultural diversity within South Africa. In future, it could be advantageous to explore and compare the experiences of a mixed group of unemployed young people, with the purpose of initiating advocacy and change action on a macro system level that surpasses racial, cultural and ethnic boundaries.

Bryant (1995) states that the CAR approach provided the high degree of flexibility needed as research projects seldom fit neatly into a cycle of planning, action, observation and reflection. The CAR process therefore accommodated the changes that were needed to be made in this research process and intervention.

The CAR approach was also chosen because of its ability to generate new insights and action with participants and because of its link with a social justice approach that promulgates change through collaboration. The limitation of the research is however evident in the terminating of the data collection as the CAR process can continue indefinitely. The ending of the data collection process was negotiated with my supervisor and it was discussed with available participants and communicated to all participants via social media.

Chapter 6 - Conclusion

6.1. Introduction

The aim of this research study was to document the CAR intervention with a group of unemployed, matriculated young people, for the purpose of extracting lessons that could be applied to the adoption of a social justice approach in counselling psychology. In particular, it was envisaged that lessons will be drawn from the CAR process and from the concrete information provided by the participants and the researcher.

6.2. Lessons and Main Recommendations

The main recommendations drawn from the findings and discussion are as follows:

- It is recognised that the advocates for the adoption of a social justice approach in counselling psychology in South Africa (Young, 2013, Bantjes et al., 2016) have done well to keep the issue on the agenda. One of the lessons drawn from this research however suggests that the counselling profession should address the absence of a relevant social justice model for South Africa to guide training, research, therapeutic interventions and even supervision. The model presented by Ratts et al. (2010) could provide a starting point for discussion because their model provides a conceptual framework to support the practical application of a social justice approach. The model also illustrates that social justice is both a goal and a process.

As was illustrated by the use of the CAR approach for this research, it might be advisable to include in counselling psychologists' training research approaches that promote social justice (Martín-Baró et al., 1994).

- Having said that, it was confirmed by this research that a social justice approach can only be effective if the context and experiences of the target group informs all aspects of an intervention (Vera & Speight, 2003; Helms, 2003; Speight & Vera, 2004; Hage & Kenny, 2009). Another lesson drawn, therefore, relates to the urgent need to engage in micro and macro level collaborative meetings and discussions in order to take the profession forward, as suggested by Watson and Fouche (2007). The recommendation is that these meetings and discussions with the disadvantaged majority be part of the training curriculum of counselling psychologists in South Africa. The approach will benefit the trainees in that they will develop and gain insights in the experiences of the target population, hence initiating dialogue and reflection related to the possible role and point of entry of counselling psychology.
- The final lesson drawn from this research is in support of the Young et al. (2016) argument that counselling psychology in South Africa is well placed to make a meaningful contribution to the mental health care needs of the country. In this regard, it is imperative that, as proposed by Winter (2015), the counselling profession in South Africa ensures that the adoption of a social justice approach is included in the debates around the identity and the scope of practice of the profession. A critical review of the professional and ethical guidelines should perhaps become an imminent priority and should also be incorporated in the training curriculum of counselling psychologists.

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Appendices

Appendix A - Extract from the reflective journal

16 September 2015

Description What happened?	The first meeting with participants took place at the local organisation. Two female participants arrived on time. I introduced myself and I introduced the proposed activity. I asked them to introduce themselves by saying a little about who they are, their families, how long they have been unemployed and their hopes and dreams for future. They were very short in their contributions. I tried supporting them with a few probing questions but I was also conscious of not making them feel more nervous. When one of the participants talked about her family and their financial struggles, she became a bit emotional. At the end of the session the participants agreed to signing the consent form. I realised that I did not record the session. I checked with the participants if they would agree to me recording and although they did not say no, there was a reluctance and I decided not to record.
Feeling What were you thinking and feeling?	The positive feelings related to this being the first meeting, quickly dissipated when I realised how shy the participants were. I realised that I will have to build their confidence to ensure free and open participation in the focus groups. I must admit that I was a bit shocked that they were so timid given the fact that they have completed matric. I expected that they would be more confident.
Evaluation What was good and	The good thing was that the meeting actually took place. It provided me with a better idea of what I was to expect of the activity. The bad experience was that it was only two participants. I am negative about the success of the focus group

bad about the experience?	discussions given that they are not keen to talk.
Analysis What sense can you make of the situation?	I appreciate their willingness to meet with me. I think they might have had hope that the meeting will lead to them finding a job. Both of them however were very shy and limited in their conversation. My understanding is that their educational experience is largely to be blamed for the lack of confidence they are showing. Perhaps they were not allowed to have opinions. They were also not expected to provide critical feedback. Mostly they might not be used to people who want to hear from them. I think I also had expectation that were informed by my own self-development when I passed matric. I was quite an out spoke young person so perhaps I expected the same.
Conclusion What else could you have done	I don't think I would have done anything differently. I think the interaction went well and despite them not engaging as much as I would have liked to, I think I managed to make them feel at ease. I think they feel accepted and not pressured to participate.
Action Plan If it arose again, what would you do?	I would have had the preliminary meeting as mentioned before. That would have given me a better indication of who they are and as such it would have helped me with planning for the session.

