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'YOUTH BULDGE – IS IT AN OPPORTUNITY OR RISK?

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***STATUS OF YOUTH IN THE NORTH WEST PROVINCE: 'YOUTH BULDGE – IS IT AN
OPPORTUNITY OR RISK?***

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1. CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. INTRODUCTION

South Africa is a youthful nation which suggests vast potentials to draw meaningful dividend from hence increased economic growth. In a country with a youth bulge, immediately when the young adults enters the working age, the dependency ratio will definitely decline. The opportunity will depend on whether this individuals can be fully employed in productive activities, other things being equal, the average income per capita will definitely increase. Conversely, if the situation is reversed where a larger number of young adults entering the working age are unable to be employed and earn satisfactory incomes, the youth bulge will then become a demographic risk or bomb (La Graffe, 2012). Young people are classified as one of the vulnerable groups by Statistics South Africa, they define the vulnerable groups as a part of South African population that experience a higher risk of poverty and social exclusion than the general population. The vulnerable groups include children which is population aged below 17 years; youth which are those aged between 15 and 34 years; women which are female population; and older persons which covers those aged 60 years and older (Statistics South Africa, 2019).

1.2. BACKGROUND

According to Makiwane (2012) the population projections of South Africa resembles a continued youth bulge till the year 2050 where majority of population are estimated to concentrate on the 15 – 34. And it is expected to take longer than in other parts of the world. Youth Bulge is a common phenomenon in many developing and in particular

in the Least Developed countries (Lin, 2012), it refers to a demographic pattern where a large share of the population is comprised of children and young adults. It is regularly occur as a stage of development where a country achieves success in reducing infant mortality but fertility continues to high (Inayatullan, 2016).

A demographic window or dividend or bonus is defined by Taljaard (2008) as a period of time in a nation's demographic evolution when the proportion of the population that is in working age group is particularly bulging. A window is expected to last for 30 to 40 years and the age pyramid firstly shrinks with gradually lower proportion of young population (under 15 years) and the dependency ratio decreases. However, after few decades, low fertility causes the population to get older and the growing proportion of elderly people inflates the dependency ratio leading to aging population. Age dependency is projected to decline from the 57.5 of 2001 to 34.1 in 2031 for South Africa. Which implies that there will be less dependent people, however this is likely to be affected by the expected aging population discussed above (Taljaard, 2008).

1.3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

As reported in one of the studies done earlier in the directorate titled 'The state of the Population in the North West Province conducted in the year 2018', the North West Province has a higher proportion of young and child population which symbolizes youth bulge. As indicated above this is a demographic dividend or window of opportunity which essentially means the province has a large proportion of young/working age population and less people depending on the working class. This calls for adjustments

in focus as this group implies more economic demands thereby impacting on planning. The implication of this finding is that the province may have high population growth rate in the long run particularly when the young population attain reproductive age. Accordingly, the rapid population growth exerts pressure on the distribution and provision of services such as educational, health and recreational resources including housing.

Moreover rapid population growth results in young dependent population, which leads to lower levels of saving per capita because of the excessive burden of dependents that families are obliged to bear. Therefore, the basic measure in turning youth bulge into dividend is the youth employment, unfortunately with the high rate of youth unemployment and high poverty.

Youth population has been observed to be more than double of the overall unemployment rate in the province. Youth bulge and the subsequent unemployment result in an increased number of young people living in poverty. Poverty adds to nearly all security shortcomings, for instance, instability, social unrest, illegal and illicit economy. There are questions which need to be asked with regard to the youth bulge experienced in the province. Whether the window of opportunity is still open for the province to take advantage of its demographic dividend; are we going to reap in the dividend; if not what are the challenges for not being able to reap in the dividend?

1.4. OBJECTIVES

- The study present demographic and socio – economic status of the young population in the North West Province.
- Examine the issues around youth unemployment in the province.
- Examine the challenges and opportunities faced by youth in the province.
- Determine whether the youth bulge can be used as a window of opportunity.

1.5. JUSTIFICATION/MOTIVATION

The population of the North West province has argued to grow further, this implies that the population has a potential of growing given the broad base of the age-sex structure. This has then pose challenges with respect to lower job creations; the housing backlogs; the skills deficit or land issues. The global economy is turning into technological solutions which leaving higher number of people jobless and irrelevant and increased number of school leavers who enter the market annually. The marginalization of young people is primarily manifested in high youth unemployment. Overall, the socio – economic situation of young people has improved since 1994. Even though there is progress, there is still a lot which has to be done. For instance, there is still higher number of young people in the province who are not in education, employment or training.

The study is motivated by the fact that the 'YOUTH BULGE' comes with its unique set of challenges as well as potential opportunities. The study intends to examine this

further and diagnose the situation for the North West Province. If it is an opportunity or otherwise, share with and recommend to government planners and policy makers to inform planning in the province. The study will further recommend the best solution to the current problem of youth unemployment and poverty and recommend the best approach of using the youth bulge to our advantage. That is facing youth bulge as a 'RISK' and use it as a window of opportunities. This can work for the province as it has been argued that the youth bulge of the country could lead to a demographic window of opportunity from around 2030 to 2060 (Taljaard, 2008).

1.7 DIVISION OF THE REPORT

1.8 Chapter one: general orientation of the study

1.9 Chapter: two: literature review and theoretical/conceptual frameworks

1.10 Chapter Three: research methodology

1.11 Chapter four: data analysis and interpretation

1.12 Chapter five: main findings, conclusion and recommendations

2 CHAPTER 2 : LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The vulnerable groups sector is one of the most affected sectors of population. There are a number of interventions which seek to address challenges faced by different sectors of the population in the country. Those processes require adequate monitoring as well as information on key indicators that can be used for monitoring. This sector requires particular effort to be made at all levels of policy planning and implementation to inform among other things resource allocation. Vulnerable groups include children aged below 17 years, youth aged between 15 and 34 years, women - female population, and older persons aged 60 years and over. One of the most effective ways of tracking progress made towards improving the lives of vulnerable groups in South Africa is through the monitoring of key indicators. It is based on this background that the study intends to present information on youth as one of the vulnerable groups as a key indicator through the provision on data relating to the socio – economic and demographic profile in order to inform policy and planning in the province.

Global economic growth has been reported to have increased by 3.6 per cent in 2017 as compared to 3.2 percent of 2016 (ILO, 2018). Overall, labour force participation rates among adults have been declining for the past 25 years, the decline is even more pronounced among young people aged 15 – 24 years. This downward trend is projected to continue in the future. Some factors behind it such as increased educational enrolment, greater retirement opportunities and higher life expectancy, are of course positive. However, the rise in the dependency ratio, such as (the

proportion of economically inactive people relative to the active) poses new challenges in terms of the organisation of work and the distribution of resources in society (ILO, 2019).

Youth unemployment has persistently continued to be high over decades. This has been reported to be a global challenge, as warned by ILO in 2013, the generation of young workers is scarred with a dangerous mix of high unemployment, increased inactivity and precarious work in developed countries as well as persistently high working poverty in the developing world. Young people are challenged and are unable to participate in the mainstream economy because of joblessness, poverty and inequality. These need to be addressed as they might lead to socio – economic effects such as increased crime, a poorly performing economy, extreme joblessness and poverty, and increased potential for political instability.

The above mentioned challenges can be linked to the high drop – out rates and inadequate skills development among the young people, hence the weak pipeline for human capital development. There is a challenge of poor quality of education at all levels. The skills pipeline has been reported to be riddled with obstacles that undermine equitable access to opportunities in the labor market. For instance, literacy and numeracy at primary level are below the international average, there is also low uptake and pass rates for mathematics and science at grade 12 which inhibits growth in higher education. Poor throughput in higher education often affects the supply of

high level skilled graduates. South Africa's high rate of youth unemployment is largely attributed to the skills shortage in this age group. One more reason behind this might be linked to the fact that young people exit the education system prematurely and process no professional or technical skills, making them effectively unemployed.

Youth bulge has been seen as the potential to elevate the socio-economic status of the North West Province, if sufficient jobs and employment are available to youth who have the potential to actively contribute to the labour market. However, young population continues to experience the very high levels of unemployment it currently faces, it could result in economic stagnation through a "lost generation" of workers. To address this most effectively, taking into account the aspirations and agency of these is crucial.

2.2. CONTEXTUALIZATION OF IMPORTANT CONCEPTS IN THE STUDY.

2.2.1. YOUTH

The term "youth" is expressed differently depending on organizational perspective. It therefore denotes a particular category of people defined in terms of their stages of development between childhood and adulthood (DPME, ???). The United Nation General Assembly (2005) describe "youth" as the population between 15 and 24 years in some countries. However, in South Africa "youth" is defined as the population aged between 15 and 35 years. The "youth" is commonly understood to refer to young

population. The African youth charter also defines youth as those aged between 15 and 35 years.

The NYP 2020 defined young people as those who are aged between 14 and 35 years. Scientifically, the term “youth” denotes individuals who reflect certain behavioural traits such as adolescence, immaturity or a particular mind-set of attitudes. Moreover, the youth represents young energetic individuals who hugely influence the present and future of state development. The NYP 2020 definition of “youth” is based on the mandate of the National Youth Commission Act of 1996 and the National Youth Development Policy Framework (2002). The NYP 2020 is definitely in recognition of the fact that young people are not homogenous group. The NYP therefore in defining and addressing the challenges faced by youth, take into account the definition stipulated by relevant legislation and policies. For instance, the proposal of 15 -28 as the age range for youth in the National youth Development Policy Framework (National Youth Commission, 2002); the definition of a child as a person up to the age of 18 years in the Children’s Act (2005); and the criminal justice system’s reference to young offenders as those between the ages of 14 and 25 years.

2.2.2. YOUTH BULGE

Youth bulge is defined as the presence of large youth cohorts in a country’s population linked to falling mortality and fertility rates. Youth in our societies are seen as problems, they are either seen as a source of trouble or in trouble. It has been

argued that the earlier writings of the phenomena "youth bulge" have been largely negative, for instance, in Caldwell (2007) it was argued that an excess in young male population is likely to lead to social unrest. The World Bank in (2007) drew attention to the potential benefits of the largest youth bulge. It was based on the fact that the demographic transition in many developing countries will result in a situation where the proportion of the population active in the labour market is large relative to those who are not, therefore the household dependency ratios are low and per capita incomes rise. This is known as demographic dividend, which is delivered through a number of mechanisms, with labour supply, savings and human capital as the most important (Potgieter – Gqubule and Ngcobo, 2009).

2.2.3. DEMOGRAPHIC WINDOW

A demographic window (dividend, bonus) as defined by Taljaard (2008) is the period of time in a nation's demographic evolution when the proportion that is in the working age group is particularly prominent. This demographic window of opportunity is expected to last for 30 to 40 years. The timing and duration is associated with the decline in fertility, that is, when birth rates fall, the age pyramid first will shrink with gradually lower proportions of young population aged below 15 years and the dependency ratio decreases. However, after a few decades, low fertility rates cause the population to get older and the growing proportion of elderly people again inflates the dependency ratio, creating an aging population (Taljaard, 2008).

2.2.4. AGE DEPENDENCY RATIO (ADR)

Age Dependency Ratio (ADR) is argued to examine the concept of dependency. The ratio measures how many dependants there are for each person in the working age groups and thus helps us to understand how a society's resources should be shared between these groups (Taljaards, 2008). Age Dependency Ratio (ADR) can be affected negatively by youth unemployment.

