

Prospects and challenges
of youth empowerment in
South Africa: the
international political
economy perspective

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Prospects and challenges of youth empowerment in South Africa: the international political economy perspective is the outcome of my personal research effort submitted at the North-West University for degree purposes. The dissertation is not submitted to any other university, and I have used references to recognise the influence and contribution of other researchers.

5 September 2022

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Date

Lack of uniformity in the youth work sector about the concept of youth has led to various classifications of the youth age group. The United Nations (UN) considers anyone between the ages of 15 to 24 years as 'youth'; a criterion endorsed by the UN General Assembly in the context of preparations for the International Youth Year 1985 (UN, resolution 36/28 of 1981). This criterion of youth applies to development measurements of education, health, employment, and demography reflected in the UN yearbooks. The global youth population is estimated at 1.8 billion youth, ninety percent of whom reside in developing countries and make up most of the population there. There are more than 235 million youth in India and 225 million in China. Africa's population is noticeably young, with 60% of the entire continent aged below 25 years, making it the youngest continent in the world. Individuals in the 15 to 34 years age group make up about 20.4 million or 63.9% of the entire population in South Africa (Statistics South Africa, 2022). The imbalance in the population spread implies that young people suffer the worst economic burden. There are frequent assertions that the youth are the future, even the famous Nelson Mandela once spoken about the the youth of today as the leaders of tomorrow. These words are inspiring, however, the current challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality that young people face raise concerns about how the youth can achieve what society says about them in the global competitive economy. It is important also to reflect on the role of the youth in the UN, African Union (AU), Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), and other foreign embassies' initiatives in the South African context. This study is concerned with the present opportunities that are available to empower young people for them to truly be the future. The problem with using the slogan "The youth are the future" while neglecting to empower them is that this leaves them unprepared when they are expected to take a stand in society. The significance of this study is in probing the issue of empowering South African youth to be competitive in the global political economy unless they rely on foreign actors and nationals for a livelihood. It is high time that the South African youth take responsibility as leaders at the community level, and step onto the global stage.

This study argues from empowerment theory that youth empowerment in South Africa is focused on individuals instead of communities and organisations; and the people who benefit from such initiatives are those from well-off families, the politically connected and

youths in universities or those who are intrinsically motivated to seek out information. The poor and disadvantaged youth have no semblance of contacting a foreign embassy, SADC or UN offices to inquire about leadership and economic development programmes. As result, the poor are in a permanent state of disempowerment. Using interviews and document analysis, the study incorporates the voices of young people who indicate that they are now aware of youth empowerment initiatives from the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), foreign embassies and youth development organisations. Their complaints include the political patronage in BEE deals by the government and other funding opportunism from the NYDA. The youth indicated that they were not aware of anybody from their neighbourhoods who is a role model on an international scale, whether in the UN, SADC, AU circles or business. Foreign embassies and regional bodies do not communicate effectively with the youth to let them know of available opportunities. Thus, the need that the study prospects is that of youth empowerment. Focusing on the word prospects is important to show what solutions to implement in the context of existing hindrances to youth empowerment. Applying the political economy framework enhances the dialogue and creates awareness among South African youth to start imagining themselves as global actors. This will help the youth to realise what job and entrepreneurship opportunities exist internationally. That kind of global imagination will help reduce the xenophobic sentiments in South Africa as the youth see themselves as The research findings and recommendations could help to enhance and direct positive curiosity for the youth to become the future leaders that Mandela spoke of. The findings will help the South African youth to appreciate that international issues have an impact on local issues, and they cannot be ignored. As one respondent said, *“The best way of youth empowerment is to let the youth know what the real world is and get them prepared for their future career.”* For organisations and regional structures, open communication and accessible platforms will increase the prospects for youth empowerment. The role of local government is, therefore, vital to ensure that the youth in rural communities partake in the global economy.

Keywords: Internatinal Political Economy, IPE competitiveness, Youth Diplomacy, Youth empowerment, youth unemployment

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CHAPTER ONE: UNDERSTANDING YOUTH EMPOWERMENT CHALLENGES IN SOUTH AFRICA

1.1 Orientation and background

It is urgently important to engage the youth honestly and involve them in political (parties, NGOs, legislatures and the public sector) and economic (labour market and entrepreneurship trading or manufacturing high-return products and services) structures to ensure growth and order in today's world. The International Political Economy (IPE) of youth empowerment is relevant as a frame of reference for this study which aims to describe barriers and opportunities to enable young people to shape processes and outcomes of domestic economics and political leadership. These processes and outcomes relate to stable democratic governance with rule of law and economic policies that promote the ease of doing business, sustainable economies that rely more on private sector production, and societies based on equity. As with other states like Brazil, Niger, Zambia, Mozambique, Russia, India and China (Kuepper, 2022), those under 35 years of age comprise the majority of South Africa's population (Lehohla, 2013; Ndondo, 2022). Deciding the definite age group of the youth is not an easy task. The concept of youth has varying definitions depending on cultural and societal context (Phaswane, 2009). The UN and International Labour Organisation (2020a) define youth as individuals between the ages of 15 and 24, in the Commonwealth it is 15 to 29 years, while South African and African institutions define youth as people falling within the age group of 14 to 35 years (NYDA, 2020; The Commonwealth Secretariat, 2021; AU, 2006). South Africa's reasons to have the youth age limit at 35 years is because of the apartheid government's past injustices of occupational and wage discrimination that deprived young people of upward career mobility and skills development opportunities for better livelihoods (O'Malley, 1997). Focusing on youth is a priority of states globally where communities consider youth as future leaders and actors with a direct stake in the development process in society (Kura, 2008). The Paris Principles apply to mutual accountability where the youth take part in democratic processes to hold government and donors accountable and call for initiatives that foster peacebuilding (Wood et al., 2008). The principles of ownership and managing results are relevant where youth exercise citizenship rights and make their voices heard through political and economic activity, which is vital to reaching the

Millennium Development Goals [MGDs] (Freeburg, 2004). The World Bank, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Commonwealth Secretariat have found the youth critical to reaching the MDGs (Freeburg, 2004). On the other hand, the youth rise to the occasion and speak about pressing issues like climate change responses, social justice, political representation, and dignified economic opportunities in society (Jabari, 2022; UN, 2017:36). People in positions of power are reluctant to believe youth activists and claim that they act because someone behind the scenes is influencing them (Cloete, 2016). Look at youth who led a movement for climate change, or political reform, for example, some critics do not want to see these efforts as genuinely by youth (Almulund, 2020). Youth empowerment is a key feature of good governance in a legitimate democratic condition. This study, in exploring the prospects and challenges of youth empowerment will analyse the extent to which young people in South Africa influence and take part in decision-making processes, occupy leadership positions, lead innovation, and gain success in entrepreneurship in a manner that amounts to international significance.

1.1.1 Defining youth empowerment

The concept of youth empowerment is about attitudes, structures, and common practices that enable youths to develop critical political and economic awareness and authority to make decisions that affect their lives and those of others (UN, 2003). Empowerment is a political concept because it opposes exclusionary or divisive practices and views while at the same time, it promotes individual well-being and connecting people with the immediate and broader socio-political environment (Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988; Zimmerman, 2000). It is about releasing an individual's power, and collaborating with people so they can take control over their lives and decision-making through creative, critical thinking, and be liberated active participants in the community (Jupp *et al.*, 2010). Conditions that isolate and do not integrate people into society diminish their self-confidence and level of functioning or degree of independence (Jhangiani & Tarry, 2022). Empowerment is about setting up fair power relations. That is why youth powerlessness is a result of discriminatory social values and policies. Since youth wellbeing depends on funding and progressive services, it makes sense that youth exclusion is disempowering. Judging from said assumptions, youth empowerment entails support mechanisms, ensuring impartial opportunities that produce critical and creative abilities among youth to

bring positive community change. Synonymous with youth empowerment, youth development is about ensuring access to opportunities for youth at an individual level; it entails offering young people programmes and opportunities that will make them advance in their lives and within their communities (SAHRC & UNICEF, 2014).

International Political Economy (IPE) refers to economic cooperation and political decisions between sovereign states for the upliftment of youth domestically (Ku & Yoo, 2013). It signifies that sovereign states are no longer the sole decision-makers in matters of youth empowerment, international institutions and the market are now formidable role players in making decisions that affect youth. The IPE framework informs recent studies on prospects and challenges or threats of youth unemployment in South Africa (Mlatsheni & Leibbrandt, 2011; Fox *et al.*, 2020).

1.1.2 Youth diplomacy and the role of local government in foreign policy

International relations are about “associations and cooperation between sovereign States” (Lim, 2014). Cooperation happens through foreign policy, which is an extension of national policy, where interest is a critical part of framing strategies for development and social services (RSA, 2011). Now, youth interests are employment, education, health, security and the environment. These interests form the challenge of youth empowerment. The state of youth development and empowerment is facing several challenges ranging from high HIV/Aids transmissions, the prevalence of war, lack of education, unemployment, teenage pregnancy, genital mutilation, drug use and human trafficking, lack of entrepreneurial support and skills development, poverty and deprivation (Mlatsheni & Liebbrandt, 2011:118). It is, therefore, significant to explore challenges associated with the youth empowerment agenda and youth diplomacy to increase youth opportunities. Since the end of apartheid in 1994 and the coming of a multiparty system of governance in South Africa, youth empowerment featured as one of many concerns for the African National Congress (ANC) regime (DPME, 2014). The high youth population in Africa will endure (Kriel *et al.*, 2005). This youth bulge is beneficial for the labour force and potential tax returns in the developing world, yet a political risk when economic needs remain unmet. Even though South Africa transitioned from an apartheid government to a more democratic and inclusive regime in the early 1990s, the legacy of socio-economic

inequality remains a challenge to the development of young people regarding education, employment, poverty and health outcomes (Kriel *et al.*, 2005).

Youth unemployment in the country still poses a formidable policy challenge. For example, the unemployment rate of 27% in the fourth quarter of 2010 (StatsSA, 2011) compared with the rate measured at 26.7% in the fourth quarter of 2018 (StatsSA, 2018) present different figures. However, the difference in eight years is extremely small. The unemployment rate amongst the youth shows higher figures of 38.2% in 2018, implying that one-third of every young person did not have a job (StatsSA, 2018). Unemployment in South Africa is among the highest in the world (Rivombo & Motseke, 2022). Skills development and youth employment remain unresolved, which presents a potential risk of social and political instability, leading to increased criminality and drug use. Evidence of this effect was seen in the unrests or riots that affected the Middle East, North Africa, and the United Kingdom in 2011 (Adesina, 2013). Countries like South Africa with an ageing population will have to find ways to include the youth in job opportunities and reduce economic and social inequalities.

Therefore, the role of local government in foreign policy and youth empowerment is very important to create a suitable interface between the people and the government. This interface can help solve the problems of unemployment, skills development, drug use and human trafficking. The impact of foreign policy implementation should occur there, and youth empowerment programmes and their impact should be visible there. This study argues that foreign policy and engagements are still a high-level phenomenon. DIRCO and foreign embassy activities in South Africa do not happen at the municipal level in the larger scheme. The IPE of youth empowerment shows bias for urban and rich classes in provinces like Gauteng and the Western Cape. This study argues that the activities of DIRCO and foreign embassies engage urban regions. If informal settlements are engaged, it is those in the vicinity of elite towns (Cape Town, Khayelitsha, Centurion, Pretoria, Germiston, Johannesburg, Soweto), not municipalities like Sedibeng, the West Rand or Sasolburg. The prospects for youth to partake in DIRCO programs depend on the young person attending universities like the University of the Witwatersrand (WITS), the University of Johannesburg (UJ), the University of Cape Town (UCT) and the University of Pretoria (UP). Engagements with universities like the North-West University

(NWU), the University of Fort Hare in Limpopo, the Vaal University of Technology (VUT), Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) and Further Education and Training (FET) colleges are minimal. This study further argues that youth empowerment still reflects the privileges of the apartheid system because it requires young people to either be in university, have political connections or be lecturers with such connections to take part in DIRCO and foreign embassy programs. Relevant parties like DIRCO and the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) do not communicate international and bilateral youth empowerment opportunities effectively and transparently to allow access for youth who are not politically exposed.

South Africa has prioritised an Afro-centric worldview towards its foreign policy aimed at the African renaissance. This policy approach honours the historic liberation struggle against colonial and apartheid oppression. The premise is that state institutions would prioritise the prospects for youths to be active participants in the economy and political spaces in a way that is different from the past practices of the old regimes. Therefore, initiatives like the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), and the reform of the Organisation for Africa Unity (OAU) into the African Union (AU) in 2002, were promised to be game changers in realising the African youth's hopes for the future. These organisations have started several policies and initiatives to ensure the enhancement of multi-dimensional skills for youth through vocational skills training, micro-enterprise start-ups and gender mainstreaming (NEPAD, 2018). South Africa has embraced multi-literalism as an approach to locating economic development at the centre of youth interests through strengthened ties with donors or agents. The South African IPE context of youth empowerment finds DIRCO as the key role player in youth empowerment efforts.

1.1.3 Youth empowerment initiatives in South Africa

Youth empowerment initiatives in South Africa are a social collaboration between government and business. Often, the empowerment initiatives that are implemented in South Africa involve youth exchange programmes and education and training programmes that are funded by international organisations, youth involvement in policy engagement and organisations that promote intercultural exchange programmes and sports between South Africa and the world.

1.2 Rationale and aim of the study

The rationale and motivation of the study are to analyse how South Africa in its relations with other countries prioritises youth empowerment and how foreign policy articulates initiatives for youth interests and diplomacy in political and economic arenas. Unemployment leads to issues that breed all sorts of crimes; it should, therefore, be an international political economy concern. In addition, the literature presents little research that has been done, especially in South Africa, on youth empowerment from an international political economy perspective. Analysing the political economy of violence, True (2010) shows how young women are vulnerable to abuse both at home and outside the home (at their workplace, socially, and politically). True's study takes an international perspective on feminist relations while this dissertation takes an international perspective on youth empowerment. Global youth empowerment and political economy structures determine the empowerment levels of youths and in this regard, "political and economic power are the same authority structure" (True, 2010:44). Geza *et al.* (2022) cover youth empowerment in agriculture and show how unemployment in the agriculture sector remains stubborn with the youth struggling to benefit from the sector. Shava and Clementine (2016) touch on a similar problem that leads to youth unemployment by discussing skills deficit and youth empowerment in South Africa. Jugmohan *et al.* (2017) look at the need for transforming the tourism sector as a way that better responds to the difficult problem of youth unemployment. They also argue that the reality of youths who own tourism establishments is essential for youth empowerment. Miettinen *et al.* (2018) focus on service design tools for stakeholder engagement in youth empowerment. The researchers address the need to prioritise the interests of the San youth as marginalised and underserved communities. All the above literature entries show an inclination to youth entrepreneurship and employability but no other study focuses on the IPE of youth empowerment. This is why this dissertation is significant among the seminal contributions to the IPE of youth empowerment globally, and in exposing the research gap in youth diplomacy studies in South Africa.

The aim of this study is to enable domestic economic and political leadership growth which will have a positive impact on the international political economy of the country. It is within this IPE framework that the study explores the prospects and challenges of youth

empowerment in South Africa. This is possible, first, by identifying and analysing how South Africa's foreign policy represents the interest in youth empowerment and the extent to which policy implementation promotes that interest. Secondly, by showing the extent to which the youth take part and shape international institutions and the market on issues of their interest. In other words, the study seeks to examine the extent to which role players in the world order commit to youth empowerment in both domestic and international political and economic arenas.

1.3 Problem statement

It is necessary to frame the problem as that of too little genuine commitment to empowering the youth at the local level, which amounts to a lack of international youth empowerment. Whatever youth empowerment initiatives there are do not promote IPE competitiveness because their focus is domestic at length.

Most South African youth are not aware of the strategic plans of DIRCO on youth diplomacy (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2020), with the youth in townships and low-income households being the most ill-informed about DIRCO's initiatives (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2015). As a result, the South African youth are not competitive in global economic and political structures – they are not global agenda setters and market movers (Bushe, 2019). Based on the reports from the Parliamentary Monitoring Group (2015, 2020) about the youth's lack of access to DIRCO's initiatives, only young people at universities and those with close ties to people in the department may get to hear about opportunities. In other words, it is believed that the economic benefits of DIRCO's efforts could be elitist; an assumption to which DIRCO responded by saying "it was difficult to indicate whether the Department's initiatives were actually impacting rural communities and townships" (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2022). From this recent admission by DIRCO, it is possible to argue from an international political economy perspective that DIRCO is a facilitator of entry for private business actors to work in the South African market, with little exposure heading outside the country for local entrepreneurs, among whom there are few young people. The observation by a member of parliament that DIRCO's initiatives could be elitist support this dissertation in noting that international actors have based their offices and conduct empowerment activities in urban areas, where it is significantly easier to access transport, basic amenities and information. Even

so, these opportunities are accessible to youth who come from better-income households and advanced social networks. The youth in informal settlements and rural communities lack the resources to maximise the available economic and youth diplomacy structures. In other words, “policies that claim to be in specific interests of youth are often working for already privileged youth” (France & Threadgold, 2016:2). The challenge of international youth empowerment is a matter of attitudinal and structural design, including politicised cultural processes. Youth in South Africa also complain about patronage and partisanship in the NYDA in accessing empowerment opportunities (OUTA, 2020; South African Press Association, 2009). This elitism and patronage in youth empowerment is a result of what Ledford et al (2013:3) highlight as the “problem of implementation and accountability for youth empowerment”.

The low-skilled and disadvantaged youth are without work or receive low wages which they cannot maximise for daily living and survival. Branson (2018a) argue that only 51% of the South African youth complete matric (Grade 12), and only 6% have any tertiary qualification. Twenty percent of the South African youth enter higher education immediately after matric and about 17% in higher education graduate. Fifty percent drop out of their degree studies and more than 60% drop out of their certificate and diploma studies; in total, there is an average of 70% that drop out of their long-distance studies (Sheppard, 2009:8).

1.4 Research questions

The research poses the primary research question, what are the prospects and challenges that are associated with youth empowerment, and how do they affect the international political economy of South Africa?

To answer this, the researcher will have to understand the context of the IPE of youth empowerment. The following supplementary questions will therefore prove useful:

- What entails the challenge of youth empowerment in South Africa?
- How does youth empowerment relate to IPE?
- What is the structure and outcome of international youth empowerment?
 - How do institutions/individuals affect youth empowerment?

- What youth empowerment initiatives transpire in South Africa?
- What are the prospects for youth empowerment and IPE competitiveness in South Africa?
 - What is the role of local government in promoting youth empowerment for IPE competitiveness?

1.5 Research objectives

The main objective of this research study is to look into the prospects and challenges of youth empowerment in South Africa from the IPE perspective to further promote IPE competitiveness in South Africa. To achieve this objective, the researcher will identify the challenges and prospects for youth empowerment in South Africa and the researcher intends to:

- Characterise the challenge of youth empowerment in South Africa;
- Formulate the IPE framework of youth empowerment;
- Appraise the structure of international youth empowerment and its outcome,
 - The impact of institutions/individuals on youth empowerment, and
 - The outcome of youth empowerment initiatives in South Africa;
- Infer prospects for youth empowerment and IPE competitiveness in South Africa,
 - Making the case for local government in foreign policy implementation for youth empowerment.

1.6 Central theoretical argument

Despite the rhetoric of youth empowerment policies and bilateral agreements, a lot of South African young people remain without necessary access to opportunities. They have no choice but to align with political parties, or exchange favours to gain an advantage both on local and international platforms.

1.7 Theoretical reference

The foundational theory for this study is empowerment, while IPE enables high-level argumentation. The essence of youth empowerment is to develop “decision-makers and analytical people” of the social injustice in the community (Ledford *et al.*, 2013:2). Youth

empowerment aims at a broader community change through youth development, which focuses on individual capacity (Zimmerman, 2000). Youth development does not eventually lead to youth empowerment. The significance of combining youth empowerment with IPE is that youth diplomacy is not a popular practice among South African youth, as a result, they are not in control and are unable to bring about change in the IPE. Figure 1 shows the two phases of empowerment, i.e., process and outcome. These involve three levels (individual, organisational and community) of empowerment in the process phase. The outcome phase has three outcome measurements (economic, political and social) where the ability to control and bring meaningful change is the ultimate indicator of empowerment. In context to this study, the analysis will identify youth empowerment initiatives and the extent to which their outcomes develop decision-makers who bring a greater change in the international space and local community (socially, economically and politically). The level at which empowerment initiatives occur is also included, whether it be at the individual, organisational or community level.

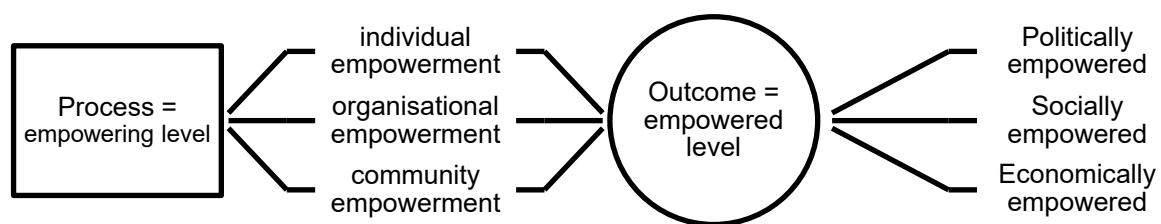


Figure 1.1: The process and outcome of youth empowerment (adapted from Ledford *et al.*, 2013)

The IPE framework presents a contextualised analysis of youth empowerment challenges in South Africa. IPE is concerned with the intersection of domestic and global factors that determine the production and distribution of resources, including the impact these have on political realities. It is equally about the impact of political decisions on the production and distribution of resources in the global community. In simple terms, IPE is about how political decisions affect economic objectives and how economic developments affect political aspirations both at domestic and international levels (Internet: <http://assets.press.princeton.edu/chapters/s8785.pdf>). The pillars of the IPE framework are finance, trade, knowledge, security, and production (Drezner, 2019). For example, the production of services and goods within a state creates more exports that increase fiscal reserves and job creation in the country. This means that the increase in exports

creates more jobs, and hence government investments in the youth remain important. However, the impact of youth on the increase of jobs in the industries depends on the type of product the manufacturing sector at the domestic level produces that attracts external or international purchasers. The youth ought also to be job creators and political agenda setters, not passive recipients in the global economy. The IPE as a context of youth empowerment is an arena where young people participate in economics and international political relations where they show abilities and manifest change. Both political institutions and corporates share in the distribution of resources whereby business enrolls youths in apprenticeship programmes in return for tax rebates from the State, while the State boasts about the number of youths who have taken part in empowerment initiatives. This reflection of empowerment initiatives builds a public perception that the government is doing something to resolve the problem of unemployment and lack of skills among youths. The youth empowerment political economy indicates the powerlessness of young people who are at the mercy of policies that old people in decision-making offices make. Kang'ethe (2014) also indicates that old people use the youth as agents of violence in political disputes or campaigning for votes. This creates an illusion of empowered youth but in fact, leaves them as puppets on the grand stage of political factions in society. Eventually, the political economy of youth empowerment highlights how youths are used by their parents or adults in society. Progressive IPE of youth empowerment is different from what Furlong and Cartmel (2006) refer to as "a fallacy in the political and social discourse that emphasises choice and opportunity, but creates a disconnection between the rhetoric of the classes, individualised neo-liberalism, and the reality of lack of options in their actual lives". Theoretical reference within the IPE framework is the empowerment that requires deeper involvement by people in their lived environment and circumstances. The majority of South African young people are black coloured, in the poor working class, in underdeveloped geographic locations, with mismatched education skills, and lack personal ties to powerful people (ILO, 2017). The lack of resources limits their choices and opportunities to pursue life goals in trade and productive economic sectors as owners of businesses. Their lack of skills leaves them with few opportunities for meaningful employment as income earners. In other words, South African youths are most disconnected from the economy and interaction with the international community.

