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WESTERN CAPE**

Department of Statistics and Population Studies, Faculty of Natural Sciences

**FEMALE UNEMPLOYMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA: INSIGHT FROM THE 2021
LABOUR FORCE SURVEY.**

By

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Acronyms

GDP	:Gross Domestic Product
OECD	:Organization for Economic Cooperative and Development
SPSS	:Statistical Package for Social Science
Stats SA	:Statistics South Africa
ILO	:International Labour Organization
QLFS	:Quarterly Labour Force Survey
EPWP	:Expanded Public Works Programme
CWP	:Community Works Programme
SDGs	: Sustainable Development Goals
WEF	: Women Empowerment Fund
SAWEN	:South African Women Entrepreneurs Network
NEF	: National Empowerment Fund
SMMEs	: Small Medium Micro-Enterprise
CGE	: Commission of Gender Equality
ANC	: African National Congress
PWMSA	: Progressive Women’s Movement of Africa
EA’S	: Enumeration Areas
PSU	: Primary Sampling Units
CATI	: Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing
ANCWL	: African National Congress Women’s League
UNDP	: United Nations Development Program
SPFII	: Secretariat of Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
4IR	: Fourth Industrial Revolution
NYDA	: National Youth Development Agency
COGTA	: Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs

Abstract

The study focused on female unemployment and aimed to establish whether or not there is a relationship between female unemployment and demographic characteristics, whether the currently unemployed have ever worked or not, their duration of unemployment and the reasons for not working. It utilized the existing dataset from Statistics South Africa's fourth-quarter of 2021 Labour Force Survey. The study suggested that there are differentials in female unemployment, according to demographic characteristics. More precisely the greatest share percentage of unemployed females in South Africa was found within 25-34 age group and who are single. Nonetheless, those within 15-24 most of them were found among those who have never worked before, while a high percentage share of those who have work experience was found in 55-64 age group. The study also found that the percentage share of unemployed Black women was high than other population groups and a remarkably high percentage share of Black females was found among all the reasons for not working mentioned in the study such as household duties, scholar to name a few. Another variable found to have great influence on unemployment was the level of education, particularly those with secondary level of education. Moreover, it was found that women living in Eastern Cape, Kwazulu Natal, Gauteng and Limpopo were more unemployed. On the other hand, urban areas had the most unemployed women while females living in traditional areas were discouraged job seekers who majority had never worked before. The study also looked at the length of stay in unemployment, and those found to be vulnerable to unemployment as specified above, were experiencing short/long-term unemployment. In the final section, the report offered a few recommendations for female unemployment and for future research.

Key words: discouraged job seekers, reason for not working, duration of unemployment, ever worked; fourth quarter; currently unemployed.

DECLARATION

I, Anele Mfubu hereby declare that “Female unemployment in South Africa: Insight from the 2021 labour force survey” is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any academic institution, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete reference.

Anele Mfubu

July 2023

Signed



Date...16/10/2023...



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Dedication

I dedicate my thesis to God almighty who gave me strength to reach this level. This thesis is also dedicated to my late father, my mother and sisters and everyone who contributed in any capacity to the completion of this thesis.



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CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Background of the study

This study investigates the factors influencing female unemployment in South Africa, focusing on whether currently unemployed females have worked or never worked before, how long it takes for an unemployed female to get employment and the reasons for not working. Unemployment is the most prevalent designator of the economy of a country. In almost the entire world, men are more likely to take part in the labour market when compared to females, resulting in females having lower socioeconomic status due to the labour division in terms of gender (Ortiz-Ospina & Tzvetkova, 2017). This division of labour by gender thus results in high poverty levels amongst females. All these divisions happen due to economic and social factors, including primary cultural and social barriers, economic growth and education (UNIFEM, 2005; Verick, 2014). The Quarterly Labour Force Survey (2017) defines unemployed people as those between the ages of 15 and 64 years who were not employed in the reference week; and effectively searched for work. The main objective of this study is to examine the relationship between whether currently unemployed females have ever worked before and the period it takes them to look for work in terms of their demographic characteristics (age, population group, marital status, education status, geographic type and province of residence).

Mascherini *et al.*, (2016) define the gender gap as the difference between the employment rates of men and women aged 15-64. Hidden behind this indicator is the reality of millions of women who cannot partake in the labour market. According to the researchers, these comprise of women who would like a job but cannot take one due to family responsibilities, and those who cannot secure a job under the right conditions, good job quality and equal pay. In the past ten years, there has been an increase in female labour force participation across the globe, reaching 47% in the 15-64 age groups (Kuhn *et al.*, 2017). Nevertheless, the participation gap between men and women remains large, at over 20 percentage points.

In Africa, gender equality in employment is currently one of the countries' most significant development challenges (Anyawu and Augustine, 2013). Their study revealed that, the male employment-to-population ratio is estimated at 69.2 % compared to the female employment-to-population ratio of only 39.2%. According to International Labour Organisation (2016), female

unemployment rates are still twice as high as male rates in countries like those in the Arab and Northern Africa, peaking at 44.3% and 44.1%, respectively. Almost 43% of the labour force in Africa's agricultural sector is made up of women. However, their farming activities are scaled down to unpaid family labor.; consequently, they are often excluded from agricultural statistics (Agholor, 2019). Therefore, the persistent gender gap constitutes a significant obstacle to growth and development in Africa.

In South Africa, unemployment is one of the prevailing issues. Even though women make up a more significant proportion of the working-age population (15-64), with 19787410 being women compared to 19028342 men (The World Bank, 2021), the actual number of women in the labour force (employed and unemployed) is still less than that of men. South Africa's unemployment levels have all but doubled in the years since apartheid, despite the increase in the labour force (Msimanga, 2013). The population group that suffered under the apartheid regime bear the cost of this unemployment. According to Statistics South Africa (2022), female unemployment rates are higher than males. Of these, the majority are women between the ages of 15-34, and most of these are Black women who make up 41.0% compared to 8.2% among White women, 22.4% among Indians and 29.9% among Coloured women (Stats SA, 2021).

Moreover, the province where a person resides or a geographic type has an impact on their employment status because it allows an evaluation of variations in access to employment opportunities. During apartheid, Africans were primarily restricted to their tribal homelands and urban townships, which resulted in a geographically fragmented workforce. (Leibbrandt *et al.*, 2010). The most affected provinces were Transkei, Ciskei and Venda, and this legacy can still be seen in the unemployment rate by province as depicted by the writers. However, Statistics South Africa (2021) supported the above claims that the highest unemployment rate by far in 2021 was in Eastern Cape and Limpopo. On the other hand, traditional areas are situated some distance from where the jobs are, which is typically not where employment possibilities are available, and this raises the cost of job searching, leading to inefficient labour market outcomes (Leibbrandt *et al.*, 2010).

Concerning education, girls and boys were traditionally taught differently. A study done by the United Nations in 2014 revealed that, the priority placed on boy's education resulted from the notion of males being breadwinners, while Girls were often socialized to take on domestic and caring duties with the expectation that they would be financially dependent on men. As a result, females are still perceived as caregivers and mothers, particularly married women; any duty they perform is considered an extension of their domestic roles (Msimanga, 2013). Also, these stereotypes often dictate different prospects for boys and girls, such as completion of education and fields of study to pursue (The United Nations, 2014). Mascherini *et al.*, (2016) add that women often choose different fields of study than men, such as humanities, which may translate into poorer employment opportunities and a more considerable skill mismatch for women than men.

When launching the National Gender Policy Framework, the South African Act (108 of 1996) reaffirmed the importance of women's empowerment and gender equality (Department of women, 2015). This policy framework emphasized that in order to lower the danger of social exclusion and poverty for women and to promote inclusive growth, these gender inequalities in employment rates and other gender disadvantages in the labour market need to be addressed or eliminated (Department of women, 2015).

In addition to furthering equality, enhancing women's access to employment can sustain economic growth, especially considering population ageing and the expected labour supply shortages across South Africa. According to Kuhn *et al.*, (2017), narrowing the gap between male and female employment rates could improve the country's GDP. Also, increasing the participation of women in the labour market is crucial to meeting the South African 2030 target to achieve an overall employment rate of at least 61% by 2030.

Much progress has been made concerning female unemployment in South Africa. The government has introduced programmes targeting women to facilitate their participation in the economy, namely; education, training and skills development. According to the Minister in the presidency responsible for women, education improves market participation and is central to achieving gender equality (Department: Women, 2015). Following is the Women's Empowerment Fund (WEF) as part of the National Empowerment Fund (Women, youth & Persons with disabilities report, 2020). Other targeted initiatives include Bavumile Skills Development Programme, the Isivande

Women's Fund, the South African Women Entrepreneurs Network (SAWEN), Women Entrepreneurial Fund (WEF), among others (Women, youth & Persons with disabilities report, 2020).

Knowing all these efforts the South African government has put in place to help alleviate unemployment, women's unemployment has hardly been made the object of study. However, when women's unemployment patterns have been made the object of study, the explanations are primarily economic. Their focus is not specifically on linking female unemployment with demographic characteristics (age, population group, education status, province of residence and geographic type) and research on this topic is limited. Therefore, there is a need for more empirical research into the topic. Moreover, more is needed to know about the contributing factors to female unemployed who have worked before and those who have never worked before. The duration of unemployment and the reason for not working is still under-researched. Therefore, the focus of the study is to unpack the factors contributing to female unemployment, whether the currently unemployed females had ever worked before or never worked before, and to assess how long they have been trying to find work and their reasons for not working.

1.2 Problem Statement

The problem of female unemployment, especially among Africans, has existed since prehistoric times, when systems of segregation forced Black people to migrate to the cities for work since there were no employment opportunities in their homelands and for them to go look for employment they had to have a domestic passport which was called *dompas* (Du Plessis, 2015). Labour organisation called Teba came and created employment, through Teba, unskilled Black men from Ciskei and Transkei were taken to Transvaal as mine labourers (Glover and Money, 2021). However, this meant that women were left to care for the needs of the family, the home, the sick, and the elderly. These women relied on their husbands and continued to reside in Bantustans. (Shepherd, 2008). As a result, there is a significant variation in female labour force participation in South Africa today. Labour participation rates are lower for women than for men. According to Statistics South Africa (2022), female unemployment rates are higher than males in South Africa. The official rate among males in the second quarter of 2022 is 32.6%, while for females is 35.5% (Stats SA, 2022). On the other hand, women's labour force participation rate in

the second quarter of 2022 is 53.0% compared to 64.4%, a gap of 11.4 percentage points. Of these, most are women between the ages of 15-34, and most are Black women (Stats SA, 2022). Women are struggling in the South African labour market. Due to inadequate employment opportunities, women are forced to engage in unpaid labour and other livelihood sources not accepted by society (Diraditsile and Ontetse, 2017) which include commercial sex work and crime (Diraditsile and Ontetse, 2017). In light of the existing research done on female unemployment in South Africa, some researchers, such as Ackermann and Velelo (2013), omitted important information which explains the determinants of female unemployment among the age group 15-64, whether they have ever worked or have never worked before, their duration of unemployment and the reasons for not working.

1.3 Research questions

This study on female unemployment: insight from the 2021 labour force survey will focus on the following research questions:

- What are the demographic characteristics of currently unemployed females, such as age, population group, marital status, and level of education?
- Is there a relationship between the demographic characteristics (age, population group, marital status, education status, geographic type and province of residence) of currently unemployed females and whether they have worked or never worked before?
- Is there a relationship between the unemployment duration of currently unemployed females and their characteristics such as age, population group, marital status, education status, geographic type and province of residence?
- Is there a relationship between personal characteristics such as age, population group, marital status, education status, geographic type and province of residence of currently female unemployed and the reasons for unemployment?
- What factors determine unemployment status; ever worked and never worked unemployment duration, and the reason for not working?

1.4 Hypotheses to be tested

The hypotheses were developed by linking variables of interest in this study.

- Demographic characteristics such as age, population group, marital status, and level of education determine the unemployment of currently unemployed females.
- There is a relationship between the demographic characteristics such as age, population group, marital status, education status, geographic type and province of residence of currently unemployed females and whether they have worked or never worked before.
- There is a relationship between the unemployment duration of currently unemployed females and their characteristics such as age, population group, marital status, education status, geographic type and province of residence.
- There is a relationship between personal characteristics such as age, population group, marital status, education status, geographic type and province of residence of currently female unemployed and the reasons for unemployment.
- Level of education, province of residence, type of residence, age and marital status are the main determining factors of female unemployment, whether they have ever worked, their unemployment duration and the reason for not working.

1.5 Aims and Objectives of the Study

1.5.1 General objective

The study's overall objective is to determine the factors influencing female unemployment in South Africa.

1.5.2 Specific objectives

- To determine the demographic characteristics of currently unemployed females such as age, population group, marital status, and level of education.

- To examine the relationship between currently unemployed females' demographic characteristics (age, population group, marital status, education status, geographic type and province of residence) and whether they have worked or never worked before.
- To assess the relationship between the unemployment duration of currently unemployed females and their characteristics such as age, population group, marital status, education status, geographic type and province of residence.
- To examine the relationship between personal characteristics such as age, population group, marital status, education status, geographic type and province of residence of currently unemployed and the reasons for unemployment.
- To identify the factors determining female unemployment, whether they have ever worked, their unemployment duration, and the reason for not working.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study identifies factors influencing female unemployment in South Africa and examines those vulnerable to unemployment according to their demographic characteristics. Furthermore, the study aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by linking female unemployment with demographic characteristics such as age, population group, marital status, level of education, province of residence and geographic type. Data on female unemployment in South Africa has been and continues to be collected by institutes such as Statistics South Africa. However, more research needs to be done to investigate how these factors, such as the ones mentioned, influence female unemployment, whether the unemployed have ever worked or never worked before, how long they have been unemployed, and why they are unemployed in South Africa.

1.7 Limitations

It is crucial, however, to highlight that this study focused on Quarterly Labour Force Survey 2021. Based on the year under study, the Quarterly Labour Force Survey Fourth Quarter of 2021 appeared to be the most recent and detailed data source to address the research questions under investigation. The study will not focus on male unemployment but be limited to currently unemployed females, who have ever worked and never worked before, the unemployment duration and reasons for not working. Also, this study will include females aged 15-64 in South Africa. The study uses the fourth quarter 2021 of Labour Force Survey secondary data requested from Data First and paints an accurate picture and an actual situation of female unemployment and the contributing factors.

1.8 Definition of terms

Unemployment - according to Dagume and Gyekye (2016), a person of working age fifteen years and older is considered to be unemployed during a specified reference period (a week) if that person is not working for some financial compensation, but is willing to work, available to work and actively searching for work.

Discouraged work-seeker: a person who was not employed during the reference period, wanted to work, was available to work/start a business but did not take active steps to find work during the last four weeks, and the main reason given for not searching for work was: unavailability of jobs in the area; unable to find work requiring his/her skills; lost hope of finding any work (Stats SA, 2021).

Long-term unemployment: these include those among the unemployed who did not have work and are trying to find a job or start a business for one year or more.

Short-term unemployment: persons in short-term unemployment are those individuals among the unemployed who were without work and trying to find a job or start a business for less than one year.

Work experience: refers to the practical knowledge, skills and expertise acquired by an individual through employment.

Labour Market – The Oxford English Dictionary (1971) defined the labour market as "*the availability of employment and labour, in terms of supply and demand*". This study will also use the exact definition.

Labour Force: is defined as a currently economically active population; this includes the people of ages 15-64 years who fulfil the requirements for inclusion among the employed or the unemployed. The employed are those who work for pay or profit or temporarily not working due to illness, leave or industrial action. The unemployed are people who do not work and don't have income or profit.

Employment Rate: measures the extent to which available labour resources (people available to work) are used. The ratio of the employed to the working-age population is used to calculate the employment rate.

Labour Force Participation rate: the proportion of the working-age population employed or unemployed.

Employment rate: is the proportion of the labour force that is employed.

Unemployment rate: is the proportion of the labour force that is unemployed.

Share of unemployment: is defined as the proportion of the unemployed in the total population

Labour absorption rate: it is the proportion of the working-age population that is employed.

Active Population: this includes the people ages 15-64 years who fulfil the requirements for inclusion among the employed or the unemployed.

Frictional unemployment deals with unemployment arising from people searching for new jobs or transitioning from one job to another (Dagume and Gyekye, 2016). This may be common among the youth who prefer to move from one job to another to search for greener pastures.

Cyclical unemployment: occurs when the economy slows down, such as during times of covid-19, when people lose their jobs (Dagume and Gyekye, 2016).

Structural unemployment: occurs when there is a change in the structure of an industry or economic activities due to, say, rapid changes in technology, which results in a mismatch between the skills of workers and the skill requirements of available jobs (Dagume and Gyekye, 2016).

Working age population: The working age population is defined as those aged 15 to 64.

1.9 Thesis outline

Chapter One of this thesis provides an introduction to the research, and it deals with the background of the study and a statement of the problem underlying female unemployment in South Africa. It further outlines research questions, hypotheses, objectives, significance and the limitations of the study, and the working definitions. Chapter Two presents a body of literature discussing the theoretical and empirical reviews underlying the study. Chapter Three outlines the research design, sampling and data collection, the method employed in the analysis and description of variables. Chapter Four presents the data analysis and results, while Chapter Five critically discusses the findings. Chapter Six summarizes the thesis and recommends possible policy-making and future research.



CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The main aim of this chapter is to review the theoretical framework and existing literature regarding female unemployment in South Africa. Hence, this was subdivided into two sections: theoretical and empirical literature. The section on theoretical literature reviewed the theories related to female unemployment, while the empirical literature section offered discussions and debates on the existing body of research on female unemployment in South Africa.

2.2 Theories on unemployment

There is little theory on unemployment that explicitly concentrates on female unemployment. A number of general theories of unemployment exist, namely: feminist theory, discrimination theory, gender stereotyping theory, human capital theory, to name a few. Among these theories, very few have attempted to conceptualize female unemployment.

2.2.1 Feminist theory

According to the feminist theory perspective, unemployment is primarily a gender issue that cannot be adequately seen through any lens that does not use gender as the primary component of analysis (Diratsile and Ontetse, 2017). The authors maintain that the theory challenges the existing social structures where men dominate almost all fields and women are treated as mere objects. Generally, in the patriarchal society, women have historically held lower status than men. Women are still viewed in the context of the stereotypical female role of being a housewife. However, the feminist theory emphasises that unemployment results from male dominance and female subordination brought about by culture. The authors further assert that this inequality originates in Botswana, where men were perceived as superior to women, and gender stereotypes were shown in the labour market as men were viewed as having more value than women. The results of the present study demonstrate that women experience higher rates of unemployment than men and that they rely on informal employment and family support to meet their basic needs. The findings also show that the notion that a woman's place is in the house is still widely held in society.

2.2.2 Discrimination theory

Understanding why people discriminate based on race, gender or other observable group attributes has been one of the central topics in economics and other social sciences. Berson, (2016) indicated that due to visible non-productive characteristics, Becker established the discrimination theory in economics as the distinction of two individuals with identical visible, productive characteristics. Women and men are organised into households with identical household-specific human capital (Blau and Kahn, 2017). As a result, discrimination is seen in occupational segregation, where men are given access to high-paying efficiency-wage occupations while women are given piece-rate employment. In addition, Whitehouse (2001) adds that employers may discriminate against women when recruiting and promoting staff, preferring to hire men for higher-status positions and investing more in training and development programs. This can also be termed statistical discrimination, where the employer assumes that women will be more likely than men to leave work or have lower levels of commitment to it once they have family responsibilities. Also, female-dominated areas of employment may be relatively underpaid. This was proven by Dewan *et al.*, (2022) analysis that revealed that women earn up to 35% less than men for doing work of equal value, yet nearly 38% of households depend on the income a woman brings home. The findings of the current study demonstrate that instances of racial discrimination continue, as seen by salary disparities between the White and Black population. Mabuza (2020), who discovered that women generally earn 14% less than men and among the four major racial groupings in South Africa, provided evidence that income earnings in the country are still racially segregated. According to the author, Whites earn the highest, 23% more than Blacks, with Blacks earning the least, followed by Indians and Coloured people. However, this places White men at the top and Black women at the bottom of the labour earning hierarchy.

2.2.3 Gender stereotyping theory

A gender stereotype is a generalised view or presumption about qualities or the functions that ought to be possessed by or performed by women and men (United Nations, 2014). In the context of unemployment, many gender-related obstacles and biases have declined over the years, but gender stereotypes continue to create problems in the progress of women's careers (Tabassum *et al.*, 2021). The authors maintain that the availability of opportunities for the career progressions of women continues to be negatively affected by gender stereotypes, which shape managerial behaviour and occupational outlooks in the workplace with patriarchal expectations. According to Hentschel *et al.* (2019) perspective, gender stereotype originates from the discrepant distribution of men and women into social roles at home and work. Ideally, there has long been a gendered division of labour, which according to the author, existed both in foraging and more socioeconomically complex societies. In the domestic sphere, women perform the majority of routine domestic work and play the significant caretaker role. Comparably, in the workplace, women tend to be employed in people-oriented service occupations rather than competitive occupations, which men have traditionally occupied (Hentschel *et al.*, 2019). The authors go further to explain that men are characterised as more "agentic" than women; taking charge and being in control, and women are characterised as more "communal" than men; being attuned to others and building relationships. According to the authors, these two concepts were introduced by Bakan in 1966 as fundamental motivators of human behaviors. On August 16, 2023, during the Eastern Cape Provincial Networks for women in leadership and management, Minister Angie Motshekga brought up the subject of gender inequality in the workplace and in public settings. The minister made passing mention of the fact that women hold just 20% of director positions and are disturbingly underrepresented in positions of decision-making (Department of Basic Education, 2023).

2.2.4 Human capital theory

In the labour market, people bring different levels of education, knowledge, skills, abilities, and expectancy to the workplace. According to Almendarez (2011), the foundation of human capital theory rests on the idea that formal education is highly instrumental and necessary to improve the productive capacity of a population. In short, human capital theorists argue that a more educated, better-trained person can supply more useful, productive effort than one with less education and training (Wuttaphan, 2017). In the context of his study, an early proponent of the Human Capital Theory, Yakubu (2010), explained that over their working life, women are on average less productive than men because they tend to take an employment break for maternity leave and childcare. By design, women bear the prime responsibility of the unremunerated domestic chores. Thus, the Human Capital Theory emphasizes the importance of education and training in developing human capital (Yakubu, 2010). Although the aforementioned claim is accurate, it is no longer a guarantee of work in South Africa. The Human Capital Theory underpins the government's initiatives for ending poverty in South Africa, yet the nation has a high rate of unemployed graduates, especially women.

2.3 Empirical consideration of female unemployment

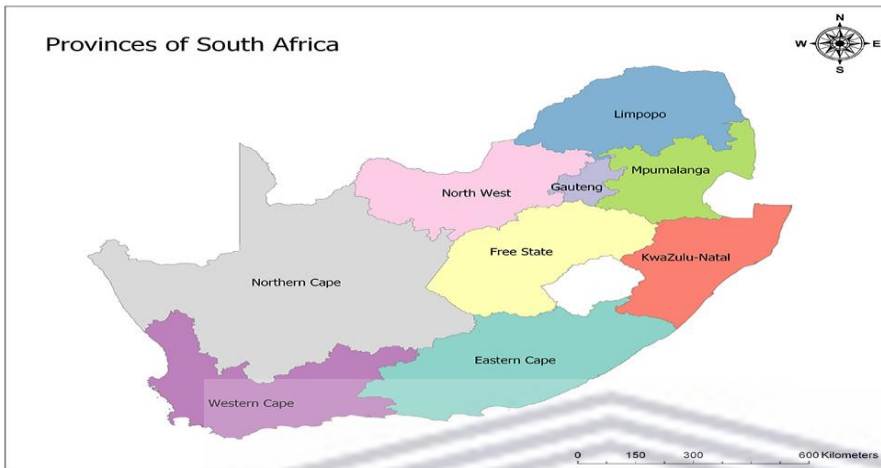
2.3.1 Study area

The study focuses on the Republic of South Africa (RSA), the southernmost country on the African continent. According to Stats SA report (2022), South Africa constitutes over 60.6 million people, and it is the world's 24th most populous nation and covers an area of 1,221,037 square kilometers. The country has three capital cities, each hosting a vital function of the government. The executive meets in Pretoria, the Judiciary in Bloemfontein and the Legislature in Cape Town. The largest city in South Africa is Johannesburg. About 80% of South Africans are of Black African ancestry, divided among various ethnic groups speaking different African languages, 8.8% are Coloureds, followed by White population (8.4%) and Indians (2.5%).

2.3.1.1 South African provinces

South Africa has nine provinces: Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Northern Cape, North West, Free State, KwaZulu Natal, Gauteng, Limpopo and Mpumalanga.

Figure 2.1: South African provinces



Source: <https://www.mappr.co/counties/so 1>

2.3.2 Defining unemployment

Msimanga (2013) explains that the International Labour Organization's (ILO) recommended definition of unemployment is when a person did not work during the reference week for the survey (typically the week before the interview); he or she is available to start working immediately; and they looked for work during the reference week or were waiting to start working in a job already found. The author further explains that an unemployed person is out of work and has been actively looking for employment over the last four weeks, or that they are either awaiting recall to employment after being laid off. The fact that someone has actively sought employment in the last four weeks attests to their interest in employment (Msimanga, 2013). Statistics South Africa defines unemployment as having not worked in the seven days prior to the interview, wanting to work and being ready to begin within a week of the interview, and have taken active steps to look for employment or started some form of self-employment in the four weeks before the interview (Stats SA, 2021).

2.3.2 Types of unemployment

The study touched on three types of unemployment: frictional unemployment, also called job search unemployment, and short-run unemployment, which results from searching for new jobs. According to Begg *et al.*, (2014), there will always be some form of unemployment because of labor market frictions brought on by the shifting labor market. As long as job searchers keep looking, there will always be frictional unemployment since it takes time for someone to find the right type of employment at the right moment. (Begg *et al.*, 2014).

On the other hand, there is structural unemployment which is due to the mismatch that exists in the world of work between the demands of companies and the skills and experiences young people have to offer, in particular those who are entering the labour market for the first time (Refrigeri and Aleandri, 2013). The authors maintain that people are unemployed because they need to acquire the right skills or experience to drive the economy. The government stresses careers in Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) to rekindle economic growth and transformation, revitalise skills, and create high-quality jobs in large numbers. However, the government does not consider that 4IR may lead to job losses, given that unemployment in South Africa today stands at 34.9 %. Furthermore, there is cyclical unemployment that is manifested by the fact that there are not enough jobs to go around and that it is closely linked to the movement of the economy in the business cycle (Msimanga, 2013). Cyclical unemployment, also known as demand deficiency unemployment, is a product of recessions that results from firms being forced to lay off or discharge workers due to inefficiencies in the aggregate demand for labour (Msimanga, 2013).

2.3.3 Female unemployment in Africa

To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, closing the gender gap in the labour force is crucial. Iheonu *et al.*, (2020) revealed that female labour force participation has remained dismal across African countries. According to International Labour Organization (2017), the problem of female unemployment is particularly marked in Northern Africa and the Arab States, where the unemployment rate of women exceeds 20%. The highest value is observed in Djibouti, South Africa, Sudan and Gabon, comprising 39.4%, 35.7%, 31.8% and 30.5%,

respectively (International Labour Organization, 2017). In addition, the lowest value is observed in Niger, comprising 0.66% of female unemployment.

According to Iheonu *et al.* (2020), the low participation of women in the labour market in Africa is influenced by firm religious interpretation, patriarchal cultures derived from Islam, the legacy of colonialism and the prioritization of oil. Asi (2022) points out that African women are overrepresented in the unpaid workforce in caregiving and household work meant to keep families and communities healthy and functional. Countries in Arab states have gender-restrictive policies when it comes to women in the workforce. For instance, policies like constrained freedom of movement and workplace laws are implemented to implicitly or explicitly exclude women from workplaces (Asi, 2022).

