



ETDP SETA EVALUATION STUDY

TRACK & TRACE STUDY FINAL REPORT

2020

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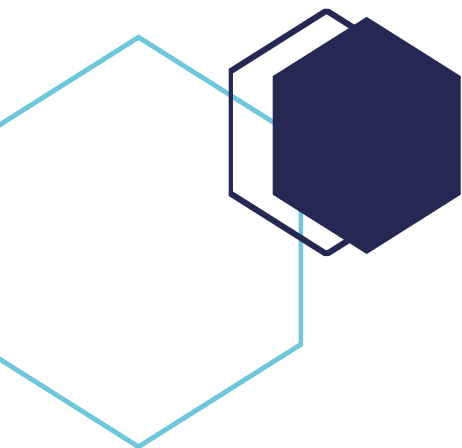


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Abbreviations and Acronyms

Abbreviation	Description
4IR	Fourth Industrial Revolution
CATHSSETA	Culture, Arts, Tourism and Hospitality Services Sector Education and Training Authority
CHE	Council on Higher Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
EC	Eastern Cape
ECD	Early childhood development
ETDP SETA	Education, Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority
ETDP	Education, Training and Development Practices
ETQA	Education Training Quality Assurance
ETDQA	Education Training Development Quality Assurance
GP	Gauteng Province
HEI	Higher education institution
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
HRDS	Human Resource Development Strategy
ILO	International Labour Organisation
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
MIS	Management Information System
NDP	National Development Plan
NSDS	National Skills Development Strategy
NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
NQF	National Qualification Framework
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PSET	Post-School Education and Training
RPL	Recognition of prior learning
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
STWT	School to Work Transition
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
TVETs	Technical and Vocational Education and Training institutions
UoTs	Universities of Technology
VET	Vocational Education and Training
WBL	Workplace-based Learning
WC	Western Cape
WIL	Work-integrated learning
WIL TVETs	Work-integrated learning for Technical and Vocational Education and Training institutions
WIL UoTs	Work-integrated learning for Universities of Technology

Gatekeeper approval from Government institutions

It is proposed that the ETDP SETA engage with the DHET, Department of Basic Education and HEIs to motivate for increased employer participation. A significant number of the employers are in the public sector. The leadership of the DHET, Department of Basic Education and higher education institutions to create awareness among senior managers of the value of such studies and secure prior agreement to participate. Increasing numbers of studies of this nature will be required.

Acknowledgements

The HSRC-ETDP SETA Track and Trace Evaluation Study has been a year-long journey which has been enriching, insightful and challenging. The HSRC Research Team wish to acknowledge the extensive contributions and support from ETDP SETA colleagues in enabling the research team to conduct the Track and Trace Study. The evaluation team was particularly impressed by the active engagement of ETDP SETA officials with the evaluation study across the various phases of its implementation. Special recognition is given to the leadership and vision demonstrated by study project manager Sibongile Nhlabathi. She, together with the Evaluation Task Team, including Winnie Kananda, Isaia Mphaphuli, Ndumi Msebe, David Gulston and Tommy Baloyi, provided critical yet constructive guidance throughout the study and diligently performed and fulfilled their oversight role.

The authors are extremely grateful to the ETDP SETA beneficiaries who so willingly shared their insights, experiences and challenges and in doing so enriched our understanding of the pathways through which they have sought to transition into the labour market. The employer representatives are also acknowledged for the valuable time and inputs they gave on the value of the ETDP SETA-funded interventions for their institutions.

Special thanks to Michael Rogan, who provided insightful and constructive feedback on the draft report which guided revisions to the final report. We are deeply appreciative of the many stakeholders who sacrificed their time and provided valuable comments on the study findings during the roundtable and validation workshops. Leverne Gething is thanked for her careful and extensive copy editing of the draft and final report.

Our sincere thanks are due to the entire evaluation team, including the research interns Sandile Mthethwa, Boitumelo Molefe, Pearl Mkaza and Mmantsha Seshibe, Kgothatso Manyaka, Nhlanhla Ntuli, our 30 person strong fieldwork team, Shingirirai Muzondo, our information consultant, Nandipha Mshumpela, the project administrator and Gray van der Berg, programme manager, who dedicated time, expertise and many hours across the different components of the study. The richness of the data and the scale of evidence collected are testimony to their contributions.

Full responsibility for this report rests with the authors. In common with all evaluation reports, the views contained in this report do not necessarily represent those of the institutions or people consulted.

Independent Evaluation Conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council (2020)

This report has been independently prepared by the Economic Performance and Development Programme (EPD), Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC). The study was overseen by an Evaluation Task Team established specifically for the study, comprising officials from within the ETDP SETA. The Evaluation Task Team oversaw the study and commented on and approved the main deliverables, including this report.

Client	Education, Training and Development Practice Sector Education and Training Authority (ETDP SETA)
Project	ETDP SETA Track and Trace Study
Document type	Final Report
Title	ETDP SETA Track and Trace Evaluation Study of Bursaries, Learnerships, Internships and Work Integrated Learning for TVT and UoT learners implemented between 2015/16 and 2018/19
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Disclaimer: It should be noted that any opinions expressed in this report are the responsibility of the Human Sciences Research Council and not of the Evaluation Task Team, the ETDP SETA or the peer reviewer.

Executive Summary

Introduction

Addressing skills deficits continues to be a major concern for South Africa within a context of unprecedented levels of poverty, unemployment and inequality. While economic growth remains subdued, the labour market is not able to absorb the rapidly expanding supply of workers, particularly young workers. Globally there is recognition of the crucial contribution that a skilled workforce plays in advancing economic transformation (World Bank, 2018). A lack of training or entry into skilled occupations is associated with negative future employment (Bradley & Nguyen, 2004) and earning outcomes.

Globally, school to work transitions (STWT) have become non-linear, extended and more uncertain; as such it is important to look at the factors responsible for smooth or broken transitions. The literature focusing on transitions from secondary school and into the world of work has grouped these factors into individual, institutional (school-related or higher education and training variables) and labour market contexts. Identifying factors with an impact on the transitions is particularly important for the South African context, which is marked by pronounced inequalities.

Central to the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) III (Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), 2011) framework is the commitment to increase access to high-quality and relevant education, and training and skills development, including workplace learning and experience, to enable participation in the economy and society by all South Africans and reduce inequalities (DHET, 2011).

As one of 21 SETAs in South Africa, the Education Training and Development Practices (ETDP) SETA was established through the Skills Development Act of 1998 (Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998, 1998) to facilitate the development of skills in relation to sector-identified skills needs. The ETDP SETA's (ETDP SETA, 2019, p. 8) vision is:

To promote and facilitate the development and improvement of the skills profile of the sector's workforce in order to benefit employers, workers and employees in the sector.

The ETDP SETA has been instrumental in implementing a range of learning interventions to facilitate the development of skills in relation to sector-identified skills needs. These include, among others, the five learning interventions which are the focus of this study, namely bursaries¹, learnerships, internships and work-integrated learning (WIL) interventions with Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions and Universities of Technology (UoT) between the 2015/16 and 2018/19 financial period.

The SETAs and the DHET are now increasingly required to answer questions that relate to outcomes and impacts (particularly labour market outcomes) of the programmes implemented. The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) therefore understands the necessity of tracer studies as arising from this broader context.

¹ Bursaries are for employed and unemployed learners.

Study Objectives

The ETDP SETA commissioned the HSRC to undertake a Track and Trace Evaluation Study with the aim of understanding the outcomes and impacts of five skills development interventions supported by the ETDP SETA, and to determine whether or not bursaries², learnerships, internships and work-integrated learning interventions targeted to TVET and UoT learners are achieving their objectives. The study was expected to understand, explore and document key features, trends, challenges and outcomes of these learning interventions.

The objectives of the study are summarised as follows:

- a. To gather data about the effectiveness and impacts of the five skills development interventions supported by the ETDP SETA for the period 2015/16 to 2018/19. The impacts could be direct or indirect and intended or unintended.
- b. To understand the wider effects of these interventions – social, economic and technical – on individual beneficiaries.
- c. To generate evidence of the key achievements and challenges to inform the decision-making process for senior management and accounting authority on programme delivery mechanisms and how these can be improved in future in order to ensure sustainability.
- d. To determine the nature of employment of learners who received employment.
- e. To pilot a survey of the perceptions of employers on the value of learnerships, WIL and internships.

Methodology

This section provides an overview of the approach and methodology employed in respect of the study, with section 5 of this report providing the details regarding the methodology. A theory-based evaluation approach was used with a cross-sectional research design. This approach sought to understand the pathways through which change was expected to occur, with an emphasis on detailing the assumptions on which the intervention logic was premised.

Reconstitution of Theories of Change and Results Log Frames

Recognising that theories of change (ToCs) did not exist for the five learning interventions, an initial phase of the study involved the retrospective reconstruction of the ToC through a participative process involving key ETDP SETA officials. This was aimed at capturing the pathways that lead to the goal intent of the SETA's five interventions. The articulation of the ToCs contributed to the development of a Results Log Frame for each of the five learning interventions.

Analytical Framework

For our analytical framework we built on Nilsson's conceptual framework for school to work transitions (STWT) (2019) and made several extensions to operationalise his conceptual framework (see section 4.5) as the lens through which the findings of this evaluation would be understood.

² Targeted to employed and unemployed people for full qualifications, either as a degree, diploma or higher certificate.

Nilsson's framework highlighted the existence of a gap between education and targeted labour market outcomes that people transition to and emphasised that central to this broad relationship are internal and external factors that influence the duration and strength of the transition. We posit that given the SETA's role and impact through the quantum of expenditure in the post-school education and training (PSET) sector, there are two broad pathways that one can follow:

- Pathway 1: Individuals who traverse the STWT without exposure to any SETA intervention;
- Pathway 2: ETDP SETA interventions enter the STWT process as an external factor that is meant to enhance the efficacy of the transition.

The outcome of each pathway on the achieved transition will vary, and from the broader South African PSET and STWT literature it can generally be hypothesised, *ceteris paribus*, that the second pathway is potentially stronger and would lead to shorter duration transitions due to the SETA-funded intervention, compared to a control group that did not access SETA support. It is also important to note that throughout each pathway internal and external factors would continue to mediate and influence the entire process. These factors are key in helping us understand and contextualise the achieved transitions. For example, the role of internal factors such as social networks might shorten the transition duration for some individuals via the first pathway, while for others socioeconomic background might constrain them from accessing post-schooling skills development and training; however, once exposed to these interventions via the second pathway, external factors such as the macro economy, e.g. the ability to create enough jobs, might mitigate against a successful transition. Above and beyond the latter, the rationale of the SETA is that the design of its interventions confer certain benefits that would lead to a more efficient transition (Nilsson, 2019).

Research Methods

To address the study objectives a number of different research methodologies were employed, including a literature review and reconstruction of ToCs and Results Log-frames in respect of bursaries, learnerships, internships, WIL TVET and WIL UoT learning Interventions. Primary research was conducted both with beneficiaries of the five learning interventions and the employers of those beneficiaries who are currently employed. Secondary data analysis included an analysis of data on ETDP SETA beneficiaries of the five learning interventions and a detailed desk review of evidence to contextualise our understanding of the research findings, as well as to deliver insight into emerging trends impacting on the ETDP sector. The study was undertaken in line with principles of ethical research involving human subjects.

Telephonic interviews were conducted with structured survey instruments for learners and employers, and captured on the REDCAP (Research Electronic Data Capture) platform. The learner survey was administered to learners with contactable details for the five designated learning interventions.

The total realised population of learners with contact details was 7,438 as extracted from the ETDP SETA Management Information System (MIS). These were learners who had undertaken and completed a learning intervention between 2015/16 and 2018/19 financial years. The interviews were conducted during the period November 2019 to January 2020, which is between 10 months to 3 years after completion of the learning intervention. The expectation had been to deliver a realised sample of 40-60%; 4,002 ETDP SETA beneficiaries were successfully contacted. This number represents the number of **learners who actually answered the phone**, and relative to the total population of 7,438 this represents a response rate of **54%**. However, the study found that only 5,085 of the 7,438 telephone numbers were working, and this means that the response rate for working numbers is significantly higher at **79%**. Of the 4,002 learners who were

contacted, the study reports on the responses of **3,788** learners; 163 refused to participate in the study, with 3,839 consenting to being interviewed. The 3,839 completed questionnaires were all assessed for level of completeness, and 51 were found to be incomplete, arising from some participants dropping out after the first few modules, while others did so halfway into the interview. Participants had completed the learning interventions between April 2015 and March 2019, and as interviews were conducted in November 2019 to January 2020, they were conducted at least seven months after completion for those who graduated in 2019, and up to five years later for those who graduated in 2015 or later.

The terms of reference had requested that the study interview **20 current employers** of ETDP SETA-funded beneficiaries. The HSRC reasoned that the study population of beneficiaries was large and that the proposed sample size would not give results that were representative of the population – more so when one factors in the diversity of the ETD sector by sub-sector and by the five learning interventions. The study found 1,810 learners who were employed at the time of the survey. The HSRC targeted the entire population of 1,135 learners who consented to and provided current employer details, and at a 5% margin of error and a confidence level of 95% and eligible employer population of those who consented, this gave a **target sample of 288**. The study managed to achieve a **sample of 349**.

Study Outputs

The study generated the following research reports as core deliverables during the study and in the preparation of this report. The reports contain insights used in the analysis of the findings and which have contributed to the drafting of this report.

These reports include:

- HSRC ETDP SETA Track and Trace Study Inception Report.
- HSRC ETDP SETA Tracer Study Literature Review Report.
- HSRC ETDP SETA Tracer Study ToC and Log-Frame Report for Bursaries.
- HSRC ETDP SETA Tracer Study ToC and Log-Frame Report for Learnerships.
- HSRC ETDP SETA Tracer Study ToC and Log-Frame Report for Internships.
- HSRC ETDP SETA Tracer Study ToC and Log-Frame Report for WIL TVETs.
- HSRC ETDP SETA Tracer Study ToC and Log-Frame Report for WIL UoTs.
- ETDP SETA Track and Trace Fieldwork Report.
- HSRC ETDP SETA Track and Trace Study Final Report September 2020.

Research Findings

The research findings are presented in relation to the broad objectives of the study. Presenting the findings in this manner addresses the key research questions articulated in section 1.3. The key findings report evidence in respect of the following indicators: employment status of the beneficiaries (employed, self-employed and unemployed); employment rates; nature of employment (access to benefits); key achievements and challenges; the wider socioeconomic effects of the interventions on the beneficiaries; career progression for beneficiaries; and employer perceptions of the value of learning interventions (employable people; increased productivity of the company).

*To gather data about the **effectiveness and impacts** of the skills development interventions indicated above. The impacts could be direct or indirect, intended or unintended.*

The findings are conclusive in that ETDP SETA learning interventions have exceeded in their equity targeting of previously disadvantaged women, youth and Black people;

It did not however meet its target for people with disabilities;

In respect of enabling access to disadvantaged learners from households in poverty, the study findings confirm the high prevalence of learners from larger households and high prevalence of poverty;

The study also found that half of all beneficiaries were unemployed at the time they commenced with the learning intervention;

As elaborated in section 5, there are significant variations in outcomes by learning interventions, with particular focus on recruitment of younger beneficiaries between the ages of 18 and 35 years across all interventions, but specifically with regard to bursary interventions.

Table 69 below presents a summary of the evidence generated in respect of the above.

Table 1: Socio-economic and demographic characteristics of beneficiaries

Socio-economic characteristics						
Outcomes	Bursaries	Learnerships	Internships	WiL TVETs	WiL UOT's	Total
Prevalence of poverty*	11%	69%	71%	80%	60%	65%
Depth of poverty	6%	43%	41%	49%	36%	40%
Severity of poverty	4%	31%	28%	35%	26%	28%
Demographic characteristics (Percentage of indicator only, does not add to 100%)						
Outcomes	Bursaries	Learnerships	Internships	WiL TVETs	WiL UOT's	Total
Black	97%	100%	99%	100%	99%	99%
Women	53%	78%	68%	76%	50%	69%
Youth (20-35 yrs)	43%	71%	92%	96%	99%	78%
Disability	1%	7%	1%	2%	4%	3%

Source: Authors, compiled from HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020) *Percentage of people below poverty line.

In respect of the **destination of beneficiaries** across all interventions and the reference period, the study found the following:

- 48% of beneficiaries were in some form of employment, with 39% full time and 9% part time;
- 4% were pursuing further studies;
- 1% were engaged in self-employment;
- 47% were unemployed.

In respect of 4% of beneficiaries who were **continuing to study** full time towards another qualification, the findings reveal:

- The majority were registered with universities (41%), UoTs (26%) and TVET colleges (24%).
- Almost all of those who were studying were youth aged 20-35 years.
- Two main reasons for undertaking further studies that were given by beneficiaries were to increase knowledge and understanding in the industry (50%) and to achieve a higher qualification (48%).

Among the 47% of **unemployed beneficiaries**, the study found:

- 57% had been without work for a year or more;

- encouragingly, 95% of the unemployed were actively looking for work;
- the main reason given by 44% of the unemployed in respect of their unemployed status was the lack of available jobs in the labour market;
- in order for us to establish the presence of reservation wage dynamics in this population, we explored potential attitudes of beneficiaries towards work, and noted that only 3% had ever declined a job offer.

To understand **the wider effects of these interventions** – social, economic and technical – on individual beneficiaries.

- The study provides evidence that beneficiaries have gained a range of skills, with more than half (54%) indicating that the training received was highly relevant to the work they were doing.
- Beneficiaries who had secured employment on a full-time basis reported earnings ranging from the lowest at R6,000 (slightly less than double the minimum wage) to R29,000.
- All reported qualitatively on impacts to their wellbeing, both personally and on their households, resulting from access to an income.
- Self-esteem and career mobility were also reported by beneficiaries as key outcomes of participation in the learning interventions; this was supported by most beneficiaries, including those who were unemployed.

To generate evidence of **key achievements and challenges** to inform the decision-making process for senior management and accounting authority on programme delivery mechanisms, and how these can be improved in future to ensure sustainability.

Achievements

As postulated in the literature review in section 3, the SETA's role is to promote the employability of beneficiaries and not necessarily directly their employment. The labour market transition analysis presented in section 5.9 allows for it to be concluded that:

- ETDP SETA has contributed significantly to the realisation of the employability outcome. When we consider the net transitions into employment and out of unemployment, there was a 37% positive net transition, which means that more people moved into employment than into unemployment, as illustrated in Table 64.
- Barring the influence of external factors such as the performance of the economy, one can conclude that ETDP SETA's learning interventions appear to be making some contribution in facilitating the postulated transitions as per intervention ToCs.

Challenges

- Administrative challenges were reported by a quarter of all beneficiaries (27%) in terms of not receiving their **certificates** after completion;
- About 10% of WIL beneficiaries raised concerns about aspects of the design of these learning interventions, including insufficient resources, poor match with their placement, and poor quality or non-existent mentoring provided by the employer.

To determine the **nature of employment of learners who received employment.**

Employed Beneficiaries

Of those 48% of beneficiaries in employment the results are favourable, with 80% in full-time employment, as outlined below and in section 8.2.

- For those in employment the results are favourable, with 80% in full-time employment;
- Two-thirds of beneficiaries are employed in the public sector;
- Regarding the **quality of employment**, it was revealed that the majority (79%) of beneficiaries are registered with the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF), 61% contribute to a pension fund and 50% have access to medical aid. These findings indicate that these jobs can be classified as 'decent work';
- The average salary across all five learning interventions is slightly under R13,000 per month, with the lowest salary being R6,700 for WIL TVET beneficiaries, which is almost double the minimum wage rate in South Africa;
- Importantly, 93% of those who are employed are in the formal sector.
- In respect of **career progression** the findings reveal that a minority of learners received a promotion (5%) and 13% received a pay raise;
- More than two-thirds of the beneficiaries (68%) experienced no change in their careers.

Table 2: Summary of evaluation outcomes: Employer Sector and Nature of Employment

Outcomes	Bursaries	Learnerships	Internships	WIL TVETs	WIL UoTs	Total
Classification of employers by sector						
Public	81%	63%	77%	48%	60%	67%
Private	8%	18%	18%	47%	35%	22%
NPO	9%	15%	4%	5%	3%	9%
Other	2%	4%	1%	0%	2%	2%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Types of employment by formality						
Formal	100%	89%	94%	90%	99%	93%
Informal	0%	12%	6%	10%	1%	7%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Tenure						
Part time	3%	11%	23%	16%	9%	12%
Full time	95%	83%	63%	74%	89%	80%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Nature of contract						
Contract	13%	26%	71%	42%	48%	38%
Permanent	87%	60%	22%	45%	50%	53%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Authors, compiled from HSRC ETD SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Self-employed Beneficiaries

- 1% of beneficiaries were engaged in self-employment;

- In terms of economic well-being, the study found no significant difference between those who started a business after completion of the training programme and those who did not start a business;
- Of the beneficiaries who have started a business, youth between the ages of 20-35 years predominate;
- Most of the businesses operate informally with only 20% being VAT registered;
- In assessing the economic viability of these businesses, a third of these self-employed beneficiaries were earning less than R1,000 and just over a tenth were earning between R2,001 and R4,500 a month.

*To pilot a survey of the **perceptions of employers on the value of learnerships, WIL and internships.***

Employer perspectives on the value of the learning interventions were explored in the study, and the following was noted:

- The majority of the employers (91%) highlighted that the learning interventions had served to bridge the gap between theoretical learning and practical workplace needs, with 60% of the employers in agreement that this was achieved to a 'great extent' and 31% in agreement that it had achieved this to a 'moderate extent'.
- Six in every ten employers (63%) were greatly in agreement that the learning intervention had contributed to the development of multi-skilled workers.
- There was overwhelming agreement by employers, with 57% noting that this was the case to a great extent, that 'employees who have gone through the learning interventions were more efficient at doing their job compared to those who received no training'.
- **Firm productivity** is an important indicator for the success of the firm, and overall a large majority of the employers (91%) agreed that participation of employees in the learning interventions has contributed to increased productivity in the organisation.
- Regarding the **impact on beneficiaries**, on average employers reported that 12% of employees' **earnings had increased** across all learning interventions, although a disaggregated analysis reveals that a third of WIL UoT beneficiaries (35%) and a quarter of bursary beneficiaries' (26%) had reported increases in their salaries.

Conclusions

The foregoing analysis included a thorough interrogation of indicators chosen on the basis of intervention ToCs, including the subjective assessments of the SETA's beneficiaries of the role that the ETDP's interventions played in assisting them to secure employment. One can conclude that, among other factors (both external and internal), ETDP SETA's learning interventions appear to be making some contribution in facilitating the postulated transitions as per intervention ToCs. Framed another way, the body of evidence assembled here is incompatible with a hypothesis of no impact. This is more so when the socioeconomic status of most beneficiaries is taken into consideration.

The ToC pathways have generated insights with respect to the pathways that have been confirmed and those which are weak. It has identified intervention-specific assumptions and outcomes that need to be revised.

The ETDP SETA is to be congratulated for embracing the ToC approach to monitoring and evaluation of SETA outcomes. To integrate and mainstream its use widely across the institution and in respect of all streams of work, from design to implementation, monitoring and strategic decision making, is the task which now lies ahead of them.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are therefore being put forward:

1. Design recruitment strategies to ensure that the disability equity target is met

It is evident across many government interventions that while the commitment to meeting targets regarding people with disabilities exists, the ability to recruit is lacking. The ETDP SETA is encouraged to develop a recruitment strategy for this group of learners, with engagements with key stakeholders, particularly people with disabilities themselves through their representative organisations.

2. Revisit recruitment strategies in respect of demographic and socio-economic targets for specific learning interventions

Areas which require improvement relate to increasing access to younger cohorts of learners between the ages of 18-35 years across all interventions, and specifically for bursary beneficiaries to target youth up to 35 years of age, given that the average age of learners was found to be 32 years across all interventions and 40 years for bursary beneficiaries, as reported in section 5.3.3.

It is further proposed that the ETDP SETA review its targeting of bursary beneficiaries in relation to the ToC in respect of providing support to high-income learners accessing bursary interventions.

SETA recruitment strategies per learning intervention need to be revisited to enable more spatial equity; for example, where almost half of all WIL UoT beneficiaries are from the Western Cape.

3. Ensure further integration and alignment of ETDP SETA programmes within a Theory of Change framework

The need for orientation and the mainstreaming of ToC in the projects and programmes implemented by the ETDP SETA is highly recommended. This will involve awareness raising and the inclusion of performance indicators to measure the effective integration of ToC in all programmes implemented by the SETA.

4. Enhance initiatives to improve learner employability

This is focused on designing and implementing interventions to strengthen employer mentoring and supervision capabilities. Improvements in administration systems regarding the delivery of certification is another area which will contribute to employability. ETDP SETA's role in the supervision of placements is also encouraged as a means of enhancing the quality of the WIL placements. In addition, attention needs to be given to how to retain the bulk of the skilled workforce within the ETDP sector.

5. Increase employer engagements with the ETDP SETA

The relatively small number of organisations who have active engagement with the ETDP SETA needs to be given further attention. The aim would be to increase the number of organisations who host learners and to increase the number of learners benefitting from ETDP SETA interventions in these organisations.

6. Institutionalising evaluation studies

Enhancing the Management Information System records on learners

ETDP SETA should request an alternate number if a landline number is provided as the primary contact number for beneficiaries in the skills intervention MIS. Given the relatively high functioning rates on cell-phones, increasing the number of cell-phone numbers would greatly increase the overall response rate. In general, this calls for overall improvements to the SETMIS database.

Informing learners about such research studies and requesting their participation during induction

Increasing numbers of studies of this nature will be required. It is unclear whether learners are advised in the contracts they sign that they might be called upon to participate in such studies. Even if this is the case, it is evident from the responses that most participants did not remember this. It is recommended that guidebooks or manuals as well as the contract document indicate that such requests will arise, to ensure that learners understand the value of such studies and are thus motivated to participate. This could be reinforced in orientation sessions and forums where learners meet with the ETDP SETA. In addition, newsletters, social media and other related platforms should be utilised to communicate more widely about these surveys.

Employer awareness of role of SETAs

It is recommended that SETAs in general and the ETDP SETA more specifically work with the Human Resources Departments of employer bodies to facilitate increased awareness of the role of SETAs, and the importance of participation in such studies among the managers at these institutions, beyond those in the Human Resources Departments.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Addressing skills deficits continues to be a major concern for South Africa (SA) within a context of unprecedented levels of poverty, unemployment and inequality. While economic growth remains subdued, the labour market is not able to absorb the rapidly expanding supply of workers, particularly young workers. Globally there is recognition of the crucial contribution that a skilled workforce plays in advancing economic transformation (World Bank, 2018).

In SA the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) were established to ensure and facilitate the development of skills in relation to sectoral-relevant identified skills needs. As the key institutions which mediate between education and work, SETAs are responsible for the development of a skills pipeline through promoting and supporting awarding of bursaries, learnerships, apprenticeships, work-integrated learning (WIL) and internships (Skills Development Act 97 of 1998). As one of 21 SETAs in SA, the Education, Training and Development Practices (ETDP) SETA has been instrumental in implementing a range of learning interventions to facilitate the development of skills in relation to sector-identified skills needs.

One of the main highlights of the National Skills Development Strategy III (NSDS III) (Department of Higher Education and Training [DHET], 2011) is the observation that there needs to be less focus on numerical targets (outputs or numbers in the post-school education and training (PSET) system), and more focus on outcomes and impact. The SETAs and the DHET are now increasingly required to answer questions that relate to outcomes and impacts (particularly labour market outcomes) of the programmes implemented.

Critical to theory-based evaluations is the construction of a theory of change (ToC) as the entry-point for an evaluation study, which provides a way of delineating pathways through which SETA-funded interventions achieve their impact. This has led to a reconsideration of the types of information required to assess the extent to which learning activities are successful and effective.

The HSRC therefore understands the need for commissioning of the ETDP SETA's Tracer Evaluation Study as arising from this broader context. The Evaluation study focuses on five learning interventions implemented by the ETDP SETA between the 2015/16 and 2018/19 financial period: bursaries, learnerships, internships, and WIL interventions with Technical and Vocational Education and Training institutions (TVETs) and Universities of Technology (UoTs).

The study is aimed at generating information on the outcomes of learners after completion of their learning intervention, progress with respect to income and career progression, skills development, and relevance of a skilled workforce for employers and its contribution to productivity and growth of the economy. The findings generated are expected to assist the ETDP SETA in understanding the value and relevance of the interventions implemented, identifying areas requiring improvement and supporting evidence-informed planning and decision making.

1.2 Study Purpose and Objectives

The Terms of Reference (ToR) outline the study purpose, objectives and scope of the study, as listed below.

1.2.1 Purpose

- To understand, explore and document key features, trends, challenges and outcomes of the skills interventions in the ETDP sectors.
- To assist in further developing a sustainable skills development strategy for the ETDP SETA, which will contribute positively to the ETDP sectors and promote inclusive economic growth in the country.
- The primary focus of the study is to understand the outcomes of programmes through the tracking and tracing of learners who have been supported by the SETA.
- The main purpose of the assignment will be to provide the SETA with information regarding the activities of learners who have completed these programmes.
- To determine whether a programme is achieving its mission and assist in demonstrating the programme's outcomes by assessing the following:
 - Employment status (employed, self-employed and unemployed);
 - Employment rates; and
 - Nature of employment in terms of employment sector or types of employment (e.g. formal or informal), tenure (part time or full time, contract or permanent), salary level, benefits (Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF), pension, medical aid, allowances).

1.2.2 Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are:

- To gather data about the **effectiveness and impacts** of the skills development interventions indicated above. The impacts could be direct or indirect, intended or unintended.
- To understand **the wider effects of these interventions** – social, economic and technical – on individual beneficiaries.
- To generate evidence of **key achievements and challenges** to inform the decision-making process for senior management and accounting authority on programme delivery mechanisms, and how these can be improved in future to ensure sustainability.
- To determine the **nature of employment of learners who received employment**.
- To pilot a survey of the **perceptions of employers on the value of learnerships, WIL and internships**.

1.3 Research questions

The research questions pertaining to this study as listed in the ToR are as follows:

- **What are destinations of students who completed?**
 - Are they employed?
 - Are they not working?
 - Are they studying further?
- **If employed:**
 - Where are they employed (name of the company/organisation)?
 - What is their occupation?
 - Has there been a change in jobs since completing the learning programme?
 - After the programme has there been a difference in rank/post level?
 - Are they employed full time or part time and temporarily or on contract?

- What are their wages?
- What benefits and allowances are they receiving?
- **If not in employment, why?**
 - Are they studying full time?
 - Are they looking for employment?
 - Are they ill?
 - Are they looking after parents, siblings?

1.4 Scope of work

The scope of work required in achieving the objectives above included conducting an empirical study on tracking and tracing learners, by interviewing 100% population of learners who completed learnerships, WIL, internships and bursaries, with a response rate of between 40% and 60%.

The activities aligned to the scope of work included designing instruments for both the beneficiary survey and employer interview, undertaking the survey using computer-assisted telephonic interviews, conducting 20 employer interviews telephonically and producing a report on the findings. The development of instruments was informed by a literature review. An important component of the scope of work was the reconstruction of the Theory of Change and results chain log-frame for each of the learning interventions.

1.5 Structure of the report

Section 2 of this report provides a brief description of the ETDP SETA and the five learning interventions. In section 3 a review of the literature is presented, with a conceptual framework which provides context for the analysis of the post-school to work transition, and the drivers of effectiveness of learning interventions which are the focus of this study. This is followed by section 4, which presents the study methodology including the reconstructed ToCs, and the analytical framework which outlines the transition process from school to work, identifying the factors which influence outcome determinants. Section 5 presents results from the Beneficiary Survey, and section 6 presents the findings from the Employer Survey. Section 7 presents findings in respect of the pathways through which change was intended to be realised, and the concluding section 8 summarises key findings in relation to the study objectives and presents recommendations for enhancement of the interventions.

2 Description of the ETDP SETA Programme and Learning Interventions

2.1 Overview of the ETDP SETA

The ETDP SETA is one of 21 SETAs, 18 of which were originally established in 2000, and was re-established by the Minister for Higher Education and Training in 2019 with no changes for the period 01 April 2020 to 31 March 2030. As outlined in the ETDP SETA Final Strategic Plan 2015-2020 (ETDP SETA, 2019, p. 8) its vision is:

To promote and facilitate the development and improvement of the skills profile of the sector's workforce in order to benefit employers, workers and employees in the sector.

The ETDP SETA mission statement which seeks to realise this vision is to promote and facilitate education, training and development whereby:

- Workforce skills levels are raised;
- A variety of career paths are available;
- Supply and demand in the labour market is balanced;
- Quality of education and training provided is improved;
- The levy grant scheme is efficiently administered;
- Effective communication channels are in place, both internally and externally;
- Liaison with key sector stakeholders, including other SETAs, the DHET, National Skills Authority, and Quality Council among others, is timeous and appropriate;
- Efficient service delivery is encouraged; and
- Employers, workers and employees in the sector benefit from quality training, higher productivity and harmonious mutual dependence.

The ETDP SETA's role in respect of upskilling the workforce through reducing the scarce and critical skills gaps in the sector is guided by the Medium Term Strategic Framework 2014-2019 which sets out its priorities, with Outcome 5 directly informing the work of ETDP SETA (Republic of South Africa (RSA), 2019, p. 22):

Outcome 5: Skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path

The ETDP SETA translated this imperative in its Strategic Outcome (SO) Goals 3, 4, 5 and 6 namely:

- SO 3: Skilled personnel to improve teaching and learning;
- SO 4: Increased number of undergraduates and graduates who successfully enter the PSET system and the labour market;
- SO 5: Increased human and institutional capacity within the non-schooling and post-schooling ETDP SETA constituencies; and
- SO 6: Improved quality of graduates of skills programmes in the ETD sector to satisfy qualification needs of the ETD sector by March 2020.

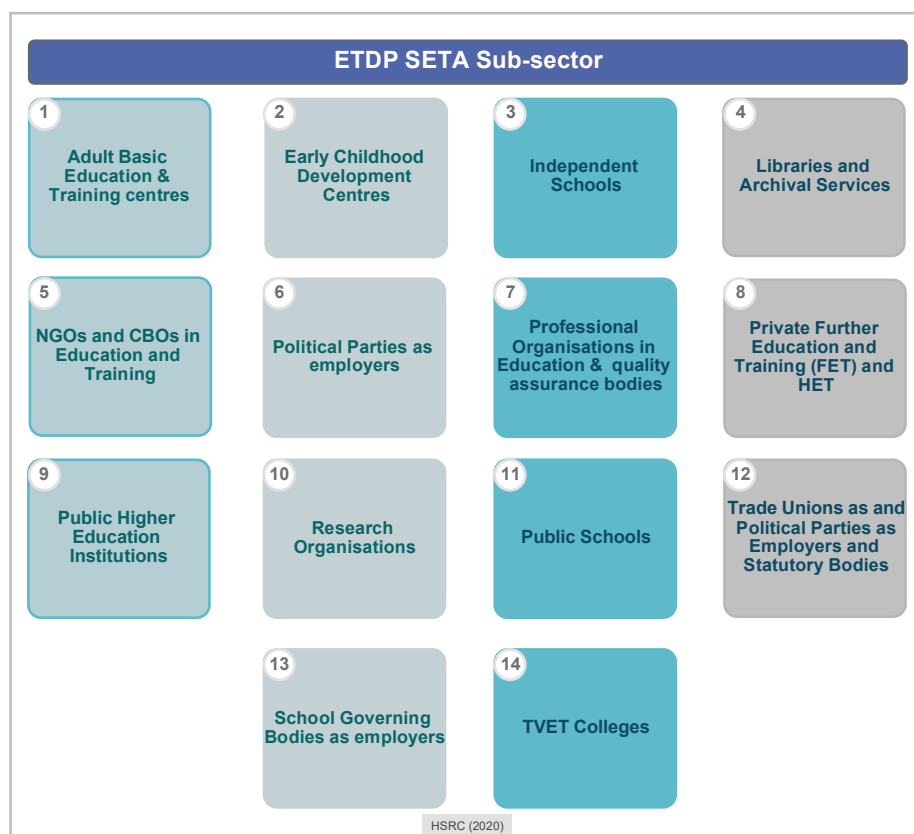
The ETDP SETA has a diverse scope of coverage, with 17 Standard Industrial Classifications (SIC codes) which indicate the area of economic activity (ETDP SETA, 2019). These have been organised around 14 subsectors that fall within its mandate, as reflected in Figure 1 below.

These subsectors vary in size, scope and skills development needs, with public schooling reportedly the largest subsector, with about 23,796 public and 1966 independent schools in 2017. During this period, the ETDP sector had about 52,629 employer organisations (ETDP SETA, 2018), representing an important source of employment in the South African economy.

To align the ETDP sector goals with key legislation, certain policies and regulations need to be enforced, so that the interventions proposed by the ETDP SETA meet their broad themes: supporting transformation of the PSET sector, ensuring effective service delivery in educational institutions, and ensuring quality teaching in PSET institutions (DHET, 2018).

The ETDP SETA sets out to identify skills and training shortages in the sector, develop qualifications, increase investment into education, improve work productivity, drive self-employment, and redress imbalances of the former unequal education system (DHET, 2018).

Figure 1: ETDP SETA 14 Sub-sectors



Source: ETDP SETA SSP, 2019-2020 Update

2.2 Description of the ETDP SETA learning interventions

The five learning interventions, which are the focus of this evaluation, are among the many interventions implemented by the SETA in order to achieve its mandate. These include bursaries, internships, learnerships and WIL for TVETs and UoTs. This section provides a brief description of each of the learning interventions including their objective, target and operational modalities.

2.2.1 Bursary Intervention

2.2.1.1 Objective of the learning Intervention

The core objective of a bursary programme is that it promotes wider access for previously disadvantaged learners to higher education and to address skills shortages within the sector and more widely across SA. Through the awarding of bursaries, the ETDP SETA aims to ensure a continuous and increased supply of a skilled workforce in the sector of identified scarce occupations and skills as well as to improve service delivery in the public sector. Awarding of bursaries seeks to provide unemployed youth with an opportunity to gain a qualification (ETDP SETA, 2016, p. 50) and for employed beneficiaries to enhance their qualifications and skills. Awarding of bursaries to employees in a firm in the ETDP sector is aimed at encouraging employers to contribute to skills development, particularly in the area of scarce skills required by that firm.

2.2.1.2 Description of the intervention

Bursaries are awarded to employed and unemployed learners to access higher education and technical vocational training. Learners who are awarded bursaries are assumed to be registered for further studies with a relevant HEI. The career prospects of bursary holders are expected to be enhanced at the termination of the programme; likewise, the skills acquired are expected to promote mid- and high-level skills for the sector. The focus on improving soft skills includes those related to management, leadership and relationship building (INSETA, 2020a).

Table 3: Bursary grant targets

Target	Description
Bursaries for unemployed learners	This is a monetary award made to institutions. The SETA awards bursaries for one year, renewed annually, based on progress. This intervention is a grant awarded to unemployed learners enrolled in part or full qualifications registered on the National Qualification Framework (NQF).
Bursaries for employed learners	This is a monetary award made to employed learners. This intervention is a grant awarded to employed learners enrolled in part or full qualifications registered on the NQF.

Source: ETDP SETA (2016)

Recruitment of bursary recipients is through engagement with social partners and interactions with employers and specific constituencies targeted by that SETA.

The ETDP SETA targets bursaries for the following scarce skills:

- Bachelor of Education in Maths and Science;
- Bachelor of Commerce;
- Bachelor of Science in Applied Mathematics;

- Master's in Commerce;
- Computer Studies
- Public Finance; and
- Advanced Certificate of Education in Leadership and Management.

Implementation of the bursary intervention entails activities such as:

- Registering the bursary recipient onto the ETDP SETA Management Information System (MIS); and
- Issuing of a Purchase Order to facilitate transfer of funds to the recipient.
- Support for the learner through two learner support meetings hosted annually; and
- The hosting of stakeholder meetings at regular intervals.

SETA-funded bursaries cover fees for the course and in some instances other related costs. ETDP SETA indicates that its bursary values are linked to the NQF level, with NQF level 7 receiving R50,000.00, which increases by R5,000.00 for each subsequent NQF level (8 and 9).

Key stakeholders in respect of the bursary intervention include ETDP officials such as the Provincial Managers and Project Coordinators. External stakeholders are officials from universities; and TVETs (ETDP SETA, n.d.-a).

2.2.2 Learnership

2.2.2.1 Objective of the learning Intervention

A learnership is a work-based experiential learning intervention, which enables the learner to acquire an NQF-registered qualification associated with a specific qualification, trade or profession, while gaining work experience. Its value lies in the fact that learners who are unable to engage in full-time study are provided with an opportunity to work and learn at the same time. Learnerships aim to redress the unequal access to education, training and employment opportunities, as well as skills shortages in the labour market for a specific competency.

2.2.2.2 Description of the intervention

A learnership comprises structured and practical work-based learning and structured theoretical training. The manner in which the programme is split involves 30% theoretical learning and 70% practical work experience with a mentor to guide the process. Learnerships are managed by the ETDP SETA and involve the commitment of three stakeholders: the learner, the employer and the training provider. The roles and functions of each of these stakeholders are outlined in a written agreement.

The learner enters a contract with the employer for a fixed period, whilst at the same time studying towards the qualification the duration of which is predefined. The formal learning component is delivered by an accredited skills development service provider and includes an assessment component (ETDP SETA, n.d.-d). A learnership is designed to provide the learner with a variety of skills that include technical, work-specific and life skills such as communication and teamwork skills (SASSETA, 2019b).

Table 4: Learnership grant targets

Targets	Description
Learnership for Unemployed Workers Programme	This is a structured learning programme over a maximum period of 18 months for unemployed learners. It includes theoretical and practical workplace

Learnership for Employed Workers Programme	experiential learning and leads to an occupationally related qualification registered on the NQF. It includes a stipend for the learner. This is a structured learning programme over a period of 12 months for employed learners. It includes theoretical and practical workplace experiential learning and leads to an occupationally related qualification registered on the NQF.
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Source: ETDP SETA (2016b)

The funding from the ETDP SETA covers the cost of the training as well as an allowance for the learner for the duration of the learnership, if that learner is unemployed. The learnership is targeted at unemployed and employed beneficiaries but employed beneficiaries do not receive an allowance. During the learnership the learner attends a prescribed number of classroom sessions. The maximum period of a learnership is 18 months (ETDP SETA, n.d.-d).

Key activities undertaken in respect of the learnership intervention include:

- Appointment of a training provider, facilitation of training as well as the assessment, moderation and verification of the training programme.
- The learner must sign an employment contract and a learning agreement.
- Regular attendance by the learner at contact sessions, in line with the notional contact hours of learning required to achieve a specific qualification.
- During the learnership the learner will be expected to submit assignments and undertake practical tasks and projects and keep timesheets which are signed off by the mentor and submitted to the SETA monthly. The learner is also expected to maintain a logbook/portfolio of evidence for the duration of the intervention.
- The host employer must provide a job description and assign a mentor for the duration of the learnership. In addition, the employer must induct the learner with respect to workplace policies and procedures.
- In respect of management of the contract, service level agreements will have to be signed, project deliverables are timeously submitted, and funds are disbursed accordingly.
- The SETA is also responsible for hosting stakeholder meetings at regular intervals to monitor progress in implementation.

Stakeholders who need to be engaged in this initiative include ETDP SETA officials, training providers, host employers, learners, ETQA officers and officials from the ETDQA unit (ETDP SETA, n.d.-d).

2.2.3 Internships

2.2.3.1 Objectives of learning intervention

An internship is a structured programme targeted at university and UoT graduates aimed at giving such graduates an opportunity to build on their qualifications by exposure to structured workplace experience. Exposure to workplace experience empowers unemployed graduates with practical knowledge commensurate with their qualification (ETDP SETA, 2017c).

2.2.3.2 Description of the intervention

The ETDP SETA's focus is on work experience in areas of scarce and/or critical skills in the sector, with the internship providing graduates an opportunity to apply their knowledge in real situations (Table 5). The

internship is a full-time placement with an institution (government or private sector). The skills gained from internships, as noted by Ismail (2018), are interpersonal, confidence, self-efficacy and professionalism.

Table 5: Internship programme targets

Targets	Description
Internships Programme	This is a 12-month workplace experience programme designed for unemployed learners who have already completed an NQF level 5 to 8 qualification at a university or UoT that is relevant to employment but have not yet gathered the necessary practical experience to enable them to obtain employment.

Source: ETDP SETA (2017b)

The target group is unemployed people, giving them up to 12 months' work experience (ETDP SETA, 2017c). Internships are focused on continuous development and are aligned to the specific qualification which the learner has achieved, namely:

- National Senior Certificate level
- Diploma
- National first degree
- Honours degree
- Master's degree
- PhD

The value of the stipend that is paid is linked to the specific qualification that the graduate has acquired. The ETDP SETA's internships are targeted to unemployed beneficiaries only, with the grant value being disaggregated by the qualification level, from National Senior Certificate up to PhD. A stipend is paid to the beneficiary on a monthly basis, at R2,500 per month at National Senior Certificate level up to R6,500 per month at PhD level.

In order to motivate employers to provide internship opportunities, two types of internship grants are paid:

- A grant to cover the costs of the training service provider;
- Another grant to cover the stipend of the learner.
- In addition, a third specific grant is provided to learners with a disability, of an additional R5,000 per year.

The employer is expected to provide a designated mentor for the graduate. On completion of the internship, the learner receives a Letter of Recognition from the host employer. The benefit for the employer of hosting an intern is that they have an opportunity to assess the intern to see if they are employable, enhancing the possibility of that individual securing a permanent job. Key activities involved in an Internship include:

- Recruitment of beneficiaries through engagements with constituencies;
- Identification of potential employers for the graduate;
- Signing of learner agreements between the learner, SETA and the employer;
- Capturing of the learner's information on the SETA MIS;
- Induction of mentors and coaches on what is expected of them;
- Induction of learner to the workplace policies and procedures;
- Provision of tax incentives to employers;
- Payment of the stipend to the intern;

- Production of timesheets and maintenance of logbooks/portfolios of evidence; and
- Student support meetings held, and student monitoring visits undertaken.

Key stakeholders involved here are the unemployed graduate (potential employee), the host company (potential employer), and the ETDP SETA (ETDP SETA, 2017c).

2.2.4 Work-integrated Learning (TVETs)

2.2.4.1 Objectives of the learning intervention

The aim of the ETDP SETA WIL TVET intervention is to provide TVET learners with access to structured workplace experience in the relevant sectors. This is expected to serve as a springboard for access to employment or to becoming self-employed. It is expected that through the WIL exposure, graduates will acquire relevant attributes and work-related competencies. TVETs' training duration is generally three years for a certificate, with the focus on educating and training students to work in technical or vocational fields. In some instances a graduate from a TVET may be able to continue further studies in a UoT.