Therefore, despite the rhetoric of bilateral agreements and enacting youth empowerment opportunities, young people remain without necessary access to opportunities. They have no option but to align with political parties, or exchange favours to gain an advantage. Taking a youth empowerment political economy view point, this study argues that genuine youth empowerment enables young people to get the power that will shape both the process and the outcome. The first political economy of youth empowerment policy issue includes the minimum years of experience needed for employment and the criteria for funding allocation to youth entrepreneurs. The second political economy of youth empowerment policy issue is the internationalisation (or centralisation at the national level) of youth empowerment opportunities that remain inaccessible to young people at the local level and outside partisan political networks. The third political economy of youth empowerment policy issue is the lack of funding for youth empowerment NGOs that do not have sufficient resources. As a result, prominent youth empowerment NGOs are those led by and connected to international actors or donors. Corporates are also leading their own initiatives. In the end, there is no coherent reporting framework that synthesises all empowerment initiatives to measure their impact on the international competitiveness of South African youth.

1.8 Research design

The study incorporates an exploratory research design that describes how and why the IPE of youth empowerment unfolds in a South African setting (Polkinghorne, 2005). The study design helps the researcher to reflect critically about the topic and identify suitable questions that are relevant to the research process and empirical phenomena (Jimris-Rekve, 2016). The comprehensive analysis concerning IPE of youth empowerment follows a qualitative research method through which the researcher captures participants' interpretations, experiences, feelings and beliefs concerning the process (individual, organisational, and community levels), and outcome (political, social, and economic) of youth empowerment initiatives in their communities (Mohajan, 2018; Polkinghorne, 2005:138; Flick, 2015: 542; Van Maanen, 1979; Van Maanen et al., 2007). The researcher incorporates the political economy analysis for development strategies from the Department for International Development (2009) including Brockhaus and Angelson (2012); which seeks to understand i) agents or actors – their interests and incentives or

material advantages for pursuing youth empowerment, ii) ideas and information – policy principles, ideologies, data, knowledge, and beliefs about youth empowerment as a growing public concern, and iii) structure or institutions – the international system rules and path-dependencies of youth empowerment. From this information the researcher can deduct how the South African youth make sense of their ability to participate in and shape processes that prioritise their interests domestically and internationally.

1.8.1 Population and sampling

The target population is the local youth in Centurion, Pretoria, Soweto and Johannesburg. Interviews with a total of 26 respondents inform this study. The sampling approach and participant selection are based on a snowball practice, which is a useful purposeful sampling method when resources are insufficient. The method involves a chain of referrals by people who participate in the youth development sector and/or are conversant in IPE (Palinkas *et al.*, 2015; Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981:141; Atkinson & Flint, 2001). The technique “yields a study sample through referrals made among people who share or know others who possess some characteristics that are of research interest” (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981:141). The benefit of the snowball sampling method is that it connected the researcher with respondents in a way that would have been impossible or difficult without being recommended or referred. This means that potential respondents would not have been willing to participate in the study had not a friend or colleague introduced them to the researcher. However, the disadvantages are that the researcher might interact with people who have a common mindset and interests, within a common class and geography. The researcher must be cautious of this bias, homogeneity and implications on the validity and generalisation of research findings (Atkinson & Flint, 2001). The researcher initiated contact with several local young people in Centurion, Pretoria, Johannesburg and Soweto. Non of the 26 respondents withdrew consent or participation and all the participants were cooperative and willing to offer critical knowledge that led to the collection of the data for this study. The research did not exclude any responses from the informants in the analysis.

1.8.2 Data collection tools

Documents and reports from official state and non-state institutions provided valuable information (Bryman, 2016; Flick, 2015). As Flick (2015) noted that documents support other data collection strategies like interviews. Therefore, the researcher combined primary and secondary data to get a broader understanding of the prospects for youth empowerment and IPE competitiveness (Bryman, 2016). Interviews, surveys, and observations are a primary source of the data collected by the researcher; while secondary sources include official documents, policy reports, archives, books, peer-reviewed articles, and online sources (Bryman, 2016; Zohrabi, 2013; Denzin & Lincoln, 1995; Van Maanen, 1979). The researcher relied on both primary and secondary sources to get an in-depth understanding of how young people perceive youth empowerment initiatives in South Africa, including the role young people play in the global community. During the group interviews process, the researcher observed the non-verbal communication of respondents, which is important to identify if the respondents are comfortable, differing, or in agreement during discussions (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Cohen & Arieli, 2011). This revealed a broader perceptive of how respondents understand the youth empowerment project under the umbrella of black economic empowerment on a day-to-day basis. Therefore, the research method and data collection tools in this study enable validity and triangulation where the researcher, through observation, reading and talking to people, can yield similar findings and notice points of differences (Flick, 2015). Triangulation is a strategy to confirm the results with earlier research and existing report to increase the and increase validity of the research report (Bryman, 2016) This is possible by testing interview responses against academic and news reports, and against state and regional body institutions to understand the prospects of youth empowerment.

Regarding community entry, the researcher informed the youth leaders of organisations in specific communities about her intentions to conduct research, the name of the institution the researcher comes from, and that the research report will be available for respondents to read and use in advancing their cause for improved inclusion in decision-making processes and strengthen empowerment initiatives. The names of the organisations are the Olievenhoutbosch Youth Forum, the Wits University Political Science Students, the Diepkloof Youth Forum and the Soweto Cultural Group. The youth

leader in each community provided the researcher with the venue, date and time to conduct the interviews. The researcher explained the importance of the rights of the participants and did not coerce anyone to participate in the study. The right to privacy, meaning their names and the content information, is a matter of importance in terms of security and non-disclosure (Biggam, 2008). The researcher also encouraged respondents to speak in the language they are comfortable with. The youth leader chaired the meeting. The youth leader explained the procedure concerning the audio recording and note-taking of the interviews for analysis purposes. Everyone was given time to answer and active participation was emphasised. The researcher met some difficulties in contacting a few of the organisations and on several occasions interviews were rescheduled. The researcher interacted with 26 participants who come from youth organisations; young people who had an adequate understanding of youth initiatives in their communities and were suitable to inform the research topic.

The semi-structured interviews were based on open-ended questions that provided a relaxed and friendly interaction between the researcher and respondents. This nature of interaction also allowed the researcher to probe deeper into the responses and get clarity. This process enabled the researcher to develop trust with respondents who felt comfortable to refer other respondents in keeping with the snowball sampling method. Respondents provided a rich description of their life-world concerning the implementation of youth empowerment initiatives and what it means for them to be competitive in the global economic and political leadership spheres (Kvale, 1983). This semi structured interview setting presented a cordial conversation that allowed the researcher to ask a follow-up question and relaxed respondents who elaborated on their answers and pointed out what they consider relevant (Kvale, 1983). Face to face interview allow the researcher to observe social cues such as the tone and body language associated with verbal responses of the respondents (Opdenakker, 2006). This opportunity of observation allows the researcher to maintain a safe environment and show sensitivity when it occurs that the respondent is uneasy.

The first group interview was held in Centurion, where young people from the Olievenhoutbosch Youth Forum responded. The session had a relaxed atmosphere with music and art activities that helped to reflect on the role of young people in society. This

event provided an understanding of the role of young people in both domestic and international politics. In other words, the role of youth empowerment in the IPE of this country was made vivid. The second interview took place in Auckland Park at the University of Johannesburg, where youths including students from the university responded. All respondents were informed and well-acquainted with the topic. The third interview was with youths at Wits University near the city of Johannesburg, close to the Johannesburg CBD, where the majority of young people and mostly street beggars are frequently observed. In the last interview in Soweto, in Meadowlands, the researcher joined young people to reflect on the regional and national challenges of unemployment and the situation of criminality and drugs in communities. This was an opportune moment to talk about the nexus of empowerment and IPE. The interview process consisted of meaningful conversations that were open to all young people present to contribute to. The respondents could add to each other's responses when it seemed that the respondents struggled or had forgotten the details. While in Meadowlands, the researcher met with stakeholders from youth initiatives and organisation movements. The interviews with them were interesting because the youths gave short responses and seemed to be annoyed by the government. Others were very reluctant to speak out about their grievances and elaborate on them. They exuded unhappiness and frustration. Giriti (in Littlejohn & Foss, 2009) argues that verbal communication without nonverbal messages make for ineffective communication did not accompany them". Hence meeting with respondents in person indicated the body language as youths made gestures, facial expressions, and verbal cues that indicated their disappointment and frustration about youth empowerment initiatives. Conversely, participants might be reluctant to comment during interviews because they do not trust the researcher (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009:690).

The interview guide included questions about youth programmes and youth empowerment programmes. There was a one-hour allocation for the interview and 30 minutes for those who wanted to use the bathroom. During the interview, the researcher acted as the facilitator and also encouraged more answers from participants. There were 26 respondents, all black, made up of 14 males and 12 females. All reside in Gauteng Province.

The questions that follow below form the basis of the interviews:

- I. How do you understand youth empowerment in terms of economic development?
- II. In your view, how does youth empowerment in the country lead to the political and economic development of young people?
- III. To what extent has the government given priority to youth empowerment?
- IV. How is SA's Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) benefiting the youth in the country?
- V. What can be done so that the government strengthens BEE and any other programme that uplifts young people in terms of offering them a source of income?
- VI. What programmes do you know of that empower youth in politics?
- VII. What suggestions can you give for the youth to receive information?
- VIII. What do you understand by the concept, International Relations?

The interview sessions resembled informal conversations and crossbreeding of ideas among respondents. Some interviews were not audio recorded while others were recorded on a Samsung smartphone. Interruptions were minimal, only when someone would enquire about the meeting, and if bookings for the venue were set. This shows miscommunication in the internal processes of the youth organisations. Some youths saw the gathering and simply joined in without invitation, and later commented about the need for regular conversations of this kind at the end of the meeting. This also suggests that young people need rich, productive conversations about their development. These public dialogues are an essential empowerment tool. The researcher provided ample time for the youths in the meetings, and as a result, one cannot say the youth spoke in a rush to beat the time and which could have affected the quality of their responses. The youth in a university setting seemed more informed and opinionated, yet they still lacked exposure to youth empowerment initiatives. Therefore, organisations like the NYDA, DIRCO, UN, SADC and the AU must establish connections with universities and colleges to increase the exposure of youth empowerment initiatives to more youths. This is especially true taking into consideration that youths graduate and remain unemployed or less equipped to enter the world of work. Partnerships between development organisations and

universities would benefit students in terms of experiential learning. The interviews are grounded on the principle of informed consent and privacy in that the researcher does not mention names and allocates alphabet letters to respondents instead (Bryman, 2016).

Secondary data complements primary data collection through content analysis of textual materials (books, official reports, journal articles, news, videos, and internet sources) to obtain data (Bryman, 2016; Zohrabi, 2013; Flick, 2015). Observation of body language and behaviour during interviews also allowed the researcher to describe and reconcile responses and theory with a social setting (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). Therefore, the research method and data collection tools in this study pass the test of validity and triangulation where the researcher, through observation, reading, and talking to people, can yield similar findings and notice points of differences (Flick, 2015). This is how the researcher confirms the information based on previous research and recent reports or developments, which is essential for the validity of the study (Bryman, 2016). Through the inductive process by which the researcher collects data to build the concept of the IPE of youth empowerment, the researcher categorised data into themes that make it possible to justify the relevance of the IPE framework to youth empowerment in South Africa (Bryman, 2016). This embedded process focuses on the context of people and institutional routines in making and implementing youth empowerment initiatives (Rosaline, 2008). Therefore, similarities and differences in youth empowerment programmes become evident, which are vital for recommendations to duplicate or discontinue programmes based on their performance. Youth empowerment and IPE concern the image of the country, therefore, examining the nexus between the two concepts became essential to help understand the reasons that attract people to criminal activities and radical groups.

For reliability and validity, the researcher used explicit mention of where the respondents spoke; be it verbatim or by way of clarification. Therefore, it is possible to make out what the researcher presents as their academic analysis and what the respondents said (Bryman, 2016; Flick, 2015). The researcher also avoided unwarranted generalisations given the small sample in this study. The findings of this study are transferable to situations of young people elsewhere in South Africa because the “researcher’s subjective opinions or personal values do not influence the analysis” (Bryman, 2016).

1.8.3 Data analysis techniques

Through inductive analysis, the research categorised data into themes that make it possible to justify the relevance of the IPE framework to youth empowerment in South Africa (Bryman, 2016). This embedded process focuses on power structures, routines, and relationships of youth empowerment institutions (Rosaline, 2008). The researcher can reveal the barriers and opportunities for youth empowerment through the analysis of i) agents or actors – their interests and incentives or material advantages for pursuing youth empowerment, ii) ideas and information – policy principles, ideologies, data, knowledge, and beliefs about youth empowerment as a growing public concern, and iii) structure or institutions – the international system rules and path-dependencies of youth empowerment (DFID, 2009).

1.8.4 Ethical considerations

This study is under strict ethical guidelines of the North-West University. The researcher is qualified in terms of ethical considerations as per the McCowen University social science ethics program. All respondents received full details about the research and had an opportunity to participate based on clear information and voluntary consent (Halai, 2006). The respondents' identities remain concealed following the NWU post-graduate and research centre criteria. This way, the researcher minimises unexpected risks (Mosley, 2013). The NWU is unwavering in the need for academics to exercise academic honesty. In this regard, the researcher will make use of full citations for work taken from other scholars. At the end of this study, the researcher will distribute a copy of the dissertation to participants who expressed such a desire. The NWU will also publish a copy on the library website, which the public can access for research and reference for public dialogues. Copies will also be sent by the researcher to DIRCO sections that deal with youth policy and community engagement. The respondents were not deceived at any moment or point. The researcher made clear the purpose, objectives, and assumptions of the research before respondents took part in the research. This way, the researcher ensured that the power dynamics were not altered in such a manner that the respondents felt obliged and also minimised chances of bias on the side of the researcher and participant (Flick, 2015). This aspect of bias is important because the researcher also clarified that there is no financial or alternative material reward that the respondents

should expect for participating in the study. Fortunately, no one asked for money or food during the interviews. The respondents also had a choice to discontinue the interview at any given time without explanation in which case their information will not feature in the research report. On the question of risk, the study is of minimum risk because the questions are non-partisan, non-ethnic, and non-sexist (Halai, 2006:5). There is no expectation for backlash about what the respondent said. The duration and time of the interviews were convenient for respondents and determined by them; they had time for a relief break when they needed it. Gatekeeping was unnecessary because the researcher already had access to various communities and security available through resources that the employer provided. Gatekeeping is the process whereby any person or institution becomes a mediator. The cordial nature and respect through which the researcher approached this study allowed the respondents to speak without fear or favour (Bryman, 2016; Flick, 2015).

1.8.5 Limitations of the study

This study is limited to the investigation of youth empowerment in South Africa, however, its literature ranges on youth participation, unemployment and crimes, and insecurity in the country. This analysis is done in light of the international political economy, economic growth, and development perspective to understand how youth unemployment affects the security of the country as opposed to youth empowerment, which enhances political and economic development. The research will merely evaluate theory and not its generalisation in different countries and regions because of the small sample. The other limitation is that the sample stands for one province in South Africa and, therefore, it does not comprehensively represent the youth in the country. It is worth noting that the youth community is not homogenous with different economic levels. Their views on the IPE for youth empowerment will differ according to their background. However, it is possible to draw inferences from other youths who did not have a say in this study.

1.8.6 Significance of the study

The study first explores and contextualises youth empowerment within the IPE framework. It opens a dialogue about the need to see foreign policy make significant changes in the lives of the youth, and to consider what role local government has in

foreign policy implementations where local actors come to South Africa for youth empowerment. By reflecting on the voices of the youth, the study proves the extent to which empowerment occurs and the opportunities available for them to take part on international political and economic platforms. The unique point of this study is that it looks at the local level to measure the impact of foreign policy in terms of how young people shape processes and benefit from empowerment initiatives that are available in South Africa through partnerships with international actors.

1.9 Literature review

The researcher used textual review as a data collection technique and searched keywords such as youth empowerment, IPE for youth empowerment, youth diplomacy, and local government's role in youth empowerment. The researcher consulted and sifted the sources based on their relevance in providing detailed information related to the keywords. The catalogues include Google Scholar, various academic journals, Academic Search Premier, Jstor, Scopus, and Research Gate. From these databases, the researcher understood that the concepts of international political economy and global political economy carry the same meaning although with different implications. The former implies "economic relations between States while the latter indicates a wider scope of political relations beyond relations between States" (Walzenbach, 2017:87).

The researcher opted to focus on the international political economy because governments remain the primary actors in global affairs despite liberal approaches that focus more on individual actors (Ataman, 2003). However, the variable of youth empowerment in this study is in keeping with modern liberal approaches, and in that sense young people collaborate with various global actors to shape policies that help the youth (The Commonwealth Secretariat, 2021). Scholars in IPE analyse the interaction of economics and politics at the international level where States influence the flow of capital and shape markets. In turn, traders decide how and when to spend their profits, which affects the terrain of politics. Debates in IPE are about how "the interaction of political and economic forces promotes human welfare" (Walzenbach, 2017:87). This study is unique and steers away from the traditional interpretation of IPE in that it aims to investigate how political and economic forces promote the welfare of young people, or how young people shape political and economic interests to promote youth interests.

Academic and technical reports or strategies in the youth sector incorporate youth mainstreaming in political and economic decisions as an approach to youth empowerment. It is here that the idea of a youth-centric international political economy comes to the fore (The Commonwealth Secretariat, 2021). Youths are not a single group with common circumstances and views, their claim-making is influenced by their background and current situations in society, the economy, geographical setting, and racial or cultural backgrounds (Makiwane & Kwizera, 2009; Odoh & Innocent, 2014). Nevertheless, the common development profile of youths reflects a majority living in developing countries with limited resources and access to education, health, and employment or economic opportunities (UN, 2020). Imaginings about youth empowerment are among the considerations of political theorists in South Africa although most researchers in youth empowerment do not incorporate IPE competitiveness as a priority. Conventional explanations and practices of youth empowerment focus on “discipline-oriented subjects such as child psychology, paediatric medicine, criminology as it relates to juvenile delinquents, youth sports and so on. Indeed, there has also been research and even documentaries about situations of youth and children in conflict-ridden societies, including post-conflict situations. However, there is a need for increased research about the broader socio-economic and political situation of the youth in Africa (Maimela, 2014) and the inclusion of IPE is in the main periphery. As a result, this study contributes to the literature on youth empowerment by forecasting IPE.

The New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) 2005-2015 strategic framework for a NEPAD youth programme responds to the disconnect between youth engagement and empowerment (Mboya, 2015). The NEPAD strategic framework identifies challenges that when addressed successfully would lead to youth empowerment and thereby incorporates the IPE dimension in South Africa’s national youth policy (Enaifoghe and Dlamini, 2021). Buntu and Lehmann (2015) studied youth policy at the municipal level and through a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis, identify threats of politicisation, disillusionment and fatigue related to youth engagement and empowerment in local government. The significance of their study is that it explains the role of local government in youth development where young people participate in policy processes such as the IDP. Local government in Africa begins to make clear commitments to youth engagement and empowerment, such is the case in the open

government action plan of Elgeyo Marakwet County in Kenya. The IPE component is missing in Buntu and Lehmann's (2015) report and the Elgayo Marakwet action plan.

Where youth empowerment is operational at the global level, there is a problem with commitments to meet targets and objectives (Karsten, 2011). The failure to meet targets is in part linked with the lack of meaningful engagement for inclusive participation in decision making and programme implementation. The OECD (2021) draws a link between youth engagement and empowerment, and argues that the non-participation of citizens in the politics of the state is an increasing problem in modern societies. Locally, Mhlongo (2016) identifies the lack of engagement as a barrier to youth empowerment in South Africa.

1.10 Provisional chapter layout

The first chapter is *the introduction to the study*: Prospects and challenges of youth empowerment in South Africa. The chapter outlines the problem statement, and research design touching on youth empowerment in South Africa. It clarifies the challenge of youth empowerment in South Africa.

The second chapter presents *the theoretical reference* of the IPE framework for youth empowerment. The theory will help to understand and justify the findings. It describes how individuals and institutions contribute to youth empowerment in domestic political economy, and later regional and international political economy.

The third chapter consists of a *research design and reports on the outcomes of youth empowerment initiatives in South Africa*. This research emphasises the role of youth empowerment in the political economy.

The fourth chapter makes *suggestions on youth empowerment for IPE competitiveness by South African youth*.

The fifth chapter is the presentations of the findings to answer research questions and achieve the objectives and aim of the study. It offers recommendations for policymakers and future studies.

