

Journal of African films and Diaspora Studies (JAFDIS)
(Research on African Films, Diaspora Studies,
Performance Arts and Communication Studies)

ISSN: 2516-2705 (Print) ISSN: 2516-2713 (Online)
Published consistently since 2018.

Indexed by SCOPUS, IBSS, EBSCO, ProQuest, COPENICUS,
ERIH PLUS and Sabinet

Volume 7, Number 2, June 2024
pp 139-159

**The Role of Community Radio in Promoting Youth
Employment in North-West Province, South Africa: The
Case of *Mahikeng FM***

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31920/2516-2713/2024/7n2a8>

Dr Karabo Mohapanele*

*North-West University Mafikeng and Human Sciences Research Council, Pretoria,
South Africa*

Orcid ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6831-2172>

Email: karabomohapanele@gmail.com

&

Dr Kiran Odhav

*Department of Sociology, School of Social Sciences, Faculty of Humanities, North-
West University, South Africa*

Orcid ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4665-4769>

Email: Kiran.odhav@nwu.ac.za

Abstract

Standing at a bloated figure of 66%, South Africa's youth unemployment needs interventions. One such intervention is afforded by radio, especially with 50% of South Africans regularly tuning into radio. Skills transfer and transitional employment are possible through such an intervention.

This paper explores the role that radio could play in promoting youth employment, by engaging with the work of Jurgen Habermas, Paulo Freire, as well as Community Development theories. It draws from qualitative data collected from youth aged 15 to 30, and from staff and administrators at a small community radio station, 'Mahikeng FM'. The paper analyses broadcasting contents of the radio station to promote youth employment. It thus argues that community radio in collaboration with various stakeholders can have a significant role in enhancing youth experiences.

Keywords: *Community radio, employment, youth, community development, public sphere.*

Introduction

Strategic interventions are needed to address the malaise of youth unemployment (of up to 75%) and the issue of the youth's lack of skills in South Africa (Bulani, 2022). Fraser and Restrepo (2001) find that radio provides easy access for vulnerable youth, a platform that is appropriate for low-income homes, and can target the daily issues affecting young people. Further traction can be gained in respect of community radio, which has far greater possibilities for being interactive, particularly when it comes to the use of cell phone technology. This is especially the case when radio can be interactive, oral and has cell phone support, specifically for rural youth (ECOSOC Youth Forum, 2015)

There is sparse research on the topic of young people's jobs and skills, with studies focussing on radio and youth economic empowerment (Bulani, 2021), livelihood improvement, (Al-Hassan, Andani and Abdul-Malik, 2011), and integrated marketing communication (Van Rheede, Van Oudtshoorn and Mulder, 2001). With radio as a preferred and economical communication mode, it is the ideal information provision for poor households. It naturally suggests to the researcher, the importance of exploring the broadcasts of Mahikeng FM and its impact on Mahikeng rural communities in terms of work, skills and community development. While radio cannot do what industrial or economic growth can, its effectiveness as a media form, means that it remains a powerful tool in and for Africa.

This paper aims to understand if, and how, Mahikeng FM community radio station promotes youth employment by directing youth in Mahikeng and the surroundings to employment opportunities, via its broadcast programmes, its content and related activities.

Background of the Study

Three categories of broadcasting services in SA

Three categories of broadcasting services exist in South Africa: **Public Service Broadcasting**, **Commercial Broadcasting** and **Community radio**. The latter is the focus of this study. The Independent Broadcasting Authority Act (IBA, 1993) describes community radio as “a service that is fully controlled by a non-profit entity for non-profit purposes in order to serve a particular community. Thus, such a station should “promote community interests and encourage the community to participate in the selection and provision of programming” (Girard, 2007: 1).

Defining Youth

The United Nations (UN, nd) defines youth by age (15-24). Despite this, youth are classified within the age range of 14 to 35 years in South Africa, ‘Youth’ can be a broad term and defined as those between 10-24 years, with various experiences and transitions: the latter range from early age (10 to 14), through middle (15 to 20) to late (21 to 24) phases (Nugent, 2005).

The problem of unemployment

The term ‘unemployed’ refers to people who are available for employment, are searching for employment but cannot find paid work. Unemployment in South Africa has a structural or systemic character, which indicates the general inability of an economy to provide jobs for the entire (or potential) labour force, even at its peak (Cloete, 2015).

Youth and unemployment

An unemployed youth is a person aged 15-24 who is jobless, ‘available for work’, and ‘seeking work’ (Wangmo, 2012). According to Budlender (2014), South African youth are low skilled, with little employment experience, and 66% of them never worked. In the Mahikeng Local Municipality area, the rate of unemployment among Youth aged 15–34 is 47% (Stats SA, n.d). STATS SA (2020) reports 20.4 million youth between 15-34 (63% of youth) has a 59% rate of unemployment for the first quarter of 2020.