2.2.4.2 Description of the learning intervention

Access to WIL enables TVET learners to meet curriculum requirements in order to complete their studies and achieve a relevant qualification (Table 6). The maximum duration of a WIL placement is 18 months. The expectation is that once they have had such workplace exposure, the learner will be able to complete a qualification in order to secure employment more easily or become self-employed (ETDP SETA, n.d.-c).

Table 6: Work-integrated learning TVET college placement targets

Targets	Description
WIL – Technical and Vocational Education and Training	This is a 12–18-month workplace experience programme designed for candidates who have completed a National Accredited Technical Education Diploma 6 qualification and require compulsory work experience in order to obtain their qualification. It is targeted at marginalised groups, including women, youth and people with disabilities

Source: ETDP SETA (n.d.-b)

Key activities related to WIL include:

- Registering of the learner on the ETDP SETA MIS;
- Identification of host employers and securing their commitment to hosting the learner through a formal Memorandum of Agreement;
- Issuing of Purchase Orders to enable payment of a stipend to the learner;
- The workplace where the learner is placed is expected to have appropriate equipment and facilities as required, and deemed to be ready and suitable;
- A clearly defined job description has to be provided for the learner so that they are aware of what to expect, and that the placement fulfils the need of providing relevant experience to the learner;
- The host employer is expected to nominate a mentor, who will oversee the placement and provide onsite mentoring and training of the learner;
- The host employer is also expected to facilitate an appropriate induction of the learner to the workplace policies, systems and procedures;
- Timesheets are maintained as a record of the placement and signed off by the mentor prior to submission to the SETA;

- The learner is expected to maintain a logbook/portfolio of evidence throughout the placement, and to produce this as and when required.
- The ETDP SETA is expected to hold stakeholder meetings at regular intervals.

Key stakeholders include the ETDP SETA officials, host employer and the mentor (if not the same person) and officials representing the higher education learning institution, TVET or UoT (ETDP SETA, n.d.-c).

2.2.5 Work-integrated Learning UoTs

The aim of the ETDP SETA WIL UoT intervention is to provide UoT learners with access to structured workplace experience in the relevant sectors (ETDP SETA, n.d.-c). It is expected that through the WIL exposure, graduates will acquire relevant attributes and work-related competencies. Importantly, access to such experience enables learners to meet curriculum requirements in order to complete their studies and achieve a relevant qualification. A UoT offers mainly diploma and certificate courses and some degree courses which have a three-year duration. UoTs focus on career-directed courses which are designed to be practical, with WIL being an essential aspect of the course

2.2.5.1 Description of the WIL UoT Intervention

The maximum duration of a WIL placement is 18 months. The expectation is that once the learner has had workplace exposure, they will have completed a qualification and be able to secure employment more easily or become self-employed (ETDP SETA, 2017c).

Table 7: Work-integrated learning for UoTs' targets

Target	Description
WIL – University of Technology placement	This is a workplace experience programme with a maximum duration of 18 months. It is designed for learners who require practical experience to complete their qualification at a UoT.

Source: ETDP SETA (2016)

Key activities related to WIL UoT include the following:

- Registering of the learner on the ETDP SETA MIS;
- Identification of host employers and securing their commitment to hosting the learner through a formal Memorandum of Agreement;
- Issuing of Purchase Orders to enable payment of a stipend to the learner;
- The workplace where the learner is placed is expected to have appropriate equipment and facilities as required and deemed to be ready and suitable;
- A clearly defined job description provided to the learner so that they are aware of what to expect and that the placement will provide relevant experience to the learner;
- The host employer is expected to nominate a mentor who will oversee the placement and provide onsite mentoring and training of the learner;
- The host employer is also expected to facilitate appropriate induction of the learner to the workplace policies, systems and procedures;
- Timesheets are maintained as a record of the placement and signed off by the mentor prior to submission to the SETA;
- The learner is expected to maintain a logbook/portfolio of evidence throughout the placement and to produce this as and when required.
- The ETDP SETA is expected to hold stakeholder meetings at regular intervals.

Key stakeholders include the ETDP SETA officials, host employer and the mentor (if not the same person) and officials representing the higher education learning institution, either TVET or UoT (ETDP SETA, n.d.-c). The skills developed through the WIL include technical, business and soft skills, with a focus on motivational, interpersonal, maturity and confidence skills (DHET, 2013a).

3 Literature Review: School to Work Transitions (STWT)

3.1 Introduction

“A bad start to a young person’s working life has immediate and long lasting economic, personal and social costs” (Bradley & Nguyen, 2004, p. 513).

The long-standing links between education, inequality and social mobility call for an in-depth investigation of the nature and character of transitions, especially of youth from school to work, and particularly in a developing country like SA. Nilsson (2019, p. 746) broadly describes the “school to work transitions as that period in time during which an individual leaves school and finds suitable employment”. A more nuanced definition is provided by Mastercard Foundation, where the school to work transition is understood as a “process during which youth shift from being predominantly in an educational environment, to more permanently either looking for, being available for or starting a job, to gradually improving their livelihood” (Mastercard, 2019). In the same vein, Alam and De Diego (2019) define STWT also as a process “that enable young people (aged 15-24) to move easily from initial education to productive and decent work”. The authors also identify two key central elements of this process: 1) preparing young people for the transition (where skills for work, qualifications, knowledge, competencies and values are developed), and 2) making the actual transition (finding productive and decent work opportunities that make use of the skills developed).

In the absence of a common definition of school to work transitions (STWT), there is also no agreement on when exactly transitions begin or end. For instance, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) argues that transitions begin upon graduation, and from the first economic activity. However, Nilsson (2019) concurs with Alam and De Diego (2019) that transitions could begin even before leaving school or graduation.

According to the ILO (2009) a completed transition relates to finding ‘regular or satisfactory’ employment. Importantly for the ILO, quality of employment matters, and considers a number of workplace experience indicators, including job stability, type of contract and job satisfaction (ILO, 2009). Nguyen and colleagues (2010, p. 32) of the National Centre for Vocational Education Research also opt for a narrow definition:

... the main outcome of youth transitions is for school leavers to attain the state of employment, as opposed to unemployment or non-participation in the labour force. However, if we are to accept that the appropriate objective function is to maximise welfare, a richer set of considerations should be considered. This will encompass questions of the quality of employment. Some commonly identified dimensions of job quality include earnings, skill levels, job security, training and promotion opportunities, flexibility, self-assessed job satisfaction and ‘vocational congruence’

‘Youth’ is perceived as the right time to invest in education and training, and that is where most countries have institutionalised arrangements to facilitate entry into educational and vocational programmes to facilitate smooth transitions into employment or possible entrepreneurship. A lack of training or entry into skilled occupations is associated with negative future employment (Bradley & Nguyen, 2004) and earning outcomes. Youth bulges in developing countries present both an opportunity (demographic dividend) and a threat if youth do not transition into decent employment or sustainable livelihoods (Nilsson, 2019; Alam & De Diego, 2019).

While there are a number of models that are used to frame STWT, Bradley and Nguyen (2004) identify the human capital theory as the most widely used framework for investigating STWT. In this theory, education is perceived as an investment decision made by young people, who therefore choose to either continue

investing more in their education or training beyond current levels of education, or to stop investing in formal schooling and enter the labour market (Bradley & Nguyen, 2004, p. 486).

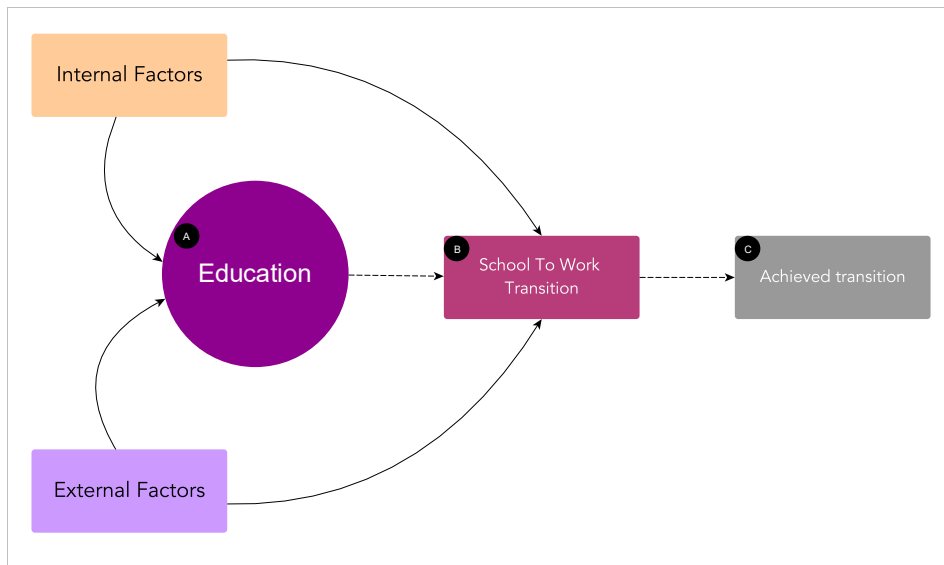
Human capital theory further suggests that choices made by young people are informed by an assessment of whether the value of the intended benefits of education and training in the future is greater than the current costs which are linked to enrolment in education. Such costs include fees, books, subsistence and accommodation, and even potential loss of foregone incomes, together with the non-monetised costs and benefits of engaging in education and training (Bradley & Nguyen, 2004).

An important observation made by human capital theorists is that family background and individual ability are important mediating factors in young people's decision to invest in further education. This is explained by the fact that individuals from better-off families incur lower relative costs in making such an investment.

3.2 Conceptual framework: Factors influencing school to work transitions

Globally, STWT have become non-linear, extended and more uncertain. As such it is important to look at the factors responsible for smooth or broken transitions. The literature focusing on transitions from secondary school into the world of work has grouped these factors into individual, institutional (school-related or higher education and training variables) and labour market context. A useful framework below demonstrates a three-staged transition process, where internal factors (e.g. gender, race, individual ability) and external factors (e.g. macro-economic environment, institutional and school characteristics and labour market policies) interact with the educational system and indirectly influence STWT outcome determinants (Nilsson, 2019). These factors are explained further in the next section. Here (Figure 2) individuals begin school and end with an 'achieved transition'. Nilsson's work is aimed at bridging the knowledge gap on STWT, which has been largely based on evidence from high-income countries, through extensively reviewing evidence from developing countries to inform his framework (Nilsson, 2019).

Figure 2: Conceptual framework of the school-work transition process



Source: Nilsson, 2019, p. 748. Source: Nilsson, 2019, p. 748

Based on Nilsson's framework (2019), internal and external factors which are main components of the transition process are briefly outlined in the next section.

3.2.1 Internal factors

3.2.1.1 Personal characteristics

An individual's ability and academic attainment (as measured through school achievement, test scores, grade and class rank and test scores) have been found to be powerful predictors of STWT outcomes. This suggests that high-ability students are more likely to invest in post-school education and are expected to enjoy higher rates of return from higher education.

Gender differences have also been found to have a significant impact on decisions to enrol in higher education, as well as in the process of transitioning. However, the extent to which gender is related to participation in higher education seems to be context dependent. For instance, Bradley and Nguyen (2003) note that in the United States of America there is mixed evidence regarding probabilities of enrolment by gender, with Kane (1994) finding girls to be more likely to enrol for college education, while Hilmer (2001) demonstrates that it is boys who are significantly likely to participate in a college education.

Some of the gender differences have been linked to gendered preferences, where females tend to pursue more non-vocational training. In general, however, women have been found to be more disadvantaged, in the sense that they take much longer to transition into stable or satisfactory employment. Mills and Prag (2014) compared STWTs of males and females in Europe, and found that although both genders can transition from school to work or to first employment at the same pace, their labour market outcomes begin to diverge significantly over time, with males more likely to progress faster in their careers. These uneven STWTs are also to a great extent shaped by a complex mix of institutional, community and personal factors.

Differences by race and ethnicity in attending post-school education and its impact on overall STWTs has also been investigated. Counter to the expectation that students from ethnic minority groups are less likely to pursue post-compulsory education than their white counterparts, because of poor socioeconomic backgrounds, there is significant empirical evidence suggesting that young people from ethnic minorities are more likely to transition into higher education and training. Some of this evidence (Ellwood & Kane, 2000) suggests that Black and Hispanic high school graduates in the United States of America were more likely to attend college. However, whilst Desjardien et al. (1999) did not find any evidence of ethnic differences, more 'able' high school graduates were found to proceed to attend college, no matter the ethnic group.

Looking closely into STWTs, Bradley and Taylor (2002) investigated racial differences in the further education and training participation rates, employment, and unemployment; they found that although non-white students are less likely to enter the labour market, they are more likely than their white counterparts to participate in further education. Higher probabilities of participation in post-compulsory education are then attributed to fear of racial discrimination when attempting to access the labour market.

The influence of family background factors has also been noted in literature. This includes parental education and occupation, family income, and family size and structure. Apart from possibilities of intellectual heredity, it is expected that the more educated the parent is, the greater the chances of investing in their children's education. Furthermore, social class speaks to economic support and the availability of resources to finance education. Family or the household serves as an important network (Nilsson, 2019) which is useful for job search processes as well as career guidance. Personal contacts also represent an important job search channel, as is the case in SA. However, families as institutions can also transmit a social disadvantage associated with inferior labour market outcomes, thus reinforcing social inequalities (Iannelli, 2003, in Kogan & Muller, 2003).

Specifically, in the South African context there is growing literature demonstrating how some of these internal factors, such as school performance, race, gender, family background or social class, shape education and employment outcomes (Haroon Bhorat et al., 2017; Case et al., 2018; Fongwa et al., 2018; Rogan & Reynolds, 2016). SA has a dualistic public schooling system which produces very diverse educational outcomes: on one hand a better-performing segment serves the affluent minority, and on the other hand the majority of learners, who are largely from poor households, are serviced by a less efficient segment of the system (Fleisch, 2008). Based on the TIMSS 2015 results, Reddy, Juan, Fongwa and Isdale (2019) found that almost 80% of Grade 9 learners in no fee paying (quintiles 1, 2 and 3) schools (largely Black) did not meet the minimum knowledge and skills benchmark of 400 points, compared to 38% in fee-paying (quintile 4 and 5) schools.

Wide gaps in the educational achievement of children from different socioeconomic status backgrounds demonstrate the association between type of school attended and the learner's socioeconomic background. Moses, Berg, and Rich (2017) report that according to the Stats SA Community Survey of 2016, children with parents who had higher education levels were more likely to achieve upward educational mobility. While most white youth with post-secondary qualifications had parents with a similar qualification, 56% intergenerational transmission of similar qualifications was achieved by 28% of coloured, 27% of Indian and 24% of African youth (Stats SA, 2017, p. 87). In general, learners from well-off families enjoy favourable educational outcomes as they are more than likely to finish primary school on time, reach matric, pursue a university education and find employment (Moses et al., 2017). Learning outcomes at the lower levels of schooling influences the type of subjects selected as well as the choice of HEI, which all later influence employment prospects (through securing employment and earnings) and life chances.

Gender differences are also evident in as far as school and higher education participation is concerned, and these patterns have a bearing on subsequent patterns of transitions. Pointing to the female advantage, some studies (Broekhuizen & Spaull, 2017; Spaull & Makaluza, 2019) show that girls consistently enjoy superior academic achievement through schooling and higher education, and are less likely to repeat a grade and drop out of school. However, Bhorat et al. (2017) suggest that girls lose the advantage when they reach the labour market, as can be seen from their poor labour market outcomes, and this is strongly mediated by race (Espi et al., 2019).

3.2.2 External factors

3.2.2.1 Institutional or school-related factors

School-related variables have also been found to have an influence on transitions in postsecondary schooling and training. Particularly in the literature from the United Kingdom, the broad finding is that students from selected schools are more likely to make transitions in further education and training than students from comprehensive schools (Bradley & Taylor, 2002). This is a very important factor in South Africa, considering the heterogenous nature of the schooling and the PSET system which offer very varied educational quality, resulting in diverse education and labour market outcomes. In this context, the type of school, and higher education and training institution (such as higher education institutions (HEIs), or TVET colleges) attended significantly affects the individual's labour market outcomes.

Although in general graduates have much lower unemployment rates than non-graduates, studies looking at their employment trajectories show that the institution where one obtains the qualification matters. Generally, university graduates have: 1) better employment prospects than graduates from other institutions such as TVET colleges (Lehohla, 2017; Van Broekhuizen, 2016; van der Berg & van Broekhuizen, 2012); and 2) enjoy better financial returns compared to the diplomates³ (Branson et al., 2009, in Wildschut, Mncwango, Rogan, Rust, & Fongwa, 2018). Furthermore, TVETs are perceived as an inferior option by both learners and employers (Lehohla, 2017; Ismail & Mujuru, 2020).

The type of university attended also influences employment prospects. Rogan and Reynolds (2016) conducted a graduate tracer study in the Eastern Cape and found that students who obtained degrees from Black or historically disadvantaged universities are more likely to be unemployed. Poor employment prospects of graduates from historically disadvantaged universities have been attributed to a number of factors, including employer bias and lack of social networks on the part of graduates. Walker and Fongwa (2017) also argued that the university's status and reputation matter, as the major private sector employers expressed preference of students from historically White universities.

3.2.2.2 The Macroeconomic Environment

Ryan (1999) observes another important determinant of STWTs and outcomes – the state of the economy, and more specifically the number of decent jobs available in a given economy. The economies of low-income countries are not growing quickly enough to absorb the rapidly growing labour force, particularly first-time labour market entrants, a feature prevalent across the African continent for both men and women and in

³ Comprised of HEI and TVET graduates with NQF level 5 or 6 qualifications (Van Broekhuizen, 2016, p. 4)

both the formal and informal labour markets (Khan, 2020). Furthermore, regarding the structure of the labour market in terms of sectoral growth, it has been argued that labour markets in low-income countries have been moving towards pre-industrialisation and labour reallocation from agriculture to service sector employment, which is largely characterised by vulnerable employment.

3.2.3 Labour market policies

Globally, active labour market policies have been employed in both developed and developing countries to stimulate economic growth and development, promote access to employment and respond to the needs and deficits within an economy. Typical active labour market policies and interventions have focused on training of economically active adults, incentivising firms to employ people through the provision of employment subsidies and rebates, provision of matching services which link economically active adults to jobs, promoting enterprise development and providing public works programmes. Increasingly these policies have focused on enhancing youth employment outcomes (Crépon et al., 2016).

Training programmes of diverse nature have been widely implemented, with differences relating to the type of skills that the programme seeks to develop, the nature and intensity of training provided, the duration of the training intervention and the level of financial investment made. There is a wealth of literature on the impact of such programmes, which appears to suggest that there are positive long-term impacts of these programmes (Crépon et al., 2016).

Nilsson (2019), drawing on evidence from various systematic reviews, argues that these programmes have achieved little or modest results with respect to improvements in employment and earnings, although he acknowledges that some programmes, such as business skills training, have positively impacted on business creation. Public employment programmes were also reviewed, and evidence pointed to relative inefficiencies in implementing such programmes. In contrast, reviews of the effects of vocational and technical training targeted at youth in developing countries (both low and middle income) have proven to be effective in promoting employment and income. Evidence suggests that programmes that transfer cash and physical assets to individuals appear to have had more sustained positive impacts on youth employment. Nilsson (2019) posits that a combination of these labour market interventions, rather than standalone responses, are more likely to contribute to improved STWT for youth.

Other factors affecting overall employment opportunities noted across the literature include geographical areas and economic cycles (Hannan et al., 1996; Bradley & Nguyen, 2004), English language proficiency, and disability. However, the effect of the various factors is very complex, as most of them tend to be inextricably linked. For instance, the socioeconomic status of a person has an impact on school achievement and post-school outcomes, including occupational status.

Employers are widely recognised as having a key contribution to make towards enhancing skills in the workforce. There are, however, varied approaches to such contributions, including identifying skills gaps and needs, offering workplace skills training, induction and institutional socialisation of employees, valuing of learning and training, mentoring and supervision, financial contributions to skills development (such as levy payments or budgeting for skills development), performance appraisal systems and partnering with relevant PSET institutions towards the effective delivery of skills programmes (Smith & Comyn, 2004; Centre for Career Management Skills, 2009).

3.3 Components of the school to work transition

A body of literature has identified various components of the STWT, with Jung et al. (2004, p. 13) drawing from the work of the OECD (Elder, 2009) and summarising these as indicated in the section that follows.

3.3.1 The context within which STWT occurs

This context includes the labour market and the education and training system, covered in an earlier section of this report.

3.3.2 Duration of transitions

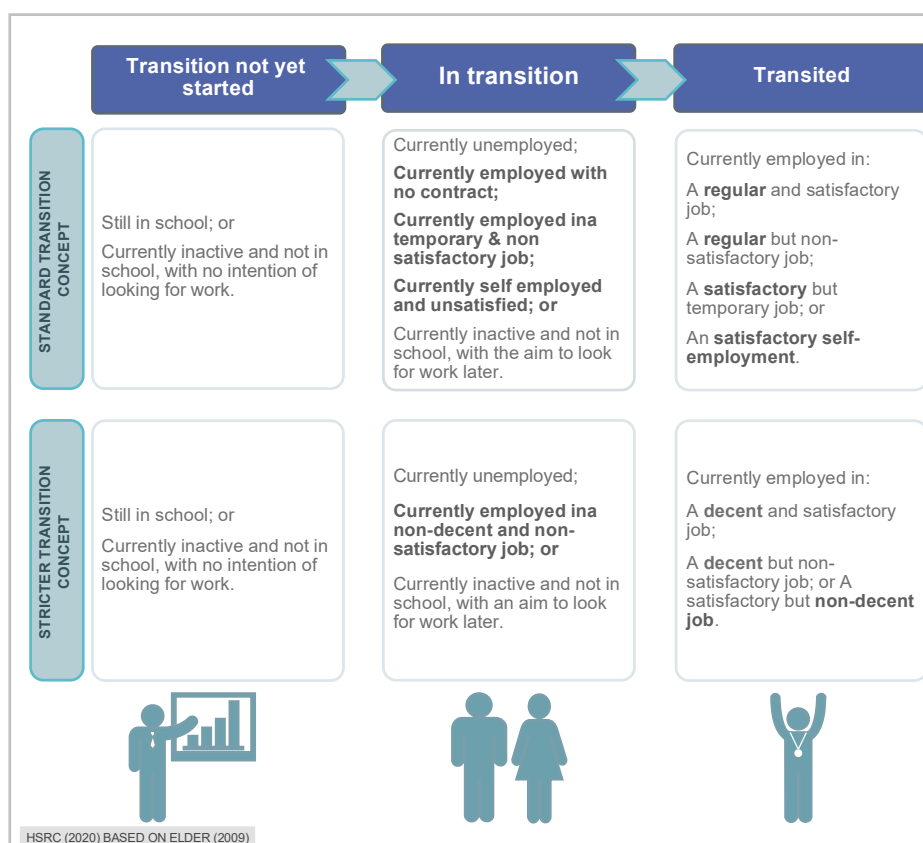
The duration of transition refers to the period from when the transition starts to when the transition outcome has been achieved. The starting-point is generally when learners leave school permanently, while the end-point of the transition has been described by the OECD as full-time stable employment, while the ILO has extended this to include qualitative measures of outcome (Nilsson, 2019).

In a review of studies relevant to the duration of transitions (Nilsson, 2019) found that a complex relationship exists between completion of education and transition to employment. He posits that the data support the notion of queuing theory, which suggests that an unemployed person may refuse to accept an employment offer for a range of reasons, meaning they may have a longer transition until the kind of employment they are aspiring to becomes available. Equally so, it suggests that those with lower levels of education are likely to experience a shorter transition, as they may take up jobs in the informal sector and in so doing accept jobs paying below the reservation wage.

3.3.3 The transition process, outlining various pathways to transitions

The transition process is the other element, and this refers to the pathways available to the school leaver towards attaining the desired transition outcome. Given the magnitude of the unemployment challenge in South Africa, the definition adopted by this study for a successful transition is based on the standard concept, and any job that fulfils any of the four attributes will be considered a desired transition outcome (see Figure 3). The rationale for this is also based on the understanding of the importance of young people having early exposure to some form of employment, which can hopefully increase their probability of future employment.

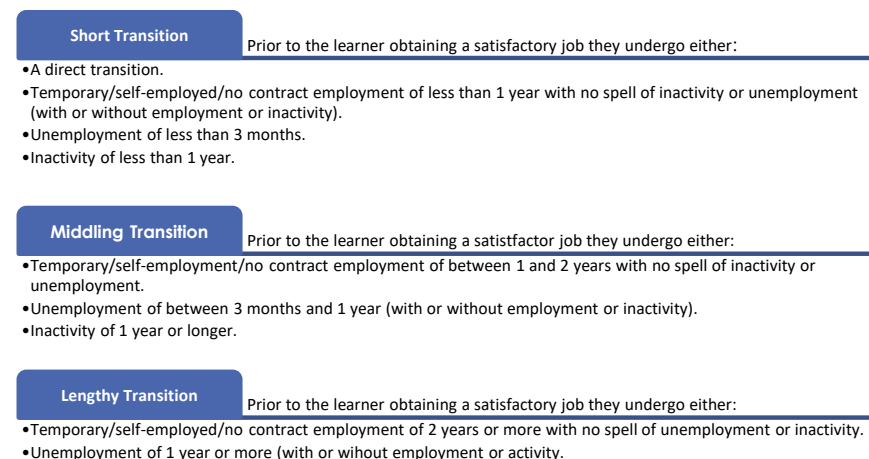
Figure 3: Definitions and stages in the transition process



Source: Elder, 2009, p. 8-9.

The transition process towards attaining the desired transition could be either easy or difficult, and the ILO has included a time variable which includes a “short, middling and lengthy transition” (Elder, 2009), as outlined in the phases below (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Transition Phases



3.3.4 The transition outcomes

According to the ILO standard STWT framework (Elder, 2009, p. 8):

It is not until a young person has attained work that meets a very basic criteria of ‘decency’, namely a permanency that can provide the worker with a sense of security (regular employment⁴), or a job that the worker feels personally satisfied with (satisfactory employment⁵), that we claim the transition has been completed.

An assumption embedded in this broad framework is that access to a permanent job automatically implies access to other basic work characteristics, such as a decent income and other related benefits. The emphasis on whether the job is ‘regular’ or ‘satisfactory’ as the outcome explicitly extends the ILO’s commitment to promoting the concept of decent work for all.

A much broader conceptualisation of a successful transition is offered by the Mastercard Foundation,

“as a process in which youth acquire the skills to make the decisions in their job search that maximises their options and enables them to start an employment trajectory that improved their livelihood”. This is due to the understanding that the outcome of interventions seeking to improve school to work transitions do not always end with a successful transition, but rather put learners on a trajectory towards the end goal” (Mastercard, 2019, p. 21).

Transition outcomes have been identified at both macro and micro levels, with macro level outcomes being the meeting of skills needs of the economy and promoting economic growth. Transition outcomes at the

⁴ Regular employment is defined in terms of duration of contract or expected length of tenure. The contrary is temporary employment, or employment of limited duration (p. 8).

⁵ Satisfactory employment is measured based on the self-assessment of the jobholder and implies a job that the respondent considers to ‘fit’ his desired employment path at that moment in time. The contrary is termed non-satisfactory employment, implying a sense of dissatisfaction about the job (p. 12).

micro level include economic outcomes such as improved labour force participation, security of employment, occupational status, access to on-the-job training and development, career mobility and job satisfaction. Non-economic outcomes include migration, family formation and establishing independent households (Hannan et al., 1996). Failure to transition, particularly for the large cohort of youth globally, has been associated with increased at-risk behaviour, reduced self-confidence, low self-esteem, inhibition of motivation and depression (Sissons & Jones, 2012; Hannan et al., 1996). Failure to transition, particularly for the large cohort of youth globally, has been associated with increased at-risk behaviour, reduced self-confidence, low self-esteem, inhibition of motivation and depression (Sissons & Jones, 2012).

3.3.5 Limitations of the STWT Conceptual Framework

Identifying factors with an impact on the STWT is particularly important for the South African context, which is marked by pronounced inequalities. Although countries vary in terms of economic, sociodemographic and institutional characteristics, the factors or elements of the transition process tend to cut across both developed and developing countries.

However, the Mastercard Foundation report (Mastercard, 2019) rightfully observes that ‘school to work’ transitions are context specific. Learners might follow different paths between school and work, differing in starting and end points and duration. Transitions appear to be even more complex in developing countries where the majority of youth have low levels of education, economies with large informal sectors, and where individuals participate in varied economic activities, at times simultaneously, to sustain their livelihoods. Particularly in South Africa, studies presented above demonstrate that successful transitions are an outcome of a complex interplay of internal and external factors; however, our historical legacy has deemed race a consistent mediating factor.

The High Level SETA M&E framework (Ward & Rosenberg, 2020; p. 12) has appropriately defined the SETAs’ shared responsibility as being to enhance beneficiary employability and not their employment. This is consistent with the standard definition of a successful transition discussed earlier in this section.

Furthermore, local evidence points to the existence of large structural unemployment, employer biases and contextual challenges, a negative perception of the TVET sector, and a changing world of work and skills needs due to the impending Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). All these contextual factors have a bearing on the shape and duration of youth transitions and need to be considered in investigations of STWT. It is contended that some of the assumptions underpinning the ILO STWT Framework require revisiting in the context of a global pattern of increased informalisation of employment and the related precarity which accompanies it.

3.4 Post-school education and training landscape in South Africa

3.4.1 Legislative and policy context

The Constitution of South Africa (1996) as the supreme law provides the right to education for all South African citizens, with the belief that this will contribute to a better quality of life for all. The Government has set out a number of key priorities, among them being the maximisation of individuals’ potential and a better quality life for all South African citizens (RSA, 1996).

The South African Government has attempted to give effect to the right to education, particularly post-schooling education, through a plethora of legislative and policy initiatives which seek to expand the current provision of quality higher education and training. Central to this are the following:

- The White Paper on Post School Education and Training (DHET, 2014);
- The Human Resource Development Strategy (HRDS) for South Africa (DHET, 2009);
- The National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) Act No. 56 of 1999 (RSA, 1999); and
- The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act No. 67 of 2008, (RSA, 2009).

Of relevance to this study is the role of SETAs, which the White Paper has tasked with promoting linkages between the various institutions and stakeholders. The White Paper highlights the importance of collaboration between colleges and employers in the provision of internships, learnerships and other learning interventions, with the aim of enabling clear linkages between educational provision and the labour market (DHET, 2014).

Responding to skills challenges and attempting to smooth the learning to work transitions, the White Paper (DHET, 2014) recognised the inadequate skills levels and poor readiness of new entrants into the labour market. This refers to those leaving formal secondary and tertiary education and entering the labour market for the first time. The situation is even more precarious for those who lack any form of formal education or are in long-term unemployment with no basic numeracy and literacy skills, and thus lack necessary entry-level skills and work experience.

3.4.2 SETAs' role in advancing post-school education and training

The SETAs were established in 2000 through the Skills Development Act of 1998 (RSA, 1998, Chapter 3, Section 10) to facilitate the development of skills in relation to sector-identified skills needs. Initially, 25 (now 21) SETAs replaced the 33 industry training boards that existed prior to 2000 and were a response to the need for skills development across different sectors.

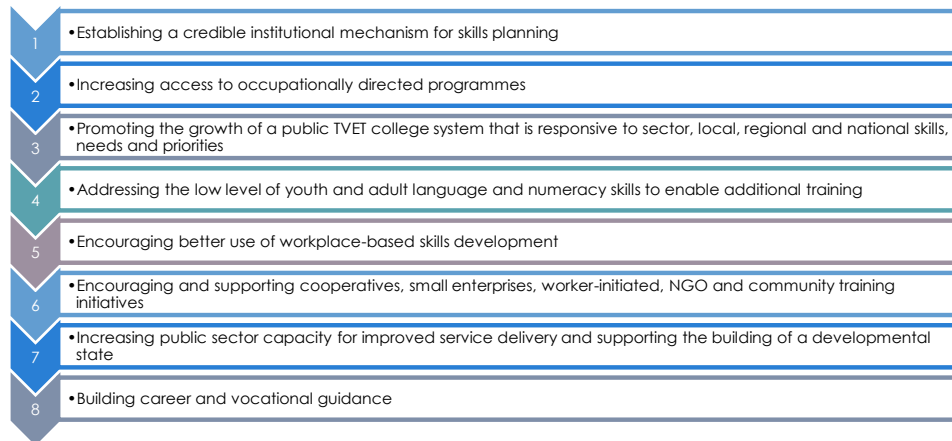
SETAs have been charged with a myriad of objectives and responsibilities, but one which was amplified in the White Paper for Post School Education and Training is that of “obtaining accurate data about workplace skills needs, as well as supporting providers in delivering programme’s necessary in their sectors” (DHET, 2014, p 67). As the key institutions which mediate between education and work, SETAs are responsible for the development of a skills pipeline through promoting and supporting learnerships, apprenticeships or internships.

Responding to skills challenges and attempting to smooth the transition from learning to work, the framework recognised the inadequate skills levels and poor readiness of new entrants into the labour market. This refers to those leaving formal secondary and tertiary education and entering the labour market for the first time.

The situation is even more precarious for those who lack any form of formal education, are in long-term unemployment, with no basic numeracy and literacy skills, and thus lack the necessary entry-level skills and work experience. Employers prefer to employ individuals with some form of formal education or work experience. As it is, about 60% of the persons who are unemployed in SA have never worked before (Van Staden, 2015).

Central to the NSDS III framework was thus a commitment to increased access to high-quality and relevant education, and training and skills development, including workplace learning and experience, to enable participation in the economy and society by all South Africans and reduce inequalities (DHET, 2011). Consequently, NSDS III identified 8 strategic outcomes, that have served to guide the SETAs since 2011 (Figure 5).

Figure 5: NSDS III strategic outcomes.



In order to realise the NSDS III strategic outcomes, DHET's Strategic Plan of 2019/20 (DHET, 2019) highlights the following as key issues of focus for SETAs in the next five years: In order to realise the NSDS III strategic outcomes, DHET's Strategic Plan of 2019/20 (DHET, 2019) highlights the following as key issues of focus for SETAs in the next five years:

- To substantially expand access to education and training for youth and adults, regardless of whether they have completed school or not;
- To improve the alignment between universities, TVET colleges, SETAs, the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) and quality councils to improve student and learner mobility across institutions and qualifications;
- To expand the availability of opportunities for workplace training for students in colleges and universities, and to expand other forms of workplace training such as learnerships and apprenticeships;
- To ensure that the PSET system prioritises funding of the marginalised, enabling them to access post-school institutions and fulfil dreams of careers thought to be unrealisable;
- To further develop postgraduate studies to ensure expansion of the academic profession and development of high-level knowledge and skills;
- To diversify provision based on open learning principles, to improve learning opportunities across the PSET sector, by expanding and strengthening the post-school distance education landscape;
- To integrate disability into the broader policy arena by introducing a nation policy to guide education and training institutions in the post-school domain; and
- To integrate recognition of prior learning (RPL) into the post-school education and training system.

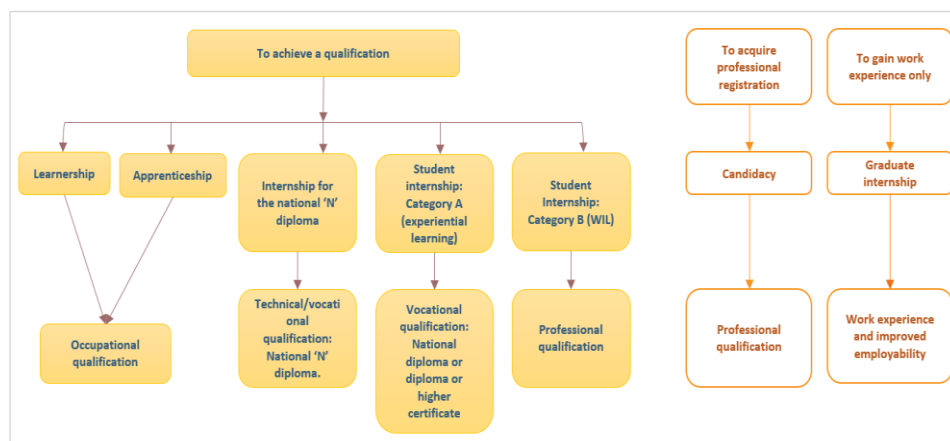
Through addressing these issues and implementing initiatives, the DHET (2019) aims to realise the following outcomes and impacts:

- Skilled citizenry
- Quality graduates
- Employable graduates
- Improved public confidence

- Economic growth
- Improved productivity
- Reduced unemployment
- Improved economy
- Reduced poverty
- Reduced inequality
- Reduced crime

In response to NSDS III, SETAs have rolled out a range of learning initiatives, including workplace-based learning (WBL) initiatives such as learnerships, apprenticeships, internships and skills programmes in their respective sectors, to assist learners and graduates with required workplace experience). For the purposes of this study the focus is on the five learning interventions which are under review, namely bursaries, learnerships, internships and work-based learning through TVETs and UoTs.

Figure 6: An overview of various categories of workplace-based learning in South Africa



Source: DHET (2015)

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3.5 Implementation of post-schooling education and training interventions

3.5.1 Implementation of WIL interventions: Lessons from the literature

Work integrated learning (WIL), with its great emphasis on integrating students' experiences in a work setting into their educational programmes, has been receiving increasing attention in recent times. This has been evident through a number of government strategies underlining the importance of WIL, including: the National Skills Development Strategy for 2011-2016 (NSDS III), the National Development Plan (NDP), the National Skills Accord (DHET, 2014), and the latest national skills development plan, which all locate WIL as central to effective and efficient vocational and occupational education and training (SSACI, 2013).

The NSDS III (DHET, 2011, p. 12) encourages the integration of theory and practice in the workplace, and notes as follows:

‘Workplace learning should be an integral part of all vocational programmes. Establishing effective partnerships between education and training systems and employers to provide for workplace training would ensure that skills have real labour market relevance and that young people gain an early appreciation of and exposure to the world of work’.

In 2014 the White Paper for Post-School Education and Training: Building an Expanded, Effective and Integrated Post-School System (DHET, 2014, p. 16) stated:

‘Since the main purpose of the TVET colleges is to prepare students for the workplace, it is essential that they develop and maintain close working relationships with employers in their areas. Close partnerships between colleges and employers can assist the colleges in locating workplace opportunities for students who need practical experience’.

The NDP (National Planning Commission, 2012) also recognises the importance of workplace-based training as part of skills development. It emphasises the important role played by FET colleges in vocational education and training. Furthermore, the NDP stresses the role of SETAs in supporting the development of relationships between educational institutions and employers.

The National Skills Accord committed all parties, including government, organised business and labour, and civil society to increase the numbers of apprenticeships, internships, workplace-based experience for college students and other opportunities for WIL in the industry. This is embedded in the second commitment (Department of Economic Development, 2012, p. 6):

‘To make internship and placement opportunities available within workplaces. Companies will annually make 12 000 placements/internship spaces available for students who complete their certificates at FET Colleges, 5000 internships for 3rd year students at Universities of Technology who need the work experience as part of their qualifications, and opportunities for training exposure in a work environment for at least 16 000 lecturers at FET Colleges. This will be phased in, with 20% of the target to be achieved in 2011, 50% in 2012 and 100% from 2013.’

Furthermore, the implementation of WIL is part of the Minister of Higher Education and Training’s delivery agreement, outcome 5 – a skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path, and output 3 – access to occupationally directed programmes. As such, the provision of WIL has become a key performance area for public TVET colleges and the same applies to UoTs. This is reinforced through the DHET Technical Guidelines for Quarterly Performance, which require institutions of higher learning to report on placement of students in learnerships and apprenticeships, N6 graduates in internships, NC(V) and report on students in workplace-based experience and lecturers in workplace exposure (SSACI, 2013).

Ability to measure the impact of the various work-based learning interventions has historically been hampered by a lack of common understanding: first of what WBL is, and second, of the relationship between different approaches of WBL (Wildschut et al., 2017). The concept of WBL is often used interchangeably with other terms such as WIL, practice-based learning, work-related learning, etc. The ILO notes that “apprenticeships, cadetships, traineeship and internships are effective means of bridging school and the world of work for young people by making it possible for them to acquire work experience along with technical and professional training” (ILO, 2009, p. 8).

Given the whole range of programmes covered under this concept, different conceptualisations however converge on the recognition that WBL encompasses different kinds of learning taking place in ‘real’ work

environments. In an attempt to synthesise the various WBL definitions across the literature, Table 8 begins to capture some of these definitions, as attributed to national and international institutions.

Table 8: Definitions of work-based learning

Institution/Country	Definition of WBL
Asian Development Bank Source: Asian Development Bank, 2017, pp. 6-8	WBL takes a variety of forms and can range from highly informal to unstructured training, delivered in micro- and small enterprises, through to highly structured training in medium and large enterprises resulting in nationally recognised certification.
Australia Source: Atkinson, 2016	- WBL is learning that occurs in a real environment through participation in work activities and interactions. - It is integral to vocational education because it emphasises learning through practice in the workplace and fosters engagement with employers. - WBL is embedded in a curriculum and can involve deliberate engagement and experience for learning purposes. Types of WBL include apprenticeships and traineeships, simulation and placements.
European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, 2015, p. 73	WBL is the acquisition of knowledge and skills through carrying out and reflecting on tasks in a vocational context, either at a workplace or in a vocational education and training institution.
Canada Source: Business and Higher Education Roundtable (BHER) and Academica, 2015, p. 4	- WIL is defined broadly as the process through which students come to learn from experiences in educational and practice settings. - It includes the kinds of curriculum and pedagogic practices that can assist, provide and effectively integrate learning experiences in both settings.
UNESCO UNESCO, 2015, p. 99	WBL refers to any form of learning or vocational training for youth and adults that occurs inside an enterprise or workplace.

Source: Adapted from Comyn and Brewer (2018)

The different terminologies make comparing different types of WBL programmes and the labour market outcomes that they deliver almost impossible.

In SA the DHET published a draft policy framework in 2015 which offers a conceptual and practical delineation of the different forms of WBL (Van Staden, 2015). The framework presents WBL as “an educational approach that aligns academic and workplace practices for the mutual benefit of students and workplaces” (Council for Higher Education, 2011, p. 4). Additionally, the framework clarifies the type of WBL required to obtain a particular qualification, to acquire a professional registration, and for solely obtaining workplace experience (Wildschut et al., 2017).

WBL or WIL is thus used as an umbrella term to describe curricular, pedagogic and assessment practices across a range of academic disciplines that integrate formal learning and workplace concerns. In this context, the term is used to describe an approach to career-focused education that includes classroom-based and workplace-based forms of learning that are appropriate for the professional qualification (Council for Higher Education, 2011). WBL provides a recognised occupational qualification through structured institutional

learning and applied competence developed through workplace experiential learning. Such programmes thus incorporate practical exposure and training in a workplace setting.

Furthermore, these programmes are required to enhance skills upgrading across all levels of the existing workforce in firms (those who enter as 18.1 or employed learners), as well as provide vocational education and training for the (young) unemployed to facilitate transition to the labour market (those who enter as 18.2 or unemployed learners).

WIL programmes are widely implemented in SA, with the understanding that distinct roles and responsibilities are to be undertaken by relevant stakeholders (Table 9).

Table 9: Stakeholder roles and responsibilities in implementation of WIL

Stakeholder	WIL objective	Description
DHET	To enable WIL implementation	• Develop policy and legislation that support the delivery of WIL • Ensure college programmes include or accommodate WIL • Advocate WIL to other government departments and agencies, and to organised business and labour • Provide incentives to employers for supporting WIL • Provide direction on provision of WIL • Fund provision of WIL by colleges
TVET colleges	To implement WIL in core programmes	• Plan, manage, monitor and report on WIL within college programmes • Provide every NC(V) and N4-6 student with at least one period of WBL during their programme • Allocate human and financial resources to WIL • Recruit employers for WIL and develop long-term partnerships with them to enable sustainable delivery • Support employers in the planning and implementation of WIL in their workplaces
Employers	To provide opportunities for students and lecturers to learn in the workplace	• Make workplaces available to students and lecturers on WIL • Provide a safe working environment that is also conducive to learning • Provide feedback to the college on each period of student workplace-based activity to improve the implementation of WIL • Develop partnerships with colleges for sustainable and mutually beneficial implementation of WIL
Students	To use workplace visits and placements as learning opportunities	• Comply with the WIL requirements of their programmes • Prepare well for their placements, adhere to instructions by workplace supervisors, complete work assignments and conduct themselves in a responsible manner

Stakeholder	WIL objective	Description
SETAs	To support WIL implementation	• Help ensure the relevance of college programmes and WIL by providing information on employers and their skills needs • Advocate WIL to employers • Link colleges and employers • Provide funding for WIL and guidance on how to access it

Source: Adapted from SSACI (2013)

The OECD report (2009) identifies four key advantages of workplace training for students and employers which are outlined below.

First, workplaces provide high-quality learning environments where learners get exposure to 'real on the job experience' thus enabling them to acquire both soft and hard skills. Furthermore, in such arrangements, learners are trained using up-to-date equipment, which could be too expensive for some institutions of higher learning to acquire. There is evidence that soft skills such as problem-solving, conflict management and entrepreneurship are easily learnt in places of work. In general, benefits from WIL experiences include development of relevant discipline-specific skills, personal attributes, and communicative abilities. Other skills and competencies include technology, writing, punctuality, attendance, teamwork, leadership, career development, observing theory in practice, putting theory into practice, awareness of workplace culture, meeting workplace expectations, opportunity to develop a range of personal attributes, coping in a rapidly changing world of work, improved employment prospects, and building a network of contacts. In terms of building networks, Rodriguez et al. (2016) found the benefits of WIL to be greater for low-income, low-skilled and racial ethnic minority students. These are categories of learners who might otherwise have very weak labour market networks.

Participation in WIL has been associated with positive career prospects. A South African study of students in Human Resources and Marketing found that learners who have been through WIL intervention generally tend to enjoy better labour market and life outcomes (Govender & Wait, 2017). The National Business Initiative commissioned a tracer study of FET college graduates (Gewe, 2010), which found that participation in the WIL programme improves the learner's chances of finding full-time employment. Participation in WIL has been associated with positive career prospects.