Appendix B - Back Translation

Original text	English Translation	Back Translation
11/2/2015 2:08 PM: xxxxx: Wont able to make it on wed have an appointment at half 8 sowi	11/2/2015 2:08 PM xxx: Wont able to make it on Wednesday, have an appointment at half past eight sorry	11/2/2015 2:08 PM: Sal dit nie Woensdag kan nie maak nie, het n afspraak om half agt. Jammer.
11/5/2015 8:35 AM: xxxxx: Jammer x gni nxt week kan meet ni x gn dinsdag oggend port alfred 2 v d week	11/5/2015 8:35 AM: xxxx Sorry, I won't be able to meet this week as on Tuesday I am going to Port Alfred for two weeks.	11/5/2015 8:35 AM: Jammer, ek sal nie hierdie week die vergadering kan maak nie want Dinsdag gaan ek na Port Alfred toe vir twee weke.
1/6/2016 2:48 PM: xxxx Wow so jy werk?	1/6/2016 2:48 PM: xxxx: Wow so you are working?	1/6/2016 2:48 PM: Wow so jy werk?
1/6/2016 5:19 PM: xxxx: Ds nt n casual x mk dai week vn d 15de kla	1/6/2016 5:19 PM: xxx: It is just a casual appointment; I will finish the week of the 15th	Dit is net n tydelike aansteling; ek sal die week van die 15de klaar maak.
1/6/2016 7:27 PM: xxxx: Maar dis iets vir jou CV	1/6/2016 7:27 PM: xxx: But it is something worthwhile for your CV	1/6/2016 7:27 PM: Maar dit is iets moeite werd vir jou CV

1/6/2016 7:28 PM: xxx: Jha x suk iemand om dt oor te tik vmy	1/6/2016 7:28 PM: xxx: Yes, but I am still trying to find someone who can help me to update my CV	1/6/2016 7:28 PM: Ja, maar ek probeer soek nog iemand wat my kan help om my C.V op datum te bring.
1/6/2016 11:41 AM: xxxx: Ja weeti gn x ken meet ni besig om my goete uit te sort	1/6/2016 11:41 AM: xxxx Yes, but I don't know if I can meet. I am trying to sort my stuff…	1/6/2016 11:41 AM: ja, maar ek weet nie of ek sal kan ontmoet nie. Ek probeer om my dinge uitsorteer.
1/6/2016 11:42 AM: xxxx: Ok wanneer begin jy?	1/6/2016 11:42 AM: xxxx: Ok, when do you start?	1/6/2016 11:42 AM: Ok, wanneer begin jy?
1/6/2016 11:42 AM: xxx: X begin die 25ste	1/6/2016 11:42 AM: [redacted] I am starting on the 25th	1/6/2016 11:42 AM: Ek begin op die 25ste.
Oh moedeloos. Moedeloos. Dit laat jou voel asof dinge nie uitwerk vir jou nie partykeer hou ek van alleen wees. Want mense vra soms te veel vrae dan voel ek nie gemaaklik daaroor nie.	Oh, despondent, very despondent. It makes one feel as if things will never fall in place. Sometimes I prefer to be alone. People can ask a lot of questions. I don't feel at ease with a lot of questioning.	O, moedeloos, baie moedeloos. Dit laat voel n mens asof dinge nooit sal regkom nie. Sommige tye verkies ek om alleen te wees. Mense kan baie vrae vra. Ek voel nie gemaklik met baie vrae nie.
Ek sal se ek het sleeping problems. Die slaap is ek dink omdat ek ledig is deur die dag so in die aan kyk ek films en	I have problems sleeping. I think it is because I am idle during the day. At night I watch a lot of movies and	Ek het probleme met slaap. Ek dink dis omdat ek niks doen gedurende die dag. In die aand kyk ek baie flieks en dan slaap

dan kan ek nie slaap nie.	then I can sleep.	ek.
Oeee, dis frustrating, ek raak, ek oorboos my eerlikwaar dan… Ja Daar kom daai gevoel op want ek meen al gaan jy ook nou ‘n motivational letter stuur van ek is hardworking en al daai goed at least kan hul jou in roep en sien watter tipe persoon jy is. Hoe jy dink of so. En dan kan hulle besluit of hulle jou wil huur of nie.	Oh, it is very frustrating. Truth be told, I get very angry. It is a strange feeling that develops inside of me. I mean, if I make the effort to write the motivational letter stating that I am hard working and so on, the least they can do is to call you for an interview to see what kind of person you are, how you view the world. After this they can decide if they want you for the job…	O, dis baie frustrerend. Om die waarheid te se, ek raak baie kwaad. Dit is n vreemde gevoel wat in my ontwikkel. Ek meen, as ek die moeite maak en n motiverende brief te skryf wat verklaar dat ek hardwerkend is en so aan, die minste wat hulle kan doen is om vir jou vir n interview te bel om te sien watter soort persoon jy is, hoe jy die wereld aanskou. Daarna kan hulle besluit of hulle vir jou vir wil he vir die werk...
Yoh baie. Ons stress want ons kan nie vir ons toiletries koop nie. Ons se ouers kan nie vir ons klere koop nie, sulke goed. Dit, dit het ‘n uitwerking op ons. Negatiewe uitwerking op ons. Ek weier om in die straat rondloop nie.	Yes, a lot. We are stressed because we can’t buy basic toiletries. We can’t continue asking from our parents. It does have a negative impact on us. I refuse to walk around in public. If I work, then I will be able to buy myself	Ja, baie. Ons is in spanning/frustreerd omdat ons nie basiese toiletware kan koop/bekostig nie. Ons kan nie aanhou ons ouers vra nie. Dit het n negatiewe impak op ons. Ek weier om tussen die publiek rondeloop. As ek werk dan sal