2.2.5. NON – STANDARD EMPLOYMENT

Non – Standard Employment: The International Labour Organization (ILO) classifies non – standard employment in four categories. The categories reflect the conclusions of the February 2015 ILO meeting of experts on non – standards forms of employment and capture various arrangements, some of which are specific to particular countries. The classifications are as follows:

Temporary employment: in temporary employment, workers are engaged for a specific period of time. This include fixed term, project or task – based contract, as well as seasonal and casual work, including day labour. Casual work is a prominent feature of informal wage employment in low – income developing countries, but it has also emerged more recently in developed countries, particularly in jobs associated with the “gig economy” also called the “on demand economy” or “platform economy”. **Part – time employment:** with the part – time employment, the normal hours of work are fewer than those of comparable full – time workers. For statistical purpose, part – time work is usually considered as working fewer than 30 to 35 hours per week. In some instances, working arrangements may involve short hours or no predictable fixed

hours, and the employer has no obligation to provide a set of ours of work. These arrangements, known as "on call" come under different contractual forms, depending on the country, and include "zero – hours contracts". **Contractual Arrangements involving multiple parties:** Here, workers are not directly employed by the company to which they provide their services, such as when a worker is deployed and paid by a temporarily work agency, through the work is performed for a user firm.

Disguised employment: This work that lends "an appearance that is different from the understanding reality, with the intention of nullifying or attenuating the protection afforded by law. It can involve masking the identity of the employer, by hiring workers through a third party or engaging a worker in a commercial or corporative contract instead of an employment contract and at the same time directing and monitoring the working activity in a way that is incompatible with the independent status of the worker. **Dependant self – employment:** with this one the workers perform services for a business under a commercial contract but depend on one of the few clients for their income, or receive direct institutions with respect to how the work is carried out. This is an area which for some time have been lacking legal clarity. This workers are typically not covered by the provisions of labour law or employment – based social security, although a few countries have adopted specific provisions to extent some protections to dependant self – employed workers.

2.3. STATUS OF YOUTH

2.3.1. GLOBAL OVERVIEW

India has been reported to be enjoying its population dividends. The question which was raised was whether that can be real and whether potentials of the youth are being used optimally. The youth of India was reported to be budding around 2015 with an increase from 353 million in 2001 to 430 million in 2011. The youth of India are reported to share the some unique characteristics such as relatively better educated, better connection within and outside the country, internet connectivity and wider social networking (Hans India, 2015). As reported, by 2030, the global population is projected to reach 8.5 billion people which will increase to 9.8 billion people in 2050. This increase is expected to be driven by longer life expectancies rather than new births. As a result, the proportion of person aged 65 years or older is expected to continue to grow while that of young people will shrink in most of the world. Youth populations, however, will continue to expand in some of the regions

The global youth unemployment rate was expected to rise slightly in 2017, reaching 13.1 per cent, although the expected 70.9 million young unemployed is well below the crisis peak of 76.7 million in 2009. The projected youth unemployment was reported to be 70.7 million in in 2016 which increased to 70.9 million in 2017 which increased to 71.1 million in 2018 (ILO, 2017). Even when young men and women find employment, quality remains a concern. In emerging and developing countries, 16.7% of young workers live in on income below the extreme poverty threshold of US\$1.90 a day, partly because they often start their working lives in the informal economy.

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Globally, 3 out of 4 employed young women and men are in informal employment, compared to 3 in 5 for adults. Youth labour force participation has been reported to have declined sharply in the more than 20 years, which is a decline of 34.9 million between 1997 and 2017.

Around half of the world's youth population aged 15 and 24 years have been reported to be in the labour force. The proportion of young people in the labour force declined from 55.0 percent to 45.7 per cent between 1997 and 2017. This was largely driven by the positive development of young people remaining longer in education. It is however projected that the global youth labour force will decline between 2017 and 2030 by 41.8 million while the youth cohort 25 – 29 years will continue to decline with a projected reduction of 16.2 million. The global labour force aged 15 – 24 is projected to increase by 41.8 million people between 2017 and 2030. However, the number of labour force participants aged 25 – 29 will decline by 16.2 million. Overall, the number of youth labour force participation aged 15 – 29 will increase by 25.6 million by 2030. Approximately, 86% of young labour force is estimated to be in emerging and developing countries by 2030. This increase in the youth labour force will be almost entirely in Africa. Elsewhere, the youth labour force is reported to be stable or declining, partly because more young people are staying in higher education. Furthermore, an estimated 21.8 per cent of world's young people are neither in employment nor in education or training (NEET), most of them being females. That is, 34.4% being female while 9.8% being males with females taking 76.9% share (ILO, 2017).

2.3.2. REGIONAL OVERVIEW

As reported by United Nations (2011), young Africans are continuing to face major difficulties in the realms of higher education, employment, health and participation in decision making processes. Even there is improvement noticed in recent years, for example, there has been an increase in school enrolment over a period of 20 years with a gender gap narrowing. As the United Nations (2011) argued, African youth might have the potential to be the drive for Africa's development, provided that appropriate investment in health and human capital are made. However, if youth issues are not addressed, and if high rates of youth unemployment and under-employment persist, Africa's development could be negatively affected. Recent financial crisis in the continent are likely to hit young people than the general population, given the fact that most of those presently unemployed are youth. This sentiment has however been expressed in terms of civil unrest.

It has been reported that, the global financial crisis notwithstanding, poverty, low levels of participation in national and local decision – making processes, poor infrastructure, and conflicts have led thousands of young people to migrate from rural to urban areas. Many have been reported to have crossed borders in Africa, and others have been reported to have left the continent in search for better educational opportunities and livelihoods. Dissatisfied youth are often more likely than older generations to challenge their situation actively, and become a socially destabilizing force, as evidence by increasing demands for change on their continent. For these

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reasons, many African countries are placing emphasis on youth development (United Nations, 2011).

The youth population in Africa is projected to increase by 105 million people by 2030, 94 million of them will be found in the sub-Saharan subcontinent. Youth unemployment in Sub Saharan Africa remained stable in 2017 (ILO, 2017). The region reported an increase in youth unemployment rate, the ILO (2017) projected an increase from 11.5 million in 2016. It increased to 12.0 million in 2017 and further projected to increase to 12.4 million in 2018. The decline in participation among youth is found to be almost universal. Accordingly, gender participation gaps are narrowing. The sub Saharan African region has a total increase of youth labour force participation from 53.9% in 1997 to 54.3% in 2017. However, male have reported a slight decline from 57.3% in 1997 to 56.9% in 2017 while females reported an increase from 50.6% in 1997 to 51.6% in 2017. Females still reported a lower participation rate as compared to their male counterparts with a gender gap of 6.7% in 1997 which decreased to 5.3% in 2017. As at the end of the years 2017, the sub Saharan African region reported a total of 15.5 per cent with males accounting for 11.2% and females 19.0%, which gives females a total share of 61.4% (ILO, 2017).

2.3.2.1. ISSUES AND CHALLENGES FACING AFRICAN YOUTH:

2.3.2.1.1. EDUCATION

According to the United Nations (2011) report, there has been a significant improvement in access to primary education and literacy across Africa in the past decades with specific reference to a period between 1999 and 2008. However, these has not led to improvement in secondary and tertiary enrolment rates, rather reported that the enrolment rate for tertiary education became very low. It is vital to note that, increased provision of post – primary education can give young Africans the hard and soft skills that will enable them to compete effectively in the labour market of an ever – evolving and globalised world. This education deficit has been argued to affect the socially excluded young people such as girls and young people with disabilities. Concerns faced by youth in India include among others education. There has been a noticeable rapid growth in the number of educational facilities/ institutions in India though not uniformed across the length and breadth of India. Furthermore, that has been reported not to be equally accessible to all sections of societies, just like Africa, youth are demanding better and skill – based education, they want career oriented education (Hans India, 2015).

2.3.2.1.2. HEALTH

According to the United Nation (2011) report, Africa collectively aspires to universal access to Health care and coverage (i.e. securing access to promotive, preventive, curative and rehabilitative services at affordable costs). However, the various constraints in health financing are affecting the most vulnerable Africans, including the young people. HIV/AIDS has been reported to be the major cause of death among

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African youth, especially girls and young women who are more vulnerable to contracting HIV than boys and young men. Some of the explanations for the spread of HIV are to be found in inequalities related to gender and age. However, poverty and risky behaviour are also found to play a bigger role in this regard. Harmful environments and the rapid population changes to which many young people are subjected to increase their exposure to the virus. Girls are particularly vulnerable to HIV/AIDS infection due to early marriages, violence against women and sexual abuse. The fact is, lack of knowledge about how HIV is transmitted, stigmatization, and social alienation of infected persons from schools and workplaces impede faster progress towards the eradication of HIV/AIDS, particularly among young Africans. This is due to the fact that, structural challenges and weak health care systems contribute to the high mortality rates of young people in the region. As the resolution of the fourth Joint United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and African Union Commission conference of the Minister of Finance, improving the coverage and performance of health care systems in Africa would be undoubtedly reduce morbidity and mortality among young people (UN, 2011).

2.3.2.1.3. EMPLOYMENT

As reported by United Nations (2011), employment has continuously been the main concerns in African region. The United Nations (2011) conveyed that the exceptionally high unemployment rates experienced in Africa can be linked to the recent or revolutionary activities and unrests in the region. The main reasons for Africa's high unemployment rates were sited to be:

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- A mismatch between the education system and the skills needed in the labour market, and the saturated public services and small private sector basis that are unable to employ large numbers of people.
- Labour demand barriers such as observed discriminations by employers towards young people on the grounds of lack of experience; information gaps between job seekers and potential employers; and barriers to the creation and development of business opportunities, particularly in gaining access to financial, physical and social capital.
- Another reason for high youth unemployment rates is a mind-set that tells educated young people that they must be employed in white – collar jobs. In relation to this sentiment, a low status is also afforded to vocational training.

Furthermore, most young people in Africa do not finish school and universities with a plan to engage in self – employment. As was reported by ILO’s 2010 youth Employment Report, while unemployment is relatively high across Africa, the degree of underemployment and working poverty is even higher, thus pointing to a lack of adequate job opportunities for youth (UN, 2011).

India share the same challenge with African countries, the skills acquired by youth and education in India do not match with the job requirements. Therefore, after completion of the course, the youth struggles to get good jobs in formal sector in the growing competitive world. At the same time, youth cannot remain without jobs for

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long time which leave them with no choice but to take up whatever job come their way. In India, just like in Africa those who get the jobs, are under-employed, under-paid and have to bear longer duration of work. In spite of some advantages, due to lack of communication and other skills, the probability of a youth remaining unemployed is much higher than that of an adult case especially in case of females. The youth are bearing the brunt of unemployment problem which forces them to migrate to foreign countries (Hans India, 2015).

2.3.3. STATUS OF YOUTH IN SOUTH AFRICA

As mentioned above, youth unemployment can affect Age Dependency Ratio negatively, as for South Africa youth unemployment has been reported to be increasing for number of decades now, for instance, the percentage of South African young people who were not working was found to be low at 24% of 20 to 24 year olds in 2001 (Taljaards, 2008). Furthermore, the future of South Africa's youth has been reported by researcher to look depressing as young people are still ailing in poverty and are plagued by crime, violence, unemployment and lack of education. According to Statistics South Africa (2018), half of South African population is under 24 years old with 64% of youth being poor. Education has improved in the country specifically in terms of access, but still 70% of those schools does not have functioning library. There was a high and growing rate of youth unemployment in South Africa which led the Development Bank of South Africa (DBSA) to initiate a project in 2010 which aimed at developing a high – level youth employment strategy.