Furthermore, African women face a chain of barriers to achieving their full potential ranging from a differential in educational attainment and quality, interruption of labour force participation related to fertility and child-rearing, discrimination in terms of employment practices and wage determination (Idowu and Owoeye, 2019). Another essential factor is child marriage which is a critical challenge. A report by Wodon *et al.*, (2018) reveals that females who marry young are more likely to drop out of school, have children, and be victims of violence perpetrated by their partner, which has an impact on their education, health, and capacity to earn a living.

2.3.4 Female unemployment in South Africa

Like many African counterparts, South Africa strives to improve its citizens' living conditions. This movement towards a better quality of life involves women's empowerment. Even though women make up a more significant proportion of the working-age population (15-64), with 19787410 being women compared to 19028342 men (The World Bank, 2021), the actual number of women in the labour force (employed and unemployed) is still less than that of men (Ackermann and Velelo, 2013). This has been the reality for most countries worldwide, as women, for various reasons, do not participate in the labour force to the extent that men do. However, South African women have been entering the labour force in increasing numbers, according to the Department of Women (2015), which shows an increase in the number of women seeking employment. However, despite this increase, the entry of job seekers into the labour force has been more rapid, leading to an increase in the unemployment rate.

2.3.5 Female unemployment in the apartheid era

When examining the infamous laws that governed the lives of African women and men prior to 1994, apartheid served to limit the participation of women in various aspects of life. According to Chapman (2014), it deeply affected what was possible in women's private and public lives through patriarchy encouraged by violence, traditionalism and the control of the apartheid state. Black women's participation in the workforce indicated the gender division of labour within the home (Banks, 2019). The most common employment of African women was that of domestic work for wealthy White families and agriculture, whereas factory jobs for women were largely confined to Coloured women (Chapman, 2014). African and Coloured women's unemployment rates, however, remained high. Many of these women continued to live in rural areas and depended on their husbands' remittances because of the low income of this employment and the significant cost of inter-occupational migration (Shepherd, 2008).

2.3.6 Female employment in post-apartheid era

The new democratically elected government focused on changing the laws of the past to reflect the true spirit of the new constitution that emphasizes dignity, justice and equality. Casale *et al.* (2020) indicated that the feminization of the labour force in post-apartheid South Africa derives partly from the removal of apartheid laws that inhibited the labour supply of African women and men and their ability to migrate to places of employment. Various scholars have documented a growing flexibility within South Africa's labour market in the post-apartheid era of South Africa. According to (Ewinyu and Shedi, 2022), women's labour force participation has continued to increase during the post-apartheid years. The South African government further introduced a range of protective labour and equal opportunity legislation intended to redress race and gender inequality. This includes the Employment Equity Act (1998). However, Casale and colleagues have established that social norms about women's work have been changing, as a result of the new labour legislation introduced in the post-apartheid years to encourage the hiring of women, followed by the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (1997) and minimum wage legislation in low-wage employment, for example; for contract cleaners in 1999, domestic workers in 2002, agricultural workers in 2003 and nationally in 2018 (Casale *et al.*, 2020). The Department of

Women (2015) established that women's levels of education have also been rising and now exceed those of men on average while fertility rates have fallen.

2.3.7 Current female unemployment

Despite the improved economic growth performance in South Africa since the end of apartheid, all the changes in labour market participation during the first decade of democracy were not favourable. Unemployment remains high and poses a significant social and economic policy challenge. In 2021, the official unemployment rate stood at 33.56 per cent of the labour force, roughly the same as in 1994 (Statistics South Africa, 2021). Even though a higher employment growth rate has contributed to the increase in economic growth since 1994, this growth has not kept up with the increase in the labour force. Unemployment is still intense among historically disadvantaged groups and is higher among females than men, uneducated and young segments of the population (Nowak and Ricci, 2005).

Statistics South Africa (2022) stresses that the current labour force participation rate for women in South Africa, according to the second quarter of the Quarterly Labour Force Survey of 2022, is 53% compared to 64.4% for men, a gap of 11.4 percentage points. Women have the lowest absorption rate at 34.2% in Quarter two of 2022, lower than their male counterparts at 43.4%, and the current unemployment rate at 35.5% (Statistics South Africa, 2022). Casale *et al.*, (2020) add that women's increased participation in the paid economy has yet to buy women much in terms of job security and earnings. Those who do find work are usually self-employed in the informal sector, typically poorly paid and unstable work or employed in vulnerable employment often characterised by inadequate earnings, low productivity and demanding work conditions compared to men. Statistics South Africa (2022) noted that 5.8% of employed women occupy management positions, compared to 9.8% of employed men. Unemployment in South Africa still differs according to the place of residence, with some provinces characterised as poor provinces or dominated by the Black population having a high unemployment rate. For example, Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga and Limpopo “Non-metropolitan regions” are the highest with 42.8%, 36.1% and 36.3%, respectively, during the second quarter of the Quarterly Labour Force Survey 2022, whereas Western Cape, a province that is ruled by the White governing party (Democratic Alliance), recorded the lowest rate of 27.5%. Unemployment is still higher among the Black, who

constitute 41% compared to 8.2% of White females and compared 29.9% and 22.4% among Coloureds and Indians. However, one can argue that the injustices of the past still exist.

2.3.8 Effect of covid-19 on females' unemployment

When looking at unemployment since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, the government announced a national lockdown that brought about a shutdown of the economy, resulting in a shock in the labour market (Quarterly Labour Force Survey, 2021). Therefore, over 1 million jobs were lost, reflecting a 9.9% reduction in employment since Q1 2020 (Statistics South Africa, 2021). Due to the lockdown caused by the pandemic, women in general, specifically Black women, bore the brunt of job loss, especially in sectors that employ a large majority of women, like commerce, catering and personal care. These sectors faced closure or witnessed their activities severely restricted to contain the spread of the virus (Smith, 2022).

2.3.9 Support services which stand for women

Various organizations and NGOs in South Africa are devoted to supporting and facilitating women's participation in the economy and defending women's rights. The programs targeting women's participation in the labour force in South Africa are; the Women's Empowerment Fund (WEF), which was Established by the National Empowerment Fund Act No 105 of 1998 (NEF Act). The NEF Act promotes and facilitates Black economic involvement by giving financial and non-financial support to Black-owned and operated businesses and by encouraging a culture of saving and investing among Black people (Women, youth & Persons with Disabilities Report, 2020). On the other hand, Bavumile Skills Development Programme offers 20 days of training in sewing, knitting, weaving, and crafting to women who want to start their businesses (Women, youth & Persons with Disabilities Report, 2020). The primary goal of this programme is to develop women's arts and crafts skills and experience to produce better products.

In addition, the Isivande Women's Fund seeks to empower South African women (particularly Black women) through financial aid of between R30 000 and R2 million and non-financial support to improve socioeconomic development in rural, peri-urban, and township regions (Women, youth & Persons with disabilities report, 2020). On the other hand, the main objective of the South African Women Entrepreneurs Network (SAWEN), a Section 21 registered company, is to make

it easier for South African women entrepreneurs to access business resources, information, and opportunities. This programme targets women specifically, those who participate in informal income-generating activities and operate a Small, Medium, Micro Enterprise (SMMES) or women who aspire to open businesses, particularly rural-based women-owned SMMES (Women, youth & Persons with disabilities report, 2020)

There are programmes which focus on advocating for women's rights. For example, the Women's League programme aims to defend and improve women's rights inside and outside the ANC against all forms of national, social and gender oppression. Following is the Commission of Gender Equality (CGE) established in terms of Section 187 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa in order to promote respect for gender equality and the protection, development and attainment of gender equality through undertaking research, public education, policy development, legislative initiatives, effective monitoring and litigation (South Africa Commission of Gender Equality 39 of 1996). Lastly is the Progressive Women's Movement of South Africa (PWMSA), a registered non-profit organisation launched in Bloemfontein on August 8, 2006, to fight discrimination against women in all spheres of life (Progressive Women's Movement of SA, 2006). The organisation recognised that women's socio-political and economic progress was slow. Even those who benefited from democracy were still confronted by the massive problem of patriarchy, and all it represents in society (Progressive Women's Movement of SA, 2006).

2.4 Policies on female unemployment

This section outlines the laws, policies, and regulations introduced to aid the workplace transformation in a democratic South Africa since 1994.

2.4.1 Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997

Given the issue's importance, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) adopted three Conventions on maternity protection: Convention No. 3, 1919; No. 103, 1952 and No. 183, 2000. However, Although South Africa has not yet ratified the International Labour Organisation Maternity Protection Convention, CEDAW has been ratified (Pereira-Kotze *et al.*, 2022). South Africa's maternity leave is legislated through the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, requiring

women to receive four months' maternity leave after childbirth (Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997) (Pereira-Kotze *et al.*, 2022).

2.4.2 The Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998

South Africa has a legacy of discrimination with race, gender and disability that has denied access to opportunities for education, employment, promotion and wealth creation to most South Africans. However, the Act, according to the CCMA (2022), was passed to address this legacy and has two main objectives, which were to ensure that the workplaces are free of discrimination and to ensure affirmative action measures are implemented to ensure that qualified people from designated groups have equal employment opportunities and are equitably represented in all occupational categories and levels in the workforce of a designated employer (CCMA, 2022).

2.4.3 Gender equality and empowerment of women policy

According to the Department of Public Service and Administration (2015), the primary purpose of this policy is to serve as a tool and framework for enhancing gender equality in the workplace and to enable the company to integrate gender into essential organisational practices. Further, it suggests the development of specific interventions to meet the practical and strategic needs of women to ensure women's empowerment as a step towards gender equality (Department of Public Service and Administration, 2015).

2.5. Female unemployment by individual characteristics

In this section, an analysis of empirical literature will be assessed: this analysis will be based on how female unemployment is influenced by demographic characteristics. Whether the currently unemployed have worked or never worked, their duration of unemployment and reasons for not working.

2.5.1 Female unemployment and age

Age is a prominent factor in female unemployment. Many researchers, such as Axelrad *et al.*, (2018), have noted that young people usually have a higher unemployment rate than adults. In this case, young people aged 15-24 are commonly referred to as youth. In South Africa, a youth is someone between 15-34 years. South Africans are known to remain in a youth-like state for longer

periods, where a youth-like state refers to dependence on others (Bhorat *et al.*, 2017). Several explanations have been offered for this phenomenon. For instance, Axelrad *et al.*, (2018) have associated youth unemployment with insufficient skills or skills mismatch. On the other hand, Oosthuizen and Cassim (2014) reported that young people have little work experience which is a particularly undesirable characteristic for employers. Moreover, due to covid-19, South Africa experienced changes in aggregate demand which led to a decline in the demand for labour. This change was observed primarily among first-time job seekers, where young people were increasingly having trouble when looking for their first job. On the contrary, older workers' unemployment is largely characterised by difficulties in finding a new job for those who have lost their jobs. Unlike the youth, they are unlikely to reintegrate into the labour market after losing their jobs (Axelrad *et al.*, 2018).

2.5.2 Female unemployment by population group

South Africa has a complex history when it comes to race. Black Africans have the highest unemployment rate, which is more or less four times higher than the white population group. According to Gradin (2021), employment rates are especially low among women and the Black/African population, falling below the average in OECD countries and other developing countries, including Brazil, India, and China. The author maintains that the apartheid regime left South Africa with significant racial inequalities in labour market outcomes, employment rates and wages, occupational attainment and segregation, and poverty (Gradin, 2021). The system divided South African society according to race, granting unequal access to land, public services, education, and skilled jobs, among many other life spheres (Gradin, 2021). Another factor that limits Black women is traditional norms. Women in African homes battle for equality; most are still denied education and are perceived as housewives (Akinola, 2018).

2.5.3 Female unemployment by education status

Basic education and training are among the most critical factors influencing one's ability to participate in the economy. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development report (2011), a female's higher levels of educational attainment lead to greater labour participation and higher employment rates. Women's education dates back to the beginning of the twentieth century. However, girls and boys were taught differently. Girls were often

socialised to assume domestic and care responsibilities, assuming they would be economically dependent on men (United Nations, 2014). The report further highlights that the stereotype of men as breadwinners led to the prioritization of boys' education by parents. Stereotypes often dictate different expectations for boys and girls, such as completion of education and fields of study to pursue. Stereotypes were also perpetuated in school curricula and materials, often leading to occupational gender segregation. In South Africa, women still occupy low-skilled jobs, including Elementary (22.3%), Sales and services (18.5%), Clerk (16.4%), and Domestic workers (11.9%) (United Nations, 2014 and Statistics South Africa, 2021). Also, girls are less likely to study and pursue careers in highly valued professional and traditionally male-dominated fields, such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics (The United Nations, 2014).

2.5.4 Female unemployment by marital status

Understanding the link between marital status trends and female labour market outcomes in South Africa is important because high levels of unemployment characterise the South African labour force, which is much higher for married women than for single women. Female work upon marriage reflected cultural norms, which is unpaid care work that undermines their rights to decent work (Coffey *et al.*, 2020). They are perceived as caregivers and mothers. The time and energy spent on cooking, cleaning, the collection of water, and the specific care required for young children, the elderly, and the ill may not leave enough time in a day for paid work (Coffey *et al.*, 2020). This confines women to poverty and dependent on other household members, often men, for their livelihoods. In addition, this unequal distribution of unpaid work on women restricts their choices about the location, type and nature of paid work they can engage in (Coffey *et al.*, 2020). All in all, economically, women within marriages are very different from women outside marriages.

Figure 2.2: Domestic roles of women



Source: <https://policy-practice.oxfam.or>

2.5.5 Female unemployment by place of residence

Geographic distribution is another obstacle to lower labour force participation among women in South Africa. Provinces endowed with natural resources and concentrated with industries are likely to exhibit lower unemployment rates, the reason being that the provinces attract more workers (Lartey, 2018). On the contrary, the influx of the workforce into these provinces is more than the jobs available in the labour market, which causes a high unemployment rate. Moreover, provinces that were affected by the legacy of apartheid bear high rates of unemployment among women. These are provinces that are located some distance from where jobs are accessible, where social housing is mostly located where land is of poor quality, which is usually not where employment opportunities are available, namely "traditional areas" (Loewald *et al.*, 2021). These homelands effectively became labour reserves from which legislative and administrative rules impeded permanent and even temporary movement to non-homeland areas (Kingdon and Knight, 2004). Thus, high unemployment in traditional areas took the form of waiting for a formal sector job opportunity to arise outside (Kingdon and Knight, 2004). In addition, more than half of the families in these locations have a female head of household who depends on a migrant spouse's income (Loewald *et al.*, 2021).

2.5.6 Work experience

According to Dagume (2016), women with job training are better positioned to get employment than their counterparts who have never gone for any training. Studies done by Statistics South Africa (2021) have confirmed that age can influence employment status since employability goes with experience, implying that youth with no work experience will always find it difficult to access jobs since they lack relevant work experience. The report further highlights that employers often prefer to employ those with previous work experience and a higher level of education (Statistics South Africa, 2021). Yu (2017) indicated an unsettling rate of 39% of all jobless South Africans who have never worked before. In other words, one in every ten working-age people has never held a job.

2.5.7 Unemployment duration of currently unemployed

Although unemployment rates among young women are relatively higher than those of older people, the period they spend unemployed is generally shorter than that of older adults (Axelrad *et al.*, 2018). On the other hand, older workers who have remained unemployed longer have low chances of regaining employment once unemployed and a higher chance of landing part-time work (Carlson and Eriksson, 2019). According to Msimanga (2013), this may be due to the wide range of wages offered to the young. On the contrary, Lartey (2018) indicated that another issue that prolongs women's unemployment, especially in African homes, is the cultural values and family ties which permit them to attach to the household for financial support for more extended periods while looking for a job. Furthermore, covid-19 pandemic caused a massive rise in cyclical unemployment. People who could not find employment became long-term unemployed, and it is known that if one is out of work long enough, their skills become outdated (Mueller *et al.*, 2021). With time, this contributes to structural unemployment (Mueller *et al.*, 2021). Stats SA released statistics for the first quarter of 2021 indicating that people who have been unemployed for longer than a year make up 75.3% of the unemployed population. Many have been unemployed for a great deal longer than a year. Seemingly 60% of unemployed South Africans have been out of work for longer than five years, and at least 1 in 3 have never worked before (Stats SA, 2021).

2.5.8 Reasons for not working

Moreover, labour force participation is interrupted related to fertility and child-rearing. According to Matotoka and Odeku (2020), women are discriminated against on the grounds of being pregnant as they are excluded from employment based on pregnancy. Consequently, this perpetuates the sexual division of productive and reproductive labour, which confirms women's second-class status in the workplace (Matotoka and Odeku, 2020). Childbirth imposes a significant problem on women's health and time, yet females need time and opportunity to participate in the labour force. The postnatal period affects mothers since, during this time, most are sleep-deprived due to the unexpected sleeping, maternal health and feeding patterns of the new-born (Yang *et al.*, 2020). International Labour Organisation (2018) found that women's vulnerable economic, cultural and social status in the economy contributed to the reasons they were not participating in the labour force; these include marriage, domestic duties, health issues and education.

2.6 The gap found in the literature

In this study of female unemployment, some theories have been reviewed, such as Human Capital theory, gender stereotyping theory and discrimination theory. However, there is no unified theory linking female unemployment and individual characteristics in terms of currently unemployed females who ever worked and those who never worked, regarding the duration of currently unemployed females and the reasons for female unemployment in South Africa. A significant gap was noticed where, statistically, there is limited information regarding the magnitude of those who ever worked and never worked in terms of the duration of currently unemployed females and the reasons for female unemployment.

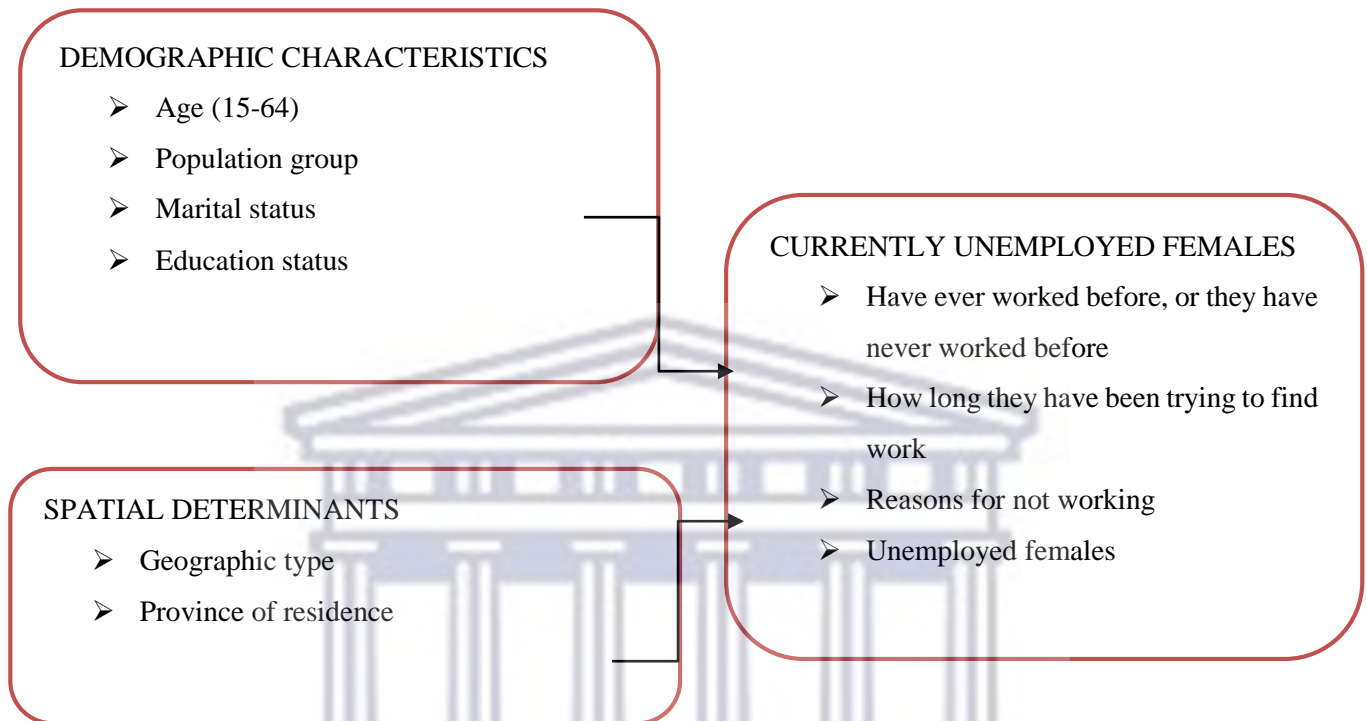
2.7 Conceptual framework

Using available theoretical literature as the basis, a conceptual framework of female unemployment and individual characteristics in terms of currently unemployed females who ever worked and those who never worked, in terms of the duration of unemployment among currently unemployed females, and the reason for not working is elaborated in this section. More so, several hypotheses have emerged. It is generally assumed that there is a relationship between the personal characteristics of currently unemployed females and the reasons for unemployment. Numerous

studies have also shown that women's interruption in labour force participation is generally related to fertility and child-rearing, the postnatal period, and cultural and social status (Matotoka and Odeku, 2020). It is also assumed that the area of residence, such as geographic type and province, influences the unemployment of currently unemployed females. Studies have also shown that the province of residence is another factor that can influence employment status. According to (Msimanga, 2013), unemployed females go to provinces with the highest number of job vacancies. Moreover, provinces affected by the legacy of apartheid, which are located far from where jobs are accessible, bear high unemployment rates among women (Loewald *et al.*, 2021). There is an assumption that age and population group can influence the employment status of a female. According to Axelrad *et al.*, (2018), the youth unemployment rate is much higher than that of adults in most countries. It is assumed that the older one gets, the more chances one gets employed. In the same vein, Oosthuizen and Cassim (2014) indicated that young people have little work experience, which is a particularly undesirable characteristic for employers. Hence, it can be hypothesised that female unemployment is prevalent among youth.

On the other hand, employment rates are meagre among Black/African women. According to Gradin (2021), the apartheid regime left South Africa with racial inequalities in labour market outcomes. It is again assumed that social characteristics can influence one's ability to participate in the labour force. For example, Education level and marital status can be necessary for female employment. Women who are educated are more likely to work than those not educated. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (2011), higher levels of educational attainment typically lead to greater labour force participation and higher employment rates. On the other hand, it is assumed that married women are less likely to engage in economic activities. Van Rensburg (2019) have established that women outside marriages are more employed than women within marriages. It is further assumed that for those who never worked before, lack of work experience, skills mismatch, and lack of education is a stumbling block that results in them finding it hard to secure employment, whereas those who ever worked have been laid off. Finally, it is assumed in the study that covid-19 pandemic (recession) affected the length of time women were unemployed.

Figure 2.3: Conceptual framework depicting the association between dependent and independent variables.



The conceptual framework above generated several hypotheses obtained by linking variables of interest in this study. These hypotheses become necessary to ascertain the relationship between currently unemployed females and demographic characteristics.

- Demographic characteristics such as age, population group, marital status, and level of education determine the unemployment of currently unemployed females.
- There is a relationship between demographic characteristics such as age, population group, marital status, education status, geographic type and province of residence and currently unemployed females and whether they have worked or never worked before.
- There is a relationship between the unemployment duration of currently unemployed females and their characteristics such as age, population group, marital status, education status, geographic type and province of residence.

- There is a relationship between personal characteristics such as age, population group, marital status, education status, geographic type and province of residence of currently female unemployed and the reasons for unemployment.
- Level of education, province of residence, type of residence, age and marital status are the main determining factors of female unemployment, whether they have ever worked, their unemployment duration and the reason for not working.

2.9 Chapter Summary

In this literature review, an analysis of empirical literature was done. This was a general review of female unemployment, whether the currently unemployed have worked or never worked before, the duration of unemployment, and the reasons for not working by demographic characteristics and spatial determinants. The demographic characteristics and spatial determinants (e.g. age, marital status, population group, education status, geographic type and province of residence) influence female unemployment. There are also gaps in the study, for example, where there is limited information regarding the magnitude of those who ever worked and never worked and the duration of unemployment in terms of getting a job. In the theoretical framework, the theory of discrimination and gender stereotyping theory were used to elaborate on why women (especially of disadvantaged population groups) find it hard to get employment and how it is even harder for them to keep their jobs. However, no unified theory linked female unemployment and individual characteristics. In the contextual framework, female unemployment, whether the currently unemployed have ever worked or never worked before, duration of unemployment and the reasons for not working is influenced by different factors such as age, population group, marital status, level of education, province of residence and geographic type.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explores and discusses the data and the methodology which guided the study of female unemployment in South Africa. In the first part, the study gives the perspective and the scope of the study. The following part presents the source of data and gives a brief description of the data source used. The data collection techniques and the sample design are also explored, while the next section presents and explains the variables that were used for data analysis. The final part explores the statistical methods used in finding relationships or associations between the dependent and independent variables, as well as the binary and multinomial logistic regression.

3.2 Research perspective

For this study, a quantitative research design was implemented. This study is cross-sectional because it used data collected at one point. This was consistent with the purpose of the study, which is to determine whether there is a statistically significant relationship between or among specific contextual and outcome variables. Lartey (2018) defines quantitative research as interrogating an identified problem based on testing a theory using number measurements and statistical techniques. According to the author, it is used to resolve doubts about relationships among measurable variables to explain, predict and control phenomena.

The variables, in turn, can be measured typically on instruments so that numbered data can be analysed using statistical procedures (Nsengiyumva, 2013). Multiple methods allow the different research objectives and questions to be fully explored. In the first stage of the research, secondary data from researchers was used to build the whole picture of female unemployment in South Africa. On the other hand, quantitative data was derived from the collected responses of each participant that responded through the survey instrument conducted by Stats SA as documented by Quarterly Labour Force Survey Metadata (2021). Inferences were further made by testing statistical hypotheses.

3.3 Scope of the study

The study covered the population of females in the labour force between 15-64 years, who, by the standard definition according to Statistics South Africa (2021):

- Did not work and did not have a job to return to in the last seven days before the interview.
- Tried to look for work in the last four weeks preceding the interview.
- Did not have jobs to return to in the last four weeks prior to the interview.

3.4 Data Source

The data for this study was extracted from the 2021 Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) of South Africa. The QLFS is a household-based sample survey conducted by Statistics South Africa. The data was obtained from the labour market activities of individuals aged 15-64 who live in South Africa (Stats SA, 2021). The rationale behind using this data set is that it covers all the variables of interest: household and individual demographic and socio-economic characteristics, details of unemployment and involvement in active labour market programs. The interest of the study lies in highlighting and describing the factors determining female unemployment in South Africa. During the Quarterly Labour Force Survey, the following questions in the last seven days prior to the interview were asked: (1) What are the reasons for not working (2) For how long have you been trying to find work? (3) How long ago was it since you last worked? (4) Have you ever worked for pay or profit or helped unpaid in a household business? (5) What is the highest level of education that you have completed? Furthermore, the year 2021 marked the recovery of the global crisis, and during covid-19, the labour market was affected. Consequently, women lost more employment in percentage terms than men (Stats SA, 2021). Hence, the use of the 2021 (Q4) data would impact the analysis and results of the thesis.