CHAPTER TWO: CONCEPTUALISING THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY OF YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

2.1 Introduction

Among the underprivileged groups in the world, women endure and suffer the most. Women have been the target of political, social, economic, religious and psychological bondage imposed by their very own protectors (The World Bank Group, 2014; UNODC, 2008). Hence women's dire need for emancipation, which is only possible with women's empowerment (RSA, 2021). As a multidimensional social process, women empowerment helps women to acquire control of their own life, simultaneously of resources and decisions (Bayeh, 2016; Marloes *et al.*, 2017). The concept of empowerment applies to various contexts but in this study, the focus is on youth empowerment where the same principles of empowerment apply. The former UN general secretary, Ban Ki-moon, argues that governments must fulfil their obligations to the youth (UN, 2007b). In the same vein, the UN (2007c) conveys that the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY) mandates governments to acknowledge and make commitments to implement the inputs young people submit in policy and decision-making on matters that affect their empowerment. Ban Ki-moon further argues that "governments must also increase the financial, education and technical support made available to cultivate young people's potential and stop viewing young people as part of the problem" (UN, 2007a).

Youth diplomacy is not a popular practice in South Africa, hence the need to conceptualise the IPE of youth empowerment. This chapter operationalises linkages between youth empowerment and IPE to show its expressions in South Africa. It will also outline barriers to youth empowerment for application in the South African context. The chapter will help formulate suggestions and a model for youth empowerment that ensures South Africa's IPE competitiveness.

2.2 Connecting empowerment and International Political Economy (IPE)

The construct empowerment links individual strengths, support systems, and equipping people's behaviour for a proactive stance in influencing public policy and social change (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995). Theoretically, empowerment promotes people working

together, thereby improving their mental health in the process of creating communities that respond to people's needs. It connects a person's welfare with the social environment and political realities. Empowerment suggests working together based on common purposes and interpretations of the social and political realities for people to mobilise resources and gain greater control of their lives (Jupp *et al.*, 2010).

2.2.1 Empowerment theory

Youth empowerment is about "collective efforts to create socio-political change" (Jennings *et al.*, 2006:31). This requires adults to foster the inclusion and meaningful engagement and participation of the youth as stakeholders with equal power, interacting with youths in socio-political processes that bring change at both community and individual level. The time to contain or keep the youth from the streets has passed; now is the time for them to be on the streets as change-makers in their communities, active participants and leaders in the economic and political sectors (Jennings *et al.*, 2006). Youth empowerment at an individual level touches on psychological development, capacity building, personal control, a proactive approach to life, and critical thinking and understanding related to socio-political issues (Jennings *et al.*, 2006). Youth empowerment at a community level leans towards collective actions that families and organisations support and implement that promote the youth's wellbeing and quality of life (Jennings *et al.*, 2006). This theoretical explanation implies that the youth have a role to play in socio-economic solutions that require the presence of institutions that implement meaningful youth engagement in community service programmes. Community service would help the youth have a sense of control by learning about life's realities, expressing their expectations, and being involved in the implementation of projects that bring solutions or create opportunities for growth (Jennings *et al.*, 2006). In other words, the youth become partners in development processes. The logic is for adults to be "facilitators, allowing the youth leader to take on a leadership responsibility for the ensuing activities" (Jennings *et al.*, 2006:35).

There are two components to the idea of empowerment, namely processes and outcomes which differ in their appearance (Rappaport, 1984; Zimmerman, 1988). The empowerment theory analyses differences in the empowering processes (the programmes implemented) and empowerment outcomes (the consequences of

empowerment programmes). According to Tembo (2015), at the community level these processes “might include collective action to access government and other community resources like the media”. The “empowered outcome for individuals might include situation-specific perceived control and resource mobilisation skills” (Mathoothe, 2019).

Empowerment is “a social-action process that promotes participation of people, organisations, and communities towards the goals of increased individual and community control, political efficacy, improved quality of community life, and social justice” (Laverack, 2001; Jennings et al., 2006). Whitmore (1988) lists the following points regarding the embodiment of empowerment:

Empowerment assumes a) individuals understand their own needs better than anyone else and therefore should have the power both to define and act upon them, b) all people have strengths upon which they can build, c) empowerment is a lifelong endeavour, d) personal knowledge and experience are valid and useful in coping effectively (quoted in Lord, J., & Hutchison, 1992:4).

The essence of youth empowerment is to develop “decision-makers and analytical people” of social injustice in the community (Ledford *et al.*, 2013:2). Youth empowerment aims at “greater community change” through youth development, which focuses on individual capacity (Zimmerman, 2000:569-579). As depicted in Figure 1, the two phases of youth empowerment, namely, the process (empowering) and outcome (empowered), confirm that empowerment precedes development. The theory suggests that intentional and meaningful actions and structures can be empowering or make people empowered (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995). The three categories of empowerment in the process phase are individual adaptation, organisational development, and community life evolution (Zimmerman, 2000; Swift & Levine, 1987). Zimmerman (2000) further points out that the empowerment process results in outcomes or the empowered level. The evidence of being empowered is in seeing desired results or outcomes from efforts to gain control in the community and having more marginalised participants involved in decision making processes (Chattopadhyaya, 2005).

2.2.1.1 Individual adaptation

The process of empowerment begins with building capacity in individuals to a collective of empowered people. Youth empowerment at the individual level is possible through education, skills training and support for individual entrepreneurial initiatives (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995). Successful individuals can sponsor other individuals in need of empowerment or support organisations working for human development. Youth empowerment enables individuals to adapt to the ever-changing socio-political environment. Disempowered youth are those who do not find opportunities amid high unemployment and resort to violence, drug and alcohol abuse, drop out of school and are more prone to depression (Hébert, 2016). They are pessimistic about their present and future life prospects. The top priority of youth empowerment should be to prepare youth to adapt and innovate to life's challenges in order to create a prosperous socio-economic reality. Youth empowerment enables youth to envision their role and place, not only locally but also internationally. Empowered youth are bold enough to make a living outside the country. This is what is lacking in South African youth, the majority of whom are not looking for job opportunities outside the country's borders.

2.2.1.2 Organisational development

In the absence of driven individuals to champion socio-economic change, there must be organisations in place to do the job. The organisational level of analysis suggests that "empowerment includes organisational processes and structures that enhance member participation and improve goal achievement for the organisations" (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995; Larkin *et al.*, 2008). Youth empowerment at the organisational level allows for greater outreach to young people and greater influence on decision-making processes. The less able may miss out on opportunities for empowerment in sport, academia, business or leadership positions. Organisations, therefore, serve a vital social justice role in youth empowerment. Organisations expose young people to the kind of information that an individual may not have had access to. They also provide a network of individuals where young people can support each other to succeed. A coalition of organisations working to empower young people also has a greater impact across a broad geographic landscape. Organisations also provide support for empowerment beyond the borders of one country. It is worth noting that South African-based organisations provide

little support to young people in other countries. Instead, more foreign organisations are supporting South African youth. And most of these foreign organisations are linked to embassies and foreign donor organisations. Youth empowerment organisations often struggle to make ends meet due to a lack of funding. As a result, youth empowerment initiatives are not sustainable. This is a reason for concern because most empowered youth in South Africa owe their life successes to one or two organisations. Effective youth empowerment involves building the capacity of youth organisations to access and influence decision-making processes at local, national and international levels. The point is that without youth empowerment organisations, the future of most young people looks bleak.

2.2.1.3 Community life evolution

A community is a collective of households in a local area. Another possibility of youth empowerment is to target specific communities where skills are limited, youth deviance is high or the specific community in question is marginalised. At the community level, empowerment is about people working together and building networks that promote the common good and improve living conditions (Charles *et al.*, 2020; Tembo, 2015). This is where companies may start a Corporate Social Investment (CSI) initiative to empower communities and youth. This is often done through the provision of bursaries, procurement of goods and preferential employment in specific communities. Conceptually, a community could relate to specific groups of people – the disabled for example. Youth empowerment is crucial for the upliftment of communities for communities to stand on their own feet – building their assets and forging links with various partners to generate socio-community change. Community empowerment should break down the political, economic, social, legal and environmental barriers to youth empowerment. However, such an approach to youth empowerment is extremely lacking in the South African context. There is no community ownership of youth challenges such as drug use, crime, unemployment and public accountability. It seems that community empowerment is an idea that is absent from the imagination of the South African people.

2.2.2 The IPE relevance to youth empowerment

Sriyani and Nonutu (2020) assert that “mercantilism, economic liberalism, and neo-Marxism are the three important theories in the field of International Political Economy (IPE)”. IPE involves economic and political relations between sovereign states on the global stage. This includes the impact that trade barriers and government performance have on people’s quality of life. Therefore, IPE is a common analytical tool in the academic discipline of international relations, sociology and economics. “IPE is about wealth and poverty, about who gets what in the international economic and political system.” (Lockwood, 2021) It focuses on global economic connections that shape the political system involving states and non-state institutions. These role players are concerned with the effects of production and allocation of resources at the individual and collective levels to supply people’s needs and wants (Eatwell *et al.*, 1987:907). The models of doing this vary and include socialism and capitalism, which stimulate debates in the policy-making arena.

IPE is about how economic processes constrain the economic decisions of governmental and non-governmental agencies. It is also concerned with economic forces and their influence on political decisions, such as government policy, individuals’ voting behaviour and choices, and unions or firms’ political lobbying. In short, IPE is about nation-states wielding global power to advance their interests. IPE is an analytical approach to understanding international and global problems related to the role of youth in the global economy and job creation efforts. As stated earlier that the pillars of IPE are finance, trade, knowledge, security, and production. Finance attends to “analysis of exchange rate policies, foreign exchange systems, international capital movements, particularly portfolio capital and debt flows, and the international and domestic institutions and political structures to which they relate. International finance is viewed by some as less political and more purely economic than international trade” (Hammood, 2011:202). Trade implies that knowledge includes wealth as well. Nations that have insufficient knowledge and technological advances cannot compete, especially in today’s world. Arrangements made in “the security, production, and finance structure depend on access to knowledge in its several forms” (Hammood, 2011:206). Security is a broad term in IPE, “and a nation’s security can be threatened in many ways: by foreign armies, by foreign firms and their

products, by foreign influence over international laws and institutions, and even by media which may affect social and cultural cohesion” (Hammood, 2011:197-198). Youth unemployment is also a security threat that is frequently mentioned in international policy discussions today. The rise of IT security in the context of election campaigns, including the widespread use of social media, has led to government efforts to regulate and censor it. Most countries in the world do not create or manage their IT infrastructure. Countries that export technology enjoy soft power in the knowledge economy.

Production is the act of creating value and wealth, and wealth is nearly always linked to power. The issue of who produces what for whom on what terms, therefore, lies at the heart of IPE. Recent decades have seen dramatic changes in the production structure, with the production of certain high-value items such as automobiles shifting from the United States (US) to Japan and now to other countries like Korea, Mexico, Brazil, and China. These structural changes affect the distribution of wealth and power in the world. (Hammood, 2011:206)

Regarding the IPE of youth empowerment, the ideological debates revolve around the barriers to youth empowerment and how they can be overcome. This includes the role that government and the private sector should play in the process of youth empowerment. For this reason, national youth development agencies and international institutions committed to youth empowerment have been established. But, private businesses have also established foundations or donate to NGOs working with youth. It is now clear that youth empowerment is not the responsibility of the government alone. If private businesses reduce funding for youth empowerment due to low revenues, critics are likely to complain that businesses are prioritising profits over development. Cheema (2017) analyses economic empowerment through the IPE lens and found that economic empowerment programmes rarely achieve the set targets. In other words, economic empowerment programmes are not able to engender change and individual self-sufficiency. In short, the IPE is the locus of the empowerment process. Nation-states are the dominant role players in the IPE environment, but non-state actors also play a vital role but remain vulnerable to the rules set by nation-states, that determine empowerment outcomes. Nation-states affect monetary flows and opportunities for youth to participate

in the international trade platform. The international economy is open to young people, but not all young people who venture into it are successful. This is due to the extent of support that nation-states provide.

Fundamentally, empowerment and IPE are practices of power in the politics of human services (Edelman, 1977) or the experience of powerlessness (Moscovitch & Drover, 1981). Talking more about empowerment is about raising awareness (Rappaport, 1986). However, the most important thing is to evaluate the extent to which empowerment leads to liberated people who take control of their life path and shape the environment in which they live. The two concepts are about the “capacity of some persons and organisations to produce intended, foreseen and unforeseen effects on others” (Cornell Empowerment Group, 1989:2). Sources of power include “personality, property/wealth, and influential organisations” (Galbraith, 1983). Youth empowerment IPE is, therefore, about building the foundations of power for young people, or at least basing it on the existing ones. In other words, “youth empowerment is a process of transition from a state of powerlessness to that of relative control over one’s life, destiny, and environment” (Whitehead *et al.*, 2016). Especially when young people take the initiative instead of being mere bystanders to the process. Other scholars have shown that the “class-dominated nature of society means that a small number of people have vast economic or political power, while the majority have little or none” (Moscovitch & Drover, 1981). Therefore, this study refers to the IPE of youth empowerment, where few young people from politically dominant and economically advanced countries benefit more from youth empowerment initiatives.

2.3 The IPE youth empowerment challenges

As much as empowerment is about people being grounded in their daily reality and taking control of their lived experiences there, barriers exist too. Disempowered youth have no freedom of choice, no agency and no control over resources to determine their life prospects and livelihoods. This begets inequality as people do not put in the same effort and resources to gain control of their lives. This is because people may not have the same opportunities.

2.3.1 Lack of resources

Citizens “need public resources to pursue private inspirations, implying that there is no caring without justice and no justice without caring” (Prilleltensky, 2003:23-24). Poverty and unemployment primarily lead to a lack of resources that affects people’s personal and community well-being. “Poverty inflicts physical, psychological and spiritual pain in people of all ages who strive for wellness and resist the oppressive burden of destitution” (Cloete, 2015:516). Many young people miss out on international youth empowerment initiatives solely because they do not have the resources to take up these opportunities. These are the most disempowered youth.

2.3.2 Lack of engagement

Feelings and experiences of powerlessness “lead to a lack of self-worth, which is about self-blame, indifference towards and alienation from the environment, besides the inability to act for oneself and growing dependence on social services and specialists to solve problems in one’s life” (Sadan, 1997). Nation-states must prioritise resolutions that pertain to youth interests, therefore, lack of engagement is one of the big difficulties of youth empowerment (Mhlongo, 2016; OECD, 2021). The Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund (DGTTF), issued by the UNDP (2013), is a great initiative to support innovative and meaningful projects that promote youth participation in public policy-making structures and leadership at a community level. The assumption is that increased youth participation will open avenues for young people to promote social justice and become leaders and public office bearers in their respective countries. The UNDP received 37 funding applications of which 9 went to African countries, 8 were allocated to the Arab States, 8 to central and Eastern Europe, 5 went to Asia, and 7 to Latin America and the Caribbean. Youth exclusion was evident in several of the project countries as was proven by cross-cutting issues like gender and cultural marginalisation. These UNDP-funded projects prioritised projects like creating advocacy groups and national youth councils. The purpose is for young people to interact with government institutions to craft youth development plans that incorporate the need for information technology and the use of new media to influence public policy. As a result, initiatives like the youth parliament, model UN, and digital games on youth and local governance are on the roll-out, helping

the UNDP to increase its collection of lessons learnt for future implementation of youth empowerment initiatives.

Engagement is essential to the process of empowerment because it leads to entry for the marginalised, advancement and incorporation for the underprivileged, and ensures their commitment to uplift others (Kieffer, 1984; Zeldin *et al.*, 2008). The benefits of involving young people in national issues empower them on various levels and connect them with the larger social and political environment, which is vital for the country's foreign policy and international political economy (WEF, 2021). This means that empowerment is a process of change (Cornell Empowerment Group, 1989). A change that "enhances the possibilities for people to control their own lives" (Rappaport, 1987:119). Cochran (1986) highlights that "people understand their own needs far better than anyone else and as a result should have the power both to define and act upon them". McClelland (1975), in a similar view, said that "for people to take power, they need to gain information about themselves and their environment and be willing to identify and work with others for change". Engagement is the "interactive process through which people experience personal and social change, enabling them to take action to achieve influence over the organisations and institutions which affect their lives and the communities in which they live" (Whitmore, 1988:13).

2.3.3 Youth attitudes of low self-esteem

When young people lack resources to achieve their life aspirations, added to the lack of information about aid opportunities, they develop self-defeating attitudes toward inferiority. They become powerless. Powerlessness is "an objective phenomenon, where people with little or no political and economic power lack the means to gain greater control and resources in their lives" (Albee, 1981). Powerlessness at the individual level is about one's belief that their efforts will not help bring about change in shaping their life prospects (Kieffer, 1984). Lerner (1986) shows the categories of powerlessness, namely, surplus and real powerlessness. Economic inequities are due to unfair systems and people who influence the allocation of values in society. Surplus powerlessness is about a person's conviction and mental attitude that things will never change as far as economic growth and government performance. Thus, their life prospects and dreams are futile, in other words. This attitude and belief lead to people who show no interest in political processes

like voting and public meetings. And at worst, a lack of interest in looking for jobs and studying further. Asch (1986) makes a good point to show the impact of powerlessness by noting the following regarding people with disabilities:

People with disabilities have so internalised the general negative attitudes towards them because of their disabilities that they cannot believe that collective action can improve their lives. They have seen the problems as inherent in their medical conditions and have not been urged to join others to demand structural changes that would render the environment useful for them.
(p.13)

This sense of powerlessness accounts for young people who are despondent about the future and believe that nothing will improve their life prospects. A study conducted by McBride (2020) reveals that young people in South Korea are feeling increasingly pessimistic about the future due to the country's worsening economy. The cost of living has increased to the extent that the youth no longer believe that hard work alone leads to success. Young people have lost hope in South Korean leadership. It is worth noting that the negative attitude toward the value of work is not limited to South Korean youth, but is a global phenomenon across age groups (Purtill, 2020). Inequality is the main reason people lose confidence in honest work as a pathway to realise their life prospects. If this continues, it may breed a culture of various corruption practices as a means for people to survive.

2.4 The impact of youth empowerment initiatives

There remains confidence that youth empowerment programs can “impact their communities as they support students, increase access to opportunity, and remove barriers to education and achievement” (Pride Survey, 2019). The Pride Survey report highlights the need for multi-dimensional approaches to empowerment where healthy eating, physical activity, workforce training, violence and bullying prevention, and support for LGBTQ kids should be among the priority areas. The United States AID (USAID) and the U.S. African Development Foundation (USADF) collaborate in the implementation of youth empowerment including programmes like the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) whose objective is developing future African leaders who will promote economic,

democratic governance and energise civil society organisations. YALI components are the Regional Leadership Centers (RLCs), the Mandela Washington Fellowship (MWF) and the YALI Network which enable young people to connect with those in the United States for lessons on socio-economic programs. The RLCs have reached 24,000 youths between the ages of 18 to 35 years (Adkins, 2021). However, the RLCs select young people with already proven leadership in their profession. The MWF also targets youths who are already leaders in business and the community. The MWF has reached 5,100 youths in Africa and aims to include 700 more in 2022. The YALI network, however, is an open virtual platform that provides online courses to its members. The online courses have equipped over 700,000 online community members to start a business, promote human rights and have rewarded them with certificates. There are positive reports about the YALI alumni who create 2.8 jobs on average in East Africa and have impacted 300,000 more youths. The Borgen Project (2018) reports about Elijah Amoo Addo, a YALI alumni and a chef in Ghana who launched Food for All Africa (FFAA), the first community food bank in Ghana, helping the homeless and needy. Another highlight is Dr. Ajimegor Ikuenobe who launched the Lead Oak Foundation to distribute the nutrition formula he developed as a response to malnutrition in vulnerable Nigerian communities. The Microsoft youth empowerment programme implementation in Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal, and Tanzania showed improved numbers of youths who returned to school, became employable, or entered into entrepreneurship and self-employment (IYF, 2007). The aspect of socio-political competitiveness that is the focus of this study was highlighted by the Commonwealth (2021) to be in decline in the global youth development index. This suggests that young people are less interested in politics and governance, which could further isolate them and exacerbate their discouragement.

Figure 2 below shows the impact of YALI where alumni report on their increased decision-making, personal income, community engagement and community work due to YALI exposure.

After attending the YALI leadership training at a Regional Leadership Center (RLC), YALI alumni are surveyed to determine the impact that training has had on their personal and professional development.

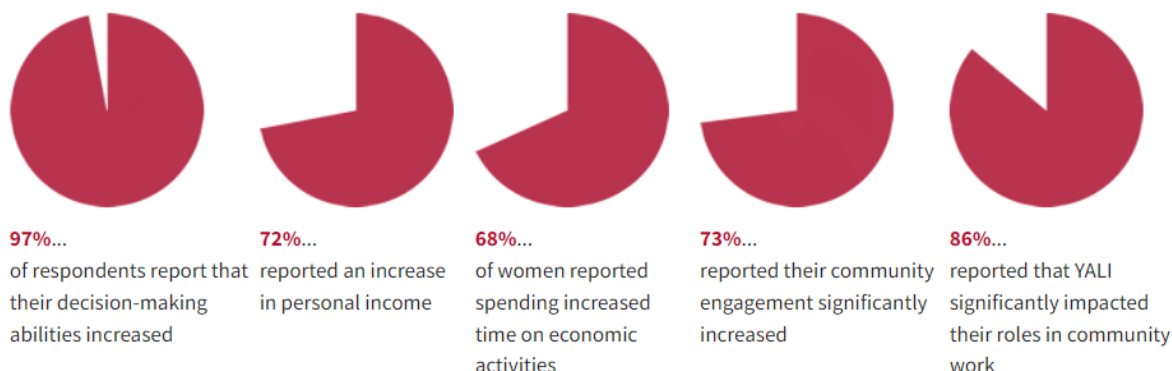


Figure 2.1: The YALI impact (Source: <https://www.usaid.gov/yali/impact>)

The list of YALI highlights shows the dominance of Nigerian youth as well as young people from Cameroon, Chad, Ghana, Rwanda, Liberia, Botswana, Uganda, Kenya, Zimbabwe and Tanzania. This is a worrying trend that implies that South African youths are not competitive enough to generate solutions that make an international impact. The YALI Southern Africa website only has two impact stories (https://yalisouthernafrica.melimu.com/page/stories_of_impact.php) which is not acceptable in light of the crucial information that reports on the impact of youth empowerment provide. This is a hindrance to the monitoring and evaluation of youth empowerment initiatives by those outside of the institutions that lead and implement empowerment projects. That there are only two impact stories for South Africa could falsely imply that South Africa is a sufficiently developed country to an extent that youth initiatives do not warrant being reported.