The current generation of youth have greater access to education, with younger generations generally more educated than older generations, and there has been a dramatic increase in the number of young people among all races who get their matric certificate and higher education enrolment have also increased. Young people in most societies are usually the healthiest sector of the population. However, as Makiwane and Kwizera (2009) argued, the AIDS pandemic, substance abuse, mental ill health and crime and violence are compromising this advantage. Portgieter – Gqubule and Ngcobo (2009) further argued that unemployment is higher for young people and women as a result these groups suffers from poverty and dependency.

The unemployment rate has been reported to have increased optimally since the year 2017 as per the 2019 first quarter labour force report (StatsSA, 2019). As reported by statsSA (2019), the unemployment rate has increased with 0.5% between the last quarter of 2018 and the first quarter of 2019 in the country. As of the first quarter of 2019, the South African unemployment rate was found to be 27.6%. However, the number of employed persons decreased by 237 000 and the number of unemployed persons increased by 62 000. This has therefore resulted in the decreased of 176 00 in the number of people in South Africa's labour force. The survey also reported that South Africa's unemployment rate has remained high at 34.2% for age group 25 – 34 years and 52. 2% for 15 – 24 years (youth).

“it is becoming harder to stay employed in South Africa” by Larry Claasen. Classen (2019) argued that the drop in the number of employed people is a further blow to government as it seeks to put a dent in the stubbornly high unemployment rate of around 27%. As Classen (2019) put it, there was no way the figures of unemployment will change when the Statistics South Africa releases the country’s 2019 first quarter results. The reason being that a number of companies reported that they have either reduced their head counts or were planning to do so. For instance the state – owned diamond mining company Alexkor had plans to retrench a total of 238 employees followed by sugar and property development group Tongaat Hullet which were looking at letting go a total of 5 000 employees.

There are additional companies which announced job cuts in 2019, that is, Standard Bank with 1 200 cuts; Multichoice with 2 194 cuts; Sibanye – Stillwater with 3 450; and Impala Platinum with 1 500 cuts. Classen (2019) further reported that the difficulty of the above mentioned sectors could be seen in the quarterly employment figures for the period ending December 2018 with an indication of sharp drops in both industries. For instance the number of fulltime mining jobs declined from 1.5% (7 000) to 449 000 as compared to the preceding quarter. The construction company experienced a decline of 20 000 jobs in a three month period. However, at the end of December 2018, the sector employed 522 000 people, which is about 90 000 fewer than what the sector employed in the same period in 2016. The other saddening part is the decline in wages in the construction for those who remained in the sector were

earning less. Wages in the sector fell 0.6% for the quarter and were only 0.9% for the whole year.

One major contributing factor to unemployment is automation which affected the banks mostly. For instance, Nedbank and Standard Bank had no option but to reduce the number of people they collectively employ by over 4 000 over the past two years. Automation has further affected companies like multichoice with a reduction of 2 000 staff at pay – TV operations (Classen, 2019).

As pointed out by an economist Iran Abedian, government has to be responsible for this condition as it played a major role due to mismanagement of the economy. The South African youth unemployment have been ranked as one of the highest in the world. An education expert believes that a fundamental problem with South Africa's education system is that not all students are equipped with the basics in primary school. South Africa's poor foundation – phase education system has repeatedly been linked to the country; skills shortage.

2.3.4. STATUS OF YOUTH IN NORTH WEST PROVINCE

In 2005, the North West Province had a population of 3, 58 million people with approximately 849 957 people being employed. As per expanded definition of unemployment, a total of 2, 37 million people were not economically active indicating that 362 242 people were unemployed. The North West unemployment rate has been

STATUS OF YOUTH IN THE NORTH WEST PROVINCE: 'YOUTH BULDGE – IS IT AN OPPORTUNITY OR RISK?

estimated to be 29,9% and was found to be higher than the national one which was found to be 26.4% in the year 2000. In 2000, comparing unemployment by district municipality, the then Southern District (Dr Kenneth Kaunda) had the highest unemployment rate of 39%, followed by Bophirima with 36%, then Kgalagadi with 35% (Merged to be Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati), Bojanala with 30% and Central (Ngaka Modiri Molema) with 27%.

2.3.4.1. NORTH WEST PROVINCE ACTS AGAINST YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

The provincial administration intensified the fight against the worrying ills of unemployment, hunger and poor education levels. The provincial government under the leadership of Mr Supra Mahumapelo initiated programmes which are aimed at improving lives of the citizens. Additionally, administration introduced several government-driven programmes to turn around the economic growth of the province. In responding to high rate of unemployment of 38% which affected mostly youth, the North West Province came up with several measures aimed at addressing both poverty and joblessness while improving economic growth.

2.3.4.2. PERCENTAGE OF YOUNG PEOPLE NOT IN EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT NOR TRAINING (NEET) IN THE NORTH WEST PROVINCE.

The North West province has been ranked to be the third highest province with percentage of young people who are Not in Education, Employment nor Training as compared to other provinces. In the last quarter of 2015 it was reported to be at 31.4% which increased to 36.1% in 2016 and 36.7% in 2017. This indicate that the province will continuously experience high levels of unemployment and subsequently living in poverty. Lack of obtaining some educational qualification by young people, limit their chances of obtaining employment.

2.4. NEW FORMS OF YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

According to International Labour Organisation (2017), the previous generations of young workers mostly in developed countries, might have anticipated a "job for life" and young people still aspire primarily to stable and secure jobs. However, the current rapidly changing labour market is rearranging the job landscape and the expectation of a traditional stable or permanent job is increasingly becoming less realistic in both developed and developing countries. Emerging job opportunities, especially those facilitated by digital technologies, are linked to a wide range of new and diverse forms of employment which offer greater flexibility, particularly for young women, but also pose greater risks of stress and provide lower job security. Currently, the majority of workers aged 15 – 29 years around the globe are employees (in wage employment).

That proportion steadily increased between 2005 and 2015, from about 58 per cent to 69 per cent of young working people.

For today's new labour market entrants, the prospect of lifetime employment with the same employer have all but disappeared, and the attainment of a permanent job is more elusive than ever before. Young people are increasingly engaged in multiple non – standard jobs, sometimes working for many employers simultaneously. A closer look at the type of wage employment contracts young people sign reveals important insights about youth engagement in non – standard employment relationships. Contract types include permanent, temporary and without written contract.

2.5. DEMOGRAPHIC TRANSITION THEORY

According to La Graffe (2012), as population decline, either absolute or relatively, their economic clout in the form of percentage of global gross domestic product (GDP) declines as well. In the earlier stage of a country's development birth rates and death rates will consistently be very high. Ultimately, high birth rates will cause large cohorts of youth to follow one after the other, thereby creating, or increasing the size of a youth bulge in the population. This will however, in turn increase the dependency ratio of non-workers to workers within a population. A higher dependency ratio is representative of the portion of the population not earning income, participating in tax base, or creating economic growth. There is further concern that within this non –

working population, more require social services, are unable to contribute to the family unit, and thereby drag down household income levels.

2.6. YOUTH BULGE– IS IT AN OPPORTUNITY/DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND OR RISK?

South Africa like many countries in the continent has experienced high population growth rate with high but slowly decreasing fertility and declining mortality, North West is no exception. The likelihood is that even if the population growth rates declines further with fertility being below replacement level (2.1TFR), this situation can continue further for several decades. Reason being, there are many young people who are likely to start their own families. Like any African country, South Africa is faced with youth bulge. According to the United Nations definition, "Youth Bulge" occurs when more than 20 percent of a country's population is composed of young people. A "Youth Bulge" can be a valuable asset for both present and future generations, but at the same time it can be a risk to development, if social and economic conditions are not suitable. A "Youth Bulge" can either be a "demographic dividend" or a "disaster". If it's a "demographic dividend", a so-called country will be able to utilise and support its young, aspiring citizens in achieving appropriate education and jobs, which should lead to prosperous socio-economic future for everyone. Or if chance is missed, economic stagnation and a neglected 'lost generation' will likely to jeopardize such future. The rapid increase of the overall population, and especially of the youth population, could have in the past decades provided a country with socio-political

structure and the economy with various opportunities, stemming from increased number of potential consumers and workers, but also increasing stress.

Other mega trends are intertwined with this phenomenon, for instance migration. Including rural – urban migration as many young people have moved to cities as a way to escape poverty and seek opportunities, and out-of-country-migration in the face of the increasing discontent and poor employment prospects, out migration of young people has remained an important issue in the continent including Kenya (Hall, 2017). The issue of Urbanisation in Kenya has been fuelled by rural – urban migration and the general population growth. Kenya has been experiencing uncontrolled growth which can be observed for the country’s major agglomerations, but increasingly also smaller and secondary towns. The increase in population can lead to environmental strain as the demand for water, for example, increases. The other challenge has been insufficient infrastructure, with more young people comes an increased demand for education, health and sanitation infrastructure. High youth unemployment rates is one of the issues which can be intertwined with “youth bulge”. For instance, Kenya is experiencing youth bulge with youth unemployment being high, youth representing by far the bulk of unemployed people there. The unemployment problem in Kenya has been reported to be largely a “youth” problem (Hall, 2017).

2.6.1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND THE POTENTIAL OF THE DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND.

Accordingly, economic development should reflect in the employment rate of the population especially the youth. The gap between economic progress and increasing youth unemployment is also of vital importance when looking into the potential of economic dividend. In the case of youth dividend in Kenya, when looking at the sheer size and growth of its young population, despite of most recently plateauing as a share of the population, it becomes hard to compensate for. Even if continuous and strong economic growth leads to more employment opportunities, in the present and near future. In Kenya, employment growth has been reported to have benefitted the older segments of the labour force in the past few years based on the fact that they have experience and contacts. It has further being reported that the skill-sets and aspirations of Kenya's young generation are often disconnected from the realities and demands of the actual labour market. For instance, only about 11 percent of youth aspire to work in agriculture despite the sector's huge capacity for employment (Hall, 2017).

2.6.2. DEMOGRAPHIC IMPLICATIONS OF YOUTH BULGE

2.6.2.1. URBANIZATION

Accordingly, with the general shift from agricultural jobs toward those in the manufacturing and service industries, youth as well as the populations in general are moving from rural to urban areas at an alarming rate. Overcrowding in urban centres are argued to exacerbate problems and inequalities within society as municipalities

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outgrow their governing capacities. This might in the long run cause some cities to become petri dishes of instability, diseases and terrorism (La Graffe, 2012).

2.6.2.2. TURNING THE "YOUTH BULGE" INTO THE "DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND"

As stated by LaGraffe (2012), demographic trends such as the youth bulge, can be beneficial once a country reaches a certain point in demographic transition where birth and death rates begin to decline. Once this demographic progression begins, countries may experience a window of opportunity for economic development, often called a demographic dividend, largely flowing from increased savings as the relative number of dependents decreases. In order to reach this stage in demographic transition, it is argued that it will be necessary to keep the youth as much as employed and socially engaged as possible in order to reap the benefits and keep the country falling into conflict.