For Ndondo, (2022), such youth unemployment includes under-qualified youth (15 – 34 years, and without a matric), and with unemployment among this group being 55%. The question is whether community radio can channel youth towards employment opportunities.

Community radio and its provision of employment, skills, and training

Community radio stations are legally obliged to examine the environment and inform their listeners about possible activities that can improve their standards of living (Mburu, 2009), and this obviously includes the mass of unskilled youth facing daunting economic challenges. Community radio interventions can play a role in assisting to create active citizens (Mburu, 2009). Kasongo (2015) adds that radio can go beyond a purely dialogical function by providing career and job opportunities, particularly for rural youth, to increase skills' opportunities that improves their prospects for employment at commercial stations (Madamombe, 2005).

Bulani (2021) and Dalene (2021) found that 'Bush radio' in Cape Town has a history in providing skills training and employing young people in community broadcasting. The radio station is relevant and benefits youth in respect of the following: entrepreneurship, education, financial literacy, and employment creation. It promotes creativity and the monetizing of creative enterprises and activities; and connects youth to government and other organizations to provide them with what they require, in order to uplift themselves. Bulani (2021) assessed the role of Bush Radio in promoting economic empowerment, specifically for youth in the Cape Flats. This study supplements such knowledge.

Bush FM radio's 'Sakh'isizwe' programme is centred on youth empowerment and job creation, to provide the listeners with basic soft skills needed to get a job or register a business. Unemployed youth are referred to relevant youth organisations, and its 'Morning Cruise' show supports unemployed youth. The 'Jobshop' programme broadcasts job vacancies for unemployed listeners in Cape Town that have no access to internet (Adebayo, Bulani and Matsilele et al., 2022).

Furthermore, Dalene (2006) found 'Siyaya FM' in KwaZulu-Natal province, to be expanding its geographical reach, listenership and quality of volunteers. It began as an educator, and to create employment opportunities for Cato Manor residents in Durban, not necessarily at the

radio itself. The radio provides teaching and training, so that youth can use such skills in jobs elsewhere. Dalene (2006) further reports that Siyaya FM trains and provides skills to unemployed volunteers on radio production techniques, journalism and on the concept of community radio, as part of their early experience of radio. Such exposure is suggestive of one avenue for recruitment into employment, illustrating how community involvement can create opportunities and empower people to (further) develop their skills. Siyaya FM's volunteers highlighted the importance of radio as a portal for skills transfers for youth, urging them onto employment. Since most opportunities on radio are skills based, and the knowledge acquired from such can be used as a basis for further education or for employment (Dalene, 2006).

Moreover, international studies on the topic (Namaganda, (2019) find youth unemployment as the biggest challenge in Makerere Kivvulu (Uganda). One important function of radio is to advocate economic development of youth. Kasongo (2015) concurs, by showing that Zimbabwe, Democratic Republic of Congo, Zambia, Malawi, and Mozambique, are all seeking initiatives to enhance the capacity of community radio stations for their young staff and volunteers in terms of content development and radio programming. In Malawi, intelligent and highly motivated young people are busy running community radio stations voluntarily and part time, and developing skills on the job, as broadcasters and producers. Kasongo (2015) thus argues that the 15 licensed community radio stations in Malawi could provide viable opportunities for youth empowerment.

Theoretical Framework

Community Development Theory

For Schiele (2005) Community Development theory pertains to self-help and joint problem solving for practical change, for capacity building and for empowerment. For Flora, Flora, Spears and Swanson (1992) community development means its inhabitants must believe in collective work in order to make a difference. Radio programmes need professionals to be involved in problem solving such as the unemployment issue, to ignite such empowerment to enhance the sociological concept of

‘collective agency’, rather than a uni-directional directive of traditional radio systems.

Criticism of Community Development Theory is the lack of evidence of its effectiveness, and of scarce funds for social work. Still, sustainable African futures are important, where 25% of the globe’s population resides, with 60% of them under-25 years old (World Economic Forum, 2023).

Jurgen Habermas: the ‘public sphere’

Habermas proposed the public sphere as a place of topical public debate and opinion formation (Habermas, 1989: 31). Community radio can be considered as part of such a public sphere, since it engenders or facilitates discussion especially on community and youth issues, with multiple stakeholder involvement. For this study, radio stations can and do open discussion of public issues on air, share information, and come up with solutions in a democratic way, and with an educational motive, and in tandem with new media technologies such as Facebook. Mahikeng FM has created its own Facebook page for interaction, to share information on job vacancies and to broadly build the public sphere.