3.5 Sample design

The sample size for the Quarterly Labour Force Survey is roughly 33000 dwellings. The sample is centred on information collected during the 2011 population census conducted by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA, 2021). In preparation for the 2011 census, the country was distributed into 103576 EAs. EAs according to Qader *et al.*, (2021) are the operational geographic units for the collection and distribution of census data and are frequently used as a national sampling frame for

various types of surveys. Some of these EAs are small regarding the number of households enumerated in them during the 2011 census (Stats SA, 2021). Stats SA's household-based survey uses a master sample of Primary Sampling Units (PSUs) comprising EAs drawn from the country. The current sample size is 3324 PSUs. It is equally divided into four subgroups or panels called rotation groups (Stats SA, 2021). The rotation groups are designed to have the same distribution pattern as in the whole sample. They are numbered from 1 to 4, corresponding to the quarters of the year in which the sample will be rotated for the particular group. The sample is designed to be representative at the provincial level and within provinces at the metro/non-metro level. Within the metros, the sample is further distributed by geographical type. The three geographical types are urban, tribal and farms. Furthermore, the sample for the redesigned Labour Force Survey is based on a stratified two-stage design with probability proportional to size (PPS) sampling of PSUs in the first stage and sampling of Dwelling Units (DUs) with systematic sampling in the second stage (Stats SA, 2021). The data from household questionnaires relating to the 2021 QLFS of South Africa was recorded and analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

3.6 Data collection

Covid-19 affected data collection for Quarterly Labour Force Survey since the data used in this study was collected during the covid-19 period. According to Statistics South Africa (2021), the mode for collecting Quarterly Labour Force Survey data was changed to Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) to reduce the spread of the virus (Stats SA, 2021). To facilitate CATI, the sample used for QLFS Q1: 2020 was also used in all quarters of 2020 and Q1: 2021. Nonetheless, the covid-19 restrictions limiting the movement of the general population in the country were eased in Q4 2021. According to Stats SA (2021), this allowed sample rotation to take place for the QLFS in Q4 2021, although not all dwelling units on the sample had contact numbers, resulting in data being collected from part of the sample where contact numbers were available.

3.7 Description of variables

3.7.1 Demographic variables

Demographic variables that describe female unemployment include age, population group, marital status and education status, province and geographic type.

3.7.2 Age

This first variable focused on the age group of each household member. The question was classified into fourteen categories: **(1)** 00-04; **(2)** 05-09; **(3)** 10-14, **(4)** 15-19; **(5)** 20-24; **(6)** 25-29; **(7)** 30-34; **(8)** 35-39; **(9)** 40-44; **(10)** 45-49; **(11)** 50-54; **(12)** 55-59; **(13)** 60-64; **(14)** 65-69. The variable age was regrouped in intervals of 10 in SPSS and selected only those from 15-64 with categories: **(1)** 15-24, **(2)** 25-34, **(3)** 35-44, **(4)** 45-54, **(5)** 55-64.

3.7.3 Population Group

This study assumes that women's employment status in South Africa differs according to their population group. Thus, to determine the population group of persons in the selected dwellings, the question was, "How would the person describe himself/herself in terms of population group? This variable is essential since it reflects how the South African population is composed and shows which population group is mainly affected by unemployment. The final code list was: **(1)** Black/African; **(2)** Coloured; **(3)** Indian/Asian; **(4)** White.

3.7.4 Marital status

Marital status is an essential variable in this study to see if one's status can influence their opportunity to participate in the labour force. The question on marital status was asked to determine the marital status of household members. Concerning this study on female unemployment in South Africa, this variable is set to observe the disparities amongst married, single, divorced, widowed, and separated females. In this study, this variable helps to determine the influence of the marital status of each household member and its relationship to female unemployment. The responses were divided into five categories: **(1)** Married; **(2)** Living together like husband and wife; **(3)** widow/ widower; **(4)** Divorced or separated; **(5)** Never married.

3.7.5 Education status

To determine the status of education of those residing in the household, the question asked was: "What is the highest level of education that each person has successfully completed?" This question was intended to determine the highest level of education completed rather than the present level the person was at. However, the variables were transformed where the final coding was: (1) No schooling; (2) Never completed primary; (3) Primary completed; (4) Secondary not completed; (5) Secondary completed; (6) Tertiary.

3.8 Spatial variables

3.8.1 Province of residence

This variable is very significant to this study as it broadens to all nine provinces of South Africa to perceive the percentile disparities in female unemployment across these provinces. Thus, structural changes may be observed. The coding was as follows: (1) Western Cape; (2) Eastern Cape; (3) Northern Cape; (4) Free State; (5) KwaZulu-Natal; (6) North West; (7) Gauteng; (8) Mpumalanga; (9) Limpopo.

3.8.2 Geographic type

This variable is basically about classifying individuals per settlement characteristics. The final coding was as follows: (1) Urban; (2) Traditional; (3) Farms.

3.9 Unemployment-related variables

Four dependent variables were identified for this study, i.e. whether the currently unemployed females have ever worked before or never worked before, how long they have been trying to find work and the reasons for not working.

3.9.1 Employment status

This variable indicates the employment status of all persons in the household aged 15 years and older. An unemployed person is defined as "a person within the economically active population who: did not work during the seven days prior to census night, and would have liked to work, and

was available to start work within a week before the interview and had taken active steps to look for work or to start some form of business in the four weeks prior to the interview” (Stats SA, 2000). The variable was grouped into four categories in the QLFS 2021 as follows: (1) Employed, (2) Unemployed, (3) Discouraged job seeker, (4) Not economically active. The variable employment status was regrouped in SPSS with categories 1 and 2, (1) Unemployed and (2) Discouraged job seeker.

3.9.2 Reason for not working

The question which all household members aged 15 years and older who did not work and did not have a job to return to in the last seven days was asked to determine the reasons that prevent people from working. Response to this was classified into nine categories: (1) Scholar; or student; (2) Housewife/homemaker (family considerations/ child care); (3) Health reasons; (4) Retired or too old for work; (5) No desire to work; (6) Too young to work; (7) Pregnancy (8) Disabled or unable to work.

3.9.3 How long they have been trying to find work

The question which all household members aged 15 years and older who also tried to look for work in the last four weeks were asked to determine the amount of time a person spent trying to look for a job. Therefore, the answer to this variable was categorised into eight outcomes: (1) Less than 3 months; (2) 3 months – less than 6 months; (3) 6 months – less than 9 months; (4) 9 months- less than 1 year; (5) 1 year- less than 3 years; (6) 3 years- 5 years; (7) More than 5 years; (8) Do not know.

3.9.4 Have you ever worked before

The question of all household members aged 15-64 years’ old who did not have jobs to return to in the last four weeks prior to the interview and who were not looking for work was asked in order to determine if the person had ever worked for pay, profit or family gain. The responses were recorded as: (1) Yes or (2) No.

3.10 Methods of data analysis

The data from the fourth quarter (Q4) of the 2021 Labour Force Survey were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26. Three approaches were employed: univariate, bivariate and multivariate analysis.

3.10.1 Univariate analysis

Univariate analysis is one of the methods used to analyse data using a single variable. It summarises the data and calculates the pattern of percentages (Tessler, 2022). The univariate in this study was used to describe women by unemployment status and personal characteristics to assess the suitability of data for higher-level analysis. The results of the univariate analysis are presented in frequency distribution tables and graphs.

3.10.2 Bivariate analysis

This type of data analysis is used to establish if there is a relationship between independent and dependent variables (Nsengiyumva, 2013). In this regard, the bivariate level assessed the association between the unemployment status of women and the individual characteristics selected for the study at hand using the chi-square statistics and the level of association were tested at a 95% confidence level and $p < 0.05$. The individual's characteristics were separately cross-tabulated with the corresponding unemployment variables to examine the degree of association.

To compute chi-square test statistics, the following equation can be used:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$$

3.10.3 Multivariate analysis

After performing bivariate analysis, multivariate analysis was used to create a model that includes more than two variables to identify the main predictors of female unemployment (Nsengiyumva 2013). The use of two regression models did the multivariate analysis. The first one was the binary logistic regression. In this regard, the dependent variables such as employment status, duration of unemployment and work experience were dichotomised and were coded 1 and 0. In order to find the factors determining female unemployment, whether the currently unemployed had ever worked

before or never worked before, and the duration of unemployment, the study will need to dichotomise the dependent variable. The modelling is as follows:

$Y_i = \{1 = \text{Unemployed}, 0 = \text{Other: } 1 = \text{discouraged}, 0 = \text{Other}\}$

$Y_i = \{1 = \text{Ever worked before}, 0 = \text{Other: } 1 = \text{Never worked before}, 0 = \text{Other}\}$

$Y_i = \{1 = \text{Less than 1 year}, 0 = \text{Other: } 1 = \text{More than 1 year}, 0 = \text{Other}\}$

The logistic regression, according to Dagume and Gyekye (2016), is given by the equation:

$$y_i = \beta_0 + \beta x_i + \varepsilon$$

Where: y_i is unemployment status.

X_i is a vector of explanatory variables.

β represents a vector of parameters of explanatory variables to be estimated.

ε is a vector representing the stochastic error.

A binary logistic regression technique was adopted to analyse how each explanatory variable (age, population group, marital status, level of education, province of residence and geographic type) influences the probability of a woman becoming unemployed. The logistic model to be estimated for this study, according to Dagume and Gyekye (2016), is specified as follows:

$$\ln \frac{P_i}{1-P_i} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \beta_6 X_6 + \varepsilon_i$$

The estimated regression coefficients represent the odds ratio $\exp(\beta_i)$ which measures the effect of explanatory variables on the odds ratio (Dagume and Gyekye, 2016), while Hosmer-Lemeshow goodness-of-fit, indicated how closely the observed and predicted probabilities match, as cited by Nsengiyumva (2013). In addition, while binary logistic regression is used when the dependent categories are two, multinomial logistic regression is employed when dependent variables involve three or more categories. The multinomial logistic regression model in which dependent variables are more than two discrete and non-ordered categories with nominal properties and exhibit multinomial distribution is an expansion of the binomial logistic distribution for the category (Solutions, 2015).

In this model, a baseline category should be determined in order to make comparisons or analyses. The packaged software can randomly select the baseline category (J). For a dependent variable with 1, 2, 3, and 4 categories, for example, the baseline category can be chosen as 1. Three logistic models are thus constructed for the comparison, consisting of 1 and 2, 1 and 3, and 1 and 4. (Erkan, 2016). As a result, given a model, the dependent variable's four categories are divided into three odds ratios. These odds ratios are then compared to each category, and the model is linearized by using the odds ratios' natural logarithms to produce logistic models. (Erkan, 2016). However, this model is relevant for the study because the nominal dependent variable was the reasons for not working and was organised as follows 1: scholar- too young to work; 2: housewife/homemaker-pregnancy; 3: health- disability and 4: retired- no desire to work. Demographic characteristics believed to impact the reasons for not working are age, population group, marital status, level of education and geographic type.

The probability of a dependent variable being in the n th category in a multinomial logistic regression model is expressed as given in Equation 1 (Erkan, 2016)

$$\pi_j = \frac{\exp(\sum_{k=1}^K \beta_{jk} \chi_k)}{1 + \sum_{j=1}^{J-1} (\sum_{k=1}^K \beta_{jk} \chi_k)} \quad j = 1, 2, \dots, J-1 \quad (1)$$

It is possible to write this definition in Equation 2 as well (Erkan, 2016):

$$\pi_j = \frac{1}{1 + \sum_{j=1}^{J-1} \exp(\sum_{k=1}^K \beta_{jk} \chi_k)} \quad (2)$$

While the subscript k in the... coefficient in Equation 2 denotes the dependent variable, the subscript j is used to denote the dependent variable category (Erkan, 2016).

Multinomial logistic regression is a simple extension of binary logistic regression that allows the inclusion of more than two dependent variable categories. It is used to predict categorical placement in the probability of category membership on a dependent variable based on multiple independent variables. Therefore, multinomial logistic regression is often considered an attractive analysis for analyses involving categorical variables, as it does not assume normality, linearity, or homoscedasticity. The primary condition for its validity is the independence of irrelevant

alternatives, implying that adding a choice category to its independent variable does not affect the outcomes of existing categories. Under the assumption of independence of irrelevant alternatives, we opted for a multinomial logistic regression as the most suited model to estimate the odds ratio (OR) of access to piped water by migrants with given socio-demographic characteristics. The regression applied the maximum likelihood estimator.

3.10.4 The rates

The analysis involves calculating the employment rate, unemployment rate, labour force participation rate, share of unemployment, working-age population and labour absorption rate.

$$ER = \frac{\text{Number of unemployed}}{\text{people in the labour force}}$$

$$UR = \frac{\text{Unemployed population}}{\text{total labour force}} \times 100$$

$$LFPR = \frac{\text{Employed} + \text{unemployed}}{\text{Eligible population (15-64)}} \times 100$$

$$\text{Working age population} = \text{total population} - (\text{population aged 14 years old and below} + \text{population aged 65 years old and above})$$

$$\text{Labour Absorption rate} = \% \text{ of the working - age population (15 - 64)}$$

$$\text{Share of unemployment} = \text{proportion of the unemployed in the total population}$$

3.11 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the research perspectives were identified using quantitative research because it is conclusive in its purpose and tries to quantify a problem. The data source was named and identified; the study used the 2021 fourth quarter (Q4) Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) 2021. The analysis methods used in the study were univariate, bivariate and multivariate analysis. The univariate analysis consisted of frequency tables; bivariate analysis, on the other hand, consisted of cross-tabulation and chi-square. Lastly, the multivariate analysis consisted of binary and multinomial logistic regression, while the calculation of rates involved the employment rate, unemployment rate, labour force participation rate, the share of unemployment, working-age population and labour absorption rate. The variables were further described.



CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

4. Introduction

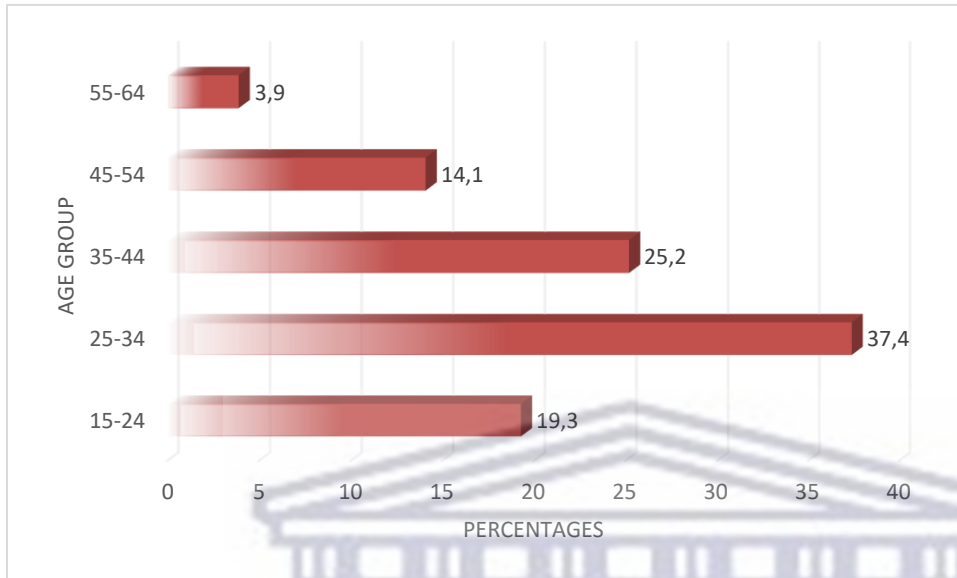
This chapter presents results from the analysis of data collected through a Quarterly Labour Force Survey, Quarter four of 2021, done on females in South Africa with an attempt to assess female unemployment, discouraged job seekers, duration of unemployment, work experience and identify the reasons they perceive to have been obstacles for them to be employed. The results of the analysis are presented in order to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses. In order to measure the extent of female unemployment in South Africa and its characteristics, the analysis begins with univariate analysis. After that, a bivariate analysis was used to describe the association between independent and dependent variables using the chi-square test. The independent variables considered are age, population group, marital status, education status, province and geographic type. The dependent variables are unemployment, work experience, unemployment duration, and the reasons for not working.

4.1 Demographic characteristics of the study population

4.1.1 Age of women

This study focuses on females aged 15-64 who are currently unemployed. The results below show that most currently unemployed females were young, with nearly half (37.4%) within the age group 25-34. Those aged 35-44 represented 25.2%. The school-age group between 15-24 years had the lowest proportion of 19.3%, compared to the 25-34 unemployed females. Figure 1 shows the lowest percentage in female unemployment distribution for individuals aged 45-54 and 55-64 years, with an average of 14.1% and 3.9%, respectively.

Figure 4.1: Frequency distribution of female population by age group

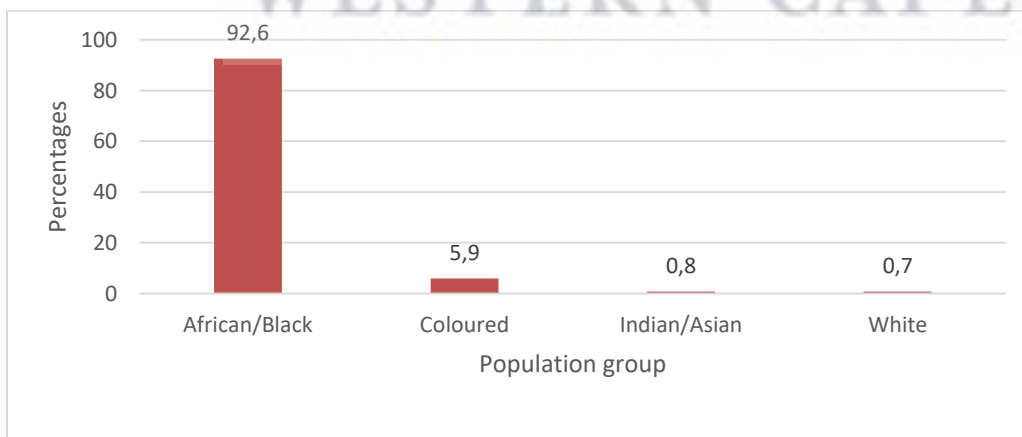


Source; The author's own calculation from QLF 2021 of quarter 4 of 2021

4.1.2 Population group of women

Figure 2 shows the analysis results of the currently unemployed female population group. A high percentage of unemployed females were Black women at 92.6%, followed by Coloureds at 5.9%. There are, however, a small percentage of White and Indian/Asian females who make up 0.7% and 0.8%, respectively, of the currently unemployed.

Figure 4.2: Frequency distribution of female by population group

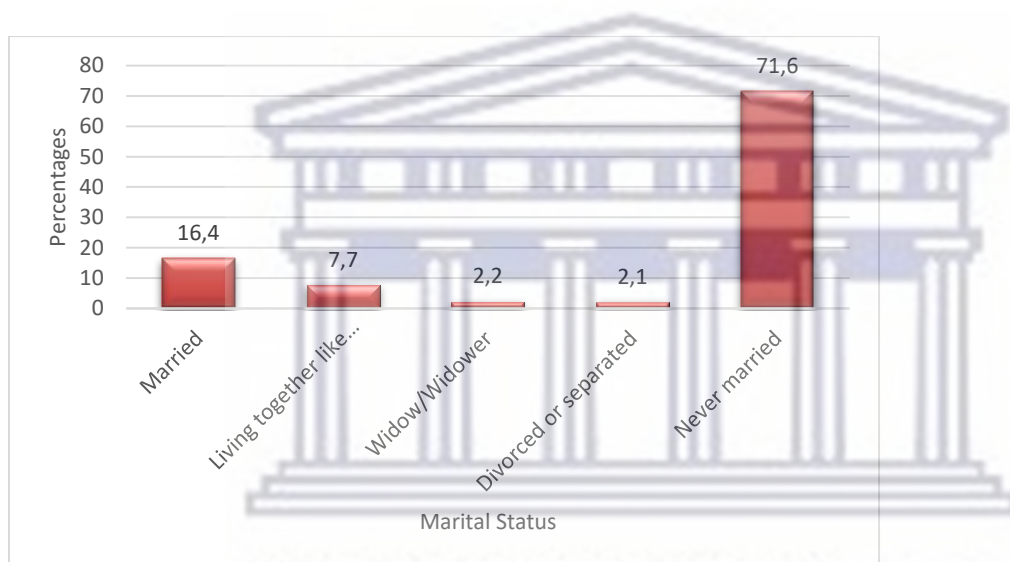


Source; The author's own calculation from QLF 2021 of quarter 4 of 2021

4.1.3 Marital status

Figure 3 below presents the marital status of the female population who are currently unemployed. It shows that 71.6% of unemployed females were never married, while 16.4% were married. The percentage of those who lived with their husbands stood at 7.7%, 2.2% were widowed, and those divorced or separated were 2.1%. These findings show that unemployed females are likely to be single rather than married or living with a partner.

Figure 4.3: Frequency distribution of female population by marital status

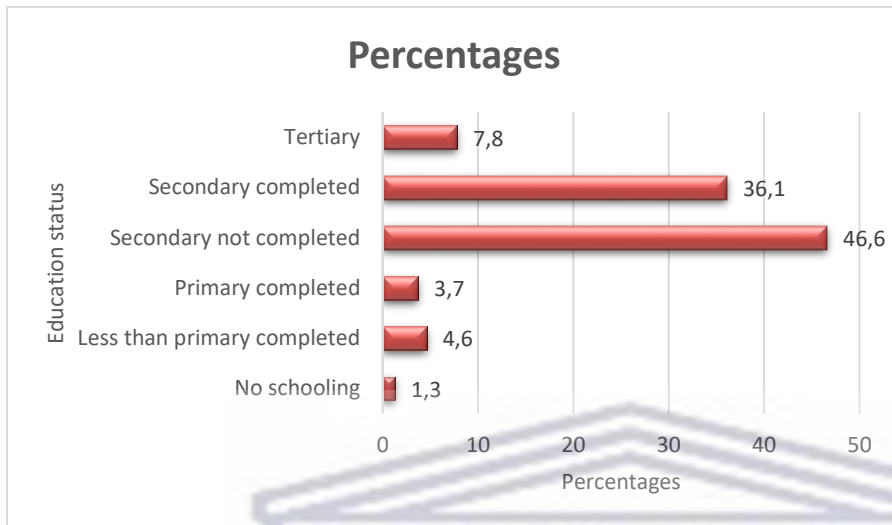


Source; The author's own calculation from QLF 2021 of quarter 4 of 2021

4.1.4 Level of education

The findings also show in Figure 4 that 46.6% of currently unemployed females had not completed secondary school. The percentage of those who completed secondary school was 36.1%, tertiary 7.8%, never completed primary 4.6%, primary completed 3.7%, and those who had received no schooling recorded 1.3%. These findings further show that many unemployed females in South Africa had not completed secondary school.

Figure 4.4: Frequency distribution of female population by education status



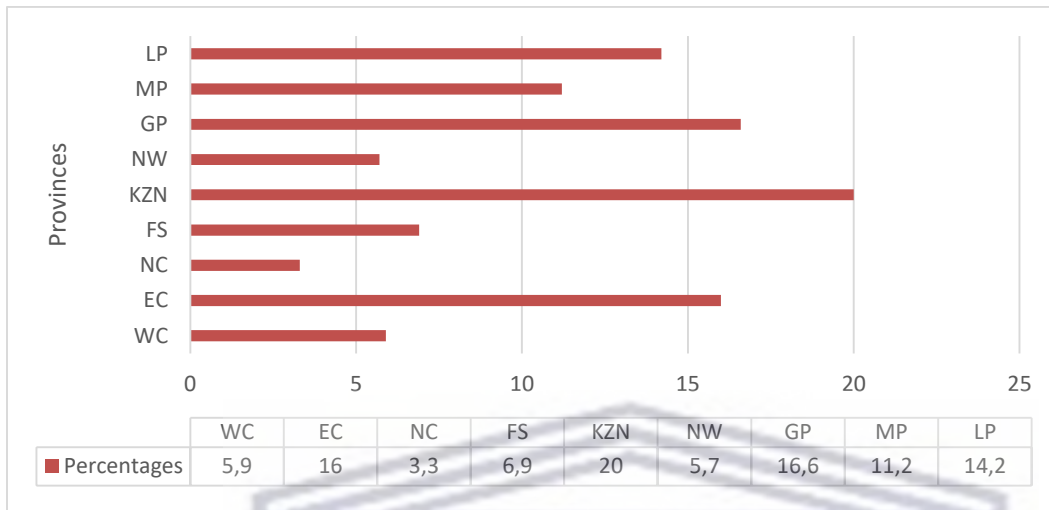
Source; The author's own calculation from QLF 2021 of quarter 4 of 2021

4.1.5 Province of residence

Figure 5: shows the distribution of unemployed females in South Africa by province. The findings show that on average, Kwazulu Natal had the highest composition (20%) of unemployed females, followed by Gauteng (16.6%), Eastern Cape 16%, Limpopo 14.2%, Mpumalanga recorded 11.2%, Free State 6.9%, Western Cape 5.9%, North West 5.7%. In comparison, Northern Cape had the lowest rate (3.3%) of unemployed females.

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Figure 4.5: Frequency distribution of female population by province

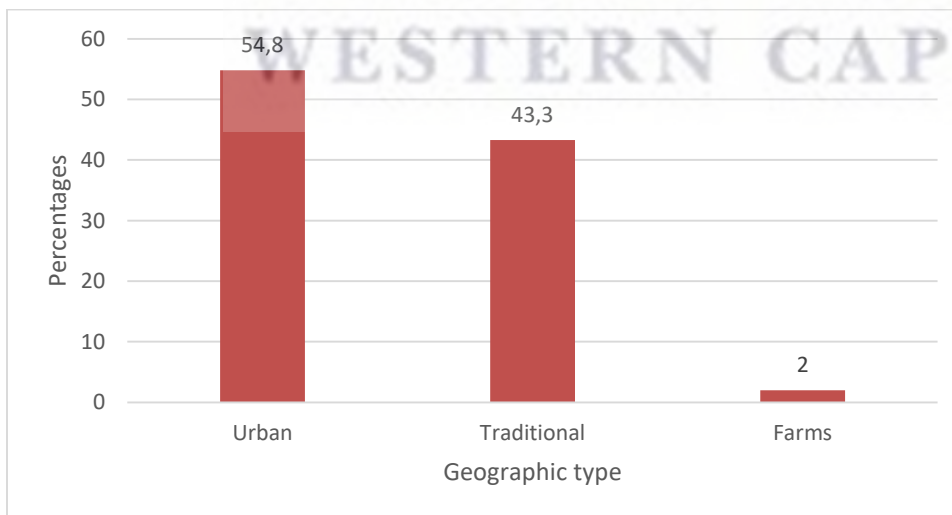


Source; The author's own calculation from QLF 2021 of quarter 4 of 2021

4.1.6 Geographic type

Regarding the Geographic type, the study found that the majority of unemployed females in South Africa are found in urban areas, with more than half (54.8%) as represented in the diagram below, followed by women from traditional areas with a proportion of 43.3%. However, unemployed females in farm areas recorded the lowest with a percentage of 2%.

Figure 4.6: Frequency distribution of female population by geographic type



Source; The author's own calculation from QLF 2021 of quarter 4 of 2021

4.2 Dependent variables related to unemployment

Furthermore, the results regarding the dependent variables (*see Table 4.2 below*) show distributions and patterns of percentages about characteristics that the researcher chose for female unemployment. The table below indicates that 62.2% of women in South Africa are unemployed, while 37.8% are discouraged job seekers. The study has shown that the reason women in South Africa are not in the labour force is that the majority of them (36.7%) have retired or are too old to work; 32.7% are still in school, followed by 21% of women who are not working because they are housewives/homemakers, 6.2% were not working due to health reasons, and 1.9% of women were unable to work due to disability. Women who had no desire for work recorded 0.7%, too young to work 0.5%, and women who were not working due to pregnancy recorded the lowest with a rate of 0.2%. With regards to the period of trying to find work, the study found that the majority of women in South Africa have been in long-term unemployment (more than one year); 39.8% of the unemployed females have been looking for work for more than five years, followed by 26.7% unemployed females who have been looking for work one year-less than three years and 15.6% unemployed females who have been looking for work for three to five years. Looking at work experience, most females in South Africa have never worked before (56.6%), while 43.4% have worked before.



