

**THE ROLE OF ACADEMIA, INDUSTRY AND GOVERNMENT IN PROMOTING
YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

BY

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DECLARATION:

In accordance with Rule G5.6.3, I hereby declare that the above-mentioned treatise/dissertation/thesis is my own work and that I have not previously been submitted to another University or for another qualification

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to systematically review the role of academia, industry, and government in promoting youth entrepreneurship, where they work together to better support young people in starting and growing their own businesses in South Africa. This research explores the ways in which academia, industry, and government each play a role, both on their own and in partnership, in helping youth succeed as entrepreneurs. It will examine existing initiatives, creative strategies, and policy efforts focused on helping youth start and grow their own businesses. In South Africa, where youth unemployment remains critically high, entrepreneurship stands out as a meaningful and practical route for many young people to build their own futures. The findings of the study proves that while support systems are in place, the lack of strong coordination and shared direction limits how effective they can be ,with future research recommending studies on this topic, which are to be conducted.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Youth Entrepreneurship, Academia, Industry, Government

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Youth unemployment accounts for the highest proportion in South Africa with its critical socio-economic challenges; over 62% of individuals aged between 15 and 24 were unemployed as of the fourth quarter of 2022. (Stats SA, 2022). The unemployment rate has been increasing, starting from 36.8% in 2014 to 45.5% in 2024. As is, the unemployment rate stands at 56.3% in the first quarter of 2025. According to the South African Government News Agency (2025), this figure represents 9.2 million youth who lack access to education, employment, or training. The expanded definition of unemployment considers 42.6% of individuals who have given up on job hunting. The factor contributing to high unemployment rates and the large number of young people not working, studying, or in training programs, such as the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET), is poor education levels and social and economic hardships (Stats SA, 2024). Government and industry initiatives often operate independently, missing the crucial link that would enable them to meet their objectives, like economic growth, job creation, and reducing inequality (Caban Investments, 2023). Youth entrepreneurship is hindered by limited access to capital, inadequate infrastructure, and insufficient business mentorship (World Bank, 2025). The problem is even more pronounced in under-resourced communities, where young people face even greater obstacles to accessing quality education, technology, and job opportunities (Shava & Maramura, 2017:234). Basic education levels endure as a challenge, especially for individuals without a National Senior Certificate (Matric) and thus, limiting their chances of securing employment (Stats SA, 2022).

According to Caban Investment (2023), youth entrepreneurship is a key strategy to reduce the high level of unemployment in South Africa. Youth entrepreneurship can be defined as the entrepreneurial activities and initiatives undertaken by individuals aged 18 to 35 who actively engage in starting, managing, and growing businesses (Fariel, 2024). This occurs through the youth starting their own business in effort to resolve high unemployment and making difference in workforce development (Caban Investment, 2023). It would result in the generation of employment opportunities, with Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) generating over 40 % of employment, and fuels innovation, empowering youth and reducing unemployment (GEM SA, 2021). Through entrepreneurial start-ups, youth are not only able to generate an

income for themselves but also contribute to innovation by introducing new products, services, and businesses ideas to the market (GEM SA, 2023). Industries also give young entrepreneurs to gain important abilities including handling problems, managing their own money, and making good decisions (SMESA, 2024). Entrepreneurship showcases drive, creativity and resilience as ideas are transformed into reality (Marganingsih & Pelipa, 2023:70).

In South Africa, academia, industry, and government are uniting to stimulate entrepreneurship and economic growth, leveraging their combined strengths to spark innovation and progress. (DHET, 2020). To encourage self-employment tertiary institutions, have been focusing on entrepreneurship and pushing the youth to think of building their own businesses as a career path since unemployment rates keep rising in South Africa (Muchemwa & Odimegwu, 2023). Coaching programs and professional networking programs need to be scaled up to foster an entrepreneurial mind-set amongst the youth (Duja Consulting, 2024). The way the education system works has a large influence on the struggles the youth faces (Stats SA, 2024). Chimucheka (2014:405) explained by placing structured programmes many institutions have integrated entrepreneurship modules into their non-business faculties, helping students from mixed educational backgrounds to develop problem-solving, innovation, and leadership skills. Entrepreneurship is about individual potential, where success depends on personal drive, passion, and perseverance, regardless of qualifications or background (GEM SA, 2023).

South African industries play a vital role in youth entrepreneurship. They offer resources and create opportunities for young entrepreneurs (SMESA, 2024). Stronger partnerships between industries and universities have led to the establishment of programs combining in-training learning and practical experiences. These efforts help young people become more employable and improve their chances of starting a business. Businesses like Standard Bank and MTN have launched youth-focused innovative challenges and entrepreneurship hubs that give young entrepreneurs access to funding, technology, and business networks (GEM SA, 2023). The growing commitment of these businesses demonstrates its vital role in building an inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem in South Africa.

The South African government, hold an important role in creating guidelines to support entrepreneurship and reduce obstacles for young start-ups (GEM SA, 2021).This includes offering start-up funding, cutting down regulatory difficulties, and launching efforts such as the National Youth Policy 2020 and the National Youth Development Agency's (NYDA)

entrepreneurship plans. These programs are designed to support young people in starting and growing their businesses (DWYPD, 2020; NYDA, 2022). The National Development Plan (NDP) underscores the significance of entrepreneurship in driving economic growth. Since innovative ideas often require upfront investment, the government's commitment to removing financial barriers plays a crucial role in unlocking the full potential of young people (Duja Consulting, 2024). Looking ahead, South Africa is at a crucial point where collaboration between government, industry, and the youth can drive sustainable economic growth. While the challenges are clear, the opportunities are equally significant

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

South Africa's youth unemployment rate with 62.1 % for the age group of 15- to 24-year-old is among the highest in the world (Stats SA, 2022). Although youth entrepreneurship is widely promoted as a remedy, the share of young South Africans who actually start and maintain viable businesses remains low (GEM SA, 2023). Many young entrepreneurs in South Africa face significant challenges in starting their own businesses due to limited access to financial resources, mentorship, professional networks, and proper infrastructure. According to SMESA (2024), more than 65% of youth entrepreneurs identified the lack of start-up funding as the most critical barrier to launching their ventures.

Academics are putting increased focus on entrepreneurship by developing academic programs and resources to support student success (DHET, 2020). Business sectors are supporting young entrepreneurs with innovation hubs, funding options, and guidance through mentorship efforts (SAB Foundation, 2023), The government is boosting opportunities for the youth by offering initiatives such as the National Youth Policy 2030 and supporting entrepreneurial activities through NYDA programs (NYDA, 2022).

The core problem, therefore, is not the absence of support, but the lack of integrated, mutually reinforcing collaboration among academia, industry and government. Without a clearer understanding of how these three sectors can align strategies, pool resources and co-create programmes, South Africa risks continuing fragmentation, wasted funding and lost entrepreneurial talent. Addressing this gap is essential to convert youth entrepreneurship from a policy ambition into a practical implementation of youth businesses.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This section presents the primary, secondary, and methodological objectives of the study, followed by the research questions,

1.3.1 PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

To analyse the role of academia, industry and government in promoting youth entrepreneurship.

1.3.2 SECONDARY OBJECTIVES

Secondary objectives are formulated to assist in achieving the primary objective. These are as follows:

- SO¹: To review how academia, industry and government supports young entrepreneurs in South Africa
- SO²: To identify challenges preventing the promotion of youth entrepreneurship by academia, industry and government.

1.3.3 METHODOLOGICAL OBJECTIVES

To address the specified primary and secondary objectives of this study, the following methodological research objectives have been formulated.

- MO¹: To conduct a literature review on the nature and role of academia, industry and government in promoting youth entrepreneurship.
- MO²: To identify an appropriate research design and methodology that will assist in achieving the research objectives.
- MO³: To analyse the role of academia, industry and government in promoting youth entrepreneurship.

MO⁴: To summarise, conclude and provide recommendations to encourage the youth to participate in entrepreneurship as it contributes to economic growth in South Africa.

1.3.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

RQ¹: What is the state of how academia, industry and government supports young entrepreneurs in South Africa?

RQ²: What are challenges preventing the promotion of youth entrepreneurship by academia, industry and government?

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to show how universities and training institutions can more effectively align entrepreneurship curricula, practical training, and career development with real-world industry needs. The impact is to promote a more integrated and coordinated approach to youth entrepreneurship in South Africa by strengthening collaboration between academia, industry, and government. The goal is to reduce youth unemployment by equipping young people with entrepreneurial skills and supporting the development of sustainable youth-led businesses that contribute to inclusive economic growth.

1.5 STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

This study consists of five chapters, and its structure is presented as follows.

Chapter One: This chapter presents the introduction and background of the study. It also outlines the problem statement and research objectives. The chapter concludes by highlighting the significance of the study.

Chapter Two: Presents the literature review of the study. It begins with a discussion on the nature and significance of the roles played by academia, industry, and government in assisting

the youth to develop entrepreneurial skills and pursue sustainable economic opportunities. It will end off with a summary of the chapter.

Chapter Three: The research design and methodology discuss how the study will be conducted. This chapter will start with a discussion of the research design and methodology, followed by data collection and data analysis. The chapter will end with the ethical process followed and a summary.