Habermas’ view remains controversial for expressing exclusive concern with bourgeoisie’s life, of being gender blind and serving European patriarchy (Susen, 2011). This study, however, remains focussed on concerning itself with enlarging the public sphere in one location. The implications of this, not developed here, are massive if such a public sphere grows in Africa.

Paulo Freire: theory of Conscientisation or Critical Consciousness and Dialogic Communication.

Paulo Freire conceived of Participatory Development Communication (PDC) by stressing agency for social change and development, starting with...“The situation within which they (people) are submerged, from which they emerge, and in which they intervene” (Freire 1973).

This paper intends to find out whether community radio can facilitate non-formal education and create public participation and social awareness of issues affecting youth or communities to resolve their problems. Radio

can strategically enhance dialogic communication, for participatory community development to build on democratic gains.

Criticisms of participant development communication's lack of rigor and being subjective (Ibuot, Majemu and Nwantah, 2021), can be met by keeping to methodological strictures and by working on inclusivity to build on public views, for more objective structures and roles. The aim is to implement notions of 'Communicative competence' (Habermas) and 'radical pedagogy' (Freire), as intertwined concepts, to allow for bottom-up community development that is youth oriented.

Methodology

The study used qualitative research with interviews and Focus Group Discussion (FGD): with 25 youths (FGD), and 7 Mahikeng FM staff administrators interviewed individually.

Both youth and radio administrators were interviewed to gauge their common concerns, further supported by the researcher listening in to the station's programmes. This was done to offset any biases that research participants could bring into the study. Mahikeng FM's Facebook page is readily accessible to its youth listeners, to allow them to gain an understanding of the radio's operations.

Most of the youth sampled for the interviews were in school (Grade 10 to 12), and were from Mahikeng rural surrounding communities, where they have limited opportunities. The theme of 'employment' emerged strongly from the broader study, as the findings herein show.

The collected qualitative data was transcribed and coded manually. Themes and sub-themes emerged that are outlined hereunder and presented for analysis.

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Data from youth

Mahikeng FM promoting and directing youth to employment opportunities

In the context of high employment (Mayer, Gordhan, Manxeba, Hughes, Maroc and Nell (2011), a majority of young people see Mahikeng FM

directing them to job opportunities as indicated by the following responses:

The station addresses our unemployment challenges, they bring solutions, by directing and giving us links for employment (Listener 1).

The station encourages youth to...study and...helps them...get funding...(for).. studies. We can...call into the station to talk about our problems, and we can get help from other listeners, and...presenters. They invite various successful professionals to guide young people (Listener 2).

I have a small business because of Mahikeng FM. It brings youth together to form various projects...all because of advice...from...the station's presenters (Listener 3).

Their programmes...enlighten and guide unemployed young people with job applications, such as filling in the government job application forms (Listener 4).

The above quotes reflect community interactivity with professional and lay participation, entrepreneurial development, and guidance on employment. Igweta, (2010) corroborates media's ability to inform, educate and guide youth for economic independence without formal work experience. Community Development relates to problem solving, self-help and empowerment (Schiele, 2005), and for community members to believe that collective work makes a difference (Flora, 1992). As thus, Mahikeng FM provides such opportunities for youth and communities, and this is supported by the literature cited herein.

Radio programmes that young people listen to, and reasons for listening to those programmes.

The above theme explores the nature, functions and effects of Mahikeng FM programmes for youth employment opportunities. The youth justify their programme choices as follows:

'Spot the talent'...promotes local music and...artists...(with)...opportunities...We are given the opportunity to be interviewed on the station...talk about our talents... (Listener 5).

‘Retokafatsa botshele’ (Bettering Life)...changes our lives with...(enlightening)...information...(and teaches) us. They have...more developments for youth (Listener 6).

Their programmes...alert us about jobs that are available, internships, learnerships, bursaries...We can access links...they share with us on Facebook...(to)...access those opportunities. We can...share... (them) with...peers (Listener 7).

Programmes direct us to employment opportunities...(with...numbers and emails...(of)...recruiters...It makes things easier...They would relay NGO announcements of where young people are needed (Listener 8).

Thus, inclusivity for creative youth on public media is engendered, by allowing the public to share in youth needs, tastes, networks and to empower them further to fulfil their dreams in various ways. For youth, such opportunities are invaluable, as the following (sub-) themes further testify.

Provision of platform for youth to showcase and unleash their talents through the station’s different Programmes

The sampled youth listen to various programmes that serve as platforms to unleash their talents as indicated by one such youth below:

It...(exposes and gives us)... a platform to showcase our) talents:...Thus ‘Maftowns finest’ ‘My Favourite DJ’, ‘Spot the Talent’ empower local young DJs ‘...(with)... slots...to find their talents...Most...(material played) on the...station is... from... local young DJs, poets, models...(to) expose us...(and)...give us confidence and have a high regard for our talents (Listener 9).