In Australia, Freudenberg et al. (2010) also found a positive influence of WIL in terms of impact on student motivation to learn further, complete programmes and graduate. Rodriguez and colleagues (2016) concur and further argue that students begin to recognise links between their training and career interests, and are therefore more likely to commit to and complete their academic programmes. Holzer and Lerman (2014) indicate that receiving income while undergoing training also improves students' confidence in general.

Gribble and colleagues (2014) state that student placements have significant influence on the overall career life of learners, as they promote self-awareness. In most cases, the institution of higher learning tends to mediate the interaction between the organisation and the students. This is through student placements, site visits, ongoing monitoring of student work and assessment during placement. But the most impactful model is when students personally approach the organisation, and this is referred to as 'self-placement'. With self-placements, "students must think about, plan, and confidently approach an organisation to request, secure, confirm and complete their WIL placement" (Govender & Wait, 2017, p. 53).

Second, whilst participation in WIL improves STWT on the part of learners, it also brings along a host of recruitment benefits for employers. Importantly, WIL serves as a useful mechanism for creating a well-skilled, and labour market-ready talent pool. Employers who are already training learners are in an advantageous position, able to screen and select the best from the cohort of trainees, thereby rendering their recruitment and induction processes more effective and less costly.

Third, employer commitment and provision of workplace training serves as a signal that a VET programme offered is of labour market value. The work-related skills and attitudes that students develop during WIL are highly valued by employers (Rodriguez et al., 2016).

Fourth, WIL learners get an opportunity to make a productive contribution to the firm as well the economy at large.

Importantly, the OECD (2009) stresses that these benefits only accrue to structured workplace learning in a vocational programme. In line with this, SACCI (2013) identified 8 guiding principles for the effective implementation of WIL:

- It is part of the core business of colleges (and UoTs) to integrate WIL into their curricula;
- Planning and implementation of the workplace component must be done systematically and institutionalised in the college;
- The workplace component of WIL must be in suitable workplaces that are able to provide the required experience in a safe and healthy environment;
- WIL depends on the continued involvement and support of employers. Colleges must therefore strive to address the skills needs of local employers and accommodate their business objectives, operating procedures, work processes, calendars, timing and managerial systems;
- The longer and more frequent the workplace-based components of a WIL programme are, the more effective it is likely to be;
- WIL requires good preparation of students and employers; each must know what is required of them and how to meet these requirements;
- Students need to be mentored during WIL placements so that problems are resolved quickly and opportunities for learning are fully exploited; and
- Monitoring and reporting are necessary for effective WIL implementation and compliance with DHET requirements.

Care in the planning and implementation of the programme is therefore key to its success. For instance, effective delivery of WIL requires strong and mutually beneficial partnerships between institutions of education and training and with local employers. In an investigation of work-based placements in the engineering sector at mining schools (including the Universities of Johannesburg, Witwatersrand, Pretoria and UNISA), the commitment of universities to collaborate with other relevant stakeholders in the intervention was found to play an important role in the successful provision of WIL (Maseko, 2018).

Rodriguez et al. (2016) maintain that quality WIL pedagogy should be designed to maximise impact in student outcomes. The content of the programme should thus be developed with the aim of advancing students' career awareness, career exploration, career preparation and career training. It is for this reason that Wedekind (2016) argues that the experiential components of the interventions need to be properly thought through and integrated with other parts of the curriculum.

Whilst the above discussion demonstrates that the relationship between employers and colleges is of critical importance to the success of the intervention, care should be taken to ensure that both the employer and the institution perspectives are considered in a well-balanced manner. Notably, Rambe (2018) cautions that there is much focus on improving learning outcomes without much attention being given to the nature and process of development of educational content. Peacock and Ladkin (2002) posit that employers must be involved in the training design and curriculum development. Rodrigues and colleagues (2016) argue that the main element which is central to successful programmes is having strong alignment between classroom-based learning and workplace experiences and learning.

A review of learner outcomes in SA noted the need for a well-developed curriculum for classroom-based learning which is integrated with WBL; this was emphasised as key to the success of WIL (Arends et al., 2016). A further finding was that the role of the employer in ensuring an effective induction of the learner into the workplace and a well-structured mentorship programme was key to the successful outcome of the WIL. Of relevance for SETAs was the recommendation in this study that SETA offices in colleges could play a useful role in facilitating greater interaction and cooperation between TVET colleges and UoTs and employers (Arends et al., 2016)..

It is posited that these partnerships will assist with the recruitment of learning and enhancing employability, promoting continued training and development of the workforce and improving the existing skills base. At the same time, this assists in the development of products and process development and technology transfer to boost academic development.

3.5.2 Implementation of bursary interventions: Lessons from the literature

State funding to increase access to higher education for beneficiaries from low-income households has been in practice in developed countries such as USA and UK for decades (Callender & Wilkinson, 2013). Similarly, in SA, it is found that learners without bursaries had to raise student loans via banks, but that many would not qualify to receive a loan and as a result were denied access to higher education (Naidoo & Mckay, 2018). However, the study found that the bursary-targeting mechanism – which appeared to focus mainly on how ‘needy’ the applicant was, without due consideration to the performance of the learner – had resulted in money being spent on learners whose academic performance was very poor.

There is rich literature in England which has sought to explore the impact of bursaries as a tool of promoting wider participation by traditionally underrepresented groups in higher education. Universities have been found to be using bursaries as competitive marketing tools, as opposed to fulfilling the primary purpose of widening access (Harrison et al., 2018). Harrison and Hatt (2012, p. 708) introduce the concept of “ossification by status”, where elite universities offer higher-value bursaries compared to low-status institutions.

Callender, Wilkinson and Hopkin (2013) found that as part of financial considerations, bursaries had failed to influence students’ choices between universities or the decision to enter higher education. Several reasons have been put forward for this, including: 1) students not being aware of the extent of benefits before joining the programme, thus making it impossible to influence their choice; 2) choice of university and degree programmes are academically driven processes, and bursaries only play a small role in this regard; and 3) that students’ sensitivity to financial incentives has been overestimated.

It is for these reasons that Harrison and colleagues argue for a broader conceptualisation of participation in HEIs, which is beyond simple access, to include the nature of student experience and the impact on the

retention and academic outcomes (Harrison et al., 2018). They concluded (Harrison et al., 2018, p, 693) by saying that although evidence of the impact of bursary offerings on choices and enrolments is limited, nonetheless:

'bursaries do provide a lubricating resource that enables students to craft an individual experience with features that are likely to support success and retention, by strengthening social networks. Reducing anxiety and raising motivation as well as improving access to the formal and informal curriculum.'

Therefore, given evidence from England and elsewhere, there is limited evidence demonstrating that bursaries significantly impact on student decisions. Harrison and Hatt (2012) argue that students from lower socioeconomic groups remain significantly less likely to move away from their home areas, limiting the number of universities available to them. Anxiety about social comfort continues to act as a barrier to progression to elite universities. Callender et al. (2013) found that students from non-traditional backgrounds are discouraged from applying for elite universities due to fear of debt, and rather elect to enrol in local universities.

In England Moriarty et al. (2012) conducted a study focused on a social work bursary scheme which was introduced in 2003 as a financial incentive to encourage students to pursue social work-related fields. One of the key findings was that bursary incentives were perceived as insufficient to meet the student's needs. Furthermore, students were found to be highly motivated particularly if obtaining a qualification was likely to result in a promotion or a pay increase. However, in general the bursary intervention did increase numbers of enrolments, and supported students from disadvantaged backgrounds who otherwise would not have been able to pursue studies in the field of social work.

Encouraging evidence from a South African study shows a high absorption of NSFAS-funded higher education graduates, with about 90% chance of graduates becoming employed, but low graduation rates (Wildschut et al., 2017). However, gender, race and university type continue to be significant predictors of the likelihood of labour market absorption.

In South Africa, the DHET (2010, 2012, 2013) Delivery agreement for outcome 5 recognises the use of NSFAS as an instrument to facilitate the provision of financial aid to academically eligible and financially disadvantaged students. NSFAS is available to all South African citizens who are registered at a public South African HEI, i.e. university or TVET college, for their first post-school qualification who meet the means test, which requires that the learners are from households with incomes of less than R350 000 per annum (Garrod & Wildschut, 2020). Since 2018, the scheme has provided a complete bursary for the full cost of study (fees, and university or college residence) and applicable allowances for food, travel, books, and accommodation (for those not residing in the university or college residence). Furthermore, NSFAS provides targeted bursaries to specific programmes like the Funza Lushaka Bursary for students pursuing a teaching qualification, the Department of Social Development bursary for students studying social work, as well as other SETA bursaries which are targeted to grow sectoral priority skills.

Encouraging empirical evidence demonstrates the positive impact of the funding scheme on student access, and success in PSET (Bhorat & Pillay, 2017; Villiers et al., 2013). The scheme has been successful in improving opportunities for students from historically disadvantaged backgrounds to get higher education (Bhorat & Pillay, 2017). In 2019, NSFAS funded more than 550 000 students at TVET colleges and universities, with the main beneficiaries being Black African students. For instance, in 2012 the racial composition of beneficiaries was as follows: 91% African, 4% Coloured, 1.5% Indian, and 3% White. With respect to labour market

outcomes, Wildschut, Rogan, and Mncwango (2020) found a high labour market absorption rate of NSFAS-funded graduates. However, beneficiaries achieve low graduation rates. Specifically, results showed that NSFAS-funded graduates have about a 90% chance of becoming employed. Yet gender, race and university type continue to be significant predictors of the overall likelihood of labour market absorption.

The Skills Development Act (No. 97 of 1998) encourages public service employers to budget at least 1% of payroll for the training and education of employees. In correspondence, the NDP (National Planning Commission, 2012) aims to improve the quality of education, skills development and innovation through the provision of loans and bursaries to upgrade the qualifications, knowledge, skills and abilities of students and employees.

3.5.3 Implementation of learnership interventions: Lessons from the literature

With the NDP (National Planning Commission, 2012) seeking to address skills development as well as the gap between the current education and training provided and the needs of the labour market, the Skills Development Act supports the notion through the provision of learnerships using a SETA, provided the learnership will include practical work experience of a specified nature, as well as lead to a qualification related to an occupation.

Learnerships have been identified as key policy instruments for enhancing employability, particularly among youth in SA. Implementation of learnerships which combine theoretical instruction with practical experience have been implemented across the African continent, although not on the scale implemented in SA (Rankin et al., 2014). These have been seen to enhance early labour market transitions, although the benefits have been seen to diminish over time. The imperative driving its implementation in SA was the strong correlation between unemployment and the low skills of the workforce. In SA it was found that larger firms (200–999 employees) are more likely to participate in a SETA-accredited learnership programme (40%), compared to smaller firms (10–19 employees), with only 13% participating. It also found that firms with larger numbers of low-skilled workers (85%) were less likely to participate in a SETA-funded intervention compared with firms where 65% of the staff were low-skilled. It was also found that workers who participated in a learnership were more likely to find employment immediately after completion of the training intervention (Rankin et al., 2014).

An HSRC learnerships study (Wildschut et al., 2012) found that participants reported enhancement of skills levels, particularly soft skills such as teamwork and confidence. The findings also confirmed that completion of a learnership was a strong indicator of employment as a successful impact. Interestingly, the study found that once learners had secured employment, they stayed in it, while those who did not secure employment moved on to further studies. Similar findings were reported for students who participated in an FP&M learnership where the growth of financial skills, soft skills and personal development skills and improved attitudes towards life were reported (FP&M SETA, 2014). More recently an INSETA study noted that students who found employment through a learnership reported having gained analytical and business skills. Unemployed students also reported improvements in their soft and technical skills (INSETA, 2020b).

In terms of types of employers, the study noted that learners were being absorbed into the formal sector, and then mainly by large private and government sector employers. The study also tracked migration of learners after completion of the learnership, finding a net migration away from the Eastern Cape, Limpopo and North West provinces, which are among the poorer provinces in SA. In respect of net in- migration, the study found movement towards Gauteng followed by the Western Cape.

Interestingly, the study compared the employment outcomes of two sets of learners, namely the 18.1 group being employed learners, and the 18.2 group being unemployed learners. The findings revealed slight differences between the two groups: the 18.1 group had 89% experience of a single transition into employment, while the 18.2 group had 84% experience of such a transition (Wildschut et al., 2012).

A concern was noted that learnerships appeared to be concentrated closer to the metros and in more affluent provinces, with almost 60% of all learnerships being found in GP, WC and KZN. Hence while the impact of such programmes is promising, the failure to reach populations most in need was noted. It was recommended that the targeting should increasingly be focused on women, with low socioeconomic status, who are African, with low educational levels and in low-status occupations and sectors (Kruss et al., 2014).

3.5.4 Implementation of Internships: Lessons from the Literature

Internships as an instrument for learning and skills development have been identified as valuable experiential-based learning which, if appropriately implemented, can be participative, interactive, ensure contact with the environment and involve students in evaluating their experience. Internships involve three stakeholders, namely the learner, the assigned mentor and the organisation within which the learner is placed (Madiba, 2015). Evidence highlights the benefits of internships as implemented in the United Kingdom (Ismail, 2018) as including:

- Development of soft skills such as interpersonal skills;
- Institutional learning and practical work develop technical and problem-solving skills;
- Ability to develop communication and teamwork skills;
- Internships increase the probability of securing employment and have a positive effect on earnings;
- Internships are less likely to promote postgraduate studies; and
- Interns provide labour to companies at a reduced cost and reduce the recruitment and training costs of companies.

A critical component of an internship is that of mentorship. An extensive body of research suggests that effective mentoring requires that the mentor has both the time and the understanding of their role as a mentor, especially the ability to provide regular and continuous feedback and guidance (Ismail, 2018). However, Madiba (2015) raises the problematic point that the socio-psychological issues relating to mentoring are undervalued and overlooked, and as a result they impact negatively on the transfer of skills and knowledge. He further argues that despite extensive legislation in SA to address racial discrimination, what is required is for organisational culture to change – and legislative measures only contribute in part to achieving this.

Internship programmes are usually targeted at learners who have completed their studies and require workplace experiential learning in order to receive their qualification. A CATHSSETA study noted that significant differences existed between employer expectations of the requisite skills set of the learner and those which the learner possessed. This was specifically with respect to learners' capacity towards customer orientation and to satisfy their needs, and the ability to be proactive. Employers noted that the CATHSSETA-funded interventions were not meeting the specific needs of this tourism and people-oriented sector. It was recommended that the prior classroom-based learning should thus integrate the development of learners' soft skills and work ethic into the curriculum (Zwane et al., 2014).

An assessment of internship programmes implemented in Pakistan found that these had a positive effect on skills development and labour market access. The study noted that the strength of these programmes was

the post-completion evaluation of the internship by the learners, as a means of giving learners a voice in shaping future programmes. It did, however, also identify two core weaknesses: lack of coordination between the company and the academic supervisor, and lack of feedback by the company to the interns and academic supervisors (Ismail, 2018).

3.6 Employment Outcomes of Skills and Learning Interventions

This section summarises findings from the literature review of Tracer and Evaluation Studies undertaken in respect of SETA-funded learning interventions in the last decade. The key outcome tracked was the employment outcome of learners who had participated.

Table 10: Employment outcomes of SETA-funded learning interventions comparing % unemployed at the start and after programme

SETA	Programme type	Year completed	% of unemployed at the start of the programme	% employed after the programme
ETDP SETA (ETDP SETA, 2017a)	Learnerships, Internships, bursaries, RPL and Matric	2017/18	100%	37%
HWSETA *(A Wildschut et al., 2017)	Summative Evaluation of the Ancillary Health Care Qualification and its Associated Skills Programmes	2012	73%	32%
HWSETA *	Bursaries, Internships and Learnerships	2014/15	100%	52%
HWSETA *	Learnerships	2014/2015	**	19% (95)
HWSETA *	All programmes	NSDS 3 period (2011-2016)	100%	63%
INSETA *	Learnerships	2010-2016	64%	81%
INSETA *	Learnerships	2016/2017	**	58% of the previous unemployed (189) 86% of employed (138)
FASSET (FASSET, 2013)	Work Readiness Programmes (WRPs)	2010-2015	73%	69%
FASSET *	Learnerships	2015	**	90%
TETA*	Apprenticeships, internships, Learnerships and Bursary	2010-2014	46%	72%
TETA *	Artisans, Bursaries, Internships, Learnerships	2011/2012-2013/2014	**	72% (1 318)
CATHSETA (CATHSETA, n.d.)	National Certificate in Fitness (NQF Level 5) and the Further Education and Training Certificate in Sport Administration	2011-2015	59%	70% (48 140))
MICT SETA*	Learnerships, Internships, Learnerships and skills programmes	2011/2012-2015/2016	82%	54%
FP&M SETA (FP&M SETA, 2014)	Learnerships, Apprenticeships and Bursaries	2011/12-2012/13-2013/2014	**	6 247
Bank SETA (BANKSETA, 2017)	Impact assessment	2011-2016	**	26% (5,559)
LGSETA*	Learnerships	2011/2012-2013/2014	**	83% (1,681)
merSeTA (merSETA, 2016)	Apprenticeships	2012/2013	**	80% (408)
merSETA (merSETA, 2016)	Learnerships and apprenticeships	2012-2013	**	83% (1,030)
SASSETA (SASSETA, 2019)	Learnerships, Apprenticeships, Internships	2015/2016-2017/2018	**	**340

SASSETA (SASSETA, 2019)	Learnerships	2014/2015- 2016/2017	**	32%
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Source: Adapted from A Wildschut et al. (2017)*; NSDSIII evaluation report 2011-2016; SASSETA (2019) *** denotes- not available

The important issue to note about those studies which reviewed several learning interventions is that the employment rate within the learning interventions varied from each other, although importantly all have contributed to positive employment outcomes. The lack of available data from some studies and disaggregated data by the type of intervention implemented also makes it impossible to compare outcomes between different types of interventions. Evidence suggests that bursary holders appeared to have the strongest employment outcomes out of the interventions.

3.7 Implementation of Tracer Studies

The review included an assessment of methodologies and sampling outcomes of various tracer studies conducted both within and external to the SETA environment. Tracer studies have been employed to investigate what outcomes are being realised through the implementation of skills development interventions.

Table 11 provides an overview of data collection methods used as well as the response rates achieved for each of the studies. In many of the studies it was noted that while face-to-face data collection is clearly the ideal, the costs of this are likely to be prohibitive and hence most of the studies conducted have used postal, online and telephonic survey approaches. As can be seen, the response rates vary with the evidence suggesting that the response rates were lower than if conducted face to face.

Table 11: Response rates on Tracer Studies conducted in South Africa and Globally

Tracer studies	Title	Purpose	Year Completed	Response rate
International Centre for Higher Education Research (Schomburg & Teichler, 2006)	Higher Education and Graduate Employment in Europe: Results from Graduate Surveys in 12 countries	To track the outcome of graduates 4 years after graduation in 12 countries in Europe and Japan. Online survey conducted.	2006	Overall response rate of 39%. However, disaggregated by country it varied from 50% in Norway to 15% in Spain
UCT (Bhorat et al., 2012)	Graduate Exit Survey	To assess job-seeking behaviour, employment status, and satisfaction with the HEI. Conducted face to face at graduation ceremony	2012	51%
ETDP (ETDP SETA, 2017a)	ETDP SETA Phase 1 Study Report	To trace beneficiaries of two ETDP SETA-funded programmes offered between 2011 and 2016 to assess relevance and usefulness of the programmes for beneficiaries and institutions.	Completed 2017	51%
ETDP (ETDP-SETA, 2018)	ETDP SETA Phase 2 Study Report	To determine the effectiveness of SETA programmes targeted to HEIs and TVETs implemented between 2011-2015	Completed 2018	21%
ETDP (ETDP SETA, 2017b)	ETDP SETA Phase 3 Study Report	To determine the effectiveness of SETA programmes targeted to constituency organisations implemented between 2011-2015	Completed 2018	56%
ETDP (ETDP SETA, n.d.-a)	An Impact Assessment of teacher and principal training programmes offered by KZN Dept of Education	To determine the impact of SETA programmes targeted to principals and educators implemented between 2011-2015	Completed	28% to 59%

Tracer studies	Title	Purpose	Year Completed	Response rate
FASSET (Fasset, 2015)	Learning Programme Success Access into employment - learner tracer study	To determine the impact of programmes on learners and employers To monitor learner progress after completion of the programme National survey of graduate destinations using Labour Force data for 1995 and 2005	Completed 2015	74% Bonani Programme and 26% Thusani Programme Analysis of secondary data
DPRU (Bhorat et al., 2012) HSRC (Letseka et al., 2005)	Student Retention and Graduate Destination Survey	This was a survey of dropouts and graduates in 2003 in 7 selected HEIs across SA. HEIs were selected by location (urban/rural) as well as historical advantage This was a postal survey	Completed 2005	16%
BANKSETA (BANKSETA, 2017)	Impact Assessment	To determine the impact of BANKSETA interventions.	Completed 2016	17% response rate (5 559 out of 32 251)
LGSETA (LGSETA, 2015)	Tracer Survey of Beneficiaries that completed a Learning Programme funded by the LGSETA between 2011/12 and 2013/14	To ascertain whether the programme improved skills and knowledge for employed beneficiaries; whether the programme facilitated access to and entry into careers within the sector for those beneficiaries who were unemployed; and whether the programme facilitated access to and entry into self-employment.	Completed 2015	32%
IQ Business SETA, 2014)	A Tracking and Tracing study of the impact of learnerships, apprenticeships and bursaries	Impact assessment of Learnerships, Apprenticeships and Bursaries:	Completed 2014	25% for learnerships 28% for apprenticeships

Source: Adapted from Wildschut et al., 2017; ETDPA SETA, 2016, 2017 & 2018

3.8 Conclusion

The literature review was aimed at understanding the body of evidence with respect to the implementation of skills programmes, particularly as they relate to the SETA-funded learning interventions. The aim was to identify learnings which are relevant to the research questions which the study is seeking to explore. The significance of the literature review is summarised briefly in this conclusion.

Key findings from the literature review regarding the destination outcomes of learners are:

- Employment outcomes vary greatly by type of learning intervention, with university learning being strongly rewarded in the labour market.
- The literature highlights trends in outcomes disaggregated by race and gender, with employment outcomes being lower for women and Black people.
- Although race is a significant determinant of graduation and employment outcomes, it did not appear to have an impact on earning differentials.
- TVET training appears to be a stepping-stone to other types of education and training.
- A smaller cohort of beneficiaries pursued further education.

Key findings in respect of implementation of tracer studies are:

- Methodologies appear to be largely survey-oriented, with a few encompassing mixed methods.
- Few studies combined learner surveys with employer surveys.
- Databases of learners were of varying quality, and that this impacted on achieving better response rates.
- The use of telephonic surveys was found to be beneficial to achieving higher response rates.
- The articulation of theories of change in the design and analysis of tracer studies.

The literature review contributed to the development of the theoretical and conceptual framework for understanding STWT in respect of this study. It made it clear that the pathways through which change has occurred are nuanced and not linear. Interestingly, only a few studies utilised the ToC as a key component of the methodology, which unpacks assumptions with respect to the pathways through which change has been achieved. Its value has been in articulating these assumptions which it was intended would be tested drawing on the study findings. Importantly, the literature review validated the key indicators as identified in the ToC, to be measured in this study

The literature review has also informed and affirmed the nature of the questions which were included in both the learner and the employer surveys. It also provided a lens for the gendered analysis of the findings, given the key focus of the NSDS III on achieving gender equity objectives.

4 Methodology

4.1 Aims and objectives of the Track and Trace Study

As outlined in the Terms of Reference (ToR), the aim of this study is to provide the ETDP SETA with information regarding the outcomes for learners who have completed one of the five learning interventions. In addition, the study will document key features, trends and challenges arising from implementation of the learning interventions:

- To understand, explore and document key features, trends, challenges and outcomes of the skills interventions in the ETDP sectors.
- To assist in further developing a sustainable skills development strategy for the ETDP SETA, which will contribute positively to the ETDP sector and promote inclusive economic growth in the country.
- The primary focus of the study is to understand the outcomes of programmes through the tracking and tracing of learners supported by the SETA.
- To determine whether a programme is achieving its mission and assist in demonstrating the programme's outcomes, by assessing the following:
 - Employment status (employed, self-employed and unemployed)
 - Employment rates
 - Nature of employment, in terms of employment sector or types of employment, for example:
 - Formal or informal
 - Tenure
 - Part time or full time
 - Contract or permanent
 - Salary levels
 - Benefits
 - Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF)
 - Pension
 - Medical aid
 - Allowances

The objectives of the study and scope of work necessary for the achievement of the study objectives are as outlined below:

- To gather data about the effectiveness and impacts of five skills/learning development interventions, namely learnerships, internships, bursaries, and WIL for UOTs and for TVETs. The reference period for the study is the 2015/16 to 2018/19 period. The impacts could be direct or indirect and intended or unintended.
- To understand the wider effects of these interventions – social, economic and technical – on individual beneficiaries.
- To generate evidence of key achievements and challenges to inform the decision-making process for senior management and accounting authority on programme delivery mechanisms and how these can be improved in future on order to ensure sustainability.
- To determine the nature of employment of those learners who received employment.
- To pilot a survey of the perceptions of employers on the value of learnerships, WIL and internships.

4.1.1 Evaluation Questions

The ToR outlined the questions listed below which the study needed to explore. These were reviewed against the study objectives:

- **What are the destinations of students who completed?**
 - Are they employed?
 - Are they not working?
 - Are they studying further?
- **If employed:**
 - Where are they employed (name of the company/organisation)?
 - What is their occupation?
 - Has there been a change in jobs since completing the learning programme?
 - After the programme, has there been a difference in rank/post level?
 - Are they employed full time or part time and temporary or on contract?
 - What are their wages?
 - What benefits and allowances are they getting?
- **If not in employment, why?**
 - Are they studying full time?
 - Are they looking for employment?
 - Are they ill?
 - Are they looking after parents, siblings?

4.1.2 Scope of work

Underpinned by the HSRC's understanding of the ToR, the following core activities, which constitute the scope of work, were identified:

- Conduct a scoping exercise to assess the state of the ETDP SETA's programme data and data systems;
- Construct an implicit ToC in respect of each of the five learning interventions implemented by the ETDP SETA in consultation with ETDP SETA officials;
- Develop a logic framework for the interventions informed by the Theories of Change;
- Undertake a desktop review of ETDP SETA documentation;
- Undertake a systematic literature review of academic and grey literature on the interventions being evaluated within the context of a post-school education and training system.
- Design and test instruments for data collection with learners and current employers;
- Conduct telephonic interviews with a sample of learners with a 40–60% response rate;
- Conduct telephonic interviews with a sample of 20 employers;
- Deliver interview data in Excel format for both learners and employers;
- Produce a draft and final comprehensive Track and Trace Study report;
- Present preliminary and results of the evaluation to relevant forums, as identified by the ETDP SETA.

4.2 Determining an acceptable sample size

Two sampling statistics that have an impact on the sample size are the **margin of error** and the **confidence level**. These are important if there is a desire to extrapolate the results across the total population of beneficiaries inclusive of the intervention type and the year of completion. The margin of error is simply the amount of error that we are willing to tolerate, with a **lower margin of error requiring a larger sample size**. The confidence level is the amount of uncertainty we can accept, with **higher levels requiring larger samples**. The adoption of a sampling approach is determined by the study objectives and available data on the total population of a study as well as access to that population.

For this study, this sampling approach does not apply as the total population of the ETDP SETA learners for the five learning interventions during the period 2015 to 2019 was included. The details in respect of how the study population was arrived at and managed for the study are elaborated on in Section 4.6 of this report.

4.3 Theory-based evaluation

The HSRC proposed a theory-based mixed methodology for the study. The proposal was for the review process to be underpinned by a theory-based design, which would seek to understand the causal through which change is expected to occur. This approach placed emphasis on detailing the assumptions on which the intervention logic is premised.

It was recognised that a ToC did not exist for the five learning interventions, and that this would require a retrospective reconstruction of the ToCs as a key initial phase of the study. The objective of this exercise was to reconstitute the ToC that captures the causal that lead to the goal intent of the SETA's five interventions. A secondary objective of the ToC reconstruction exercise would be to align the questions in the survey instrument for learners which the ETDP SETA shared, to ensure that they captured the indicators in the ToC adequately and facilitated collection of appropriate evidence.

Through a participative process involving stakeholders from the ETDP SETA across provincial and national directorates, a ToC and results log chain in respect of each of the five learning interventions was developed. A detailed Theory of Change and Results Framework Report is attached as Annexure 1.

In the section that follows, the narrative Theory of Change for each of the five interventions is presented.

4.4 Reconstructed Theory of Change narratives in respect of the five learning interventions

4.4.1 Theory of Change: Bursaries narrative statement

The bursaries Theory of Change is defined by a series of causal pathways that show the rationale for the intervention as articulated in the problem statement, that is:

- Poor supply of skilled workers in scarce occupations and skills in the sector, which negatively impacts the productivity of firms, which in turn affects the country's economic growth.
- Skills shortages in the sector and the country.
- Lack of funding for skills development.
- Lack of participation for previously disadvantaged individuals in the economy due to access issues in post-school education and training.

If ETDP SETA invests its resources into the development of systems, guidelines and a supportive skills development institutional framework, then it will be **able to implement the BURSARY programme**, which will in turn provide opportunities for workers and the unemployed in the sector. It will allow them to enter further education and gain qualifications in scarce and critical skills. This will increase the supply of skills to scarce occupations and the number of people accessing higher education and vocational training from previously disadvantaged backgrounds. This will lead to a reduction in the shortage of qualified and skilled people in the workforce, and an increase in the number of unemployed people in post-school education. This will eventually contribute to better service delivery, higher productivity, and skilled youth in the ETD sector, whilst encouraging lifelong learning, and increasing access to jobs for different groups, such as women and the disabled.

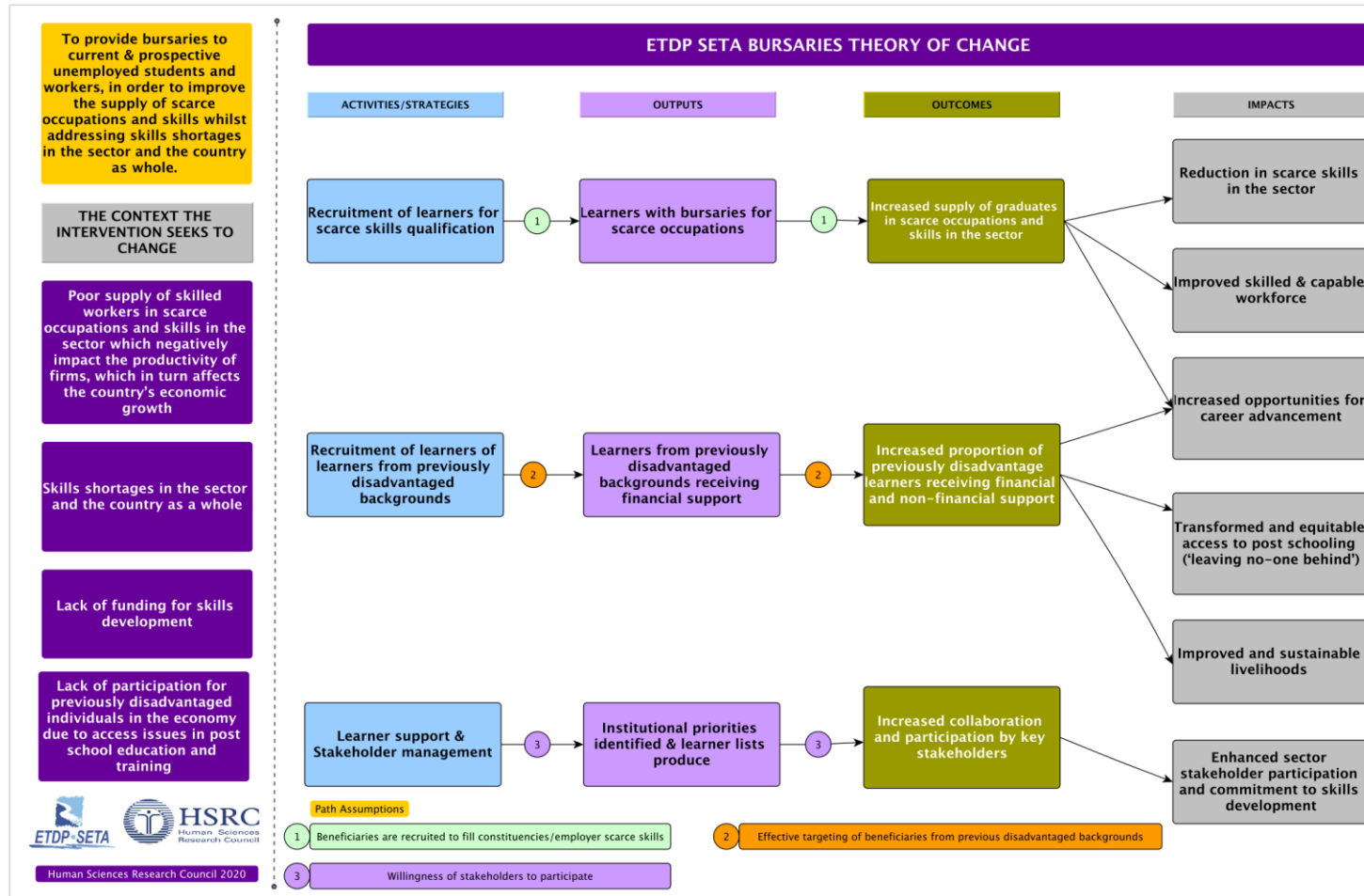
4.4.1.1 Intervention hypothesis – Bursary programme

In the context of the intervention Theory of Change, the following hypothesis can be framed:

ETDP SETA's bursary interventions enable beneficiaries who cannot afford further education to:

- Acquire new or enhanced skills and competencies to meet the demand for scarce and critical skills;
and
- Gain access to new or enhanced employment or self-employment opportunities.

Figure 7: Theory of Change for Bursaries



4.4.2 Theory of Change: Learnerships narrative statement

The learnerships Theory of Change is defined by a series of causal pathways that show the rationale for the intervention, as articulated in the problem statement, that is:

- Young unemployed people lack appropriate qualifications and/or relevant practical skills for employment.
- Employed workers lack career mobility and progression in the workplace due to lack of qualifications (for the employed).
- Lack of employment opportunities (for the unemployed).
- Lack of structured learning in workplaces.

Theory of Change Narrative

If ETDP SETA invests its resources into the development of systems, guidelines and a supportive skills development institutional framework, then it will be **able to implement the LEARNERSHIP programme**. This will allow learners who cannot afford full-time study, and those that cannot afford to be on a learning programme that is not directly (or practically) related to their field of work, to further their post-school education towards an NQF qualification. This will increase their knowledge and work experience in a cost-effective way, that empowers them with relevant skills. This will lead to an increase in the number of learners with job-ready skills and competencies, which in turn will enhance their opportunities for career mobility, and progression in the workplace, due to the acquired qualifications. This will lead to an overall improvement in the qualifications of the workforce, with increased earning capacity and sustained employment.

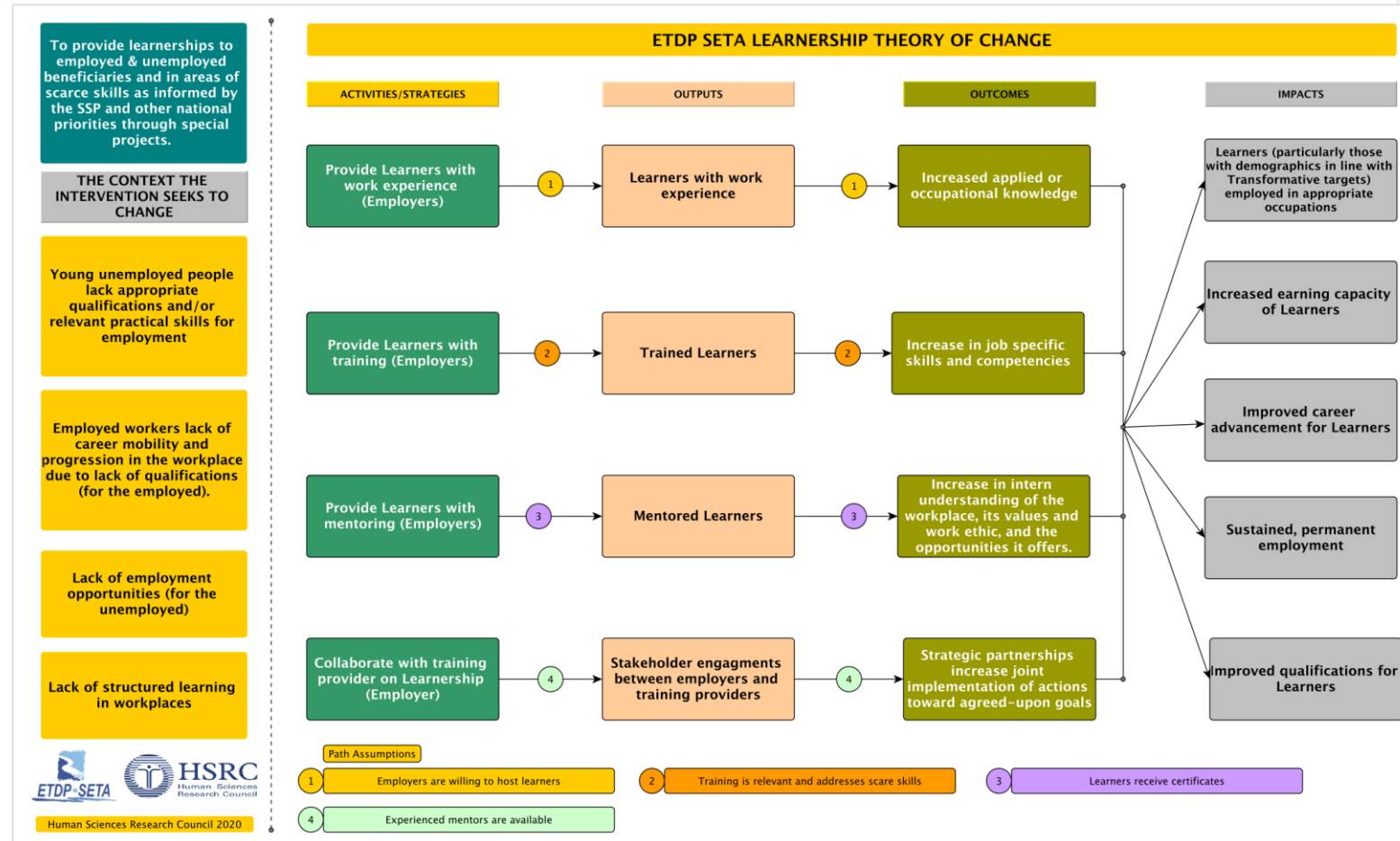
4.4.2.1 Intervention hypothesis – Learnerships

In the context of the intervention Theory of Change, the following hypothesis can be framed:

ETDP SETA's learnership intervention enables beneficiaries who cannot afford full-time study, and those that cannot afford to be on a learning programme that is not directly (or practically) related to their field of work, to:

- Enhance their skills and qualifications in a way that meets the demand for scarce and critical skills; and
- Gain access to new or enhanced employment or self-employment opportunities, including the possibility of career mobility.

Figure 8: Theory of Change for Learnerships



4.4.3 Theory of Change: Internships narrative statement

The internships Theory of Change is defined by a series of causal pathways that show the rationale for the intervention, as articulated in the problem statement, that is:

- Lack of support for continuous development of graduates in the ETD sector for future appointment in the labour market.
- Lack of opportunities for young people who have completed their studies and are unemployed, to gain practical experience by applying what they have learnt in a real-life environment.
- Graduates lack employable skills.

Theory of Change Narrative

The rationale and logic of the ETDP SETA internship programme is underpinned by a Theory of Change that posits that If ETDP SETA invests its resources into the development of systems, guidelines and a supportive skills development institutional framework, then it will be able to **implement the Internship programme.** This will provide young people who have completed their studies, preferably in an area of scarce and critical skills, and are unemployed, with the opportunity to practice the work skills that they have studied, under a designated mentor. This will increase the number of unemployed graduates with practical real-life work skills, which in turn will increase their employability by employers who value “applied competence/occupational competence” (ability to work). This will increase the number of unemployed graduates supported and developed in the ETD sector, for future appointment in the labour market. This will lead to a reduction in the number of unemployed graduates and an improved level of qualified people in the South African workforce, whilst increasing the productivity of employers in the sector.

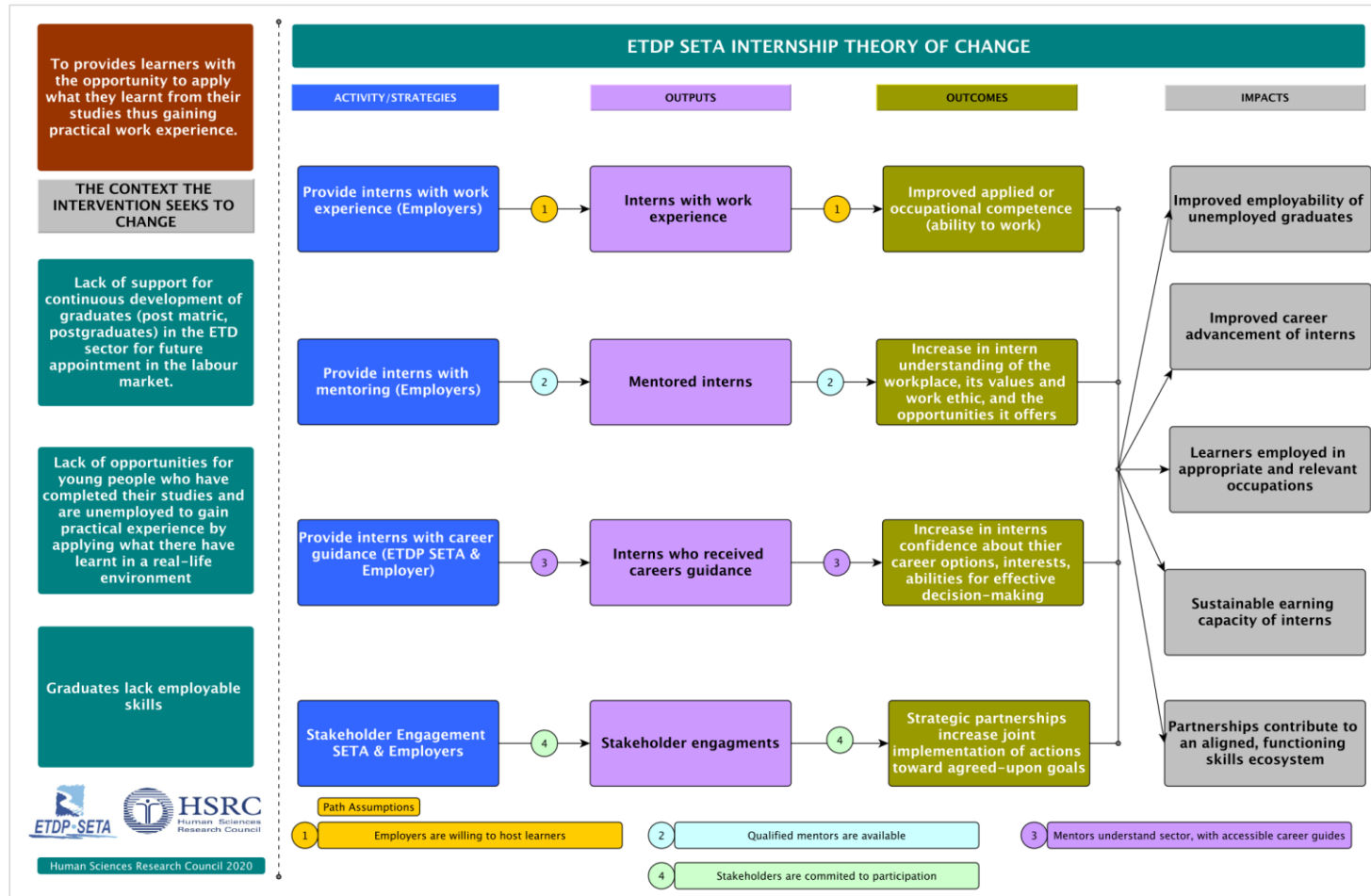
4.4.3.1 Intervention hypothesis – Internships

In the context of the intervention Theory of Change, the following hypothesis can be framed:

ETDP SETA’s internships intervention enables beneficiaries to –

- gain real-world work experience and competencies to meet the demand for scarce and critical skills, and
- Gain access to new or enhanced employment or self-employment opportunities.

Figure 9: Theory of Change for Internships



4.4.4 Theory of Change: WIL TVETs narrative statement

The WIL TVET Theory of Change is defined by a series of causal pathways. It shows the rationale for the intervention, as articulated in the problem statement, that is:

- TVET students in ETD sectors are not getting structured workplace experience/exposure.
- TVET students in ETD sectors are failing to fulfil the set curriculum requirements, and as such cannot achieve various qualifications.
- TVET students in ETD sectors face limited opportunities for employment or self-employment.

Theory of Change Narrative

If ETDP SETA invests its resources into the development of systems, guidelines and a supportive skills development institutional framework, then it will be **able to implement the WIL for TVET programme** by providing grants for work experience. This will allow learners in scarce and critical skills programmes to get experience by assisting them to find employment or preparing them to become self-employed. This will allow them to fulfil the work experience requirements of their **TVET** programmes, whilst increasing the supply of scarce and critical skills in the sector. This will increase the number of **TVET** students in ETDP sectors accessing structured workplace experience/exposure, and those achieving relevant qualifications. This will lead to enhanced competencies and skills in the sector and an improved level of qualified people in the South African workforce, whilst meeting the need for improved economic wellbeing and social development of the workforce.