2.4.1 Youth empowerment aspiration is far from reality

Youth empowerment strategies from government and trans-national organisations affirm the need for youth inclusion in policy-making processes and to ensure that youths are the beneficiaries of development (Spasevski, 2021). However, in practice, these aspirations are far from reality. Unemployment is an age-old problem that the South African government has failed to solve. As far back as 2013, at a global level, there were 73.4 million young people who were searching for jobs, eager to work but unable to find employment (ILO, 2020a; 2020b). In recent times, despite many empowerment initiatives

and education being set among key instruments of youth development, there are still “1 in 5 youths not acquiring life skills through education” (UN, 2020:43). Due to this employment problem, many youths are less productive because they take jobs for which they are not qualified, for example, a law or IT graduate being a cab driver (UN, 2020). The continued trend of youth underemployment prevents young people from making the desired progress in society and their careers (Taiwo *et al.*, 2022), thereby perpetuating disempowerment. Education and employment remain the dominant challenges for young people in Southern Africa. When the government’s macro policies fail, non-government organisations are required to bridge the gap. The IYF (2021) has prepared over 22,000 youth in Tanzania and Mozambique for work readiness, life skills, and entrepreneurship through the Via Pathways programme. The IYF graduates’ absorption into the job market improved from 26 to 56%, with some reporting increased wages, permanent employment, self-confidence, and a belief in the future. This further confirms the significance of the youth empowerment programs that the IYF and similar organisations outside state institutions are doing. There are visible improvements that government youth empowerment programmes bring to the socio-economic state of youths (The Commonwealth, 2021; Abiodun, 2015; Taiwo & Tobias, 2022). However, the impact is inadequate because millions of youths still do not have access to empowerment opportunities.

The political aspects of youth empowerment become clear in the OECD’s (2020) report which presents the views of 151 youths from 72 countries and 100 youth organisations who feel that the government is not incorporating their views in government policy responses on matters as recent as the COVID-19 pandemic. This exclusion of youth voices in policy processes defeats the idea of having youth as agents of change in their communities.

The failure of decision makers to meaningfully engage young people and address the challenges they face has led to widespread disillusionment and disengagement among youth. Frustrated by structural barriers to their development and engagement, they are questioning and protesting the status quo and are increasingly turning away from traditional social development paths and platforms. More

importantly, they are creating alternative avenues to express themselves and engage in social change. Their enhanced connections and solidarity are leveraged by social media, and various new forms of activism are becoming mainstream. (UN, 2020:44)

Figure 3 below shows the rate of youth unemployed in education or training in the period from 2000 to 2018.

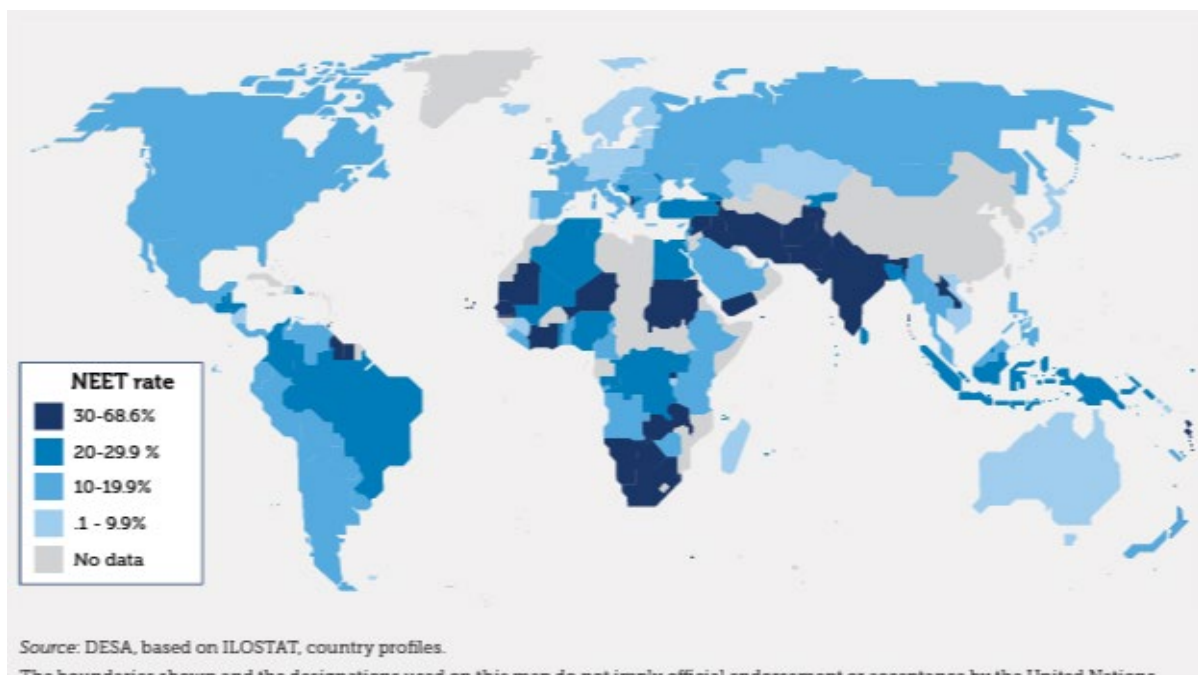


Figure 3.1: The rate of youth not employed in Education or Training in the period 2000-2018 (ILO, 2020b)

Unemployment, conflict and violence, climate change, poverty and vulnerability, lack of market-relevant skills among graduates, lack of entrepreneurial financing and digital transformation remain the global challenges for youth (Bentil *et al.*, 2021). Despite massive investments in educating youths, the question is what prevents education programmes from equipping young people with the necessary tools for them to take leadership in their lives.

2.5 Summary

This chapter has explained the theory of youth empowerment that Jennings *et al.* (2006) summarise in the following six dimensions, as creating “i) a welcoming and safe environment; ii) meaningful participation and engagement; iii) equitable power-sharing

between youth and adults; iv) engagement in critical reflection on interpersonal and socio-political processes; v) participation in socio-political processes to effect change; and vi) integrated individual- and community-level empowerment” (p. 41). Linking empowerment theory with the political economy method adds a critical, progressive dimension. Especially the internal element of political economy, in this, showing how the global youth empowerment structures perpetuate the disempowerment of youths (Ngai & Ngai, 2007). Disempowerment through empowerment occurs where national agencies and international agencies remain key drivers of initiatives, and local organisations make little impact because of a lack of funds and capacity to design sustainable programmes. Also, through the involvement of youths in global dialogue programmes that make commitments and resolutions that national governments do not implement. The IPE of youth empowerment “conveys both a psychological sense of personal control or influence and a concern with actual social influence, political power and legal rights” (Rappaport, 1987:121). This points to three levels of empowerment: at the personal level people have more control and influence over daily lives and community participation (Kieffer, 1984). Empowerment at a small group level includes involves the common experience of young people using political and economic opportunities to change material conditions (Kirmayer *et al.*, 2009). At a community level, empowerment is about how people collectively raise and use resources and implement strategies to increase their control in their neighbourhoods (Jonas & Vanclay, 2021). The empowered people do not depend on the government or watch as it does things for them, instead they use the government as a supporter and promoter of their projects.

This chapter aimed to present a suitable theoretical framework to analyse the challenges and prospects of youth empowerment in South Africa using the IPE lens. Empowerment theory has been studied in the literature concerning people’s empowerment as youth and gender empowerment. The theory clarifies that youth empowerment cannot be practical unless applied in collective solidarity in the public arena, as well as individual assertiveness in the private one. This would lead to useful social movements and youth organisations in creating the conditions for change and reducing the costs of individual action. This theory is, therefore, applicable to the South African context.

Continuing the theoretical argument in this study, Diraditsile (2021) expresses a similar concern about the difficulty of how many youth empowerment programmes there are in each country and the impact thereof. There is of Monitoring and evaluation reports of youth empowerment interventions are insufficiently documented and published by academics, governments and civil society actors involved in youth development. Therefore, it remains a challenge to measure the impact or analyse prospects for youth empowerment. The preliminary observation is that youth empowerment programmes do not achieve their intended purposes because political challenges do not complement empowerment initiatives. Therefore, religious organisations have also joined the endeavour to empower young people and improve their prosperity (Gukurume, 2019).

CHAPTER THREE: THE INTERNATIONAL YOUTH EMPOWERMENT STRUCTURE AND ITS INITIATIVES

3.1 Introduction

It is necessary to explain how youth diplomacy finds expression in each part of empowerment and to determine the level of competitiveness of South African youth in this regard. The IPE tools contextualise analysis of youth empowerment challenges in South Africa and show that empowerment initiatives in South Africa are a disintegrated effort of individual organisations lacking articulation. Most initiatives are at an individual level and not community-based. This chapter presents an analysis of the international youth empowerment architecture, from the international to local levels. The chapter shows that initiatives set up by political institutions are the strongest in international youth empowerment, while corporates have initiatives driven through Corporate Social Investment (CSI) initiatives. These CSI initiatives are not coordinated at a national level or through a national youth development agency to quantify the impact of the investment.

3.2 International institutions of youth empowerment

There are various international youth foundations at a global, regional and national levels that are state-led or non-governmental. Organisations like the International Youth Foundation (IYF, 2020) are leading non-government contributors in the youth empowerment sector. The IYF's primary mandate of youth empowerment, involving about 600 organisations from all across the world, has benefited over 250,000 young people in the past 15 years through a programme called A passport to success (IYF, 2021). Interestingly, the IYF initiatives in South Africa are implemented through collaboration with the government and industries to implement skills development among the youth (<https://iyfglobal.org/country/south-africa>). Some of the IYF interventions in South Africa target youths in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges.

The UN is an organisation founded in 1945 after the Second World War, committed to keeping international peace and security and developing friendly relations among nations (Weiss, 2015). The UN has 193 sovereign member states (<https://www.worlddata.info/alliances/un-united-nations.php>). Within the UN system,

there is a focal point on youth to purposefully build awareness of the global situation of young people through the United Nations Youth Associations (UNYAs) of youth-led volunteer organisations (The UNYAs enable young people to learn about the work that is done by the UN and to lend a voice in decision-making processes. Within the UNYA network, there are organisations such as City Kids, UN scouts and the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA). The UN youth initiatives help young people contribute to human rights, peace and security, sustainable development and informing the UN secretary-general about issues regarding young people's policy interests. WFUNA as a global non-governmental, non-profit membership finds expression in South Africa through the United Nations Association of South Africa (UNASA) (<https://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/what-we-do/what-can-you-do/unya.html>). However, the UNASA chapters are based in tertiary institutions and have little visibility among youth in communities.

The Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP), established in 1973 and representing some 56 member states of the British Empire, has a youth council established in 2013 that reaches about 1.4 billion young people in the world (The Commonwealth, 2021). The CYP promotes the professionalisation of youth work through education and training and support for youth worker associations. The first CYP conference in South Africa was held in 2013 and the second in 2016. The fact that the CYP focuses on professionalising youth work indicates that millions of unemployed and unskilled youth are excluded. Like the UNYSAs, the CYP tends to be a forum for conversation at higher diplomatic levels and national seminars with little visibility for young people in South African communities.

When analysing the international architecture for youth empowerment, one realises that prominent organisations are those linked to dominant Western powers and international institutions. Moving from there, further youth empowerment efforts take place through bilateral agreements between African countries or the African Union (AU).

3.3 The African Union (AU)

The AU is a continental body comprising 55 sovereign member states that make up the countries of the African continent. The mandate of the AU Youth Division is to mobilise young people for skills development, knowledge sharing and innovation to promote

continental integration and strengthen Africa's position in the globalised world. The AU Youth Division manages the AU's youth agenda. The division is also responsible for developing policies and legal frameworks for young people. Examples include the African Youth Charter, African Youth Decade Action Plan (2009-2018), the AU Youth Volunteers Corps (AU-YVC) and building partnerships for resource mobilisation. The African Youth Charter is an outstanding institution that other African countries should embrace. However, just like the other international institutions already discussed (AU, 2006), the AU youth development initiatives are not visible except as strategic guidelines for youth NGOs to recite. In other words, there is little to no impact for young people to acknowledge AU youth empowerment in South African communities.

3.4 The Southern Africa Development Community (SADC)

The Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) is a group of 16 countries founded on 17 August 1992 (SADC, 1993). The Southern Africa Youth Forum (SAYoF-SADC) was established on 9 April 2014 with a mandate to mainstream youth issues in policy and economic partnership agreements. As a collective of youth organisations, the forum promises to provide a platform for youth to participate in regional processes. SAYoF-SADC sits in various UN and AU settings related to democracy, transitional peace and justice, climate change, leadership and governance. The forum is a good initiative for youths to engage in high-level political discussions. The second SADC Youth Forum committee leadership has South African youths as members, which is a positive indicator and opportunity to influence decision-making structures (SAYoF, 2020:12). There are also other South African youths involved in the SADC Youth Parliament, which SAYoF engages with closely (SAYoF, 2020).

The preceding sections highlight the strategic and political role that youth empowerment has at the global and continental levels. The same pattern repeats itself at the regional level, which makes quantifying the gains and impact of youth empowerment initiatives difficult and almost impossible without one having close contact with the people inside these organisations. Turning to the national level of analysis, South Africa is the case in point.

3.5 South African youth empowerment institutions

To empower the youth, the South African government created a directorate, the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), through the promulgation of the National Youth Development Agency Act 54 of 2008. This act merged the old youth development vehicles, the National Youth Commission and the Umsobomvu Youth Fund. This new agency aims to:

Initiate, design, coordinate, evaluate and monitor all programs working to integrate young people into the economy and society in general. Promote a uniform approach by all organs of state, private sector, and NGOs to youth development. Establish annual national priority programs for youth development. Promote the interest of the youth, particularly young people with disabilities. And guide efforts and facilitate economic participation and empowerment, and the achievement of excellence in education and training.
(NYDA, 2020:9)

The NYDA (2021) reports that partnerships have been established with six SETAs and two technology companies. Between 2017 and 2021 the NYDA has supported 4,053 enterprises, provided non-financial support to 88,640 enterprises, sustained 18,812 jobs through enterprise support to youth and supported 295,900 young people with skills to enter the job market (NYDA, 2021). The youth empowerment programme of the NYDA is however not very integrated and since 2017 it has failed to lobby any organisation to adopt the National Youth Service (NYS) while 87,577 youths have enrolled or volunteered in the service (NYDA, 2021). It is notable from analysing this report that the NYDA has neither produced progress reports on the impact of programme evaluations and documents for discussions on youth development in the country, nor a status outlook on youth between 2017 and 2020. This gap in reporting indicates the poor monitoring of empowerment outcomes. Although the NYDA has offices at the local level or within government institutions (municipal and provincial government youth directorates), the work of the NYDA continues to be invisible to ordinary young people in the community. It implies that the capacity of the NYDA for lobbying, advocacy, monitoring and coordination among youth at the local level is limited.

In South Africa, the Youth Employment Service (YES) has been one of the successful joint initiatives by the private sector and government making huge progress towards assisting South Africa's youth to gain work experience through employment placement (Gerber, 2018). The YES initiative has become an important component of companies' compliance with the Broad-Based Black Economic Employment (B-BBEE) scores (Gerber, 2018). Young people from disadvantaged rural communities, including unemployed graduates, were placed in internship programmes in the hospitality and tourism sector in several countries around the world (Fields, 2000). The YES programme seems to be a much-needed intervention for poverty alleviation amid high unemployment in the youth cohort. Poverty is thus much more than a lack of access to resources to meet basic needs, it is also a symptom of power inequalities. In this kind of relationship, the powerful have the freedom to engage with or exclude (ANA, 2018). The YES initiative signifies both the empowerment and development aspect of the youth. It further ensures that this youth is equipped with skills that will positively offset their careers by incorporating technological equipment to familiarise youth with the demands of the fourth industrial revolution (ANA, 2018). The YES initiative creates 2,000 to 3,000 youth jobs per month and has created over 95,048 jobs to date (Tabane, 2022).

Another youth development initiative is called The South African Youth Development Organisation (SAYDO). According to their website, this organisation was created by the government to specifically focus on the empowerment of youth from rural areas.

The South African Youth Development Organisation was created by the South African government to unlock the potential of youth, particularly those from rural areas. SAYDO focuses on five primary areas namely, arts, environment, sports, health, and education for school-going learners, educators, and their schools. Its activities include online programs and newsletters for environmental, health and wellness, helping schools to draft and restructure the school environment. It works with international youth organisations and social development centres to promote the planting of plants and trees, preserving and reintroducing the traditional arts of South Africa. (www.saydo.co.za)

The South African Youth Council (SAYC) is “a voluntary civil society youth council that represents the interests and aspirations of its various affiliated organisations” (National Youth Policy, 2020:9).

Its purpose is to mobilise youth organisations to ensure their participation in the broader societal affairs of the country. Its affiliates are drawn from political youth organisations and issue-based organisations. Its diverse membership gives it a competitive advantage in serving as the voice of the youth and unifying divergent views into a common agenda for youth development. (National Youth Policy, 2020:9)

The Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) intends to prioritise skills development in different economic sectors, especially skills that are in high demand. Skills development happens through learnerships, internships, unit-based skills programmes and apprenticeships. As of March 2011, there are 21 SETAs (www.serviceseta.org.za).

The Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) also has a youth diplomacy branch. This paper aims to look at and assess how this branch looks at information, what its purpose and goals are, how youth know of its existence and how it contributes to the youth's position in South Africa and across the globe. There has been significant economic growth in Africa in the last few decades, even with prevailing civil wars and public sector corruption that leads to extreme poverty (The World Bank Group, 2014). Some of the brightest minds in Africa are leaving to take up job opportunities in other parts of the world and as a result, Africa cannot keep innovators and cutting-edge inventions that shape the path of global economies.

The United Nations has a programme called Model United Nations Clubs, which is an instrument to protect and support young people to raise and make their voices heard in policy circles. Over 1.2 million learners from schools of different backgrounds have participated in the South African Model United Nations (SAMUN), debating issues related to human rights and international relations (<https://educationafrica.org/current-project/the-education-africa-model-united-nations>). This youth leadership initiative is imperative because it introduces young people to the workings of a prestigious global institution like the UN. The commendable thing about the Model UN initiative is that it

attracts participants from high schools of varying backgrounds instead of youths from universities only. It would be encouraging and progressive to see the Model UN initiative attract youth who are out of school and have never had a chance to go to a university or college.

3.6 Summary

This chapter has presented the structure of youth empowerment, starting from the global level to the local context in South Africa. Prominent youth empowerment initiatives that are led and funded by businesses and the government were highlighted. The NGO sector is also dominated by international donor and bilateral empowerment initiatives. While local NGOs connect local youths with industry and government initiatives, they play a small role in leading empowerment initiatives that have a global reach. In other words, South Africa's NGO sector is a beneficiary of inward youth empowerment initiatives, instead of being a funder and driver of outward youth empowerment initiatives that benefit young people in other countries. Another positive aspect is that South Africa hosts regional institutions like the SADC and the AU where young people participate and build their capacity in diplomacy and international political leadership. On the negative side, these UN, AU and SADC initiatives take place or are hosted in cities out of reach of youth in rural communities and townships. This weakness is, however, also an opportunity to strengthen the professionalisation of youth work and build more networks of organisations that can share resources and information that enhances the entry of marginalised youth into global leadership.

The type of youth empowerment initiatives covered in this chapter is predominantly at an individual level, such as job opportunities and participation in global or bilateral networks that build leadership skills. The researcher has not found any reports about initiatives that focus on building entrepreneurship and job creation programmes. This aspect of entrepreneurship and job creation is important to build the economic competitiveness of South African youths in order to enter global trade. The current strong point of the political and leadership competitiveness of South African youth lies in existing structures. However, that competitiveness seems to be more about presence and representation because no evidence suggests that South African organisations led by young people have caused significant policy shifts or contributions internationally. There are also some

commendable achievements at an individual level, such as Karabo Mokgonyana who is a female raised in rural villages who graduated from a notable university (University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg) who is making a positive impact in youth diplomacy (<https://www.peaceau.org/en/article/meet-the-african-youth-ambassadors-for-peace>).

This case of Karabo Mokgonyana shows that there is potential to empower young people who can make an international impact.

Youth empowerment organisations, as discussed in this chapter, are a positive indication of young people trying to participate in decision-making processes and becoming leaders to influence policymakers on the continental and global levels. What is clear is that the organisations must stay open to youth that are active in politics and promote that these kinds of organisations exist. The youth at universities and colleges also have an advantage to access networks for international competitiveness because of the reality that youths outside universities have fewer networks for high-level engagements. It is worth noting that youth empowerment organisations serve as a vital pathway to power and careers for individual participants, especially those in leadership. Young people get to improve their profile by participating in forums like Model UN activities and SAYoF-SADC. The advantages of youth empowerment programmes include improved social skills, informed decision-making and positive lifestyles, increased academic achievement, increased self-esteem, increased self-efficiency, knowing and valuing one's culture, enhancing patriotism and valuing others. This chapter has not found any evidence of youth empowerment at a collective (community) level where an international organisation or agency is hosted in townships on a long-term basis to show what the outcome of such intervention would be.

The international youth empowerment architecture starts globally with the UN, followed by non-state international youth development organisations, then the AU (continental), followed by regional organisations. Lastly, the organisations at the national level are more important and make a better impact compared to the regional and continental levels. At that, organisations attached to the government (UN, SAYoF, NYDA) are more significant about policy setting albeit less accessible. Non-state organisations are more passionate and engaging better with the people but lack funding.

CHAPTER FOUR: PROSPECTS FOR YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AND IPE COMPETITIVENESS IN SOUTH AFRICA

4.1 Introduction

It is necessary to explain how youth diplomacy finds expression in empowerment and to determine the level of competitiveness of South African youths in this regard. The chapter shows the state of youth empowerment and the weaknesses thereof. The core focus is on youth empowerment, which is essential to suggest options to improve empowerment initiatives and increase youth competitiveness in the global space. To analyse prospects for youth empowerment and IPE competitiveness, it is important to make a situational analysis based on the.