Overall, such quotes reflect a tapping into the liberatory potential of youth development for the community, and from the catalytic effect of such practices inserted into the public sphere and its contribution to the national youth culture.

Conscientisation is subsumed by people’s action for development and critical consciousness (Freire, 1973). Youth partake in their own development by gaining media creative skills to both inspire and provide them with a foundation for their future careers.

Radio even empowers young people simply by informing and disseminating knowledge on employment opportunities (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995: 569). Community development theory assumes that the poor can transcend their externally imposed social problems, of which unemployment is central. Stakeholder engagement is crucial as the station is well aware. Radio exposure pitched appropriately, can be one turnkey to change the quality of life of youth, even with business partaking in such ventures. Community development theory (Flora, 1993) further sees collective agency as an essential force to garner external partnerships with business and other relevant stakeholders, as well as internally with the community believing in such collectivism to address their needs. Hence, youth agency features in the quotes above.

Radio administrators' responses

To add onto youth views, data from radio staff administrators was collected. Seven Mahikeng FM radio administrators were also interviewed. The responses of the two groups were in tandem. Questions asked about the role the station plays in empowering youth, elicited the following themes:

Programmes directing youth to employment opportunities

Just as Bulani, (2021) outlined Bush FM's diverse programmes that promote youth employment, this study also shows Mahikeng FM's dedication to youth employment programmes as per the responses below indicate:

'Re tokafatsa botshelo', 'Spot the Talent', 'Your Favourite DJ', 'Capital City Drive' (CCD), 'Maftown's Finest' programmes...expose youth with different talents. '*Retokafatsa botshelo*'...means 'we are bettering life' (Administrator 1).

'Lunch Time Twist' programme...addresses young people...(and)...focuses on unemployed youth...to empower...(them), to look for jobs...(and share)...scholarship links...(or)...the available bursaries with them (Administrator 2).

Such responses echo the literature on youth involvement in radio. Radio broadcasting skills enhance both personal growth for participants in terms

of communication, articulation, creativity, and interactivity, and can service the communication job market. Administrators and youth agree that radio acts as an impetus for the youth to strive for employment and a better life. Provision of public sphere for youth to showcase their talents.

Radio administrators' statements also align with young people's views, in seeing the station empowering youth, in talent identification, expression, public display and entertainment. This is corroborated by the following radio administrator's view:

We empower young people by playing their music...and we do interviews with them weekly in... 'Spot the Talent' programme on Saturdays... Local raw DJs bring mix(ed) tapes to play at the station... (It's a specific) ...platform...for rappers, R&B singers...We empower them...(to)... take their career in music seriously and grow their talents. We also hire for the station's different departments through auditions (Administrator 3).

The above responses from radio administrators supports the responses from youth participants, as they indicate that the station does play a positive role in empowering them, for talent identification, expression, and public display. It helps them to grow their entertainment talents. Just as young people said that the station does provide them with a public medium to showcase their talents, so too are the radio administrators aligned to this view.

Kasongo's (2015) findings are strikingly similar in reporting youth in Malawi running community radio stations, and developing skills as producers and broadcasters. Most formed careers and diversified their skills into research, debate, interviewing and producing, and also structuring stories, and working on developing a strong music foundations for African youth in South Africa (Martin and Rahfaldt, as cited in Bulani, 2021).

Radio administrators' responses support the views that most programmes that are meant to empower young people are those that youth highlighted too in their responses. Such programmes provide information and educates young people and the community at large.

Another administrator said:

At least the community is...given an opportunity to decide who becomes part of the board through...the Annual General Meeting (AGM) (Administrator 4).

Such a view is in tandem with Habermas' (1984) view that communicative action is intended to encourage shared and common understanding, so that there can be cooperation. Communication between individuals and groups is important for any action or decision, and community radio provides an opportunity for such action.

Habermas' public sphere suggests a theoretical basis for a view of planning that highlights widespread public information sharing, public participation, and attaining consensus through public dialogue, as opposed to the raw and unfettered exercise of power (Argyris & Schön, 1974; Innes, 1995; Lauria & Soll, 1996; Schön 1983; Wilson, 1997). This is in line with Freire's theory of dialogic communication, where radio allows community participation in public decision making.

Thus, top down decision can be avoided, as various inputs coming from those on the ground are included. Radio provides a solution to democratic functioning of the public sphere, with power being placed in the hands of communities as highlighted by Freire. Building and developing community in this way can empower youth, and this can ultimately spread to civics and society as a whole. The notion of radio with its educational function spreading to poor embattled communities is embedded in such a view.