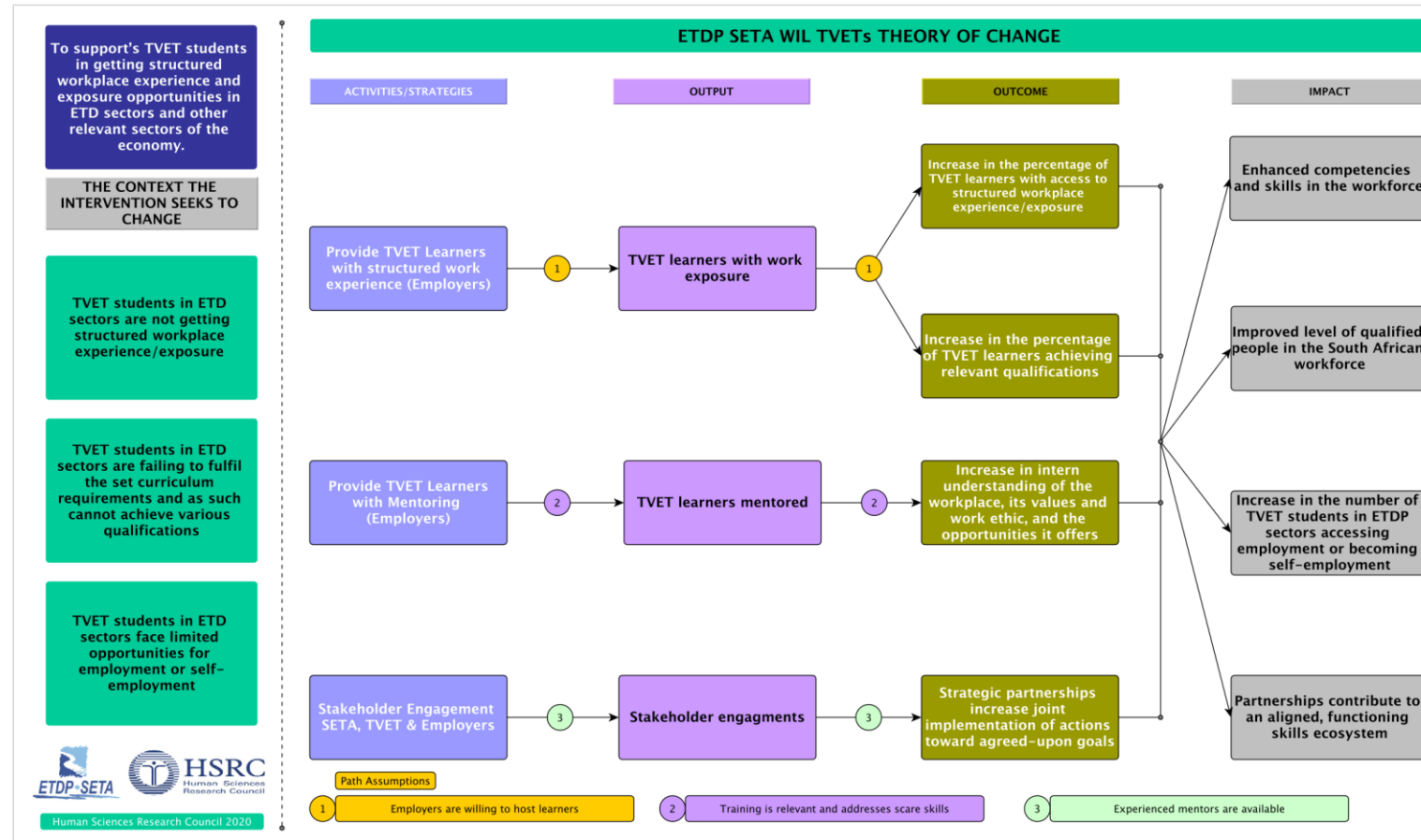
4.4.4.1 Intervention hypothesis – WIL TVETs

In the context of the intervention Theory of Change, the following hypothesis can be framed:

ETDP SETA's WIL for TVET intervention enables TVET learners to –

- fulfil the work experience requirements of their TVET programmes,
- enhance their skills and qualifications in a way that meets the demand for scarce and critical skills, and
- Gain access to new or enhanced employment or self-employment opportunities, including the possibility of career mobility.

Figure 10: Theory of Change for WIL TVETs



4.4.5 Theory of Change: WIL UoTs narrative statement

The WIL UoTs Theory of Change is defined by a series of causal pathways. The rationale for the intervention, as articulated in the problem statement, is that:

- UoT students in ETD sectors are not getting structured workplace experience/exposure.
- UoT students in ETD sectors are failing to fulfil the set curriculum requirements and as such cannot achieve various qualifications.
- UoT students in ETD sectors face limited opportunities for employment or self-employment.

Theory of Change Narrative

If ETDP SETA invests its resources into the development of systems, guidelines and a supportive skills development institutional framework, then it will be able to implement the WIL for UoT programme by providing grants for work experience. This will allow learners in scarce and critical skills programmes to get experience by assisting them to find employment or preparing them to become self-employed. This will allow them to fulfil the work experience requirements of their UoT programmes whilst increasing the supply of scarce and critical skills in the sector. This will increase the number of UoTs students in ETDP sectors accessing structured workplace experience/exposure and those achieving relevant qualifications. This will lead to enhanced competencies and skills in the sector and an improved level of qualified people in the South African workforce, whilst meeting the need for improved economic wellbeing and social development of the workforce.

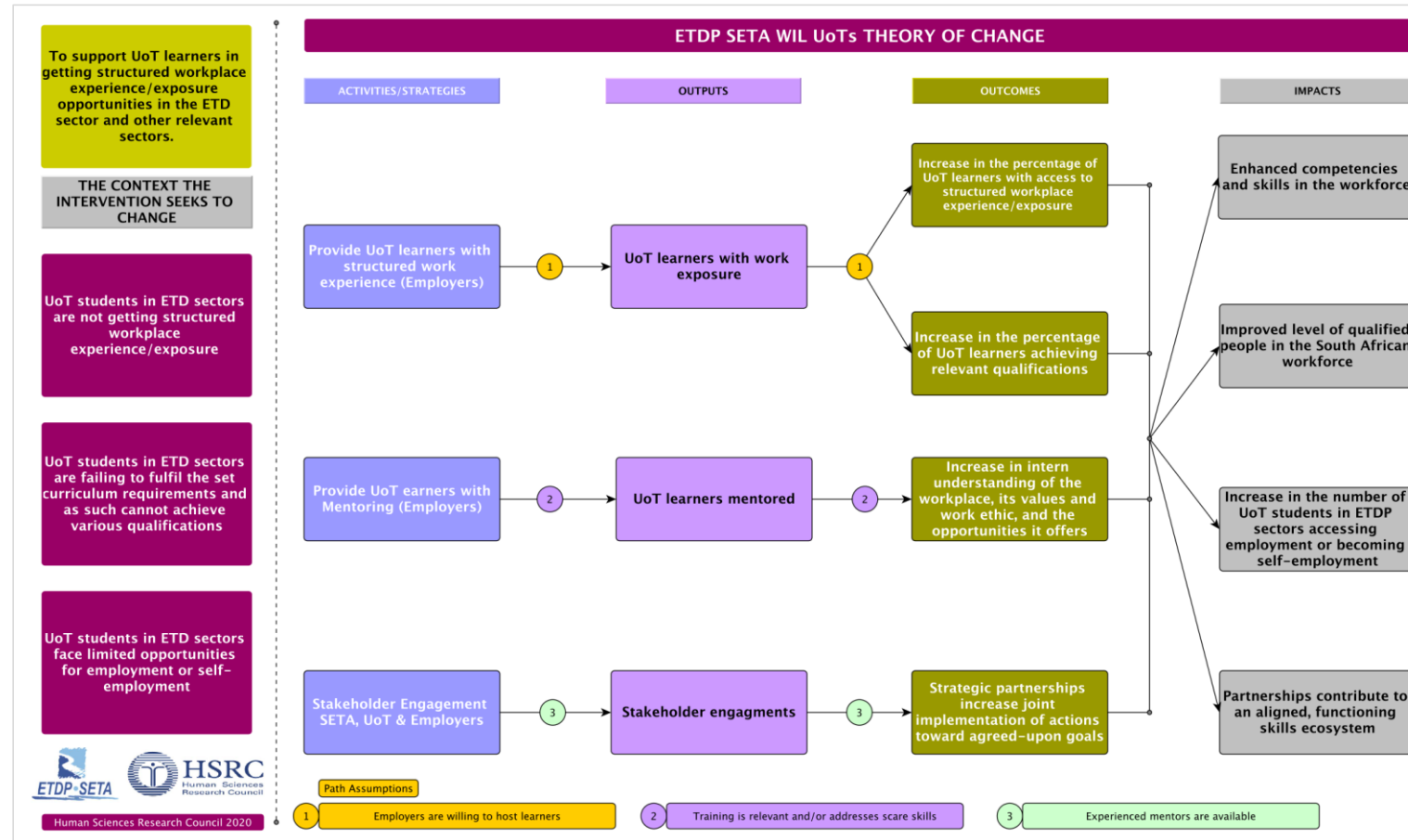
4.4.5.1 Intervention hypothesis – WIL UoTs

In the context of the intervention Theory of Change, the following hypothesis can be framed:

ETDP SETA's WIL for UoT intervention enables UoT learners to –

- fulfil their work experience requirements of their UoT programmes,
- enhance their skills and qualifications in a way that meets the demand for scarce and critical skills, and
- gain access to new or enhanced employment or self-employment opportunities, including the possibility of career mobility.

Figure 11: Theory of Change for WIL UoTs



4.4.6 Theory of Change for Employers

The Employer theory of change is articulated in the problem statement, that:

- Employers' needs are not addressed in respect of sourcing work ready and skilled workers;
- Employers are unable to fill vacancies in scarce and critical skills;
- Employers are unable to meet their employment equity targets with appropriately skilled workers.

Theory of Change Narrative

If ETDP SETA invests its resources into the development of systems, guidelines and a supportive skills development institutional framework, then it will be able to implement learning interventions which respond to employer needs. It will thus provide grants for skills development programmes implemented by employers, provide bursaries for upskilling workers, provide grants for work experience and link employers with workers requiring WBL opportunities. This will allow learners in scarce and critical skills programmes to acquire accredited skills and access WBL experience. This will allow employers to find a pool of work-ready and skilled workers, enable them to fill scarce and critical skills vacancies, enhance their middle and high-level management capabilities and enable them to meet their employment equity targets. This will lead to employers whose productivity is increased, reduced employment costs, a reduction in vacancies for scarce and critical skills in firms and an improved level of qualified people in the South African workforce. This in turn will contribute to economic growth and competitiveness of firms, whilst also contributing to improved economic wellbeing and social development of the workforce.

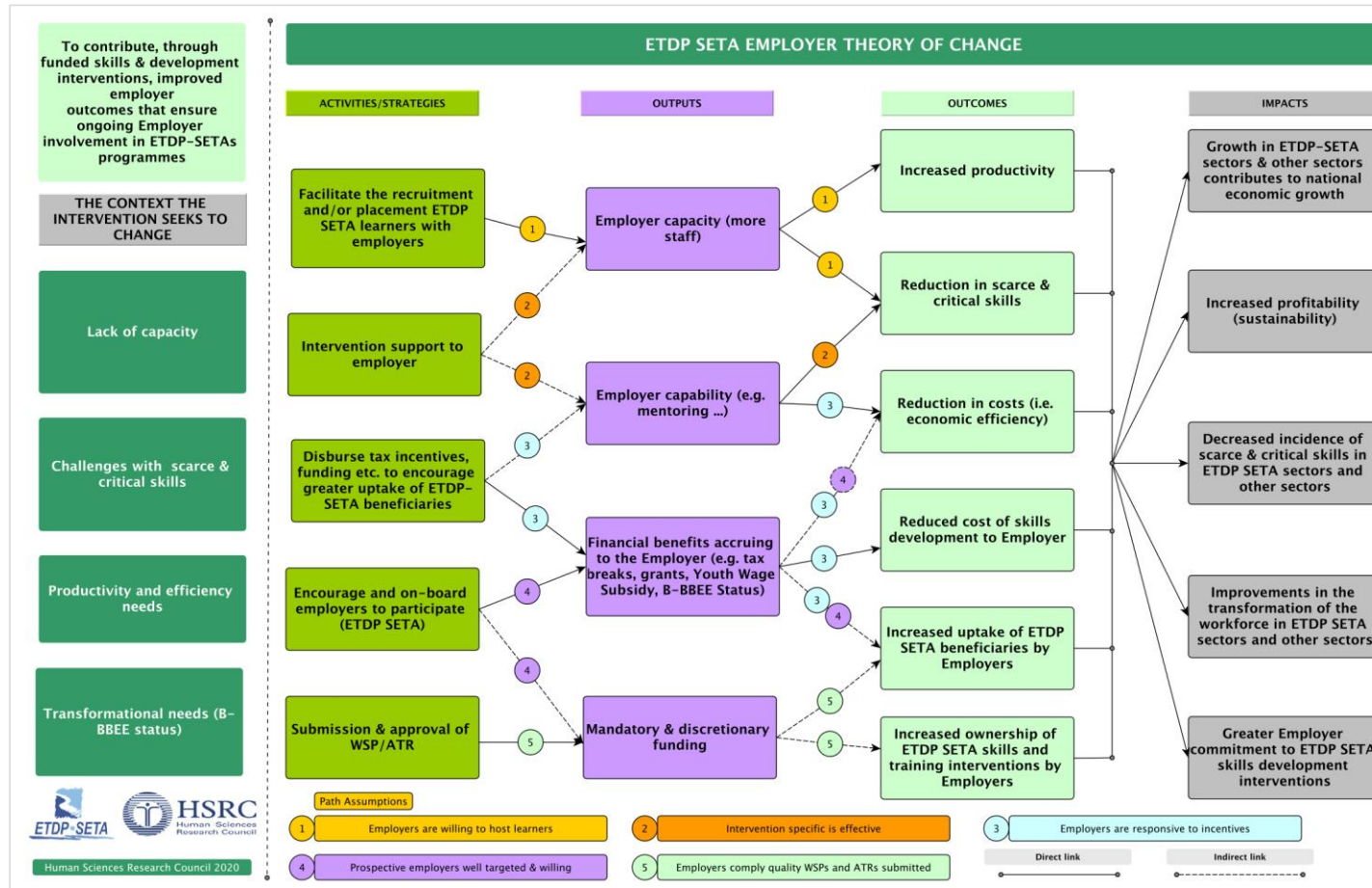
4.4.6.1 Intervention hypothesis – Employers

In the context of the intervention Theory of Change, the following hypothesis can be framed:

ETDP SETA's Learning and Skills development intervention enables Employers to –

- contribute to an improved level of qualified people in the workforce through increased uptake of ETDP SETA beneficiaries;
- fill their scarce and critical skills vacancies;
- reduce costs of employment and cost of skills development;
- enhance the level of skills amongst their employees, including middle and higher-levels skills and qualifications, in a way that meets the sector's demand for scarce and critical skills;
- promote the possibility of career mobility among the workforce;
- improved employer outcomes in terms of productivity and growth of the firm; and
- ensure ongoing employer involvement in ETDP SETA's programmes and therefore increased ownership of skills development by owners.

Figure 12: Theory of Change for Employer

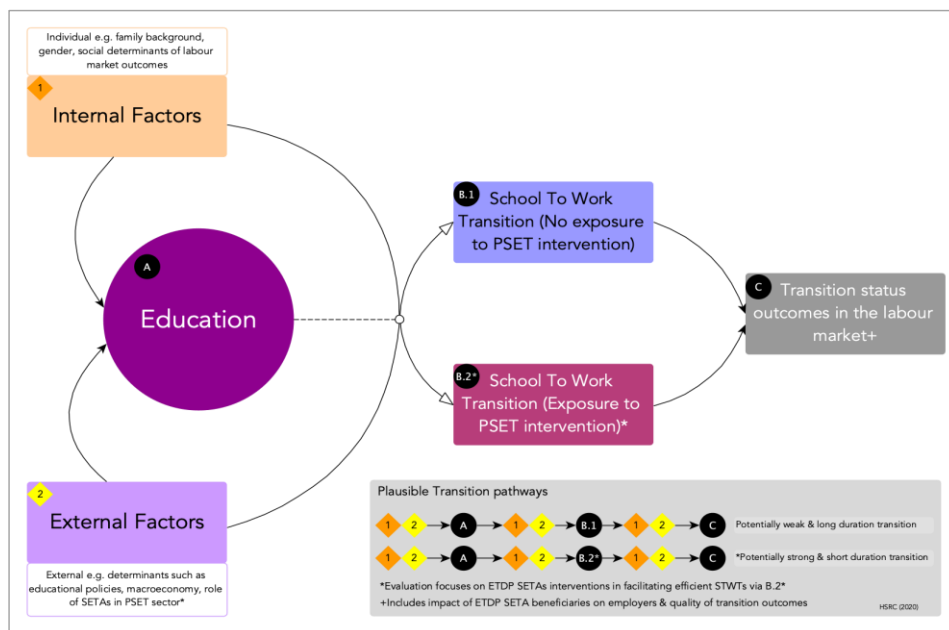


4.5 Analytical framework

For our analytical framework we built on the work of Nilsson (2019) and make several extensions to operationalise his conceptual framework (see Figure 2) as the lens through which the findings of this evaluation will be understood. Nilsson's framework has been purpose-built as a medium that can be used to highlight three components as a process of STWT in developing countries. It not only highlights the existence of the gap between education and targeted labour market outcomes that people transition to, it also emphasises that central to this broad relationship are internal and external factors that influence the duration and strength of the transition. We posit that given the SETA's role and impact through the quantum of expenditure in the PSET sector, there are two broad pathways that one can follow (Figure 13).

The SETA's interventions enter the STWT process as an external factor that is meant to enhance the efficacy of the transition. This path is represented by the **B.2*** pathway $\text{1-2} \rightarrow \text{A} \rightarrow \text{1-2} \rightarrow \text{B.2}^* \rightarrow \text{1-2} \rightarrow \text{C}$ in (Figure 13). At the same time, there will be individuals who transverse the STWT without exposure to a SETA intervention, as represented by the **B.1** pathway $\text{1-2} \rightarrow \text{A} \rightarrow \text{1-2} \rightarrow \text{B.1} \rightarrow \text{1-2} \rightarrow \text{C}$. The outcome of each pathway on the transition achieved will vary. From the foregoing and broader South African PSET and STWT literature, it can generally be hypothesised, ceteris paribus, that the **B.2*** pathway is potentially stronger and would lead to shorter duration of transition due to the SETA's intervention.

Figure 13: STWT analytical framework for the evaluation



Source: Authors, adapted from Nilsson (2019).

It should also be noted that the basic mechanisms built into the **B.2*** pathway are further expanded in the different intervention-specific theories of change. It is also important to note that throughout each pathway, internal and external factors continue to mediate their influence on the entire process. These factors are key

in helping us understand and contextualise the transitions achieved. For example, internal factors such as social networks might shorten the transition duration for some individuals via the **B.1** pathway, whilst for others socioeconomic background might constrain them from accessing post-schooling skills development and training; however, once exposed to these interventions via the **B.2*** pathway, external factors such as the macro economy, e.g. the ability to create enough jobs, might mitigate against a successful transition. Above and beyond the latter, the rationale of the SETAs is that the design of interventions confers certain benefits that would lead to a more efficient transition. It is this lens that will be used to add meaning to the findings from this study (Nilsson, 2019).

Table 12 maps the dimensions of assessment in the framework above to the indicators and evaluation questions, and ultimately to the evaluation study objectives.

Table 12: Dimensions of assessment and alignment to study objectives and evaluation questions

Dimension of assessment	Evaluation Questions ⁶	Link to which evaluation objective ^{7,8}	Indicators ⁹
Transition outcomes	What are destinations of students who completed?	A & D	Employment, Self-employed, Further studies, Unemployed status
Average duration of transition	Do people who receive training that is supported by the SETAs find jobs?	A & D	Period till first employment
Exposure to PSET	Does the training improve their chances of upward mobility or contribute in career pathing?	A, B, C, D, E	Changes in employment career status
Average duration of transition	Has there been a change in jobs since completing the learning intervention?	A, B, D, E	Change in learner outcomes – promotion, increased skills and competencies
Entry costs into the labour market	Are they employed full time or part time and is it temporary or contract?	D & E	Nature of employment secured
Entry costs into the labour market	What are their wages? What benefits and allowances do they receive?	D	Quality of employment: Wage rate Employment benefits
Gender differences	What empirical evidence is there of the socioeconomic impact of the various interventions on the lives of the beneficiaries as well as of employers?	A, B & E	Socioeconomic status of learner currently compared to reconstructed baseline
Family background			
Socioeconomic status			
Ethnicity			
Race			
Exposure to PSET	Do learners stay in those jobs, and is the training appropriately preparing them to function in that job?	B, D & E	Effectiveness of skills transfer
Reservation utilities (wage)	Are they studying full time and how has the previous learning contributed to this?	A & B	Nature of Study Value of previous learning for current studying
Exposure to PSET			
HEI factors	Are they looking for employment?	A & B	Employment Status
Entry costs into the labour market	What challenges with securing employment or generating income?	B	Challenges with securing employment
Entry costs into the labour market	What are the main sources of information for securing jobs?	A & B	Employment sources of information
Social networks			
Job searching approaches			

⁶ State all evaluation questions.

⁷ Refer to objectives as outlined in section 1.

⁸ Refer to text block below for evaluation objectives.

⁹ State the indicators to be used.

Dimension of assessment	Evaluation Questions ⁶	Link to which evaluation objective ^{7,8}	Indicators ⁹
Individual ability and academic attainment	If unemployed, why? How are they supporting themselves?	B	Reasons for unemployed Support while unemployed

Source: Authors

As is evident from Table 12 above, several dimensions of assessment respond to the study objectives. The objectives are listed below for ease of reference.

ETDP SETA TRACER STUDY OBJECTIVES

Learning intervention effectiveness and impacts: To gather data about the effectiveness and impacts of five skills/learning development interventions, namely: learnerships, internships, bursaries, workplace-integrated learning for universities of technology and for technical and vocational education training institutions. The reference period for the study is the 2015/16 to 2018/19 period. The impacts could be direct or indirect and intended or unintended;

Beneficiary wider impacts: To understand the wider effects of these interventions – social, economic and technical – on individual beneficiaries;

Achievements and challenges: To generate evidence of key achievements and challenges to inform the decision-making process for senior management and accounting authority on programme delivery mechanisms and how these can be improved in the future on order to ensure sustainability;

Nature of employment: To determine the nature of employment of learners who received employment; and

Employer perceptions: To pilot a survey of the perceptions of employers on the value of learnerships, WIL and internships.

4.6 Learner Survey Sampling

4.6.1 Learner Population

The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the study had provided an indicative population to inform sampling with a specified number of learners who had completed learnerships, internships, bursaries and workplace integrated learning (WiL TVETs and WiL UoTs) interventions. The ToR specified a sample size of between 40% and 60%. The databases provided by ETDP SETA in respect of the study population comprised of 16 Excel Quarterly Management Reports for all quarters over the financial years 2015/16 to 2018/19 and 5 Excel Indicium generated reports for each skills project for all quarters over the financial period 2016/17 to 2018/19.

The database assessment sought to determine the number of beneficiaries with valid and current contact details. A database assessment exercise focused on the development of the sample frame and this revealed that the total realised population of learners with contact details was significantly lower, at 7,438 compared with 10,003 from the ToR, across all five interventions and the reference period of 2015/16 to 2018/19. Using this revised total population of 7,438 the sample size at 40% and 60% was recalculated.

A critical limitation of tracer studies is the assumption that the database of learners is comprehensive. A review of tracer studies conducted in South Africa had reported low response rates and had noted that this

arose from the poor quality of databases available as a key factor (Wildschut et al.; 2016). Whilst the approximately 25% difference between the originally reported population size (ToR) and the final database utilised is significant, it must be noted that the quality of the ETDP SETA database was not problematic relative to other studies cited above.

4.6.2 Sampling approach for survey of learners

The study did not employ a formal sampling design in that it sampled the entire population of 7,438 beneficiaries. To ensure representativity it was important for the achieved sample to have the same proportions as the population it was measuring.

4.6.3 Sample construction

The total realised population of learners with contact details was 7,438. At the time of sampling, a **contactable number was simply identified by the extent to which it met known cell phone or fixed line number format, for example, with respect to the prefixes and total number of digits.**

Table 13: Population of learners who completed the learning intervention with contactable details

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19		Sample
Interventions	Number of completions	Number of completions	Number of completions	Number of completions	Total	40%
Bursaries	39	29	594	64	726	290
Learnerships	838	384	1,548	354	3,124	1,250
Internships	38	32	563	607	1,240	496
WIL TVETs	87	110	530	551	1,278	511
WIL UoTs	124	141	312	493	1,070	428
Total	1,126	696	3,547	2,069	7,438	2,975

Source: Authors, compiled from various ETDP SETA administrative databases (2019)

Table 13 above shows the distribution of that population of completers by intervention and financial year, as well as the target of 40%, 2,975 across the interventions. It indicates that learnership beneficiaries dominate in the population and similarly that beneficiaries who completed the intervention in the 2017/18 financial year comprise the largest group within this population.

Table 14 below shows the sample proportions for a population of 7,438, if sampled randomly at the conventional margin of error of 5% and a confidence level of 95%. This shows that the target sample under a stratified simple random sampling would be 1,468.

Table 14: Random sample drawn from a stratified population of 7,438 at 5% margin of error and 95% confidence interval

	Bursaries	Learnerships	Internships	WIL TVETs	WIL UoTs	Total
Random sample	252	343	294	296	283	1,468

Source: Authors' calculations

Table 15 shows how the 40% target sample of 2,975 would be distributed by financial year. Although the latter would be the target, the HSRC covered the entire population of 7,438. This was in anticipation of contact numbers being no longer in use or respondents not being available.

Table 15: Distribution of 40% sample by learning intervention and financial year

Interventions	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Total
Bursaries	16	12	238	26	290
Learnerships	335	154	619	142	1,250
Internships	15	13	225	243	496
WIL TVETs	35	44	212	220	511
WIL UoTs	50	56	125	197	428
Total	450	278	1,419	828	2,975

Source: Authors, compiled from various ETDPS SETA administrative databases (2019)

4.6.4 Learner sample achieved

This section reports on the study sample achieved, and Table 16 shows that 4,002 ETDPS SETA beneficiaries were successfully contacted. This **number represents the number of former learners who answered the phone**; relative to the total population of 7,438 which represents a response rate of **54%**. It is important to note that this response rate is based on all successful pick-ups and includes those who answered the call but went on to decline to participate in the study.

Table 16: Sample size achieved by learning intervention and financial year

Interventions	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	Total
Bursaries	17	19	317	60	413
Learnerships	299	223	548	139	1,209
Internships	27	23	485	511	1,046
WIL TVETs	62	90	342	349	843
WIL UoTs	45	51	112	283	491
Total	450	406	1,804	1,342	4,002

Source: HSRC Fieldwork MIS (2020) and HSRC ETDPS SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

For this study the **telephone number functioning rate** was very high for cell phones, relative to landlines. Table 17 shows that 68% of all contact numbers (both cell and landline) in the target population were still functioning; the rate was much higher for cell phones, at 76%.

Table 17: Type of contact number by working status

Status	Cell phone		Landline		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Working	5,081	76%	4	1%	5,085	68%
Not Working	1,646	24%	707	99%	2,353	32%
Total	6,727	100%	711	100%	7,438	100%

Source: Constructed from HSRC Fieldwork MIS (2020) and HSRC ETDPS SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Factoring in the functioning status of a telephone number, something that could only be determined at the time of making a call, affects the response rate of the study.

Table 18 shows that whilst the response rate based on the target population of all numbers is 54%, the response rate on working numbers is much higher, at 79%.

Table 18: Response rates, all contact numbers vs. working numbers

Target population	No.	Achieved sample	Difference	Response rate
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Target population all numbers	7,438	4,002	3,436	54%
Target population working numbers	5,085	4,002	1,079	79%

Source: Constructed from HSRC Fieldwork MIS (2020) and HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

4.6.5 Differences between target and sample achieved

The differences between the targeted 40% sample and the achieved sample are shown in Table 19. The last column in the table shows that the achieved sample exceeded the target by 1,027 responses. The blue highlighted cells indicate cases where the achieved number is greater than the target, with the red cells showing cases where the achieved number fell short of the target. At the level of the learning intervention, it can be observed that the relatively lower response rates of learnerships at 39% and WIL UoTs at 46% account for all the missed targets.

Table 19: Differences between target and sample achieved by intervention and year of completion

Interventions	2015/16			2016/17			2017/18			2018/19			Total		
	Target	Achieved	Difference	Target	Achieved	Difference	Target	Achieved	Difference	Target	Achieved	Difference	Target	Achieved	Difference
Bursaries	16	17	1	12	19	7	238	317	79	26	60	34	290	413	123
Learnerships	335	299	-36	154	223	69	619	548	-71	142	139	-3	125	1,209	-41
Internships	15	27	12	13	23	10	225	485	260	243	511	268	496	1,046	550
WIL TVETs	35	62	27	44	90	46	212	342	130	220	349	129	511	843	332
WIL UoTs	50	45	-5	56	51	-5	125	112	-13	197	283	86	428	491	63
Total	450	450	0	278	406	128	1,419	1,804	385	828	1,342	514	2,975	4,002	1,027

Source: HSRC Fieldwork MIS (2020) and HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

4.6.6 Representivity of achieved sample and comparison to randomised sample approach

For the achieved sample to be representative of the study population, it is important for the realised sample proportions to be similar to those from the population. The last two columns in Table 20 show the differences in the achieved sample proportions by intervention. The table shows that there are relatively small differences between the two. This means that, to a large extent the achieved sample captures the population across the five interventions with the largest difference being -12% for learnerships.

Table 20: Differences in sample proportions by intervention population vs. achieved sample

Interventions	Population		40% Target		54% Achieved		Diff	% Diff
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%		
Bursaries	726	10%	290	10%	413	10%	123	1%
Learnerships	3,124	42%	1,250	42%	1,209	30%	-41	-12%
Internships	1,240	17%	496	17%	1,046	26%	550	9%
WIL for TVETs	1,278	17%	511	17%	843	21%	332	4%
WIL for UoTs	1,070	14%	428	14%	491	12%	63	-2%
Total	7,438	100%	2,975	100%	4,002	100%	1,027	-

Source: HSRC Fieldwork MIS (2020) and HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

4.6.7 Final learner sample achieved: Adjusting for refusal to participate and incomplete questionnaires

As mentioned above, the achieved sample is based on all calls that had a successful pick-up, which includes those who later went on to decline to participate. It also includes incomplete questionnaires due to respondents refusing to continue after they had started the interview. Table 21 shows that 163 beneficiaries refused to participate in the study, with 3,839 consenting to being interviewed.

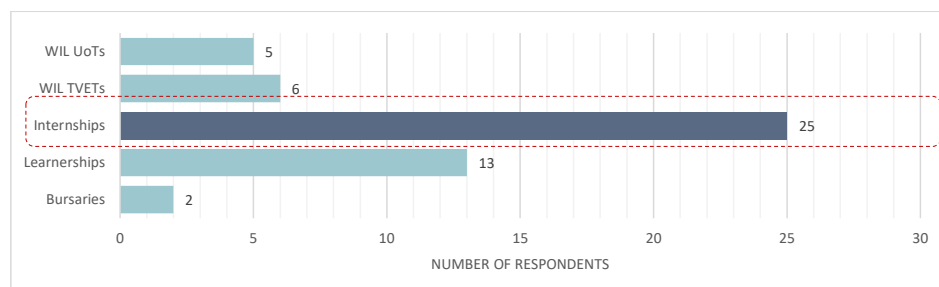
Table 21: Beneficiaries by consent status and financial year

	2015/2016		2016/2017		2017/2018		2018/2019		Total		Grand Total
	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	
Bursaries	4	13		19	30	287	3	57	37	376	413
Learnerships	6	293	13	210	15	533	5	134	39	1,170	1,209
Internships		27		23	26	459	29	482	55	991	1,046
WIL TVETs	5	57	6	84	7	335	2	347	20	823	843
WIL UoTs	4	41	2	49	2	110	4	279	12	479	491
Total	19	431	21	385	80	1,724	43	1,299	163	3,839	4,002

Source: HSRC Fieldwork MIS (2020) and HSRC ETD P SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

The 3,839 completed questionnaires were all assessed for level of completeness, and 51 were found to be incomplete, with internships accounting for the highest number of incomplete submissions (Figure 14). Levels of incompleteness varied, with some participants dropping out after the first few modules, whilst others dropped out halfway into the interview.

Figure 14: Number of incomplete questionnaires by skills intervention (n = 51)



Source: HSRC ETD P SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Table 22 shows the final realised sample of **3,788** that fed into the study analysis.

Table 22: Final realised sample after adjusting for incomplete questionnaires vs targeted sample

Intervention	2015/2016		2016/2017		2017/2018		2018/2019		Total	
	Target	Achieved	Target	Achieved	Target	Achieved	Target	Achieved	Target	Achieved
Bursaries	16	13	12	19	238	285	26	57	290	374
Learnerships	335	292	154	206	619	528	142	131	1250	1,157
Internships	15	27	13	22	225	449	243	468	496	966
WIL TVETs	35	56	44	84	212	333	220	344	511	817
WIL UoTs	50	41	56	48	125	109	197	276	428	491
Total	450	429	278	379	1,419	1,704	828	1,276	2,975	3,788

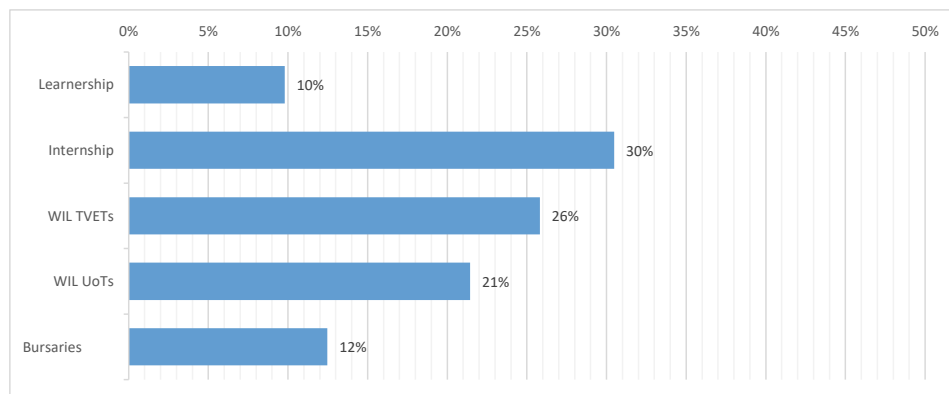
Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

The final sample, as indicated in Table 22 above, indicates that across all interventions except learnerships the target sample size was exceeded and similarly across all years when the intervention was completed the target sample was exceeded, with the exception of the 2015/16 financial year.

4.6.8 Response rate

This section provides an overview of beneficiaries who were sampled for this ETDP SETA tracer study. Figure 15 shows that 3,788 beneficiaries of the ETDP SETA programme consented to participate in the study, that is, 95% of the total sample, with only 5% refusing to participate. Participants in internships made up the largest percentage (30%) of those who consented, while those receiving bursaries (12%) and learnerships (10%) had the lowest percentages.

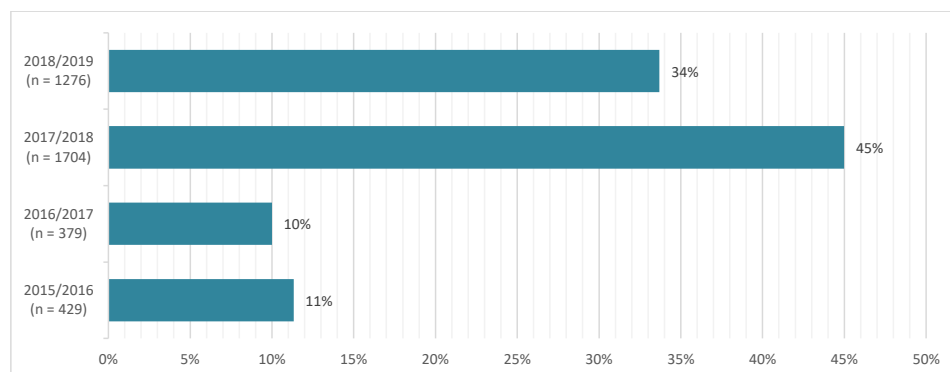
Figure 15: Final consent achieved, by learning intervention (n = 3,788)



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

The consent was also analysed by the financial years for which the beneficiaries were enrolled in the ETDP SETA programme. The results in Figure 16 show that out of the 3,788 population, the majority of 45 beneficiaries were in the programme between the 2017/18 and 2018/19 financial years.

Figure 16: ETDP SETA beneficiaries who consented to participate in the study by financial year



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

The realised sample comprised participants who had successfully completed their intervention in the study reference period of 2015/16 to 2018/19. As is reflected in Table 22, the realised sample is broadly reflective of the population under consideration.

4.7 Employer Survey Sample

The ToR had requested for the study to interview **20 current employers** of ETDP SETA-funded beneficiaries. The HSRC reasoned that the study population of beneficiaries was very large, and together with the five interventions, this meant that each would be represented by two employers, and this would not give results that were representative of the population – more so when one factors in the diversity of the ETD sector by sub-sector. The study found 1,810 beneficiaries who were employed at the time of the survey.

The sample of employers for this study was achieved by asking currently employed learner beneficiaries whether they would be willing to have their employer participate in the study, by supplying their contact details. This meant that the sample for employers would be determined by the number of beneficiaries who were employed at the time of the study. Table 23 below shows that 1,135 employed beneficiaries agreed to give details of their employer.

Table 23: Number of beneficiaries who consented to give their employers' contact details

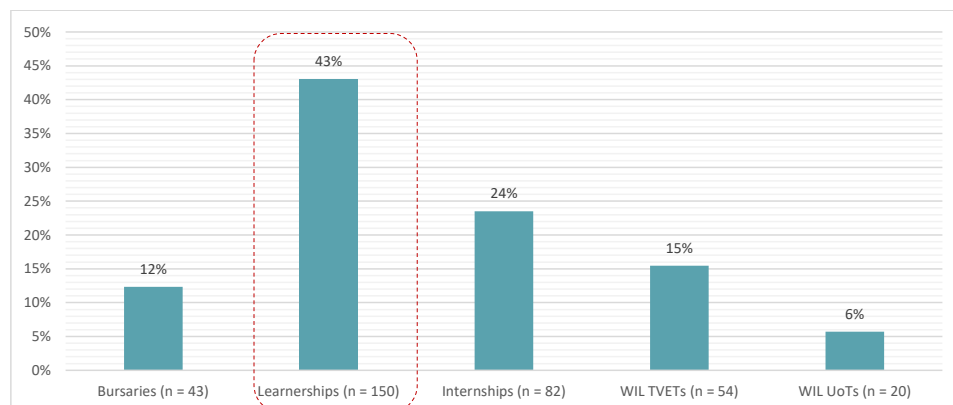
Intervention	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	Grand Total	Row %
Bursaries	7	8	178	27	220	19%
Internships	11	4	127	122	264	23%
Learnerships	91	87	187	57	422	37%
WIL TVETs	16	20	65	61	162	14%
WIL UoTs	10	10	11	36	67	6%
Grand Total	135	129	568	303	1,135	100%
Column %	12%	11%	50%	27%	100%	

Source: HSRC Fieldwork MIS (2020) and HSRC ETDP SETA Employer Survey (2020)

The 1,135 who provided employer details represent 63% of the total number of learners, 1,810 who were employed (both full and part time) at the time of the study. The estimated target sample was based on a simple random sample that assumed a 5% margin of error and a confidence level of 95% and was calculated

based on the eligible employer population of those who consented to give their details, 1,135. This gave a **target sample of 288**. However, the HSRC targeted the entire population, and **managed to achieve a sample of 349** (see Figure 17).

Figure 17: Sample achieved for employer survey by learning intervention (n = 349)



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Employer Survey (2020)

Employers of study participants who had benefitted from an ETDP SETA learnership represented 43% of the respondents.

With the employer contact details supplied by the participant the estimated target sample was based on a simple random sample that assumed a 5% margin of error and a confidence level of 95% and was calculated on the eligible employer population of those who consented, 1,135. As mentioned above, this gave a **target sample of 288**, the HSRC however targeted the entire population and **managed to achieve a sample of 349**.

4.8 Data Collection Instruments and Collection Methods

The study used two data collection instruments in respect of this study: the learner survey and the employer survey.

4.8.1 Beneficiary instrument

The objective of the learner survey was to profile graduates in the sector and their career progression. Importantly, it was aimed at ascertaining their perspectives on the contribution of education and training to their career path. The learner survey responded directly to objectives A, B, C and D as outlined in the ToR.

The survey instrument had eight (8) modules, each of which addressed different variables of interest. It was structured with some modules being captured for all respondents, and with specific modules which explored questions for beneficiaries based on their current employment status.

The purpose of the beneficiary survey was to collect information on the profile of graduates in the sector, their labour market outcomes and their career progression. A draft instrument had been provided by the ETDP SETA and this was revised to ensure alignment to the study objectives and research questions as outlined in the ToR and captured in the Evaluation Matrix included in the Inception Report.

The reconstruction of a Theory of Change informed further refinement of the instrument, to ensure that information was collected across all the variables of interest. The survey was administered telephonically with the information captured in real time on a tablet using the REDCap (Research Electronic Data Capture) platform. Interview duration was approximately 20 minutes. Interviews were administered to beneficiaries across the five designated learning interventions for whom contact details were available.

4.8.2 Employer instrument

The employer instrument was developed by the research team, informed by the study objectives, the key questions outlined in the ToR, and findings from the review of relevant literature and documentation provided by the ETDP SETA.

Study data were collected and managed using REDCap electronic data capture tools **hosted at the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC)**. REDCap is a secure, web-based software platform designed to support data capture for research studies. It provides: 1) an intuitive interface for validated data capture; 2) audit trails for tracking data manipulation and export procedures; 3) automated export procedures for seamless data downloads to common statistical packages; and 4) procedures for data integration and interoperability with external sources (Harris et al., 2019).

The employer survey was also telephonically administered with the information captured in real time on a tablet or laptop using the REDCap Platform. Interview duration was approximately 20 minutes. The survey was administered to employers of beneficiaries who received the five designated learning interventions, who had contactable details.

The objective of the employer survey was to seek employers' perspectives on the value of the learning interventions which beneficiaries were exposed to, and to assess the impact which these had on the firms' performance in terms of productivity and profitability. It was also aimed at understanding to what extent the firms' skills needs had been addressed. The survey also sought to understand the challenges that employers experienced with respect to hosting learners. The Theory of Change also informed the inclusion of specific questions aimed at collecting information on identified variables of interest, which were captured in the instrument.

4.9 Data cleaning and analysis

This phase involved processing the data collected from the two surveys. All data management processes (e.g. data cleaning, assessing the level of completeness of collected records, identifying outliers, assessing whether there were any missing data, duplicate records, and errors) was done using the Stata statistical software package. Once the data had been cleaned, they were analysed using the same statistical package.

4.10 Study challenges and limitations

As with other studies of this nature, it is not unexpected to experience some challenges, despite effective planning and risk management processes being in place. The purpose of sharing challenges and limitations is to alert and identify where these can be minimised or addressed fully in the planning of future studies of this nature.

4.10.1 Beneficiary survey challenges

4.10.1.1 Beneficiary Population Database

A key concern for tracer studies has been the availability of a database with current contact details for the beneficiaries. Evidence from an ETDP SETA study and from other tracer studies in South Africa had recorded low response rates of between 15-35% with the key factor influencing this noted as primarily uncontactable respondents, followed by respondents who were unwilling or unable to participate and incomplete interviews or other circumstances (ETDP SETA, 2017; Wildschut et al., 2017). In anticipation of this challenge, the mitigation strategy adopted was the inclusion of the entire population of beneficiaries with contact details as the study sample.

4.10.1.2 Not seeing the need to participate and fears of being scammed

First and foremost, some learners did not understand why they needed to participate in a study of this nature, even with fieldworkers explaining the reasons to them over the phone. Once information sheets and consent forms were shared with them via WhatsApp or email, most were happy to participate. However, a few respondents remained suspicious; this was more prevalent among respondents who had completed postgraduate qualifications. Examples of such responses include:

"I can't continue with the interview because nowadays there are a lot of scams, so I am not comfortable with giving you my information".

"It's not going to benefit me and asking about my employment status is unnecessary".

4.10.1.3 Not knowing that the skills intervention was funded by the ETDP SETA

A number of respondents were unaware that the skills intervention had been funded by the ETDP SETA, with several insisting that their intervention had been funded by NSFAS or the university, and even some who insisted that they had never had direct contact with the SETA.

4.10.1.4 Learners sampled as completed insisting that they hadn't finished

A serious challenge confronted by enumerators was the number of learners who claimed that they had not completed the learning intervention, despite the data base indicating to the contrary. The comments below illustrate this point:

"I enrolled but quit before the programme started".

"I have not yet completed studies; I have one exam left".

"I did not complete the internship because I got another job in a new organisation".

"I dropped out 3 months before completing as I had to go back to college".

4.10.1.5 Certificates not received

Complaints about not having received certificates were made by some respondents. In some cases, there was an expectation that the enumerator would resolve this matter. The respondents were provided with the SETA's contact details and encouraged to contact the relevant offices in their province to lodge their concern.

4.10.1.6 Expectations of the possibility of employment

Several unemployed learners had the expectation that these interviews were being conducted to recruit them for employment, and enumerators had to brief them that the interview was not for this purpose.

4.10.1.7 Fear of sharing employer details

Some learners were suspicious as to why an interview would be conducted with their employer. It seems that there were fears that this was related to their performance assessment, and hence they were reluctant to share this information. A further group of learners, mainly educators, did not want to provide the employers' contact details as they said, "SETA has the details and they should provide this information". Another related issue was that many of their employers were Circuit Managers or Heads of Departments, and they would not provide names or contact details but insisted that we call the regional office and find out this information.

Mitigation: Enumerators were trained to motivate participation by assuring the respondents of the purpose of the study. To a large extent, this facilitated a lower rate of refusal.

4.10.1.8 Same contact numbers for different beneficiaries

Enumerators noted that in some instances several respondents in the same skills programme in a province, all had the same contact number, and that it was not possible to get through to that number. It is unclear why this would be the case.

4.10.1.9 Dropped calls due to bad reception

There were a few cases where the telephone reception was extremely poor, and as a result calls dropped during the interview. This prolonged the interview, sometimes up to an hour, or a follow-up interview was required to complete the survey, which at times resulted in the respondent not being contactable for completion. This explains the 51 incomplete interviews, which had to be excluded from the analysis.

4.10.2 Employer survey challenges

4.10.2.1 Challenges with negotiating employer participation

Unlike the beneficiaries, who had had a direct relationship with the SETA, some employers did not know that their employee had benefitted from an ETDP SETA-funded skills intervention. This meant that a considerable amount of time was spent by enumerators explaining to the employer who the SETA was and why they should participate in the survey. This was despite sharing the ETDP SETA information letter as well as the information sheet and consent form. This was more apparent if the respondent had not been employed at that company at the time of undertaking the learning intervention.

Mitigation: The Invitation to Participate letter which the HSRC requested from the ETDP SETA served to address this problem to a large extent. There is, however, a general poor understanding by employers of the role of SETAs.

4.10.2.2 Confusion over who should respond, supervisor or human resources

Several of the supervisors/managers questioned why they should be interviewed, and some suggested that the person who had supervised/employed the beneficiary at the time of their studies should be contacted instead, as that person would be able to make a comparative assessment.