4.2 Situational analysis of youth empowerment challenges in South Africa

The “government needs to be committed to advance youth development and make extensive consultations with diverse stakeholders, including the youth, to give input on how young people can be developed to contribute to important issues that affect their lives. It is evidence that policies and programmes designed after consultation with users are more likely to be effective” (Mampane, 2019:36). This consultation is mostly carried out by both the private and public stakeholders among the existing youth empowerment institutions. The consultation is instrumental in exploring solutions that impede youth empowerment in South Africa.

4.2.1 Unemployment and joblessness

Youth unemployment in South Africa remains high even though there has been economic growth, which implies a disregard for investments in job opportunities. This experience of unemployment coincides with the international trends that show a “scarred generation of young workers with a dangerous mix of high unemployment, increased inactivity, precarious work in developed countries, and high working poverty in the developing world” (ILO, 2020b). There exists a general lack of entrepreneurship and support for small businesses. More worrying, the quality of education that African youths are receiving is tilted toward employment and not creativity. Unemployment is, therefore, the primary challenge and barrier to young people playing a crucial role in the economy and decision-

making processes (National Youth Policy, 2015). Unemployment is also a cause of inequality in society. This inequality makes people submissive and tolerant of maladministration and poor governance, instead of calling for accountability. If unemployment continues unresolved, the outcome will be an increased rate of criminality, a poor-performing economy, extreme poverty and potential political instability (National Youth Policy, 2015). The common sight of young people in South Africa, including the graduates who are out of work, sitting on street corners without any productive activity is a concern – something that requires a speedy resolution.

4.2.2 High drop-out rate and inadequate skills development

The increase in quality education that meets the demand for market-related skills among South African youth will lead to an increased employment rate and entrepreneurship among the youth. Weak human capital is a result of the inferior quality of education at all levels of the system (Wolhuter, 2020; Amnesty International, 2020). On the other hand, some argue that South Africa's unemployment is not a result of inferior education levels (ILO, 2020a), but instead caused by the preference of the private sector to employ foreign nationals instead of South African citizens. This is because foreign nationals are willing to take lower wages and have poor working conditions. However, there is merit to the claim that the South African education system is inferior because of the poor literacy and numerical competency among primary school learners. The implication is that those not equipped with numeracy and literacy will not stand a good chance of competing in the global economy and new technological advances of the 21st century. The literacy levels of South African learners are below the international average (Amnesty International, 2020; Mlachila & Moeletsi, 2019). For example, the lower pass rates for mathematics and physical science in Grade 12 are a true testimony to the low average (National Youth Policy, 2015). Poor school results lead to weak participation at other school levels. As a result, most learners do not complete their high school education and do not advance to higher education (National Youth Policy, 2015). Young people who fail to complete school do not even bother to take adult-based education training that the South African government provides.

The aspect of increased youth participation rates in Further Education and Training (FET) institutions remains inadequate in that the skills output for the economic market is not

compatible with what employers want. Branson (2018b:10) notes that “on an average few of those who leave the schooling system enrol in technical vocational education and training (TVET)”. Hence, there are few useful creative skills for building the economy and international competitiveness.

Poor throughput in higher education affects the supply of high-level, skilled graduates. Access to post-school education and training is limited for school leavers, and those who do access this opportunity are often not sufficiently prepared for the workplace. The essential to finding ways to help most school leavers who do not qualify for direct entry into higher education or employment to gain skills. (National Youth Policy, 2015:11)

4.2.3 Low skills levels

South Africa is said to produce graduates who have not focused on academic streams that are scarce in the market. More young people continue to enrol for qualifications that do not equip them for profitable entrepreneurship or quick absorption into the market. This suggests that organisations like the NYDA and state departments responsible for education, science and technology have not engaged young people to clarify market demands. Such engagements would enlighten young people to pursue career paths that are less taken, paths that the market demands, and careers that would reduce the need to import qualified people from foreign nations. For example, South Africa needs nurses and medical doctors, but few young people are exploring various fields of medical science (ECONEX, 2015; Cleary, 2020). South Africa is a low-skilled country, and young people are not aware of this reality. The number of matriculants has doubled from over 3 million in 1994 to over 11 million in 2016, yet the number of youths completing tertiary education has dropped from 2016 to 2011 (StatsSA, 2016). The majority of young people drop out of the educational system prematurely, leaving the country with little or no professional or technical skills, therefore, making them effectively unemployed and with no entrepreneurial skills to run small or medium size businesses (National Youth Policy, 2015). It is important to note here that an estimated 60% of unemployed youth in South Africa, aged between 18 to 35 years, have never worked because of a lack of skills or work experience despite their level of education (StatsSA, 2021). There are also concerns among respondents about them hearing that some young people will never get to find a

job in their lifetime (Respondents, A, D, C). The NYDA has two partnerships with technological companies which is also a concern because there is a need to expose more young people to careers relevant to the market. Then there is an emphasis on STEM subjects, yet poor children have no access to early training in robotics or similar programs. The social inequalities, therefore, contribute to the problem of skills development. The reality is that those who are from well-off households stand a better chance of a winning start in the future. There is also a need for a national skills revolution dialogue, where academics, entrepreneurs and political leaders inform the youth about South Africa's state of skills and future economic trajectory. From these dialogues the youth can better understand what skills they need to acquire for global economic relevance.

4.2.4 Insufficient framework for youth work

Ineffective youth intervention strategies and policies by government institutions and NGOs have put the South African youth in the background of decision-making, hence the increasing demand by young people for a chance at leadership (Chamisa & Shava, 2016; Meterlerkamp, 2022). A common adage in society is that the youth are the future, but African leaders underestimate the truth in the statement. This is because of a lack of proper planning and implementation of an integrated youth empowerment framework. The NYDA concedes in its 2021 annual report that there is a "lack of integrated monitoring and evaluation impact on youth sector progress" (NYDA, 2021:19). The NYDA (2021:40) has not done youth impact studies to evaluate the effectiveness of empowerment programmes since 2017. This lack of monitoring further contributes to poor integrated planning for youth empowerment so that both private businesses and public institutions can be accountable for its implementation. A binding plan that the NYDA can monitor is required. The NYDA as a legislated institution for monitoring the impact on the youth sector cannot say what the outcomes of private businesses' youth empowerment initiatives are. The NYDA seems to only account for projects that are implemented in collaboration with state departments and the office of the presidency – projects like the Tshepo 1Million. It is for this reason that there is a need to enhance youth empowerment frameworks in a more meaningful way.

Youth work is about challenging narratives that maintain and see young people as obstacles to national progress thus side-lining youth voices in decision-making

processes. Youth work, therefore, requires building youth networks and meeting young people where they are – in clubs, organisations and on the streets, mobilising them to effect social change (de St Croix, 2018). For instance, according to the National Youth Policy (2015):

South Africa started professionalising youth work in the late 1980s. The Youth Practitioners Advocacy Group, established in 1994, which became the South African Youth Workers Association in 2008, produced the Hunter Rest Declaration and a draft youth-work policy which was presented to the inter-ministerial committee on youth risk. The South Africa Youth Workers Association consulted and collaborated with the professional Development of Youth Worker Consortium to facilitate the professionalism process. (p.12)

In this regard, therefore, youth work was included in the SANYP. But still today, the impact of youth work is not visible in terms of youth empowerment outcomes in South Africa, and neither is the concept of youth work better known in communities compared to the well-known community development workers (CDW). To properly address the inadequacy of youth work in South Africa, there is a need for suitable formalisation through a database of youth workers, thematic areas that need attention, a code of ethics, and higher education training qualifications for the profession (RSA, 2020). Youth work has improved the educational achievement and self-esteem of learners in South Africa (Chauke, 2019). As other countries embraced the university qualification of youth work, in South Africa, UNISA (University of South Africa) seem to be the only higher learning institution presenting the course (Rahlaga, 2012).

The SANYP report indicates that the health challenges in South Africa are more than purely medical in nature and this stems from the risky behaviour of young men and women. The National Youth Policy (2015) clarifies that:

...unhealthy lifestyles also play a significant role in ill health. More so, the advent of chronic diseases that are associated with an unhealthy lifestyle is uncommon in young people, many of the behaviours that

place individuals at increased risk of developing these conditions in later life are adopted during adolescence. (p.14)

The greatest challenge that young South Africans face is the issue of sex and reproductive health. The Medical Research Council and the Departments of Health and Education conducted a study among grade 8 to 11 learners where 36% of learners have had sex and 12% started having sex under the age of 14 years. Among learners that have had sex, 46% had two or more sexual partners in their lifetime, and 18% are pregnant or had made someone pregnant. One out of seven learners reported having received HIV/AIDS education at school (National Youth Policy, 2015:15). One of the problems with teenage pregnancy is that most girls have to drop out of school or endure schooling under the pressure of raising a child. Recently, teenage pregnancy has been prevalent among girls as young as 14 years (Reliefweb, 2021; Panday *et al.*, 2009). This implies statutory rape as the legal age for having sex is 16 years, leaving young girls vulnerable at the hands of older men. Sathiparsad and Taylor (2011) claim that teenage pregnancy can also be a result of poverty where girls have sex in return for money or the simple youthful carelessness of unprotected sex. However, the WHO (2020) reports that it is not only having careless unprotected sex but also the bane of patriarchal abuses in society which is a global plight of young girls. This is not a phenomenon limited to South Africa alone.

Teenage pregnancy is also a health problem where young girls fear using public clinics or lack the means to access quality health facilities (Musakwa *et al.*, 2021). This has led to the deaths of many childbearing mothers, illegal abortions and high HIV prevalence. The level of drug use is also high among young people, which contributes to violent behaviour and loss of lives due to car accidents. Drug use leads to young people also defaulting on their Tuberculosis and HIV treatments. According to the National Youth Policy (2015:15), “an estimated 13% of the learners have smoked dagga, 12% used inhalants, 5% consumed cocaine, 6% do take crystal meth and 5% have used Mandrax”. Tuberculosis accounted for 14% of deaths among the age group ranging from 15 to 35 years in 2013, HIV/AIDS accounted for 10%, other viral diseases accounted for 6%, influenza and pneumonia accounted for 5%, certain disorders involving the immune mechanism accounted for 3%, and intestinal infectious diseases accounted for 3%. All

these diseases contributed to 40% of all deaths occurring among youth in South Africa in 2013 (National Youth Policy, 2015:15).

4.2.5 Lack of access to sporting and cultural opportunities

One trend in South African townships is the absence of sporting codes other than soccer and netball (Bogopa, 2001). There is little government and business support for athletics and sporting activities that can serve as a career to secure a livelihood for talented youths in the townships (Alegi, 2007; Mefi & Asoba, 2020; Dodo *et al.*, 2020). The availability of different sporting codes would help to increase the participation of black youth in track and field athletic competitions, as well as contribute to decreasing deviant behaviour as more youth engage in sports. Unfortunately, public sector corruption is among the reasons for the lack of youth empowerment in sports and culture (Rogerson, 2020). To the government's credit though, there are sports centres that the government built in townships, but the lack of maintenance by the government and lack of care by communities has led to the destruction of the infrastructure (Shackleton & Njwaxu, 2021). It is not surprising that there is a culture of negligence related to public goods, therefore, meaningful youth engagement and regular participation in sports and cultural activities can create healthy, active citizens, inspire a sense of national pride and contribute to social and economic transformation (Burnett, 2021). The lack of sport among township youth does not bode well for the welfare of the country. Recently, the South African Olympics team came under criticism for being lily-white (Mphahlele, 2021) – yet black youth do not invest their time in various sporting codes to enable a diverse national team. Both the government and the private sector ought to invest in sports and culture because there is a network of professional careers and informal business support connected to sports.

The potential to contribute to the economic growth in South Africa through sport and culture. The Department of Arts and Culture and the Department of Science and Technology can play a greater role in creating employment over the next five years. The Department of Sport and Recreation should focus on mass participation and target the needs of the youth, particularly in education and skills

development, creating employment opportunities and promoting health throughout the country. (National Youth Policy, 2015:15)

4.3 The core strategic areas for youth empowerment in South Africa

The NYDA is an important instrument of the government for youth empowerment. A vibrant and effective NYDA would equate to operationalising Article 12 of the African Youth Charter. This article calls on world nations to implement comprehensive national youth policies (AU, 2006). The principles outlined in Article 12 state the following:

“The policy shall be cross-sectoral considering the inter-relatedness of the challenges facing young people; the development of a national youth policy shall be informed by extensive consultation with young people and cater for their participation in decision-making at all levels of governance in issues concerning youth and society as a whole; a youth perspective shall be integrated and mainstreamed into all planning and decision-making as well as programme development. The appointment of youth focal points in government structures shall enable this process; mechanisms to address these youth challenges shall be framed within the national development framework of the country; the policy shall provide guidelines on the definition of youth adopted and specify subgroups that shall be targeted for development; the policy shall advocate equal opportunities for young men and women; a baseline evaluation or situation analysis shall inform the policy on the priority issues for youth development; the policy shall be adopted by the parliament and enacted into law; a national youth coordinating mechanism shall be set up and shall provide a platform as well as serves as a link agent for youth organisations to participation in youth policy development as well as the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of related programmes; national programmes of action shall be developed that are time bound and that are connected to an implementation and evaluation strategy for which indicators shall be outlined; and such a programme of actions shall be accompanied by

adequate and sustained budgetary allocation (AU, 2006:article 12 [a-i]).

South Africa is making progress in line with continental standards because the national youth policy (SANYP) is the guideline for integrated youth empowerment. There is broad consultation with the youth through formal parliamentary policy-making processes. What is needed is a practical youth empowerment program, not political rhetoric that have no measurable timelines. And where timelines exist, there is a need for accountability for institutions and individuals who do not deliver as expected. Since the end of apartheid in South Africa, the country is still drafting policies that will bring about equality and better opportunities for all South Africans. For instance, the SANYP has recognised the importance of a large, informed and practical shift to developing new strategies that will help to meet the major needs, challenges and opportunities facing the youth. These strategies will help to operationalise and achieve the youth empowerment vision as set out in the NYP If they can only be implemented, measured and improved and corruption can be overcome.

4.3.1 The South African National Youth Policy (SANYP)

Chapter Two of this dissertation concluded by stating the six dimensions of empowerment. Creating a welcoming and safe environment for meaningful participation and engagement of the youth are some of the dimensions. The SANYP is a legislative institution that attempts to foster the youth as equal power-sharing actors in the development of solutions for the socio-economic challenges that South Africa is confronted with. The SANYP makes a declaration of belief that youth can reduce unemployment, but for this to be true, it requires a move away from passive citizenry towards social and economic inclusion (RSA, 2021). This policy statement resonates with the other dimension of youth empowerment, namely, engagement in critical reflection on interpersonal and socio-political processes. This means the youth should take responsibility for their own development integrated with their community aspirations. This integrated approach to youth empowerment considers the inequality, corruption, violence and other injustices in South African society. It is essential for young South Africans to “demonstrate the motivation to work for broad-based positive changes in the community, reflect the community they will work in, and have a connection to the neighbourhood”

(Pearrow, 2008:514). At first glance, the SANYP is laden with empowerment theory and correctly touches on the key challenges that young people face. But the challenge is with regard to the actual implementation of the plans, noting that the first SANYP covered the period of 2009 to 2014 and the second SANYP covered 2015 to 2020. Pearrow (2008:15) criticises the SANYP for not doing enough to enhance the potential of young people by “fully engaging youths in the empowerment process, the environment must be safe, supportive, fun, caring and challenging, and the youths must have a sense of ownership”. Having a sense of ownership is pivotal for the youth in South Africa, where the government is increasingly a basic services provider and carries the expectation to solve unemployment challenges for the public. It makes sense that the public, including the youth, easily perceives the government to be the owner of empowerment initiatives and responsible for community development in general. Effective and efficient youth empowerment in South Africa requires a different culture of innovation and courageous leadership – a radical mindset shift among youth in a way. This is possible by creating “a social space in which young people have the freedom to be themselves, express their creativity, voice their opinions in decision-making processes, try out new skills and roles, rise to challenges and have fun in the process” (Jennings *et al.*, 2006:41). This approach will help to reverse the marginalisation syndrome of the young people in South Africa. South Africa and the world at large are suffering from a lack of job opportunities for the youth.

Despite the global economic challenges that may affect the South African economy, the youth policy notes that young people are important change agents in a democratic South African dispensation (National Youth Policy Document, 2020). The vision of the SANYP is enshrined in the National Youth Development Policy Framework (NYDPF) (2002), which states that:

...integrated, holistic and sustainable youth development, conscious of the historical imbalances and current realities, to build a non-sexist, non-racist and democratic South Africa in which young people and their organisation not only enjoy and contribute to the full potential in the social, economic and political spheres of life but also recognise and develop their responsibilities to build a better life for all. (p.28)

However, the youth empowerment approach in South Africa is not integrated and coordinated among public, NGO and corporate efforts. The idea of a better life for all is a vision of the governing party, which has led to widespread dissatisfaction as public institutions fail to produce effective policy solutions amid public sector corruption (Kroth *et al.*, 2016). At a close reading, one sees that the SANYP is a general reference to youth initiative across various sectors to enhance the capability of youths in the economy and civic space. But the SANYP has to be broken down to specific programmes that NGOs drive and within which individual youths can feel they belong. However, this study argues that the SANYP is not communicated sufficiently to the youth community in South Africa. Neither is there monitoring of youth activities to understand how they translate or achieve the objectives of the SANYP.

Young people in South Africa complain about the lack of support from government institutions that are created to promote entrepreneurship and support youth-led NGOs (Respondent, D). Their concerns about having to be politically connected to benefit from youth empowerment initiatives are common, as public opinion holds (Enaifoghe & Dlamini, 2021). A recent example is Desmond Tutu's granddaughter who confessed to contacting senior politicians asking for an R1 million scholarship to study in New York (Naidoo, 2021). It is unheard of in South Africa for any ordinary person to contact a politician and eventually secure a million Rand fund unless that person is a close family ally, from a family lineage with roots in the governing party, or has business relations with the government (Blackman & Dall, 2021; Chabalala, 2022; Nicolson, 2022; Mukwedeya, 2016). This case shows that not only is inequality rife in society but also public institutions advance such inequalities. Hence, elements of cronyism and other forms of favoritism in the allocation of resources, barring corrupt dealings either in the public or private sector, will undermine the youth empowerment policy in South Africa. It proves to be pleasantries that impress the electorate and international youth empowerment partners. "This policy emphasises the need for various youth development efforts and interventions that holistically respond to all aspects or spheres of young people's lives." (National Youth Policy Document, 2015)

The SANYP echoes these sentiments and is aligned with the global agenda of the UN which acknowledges the empowerment of young people as people who have a claim to

human rights and entitled to participate in decision making processes as social actors in their community's development (Theyw et al., 2020). That the youth have a right to participate in decisions that affect them is now a globally embraced belief. The SANYP cascades from the broad global agenda to integrate the continental preamble of the African Union Constitutive Act (AUCA) of 2000 and the African Union Commission (AUC) strategic plan of 2004-2007 that underpinned the significance of youth development and empowerment in the community. The AU strategic plan of 2004-2007 makes what seems to be political rhetoric that is repeated on various regional, national, and international platforms about having to equip the youth through frameworks for cooperation at a continental level. This includes creating opportunities for youth volunteering in professional programmes and scholarships or exchange programs (AU, 2004)

According to the African Youth Charter, youth participation and empowerment is about every young person participating in all spheres of the polity; and state parties shall:

...guarantee the participation of youth in parliament and other decision-making bodies in accordance with the prescribed laws; facilitate the creation or strengthening of platforms for youth participation in decision-making at local, national, regional, and continental levels of governance; ensure equal access to young men and young women to participate in decision-making and in fulfilling civic duties; give priority to policies and programs including youth advocacy and peer-to-peer programs for marginalised youth, such as out-of-school and out-of-work youth to offer them the opportunity and motivation to re-integrate into mainstream society; provide access to information such that young people become aware of their rights and of opportunities to participate in decision-making and civic life; institute measures to professionalise youth work and introduce relevant training programs in higher education and other such training institutions; provide technical and financial support to build the institutional capacity of youth organisations; institute policy and programs of youth voluntarism at local, national, regional and international levels as an important form of youth participation and as

a means of peer-to-peer training; provide access to information and services that will empower youth to become aware of their rights and responsibilities, include youth representatives as part of delegations to ordinary sessions and other relevant meetings to broaden channels of communication and enhance the discussion of youth related issues. (AU, 2006, Article 11)

By guaranteeing the participation of youth in parliament and other decision-making bodies, South Africa is making progress because young people are emerging in local government councils, provincial legislatures, and the national parliament. The political space is open to young people. Also, young people are leading some influential NGOs on policy issues and are mobilising public support on petitions. There are also efforts to ensure equal access for young men and young women to participate in decision-making. Youth advocacy and peer-to-peer programmes for marginalised youth are a challenge in the youth development sector. Organisations that are not linked to the government struggle for resources and access to platforms for decision-making. The NYDA as a leading agency has also failed to establish peer-to-peer platforms or even monitor the impact of interventions that private companies carry out in the country. The South African National Youth Policy is developed to promote mainstream youth issues in society and to facilitate youth development programmes across all the various sectors of the state (National Youth Policy, 2020). Both the private and the government sectors of the state are entitled to help young men and women to develop skills that will enable them to gain decent job opportunities or become entrepreneurs (Abisuga-Oyekunle & Fillis, 2017). The African National Congress (ANC) political party has adopted a policy to increase the equal representation of women in executive leadership in provincial governments and parliament. In addition, the political culture in South Africa is tolerant of women participating in politics. There is no intimidation or social rejection of women in politics or leadership as would be the case in other countries.

4.3.2 Education and training

Quality education is essential for South Africa to ensure competent and competitive young people in the context of the global economy. The question one can ask here is what type of education and training can Africans and South African youth gain to develop their lives

to ensure that they can satisfy the need in the job market and find employment or entrepreneurship opportunities. South Africa is still challenged by youth who graduate but cannot get job opportunities, suggesting a mismatch between the quality of education and the needs of the labour market (Spaull, 2015). Hence the need for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) related subjects and the introduction of robotics at an early age and making coding compulsory. There is also a concern that South Africa is late moving in this direction given the changing global economic realities of technological innovation (Spaull & Kotze, 2015). Added to STEM subjects, entrepreneurship is another critical area that youth need to be exposed to. There is a need to develop more entrepreneurial intentions and attitudes among South African youth, especially the black youth in townships (Adebayo & Kavoos, 2016; Tshikovhi & Shambare, 2015). This is seen in most South African citizens being patrons of foreign nationals the majority of whom operate shops and manufacture products in the informal sector (Gamielien & Van Niekerk, 2017). The South African government ought to facilitate a dialogue on culture change in terms of skills among young people and get them to acknowledge the reality that trades such as artisanry, plumbing and carpentry are critical economic activities that they should consider pursuing.