LaGraffe (2012) further claimed that the stage of a country's youth bulge along the demographic transition continuum is an important factor in determining when that country will experience demographic dividends those being the societal benefits arising from the favourable change in the structure of the population. However, youth bulge can pay "demographic dividends" once the birth and death rates even out, resulting in a larger percentage of the population being economically productive in comparison to the amount that is dependent. Birth rates are also directly correlated

to the level of education attained by women in society. For instance, the longer a girl stays in school, and the higher the education level she attains, the fewer children she will have. Therefore, focusing in improvements in education for girls may shift countries in a positive direction in terms of getting to the next stage of the demographic transition. Moreover, increased access to health services, family planning, and sex education can contribute to demographic stability (LaGraffee, 2012).

2.6.2.3. WHAT DOES YOUTH EMPLOYMENT MEAN TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs).

It is clear that the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development has placed full and productive employment and decent work for youth at the centre of new development vision. The emphasis here is on the catalytic power of youth employment in poverty alleviation, economic growth, and peace and prosperity for all. Targets under goal 8 and other goals, recognises the centrality of youth employment challenges, and open pathways for consistent and focalized action on decent jobs for youth, and youth development overall. For instance, by 2030, increase in the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship; by 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy; by 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training; by 2020, develop and operationalise a global strategy for youth employment and implement the global jobs pact of the International Labour Organisation; and promote mechanism for raising capacity for effective climate change

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related planning and small island developing state, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalised communities (International Labour Organisation (ILO), 2017).

The International Labour Organisation came up with initiatives in order to celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2019. The initiative is aimed at tackling issues faced by youth and their challenges, facilitating dialogues and policy action on the impacts of technology, demography, climate change, and globalisation on labour markets. The initiative therefore carried out a multi – stakeholder national dialogues on work and society, decent jobs for all, the organisation of work and production, and the governance of work. The following critical measures and next steps were identified through those dialogues:

- Develop national employment strategies and policies to enhance job creation in a coherent and coordinated manner;
- Develop appropriate macro – economic and sectoral policies, such as industrial policy, relevant to the future of work;
- Develop well – functioning and targeted active and passive labour market policies;
- Develop adequate policies for skills development, education and training;
- Develop policies to foster entrepreneurship and self – employment;
- Develop policies to promote rights at work;
- Further the expansion of social protection;

- Develop policies to support the transition from the informant to the formal economy; and
- Adapt all these policies to new and future technological realities (ILO, 2017).

2.7. CONCLUSION

It is evident from the literature that youth bulge has been experienced by many countries across the world. It has however depended on the developmental state of the nation whether it become a risk or an opportunity. Based on the literature North West is experience a youth bulge with limited resources which leaves it with a risk rather than an opportunity. As the one of the intention for this study is to determine the status of youth in the North West province as a way of examining whether youth bulge can be used to our benefit, the upcoming chapter focuses on the methods of research used in this regard.

3 CHAPTER 3: DATA SOURCE AND METHODS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter primarily concentrated on the review of literature on the subject of the status of youth in the North West Province and South Africa as a whole. This chapter is then focusing on the methods and models of research applied in this study.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

The study was based on a quantitative research approach. Quantitative research approach is mainly selected in this study in order to address quantifiable part which is needed for assessable indicators (De Vos et al, 2005; Goddard and Melville, 2001). Quantitative method of research relies on the collection and analysis of numerical data to describe, explain, predict or control variables (Gay, et al, 2017).

3.3 DATA SOURCES

Data sources was mainly secondary from Statistics South Africa. Therefore, the study employed the 1996, 2001 and 2011 censuses; General Household Surveys between 2002 and 2018; the 2007 and 2016 community surveys; and the mid-year estimates between 2016 and 2019.

3.3.1 Population Census

The UN defines a population census as the total process of collecting, compiling and publishing demographic, economic and social data pertaining, at a specified time or times, to all persons in a country or delimited territory. The South African Population census has been done every five years, however due administrative and financial challenges it was then moved to 10 year interval. Therefore, the census data is collected after 10 every years in the country (Weeks, 2016). The census data sets were selected due to its allowance of performing trend analysis which is an interest of this study.

3.3.2 Community Surveys

The first Community Survey was conducted in 2007 while the second Community Survey took place in 2016. The Community Survey is referred to a huge scale survey that occurs in between censuses which was conducted with the broad intentions of giving statistics about overall population and household to public sector and private sector at a municipal level (Statssa, 2017). The community surveys are collected five year prior to the next circle of census in order to supplement the census data. The community survey data has been used to supplement the census data in order to perform trend analysis for this study.

3.3.3 General Household surveys

The General Household Survey (GHS) is an annual household survey which measures the living circumstances of South African households. It collects data on education,

health, and social development, housing, access to services and facilities, food security, and agriculture. The Statistics South Africa's GHS's purpose (Aliber, 2009) is to collect the national household data annually. The survey began in the year 2002 and is collecting what the former October Household survey has been doing (Stats SA, 2018b). This data set is employed in this study as it collects data on household survey annually which is able to give a picture of how the household structures changes annually in this province.

3.3.4 Mid – year Population Estimates

Mid-year population is regarded to as the population at the 1st of July and are assumed to be the point at which half of the changes in the population during the year have occurred. For South Africa, the mid-year population estimates are produced by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA). It uses the cohort-component method for population estimation. In the cohort-component method, a base population is estimated that is consistent with known demographic characteristics of the country. The cohort base population is projected into the future according to the projected components of change (Stats SA, 2018). The mid-year estimates are used in this study because they are one of the data sets which provides population estimates annually which affords updated data.

3.4 METHODS OF DATA ANALYSIS.

The study analysed data on young population in North West Province aged between the ages of 15 and 34 years, from the censuses, surveys and mid-year population

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estimates. Data analysis is mainly descriptive. The data employed supercross and super web analytical soft wares both from Statistics South Africa. The analysis was done at two analytical levels, that is, univariate and bivariate analytical levels. Univariate analysis describes the individual variable through frequencies and percentage while bivariate analysis describes relationship between two variables. Other demographic measures such fertility measures, employment/ unemployment rate, labour participation rate, sex ratio, youth dependency ratio, etc, were employed in the study. Data is presented in tabular and graphical format (Gay, et al, 2016; De Vos et al, 2005; Goddard and Melville, 2001).

3.4.1 Selection of Study Variables

3.4.1.1 Dependent Variables

The dependent variable for this study proportion of young population.

3.4.1.2 Independent Variables

Independent variables include the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of young population.

3.5 CONCLUSION

A number of data sources were used in order to achieve the objectives of the study, the findings are presented in the next chapter.

4 CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

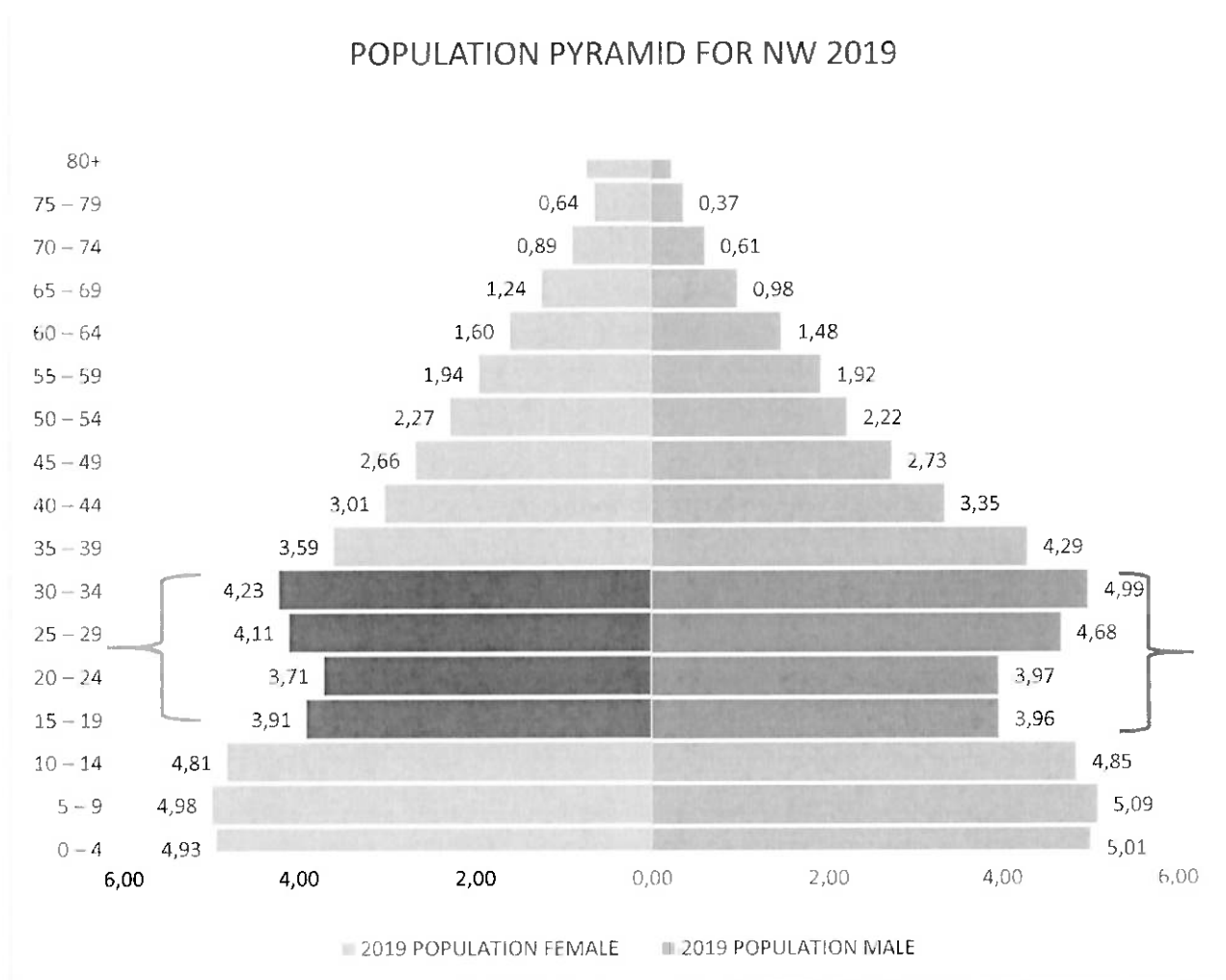
Research methods and models are discussed in the previous chapter which among others outlined how data is going to be analysed. This chapter therefore applies those techniques and discuss the results thereof. Findings were drawn from different sources as highlighted in the previous chapter. The chapter first discussed population age and sex structure of the North West province in general highlighting the youth population. It further looked at the trends and composition of young people in the province, then projected or forecasted the population growth of young people by sex for the upcoming 5 years. Lastly, the chapter examine the socio economic factors of the young population with the specific link to the youth bulge.

4.2. THE 2019 AGE AND SEX STRUCTURE OF THE NORTH WEST PROVINCE POPULATION

Figure 4.1 below present the current age and sex structure of the North West Province. The population structure of the North West province resembles an expansive population pyramid which has an implication of a young and growing population. A population with a higher proportion of young people has an implication of high fertility and a likelihood of survival to higher ages which suggests a rapidly growing population. As presented in figure 1, the population of the North West Province is higher at the younger ages between 0 and 14 years with age group 0 – 4 having a lower proportion while those aged between 5 and 9 have a slight higher proportion. However, those aged between 10 and 14 declined a bit.

As for youth population, the proportion declined sharply at age group 15 – 19 years and further at age group 20 – 24 specifically for female population. However, the population noticed an increase for age group 25 to 29 and 30 to 34 years with males indicating slightly higher proportion. Then the structure of the population of the North West Province started to decline from middle ages and declines further as age increases till the apex with females showing a slightly higher proportion for those ages 80 and more as compared to male counterparts.