Selection regarding Mahikeng FM's board of directors are made through a consultative process, involving directors, listeners, radio administrators, other stakeholders' and the community at large. The Annual general meeting (AGM) accepts public participation in choosing the board of directors, allowing for a public voice in the stations decision making, which serves to embed the station in the community. Agreement is reached between the community, its varied stakeholders, the station and all the actors who should be part of the board of directors. In effect, the criticism against Habermas' notion of the public sphere as serving a bourgeoisie function, is negated by what actually happens in the media and creative spheres (if we consider the music industry as our example). Here the democratic arrangements generated by the public sphere have the ability to undercut the power of big record companies (by encouraging small music producers) and challenge the hegemony of the creative

industry being located only at the metropolitan centres. It puts small media in public hands, through such forms of ownership.

The station directs youth to employment opportunities in collaboration with different institutions.

Consistent with our findings, Igwet (2010) asserts the media's power to reach youth audiences means that it is necessary to team up with the government, to carry out campaigns to educate unemployed youth to become economically self-reliable through various initiatives. Administrators also expand on how Mahikeng FM directs youth to employment opportunities when working with different institutions:

We invite experts...(from different institutions to advertise and to interview and)...to enlighten youth on...careers...to be...(more) easily employed (in the current unemployment climate). The station informs...young people about...opportunities...on live broadcasts and via various social media...(platforms)...We mention youth challenges on air, where different companies are listening, and also through those unemployment topics that we tackle, officials can be able to know where they fit, so...they can play a role (Administrator 5).

(The station's)...‘Your Business Tonight’ programme has an accountant explaining compliance processes. Young people or community members call...(in)...for guidance, or on a...business issue....(It leads to greater)...clarity about their businesses and for operational guidelines... (Administrator 6).

At times we focus on career guidance activities...(For example)...we...collaborated with the ‘Department of Education’ for the ‘Career for You’ programme, as part of...social responsibility...(allowing)...various government departments and different institutions to engage with youth about careers that are available. We...(provide)...officials with a platform to inform the public about any important information or knowledge...(related issue) (Administrator 7).

Career guidance is vital to rural youth, and public enactment of this discourse gives it greater urgency and allows input from multiple stakeholders. Bulani (2021) found that Cape Town's ‘Bush radio’ provides credible and relevant information that is beneficial to youth that focuses on entrepreneurship, employment creation, education and financial literacy. The radio station channels youth to contact relevant government bodies that can enhance their livelihoods.

Responding to such channels being provided by radio, the youth have appreciated the role that the station's programmes is playing in directing them to employment opportunities. This is confirmed by radio administrators, who view their programmes as being educational in terms of the discussion of career and opportunities that they facilitate.

Discussion

It is clear that community radio can indeed promote youth employment by contributing directly or indirectly to employment opportunities, even if only at a micro level. This study has only focussed on one station, while there are about 290 such stations in the country that engage in various forms of community building. Further research can establish its extent and impact (Nkoala, Makwambeni and Matsilele, 2023). Such potential does exist with Mahikeng FM and Bush Radio. The view of youth endorses the view that the station's programmes do direct them to employment opportunities by sharing links with them to the available vacancies that are being advertised and by exposing them to a public space to showcase their talents.

The station encourages, advises, and motivates youth in several other aspects of their lives, such as advising them to open and register their own businesses and projects, and to make a living for themselves. As a result, the station performs a crucial service in light of the high rate of unemployment in South Africa. It directs youth to actively create employment opportunities for themselves. Freire's notion of participation is relevant here: the existing interests of youth should be worked on, in order to build a stronger base for a long-term, strategic and community empowering agenda.

Radio provision of possible development of working relations with various institutions and organizations, is one avenue by means of which to tackle youth unemployment. The use of radio is significant, as it forms part of the public sphere, and this is important for the development of democratic functioning, particularly if the dialogic mode is used. While radio is only one part of that public sphere, it remains an important media form on the African continent. Its potential to widen that sphere is great, if such stations are able to garner the interests of disadvantaged communities.

The station does not only direct youth to employment opportunities but also employs young people to take part in different positions in the station, including the roles of presenters, news readers, programme

managers and the like. The station intends to grow and ensure its success. It is a community radio station that is already empowering the community by providing youth with employment opportunities at the station, where passion and talent for radio is growing.