Chapter Four: The findings of the study are presented in this chapter. A summary concludes this chapter.

Chapter Five: The key findings from the literature review and desktop study will be summarised as well as the conclusions in this chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, a comprehensive literature review is presented, focussing on how academia, industry, and government support youth entrepreneurship and why their roles are important. This chapter explores how each sector contributes by equipping young people with entrepreneurial skills and creating environments that allow them to identify, pursue, and sustain economic opportunities. The chapter will conclude with a summary.

2.2 THE NATURE OF YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Entrepreneurship is widely seen as an essential way by equipping young people with the skills and means to earn income, create jobs, reduce poverty, and contribute to socio-economic development by promoting business activities and adding value to society (Ndlovu, Radebe, Mlambo & Nkonde, 2024: 49). However, youth entrepreneurship in South Africa is complex and strongly shaped by structural and systemic factors (Duja, 2025). According to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM SA, 2023:26), most youth in South Africa engage in entrepreneurship out of necessity rather than opportunity. Due to limited formal employment opportunities, many young people turn to informal businesses out of necessity rather than innovation, often earning below-average wages and operating at a survivalist level within the informal sector (Meyer, Meyer & Molefe, 2016:126).

In South Africa, youth entrepreneurship is mainly concentrated in the informal sector, with a focus on survival and sustainability, especially among individuals aged 15–34 years (Murozvi, Adams & Yu 2023:3). This is where many unregistered and unprotected businesses, often owned by African, low-educated, own-account workers in the wholesale and retail industry, emerge out of structural exclusion, such as limited access to finance, poor entrepreneurial education, and restrictive regulations. This is where most enterprises lack financial records, operate intermittently, and prioritising household needs over business reinvestment (Murozvi, Adams, & Yu 2022). As the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA 2022) points out, most youth entrepreneurs are excluded from formal financial institutions and support programs because their businesses lack documentation or legal standing. This limits their ability to grow

and transition into the formal economy. Education is a key factor in sustaining youth entrepreneurship in South Africa; its impact is limited as entrepreneurship training is often too theoretical, with insufficient mentorship, coaching, incubation, and business infrastructure support (Daju, 2025). The lack of real-world entrepreneurial experience among educators diminishes the effectiveness of entrepreneurship training, leaving young South Africans underprepared for business management, thereby highlighting the need for practice-based, interdisciplinary education that includes digital skills, industry partnerships, and targeted youth development programs (Armuna et al. 2020:74). Young entrepreneurs continue to face significant challenges in obtaining financing. Due to rigid application processes, hefty collateral requirements, and limited personalized financial products for their startups (Allen Gray Orbis Foundation 2024).

The National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) and the Small Enterprise Finance Agency (SEFA) offer financial assistance to young entrepreneurs, including grants and development funding. These are frequently constrained and difficult to access especially for youth in rural and urban areas starting their businesses (NYDA, 2022). GEM reports confirm a lack of entrepreneurial activity in rural areas, attributed to insufficient resources, smaller markets, and lower skill levels (Department of Small Business Development, 2023). The NYDA also relies on funding from public and private sectors, provincial government, and national departments (e.g., the Department of Labour through the Unemployment Insurance Fund, SETAs, and the Presidential Youth Employment Intervention) to scale up the grant program (NYDA, 2025).

Youth entrepreneurship in South Africa is growing as opportunities expand in the digital and green economies. Increased access to mobile technologies and online platforms, young entrepreneurs can start low-cost, scalable businesses in areas like e-commerce, freelancing, and content creation (Chauke, 2025). The growing tech business, combined with the targeted digital skills program, supports innovation and enables youth to build sustainable ventures that align with global development goals (SME South Africa 2024).

2.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Entrepreneurship not only offers young people a pathway to self-reliance but also equips them with the essential skills and mind-set to create businesses that drive economic growth through innovation, increased competition, and job creation. They are the ones who can reduce

unemployment while increasing job creation (GEM SA, 2023). Supporting youth entrepreneurship by equipping them with critical life skills which include decision-making, financial, and problem-solving is essential (Seed Academy, 2023). According to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (2022:35), nations with supportive entrepreneurial ecosystems typically have greater rates of young employment and business survival. It creates an environment where new businesses are more likely to succeed in the market and where young people find greater opportunities for employment. The growth of young entrepreneurial capabilities is highly related to broader national development goals particularly those involving job creation and innovation (SEDA, 2023).

Educational systems are more active in promoting youth entrepreneurship. The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) has launched the Entrepreneurship Development in Higher Education (EDHE) program, which aims to integrate entrepreneurship into university courses. The EDHE Programme aims to make entrepreneurship education and training accessible for all students across disciplines. This is a much needed intervention that would better equip students to successfully participate in the economy upon graduation, regardless of whether they are employed or not (EDHE, 2024:5). However, the literature also identifies barriers that hinder full participation in youth entrepreneurship, which include limited access to finance, regulatory complexity, lack of real-world business exposure, and weak inter-sector collaboration (GEM SA, 2023; SEDA, 2023:27). Despite these challenges, Madondo (2025:198-201) states that with the right support, especially from academia, government, and industry, youth entrepreneurship can drive both individual economic advancement and broader developmental outcomes.

2.4 THE ROLE OF ACADEMIA IN PROMOTING YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Academia plays a vital role in shaping the entrepreneurial capacity in young people, particularly in developing economies like South Africa, where high unemployment and inequality remain major challenges (Park, 2024:02). Universities and technical institutions are increasingly recognised not only as centres of knowledge but also as platforms for cultivating innovation, problem-solving, and entrepreneurial mind-sets that empower youth to generate their own economic opportunities (DHET, 2020; EDHE, 2025). Moreover, teaching and mentorship play a crucial role in shaping young people's entrepreneurial development by

providing guidance, support, and networking opportunities (Park, 2024:01). Entrepreneurial activity has increasingly been embraced as a core mission of higher education institutions, promoting South African universities to offer entrepreneurship programs that encourage youth to consider entrepreneurship as a viable career option in response to rising unemployment (Hahn, Minola, Bosio, & Cassia, 2020:261).

Universities South Africa (USAF), through its EDHE program launched by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) is a leading national initiative aimed at encouraging student entrepreneurship within South African universities (USAF, 2023:31). The program's three main priorities are to foster student entrepreneurship among students, assist academics to include entrepreneurship education in their research and teaching, and create institutions with an entrepreneurial culture and practice (DHET, 2021:74; EDHE, 2023). This comprehensive approach encourages youth to think beyond standard jobs and prepares them to start and expand their own businesses. Universities in South Africa are increasingly fostering community development by targeting youth through entrepreneurship programs that promote economic participation and local empowerment. Through corporate social responsibility initiatives that combat unemployment and foster inclusive growth in South Africa, educational institutions significantly contribute to the transformation of communities (Mashwama & Thwala, 2025:27). These initiatives include economic empowerment, health promotion, skill development and education. Johnson & Johnson supports community health projects to boost public well-being, Coca-Cola's 5by20 empowers women entrepreneurs with financial help and mentorship, and Microsoft's YouthSpark increases adolescent employment through training in digital skills (Pelu, 2023:35).

Entrepreneurial education is a learning process that focuses on developing the knowledge, practical skills, personal qualities, and attitudes necessary to identify business opportunities, take initiative, and manage entrepreneurial ventures effectively (Katjiteo, 2024:377). According to research hands-on experiences like venture development projects, internships, and start-up competitions are particularly effective in fostering entrepreneurial mind-sets and abilities (Amoah, 2025:88). Experiential learning at universities and technical institutions helps students apply theoretical concepts, improve problem-solving skills, and foster an entrepreneurial mind set through real-world challenges and opportunities (Qwabe, Ngibe, & Bingwa, 2025:1068).

However, the literature notes several ongoing challenges in South Africa; these include uneven implementation across institutions, limited collaboration with industry partners, and lack of alignment between academic outputs and market demands (GEM SA, 2023). Despite these obstacles, academia remains a critical actor in promoting youth entrepreneurship and sustainable development, especially when efforts are supported by government and industry partnerships (Dyantyi et al 2024:1490). Academic institutions in South Africa have a key role in preparing young people for entrepreneurship by providing them with essential skills, creating enabling environments, fostering a culture of innovation (EDHE, 2024). Improving entrepreneurship education and institutional support systems may help reduce youth unemployment and promote inclusive economic growth (Duja, 2025).

2.5 THE ROLE OF INDUSTRY IN PROMOTING YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The South African private sector has contributed significantly to the expansion of youth entrepreneurship by developing strategic initiatives, cross-sector partnerships and coordinated development programs (Harambee, 2024). Organizations such as Entrepreneurship to the Point (ETTP) and the Allan Gray Orbis Foundation (AGOF) have been important in supporting the youth through entrepreneurship by offering funding, mentorship, and entrepreneurial training. These initiatives are primarily concentrated in urban areas, which limits access for youth in rural and peri-urban communities. This is highlighted in both empirical studies and organizational reports (Mabizela, 2024:27). Rural youth in South Africa have limited access to economic opportunities, like those published by International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). However, when they are actively involved in development initiatives, their participation greatly improves livelihoods and allows them to make a significant contribution to economic growth (Allan Gray Orbis Foundation, 2024:11).