Figure 4.1. Population Pyramid for the North West Province



Mid-year population estimates base data

4.3. POPULATION TRENDS OF POPULATION OF NORTH WEST WITH

YEAR	POPULATION	YOUTH (15-34)	YOUTH PROPORTION
1996	2,727,222	996,900	36.6
2001	2,984,097	1,079,676	36.2
2011	3,509,952	1,259,268	35.9
2016	3,748,435	1,349,550	36.0
2019	4,027,160	1,351,352	33.6

1996, 2001, 2011 Census, community survey 2016, Mid-year population estimates base data

4.4. SPECIFIC FOCUS ON YOUTH POPULATION.

Table 4.1 below present a trend analysis of the North West province population at a glance with a specific focus on the youth. As presented in table 4.1, the population of the North West province in general has been growing positively since the year 1996 with a total of 2.7 million which increased to 2.9 million in 2001, further to 3.5 million in 2011 and 3.7 million in 2016 and then 4 million in 2019. The same trend has been observed for youth population with an increase from 996 900 in 1996 to 1 079 676 in 2001, and further to 1 259 268 in 2011 and then to 1 349 550 and 1 351 352 in 2016 and 2019 respectively.

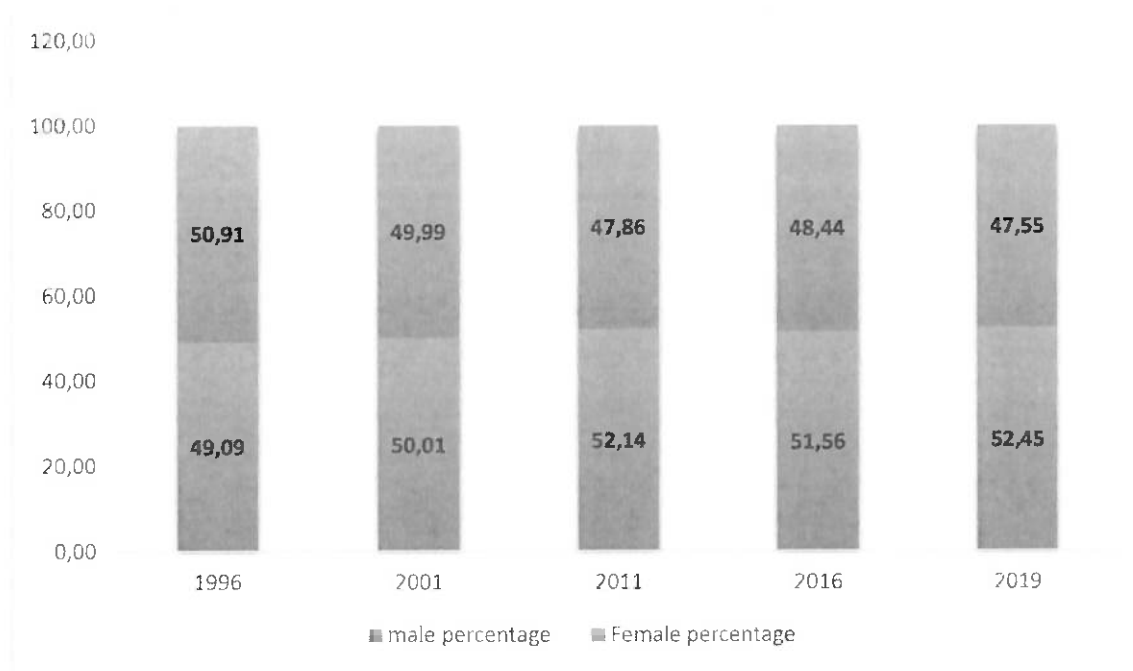
4.4.1. SHARE OF YOUNG POPULATION FROM THE TOTAL POPULATION

As presented in table 4.1 above, the North West province young population takes more than 30 percent share of the population. The proportion of young population in the North West province is indicated to have been fluctuating since 1996, it stood at around 36% between 1996 and 2016, it has however declined to 33.6% in 2019.

4.4.2. TREND ANALYSIS OF YOUNG POPULATION BY SEX

Figure 4.2 below present percentage distribution of young people aged between 15 and 34 years from the year 1996 to the year 2019 by sex. As shown in figure 4.2 below the proportion of females has been found to be expectantly higher for females in 1996 at 50.91% as compared to 49.09% of males. However, that has changed since 2001 with males taking the highest share accounting for 50.01%, 52.14%, 51.56% and 52.45% for 2001, 2011, 2016 and 2019 respectively. This indicate that the proportion for females has been declining which is likely to affect the sex ratio for young population in the province.

Figure 4.2: percentage distribution of youth population by sex.



1996, 2001, 2011 Census, community survey 2016, Mid-year population estimates base data

SEX RATIO OF YOUNG POPULATION

Table 4.2 below present percentage distribution of young population by sex ratio. In relation to what has been presented in figure 4.2 above, sex ratio has been affected. A sex ratio measures a proportion of males relative to females in a population. Sex ratio is expected to be higher at birth ranging between 104 and 107, it decreases as age increases. That is, at middle and older ages sex ratio decreases as the proportion of males decreases due to higher mortality among males than females in those ages. As presented in table 4.2 below, in 1996 the sex ratio for the North West province youth was low at 96.41, which indicated that there were more females than males in that year. The youth sex ratio in the province increased in 2001 where the proportion of males were equal to females that is 100:100. However, between 2011 and 2019 the sex ratio among youth population in the province increased ranging between 106 and 110 which indicated that there were more males than females aged between 15 and 34 years.

Table 4.2: Percentage distribution of young people by sex ratio between 1996 and 2019.

	Male	Female	Sex ratio
1996	489,336	507,564	96.41
2001	539,931	539,742	100.04
2011	656,523	602,745	108.92
2016	695,885	653,666	106.46
2019	708,738	642,616	110.29

1996, 2001, 2011 Census, community survey 2016, Mid-year population estimates base data

4.6 YOUTH POPULATION FORECASTING

Table 4.3 and 4.4 present population forecast between 2020 and 2024 for the North West province. Forecasting of population can be accomplished with different mathematical methods using present and past population records. This study used the Arithmetical increase method which is based on the assumption that the population increases at a constant rate. The forecast is based on the Mid – Year Population Estimates (MYPE) by statistics South Africa as a starting point. The forecast is based on the 5 year period using 2019 as the base year with the application of the excel forecast function. As presented in table 4.3, the youth population is projected to increase between the year 2020 and 2024 for both males and females. For age groups 10 -14 and 15 – 19 the population has been estimated to increase positively between the years 2020 and 2024 for both males and females. However, for age group 20 to 24, females are estimated to increase till the year 2024 while males are estimated to decline in 2021 but increase again from the year 2022 up to the year 2024. Furthermore, the age group 25 to 29 have been estimated to decline for both males and females since the year 2021 till the year 2024. As for age group 30 to 34 a decline is estimated for both males and females starting from the year 2023 and 2024.

Table 4.3: youth population projections

Age	2020		2021		2022		2023		2024	
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE
10-14	200722	198666	204507	201952	205614	202266	206133	202080	206215	201586
15-19	165181	163479	171602	170064	178746	177393	185909	184742	191661	190245
20-24	157471	148430	155674	148339	157153	149610	159603	152115	163040	156430
25-29	186601	162975	184761	160500	182275	159307	179286	157424	177454	156023

30-34	205520	174686	206956	176236	207109	176622	206537	176187	205104	174991
TOTAL	915494	848237	923501	857090	930897	865198	937466	872547	943474	879275

Mid-year population estimates base data

Table 4.4 below present percentage distribution of projected youth from the year 2020 to the year 2024 in the North West Province. This table is related to table 4.3 above, it distribute the proportion of young population. As presented in table 4.4 below, for the year 2020 majority of males respondents were young people aged 30 – 34 accounting for 22.5% followed by those aged 10 – 14 with 21.9%, then 25 – 29 with 20.4% and then 15 – 19 and 20 – 24 with 18.0% and 17.2% respectively. Almost the same trend was observed for females in 2020, but majority were found in age group 10 -14 accounting for 23.4% followed by 30 – 34 with 20.6%. The same distribution was observed also for both males and females for the years 2021, 2022 and 2023. However, for the year 2024 the proportion of young people was found to be higher for females in the younger ages, that is, 22.9%, followed by 15 – 19 years with 21.6% and then jumped to age group 30 – 34 years with 19.9%.

Table 4.4: Percentage distribution of projected youth population in the North West Province

AGE	2020		2021		2022		2023		2024	
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE
10-14	21,9	23,4	22,1	23,6	22,1	23,6	22,0	23,2	21,9	22,9
15-19	18,0	19,3	18,6	19,8	19,2	20,7	19,8	21,2	20,3	21,6
20-24	17,2	17,5	16,7	17,3	16,9	17,5	17,0	17,4	17,3	17,8
25-29	20,4	19,2	20,0	18,7	19,6	18,6	19,1	18,0	18,8	17,7
30-34	22,5	20,6	22,4	20,6	22,3	20,6	22,0	20,2	21,7	19,9
TOTAL	51.9	48.1	51.9	48.1	51.8	48.2	51.8	48.2	51.8	48.2

Mid-year population estimates base data

Table 4.5 below present estimated population change from the year 2020 to the year 2024. As presented in table 4.5 below, the youth population in general is forecasted to increase positively but there are exceptional cases. Generally, the young population has been estimated to higher in younger age groups aged 10 – 14 but declines among the age groups 15 – 19 and 2014 years. There after the number of young people increases for age groups 25 -29 and 30 – 34 year, but the numbers has never been estimated to be higher than the age group 10 to 14 years between 2020 and 2024.

As for population change, it has been estimated that for age group 10 – 14 years will decrease from 7071 in 2021 to 1421 in 2022, to 333 in 2023 and further to a negative

increase of -421 in 2024. Age group 15 – 19 is estimated to increase with a higher proportion from 13006 in 2021 to 14473 in 2022 and further to 14512 in 2023, but started to decrease to 11255 in 2024. Age group 25 – 29 has been estimated to increase negatively a population change of -4315 in 2021 which shows an increase with a declined -3679 in 2022 but declined again to -4872 in 2023 and -3233 in 2024. Age group 40 – 34 also has been estimated to decline from a population change of 2986 in 2021 to 539 in 2022, -1007 in 2023 and further to -2629 in 2024. Generally, the population change for young people in the North West Province has been estimated to decline from a total of 16860 in 2021 to 15504 in 2022, then 13918 in 2023 and further to 12736 in 2024.