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Table 4.2: Distribution of unemployment related variables

Unemployment status	Frequency	Percentages
Unemployed	2382	62.2%
Discouraged job seekers	1450	37.8%
Total	3832	100%
Reason for not working		
Scholar or student	2278	32.7%
Housewife/homemaker (family considerations/child care)	1464	21%
Health reasons	430	6.2%
Retired or too old for work	2553	36.7%
No desire for work	49	0.7%
Too young to work	38	0.5%
Pregnancy	14	0.2%
Disabled or unable to work	131	1.9%
Total	6957	100%
How long been trying to find work		
Less than 3 months	163	6.9%
3 months-less than 6 months	70	2.9%
6 months- less than 9 months	87	3.7%
9 months- less than 1 year	105	4.4%
1 year-less than 3 years	636	26.7%
3 years- 5 years	372	15.6%
More than 5 years	946	39.8%
Total	2379	100%
Ever Worked		
Yes	4907	43.4%
No	6391	56.6%
Total	11298	100%

Source; The author's own calculation from QLF 2021 of quarter 4 of 2021

4.2.1 Some preliminary calculations

The primary labour market indicators are calculated using the following Female Labour Force Participation rate relationships below. The results revealed that the total number of eligible females (15-64) was 13322, whereas the share of unemployment was 2382. Nevertheless, the calculations below indicate that the unemployment rate for females was 37.9%, and the employment rate stands was 0.379. The female labour force participation rate was recorded at 47.1%, and the labour absorption rate at 29.24%.

- Employment Rate = $\frac{2382}{6278}$
= 0.379
- Unemployment Rate = $\frac{2382}{6278} \times 100$
= 37.9%
- Female Labour Force Participation Rate = $\frac{6278}{13322} \times 100$
= 47.1%
- Working age population = $20919 - (5725 + 1872)$
= 13322
- Labour absorption rate = $\frac{3896}{13322} \times 100$
= 29.24%
- Share of unemployment = 2382

4.3 The relationship between unemployment status and women's characteristics

4.3.1 Unemployment status and age

Table 4.3 below presents the relationship between women's unemployment status and age using the Quarterly Labour Force Survey 2021. The hypothesis being tested is whether the unemployment status of women is influenced by personal characteristics (age). The results below show that 39.4% of unemployed females are between the ages 25-34, which makes the highest percentage, followed by ages 35-44 with a proportion of 25.8%. In the same instance, a high rate of discouraged job seekers also falls between the same age groups 25-34 and 35-44 years with a rate of 34.2% and 24.2%, respectively and decreases with an increase in age from this year. Youth aged 15-24 are the third highest among the unemployed and discouraged job seekers, with a rate of 18.6% and 20.4%. A Chi-square test statistic was used to weigh the level of association between the employment status of females and age. The findings indicate a $p\text{-value} = 0.001 < 0.05$. Therefore, there is a shred of statistical evidence to conclude that there is a significant relationship between the employment status of women and age. The Phi and Cramer's V 0.085 showed a weak association.

Table 4.3 Distribution of unemployment status by age

Unemployment status	Age group					Total
	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	
Unemployed	443 18.6%	939 39.4%	614 25.8%	315 13.2%	70 2.9%	2381 100%
Discouraged job seeker	295 20.4%	496 34.2%	351 24.2%	227 15.7%	80 5.5%	1449 100%
Total	738 19.3%	1435 37.5%	965 25.2%	542 14.2%	150 3.9%	3830 100%

Source: Authors own calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.3.2 Unemployment status and population group

In South Africa, race is an essential differentiating factor in labour market outcomes. This study has shown that among unemployed females, an African/ Black has the highest unemployment rate of females. Table 4.4 below shows that 91.2% of African/Black females are unemployed while the other population groups have lower proportions, with Coloured 7%, Indian/ Asian 1% and White 0.8%. On the other hand, Africans/Blacks also exhibit a high rate of discouraged job seekers with 92.6%, followed by Coloureds who comprise 4.2%, Whites 0.5%, and the lowest rate is observed among Indians with a rate of 0.4%. This could be because there are few job opportunities in South Africa, especially since the start of covid-19. It is well known that women are likely to work in informal sectors of the economy, such as salons, hospitality, retail, day-cares, street vendors etc., that lost the most jobs due to the lockdown regulation. In addition to cross-tabulation between employment status and population group, Pearson Chi-square was used to measure the association. This confirms that the association was statistically significant, with $p=0.000 < 0.05$. i.e. population group is closely associated with employment status. However, the strength of that association using Phi and Cramer's V indicates a weak relationship (0.069).

Table 4.4: Distribution of employment status by population group

Employment status	Population group				
	African/Black	Coloured	Indian	White	Total
Unemployed	2173 91.2%	166 7%	24 1%	19 0.8%	2382 100%
Discouraged job seeker	1376 94.9%	61 4.2%	6 0.4%	7 0.5%	1450 100%
Total	3549 92.6%	227 5.9%	30 0.8%	26 0.7%	3832 100%

Source: Author's calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.3.3 Unemployment status and marital status

Table 4.5 below reports that the highest unemployment rate of about 72.1% is found among females who have never been married. In the same instance, 70.8% of single women are discouraged job seekers. This could be because the majority of people who have never been married/are single are youth, and South Africa is dominated by youth, which constitutes a high unemployment rate in this country. The second highest rate of unemployed females are those who are married, with a rate of 16.1%, and the percentage of discouraged job seekers comprises 17%. On the other hand, women living together like husband and wife recorded 8.1% and 7.1% of the unemployed and discouraged job seekers, respectively. Literature reveals that marriage drives down women's labour force participation (International Labour Organization, 2020). Msimanga (2013) adds that married women are perceived as people who should stay at home and perform household duties. However, low unemployment rates and discouraged job seekers are found among widows/widowers and divorced/separated with a rate of 1.7%, 2.0% and 2.9% and 2.3%, respectively. In order to test the relationship between unemployment status and marital status, Pearson Chi-square statistical test was used. The results indicate $p=0.093 > 0.05$, meaning the test is not statistically significant. However, Phi and Cramer's V cannot be tested.

Table 4.5 Distribution of unemployment status by marital status

Unemployment status	Marital status					Total
	Married	Living together like husband and wife	Widow/Widower	Divorced/Separated	Never married	
Unemployed	383 16.1%	193 8.1%	41 1.7%	47 2.0%	1718 72.1%	2382 100%
Discouraged job seeker	246 17.0%	103 7.1%	42 2.9%	33 2.3%	1026 70.8%	1450 100%
Total	629 16.4%	296 7.7%	83 2.2%	80 2.1%	2744 71.6%	3832 100%

Source: Author's calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.3.4 Unemployment status and level of education

According to Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2011), the probability of females gaining employment increases with higher education. However, this relationship is not applicable in South Africa. For instance, Table 4.6 below shows that the unemployment rate is higher among females with at least some schooling than those without schooling. The table further shows that females who have not completed their secondary level constitute the highest rate of unemployed and discouraged job seekers, with a rate of 45.4% and 36.9%, respectively, followed by women who completed secondary education with 36.9% and 34.7%. Moreover, tertiary recorded the third highest for the unemployed females with 9.8%.

In comparison, a significant difference of less than 1% of the unemployed was observed for females who received no schooling at all, followed by less than primary completed or had primary school education with a rate of 4.1% and 2.9%. Females with less than primary completed were the third highest among those who are discouraged job seekers (5.3%), followed by those with primary completed (5.1%) and tertiary (4.5%). The lowest was found among women with no schooling (1.9%). The chi-square test statistic was performed. The findings showed a p-value of 0.001, which does not exceed the standard value of 0.05, which denotes a significant relationship between the employment status of women and their education status. Moreover, Phi and Cramer's V coefficient was 0.121, signifying a strong association.

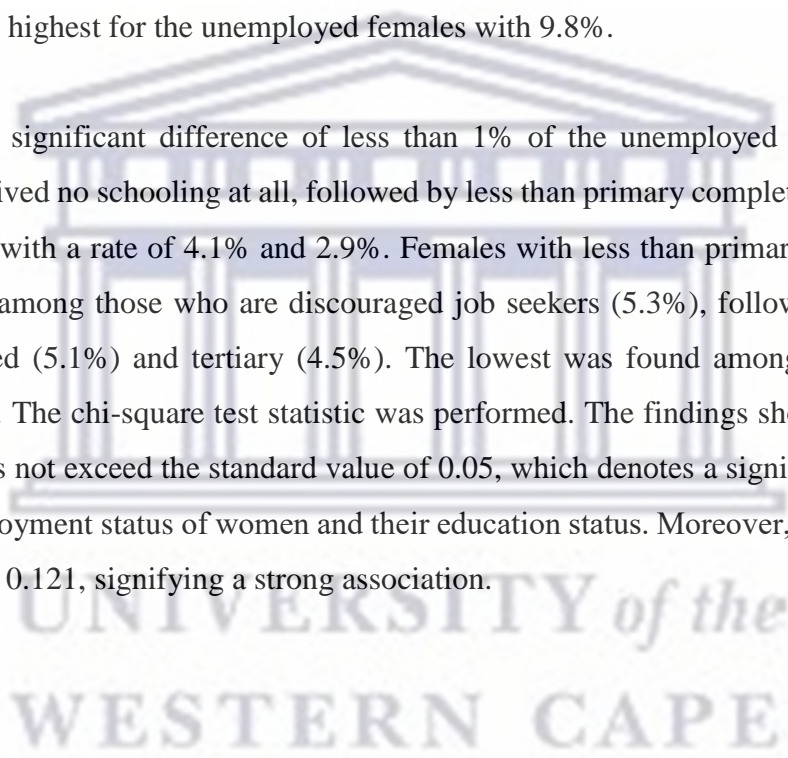


Table 4.6: Distribution of unemployment status by education status

Unemployment status	Education status						Total
	No schooling	Less than primary completed	Primary completed	Secondary not completed	Secondary completed	Tertiary	
Unemployed	21 0.9%	97 4.1%	70 2.9%	1078 45.4%	877 36.9%	232 9.8%	2375 100%
Discouraged job seeker	27 1.9%	77 5.3%	73 5.1%	701 48.5%	501 34.7%	65 4.5%	1444 100%
Total	48 1.3%	174 4.6%	143 3.7%	1779 46.6%	1378 36.1%	297 7.8%	3819 100%

Source: Author's calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.3.5 Employment status and province of residence

Table 4.7 shows the distribution of female unemployment by province. The findings show that, on average, Gauteng, Eastern Cape and KwaZulu Natal have the highest proportion of unemployed females at 19.5%, 18.7% and 16.8%, respectively. In contrast, Free State, North West and Northern Cape had the lowest rate of 7.9%, 3.9% and 2.9%, respectively. However, KwaZulu Natal, Limpopo and Mpumalanga showed the most significant proportion of females who are discouraged job seekers, with 25.2%, 18.8% and 12.2%. Gauteng, the economic hub of the country with plentiful resources, is expected to have a high employment rate. However, it is the opposite due to the influx of migrants from neighboring areas searching for jobs. According to Statistics South Africa (2011), in Eastern Cape and Kwazulu Natal the high unemployment rates may be a result of the informal sector, which by the way, accounts for a larger share of total employment compared to most of the other provinces, and this sector is known to generate short-term/casual jobs. The Chi-square test showed a p-value of 0.001, which does not exceed the cut-off value 0.05. This means a statistically significant relationship exists between women's employment status and the province. Moreover, Phi and Cramer's V coefficients were 0.285, signifying a solid association.

Table 4.7 Distribution of unemployment status by province

Unemployment status	Province									
	WC	EC	NC	FS	KZN	NW	GP	MP	LP	Total
Unemployed	217 9.1%	445 18.7%	49 2.1%	187 7.9%	400 16.8%	93 3.9%	465 19.5%	253 10.6%	273 11.5%	2382 100%
Discouraged job seeker	10 0.7%	169 11.7%	79 5.4%	77 5.3%	365 25.2%	127 8.8%	173 11.9%	177 12.2%	273 18.8%	1450 100%
Total	227 5.9%	614 16%	128 3.3%	264 6.9%	765 20%	220 5.7%	638 16.6%	430 11.2%	546 14.2%	3832 100%

Source: Author's calculation using *Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021*

4.3.6 Unemployment status and geographic type

Table 4.8 shows the distribution of female unemployment by geographic type. The results show more unemployed females in urban areas at 61.7%, while farms have the lowest with 1.9%. On the other hand, the traditional area showed the most significant proportion of females discouraged from looking for work, with 54.6%. The high rate of unemployed females in urban areas is caused by mass migration. On the other hand, traditional settlements are located far from where jobs are available (Leibbrandt *et al.*, 2010). Additionally, female unemployment is low in farms because, firstly, the population rate is low, then white people mostly occupy farms, and most of the people who live in farms work or own the farms. The chi-square test statistic was used to assess the relationship between the employment status of females and geographic type. It showed a p-value of 0.001, indicating the statistical evidence to conclude that there is a significant relationship between the employment status of women and geographic type. To measure the strength of the relationship, Phi and Cramer's V tests 0.179 showed a strong association.

Table 4.8: Distribution of unemployment status and geographic type

Unemployment status	Geographic type			
	Urban	Traditional	Farms	Total
Unemployed	1469 61.7%	867 36.4%	46 1.9%	2382 100%
Discouraged job seeker	630 43.4%	791 54.6%	29 2%	1450 100%
Total	2099 54.8%	1658 43.3%	75 2%	3832 100%

Source: Author's calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.4 The relationship between work experience and unemployed women's characteristics

4.4.1 Women's work experience and age

Table 4.9 shows the distribution of female work experience by age. The difficulty of finding work is drastic for young women aged 15-34. Table 4.9 shows that more than half (52.9%) of women aged 15-24 in South Africa have never worked before, followed by women aged 25-34, with a rate of 22.7%. This high rate is because most people in these age groups are still at school. On the other hand, the results show that females with work experience recorded the highest among adults. The highest rate is seen among ages 55-64 (27.9%), followed by the age group 35-44 (25.2%) and age group 45-54 with 20.7%. This shows that prior work experience is vital in the labour market. To test the relationship between female work experience and age in South Africa, a Chi-square test was performed. The findings showed a p-value of 0.000, less than the standard value of 0.05. Therefore, this means a statistically significant relationship exists between ever worked and age. Nevertheless, the strength of that relationship tested using Phi and Cramer's V shows a robust association (Phi and Cramer's V= 0.548).

Table 4.9: Distribution of women’s work experience and age

Ever worked	Age group					
	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	Total
Yes	146 4%	799 22.2%	909 25.2%	746 20.7%	1007 27.9%	3607 100%
No	3103 52.9%	1334 22.7%	617 10.5%	385 6.6%	430 7.3%	5869 100%
Total	3249 34.3%	2133 22.5%	1526 16.1%	1131 11.9%	1437 15.2%	9476 100%

Source: Author’s calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.4.2 Work experience and population group

Table 4.10 below displays the distribution of females who have work experience by population group. The study discovered 81.5% of African/Black women have work experience. In the same instance, the most considerable rate of women who have never worked before is also within the African/Black population compared to the rest of women of working age from other races (91.3%). This might be because Black women in South Africa have higher labour force participation than other races. Whites and Indians, on the other hand, recorded the lowest rate of women who have never worked before at (1.7%) and (1.9%), respectively. In short, in South Africa, one is more likely to get a job if they are white compared to someone with the same education level who is Black. A Chi-square test was used to assess the relationship between female work experience and population group. The findings support the above argument that the variables have a significant relationship ($p=0.001<0.05$). The strength of that relationship was tested using Phi and Cramer’s V, which shows a strong association (Phi and Cramer’s V= 0.158).

Table 4.10: Distribution of female work experience by population group

Ever worked	Population group				
	Africa/Black	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Total
Yes	3998	541	95	273	4907
	81.5%	11%	1.9%	5.6%	100%
No	5837	325	120	109	6391
	91.3%	5.1%	1.9%	1.7%	100%
Total	9835	866	215	382	11298
	87.1%	7.7%	1.9%	3.4%	100%

Source: Author's calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.4.3 Work experience and marital status

Table 4.11 presents the distribution of females' work experience by marital status. The results show that females who have work experience are found among single (40.6%) rather than married (26.3%) or living together like husband and wife (6.3%). Women within this setup economically are very different from single women. These women tend to do the most significant portion of household work. Nonetheless, it is noted that 22.9% of widowed women had work experience, whereas a low rate was found among those who are divorced or separated. Results prove that 73.8% of those who have never worked are single women, followed by married women at 13.7%, widowed at 7.6%, women living with their partners like husband and wife at 4.1% and divorced 0.8%. The study used a Chi-square statistical test to test the relationship between the females who have/have never worked before and marital status. The output showed a p-value of 0.001. Since the p-value (0.001) is less than the standard value of 0.05, statistically, there is a significant relationship between the two variables. The strength of that relationship was tested using Phi and Cramer's V, which shows a solid association (Phi and Cramer's V= 0.345).

Table 4.11: Distribution of female work experience by marital status

Ever worked	Marital status					
	Married	Living together like husband and wife	Widow/Widower	Divorced or separated	Never married	Total
Yes	1290 26.3%	308 6.3%	1122 22.9%	194 4%	1993 40.6%	4907 100%
No	874 13.7%	259 4.1%	488 7.6%	53 0.8%	4717 73.8%	6391 100%
Total	2164 19.2%	567 5%	1610 14.3%	247 2.2%	6710 59.4%	11298 100%

Source: Author's calculation using *Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021*

4.4.4 Women's work experience and educational level

Table 4.12 depicts the distribution of females with work experience by education status. The rate of females who have work experience in South Africa is highest among females who did not complete their secondary school (40.1%), those who completed secondary with 20.5%, followed by females with less than primary completed with a rate of 14.4% compared to those with higher levels of education with a rate of 8.2%. The explanation for this could be that higher education in South Africa is no longer a guarantee for a job. In the same instance, females who did not complete secondary education recorded the highest for those who have never worked before with a rate of 52.7%, followed by secondary completed with 25.8%. In comparison, the tertiary level recorded the lowest with a rate of 3.5%. A Chi-square test was performed to investigate the relationship between the females who have/have never worked before and their education status. The findings showed a p-value of 0.001, less than the cut-off value 0.05. This means that we have statistical evidence to conclude that there is a significant relationship between work experience and education status. To measure the strength of the association between these two variables, the study used Phi and Cramer's V. The test's findings show a strong association (0.200) between the variables.

Table 4.12: Distribution of female work experience by education status

Ever worked	Education status						Total
	No schooling	Less than primary completed	Primary completed	Secondary not completed	Secondary completed	Tertiary	
Yes	481 9.9%	702 14.4%	334 6.9%	1952 40.1%	999 20.5%	398 8.2%	4866 100%
No	338 5.3%	490 7.7%	319 5%	3359 52.7%	1642 25.8%	220 3.5%	6368 100%
Total	819 7.3%	1192 10.6%	653 5.8%	5311 47.3%	2641 23.5%	618 23.5%	11234 100%

Source: Author's calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.4.5 Women's work experience and province of residence

Table 4.13 depicts the distribution of females who have work experience by province. The findings show that, on average, KwaZulu Natal, Gauteng, Eastern Cape and Western Cape have the highest rate of 18.7%, 13.7%, 13.5% and 10.1%, respectively, of females who have worked before. De Viller (2019) has provided a reason for this high rate. According to De Viller, these provinces have the most job offers. Moreover, KwaZulu Natal (21.1%), Eastern Cape (18.9%), Limpopo (17.3%) and Gauteng (11.9%) had the highest rate of women who have never worked before. According to Statistics South Africa (2011), a high unemployment rate in these provinces may result from the informal sector, which accounts for a larger share of total employment compared to most other provinces. This is supported by Statistics South Africa Q2 (2021), by highlighting that the total share of employment in the informal sector among Gauteng, KwaZulu Natal, Eastern Cape and Limpopo was 689, 445, 312 and 282, respectively. Also, since De Viller (2019) mentioned that these provinces have high opportunities, the influx plays a negative role in employment.

A Chi-square test was performed to investigate the relationship between the female work experience and province. The findings showed a p-value of 0.001, which is less than the cut-off value 0.05. This means that we have statistical evidence to conclude that there is a significant relationship between ever worked and province. To measure the strength of the association between these two variables, the study used Phi and Cramer's V. The findings in all the tests show a strong strength (0.140) in the association between the variables.

Table 4.13: Distribution of female work experience by province

Ever worked	Province									
	WC	EC	NC	FS	KZN	NW	GP	MP	LP	Total
Yes	496 10.1%	759 15.5%	280 5.7%	408 8.3%	916 18.7%	340 6.9%	671 13.7%	489 10%	548 11.2%	4907 100%
No	375 5.9%	1209 18.9%	216 3.4%	422 6.6%	1349 21.1%	398 6.2%	762 11.9%	556 8.7%	1104 17.3%	6391 100%
Total	871 7.7%	1968 17.4%	496 4.4%	830 7.3%	2265 20%	738 6.5%	1433 12.7%	1045 9.2%	1652 14.6%	11298 100%

Source: Author's calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.4.6 Women's work experience and geographic type

The results in the Table 4.14 below show that more females in urban areas have work experience compared to other regions with 60%. On the other hand, Traditional areas showed the largest proportion of females who have never worked in their lives, with a rate of 50.2%. In traditional regions, lack of employment may be due to spatial isolation and the narrow range of available opportunities. For traditional areas, some of the most effective bridges into the labour market (such as education and training) may be limited or inaccessible, and opportunities to fulfil aspirations may be restricted (Kwenda, 2020). However, farm areas with low population rates recorded the least.

A Chi-square test was performed to determine the relationship between females who ever worked (yes and no). The findings show a p-value of 0.001, which is lower than the standard value of 0.05. Since the p-value is less than the standard value of 0.05, this means that there is a relationship between these two variables. To quantify the strength of the association between these two variables, the study used Phi and Cramer's V. The findings in all the tests show a strong association between the variables (0.129).

Table 4.14: Distribution of female work experience by geographic type

Ever worked	Geographic Type			
	Urban	Traditional	Farms	Total
Yes	2943 60%	1830 37.3%	134 2.7%	4907 100%
No	3051 47.7%	3207 50.2%	133 2.1%	6391 100%
Total	5994 53.1%	5037 44.6%	267 2.4%	11298 100%

Source: Authors own calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.5 Women's unemployed characteristics and the reason of working of not

4.5.1 Main reason of women unemployment and age

Table 4.15 depicts why currently unemployed females in South Africa are outside the labour force by age. The results in the table below indicate that females in the 15-24 age group, 93.4% were not working. The reason might be that females in that age group were still scholars or students. Females who were housewives/ homemakers were highest among the ages 25-34, with a rate of 23.8%. In developing countries, particularly South Africa, young women are less likely to be employed because of early marriage. This results in complete withdrawal from the labour force (Leibbrandt *et al.*, 2010). However, the rate is more or less the same for age group 35-44 (23.3%) and age 45-54 (23.2%). On the other hand, those who could not work for health reasons were high among the elderly (55-64), which means older people are too tired to work. Women who showed no desire to work were again found among age group 55-64 with a rate of 27.7%. This is because reaching this age means retirement in South Africa; hence they recorded 94.3% among the retired.

Furthermore, females who were too young to work were only in age group 15-24 with a percentage of 100%. Lastly, many young women drop out of school because of pregnancy, and they, therefore, end up with less education and no skills to help them in the labour market. Table 4.15 shows further that youth is not working due to pregnancy, with a rate of 50% for both ages 15-24 and 25-34. A Chi-square test was done to investigate the relationship between women's age and the reasons women are not working. The findings showed a $p\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$, less than the cut-off value of 0.05. This means that the relationship between the variables is statistically significant. To measure the strength of the association between these two variables, the study used Phi (1.086), which showed a very strong association between the variable and Cramer's V (0.543), which showed a weak association.

Table 4.15: Distribution of the reasons for not working by age

Reason for not working	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	Total
Scholar or student	2120 93.4%	127 5.6%	17 0.7%	2 0.1%	4 0.2%	2270 100%
Housewife/homemaker(family consideration/child care)	145 10.3%	334 23.8%	328 23.3%	326 23.2%	272 19.4%	1405 100%
Health reasons	31 7.7%	49 12.2%	64 15.9%	108 26.9%	150 37.3%	402 100%
Retired or too old for work	3 0.4%	1 0.1%	3 0.4%	41 4.9%	791 94.3%	839 100%
No desire to work	12 25.5%	10 21.3%	8 17%	4 8.5%	13 27.7%	47 100%
Too young to work	36 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	36 100%
Pregnancy	7 50%	7 50%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	14 100%
Disabled or unable to work	10 8%	16 12.8%	37 29.6%	37 29.6%	25 20%	125 100%
Total	2364 46%	544 10.6%	457 8.9%	518 10.1%	1255 24.4%	5738 100%

Source: Author's calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.5.2 The main reason of women unemployment and population group

The results below expose the inequities in the Black community of South Africa. The reason for not working due to pregnancy is significantly high among the Black population (92.9%), followed by the Coloured population (7.1%). This could be related to the differences in sexual behavior. Table 4.16 shows that a high percentage (81.5%) of Black women are not working because they are housewives/homemakers. This could be because Black women tend to shoulder more childcare and home responsibilities than their white counterparts (3.9%). Women who cannot work for health reasons are high among the Black population, yet again, compared to Indians and whites in South Africa, the Black population have lower levels of access to proper medical care. The rate of women who have retired and some too tired to work is also seen among the Black population, with 79.3% and 75.5%, respectively, followed by the coloured population, with 8.5% and 20.4%. Black youth, especially females, are predominant in South Africa, hence why the high rate of those too young to work is found among the Black population (89.5%), and many of them are still scholars/students (90.8%). A Chi-square test statistic was used to weigh the association level between the average unemployment duration and age. The findings indicate a $p\text{-value} = 0,001 < 0.05$. Therefore, there is statistical evidence to conclude that there is a significant relationship between duration of unemployment and population group. The Phi (0.193) independently showed a strong association. On the other hand, Cramer's V was 0.111, denoting a moderate association.

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Table 4.16: Distribution of women's reasons for not working by population group

Reason for not working	Black/ African	Coloured	Indian/ Asian	White	Total
Scholar or student	2069 90.8%	134 5.9% ³	32 1.4%	43 1.9%	2278 100%
Housewife/homemaker(family consideration/child care)	1193 81.5%	152 10.4%	62 4.2%	57 3.9%	1464 100%
Health reasons	348 80.9%	65 15.1%	7 1.6%	10 2.3%	430 100%
Retired or too old for work	2025 79.3%	216 8.5%	78 3.1%	234 9.2%	2553 100%
No desire to work	37 75.5%	10 20.4%	0 0%	2 4.1%	49 100%
Too young to work	34 89.5%	3 7.9%	0 0%	1 2.6%	38 100%
Pregnancy	13 92.9%	1 7.1%	0 0%	0 0%	14 100%
Disabled or unable to work	102 77.9%	20 15.3%	3 2.3%	6 4.6%	131 100%
Total	5821 83.7%	601 8.6%	182 2.6%	353 5.1%	6957 100%

Source: Author's calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.5.3 The main reason for unemployment and marital status

Table 4.17 shows the distribution of the reasons women are not working by marital status. The results reveal that the currently unemployed single women are not working because they are still scholars or students compared to the rest of the working-age women, with a rate of 98.4%. In comparison, married women sit at home performing housewife duties (47.1%). This is supported

by Msimanga (2013), where Msimanga noted in his study that married women are seen as people who stay home and perform household duties. The results below also reveal that the rate of health complications is high among single women (54.7%), causing them not to be able to work. Retirees are found among widows/widowers, with a proportion of 51.9%. Women who have lost the desire to work are found among the single, probably because they are discouraged by the scarcity of jobs in South Africa. Moreover, most single women are not working due to pregnancy and disability, with a rate of 85.7% and 67.2%, respectively, followed by those married at 7.1% and 14.5%, respectively. Chi-square was conducted with a p-value=0.000 <0.05. However, this indicates a statistically significant relationship between the reason for not working and marital status. Furthermore, Phi and Cramer's V, respectively 0.819 and 0.409, showed a strong association.