South Africa needs a well-developed education and training system that will produce young men and women that can be creative and entrepreneurial and not just job seekers. It is impossible to promote the development of individual youths and communities without fixing the quality of education, maximising individual talents and providing professional support for career and skills development. The legacy of apartheid and poor planning in the democratic dispensation has created an urgent need for transformation in the youth sector. The construction of new schools, teacher training, the need for contemporary forms of governance and new attitudes toward education and training must be treated as a matter of urgency. The South African Constitution has set a framework for education and training but has not specified the type of education and training that can develop creative youth. Although the Constitution does ensure that all citizens must be provided with education and training. The NYP acknowledges the Report of the National Committee on Further Education (NCFE) as a framework for the transformation of further education and training in South Africa (National Youth Commission, 1997). "FET is the epicentre for the development of young men and women, most especially those who have

previously suffered under Bantu Education as well as those who were currently out of school because it supplies training in vocational and technical fields.” (National Youth Commission, 1997) The contemporary National Qualification Framework (NQF) has created a new enabling environment for education and training through the new outcome-based National Curriculum of 2005.

Science and technology have brought unprecedented transformations around the globe. The scientific know-how and the introduction of contemporary technology have not only reduced the world into a global village but also made an unchangeable transformation in how people live, work, communicate, travel and do business. For the youth of today, science and technology have innovative opportunities and fresh challenges. It is nevertheless important for the youth to be fully informed of the opportunities in this area and be able to make use of the opportunities for such development (National Youth Commission, 1997). The era of apartheid created an unequal society among black and white students in South Africa. During the apartheid epoch, white students were offered the privilege to be exposed to contemporary development in science and technology as compared to their black counterparts. As such black students were not encouraged to explore new fields of study by the political powers of the apartheid regime. Hence the need to revise the education systems in a manner that enable many youths to explore academic and professional terrains that are unfamiliar in their culture (National Youth Commission, 1997)

4.3.3 Health

Health challenges that South African youth face range from Tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases to substance (drugs and alcohol) abuse (Hopkins *et al.*, 2018). Unemployment is also a health problem that is not spoken of enough because it leads to mental illness and depression among the youth (Graham & Mlatsheni, 2015). The link between economic prospects and mental health in South Africa is a concern that the SANYP identifies as a strategic imperative (RSA, 2021). Sexual violence and suicide ideation (likelihood of committing suicide and follow-up attempts after failing) have increased, especially among children orphaned by AIDS or with parents ill from AIDS (Cluver *et al.*, 2015). The researchers further note that suicide in South Africa is “responsible for around 9.5% of non-natural deaths among young people” (Cluver *et al.*,

2015:52). For South African youth to thrive individually and collectively, it is important to resolve development challenges and support their wellbeing in a way that promotes their economic prospects. South Africa, in confirmation of being a just society, is creating an environment that welcomes the needs and interests of youth by discouraging the exclusion and expulsion of pregnant young women from school (Veriava, 2015). Sexual discrimination, criminalisation and condemnation have left young women in a perpetuated cycle of disadvantage (Campbell, 2016). It is commendable that South Africa's policy reforms ensured that pregnant youths do not miss school but continued until they give birth.

4.3.4 Economic and political participation

The NYDA has supported more youths with business-related training as compared to the funded start-ups (NYDA, 2021). The majority of the black South African women are poor, hence the need to ensure enterprise support for young girls in townships (Hikido, 2018). One challenge is the poor culture of entrepreneurship among the South African youth (Mbuya *et al.*, 2022). Therefore, the NYDA should offer business-related workshops to youth in the townships in an outreach format and not only serve youths who visit NYDA offices for consultations. Going where young people are and engaging them through entrepreneurship awareness and opportunities is very important because increased youth participation in the economy will improve South Africa's productivity and competitiveness (Magagula & Tsvakirai, 2020). For increased economic participation, youths should explore careers in scarce skills and keep up with international economic developments. South African youth do not have enough career development role models to show them the possibilities of the world of work. Hence Graham & Mlatsheni (2015) suggest that expanded youth programmes through NGOs would help youth acquire workplace exposure. In addition, the researcher argues that there is a need for academic institutions to incorporate career planning and career talks with professionals in these NGOs where the youths are. The South African government ought to make true its commitment to the township economy. This is where the government can help local panel beaters, plumbers, artisans, fashion designers, carpenters and many more trades by providing a chance to formalise their businesses and in the process, transfer skills to young people. The South African government can fulfil this in partnership with local and

international partners and entrepreneurs. There are old, unused shop buildings that can be used by start-up businesses. As a result, there would be fewer abandoned structures that serve as havens for crime.

On the political front, South African youth are active in contesting and supporting political candidates and voting in electoral processes. The youth are influential in political processes and other informal modes of political participation (). Young people are a common feature in community meetings and protest actions in South Africa, confirming that the political space is open to youth. The only need now is a movement that can convince young people to support a common political and economic agenda that will enable inclusive economic development. Mampane (2019) contends that “participation and involvement of youth in decision making requires an understanding of the process of participatory development, crucial for the youth, community development practitioners and other stakeholders”. The need to understand participatory development processes is real in South Africa where young people do not trust politicians due to poor governance and leadership. As a result, young people lose trust in the purpose of voting, and the government. This is where youth development organisations should be playing a role to empower young people as activists and monitors of public policy outcomes. Also, to encourage more young people to take leadership positions in government and bring about the change they expect and not rely on other people to bring change or complain merely on the sidelines. The development of youth for participatory decision-making should enable the youth to address the challenges of adolescence and adulthood (National Planning Commission, 2012).

The argument put forward by Chege (2011) points out that:

South African youth development and involvement in decision making is not prioritised because communities consider them a risk to the society. Consequently, strict decisions on what is right or wrong are handed down to them by the government programmes, adults, and guardians, because of such negative stereotypes (p.1).

The communities assume that young people are unable or unwilling to contribute to the common good; assumptions perpetuated by public institutions (Zeldin *et al.*, 2008).

Notwithstanding the above challenges, the “South African youth development programmes for participation in decision making are defined and conceptualised in terms of education, programs and opportunities in the country” (RSA, 2020). Hence, youth participation is interchangeable with youth participation of those historically excluded to enhance their personal and social development and provide expertise for a more democratic society (Mampane, 2019; Chege, 2011; RSA, 2009).

4.3.5 Safety, security and justice

South African youth are repeatedly victims of crime and can be exposed to threatening or unsafe environments. As matter of fact, some youth are the main architects of the enormous crimes that are affecting the country (National Youth Commission, 1997). Poor socio-economic conditions are leading drivers of youth involvement in criminality (Ljubic et al., 2017), hence the need to improve the socio-economic conditions of young people through career development in different trades and sectors. This initiative should focus especially on youth gangs and dependency on drug use by, for example, allowing youth as community watch persons and guards at public schools where vandalism and theft are rife. Some South African communities are already implementing this approach and community members sometimes make financial inputs to purchase whistles and tea for volunteers. Unfortunately, these informal forums often resort to vigilantism and kill criminal suspects while at it, as described by the National Youth Commission (1997):

Despite all the initiatives, the SAPS is faced with several challenges when dealing with youth crimes. These challenges include the lack of security facilities for young offenders, the need to focus on more preventive forms of policing and better community liaison, and the need to incorporate youth issues more clearly during police recruitment and training. (p.)

Public and personal safety are essential to ensuring suitable communities to live in and youths in security projects can be a useful tool to reduce incidents of gender-based violence in communities (Senge *et al.*, 2015). The researcher argues that ceremonial anti-crime campaigns could be insufficient, rather, anti-crime youth clubs could be implemented locally and upgraded to regional security groups that also enable further

career advancement in the security forces, police and military sectors. The youth-centred safety initiatives can also create opportunities for young people to work in national parks as anti-poaching cadets. Just as national conscription into the military was compulsory during the apartheid regime, the South African government could make it a requirement for all who want to be employed in the army and police service to have spent at least two years in community anti-crime activities.

4.3.6 Sports, art, culture and recreation

Sport is a vehicle to divert the energy and focus of youth away from crime to productive means, but these should be permanent efforts, not calendar events or temporary ones. Young people are naturally drawn to sport, which is the reason public institutions and private businesses invest in it. The United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) International Charter of Physical Education and Sport provides well-built support for the need that young people have for sport, leisure and recreational services by indicating that:

Individual-level physical education and sport contribute to the maintenance and improvement of health, provide a wholesome leisure-time occupation, and enable mankind to overcome the drawbacks of modern living. While at the community level they enrich social relations and develop fair play which is essential not to spot itself but to life in society. (Cited in the Republic of Botswana, Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs, Department of Culture and Social Welfare, 1995:21)

Sport is a tool that promotes health, self-discipline and teamwork. These are attributes essential to thriving as an entrepreneur or career professional. South Africa has taken sport and recreation as an integrated scheme for social cohesion (Burnett, 2021), however, apartheid policies often prevented equal sport and recreation in all schools because of their racial discrimination (Dodo *et al.*, 2020). Providing access to sports for youths in townships will create opportunities for South Africa's competitiveness on the world stage and generate income for career athletes (Leedy, 2020). However, the limited

financial support and municipal negligence to plan for infrastructure like swimming pools have hindered youth participation in sports and recreation (Naidoo, 2021; Marais, 2015).

Sports, art and culture express the essence of empowerment because it allows the youth personal and collective views on society and the world in which they live (Meir, 2017; Swartz *et al.*, 2018). It is through arts and culture that youth show their creativity, conserve norms and values, and form networks that are valuable for careers (Abisuga-Oyekunle & Fillis, 2017). In the same light, arts and culture is a powerful means of communication and can help develop leadership skills for change in society. This activity also contributes to the promotion of reconciliation among the youth. It is an essential element of an industrial sector where new economic and employment opportunities can be refined and where human creativity can create a direct impact on the national economy (National Youth Commission, 1997).

CHAPTER FIVE: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION

This concluded the research report and is an account of the findings reached after the careful review of literature and incorporation of the views from the young people during the interviews.

5.1 Research findings and discussion

The section is about what the researcher could establish in the study based on literature and interactions with respondents. The discussion of findings will set the tone for suggesting recommendations at the end of the study. The findings suggest that government initiatives for youth entrepreneurship are not delivering on their promises. The youth that the researcher engaged with come from families with single mothers and unemployed caregivers who rely on social grants and old age pensions. During the interview, one young girl (Respondent A) had the following to say:

“I want to be empowered but I believe mainly empowerment you access it from using of technology. It is sad, that I do not have a proper cell phone to use technology and access Wi-Fi. I must use my aunt's cell phone when she is in the right mood, it also depends on if it is loaded with data. Data is expensive as sometimes my mother gives R100 to purchase some of it. As I have already said access to information is crucial as it empowers the self with vital information to make informed decisions in life. Many information you access through technology. As you apply for job opportunities or scholarships it is a tedious process. That is my view of empowerment - access to information as a young person to global information. Only if the government can supply gadgets and technology for free as they do in the high schools. I understand in other countries such as Singapore Wi-Fi is in abundance and free.”

Another respondent (Respondent E) said:

“...youth empowerment I want to see the paper or the formula of it. What does it entail? It is painful when you see other young people of

my age so well informed about issues. I see them on the television programmes which I ask myself if ever I will be able to be at the same level with them.”

From the group interviews, the researcher heard a common sentiment from the youths who complained about the government policies and regulations that need certain one to have a certain revenue generation in their business before they can partake as service providers to government entities. These requirements are a barrier to accessing government tenders, even when one does meet the requirements, there is also an aspect of corruption where one cannot get tenders unless they pay kick backs. The youths argues that it is common that government officials call and bully the one who received a government tender asking for a bribe, (also called Dulas). The youth express their desire to understand what empowerment entails and a need for using technological platforms that enhance their capabilities and access economic opportunities. The aspect of inequality where one's peers seem to succeed in like while one does not have access to opportunities is one of the concerns that young people raised, this makes it easy for one to pay bribes if it means getting an opportunity to succeed. The next section is about the challenge of youth empowerment in South Africa, which echoes the sentiments already expressed in this section.

5.1.1 The challenge of youth empowerment in South Africa

The South African Constitution mentions cooperative governance, which is a principle of intergovernmental relations where the expectation is for all spheres of government to preserve the peace, national unity and indivisibility of the Republic (RSA, 1996). DIRCO promotes South Africa's international relations responsibilities but the public at the municipal level is not aware of DIRCO's activities with foreign countries and partners. As a result, people do not relate to international relations or the benefits it brings to the empowerment of young people. This means opportunities are available to those who are out looking for them and the disempowered youth who need to be reached continue to be excluded. This drives the need for municipal offices to implement the cooperative government principle with DIRCO and cascade youth empowerment and foreign embassy initiatives to the grassroots where the youth are. Most young people will never have an international vision unless municipalities expose them through active bilateral

agreements between South Africa and international partners. Agreements that include cultural exchange programmes to expose youths to world realities could engender political sensitivity and minimise xenophobia and create awareness regarding business opportunities that exist in other countries. Thus, more South African youths may be willing to live and work abroad. Therefore, one can argue that the local government is not doing enough to operationalise the constitutional provision of cooperative governance where interrelations are concerned. Municipalities need to show how international realities affect local issues, therefore, the local government ought to lay the foundation for responsible citizenry among youth. With more youth active in the development, there is a chance for them to participate in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of decisions determining the function and well-being of society.

The lack of government outreach to young people is a big obstacle to youth empowerment and support. This is a big concern where entrepreneurship is vital to reducing the unemployment challenge. Young people show a willingness to undertake self-employment activities but there is no direction on how to go about with it. A group of young people were apprehensive and unwilling to speak during a group interview session at Meadowlands, Soweto. The respondent B said, *“the ANC has forgotten the youths”*. Young people complained that they *“do not have access to information, skills volunteerism, and youth employment programmes”*. It is therefore the responsibility of municipalities to ensure youth offices are vibrant because the youth are a dominant population group in Africa. Once mobilised into networks of youth forums, young people in South Africa can work together and improve their economic status because although there are small pockets of business activities among youths in townships, there is no engagement with them to formalise and grow the businesses. This is important because if more young people grow into well-educated adults with entrepreneurial mindsets, there will be fewer dependants on government grants and new opportunities to acquire wealth, increased saving and purchasing power and accelerated economic growth and development.

Education in entrepreneurship, STEM subjects and artisan training are among the key strategies to support and encourage youth to undertake entrepreneurship ventures, providing them with the skills that are most needed to run a successful business with

relevance in the modern economy (DTI, 2013). There is no strong emphasis on entrepreneurship education in the South African school system, this means that the youth will lack the basic understanding of how to start and run a business or access to financial literacy, marketing and business skills (Tolamo, 2012; Leshilo & Lethoko, 2017).

This spills into anti-social behaviour among youth due to the large number of youth who do not complete the matric certificate (Van Aardt, 2012). Those who go to university follow a narrow academic stream, not exploring possibilities in science and technology, medical science subfields, or opportunities in agriculture although the agricultural sector is undergoing significant changes in the 4IR dispensation. Information and communication technologies (ICTs) could offer new job opportunities and, therefore, the youth need to be trained and be given the chance to access ICTs so that they can use various tools and enter exciting innovative industries. It is increasingly challenging for young people to engage in modern farming, while those who do struggle to secure land on which to do business. In cognisance of these challenges, Gwija et al (2014) argue that educated youth with expanded horizons find imagined futures in farming difficult. Therefore, the South African government ought to engage youth in dialogue and supply resources and support for those brave enough to take a career in agriculture. The South African government and private sector should open business opportunities for young in rural enterprises and the value chains within it (Motloun, 2021). A suite of challenges to youth in agriculture is evident in the seminal work addressing youth in agriculture, Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (2014) as:

1. Insufficient access to knowledge, information and education. Poor and inadequate education limits productivity and the acquisition of skills, while insufficient access to knowledge and information can hinder the development of entrepreneurial ventures. There is a distinct need to improve young rural women's access to education and entrepreneurial skills development and to better incorporate agricultural and entrepreneurial skills into rural education.
2. Limited access to land. Although access to land is fundamental to starting a farm, it can often be difficult for young people to reach. Inheritance laws and customs in developing countries too often make the transfer

of land to young women prohibitive. 3. Inadequate access to financial services. Most financial service providers are reluctant to provide their services – including credit, savings and insurance – to rural youth due to their lack of collateral and financial literacy, among other reasons. Promoting financial products catered to youth, mentoring programmes and start-up funding opportunities can all help remedy this issue. 4. Difficulties accessing green jobs. Green jobs can provide more sustainable livelihoods in the long run and can be more labour intensive and ultimately involve more value added. However, rural youth may not have the skills (or access to the necessary skills-upgrading opportunities) to partake in the green economy. 5. Limited access to markets. Without such access, youth will not be able to engage in viable and sustainable agricultural ventures. Access to markets for youth is becoming even more difficult due to the growing international influence of supermarkets and the rigorous standards of their supply chains. Young rural women in developing countries face additional constraints in accessing markets, due in part to the fact that their freedom of movement is sometimes limited by cultural norms. 6. Limited involvement in policy dialogue. Too often young people's voices are not heard during the policy process, and so their complex and multifaceted needs are not met. Policies often fail to account for the heterogeneity of youth and do not provide them with effective support. Policymakers themselves must actively engage youth. Addressing these six principal challenges is vital to increasing youth's involvement in the agricultural sector and addressing the significant untapped potential of this sizeable and growing demographic (p. ix).

There is a need for government to attract youth to the agricultural sector where young people have lost interest due to perceptions of it being unprofitable or expensive to sustain without funding. Participant A said:

"I do not see the success of the black economic empowerment without the government helping young people to understand the role

agriculture can play in enhancing our economy. White people are still holding this [agriculture] sector because they know how it is linked to economic opportunities. I did not understand why the government keeps saying BBE while there is nothing to empower young people in the agricultural sector. I am not a pessimist but honestly the ANC though being a black government has done nothing to empower young people in that sector.”

Leavy and Hossain (2014) write that “Agriculture remains hard work, and risky, and the allure of middle-class lives in urban areas remains strong”. This perception is disappointing in light of developing countries that show potential for increased income generation in agriculture and the opportunity to alleviate food insecurity. However, rapid urbanisation has led to a decline in rural populations. Nowadays, young people desire to migrate to urban areas where diverse needs and careers exist. Leavy and Hossain (2014) argue that a productive country must invest in developmental policies that engage youth in productive and profitable sectors including crops, livestock and fisheries. There is a need for economic reforms that ensure that youths do not have an appetite to migrate to the urban areas, but find the prospects of a meaningful life and attaining life goals in rural communities. This requires the government to take the initiative to expose young people to the benefits of agriculture and economic diversification outside of urban areas. At the moment, it is hard for they youths in rural communities to imagine a future that is outside of the agriculture economy (Leavy & Hossain, 2014). The point is that, the South African government has not focused the youth’s attention to the varaities of economic activities in the agribusiness sector and what the sector can do to improving the national economy.

Revitalising the township economy and restoring manufacturing and industrial plants, including investments in the textile and fashion industry, provides another chance at youth empowerment. The study argues that the role of agriculture and the township economy in job and wealth creation for young people in the country has not been understood and recognised. The nexus between youth and the political economy in the agricultural sector has not been developed and translated into public policies at the national level. National policies and programmes do not actively involve the youth in agriculture and township economy policy processes. This problem is not only at the national level but also a major

problem that the African continent is currently facing. The FAO report confirms that “while most African countries have national agricultural and/or youth policy and programmes, they often do not directly address the need for active involvement and participation of youth in agriculture policy processes” (FAO, 2014: 21). Youth prefer being creative and innovative; the manufacturing and textile industries will challenge young people while developing the gross domestic product (GDP) ratings. South Africa can stop importing many products when it is increasingly produced locally. This will contribute to the upliftment and empowerment of the population as more people are employed and crime rates decline. The COVID-19 pandemic has proved that South Africa is dependent on imports and is vulnerable in times of crisis. Hence South Africa ought to develop in the era of transformation and modernisation and maximise innovative public-private partnerships. This includes strengthening market related vocational training activities (technical and entrepreneurial skills) that are adapted to youth’s levels of understanding and the constraints they face (UNESCO, 2013). The BMW innovation schools are such an example (University of Pretoria, 2022; Tyolwana, 2021).

The lack of youth engagement has attributed to loitering on township streets, criminality and drug use. On the human development side, young people are now actors in land grabs and illegal occupation of land in South Africa. This has led to the overload of municipal infrastructure and increased demand for government basic services despite a low revenue base in municipalities. The majority of youth might feel hopeless and have few pathways to their desired career. This is compounded by government corruption and maladministration, where there seems to be no reason to agitate for social change as an activist. They are not interested to engage in governance and decision-making processes because *“the establishment has already decided what policies to implement, public participation is merely a box-ticking exercise”* (Respondent B).

5.1.2 The structure of international youth empowerment and its outcomes in South Africa

Looking at the political economy analysis for development strategies from the DFID (2009) and Brockhaus & Angelson (2012), as presented under section 1.8 of this study, the research established that transnational and regional organisations like the UN, AU, SADC, the EU and embassies are the main influential agents of international youth

empowerment. Donor foundations are also prominent agents in youth empowerment globally. Their interests and incentives involve their influence in shaping the global policy agenda, increasing their cultural diplomacy and influence globally, or evidence of their benevolence to meet with developing countries which is informed by prominent NGOs and donor foundations. The ideas and information on international youth empowerment come from the youth charters of these transnational organisations which national governments adopt and commit to implementing. Practitioners in western universities and NGOs are the thought leaders in youth empowerment strategies and reports about youth empowerment globally. The national youth empowerment plans echo what transnational organisations have espoused. Ideologies and principles like youth mainstreaming in decision-making are common expressions of the charters which carry more legitimacy compared to domestic organisations that do not affiliate with transnational organisations. The dominant ideas about youth empowerment support the hierarchical structure (local dependency on global actors) instead of disrupting that structure and reversing the cycle. South African organisations are receiving more support from outside instead of sending support to the global community. The structure of youth empowerment globally is hierarchical because the UN sets the global vision of youth empowerment that national governments implement along with local youth organisations. There is minimal path determination outside the global youth empowerment agenda. Even private organisations implement youth empowerment initiatives to support themselves and recruit new talent. The NYDA does not reflect how the private sector has performed in capacitating youths.