Various radio stations do not employ young people, as they prefer experience, thus, Mahikeng FM's decision to bring in young talent is refreshing. By employing such young people, the station acts as a training ground, and prepares them for occupying more challenging roles in bigger or commercial and national radio stations. Some such young people that had their talents honed on the radio station have grown in the entertainment industry, going onto be professional disc jockeys, producers, and presenters. This became evident to some inexperienced youth who started working at the radio station, but then developed their talents and skills, and are now employed by large reputable commercial and national SABC (South African Broadcasting Corporation) radio stations, including Motsweding FM, Metro FM, SA FM, Khaya FM and the like.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper intended to assess the role of Mahikeng FM radio station in promoting youth enablement by directing youth to employment opportunities. Ultimately, based on the responses gathered, youth unanimously agreed that radio does play an important role in directing them to employment opportunities.

The provision of skills by radio enhances the professional ethics in the public sphere. Such enhancement suggests a Freirian logic of bottom-up community development, a lateral spread of the public sphere and civics with personalised investiture in community organs such as community radios stations. In effect, some of the vital elements of the subjective and objective conditions of social liberation as envisaged by Habermasian critical theory, are put into place by such an endeavour. The business world can also interact with civics when participants engage in entrepreneurial and business ventures.

This study suggests that radio programme managers should prioritize programmes that have youth development as part of its agenda. Stations should have more programmes that address youth unemployment and that direct them to employment opportunities. There should be more time allocation for the slots that cover that segment when incorporated in those programmes. The relationship between the station and its collaboration with other institutions should therefore also be strengthened.

To optimize youth empowerment, there should be an increased, constant, and sustained partnerships of different organizations with such stations. This would include the coming together of community members, radio stakeholders, civic bodies, different government departments, institutions of higher learning, and the like. Multi-constituency collaboration needs to be promoted, for an effective co-working relationship among different bodies and institutions to optimize youth empowerment. By so doing, it will be easier to battle against the problems faced by the youth in South Africa. This includes university professionals to facilitate and guide youth about their academic amenities, suggesting to them pathways that can make them employable, so that youth can make informed decisions about selecting careers, so as to avoid being unemployed after graduating.

Human resources experts or recruiters should also collaborate with the station to guide youth in terms of what they are looking for in the market, and when youth apply, what they should consider when looking for vacancies. Similarly, the National Youth Development Framework (NYDF) Youth policy (2009–2014), indicates that it is equally critical that there must be a greater integration amongst different key role players in the provision of young people services.

For the struggle against the enormous problems that rural communities face, their problems (such as unemployment) are discussed on various topics on the radio programmes of Mahikeng FM. The solution to these problems arises from various role players or listeners, as joint solution seekers. Sociologists refer to this as ‘collective agency’ (Flora & Flora 1993) and Schiele (2005) calls it ‘collective problem solving,’ as opposed to leaving isolated individuals to come up with solutions for their own problems. This approach builds community in the hope that it may impact on the society at large.

As youth unemployment is a glaring issue in South Africa, various avenues of media, including radio empowerment as described above, should be exploited to channel youth or to engender youth employment opportunities. Also, there are still gaps in the literature based on the few studies especially in South Africa, that explore the role of community radio in promoting youth employment. More studies are therefore needed to tackle how radio as a medium can be used to address unemployment amongst youth and direct them to employment opportunities.

Since many young people work in most community radio stations, of which many are volunteering as a way to grow their talents, and as a

stepping stone to venture into their careers, it is thus suggested that community radios should be funded, both from the private and public sector, so that some of the money can go to the budget that pays its employees.

Finally, radio as a medium is a powerful tool to use as a platform, to begin addressing youth issues, with the unemployment issue being one important arena that is a national challenge. One such arena is being tackled by emerging radio stations in their local communities. Radio could therefore be seen as one foundation, amongst a host of others not explored herein, to address the untapped youth potential, and to try to alleviate both the national dearth of skills and the enrichment of local media that has not been fully explored, and that lies untapped in the various disadvantaged communities in South Africa.

References

- Adebayo, J. O., Bulani, G. J., & Matsilele, T. (2022). The potential of community radio in fostering economic empowerment of youths in the Cape flats communities. *Communicare: Journal of Communication Studies*, 9(1), 22-43.
<https://journal.lspr.edu/index.php/communicare/article/view/297>
- Al-Hassan, S., Andani, A., & Abdul-Malik, A. (2011). The role of community radio in livelihood improvement: The case of Simli Radio. *Field Actions Science Reports. The journal of field actions*, 5.
<https://journals.openedition.org/factsreports/869>
- Argyris, C. and Schön, D. (1974). *Theory in Practice: Increasing Professional Effectiveness*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
[https://books.google.co.za/books?hl=en&lr=&id=H1SkEAAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PR1&dq=Argyris,+C.+and+Sch%C3%B6n,+D.+\(1974\)+Theory+in+Practice:+Increasing+Professional+Effectiveness,+San+Francisco:+Jossey-Bass.&ots=2NqWrpqUA&sig=6L3m5LLDaB2KnGBIjTUK84uNEk8&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.co.za/books?hl=en&lr=&id=H1SkEAAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PR1&dq=Argyris,+C.+and+Sch%C3%B6n,+D.+(1974)+Theory+in+Practice:+Increasing+Professional+Effectiveness,+San+Francisco:+Jossey-Bass.&ots=2NqWrpqUA&sig=6L3m5LLDaB2KnGBIjTUK84uNEk8&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false)
- Budlende, J. (2014). Youth unemployment in South Africa: causes and counter-measures. *Research reports & papers*. <https://budgetspeechcompetition.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/josh-budlender.pdf>