Unilever (2025) and Harambee (2024) highlight that sustained, focused investments from businesses play significant role in driving inclusive economic growth and supporting the emergence of youth-led enterprises. By responding to urgent needs such as funding and mentorship while also tackling deeper systemic issues these efforts help build a more balanced and supportive entrepreneurial environment in South Africa (Yani, Suherlan & Zaakiyyah 2024:339). These initiatives help build a more comprehensive and just entrepreneurial ecosystem in South Africa in addition to removing current obstacles to entrepreneurship

(Mensah & Benedict 2010: 141). Unilever’s Bright Future initiative exemplifies how the private sector can foster youth entrepreneurship by delivering integrated and practical support structures (Harambee News, 2024). The programme equips young individuals with vital resources, guidance, and market access needed to build and sustain their entrepreneurial ventures. Furthermore, the programme provides structured mentorship, access to business resources, and linkages to market opportunities, which equips young entrepreneurs with the skills necessary to establish and sustain successful businesses (Duja, 2024). This includes scaling up access to capital, streamlining regulatory processes, and prioritising investment in emerging sectors such as digital innovation and green technology (Chauke, 2025). Positive outcomes have also been observed in large-scale initiatives such as the Youth Employment Service (YES) and the Presidential Youth Employment Initiative (PYEI). These programs have contributed to job creation, practical training, and soft skills development for young people. (YES, 2023; YES, 2024). Business leaders are encouraged to support the education-to-employment pipeline and actively shape the next generation of talent by funding post-qualification training and internships with bursaries. These initiatives have contributed to filling the skills gap between academic training and workplace demands (Duja, 2025).

Some companies collaborate with educational institutions and Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) to provide workplace-based learning opportunities. The Swiss-South African Cooperation Initiative (SSACI) supports Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) students by placing them in relevant companies for workplace-based learning. With a youth unemployment rate nearing 64%, meaningful and sustained private sector involvement is critical (DHET, 2023). YES (2023) emphasises, the private sector must go beyond charitable contributions and commit to strategic, action-oriented interventions that empower youth with the tools necessary for long-term success.

There is a growing consensus among scholars and development practitioners that the private sector should take a more proactive role in supporting youth to transition into the formal economy. This involvement should go beyond direct entrepreneurial support and address wider structural challenges that limit economic inclusion, especially in key sectors like manufacturing, construction, and mining (Harambee News, 2024). Industry-led efforts in skills development, enterprise development, and corporate social investment have been identified as effective means of bridging gaps in labour market access and creating a more inclusive economy (Habiyaemye, Habanabakize & Nwosu, 2022:4). While progress has been made

through industry initiatives aimed at supporting youth entrepreneurship, challenges persist, particularly in expanding access, scaling successful programs, and implementing broader systemic changes (Habiyaemye, et. al., 2022:7). Numerous experts advocate for a collaborative, equity-focused approach in which industry takes an integrated and sustained role in enabling youth entrepreneurs to make meaningful contributions to the South African economy (CDE, 2025). Reducing South Africa’s high unemployment rate and enabling more young people to enter formal employment depends largely on the growth of the private sector in these areas (IOL, 2023).

2.6 THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IN PROMOTING YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Every year the number of employed youth in South Africa increases due to first time job seekers (Stats SA, 2023). However, South Africa continues to struggle to generate sufficient jobs to absorb the growing labour force (Dube, 2024). Youth unemployment and poverty remains one of South Africa’s most pressing socio-economic issues as an even higher proportion of young people are not in education, employment or training (MK, 2024). Youth entrepreneurship has emerged as a key strategy for reducing unemployment, encouraging innovation, and promoting long- term economic development. Understanding this potential, the South African government along with the private sectors have put in place a range of policies and initiatives aimed at encouraging youth by starting their own businesses (Dube, 2024). The significance of government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in promoting youth entrepreneurship should not be overlooked. These entities play an important role in creating an enabling environment through policy frameworks, financial support, development programs, regular support, and mentorship programs (Yusuf, 2024; Dube, 2024).

The significant rate of youth unemployment has led many to depend on government support to survive which puts additional pressure on the country’s already limited resources (Yusuf, 2024). Central among these is the National Youth Policy (NYP) of 2020–2030 that prioritises entrepreneurship as a pathway to youth empowerment and inclusive growth. To promote youth participation in the economy, the National Youth Policy advocates for improved access financial support, mentorship opportunities, infrastructure, and skills development (SA News, 2025). Key frameworks such as the National Youth Commission Act 19 of 1996, the National Youth Policy (NYP) of 2000, and the National Youth Development Policy Framework

(NYDPF) of 2002/2007 were established to support youth development in South Africa by guiding government and relevant stakeholders in the implementation of strategic goals (DWYPD, 2020; Dube, 2024). These frameworks and policies for youth development were designed to guide the government to assist organizations in implementing and achieving the goals of the National Youth Policy. Youth development frameworks and policies have been designed to guide the government and implementing agencies in achieving the objectives outlined in the National Youth Policy (Chauke & Malatji, 2022:30). According to the NYP (2021:25), universal access to quality early childhood development and learning programs, creating safe learning environments, and offering second-chance opportunities to re-engage with education is vital for youth development. By expanding the access to quality post-school skills training, and providing continuous career guidance aligned with technical, technology-driven and productivity-focused sectors of the economy increases the opportunity of youth participating in entrepreneurship (NYP, 2021:25).

South African government has established a number of major institutions and programs to assist youth entrepreneurship. The National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) is the primary agency that offers financial assistance and non-financial assistance to young entrepreneurs (NYDA, 2022). Furthermore, the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA), an agency of the Department of Small Business Development (DSBD), offers business development and assistance services to micro and emerging enterprises particularly those owned by young people (SEDA, 2024:27). The DSBD also manages the Youth Challenge Fund (YCF), which provides support to youth-owned start-ups, including funding and business development support. These programs seek to alleviate poverty, promote urban and rural development, combat crime and substance abuse, and social decay among young people. Its offerings include business development services, mentorship, and grant funding for youth-owned enterprises. Between April 2023 and March 2024, 2200 grants were provided (NYDA, 2023:11). The target of 2200 was met and exceeded as young people were willing to participate in the programme (NYDA, 2023:12). A total of 43,163 young people benefited from non-financial services such as mentorship, business consultancy services, market linkages, the Business Management Training Programme, and the Youth Co-operative Development Program. This exceeded the set target, largely due to collaborative efforts with local municipalities and provincial stakeholders that expanded training opportunities (Vukuzenzele, 2019).

In addition to providing direct financial help, the South African government regulates entrepreneurship to make it more accessible. The Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC) developed the BizPortal platform, which facilitates business registration and compliance (CIPC, 2023). It offers those wanting to start a business a one-stop platform to register a company, register for tax, register a domain name, and apply for a Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) certificate, registration with the Compensation Fund and the Unemployment Insurance Fund, and the opening of a business bank account. Such tools are especially valuable to first-time entrepreneurs who often find administrative procedures daunting (Vukúzenzele, 2022).

Many government programs are underfunded or do not reach rural and township youth due to infrastructure, internet access, or coordination. The government and regulatory agencies could implement policies to reduce data costs, such as zero-rating data essential business and educational platforms, allowing entrepreneurs to access critical resources without incurring data charges (Aruleba & Jere, 2022). With Wi-Fi projects already in place in some townships, the government should expand these connectivity models to include new townships. The current township-based public Wi-Fi zones have demonstrated how reliable connectivity hubs help young entrepreneurs to develop and manage digital operations without prohibitive costs (Chauke, 2025).

The South African government has made major efforts to promote young entrepreneurship as a path to long-term economic opportunities. National policy, institutional frameworks, funding mechanisms, regulatory reforms, and education programs, has created a foundation for youth to engage in meaningful economic activities.

2.7 THE CHALLENGES OF PROMOTING YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Despite the fact that government, academia and industry, all have a role to play in giving young people the necessary skills, resources, and opportunities needed to thrive in entrepreneurship, there is still a number of barriers that prevent these sectors from implementing and producing positive outcomes. The COVID-19 epidemic has made structural challenges and slow economic growth even more problematic, undermining efforts to reduce poverty (Presidential Youth Employment Intervention 2023:12). The World Bank Group (2025) notes that the rising unemployment rate, which reached 31.9% in the fourth quarter of 2024, exceeding pre-

pandemic levels significantly limits improvement in household welfare. This unemployment rate is highest among youths aged 15-24 at 59.6%. These challenges range from financial constraints to socio-cultural attitudes, and systemic institutional barriers to the complexities of navigating a business environment (Madondo & Tinonestsana 2024:21). Understanding these barriers is crucial for creating policies and support structures that can help students overcome obstacles and realize their entrepreneurial potential (Taofeek, 2025:10).