Mitigation: Enumerators were trained to address this by explaining the importance of the direct line manager providing the responses.

4.10.2.3 Public sector officials

Several government officials, again mostly senior education officials, were reluctant to participate as they were on the road and out of their offices, or very busy due to the start of the school year.

Mitigation: Efforts were made to accommodate respondents who were too busy by rescheduling interviews for later in the day, or after schools had closed, or on a Saturday. However, these were not readily taken up.

4.10.2.4 Supervisors wanting approval

Approval of gatekeepers was another factor which made some supervisors/managers reluctant to participate in the study, as they were concerned that this had not received the stamp of approval from their seniors. They also felt that this was a task for the enumerator or the SETA to secure such approval.

Mitigation: Enumerators attempted to follow up with officials of higher designations to facilitate participation. This was partially successful.

4.11 Ethical considerations

The project was undertaken in line with the principles of ethical research involving human subjects. These principles included special attention to communicating the aims of the study, and the rights of people participating in the research, with written informed consent, and confidentiality in place. The study proposal and key informant interview schedules, and consent forms were submitted as part of the Ethics Approval application to the HSRC Research Ethics Committee (REC). The study received full ethical clearance (No REC 4/23/10/19).

5 Research Findings on Beneficiary Survey

5.1 ETDP SETA Learning Intervention Participation

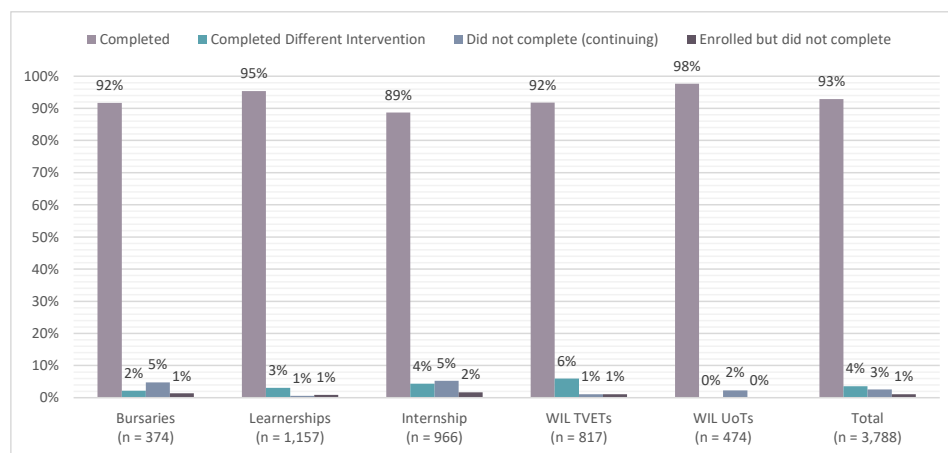
5.1.1 Participation in the ETDP SETA Learning Interventions

The focus of the study as outlined in the ToR was only on those beneficiaries who had completed a specific learning intervention; therefore, according to the ETDP SETA the learner database that was provided was for beneficiaries who had completed.

In order to confirm the completion status, the study sought to confirm if all participants had completed and that there were no inclusion errors on the database. Overwhelmingly participants confirmed their completion status and importantly that it was in respect of the specific learning intervention undertaken during the reference period.

Figure 18 reflects that of the 3,788 participants, 93% reported having completed the learning intervention for which they were enrolled. A further 4% reported having completed another learning intervention (not that recorded on the database), and 3% reported they were currently continuing with their studies, while 1% reported having dropped out of the learning intervention completely. This confirmation of completion status forms the initial stage of the STWT where a student needs to complete their education in order to progress towards employment and/or any other livelihood generation activity.

Figure 18: Can you please confirm that you completed the ETDP SETA learning intervention



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

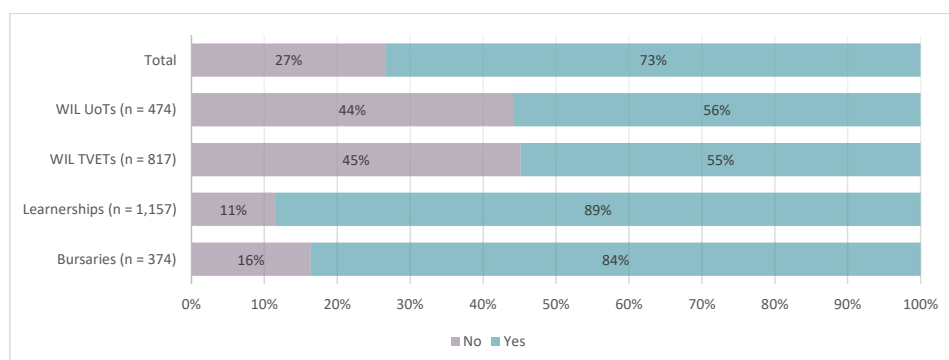
No further effort was made to understand the reasons for the discrepancy with the database; given the small size of the discrepancy, this could be the result of factors such as data capturing errors or recall errors.

For four of the five learning interventions the successful completion of the intervention is registered through the beneficiary receiving a certificate confirming their effective participation in that intervention. The only intervention for which no certificate is given is internships. This certification serves as proof of qualification obtained or skills gained and is an important requirement for job searching. The SETA Workplace Based Learning Programme Agreement Regulations (DHET Workplace Based learning Programme Agreement,

2018) state that learners should be issued with a certificate within 30 days after the assessment and verification processes have been completed.

Participants who had completed their learnership, bursary or WIL intervention were asked if they had received their certificates, with 73% (Figure 19) confirming that they had. The majority of bursary (84%) and learnership (89%) beneficiaries reported receiving their certificates. In contrast, just under half of WIL beneficiaries, WIL UoTs (44%) and WIL TVETs (45%) reported not having received their certificates.

Figure 19: Did you receive a certificate after completion of the learning intervention?



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

An expectation is that learners would receive the certificate as evidence of having successfully completed a learning intervention and the findings reveal that just over half, 27% of beneficiaries of Learnerships, Bursaries and WIL, did not receive their certificate; while others did receive the certificates, they complained of long waiting periods.

We sought to understand beneficiaries' perspectives on what improvements were required by the ETDP SETA. Beneficiaries shared their frustration in respect of the long delay in receiving their certificates, with examples given below:

"It took 11 months to receive mine" – Young self-employed female

"No certificates yet, 3 years after finishing the learnership" – Employed female

The failure to receive a certificate was reported by beneficiaries to have compromised their job searching abilities or further studies.

Several of the internship beneficiaries requested that some form of certification be provided as proof that they had completed the internship.

Getting a replacement certificate seemed to be a problem, as reported by one beneficiary who noted the following:

"The shack was burned in December and I went to SETA office. They told me they don't do certificates for individuals, they do for groups". – Employed educator

She further reported that she called the Head office and was told the same story.

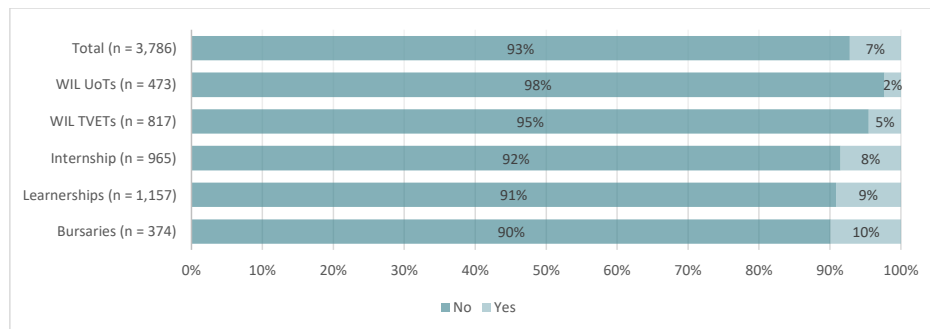
Another participant made the following appeal:

“The system regarding issuing certificates is very poor. Before SETA do the next intake, this issue must be solved” – Employed female

5.1.2 Prior access to a SETA-funded learning intervention

The study probed whether participants had been exposed to any SETA-funded learning interventions prior to the ETDp SETA-funded one which was the focus of this study. Overwhelmingly it can be seen that beneficiaries had not accessed a previous SETA-funded learning intervention, 93% (Figure 20). When disaggregated by the learning intervention, 10% of bursary, 9% of learnership and 8% of internship beneficiaries reported having previously accessed a SETA-funded learning intervention.

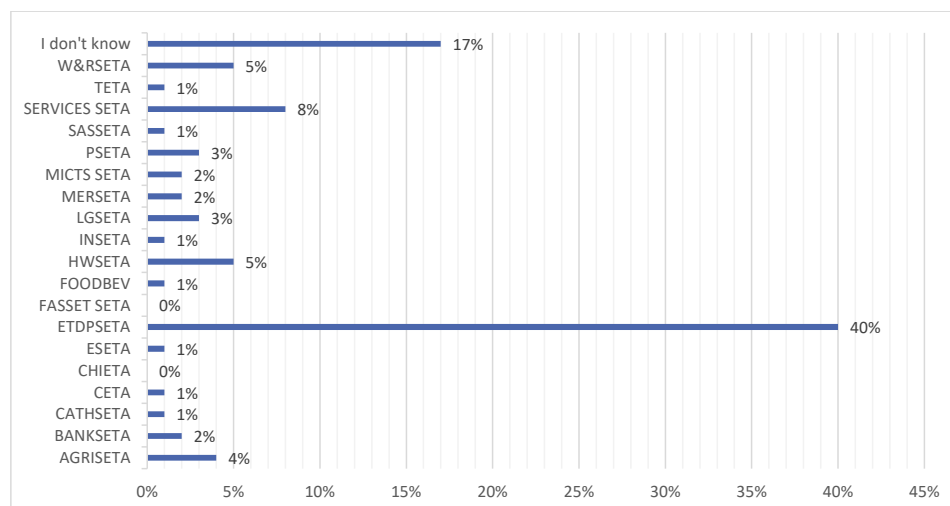
Figure 20: Did you previously access any OTHER SETA learning intervention/s BEFORE doing the ETDp SETA learning intervention we are interviewing you for?



Source: HSRC ETDp SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Of the 7% who reported previously having undertaken a SETA learning intervention in Figure 21, the majority (40%) reported that the learning intervention had been funded by ETDp SETA. Under one-fifth of participants (17%) were unable to recall which SETA programme assisted them.

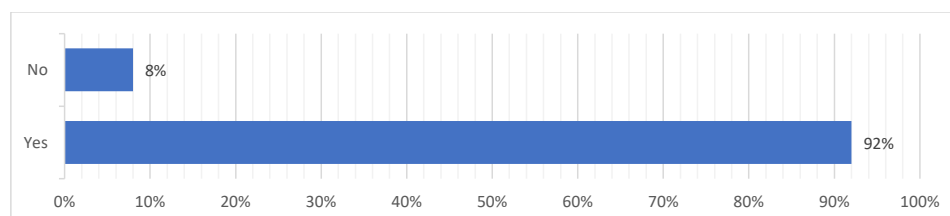
Figure 21: Which SETA had funded the previous learning intervention?



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

The findings in Figure 22 show that about 92% of the sampled participants completed their skills and training interventions.

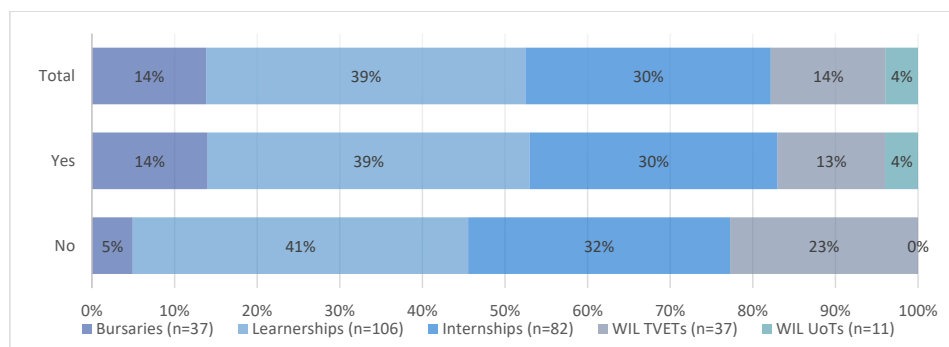
Figure 22: Did you complete the learning/training/skills intervention mentioned?



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

The results in Figure 23 below show that participants who completed their skills or training interventions were mainly from the learnership and internship programmes.

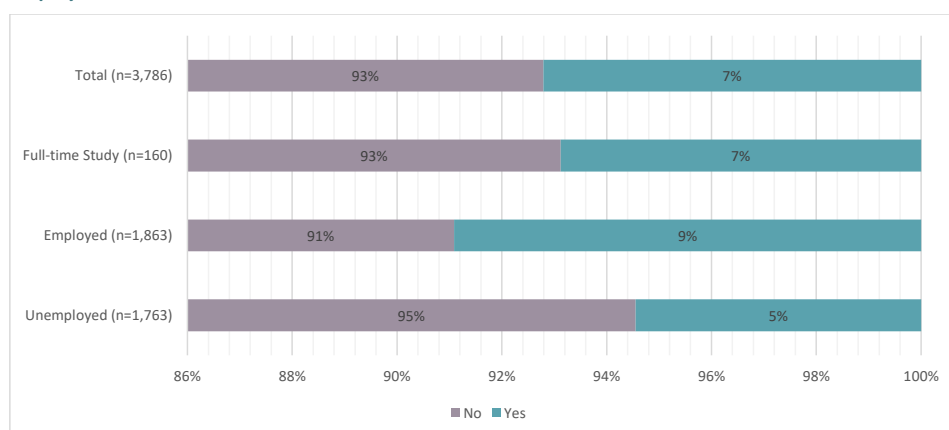
Figure 23: Did you complete the learning/training/skills intervention mentioned?



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Learners were asked if they had participated in any other SETA learning programme prior to undertaking the ETDP SETA learning intervention. Figure 24 reveals that a very small percentage of beneficiaries, 7%, had accessed any SETA learning programme.

Figure 24: Participation in SETA-funded learning intervention prior to the ETDP SETA one by current employment status



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

5.2 Spatial Demographics of Sampled Beneficiaries

This section provides a profile of the respondents who participated in the survey. This demographic analysis serves to determine whether the respondents are representative of the ETDP SETA's target population in respect of the five learning interventions.

The need to ensure increased access to PSET was underscored in NSDS III, with transformation imperatives framed around class, race, gender, age and disability (DHET, 2011). These imperatives, which find expression in several national skills development policies, require SETAs to ensure that these previously disadvantaged demographic sub-groups are prioritised in their interventions. Targeting these groups ensures that

government interventions have the greatest development impact on individuals who otherwise would remain marginalised. The ETDP SETA Strategic Plan for 2016-2020 (ETDP SETA, 2019) adopted specific demographic targets in order to contribute to broader equity objectives, as shown in Table 24.

Table 24: Specific ETDP SETA demographic targets adopted for study reference period

Demographic characteristics	Demographic target
Black	85%
Women	60%
Youth	60%
Rural geographical areas	60%
Persons with disabilities	5%

Source: ETDP SETA Strategic Plan for 2016-2020

5.2.1 Distribution of Beneficiaries by Nationality

The ETDP SETA predominantly aims to improve the lives of South African beneficiaries within the ETDP sector, and this study found that 97% of the participants were South African (Table 25).

Table 25: Nationality of beneficiaries

Nationality	No.	Percent
South African	3,686	97%
Other African	43	1%
European	13	0.3%
Asian	22	1%
Australia Oceania	7	0.2%
North American	5	0.1%
Other	11	0.3%
Total	3,787	100%

Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

5.2.2 Distribution of respondents by province

Decentralisation of ETDP SETA cross the nine provinces is aimed at enhancing access to SETA-funded interventions by beneficiaries and companies. In Table 26 below the spatial distribution of ETDP SETA beneficiaries is analysed in terms of the province in which they currently reside. The study did not explicitly ascertain sub-provincial location of the respondent.

The findings indicate that under a fifth of beneficiaries live in LP, 18%, closely followed by KZN, 16% and GP, 15%. Interestingly, this table reveals that the largest number of bursary beneficiaries live in KZN, 45%, while more than half of all WIL UoT, 52% beneficiaries are found in the WC. In addition, it reveals that more than one-third of WIL TVET beneficiaries reside in LP, 37%, and that a little under half of all learnership beneficiaries were based in two provinces, GP 20% and KZN 24%. One-third of all internship beneficiaries were in the EC, 34%.

Table 26: Province in which the beneficiaries currently resided

Province	Bursaries (n = 374)	Learnerships (n = 1,157)	Internships (n = 964)	WIL TVETs (n = 817)	WIL UoTs (n = 474)	Total (n = 3,786)
EC	5%	7%	34%	1%	7%	12%

Province	Bursaries (n = 374)	Learnerships (n = 1,157)	Internships (n = 964)	WIL TVETs (n = 817)	WIL UoTs (n = 474)	Total (n = 3,786)
FS	1%	6%	10%	8%	1%	6%
GP	12%	20%	13%	16%	10%	15%
KZN	45%	24%	3%	5%	22%	16%
LP	13%	15%	14%	37%	3%	18%
MP	11%	11%	12%	16%	3%	11%
NC	3%	7%	5%	5%	0%	5%
NW	3%	4%	6%	5%	1%	4%
WC	7%	7%	3%	9%	52%	12%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

5.2.3 Migration of Beneficiaries across Provinces

Migration patterns of beneficiaries from the province they were in whilst they undertook the learning intervention compared to their current location was explored. In order to assess these migratory patterns, we computed transition matrices which show changes in a desired state between two periods. In this case we wanted to know whether there was significant outward migration out of the province where the beneficiary was residing whilst they were participating in the intervention and their current residence. The importance of this analysis is that it can assist in explaining employment outcomes, given the concentration of economic activities in the two provinces of GP and WC.

Table 27 shows the transition matrix for province of residence. The main diagonal with the highlighted percentages shows the percentage of beneficiaries who did not change their province of residence after they had completed their learning intervention. The off-diagonal percentages show the number that changed their province of residence. For example, whilst 89% of beneficiaries from GP stayed in the province after completing, 4% moved to LP. The largest relocation was by people from LP moving to GP, 8% and from NW to GP, 6%.

Table 27: Province of residence transition matrix* (n = 3,785)

	Province of residence currently (at time of survey)										Total
	Province	EC	FS	GP	KZN	LP	MP	NC	NW	WC	
Province of residence whilst participating	EC	91%	0%	0%	1%	0%	5%	0%	0%	2%	100%
	FS	1%	93%	3%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	100%
	GP	1%	1%	89%	1%	4%	3%	0%	1%	1%	100%
	KZN	1%	0%	1%	98%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
	LP	0%	0%	8%	1%	90%	1%	0%	0%	0%	100%
	MP	0%	0%	4%	1%	2%	91%	0%	1%	0%	100%
	NC	1%	1%	2%	0%	0%	0%	95%	2%	0%	100%
	NW	1%	1%	6%	0%	2%	0%	1%	88%	1%	100%
	WC	6%	0%	2%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	88%	100%
	Total	12%	6%	15%	16%	18%	11%	5%	4%	12%	100%

Source: Author calculations using HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020). *Transition matrices show changes in status between two periods

The table also shows that GP 11%, NW 12% and WC 12% had the largest number of people moving to another province after completion, with KZN 2% having the least number of beneficiaries leaving the province.

Overall, whilst GP experienced an outflow of 11%, it was the recipient of most of those who moved from their province of residence during participation, with a total inflow of 25%.

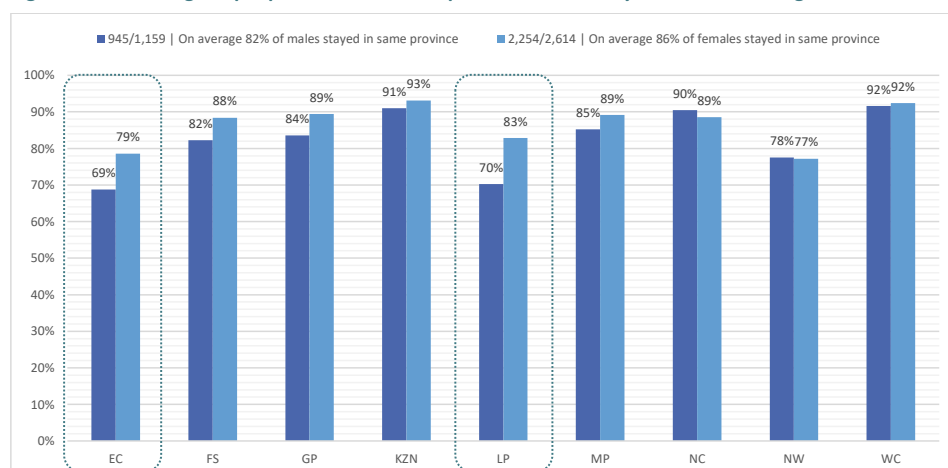
5.2.2.1 Migration and gender

With respect to gender, we would expect to see more provincial outward migration among males, an outcome that can be linked to the greater attachment that women have to their primary places of residence due to maternal responsibilities. In this case ‘maternal’ is defined within an anthropological context, à la Sanday (2003), where matriarchy "emphasises maternal meanings where maternal symbols are linked to social practices influencing the lives of both sexes, and where women play a central role in these practices" (Peoples & Bailey, 2012, p. 258). The results of this study are consistent with this view, and with respect to gender we would expect to see more provincial outward migration among males, an outcome that can be linked to the greater attachment that women have to their primary places of residence due to maternal responsibilities. Table 27 shows that with the exception of NC and WC (marginally so), women tended to stay in the same province where they completed their high schooling more than their male counterparts.

Sending and Receiving Provinces

Further disaggregation of the results by gender revealed that both males, 27% and females, 14% from LP (sending) were most likely to migrate to GP (receiving) after completion, with 3% of both going to other provinces. Further disaggregation of the results by gender in Figure 25 revealed that both males, 27% and females, 14% from LP (sending) were most likely to migrate to GP (receiving) after completion, with 3% of both going to other provinces. Their counterparts from the EC, males 23%, and females 14% were more likely to move to the WC. Both patterns also show the influence of proximity to an economic hub in influencing the destination of migrators. These patterns are also in keeping with migratory patterns of the population, with 45% of all migrants moving to a major metropolis (Statistics SA, 2015).

Figure 25: Percentage of people still in the same province where they did their schooling



Source: Author calculations using HSRC ETD P SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020). *Transition matrices show changes in status between two periods

These findings not only highlight the migratory patterns of ETDp SETA beneficiaries, they also show that a significant proportion stayed within the same province they were in when they participated in the intervention, and/or where they did their high schooling.

These patterns also show that SETA-supported learners could move to and potentially close spatial gaps within different geographical labour markets. Furthermore, in as far as the SETA's interventions broaden job search strategies outside the province, thus enhancing the probability of positive transition outcomes, it could be argued that they have an indirect impact on the socioeconomic status of beneficiaries from economically deprived provinces such as LP, that are among the poorest in the country.

5.3 Demographic Profile of Beneficiaries

5.3.1 Representation by Race

Race

The SETA targets beneficiaries by demographic characteristics such as gender, and people living with disabilities. The ETDp SETA equity goal in respect of race is to achieve a target of 85% Black learners as beneficiaries. Table 28 shows that the realised sample comprised 93% Black African followed by 5% Coloured respondents, with the Indian and White population groups each making up 1% in this study.

Table 28: Race of the beneficiaries

Population group	No.	Percent	Population % distribution in census*
Black African	3,529	93%	81%
Coloured	200	5%	9%
Indian/Asian	31	1%	3%
White	20	1%	8%
Other	7	0%	0%
Total	3,787	100%	100%

Source: HSRC ETDp SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020) *Stats SA (2020)

According to the latest release of the country’s demographic scope, 81% of SA’s population is Black African and the least populous groups are Coloured and White. Table 28 thus indicates that Black Africans are overrepresented as ETDp SETA beneficiaries relative to their share in the population. In the context of the scale of disadvantage experienced by Africans in general, this reflects well on ETDp SETA’s targeting. The evidence also confirms that Coloureds and Indians who are understood as being part of the previously disadvantaged groups are slightly underrepresented in the population.

5.3.2 Representation of people living with a disability

Inclusion of people living with disabilities is an important priority for skills development and employment initiatives in the country. The PSET White Paper emphasised the need for research to determine the number of people with disabilities accessing PSET (DHET, 2013c). Towards addressing this target, the ETDp SETA has demonstrated its commitment by setting its target at 5%. Study participants were asked whether they had any disability. Inclusion of people living with disabilities is an important priority for skills development and employment initiatives in the country.

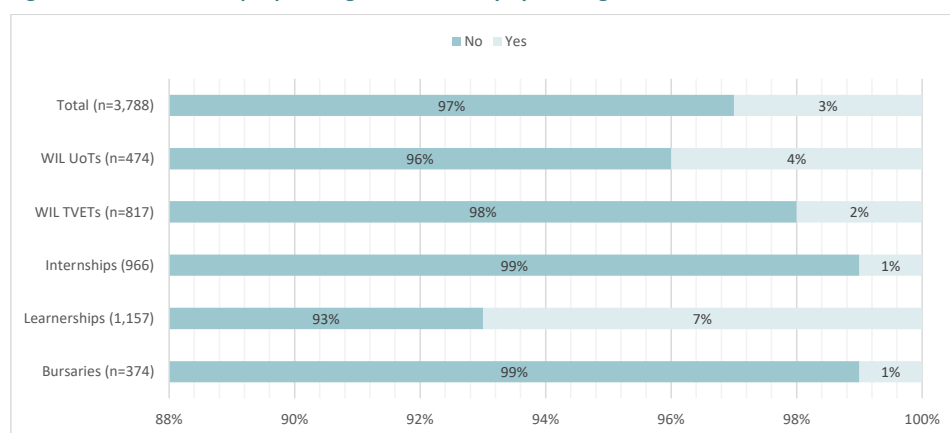
Study participants were asked whether they had any disability. Figure 26 shows that only 3% of the sample indicated that they were living with some form of disability. The national prevalence of disability in SA is

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7.5%, which excludes children under five years, those in institutions and those with mental disabilities (Statistics SA, 2014). Interestingly 7% of learnership beneficiaries were people living with a disability, followed by 4% of WIL UoT beneficiaries. It would be valuable to understand what factors contribute to this variation between learning interventions and how those possibly enabling factors can be harnessed to increase participation of people living with disabilities in ETDP SETA learning interventions. The findings reflect that the SETA had not achieved its disability target.

The largest cohort of people living with a disability, 80 had completed a learnerships and the bursary recipients were the smallest cohort with 3 beneficiaries.

Figure 26: Distribution of people living with a disability by learning intervention



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Given the fact that there were 126 people living with a disability in the study, Table 29 presents the breakdown of these beneficiaries.

Table 29: Number of People with a disability by learning intervention

Learning Intervention	Number living with a disability
Bursaries	3
Internships	9
Learnerships	80
WIL TVETs	17
WIL UoTs	17
Total	126

Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

5.3.3 Distribution by age and gender

Table 30 shows a summary of statistics with respect to the age of beneficiaries in the sample, which ranged from the youngest participant of 19 years of age to the oldest of 67 years. The average age in the sample was 32 years and the median age (the age in the middle of the sample separating the youngest from the oldest) was 29 years. The standard deviation shows the variance within each group and indicates that bursaries had the largest dispersion around the mean age of 41 years for men and 40 years for women, while WIL UoTs had the youngest population with relatively small variances. Based on these summary statistics, it appears

that the beneficiary population is skewed towards slightly older cohorts, which has implications around priorities with respect to targeting youth immediately after they have completed secondary schooling.

Table 30: Summary statistics on age by intervention and gender of beneficiary (n = 3,767)

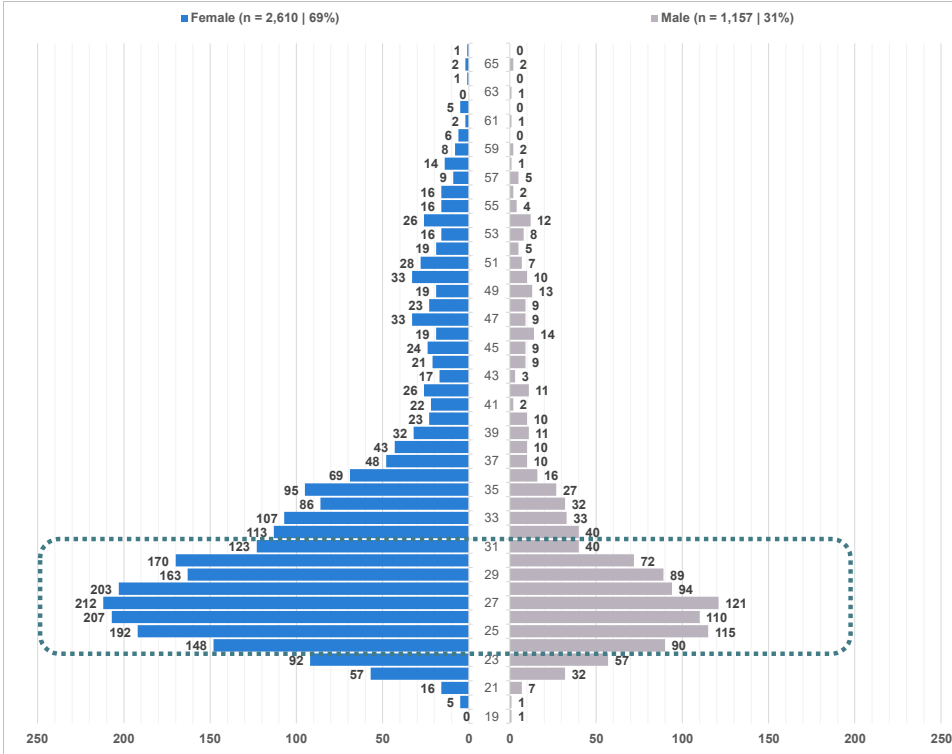
Intervention	N	Mean	Median	Min	Max	Std Dev
Bursaries - Male	174	41	42	22	65	10
Bursaries - Female	193	40	41	22	67	12
Learnerships - Male	248	32	29	19	65	9
Learnerships - Female	901	36	33	20	65	10
Internships - Male	304	29	28	20	49	4
Internships - Female	659	30	29	20	62	5
WIL TVETs - Male	197	28	27	23	53	4
WIL TVETs - Female	618	29	28	20	53	4
WIL UoTs - Male	234	26	25	21	39	3
WIL UoTs - Female	239	26	25	21	50	4
Total	3,767	32	29	19	67	7

Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

The Analysis of Variance Test (ANOVA) on mean age by intervention revealed that the observed differences in means are statistically significant, with a p-value of 0.000.

To get a better understanding of the demographic structure of the population, an age-sex pyramid was constructed. The pyramid, Figure 27, shows that the majority of the sample population is clustered between the ages of 24 and 30 years, with females having a distinctively larger bulge than male counterparts.

Figure 27: Sample population pyramid – demographic structure of study (n = 3,767)



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Table 31 shows that on average, 78% of the beneficiaries fall into the 19-35-year age cohort, which coincides with the official definition of youth in SA. The ETDP SETA set its age target at 60% youth, using the same definition of youth. The table also shows that on average women tend to be marginally older than their male counterparts, an outcome that is also evident across all interventions with the exception of bursaries (see Table 32).

These demographic statistics also reveal that females, 69% are afforded substantially greater access to SETA-funded opportunities compared to males, 31%, which was the intention with the SETA target of 60% women. The evidence indicates that the SETA exceeded its target for women, 69% and greatly exceeded its youth target, 78%.

Table 31: Demographic statistics for beneficiary sample (n = 3,767)

Demographic Stats	Female	Male	Total
n - size	2,610	1,157	3,767
Mean age	32.3	30.6	31.7
Median age	30.0	28.0	29.0
Gender ratio			44:100
All	69%	31%	100%
19-35(%)	76%	83%	78%
36-65 (%)	24%	17%	22%
64+ (%)	0.11%	0.17%	0.13%

Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

5.3.4 Realisation of demographic targets

Table 32 summarises the findings relative to the four ETDP SETA demographic targets. The findings from this evaluation are meant to externally validate the level of achievement of each intervention, relative to the defined cut-offs in the SETA strategic plan. Including the overall targets, and the five individual interventions (that is, 6 x 4 gives us a total of 24), findings from this study show that the SETA managed to achieve 16 of those targets. At an aggregate level, three out of the targets were exceeded, with a shortfall on the disability target. Bursaries only managed to achieve the race target, with WIL UoTs only managing to achieve the gender and youth targets.

As the results show ETDP SETA has exceeded its targets for women, 69% against target of 60%; youth, 78% against a target of 60%; and Black learners, 90% against a target of 85%. It failed to achieve its disability target, 3% against a target of 5%.

Areas which require improvement include increasing access to those living with disabilities and increasing access to younger cohorts of learners between the ages of 18-25 across all interventions. Specifically bursary beneficiaries must target youth up to 35 years, given that the average age of learners was found to be 32 across all interventions and 40 for bursary beneficiaries, as reported in section 5.3.3.

Table 32: Demographic targets vs. evaluation outcomes (%)

n	Demographic characteristics	Overall		Bursaries		Learnerships		Internships		WIL TVETs		WIL UoTs		
		Demographic Target	Evaluation outcome	Achievement	Evaluation outcome	Achievement	Evaluation outcome	Achievement	Evaluation outcome	Achievement	Evaluation outcome	Achievement		
	Black	85%	99%	Exceeded	97%	Exceeded	100%	Exceeded	99%	Exceeded	100%	Exceeded	99%	Exceeded
	Women	60%	69%	Exceeded	53%	Not achieved	78%	Exceeded	68%	Exceeded	76%	Exceeded	50%	Not achieved
	Youth (20–35 years)	60%	78%	Exceeded	43%	Not achieved	71%	Exceeded	92%	Exceeded	96%	Exceeded	99%	Exceeded
	Persons with disabilities	5%	3%	Not achieved	1%	Not achieved	7%	Exceeded	1%	Not achieved	2%	Not achieved	4%	Not achieved

Source: Author calculations using HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

5.4 Socioeconomic profile of beneficiaries

This section focuses on findings that speak to the evaluation objective seeking to understand the wider effects of the interventions under study, with respect to social and economic outcomes on individual beneficiaries. Family and household resources are key internal determinants of educational, occupational and employment outcomes (Nilsson, 2019). This analysis is important, as it relates to the assessment of the transformative dimensions of skills development policies such as the NSDS III (DHET, 2011). These findings provide an indication as to whether the SETA's interventions are having an impact on the previously disadvantaged, most of whom still face deprivations that hinder their ability to access PSET.

5.4.1 Household composition

The strong emphasis of the PSET White Paper and the NSDS III transformation imperatives need to be contextualised within a livelihoods framework that recognises that household composition plays an important role in defining how resources are allocated. Human capital plays an important role in broadening household livelihood strategies. A body of literature confirms that from a gender perspective, access to education is a pervasive challenge globally (Iddrisu et al., 2020), with the recognition that relatively larger households may serve as a constraint to household members' access to since they may not have enough resources to invest in further education.

As can be seen in Table 33, in four of the five learning interventions female beneficiaries currently reside in slightly larger households than male beneficiaries, the exception being bursary beneficiaries where the household size was larger for males.

Table 33: Household size summary statistics of beneficiaries (n = 3,742)

Intervention/Gender	N	Sum	Mean	Median	Min	Max	Range	Std Dev
Bursaries - Male	170	906	5.33	5	1	17	16	2.66
Bursaries - Female	192	920	4.79	5	1	18	17	2.44
Learnerships - Male	246	1,241	5.04	5	1	13	12	2.16
Learnerships - Female	899	4,746	5.28	5	1	17	16	2.47
Internships - Male	299	1,429	4.78	5	1	14	13	2.39
Internships - Female	655	3,419	5.22	5	1	17	16	2.65
WIL TVETs - Male	197	941	4.78	5	1	14	13	2.3
WIL TVETs - Female	614	3,195	5.2	5	1	16	15	2.3
WIL UoTs - Male	232	1,097	4.73	5	1	18	17	2.72
WIL UoTs - Female	238	1,232	5.18	5	1	16	15	2.66
Total	3,742	19,126	5.11	5	1	18	17	2.48

Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

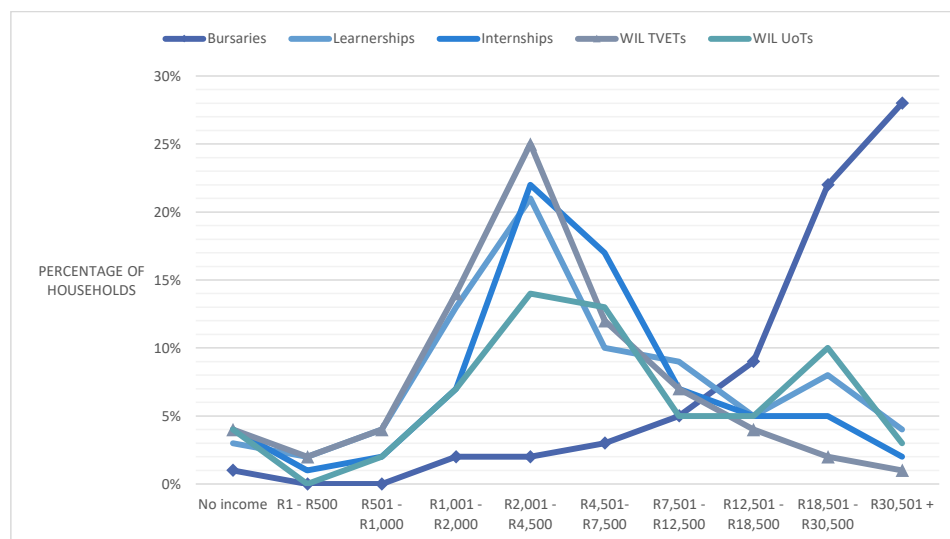
5.4.2 Socioeconomic status of beneficiaries

Figure 28 shows reported gross household income as was reported at the time of the interview. Whilst income data are typically presented in the form of bar charts, this presentation has been chosen to reduce the number of bars on one chart, and more importantly because it highlights the distribution of income in a way that allows us to easily see differences across the five interventions.

Evidence indicates that bursary recipients have incomes that are skewed towards the higher income bands, in comparison with other learning interventions – almost three or four times higher. This is unsurprising,

given their relatively older age status and that predominantly the bursary recipients were employed at the time they undertook the learning intervention. This would imply more advanced career progression and, their employment status. The figure also shows that most beneficiaries across all interventions come from households earning very low incomes, most being clustered around the R2,001 and R4,501 income bands. Even more striking is the presence of beneficiaries reporting that they come from households with from no income to very low income.

Figure 28: Gross household income by intervention (n = 2,746)



Source: Author calculations using HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

The following Table 34 shows that majority of participants live within an income bracket of between R2,001 and R4,500 per month.

Table 34: Current Gross monthly income by employment status of beneficiaries

Gross monthly income by employment status	Studying full-time	Full-time employment	Part-time employment	Self-employed	Unemployed	n
No income	7%	11%	1%	2%	80%	122
R1 - R500	0%	8%	5%	0%	88%	40
R501 - R1,000	2%	10%	5%	1%	82%	102
R1,001 - R2,000	6%	14%	5%	1%	73%	369
R2,001 - R4,500	5%	21%	10%	1%	63%	731
R4,001- R7,500	3%	32%	16%	2%	45%	449
R7,501 - R12,500	4%	49%	15%	0%	32%	267
R12,501 - R18,500	4%	66%	8%	2%	21%	199
R18,501 - R30,500	2%	82%	6%	0%	10%	278
R30,501 +	2%	88%	3%	1%	6%	189
Refused	2%	74%	8%	2%	14%	349
Can't Remember	1%	33%	12%	5%	49%	76
Don't Know	7%	25%	7%	2%	59%	613
Total	4%	39%	9%	1%	47%	3,784

Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Analysing income by gender and type of learning intervention they participated in, Table 35 shows that there is a substantial variation in gross household income, as shown by the relatively large standard deviations. The results also show that female beneficiaries generally come from households that earn lower incomes than those of their male counterparts, except for WIL UoT beneficiaries, where female participants came from households with higher incomes. Noting that females come from larger households compounds the problem.

Table 35: Summary statistics of beneficiaries' household gross monthly income by intervention and gender

Intervention/Gender	N	Total income (R)	Mean	Median	Min	Max	Std Dev
Bursaries - Male	129	3,518,097	27,272	35,501	1,251	35,501	10,137
Bursaries - Female	135	2,998,838	22,214	25,501	751	35,501	10,930
Learnerships - Male	184	1,713,348	9,312	5,001	751	35,501	9,595
Learnerships - Female	665	5,479,099	8,239	4,001	251	35,501	9,438
Internships - Male	197	1,579,852	8,020	5,001	251	35,501	7,956
Internships - Female	465	3,311,739	7,122	5,001	251	35,501	7,432
WIL TVETs - Male	127	794,814	6,258	4,001	251	35,501	5,915
WIL TVETs - Female	441	2,151,223	4,878	3,251	251	35,501	5,519
WIL UoTs - Male	142	1,362,575	9,596	5,001	751	35,501	9,875
WIL UoTs - Female	139	1,560,574	11,227	6001	751	35,501	10,286
Total	2,624	24,470,157	11,414	5,505	1,251	3,501	8,708

Source: Author calculations using HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Poverty indicators

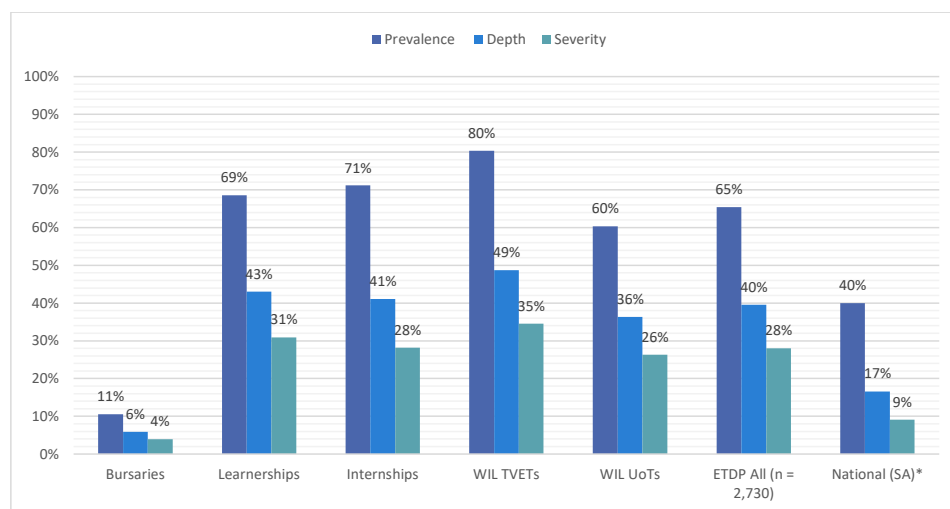
With the income and household size variables we were able to compute poverty indicators for this population of beneficiaries. Whilst it would have been desirable to use a welfare indicator other than income, the nature of this track and trace study does not allow the collection of comprehensive expenditure data for construction of such an indicator. Furthermore, in situations like this the literature supports the use of income as a reasonable welfare aggregate. For this study the focus is on getting an indicator that brings us closer to understanding the socioeconomic status of beneficiaries, as all national skills development policies place an emphasis on prioritisation of the poor. For the SETA it is important to understand whether its interventions are targeting the most deserving, which by extension – and within the context of this evaluation – would demonstrate that the incidence of its interventions overlaps with those whose poverty status would not allow them to otherwise gain access to further education.

Given that poverty is a household phenomenon, both household income and household size were needed to construct poverty indicators. Just like the national poverty statistics by Stats SA, they are calculated using per capita household income, relative to the same upper-bound poverty line used by Stats SA of R1,227 per capita monthly expenditure and monthly income in our case (Statistics SA, 2019). This means that the findings on poverty in this section are weighted by household size, and as such refer to the reference population of 19,126 that represents these beneficiaries.

Figure 29 shows the three conventional Foster-Greer-Thorbecke (FGT) poverty indicators that capture the **prevalence of poverty** (FGT0) (i.e. the number of people who are below the poverty line), the **depth of poverty** (FGT1) (i.e. the distance the poor are from the poverty line) and the **severity of poverty** (FGT2) which captures extreme poverty, that is those furthest from the poverty line (Foster et al., 1984). Except for bursaries, relative to national levels poverty is very high across all interventions. This is more so for WIL TVET

beneficiaries, reflecting a prevalence that is twice and a depth that is more than twice that of SA. In contrast, the poverty prevalence among bursary beneficiaries is the lowest at 11%, which is more than three times lower than the national average of 40% (Foster et al., 1984).

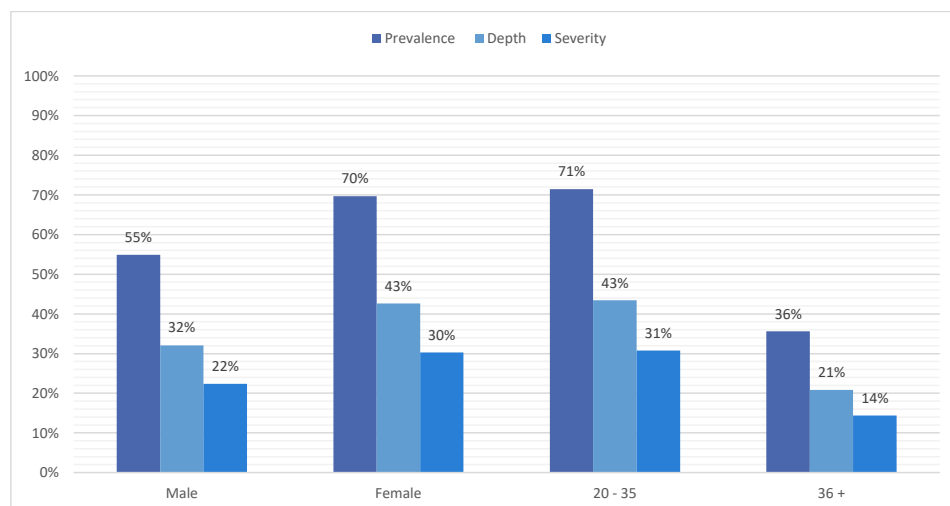
Figure 29: Poverty Indicators of ETDP SETA Beneficiaries by intervention (n = 2,730)



Source: Author calculations using HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Figure 30 shows the poverty indicators by gender and youth age cohort. The findings show that female beneficiaries come from households with higher poverty levels, 70%, relative to males, 55%. The figure also shows that those between the ages of 20 and 35 years face higher levels of deprivation (71% living under the poverty line) than older cohorts, with poverty levels that are twice those of their older counterparts (36% living in poverty).