Table 4.5: Population change by age and year

	2020		2021		2022		2023		2024	
AGE	POP	POP	POP CHANGE	POP	POP CHANGE	POP	POP CHANGE	POP	POP CHANGE	
10-14	399388	406459	7071	407880	1421	408213	333	407801	-412	
15-19	328660	341666	13006	356139	14473	370651	14512	381906	11255	
20-24	305901	304013	-1888	306763	2750	311718	4955	319470	7752	
25-29	349576	345261	-4315	341582	-3679	336710	-4872	333477	-3233	
30-34	380206	383192	2986	383731	539	382724	-1007	380095	-2629	
TOTAL	1763731	1780591	16860	1796095	15504	1810013	13918	1822749	12736	

Mid-year population estimates base data

4.6 YOUTH POPULATION BY AGE GROUP (15-34) BY SEX AND GEOGRAPHICAL

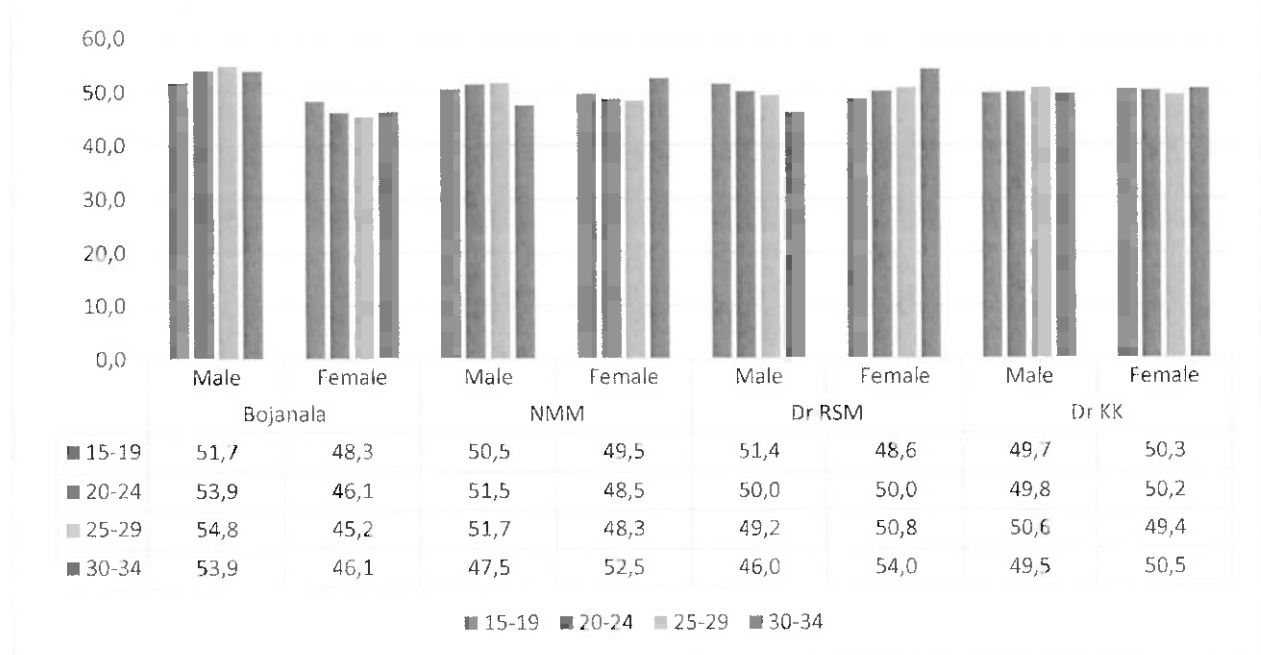
Figure 4.3 below present percentage distribution of young people by age, sex and geographical area. As presented in figure 4.3 for Bojanala District, majority of young people were found to be males with age group 15 – 19 with 51.7% males and 48.3%

STATUS OF YOUTH IN THE NORTH WEST PROVINCE: 'YOUTH BULDGE – IS IT AN OPPORTUNITY OR RISK?

for females, for age group 20 – 24 with males 53.9% and females with 46.1%, for age group 25 – 29 with 54.8%% for males and 45.2 for females, and then age group 30 – 34 with 53, 9% for males and 46.1% for females. The same pattern has been observed for Ngaka Modiri Molema with males presenting the highest proportion for all the age groups except for age group 30 – 34 where females account for 52.5% as compared to 47.5% of males.

Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompoti demonstrates a different pattern from the other two districts, for age group 15 – 19 males were found to have a higher proportion at 51.4% as compared to 48.6% of females. For age group 20 – 24 there is equal proportion for both males and females at 50% each. However for age group 25 – 29 females were found to be slightly higher at 50.8% compared to males with 49.2%. However, age group 30 – 34 indicated a higher proportion for females at 54.0% compared 46.0%. As for Dr Kenneth Kaunda District there is an indication of lower proportion for males at age group 15 – 19 with 49.7% as compared to their counter parts with 50.3%. The same pattern has been observed for age group 20 – 24 with males showing a lower proportion at 49.8% as compared to females with 50.2%. Age group 25 – 29 year olds with males accounting for higher proportion at 50.6% as compared to 49.4% of females. And then age group 30 – 34 with males accounting for lower proportion at 49.5% as compared to females with 50.5%

Figure 4.3. Percentage distribution of youth population age group (15-34) by sex and geographical area



Source: community survey 2016

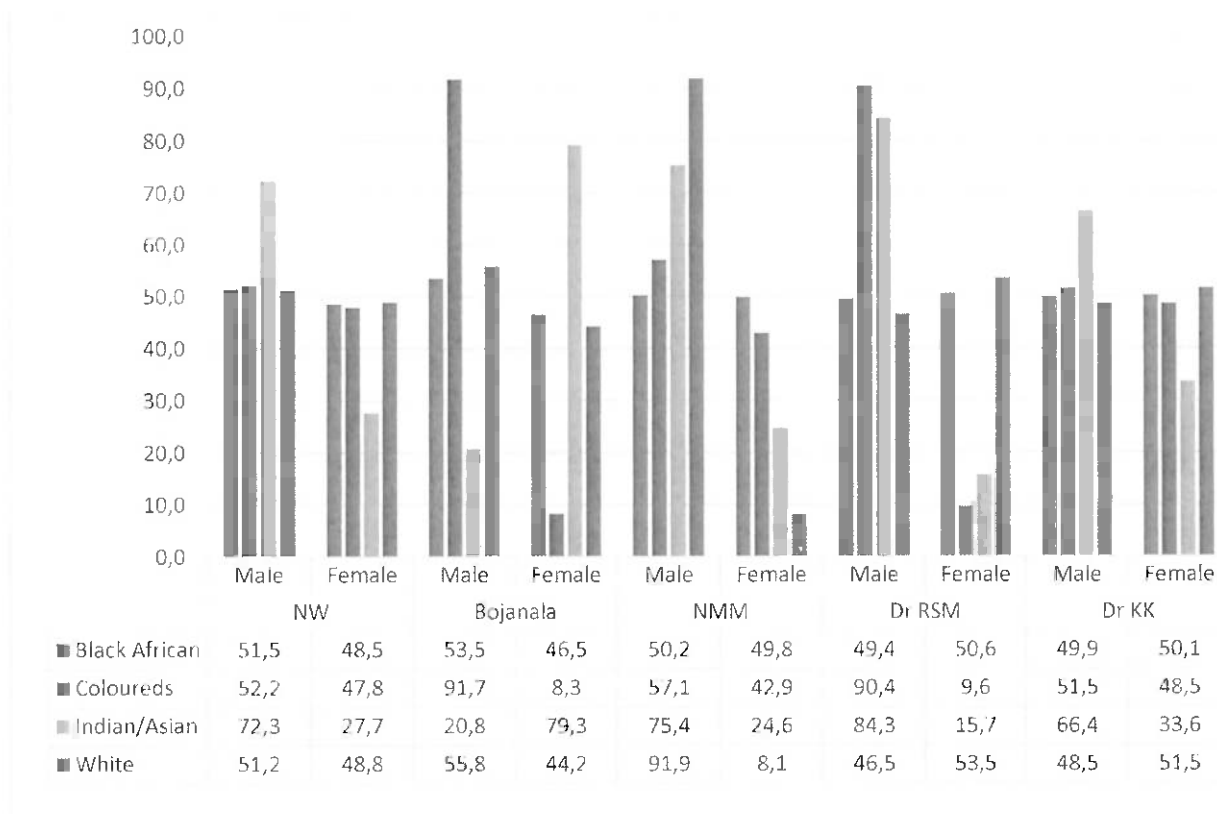
YOUTH (15-34) BY RACE BY SEX AND GEOGRAPHICAL

Figure 4.4 present percentage distribution of youth by race, sex and geographical area.

As indicated in figure 4.4 below majority of Black/African population in the North West Province are males at 51.7% compared to 48.3 % of females. As for coloured Population in the North West Province mostly are males with 52, 2% as compared to females at 47. 8%. A different but expected pattern has been observed for Indians/Asians with males reporting the highest proportion of 72.3% as compared to 27.7% of females. Bojanala Province reported majority of Blacks/Africans to be males at 53.5% compared to 46.5% of females. Majority of coloureds in Bojanala were

presented to be males at 91.7% as compared to the female counterparts at 8.3%. As for Ngaka Modiri Molema, Black and coloured population presented an expected pattern whilst Indian and Whites presented higher proportion for males at 75.4% and 91.9% respectively. The same pattern was observed for Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompoti with coloureds and Indians presenting a higher proportion at 90.4% and 84.3% correspondingly. Dr Kenneth Kaunda presented a normal pattern with Indians presenting a higher proportion of males at 66.4% as compared to 33.6% females.

Figure 4.4 Percentage distribution of youth population by race, sex and geographical area.



Source: community survey 2016

4.7 HOUSEHOLD DISTRIBUTION

This section present the household characteristics of youth in the North West province.

YOUTH HOUSEHOLD HEADS BY GEOGRAPHICAL AREA AND POPULATION GROUP.

According to table 4.6 below majority of households headed by youth in the North West province were Africans accounting for 93.2% followed by whites with 4.8%, then 1.1% for coloureds and lastly 0.9% for Indians. Looking at percentage distribution of youth headed households by population group per district, most youth headed households were from Bojanala district accounting for 48.5% followed by Ngaka Modiri Molema (NMM) with 22.1%, then Dr Kenneth Kaunda (Dr KK)with 19.0% and then Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati (Dr RSM) with 10.3%. Furthermore, majority of Black/African youth headed households were from Bojanala district accounting for 50%, followed by NMM with 22.2%, Dr KK and Dr RSM with 17.0% and 10.2% respectively. With regards to coloured youth headed households, majority were found to be in Dr KK district accounting for 41.2% followed by NMM, Dr RSM and then Bojanala with 22.2%, 21.6% and 15.0% individually. As for Indians, majority were reported to be in Bojanala district accounting for 34.7%, compared to 27.7% for Dr KK, 23.2% for NMM, and 14.4% for Dr RSM. Similar to the coloured youth headed households, majority of whites youth headed households were found to be residing in Dr KK district at 51.4%, followed by Bojanala at 30.7% and then Dr RSM at 9.2% and NMM at 8.7%.

Table 4.6: Percentage distribution of young people by Head of Household and Population Group.

Geographical Area	Black African		coloured		Indians		White		Total Population	
	HH	%	HH	%	HH	%	HH	%	HH	%
North West	337 440	93.2	3 944	1.1	3115	0.9	17 473	4.8	361971	100,0
Bojanala	168 699	50.0	594	15.0	1 080	34.7	5 360	30.7	175733	48,5
NMM	77 049	22.8	876	22.2	722	23.2	1 525	8.7	80172	22,1
Dr RSM	34 384	10.2	850	21.6	448	14.4	1 609	9.2	37291	10,3
Dr KK	57 308	17.0	1624	41.2	864	27.7	8 979	51.4	68775	19,0
North West	337 440	93.2	3 944	1.1	3115	0.9	17 473	4.8	361971	100,0

Source: community survey 2016

YOUTH HOUSEHOLD HEADS BY GEOGRAPHICAL AREA AND SEX OF HEAD OF HOUSEHOLDS.