Since entrepreneurship education has become more widespread in South African universities it remains a limited resource in many institutions, particularly for students from underprivileged backgrounds (Taofeek 2025:3). A great deal of students don't have access thorough entrepreneurial training that provides practical skills such as business planning, marketing, financial management, and leadership (Taofeek, 2025:9). Without this foundational knowledge, students may feel ill-equipped to start their own businesses or may struggle with navigating the complexities of running a company (Taofeek, 2025:11). A major concern is the digital divide in entrepreneurship education. Despite the growing move toward online learning, many students from low-income background or rural areas still lack reliable internet access and digital tools (Afzal, Khan, Daud & Butt, 2023:885). This limits their ability to access online entrepreneurial resources, virtual mentorships, and market platforms, thereby widening the skills gap (Robert, 2023).

The private sector can make a big difference in the lives of young entrepreneurs through innovation hubs, coaching, supply chain inclusion, and finance (Allan Gray Orbis Foundation, 2024). However, commercial banks continue to be hesitant to lend money to early start-ups due to their perceived risk, lack of credit history, and insufficient collateral, making access to finance a significant barrier (UDO, 2024:9). Starting a business is sometimes viewed as an unpredictable and dangerous endeavour and those who try it fail may encounter unfavourable opinions from society. Failure is frequently viewed as a personal and professional setback which can contribute to the fear of failure that many youth experiences (Taofeek, 2025:11). The industry's concentration of support in urban areas also inhibits young people from rural and township areas from accessing meaningful opportunities. Most innovation hubs, accelerators, and corporate partnerships remain situated in metropolitan areas, creating geographic inequality in access to industry-linked support (Aruleba & Jere, 2022).

The South African government has implemented a broad range of youth entrepreneurship initiatives, including the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) grant program (NYDA, 2022). These institutions aim at offering financial assistance, mentorships, and skills development for young entrepreneurs (IDC, 2025). However, the ineffectiveness of these programs is due to the government failure to centralise the initiatives at local government level and encourage citizen participation (Dede et al. 2022:76). Youth are often unsure which agency to approach and are required to repeat documentation across multiple platforms. This bureaucratic inefficiency discourages engagement and wastes resources (University of Free State, 2021).

Government regulations and the tax system can be difficult to understand particularly for first-time entrepreneurs (CMS 2021). Small businesses in South Africa are frequently burdened, by heavy compliance requirements such as registering for Value Added Tax (VAT), filing regular tax returns, and adhering to labour rules. These bureaucratic challenges may discourage students from pursuing entrepreneurial ventures, especially if they believe they are unprepared to deal with the administrative burden (Scholtz, 2024). Municipalities are often ill-equipped to assist young entrepreneurs with infrastructure, local procurement, or incubation spaces. As a result, national policies do not reach the communities that need them the most (Mgweba & Lungisa, 2024:2).

Promoting youth entrepreneurship is a pressing national challenge in South Africa. While academia, industry, and government are increasingly working to address this issue, systemic and sector-specific barriers continue to hinder effectiveness. To overcome these barriers, the youth-led, and context-sensitive approach is required to overcome these challenges. Strengthening cross-sectors collaboration, between sectors, improving rural access, ensuring follow-through on legislative commitments, and integrating real-world entrepreneurship into education systems will be critical for unlocking the full potential of South Africa's youth.

2.8 SUMMARY

Entrepreneurship can be seen as the pathway to self-reliance for young people. However, in South Africa, youth entrepreneurship focuses on survival and sustainability of youth entrepreneurship, but its impact remains limited as training focuses more on theoretical aspects. Without mentorship and real-world entrepreneurial experience, the effectiveness of

entrepreneurship diminishes. Academia follows a comprehensive approach to encourage creative thinking when it comes to standard jobs and prepare them to start their own businesses. The private sector's contribution focuses on expanding youth entrepreneurship with strategic initiatives, cross-sector partnership, and coordinated development programs. The benefit of those programs is that they equip the youth with resources, guidance and market access; the necessary tools to build entrepreneurial ventures. The higher the unemployment rate among the youth, the more people rely on government grants. The government has established some major initiatives and programmes to support youth entrepreneurship. The next chapter will delve into the research methodology and design of the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter three begins with an overview of research design and methodology, using the research onion framework proposed by Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2019:128). According to Saunders et al. (2019:128), the research onion framework consists of several layers, including research philosophy, approach to theory development, methodological choice, research strategy, time horizon, and data collection and analysis techniques and procedures. Furthermore, a summary and a discussion of ethical issues conclude the chapter.

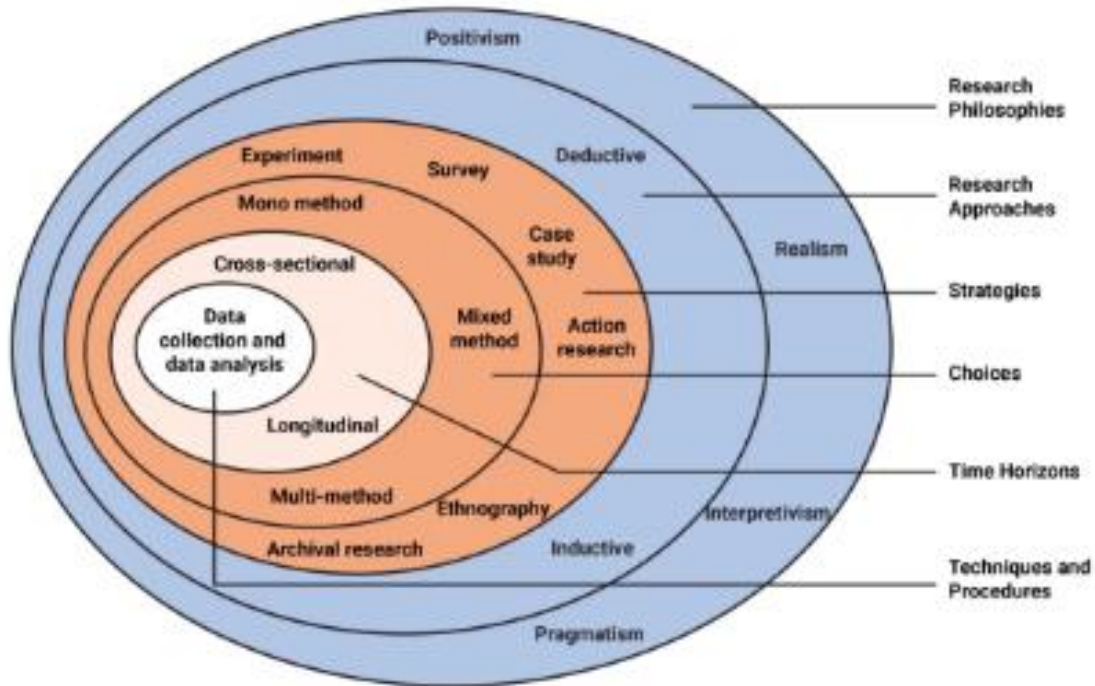
3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Research design is defined as a framework of methods and techniques selected by a researcher to integrate various components of research in a reasonably logical manner, so that the research problem is efficiently addressed (Khan, Raman & Sambamoorthy, 2023:1). It provides guidance on how to conduct research using a particular methodology. Every researcher has a set of research questions that need to be assessed, which can be done with research design (Khanday & Khanam 2019:368). It not only anticipates and specifies the seemingly countless decisions connected with carrying out data collection, processing, and analysis, but also provide a logical basis for these decisions (Singh, 2023). The research design is essential because it ensures a better, systematic, and organised plan of the research undertaken (Thakur 2021:52).

Research methodology refers to the specific methods and procedures applied to systematically carry out the research design to address the research problem effectively (Swarooprani 2022:537). The selection of sampling strategies, data gathering instruments, and analysis methods must be justified based on the questions, objectives, and study context (Ismail & Aldaihani, 2022:1). The methods and research design of this study are structured around the six layers of the research onion framework. Research philosophies, research approaches, methodological decisions, time frame, and techniques and procedures involving data collection and analysis are among the layers of the research onion, according to Saunders et al.

(2019:130). Figure 3.1 provides a summary of the structural decisions made in the study's methodology.

Figure 3.1: The Research Onion



Source: Adopted from Saunders et al. (2019)

3.3 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY

According to Saunders et al., (2019:130), the research philosophy encompasses essential assumptions and beliefs that shape a researcher's viewpoint and guide their approach to knowledge production and analysis in a study. The five philosophies namely: pragmatism, positivism, interpretivism, postmodernism, and critical realism presented by Saunders et al. (2019:130). Interpretivism sees humans as different from objects, focusing on context to understand their deeper meanings (Alharahsheh & Pius 2020:41). Therefore, adopting the interpretivism paradigm enables a deep understanding of specific situations by taking into account cultural, contextual, and temporal factors (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020:42). The current study will adopt the interpretivism paradigm, as it supports the use of qualitative methodologies.

3.4 RESEARCH APPROACH

A research approach defines the overall strategy and reasoning that directs the entire process, from problem conceptualization to data analysis and interpretation (Taherdoost 2020:53). As stated by Saunders et al. (2019:152), there are three main research methodologies for developing theories: abductive, inductive, and deductive. A researcher using a deductive approach begins by selecting a relevant social theory which often developed through academic literature and then builds a research strategy (Witkowsky & Bingham, 2021:2). Qualitative research frequently uses the inductive approach (Saunders et al., 2019:153). For the study, inductive approach is relevant as this helps to gather data relating to the role of academia, industry and government in promoting youth entrepreneurship.