- Bulani, G. J. (2021). *The role of community radio in youth economic empowerment: a case study of bush radio in Cape Town* (Doctoral dissertation, Cape Peninsula University of Technology). https://etd.cput.ac.za/bitstream/20.500.11838/3352/1/Bulani_GQIBILE_211053996.pdf
- Cloete, A. (2015). Youth unemployment in South Africa-a theological reflection through the lens of human dignity. *Missionalia: Southern African Journal of Mission Studies*, 43(3), 513-525.
<https://www.scielo.org.za/pdf/mission/v43n3/16.pdf>
- Dalene, M. B. (2006). *Community radio and participation: the case of Siyaya FM* (Doctoral dissertation).
https://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/Files/articles/MA_dissertations/dalene%20ma.pdf
- ECOSOC Youth Forum. (2015). 'Youth on the rise: Youth Participation in Africa', *Concept note session 3*, UN Conference Room 4, New York.
https://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/youth2015/pdf/session_3.pdf
- Flora, C., Flora, J., Spears, J. and Swanson, L. (1992). *Rural Communities: Legacy and Change*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.
https://www.abebooks.com/servlet/BookDetailsPL?bi=22809084086&ref=pd_hw_o_1
- Flora, C. B. and Flora, J.L. (1993). Entrepreneurial social infrastructure: A necessary ingredient. *The Annals of the American Academy of political and social science*, 529(1), pp.48-58.
https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/1048623.pdf?casa_token=qGoY8xVMjJ0AAAAA:-fx0mGCRGK9-WWFinYJcLN__A82hWwE_C2u8qQhatNAtG1PM4h-sRTRab3mNp0ggHRUnfaygbuUoX_nvdiTp9TCOVRgYVU1IYV_5YR1c6Vs6noV19A
- Freire, P. (1973). *Education for critical consciousness*, Vol. 1, London: Bloomsbury Publishing. <https://abahlali.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Paulo-Freire-Education-for-Critical-Consciousness-Continuum-Impacts-2005.pdf>
- Fraser, C., & Estrada, S. R. (2001). *Community radio handbook* (pp. 13-23). Paris: Unesco.
<https://crfc.in/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/UNESCO-Community-Radio-Handbook-2001.pdf>
- Girard, B. (2007). *What is community media?*
- Habermas, J. (1984). *Theory of Communicative Action*, Boston: Beacon Press, Vol.1. <https://teddykw2.wordpress.com/wp->

- content/uploads/2012/07/jurgen-habermas-theory-of-communicative-action-volume-1.pdf
- Habermas, J. (1989). *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, Cambridge MA: The MIT Press. https://mitpress.mit.edu/9780262581080/the-structural-transformation-of-the-public-sphere/?utm_term=&utm_campaign=&utm_source=adwords&utm_medium=ppc&hsa_acc=8539032139&hsa_cam=21210798719&hsa_grp=162928542842&hsa_ad=697243391498&hsa_src=g&hsa_tgt=dsa-948360980370&hsa_kw=&hsa_mt=&hsa_net=adwords&hsa_ver=3&gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAjwi_exBhA8EiwA_kU1Ms0ANV3up7sVNmnG17mzLvH5WcHZY6ZlCE1jb74xleFI21z3jp4LQhoC4P8QAvD_BwE
- Ibuot, U. P., Majemu, S. A., & Nwantah, F. (2021). Participatory Development Communication: An Audience-Centered Initiative. *The International Journal of Humanities & Social Studies*, 9(6). <https://www.internationaljournalcorner.com/index.php/theijhss/article/view/165600>
- Independent Broadcasting Act (IBA), (1993). <https://www.icasa.org.za/LegislationRegulations/Acts/IndependentBroadcastingAuthorityAct/tabid/90/Default.aspx>
- Igweta, D. K. (2010). *An evaluation of the role of FM radio stations in empowering the youth to ensuring a sustainable economic future in Kenya: a case study of youth residing in high rise estate in Nairobi* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Nairobi, Kenya).
- Innes, J.E. (1995). Planning theory's emerging paradigm: Communicative action and interactive practice. *Journal of planning education and research*, 14 (3), pp.183-189. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0739456x9501400307>
- Kasongo, G. (2015). Reflection on community radio and youth empowerment. <https://www.comminit.com/opensocietyfoundation/content/reflection-community-radio-and-youth-empowerment>.
- Lauria, M., & Soll, M. J. (1996). Communicative action, power, and misinformation in a site selection process. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 15(3), 199-211.
- List, D. (2002) *Participative Marketing for Local Radio*, Wellington: Original Books. <https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/document?repid=rep1&type=pdf&doi=337f2db5b04b7191a47fd538c534a66454831e0a>