Table 4.17: Distribution of the reasons for not working by marital status

Reason for not working	Married	Living together like husband and wife	Widow/ Widower	Divorced or separated	Never Married	Total
Scholar or student	22 1.0%	8 0.4%	6 0.3% ¹	1 0.0%	2241 98.4%	2278 100%
Housewife/homemaker(family consideration/child care)	690 47.1%	128 8.7%	99 6.8%	26 1.8%	521 35.6%	1464 100%
Health reasons	90 20.9% ¹	19 4.4%	63 14.7%	23 5.3%	235 54.7%	430 100%
Retired or too old for work	635 24.9%	42 1.6%	1324 51.9%	105 4.1%	447 17.5%	2553 100%
No desire to work	6 12.2%	8 16.3%	6 12.2%	1 2.0%	28 57.1%	49 100%
Too young to work	0 0%	0 0%	2 5.3%	0 0%	36 94.7%	38 100%
Pregnancy	1 7.1% ¹	1 7.1%	0 0%	0 0%	12 85.7%	14 100%
Disabled or unable to work	19 14.5%	5 3.8%	14 10.7%	5 3.8%	88 67.2%	131 100%
Total	1463 21%	211 3%	1514 21.8%	161 2.3%	3608 51.9%	6957 100%

Source: Author's calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.5.4 Main reason for not working and women's level of education

Table 4.18 below shows that females who did not complete secondary school were not working. The reason might be that they are too young to work (42.1%), and most females were scholars or students (73%), 48.5% were housewives or homemakers. In comparison, women who were housewives/homemakers with tertiary education recorded the lowest rate of 3.3%. Educated women are the least likely than less educated to get married because they choose to establish themselves in demanding careers before they even consider marriage. Moreover, in the same instance, females who did not complete secondary school were not working because they were too old to work or retired (26.1%), followed by females who had no desire to work (38.8%). About 50% of females who did not complete secondary education were not working because they were pregnant, and 37.3% were not working because they were disabled. Nonetheless, when Pearson Chi-square was used to test the hypothesis, the findings indicated that an association exists between the reason women are not working and education status with $p=0.000<0.05$. Moreover, when the strength of this relationship was measured using Phi (0.552), and Cramer's V test results (0.247) indicated a strong association.



Table 4.18: Distribution of the reasons for not working by education status

Reason for not working	No schooling	Less than primary completed	Primary completed	Secondary not completed	Secondary completed	Tertiary	Total
Scholar or student	5 0.2%	48 2.1%	114 5%	1659 73%	407 17.9%	39 1.7%	2272 100%
Housewife/homemaker(family consideration/child care)	71 4.9%	166 11.4%	84 5.8%	708 48.5%	383 26.2%	48 3.3%	1460 100%
Health reasons	54 12.7%	100 23.6%	36 8.5%	157 37%	55 13%	22 5.2%	424 100%
Retired or too old for work	601 23.8%	640 25.3%	237 9.4%	658 26.1%	210 8.3%	179 7.1%	2525 100%
No desire to work	3 6.1%	8 16.3%	4 8.2%	19 38.8%	10 20.4%	5 10.2%	49 100%
Too young to work	1 2.6%	3 7.9%	3 7.9%	16 42.1%	15 39.5%	0 0%	38 100%
Pregnancy	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	7 50%	5 35.7%	2 14.3%	14 100%
Disabled or unable to work	26 20.6%	29 23%	13 10.3%	47 37.3%	8 6.3%	3 2.4%	126 100%
Total	761 11%	994 14.4%	491 7.1%	3271 47.4%	1093 15.8%	298 4.3%	6908 100%

Source: Author's calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.5.5 Main reason for not working and province of residence

Table 4.19 below shows that the high levels of unemployment in some provinces are associated with education. The majority of females in KwaZulu Natal were not working for the reason that they were still scholars or students (20.9%), followed by females in Eastern Cape and Limpopo who were not working due to the same reason with a percentage of 16.7% and 14.8% respectively. Societal division of labour on the basis of labour still prevails, especially in Zulu, Xhosa and Venda homes hence why a majority of women in these provinces recorded the highest rate for those who were not working. The reason might be family consideration or child care, with a rate of 23.3% in KwaZulu Natal, 18.9% in Eastern Cape and 17.4% in Limpopo. In addition, females from Eastern

Cape, KwaZulu Natal and Free State were not working because they suffered from health issues, with EC leading at 21.9%, KwaZulu Natal (18.8%) and Free State (14.2%). Most women not working because they retired were found in Eastern Cape compared to the rest of the women of working age in other provinces. On the other hand, women who were too young to work were also found in Eastern Cape (31.6%). According to Stats SA (2019), the mid-year population estimates revealed that Eastern Cape had the highest youth population. This could be due to the fact that Eastern Cape is South Africa's poorest province, with the highest rate of outward migration to other provinces. This leaves it with the highest proportion of both children and the elderly hence why Eastern Cape had the highest rate for both too young and retired. Gauteng and Western Cape recorded the highest rate of women not working because they had no desire to work, with 24.5% and 20.4% correspondingly. Females who were not working due to disability were found to be the highest in Eastern Cape (23.7%). Furthermore, most females in Gauteng were not working because they were pregnant, with a proportion of 35.7%.

Besides cross-tabulation, Pearson Chi-square was used to test the association between the reason women are working and the province. The results from the Pearson Chi-square test show a significant relationship between the reasons for not working for currently unemployed females and the province of residence given the p value = $0.001 < 0.05$. Moreover, when Phi 0.207 and Cramer's V (0.078) were used to measure the strength of the association, the findings showed a moderate and a weak association, respectively. Phi (0.095) and Cramer's V (0.067) were used to measure the strength of the association. The findings both showed a weak association.

Table 4.19: Distribution of the reasons for not working by province

Reason for not working	WC	EC	NC	FS	KZN	NW	GP	MP	LP	Total
Scholar or student	185 8.1%	381 16.7%	86 3.8%	184 8.1%	475 20.9%	124 5.4%	276 12.1%	230 10.1%	337 14.8%	2278 100%
Housewife/home maker(family consideration/child care)	153 10.5%	276 18.9%	72 4.9%	73 5%	341 23.3%	114 7.8%	113 7.7%	67 4.6%	255 17.4%	1464 100%
Health reasons	44 10.2%	94 21.9%	43 10%	61 14.2%	81 18.8%	30 7%	23 5.3%	31 7.2%	23 5.3%	430 100%
Retired or too old for work	208 8.1%	494 19.3%	119 4.7%	194 7.6%	485 19%	181 7.1%	287 11.2%	202 7.9%	383 15%	2553 100%
No desire to work	10 20.4%	7 14.3%	2 4.1%	5 10.2%	2 4.1%	6 12.2%	12 24.5%	2 4.1%	3 6.1%	49 100%
Too young to work	1 2.6%	12 31.6%	1 2.6%	1 2.6%	5 13.2%	4 10.5%	4 10.5%	9 23.7%	1 2.6%	38 100%
Pregnancy	3 21.4%	3 21.4%	0 0%	0 0%	2 14.3%	1 7.1%	5 35.7%	0 0%	0 %	14 100%
Disabled or unable to work	18 13.7%	31 23.7%	6 4.6%	8 6.1%	15 11.5%	18 13.7%	7 5.3%	17 13%	11 8.4%	131 100%
Total	622 8.9%	1298 18.7%	329 4.7%	526 7.6%	1406 20.2%	478 6.9%	727 10.4%	558 8%	1013 14.6%	6957 100%

Source: Author's calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.5.6 The main reason of not working and geographic type

The results below (Table 4.20) show that 54.4% of females who were not working in urban areas were still scholars or students, while traditional areas had a high rate of females who were not working because they were participating in household duties (50.7%), such as child care that limited them from participating in the labour force. According to World Health Organization (2021), people in urban areas breathe polluted air and noise pollution, leading to higher levels of non-communicable diseases and injuries. As a result, urban areas recorded the highest rate of females not working due to health issues (57%). The majority of females who were not working

because they had retired were found in urban areas, 52.9%, while females who were not working because they were too young to work recorded 52.6%. Furthermore, women who were not working because they were pregnant and disabled were found in urban areas with a rate of 85.7% and 57.3%, respectively. Pearson Chi-square was used to test the association between the reasons why currently unemployed females are not working and the province. The results from the Pearson Chi-square test show a significant relationship between the reasons for not working for currently unemployed females and the province of residence given the p value = $0.001 < 0.05$. Phi (0.095) and Cramer's V (0.067) both indicated a weak association.

Table 4.20: Distribution of the reason for not working by geographic type

Reason for not working	Urban	Traditional	Farms	Total
Scholar or student	1239 54.4%	991 43.5%	48 2.1%	2278 100%
Housewife/homemaker(family consideration/child care)	668 45.6%	742 50.7%	54 3.7%	1464 100%
Health reasons	245 57%	174 40.5%	11 2.6%	430 100%
Retired or too old for work	1350 52.9%	1140 44.7%	63 2.5%	2553 100%
No desire to work	39 79.6%	9 18.4%	1 2%	49 100%
Too young to work	20 52.6%	18 47.4%	0 0%	38 100%
Pregnancy	12 85.7%	2 14.3%	0 0%	14 100%
Disabled or unable to work	75 57.3%	51 38.9%	5 3.8%	131 100%
Total	3648 52.4%	3127 44.9%	182 2.6%	6957 100%

Source: Author's calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.6 Unemployment duration and female's sociodemographic characteristics

4.6.1 Unemployment duration and age of women in working age

Table 4.21 depicts the time unemployed females in South Africa have been searching for employment by age. The study shows that unemployed females in the 25-34 age group have been looking for paid work for less than 3 months (39.4%), followed by the age group 35-44 (28.8%). About 44.3% and 21.4% of unemployed females in the 25-34 and 35-44 age groups have been looking for work for 3 months. More than half of the females aged 25-34 have been searching for paid work for 6 months (50.6%). Moreover, the age group 15-24 saw an increase of 40% for women who have been looking for work for 9 months, followed by women in ages 25-34 with a rate of 32.4%. The results further show that of unemployed women in the 25-34 age group, 38.5% have been looking for paid work for 1 year, while about 30.8% of the females have been seeking paid work for 1 year. Results show that females who have been searching for paid work for 3 to 5 years in the 25-34 and 35-44 age groups recorded 43% and 24.5%, respectively. On the other hand, unemployed females who spent much time seeking employment of more than 5 years were found within the age 25-34 (30.8%), followed by women in the 35-44 age group (31.2%). When looking at the time unemployed females in South Africa have been searching for employment by age groups of interest, it is clear that young people are at the most significant risk of experiencing prolonged unemployment. A Chi-square test statistic was used to weigh the association level between the average unemployment duration and age. The findings indicate a $p\text{-value} = 0,001 < 0.05$. Therefore, there is a piece of statistical evidence to conclude that there is a significant relationship between the duration of unemployment and age. The Phi (0.332) independently showed a strong association. On the other hand, Cramer's V was 0.166, denoting a strong association.

Table 4.21 Distribution of duration of unemployment by age

Length of unemployment	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	Total
Less than 3 months	30 18.4%	64 39.3%	47 28.8%	18 11%	4 2.5%	163 100%
3 months – less than 6 months	12 17.1%	31 44.3%	15 21.4%	10 14.3%	2 2.9%	70 100%
6 months - less than 9 months	16 18.4%	44 50.6%	16 18.4%	11 12.6%	0 0.0%	87 100%
9 months- less than 1 year	42 40%	34 32.4%	14 13.3%	12 11.4%	3 2.9%	105 100%
1 year- less than 3 years	196 30.8%	245 38.5%	138 21.7%	49 7.7%	8 1.3%	636 100%
3 years- 5 years	84 22.6%	160 43%	91 24.5%	29 7.8%	8 2.2	372 100%
More than 5 years	60 6.3%	358 37.9%	295 31.2%	186 19.7%	46 4.9%	945 100%

Source: Author's calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.6.2 Female's unemployment duration by population group

Table 4.22 below reveals that the Black and Coloured population have the highest risk of spending much time searching for jobs. Amongst all women of working age who were not working and had been looking for work for less than 3 months, Blacks recorded the highest with a rate of 91.4%, followed by Coloureds with 7.4%. Additionally, 92.9% of unemployed women searching for work for 3 months were found among Black women, and Coloured women recorded 5.7% and Indian women 1.4%. Among women who have been seeking paid work for 6 months, Blacks recorded the highest yet again with 80.5%, among Coloureds 18.4% and among Indians 1.1%. Black women who were not working and had been looking for work for 9 months recorded 83.8%, followed by Coloured women (11.4%) and Indian women 2.9%. The study further shows that 91.5% of Black females have been looking for work for 1 year and Coloureds (6.9%), and about 90.6% of Black females have been searching for paid work for 3 to 5 years, followed by Coloureds with a rate of 6.7%. Furthermore, women who were not working and indicated a long search for employment of

more than 5 years were found among Black women (93.1%) followed by Coloured women (5.4%). The percentage share of the duration of unemployment of White women throughout remained the lowest. This could be because Whites are more likely to be employed because of social and economic class. The observed Chi-square test had a p-value=0.006 <0.05; therefore, there is statistical evidence to conclude that there is a significant relationship between the variables. The Phi 0.124 showed a moderate association, and Cramer's V 0.072 showed a weak association.

Table 4.22: Distribution of unemployment duration by population group

Length of unemployment	African/Black	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Total
Less than 3 months	149 91.4%	12 7.4%	2 1.2%	0 0%	163 100%
3 months –less than 6 months	65 92.9%	4 5.7%	1 1.4%	0 0.0%	70 100%
6 months - less than 9 months	70 80.5%	16 18.4%	1 1.1%	0 0%	87 100%
9 months- less than 1 year	88 83.8%	12 11.4%	3 2.9%	2 1.9%	105 100%
1 year- less than 3 years	582 91.5%	44 6.9%	4 0.6%	6 0.9%	636 100%
3 years- 5 years	337 90.6%	25 6.7%	6 1.6%	4 1.1%	372 100%
More than 5 years	881 93.1%	51 5.4%	7 0.7%	7 0.7%	946 100%

Source: Author's calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.6.3 Female's unemployment duration by marital status

Table 4.23 below indicates that 73.6% of unemployed females who were never married have been looking for paid work for less than 3 months recorded, whereas married women recorded 14.7%. Those looking for work for 3 months were highest among single women (78.6%), followed by married women with 11.4%. Moreover, 65.5% of women who were not working and had been looking for work for 6 months were found within single women, and married women were 16.1%. 80% of unemployed single females have been looking for work for 9 months, followed by married

women 12.4% and women living with partners like husband and wife (5.7%). The results below further show that single and married women spent much time searching for paid employment. In addition, the study indicates that 74.8% of Single women who were not working have been looking for work for 1 year, married women recorded 13.7%, and women living with partners like husband and wife (8.5%). However, unemployed women who had been looking for work for 3 to 5 years were highest among single women (77.2%), followed by married women (14.5%) and women living with partners like husband and wife (6.5%). Looking at Unemployed women who have been searching for work for more than 5 years, single women recorded the highest yet again compared to the rest of the women of working age with a rate of 66.8%, married women recorded 19.3%, and women living with partners like husband and wife were 9%. The Chi-square test statistic was performed. The findings showed a p-value of 0.16, which exceeds the standard value of 0.05, in turn, denotes that the relationship between the average duration of unemployment and marital status is not statistically significant. Therefore, Phi and Cramer's V cannot be tested.

Table 4.23: Distribution of unemployment duration by marital status

Length of unemployment	Married	Living together like husband and wife	Widow/ Widower	Divorced/ Separated	Never married	Total
Less than 3 months	24 14.7%	10 6.1%	4 2.5%	5 3.1%	120 73.6%	163 100%
3 months – less than 6 months	8 11.4%	5 7.1%	0 0%	2 2.9%	55 78.6%	70 100%
6 months - less than 9 months	14 16.1%	13 14.9%	1 1.1%	2 2.3%	57 65.5%	87 100%
9 months- less than 1 year	13 12.4%	6 5.7%	1 1.0%	1 1.0%	84 80%	105 100%
1 year- less than 3 years	87 13.7%	54 8.5%	8 1.3%	11 1.7%	476 74.8%	636 100%
3 years- 5 years	54 14.5%	24 6.5%	2 0.5%	5 1.3%	287 77.2%	372 100%
More than 5 years	183 19.3%	85 9%	25 2.6%	21 2.2%	632 66.8%	946 100%

Source: Author's calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.6.4 Female's unemployment duration and educational level

Table 4.23 shows that unemployed females who did not complete secondary education have been looking for paid work for less than 3 months (40%), followed by women who completed secondary school with a rate of 37.7% and women with tertiary education with a rate of 12.3%. Regarding women who have been looking for work for 3 months, 41.4% were found among those who did not complete secondary education, women who completed secondary school (37.1%) and women with tertiary education (15.7%). Moreover, 40.2 % of unemployed females who completed secondary education have been searching for work for 6 months, followed by 39.1% among women who did not complete secondary school and 11.5% among women with tertiary education. It can be observed from the results below that women who did not complete secondary education remained predominantly the group that experienced time in search of employment. On the contrary, the study further shows that women with secondary education spent much time in the search. As depicted below, a majority of women who completed secondary education have been looking for work for more than 1 year (42.4%) compared to the rest of women of working age.

In contrast, women who did not complete secondary school have been looking for work for 3 to 5 years and more than 5 years, with a rate of 43.2% and 52.2%. Women with no schooling, primary and tertiary education were the lowest throughout. This may be because unemployed individuals with higher education are better informed about the labour market. In contrast, women without schooling and primary education are open regarding jobs. They are unregulated labour, and lack of qualification can be a barrier to entering the labour market. The Chi-square test statistic between the average duration of unemployment and education status showed a p-value of 0.001, meaning there is a significant relationship. Furthermore, Phi (0.205) showed a strong association, and Cramer's V 0.092 showed a weak association.

Table 4.24: Distribution of unemployment duration by education status

Length of unemployment	No schooling	Less than primary completed	Primary completed	Secondary not completed	Secondary completed	Tertiary	Total
Less than 3 months	2 1.2%	5 3.1%	6 3.7%	68 42%	61 37.7%	20 12.3%	162 100%
3 months –less than 6 months	1 1.4%	2 2.9%	1 1.4%	29 41.4%	26 37.1%	11 15.7%	70 100%
6 months - less than 9 months	0 0%	6 6.9%	2 2.3%	34 39.1%	35 40.2%	10 11.5%	87 100%
9 months- less than 1 year	0 0%	4 3.8%	6 5.7%	29 27.6%	52 49.5%	14 13.3%	105 100%
1 year- less than 3 years	2 0.3%	13 2.1%	10 1.6%	263 41.5%	269 42.4%	77 12.1%	634 100%
3 years- 5 years	2 0.5%	17 4.6%	7 1.9%	160 43.2%	139 37.6%	45 12.2%	370 100%
More than 5 years	14 1.5%	51 5.4%	38 4%	493 52.2%	292 30.9%	56 5.9%	944 100%

Source: Author's calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.6.5 Female's unemployment duration by province of residence

Table 4.25 indicate the length of time unemployed females have been looking for work according to provinces of residence. The study shows that the majority of women in Mpumalanga have been searching for paid employment for less than 3 months, with a percentage of 23.9%. Based on the results below, unemployed women in KwaZulu Natal have been looking for work for 6 months (24.3%). On the other hand, among unemployed women seeking paid work for 6 months, most were found in Eastern Cape, with 20.7% and about 19% of unemployed females in Gauteng looking for paid work for 9 months. Moreover, the study shows that 19.2% of females in Gauteng have been looking for work for 1 year, and about 21.5% of females in the Eastern Cape have been looking for work for 3 to 5 years. For women who have been looking for work for more than 5 years, the majority were found in Gauteng (24.1%) and EC (21.4%). It can be observed from the table that Northern Cape showed the lowest rate of women who experienced a long time looking

for paid employment. The results showed disparities in the percentage shares of unemployed women experiencing long-term unemployment, with Gauteng having the highest proportion of women suffering for more than 5 years. The study has also used a Chi-square test to examine the relationship average duration of unemployment and province with $p= 0.001 < 0.05$, meaning the relationship is statistically significant. More so, Phi displayed a very strong association with 0.268, and Cramer's V showed a moderate association with 0.110.

Table 4.25: Distribution of unemployment duration by province

Length of unemployment	WC	EC	NC	FS	KZN	NW	GP	MP	LP	Total
Less than 3 months	8 4.9%	22 13.5%	6 3.7%	12 7.4%	38 23.3%	4 2.5%	12 7.4%	39 23.9%	22 13.5%	163 100%
3 months – less than 6 months	6 8.6%	11 15.7%	1 1.4%	9 12.9%	17 24.3%	3 4.3%	9 12.9%	4 5.7%	10 14.3%	70 100%
6 months - less than 9 months	15 17.2%	18 20.7%	4 4.6%	4 4.6%	13 14.9%	1 1.1%	8 9.2%	12 13.8%	12 13.8%	87 100%
9 months- less than 1 year	11 10.5%	18 17.1%	5 4.8%	9 8.6%	12 11.4%	5 4.8%	20 19%	11 10.5%	14 13.3%	105 100%
1 year- less than 3 years	88 13.8%	95 14.9%	10 1.6%	38 6%	121 19%	17 2.7%	122 19.2%	64 10.1%	81 12.7%	636 100%
3 years- 5 years	33 8.9%	80 21.5%	6 1.6%	31 8.3%	49 13.2%	19 5.1%	63 16.9%	33 8.9%	58 15.6%	372 100%
More than 5 years	54 5.7%	202 21.4%	14 1.5%	85 9%	150 15.9%	44 4.7%	228 24.1%	93 9.8%	76 8%	946 100%

Source: Author's calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.6.6 Female unemployment duration and geographic type

The study reveals that most women who were not working and living in urban areas have been looking for work for less than 3 months, 54.6%, followed by unemployed women living in traditional areas with a rate of 44.8%. Among Women seeking paid work for 3 months, the majority were found in urban areas 55.7%, traditional areas 40% and farm areas 4.3%. About 55.2% of unemployed females in urban areas have been looking for work for 6 months, while traditional areas recorded 40.2% and farm areas the lowest with 4.6%. Moreover, 58.1% of

unemployed women found in urban areas have been looking for work for 9 months. About 39% were found in traditional areas and 2.9% in farm areas. The results in Table 4.26 further shows that women in urban areas experienced a long search for employment compared to women from other areas. The study indicates that 61.5% of unemployed women who were staying in urban areas have been looking for work for 1 year, followed by women who have been searching for paid work for 3 to 5 years (60.8%) and women who have been looking for paid work for more than 5 years (64.9%). This is acceptable because urban areas have better opportunities, so many people move to urban areas. However, the areas expected to have high percentages (traditional and farm areas) constituted the lowest. This may be because many people from these areas are migrating to urban areas. The observed chi-square had a p value= 0.049<0.05. This means that the relationship between the variables is statistically significant. Phi and Cramer's V cannot be tested.

Table 4.26: Distribution of unemployment duration by geographic type

Length of unemployment	Urban	Traditional	Farms	Total
Less than 3 months	89 54.6%	73 44.8%	1 0.6%	163 100%
3 months –less than 6 months	39 55.7%	28 40%	3 4.3%	70 100%
6 months - less than 9 months	48 55.2%	35 40.2%	4 4.6%	87 100%
9 months- less than 1 year	61 58.1%	41 39%	3 2.9%	105 100%
1 year- less than 3 years	391 61.5%	232 36.5%	13 2%	636 100%
3 years- 5 years	226 60.8%	143 38.4%	3 0.8%	372 100%
More than 5 years	614 64.9%	313 33.1%	19 2%	946 100%

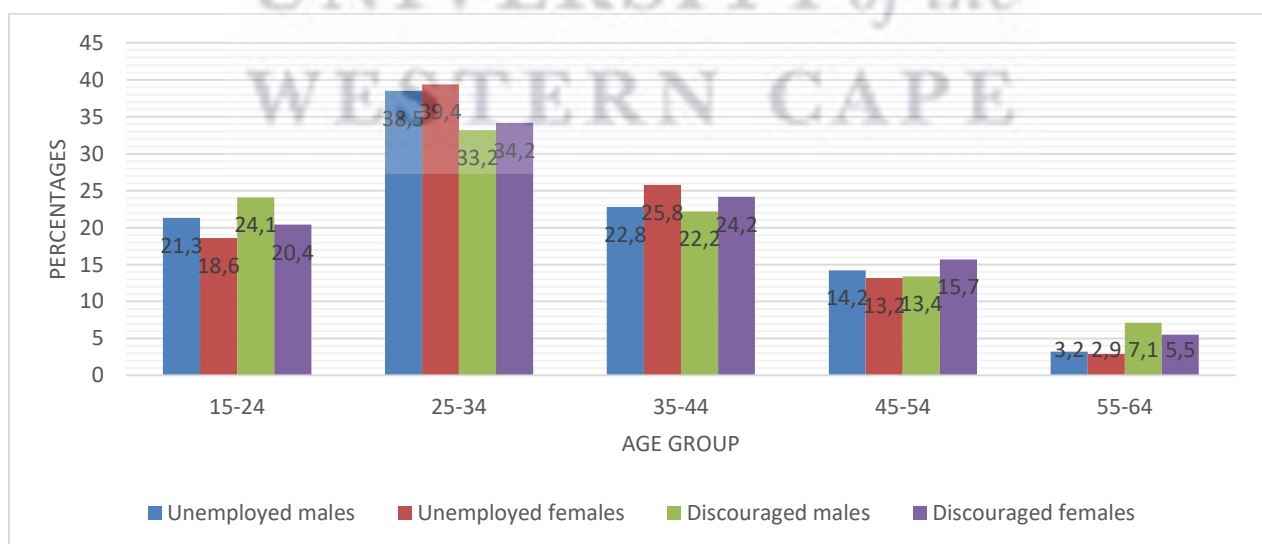
Source: Author's calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.7 The comparison between males and female's unemployment status

4.7.1 Unemployment status and age

The unemployment rate in South Africa seems to have a gender dimension. Also, it is essential to note that Covid-19 has harmed both women's and men's employment. However, in this section, the study looks at the unemployment status by comparing the findings of males with that of females. The results below (Figure 6) reveal that, on average, in South Africa, the unemployment rate of people aged 15-24 was higher for men (21.3%) than for women (18.6%). Nevertheless, even as men's unemployment rate overtook that of women in this age group, women's unemployment rate continued to increase in age groups 25-34 and 35-44 with a rate of 39.4% and 25.8% for women compared to 38.5% and 22.8% for men. The results show that men were less likely to be discouraged job seekers than females. Men in the 25-34 age group recorded 33.2%, while females recorded 34.2%. For ages 35-44 and 45-54, men recorded lower rates of discouraged job seekers, with 22.2% and 13.4%, while females recorded 24.2% and 15.7%, respectively. The Chi-square test statistic was performed. The findings showed a p-value of 0.001, which is less than 0.05, in turn, denotes a significant relationship between the unemployment status of men and age. Moreover, Phi and Cramer's V coefficient was 0.101, signifying a moderate association.