3.5 METHODOLOGICAL CHOICE

Identifying an appropriate methodology for data collection and analysis, which may involve a mono-method strategy implementing either a qualitative or quantitative approach, known as methodological choice (Saunders et al. 2019:178). Qualitative data collection uses interviews, observations, and focus groups to explore experiences and bring out key themes (Ugwu & Eza, 2023:25). Ismail (2021: 72) noted that a researcher may employ open-ended questions together with techniques such as framing, projective methods, and mapping exercises to gather deeper insights.

This study takes a mono-method qualitative approach, making it suitable for exploring how academia, industry, and government share perspectives, experiences, and interactions in supporting youth entrepreneurship.

3.6 RESEARCH STRATEGY

A research strategy refers to the overall plan guiding the study including methods, data sources, and procedures and follows the philosophical and methodological choices outlined in the research onion (Saunders et al. 2019:148). The research strategy refers to the structural process of collecting and analysing data (Melnikovas 2018:38). With regards to presenting research strategies, Saunders et al. (2016:35) suggests experiment, survey, archival research, case study, ethnography, action research, grounded theory and narrative review. The narrative literature

review is sometimes called a traditional literature review. It focuses on producing a critical, comprehensive analysis of the current state-of-the-art (or science) on a given topic/subject. According to Chigbu and du Plessis (2023:6), it is an everyday part of scientific writing because it is essential when establishing a theoretical framework or focusing on contexts. A literature review will be adopted to this study as secondary research data will be collected on how specific role players, such as academic institutions, businesses and government play a role in supporting youth entrepreneurship.

3.7 TIME HORIZON

The layer surrounding the core of the research onion illustrates the time horizon within which the researcher carries out the study (Saunders et al., 2019:148). According to Saunders et al. (2019:212), the two main types of time horizons described in the research onion are cross-sectional, which involves a snapshot of data at one point in time, and longitudinal, which examines changes over an extended period. This study will examine youth entrepreneurship during a specific period, making the cross-sectional time horizon the most appropriate choice.

3.8 TECHNIQUES AND PROCEDURES FOR DATA COLLECTION

Ugwu and Eza (2023:24) state that data collection techniques and processes are methodical approaches utilized to provide qualitative insights into the experiences of young entrepreneurs and the assistance offered by the government, industry, and academia. The methods used could include surveys, focus groups, interviews, observations, and document analysis, depending on the objectives, research design, and philosophical position of the study (Saunders et al., 2019:180). The use of these techniques is influenced by the interpretivist ideology (Saunders et al., 2019:180).

3.8.1 SECONDARY DATA COLLECTION

To ensure its relevance and reliability, secondary data which is defined as previously collected data that was not initially intended for the current research questions must be carefully chosen, ideally from reliable and transparent sources like governmental organizations, scholarly journals, or books (Martins, Cunha & Serra, 2018:2). While secondary data can save time and resources, researchers must critically assess its relevance, accuracy, and suitability for their

specific research questions (Mazhar, 2021:8). In particular, when using it for tests like panel data or time series analysis, it is crucial to identify any changes in data collection methods, formulas, or other variables that could impact the validity or interpretation of the results. The research topic uses secondary data collection by relying on existing sources like reports and journal articles by understanding the subject better and support the analysis, saving time and resources. The secondary data was gathered from existing sources like Research Gate and Google Scholar.

To make sure the sources used were both relevant and reliable, clear inclusion and exclusion criteria were set (Patino & Ferreira, 2018:84). The inclusion criteria focused on choosing trustworthy sources like peer-reviewed articles, official reports, and theses that directly relate to youth entrepreneurship, support systems, and training in South Africa. The exclusion criteria helped narrow the study by removing sources that were outdated, irrelevant, or outside the South African youth entrepreneurship context (Patino & Ferreira, 2018:84). Table 3.1 presents the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Table 3.1: Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Feature	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Topic of the Study	Focus on youth entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial training/support, or related economic empowerment in South Africa	Topics unrelated to youth entrepreneurship or focused on other regions
Language	Written in English	Articles in other languages besides English
Country of Origin	Studies conducted in South Africa or closely related African contexts	Studies from unrelated countries or continents
Publication Date	Published in the range of 2014–2025	Published before 2014

Source: Author’s own compilation

Journal articles were selected according to specific criteria, including relevance to youth entrepreneurship. Current study made use of six academic articles, which are presented in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Journals to be reviewed

Authors / Source	Title / Document	Country of Origin	Year Published
Taofeek, A., & Adedokun, O. (2025)	Understanding the Foundation of Entrepreneurial Tendencies Among South African Students	South Africa	2025
Radebe, T.N., Nkonde, S., Mlambo, V., & Ndlovu, G.S.	The Role of Higher Education Institutions in Promoting Entrepreneurship	South Africa	2023
CIPC, 2023	Companies and Intellectual Property Commission Enhanced E-Services and Bizportal Platform	South Africa	2023
Madondo, E., & Tinonestsana, F.	Youth Perceptions Towards Entrepreneurship in South Africa	South Africa	2024
Chimucheka, T	Entrepreneurship Education in S.A	South Africa	2014
National Youth Policy (NYP)	A Decade to Accelerate Positive Youth Development	South Africa	2020

Source: Author's own compilation

3.9 TECHNIQUES AND PROCEDURES FOR DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis techniques and procedures are systematic processes used to examine, assess, and extra polite findings from collected data to address the purposes or research questions of the study (Mahmud, Vanu, Nilima & Hasan 2021:288). The methods used in these processes, which include data organization, coding, theme identification, and findings synthesis, depend on the type of data, research strategy, and underlying philosophical framework (Saunders et al., 2019:178). Qualitative research, thematic analysis, content analysis, or grounded theory approaches are commonly used to interpret data and uncover patterns and meanings (Saunders et al., 2016:124).

3.9.1 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Trustworthy qualitative analysis ensures that data interpretation is credible and consistent by using clear, rigorous methods like coding, theme development, and verification to reflect participants' true experiences (Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017). Korstjens & Mosers (2018:121) states one of the most widely accepted ways to ensure trustworthiness in qualitative research is by focusing on four key principles of credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability which help strengthen the accuracy and reliability of the findings. This study

places strong emphasis on credibility, ensuring accuracy of realities of youth entrepreneurship and institutional support structures in South Africa are shown from sources found on Google Scholar and Research gate.

3.9.2 TYPES OF DATA ANALYSIS

In qualitative research, methods such as content, thematic, textual, and discourse analysis help researchers make sense of the data by identifying patterns and meaning with deeper insights into people's words, stories, and experiences. These methods all focus on different aspects of meaning while using comparable analytical processes (Ugwu & Eza, 2023:30). Thematic analysis is a widely used method for identifying, analysing, and interpreting patterns within qualitative data. It is especially useful for exploring young entrepreneurs' experiences with support from academia, industry, and government (Ugwu & Eza, 2023:31). This method helps researchers uncover meaningful patterns in qualitative data, providing insight into how youth experience and respond to entrepreneurial challenges and opportunities. This approach helps the researcher understand complex stories, like how well support systems and institutions are helping young people become entrepreneurs. It's especially useful for studies that focus on real-life experiences and behaviours within a specific social and economic setting.

3.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Research ethics refers to the principles that guide responsible and ethical behaviour in the way scientific research is carried out and communicated (Arafat, 2024:139). According to Saunders et al. (2019:252), ethical considerations are crucial throughout the research process, as they help ensure that the rights and dignity of participants are upheld and that the study complies with accepted academic and legal standards. Ethical principles assist researchers to operate publicly and conscientiously, while also developing proper connections among researchers and individuals involved in the study (Mirza, Bellalem & Mirza, 2023:442). Ethical clearance was not required for this study since no participants were involved. The researcher only completed Form E confirming that the study would not be published, and therefore no ethical clearance number was provided.

3.11 SUMMARY

Chapter three outlined the research design and methodology, detailing a qualitative research method followed by the researcher. It covered research philosophy, approach, methodological choice, strategy, time horizon, and data collection and analysis techniques. The researcher stated that they will use six journal articles, selected based on inclusion criteria, to gather secondary data and review the influence of support structures and entrepreneurial training on the development of youth entrepreneurship in South Africa. The chapter concluded by addressing the ethical considerations relevant to the study, ensuring that the research was conducted with integrity and respect for all participants. The next chapter will focus on presenting and interpreting findings of the study in relation to research objectives.

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CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the findings and interpretation of data, beginning with an outline of the thematic analysis process. The last section discusses the key findings that emerged from the thematic analysis, followed by a summary that highlights the main insights and conclusions drawn from the data.

4.2 THEMATIC ANALYSIS PROCESS

Thematic analysis is a valuable qualitative research technique for identifying, investigating, and interpreting themes and patterns in data (Rosairo, 2023). According to Naeem, Ozuem, Howell & Ranfagni (2023:2), thematic analysis is a method that allows researchers to organize large qualitative datasets while capturing participant perspectives with depth and complexity. Naeem et al. (2023:2), state that thematic analysis allows researchers to do more than just classify data; it also helps them understand conceptual relationships and underlying meanings. In the study of Ndebele, Ndlovu, Mlambo & Thusi (2022:18), the findings of the thematic analysis is highlighted in how academia, industry, and government provide conditions for young entrepreneurs while depicting themes of opportunities and difficulties, such as limited government assistance and training shortages. It further assists in the understanding of how different sectors collaborate to shape and support the growth of entrepreneurship.