Table 1 below summarises the international structure of youth empowerment based on the literature review. The UN is the fundamental agenda-setting institution for youth empowerment globally while other institutions that are established regionally promote the UN resolutions in one way or another. These institutions simply set the agenda for youth empowerment but have no control over how member states commit to implementing them. Also, most youth empowerment initiatives may be rolled out by private businesses that do not in turn monitor their achievements or report them to government institutions. As the global youth development reports show that youths are marginalised in government decision-making processes, the international structure of youth empowerment could be reduced to simple documented strategies that record the same old challenges of youth exclusion without really making a positive change in youth

empowerment.

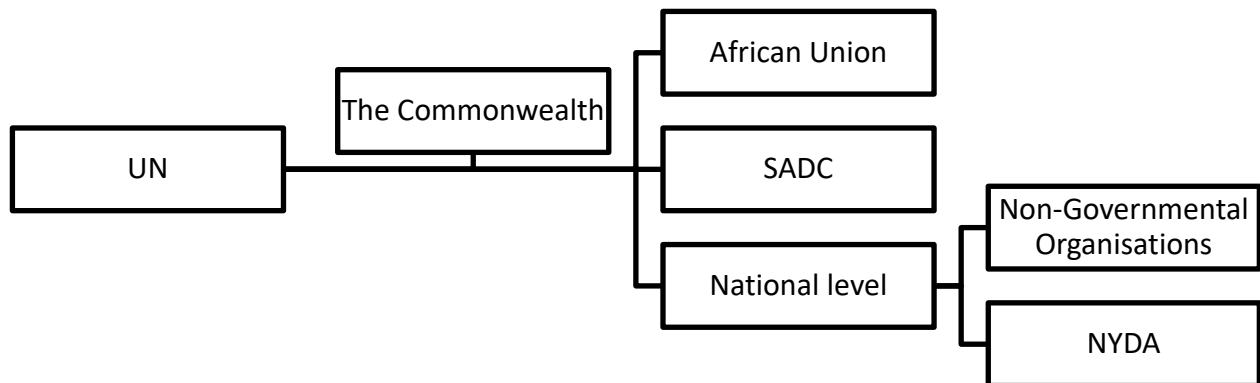


Table 1: The international youth empowerment structure (Own construction)

Youth empowerment initiatives in South Africa are a social collaboration between government and business. Often, the empowerment initiatives that South Africa implements with the help of international organisations involve youth exchange programmes in education and training that international organisations fund for South African youths to participate in. Otherwise, it is youth involvement in policy engagement on security and climate change. Some initiatives promote cultural exchange programmes where foreign youth visit South Africa and South Africans visit overseas through universities and well-resourced NGOs that have strong links with regional blocs. The outcome of youth empowerment is seen in organisations like Rethink Leadership, which “cultivates youth leadership through dialogue and active citizenship. The organisation was founded in October 2009 by six young people (aged 20 to 26) and is currently run by a team of resolute and enthusiastic South Africans, all of whom have experience in dialogue facilitation and youth development” (<http://rethinkleadership.weebly.com/>). This shows that young people in South Africa have critical thinking skills and an eye for solving social challenges.

5.1.3 Prospects for youth empowerment and IPE competitiveness in South Africa

The greatest opportunity for youth empowerment lies in the coordinated effort by the NYDA that integrates and monitors public and private sector youth initiatives. Marginalised youth in South Africa are the most disempowered and ought to be the priority in this process. Through coordinated and integrated youth empowerment

initiatives it would be possible to find youth empowerment organisations and support them in their efforts, including the internationalisation of youth empowerment. Pittman (1991) argued for the need of strengthening the role of youth-serving organisations to reach underserved and marginalised youth, and to develop within and cross-sector collaboration. This is being cognizant of the youths as an important and vital segment of human resources, which not only today but in the future will have to shoulder the responsibility for economic development (Odoh & Innocent, 2014) Youth empowerment in entrepreneurship plays a key role in the development of the political economy of the country. Young people represent the majority of the population (Mahadea *et al.*, 2011), as discussed in Chapter Two of this study, which gives greater promise for more economic returns when youth energies are spent productively through entrepreneurship. The low entrepreneurship activity by the youths is a problem that South Africa has to really look closely at because of poor economic benefits and social conditions of squalor in many communities where people continue looking for rather than creating meaningful employment (Buse, 2019). It is more disheartening to note the the non-employability of many youths (Leshilo & Lethoko, 2017).

Indeed, the unemployment rate amongst young people has continued to rise since the democratic transition (Banerjee, et al., 2006). The situation is now acute and the South African government does not seem to have enough resources for youth empowerment and employment initiatives. In addition to insufficient financial support, government departments and agencies responsible for driving enterprise development at the national, provincial and local government levels do not do proper monitoring for purposes of improving the interventions (DTI, 2013). This matter of youth unemployment also requires the government to introduce policies that prioritise South African citizens in employment for specific sectors, including involvement in business, especially in the township economy.

Chigunta (2002) in Leshilo and Lethoko (2017:47) sums up the reasons for promoting youth entrepreneurship as:

- 1) creating employment opportunities for self-employed youth and other young people they employ; 2) bringing alienated and marginalised youth back into the economic mainstream and giving them a sense of meaning

and belonging; 3) helping address some of the socio-psychological problems and delinquency that arises from joblessness; 4) helping youth develop new skills and experiences that apply to other challenges in life, promoting innovation and resilience in youth; 5) promoting the revitalization of the local community by providing valuable goods and services, and; 6) capitalizing on the fact that young entrepreneurs may be particularly responsive to new economic opportunities and trends.

The above reasons are ever relevant in the South African context where unemployment, alienation, psychosocial problems, lack of skills, redundant communities and lack of entrepreneurship brew a toxic concoction for the youth. Participant B said: *“Youth in the country are finding it not easy to get jobs to improve their source of income and to enable them to enhance the economy. This is because of the rampant corruption and nepotism in our country. This makes us remain not empowered and struggle to overcome poverty.”* South Africa needs more practical initiatives and less emphasis on theoretical propositions about youth empowerment.

Half of the global youth labour force is still unemployed (ILO, 2020b; WEF, 2020), which calls for a national development plan. However, the government must recognise its role in supporting the youth and aligning development plans to the core interests of the youth and their contribution to private business (Phyo, 2016). This is because small and medium enterprises (SMMEs) are vital components in a thriving economy and modernisation efforts (Gherghina et al., 2020). Youths claimed they do not have access the government support due to lengthy, bureaucratic processes, or to a lack of information about specific interventions. Access to, and awareness of, this kind of information has been identified as an obstacle to the growth and development of SMMEs (Leshilo & Lethoko, 2017). South African youth from poor families do not have adequate support and guidance to compete in the economic and international space, which is why the government ought to enrol such young people into programmes that enhance social cohesion and a leading role in political participation.

Lack of awareness about government initiatives supporting youth entrepreneurship is a big concern to youth empowerment in South Africa, especially for those living in townships and of lower education. Respondent A said that the *“government has not made clear the*

programmes that empower youths in the country...government has not put in practice any programme that supports young people or assists them in registering a small business to empower them economically. Even if we register companies, they remain companies on paper, and nothing works in reality." The ANC government should operationalise youth programmes and bring them closer to the youth. The literature show that the issues and challenges for youth that are central to Africa's economic development include employment, health and political participation (Odoh & Innocent, 2014:3). Odoh and Innocent (2014) further argue that the "size, energy, enthusiasm, innovation and dynamism of youths are assets that can be harnessed for Africa's development with appropriate policies that deal adequately with the issues facing them" (p.3). One can say that the reason for Africa's poverty and political representation as such at regional and international levels is that youth have not been empowered and their challenges have not been brought to light and talked about appropriately. It can also be argued that the youth's role in the economy is a bottom-up process.

However, in South Africa, the role of the youth in the national economy and IPE in the region is not understood. Unfortunately, the government has given a scant eye to the benefits of establishing programmes that empower youth to participate in growing the economy, hence setting a good image in international politics. This is because the process of youth empowerment depends on collective solidarity in the public arena. It also depends on individual assertiveness in the private life of the youth. Programmes, organisations and/or social movements for youth play a big role in creating the conditions for change and in reducing the costs of individual action. It also increases the employability of the youth and enriches their source of income. This will, therefore, lower crime rates and poverty in the country. However, as participant A said, *"...the rampant corruption in the country, especially in the politicians and youths as well as a big barrier for the country's political economy."* Economic empowerment for the international competitiveness of South African youth should be a bottom-up process rather than a top-down strategy led by the government and foreign embassies. This is essential to resolve the social exclusion in society where young people cannot only be empowered by the government; they must also be willing to empower themselves through forms of agency. For example, one can argue that offering young people access to a better education does not automatically empower them. However, it creates a favourable factor for creating the

pre-condition for employment. Hence, the government should put in place strategies and initiatives that allow young people to get employed.

Youth empowerment in South Africa can enable access to the markets by relaxing certain requirements that promote youth entrepreneurs. This is possible by exempting start-up youth entrepreneurs from paying taxes until they are established and increasing the threshold of Value Added Tax (VAT) registration so that more youth entrepreneurs are not compelled to register for VAT compliance. There is a further challenge that emerging youth entrepreneurs can not afford a tax practitioner to handle the heavy burden, as declarations have to be submitted to the South African Revenue Services (SARS) every two months. SARS conducts tax workshops specifically targeted at youth entrepreneurs, many of whom fall victim to non-compliance with tax laws. The cost of registering companies with the Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC) is now affordable and turnaround times shorter.

The above measures are essential, as Fatoki and Chindoga (2011) found that bad market conditions and no market opportunities can impede youth entrepreneurship. The high level of competition in the South African market is a challenge where young people must contend with big businesses that dominate various sectors – *“it is as if there is nothing new one can introduce to the market that other people are not providing. Even monopolies like Pick n Pay, and Shoprite are now moving into the townships to take what is left,”* another respondent said F. The start-up capital required is an obstacle to young people implementing their plans. Key suggestions made by respondents included: *“government increasing procurement opportunities for youth entrepreneurs; big businesses partnering with youth entrepreneurs to give them more publicity; exhibition shows hosted to show where youth entrepreneurs are linked to big businesses and captains of industries”*.

Youth empowerment on the economic side enables young people to worry less about short-term concerns like basic needs, allowing them to focus on long-term goals as they take control of their lives and gather the resources needed to change their circumstances (UN, 2012). An example of this effect is that economically empowered people delve more into financial investments to increase their income, spend time on improving their health through exercise, and take up further education to broaden their wealth prospects. But the people without economic security are concerned with putting bread on the table, do

not have access to nutritious meals and do not exercise sufficiently. The economically secure also have enough time, better social status and adequate intellectual imagination to participate in public decision-making processes (UN Report, 2012).

Therefore, youth empowerment is a tool to reduce gender-based violence where women have to rely on violent partners and family members just because they are the breadwinners. Participant D said:

“The economic empowerment of women is important to addressing gender inequality. Women get to have the assets that help protect them when breaking up with their partners. Women do not have to sleep around with men for money to cover basic needs, they become their person. Which is liberating.”

Participant E spoke about youth vulnerability by saying:

“We do not want to rely on social safety nets, like the EPWP jobs and grants. We want to make our own money and have job security, what is bad is that one needs connections with ward councillors and implementing agents to have an EPWP job. It is just so, so, difficult for young people to realise their dream. On top of it, there are expectations from families that we cannot meet due to lack of money. This is enough pressure to make you mad.”

The prospects of youth empowerment are about a David and Goliath encounter, where young people in their efforts for inclusion in export business and international value chains have to compete with those large corporations dominating the markets. Empowering the youth economically is essential to creating inclusive business and public governance models. For example, many strategies for economic empowerment focus on women's need to access land and other productive resources, the inclusion of marginalised women in economic and political processes, and increasing technical skills of women in agriculture and manufacturing to meet acceptable standards for the global value chains as suppliers of produce (UN Women, 2020; Farmworth, 2010). This way, women can

adapt to and deliver goods that meet the changing dynamics in the social, environmental and quality standards (CIDA, 2005).

One other fundamental observation is that the political empowerment of youth must complement economic empowerment. This is because when youth become active in politics but lack economic understanding of their community and the world they live in, they fail to champion meaningful policies that lead to the development of society. This is especially true when youths cannot productively utilise radical perspectives in the struggle over ideas with mainstream actors and organisations (UN, 2012). This study argues that youth empowerment should not only be focusing on economic priorities alone, but the capacity to access to political platforms locally, regionally, and internationally is equally important – this is what mainstreaming youth empowerment is about (Enaifoghe & Dlamini, 2021). This necessitates youths to have control and access to raw and material resources for trade and manufacturing, technologies for civic engagement, organisational capacities to mobilise communities to common action (Mathie et al., 2017). It follows that a low degree of empowerment leads to less influence. People behave in accordance to their level of empowerment, the less empowered is subjective and the more empowered is vocal and venturing, which leads to greater gains for them.

Notably, empowerment begins when people are frustrated and fed up with their circumstances as they realise their available resources may never enable them to achieve their life aspirations (Kieffer, 1984). Hence the earlier definition of empowerment pointed to the psychological dimensions. The other dimension in the definition focused on collective activity, without which the frustrated individual cannot overcome the bane of powerlessness. Collective action as an activity maximises available resources that could propel change and social legitimation. This is where one person comes with a venue, another with communication devices, another with knowledge for issue framing, another with transportation, and yet another with networks to people in power. The critical awareness of one's environment and the ability to express aspirations is important for collective action (Jemal, 2017). People achieve more when they believe it is possible to bring about change through their actions and efforts. If the opposite belief is true, they recede in seclusion and wallow in how terrible the scheme of things is and do nothing to change their circumstances. To some extent, this state of misery is what South African

youth are beginning to experience in the face of chronic unemployment and an on-setting failing state.

This observation in the South African youth empowerment context suggests that self-efficacy does not translate to collective efficacy, as empowered people leave the poor neighbourhoods and live better off without investing and spending their money in impoverished communities or sharing their experiences with the younger generation. The qualified professionals and intellectuals are not using their access and networks to improve the township economy, transform township schools as centres of empowerment, or create community dialogues for mentoring and enlightenment. These professionals and intellectuals seldom use their skills in law to take local municipalities to court over collapsing services in townships. They do not partake in public dialogues where they share information about future skills needed in the economy or internships. This is a further burden on the parents, who lacked organisational means of their own, remained outside the decision-making process and ceased having an influence to promote their unemployed graduate youth into the world of work (Sandstrom & Huerta, 2013).

The researcher observes that South African youths are interested to participate in decision making (political empowerment), not as revolutionaries or for toppling government but as partners in the project of building the country. This is important for social change, but political leaders antagonise the youths seeing them as opponents and receive them with suspicion (Respondent F). Also, the youths feel that politicians use them only for voiting and do not get back to the community for service delivery or valid explanations for the failure to provide services. Therefore, this study argues that empowerment is not possible without accountability by both the beneficiaries and facilitating agents. Also, accountability is a necessity for empowerment where government and regional institutions develop initiatives but there seems to be no improvement in the state of the youth. Implementing institutions ought to explain the reasons for the continued inferior education that young people receive as well as continued structural economic barriers that keep young people out of work although they have graduated. There should be political decisions made to deal with public office bearers and private businesses that collude in corruption and the misuse of funds because corruption and wasteful expenditure negatively affect the availability of

resources for youth empowerment. Institutions like the UN and AU should not accept mere mention of intentions to empower young people but should rather ask for empirical evidence of empowerment initiatives and the people who benefited from them. Those beneficiaries should be allowed a chance, through online reporting tools, to confirm they indeed benefited from these initiatives. There is a lack of monitoring and evaluation of youth empowerment initiatives. Organisations should also be guided to publish narrative reports that confirm how young people benefited from the empowerment initiatives. This integrated approach to empowerment is vital to improving young people's prospects of taking control of their lives. Private companies, non-state organisations and government institutions should be mandated to show evidence of young people holding leadership and other strategic positions. DIRCO should also be more transparent about the ambassadors or delegates in foreign embassies that are within the youth age and about available mentoring programs for young people to participate in. Young people will feel more empowered when social, political and economic platforms open up to the youth.

The integrated approach to youth empowerment will also promote responsive government and private institutions. It will create a common vision that inspires the political community, guiding the resources and energy of all citizens to a common outcome. This could lead to a happier society and alleviate wasteful exertions by young people involved in drug use and criminality. A common vision is that sports would preoccupy children from as early as five years old with healthy living and reduced obesity that leads to chronic diseases. Sports can also build bridges where racial and ethnic cleavages exist; this is where black schools or teams play with white schools or teams. This connection of people through public schools could lead to social cohesion and sharing of skills with disadvantaged persons and communities. Eventually, this can help to increase the number of competitive athletes who represent the country on the international stage. Indeed, most modern South African athletes who make a mark internationally have done so through support from a young age, well-resourced clubs and sponsorship from university institutions. Law enforcement and the prosecution of those who impregnate underage girls would reduce the burden on public health facilities and social welfare grants, and also restore dignity and traditional African values of adults who nurture youths well. Therefore, young people will have greater control of their lives and a meaningful experience of guidance from adults who are not there as gatekeepers in

political positions. This will significantly reduce psychological inferiority among young people, enabling them to stand and compete with their peers from other countries. Institutions like the NYDA should be streamlined with other government funding institutions to focus on supporting youth to start and maintain small businesses. Young people could attain plumbing skills and link with local government to work on sewage spillages and water leaks that cause an unhealthy living environment for many South African communities. South African communities are increasingly under the threat of collapsing electricity infrastructure. The state entity, ESKOM, and local municipalities could work with universities and colleges toward fixing and maintaining electricity infrastructure. This experiential learning could benefit young people in a manner that improves their livelihood. Practical training solutions that equip young people with mechanical work could see the formalisation of street corner car repair shops in a way that increases the tax base from registered businesses. Access to information about international projects could have more young people possessing artisanal skills, working in construction and industrial projects overseas. This way, South African young people can start imagining themselves playing a role internationally, not as refugees fleeing political volatility but as people fully in control of their life choices and career paths.

The empowerment of civil society organisations is vital for achieving empowered communities. Access to information about public finance expenditure would enable communities to hold ward councillors and local government authorities accountable. A national portal for non-government organisations to access funding and workshops for the effective administration of organisations would increase compliance with legal requirements. This portal could help organisations benchmark their efforts and extend successful empowerment initiatives to unserved communities. The portal could also be accessible to organisations on the continent to allow networking and collaboration across borders. The strengthening of community media is also vital where print, radio and television platforms could document the positive cultural aspects of communities. This includes coverage of weddings, funerals and other important ceremonies. Such instruments could also cover negative aspects like poor service delivery and facilitate community dialogues about what it is that could change the material and environmental conditions in a manner that restores control and ownership of development in the hands of the people. In this case, the local government is a mere facilitator of community

networks to thrive. This could be a useful tool to prepare broadcasts and establish connections with universities for innovative research methods that make an impact in communities. Collaboration with institutions of higher education could see a student in civil engineering adopt communities to improve roads and other infrastructure. Other students in psychology, criminology, politics, policing and IT could implement community initiatives that help address psychosocial health, informed decision-making, criminality and public participation. In short, education can assist to solve the lack of skills among graduating students.

5.2 Recommendations

After presenting the theoretical foundations and categories of empowerment, this study makes some suggestions for promoting South African youth's competitiveness in the global arena on matters related to economic activity and political leadership. The inputs from the respondents are also valuable to show the real points of view and concerns some young people have in their experience of DIRCO's dissemination of foreign policy and how other agencies implement youth empowerment initiatives.

5.2.1 The challenge of youth empowerment in South Africa

The lack of a culture of entrepreneurship in South Africa will be a permanent limitation to the international competitiveness of the youth. There are more imports to South Africa's economy versus few South African-owned companies that export manufactured goods internationally, or invent solutions that the world market needs. It would be good to introduce a subject at the primary school level, all through high school where learners have practical projects in starting businesses and inventions. This subject must include feedback from successful business people who can share tips on managing and sustaining thriving businesses. It should create a culture among young people to do business that will also remove the psychological barrier of seeing businesses like food stalls and selling brooms as shameful. Entrepreneurship education and training should not be something that starts at the tertiary level where business management is a qualification for people who are not accustomed to running businesses themselves. This kind of training in entrepreneurship should be a lifestyle and not for examination purposes.

The local economic development focus that preoccupies municipalities can improve when it is ward-based and schools participate in mapping the economic needs of the community. This should include planning how production and distribution will take place, including sourcing required materials locally. Thereafter, brilliant business solutions, especially at the high school level, should receive support for internationalisation. This is where innovation hubs and business incubation centres can make the most impact, by focusing on the culture of entrepreneurship by working with schools. Through this process, it is possible to gather information on what makes a business fail or prosper as there is a formal system to document initiatives, protect innovators from intellectual property theft and promote early registration of trademarks. This work culture could help alleviate the culture of entitlement of the people who are onlookers expecting the government to create jobs. This approach to entrepreneurship will also improve community asset creation and build organisations that facilitate community empowerment. Therefore, the government-supported programmes that focus on marketing, project management and financial management will be more visible and accessible to develop youth well capable of running a business. Such education is based on experiential and practical learning rather than theoretical outcomes. This could be among the key solutions that contribute to reducing unemployment and mismatched skills in the market economy.

Some respondents mentioned that these entrepreneurial and business funding initiatives *“are known only to those who are already established in their businesses; or that they are open to abuse by officials, who use them for personal gain, or corrupt activities such as nepotism”*. This is what leads to disempowerment among young people. Most are waiting for an invitation, orientation, and eventual growth in their sector rather than independently implementing the knowledge learnt at university. They are not used to and quickly get discouraged by the administrative red tape in the funding processes, applications for compliance, and so forth. Grade 12 education is virtually meaningless in terms of enabling young people to be entrepreneurial. For instance, what could a young person educated in history, Sesotho, or English do with the education after matric without going to university? The kind of education, even if it were history, should be packaged in a manner that gives learners the basic ability to function as, for example, researchers and authors who document the happenings in their communities, the origins of their townships and

their cultural practices. This can help learners to become academic writers at an early age.