Figure 4.7: Distribution of unemployment status by age

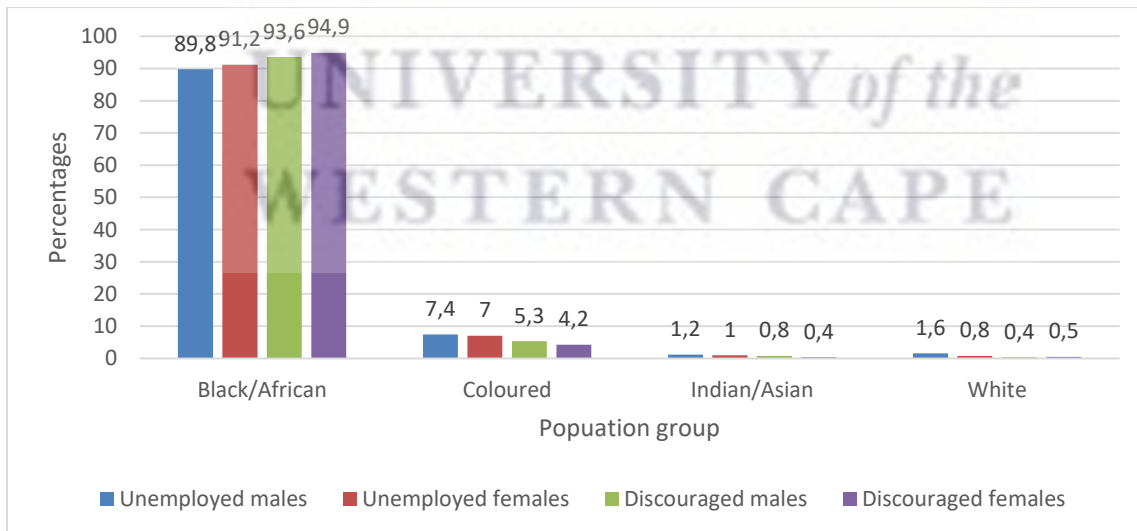


Source: Author's calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.7.2 Unemployment status and population group

According to Statistics South Africa (2021), equal opportunities and equal treatment in the labour market are at the core of decent work. Unfortunately, Black women in South Africa still face additional challenges that hinder them from accessing employment. Looking at the actual results below, when compared to females, there are more unemployed Black women than men. The unemployment rate among Black women was 91.2% in the fourth quarter of 2021 compared to 89.8% among Black/African men, 7.4% among Coloured men, 1.2% among Indian men and 1.6% among White men. In contrast, the unemployment rate for women from other population groups is lower than for men. In addition, when comparing the two genders, the results in Figure 7 reveal that Black women were more discouraged from seeking employment compared to the rest of men in working age, with a rate of 94.9%. This may be because the discouraged Black population has been unemployed for more years compared to other races. Pearson Chi-square was used to measure the association. This confirms that the relationship is statistically significant, with $p=0.002 < 0.05$. i.e. population group is closely associated with employment status. However, the strength of that association using Phi and Cramer's V indicates a weak relationship (0.069).

Figure 4.8: Distribution of unemployment status by population group

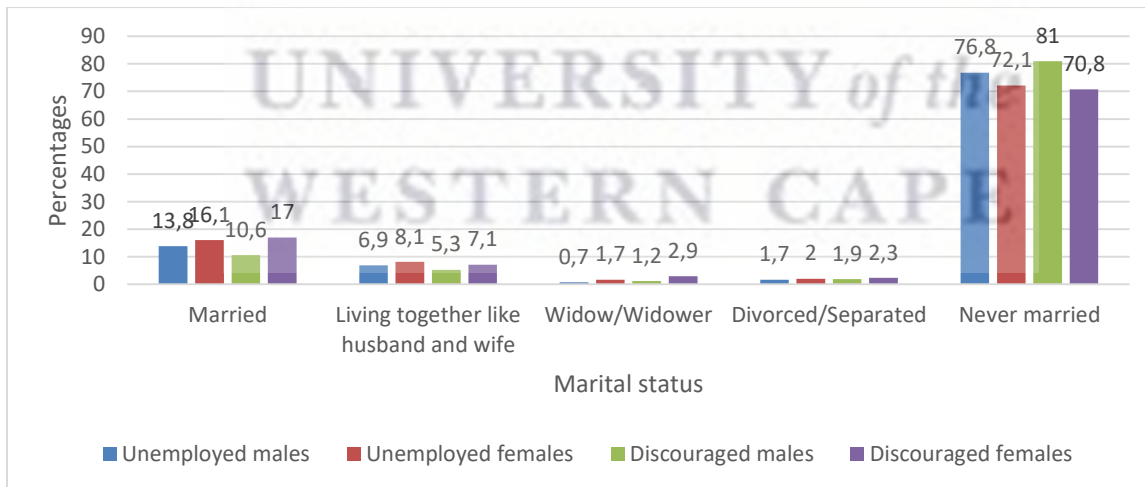


Source: Author's calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.7.3 Unemployment status and marital status

When comparing the unemployment status by marital status between men and women, the results in Figure 8 reveal that the labour force participation rate of women and men is closely linked to the composition of their household. According to the results below, the unemployment rate is significantly lower among married men or men living with their partners like husband and wife, with a rate of 13.8% and 6.9 % than when single (76.8%). The exact opposite pattern is observed for women, with a rate of 16.1% when married, 8.1% when living with partners like husband and wife and 72.1% when single. This, however, shows that marriage or living with a partner drives up men’s labour force participation while it drives down women. In addition, the rate of discouraged job seekers is larger among married women (17%), among those living together like husband and wife (7.1%), widowed (2.9%) and Divorced (2.3 %), while for men it is higher among those who are single with a rate of 81%. In order to test the relationship between the employment status and marital status of men, Pearson Chi-square statistical test was used. The results indicate $p=0.016 < 0.05$, meaning the test is statistically significant. However, Phi and Cramer’s V cannot be tested.

Figure 4.9: Distribution of unemployment status by marital status



Source: Author’s calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.7.4 Unemployment status and level of education

Table 4.27 below depicts the impact of education status on the unemployment situation for men and women. Nevertheless, the results indicate that the unemployment rate is lower among men with tertiary education at 7.3%, while it is higher for women with tertiary education at 9.8%. Compared with women with no schooling and secondary completed, it is noted below that men have a low unemployment rate of 0.9% and 36.5%, respectively. However, there are some differences in the unemployment rate among males and females who did not complete secondary education, with a rate of 45.7% for males and 45.4% for females. Males recorded a higher unemployment rate among those with primary education, 4, 7%, than females, 2.9%. The rate of discouraged job seekers was low among men who completed primary, secondary, and tertiary education compared to females. The Chi-square test statistic was performed. The findings showed a p-value of 0.001, which does not exceed the standard value of 0.05, which denotes a significant relationship between the employment status of men and their education status. Moreover, Phi and Cramer's V coefficient was 0.114, signifying a strong association.



Table 4.27: Distribution of unemployment duration by geographic type

Unemployment status	Education status						
	No schooling	Less than primary completed	Primary completed	Secondary not completed	Secondary completed	Tertiary	Total
Males							
Unemployed	17 0.8%	127 5.9%	102 4.7%	984 45.7%	766 35.6%	157 7.3%	2153 100%
Discouraged job seeker	20 2.0%	88 8.6%	51 5%	526 51.6%	292 28.6%	43 4.2%	1020 100%
Total	37 1.2%	215 6.8%	153 4.8%	1510 47.6%	1058 33.3%	200 6.3%	3173 100%
Females							
Unemployed	21 0.9%	97 4.1%	70 2.9%	1078 45.4%	877 36.9%	232 9.8%	2375 100%
Discouraged job seeker	27 1.9%	77 5.3%	73 5.1%	701 48.5%	501 34.7%	65 4.5%	1444 100%
Total	48 1.3%	174 4.6%	143 3.7%	1779 46.6%	1378 36.1%	297 7.8%	3819 100%

Source: Author's calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.7.5 Unemployment status and province of residence

The findings presented in Table 4.28 show that, on average, men in some provinces had a lower unemployment rate than women. For instance, women in KwaZulu Natal who were not working recorded 16.8% compared to men 14.6%, followed by Limpopo with a rate of 11.5% for women and 9.9% for men and Mpumalanga recorded 10.6% for women who were unemployed and 10.5% for men. On the other hand, Mpumalanga exhibited a high rate of women who were discouraged job seekers (12.2%) compared to 11.5% for men, while Eastern Cape, North West and Free State had 11.7%, 8.8% and 5.3% of women who were discouraged from looking for work compared to men. The Chi-square test showed a p-value of 0.001, which does not exceed the cut-off value 0.05. This means a statistical relationship exists between the employment status of men and the province. Moreover, Phi and Cramer's V coefficients were 0.298, signifying a very strong association.

Table 4.28: Distribution of employment status by province

Employment status	Provinces									
	WC	EC	NC	FS	KZN	NW	GP	MP	LP	Total
Males										
Unemployed	198 9.1%	415 19.2%	51 2.4%	188 8.7%	317 14.6%	119 5.5%	434 20.1%	228 10.5%	214 9.9%	2164 100%
Discouraged job seeker	11 1.1%	116 11.3%	65 6.3%	34 3.3%	262 25.5%	70 6.8%	136 13.3%	118 11.5%	214 20.9%	1026 100%
Total	209 6.6%	531 16.6%	116 3.6%	222 7%	579 18.2%	189 5.9%	570 17.9%	346 10.8%	428 13.4%	3190 100%
Females										
Unemployed	217 9.1%	445 18.7%	49 2.1%	187 7.9%	400 16.8%	93 3.9%	465 19.5%	253 10.6%	273 11.5%	2382 100%
Discouraged job seeker	10 0.7%	169 11.7%	79 5.4%	77 5.3%	365 25.2%	127 8.8%	173 11.9%	177 12.2%	273 18.8%	1450 100%
Total	227 5.9%	614 16%	128 3.3%	264 6.9%	765 20%	220 5.7%	638 16.6%	430 11.2%	546 14.2%	3832 100%

Source: Authors' calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.7.6 Unemployment status and geographic type

The results below show that men in traditional and farm areas have a low unemployment rate of 34.8% and 1.4% compared to women, with a rate of 36.4% and 1.9%, respectively. Moreover, men in urban and farm areas exhibited a low rate of discouraged job seekers, with a proportion of 42.1% and 1.8% compared to females. Furthermore, the chi-square test statistic was used to assess the relationship between the employment status of males and geographic type, showing a p-value= 0.001, indicating a significant relationship between the employment status of men and geographic type. To measure the strength of the relationship, Phi and Cramer's V tests 0.205 showed a strong association.

Table 4.29: Distribution of unemployment status by geographic type

Unemployment status	Geographic type			
	Urban	Traditional	Farms	Total
Males				
Unemployed	1380 63.8%	754 34.8%	30 1.4%	2164 100%
Discouraged job seeker	432 42.1%	576 56.1%	18 1.8%	1026 100%
Total	1812 56.8%	1330 41.7%	48 1.5%	3190 100%
Females				
Unemployed	1469 61.7%	867 36.4%	46 1.9%	2382 100%
Discouraged job seeker	630 43.4%	791 54.6%	29 2%	1450 100%
Total	2099 54.8%	1658 43.3%	75 2%	3832 100%

Source: Author's calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.8 Binary logistic regression

4.8.1 The Binary logistic regression on factors associated with female unemployment

This section measures unemployment status, duration of unemployment, and work experience as binary. The variables were dichotomized and were coded 1 and 0. The study began by conducting Binary Logistic regression statistical analysis to identify factors contributing to female unemployment in South Africa. The omnibus tests of model coefficients were significant, with a p-value of $0.001 < 0.05$, and -2 log-likelihood revealed that the data fit the model well. In contrast, Hosmer and Lemeshow test reveal that $p=0.203 > 0.05$ indicated that the model fit the data. However, Population group, marital status and geographic type did not significantly influence the reference category.

Age is one factor that plays a fundamental role in female unemployment in South Africa. The results revealed that being a female between 15-24 and 25-34 decreases the chances of being employed by 1.354 and 1.287 times, respectively than females in ages 55-64. On the other hand, females in ages 45-54 were significant. However, the β coefficient showed a negative sign which indicated that for every 1-year unit increase in age, the probability of females being unemployed would decrease by -0.432. This indicates that in South Africa, the likelihood of being unemployed is influenced by the age of females. Therefore, it is worth stating that the younger you are, the more likely you are to be unemployed, and the older you are, the less likely you are to be unemployed.

Regarding education status, the study's findings revealed as shown in Table 4.30 that, females who completed secondary school increased the probability of being unemployed by 2.781 compared to women with tertiary education. Moreover, the province of residence was another significant variable but showed a negative β coefficient. For the provinces, taking Limpopo as a baseline category, it is observed that being from these provinces decreases the probability of being unemployed. The results reveal that being from Western Cape decreases the chances of being unemployed by 0.140 times lower than in Limpopo. Moreover, it is also observed that females from Eastern Cape, Northern Cape and Free State respectively decreased the likelihood of being unemployed by 0.031, 0.107, and 0.052 than Limpopo. At the same time, KwaZulu Natal, North West, Gauteng and Mpumalanga had 0.036, 0.113, 0.075 and 0.056 chances of being unemployed than LP.

Table 4.30: Logistic regression of the factors associated with females unemployed

Variables	Unemployed			
	B	Wald	Sig	Exp(B)
Age group		22.563	0.001	
15-24	0.303	9.068	0.003	1.354
25-34	0.252	5.060	0.024	1.287
35-44	0.048	0.129	0.720	1.049
45-54	-0.432	4.323	0.038	0.650
55-64@				
Population group		3.917	0.271	
Black	-0.228	1.258	0.262	0.796
Coloured	0.758	2.515	0.113	2.133
Indian/Asian	0.101	0.043	0.836	1.106
White@				
Marital status		3.187	0.527	
Married	0.083	0.264	0.607	1.086
Living together like husband and wife	-0.086	0.111	0.739	0.918
Widow/Widower	-0.104	0.159	0.690	0.901
Divorced/separated	0.152	2.088	0.148	1.165
Never married@				
Education status		42.063	0.001	
No schooling	0.157	0.196	0.658	1.170
Less than primary completed	-0.244	0.451	0.502	0.784
Primary completed	0.124	0.147	0.702	1.132
Secondary not completed	0.307	0.884	0.347	1.359
Secondary completed@	1.023	8.442	0.004	2.781
Tertiary				
Province		198.082	0.001	
WC	-1.963	31.704	0.001	0.140
EC	-3.489	86.636	0.001	0.031
NC	-2.239	37.381	0.001	0.107
FS	-2.949	71.241	0.001	0.052

KZN	-3.326	81.452	0.001	0.036
NW	-2.179	38.861	0.001	0.113
GP	-2.585	52.780	0.001	0.075
MP	-2.881	65.702	0.001	0.056
LP@				
Geographic type		17.123	0.001	
Urban area	0.113	0.197	0.657	1.119
Traditional area	-0.254	1.005	0.316	0.775
Farms@				
Constant	2.566	22.611	0.001	13.014

Source: Authors own calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.8.2 The factors associated with women who are discouraged job seekers

The study further investigated the factors influencing the probability of female job seekers being discouraged. The findings from the 2021 data set show that the omnibus test of model coefficients was statistically significant with $p=0.001 < 0.05$ and $-2 \log$ -likelihood. Hosmer Lemeshow test shows that $p=0.166 > 0.005$, which showed that the model fit the data. The data further show that for every 1-unit increase in age groups 15-24 and 25-34, the likelihood of females being discouraged job seekers will decrease by -0.303 and -0.252 as compared to those in ages 55-64. Moreover, being a female in the age group 45-54 increase the odds of being a discouraged job seeker by 1.540. Additionally, the above findings are accurate. First of all, age is one of the stumbling blocks for the older generation not to look for employment, and also, they have to consider health-related issues.

Although secondary completion was significant at 0.004 level, β coefficient was negative (-1.023), which showed that the level of education of females in South Africa negatively affects the probability of females being discouraged job seekers. This indicates that the chances of being a discouraged job seeker among females who completed secondary education will decrease compared to those with tertiary education. The explanation for this can be linked to the skills mismatch among graduates in South Africa.

Table 4.31 reveals that being from one of these provinces increases the chances of being a discouraged job seeker. The study shows that being from Eastern Cape increases the odds of being a discouraged job seeker by 32.741 times higher than Limpopo while being from KwaZulu Natal increases the chances by 27.826. Moreover, the results below showed that women who live in Free State, Mpumalanga and Gauteng were 19.089, 17.836 and 13.260, respectively, more likely to be discouraged job seekers. North West, Northern Cape and Western Cape followed with odds ratios 8.836, 9.384 and 7.118, respectively, more likely to be discouraged job seekers.

Table 4.31: Factors that influence discouraged women job seekers

Variables	Discouraged job seekers			
	B	Wald	Sig	Exp(B)
Age group		22.563	0.001	
15-24	-0.303	9.068	0.003	0.739
25-34	-0.252	5.060	0.024	0.777
35-44	-0.048	0.129	0.720	0.953
45-54	0.432	4.323	0.038	1.540
55-64@				
Population group		3.917	0.271	
Black	0.228	1.258	0.262	1.256
Coloured	-0.758	2.515	0.113	0.469
Indian/Asian	-0.101	0.043	0.836	0.904
White@				
Marital status		3.187	0.527	
Married	-0.083	0.264	0.607	0.921
Living together like husband and wife	0.086	0.111	0.739	1.089
Widow/Widower	0.104	0.159	0.690	1.110
Divorced/separated	-0.152	2.088	0.148	0.859
Never married@				
Education status		42.063	0.001	
No schooling	-0.157	0.196	0.658	0.855
Less than primary completed	0.244	0.451	0.502	1.276
Primary completed	-0.124	0.147	0.702	0.883

Secondary not completed	-0.307	0.884	0.347	0.736
Secondary completed	-1.023	8.442	0.004	0.360
Tertiary@				
Province		198.082	0.001	
WC	1.963	31.704	0.001	7.118
EC	3.489	86.636	0.001	32.741
NC	2.239	37.381	0.001	9.384
FS	2.949	71.241	0.001	19.089
KZN	3.326	81.452	0.001	27.826
NW	2.179	38.861	0.001	8.836
GP	2.585	52.780	0.001	13.260
MP	2.881	65.702	0.001	17.836
LP@				
Geographic type		17.123	0.001	
Urban area	-0.113	0.197	0.657	0.893
Traditional area	0.254	1.005	0.316	1.290
Farm area@				
Constant	-2.566	22.611	0.001	0.077

Source: Authors own calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.8.3 The factors associated with duration of unemployment among women unemployed less than one year

The study also looked at the duration of unemployment among women who were unemployed for less than one year. The findings show that the omnibus test of model coefficients was statistically significant with $p=0.001 < 0.05$ and $-2 \log$ -likelihood. Hosmer Lemeshow test shows that $p=0.027 < 0.005$, which showed that the model did not fit the data. However, as long as the omnibus test and the $-2 \log$ likelihood analyses were significant, they were sufficient to confirm that the data fit the model. However, age, population group, marital status and geographic type did not affect the reference category significantly.

Considering the duration of unemployment, it is interesting to see that education status is a significant factor. The results below (Table 4.32) reveal that, for example, being a female who did not complete secondary school decreased the chances of being unemployed for 1 year compared to tertiary education. The negative sign of the coefficient ($\beta = -0.527$) showed that the level of education of females in South Africa negatively affects the possibility of females being unemployed for 1 year. On the other hand, the province of residence was also significant, even though the logistic regression results showed that staying in EC decreased the odds of being unemployed for 1 year by 0.662 compared to Limpopo. The study further indicated that staying in Gauteng province decreased the probability of unemployment for less than 1 year by 0.470 in Limpopo.

Table 4.32: Factors that influence duration of unemployment less than one year among unemployed women

Variables	Less than 1 year			
	B	Wald	Sig	Exp(B)
Age group		6.554	0.161	
15-24	0.529	1.718	0.190	1.698
25-34	0.335	0.728	0.394	1.398
35-44	0.101	0.065	0.798	1.106
45-54	0.240	0.357	0.550	1.271
55-64@				
Population group		13.839	0.003	
Black/African	0.350	0.209	0.647	1.419
Coloured	1.113	2.016	0.156	3.044
Indian/Asian	1.151	1.675	0.196	3.161
White@				
Marital status		1.237	0.872	
Married	-0.091	0.282	0.595	0.913
Living together like husband and wife	0.077	0.139	0.710	1.080
Widow/widower	-0.219	0.216	0.642	0.803
Divorced/separated	0.255	0.444	0.505	1.290
Never married@				

Education status		11.188	0.048	
No schooling	-0.573	0.752	0.386	0.564
Less than primary completed	-0.296	0.828	0.363	0.744
Primary completed	-0.022	0.004	0.949	0.978
Secondary not completed	-0.523	8.229	0.004	0.593
Secondary completed	-0.248	1.827	0.177	0.780
Tertiary@				
Province of residence		31.694	0.001	
WC	-0.424	2.243	0.134	0.655
EC	-0.412	3.879	0.049	0.662
NC	0.546	2.314	0.128	1.727
FS	-0.089	0.109	0.741	0.915
KZN	-0.106	0.264	0.607	0.900
NW	-0.493	2.097	0.148	0.611
GP	-0.756	9.766	0.002	0.470
MP	-0.262	1.510	0.219	1.300
LP@				
Geographic type		1.397	0.497	
Urban areas	-0.257	0.492	0.483	0.773
Traditional areas	-0.109	0.085	0.770	0.897
Farm areas@				
Constant	-1.475	2.347	0.126	0.229

Source: Authors own calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.8.4 The factors determining duration of unemployment among female unemployed for more than one year

The omnibus tests of model coefficients were significant, with a p-value of $0.001 < 0.05$, and -2 log-likelihood revealed that the data fit the model well. In contrast, Hosmer and Lemeshow test reveal that $p = 0.033 > 0.05$ indicated that the model fit the data. Assessing the contribution of education status to being unemployed for more than 1 year in South Africa, the table below (Table 4.33) shows that the level of education is significant. The findings indicate that not completing

secondary school increases the probability of being unemployed for more than 1 year by 1.687 for those with tertiary education. These results are in line with Stats SA’s report (2022), which found that unemployed persons with less than a matric level of education have a higher likelihood of being in long-term unemployment as opposed to tertiary (Statistics South Africa, 2022).

Moreover, being from Eastern Cape increased unemployment odds by 1.510 times higher than in Limpopo. This is accurate because Eastern Cape lacks skill development, the economy is slow and poor infrastructure makes finding a job difficult. Furthermore, being from Gauteng also increased the chances of being unemployed for more than 1 year by 2.130 than being from Limpopo. Besides overpopulation and a high rate of immigration, one should bear in mind that this data was collected during covid-19 pandemic, which had economic consequences on the economic powerhouse of South Africa (Gauteng). Variables such as age, population group, marital status and geographic type did not show significant influence.

Table 4.33: Factors that influence duration of unemployment among women unemployed for more than year

Variables	More than 1 year			
	β	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)
Age group		6.554	0.161	
15-24	-0.529	1.718	0.190	0.589
25-34	-0.335	0.728	0.394	0.715
35-44	-0.101	0.065	0.798	0.904
45-54	-0.240	0.357	0.550	0.787
55-64@				
Population group		13.839	0.003	
Black/African	-0.350	0.209	0.647	0.705
Coloured	-1.113	2.016	0.156	0.329
Indian/Asian	-1.151	1.675	0.196	0.316
White@				
Marital status		1.237	0.872	
Married	0.091	0.282	0.595	1.095
Living together like husband and wife	-0.077	0.139	0.710	0.926

Widow/widower	0.219	0.216	0.642	1.245
Divorced/separated	-0.255	0.444	0.505	0.775
Never married@				
Education status		11.188	0.048	
No schooling	0.573	0.752	0.386	1.774
Less than primary completed	0.296	0.828	0.363	1.344
Primary completed	0.022	0.004	0.949	1.022
Secondary not completed	0.523	8.229	0.004	1.687
Secondary completed	0.248	1.827	0.177	1.281
Tertiary@				
Province of residence		31.694	0.001	
WC	0.424	2.243	0.134	1.527
EC	0.412	3.879	0.049	1.510
NC	-0.546	2.314	0.128	0.579
FS	0.089	0.109	0.741	1.093
KZN	0.106	0.264	0.607	1.112
NW	0.493	2.097	0.148	1.637
GP	0.756	9.766	0.002	2.130
MP	-0.262	1.510	0.219	0.769
LP@				
Geographic type		1.397	0.497	
Urban areas	0.257	0.492	0.483	1.294
Traditional areas	0.109	0.085	0.770	1.115
Farm areas@				
Constant	1.475	2.347	0.126	4.370

Source: Authors own calculation using *Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021*

4.8.5 Factors associated with women's work experience (ever worked)

Female unemployment in South Africa in 2021 was largely found to be determined by work experience. The findings show that the omnibus test of the model coefficient was statistically significant with $p=0.000 < 0.05$ and with -2 Log-likelihood. Hosmer Lemeshow was also statistically significant with $p= 0.287 > 0.05$, which means the data perfectly fits the model. Age was observed to be an influencing factor among women who ever worked before in South Africa. However, β coefficients were negative, which showed that the age of females in South Africa negatively affects the probability of females having work experience. The findings from this study reveal that being a female aged between 15-24, 25-34 and surprisingly age 35-44 and 45-54 age groups decreased the odds of being unemployed among women who ever worked by 0.014, 0.195, 0.519 and 0.768 times respectively than women in 55-64 age group.

Looking at population group, it is shown in the table below that being Coloured increases the chances of being unemployed among women who ever worked by 1.918 times higher than whites, whereas being Indian/ Asian decreased the chances of being unemployed among women who ever worked before by 0.449 lower than White. Marital status was another significant variable. According to the findings from the study, being married decreases the odds of being unemployed among women who ever worked by 0.884 than those who are single, while living together like husband and wife increased by 1.299 compared to single women. The study further shows that being widowed or divorced increased the chances of being unemployed among women who ever worked by 1.222 and 1.837, respectively, times higher than women who are not married.

Education status was also significant, as shown in the table below. However, β coefficients were negative, which indicates that the female's level of education does play a negative role in women's work experience or is associated with a decrease in OR. First of all, having no schooling in South Africa decreased the likelihood of unemployment among women who ever worked by 0.259 more than tertiary. Having less than primary or primary completed decreased the odds by 0.325 and 0.389, respectively. Moreover, those who did not complete secondary schooling decreased the odds by 0.508, whereas women who completed secondary decreased the odds by 0.483 as opposed to tertiary education.

Regarding the province of residence, which was found to be significant, taking Limpopo as a reference point, it is observed that being from the provinces below increases the probability of being unemployed among women who ever worked before. The results show that unemployed women from Northern Cape and Mpumalanga had twice the odds of unemployment among women who ever worked by 2.441 and 2.474, respectively. On the other hand, being from Western Cape, Eastern Cape, and Free State increased the chances by 1.951, 1.249 and 1.824 respectively than Limpopo. Being from KwaZulu Natal, North West and Gauteng increased the odds of being unemployed among women who ever worked by 1.732, 1.726 and 1.608, respectively, compared to Limpopo. In addition, the geographic type was significant. The study found that being from traditional areas decreased the odds of being unemployed among women who ever worked by 0.543 compared to those who live in farm areas.

Table 4.34: Factors that influence women’s work experience among women who ever worked

Variable	Ever worked			
	B	Wald	Sig	Exp (B)
Age group		1516.588	0.000	
15-24	-4.237	1187.387	0.001	0.014
25-34	-1.634	287.712	0.001	0.195
35-44	-0.656	48.785	0.001	0.519
45-54	-0.264	7.850	0.005	0.768
55-64@				
Population group		46.271	0.001	
Black/African	-0.033	0.027	0.869	0.967
Coloured	0.651	8.428	0.004	1.918
Indian/Asian	-0.801	8.571	0.003	0.449
White@				
Marital status		26.616	0.001	
Married	-0.123	3.034	0.082	0.884
Living together like husband and wife	0.262	6.229	0.013	1.299
Widow/widower	0.201	2.753	0.097	1.222
Divorced/separated	0.608	9.861	0.002	1.837
Never married@				

Education status		82.451	0.001	
No schooling	-1.353	62.431	0.001	0.259
Less than primary completed	-1.125	61.055	0.001	0.325
Primary completed	-0.944	34.896	0.001	0.389
Secondary not completed	-0.678	34.447	0.001	0.508
Secondary completed	-0.728	37.436	0.001	0.483
Tertiary@				
Province of residence		95.703	0.001	
WC	0.668	21.740	0.001	1.951
EC	0.223	5.294	0.021	1.249
NC	0.892	32.495	0.001	2.441
FS	0.601	21.365	0.001	1.824
KZN	0.549	33.853	0.001	1.732
NW	0.546	19.448	0.001	1.726
GP	0.475	17.204	0.001	1.608
MP	0.906	64.776	0.001	2.474
LP@				
Geographic type		43.755	0.001	
Urban areas	-0.184	1.038	0.308	0.832
Traditional areas	-0.611	11.487	0.001	0.543
Farm areas@				
Constant	1.651	31.153	0.001	5.215

Source: Authors own calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.8.6 The factors determining work experience among women who never worked

The findings show that the omnibus test of the model coefficient was statistically significant with $p=0.000 < 0.05$ and with -2 Log-likelihood. Hosmer Lemeshow was also statistically significant with $p= 0.151 > 0.05$, meaning the model fits the data. Since the omnibus test and the -2 Log likelihood analyses were significant, they were sufficient to confirm that the data fits the model. Age was significant among women who had never worked. The results show that females in age groups 15-24, 25-34, 35-44 and 45-54 increased the odds of being unemployed among women who never worked before by 69.230, 5.122, 1.928 and 1.302 times higher than women in 55-64 age group.