4.3 FINDINGS OF THEMATIC ANALYSIS

The findings of a thematic analysis highlight the important themes and patterns that emerge by carefully reviewing data, offering valuable insights into participants' experiences and viewpoints. This method allows researchers to understand the significance and broader implications of the data, going beyond the basic summary. Thematic analysis of youth entrepreneurship in South Africa reveals important trends about how the government, the industry, and academic sectors support young people's efforts to become entrepreneurs. Practically, the findings where stronger government support systems and a closer alignment between academic curricula and industry demands to ensure the sustainability of entrepreneurs.

The thematic analysis of each of the six selected articles is presented below. The chosen articles will be analysed to discover whether the research objectives are achieved.

Chimucheka 2014

Chimucheka (2014) describes South African entrepreneurship education and how universities can help youth become successful entrepreneurs. The study further mentions that universities have an important impact on teaching students about business, assisting them in developing their skills, and motivating them to solve problems and think creatively. Entrepreneurship education can give students the confidence to start their own businesses and to understand how to run them successfully. According to Chimucheka (2014), some universities already provide useful business knowledge, examples of real businesses, and opportunities for students to practice entrepreneurial thinking. These programs can encourage students for self-employment or starting their own businesses by educating them about the difficulties involved in entering the business world. The study highlights that the success of entrepreneurship education in South Africa is restricted by several issues, including the outdated nature of courses offered by some tertiary institutions, which are not aligned with the rapidly changing needs of business, and the fact that entrepreneurship education itself is still in its early stages of development Chimucheka (2014).

The study pointed out that few opportunities to gain practical, hands-on experience, and universities absence of industries that could offer mentorship, internships, or real-life businesses projects. These issues make it difficult for youth to fully benefit from the entrepreneurship education and training system due to a poor lack of management skills and finance. According to the study, industries can assist youth through mentorship, and practical experience, while government makes funding available and training programs that encourage youth entrepreneurship in South Africa.

National Youth Policy (NYP) 2020-2030

In the study of National Youth Policy (NYP) 2020-2030, a strategy framework is in place to promote complete youth development in South Africa, with a focus on education, skill development, employment, and entrepreneurship. The study points out the challenges which include high level of unemployment, limited access to funding and business resources, and insufficient practical experience to navigate the entrepreneurial landscape effectively in South Africa. Promoting innovation, business development, and economic engagement requires the

government, academia, and industry to work together in supporting sustainable youth development and entrepreneurship (NYP, 2020). The NYP seeks to strengthen youth participation in the economy by promoting entrepreneurship training, mentorship, funding opportunities, incubation programs, and targeted support for youth-led enterprises, while also integrating youth development into national planning and emphasizing consistent monitoring and evaluation. The main aim of the South African government through this policy is to establish initiatives that inspire young people to become innovative entrepreneurs who can create their own businesses and actively contribute to the nation's economic growth and development. The NYP state that promoting structured approaches aligning with education, skills, and economic opportunities, fostering young entrepreneurs' technical competencies and confidence. It encourages higher education institutions to include entrepreneurship in curricula and urges industry to provide mentorship and market access (NYP, 2020). The government's role is vital in developing supportive policies, financial methods, and infrastructure for effective youth participation in economic activities.

Companies and Intellectual Property Commission 2023

The study highlights that the Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC) has advanced youth entrepreneurship in South Africa by introducing expanded e-services and the Bizportal platform. The research states that these digital platforms simplify the process of registering a business, protecting intellectual property, and accessing essential regulatory services, which previously presented substantial administrative and financial barriers for young entrepreneurs. According to CIPS (2023), the integration of e-services accelerates business registration, reduces expenses, and promotes transparency, enabling young entrepreneurs to handle the legal and compliance requirements of business ownership more rapidly. The study highlights that by offering an integrated online infrastructure, CIPC enables young people to take practical steps toward formalizing their firms, thus contributing to policy goals of boosting youth-led entrepreneurship and economic involvement (CIPC, 2023). The research also states that Bizportal's user-friendly interface and step-by-step guidance encourage innovation by reducing the entry barriers for first-time entrepreneurs who might otherwise be deterred by complex bureaucratic procedures. The study mentions that although the platform addresses structural issues, the effectiveness of these digital activities increased when enriched with access to funding, mentorship, and entrepreneurship training, guaranteeing that registered enterprises have the potential to become sustainable (CIPC, 2023). The CIPC platform demonstrates how the government interventions can be practical and scalable by providing

young entrepreneurs with the tools to launch businesses that can contribute to job creation and economic growth in South Africa. CIPC's e-services and the Bizportal platform help young entrepreneurs in South Africa by making business processes more accessible, efficient, and supportive, contributing to the wider goal of economic empowerment (CIPC, 2023).

Madondo & Tinonestsana 2024

Madondo and Tinonestsana (2024) discuss the attitudes of how youth in South Africa perceive entrepreneurship, focusing on factors that motivate or discourage them from pursuing their own businesses. The study highlights that a variety of factors, such as individual desires, exposure to role models, availability of education and training, and knowledge of institutional and financial assistance, influence young people's perspectives. The study shows that many young people view entrepreneurship as a way to achieve financial independence and personal fulfilment. However, the youth are concerned about risk, a lack of funding, a lack of mentorship, and what they perceive to be institutional challenges. They underline that cultural and social factors such as community opinions and family expectations might influence whether young people are motivated or discouraged from starting their own businesses.

The study of Madondo and Tinonestsana (2024) mentions that higher education institutions, government programs, and private sector initiatives play a critical role in shaping perceptions by providing exposure to practical entrepreneurial experiences, mentoring, and resources that can enhance confidence and readiness to start businesses. They also point out that while many young people view entrepreneurship as a great career choice, they need strong support like training, mentorship, and access to resources to turn that interest into real, successful businesses. Overall, the research illustrates that understanding youth perceptions is key to creating initiatives that encourage entrepreneurial motivation and long-term involvement. This further assists in providing insights into how policymakers, educators, and industry stakeholders can better align programs to meet the expectations and needs of aspiring young entrepreneurs in South Africa (Madondo & Tinonestsana, 2024).

Radebe, Nkonde, Mlambo & Ndlovu 2023

The study highlights the role of higher education institutions (HEIs) in South Africa and how they contribute to the growth of student entrepreneurship. According to Radebe, Nkonde, Mlambo, and Ndlovu (2023), HEIs are important because they offer entrepreneurship courses, incubation programs, mentorship, and professional networks. These opportunities help students

get the necessary skills, knowledge, and confidence they need to start their own businesses. Furthermore, the study mentions that these programs positively influence entrepreneurial intentions by providing exposure to business ideas and encouraging creative thinking. The main reason for this was the lack of real-world industry connections, entrepreneurial exposure, lack of finances and sufficient management experience. According to the study, limited entrepreneurship skills make it hard for students to turn their training into sustainable business ventures. The study emphasizes that HEIs are vital in shaping entrepreneurial mindsets and preparing students for business opportunities. However, systemic barriers and limited resources make it difficult for students to transform their intentions into sustainable enterprises. The research shows that higher education initiatives support youth entrepreneurship development, but achieving fully sustainable entrepreneurial outcomes requires stronger collaboration with industry and additional structural support (Radebe et al., 2023).

Taofeek & Adedokun 2025

The study of Taofeek and Adedokun (2025) delves into, mentioned that useful drivers behind entrepreneurial tendencies of South African students. Specifically focusing on personal traits, education, socio-economic background, and access to mentorship or training. By stating that resources and support offered by educational institutions, community networks, and schools have an impact on students' interest in entrepreneurship in addition to their individual goals and motivating influences. The study mentioned that by understanding these core factors, it is vital for designing programs and interventions that build entrepreneurial skills, confidence, and readiness among South African youth (Taofeek & Adedokun, 2025). Students who participate in entrepreneurship programs, mentorship, and practical business experiences are most likely to develop a strong sense of entrepreneurial intent and take active steps towards starting their own businesses. It also stresses that challenges such as limited access to funding, insufficient practical experience, and lack of guidance need to be addressed to convert entrepreneurial potential into sustainable business outcomes. The study provides actionable insights for policymakers, educators, and institutions looking to nurture entrepreneurial mindsets and create a supportive ecosystem that enables youth-led businesses to thrive in South Africa (Taofeek & Adedokun, 2025).

Following a thematic analysis of six publications, common themes highlighted that support systems perform an important role in enabling young people to succeed in entrepreneurship in South Africa. The role of universities is to prepare students for entrepreneurship by providing

them with business knowledge, practical problem-solving abilities, and creative thinking skills. These skills will give students the confidence and know-how they need to successfully start and run their own businesses. As highlighted by Chimucheka (2014), entrepreneurial education can promote self-employment and foster confidence in youth. Where complete support systems are, however, limited by shortcomings of out-of-date curricula, a lack of real-world experience, and insufficient communication between academia and industry. However, collaboration with industries to provide mentorship, internships, and hands-on experience, together with government support through funding and training programs, can strengthen the positive impact of support systems on youth entrepreneurship in South Africa.