(--) die enigste manier hoe ons aan toiletries gaan kom is as ons werk. Jy nodig geld om die goed te doen.	clothes and toiletries. One needs money for these kind of things.	ek vir myself klere en toiletware kan koop. Mens het geld nodig vir hierdie soort dinge.
Nou en dan, sometime dink ek net hoekom het ek nie werk nie, hoekom ek nie n werk kry nie. Ek soek dan ek doen effort (--), ek doen alle effort om net geld te kry om iets te koop soos toiletries, nie een van ek en hy (--) en klere.	I sometimes wonder why I don't have a job. Why do I not have a job? I am looking, I am making an effort, I make a lot of effort to make some money so I can buy things like clothes and toiletries…	Ek wonder soms hoekom ek nie n werk het nie. Hoekom het ek nie n werk nie? Ek soek, ek maak moeite, ek maak baie moeite om geld te maak sodat ek dinge soos klere en toiletries kan koop.
Ja, ons is vriende van kleintyd af Ons moedig mekaar maar aan, ons moet maar want wie anders gaan dit doen. Nee as ons nou miskien dat ons môre CVs gaan ingee dan is hy miskien lui dan help ek hom aantrek of ek sê gaan was jou	Yes, we are childhood friends. We encourage each other. We have to as no one else will. If we are supposed to submit CVs for a job and he is a bit lazy, then I help him to get dress or I tell him to go and get ready.	Ja, ons is vriende van kindertyd af. Ons ondersteun mekaar. Ons moet dit anders sal niemand dit doen. As ons moet C.V's ingee vir n werk en hy is a bietjie lui, dan help ek vir hom om aantrek of ek se vir hom om vir hom reg maak.
Ek het een beste vriend van my wat ook so te se negatiewe omstandigehede gehad het gedurende sy kinder jare. Hy	I have a best friend who also grew-up with challenges in his childhood. He grew up without a father and his	Ek het n beste vriend wat ook in sy kinderjare met uitdagings groot geword het. Hy het sonder n pa groot geword en sy

het groot geword sonder n pa net sy ma en hulle het ook gestruggle en goed. Nou ek is meer nader aan hom want ek glo ek en hy is soos broers want ons maak nou wel nie saam gebly het nie maar ons situasies is similar en ons motivate mekaar en so.	mother was struggling financially. I am close to him and I take him as my brother. We share similar circumstances and as such we motivate each other.	ma het finasieel gesukkel. Ek is naa aan home en vat hom as my eie broer. Ons deel soortgelyke omstandighede en dus hoekom ons mekaar motiveer.
My ouers het my 100% ondersteun. Wel die situasie was well dat dit baie kere baie moeilik gegaan het maar ons het n manier gekry om saam te werk met mekaar.	My parents support me one hundred percent. Yes, it is true that we went through difficult times, but we supported each other and we work together as a family.	My ouers ondersteun my total en al. Ja, dis waar dat ons deur moeilike tye gegaan het, maar ons ondersteun mekaar en werk saam as n familie.
My pa was altyd die ene, as ek sê ek nodig geld vir dit dan gaan hy uit sy pad uit en ek het laat verstaan dat ek dis nie net vir myself wat ek leef nie. Ek moet nog kyk na my jong suster en my Ma,	My father was the kind of person that would go out of his way to make sure that I have what I need. Through his actions I developed the understanding that life is not just about myself. I have to take care of my sister and my mother…	My pa was die soort persoon wat uit sy pad sal gaan om seker te maak dat ek kry wat ek nodig het. Deur sy optrede het ek n verstand ontwikkel dat lewe net nie oor my is nie. Ek moet na my sister en ma omsien.
Ek sal se baie mense in die	There are many people in our	Daar is baie mense in onse

kerk ja. Daar is paar mense wat my help ja. Wat my gehelp het ook om werk te kry. Soos ek het al a hele paar odd jobs gedoen soos by die graduation het ek vir xxx gewerk. Vir die afgelope drie jaar. Daar is n diaken in ons kerk wat my geconnect het. En dis nogal alraaite geld.	church who support me. They assisted me to find a few odd jobs. For example, one of the church brothers helped me to find a during the graduation with xxxx. Although only for a week, I have done it for three years and the money is not bad.	kerk wat my ondersteun. Hulle het my bygestaan om paar los werkies te kry. Byvoorbeeld, een van die kerk broeders het my gehelp om werk te kry by xxx gedurende die gradepletigheid. Hoewel dit net vir n week is, het ek dit vir die afgelope drie jaar gedoen en die geld is glad nie sleg nie.
Ha ah in matriek het ons net een career day gehad, dis al. Daar het baie mense gepraat (--). Dit was net nie vir my nie , want dit was klomp ander goed like technology, daai goed.	No, we only had one career day in matric. I did not find it useful as there were many speakers and it did not resonate with me as it was a lot of information on technology.	Nee, ons het net een loopbaan dag gehad in matriek. Ek het dit nie nuttig gevind nie want daar was baie sprekers en het my nie intereseerd nie want dit was meestal inligting oor tegnologie.
Nie rêrig nie. Die enigste ding was in matriek in, hulle het ons na xx toe gevat. Hulle het daai ding daarso wat hulle jou in careers inligting gee wat jy nie geweet het van nie. Hoe jy daar kom…	No not really. There was something in matric. We were taken to one of the other schools and we were given career information.	Nee nie rerig. Daar was iets in matriek. Ons was na een van die ander skole gevat en inligting oor loopbane gegee.
Ja ja ja, ons het...ek onthou, ja	Yes, yes I remember we	Ja, ja ek onthou, ons het paar