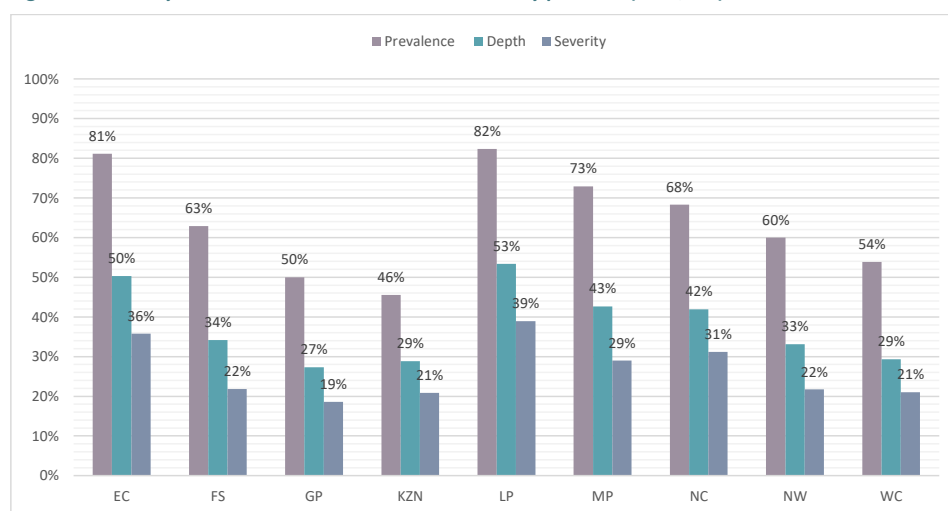
Figure 30: Poverty Indicators of ETDP SETA Beneficiaries by gender and age youth cohort (n = 2,730)



Source: Author calculations using HSRC ETD P SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Understanding socioeconomic status at a provincial level is important, as it might influence the allocation of resources based on need. This is especially important if the SETA wants to respond to the transformation requirements of the NSDS at a spatial level. Figure 31 shows that EC 81% and LP 82%, have the highest poverty levels, followed by MP, 73%; this is consistent with national poverty statistics. At a national level, KZN is generally one of the provinces with high poverty levels, and yet the results show that it has the lowest level at 46%. Further interrogation of the data revealed that this result is driven by the fact that in this sample KZN has the largest number of older beneficiaries, with 33% of those aged 35 years and older residing in this province – and as will be seen later, older cohorts also have the highest current incomes.

Figure 31: Poverty Indicators of ETD P SETA Beneficiaries by province (n = 2,730)



Source: Author calculations using HSRC ETD P SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

5.5 Employment status of beneficiary prior to participation in ETD P SETA learning intervention

A critical aspect of this evaluation revolves around assessing the extent to which the SETA's interventions have been able to facilitate successful entry into the labour market. In order to assess this, we need to understand the employment status of beneficiaries prior to participation in the learning and skills programme. Table 36 shows that prior to participating in the learning intervention, approximately 26% of all beneficiaries were employed, half were unemployed, 50%, and 17% were undertaking further studies. Across all learning interventions, self-employment was relatively negligible.

Table 36: At the time you started the ETDP SETA learning intervention what was your employment status?

Employment Status	Bursaries (E) (n = 329)	Bursaries (U) (n = 45)	Learnership (n = 1,157)	Internship (n = 965)	WIL TVETs (n = 817)	WIL UoTs (n = 474)	Total (n = 3,787)
Employed	87%	0%	39%	15%	9%	3%	26%
Part-time employment	5%	0%	6%	7%	5%	2%	5%
Self-employed	0%	0%	2%	1%	0%	0%	1%
Unemployed	0%	100%	49%	66%	66%	23%	50%
Studying and not working (full time or part time)	8%	0%	4%	10%	19%	70%	17%
Not available for work	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

As mentioned in the previous section on poverty, bursaries had the highest level of beneficiaries who were employed prior to the learning intervention. This is not surprising as this intervention targets both employed and unemployed learners. This is followed by learnerships at 39%. Whilst WIL for UoTs appears to have the smallest number of people in employment, it should be noted that 70% of these beneficiaries reported being in full-time study. This means that both learnerships and internships had the highest number of beneficiaries who were unemployed prior to participation in the learning intervention.

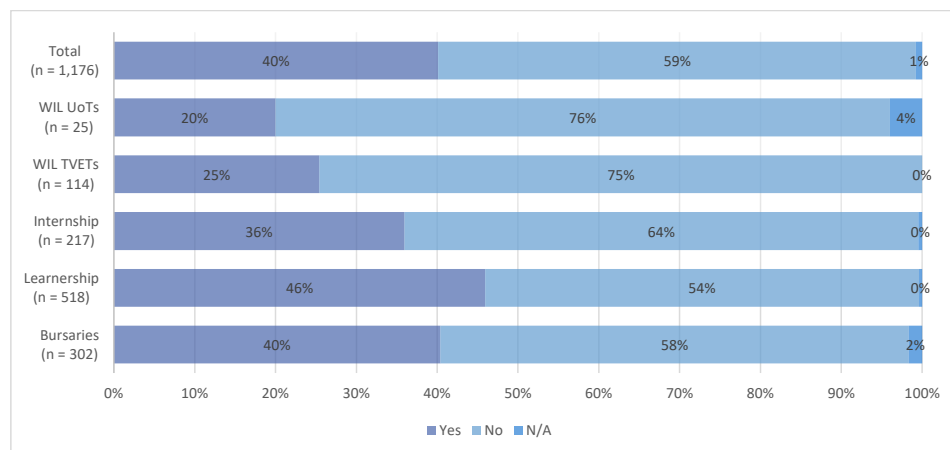
Employment status by gender and age prior to the intervention

The study further probed the employment status of beneficiaries prior to commencement of the ETDP SETA-funded learning intervention by their gender and age. The most discernible difference of employment status by gender was that more women 52%, than men, 46% were unemployed prior to commencement with the SETA-funded learning intervention. The findings reveal that 90% of youth between 20 and 35 years had been unemployed prior to the intervention. This again reflects positively on the targeting of beneficiaries.

To further unpack the employment status of the sample, we enquired as to whether the participant was still employed by the company that they were with when the learning intervention was completed.

Figure 32 indicates that 40% of the sample who were employed at the time of enrolment were indeed still employed by that company, with 46% of learnership beneficiaries reporting having been retained by that company.

Figure 32: Were you employed at the company/organisation where you completed the learning intervention?



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Duration of Unemployment

Table 37 indicates that slightly less than a third of the beneficiaries, 31%, had been unemployed for a period of 1 year to less than 3 years, with a further 25% having been unemployed for 3 years or longer and 11% never having worked before.

Table 37: Length of time that beneficiaries had been unemployed (%)

Duration	Bursaries (n = 44)	Learnerships (n = 564)	Internships (n = 633)	WIL TVETs (n = 537)	WIL UoTs (n = 111)	Total (n = 1,889)
Less than 3 mo.	14%	3%	8%	4%	11%	6%
3 mo. < 6 mo.	9%	4%	9%	9%	7%	7%
6 mo. < 9 mo.	5%	5%	10%	12%	7%	9%
9 mo. < 1 yr	7%	10%	11%	8%	9%	10%
1 yr < 3 yrs	23%	28%	30%	38%	22%	31%
3 yrs to 5 yrs	11%	5%	16%	11%	8%	16%
> 5 yrs	16%	15%	10%	3%	2%	9%
I don't know	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%
I have never worked before	14%	11%	6%	13%	33%	11%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

5.6 Beneficiary perspectives on learning Intervention

5.6.1 NQF Level of Beneficiary arising from participation in ETDP SETA-funded learning intervention

This section aims to unpack the educational level of the participants by identifying the highest education level completed and identifying the educational level of the intervention undertaken. As is evident from Table 38, just under a third of all learning interventions which the SETA funded were at NQF level 6, 29%. This NQF is a level below that of a bachelor's degree or an advanced certificate. The table also shows that 15% accessed an NQF level 4 learning programme, whilst a large number of WIL TVETs beneficiaries, 72%, accessed an NQF level 6 learning and skills training programme. A further 12% completed NQF level 7, less than half of those who completed NQF level 6. Just under a fifth, 18% of all respondents, were unable to indicate the NQF level they had completed. A small percentage of ETDP SETA beneficiaries, 4% completed NQF level 8. The evidence indicates that the interventions are targeting beneficiaries who may not have otherwise accessed accredited learning interventions.

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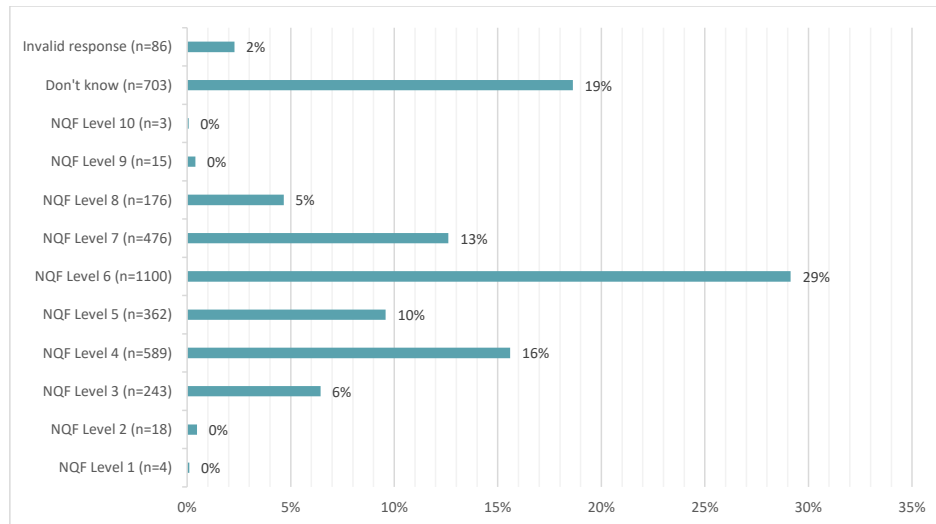
Table 38: What was the NQF level of the learning intervention that you completed?

	Bursaries	Learnerships	Internships	WIL TVETs	WIL UoTs	Total %	Total No.
NQF 1	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4
NQF 2	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	16
NQF 3	0%	12%	1%	0%	0%	4%	147
NQF 4	2%	36%	15%	2%	1%	15%	580
NQF 5	9%	19%	4%	5%	6%	10%	360
NQF 6	10%	6%	20%	72%	41%	29%	1,079
NQF 7	15%	2%	16%	1%	48%	12%	470
NQF 8	32%	0%	2%	0%	1%	4%	147
NQF 9	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	15
NQF 10	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2
Don't know	18%	14%	34%	15%	3%	18%	685
Other	12%	10%	8%	4%	0%	7%	271
Total	374	1,157	956	815	474	100%	3,776

Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

The profile of highest level of education attained is important in determining the potential demand for further education and training. Generally, lower levels of education completed would signal the need for more interventions that would enhance the skills of the labour force. That is, generally low levels of educational attainment will indicate that the SETA is fulfilling the latter objective, which is related to its mandate around skills development within the sector. Table 38 shows that the highest level of education passed by the beneficiaries is a university certificate, 29%, followed by matric, 25%. Bursary beneficiaries achieved higher levels of qualifications compared to all the other learning interventions and 72% of WIL TVET beneficiaries had acquired an NQF level 6 qualification. Just under half, 48% of WIL UoT beneficiaries had achieved an NQF level 7.

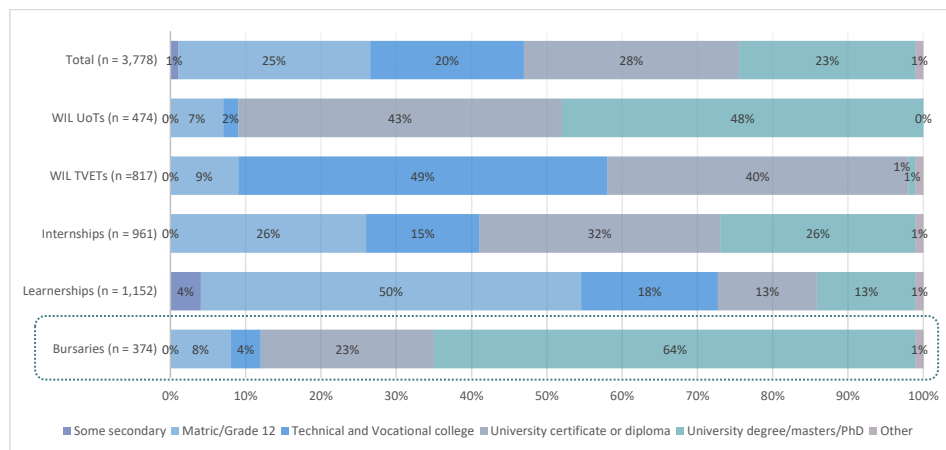
Figure 33: What was the NQF level of the learning intervention that you completed?



Source: HSRC ETD P SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

In Figure 34 beneficiaries were asked about the NQF level of the learning intervention they have completed. NQF level 6 was the level attained by just under a third of all beneficiaries, 29%, followed by 16% who completed NQF Level 4 and 13% who completed NQF level 7. A fifth of all beneficiaries, 19%, were unable to identify the NQF level they had completed.

Figure 34: Highest level of education passed



Source: HSRC ETD P SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

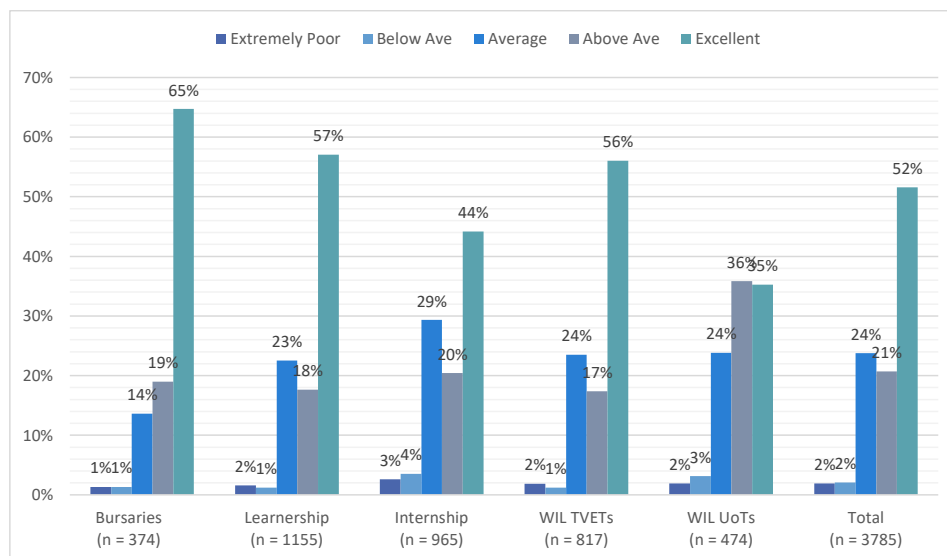
Consistently across all NQF levels, women performed highest in education level passed of the beneficiaries and females are predominant in all the listed education levels, which is consistent with the gender demographics of the study where females make up 69%. The participants who hold a university degree make

up 36% of males, which is the highest figure of the listed education levels amongst males. In the category of other, males make up 53%.

5.6.2 Quality and relevance of training/mentorship received

When asked to evaluate the quality of training and mentorship received, findings in Figure 35 show that half of participants, 52%, rated quality of training as excellent across all interventions, with about two-thirds of Bursary participants, 65% indicating the excellent quality of training with lower percentages for WIL UoTs, 35%, and Internship, 44%, participants. Given the extremely low percentage, 4%, of participants who rated the training and mentorship as below average and poor, evidence clearly indicates that most participants valued the experience.

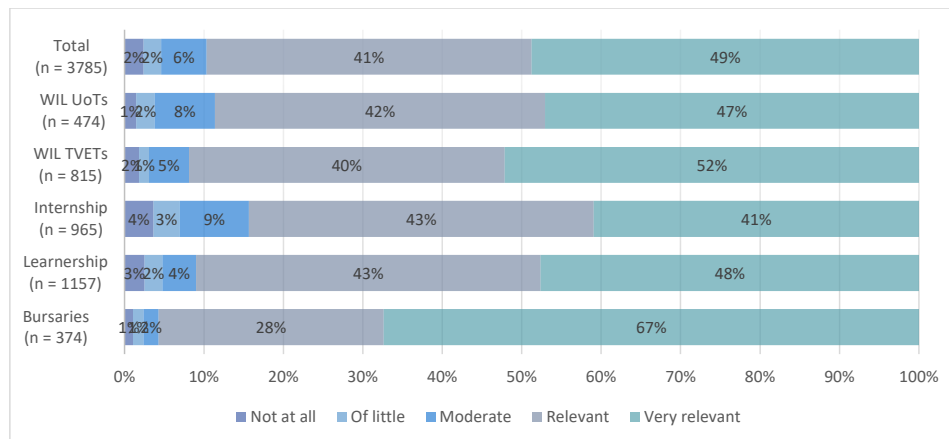
Figure 35: Quality of training/mentorship received by ETDP SETA beneficiaries (n =3,785)



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Beneficiaries were also asked to indicate the extent to which they perceived the training and mentorship as relevant to their skills and competency development. Figure 36 reveals that overwhelmingly, 90% of participants found the training and mentorship to be relevant or very relevant.

Figure 36: Relevance of training and mentorship received (n = 3,785)



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Similarly, an analysis of participants' perception of the relevance of the intervention by the type of intervention they participated in shows that irrespective of their employment, 90% found the training or mentorship relevant and very relevant.

Table 39: Current Employment Status by the relevance of the training or mentorship received

Status	Not at all Relevant	Of Little Relevance	Moderately Relevant	Relevant	Very Relevant	Total
Unemployed	2%	2%	6%	42%	47%	1,761
Employed	3%	2%	5%	40%	51%	1,864
Full-time study	3%	3%	5%	39%	50%	160
Total	2%	2%	6%	41%	49%	3,785

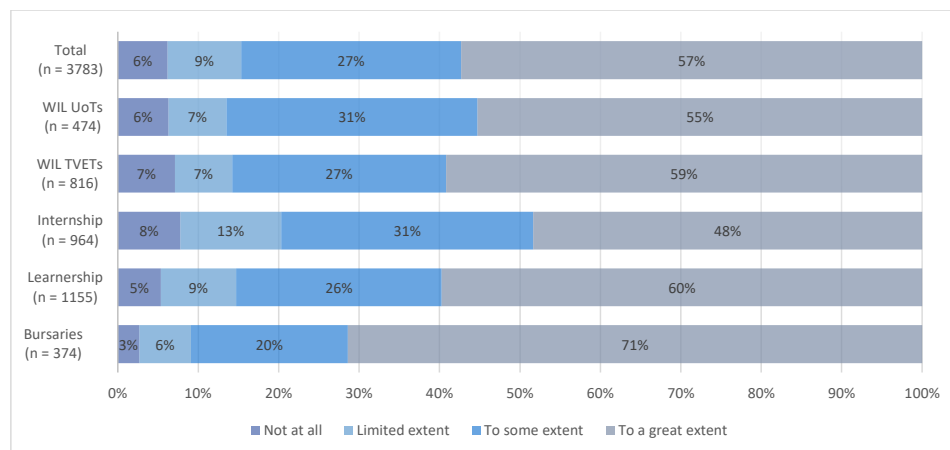
Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

5.6.3 Beneficiary programme expectations

Beneficiaries were also asked to share their perspectives on whether the ETDP SETA learning intervention had met their expectations. Approximately six in every ten beneficiaries expressed the view that participation in the ETDP SETA-funded intervention had met their expectations to a great extent, Figure 37, across all five learning interventions, with one in seven bursary beneficiaries, 71%, sharing this view.

Although negligible, 6% felt that the programme did not meet their expectations while a further 9% indicated that it met their expectations to a limited extent. Of the five interventions, internship beneficiaries were the most likely to report unfulfilled expectations.

Figure 37: Did the ETDP SETA programme meet your expectations?



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Learners' perspectives were also probed regarding what they expected would happen after completion of the intervention.

Table 40: Learner expectations

Learner expectations after completion of intervention	Bursaries (n=374)	Learnerships (n=1,151)	WIL TVETs (n=811)	WIL UoTs (n=3,770)
Gain knowledge, skills & experience	40%	13%	7%	14%
Get a Job	19%	51%	79%	63%
Graduate & receive certification	7%	2%	4%	4%
Invalid response	0%	0%	1%	1%
No Expectations	9%	2%	3%	4%
Promotion/Salary increase/Laptops	7%	2%	0%	2%
Start a business	0%	2%	0%	1%

Opportunity for further studies	15%	4	16%	6%	8	10%
Computer literacy skills	2%	0	11%	0%	0	4%
		%			%	

Source: HSRC ETD P SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

It is evident across four of the learning programmes that securing employment was the most favoured expectation (63%) after completion of the learning intervention, Table 40. Bursary learners rated the most favoured expectation as gaining knowledge and experience (40%) and their second expectation was getting a job (19%). Gaining knowledge, skills and experience rated the second best at 14%, followed by opportunity for further study at 10%. Although government has placed high emphasis on small business development, very few learners (1%) aspired to start a business

5.6.4 Relevance of learning/training intervention to their work

Next, we look at the relevance of the study interventions to the current jobs of the beneficiaries. Figure 38 indicates that 56% of the beneficiaries found the training to be highly relevant to the work they were currently doing. The findings further reveal that bursary beneficiaries, 72%, were the most likely to report close alignment between current employment and the kind of training received, followed by 58% of learnership beneficiaries.

This outcome is unsurprising, given the age and possible career advancement of beneficiaries accessing the two interventions. This would suggest that they might be able to select learning opportunities that are better aligned to their work. From the perspective of the evaluation, this outcome speaks to the effectiveness of the skills programme's objective of enhancing the skills levels of the labour force.

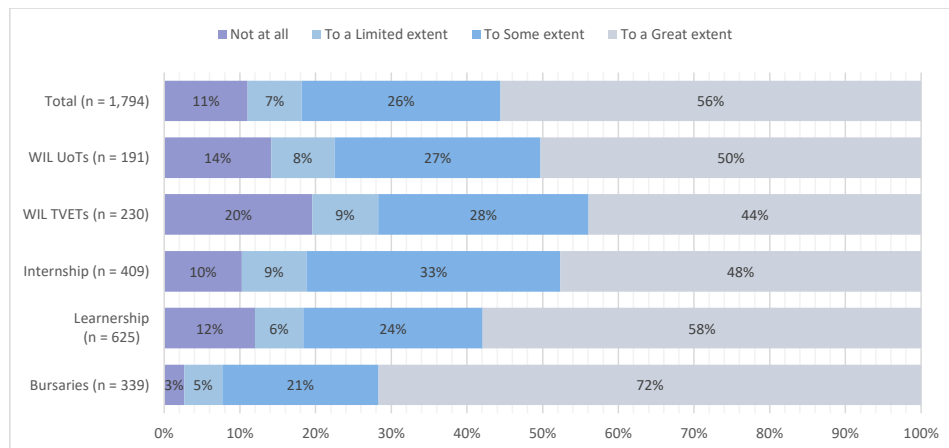
A fifth of WIL TVETs beneficiaries, 20%, which is almost double the average, expressed concerns about the lack of relevance of the training to their current work, with a lower percentage of WIL UoTs, 14% and learnerships, 12%, beneficiaries feeling the same way. One TVET participant expressed the need for:

“Transparent channels of report if bad conduct from service provider”

A few participants bemoaned the relevance of the qualification. A currently part-time employee said the following:

“On my opinion this certificate is not recognised because I have been applying and not get even one interview from my internship. I am not sure what the problem is”.

Figure 38: To what extent is your work related to what you learned during the learning intervention?



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

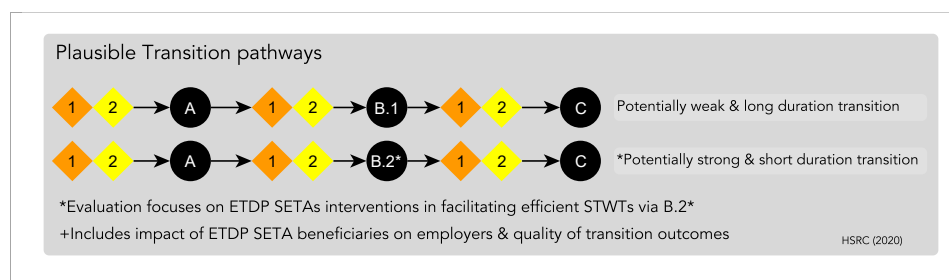
5.7 Outcomes of the ETDP SETA Learning Interventions

One of the core objectives of this study is to assess the extent to which the programmes are achieving their mission regarding facilitating successful transitions into the labour market. The findings in this section will assess the outcomes with respect to employment status, employment rates, and the nature of employment of previous beneficiaries. Specifically, this section is related to the key research questions of the evaluation as mentioned in Section 1, and briefly mentioned here as follows:

- What are the destinations of students who completed?
- If employed, where are they employed?
- If not in employment, why not?

A core indicator of impact with respect to the STWT is the labour market destination of beneficiaries. Four labour market destinations were identified, namely employed, self-employed, unemployed, and engaged in further studies. Based on the analytical framework for this study, the findings in this section assess the extent to which successful transitions have been achieved through exposure to the SETA's intervention, that is, via the B.2* pathway, Figure 39.

Figure 39: Focus of evaluation is on the B.2* pathway of the analytical framework



Source: Authors

As the ETDP SETA consistently supports the Department of Basic Education (DBE) in developing and implementing their workplace skills plan, the greatest number of participants in the study worked for the DBE across all nine provinces. Learnerships, WIL TVET, WIL UoTs and Internship programmes were noted as an effective strategy for upskilling workers in the education sector, particularly the public sector, as work-based placements were available and relevant to the participants' interest area. Arising thereof participants reported that the work experience gained was relevant. Many DHET lecturers also reported having benefitted through their skills being enhanced and they were able to perform their duties effectively and efficiently.

5.7.1 Changes in learners' career progression

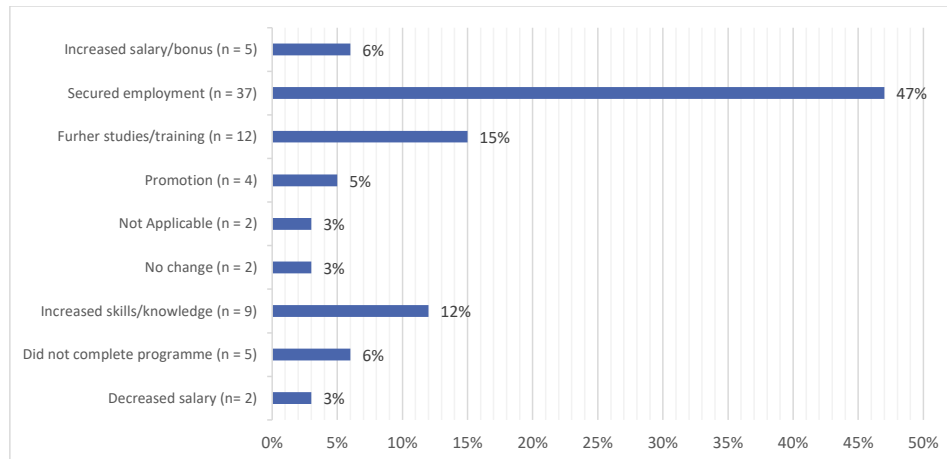
A key objective of the study was to assess what difference participation had made on the learners with a focus on their career progression. This was underpinned by a need to assess the extent to which participation in SETA interventions has enabled beneficiaries to progress up the occupational ladder. From the perspective of the Theory of Change and analytical framework, we would expect career progression outcomes to be achieved in the medium- to long-term time horizons. As such it should come as no surprise if we observe very low levels of achievement for these indicators of progression.

We asked the question "With respect to your career, did any of the following happen after you completed your programme? (Please tick all that apply)". The question had four pre-coded options and one open-ended option:

- I received a promotion
- I received a pay raise
- I moved to a new role/position
- There was no change
- Other, please specify

Changes in career of beneficiaries is illustrated in Figure 40 below. The most important change that participants reported was in security of employment, 47% and participants who were studying further, 15%. Other positive outcomes reported include the 12% who noted that their knowledge and skills had increased, increase in salary, 6% and receiving a promotion, 5%. A smaller cohort, 3% reported no change and a further 3% reported an adverse change, namely a decrease in salary.

Figure 40: Changes in career after you completed your programme?



Source: HSRC ETD P SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

5.7.2 Current employment status

The results show that almost half, 47% of the beneficiaries were unemployed, with 48% being in some form of employment (full time, part time or self-employment), and the remaining 4% were in full-time study. Only 1% indicated that they were self-employed.

Table 41: Summary of Beneficiary current employment status by financial year

Employment Status	2016/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	Other	Total %	Total n
Studying full-time	3%	8%	3%	4%	3%	4%	146
Full-time employment	40%	41%	40%	36%	37%	39%	1,420
Part-time employment	9%	10%	8%	8%	11%	8%	307
Self-employed	4%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	52
Unemployed	44%	40%	48%	51%	47%	47%	1,722
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	3,647
Total %	11%	15%	42%	29%	3%	100%	

Source: HSRC ETD P SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

The information in Table 41 indicates that across the study reference period the number of unemployed beneficiaries (post-completion of the intervention) remained high, averaging 47%. This reflects the structural nature of South Africa's economic status and poor growth trajectory. The self-employment rates are very low, despite the significant investments made by government over the last two decades to enhance entrepreneurship. This finding resonates with the Cape Higher Education Consortium study of 2013, which found a graduate self-employment level of around 2.2% (Cape Higher Education Consortium, 2013).

Focusing on employment outcomes across programmes, the study found that labour market participation varies considerably by learning intervention completed, with those who participated in the bursary interventions having the largest proportion of currently employed graduates. Bursary graduates were disaggregated by those who at the time of commencement of the intervention were recruited as employed and unemployed beneficiaries. The findings show that 91% of the previously employed were currently in employment and 62% of the previously unemployed graduates were currently employed. In contrast

employment rates for all other beneficiaries were considerably lower, with 46% of learnership beneficiaries, 28% of internship beneficiaries, 21% of WIL TVETs, and 36% of WIL UoTs being currently employed.

The percentage of workers who remained unemployed is considerably high, with an average of 47% across all learning interventions. In comparison, currently employed learnership beneficiaries, 40%, are slightly more than double those of previously unemployed bursary holders, 18%, four times more for WIL TVET beneficiaries, 67% and approximately three times more for internship, 50% and WIL UoT, 52% beneficiaries. The high rates of WIL UoT beneficiaries at 52% remains a concern, given that evidence suggests that university graduates fare better than other beneficiaries.

Table 42: Current employment status of the ETDP SETA beneficiaries by learning intervention

Employment status	Bursaries (E) (n = 329)	Bursaries (U) (n = 45)	Learnership (n = 1,157)	Internship (n = 965)	WIL TVETs (n = 817)	WIL UoTs (n = 474)	Total (n = 3,788)
Studying full-time	1%	9%	4%	5%	3%	7%	4%
Full-time employment	91%	62%	46%	28%	21%	36%	39%
Part-time employment	2%	11%	8%	15%	7%	5%	9%
Self-employed	0%	0%	2%	2%	1%	0%	1%
Not working	6%	18%	40%	50%	67%	52%	47%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020). Bursaries (E) & (U) Employed & Unemployed

Current employment status by demographic characteristics

Given the transformational imperatives for increasing access to PSET, the findings in respect of current employment outcomes are presented below by race, gender and disability.

Table 43: Current employment status by race

Current employment status	Black African	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Total (n=3,788)
Studying full-time	4%	8%	0%	5%	4%
Full-time employment	38%	52%	84%	75%	39%
Part-time employment	9%	10%	0%	15%	9%
Self-employed	1%	2%	0%	0%	1%
Unemployed	48%	28%	16%	5%	47%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

In Table 43 Black Africans were found to have the lowest current full-time employment status and the highest current unemployment status. This is unsurprising as it broadly reflects South Africa's unemployment crisis.

Current employment status by gender

The employment status of beneficiaries compared by gender, Table 44 is reported at the time the of the interview. Although there was little difference between males and females for those currently employed, more females were unemployed compared to males.

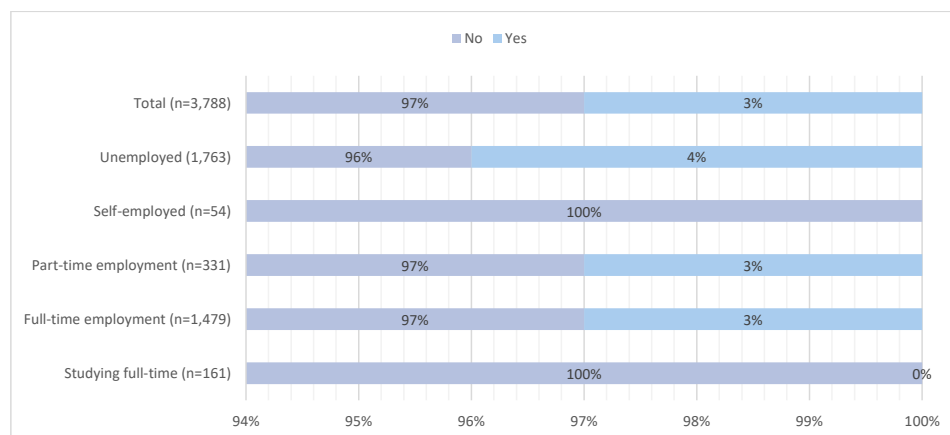
Table 44: Current employment status by gender

Employment status	Male		Female		Total	
	%	n	%	n	%	n
Studying and not working	6%	66	4%	95	4%	161
Full-time employment	40%	465	39%	1,014	39%	1,479
Part-time employment	9%	104	9%	227	9%	331
Self-employed	2%	24	1%	30	1%	54
Unemployed	43%	505	48%	1,258	47%	1,763
Total	100%	1,164	100%	2,624	100%	3,788

Source: HSRC ETD P SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Figure 41 reveals that people living with disabilities were almost equally distributed in terms of their current employment status, with 52% unemployed and 48% employed and none pursuing further education.

Figure 41: Disability by employment status

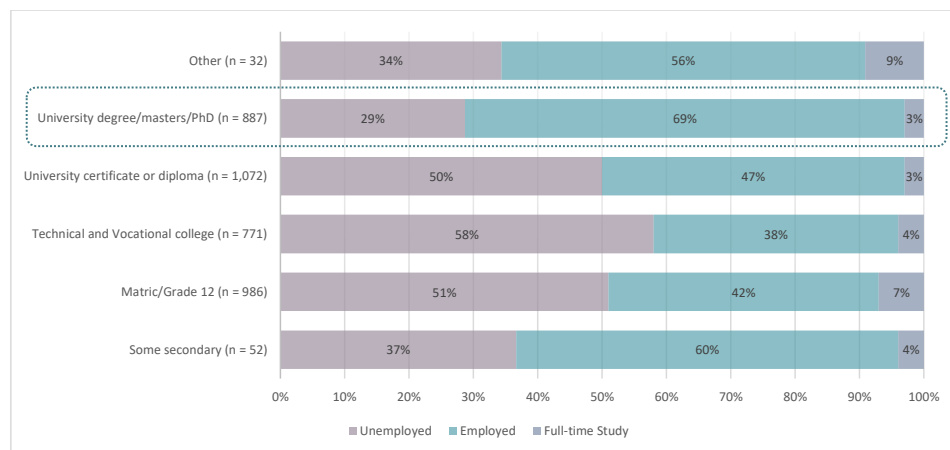


Source: HSRC ETD P SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

5.7.2.1 Employment status and level of education

Figure 42 helps us to understand the relationship between highest level of education attained and current employment status. It reveals that those with a university degree have the lowest rate of unemployment, 29% and those with TVET education had the highest unemployment level at 58%.

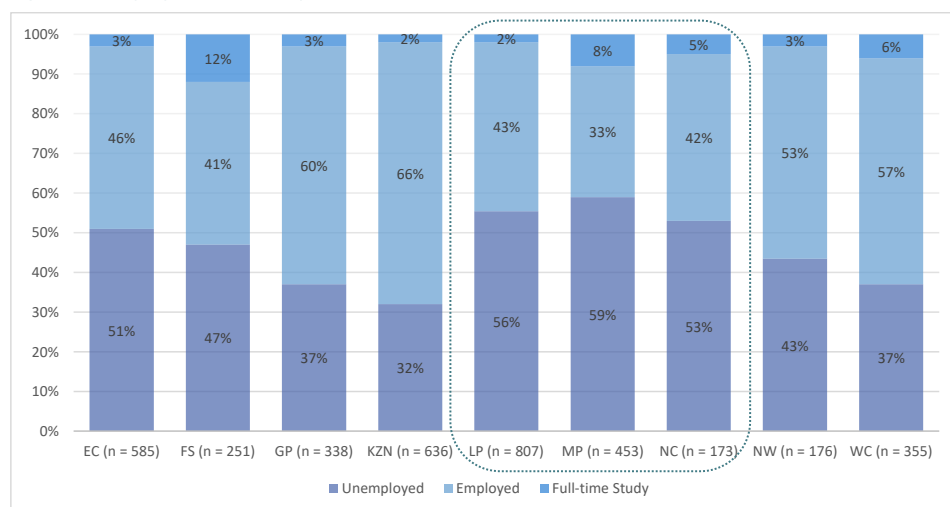
Figure 42: Highest educational level passed by employment status



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Figure 43 indicates the employment status of beneficiaries by province. It reveals that Mpumalanga, Limpopo, Northern Cape and Eastern Cape have the highest levels of beneficiaries who are unemployed.

Figure 43: Employment Status by Province

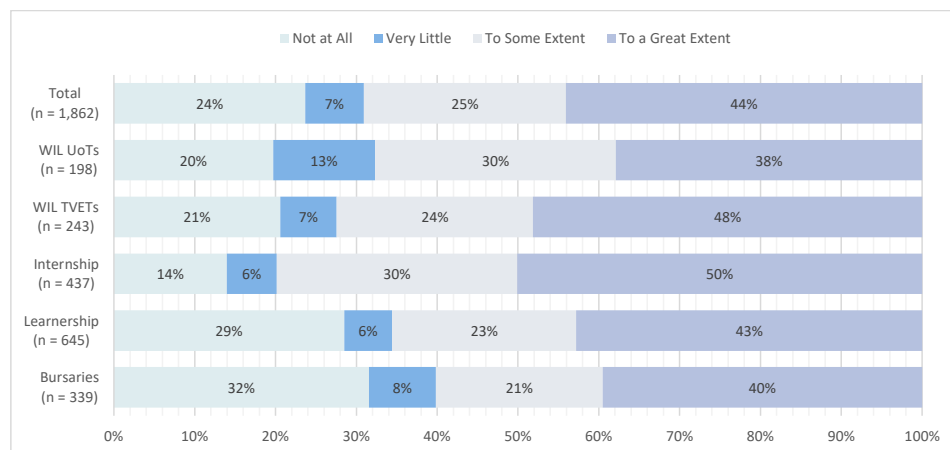


Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

One of the key objectives of the various learning programmes is to assist participants to navigate access into employment and improved livelihoods, including starting their own businesses. This could be through skills, competencies and networks developed during the learning intervention.

We asked the respondents to reflect on the extent to which they thought that participating in the intervention was useful in helping them to find work or even start their own business. Figure 44 shows that almost three-quarters, 69% of the currently employed participants thought participating in the ETDP SETA intervention assisted them in finding their job to some or a great extent.

Figure 44: To what extent do you think the ETDP SETA's intervention assisted you with finding a job/starting a business?



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

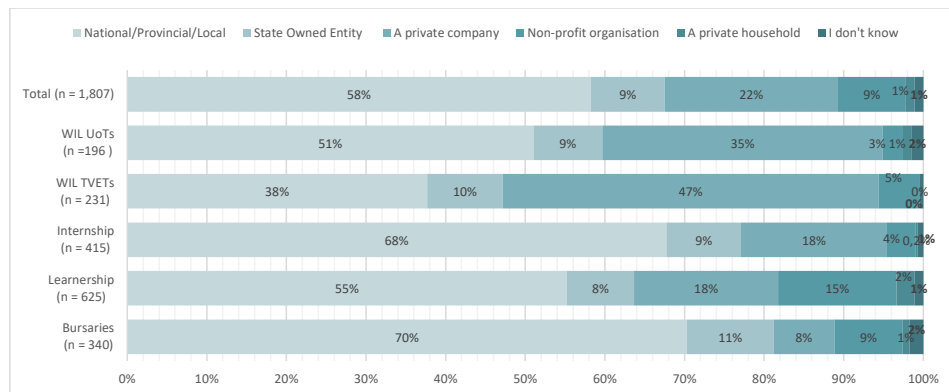
However, on average a quarter of beneficiaries, 24% felt that it did not help them at all in finding further work. Notably, more beneficiaries of bursaries, 32% and learnerships, 29% believed that participation in the programme did not help them in finding work.

5.7.2.2 Current employer profile

To fully understand the nature of work that employed beneficiaries are currently engaged in, we enquired further about their current employer, i.e. whether they are employed by government or its entities, non-profit enterprises or privately owned enterprises. Working for the government is a common desire for most job seekers, with the expectation that government offers much more stable jobs with superior employment compared to other sectors of the economy (Nilsson, 2019).

Figure 45 reveals a broader picture, where an overwhelming 67% of beneficiaries are employed in various spheres of government, 58% and in state-owned entities, 9%. A fifth, 22% work in the private sector and under a tenth are employed in non-profit organisations, 9%. These findings are aligned to the fact that several of the ETDP SETA sub-sectors are in the public sector.

Figure 45: How would you classify the employer that you work for?



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Interesting and useful dynamics emerge as you look at the constituencies of the current employers. The public sector is consistently the main employer of beneficiaries across the various interventions, especially for bursary, 70% and internship, 68% recipients. However, there seem to be more diversified employment opportunities for WIL TVET beneficiaries across the different sectors. For instance, WIL TVET beneficiaries are significantly represented in both the public, 38% and private, 47% sector. Similarly, although WIL UoTs have a higher percentage working for government, a substantial share of 35% are working in the private sector.

Table 45: ETDP SETA Constituency and Non-ETDP Sector Employers n = 1,646

Employment Sector and Constituency	n	%
Early Childhood Development (ECD) Centres	126	8%
Government Departments	373	23%
Independent Schools	1	0%
Local Government	31	2%
Non-Governmental & Community-based Organisations (NGOs/CBOs)	25	2%
Other		2%
Political Parties	14	1%
Private FET and HET Institutions	19	1%
Private Sector Companies	298	18%
Public Higher Education Institutions	95	6%
Public Schools	535	33%
Quality Assurance Bodies	3	0%
Refused	57	3%
Research Organisations	5	0%
SETA Sub-sectors	8	0%
Trade Unions	25	2%
Total	1646	100%

Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

The beneficiaries were asked to provide information about their current employer and in Table 45 above this information was clustered by the various constituencies served by the ETDP SETA and other stakeholders, with 12 of the 14 ETDP sectors included in this study sample. With regard to the government stakeholders,

75% comprised the Department of Basic Education (74%), national and provincial and Department of Higher Education and Training (1%).

The single largest constituency employing beneficiaries are public schools, 33% followed by 23% working in government departments. Half of all institutions that beneficiaries were employed in are within the education and training sector, including ECDs, Adult Education and Training Centres, independent schools, private HEIs, the Department of Basic Education and institutions associated with DHET. One-fifth of the beneficiaries are employed by private sector institutions.

This is an encouraging finding, as it partly demonstrates positive spin-offs from participating in more vocationally oriented learning interventions, where learners get greater exposure to industry, and can develop occupationally directed competencies and necessary networks with relevant players or employers in the industry. More specifically, South African studies investigating professions which are in shortage have consistently reported a need to develop and attract more and appropriately qualified teachers/educators into the sector (HRDC, 2012; Johan & Breier, 2009; Reddy et al., 2016, 2017). Evidence also shows that a concerted effort is required to ensure that adequate numbers of teachers are produced in specific education phases and subject specialisation areas (DBE, 2017; Green et al., 2014).

The ETDP updated sector skills plan of 2018 suggests that more ECD practitioners should be developed for the country to meet the demand of universal access to ECD (ETDP SETA, 2018). For instance, there are about 3,297,390 children aged between three and five requiring ECD. There are only 29,000 centres and 46,571 practitioners with only 827,888 children using these centres, resulting in an average ratio of 21.2 children to 1 practitioner and thus pointing to a significant demand for ECD teachers. Furthermore, the DSD ECD audit of 2014 cited in the same ETDP SETA (2018) report showed that a significant proportion of ECD managers and principals had low levels of education: about 40% had less than Grade 12 and about 55% had no qualifications whatsoever. Therefore, a significantly large proportion of beneficiaries joining the education sector demonstrates that the SETA is playing a critical role in ensuring that there is an adequate supply of appropriately educated personnel.

Table 46: Distribution of Private Companies by Sectors

Accommodation & Hospitality	n	%
Legal Firms	6	2%
Communication Service Provider	2	1%
Construction Companies	5	2%
Courier Services	1	0%
Financial Service Institutions	39	13%
Sports and Recreation	5	2%
Media and Marketing	5	2%
Mining Companies	9	3%
Petrol Service Station	4	1%
Private Health Care Centres	16	5%
Restaurants	12	4%
Retail & Wholesale Outlet	80	27%
Safety and Security Companies	5	2%
Small & Medium Entities	78	26%
Technology & Manufacturing Firms	17	6%
Transport & Logistics Companies	7	2%
Total (n = 298)	298	100%

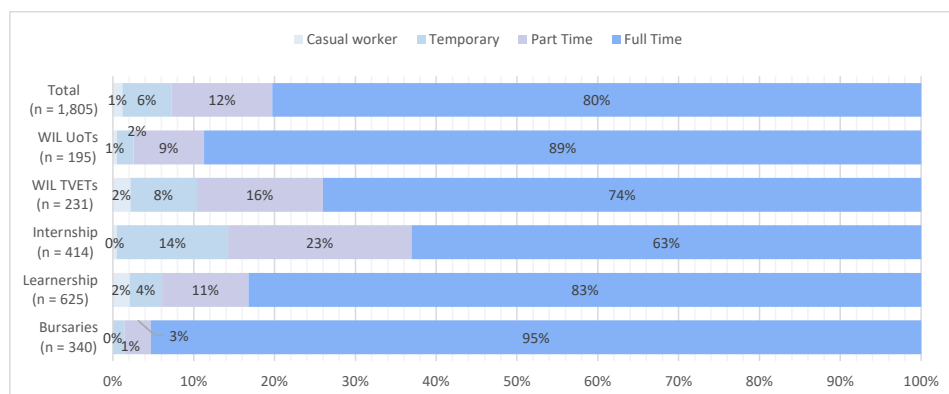
Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Further analysis was undertaken to understand the 18% private companies within which ETDP SETA beneficiaries were being employed, as illustrated in Table 46 above. A quarter comprised retail outlets, 27%, a further quarter, 26% were defined as small business without any indication of the sector within which they operated, and 13% were financial service institutions.