The National Youth Policy presents support systems from a broader and national perspective. They also highlights the need for coordinated efforts between government, academia, and industry, by offering entrepreneurship training, mentorship, incubation programs, and funding opportunities. These support systems can help young people gain practical skills, build their confidence, and take an active part in the economy. The policy shows a clear, coordinated approach that links education with economic opportunities, creating a framework to support young entrepreneurs in a sustainable way over the long term.

The Companies and Intellectual Property Commission supports entrepreneurship by providing the youth with digital platform infrastructure. The CIPC's Bizportal platform makes it user friendly for young entrepreneurs to register their businesses, stay compliant, and to protect their ideas by helping to cut through the red tape that often puts first-time business owners off. However, it mainly serves a regulatory purpose, this initiative is also designed to support young people by giving them the tools they need to take real steps toward formalizing their businesses. They have also highlighted that digital platforms, when combined with mentorship, funding, and entrepreneurship training, create a comprehensive environment that positively impacts young entrepreneurs' ability to start and sustain enterprises. Madondo and Tinonestsana (2024) look at how the support systems shape the way young people view entrepreneurship and what motivates them to pursue it. Having mentors, role models, and access to training can make young people more confident and more interested in starting their own businesses. Even if young people see entrepreneurship in a positive light, a lack of support like funding, guidance, and hands-on experience can make it hard for them to get involved. However, as the study underscores that effective support systems must address both practical barriers and psychological factors to convert positive attitudes into entrepreneurial action.

Radebe et al. (2023) point out that higher education serves as a key support system, with universities providing courses, mentorship, incubation programs, and professional networks to help students succeed in entrepreneurship. These support systems help students build an entrepreneurial mindset and encourage innovative thinking. However, challenges like weak connections with industry, limited real-world experience, and a lack of funding limit how effective these support systems can be to young people. They also state that universities and industry need to collaborate more closely to make support systems truly effective.

Taofeek and Adedokun (2025) show how personal traits, family and financial background, and support from institutions all affect young people's interest in entrepreneurship. They show that access to entrepreneurship programs, mentorship, and community networks positively affects youth confidence and entrepreneurial readiness. The study also points out persistent challenges, including limited funding, inadequate practical experience, and insufficient guidance, emphasizing that interventions should be tailored to strengthen both skills and access to resources for sustainable outcomes.

Across all six publications, there is a common thread that **support systems** have a positive impact on youth entrepreneurship by building skills, giving young people confidence and the chance to participate in economic activities. All of them agree that **mentorship, hands-on training, funding, and educational programs** are key to success. The studies focus on different areas: some highlight higher education (Chimucheka, 2014; Radebe et al., 2023), while others look at policy and national frameworks (NYP), digital support (CIPC), or motivational and socio-cultural factors (Madondo & Tinonestsana, 2024; Taofeek & Adedokun, 2025).

4.4 SUMMARY

This chapter presented the findings of this study. The results are drawn from six key publications on youth entrepreneurship in South Africa. Information from academic articles, policy documents, and official reports was analysed. Each publication was examined in detail, and common themes regarding the role and impact of support systems were identified. The summary and recommendations will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The main aim of the current research was to examine the role of academia, industry, and government in promoting youth entrepreneurship. The secondary and methodological objectives were addressed through the collection and analysis of data to achieve the main objective. Chapter Five serves to summarise the study, present the conclusions, and provide recommendations based on the findings. Additionally, it aims to encourage broader community participation in entrepreneurship, highlighting its contribution to economic growth in South Africa.

5.2 SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

The study was divided into five chapters, each ending with a summary. This section gives summary of chapters one through four.

Chapter One presented the introduction as well as the background of the study. It presented the problem statement, along with the secondary objectives and methodological objectives, all designed to address the primary objective of understanding the role of academia, industry, and government in promoting youth entrepreneurship. The chapter also highlighted the significance of the study and concluded by outlining the structure of the research. **Chapter Two** focused on the literature review. By outlining the nature and importance of youth entrepreneurship, the roles of academia, industry, and government in promoting youth entrepreneurship were discussed. The chapter also addressed the challenges associated with promoting youth entrepreneurship and ended with a summary. **Chapter Three** consisted of the research design and methodology that the researcher used. This chapter discussed the research philosophy, research approach, methodological choice, research strategy, time horizon, techniques and procedures for data collection, techniques and procedures for data analysis. The study relied on secondary data sourced from academic journals. The researcher only had to complete Form E, a document stating that the research undertaken will not be used for publication purposes, and no ethical clearance number was provided. **Chapter Four** presented the findings of this study. The results were drawn from six main publications on youth entrepreneurship in South

Africa. The publication included academic articles, policy documents, and official reports, which were analysed. Each publication was examined in detail and common themes regarding the role and impact of support systems were identified.

5.3 SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH PROCESS

The research method was structured to examine the role of academia, industry, and government in promoting youth entrepreneurship in South Africa. In terms of the analysis method used, the current study is a qualitative review of the role of academia, industry, and government in promoting youth entrepreneurship in South Africa. The study mainly used secondary data from reliable academic journals, policy documents, and official reports found on Google Scholar, ResearchGate, and official websites. The search period was conducted between April and September 2025, using keywords such as youth entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial ecosystems, government support, industry support, challenges, opportunities, and entrepreneurship policy. Inclusion and exclusion criteria were used to ensure relevant and reliable results, focusing on peer-reviewed studies from South Africa. The Mendeley reference manager was utilised for organising codes, allowing for the recording, coding, and sorting of all journals used based on author names, year, journal title, and journal source. Thematic analysis was applied to identify recurring themes, patterns, and challenges in the literature. The process provided a clarity on how academia, industry, and government each contribute, both individually and together, while also revealing gaps in coordination that can hinder the success of youth entrepreneurship initiatives.

5.4 ACHIEVEMENT OF THE OBJECTIVES

Table 5.1 provides a layout of how the researcher achieved the research objectives of the study.

Table 5.1: Achievement of objectives

<p style="text-align: center;">PRIMARY OBJECTIVE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">To analyse the role of academia, industry, and government in promoting youth entrepreneurship.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SECONDARY OBJECTIVES</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">METHODOLOGICAL OBJECTIVES</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">EXPECTED OUTCOME</p>
	<p>SO¹: To review how academia, industry, and government support young entrepreneurs in South Africa.</p>	<p>MO¹: To conduct a literature review regarding the nature and role of academia, industry, and government in promoting youth entrepreneurship.</p>	<p>Chapter Two: The nature and importance of youth entrepreneurship</p>
	<p>SO²: To identify challenges preventing the promotion of youth entrepreneurship by academia, industry, and government.</p>	<p>MO²: To identify an appropriate research design and methodology that will assist in achieving the research objectives.</p>	<p>Chapter Three: Research design and methodology</p>
		<p>MO³: To analyse the role of academia, industry, and government in promoting youth entrepreneurship.</p>	<p>Chapter Four: Results of thematic analysis process</p>
		<p>MO⁴: To summarise, conclude, and provide recommendations to encourage the youth to participate in entrepreneurship, as it contributes to economic growth in South Africa.</p>	<p>Chapter Five: Summary, conclusions, and recommendation</p>

Source: Researcher’s own compilation

As shown in Table 5.1, to achieve the primary objective, the researcher had to first address SO¹ and SO². To carry out the study effectively, four methodological objectives had to be achieved. MO¹ to conduct a literature review regarding the nature and role of academia, industry, and government in promoting youth entrepreneurship, this objective was achieved in chapter two. MO² to identify an appropriate research design and methodology that will assist in achieving the research objectives, this was achieved in chapter three, in the research design and methodology chapter. MO³ was to analyse the role of academia, industry, and government in promoting youth entrepreneurship; this was achieved in chapter four in the thematic analysis process. MO⁴ summarises, concludes, and provides recommendations to encourage the youth to participate in entrepreneurship, as it contributes to economic growth in South Africa.

5.5 LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The study used secondary data from reputable sources, including academic journals, policy documents, and official reports, accessed through research databases such as Google Scholar, ResearchGate, and official websites. The inclusion criteria of the current study restricted the selection to only six academic journals. After all research questions were addressed, future researchers on this topic should take other developing countries into consideration. However, future research could add value by gathering primary data using interviews or surveys with young entrepreneurs, educators, and government officials, providing a more detailed and direct understanding of the challenges and opportunities they experience. Studies that track youth entrepreneurship over time would also be useful to see whether support systems are improving or not. It is also recommended that more research be done in rural and under-resourced areas, since most available studies are centred in cities. Finally, a comparison between South Africa and other countries may offer new insight and best practices that could strengthen support for youth entrepreneurs locally.