ek onthou ons het, ons het surveys ingevul. Die surveys kon help met wat is ons se profession. En toevallig het myne op media uitgekom. Music and radio presenter en so aan. Toevallig het myne daar uitgekom	completed a few surveys. The purpose of the surveys was to help us find our preferred profession. Fortuitously, my results suggested a preference for media, music and radio presenting.	opname voltooi. Die doel van die opname was om vir ons te help om n verkieslike beroep te vind. Toevallig het my resultate voorgestel vir media, musiek en radio aanbieding.
Ja maar daar het mense van ander universiteiet gekom om met ons te kom praat. Daar was a paar universiteiet wat met ons kom praat het. Daar was UPE, en a paar ander maar hulle was n bietjie duur gewees toe se ek maar nee ek kan dit ongelukkig nie afford nie .	Yes, some people from a few universities came to speak to us. I know UPE was present and a few others. The courses were very expenses so I said no thank you, I unfortunately can't afford this.	Ja, paty mense van paar universiteite het met ons kom praat. Ek weet UPE was teenwoordig en a paar ander. Die kursese was baie duur so ek het nee dankie gese, ongelukkig kan ek dit nie bekostig nie.
Ons het wel toetse gedoen wat min of meer vir jou uitgewys het wat jou sterk punte is. Ek kan se dis wat ek begin lewe het toe ek op hoerskool kom...	Yes, we did a few tests to guide us in identifying our strengths. I can say, I started to enjoy life in high school.	Ja, ons het paar toetse gedoen wat ons gelei het om ons sterkpunte te identifiseer. Ek kan se, ek het skool begin geniet in hoerskool.
Ek was… ek was kwaad. Ja. Ek het gedink hoekom kan	Yes, I was very angry. I could not understand why others are	Ja, ek was baie kwaad. I kon nie verstaan hoekom anders

anders gaan (Police Colleage) maar ek kan nie gaan nie. Soos die tyd aangegaan het, het ek net, mense het my net gesê ek moet aanhou en aanhou, ja. Ek voel mense reageer verskillend van disappointment af. Miskien sit hulle by die huis, nou ek kan nie, ek gaan nie laat my goed my eet nie. Ek moet uitgaan en kyk wat kan ek doen met myself.	able to go to the Police College and I am not. As time went on, people told me to continue applying. Perhaps people react differently to disappointments. Some might sit at home and do nothing. I can't do that. I won't allow these disappointments to get the better of me. I continued to go out to see what kind of job I can find for myself.	kon gaan na die polisekollege en nie ek nie. Soos die tyd aangestap het, het mense my gese ek moet aanhou aansoek doen. Miskien reageer mense verskillend as hulle teleurgesteld is. Sommige mag seker by die huis sit en niks doen. Ek kan dit nie doen nie. Ek sal my toelaat dat hierdie teleurstellings vir my onder kry nie. Ek hou aan om uit te gaan en kyk watter soort werk ek kan vind vir myself.
Ja ek het verlede jaar (2015) so n paar CV's uitgegee en nou die jaar (2016) begin ek nou weer want ek in December ook n paar CVs in gegee maar ek het nog niks gehoor nie. Ek apply veral by die government maar die government ek weet nie hulle soek seker nie vir my daar nie. Ek het apply vir die	Yes, last year (2015) I send away many CVs. I started again this year (2016) as I have not heard any feedback from the CVs I submitted in December 2015 I apply mainly for government post, but I am starting to think that the government do not want to employ me. I applied for Correctional Services Warden	Ja, verlede jaar (2015) het ek baie CV's weg gestuur. Ek het weer hierdie jaar (2016) begin aangesien ek niks terugvoering gekry het van die CV's wat ek Desember 2015 voorgele het. Ek het hoofsaaklik vir regering posisies aansoek gedoen, maar ek beginne dink dat die regering my nie wil aanstel nie. Ek het vir Korrektiewe diens

bewaarders, die weermag, die polisie. Dan is dit by Home affairs was daar n paar jobs. En by die Polisie is dit om in die office te werk want ek het n background in dit want ek het in die bank gewerk het. Dan het ek ook by Sassa hulle apply. En vandag gaan ek weer want n tjommie het op die internet gesien van home affairs wat werk het.	posts. I applied for administration posts in the Police on account of my background working for the Bank. I also applied for posts at the Home Affairs Office in Grahamstown and I applied to Sassa. After this meeting I will take my CV to the Home Affairs office as a friend of my saw that they advertised posts on the internet.	bewaarder posisie aansoek gedoen. Ek het vir administratiewe posisie by die polisie aansoek gedoen ter wille/volgens (van) my agtergrond van die bank. Ek het ook aansoek gedoen vir n posisie by die Binnelandse Sake Kantore …. en aansoek gedoen by Sassa. Na hierdie vergadering sal ek my CV neem na die Binnelandse Sake kantore toe want n vriend het gesien dat hulle posisies op die internet adverteer het.
Ek het by Transnet aansoek gedoen maar niks antwoord nie. Net ‘n phone call want ek weet ek gaan daai interview, ek gaan dit slaag of as ek moet ‘n toets skryf ek gaan dit slaag. Ek wag net vir ‘n phone call maar niks kom deur nie. Ek het Durban toe ook apply. Niks feedback. Ek weet hulle	I applied to Transnet but no answer. I just want a phone call as I know that I will pass the interview or if I have to write a test, I will pass it. I am just waiting on phone call but nothing comes. I applied for jobs in Durban and same thing, no feedback. I know they received my application	Ek het aansoek gedoen by Transnet maar geen antwoord. Ek wil net n oproep ontvang omdat ek weet dat ek die onderhoud sal slag of as ek n toets skryf sal ek slag. Ek wag net vir die oproep maar niks kom nie. Ek het aansoek gedoen vir n werk in Durban en dis dieselfde, geen