The study revealed that the population group was significant. Among the Coloured, it was significant at 0.004 level. However, it showed a negative β coefficient which indicated a decrease in the probability of unemployment among women who had never worked before by -0.651 times lower than White women. At the same time, women from the Indian/ Asian group increased the chances of unemployment among women who never worked before by 2.228 compared to the White population. Additionally, marital status was a significant factor among women who had never worked. The results in Table 4.35 show that being married increased the odds of unemployment among those who never worked before by 1.131 times higher than single women. However, living together like husband and wife decreased the probability 0.770 of being single. Women who are widowers decreased the chances by 0.818. Those who are divorced decreased the probability of being unemployed among those who never worked by 0.544 as opposed to being single.

The difficulty of finding work in South Africa is even more drastic for women with no schooling or with less than tertiary. This is supported by the results below; however, it is essential to note that education status was significant. Table 4.35 reveals that having no schooling in South Africa increased the likelihood of unemployment among women who never worked before by 3.868 higher than tertiary education. Having less than primary or primary completed increased the odds by 3.080 and 2.569, respectively. Moreover, those who did not complete secondary schooling increased the odds by 1.970, whereas women who completed secondary increased the odds by 2.071 as opposed to tertiary education. Province of residence was found to be significant, although

β coefficients were negative. Using LP as a reference point, it is observed that being from these provinces below decreased the probability of unemployment among women who never worked before. Being from WC, EC, NC, and FS decreased the odds of being among those who had never worked before by 0.513, 0.800, 0.410 and 0.548, respectively, than being from LP. Being from KwaZulu Natal, North West, Gauteng and Mpumalanga decreased the chances by 0.577, 0.580, 0.622 and 0.404, respectively, as compared to Limpopo. The study found that being from traditional areas increased the odds of unemployment among women who never worked before by 1.843 compared to those who lived in farm areas.

Table 4.35: factors that influence work experience among women who never worked

Variable	Never Worked			
	B	Wald	Sig	Exp (B)
Age group		1516.588	0.000	
15-24	4.237	1187.387	0.001	69.230
25-34	1.634	287.712	0.001	5.122
35-44	0.656	48.785	0.001	1.928
45-54	0.264	7.850	0.005	1.302
55-64@				
Population group		46.271	0.001	
Black/African	0.033	0.027	0.869	1.034
Coloured	-0.651	8.428	0.004	0.521
Indian/Asian	0.801	8.571	0.003	2.228
White@				
Marital status		26.616	0.001	
Married	0.123	3.034	0.082	1.131
Living together like husband and wife	-0.262	6.229	0.013	0.770
Widow/widower	-0.201	2.753	0.097	0.818
Divorced/separated	-0.608	9.861	0.002	0.544
Never married@				
Education status		82.451	0.001	
No schooling	1.353	62.431	0.001	3.868
Less than primary completed	1.125	61.055	0.001	3.080

Primary completed	0.944	34.896	0.001	2.569
Secondary not completed	0.678	34.447	0.001	1.970
Secondary completed	0.728	37.436	0.001	2.071
Tertiary@				
Province of residence		95.703	0.001	
WC	-0.668	21.740	0.001	0.513
EC	-0.223	5.294	0.021	0.800
NC	-0.892	32.495	0.001	0.410
FS	-0.601	21.365	0.001	0.548
KZN	-0.549	33.853	0.001	0.577
NW	-0.546	19.448	0.001	0.580
GP	-0.475	17.204	0.001	0.622
MP	-0.906	64.776	0.001	0.404
LP@				
Geographic type		43.755	0.001	
Urban areas	0.184	1.038	0.308	1.202
Traditional areas	0.611	11.487	0.001	1.843
Farm areas@				
Constant	-1.651	31.153	0.001	0.192

Source: Authors own calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.9 Multinomial logistic regression

4.9.1 Findings

Since the dependent variable has more than two nominal categories, the study opted for multinomial logistic regression as the most suited model to estimate the odds ratio of the reasons for not working among females with given demographic characteristics. In this study, the nominal dependent variable, “reason for not working,” was grouped into four categories: 1: scholar- too young to work; 2: housewife/homemaker-pregnancy; 3: health- disability and 4: retired- no desire to work. However, the fourth category of the dependent variable was taken as the reference category. In contrast, each last category of the independent variables was taken as the baseline category, and the results were interpreted accordingly. As the validity of the multinomial logistic

regression model was examined with the Odds Ratio Test, the model was found to be significant with a p-value of less than 0.05 and a log – 2 revealed that the data fit the model. For each category of the models, it is seen that β coefficients take different values. Therefore, the odds ratios of the variable for each category vary. Moreover, in the multinomial logistic regression model, the categories that include significant coefficients were interpreted in terms of how much they increased or decreased the odds ratios for the fourth category, which was taken as a reference category. The results of the multinomial logistic regression analysis are given in the tables below.

4.9.2 Determinants of female unemployment among female unemployed scholars, students, or too young to work: A multinomial logistic regression

The table below displays the odds of unemployment because females were still scholars or too young to work. The output for significant variables showed many negative coefficients, which implies that such factors were associated with a decrease in the odds ratio. Age is one factor that plays a crucial role in the labour market. The results indicate that an increase of one year in age decreases the probability of being a scholar or too young to work. This is true, considering the starting age of the economically active population in South Africa.

The only enormously significant coefficients for marital status were associated with being married or living with a partner like a husband and wife. This negatively affected the probability of being a scholar or too young to work with reference to the pivot category (never married). The other categories of marital status did not play any significant relationship. Moreover, the level of education shows a significant effect on the likelihood of being a scholar or too young to work, with those with no schooling having the lowest odds in comparison with tertiary education as a reference. They are followed by those with less than primary education by 0.329 as compared to tertiary education. Regarding province of residence, the variable indicated a significant factor among the reasons women were not in the labour force.

In comparison to those who were from Limpopo, those who were from Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Free State, Gauteng and Mpumalanga were more likely to be unemployed for the reason that they were still scholars or too young to work by 3.243, 1.741, 2.207, 2.159 and 2.146 more respectively. However, the provinces above have a high share of women in the total population, and most provinces in South Africa are youth dominated hence why more than 50% of the provinces, according to the findings below, have unemployed women for the reason that they were scholars or too young to work.

Table 4.36: Multinomial logistic regression of the factors associated with unemployed female scholars or too young to work

Variable	β	SE	Sig	OR
Intercept	12.852	1.008	0.001	
Age group	-4.558	0.149	0.001	0.010
Black	-0.603	0.708	0.395	0.547
Coloured	-0.682	0.765	0.373	0.506
Indian	0.790	0.895	0.378	2.203
White	0 ^b			
Married	-1.342	0.337	0.001	0.261
Living together like husband and wife	-3.533	0.511	0.001	0.029
Widow/Widower	0.315	1.178	0.789	1.371
Divorced/separated	-0.394	1.169	0.736	0.674
Never married	0 ^b			
No schooling	-4.110	0.836	0.001	0.016
Less than primary completed	-1.111	0.525	0.038	0.329
Primary completed	0.058	0.540	0.915	1.059
Secondary not completed	0.124	0.438	0.778	1.132
Secondary completed	0.459	0.454	0.312	1.583
Tertiary	0 ^b			

WC	1.176	0.428	0.006	3.243
EC	0.555	0.285	0.052	1.741
NC	0.373	0.442	0.399	1.452
FS	0.792	0.414	0.056	2.207
KZN	0.114	0.276	0.681	1.120
NW	-0.413	0.354	0.243	0.662
GP	0.770	0.397	0.053	2.159
MP	0.764	0.379	0.044	2.146
LP	0 ^b			
Urban	0.339	0.497	0.331	1.404
Traditional	0.505	0.492	0.420	1.657
Farm	0 ^b			

Source: Authors own calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.9.3 Determinants of unemployed female housewives/homemakers or pregnant: A multinomial logistic regression

Table 4.37 below displays the odds of being unemployed because females were housewives or due to pregnancy. Age displayed a significant effect, although the β coefficient was negative, which implied that this factor was associated with a decrease in OR. For the population group, the study further shows that unemployed Black women were more likely to be homemakers or unemployed due to pregnancy than their White counterparts. This is true, and White people never experienced forced marriage at a younger age and all sorts of challenges that Black women have gone through. They are followed by Coloured 2.038 times higher as compared to White and Indian population by 2.680 times higher.

For marital status, the variable was significant, and the results presented by the study were in line with what was stipulated in the literature review, which indicated that marriage or women living with a partner drives down women's participation in the labour force. Table 4.38 indicate that married women were more likely to be homemakers or pregnant than single women. Those living together like husband and wife were also more likely to be homemakers or pregnant rather than working with reference to single women.

Education status was significant. Table 4.37 below reveals that having secondary education increased the odds of unemployment due to household duties or pregnancy compared to those with tertiary education. Moreover, those who did not complete secondary school were more likely to be unemployed housewives or pregnant. On the other hand, those with primary education as their highest had the lowest odds of being unemployed due to family considerations or pregnancy than women with tertiary education. Surprisingly, the province of residence did not influence being unemployed housewife/ pregnant because one would expect that being from Eastern Cape and KwaZulu Natal, in particular, would increase the chances of being unemployed.

Table 4.37: Multinomial logistic regression for unemployed housewives/homemaker or pregnancy

Variable	B	SE	Sig	OR
Intercept	6.555	0.639	0.001	
Age group	-1.824	0.090	0.001	0.161
Population group				
Black	0.495	0.286	0.083	1.641
Coloured	0.712	0.327	0.029	2.038
Indian	0.986	0.396	0.013	2.680
White	0 ^b			
Married	1.403	0.154	0.001	4.069
Living together like husband and wife	0.750	0.292	0.010	2.117
Widow/Widower	0.128	0.188	0.496	1.137
Divorced/separated	0.191	0.313	0.541	1.210
Never married	0 ^b			
No schooling	-0.028	0.315	0.928	0.972
Less than primary completed	0.464	0.284	0.102	1.590
Primary completed	0.602	0.313	0.054	1.825
Secondary not completed	0.867	0.264	0.001	2.379

Secondary completed	1.331	0.281	0.001	3.783
Tertiary	0 ^b			
WC	0.422	0.291	0.147	1.525
EC	0.210	0.204	0.303	1.234
NC	0.359	0.308	0.244	1.432
FS	-0.288	0.298	0.334	0.750
KZN	0.322	0.210	0.125	1.380
NW	-0.090	0.254	0.723	0.914
GP	-0.020	0.274	0.943	0.981
MP	-0.109	0.278	0.695	0.897
LP	0 ^b			
Urban areas	-0.828	0.378	0.029	0.437
Traditional Farm	0.057	0.379	0.881	1.058

Source: Authors own calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.9.4 Determinants of unemployment among women with health issues or disabled: A multinomial logistic regression

Table 4.38 below indicates the odds of not working because women had health issues or were disabled. The study indicates that population group and geographic type variables did not significantly affect the reference category. Age displayed a significant effect, although the β coefficient was negative, which implied that this factor was associated with a decrease in OR.

The output for marital status showed negative β coefficients, which suggests that the marital status of a female negatively affects the odds ratio. The study reveals that health reasons/ disability were less likely to be why married women were unemployed compared to single women. They are followed by those who were living together like husband and wife. However, widowed women were more likely to be unemployed due to health reasons and disability than single women.

Moreover, education levels significantly influenced the likelihood of being unemployed due to health reasons and disability, with those who received no schooling having the highest odds in comparison with tertiary education. Also, those who completed less than primary education increased the probability of unemployment due to health reasons and disability than women with tertiary education. Considering the province of residence, the variable indicated a significant factor among the reasons women were not in the labour force. Compared to Limpopo, those from Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Northern Cape, Free State, KwaZulu Natal, North West, and Mpumalanga were more likely to be unemployed due to health reasons than Limpopo.

Table 4.38: The factors associated with female unemployment among women with health issues or with disability

Variable	(β)	SE	Sig	OR
Age group				
Intercept	4.296	0.729	0.001	
Age group	-1.403	0.092	0.001	0.246
Black	0.238	0.372	0.522	1.268
Coloured	0.637	0.407	0.117	1.891
Indian	0.634	0.549	0.248	1.885
White	0 ^b			
Married	-0.646	0.164	0.001	0.524
Living together like husband and wife	-0.845	0.325	0.009	0.429
Widow/Widower	0.819	0.339	0.001	2.268
Divorced/separated	0.846	0.316	0.830	0.941
Never married	0 ^b			
No schooling	0.819	0.339	0.016	2.268
Less than primary completed	0.846	0.316	0.007	2.220
Primary completed	0.525	0.349	0.133	1.690
Secondary not completed	0.339	0.302	0.261	1.404

Secondary completed	0.236	0.332	0.478	1.266
Tertiary	0 ^b			
WC	1.347	0.334	0.001	3.844
EC	1.282	0.263	0.001	3.603
NC	1.393	0.350	0.001	4.026
FS	1.735	0.323	0.001	5.666
KZN	0.834	0.272	0.002	2.302
NW	0.826	0.314	0.009	2.284
GP	0.457	0.352	0.194	1.580
MP	1.384	0.313	0.001	3.990
LP				
Geographic type				
Urban	-0.168	0.419	0.689	0.846
Traditional	0.147	0.421	0.728	1.158
Farm	0 ^b			

Source: Authors own calculation using Quarterly Labour Survey, fourth quarter, 2021

4.9.5 Chapter summary

In this chapter, univariate and bivariate analyses were conducted to test the hypotheses that there is a relationship between the demographic characteristics of the currently unemployed, including age, population group, marital status, level of education, province of residence and geographic type, whether the currently unemployed females have ever worked before or not, duration of unemployment, and reasons for unemployment. The conclusions of the analysis above support the hypotheses. With reference to the results of cross-tabulation, the overall picture is that it is indeed in accordance with the literature. For example, there is strong evidence that female unemployment is concentrated among the youth. Moreover, there was an indication in the literature that Blacks were more unemployed than other races.

On top of that, their unemployment was associated with traditional norms and values and apartheid legacies. However, this argument is confirmed by the results, which highlighted a high rate of unemployment and the high rate of the reason for not working was due to family obligations. The analysis demonstrated that the education level did influence a woman's employment status. For example, the study discovered an outstanding rate of unemployment among those who had education less than tertiary, particularly those with secondary education.

On the contrary, the literature argued that women within marriages were more unemployed than single women. Though this was not the case, the thesis nonetheless made sense, given the high proportion of unmarried youth in South Africa. Finally, it was indicated that women residing in provinces or areas far from where the opportunities are available or provinces experiencing influx are more vulnerable to unemployment, and the results also confirmed this. The study further looked at unemployment rates, comparing the findings of males with that of females to ascertain the claims made in the literature that female unemployment is higher than males. Therefore, the argument was confirmed by the results of the study. Furthermore, the results of the multivariate analysis were also consistent with the findings.



CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of the study is to unpack the factors contributing to female unemployment and whether the currently unemployed or discouraged females had ever worked before or never worked before, and to analyse the duration of unemployment and their reasons for not working regarding the demographic characteristics. This was done to assess the impact of age, population group, marital status, level of education, province of residence and geographic type. In order to achieve the objectives stated, the study made use of Quarterly Labour Force Survey data produced by Statistics South Africa (2021).

The empirical results of the thesis come in three parts. Firstly, the study used frequency distribution to describe the percentage share of unemployed females with regard to demographic characteristics and other dependent variables. Secondly, analyses were performed by cross-tabulation, which was used to measure the patterns of the percentages. On the other hand, a Chi-square test, such as the Pearson Chi-square test, was used to measure the association between the variables. The strength of the relationship was also measured through the Phi & Cramer's V test. Thirdly, multivariate logistic regression was done using two regression analyses: binary and multinomial logistic regression, to estimate the odds ratio of the dependent variables among females with given demographic characteristics. This study relied on the truthfulness and accuracy of the 2021 Labour Force Survey Q4 as collected by Statistics South Africa.

5.2 The distribution and composition of female unemployment

The study discovered that the female unemployment rate was at 37.9% in Q4 from the 2021 Labour Force Survey. The labour market absorbed 29% of the female labour in Q4, with an overall 47% female labour force participation rate in the reference period. This revealed that just under half of the working-age female population participates in the labour market. The findings of this study are consistent with the literature showing that there were more unemployed Black/African females in South Africa than all other racial groups. This is followed by Coloured women, Indian/Asian women, and Whites, respectively. However, this reflects the inequality persisting in the South African labour market. Moreover, unemployed females in South Africa tend to be young, between

25-34 years old and single/never married. This is consistent with what was described as the dense period of life by Yakubu (2010). According to the author, this is a period when multiple events such as marriage, fertility, finishing school and migration occur. Therefore, 37.4% of unemployed females were within the age group 25-34. Over 50% of unemployed females were never married.

In general, female unemployment is seen to increase with the level of education. Among the unemployed females in the study, 46.6% had some secondary education but did not complete it, 36.1% had completed a secondary level of education, and 7.8% had a tertiary level of education. These results are significant because they highlight the challenges of labour market entry for females without higher education levels. The findings are also consistent with the Human Capital Theory in that there is a strong relationship between the level of education and Labour Force Participation. The better educated one is, the more likely they are to participate in the labour market.

On the other hand, as the demand for unskilled labour or seasonal employment continues to increase in South Africa, such as Expanded Public Works Programme, unemployment among women with primary education or those who received no schooling at all will likely remain low. In addition, the study found that the spatial distribution of female unemployment across the nine provinces of South Africa was higher in KwaZulu Natal, although Gauteng has the largest employment sectors, followed by Eastern Cape and Limpopo. The lowest unemployment rate among females was reported in the Northern Cape. Regarding the geographic type, female unemployment was higher in Urban areas followed by traditional areas. The reason might be that many unemployed females move to urban areas for job opportunities.

5.3 Differentials in female unemployment and demographic characteristics

The objectives of this study were to determine the demographic characteristics which influence currently unemployed females, such as age, population group, marital status, and level of education and to assess whether the unemployment of currently unemployed females is influenced by area of residence, such as geographic type and province of residence. Therefore, the research questions "What are the demographic characteristics of currently unemployed females such as age, population group, marital status, and level of education?" was formulated. To answer the research questions, the study formulated a research hypothesis: Demographic characteristics such as age,

population group, marital status, and level of education to determine the unemployment rate of currently unemployed females.

This hypothesis stems from how unemployment in South Africa varies according to personal characteristics. However, the findings from the study confirmed the hypothesis that, indeed, demographic characteristics do influence employment status. For instance, the results revealed that more women within the youth category, 25-34 and middle-aged adults (35-44) were unemployed. In the same instance, women who were discouraged job seekers were also found within the same age groups. Leibbrandt *et al.*, (2010) states that this is the age when most females get married and may regard themselves as housewives rather than as unemployed. Leibbrandt and colleague's report is also consistent with Yakubu's findings (2010), where the author indicated that this is a period when multiple events such as marriage, fertility, finishing school and migration occur.

Following were females within the 15-24 age group. According to Khuluvhe (2016), the non-participation of 15-24-year-olds in the labour force, many of whom are found to be still engaged in studies; education plays a role in whether youth seek and can find work. Moreover, youth unemployment in South Africa is concentrated among those who have received some education but lack the industrial and other skills required in the labour market (Leibbrandt *et al.*, 2010). South Africa has many graduates in Humanities and Economics, whereas the country is moving to the 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR). Furthermore, educated youth prefer wage jobs in the formal sector and would prefer to remain unemployed until they get the type of job they prefer. The unemployment rate is low among females aged 55-64. First, this age group existed during the Bantu education system, which absorbed many of them into the labour force, particularly the formal sector, without having secondary education. Notably, Wills (2011) indicated that the Bantu education system was implemented to ensure that Black people would only work as unskilled and semi-skilled labourers. Hence the South African labour market system is still governed by those who existed during apartheid, such as politicians.

Considering the effects of racial differences on female unemployment in South Africa, it is clear that this is an essential differentiating factor in the labour market outcomes. This study has also shown that Africans/ Blacks have the highest unemployment rate of females than all other racial groups. According to Banks (2019), the high unemployment rate among Blacks is the result of

segregation government policies that disadvantaged Black women relative to White women. However, if apartheid supposedly ended two decades ago, why does this inequality still exist? In South Africa, mainly in the Black community, it is a norm for men to leave their villages for better-paying jobs in cities as women get burdened with farm work and domestic chores. This is supported by Akinola (2018), who highlighted that traditional African communities still perceive a woman's duty primarily as childbearing and rearing, feeding and caring for the family.

Akinola (2018) maintains that Black women in African societies still live in patriarchal norms which deny them the right to decide their reproduction. However, this has a negative effect on their chances of being employed as there will be an interruption of labour force participation due to fertility. Furthermore, Black women exhibited a high rate of discouraged job seekers, and the reasons could be the ones mentioned above. Also, this could be the fact that there are no jobs in South Africa, especially since the start of covid-19. It is well known that women are likely to work in informal sectors of the economy, such as salons, hospitality, retail, day-cares and street vendors. Hence they are the ones that lost the most jobs due to the lockdown regulation.

Marital status is yet another variable that is widely accepted as a driver behind labour participation. The results reveal that single women and married women have high unemployment rates. First of all, it is well known that women within marriages economically are very different from women outside marriages. Married women tend to do the largest portion of homework and are given the responsibility of taking care of children (Janse van Rensburg *et al.*, 2019). On the other hand, the majority of people who are single in South Africa are youth. This can be seen in a report by Statistics South Africa (2022), where it was found that more than half of women in South Africa appear to be single, particularly age group 18-34 and it is important to note that South Africa is dominated by youth that constitutes high unemployment rate in the country. There are various causes of youth unemployment in South Africa, ranging from population growth, lack of experience, and skills mismatch as stipulated by Cloete (2015).

According to Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2011), the probability of females to gain employment increases with a higher level of education. However, this relationship in South Africa is not always true for instance the study found that unemployment rate is higher among females with at least some schooling than those with no schooling or primary education.

However, since South Africa is dominated by young population and majority of them have schooling, it is safe to say that the low rate of unemployed females without any schooling belongs to the older generation whom are pensioners. Msimanga (2013) maintains that older generations are too tired to work and cannot perform physically demanding duties.

When looking at unemployed females by province of residence, the results from the study found that women from Gauteng, Eastern Cape and KwaZulu Natal were more unemployed. On the other hand, those from KwaZulu Natal again, Limpopo and Mpumalanga were discouraged job seekers. Gauteng is the economic hub of the country with plentiful resources therefore it is expected to have high employment rate, however it is the opposite. Firstly, Gauteng has a larger population than any other province and an influx of migrants from neighbouring areas in search of jobs (Geyer and Mthoka, 2019). However, more people enter the city as compared to the number of jobs that become available (Geyer and Mthoka, 2019). On the other hand, another cause of unemployment in Gauteng is cheap labour that favours people from the outside, this is supported by Van Heerden (2021) by noting that South African employers deliberately prefer foreign workers as a source of cheap labour as they are willing to take anything for wages. To support this argument, the author noted the freight industry that is accused of employing foreigners rather than South African people (Van Heerden, 2021).

Regarding the geographic type, the results show more unemployed females in urban areas than in farms. Whereas traditional areas showed the most significant proportion of females, who are discouraged job seekers. The high rate of unemployed females in urban areas is caused by mass migration; people migrate from rural areas in large groups to urban areas looking for job opportunities. Even with this, urban areas can ill afford to provide employment opportunities to all of the migrated people, thus causing mass unemployment (Mthiyane *et al.*, 2022). On the other hand, traditional settlements are located far from where jobs are available, and housing is located where the land is cheap, which is usually not where employment opportunities are available. This, in turn, increases job search costs, generating inefficient labour market outcomes (Leibbrandt *et al.*, 2010).

Moreover, in these areas, most families have a female head of household who relies on income from a migrant spouse (Leibbrandt *et al.*, 2010). This, however, discourages them from looking for employment hence why women from traditional areas recorded the highest among discouraged job seekers. Additionally, female unemployment is low in farms because, firstly, the population rate is low, white people mostly occupy farms, and most of the people who live in farms work in those farms.

5.4 Differentials in female's work experience and demographic characteristics

In this section, the discussion is based on the relationship between women's work experience and demographic characteristics. Young women appear to have the greatest challenge in entering the labour market in South Africa. The hypothesis: *There is a relationship between the demographic characteristics such as age, population group, marital status, education status, geographic type and province of residence of currently unemployed females and whether they have worked or never worked before.* was formulated and confirmed by the Chi-square test statistic results, which displayed a significant relationship for all these variables.

The difficulty of finding work is even more drastic for young females (aged 15 to 24 years). Being female and young can represent a double source of discrimination. The results from the study show that more than half of women between the ages 15-24 in South Africa have never worked before, followed by women in the age group 25-34, whereas women in the age group 55-64 showed the highest rate among those who have worked before. According to Statistics South Africa (2021), prior work experience is important in the labour market. In South Africa, employers often prefer to employ those with previous work experience. Unfortunately, for those who never worked before, lack of work experience is a stumbling block that results in them finding it hard to secure employment.

This issue has been raised in many discourses, which provided reasons to promote internship and work-integrated learner programs. On the other hand, there are claims in South Africa that it is difficult to find a job if one holds a higher qualification than a degree because it automatically renders one overqualified, according to South African employers. However, these claims are supported by Mabaso (2013), where the author indicated that young people are entering the labour market at an early age with higher qualifications these years compared to the years before.

The study discovered that the majority of African/Black women recorded the highest among those who ever worked and among those who never worked. This is expected considering that Black women in South Africa have higher labour force participation than other races, meaning a higher share of Black women are either employed or unemployed. This undoubtedly reflects steep job losses due to the pandemic. Even before the pandemic, their unemployment rate was high compared to other races, which the author associates with inequality. Black women do not get the same exposure as other races. For instance, Black women have the least access to economic and educational resources and the least skills to allow them entry into broad economic participation. Banks (2019) maintains that the labour market position of Black women is the result of employer practices and government policies that disadvantaged Black women relative to white women and men. On the other hand, White women recorded the lowest among those who had no work experience. White people have opportunities that Black people do not have, to begin with, according to Pillay (2015), as they are endowed with generational wealth, social capital, and financial head start to name a few.

With respect to the distribution of females' work experience by marital status, the highest rate of females who have work experience is associated with those who are not married. However, in the same instance, most single women have never received work experience. As previously discussed regarding single women, most have never worked before and are still young. This could be because they are still studying; youth may decide not to pursue employment and attend school. Moreover, it is suggested that unemployed workers' prior work experience will be more attractive to employers because employers can potentially invest less in their training (Leibbrandt *et al.*, 2010).