5.2.2 The IPE framework of youth empowerment

The concept of international political economy (IPE) involves overlaps in politics and economics on issues like goods and services, wealth generation, leadership, and cultural and ideational influence in the global community (Snidal & Wendt, 2009). The activity of producing goods and trade intersects with government regulations that function as barriers or enhancers (Stuart *et al.*, 2011); hence international relations are relevant. The nature of relations between sovereign states influences the political voice of the youth, the production and distribution of goods and services and the flow of information for informed decision-making by youths. In this regard, the study also shows how the local government has failed to play a meaningful role in building international linkages for the benefit of young people. There is indeed an opportunity for municipalities to work with DIRCO to ensure that bilateral agreements have a practical sense for the youth. Youth are everywhere in informal settlements, villages, townships, and suburbs. This is where local government has an opportunity to connect with the people at the grassroots. Youth empowerment initiatives for those in rural areas are virtually absent, which makes them the most disadvantaged and disempowered group in society.

Local and international youth empowerment institutions must promote access to finance for the youth for setting up businesses. Financial institutions should also be encouraged to open youth-friendly packages to allow the growth of entrepreneurs. Describing the financial needs of youth entrepreneurs, Jain (2017) proposes the following:

Youth entrepreneurs do not meet the requirements for accessing business loans, either from the banks or from government's financial institutions, because of their socioeconomic background. Access to finance can be a lasting and practical solution for promoting youth entrepreneurship, while in turn reducing unemployment among the youth. Since government aims to promote and accelerate youth entrepreneurship, finance should be made accessible to young entrepreneurs. Government should therefore simplify the criteria for

obtaining finance from its financial institutions by reviewing its current lending policies, replacing them with less stringent requirements to allow for equal opportunities among the youth. Young people should be allowed to obtain the necessary finance to establish and grow their businesses without having to provide collateral or having to deal with bureaucratic procedures, or being charged exorbitant interest rates.

As young people become beneficiaries of empowerment initiatives, there is no follow-up on what they are doing and what further challenges they are facing. Therefore, organisations can merely say they reached or impacted so many young people without showing the sustainability of that impact. Long-term mentoring is fundamental to helping young people become influential in the global economy and political structures. Such mentoring should help young people to access market opportunities, international grant platforms and take part as DIRCO delegates on international trade missions of the government.

5.2.3 The structure of international youth empowerment and its outcomes in South Africa

The South African government must ensure its policies are youth-friendly and promote entrepreneurship to the extent as originally envisaged. These policies about providing experience before employment and tax waivers for business start-ups could make a significant difference. This should not be just political talk during political ceremonies but something the government implements and monitors. Job applications by mail are also expensive whereas electronic applications could eliminate unnecessary costs. Other than these challenges, it is proven that the structure of youth empowerment in South Africa is top-down and government-centred. This means that organisations involved in youth empowerment are mostly operated by government regional political blocs. The initiatives implemented by these organisations are merely to show compliance with youth charters and agendas agreed upon at these political forums. Youth involvement in these forums is not about setting agendas since it only serves as a consultative platform. If this were not so, there would not be repetitive calls for the government to take youth interests seriously and incorporate them into national policies. Private sector investment in youth empowerment also seems to be token compliance in the case of social corporate

investments. The graduate programmes and internships do not often translate to permanent job offers, while the companies repeatedly cycle young people year in and year out in internships. Some youth training initiatives at the community level, developed by community organisations and institutions of higher learning, rely heavily on government funding. Private businesses may donate a building or equipment but as a once-off contribution. Without government funding, it is difficult to sustain empowerment initiatives at the community level. Hence the submission that youth empowerment is a top-down phenomenon. Communities are virtually absent in the ownership of their empowerment initiatives because there is no community culture of people donating resources and money towards starting or sustaining an existing youth empowerment initiative. Instead, communities are complicit in destroying youth empowerment initiatives by stealing and vandalising the infrastructure investment intended for the upliftment of young people.

Entrepreneurship support services are beneficial in helping youth manage their businesses. The few respondents who were able to benefit from these support services indicated that *“they helped advertise their businesses and that they had increased their revenues”*. The youth recommended that the NYDA and other similar organisations promoting youth entrepreneurship should increase the frequency of business empowerment seminars and roadshows. They argued that these roadshows should not be about ticking boxes on annual plans but that they should be meaningful in terms of measurable outcomes. Hence the suggestion at the start of this section is to have the NYDA and private investors incorporate practical entrepreneurship and business management education in basic and secondary school education. Therefore, the NYDA should play a fundamental role in coordinating and integrating youth empowerment initiatives in South Africa to reach the marginalised youth and monitor the impact these initiatives have in promoting international competitiveness. The NYDA should also live out its mandate by holding private businesses accountable for mainstreaming youth empowerment.

5.2.4 Prospects for youth empowerment and IPE competitiveness in South Africa

The prospects for youth empowerment regarding individual well-being within the larger social-political environment remain weak because South African youth are withdrawing from political processes. The dominance of leaders with an age average of 55 years in the governing ANC party proves the slow integration of young people in the decision-making process. As a result, South African young people are not competitive in the economy or political leadership globally. Just like Trevor Noah, DJ Black Coffee, Charlize Theron, Terry Pheto and other artists who gained international prominence, young people will have to leave South Africa and reside in the US to gain competitiveness. This is also true of multi-millionaires and innovators in science. The approach to empowerment in South Africa is individualistic, where people take leadership of their lives without the government's involvement. Empowerment at the community level and organisational level remains weak, implying that young people who start economic ventures and development organisations need to have personal networks in order to thrive because there is little support from the government.

For South African youth to make a mark on the international stage as far as economic and political persuasion are concerned, there is a need for them to get exposure. Such exposure is possible through youth-led organisations that prioritise and champion youth interests in South Africa, especially at the municipal level. South Africa has great possibilities for youth empowerment but the lack of commitment or imagination from institutions like the NYDA betrays the prospects. There is no single coordinated project that ensures municipalities interact with local businesses, DIRCO, international partners and youth formations to mainstream youth empowerment (DIRCO, 2021). As a result, youth empowerment initiatives are still active in separate pockets of interested parties. The successes of those separate initiatives are obscured from public knowledge leading to empowerment only at the individual level, which does not cascade to community empowerment or encouragement to other youths. Encouragement should include profiling successful initiatives and individuals to inspire young people that they too can make it – proving that success is not only achieved by those with political connections, through corrupt actions or immoral behaviour. Hence the need for the National Youth

Development Agency (NYDA) and other relevant organisations to look at youth empowerment holistically, targeting youth as groups, especially in poor communities. The argument, therefore, is that the NYDA is not doing enough to coordinate youth empowerment initiatives that the government and private sector implement. The NYDA cannot confidently explain the gains and weaknesses of empowerment nationwide and it follows that youth empowerment occurs in an incoherent manner where private companies, foreign embassies, and other youth-centered organisations roll out youth empowerment projects in isolation. At some point, the youth who go through these initiatives return to the cycle of unemployment and lack of resources for entrepreneurship.

4.5.4.1 Youth empowerment case study from China that must be replicated in South Africa

The researcher realised the problem of DIRCO's annual plans that mention youth mentoring and other outreach programmes targeting youth and women. The questions from respondents were about how DIRCO announces its intention to meet the youth, which platforms it uses to make announcements and how many youths are aware of these initiatives. The DIRCO youth outreaches sounded very convincing and attractive. The researcher then did a preliminary scoping exercise talking to young people where it turned out that the youth do not know what DIRCO is doing at the local level for their empowerment. Some youths did not know their counsellor and mayor, which raised concerns about the quality of youth empowerment and the ability of young people to influence global policy and entrepreneurial spaces. At the time of the discussions, international issues were big and ambiguous. Speaking about Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, BRICS was a buzzword to them. The youths claimed ignorance about BRICS initiatives, which was curious seeing that the researcher knew about youths between 18 and 35 years from China who visited the South African parliament and interacted with members of parliament and its committees. Key questions were how many South African youths visited BRICS nations' parliaments, and how did they get to access such opportunities? The answers would reveal the extent of unequal access to resources and opportunities that South African youths contend with.

The case study below explains youth empowerment in the Chinese context by a respondent who is a Chinese young diplomat in South Africa. This personal experience highlights the seriousness with which China implements its youth empowerment policies.

Background Information

How China empowers youth, to large extent, is about how China prepares for its future with its youth. Our nation holds the view that young people are carriers of hope in the development of the nation, so youth empowerment in China is closely associated with the concept or terminology of political socialisation (which is the "process by which individuals learn and frequently internalise a political lens framing their perceptions of how power is arranged and how the world around them is and should be organised). And it means that the young people in China need to take in shared knowledge and basic values of the nation, coupled with the education they received for the gradual development of capabilities that are necessary for future empowerment.

In this regard, to ensure youth empowerment, China indeed has a complicated system to align this national goal with a person's life. The nation and the youth are combined so closely that this process could be even initiated as early as when one is studying in middle school (12 years old or so), or even earlier. A typical symbol is joining Communist Youth League, a talent reservoir for the nation and the party's Cause, all young people need to learn basic political values such as patriotism to get prepared for the cause of the nation apart from knowledge education. Compulsory education in China is not only to protect the right for receiving education.

From my point of view, youth empowerment in China is very simple. China is a grand country with a long history of unification, so the keyword for youth empowerment is to encourage young people to inherit the fine Chinese culture, values, and political ideas, as well as

capabilities to ensure the country's survival. In the last century, China was invaded by imperialism and colonialism, and the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation is the Chinese Dream, a collective dream for the 5,000-year civilisation to survive in peace and not to be subject to intimidation or invasion. Those who are in power must be those who are qualified for the national cause, so we do have a national plan for youth empowerment, and the main mechanism includes education, examination and selection, and practice (participation).

Personal Experience as Example

I was born in an ordinary family in Shenzhen, China. I am not endowed with many resources from my parents, and I think I did not grow up in an elite family or rich family indeed. However, the State did provide plenty of resources to ensure those who with the potential to be empowered in the future. So about how to evaluate a person's potential, China might give some insights into that. The examination is a quantitative method employed to ensure impartiality and equality, and this could be traced back to the practice of the Sui dynasty (605 A.D.). Imperial Examinations served as the most feasible practice for recruiting government officials, and its nature even influences to inform today's education in China. I studied hard and got good scores and daily performance in the study of academics, and physical education, so the nation provides me with a lot of opportunities to prepare for my future.

As I have said before, the preparations for youth empowerment could be traced back to one's early life in middle school. Indeed, the initiative of youth empowerment in international politics could be dated back to the 1950s. Starting from the mid-1950s, the Chinese Government recognised its shortage of diplomats with strong language potency. To address this issue, several foreign language schools were established in major cities of China under the direction of Premier Zhou Enlai,

aiming to cultivate diplomatic talents in demand. My dream was to be a diplomat protecting our national interests and I think it is a very honourable cause that is worth whole-life dedication, so I chose to study at Shenzhen Foreign Languages School during my high school campus life. So intensive training in English (or other languages) and international politics knowledge were employed in my high school for professionalism. Those foreign language schools I have mentioned have the right to recommend students to study in universities through green channels according to their daily academic performance and examination results at the universities. We also have self-organised student clubs for basics of international politics such as the Association of Model United Nations (whose activities are funded by the school). For each year, almost 20% of the high-school graduates of the school are recommended (in 2012, 185 students) to the top universities such as Beijing University, Qinghua University, Fudan University and so on. I was then, at 18, enrolled as a recommended student majoring in English and International Politics at China Foreign Affairs University (CFAU), which is affiliated with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. So, my next part is to raise China Foreign Affairs University as an example for preparations of youth empowerment in international politics and the economy.

The first part is preparation. China Foreign Affairs University is hailed as the “Cradle of Diplomats”, and its motto is “Unswerving Loyalty, Mastery of Policies, Professional Competency, Observance of Discipline”, which was also part of the code of conduct set out by Premier Zhou Enlai for diplomats. Indeed, Youth empowerment was implemented throughout the course (e.g. intensive and extensive reading courses from Foreign Affairs, Interpretation courses for spokesman remarks of the MFA and other diplomatic training programs), and many other activities (Such as Beijing International Model United Nations, British Parliamentary Debate, National Diplomatic Negotiations Simulation Competition for University

Students, National Mock Spokesperson Competition, to name a few) are organised by the university students themselves as a simulation of the real situation in diplomatic practices. I was then the Vice President of the Student Union to coordinate some of the activities like Model United Nations, and the funds are covered by the university and other enterprises which are interested in the activities, with veteran diplomats, and ambassadors invited to the event to share their experience with the students. Those activities also invite students from other countries to participate. The exchange of youth activities not only enhances the public diplomacy of our nation but also provides opportunities for youth to engage in international affairs. MFA has invested a lot in the University as well.

CFAU also provide volunteer internship opportunities and exchange programs for the students. In 2014, the 22nd APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting was held in Beijing. CFAU, along with other universities, provides volunteer opportunities for its students to participate in the international conference. From senior officials' meetings, and ministerial meetings to the summit, student volunteers could be seen during the conference to witness how the conferences were organised and held during their work of providing conference support. I was the team leader of the 100-person volunteers of the CFAU among the 2280 volunteers in total, and the China Communist Youth League Beijing Committee was one of the supervision organs to select the volunteers with the assistance of the CFAU, and we got a lot of experience. In 2015, I was offered an internship at the Chinese People's Institute of Foreign Affairs, where I was involved in diplomatic events with many political icons. In 2016, I was also one of the delegates for the Trilateral Youth Summit between China, Japan, and the Republic of Korea, where I met with other young elites and discussed international issues. The best way of youth empowerment is to let the youth know what the real world is like and get them prepared for their future career.

Indeed, cooperating with the China Scholarship Council, the CFAU also supports a program named “Cultivation of Young Talents for International Organisations Projects”. Which provides students with the opportunity to intern or work at various important intergovernmental organisations in the realms of international politics and international laws. Many students served as the international civil servant through the Young Professionals Program (YPP) of the United Nations with the assistance of the China Scholarship Council, and to be officials at other international organisations. In China, many universities also signed MOUs with international organisations for the recruitment of international civil servants or officials. Delegates of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference once formulated proposals to strengthen youth empowerment by training and recommending them to international institutions as well. The CFAU also has its internal selection process for empowering students to work in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and excellent students are recommended to study abroad, including those majoring in international politics, English (or other languages), international law and so on. After passing the oral and written examination, I was provided with a scholarship by the MFA to study at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey (MIIS) in the United States, where I studied English Interpretation for the future career with other candidates as well. And then I was recruited as an intern official at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs after rounds of examinations. And about a year later, I got my new post at the Chinese Embassy in South Africa. In general, since its foundation, there have been over 300 ambassadors and thousands of senior diplomats and counsellors among the alumni of CFAU. So, I think it might be a typical example to show how China empowers youth in international politics and the economy.

Youth Empowerment at the Diplomatic Front

Even in the Chinese Embassy, the youth also undertake huge responsibilities. For the political affairs section, most of the diplomats are youth under 35, and they are the main responsible persons to materialise the policies and directions from the top. Today's attache could be tomorrow's ambassador. I think the young diplomats need to accumulate experience and strengthen their capabilities for diplomatic professional skills, to better speak for the national interests. It is through the realisation of national interests that youth empowerment makes sense.

The above story of youth empowerment by a Chinese young person shows the value of in-depth and intentional youth empowerment that is accompanied by political vision. It is therefore imperative that South African youth empowerment programmes are integrated; vertically aligned across spheres and horizontally mainstreamed in government departments. Such strategies ensure that empowerment initiatives close the gap of skills shortages in the economic market, and position young people for leadership roles in political structures in the global arena. One shining example of youth empowerment that enjoys political support is the Tshepo 1Million initiative that exposes youths to job opportunities. However, this programme lacks international exposure as it is focused domestically. A Tshepo 1Million representative provides an account of the programme's achievements below.

The first iteration of this Programme, Tshepo 500 000 ran from 2014 to 2016 and reached 211 642 young people. But the programme was too fragmented and it became clear that a much more systematic and integrated approach was needed. Between 2017 and 2021 the Gauteng Provincial Government then partnered with Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator to upscale the flagship programme to Tshepo 1Million and this created demand-driven learning, earning and entrepreneurship opportunities for 718 636 young people in Gauteng in the past five years. Since 2017 a total of 102 047 of those who have been through the Tshepo pathway system have been placed into earning opportunities of various kinds, with numbers going up and

costs per youth assisted going down every year. More than 60% of the beneficiaries have been young women. The Tshepo youth employment flagship programme has been the core inspiration for the Presidential Youth Employment intervention launched by President Cyril Ramaphosa in 2018.

A preliminary report of an independent review being conducted by the Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection (MISTRA) has confirmed that without Tshepo 1Million the situation could have been worse. MISTRA has also recommended that the Tshepo youth initiative should be taken through a compacting process across the war rooms, especially the jobs and economics war room. Since 2019, Gauteng government departments alone created 48 177 total youth work opportunities and 45.6% were in the infrastructure sector. Gauteng municipalities created a total of 30 192 youth work opportunities against a target of 85 733 to date (35% of the target achieved), of which 34.2% were in the infrastructure sector. Through our education, we continue to support almost 2 million young people. We also support the youth through the bursary fund that is dedicated to young people. We also support the LGBTQ community and have now established the LGBTQ directorate, which coordinates the work of the sector across government and society. It is also gratifying to note that a total of 19 771 work opportunities were created through the National Youth Service. The Innovation Hub Management Company skills development programmes, CoachLab and Code Tribe trained 286 young people, and 114 of them found employment (45 permanent and 69 temporary jobs). Since its inception, more than 773 youth have benefited from the programme. We have also trained a total of 3 339 unemployed youth in automotive skills (1 217 young women, 2 122 young men). We are repackaging the Tshepo flagship programme into a bigger and wider integrated youth development intervention that brings all youth civil initiatives into one youth development focal point. In preparation for this new phase of a rebooted Tshepo programme

and integrated initiatives, I will soon appoint a civil society-led Youth Advisory Panel which will be supported by the Youth Directorate in the Office of the Premier. Young people must be at the centre of helping the government to respond to the current youth unemployment emergency.

The Tshepo 1Million project shows potential for collaboration by local government, the private sector and regional and international agencies to strengthen initiatives for youth empowerment in South Africa. The project should also reach institutions of higher learning to enhance employability and entrepreneurship skills. The absence of DIRCO in Tshepo 1Million activities is a big concern because it confirms the youth's complaints about DIRCO's absence in their communities. The development process for future diplomats remains a mystery among young people.

5.3 Conclusion

This study explained the research design and answered the research questions through a theoretical lens of empowerment for South African youths' international competitiveness in political and economic structures. The DFID (2009) framework summarised thus far shows that, i) agents or actors – in youth empowerment being local businesses that are interested in the perception of them collaborating with government in efforts for job creation, and national government rolling out youth empowerment initiatives in line with global declarations and protocols; ii) ideas and information – trickle down from agents like the AU, UN, EU, and commonwealth who are hegemons and funders of youth empowerment initiatives. Datasets from these international organisations (OECD, ILO, UN) enjoy more credibility in the youth empowerment and policy sector; this culminates to iii) structural issues where the local youth empowerment organisations depend on western institutions for support and credibility.

The selection of respondents is based on the youth's location in an urbanised setting with exposure to government departments like DIRCO. However, although these young people are in urbanised areas they remain excluded from accessing government departments because they are based in townships that remain underdeveloped in terms of infrastructure. Youth empowerment should not be a side project for society, but a

fundamental life requirement that occurs naturally since politics and economics are the foundation of life in political communities. Young people should be comfortable and confident to raise their claims on how policies affect them and should express their interests. Young people speaking up is not a sign of disrespect but ignoring them and their future needs is the highest level of disrespect and contempt that adults can show. Adults should know better and protect youth from sexual exploitation and other injustices. It makes sense that youth are the vehicle of social unrest and political upheavals against economic tyranny, profiting and looting of resources by modern states.

As expressions of participation, young people are organising groups for social and political action, planning programs of their choosing, and advocating their interests in the community. They are raising consciousness, educating others on matters that concern them, and providing services of their choosing. No single strategy characterises all approaches to participation. Providing opportunities for youth to successfully participate in social change, giving them a voice, and be involved in civic affairs may develop a generation of youth who carry these skills into adulthood.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors that lead to youth empowerment contributing to the political economy of this country and influencing the IPE. This nexus of youth empowerment is multidimensional and complex and is yet to be fully understood. Additionally, variations in youth empowerment in South Africa are subject to the local context, which complicates attempts to generalise it. The ANC regimes from 1994 to date have initiated projects that aim at empowering youth in the country. However, the role and ability to implement these projects rest with local and municipal governance. This study focused specifically on the prospects and challenges of youth empowerment within an IPE context. This is because the role of youth empowerment and its impact on the political economy has not been studied and understood. Hence, the findings presented here claim only to apply to South Africa, although similarities can be found in other countries and regions.

Respondents' views about the research questions flag issues such as the lack of entrepreneurship culture, the mismatch of education and market requirements to absorb

youths in work, the lack of government communication of empowerment initiatives and international exposure, and the difficulty in meeting the requirements for business support services. These challenges undermine youth empowerment for IPE competitiveness in South Africa. South Africa must develop programmes that are targeted to specific problems of health, science and education, security and job creation or entrepreneurship. The youth empowerment policy in South Africa has not sufficiently addressed the economic needs and challenges. This means young people do not have complete control over their life paths nor adequate involvement in development agencies. The NYP has developed and prioritised economic participation, education, developing skills and making the correct behavioural changes, and instilling a sense of solidarity and love of self and country in the youth. But these continue to be strategic aspirations because reports by the NYDA show that South Africa is not meeting youth development targets, or worse, does not have programmes practically implemented to achieve the strategies. The suggested interventions for economic participation include industrial and labour absorption, linking youth job seekers to employers and supporting entrepreneurship. The lack of an entrepreneurship culture is a big obstacle to youth competitiveness in South Africa. There is a need for a national dialogue about a skills revolution to conscientise South African youth about the changing world economy and the type of skills they should develop to remain relevant. Youth need to move their focus from the government as a job provider by making efforts as entrepreneurs. Good initiatives for improving the quality of education and skills development should begin with the improvement of the quality of basic education through training teachers; and lastly, fostering leadership, active citizenship and encouraging behavioural changes among the youth in South Africa.

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Respondent A

Respondent B

Respondent C

Respondent D

Respondent E

Respondent F

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