het dit gekry maar weet nie het hulle die oopgemaak of wat nie, want ek check my emails, niks nie. So ek weet nie wat die probleem is.	but I do not know if they opened it. I do check my emails regularly but nothing so I do not know what the problem is.	terugvoering. Ek weet hulle het my aansoek ontvang maar ek weet nie of hulle dit oopgemaak het nie. Ek kyk my e-pos gereeld maar niks so ek weet nie wat die probleem is nie.
Alhoewel daar is nie baie werksgeleenthede vir disabled mense hier in X stad nie. En om nou weer weg te gaan van die huis af is nou weer 'n grote stap wat ek weer moet vat, ja. Soos wat ek gesê het ek stel nie belang om nog werk te soek hier in X stad nie, want ek weet daar is nie disabled friendly plekke hier nie.	I know there are only a few employment possibilities for people with disabilities in X Town. Leaving home to find a job, is a big step that I am not prepared to take again. So I am not really interested in applying for jobs in X town as there are not enough disability friendly workplaces.	Ek weet daar is net sekere hoeveelheid werks moontlikhede vir gestremde mense in X stad. Om die huis te verlaat, om werk te gaan soek is n groot stap wat ek nie voorbereid is om weer te doen. So ek stel rerig nie belang om werk aansoeke in X stafte doen omdat dat nie genoeg gestremde- vriendelik werksplekke is nie.
Yoh, baie. Ek het apply hier by xxxx vir internship verlede jaar, dit sou die jaar begin het. Ek was nie accept nie. Ek kon nie computer goed doen nie, ja. Nou my suster het vir my	I applied for an internship at xxxx that was supposed to start this year. I was not accepted. Unfortunately, I could not do the computer exercise. My sister completed	Ek her vir n internskaap by xxx aansoek gedoen wat moes hierdie jaar begin het. Ek was nie aanvaar nie. Ongelukking kon ek nie die komputer ek aktiwiteit doen nie. My sister

die vorm ingevul toe sy nou gesê op die vorm ek ken Microsoft doen en al daai goed, toe het sy my gewys, maar ek het nou nie geweet hoe om die diary en al daai goed te doen in die interview	the application form for me, and on the form she indicated that I am proficient in Microsoft Word. In fact, she showed me a few basic things but I could not do these things in the interview.	het die aansoek vorm vir my voltooi, en op die vorm het sy aangedui dat ek Mikrosoft Woord geletterd is. Inteendeel, het sy my paar basiese dinge gewys maar ek kon daardie dinge nie in the onderhoud doen nie.
…Meeste van die mense soek nou coloreds hoor ek. Maar ek weet nie, dis net in daai situasies in. Party basisse, en so aan sal nie aanvaar nie net omdat dit kleurling is. My van ook baie. Meeste van hulle dink seker ek is 'n slams of iets op my application dan check hulle nee, los maar en so.	My understanding is that most army bases are looking for Coloured people. But here in X town it is a different situation. Some bases do not accept one just because one is a Coloured. I think my surname also count against me. Most people look at my application and think I am a Muslim. Based on that they decide not consider me.	Ek verstaan dat meeste army base kleurling mense soek. Maar hier in X stad is dit n verskilende omstandighede. Sommige base aanvaar nie n mens net omdat jy n kleurling is nie. Ek dink my van tel ook teenoor my. Meeste mense kyk my aansoek vorm and dink dat ek n Muslim is. Baseer of daardie besluit hulle of hulle vir my gaan oorweeg of nie.
En ek meen as hulle so praat van, nee Ok hulle is nie rassisties en so nie… As ek 'n besigheid ge-own het en ek gaan dertig mense aanstel dan	I mean, I hear them talk about them not being racists. If I was a business owner and I was looking to employ thirty new staff, I will make sure to	Ek meen, ek hoor hulle praat dat hulle nie rasisties is nie. As ek n besigheids eienaar was en ek het dertig nuwe werkers gesoek, ek sal seker maak om