5.7.2.3 Type of employment

In times of high unemployment, finding a stable job that guarantees some level of job security becomes a key priority for most job seekers. Figure 46 shows that 80% of the employed beneficiaries were in full-time work, with only a 20% in part-time, temporary and casual work. The bursary intervention yielded a significantly higher percentage of beneficiaries in full-time employment, 95%, followed by WIL UoTs, 89% and learnerships 83%. Of all interventions, internships have the lowest proportion of beneficiaries in full-time employment, 63%, but have sizeable proportions in part-time and temporary employment.

Figure 46: What is the type of employment?



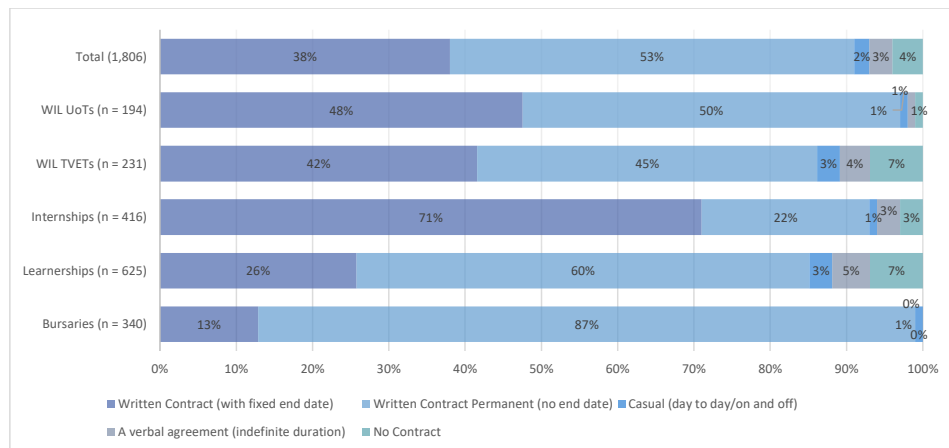
Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

5.7.2.4 Nature of employment contract

To determine the quality of employment, beneficiaries were asked to indicate the nature of the employment contract that they have with their employers. This is to establish whether they have any contract whatsoever, and if they do, whether it is written or verbal. Figure 47 shows that almost all, 91% beneficiaries were in jobs based on written work contracts. This suggests that the majority have acquired full-time employment with fixed or permanent contracts, demonstrating some level of job and income security. Thirty-eight percent have a written contract with a fixed term, and a further 53% are permanent workers. Less than a tenth, 9% either have no contract, a casual contract or just a verbal agreement.

There is a great variation in the type of employment of beneficiaries based on learning intervention completed. Almost all, 95% of the bursary intervention beneficiaries are in full-time employment. Similarly, beneficiaries of WIL UoTs, 89%, followed by learnership participants, were also more likely to be in full-time employment. WIL TVETs had a lower proportion, 74% of beneficiaries who had secured full-time employment. Even fewer beneficiaries who participated in the internship intervention were able to get full-time employment, with more of these reporting being in part-time work, 23%, almost double the national average of 12% or employed on temporary contracts, 4%.

Figure 47: What is the nature of your employment contract?



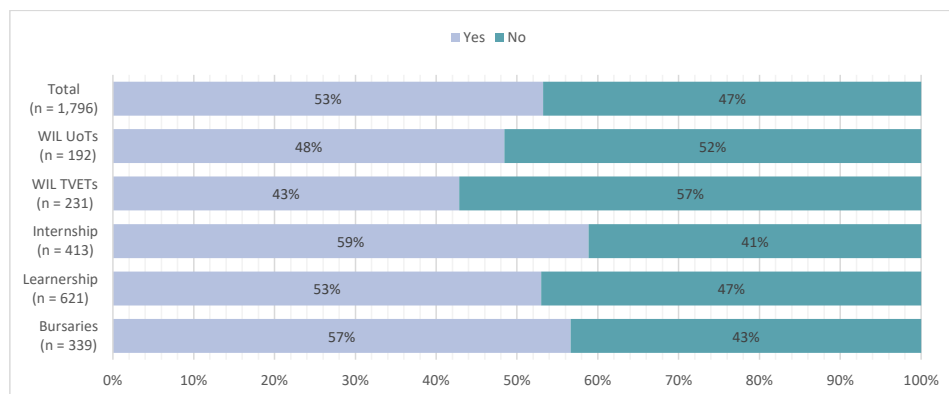
Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

The finding that most of the beneficiaries are in jobs with formal contracts is encouraging, considering the host of benefits associated with full-time employment on the one hand, and vulnerabilities associated with short-term or non-standard contracts on the other.

5.7.2.5 Matching learning intervention to sector

The implementation of skills and development programmes by the ETDP SETA allows participants to be rightly matched in the job market, significantly avoiding the skills mismatch crisis. According to Figure 48, 53% of the sample who are employed work in the same industry in which their intervention took place. We gather from this that the skills obtained were matched to the participants' work.

Figure 48: Are you working in the same industry in which your learning intervention took place?



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Of the 1,796 employed participants, 47% were not working in the same industry in which their learning intervention took place. On a positive note, this might indicate the value of the skills and competencies

developed during the learning intervention in facilitating mobility within and across sectors. Furthermore, it also shows that the skills developed are portable and adaptable enough to be utilised in other sectors.

As the ETDP obligation is to provide work-related training and development to upskill individuals under the ETD Sector, it is therefore very important to track the impact of the interventions. The purpose is to secure jobs, build new job opportunities and upskill learners for better service provision. The result reveals a positive response as educators successfully completed the learning programme.

Table 47: Summary of beneficiaries' occupation by interventions

Occupation	Bursaries	Internships	Learnerships	WIL TVETs	WIL UoTs	Total %	Total n=1,795
Armed forces (n = 6)	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	6
Clerical workers (n = 415)	10%	42%	13%	48%	8%	23%	415
Elementary occupations (n = 100)	1%	2%	9%	11%	3%	6%	100
Plant, machinery operators & assemblers (n = 33)	0%	0%	2%	3%	6%	2%	33
Professionals (n = 67)	3%	9%	0%	3%	4%	4%	67
School management (n = 137)	28%	0%	6%	0%	0%	8%	137
Senior officials/managers n=98	8%	6%	3%	6%	7%	5%	98
Service, shop & market sales workers n=127	2%	5%	7%	15%	11%	7%	127
Teaching professionals n= 642	44%	8%	57%	5%	49%	36%	642
Technicians & associate professionals n= 39	1%	4%	1%	2%	6%	2%	39
Trainee workers n=104	1%	19%	1%	3%	6%	6%	104
Invalid responses/refusal n=27	2%	2%	1%	3%	1%	2%	27
Total %	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	1,795
Total n=1,795	340	413	623	229	190		

Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

The information in Table 47 shows analysis of the beneficiary occupational positions across the learning programmes to determine occupational status of learners who had undertaken the ETDP SETA skills development intervention. Employed learners who completed their respective learning interventions were asked to indicate their occupation. The open-ended responses were subsequently coded according to the Organising Framework of Occupations (OFO) framework which classifies occupations by skill level and skill specialisation (DHET, 2013b). Such an analysis at the occupational level adds a useful dimension in understanding labour market destinations of beneficiaries. For instance, occupations can serve as a proxy to measure skills levels alongside other approaches using qualifications, earnings or job requirements (Reddy et al., 2016) and can signal areas of demand for ETD beneficiaries. It is thus expected that higher occupational levels are associated with better labour market outcomes (e.g. in terms of earnings and working conditions).

The achieved sample size comprised 1,975 participants and predominantly 36% are educators by profession followed by 23% of clerical workers. The outcome indicates that educators are the most common beneficiaries of bursaries, learnerships and WIL UoTs, while clerical workers are highest recipients in the internships and WIL TVETs learning programmes. ETDP has expressed commitment to ensuring quality teaching, learning in schools, TVET colleges, ECD centres, CETS and public HEIs by improving the capacity of teachers, practitioners and lectures in these institutions. Table 47 thus shows positive spin-offs from the SETA skills development initiatives and programmes towards addressing skills deficits in the sector and across the economy. For instance, the ETDP sector identified 2,222 shortages of Foundation Phase teachers in 2019 and estimates that about between 20,000 and 30,000 new teachers are required by the public schooling system each year (ETDP, 2019).

Importantly, the ETDP Sector Skills Plan (SSP) of 2017 had identified a demand for generic clerks (ETDP SETA, 2020). Clerical skills are often employed in public servant positions. This is again well aligned to the SETA's

commitment to improving administration, management, leadership, governance and research capacity with the aim of supporting teaching and training professionals.

About 8% of the beneficiaries were part of school management, and almost all had completed a bursary programme. These positions, such as those of school principals and department heads, have also been identified as in demand in the ETD sector (ETDP SETA, 2020). This is followed by service, shop and market sales workers with 7%. Notably, elementary occupations, technicians and associates as well as plant, machinery operators and assemblers had much lower representativity, which is well expected considering the education levels of beneficiaries. Although represented in minute proportions, this shows that the ETD sector does not just comprise white-collar workers. In fact, the sector has identified a need to develop the technicians and trade workers occupation (ETDP SETA, 2020) alongside a need for research and development managers as hard to fill vacancies in a number of organisations.

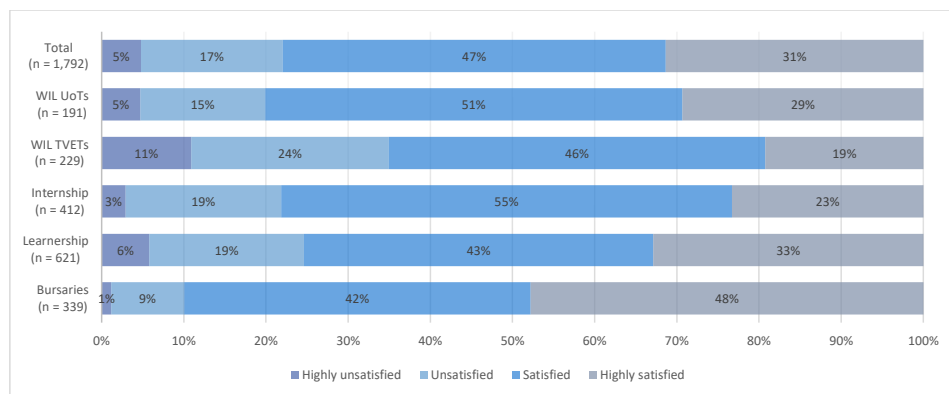
Very few learners occupied senior official, manager and other professionals' positions (this category contains occupations such as lecturers, accountants, training and development professionals). Again, this was also expected because of lead time to accumulating adequate experience for learners to move to some of these high skill level positions. Therefore, beneficiaries have begun to occupy occupations which have been identified as priority areas for development, including teaching professionals, where there has consistently been a call to improve on appropriately skilled staff to respond to the skills demands in that area. Apparently the ETDP SETA's obligations have not been shifted from the focus on the skills development enhancement and promotion of employment within the ETD sector.

5.7.2.6 Satisfaction with current job

Job satisfaction is a subjective appraisal of one's work, and therefore useful in capturing employees' overall levels of satisfaction with work. Importantly, job satisfaction is a useful indicator of future labour market behaviour (Clark, 1998). For instance, high satisfaction is associated with greater employee commitment and performance, whilst dissatisfaction is related to absenteeism and intention to quit and might even discourage future labour market participation. Figure 49 shows that the majority, 78% of the employed beneficiaries are satisfied with their jobs: 31% are highly satisfied and 47% are satisfied with their jobs.

Disaggregating by learning interventions revealed stark differences in satisfaction levels. Bursary beneficiaries registered the highest levels of satisfaction, 90%, followed by WIL UoT beneficiaries, 80%, then learnerships and internships, 76% and 78%, with WIL TVET beneficiaries exhibiting lower levels of job satisfaction, Figure 49.

Figure 49: Current job satisfaction



Source: HSRC ETD P SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Notably, WIL TVET beneficiaries, 24% display significantly higher levels of dissatisfaction with their jobs compared to those in other learning interventions.

5.7.2.7 Income

One of the key objectives of the study was to determine the level of earnings among SETA beneficiaries. Respondents were asked to report on their current gross earnings, and Table 48 shows that the majority from all five interventions have earnings that cluster between the R2,000 and R7,500 per month income bands.

Table 48: How much do you earn per month before any deductions? (n = 1,403)

Income Band	Bursaries (n = 255)	Learnership (n = 483)	Internships (n = 354)	WIL TVETs (n = 186)	WIL UoTs (n = 125)	Total (n = 1,403)
No income	0%	1%	3%	5%	2%	2%
R1 - R500	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%
R501 - R1,000	0%	6%	1%	1%	0%	2%
R1,001 - R2,000	1%	18%	4%	10%	1%	9%
R2,001 - R4,500	3%	17%	41%	33%	14%	22%
R4,501 - R7,500	3%	11%	23%	22%	20%	15%
R7,501 - R12,500	5%	10%	8%	13%	16%	9%
R12,501 - R18,500	13%	12%	9%	12%	10%	11%
R18,501 - R30,500	38%	19%	9%	3%	35%	19%
R30,501 +	37%	5%	2%	1%	2%	9%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: HSRC ETD P SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Specifically, 17% were in the R2,001 to R4,500 income band, with 11% falling in the R4,501 to R7,500 band. Across all interventions there was a skew to the right of the income distribution, with 15% falling in the R18,501 to R30,500 income band. As expected, given their demographic profile, those receiving bursaries had the largest group of high-income earners. Two percent of the participants earned no income, which indicates that they were willing to work without getting paid, which is known as voluntary employment.

5.7.2.8 Hours worked

Table 49 provides summary statistics of the beneficiaries' working hours. On average the majority of beneficiaries work a regular 40-hour week, with a few reporting that they worked longer hours – such as 56 hours a week. These hours appear to be consistent with the Department of Labour's Basic Conditions of Employment Act maximum threshold.

Table 49: How many hours do usually work per week?

Intervention	N	Mean	Median	Min	Max	Range	Std Dev
Bursaries	339	41	40	8	50	42	3
Learnerships	621	41	40	8	56	48	5
Internships	414	41	40	8	56	48	4
WIL TVETs	226	41	40	16	56	40	4
WIL UoTs	196	41	40	8	56	48	6
Total	1,796	41	40	8	56	48	4

Source: HSRC ETDp SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

5.7.2.9 Employment benefits

Access to work benefits, such as paid annual leave, health cover or pension contribution by employers, can serve as indicators of the quality of work. Table 50 shows that across all interventions, more beneficiaries reported receiving paid sick leave, 85% and UIF contributions, 79%, with the least received benefit being medical aid; this was particularly more so for beneficiaries of internships, with the lowest percentage, 22% receiving this benefit.

Table 50: Employee benefits

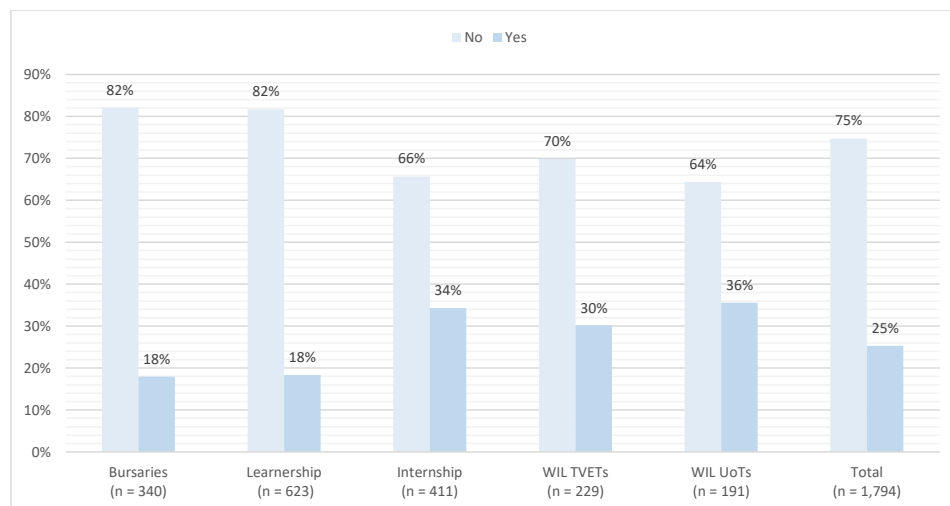
What employment benefits do you receive?	Bursaries	Learnerships	Internships	WIL TVETs	WIL UoTs	Total
Are you entitled to paid sick leave?	96%	84%	76%	81%	90%	85%
Does your employer pay UIF contributions for you?	81%	75%	75%	81%	89%	79%
Are you entitled maternity/paternity leave?	90%	80%	56%	64%	71%	74%
Does your employer deduct PAYE from your salary?	97%	71%	54%	63%	83%	73%
Does your employer contribute to any pension/retirement fund for you?	93%	65%	32%	48%	55%	61%
Are you entitled to any paid vacation leave?	74%	60%	49%	56%	49%	59%
Are you entitled to medical aid benefits?	86%	53%	22%	37%	39%	50%

Source: HSRC ETDp SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

5.7.2.10 Employment outcomes as a result of the intervention

To track progress in the careers of participants that were successfully employed, we asked if the participant's salary changed as a result of the ETDp interventions. Most participants, 75% did not experience a change in salary, as seen from Figure 50 below. However, the remainder, 25% experienced a change in their salary which was attributed to the learning intervention.

Figure 50: Has your salary changed as a result of the learning intervention?



Source: HSRC ETDSP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

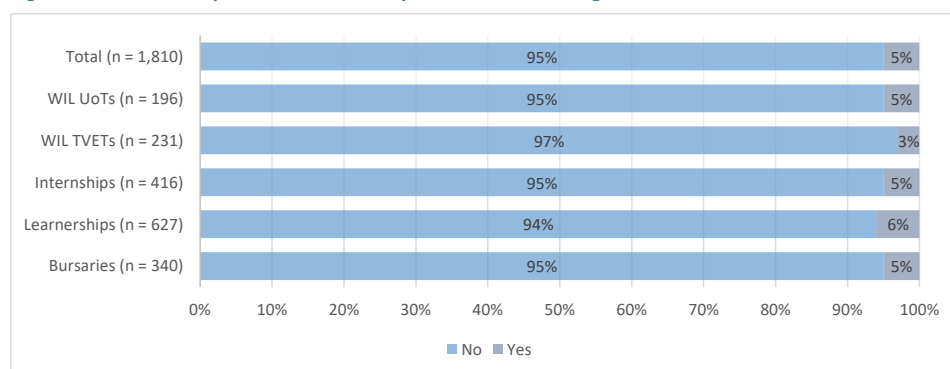
5.7.2.11 Career progression

In order to understand the beneficiaries' reported positive changes, the evidence was analysed by the type of learning intervention they had participated in. This was assessed against four indicators, namely receiving a promotion, increase in salary, change in position and no change at all.

Promotion

Promotions in the workplace indicate employer confidence in and appreciation of their skills and competencies. Figure 51 shows that only a small minority, 5% received promotions, and that learnership beneficiaries were slightly more likely to have received promotions compared to those from other interventions.

Figure 51: I received a promotion after completion of the learning intervention

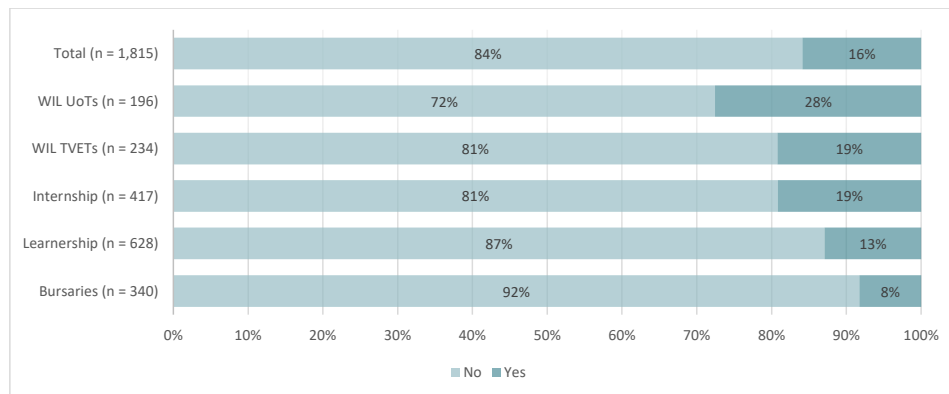


Source: HSRC ETDSP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Promotions in the workplace often occur after years of work experience have taken place and growth in core competencies have been reflected in the employee. Looking at Figure 51 we can make an assumption that 95% of the beneficiaries who did not receive a promotion, among other reasons, mainly lacked the required years of service and experience, and that this an outcome that would materialise in the medium to long term.

Another indicator of career progression that was investigated was whether the beneficiary had moved to a new role or position. Figure 52 shows that less than a fifth, 16% of the beneficiaries indicated that they had moved to a new position. Disaggregated by learning intervention it is evident that more than a quarter of WiL UoT beneficiaries, 28% moved to a new position while less than one-tenth of bursary beneficiaries were similarly rewarded. A fifth of WiL TVET and internship beneficiaries also reported having been moved to a new position.

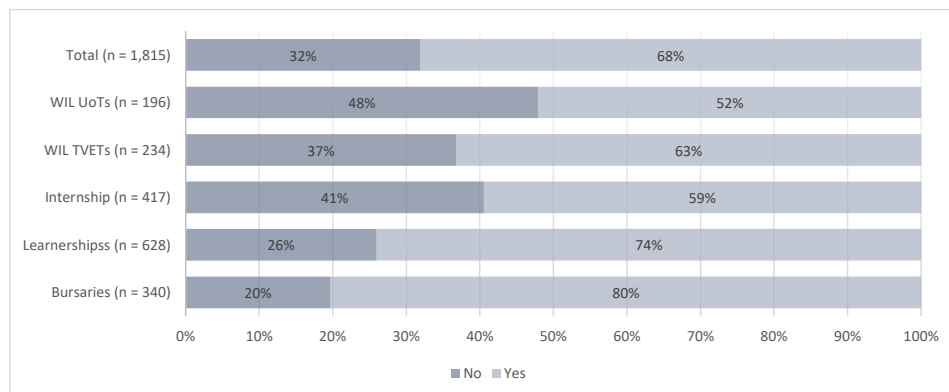
Figure 52: I moved to a new position after completion of the learning intervention



Source: HSRC ETD P SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Overall, it can be observed in Figure 53 that about two-thirds of the participants did not experience any change in their career with respect to promotions, salary increase or change in position.

Figure 53: There was no change in my employment

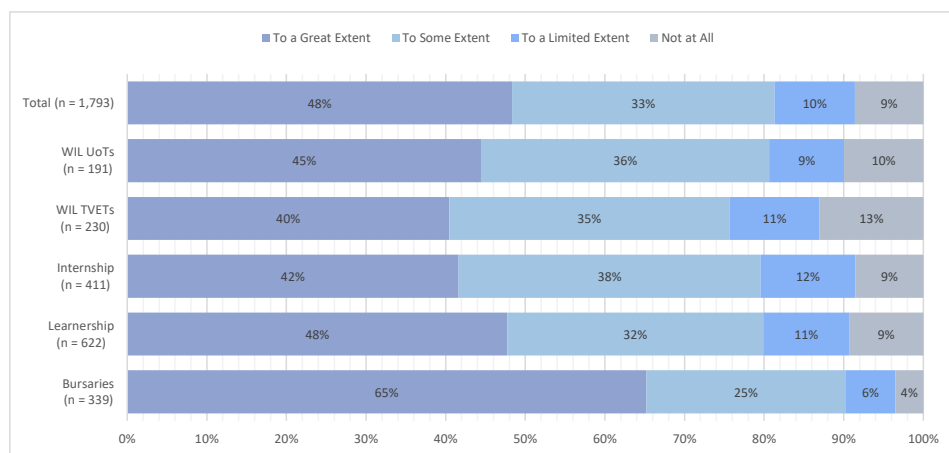


Source: HSRC ETD P SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Changes in career expectations

Figure 54 shows that almost half of the beneficiaries perceived that their career expectations had been met to a great extent when they completed the learning intervention; about a third claimed that their expectations were met but only to some extent, and a tenth indicated that their expectations were met to a limited extent. Nine percent said that the learning interventions did not meet their career expectations at all. Bursary beneficiaries were those most likely to report that career expectations were met to a great extent.

Figure 54: To what extent have your career expectations been met at the time of completing your learning intervention?



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

5.7.2.12 Summary of Employment Outcomes

As the results on employment status show, absorption rates remain relatively low and on average only 49% were in employment with 39% in full-time employment. Wide variations are noted between learning interventions, with 91% of previously employed bursary beneficiaries currently employed compared with 62% of those who were unemployed at the time they commenced the training. Less than half of all learnership beneficiaries, 46% are employed followed by 36% of WIL UoT beneficiaries. Internship beneficiaries, 28% and WIL TVET beneficiaries, 21% were the groups with the lowest current employment rates (section 5.7.2).

Whilst the levels of employment were roughly the same for both males and females, there were disproportionately more women who were unemployed (48%) relative to their male counterparts (43%). The overall association between gender and employment status was found to be statistically significant and highlights a stylised fact regarding the gendered nature of the South African labour market, and forms the basis for the gender targets.

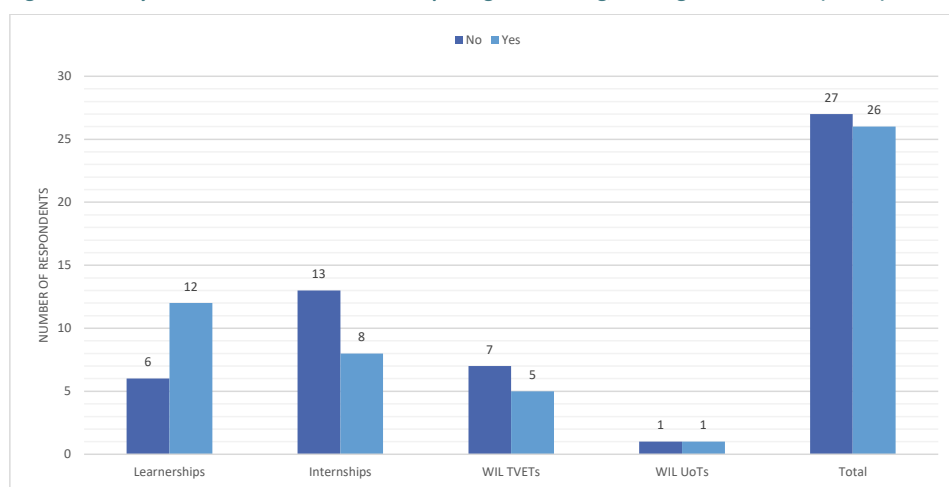
It is important to note that some of the employment outcomes could also be influenced by the fact that an insufficient amount of time had lapsed between the periods of completion for some of the learners, especially those who finished in the 2018/19 financial year. As noted in the studies' conceptual and analytical frameworks, external factors have a direct impact on influencing the extent to which successful transitions can be made into the labour market. In the South African context, the unprecedented levels of

unemployment generally and in respect of youth remain key factors impacting on transitions into the labour market.

5.7.3 Self-employment

This section explores whether exposure to the ETPD SETA programme induced an entrepreneurial spirit among its beneficiaries. Figure 55 below shows that overall, there was no significant difference between beneficiaries who started their own business and those who did not do so after receiving training. However, the results also revealed that beneficiaries who had been enrolled in the learnership intervention were more likely to start their own businesses than those in other interventions.

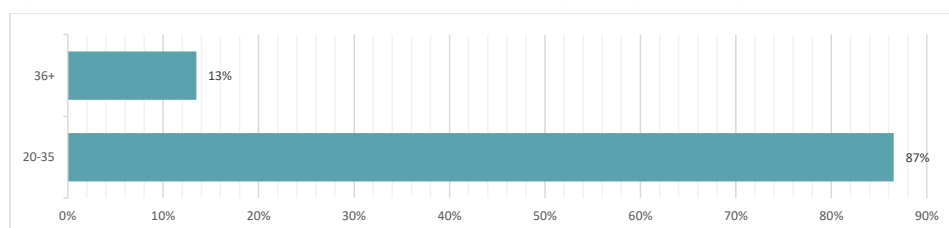
Figure 55: Did you start this business after completing the learning/training intervention? (n = 53)



Source: HSRC ETPD SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

When looking at business ownership by age, it is encouraging to note that youth predominate among the few who started businesses after receiving training. Figure 56 shows that 90% of the beneficiaries who started their own business ventures fall within the youth category.

Figure 56: Beneficiaries who started businesses after receiving training by their age cohort (n = 53)

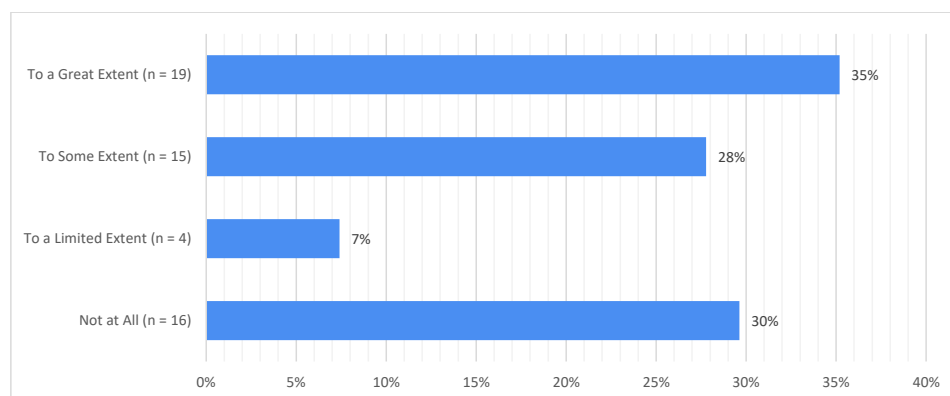


Source: HSRC ETPD SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

A large majority of the beneficiaries with businesses recognised that skills and competencies gained during their training were very valuable in starting their own businesses. Figure 57 shows that 63% of the beneficiaries said that these skills were useful to a great 35% and some 28% extent in starting businesses. These findings indicate that most beneficiaries perceived the content of training to have been relevant and

useful in helping them start their own businesses. Of concern is that almost a third 30% felt that the training received was not at all useful when they were starting their own businesses.

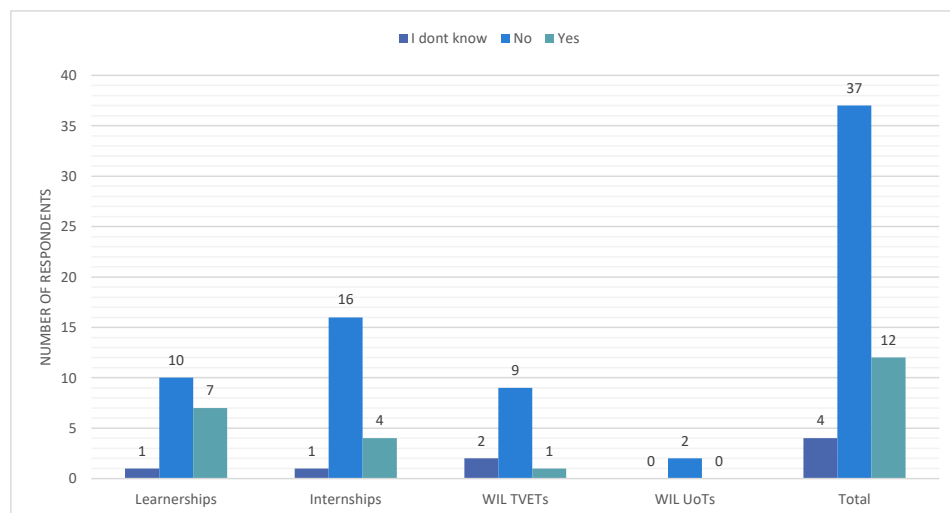
Figure 57: The extent in which beneficiaries have been able to apply what they learnt from ETDP SETA to start their own business (n = 54)



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

ETDP SETA beneficiaries who are entrepreneurs were further questioned about whether businesses they were running were registered to pay VAT. The findings in Figure 58 reveal that while about 12 business owners do pay VAT, the large majority, 37 of these beneficiaries are running businesses that are not registered for VAT. This suggests that such businesses could be informal, as can be seen in Figure 58. It is evident that there were significantly more of those who had received learnerships, 7 operating more formalised or registered operations. In contrast, beneficiaries who had been through the WIL UoTs internships were more likely to operate unregistered businesses.

Figure 58: Business registered with VAT by learning interventions (n = 53)



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

In order to assess how well the self-employed beneficiaries were doing, these respondents were asked what their gross monthly income was. The results in Table 51 show that almost one-third of these self-employed beneficiaries live at a point between having no income at all, and making at least R1,000 a month.

Table 51: Gross monthly income for the self-employed

Income band	Learnerships	Internships	WIL TVETs	WIL UoTs	Total	%	Cum. Freq.
No income	1	2	1		4	8%	8%
R1 - R500	1	1	2		4	8%	15%
R501 - R1,000	2	2	2	1	7	13%	28%
R1,001 - R2,000	2	1	2		5	9%	38%
R2,001 - R4,500	4		1	1	6	11%	49%
R4,001- R7,500	4	4	1		9	17%	66%
R7,501 - R12,500		2			2	4%	70%
R12,501 - R18,500	2	1	1		4	8%	77%
R18,501 - R30,500		1	1		2	4%	81%
R30,501 +		1			1	2%	83%
No answer	2	6	1		9	17%	100%
Total	18	21	12	2	53	100%	

Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

There were age differences with respect to income earnings, with older cohorts being in the higher income brackets, whilst almost half of the youth were making at least R2,000 per month, with about 10% making no income at all.

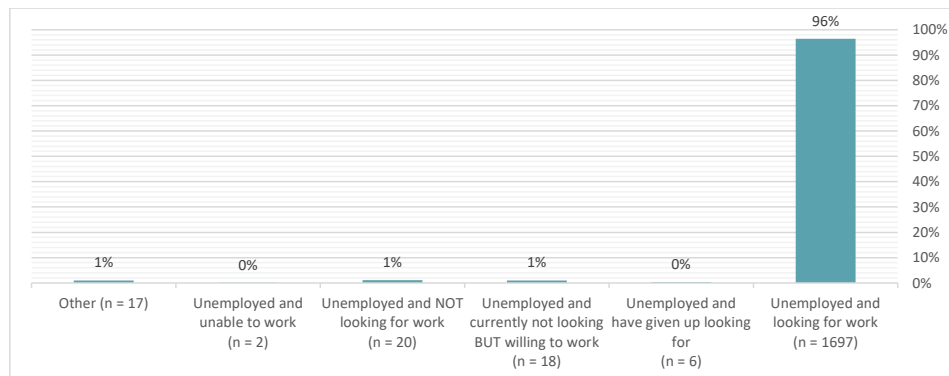
5.7.4 Unemployment / inactivity

Unemployed vs. discouraged work seekers

In unemployment studies it is important to distinguish between being unemployed relative to being non-searching unemployed, of which a sub-group are discouraged workers. For someone to be classified as being unemployed, they must be actively looking for employment. Discouraged workers are a sub-group of the non-searching unemployed, who have given up hope of finding a job but will accept if offered employment.

In order to understand the profile of the unemployed, respondents were asked to choose a description that best captured their current situation. The findings show that although economically inactive, almost all beneficiaries are actively looking for work and fit the conventional definition of unemployed, Figure 59. This is important, as it is reflecting great optimism on the part of the beneficiaries – and that they have not been discouraged or lost hope of finding work.

Figure 59: Which of the following statements most accurately describe your current situation?

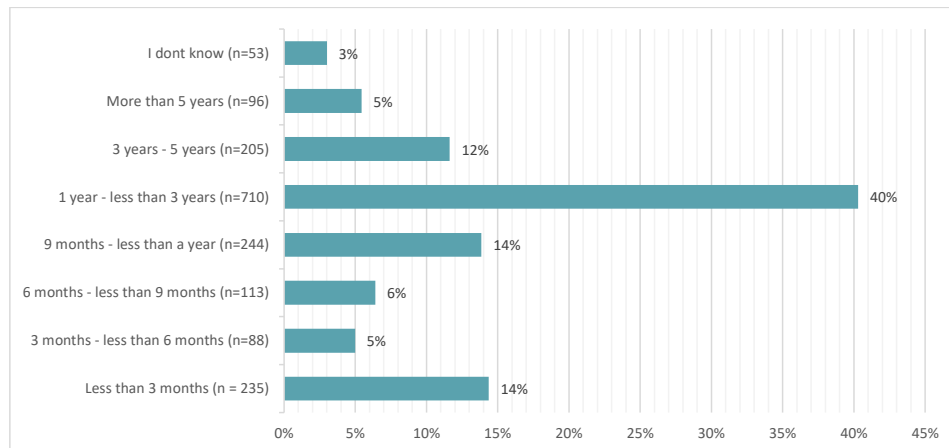


Source: HSRC ETD P S E T A Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Duration of unemployment

The length of time spent unemployed has a significant impact on the overall process and period of transitioning into the labour market. Although shorter spells of unemployment are expected at times, prolonged periods of unemployment are of major concern. The study explored the issue of duration of unemployment of the beneficiaries and results in Figure 60 indicate that over half, 57% had been without work for a year or more. This implies that this group could readily be categorised as long-term unemployed, and at risk of economic exclusion. This suggests the existence of complex challenges related to integrating this group of workers into the labour market.

Figure 60: How long have you been looking for a job?



Source: HSRC ETD P S E T A Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Main reason for being economically inactive

The ETD P S E T A beneficiaries were also asked to indicate main reasons why they are unemployed. Such information is critical as it is these perceptions that partly inform motivation of job search, intensity and strategies adopted. Results show that about 54% of these unemployed beneficiaries cited a lack of available jobs in the local labour market, while 20% cited mismatch of skills possessed, and the ones required by the

labour market. The latter begins to capture the perceived role of external factors such as the economic climate and the shrinking job opportunities in the transitions of these beneficiaries.

Table 52: One main reason why you think you are economically inactive

Reason for being inactive in the job market	Frequency	%
No jobs available in my area	945	54%
Unable to find work requiring my skills	351	20%
Lack of resources to look for a job	72	4%
Lost hope of finding any kind of work	11	1%
Nepotism/corruption	81	5%
Awaiting the season for work	37	2%
Not looking for a job	12	1%
Pregnancy	9	1%
Age constraints/disability/criminal record	11	1%
Housewife/homemaker/family consideration	3	0,2%
Undergoing training to help find work	20	1%
Retired/too old to work	8	0,5%
Do not know	200	11%
Total	1,760	100%

Source: HSRC ETD P SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

It is interesting that 5% of beneficiaries highlighted corruption and nepotism as the reasons they were unable to secure employment, while a further 4% noted the lack of resources for job searching. The responses below provide a nuanced perspective on why people were currently inactive economically:

“I resigned because of the pressure and threats; I mean threats of the position”– **Male bursary beneficiary aged 45-49.**

“Corruption, people are bribing for positions and nepotism”– **Male learnership beneficiary aged 30-34.**

About half of the beneficiaries said they are not working due to the unavailability of jobs:

“The government is not advertising and providing jobs for us”- **Female learnership beneficiary aged 30-34.**

“Older teachers do not want to retire, and they prevent us to get jobs” – **Female WIL UoT beneficiary aged 20-24.**

“I am still waiting to be placed by Funza Lushaka” – **Male WIL UoT beneficiary aged 20-24.**

“We are living in very poor area with no access to internet, our applications do not get to employers on time- **Female internship beneficiary aged 25-39.**

“The government is investing in education than balancing employment sectors” – **Male internship respondent aged 25-29.**

“I think it because of my disability” – **Male learnership beneficiary aged 35-39.**

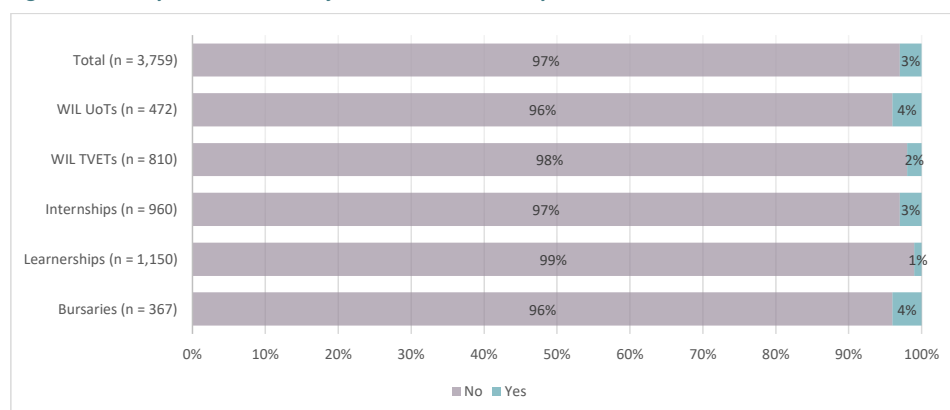
Possibility of voluntary unemployment

The debate of whether there is the presence of a reservation wage has been a part of the South African labour market literature since the dawn of democracy (Banerjee et al., 2008). A reservation wage can be

defined as the minimum wage rate at which a worker would be willing to accept any job. This means that those with a reservation wage would reject a job offer involving the same type of work and the same working conditions at a lower wage rate (Hall & Lieberman, 2008). While there is limited empirical data on self-reported reservation wage rates for unemployed in SA, there is consensus that errors may exist in self-reported wage rates, possibly arising from the fact that with widespread unemployment, few unemployed people have had opportunities to assess wage offers and therefore less knowledgeable about their acceptable reservation wage rate (Burger et al., 2017). It is thus posited that self-reported reservation wage rates may be higher than their predictive wage rate, and that this did not necessarily contribute to higher unemployment.

From the perspective of this study, we are interested in voluntary unemployment and possibly reservation wages, as they have an influence on the duration of the transition into employment. In order to establish the presence of reservation wage dynamics in this population, we asked several questions that explored potential attitudes towards work. In some instances, work seekers can refuse employment opportunities if these are not aligned with their interests or career aspirations, or do not possess specific characteristics which they deem important. Firstly, focusing on the entire sample, we wanted to know if any of the beneficiaries had ever refused a job offer. The findings reveal that of the 3,759 beneficiaries in the sample, on average only 3% indicated that they had ever declined a job offer.

Figure 61: Have you ever refused a job that was offered to you?

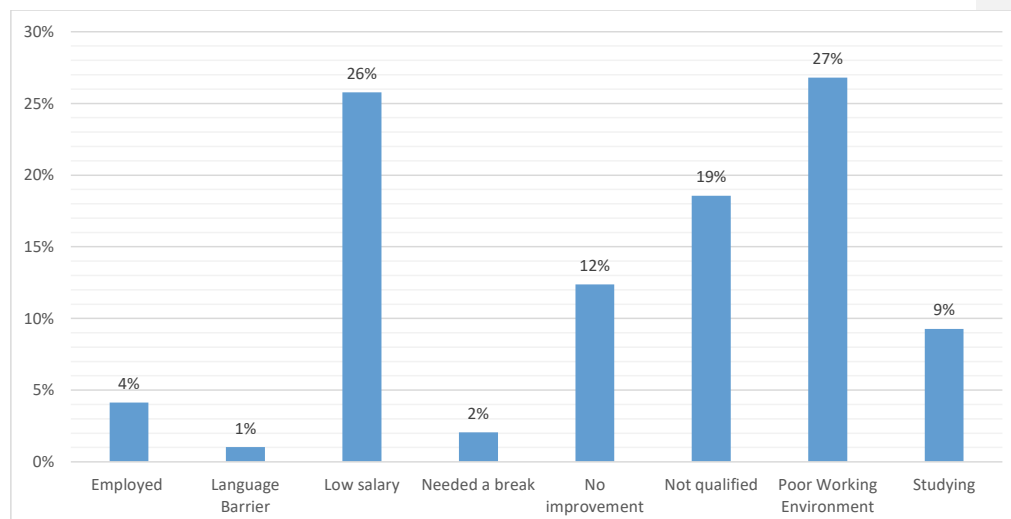


Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Reasons for refusing a job opportunity

We followed up by seeking to understand why a job opportunity was refused, Figure 62. Half of beneficiaries refused a job opportunity: poor working environment, 27% and low salaries, 26% were the main reasons provided. A further one-fifth reported that they did not have the requisite qualifications for the job opportunity.

Figure 62: Why did you refuse a job opportunity?



Source: HSRC ETDSP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Some of the reasons for declining a job offer are elaborated on below:

"I have already signed a contract with the other company" – **Female learnership beneficiary aged 20-24**

"I was not qualified for the job and the company would have paid me a market salary" – **Female WIL TVET beneficiary aged 25-29**

Illustrations of the poor work environment encountered by beneficiaries included:

"My manager acts unprofessionally when approaching me" – **Female WIL TVET beneficiary aged 25-29**

"The staff members were extremely rude" – **Female learnership beneficiary aged 20-24**

Table 30 provides insights into the reasons youth and older beneficiaries refused job opportunities. For youth between 20 -35 years of age the reasons for refusing a job offer were low wages, reported by 18%, followed by 10% who indicated that it had been a poor match between their skills level and the job offer, and 9% who indicated that the work was not interesting. In contrast, older beneficiaries above 36 years identified the inconvenient location of job, 20% and work not aligned to their skills level, 20% as their main reasons for refusing a job. A further 10% refused on the basis that the job did not provide opportunities for advancement, or that they were waiting for a better job offer, 10%.