Table 4.7 below present percentage distribution of young population by household head, geographical area and sex of household heads. As presented in table 4.7 below majority of youth headed households were found to be males which is 258 201 for the North West Province, 135 630 for Bojanala district, 52 711 for NMM, 45 253 for Dr KK and 24 626 for Dr RSM district. With regards to Youth Male headed households, mostly were residing in Bojanala accounting for 52, 5% followed by NMM with 20.4%, and 17.5% for Dr KK and then 9.5% for Dr RSM. As for youth female headed households, mostly were found to be in Bojanala accounting for 38.7%, followed by NMM, Dr KK and Dr RSM with 26.55, 22.7% and 12.2% respectively.

Table 4.7: Percentage distribution of youth Headed Households by geographical area and sex.

Geographical Area	Male		Female	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
North West	258 201	100	103 771	100
Bojanala	135 630	52,5	40 103	38,7
Ngaka Modiri Molema	52 711	20,4	27 460	26,5
Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompoti	24 626	9,5	12 666	12,2
Dr Kenneth Kaunda	45 235	17,5	23 541	22,7

Source: community survey 2016

YOUTH HOUSEHOLD HEADS BY GEOGRAPHICAL AREA AND AGE COHORT

Table 4.8 below present percentage distribution of youth headed households by geographical area and age cohort. As indicated in table 4.8 below, for all the geographical areas number of youth headed households increases with age, that is, it is lower for age group 15 – 19 and higher for age group 30 -34 years. It is further indicated that for age group 15 – 19 by district, majority of youth headed households were found to be in Ngaka Modiri Molema with 32.6% followed by Bojanala with 32.3% for Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompoti and then Dr Kenneth Kaunda with 21.4%. For age group 20 – 24, about half (50%) of youth headed households were from Bojanala followed by NMM with 22.2%, and then Dr RSM with 12.7% and Dr KK with 5.4%. The same pattern was observed for age group 20 – 24 with Dr KK indicating a higher proportion of 18.5% and Dr RSM being the lowest with 10.1%. The same was also observed for age group 30 – 34 years.

Table 4.8: Percentage distribution of youth household heads by geographical area and age cohort

Geographical Area	Age Cohort							
	15 - 19		20 - 24		25 - 29		30-34	
Bojanala	6 465	32,3	30 456	50,0	60 925	50,9	77 888	50,6
NMM	6 527	32,6	17 319	22,2	24 575	20,5	31 750	20,6
Dr RSM	2 761	13,8	7 348	12,7	12 033	10,1	15 150	9,8
Dr KK	4 289	21,4	13 322	5,4	22 080	18,5	29 084	18,9
NW	20 042	100	68 445	100	119 613	100	153 872	100

Source: community survey 2016

YOUTH HOUSEHOLD HEADS BY GEOGRAPHICAL AREA AND TYPE OF DWELLING

Table 4.9 below present percentage distribution of youth household heads by geographical area and type of dwelling. For all the geographical areas, that is the province as well as the districts, majority of respondents were staying in a formal dwelling as opposed to informal dwelling type. Youth household heads who reported to have been staying in formal dwelling type, mostly were from Bojanala district at 41.1% followed by Ngaka Modiri Molema with 25.4%, then Dr KK with 21.2% and lastly Dr RSM with 12.3%. As for youth household heads who reported to be staying in informal dwelling types, still majority are from Bojanala at 69.1% followed by NMM and Dr KK with 13% each, and then Dr RSM with 4.9%.

Table 4.9: percentage distribution of youth headed households by dwelling type.

Geographical Area	Formal dwelling/house or brick/concrete block structure on a - Room/flat let on a property or larger dwelling/servants quart	Informal dwelling/shack in backyard - Other
Bojanala	109 465	69.1
NMM	67 653	13.1
Dr RSM	32 595	4.9
Dr KK	56 315	13.0
North West	266 028	100

Source: community survey 2016

4.8 Socio – Economic Characteristics of Young population aged between 15 and 34 years.

Educational attendance by age of respondents

Table 4.10 below present percentage distribution of youth by age and current school attendance. As shown in table 4.10 below, majority of respondents in age group 15 - 19 were currently attending educational institution in 2018 accounting for 80.7% as compared to 19.3% of those who reported to have not. However, for age group 20 – 24, mostly were not attending educational institution at the time of the survey accounting for 77.2%. The same pattern was observed for age groups 25 – 29 and 30 – 34 with 95.3% and 98.6% respectively. However, generally majority of youth were not attending any educational institution at the time of the survey accounting for 73.3% as compared to those who were attending with 26.7%.

Table 4.10: percentage distribution of youth by current school attendance

Currently attending educational institution	15 - 19 years		20 - 24 years		25 - 29 years		30 - 34 years		Total	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Yes	251597	80,7	76645	22,8	16239	4,7	4393	1,4	348874	26,7
No	60194	19,3	259474	77,2	331920	95,3	305069	98,6	956657	73,3
Total	311792	100	336119	100	348159	100	309462	100	1305531	100

Source: general Household Survey 2018

Source of Income by age of respondents

Table 4.11 below present percentage distribution of youth by source of income and age. Overall, majority of youth in the province reported salaries/wages/commission to be their source of income accounting for 52.4%, followed by grants recipients at 28.4% and then remittances, income from a business at 9.0% and 5.7% respectively. For all age groups except age group 15 – 19, salaries/wages/commissions were found to be the most common source of income ranging from 51% to 60% followed by grants at a range between 24% and 28%. However, age group 15 – a9 years reported salaries/wages/commissions as the most source of income at 42.2% followed by 37.3% of grants as a source of income.

Table 4.11 percentage distribution of respondents by source of income and age

Income sources	15 - 19 years		20 - 24 years		25 - 29 years		30 - 34 years		Total	
Salaries/wages/commission	131731	42,2	173692	51,1	210355	59,6	176415	55,6	692192	52,4
Income from a business	17144	5,5	14654	4,3	18620	5,3	24521	7,7	74938	5,7
Remittances	32438	10,4	37932	11,2	24638	7,0	23359	7,4	118368	9,0
Pensions	947	0,3	2128	0,6	1758	0,5	3037	1,0	7869	0,6
Grants (include old age grant here)	116259	37,3	95896	28,2	85824	24,3	76946	24,3	374924	28,4
Sales of farming products and services	0	0,0	0	0,0	987	0,3	987	0,3	1973	0,1
Other income sources e.g. rental income; interest	2143	0,7	3480	1,0	742	0,2	1447	0,5	7811	0,6
No income	0	0,0	2345	0,7	2342	0,7	4105	1,3	8793	0,7
Unspecified	11131	3,6	9523	2,8	7965	2,3	6261	2,0	34880	2,6
Total	311792	100,0	339649	100,0	353230	100,0	317078	100,0	1321750	100,0

Source: General Household Survey 2018

Employment status by age

Table 4.12 below present percentage distribution of youth population by employment status and age. As indicated in table 4.12 below, generally majority of youth were employed at the end of 2018 accounting for 60% as compared to 40% of those who reported to be unemployed. Of those who have reported to have been employed at the time of the survey in 2018, majority were those aged between 25 and 29 and 30 and 34 accounting for 42.0% and 41.9% correspondingly. As for the unemployed youth, majority were found to be in age group 25 -29 and 20 – 24 with 35.7% and 35.1% respectively, followed by those 30 – 34 with 24.2%.

Table 4.12: percentage distribution of respondents by employment status and age.

Employment Status	15 - 19	20 - 24	25 - 29	30 - 34	Total
Employed	3364 0.9%	57341 15.2%	158902 42,0	158569 41.9%	378176(60%) 100%
Unemployed	12389 5,1%	86063 35.1%	87712 35,7	59354 24.2%	245518(40%) 100%
Total	15753 2,5%	143404 23.0%	246614 39,5	217923 34.9%	623694 100%

Source: General Household Survey 2018

Trend analysis of employment status of youth population by age cohort

Table 4.13 below present percentage distribution of youth population by year and employment status and age. According to Quarterly Labour force Survey (QLFS) in the last quarter of 2016 generally age group 25 – 29 reported the highest proportion at 40.8% followed by age group 30 – 34 with 35.8%, and then 20 – 24 with 21.1% and lastly age group 15 – 19 with just 2.2%. Furthermore, majority of employed youth were found to be in the higher ages with 30 – 34 reporting 42.9% and 25 – 29 at 41.7%. However for the unemployed youth, majority were found to be in age group 25 – 29 with 39.4% followed by age group 20 – 24 with 33.3%.

In 2017, the highest proportion of youth were found to be in age group 30 – 34 at 37.4% followed by 25 – 29 at 34.6%, and then 20 – 24 years with 26.2% and lastly age group 15 – 19 with 1.7%. In the last quarter of 2017 majority of employed youth were found to be in age group 30 – 34 with 41.9% followed by those aged 25-29

years at 34.5%. Employed youth were mainly in age group 25 – 29 and 20 – 24 at 34.8% and 34.3% correspondingly followed by age group 30 – 34 with 28.9%.

As it is further indicated in table 4.13 below, the year 2018 presented 30 – 34 years to count for higher proportion at 38.5% followed by 25 – 29 with 34.6%, and then 20 – 24 years with 22.5% and lastly age group 15 – 19 with 2.3%. As for those who reported to be employed, those aged 30 – 34 were the highest at 47.5%, followed by age group 25 – 29 years at 37.2%. However, those who reported to be unemployed mostly were found to be in age group 20 – 24 at 36.7% followed by age group 25 – 29 with 36.1%, and then 30 – 34 with 22.9%.

The year 2019 also presented the same pattern as the other years with age group 30 – 34 taking the highest share at 37.9% followed by age group 25 – 29 at 36.9%, and then 20 – 24 with 22.8% and lastly 15 – 19 with 2.4%. Those who were employed, majority were found to be in age group 30 – 34 with 46.3% followed by age group 25 – 29 with 38.7%. However, for young people who reported to be unemployed mostly were in age group 20 – 24 and 25 – 29 at 34.7% and 34.5% respectively.