gaan ek 10 dit, 10 dit of 10 dit, 5, maak dit mos nou equal. Sal nie meeste van daai nie want ek meen daar is mense met qualifications wat beter is as die anders is (--) want hulle wil hul mense in hê en dis hoe ek dit sien.	take 10 of each group. That would be equal. I won't take more of one group as there are sure to be people with qualifications in the other groups. However nowadays the on group just want their people in and that is how I see it.	10 van elke groep te vat. Dit sou gelyk. Ek sou nie meer van een groep vat nie omdat daar verseker mense van ander groepe is wat gekwalifiseer is. Alhoewel deesdae die een groep net sy eie mense wil he en dis hoe ek dit sien.
Ek is nie rassisties of iets nie maar dis basies wat dit is. Hulle sorg vir hulle mense, meestal swart mense (--). (--) sal jy sien die swartes kry voor jou werk even al het jy matriek en hy het miskien nou standard 9 of so, dan gaan hy die werk voor jou kry net omdat hy swart is. Ek dink dit speel 'n groot rol waar ons nou is.	I am not racist but I have noticed that they only look out for their own people, mostly black people. A black person will be offered a job, despite the fact that I have a matric and he only has Grade 9. He gets the job just because he is black. I think this is the main issue we are facing at the moment.	Ek is nie rasisties nie maar ek het opgemerk dat hulle net vir hulle se eie mense uitkyk, meestal swart mense. n Swart persoon sal werk aangebied word, maak nie saak of ek matriek het en hy het net Graad 9. Hy kry die werk net omdat hy swart is. Ek dink dit is die hoof problem wat ons op die oomblik ondervind.
Ons kon enige tyd loop. Hier was daar was nie rules, eintlik ons het rules gehad maar niemand het geluister nie	We could leave school at any time. There were no rules. In fact, there were rules, we just did not follow them.	Ons kon skool enige tyd verlaat. Daar was geen reels nie. Inteendeel, daar was reëls maar ons het dit net nie gevolg

		nie.
Van uh, daar by PJ is rules, as jy bly in die klas jy moet focus en hulle word ge-punish as hulle nie hul werk doen nie. Nou hier by ons is net uitgesit. As jy mos uitgesit word is mos nou beter dan gaan sit jy net buitekant.	The AB school has rules. One is expected to focus when in class and punishment is a sure thing if they do not do their school work. At our school, the only thing that happens is that one gets send out of class. Getting send out of class is not punishment as one can go and sit in the sun.	Die AB skool het reels. N mens is verplig om aandag te skenk wanneer jy in klas is en straf is verseker as jy nie jou huiswerk doen nie. By onse skool, die enigste ding wat gebeur is dat jy uit die klaskamer gestuur word. Om uitgestuur word van die klaskamer is nie straf nie want n mens gaan sit in die son.
Dis net hier en daar, goeie relationships. Veral nie met Xhosa onderwysers, hulle was net never minded oor ons. Net met Colored onderwysers en wit onderwysers. Hulle maak jou net meer comfortable voel en hulle help jou waar jy hulp nodig het. Hulle het nie daai attitude towards jou nie. Daai van ek is besig so…	I had only a few good relationships with teachers. But not with Xhosa teachers as they never gave me the impression that they care. I had good relationships with Coloured and White teachers. They at least made us feel comfortable and they assisted us when we needed help. They did not make you feel that you were disturbing them.	Ek het net paar goeie verhoudings gehad met onderwysers. Maar nie met Xhosa onderwysers nie want hulle het my die idee gegee dat hulle nie omgee nie. Ek het goeie verhoudings met kleurling en wit onderwysers gehad. Hulle het ons ten minste gemaklik laat voel en gehelp wanneer on hulp nodig het. Hulle het jou nie laat voel asof jy hulle pla nie.

…ek meen jy moet reg geleerd is, laat ek so sê, want ek was een tyd in die EMS klas gewees, die juffrou kon nie eens ‘n (--), accounting section wat ons gedoen het, toe moes ons na ‘n ander juffrou toe gaan om klas te kry want sy kon dit nie explain nie, ek meen dis tyd mors.	I want to be taught by someone who knows the subject. I was once in and EMS class and the teacher was could not explain a certain accounting concept to us. We had to go to a different teacher so she could explain it to us. I think that is time wasting.	Ek wil van iemand geleer wee swat die vak ken. Ek was eens in EMS klas en die onderwyser kon nie n sekere rekeningkunde begrip verduidelik nie. Ons moes na n ander onderwyser toe gaan sodat sy vir ons kon verduidelik. Ek dink dit was tydmors.
Ja. Dit was baie disruptive gewees op daai skool. Especially die proteste, baie tekort aan onderwysers en sulke goed gewees. Dan kom en gaan die kinders soos hulle wil. Daar was ook nie eens fence om gewees daar by die skool nie	Yes, it was very disruptive at that school. There were many protests, shortage of teachers and things like that. The learners were not disciplined as they came and left school as they pleased. We did not have a fence around our school.	Ya, dit was baie ontwrigtinge op skool. Daar was baie optoe, en te kort van onderwysers en dinge soos daai. Die leerlinge was nie disiplineer nie omdat hulle gekom en gegaan het net soos hulle dit pas. Ons het nie omheining om die skool gehad nie.
Sy het Afrikaans en History vir ons gegee. Sy sou jou altyd moed gegee het, as jy miskien lui was in die klas dan gee sy jou weer moed om	My Afrikaans and History teacher always encouraged me. When I felt a bit lazy, she would encourage me focus on my work. When I looked a bit	My Afrikaans en Geskiedenis onderwyser het my altyd aanmoedig. Wanneer ek soms lui voel, het sy my aanmoedig om op my werk te fokus.