Surprisingly, education, traditionally considered to increase human capital and, in effect, enhance labour market opportunities, negatively influenced women's work experience. For example, the study showed a minority of women with tertiary education who had work experience as opposed to a majority of those who did not complete secondary school. However, this suggests that as more women acquire higher education, the chances of getting work experience will decrease. This could be explained by the initiation of Public Work Programmes and Community Work Programmes, which offer short-term employment to those with low levels of education.

Furthermore, the impact of the apartheid legacy, when none of the White population was kept in tribal homelands and urban townships distanced from business centres and industries, can perhaps explain the differentials in women's work across provinces (Strauss, 2019). The most affected provinces were Eastern Cape, KwaZulu Natal and Limpopo (Transkei, Ciskei, Natal and Venda), basically traditional areas (Strauss, 2019). These areas are today characterized by prevalent chronic poverty, low levels of education, scarcity of employment opportunities and high dependency on welfare (Westaway, 2012). Hence, the findings from the study supported the above argument by indicating that the majority of women in these provinces and traditional areas had never worked before, which could be due to the socio-economic challenges that were inherited during the apartheid.

5.5 Differentials in reasons for not working and demographic characteristics

When looking at reasons for not working, it was found that the majority of women in South Africa within the age group 15-24 were still scholars or students hence why they were unemployed. This is, however, in agreement with what has been discussed above. On the other hand, females who are housewives/ homemakers are between the ages of 25-34: similar to what was observed in the previous discussion that this age is where multiple events occur, such as marriage and childbearing (Yakubu, 2010). In developing countries, particularly South Africa, young women are less likely to be employed because of early marriage. This results in complete withdrawal from the labour force (Leibbrandt *et al.*, 2010).

As older people age, they have different health needs compared to younger people. The study found that women aged 55-64 were not working for health reasons. Health Foundation (2022) states that an increasing number of older workers are being forced out of work due to ill health. Consequently, Covid-19 has played a factor in long covid-19 and healthcare backlogs. However, this problem goes back to before the pandemic. There is a longer-term with rising levels of ill health which cannot all be placed on Covid-19.

Furthermore, poor health is not necessarily causing older people to leave the labour market. The analysis results also reveal that most women aged 55-64 were retired or too old to work. A report by Price (2023) highlights that the rise in economic inactivity is mostly driven by older workers retiring, many of whom are relatively financially secure and have no desire to return to employment. Lastly, many young women (15-24) drop out of school because of pregnancy; they, therefore, end up with less education and no skills to help them in the labour market.

South Africa is the most unequal country, with race playing a determining factor where a majority of the Black population experiences social inequality over other races. Black youth, especially females, are predominant in South Africa, hence why the study showed a high rate for those who are too young to work and are still scholars within the Black population. The study's results highlight that most Black women are not working because they are housewives/homemakers. It is vital to note that in Black communities, even today, family responsibilities are still very much assigned to women. This argument is supported by Smith (2022), where the author highlighted that Black women tend to shoulder more childcare and home responsibilities than their white counterparts and are also likely to be primary wage earners in their families. Many have had to quit their jobs without access to affordable child care.

The study further shows that the majority of Black and Coloured were unemployed due to pregnancy, whereas Indians and Whites recorded a 0% rate. This is a concern, as it might be related to the differences in sexual behaviour. According to Dumas *et al.*, (2021), the Black and Coloured population are more likely to engage in sexual intercourse at a young age. The factors contributing to such could be family structure or household income. Strangely, when one goes to White dominated areas, billboards advertise investment opportunities, whereas billboards in Black or poor areas advertise alcohol. In addition, the reason for not working due to pregnancy among Black and Coloured women may be the postnatal period since, during this time, most women are sleep deprived due to the unexpected sleeping, maternal health and feeding patterns of the new-born (Yang *et al.*, 2020). However, the rate of women who were unemployed due to ill health, retirement and disability was found among the Black population.

Again, these findings on reasons women are not working by marital status align with what has been previously discussed. For instance, the study noted that majority of single women are youth. Therefore, it makes sense why most of them are still scholars and too young to work. Also, pregnancy is high among single people, which could be associated with teenage pregnancy. According to the data provided by Affinity Health (2023), South Africa has one of the highest teenage pregnancy rates globally, with nearly one in four girls falling pregnant before turning 20. However, those who are married are found to be housewives/ homemakers. In his study, Msimanga (2013) noted that married women are seen as people who stay home and perform household duties. On the other hand, most widowed women were retired from working.

The study shows that most unemployed women did not seek employment because they were still scholars and had yet to complete secondary school. Some of the women who did not complete secondary school were not seeking employment due to their responsibilities to take care of the household and pregnancy. However, the study's results showed that women with tertiary education recorded the lowest among homemakers or pregnant women. This is because educated women are less likely than less educated to marry. Bearak and England, (2015) alluded that the more educated one is, the less likely they are to get married, with tertiary education being the least likely and those with less than a tertiary education the most likely (Bearak and England, 2015). In the same instance, some females who did not complete secondary schooling were unemployed because they did not feel the need to work. Others were retired, assuming that they were in the older generation.

The high levels of unemployment in some provinces are associated with education. According to the study results, most unemployed women who were still scholars were found in Eastern Cape and KwaZulu Natal. In addition, women from Eastern Cape, KwaZulu Natal and Limpopo were unemployed because they were housewives. Societal division of labour based on labour still prevails, especially in Zulu and Xhosa homes, where women are still restricted to their roles as housewives and the male duties are considered special, more valued than women (Mncwango, 2015). This could be why most women in these provinces recorded the highest rate for those who were not working. The rate of women who retired or were too young to work was also found in Eastern Cape.

In addition, these results are per Stats SA's (2019) mid-year population estimates, where it is highlighted that Eastern Cape had the highest youth population. This could be due to the fact that Eastern Cape is South Africa's poorest province with the highest rate of outward migration to other provinces, which leaves it with the highest proportion of both children and the elderly; the reason why Eastern Cape had the highest rate for both too-young and retired. An article by Nkosi (2023) supported these statements by Statistics South Africa by highlighting that young people from EC are leaving the province in numbers to look for jobs elsewhere, giving rise to the aged population. Contrastingly, women in Western Cape and Gauteng were unemployed because they had no desire to work. On the flip side, many women in Gauteng were unemployed due to pregnancy.

The majority of females who were not working in urban areas were still scholars or students. However, traditional areas had a high rate of females not working because they were participating in household duties. Culturally assigned roles in traditional areas are still prevalent. SPFII and UNDP maintains that rural women spend more time than urban women and men in reproductive and household work, including obtaining water and fuel, caring for children and the sick and processing food. These limit women from participating in employment opportunities. According to Manisalidis *et al.*, (2020), people in urban areas breathe polluted air, noise pollution etc., all leading to higher levels of non-communicable disease and injuries, also, consumption of substance abuse and sex work is predominant in urban areas. Thus, urban areas recorded the highest rate of women not working due to health issues. On the other hand, the study found that women from urban were not working due to pregnancy, and some had no desire to look for work. Therefore, the hypothesis *“There is a relationship between personal characteristics such as age, population group, marital status, education status, geographic type and province of residence of currently female unemployed and the reasons for unemployment”* was tested and confirmed by the outcomes of Chi-square test statistic.

5.6 Differentials in duration of unemployment and demographic characteristics

While South Africa's unemployment rate remains high, the unemployed population is getting stuck unemployed for longer. However, one must keep in mind that one of the potential explanations for this high unemployment rate among women is the duration of unemployed, thus the study also looked at differences in the length of unemployment among age groups. The study showed that younger age groups were prone to both shorter and longer periods of unemployment than older age groups. It was found that most women, especially those aged 25-34, have been unemployed for less than a year. Younger people may be more willing to accept work offers because they are more adaptable and have less stringent beliefs about what constitutes good employment, which is one of the explanations for shorter unemployment durations for this age group that has been mentioned (Kingdon and Knight, 2004).

On the other hand, the government has prioritized addressing youth unemployment. Even though initiatives like the Expanded Public Work Programs, teaching assistants, and internships attempt to lower the high unemployment rate, doing so still poses a difficulty, hence women in the age group 15-24, 25-34, and women in the age group 35-44 have been unemployed for more than 1 year. Lartey (2018) stated that the long duration of unemployment faced by new entrants into the labour market may be related to the increased unemployment rate affecting South Africa in general. Because this group has already shown a significant risk of continuous unemployment and needs assistance entering the labour market, many new entrants searching for their first jobs during a high unemployment rate are at danger. Dlodla (2020) stated that those without prior work experience, women, and young people who are unemployed have worse chances of finding employment. This suggests that those who are unemployed but have no prior work experience are more likely to stay unemployed compared with those with previous experience. Thus the hypothesis that *“There is a relationship between unemployment duration of currently unemployed females and their characteristics such as age, population group, marital status, education status, geographic type and province of residence* was put to the test and found to be accurate by Chi-square test statistics.

In South Africa, it has been observed that the African/Black population are more vulnerable to prolonged unemployment. The hypothesis outlined above validates the non-white demographic groups widely acknowledged as vulnerable on the job market. However, the study discovered that the Black population group continuously had the longest and shortest periods of unemployment, followed by Coloured people relative to White people and Indians. Although post-apartheid policies aimed to create equal opportunities for participation in the labour market, it was anticipated that unemployment duration for the Black population group would be lower. However, the level of unemployment duration varying across different population groups has had significant implications for the incidence of crime and poverty (Lartey, 2018).

Statistics South Africa (2022) noted that in Q4 of 2021, long-term unemployment recorded its highest point of 6,3 million, while short-term unemployment peaked at 2,0 million in Q4 2020, during the national lockdown. In this respect, the results of the duration of unemployment reveal that most of the women who were in short/long-term unemployment were single women. Additionally, the level of education plays a vital role in the employability of unemployed persons in the labour market. Generally, persons with the highest level of education are less likely to be affected by high levels of long-term unemployment. Hence, the findings suggest that most women who did not complete secondary or had completed secondary education were in long-term unemployment compared to tertiary. A possible reason for this might be a lack or shortage of necessary skills to meet the labour market demand. Although people pursuing higher education careers are more likely to increase their employability and improve their success in the labour market, it has become increasingly difficult to find work in the country, no matter how qualified job seekers are.

The study looked at the length of time unemployed females have been looking for work according to provinces of residence. It is expected that there would be differences in the length of unemployment among the provinces due to discrepancies in the distribution of natural and economic resources in the nation. However, the results showed differences in the percentage shares of unemployed women experiencing long-term unemployment. EC comes in first with the highest rate of females who experienced time in search of employment. It is well known that EC has the highest proportion of rural dwellers, and the conditions in the province are inferior to the national average: implying a higher unemployment rate. According to Nkanjeni (2022), a statement made

by the former premier of KwaZulu Natal “Zikalala” during the 2022 State of the province address (Sopa) on unemployment in KZN, indicated that unemployment in this province is mainly caused by corruption and the failure of companies to invest in self-development. Furthermore, despite the effects of covid-19, overpopulation in Gauteng, load shedding and the increasing crime levels in the province harm investor confidence, which causes unemployment.

South Africa continues to see an increase in rural-urban migration because of a need for sufficient and acceptable investments in rural development (Mthiyane *et al.*, 2022). Therefore, because of the country’s economic inequalities, urban areas continue to experience an inflow of people looking for work, and job opportunities are already limited. However, it was found in the study that women in urban areas experienced short/long-term unemployment as opposed to traditional areas and farms. Furthermore, urban areas offer more short-long term job options than rural and farm areas. As a result, the number of informal settlements is increasing, causing backlogs to increase (Mthiyane *et al.*, 2022).

5.7 The comparison between males and female’s employment status

In South Africa, women have higher chances of being unemployed than males. This can be attributed to the traditional norms that excluded women from the economy and the differences in how boys and girls were raised (United Nations, 2018). Although the focus of the study is on female unemployment, it also looked at the employment status, comparing the findings of males with that of females to support the above argument. The fact that various theories attempt to explain gender-based inequalities in employment and unemployment is crucial to note. These, however, recognize that men and women's involvement in the labor market differs, and some studies link women's unemployment to issues with discrimination in the workplace, feminism, and gender stereotypes. The study showed a large gap within the 25-34 age group, where females were more unemployed and discouraged job seekers than men. In addition, while male unemployment was high, it was significantly lower for the age group (35-44).

The study also showed that the unemployment crisis among women is drawn along racial lines. Results from the study show that, compared to males of all races, Black women were more unemployed than men. Whereas the unemployment rate for women from other population groups is lower than it was for men. In addition, when comparing the two genders, the results below reveal

that Black women were more discouraged from seeking employment than the rest of men in working age. When comparing the employment status by marital status between men and women, the study revealed that the labour force participation rate of women and men is strictly associated with the structure of the household they live. It was found that the unemployment rate was significantly lower among married men or men living with their partners like husband and wife. However, the exact opposite pattern is observed for women. This, however, shows that marriage or living with a partner drives up a men's labour force participation while it drives down women's.

According to United Nations (2018), traditionally, girls and boys were taught differently. Girls were often socialized to undertake domestic and care responsibilities, with the notion that they would be economically dependent on men. This argument conforms with Madubela and Smit (2022) where they indicated in their report that the root of the differential in access to employment between males and females is the vast skills that women develop in their lifetime as homemakers. These skills are valued differently economically to skills that boys are encouraged to possess. United Nations report (2014) further highlights that the stereotype of men as breadwinners led to the prioritization of boy's education by parents. Hence the results from the study indicated that the unemployment rate is lower among men with tertiary education than women with tertiary education. In terms of employment status by province, the study found that the majority of women in these provinces were unemployed than men. On the other hand, men in traditional and farm areas have a lower unemployment rate than women. This can be qualified to the arguments made by the authors above.

5.8 The predictors of female unemployment

This study argues that demographic characteristics are associated with unemployment in South Africa. Looking at age, the relationship between age and unemployment was statistically significant, with a p-value less than 0.05. Axelrad *et al.*, (2018) examined how youth survive in the labour market. However, the binary logistic regression results indicate that women aged 15-24 and 25-34 were associated with a greater likelihood of being unemployed than women aged 55-64. The study findings are consistent with the above study by Axelrad and colleagues, which found that the youth unemployment rate is higher than that of adults in most countries.

In addition to the above discussion, the study looked at the education level, and the test statistic was also significant. The results revealed that women with secondary education were more likely to be unemployed than those with tertiary education. These findings are consistent with other researchers. For instance, Statistics South Africa (2022) maintains that higher levels of unemployment mainly affect women and people with lower levels of education. Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2021) maintains that covid-19 has affected especially those with less education. According to the report, this group was affected the most in terms of job loss than those with higher education. Regarding the province of residence, the study found it to be significantly associated with unemployment.

The results of the binary logistic regression indicated that there are greater chances of women in the age group 45-54 being discouraged job seekers, whereas those in the youth age group had lower chances of being discouraged than the elderly. These findings are also supported by Watermann *et al.*, (2023) that as the level of age rises, age discrimination may discourage older job seekers, as experiencing age discrimination likely promotes the judgement of not being desired by the labour market and the judgement of diminishing time and opportunities in the workforce. The study further showed that being from one of the provinces of South Africa increased the odds of being a discouraged job seeker.

When considering women's duration of unemployment, the results from the study indicate that women who did not complete secondary school were less likely to be unemployed for less than one year. Instead, this level of education increased the chances of being unemployed for more than one year compared to women with tertiary education. Statistics South Africa (2022) did mention that unemployed persons with less than a matric level of education are more likely to be in long-term unemployment than women with tertiary education. Another significant variable was the province of residence, which showed that women living in Eastern Cape and Gauteng were more likely to be unemployed for more than one year. This can too be qualified to the factors discussed above.

Age has been one of the prominent factors of unemployment, with a higher rate being youth due to lack of experience or limited vacant positions. However, this is shown by the study that women in the 15-24 and 25-34 age groups were more likely to be unemployed among women who never worked before than the 55-64 age group. Unexpectedly, those ages 35-44 and 45-54 were associated with greater chances of unemployment among women who had never worked before. Msimanga (2013) agrees that older women also have a high unemployment rate. Married women were seen in the study as unemployed among those who never worked, which is not surprising. The cause of this predicament is most discussed in the study, as mainly family responsibilities are enforced on women as men carry one from one job to another.

It is difficult to discuss employment without mentioning the Black population because it is the largest and most unequal population. However, the Black population category did not show any significant relationship. Coloureds and Indians were significant, and Coloured women exhibited greater chances of being unemployed among women who have experience. This may be due to their skin colour and exposure to opportunities. Coloured population are the second preferred race group after White when it comes to employment opportunities. Moreover, they do not have preference when it comes to jobs, as they can be found in informal sectors such as call centres, panel beaters, taxi industry, retail and formal sectors.

On the other hand, Indians were less likely to be unemployed among women who ever worked. Their likelihood was high among those who had never worked. Firstly, the author believes Indians are a new race in South Africa. As a result, they form the smallest population group in South Africa. Sen (2020) maintains that Indian women are ruled by patriarchal culture and norms. The author further states that traditionally, Indian men do not like their daughters or wives to earn money (Sen, 2020). For them, working with men is equivalent to compromising women's purity and safety (Sen, 2020).

Education is a fundamental factor that influences a woman's ability to participate in the economy and gain work experience. Therefore, the findings from the study did support the statement made above. The results revealed that women who had received no schooling at all were likely to be unemployed among those who never worked before compared to tertiary education. To sum up, the results indicated that women with education less than tertiary were more likely to be unemployed among women who never worked.

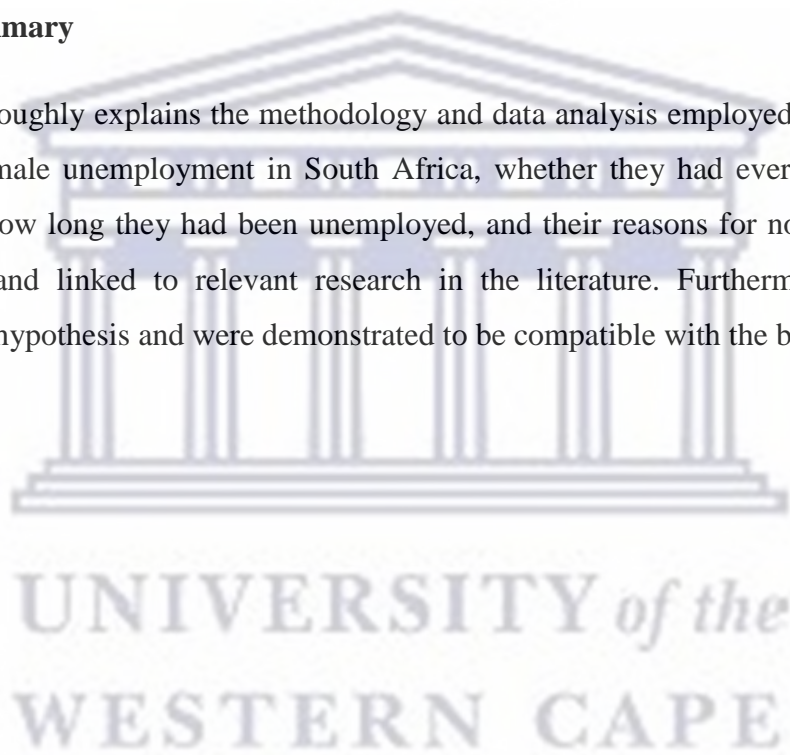
With regards to the province of residence, the study showed that staying in one of the provinces except Limpopo increased the chances of being unemployed among women who ever worked. However, the results also showed that women staying in traditional areas were unlikely to be unemployed among those who ever worked. This is accurate, considering that women in traditional areas still follow traditional ways of doing things; a woman is supposed to be a stay home wife and bear children while a man looks for employment in the Transvaal, now known as Gauteng. Also, traditional areas are dominated by older age groups that were victims of apartheid when a majority of them were denied access to quality education which would have given them the necessary skills to cope with today's changes and advances in technology (Lartey, 2018).

The study has further shown the association between demographic characteristics and why women were not working in South Africa. The test model was found to be significant with a p-value less than 0.05. The findings on the reasons for not working are consistent with the literature. For example, married women or women living together like husband and wife were less likely to be too young to work or scholars. Instead, their rate was high among those who were unemployed because they were housewives or due to pregnancy. This can be explained by the factors discussed above, such as traditional norms and apartheid policies. Further to this, what got attention again is the level of education.

In the previous sections, the study linked those who received no schooling or schooling less than primary education to the elderly adults since the majority of youth today have received some schooling. However, the results found them less likely to be too young to work or students, and they recorded the lowest among homemakers or pregnant women. Elderly adults often deal with physical limitations that arise from illness or simply the effects of old age on the body (Manini, 2011). As a result, they may not have the strength to take care of the household and are past the reproduction stage. Hence, the study found they were more likely to be unemployed due to ill health.

5.9 Chapter summary

This chapter thoroughly explains the methodology and data analysis employed in the study. The focus was on female unemployment in South Africa, whether they had ever worked or never worked before, how long they had been unemployed, and their reasons for not working, which were identified and linked to relevant research in the literature. Furthermore, the findings confirmed every hypothesis and were demonstrated to be compatible with the body of literature.



CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The study aimed to determine the factors influencing female unemployment in South Africa, whether the currently unemployed females had worked before or never worked before, and to assess how long they have been trying to find work and the reasons for not working. In different contexts, the study looked at the impact of demographic characteristics on female unemployment in South Africa. To keep the study within controllable limits for thorough analysis, the study considered females between ages 15-64 years who, by the standard definition according to Statistics South Africa (2021), did not work and did not have a job to return to in the last seven days prior to the interview, tried to look for work in the last four weeks preceding the interview and did not have jobs to return to in the last four weeks prior to the interview.

Five research questions guided the study. All potential factors of female unemployment were identified in order to provide answers to these questions. This was done through a thorough examination of relevant theoretical and empirical literature. Moreover, five theories were proposed by the study, and they were all verified through testing. The analysis found that demographic variables were substantially associated with female unemployment. The demographic characteristics used were age, population group, marital status, level of education, province of residence and geographic type. It was hypothesized that these factors exert an impact on female unemployment in the economy of South Africa. Other dependent variables such as work experience, duration of unemployment and the reasons for not working were explored along with demographic characteristics.

The period under study was 2021, using the data set concerning female unemployment obtained from Labour Force Survey produced by Statistics South Africa quarter four. Descriptive statistics were used to study the distribution of the variables. Bivariate analyses, including cross-tabulation, Chi-square test statistics, Phi, and Cramer's V, were used to test the significance of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Furthermore, the study also used multivariate analysis, using binary and multinomial logistic regression to estimate the odds ratio of the dependent variables.

6.2 Summary of the research

The study came at the following conclusions following a thorough examination of the data set and in accordance with the research questions. Firstly, the study first revealed differences in female unemployment across age groups. Although there have been government initiatives to curb female unemployment, such as education and skills development Bavumile Skills Development Programme, the study found that younger ages were more vulnerable to female unemployment, especially those in 25-34 and 35-44. However, the majority of the women in the 15-24 age group have never worked before compared to the 55-64 age group with the majority of work experience. Again, this 15-24 age group recorded the highest among those who had no desire to work because they were still enrolled in school and were too young to work. When observing the results from the study, it is acceptable to say that this age group is likely to be single women. Women aged 55-64 were not working due to ill health and were forced to retire; those aged 25-34 were not working because they were housewives and pregnant, while those 35-44 and 45-54 could not work due to disability. The study also looked at the length of unemployment and found women within the 24-34 and 35-44 age groups to be the most vulnerable in long and short unemployment.

When comparing unemployment rates across population groups, the study confirmed that non-White demographic groups, particularly Blacks, experience significant unemployment rates. Despite the fact that apartheid policies did not result in equitable employment opportunities, unemployment did not change much for the Black population. While Black women in South Africa have a high rate of labour force participation compared to other population groups, they recorded the highest among those who had never worked. In addition, the study identified a remarkably high proportion of Black women who were not working due to the reasons mentioned in the study, such as household duties, and a higher proportion of them experienced short/ long-term unemployment.

The argument that education level was associated with female unemployment in South Africa was confirmed in all analyses conducted. It was found in the study that women with an education level less than tertiary, particularly those with secondary education, had a high unemployment rate. On top of that, these women with this level of education did not have work experience and were likely to be unemployed for less than or more than one year. When looking at the reasons for not working according to education level, the study found that the rate of women who did not complete secondary schooling was high for all the reasons mentioned.

In addition to the above, the study looked at the disparities in unemployment across provinces of residence and geographic type, with the most affected being Eastern Cape, KwaZulu Natal, Gauteng and Limpopo. On the other hand, urban areas had the most unemployed women, while women in traditional areas were discouraged job seekers who did not have any form of work experience. This takes us back to the study's discussion about areas distant from industries, and it is most noteworthy that the Black population live in these deprived communities that are not only far from the industries but also prone to crime and poverty (Lartey, 2018).

6.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, South Africa should be approaching developed world status since 1994. However, the increasing pattern of female unemployment among women, predominantly Blacks, does not show improvement. This is definitely due to cultural norms and the substantial political, social, and economic transformation that the ANC government has brought about. More so, the empirical findings in this thesis led to various new understandings of the factors that contribute to women's ongoing unemployment in South Africa. Firstly, it linked female unemployment with demographic characteristics and confirmed that unemployment of the currently unemployed, whether they have ever worked or never worked before, how long they have been unemployed, and the reasons for not working differs to the demographic characteristics, therefore in order to have a major impact, labor market policies should concentrate on modifying these characteristics.

6.4 Recommendations

- In light of the findings, the study advises local governments to work with National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), Motsepe Foundation- women's unit etc., to create programs that address the issues that primarily affect women in rural areas and Black communities, including enabling them to speak up, take charge, and fight for their rights.
- Today's culture need to support the eradication of stereotypes and the equitable distribution of domestic duties and child care among the family members, and that will require Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) and traditional leaders to formulate implementations that will diversify leadership positions within households.
- South Africa has an education disparity between urban and rural areas. Women from rural schools are given fewer employment opportunities than those from urban schools, particularly in the private sector. The study advises that both women attending government and private schools should receive equal treatment; the Employment Equity Act should also consider their educational background.
- Based on the findings on youth unemployment, the government needs to step in and promote courses demanded by the economy to prevent a skills mismatch.
- The study advises that more effort, in addition to the existing constitutional provisions, be made to absorb females in the South African labour market. Women's education should also be enhanced since it is strongly linked to female labour force participation as a focal point of human capital theory.
- In addition, the country has a minister of women in the presidency, yet the people it is meant to serve are unaware of its obligation. First of all, neither locally nor provincially are there any offices for the Department of women. This leaves the author with a question if this institution is far from people, how is it going to achieve its obligation? Therefore, the study recommends that the government/ minister of women implement outreach programmes to help fight female unemployment.

- The study also recommends that programmes aimed at young people should be overseen by individuals within the same age group, especially in leadership positions.
- The objective of the ANC Women's League is to defend and advance the rights of women, but women, mostly in rural areas, are still governed by patriarchal norms, so which rights are they advocating for? If women are still getting raped, trafficked, and oppressed every day. Also, the women's league is visible to only high profile cases, for example, the "Uyinene Mrwetyana" case; what about those who are in rural areas and need the same involvement and sympathy? Women's league should also form awareness programmes and work with traditional leaders and civil rights organisations to help alleviate these problems because these barriers prevent women from being fully employed.
- To serve the interests of women, the government should include women's units in all employment creation programs. Again, the government should develop a national employment policy responsive to women's concerns.
- Create jobs for women in growing sectors of the economy where opportunities or prospects for enhancing women's incomes are bright.
- Make accessible child-care centres for young working mothers.

6.5 Areas for further study

There is a need for further research on the gender gap in South Africa, which should be addressed in prospective studies. The study could not measure or compare the relationship between paid work, occupation and female labour force participation with that of males. It is found that women tend to be over-represented in occupations regarded as unskilled or low value than men. On the other hand, men are more likely to be in paid jobs than women. Therefore, for future research, it would be appropriate to give a detailed investigation on this matter because it would enable us to comprehend the extent of gender inequality in occupation in South Africa.

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