5.6 SUMMARY

The aim of the study was to examine how academia, industry, and government contribute to supporting and promoting youth entrepreneurship. The findings of the study show that academia, industry, and government all play an important role in promoting youth entrepreneurship in South Africa by providing education, mentorship, funding, and policy support. Limited coordination and collaboration among these sectors, along with challenges such as restricted access to finance and outdated curricula, reduce the effectiveness of their efforts. Despite these challenges, the study objectives were met through conducting the literature review. Thematic analysis provided insight into how academia, industry, and government support young entrepreneurs by identifying obstacles that limit progress and highlighting where more collaboration is needed. For future research purposes, by expanding the scope to include primary data from interviews or surveys, focusing on under-resourced and rural communities, adopting longitudinal studies to capture changes over time, and comparing South Africa's efforts with other countries to identify best practices. Overall, the research underscores the importance of youth entrepreneurship for addressing unemployment and driving economic growth, while emphasising the need for academia, industry, and government to work together more effectively to create sustainable opportunities for young people.

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ANNEXURE A: LEARNING AGREEMENT

ANNEXURE XX: LEARNING AGREEMENT

NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC SCIENCES LEARNING AGREEMENT BETWEEN STUDY LEADER AND POSTGRADUATE STUDENT FOR BCOM HONS MINI-TREATISE QUALIFICATIONS

The aim of this learning agreement is to provide postgraduate students and their study leaders an opportunity to develop a sound and productive working plan. This document should be read in conjunction with the following Nelson Mandela University Policy documents:

- The General Prospectus
- Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences Prospectus
- University Code of Ethics Policy
- Policy on Intellectual Property
- Promotion of Academic Integrity and Prevention of Plagiarism

These documents are available on the Nelson Mandela University's website (<http://my.mandela.ac.za/default.asp?id=306&IRCno=>)

The Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences requires all postgraduate students and their study leader(s) to complete a learning agreement. Postgraduate students and their study leader(s) should discuss the issues outlined in this agreement, to have clarity and consistency regarding the conduct of the Postgraduate student and study leader. The document should be signed in each other's physical presence.

The postgraduate student and study leader should keep a copy of this learning agreement, and a copy must be sent to the module coordinator (Shelley.Farrington@mandela.ac.za).

PART A: DETAILS OF POSTGRADUATE STUDENT, STUDY LEADER(S) AND QUALIFICATION

NAME & SURNAME:	Melissa Daniels
STUDENT NUMBER:	211281115
QUALIFICATION:	Honours Business Management
YEAR OF REGISTRATION:	2025
DEPARTMENT:	Business Management
STUDY LEADER:	Ms. V. Nyeki

ANNEXURE B: ETHICAL CLEARANCE FORM E

ANNEXURE XX: ETHICAL CLEARANCE (FORM E)



FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC SCIENCES DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

ETHICAL CONSIDERATION FOR HONOURS TREATISE (non-publication route)

INSTRUCTIONS

- Should be completed by study leader and student.
- Must be signed off by the student, study leader and HOD.
- Submit the completed and signed form to the module coordinator who will submit to Mrs Kim.Alexander@mandela.ac.za.
- Please ensure that a summary of the research methodology section of the treatise is attached to this form (Complete Annexure A to this Form).
- **Please note that by following this ethics route, the study will NOT be allocated an ethics clearance number.**

SECTION A – STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGMENT

- The student acknowledges that their research project is for academic qualification purposes only. As such, the research report or any sections thereof **may not be published**.
- The student also acknowledges that their research project **will be a desktop study** and will **make use of publicly available documents or secondary data**. No human subjects will be involved in the study as primary sources of data.

Secondary data, in this instance, refers to data that was collected and processed by someone else for some other purpose but is now being used by the researcher for another reason (Tripathy, 2013). Research ~~utilising~~ secondary data that both exists and has been collected in a public, academic database, for example Google Scholar, is considered desktop research, and generally does not require full ethical approval (Creswell & Poth 2017).

SECTION B – STUDENT AND RESEARCH PROJECT DETAILS

Student name & surname	Melissa Derrocks
Student number	211281115
Title of treatise	The role of academia, industry and government in promoting youth entrepreneurship
Qualification	BCom Honours Business Management
Department	Business Management
Study leader	Ms Vuyohwethu Nyati

SECTION C – ETHICS CRITERIA

<i>(Please tick the appropriate block)</i>		YES	NO
1.	Is there any risk of harm, embarrassment of offence, however slight or temporary, to the participant, third parties or to the communities at large?		✓
2.	Is the study based on a research population defined as 'vulnerable' in terms of age, physical characteristics and/or disease status?		✓
2.1	Are subjects/participants/respondents of your study:		
2.1.1	Children under the age of 18?		✓
2.1.2	NMU staff?		✓
2.1.3	NMU students?		✓
2.1.4	The elderly/persons over the age of 60?		✓
2.1.5	A sample from an institution (e.g. hospital/school)?		✓
2.1.6	Handicapped (e.g. mentally or physically)?		✓
3.	Does the data that will be collected require consent of an institutional authority for this study? (An institutional authority refers to an organisation that is established by government to protect vulnerable people)		✓
3.1	Are you intending to access participant data from an existing, stored repository (e.g. school, institutional or university records)?		✓
4.	Will the participant's privacy, anonymity or confidentiality be compromised?		✓
4.1	Are you administering a questionnaire/survey that:		
4.1.1	Collects sensitive/identifiable data from participants?		✓
4.1.2	Does not guarantee the anonymity of the participant?		✓
4.1.3	Does not guarantee the confidentiality of the participant and the data?		✓
4.1.4	Will offer an incentive to respondents to participate, i.e. a lucky draw or any other prize?		✓
4.1.5	Will create doubt whether sample control measures are in place?		✓
5.	Do you wish to publish any research output (i.e. article) from this study?		✓

Please note that if ANY of the questions above have been answered in the affirmative (YES) the student will need to complete the full ethics clearance form (MEOS REC-H application) and submit it with the relevant documentation to the Faculty RECH (Ethics) committee.

The student hereby certifies that he/she has given his/her research careful ethical consideration and full ethics approval is not required.

ANNEXURE C: DECLARATION ON USE OF GENERATIVE AI AND AI-ASSISTED TECHNOLOGY

ANNEXURE XX: GENERATIVE AI AND AI-ASSISTED TECHNOLOGIES IN WRITING PROCESS – USAGE DECLARATION

According to Nelson Mandela University's Institutional Position Statement on the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) (D_71_24_ (2025-02-07), the following are considered recommended uses and unacceptable uses of AI by students and staff.

Recommended uses:

- Search engine
- Enhancing understanding
- Gaining insights
- Gathering information
- Clarifying concepts
- Critically evaluating information

Unacceptable uses:

- Copy and paste generated intellectual work.
- Claiming a generated product (text, image, creation) as your own.
- Generating information for assessments, projects, and assignments, unless this is explicitly instructed by the academic, who has provided clear guidelines in the form of permissions and prohibitions as to the appropriate use thereof as part of an assessment designed around the use of AI.
- Used for unfair advantage – when you are determined to deceive and do not use something in an appropriate manner.
- Making use of AI and not appropriately referencing the sources represented in the generated text, image and/or other product.
- Makes use of AI and does not ensure that the sources represented in the generated text, image and/or other product are accurate and represent the actual work of existing sources.
- Generating information via AI that may or may not represent the intellectual work of another person, people or AI and thereafter making further use of AI to disguise this information and then present it as one's own.
- When you do not follow permissions and prohibitions provided in assessment guidelines.
- When you are not transparent about its use, do not reference and acknowledge your sources.

Student declaration:

During the undertaking of preparing and writing this mini treatise,

I Melissa Derrocks, with student number 211281115, declare that (please tick the appropriate circle indicating whether you have used AI or not): *I have not used AI in an unacceptable manner as described by Nelson Mandela University's Institutional Position Statement on the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence.*

I further declare that *I have used [N/A] in order to [N/A].*

I also acknowledge that I am ultimately responsible and accountable for the contents of this mini treatise.

SIGNATURE STUDENT: *WDERROCKS*

DATE: 22 September 2025

[NOTE: Students must declare in their mini treatise the use or not of AI and AI-assisted technologies in the process of writing their treatise by completing this declaration statement. This statement must be included as an Appendix/Annexure in their mini treatise. AI and AI-assisted technologies do not include basic tools for checking grammar, spelling, references etc. Using AI and AI-assisted technologies in their mini treatise without completing this declaration amounts to academic dishonesty. Should AI and AI-assisted technologies not have been used in the process of writing, the appropriate circle should be ticked. Students should note that the use of AI is detected by Turnitin and in addition to this declaration a Turnitin report is required as an Appendix/Annexure to their mini treatise.

ANNEXURE D: TURNITIN REPORT

CHAPTER 1- 5 TURNITIN REPORT.DOCX

ORIGINALITY REPORT

15% SIMILARITY INDEX	10% INTERNET SOURCES	8% PUBLICATIONS	6% STUDENT PAPERS
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PRIMARY SOURCES

1	Submitted to Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University Student Paper	1%
2	busman.mandela.ac.za Internet Source	1%
3	www.vukuzenzele.gov.za Internet Source	1%
4	econ3x3.org Internet Source	1%
5	Submitted to Mancosa Student Paper	<1%
6	www.mdpi.com Internet Source	<1%
7	da Silva Teles Amaral, Daniella. "The Influence of Entrepreneurial Education on the Entrepreneurial Orientation of University Students", University of Johannesburg (South	<1%