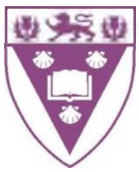
te werk of dan praat sy saam met jou miskien jy lyk af, dan praat sy saam met jou wat het gebeur, hoekom is jy af vandag.	sad and depressed, she would enquire as to what happened.	Waanneer ek hartseer en depressief lyk, het sy gevra wat gebeur het.
Ja ek dink so want ek het al gehoor van my vriende wat by CB was dat die onderwysers nie rerig tyd het vir hulle nie. Dis amper so asof hulle nie worry nie. As jy skool toe kom of nie is bo op jou. Dis hoe dit daar was. By AB is dit nou weer anders. As ek miskien vir a dag in die week nie by die skool was nie dan gaan hulle my vra is alles alraait by die huis? Hoekom was jy nie in die skool nie? Was jy siek of so? Hulle stell belang.	Yes, I heard from my friends who attended school at CB, that the teachers there did not really have time for them. I got the impression that they just did not care. As far as the teachers were concerned it was all up to you if you come to school or not. At the AB school it was very different. I for some reason I could not make it to school for one day, the teachers would ask if everything is well at home and with me. They would give the impression that they are interested in us.	Ja, ek het by vriende van my wat by CB skool gaan gehoor dat onderwysers nie rerig tyd vir hulle het nie. Ek het die indruk gekry dat hulle net nie omgee nie. So ver as die onderwysers betref dit was total en al jou storie of jy skool toe kom of nie. By die AB skool is dit baie anders. Die eendag kon ek nie skool toe gaan vir een of ander rede, die onderwysers sou vra of alles pluis is by die huis of met my. Hulle sal die indruk gee dat hulle belangstel in ons.
Dit was baie lekker ja. Individuel kon hulle meer	Yes, it was nice at my school. I received individual attention	Ja, dit was n goeie skool. Ek het persoonlike aandag gekry

aandag gegee het aan my. Ons was maar 22 kinders in onse klas end it was net een klas. En ons het n voog teacher gehad wat na ons gekyk het.	as we were only 22 in our class. We had a Guidance Teacher who looked after us.	en ons was net 22 in onse klas. Ons het n voorligting onderwyser gehad wat na ons omgesien het.
…apartheid al sy stories wat hy my gesê het. Hulle was tronk toe vir niks nie. Gesê die jare van hom kinders gemis van groot raak. Sulke goed laat my dink my probleme is nog nie so groot nie. Daar is nog probleme om te kom.	My father was send to jail during the apartheid era. He was innocent but he was locked up for years. He missed his children growing up. When I think of this, I realise that my problems are not yet big. My big problems are still coming.	My pa was tronk toe gestuur gedurende die apartheid tyd. Hy was onskuldig maar was vir jare toegelsuit. Hy kon nie sy kinders sien groot raak nie. Waanneer ek daaraan dink, besef ek dat my probleme nie groot is nie. My groot probleme kom nog aan.
Ek vat dit so dat dit die mense is met wie hulle hulle self omring. Daar is baie matrikulante wat nie werk nie. Sommige het naam gemaak vir hulle op skool. Hulle kon vining hardloop, en so aan. Ek vat dit so hoekom doen hulle nie dit nie. Baie keer hang dit van jouself af. Ek vat dit so moenie in die situasie bly nie.	I belief that one has to consider carefully who one associates oneself with. There are many students who passed matric but they are not working. Some of them were well known during school years. Some were good in athletic for example. I wonder why they do not continue with that? I think	Ek glo n mens moet versigtig wees met wie jy vir jou assosier. Daar is baie studente wat matriek slag maar wat nie werk nie. Sommige van hulle was welbekend geduerende skool jare. Sommige was goed in atletiek byvoorbeeld. Ek wonder hoekom hulle nie met dit aangaan nie? Ek dink sukses hang van n individual

Want dit is nie die situasie wat jou define nie. Dit is wat jy gaan doen omtrent dit.	success depends on the individual. I belief one should not stay in the situation as the situation cannot define who you are. One will be defined by what one is willing to do to get out of the situation.	af. Ek glo nie n mens moet in n omstandighede bly nie want die omstandighede kan jou nie defineer nie. n Mens sal defineer word van wat jy gewillig is om te doen om uit daardie omstandighede te kom.
Dit is nie bekend nie. Om eerlik te wees dit is nie. Want ek het ook geskrik toe xxxx vir my sê jy doen counselling psychology en so aan. Daar is nooit mense wat uitreik na die community toe nie en so aan.	I am not familiar with Counselling Psychology. That is the truth. I even had a bit of a shock when my friend told me that you are a counselling psychologist. I was a bit surprise as people like that never reach out to our community.	Ek is nie bekend met voorligtings sielkunde nie. Dis die waarheid. Ek was ook bietjie geskok to my vriend my gese dat jy n voorligting sielkunde is. Ek was bietjie verbaas omdat mense nooit nie na ons gemeenskap uitreik nie.
Toe moes ek n sielkundige gaan sien het toe ek in grade 4 was. Vir twee tot drie jaar maar dit het ook nie rerig gewerk nie want die situasie was nog dieselfde by die huis so ek kon nie goed presteer op skool nie.	I was in Grade 4 when I was referred to a Psychologist. I saw her for two or three years but I am not sure that the therapy helped because the situation at home was still the same so I continued to struggle at school.	Ek was in Graad 4 toe ek na n sielkundige verwys was. Ek het haar vir twee or drie jaar gesien maar ek is nie seker of the berading gehelp het, omdat die omstandighede by die huis nog die dieselfde was. Ek het aanhou sukkel op skool.
Ek het nog nie gedink om ‘n	I have not yet considered to	Ek het nog nie oorweeg om n

psychologist te sien nie want, of whatever jy call it nie. Nee dis nie vir my nie man. Is rerig nie vir my nie. Hier los jy my met iets wat ek nou moet, seker diep diep diep moet dink.	see a Psychologist. It is just something that is not for me. It just is not for me. But I can say that you have given me something to think about	sielkunde te sien. Dit is iets wat nie vir my is nie. Dit is net nie vir my nie. Maar ek kan se ky het vir my iets gegee om oor te dink.