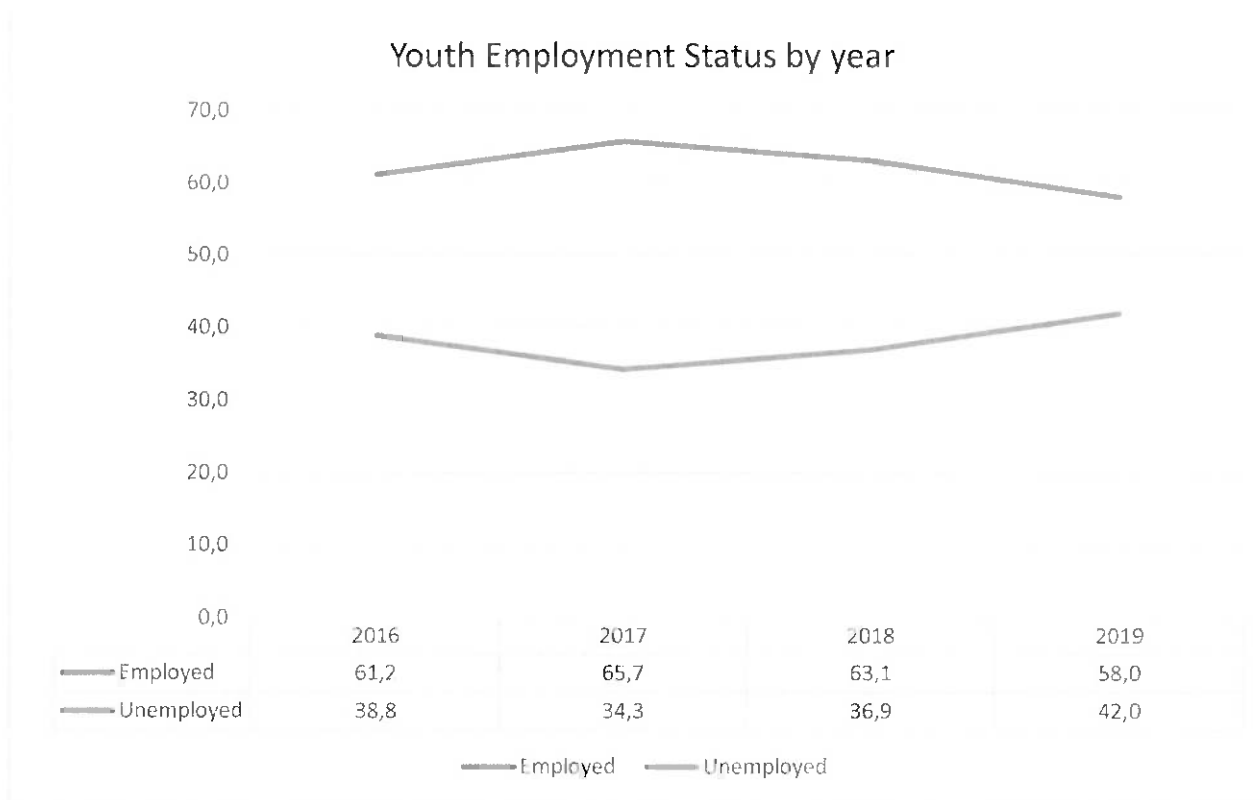
Table 4.13: percentage distribution of respondents by year, age and employment status

2016 Quarter 4						
Age group	Employed		Unemployed		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
15-19	7318	2,0	6064	2,6	13382	2,2
20-24	48707	13,4	77066	33,3	125773	21,1
25-29	151769	41,7	91198	39,4	242967	40,8
30-34	156280	42,9	56890	24,6	213170	35,8
Total	364074	100,0	231218	100,0	595291	100,0
2017 Quarter 4						
15-19	6041	1,6	3862	1,9	9903	1,7
20-24	84437	22,0	68646	34,3	153082	26,2
25-29	132374	34,5	69579	34,8	201952	34,6
30-34	160702	41,9	57767	28,9	218468	37,4
Total	383553	100,0	199853	100,0	583406	100,0
2018 Quarter 4						
15-19	3887	1,1	9059	4,3	12946	2,3
20-24	51051	14,1	77602	36,7	128653	22,5
25-29	134427	37,2	76138	36,1	210566	36,8
30-34	171635	47,5	48380	22,9	220015	38,5
Total	361000	100,0	211180	100,0	572179	100,0
2019 Quarter 4						
15-19	2892	0,8	11425	4,5	14318	2,4
20-24	49713	14,2	87957	34,7	137670	22,8
25-29	135390	38,7	87453	34,5	222843	36,9
30-34	162281	46,3	66340	26,2	228621	37,9
Total	350277	100,0	253175	100,0	603452	100,0

Source: Quarterly Labour Force Survey 2018

As indicated earlier in this section, employed youth takes the highest proportion from the last quarter of 2016 to the last quarter of 2018, the same picture is predicted in figure 4.5 below. As indicated in figure 4.5 below the proportion of employed youth was 61.2% and increased to 65.7% in 2017 but declined again to 63.1% in 2018 and further to 58.0% in the last quarter of the year 2019. While the proportion of employed youth declined over the years, the proportion for unemployed increased from 34.3% in 2017 to 36.9% in 2018 and further to 42.0% in the year 2019.

Figure 4.5: percentage distribution of youth population by year and employment status.



Source: Quarterly Labour Force Survey 2019

Highest level of education and employment status

Table 4.14 below present percentage distribution of respondents by highest level of education and employment status. It is indicated that for those youth population whom reported to be employed in 2019, mostly had secondary level of education with 73.4% followed by those with primary education with 8.5% and then diploma with 7.1% and Level 2 to N4 with 2.7%. As for youth population who reported to be unemployed at the end of 2019, majority were those with secondary level of education at 82.8% followed by those with 7.2% and then those with primary education at 6.5%. Surprisingly, those young people who reported to be occupying bachelors' degree at 0.7% (1728) and Honours degree at 0.3% (705) also reported that they were unemployed at the end of 2019.

Table 4.14: percentage distribution of respondents by highest level of education employment status

Highest education level	Employed		Unemployed	
	N	%	N	%
No schooling	3508	1,0	1082	0,4
some primary	29686	8,5	16252	6,5
some secondary	256441	73,4	205927	82,8
TVET LEVEL 2 - N4 AND CERTIFICATES	9424	2,7	17912	7,2
DIPLOMA	24841	7,1	1821	0,7
Bachelors Degree	19490	5,6	3277	1,3
Bachelors Degree & Post Grad Diploma	0	0,0	1728	0,7
Honours Degree	1436	0,4	705	0,3
Higher Degree (Masters/PhD)	3610	1,0	0	0,0
Other	882	0,3	0	0,0
Total	349319	100,0	248705	100,0

Source: Quarterly Labour Force Survey 2019

4.9 CONCLUSION

The North West province is found to be growing with higher proportion of young population to be in age group 25 – 29 and 30 – 34 years, mostly were females and found to be from Bojanala District. The sex ratio for the province is high at 110 females per 100 males with females showing a potential for higher increase than males. Africa Youth are seen to mostly heading households with Bojanala indicating higher proportion of youth headed households. Unemployment is still a challenge as the number of employed youth is declining while the unemployed increases. Education shows no significant relationship with employment status, however those with highest level of education were not employed in the last quarter of 2019.

5 CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter focused on the findings for this study. This chapter is based on the conclusion and recommendations of this study. The purpose of this study is to present information on youth as a vulnerable group through the provision of data relating to its socioeconomic and demographic profile with the use of secondary data mainly from Statistics South Africa. In reporting the status of youth in the province as a way of prioritising young people's voices and views around unemployment, education, ways of life, and their opportunities and challenges, the study aims at informing programme and policy makers in this regard.

5.2 CONCLUSION

The North West Province population age-sex structure present an expansive type of a pyramid with an implication of young and growing population. Majority of the North West population are found in the younger age groups between 15 and 34 years. This implies that the North West Province has a composition of higher number of children and young people. The base of the pyramid in the province has also been observed to be broad confirming future growth. This is a reflection of a youth bulge which is a common existence in many of developing countries and in particular in the least developed countries. It is a situation where a country manage to reduce its infant mortality but fertility continues to be high. The likely results is that a larger share of the population is composed of children and young adults, and that the children for today are the young adults of the future.

The North West province has been ranked to be the third highest province with percentage of young people who are Not in Education, Employment nor Training as compared to other provinces. In the last quarter of 2015 it was reported to be at 31.4% which increased to 36.1% in 2016 and 36.7% in 2017. This indicate that the province will continuously experience high levels of unemployment and subsequently living in poverty. Lack of obtaining some educational qualification by young people, limit their chances of obtaining employment.

The North West youth has been growing positively since the year 1996 with a total of 996 900 to 1 351 352 in 2019. The proportion of young population in the North West province stand at 33.6% at the end of 2019. Females have shown a higher and increasing proportion since the year 1996. The sex ratio for the province stand at 110 females per 100 males which is a bit higher than the expected 105. The youth population is projected to increase between the year 2020 and 2024 for both males and females. The youth population in the province is projected to increase positively but declining till the year 2024. However, there are age groups which shown a negative population change such as 25 -29 and 30 – 34 at the end of 2024. The proportion of females is expected to decline whilst males increased.

Majority of households headed by youth in the North West province were Africans with most youth headed households being in Bojanala district. Majority of youth headed households were found to be males. For all the geographical areas number of youth

headed households' increases with age. Majority of respondents were staying in a formal dwelling as opposed to informal dwelling type. Majority of youth were not attending any educational institution at the time of the survey. Majority of youth in the province reported salaries/wages/commission to be their most source of income followed by grants. Majority of youth were employed at the end of 2018 and were mostly aged between 25 and 29 and 30 and 34 while those who were unemployed were mostly in age group 25 -29. Employed youth takes the highest proportion from the last quarter of 2016 to the last quarter of 2018. While the proportion of employed youth declined over the years, the proportion for unemployed increased between 2017 and 2019. The employed youth population mostly reported secondary level as their highest level of education. The North West province is still going to experience a higher proportion of youth in the next five years. With the number of unemployed youth increasing, the youth bulge in the North West Province will take longer to be turned into an opportunity. It is therefore important to note that the youth bulge in the province currently is a risk looking at the challenges the province is having with regards to economic growth.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

In coming up with solutions to the youth bulge, it is important for the North West province to prepare the youthful supply of labor, the conventional approach for dealing with youth bulge is to make young people job ready. The idea is that young people's skills or more broadly, human capital needs to be increased to enhance their productivity in the labor market. Basic skills and access to secondary and tertiary

education, for example, are needed to create opportunities, while capabilities to make the right decision for seizing opportunities can be enhanced through better information, access to credit and other factors. Many responses to demographic challenges focus on the training and education of the young unemployed. This trend is due to the risk created by leaving this groups idle. Solutions must be tailored to the specific problems of the youth. For instance, government should introduce initiatives that would help align education and training institutions with the realities and requirements of a vibrant economy. This would make the workforce more prepared for the job market and encourage much needed investment. By doing this, the education system could ensure that the jobs it is preparing its graduates for, coincide with the market demand for labor.

In turn, better cooperation between government and private industry is in order. The private sector must do a better job of informing the government about the available jobs, as well as what skills sets are in high demand. It is important for policy makers and practitioners formulating and developing policy to be mindful of the unemployment "multiplier effects" on instability that are associated with youth bulges. Policy makers must not neglect to consider the underemployed and the working poor (LaGraffe, 2012). It is argued that youth unemployment should be at the top of policy makers lists. The national unemployment rate remains around 29%, according to Statistics South Africa's Quarterly Labour Force Survey. Even more concerning is the unemployment rate of young people between the ages of 15 and 34 years, at 56%.

Skills Development is an absolute priority for achieving South Africa's economic growth and employment goals.

The adolescent and youth population is predicted to increase which will expand the share of the working – age population. This could generate a demographic dividend, which is there are right investments and opportunities. In this position the working – age population will be left with more disposable income, which can in turn spur greater consumption, production and investment. This will ultimately accelerate growth and shared wealth. It is therefore recommended that the government of the North West province invest enough in children and young people as a healthy, well-nourished and well educated young women and men, if supported by inclusive policies can bring unprecedented levels of growth and social progress to the province. If the government does not invest in children and youth, conflict and instability will continue to prevail and demographic change will then become a burden rather than an opportunity. In order for government to invest in children and young population, WE need resources and energy. Focus could be on investment in early childhood development; lifelong learning; the transition from education to employment; unlocking the potential of girls and women; and engaging adolescents and youth in decision that affect them.

The youth bulge in the province, if not "*CHECKED*" will worsen the inequality and poverty. The possibility is, when you have a big population, you need to build the economy – China's strategy. The conventional way of dealing with youth bulge is to

make young people job ready. The idea is that young people's skills or human capital needs to be increased to enhance their productivity in the labour market.

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DR RAMPAGANE KV

20.03.2020

DATE

ACTING DIRECTOR: POPULATION POLICY PROMOTION