- Madamombe, I. (2005). Community radio: a voice for the poor. *Africa renewal*, 19(2), 4-5.
<https://www.un-ilibrary.org/content/journals/25179829/19/2/2>
- Mahikeng Community radio station website. <https://mahikengfm.co.za/>
- Mayer, M. J., Gordhan, S., Manxeba, R., Hughes, C., Foley, P., Maroc, C., ... & Nell, M. (2011). Towards a youth employment strategy for South Africa. *Development Planning Division working paper series*, 28, 1-56.
<https://www.dbsa.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/2022-11/Towards%20a%20Youth%20Employment%20Strategy%20for%20South%20Africa%20-%202011.pdf>
- Mburu, K. (2009). *Role of community radio in promoting economic development for the youth case study Koch fm* (Doctoral dissertation, Kampala international University, College of Humanities and Social Sciences).
<https://ir.kiu.ac.ug/bitstream/20.500.12306/7882/1/img-0072%20Uploaded.pdf>
- Namaganda, D. (2019). *The role of radio broad casting on the economic empowerment of the youth in Makerere Kivvulu: a case study of Central Broadcasting Service (CBS FM)*.
<https://irbackend.kiu.ac.ug/server/api/core/bitstreams/7811c9ba-6563-478e-b6a8-e09f421d1420/content>
- Ndondo, J. (2022). *South Africa's youth population, unemployment and economic growth prospects*. <https://www.ivint.org/south-africas-youth-population-unemployment-and-economic-growth-prospects/>
- Nkoala S, Makwambeni B., and Matsilele T. (2023). *Community radio: young South Africans are helping shape the news through social media*.
<https://theconversation.com/community-radio-young-south-africans-are-helping-shape-the-news-through-social-media-204958#:~:text=South%20Africa%20is%20home%20to,commercial%20and%20public%20service%20stations>
- Schiele, J. (2005). *Maggie Lena Walker and African American community development, Affilia*, 20 (1), p. 21-38.
https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0886109904272012?casa_token=7a30w--1kzMAAAAA:MwP7orUdiFeovvXtdY3phR5pSq6FbonuBJcYWOBH08-doDBcFHw6TIqD6pEueEf7MalmL3Cm9DcN
- Schön, D. (1983). *The Reflective Practitioner*, New York: Basic Books.
<https://www.sopper.dk/speciale/arkiv/book49.pdf>

- Susen, S. (2011). Critical notes on Habermas's theory of the public sphere. *Sociological analysis*, 5(1), 37-62.
https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2043824
- Stats SA. (n.d). Census 2022.
https://www.statssa.gov.za/?page_id=993&id=mafikeng-municipality.
- Statistics SA. (2020). *Vulnerability of youth in the South African labour market*.
<http://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=13379>
- Van Rheede van Oudtshoorn, G. P., & Mulder, D. (2001). *The role of radio integrated marketing communication*.
<https://scholar.ufs.ac.za/server/api/core/bitstreams/fe090e4f-9dba-4b53-b1bb-d7d6c09ef2d6/content>
- Wangmo, D. (2012). *A study on youth unemployment and its consequences in Bhutan* (Doctoral dissertation, KDI School).
<https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/213853315.pdf>
- Wilson, P. (1997). Building Social Capital: A Learning Agenda for the Twenty-First Century, *Urban Studies*, 34:5-6, 745-760.
https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/43083666.pdf?casa_token=3eNC4V73dOMAAAAA:i7GaXNi08Ri3NSvniq0n248dc7Hr-_gddiNEtZsXHPuWrTSIytvr59vQ2gMiTscb8nWu1eFvFAtzYTVzrHHyfuRuTF4NLAUIJZurkA6EtIbBTpA13M
- World Economic Forum. (2023). *Youth Perspectives: How Africa's youth will drive economic growth*. <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/08/africa-youth-global-growth-digital-economy/>