Appendix C – Outline of the Collaborative Focus Group Discussions



RHODES UNIVERSITY

Grahamstown • 6140 • South Africa

PSYCHOLOGY CLINIC □□Tel: (046) 603 8502 □ Fax: (046) 603 7203 □ e-mail:

y.scheepers@ru.ac.za

Abegail Schwartz

Masters Degree in Counselling Psychology

Information Summary Sheet

Focus group discussions with unemployed young people who have matriculated

13 Augustus 2015

What is a focus group discussion?

It is the gathering of a group of young people who all share in the experience of being currently unemployed. The group will gather to listen, to share and to discuss their individual experiences of being unemployed and through the discussion to gain a collective understanding will be gained. The group might agree to help each other by taking specific individual and/or collective action. All participation is voluntary and each member of the group usually signs a confidentially agreement.

The aims of the focus group discussion for the unemployed young people together with the Rhodes University Psychology student are as follow:

- To listen to and understand the situation for each individual;
- To explore and consider possible individual and/or group action plans to address the unemployment of the group
- To implement the action plans and possibly bring about change;
- To review the progress and agree the way forward (individually and for the group);

The aim of the focus group discussion for the Rhodes University Student

- With the permission of the group to make use of the minutes of the focus group discussion and to write a research paper for her Masters in Psychology course.
- The research paper will be on the lessons that counselling psychologists in South Africa might learn from this series of focus group discussions.

Duration of the focus group discussions and venue

- One session per week for the months of August, September and October 2015;
- Each session will be ninety minutes long;
- The meeting will take place at the X Organisation

Benefits for the unemployed young people

- Support to deal and manage the unemployed situation they are in;
- In a safe and supportive environment, critically to look at all the possible barriers preventing them from gaining employment;
- Support to address the possible barriers, either individually or collectively;

- Networking with other young people who share the same experience;

How to get involved

- Give your name and contact number to one of the any of organization staff.
- The Rhodes University Psychology Student, Abegail Schwartz, will contact each interested unemployed young person to confirm his or her willingness to engage on the topic and for the duration stated above;
- Once everybody has been contacted, an introduction meeting will take place at the X Organisation.

Thank you very much in advance

Contact information of Abegail Schwartz; Email abegailfschwartz@gmail.com; Mobile number 0798010853

Appendix D - Ethical Clearance of Project Psy2015/29

RHODES UNIVERSITY
Grahamstown • 6140 • South Africa

PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT • Tel: (046) 603 8500 / 8501 • Fax: (046) 603 7614 • e-mail: psychology@ru.ac.za

RESEARCH PROJECTS AND ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

3 June 2015

Abegail Schwartz
Department of Psychology
RHODES UNIVERSITY
6140

Dear Abegail

ETHICAL CLEARANCE OF PROJECT PSY2015/29

This letter confirms your research proposal with tracking number PSY2015/29 and title, 'Working towards a social justice approach for counselling psychologists: Lessons from a Youth Unemployment Community Engagement in Grahamstown, South Africa', served at the Research Projects and Ethics Review Committee (RPERC) of the Psychology Department of Rhodes University on 3 June 2015. The project has been given ethics clearance.

Please ensure that the RPERC is notified should any substantive change(s) be made, for whatever reason, during the research process. This includes changes in investigators.

Yours sincerely

Dr Jacqui Marx
CHAIRPERSON OF THE RPERC

Appendix E – Participant Information and Consent form

PSYCHOLOGY CLINIC Tel: (046) 603 8502 Fax: (046) 603 7203 e-mail:

y.scheepers@ru.ac.za

Focus group discussions with unemployed young people

Information of Participant

Name:

_____

Surname:

_____

Date of Birth:

_____

Year in which matriculated:

_____

School from which matriculated:

_____

Current Employment status:

_____

Contact Information

Physical Address:

_____

Telephone number: (Home) _____

(Mobile) _____

Email address: _____

Signed consent form Yes No

4. I also agree to the recording of the interview.

Signature _____

Date: _____

RHODES UNIVERSITY -DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

AGREEMENT BETWEEN STUDENT RESEARCHER AND RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

I _____ (participant's name) agree to participate in the research project of Abegail Faraja Schwartz on a Social Justice Approach for Counselling Psychology in South Africa: Lessons forma Collaborative Action Research Intervention.

I understand that:

1. The Researcher is a student conducting research as part of the requirement for a Masters Degree in Counselling psychology at Rhodes University. The researcher may be contacted at 0027 798010853 or abegailfschwarts@gmail.com. The research project has been approved by the Rhodes University Ethics Committee and Professor Jacqueline Akhurst is the supervisor. She may be contacted at 00 27 46 603 7084 or j.akhurst@ru.ac.za
2. The researcher is interested in contributing to the debate around the identity and relevance of Counselling Psychology in South Africa. The topic of this research is Working towards a Social Justice Approach for Counselling Psychologist: Lessons from Youth Unemployment Community Engagement in Grahamstown, South Africa.
3. My participation will involve a series of 12 weekly focus group discussions aimed at understanding the unemployed status of me and the rest of the group and to identify possible ways to address it.
4. I agree to the recording of the interviews.

Signature _____

Date: _____