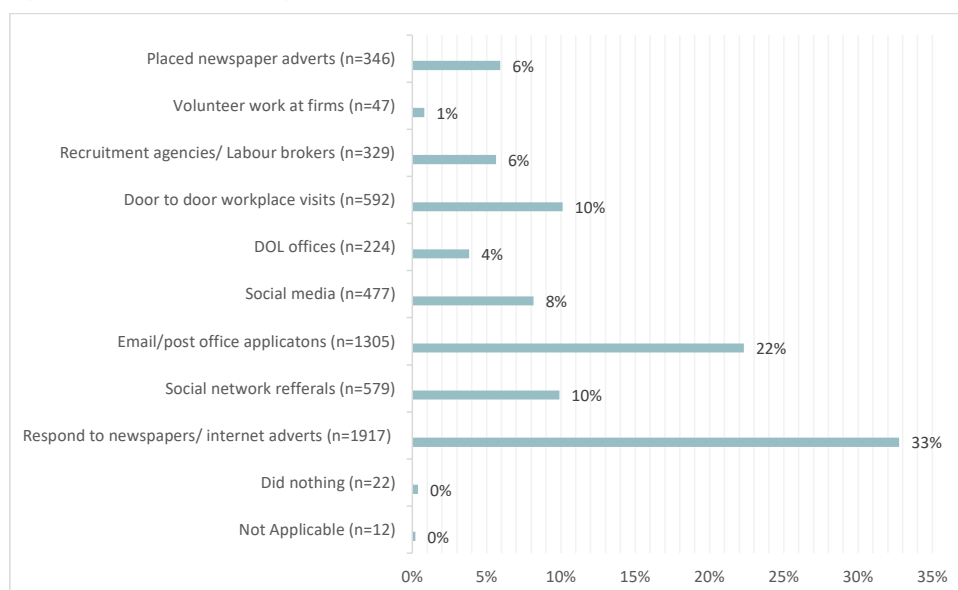
Table 53: Reasons for refusing a job opportunity by age cohorts

Reason for refusing	20 – 35 yrs	36 + yrs	Total	n
Wages offered were too low	18%	0%	16%	16
Work was not interesting	9%	0%	8%	8
Location was not convenient	8%	20%	9%	9
Work would not match my level of qualification	10%	20%	11%	11

Reason for refusing	20 – 35 yrs	36 + yrs	Total	n
Work would require too many hours	6%	0%	5%	5
Waiting for a better job offer	7%	10%	7%	7
There was no contract length offered or contract length was too short	7%	0%	6%	6
Saw no possibilities for advancement	5%	10%	5%	5
Other	31%	40%	32%	31
Total	100%	100%	100%	98

Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Figure 63: What method have you used to look for work?



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Methods used to look for work

Beneficiaries have used diverse approaches for job searching, Figure 63 with responding to adverts for job vacancies, 33% predominant followed by registering their CVs on online platforms via email or through the post office, 22%. Unsolicited visits to employers, 10% and finding jobs through their social networks, 10% were the other mainly used methods. A very small number of participants (n=22) appear to be discouraged work-seekers. A snapshot of some of the responses to how they searched for jobs is reflected below:

“There is a project I am waiting for that is starting in January” – Female internship beneficiary aged 40-44

“I am still waiting to be placed by Funza Lusaka” – Female WIL UoT beneficiary aged 20-24

“I gave up, I am no longer applying” – Male WIL TVET respondent aged 20-24

“I am underqualified, a lot of people are looking for jobs” – Male internship beneficiary aged 30-34

“I took my CV to the district because they are supposed to place me” – Male WIL UoT participant aged 25-29

In this study we wanted to understand the specific conditions under which unemployed beneficiaries and those in full-time study would accept a given job. Table 54 shows the results of a multiple response question that presented respondents with five options that they could choose from. The findings show that one in four respondents, 39% would choose ‘Any job, whatever the conditions’, with the second most picked option ‘Any job, provided it is appropriate to my level of qualification’, 31%. Both learnerships, 45% and WIL TVETs, 45% had the highest number of respondents who would accept any job, whatever the conditions, which may reflect the challenges of securing any job. Interestingly, only 17% of respondents selected ‘Any job, provided it is well paid’. There were also those who would only accept ‘A job only if it is stable, well paid and appropriate to my level of qualifications’, with a quarter of respondents selecting this option, 26%, but with more than half, 56% of bursary beneficiaries selecting this option.

Table 54: Conditions under which beneficiary would accept a given job (multiple responses*)

Which of the following are you likely to accept ...	Bursaries (n = 32)	Learner- ships (n = 507)	Internships (n = 526)	WIL TVETs (n = 567)	WIL UoTs (n = 274)	Total (n = 1906)
Any job, whatever the conditions	34%	45%	38%	45%	18%	39%
Any job, provided it is appropriate to my level of qualification	19%	21%	33%	29%	47%	31%
A job only if it is stable, well paid and appropriate to my level of qualification	56%	22%	29%	27%	24%	26%
Any job, provided it is stable	12%	17%	22%	23%	12%	20%
Any job, provided it is well paid	9%	14%	20%	19%	14%	17%

Source: HSRC ETDP SETABeneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020) *Multiple response totals don't add to a 100%

We would therefore expect the transition to the labour market of beneficiaries with more stringent requirements and preferences to be slower, as they elected to wait for job offers that best fit their capabilities and expectations. This phenomenon is common among highly educated youth, who tend to be more selective and have specific preferences for jobs fully aligned with their educational and skill levels. Therefore, whilst the ETDP SETA learning programmes might be effectively preparing and making learners work ready, a number of individual factors (e.g. preferred employment job conditions and characteristics) will continue to affect the beneficiary's decisions to accept or decline job offers.

Minimum acceptable wage

We then explored whether there were any differences between the minimum wages acceptable by those who were employed relative to those who are currently unemployed. The results in Table 55 show summary statistics on the minimum income which employed beneficiaries in different learning interventions would accept for a job. Due to the presence of outliers, the results for the employed were trimmed using a 1% unbalanced trim at the top of the distribution. The results for the unemployed are shown in Table 56, and these show that they have significantly lower minimum acceptable wage expectations. This would suggest that their salary expectations might not act as a hindrance to transitioning into the labour market.

Table 55: Summary statistics on minimum acceptable monthly salary (R) for the employed

Intervention/Gender	n	Mean	Median	Min	Max	Range	Std Dev
Bursaries - Male	110	16,679	15,000	500	42,000	41,500	9,896
Bursaries - Female	134	14,678	14,500	1,000	45,000	44,000	8,932

Intervention/Gender	n	Mean	Median	Min	Max	Range	Std Dev
Learnerships - Male	92	8,947	5,000	500	40,000	39,500	9,437
Learnerships - Female	399	7,331	4,900	250	42,000	41,750	7,448
Internships - Male	106	6,549	5,000	1,000	25,000	24,000	4,827
Internships - Female	253	6,250	5,000	250	40,000	39,750	5,789
WIL TVETs - Male	57	5,956	5,000	1,000	17,000	16,000	3,902
WIL TVETs - Female	138	4,935	4,000	1,000	15,000	14,000	3,130
WIL UoTs - Male	79	8,708	8,000	1,000	25,000	24,000	5,891
WIL UoTs - Female	84	9,446	10,000	1,000	26,000	25,000	5,821
Total	1,452	8,490	5,000	250	45,000	44,750	7,743

Source: HSRC ETP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

It can also be observed that men consistently have higher minimum wage expectations than their female counterparts, and it is not immediately clear what would drive these gendered wage differences.

Table 56: Summary statistics on minimum acceptable monthly salary (R) for the unemployed

Intervention/Gender	N	Mean	Median	Min	Max	Range	Std Dev
Bursaries - Male	5	5,300	4,500	2,000	9,000	7,000	2,885
Bursaries - Female	10	7,390	7,450	1,000	15,000	14,000	3,979
Learnerships - Male	93	4,402	3,000	500	40,000	39,500	4,696
Learnerships - Female	274	3,276	2,500	300	45,000	44,700	3,541
Internships - Male	126	4,837	4,000	250	30,000	29,750	4,259
Internships - Female	268	4,321	3,500	500	30,000	29,500	3,355
WIL TVETs - Male	90	4,837	4,000	1,000	34,000	33,000	4,435
WIL TVETs - Female	344	4,174	3,500	500	29,900	29,400	3,021
WIL UoTs - Male	104	7,216	6,000	1,000	25,000	24,000	4,806
WIL UoTs - Female	113	7,096	5,000	1,000	25,000	24,000	5,404
Total	1427	4,624	3,500	250	45,000	44,750	4,060

Source: HSRC ETP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Socioeconomic support for the unemployed

The next question is how these economically inactive beneficiaries are sustaining themselves. Table 57 indicates sources of support for the unemployed and shows that a large majority, 52% are supported by other household members. This is in line with the proposition that the youth and young adults might choose to continue living with parents for financial support (Choi et al., 2019; Klasen & Woolard, 2008). This means that milestones associated with transition to adulthood, including family formation or marriage decisions, could be delayed. It also evident that government grants play a vital role in supporting the unemployed beneficiaries. About 17% rely on child grants, with others citing reliance on other forms of government grants, such as old age and disability, 3% and welfare grants. Notably, access to a wide range of social grants has been found to be positively associated with job searching by youth (De Lannoy et al., 2018).

Table 57: Since you are unemployed, how you do support yourself? (Multiple response*)

Forms of support	Frequency	Percentage
Supported by persons in the household	1,262	58%
Child support/foster care grants	375	17%
Other sources of support	206	9%

Forms of support	Frequency	Percentage
Old age or disability pension	141	6%
Supported by persons NOT in the household	75	3%
Other welfare grants	71	3%
From savings or money previously earned	34	2%
Supported by charity, church, welfare, etc.	14	2%
Receive Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF)	6	0
Total	2,184	100

Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020). *Multiple responses percentages do not add up to 100%

5.7.5 Full-time study and not working

Choosing to study further is another possible destination for learners who have completed a learning intervention. This section focuses on those beneficiaries who indicated that they were studying full time towards another qualification. Table 58 shows that 160 individuals were studying further at the time of the survey, giving a full-time study rate of 4% within the realised sample. This table also gives an indication of the higher education and training institutions where the beneficiaries are registered. Most of the beneficiaries, 41% are registered with universities, UoTs, 26% and TVET colleges, 24%, with a very small proportion registered with other post-school and education institutions. The results further show that majority of internship beneficiaries are registered at universities, while more than half of learnership beneficiaries are at TVET colleges.

Table 58: Where are you currently registered for full-time study?

Institution	Bursaries	Learnerships	Internships	WIL TVETs	WIL UoTs	Total	%
University of Technology	1	7	8	4	22	42	26%
University	6	6	28	16	9	65	41%
TVET College	0	28	7	4	0	39	24%
Adult education centre/Community education and Training (CET) colleges	0	1	0	0	0	1	1%
Private college	0	3	3	1	0	7	4%
Other	0	3	3	0	0	6	4%
Total	7	48	49	25	31	160	100%

Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

The results in Table 59, by age cohort, show that almost all of those studying full time are youth, with only one individual above the age of 35 years.

Table 59: Where ETDP SETA beneficiaries studying full time are currently registered, by age cohort

Institution	20 – 35 yrs	36 + yrs	Total
University of Technology	41	0	41
University	62	1	63
TVET College	39	0	39
Adult education centre/Community education and Training (CET) colleges	1	0	1
Private college	7	0	7
Other	6	0	6
Total	156	1	157

Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

The results in Table 60 show that about 14% of ETPD SETA beneficiaries who are currently studying full time are studying towards postgraduate studies, 8% Honours and 6% Master's, while about one-third, 32% are studying for Bachelor's degrees. Of the remaining 43%, 11% are studying towards a certificate, 26% a diploma and 6% a higher diploma.

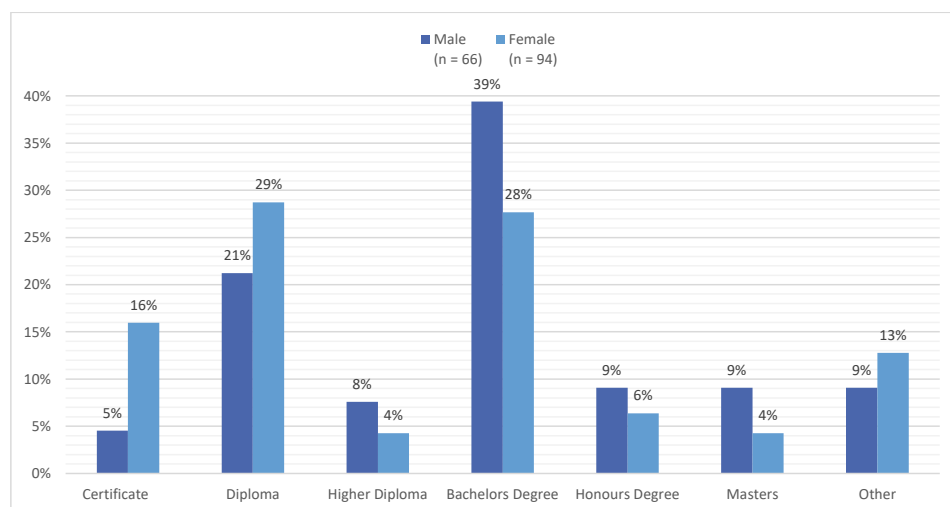
Table 60: What qualifications are you studying for, by learning intervention? (n = 160)

Intervention	Bursaries	Learnerships	Internships	WIL TVETs	WIL UoTs	Total	%
Certificate	0	10	6	1	1	18	11%
Diploma	0	17	12	6	6	41	26%
Higher Diploma	0	2	1	3	3	9	6%
Bachelor's degree	1	8	23	11	9	52	32%
Honours degree	5	0	2	2	3	12	8%
Master's degree	1	0	1	0	8	10	6%
Other	0	11	4	2	1	18	11%
Total	7	48	49	25	31	160	100%
Total %	4%	30%	31%	16%	19%	100%	

Source: HSRC ETPD SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

When it comes to gender, the results in Figure 64 show that a larger proportion of males, 39% are enrolled for a Bachelor's degree, while females are split between diplomas and Bachelor's degrees.

Figure 64: What qualifications are you studying for by gender of beneficiaries



Source: HSRC ETPD SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

When it comes to age, we found that that with one exception, the beneficiaries are youth between the ages of 20-35 years.

The study sought to understand three main reasons why beneficiaries were pursuing further studies through a multiple-response question; the results in Table 61 reveal that the half of the beneficiaries (50%) chose as their most selected option 'To increase my knowledge and understanding in the industry', and their second choice selected by almost half of the learners, 48% was 'To achieve a higher qualification'.

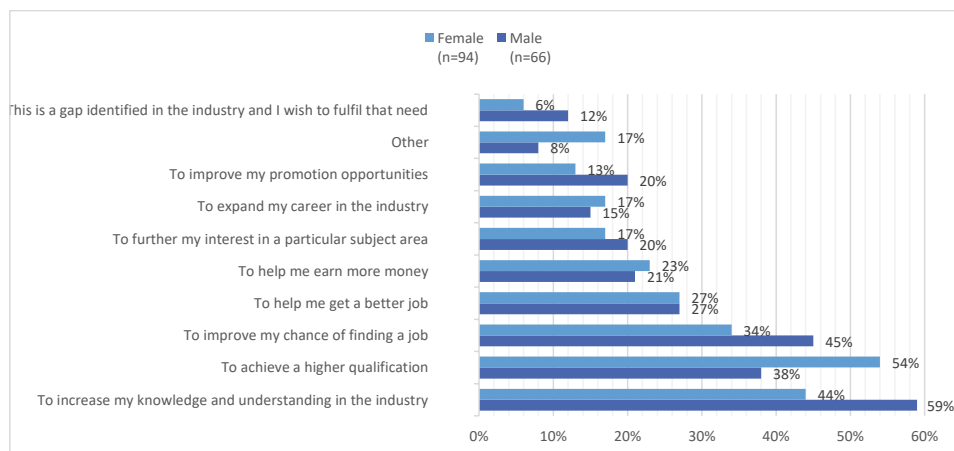
Table 61: Three main reasons for studying by type of intervention (multiple response*)

Reasons for studying	Bursaries (n=7)	Learnership (n=48)	Internship (n=49)	WIL TVETs (n=25)	WIL UoTs (n=31)	Total (n=160)
To increase my knowledge and understanding in the industry	71%	42%	55%	52%	48%	50%
To achieve a higher qualification	0	42%	57%	68%	35%	48%
To improve my chance of finding a job	43%	23%	49%	52%	35%	39%
To help me get a better job	29%	19%	35%	28%	26%	27%
To help me earn more money	0%	21%	33%	20%	16%	22%
To further my interest in a subject area	14%	21%	16%	16%	19%	18%
To expand my career in the industry	29%	17%	18%	16%	10%	16%
To improve my promotion opportunities	43%	12%	18%	4%	19%	16%
Other	14%	19%	8%	12%	12%	13%
This is a gap identified in the industry and I wish to fulfil that need	29%	6%	14%	4%	3%	9%

Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020). *Multiple responses percentages showing the proportion that selected that option. Totals do not add up to 100%

Differences were observed by gender in Figure 65, with more males, 59% seeking further study with the intention of increasing their knowledge of the industry compared to women, 44%. Women were more likely to seek further education with the objective of achieving a higher qualification, 54% compared to their male counterparts, 38%. More women, 45% than men, 34% indicated that by studying further they hoped to improve their chances of finding a job.

Figure 65: Three main reasons for studying, by gender of beneficiaries



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Beneficiaries shared some of the reasons for choosing to study further and for the choice of qualification:

"I like seeing children growing also want to have more experience with children" – Female learnership beneficiary aged 24-25

About a tenth of beneficiaries, 9% said they are studying to improve their livelihoods and a quarter of the beneficiaries wanted to secure employment:

"I am studying to get a better job to improve my family" – Female learnership participant aged 20-24

"I am studying because I want to be rich" – **Female learnership beneficiary aged 25-29 years**

"I would like to be a public servant" – **Female WIL TVET beneficiary aged 20-24**

Under a third of beneficiaries, 30%, indicated a desire to improve their qualifications, a further fifth, 21%, indicated they were motivated to study for self-development to change their qualifications, enhance career and promotion opportunities or for self-development:

"I am studying to obtain honours as it is a requirement to be CA" – **Female bursary beneficiary aged 20-24**

"I could not find civil engineering work, my aunt advised me to study teaching" – **Female internship educator aged 20-29**

"I want to be a better person the community would look up to" – **Female internship beneficiary aged 25-29**

"I am bored for not doing anything" – **Unemployed male learnership respondent aged 30-34**

"I want to start my own business to make my sister proud" – **Female learnership respondent aged 35-39**

"There is a gap identified in the industry, I want to fulfil that" – **Female respondent**

5.8 Participants' perceptions and recommendations in respect of the ETDP SETA-funded learning interventions

This section captures the insights of the beneficiaries regarding their experience of participation in the five ETDP SETA funded learning interventions. Learners were asked to give feedback to the ETDP SETA on how it could improve on the delivery of its learning interventions, Table 62.

Table 62: Based on your experience, is there anything you would like the SETA to know that might help them in improving the delivery of its learning/training interventions?

	Bursaries	Internships	Learnerships	WIL TVETs	WIL UoTs	Total %	Total (n=3,735)
Appropriate placement	0%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	45
Ensure programme certification delivered	2%	4%	2%	3%	0%	3%	97
Extend duration of programme	5%	5%	4%	3%	2%	4%	150
Improve administration	12%	16%	6%	6%	14%	10%	379
Improving quality of programme	8%	5%	9%	2%	4%	6%	209
Increase funding/stipend	10%	6%	4%	6%	11%	7%	246
Increase scale of programme	11%	5%	12%	3%	4%	7%	273
Not satisfied	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	13
Placement supervision by SETA	6%	13%	4%	11%	10%	9%	320
Post-intervention support	5%	17%	21%	18%	15%	17%	631
Provide resources	1%	1%	5%	1%	1%	2%	77
Satisfied with SETA	40%	27%	31%	44%	38%	35%	1,295
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
Total (n=3,735)	372	955	1141	809	458		

Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

5.8.1 Satisfaction with the ETDP SETA Learning Intervention

A third of participants, 35% expressed satisfaction with the ETDP SETA's management of the learning intervention, as reflected in these comments below:

"Everything was working fine, and I got the permanent job from my Internship" – Employed female learnership respondent aged 25-29

An unemployed female aged 30-34 for an internship quoted "Continue with the interventions and thank you for the stipend, it helps us a lot."

An employed female aged 25-29 for WIL TVET said "Did not have any problems with them and I have my diploma, thank you SETA."

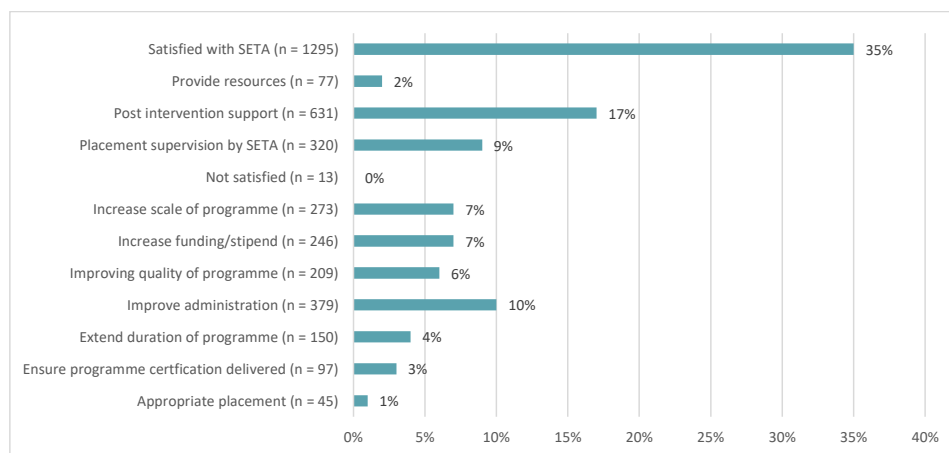
An employed young male aged 25-29 for WIL UoT said "Highly appreciate what you are doing. The monitoring should be done frequently or in between the experience," **while another male of the same age and intervention said** "Highly satisfied with SETA."

A WIL TVET female beneficiary who is unemployed aged 30-37 said "I thought I was only going to learn only things that I learned at college, but I learned a lot more than I expected."

5.8.2 Areas for improving the delivery of learning interventions

About a fifth of learners, 17%, Figure 66 requested greater support from ETDP SETA post-completion in enabling them to find employment, and one in ten learners made suggestions to the SETA to improve their administration of these learning interventions.

Figure 66: How can ETDP SETA improve delivery of learning/training interventions?



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

A WIL UoT employed male beneficiary said "The Administration was horrible, it seems as if we were punished because we were poor. If you have to be paid you have to fill in so many papers, they never do payments on time, and stipend are not the same they have to review that as well. They must do the follow-up on their students If all of them did get Internship."

Commented [A4]: Age?

A few learners expressed their concerns about how the WIL programme was implemented in terms of its duration, which did not allow for meaningful skills development, and the need for improvements in the quality of the placement:

“SETA must make sure that its interns do not lose interest on the programme by making sure that interns are properly placed” – **A male aged 24-29**

A young unemployed male for WIL UoT aged between 20-24 noted “In its current form, SETA programme does not make any meaningful difference to beneficiaries because it’s abused by companies to get cheap labour every year without exposing the trainees to the world of work and the 6 months or a year period is not enough to get workplace experience.”

“SETA must make sure that its interns do not lose interest on the programme by making sure that interns are properly placed” – **Male aged 24-29 for WIL TVET**

Amongst the learnership programmes beneficiaries there were many **expectations** in respect of SETA enabling them to get a promotion, salary raise and receive laptops:

A female teacher aged 50-54 said “I expected to get laptop from the department of education and for the department to take other educators through the same training. I expected to get a pay raise as we upgraded ourselves.”

“For me, SETA must stick to their promises; they promised us that we will get an internship after the programme but nothing happened” – **Unemployed female aged 25-29 for WIL TVET**

A full-time employed female aged 30-34 said “Make the training close to us. We cannot afford transport and food.”

A female aged 35-39, WIL TVET said “SETA should place people where they will be able to get the experience that they require for their qualifications.”

“I think SETA should do more and place graduates and not put them in places where they will not be employable and absorbed” – **An unemployed female aged 30-34, internship**

“If they can do research before placements for their practicals and ensure that the institution will allow beneficiaries the experience they need” – **Unemployed female learnership participant aged 30-34**

“Hours were too much for people coming from work. So SETA should shorten times and decrease the workload because we receive a lot of work in short space of time” – **female teacher aged 55-59 who had completed a learnership**

An **unemployed female internship learner** aged between 25-29 noted “Decentralise the internship institution so that those who can't afford the money for rent can still do internships at places near their residential area.”

A female learnership beneficiary age 35-39 said “When giving assignments SETA should give them more time as they have to juggle work and be students at the same time.”

A young female aged 25-29 WIL UoT participant said “I was expecting to be hands-on and work closely with an operation manager. Instead we were doing administration.”

Challenges with **learnerships** which were noted included:

A young unemployed female aged 30-34 for learnership said “I have nothing much to say but I hope they can improve their catering service in that most of us would get sick after eating the food they served. They should find out and accommodate us because different people eat certain things and not others.”

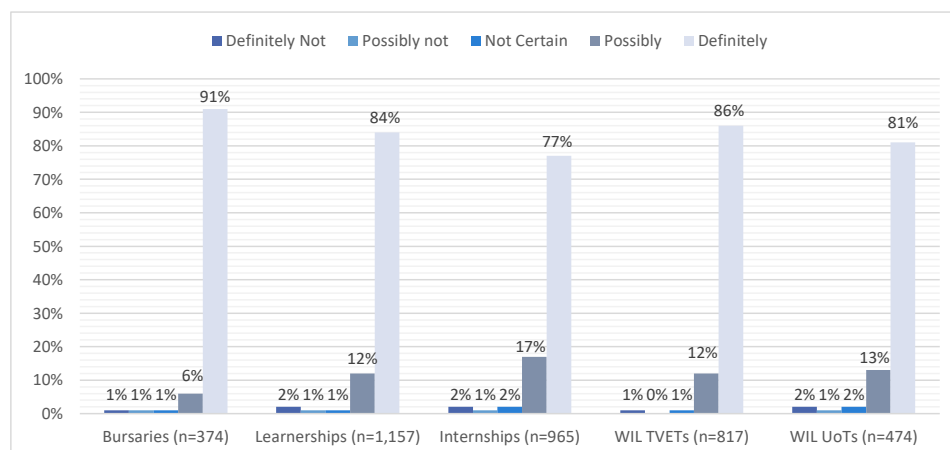
One participant made a plea to the ETDP SETA in respect of the bursary programme:

“Consistency, stick to what they promise its people because some were left out to complete the programme on our own, it was helpful on the other hand but keep promises” – **Employed male bursary recipient aged 25-29**

5.8.3 Beneficiary recommendations to ETDP SETA on improving the learning interventions

The study probed whether participants would recommend the ETDP SETA learning interventions to others, Figure 67. Overwhelmingly, across all the learning programmes participants, 81% indicated that they would ‘definitely’ recommend the ETDP SETA programmes to others.

Figure 67: Would you recommend the ETDP SETA programme to others?



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

The last question of the survey was to enquire of the beneficiary what they felt the SETA should improve on when conducting the interventions. Findings in Figure 67 identified post-intervention support as area most needing improvement, by 17% of learners. This included providing support with employment and getting extension of contracts. The call to improving administration, 10%, included a request for stipends to be paid on time, changing study times for working beneficiaries and providing leave days. Below are some of the comments:

“This Internship should have a certain duration, because she is being doing it since 2014 up until – November 2019.” – **Unemployed female aged 25-29**

“Happy, nothing to say, moved from getting R12,000 to becoming a qualified teacher in high school and earning R20,000” – **Female teacher aged 50-54**

“Learnership assisted me with confidence in that I am confident now when addressing a crowd. So I thank them for that.” – **Part-time employed female aged 25-29**

“The only thing that we didn't get was food but other than that everything was on time. It's hard to study on an empty stomach.” – **Full-time employed male aged 20-24**

5.9 Overall assessment of transitions into the labour market

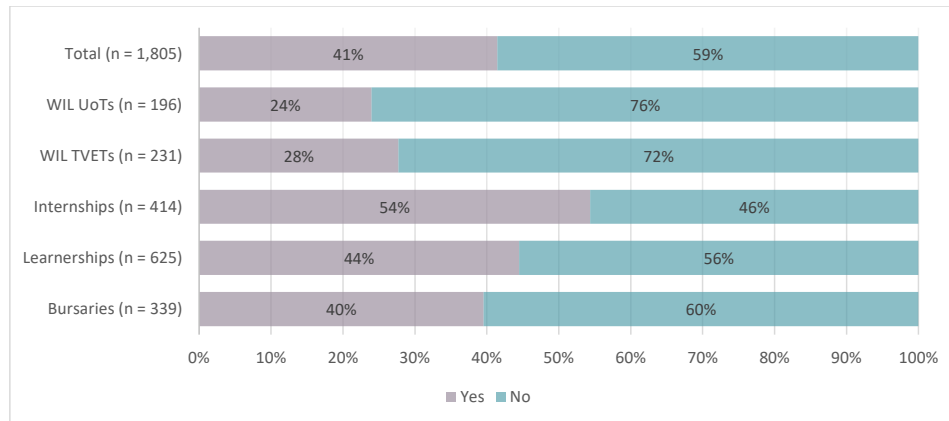
The foregoing sections focused on profiling beneficiaries by their employment status. This section brings all of the outcomes together to determine the extent to which the patterns that we see were driven by exposure to the intervention. It is noted that there are likely to be a number of factors that influence whether someone has a successful transition or not. As per the analytical framework for this study, there are a whole range of external and internal factors that are at play. This means the SETA's interventions can only contribute towards the final outcome.

Transition duration, which relates to the time it takes for a learner to have achieved their desired labour market status, was highlighted in the literature review, section 3 of this report. A **short transition** was when a learner experiences a direct and immediate transition or one that arises with a period of inactivity being less than a year. A **middling transition** was where the learner experienced periods of employment without any inactivity, although the employment was of a temporary and no contract nature. It could also include inactivity of a duration beyond one year. A **lengthy transition** was when the learner experienced unemployment of 1 year or more (with or without employment or activity).

The previous section highlighted the self-reported reasons why people think they are unemployed, with 44% indicating that there are no jobs available in their area. This is further compounded by the migration analysis that showed that a larger proportion of individuals are still in the same province where they took part in the intervention. This means that these individuals might remain unemployed, despite there being employment opportunities in other provincial job markets. This also means that whilst the SETA cannot take 100% credit for all successful transitions, transition failures should not be quickly translated as failures of the SETA's interventions.

To gain an understanding of the extent to which those who were employed felt that the intervention had played some role in assisting them in securing the current job, we excluded those who had indicated that they were employed at the same company/organisation as at the time of their studies. Figure 68 shows that only 41% were still employed at the same company.

Figure 68: Are you employed by the company/employer where you did your learning intervention?

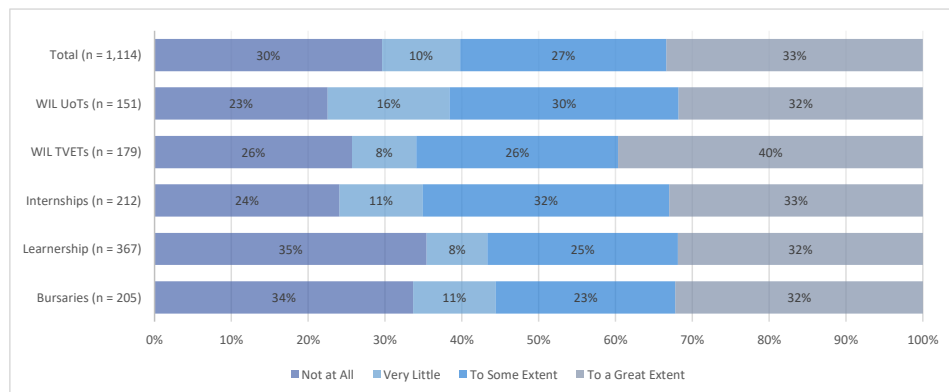


Source: HSRC ETPD SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

We asked the 59% who were no longer working for the same company or employer the extent to which they felt that the learning intervention had assisted with finding their current job. Figure 69 shows that across all learning there was consensus that participating in the ETPD SETA intervention had contributed to a great extent in securing their current job. This was particularly evident for WIL TVET beneficiaries, with 40% agreeing that the intervention had greatly assisted.

These results indicate that the majority of respondents could link the impact of the intervention to their current employment status, which suggests that beneficiaries perceived the SETA's interventions as contributing to facilitating successful transition into the labour market.

Figure 69: To what extent do you think the ETPD SETA's intervention assisted you with finding the job/starting the business, if self-employed?



Source: HSRC ETPD SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

In order to get a better picture of the pre-intervention and post-intervention employment status, Table 63 shows the net differences between these two periods. The overall rate of employment (i.e. inclusive of full time, part time and self-employed) was 17% higher at the time of the survey than it was before the beneficiaries started on the intervention. The highest increase was linked to WIL UoTs, 37% followed by

internships, 22%. This rise in the overall employment rate, though positive, was however not met by a corresponding decrease in the unemployment rate, which is partly explained by the increase in the WIL UoT beneficiaries' unemployment rate of 28%.

Table 63: Outcomes in terms of employment of beneficiaries, comparing before and after the intervention

Outcomes	Bursaries (E)	Bursaries (U)	Learnerships	Internships	WIL TVETs	WIL UoTs	Total
Employment status							
Total employment rates ¹⁰ BEFORE	92%	0%	47%	24%	14%	5%	32%
Total employment rates AFTER	93%	73%	56%	45%	30%	42%	49%
Difference*	1%	73%	9%	22%	15%	37%	17%
Unemployed BEFORE	0%	100%	49%	66%	66%	23%	50%
Unemployed AFTER	6%	18%	40%	50%	67%	52%	47%
Difference*	-6%	82%	-9%	-16%	1%	28%	-3%
Full-time employment BEFORE	87%	0%	39%	15%	9%	3%	26%
Full-time employment AFTER	91%	62%	46%	28%	21%	36%	39%
Difference*	4%	62%	7%	13%	12%	33%	13%
Part-time employment BEFORE	5%	0%	6%	7%	5%	2%	5%
Part-time employment AFTER	2%	11%	8%	15%	7%	5%	9%
Difference*	-3%	11%	2%	7%	2%	3%	3%
Self-employed BEFORE	0%	0%	2%	1%	0%	0%	1%
Self-employed AFTER	0%	0%	2%	2%	1%	0%	1%
Difference*	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%
Studying full-time BEFORE	8%	0%	4%	10%	19%	70%	17%
Studying full-time AFTER	1%	9%	4%	5%	3%	7%	4%
Difference*	-7%	9%	0%	-5%	-16%	-63%	-13%

Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

The changes in both the employment and unemployment rates for WIL UoTs were driven by the fact that this was also the group that had the highest number of people in full-time study 70%, before. This means that they also had the largest number of beneficiaries that entered the labour market 63%, with only 7% remaining in full-time study. Internships, 16%, learnerships, 9% and bursaries, 5% all experienced reductions in the unemployment rate. Full-time employment rose by 13% whilst the rates of part-time employment and self-employment only rose marginally, by 3% and 1% respectively.

5.9.1 Labour market transitions before and after the intervention

Whilst a description of these differences gives us an overall picture of the changes between the two periods, we need to dig deeper to understand the specific transitions that occurred by tracking the outcomes of each individual person. In other words, did the person who started off in a state of employment remain employed? What about the people who were unemployed – how many of them moved into employment and how many stayed unemployed?

¹⁰ Total employment rate includes full time, part time and self-employed.

In order to conduct this analysis, we computed the labour market transition matrix based on the employment status of the beneficiaries before and after the intervention. In Table 64 the rows of the table show the initial employment status, and the columns show the final status. Between the time of starting the intervention and completion, 81% of the beneficiaries employed full time remained in employment, and the remaining 19% transitioned as follows: part-time employment 4%, self-employed 1%, unemployed 13%, and studying full time 1%. This means 128 people moved into unemployment from full-time employment by the time they completed their intervention.

Table 64: Transition matrix for labour market transitions before and after the intervention

Employment status		CURRENT LABOUR MARKET STATUS (AFTER)					Total
		Full-time employed	Part-time employment	Self-employed	Unemployed	Studying full time	
LABOUR MARKET STATUS BEFORE	Full-time employed	81%	4%	1%	13%	1%	100%
		786	39	9	128	8	970
	Part-time employment	25%	37%	0%	35%	2%	100%
		52	76	1	73	5	207
	Self-employed	16%	6%	34%	41%	3%	100%
		5	2	11	13	1	32
	Unemployed	22%	9%	1%	63%	4%	100%
		413	179	27	1,191	83	1,893
	Studying full time	33%	5%	1%	51%	9%	100%
		217	34	6	336	62	655
Total %		39%	9%	1%	46%	4%	100%
Total No.		1,473	330	54	1,741	159	3,757

Source: Author calculations using HSRC ETD P SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020). *Transition matrices show changes in status between two periods. Values on the diagonal indicate the number who did not change status, e.g. 81% (786) started off in full-time employment and stayed in full-time employment after completion

With respect to those who were unemployed, 63% remained unemployed, whilst the remaining 37% shifted into full-time employment, 22%, part-time employment, 9%, self-employment, 1% and studying full time, 4%. This represents 702 people who moved out of unemployment to a positive economically active status and full-time study.

As for those who were studying full time, this group was the most unstable between the two periods, with instability meaning that this group had the highest number of transitions with only 9% remaining in full-time study. The majority shifted into unemployment, 51%, with 33% shifting into full-time employment.

The transition durations of learners in this study were evidently informed by the type of learning intervention learners had engaged in, their employment status at the time they commenced with the learning intervention, and the nature of the qualification and HEI associated with that qualification.

Overall, when we consider the net transitions into employment and out of unemployment, there was a positive net transition, which means that more people moved into employment than into unemployment.

5.10 Conclusion

For a theory-based evaluation the objective was to triangulate the evidence by assessing the different indicators based on intervention ToCs. This included the assessments of the SETA's beneficiaries' subjective

views, on the role ETDP's interventions played in assisting them in securing employment and achieving other labour market outcomes. Whilst direct causality cannot be conclusively inferred, outside the context of a randomised control trial, from the overall picture that emerges it appears as if there is some evidence in support of the basic logic in the intervention ToCs. Barring the influence of external factors such as the performance of the economy, one can conclude that ETDP SETA's learning interventions appear to be making some contribution in facilitating the postulated transitions as per intervention ToCs. Framed another way, the body of evidence assembled here is incompatible with a hypothesis of no impact; this is more so when the socioeconomic status of most beneficiaries is taken into consideration.

The transformative dimensions of skills development policies such as the NSDS III (DHET, 2011) place a great emphasis on the goal of achieving transformation within the PSET sector, aimed at increasing access of previously historically disadvantaged people to skills development interventions, and the evidence confirms that ETDP SETA's interventions have contributed accordingly.

As the results on employment status show, absorption rates remain relatively low and on average only 49% were in employment with 39% in full-time employment. Wide variations are noted between learning interventions, with 91% of previously employed bursary beneficiaries currently employed compared with 62% of those who were unemployed at the time they commenced the training. Less than half of all learnership beneficiaries, 46% are employed followed by 36% of WIL UoT beneficiaries. Internship beneficiaries, 28% and WIL TVET beneficiaries, 21% were the groups with the lowest current employment rates (section 5.7.2).

Whilst the levels of employment were roughly the same for both males and females, there were disproportionately more women who were unemployed (48%) relative to their male counterparts (43%). The overall association between gender and employment status was found to be statistically significant, and highlights a stylised fact regarding the gendered nature of the South African labour market and forms the basis for the gender targets.

It is important to note that some of the employment outcomes could also be influenced by the fact that an insufficient amount of time had lapsed between the periods of completion for some of the learners, especially those who finished in the 2018/19 financial year. As noted in the studies' conceptual and analytical frameworks, external factors have a direct impact on influencing the extent to which successful transitions into the labour market can be made. In the South African context, the unprecedented levels of unemployment generally and in respect of youth remain a key factor impacting on transitions into the labour market.

The labour market transition analysis presented allows for it to be concluded that ETDP SETA has contributed significantly to the realisation of the employability outcome. When we consider the net transitions into employment and out of unemployment, there was a 37% positive net transition, which means that more people moved into employment than into unemployment, as illustrated in Table 64.

6 Research Findings Employer Evaluation Outcomes

This section of the report presents employer perceptions of the value and benefits of employee participation in WIL, internships and learnerships. In the context of the increasing demand for a skilled workforce, engaging with employers and obtaining their perspectives is important for determining and for the design of skills interventions. This is based on the expectation that the employer is best able to identify the skills needs of

their enterprise or sector. Employer surveys, it is widely posited, serve multiple objectives (European Training Foundation, 2017) namely to:

- Define the current and future skills needs and gaps;
- Provide nuanced information on the type, level and composition of skills sets required;
- Give feedback on the relevance of curriculums and the appropriateness of the content;
- Provide insights to the employer on their investments in respect of skills development and how these need to be reviewed to achieve their intended outcomes; and
- Evaluate the effectiveness of skills and learning interventions designed to produce skilled workers.

The inclusion of an Employer Survey as part of this study was done with the intention of assessing employer perceptions regarding effectiveness and impact of the learning interventions funded by the SETA.

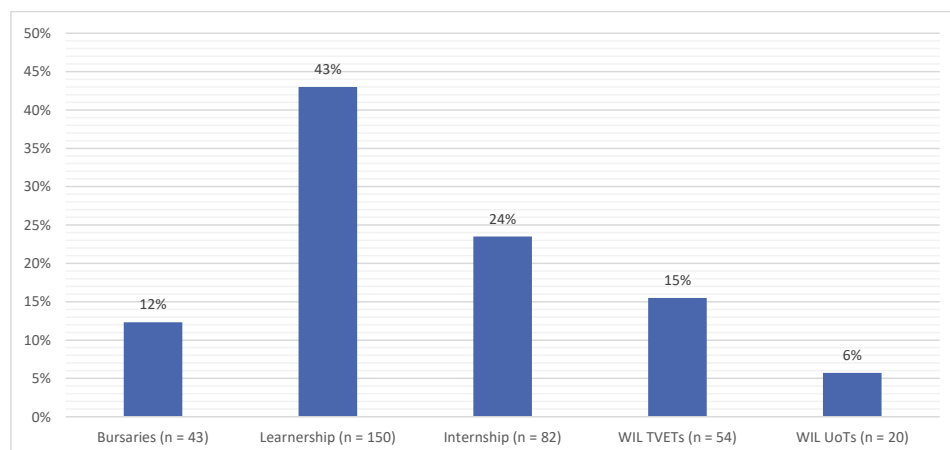
6.1 ETDP SETA Learning Intervention Participation of Employer

6.1.1 Learning Intervention of Beneficiary associated with employer

First, enumerators had to validate which intervention was completed by beneficiaries who provided a response in the Beneficiary Survey component of the project. This was also important to facilitate subsequent classification of respondents according to the various learning interventions. It should thus be noted that the analysis consists only of the beneficiaries who supplied their employers' details Figure 70, starts by showing the distribution of the total number of participants by completed interventions. Employers interviewed in this survey were categorised in respect of the learning intervention which the beneficiary had completed. The distribution of employers was as follows:

- Hosted a learnership – 43%;
- Hosted a learner who completed an internship – 24%;
- Hosted a learner who completed a WIL TVET intervention – 15%;
- Hosted a learner who completed a bursary intervention – 12%; and
- Hosted a learner who completed the WIL UoT intervention – 6%.

Figure 70: Distribution of beneficiaries in employer survey

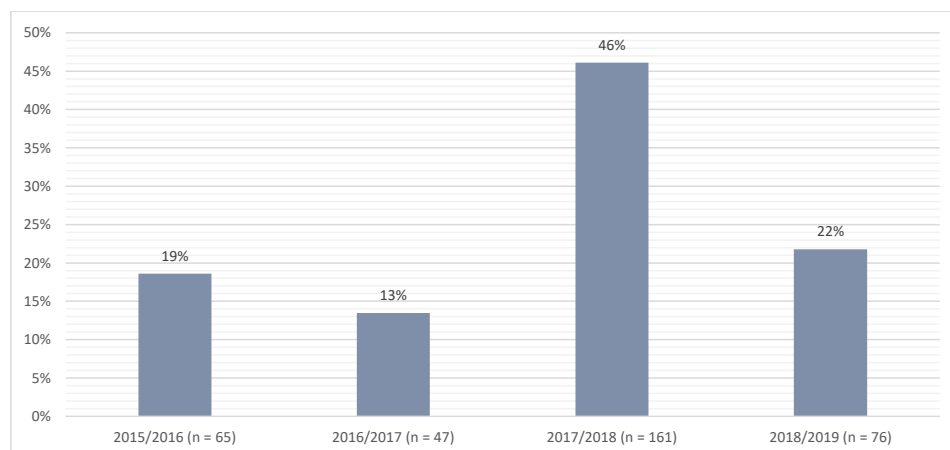


Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

6.1.2 Financial year for this participant

The enumerators also had to validate the financial year when beneficiaries completed the interventions. Figure 71 shows total percentages of beneficiaries who had completed a learning intervention for each financial year of the reference period. Almost half, 46%, and one-fifth, 22%, of the beneficiaries completed their learning intervention in the 2017/18 period and 2018/19 financial years respectively.

Figure 71: Financial year beneficiary completed intervention



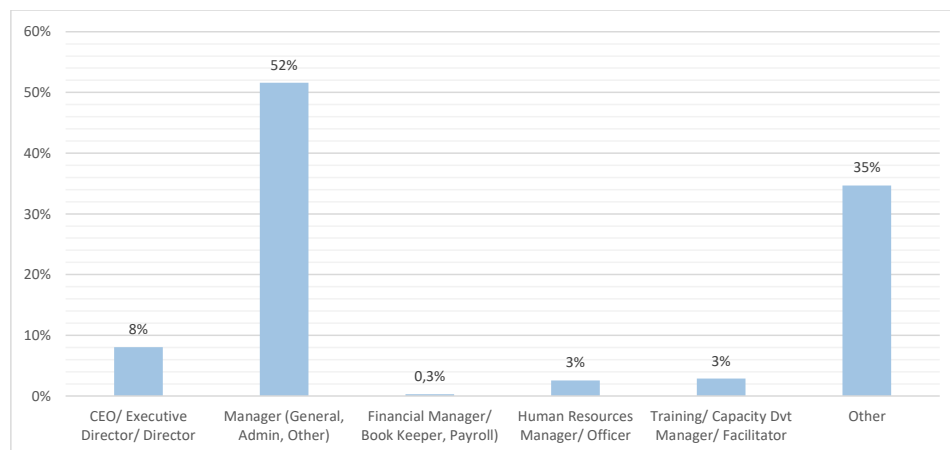
Source: HSRC ETD SETABeneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

6.2 Profile of Employer and Employer Representative

6.2.1 Profile of Employer Representative

We next sought to profile the employer representative who was interviewed. Over half, 52%, of the respondents are General Managers, 8% are CEOs and 3% are serving in the Human Resources department of that company, either as a Human Resources Manager, Officer, or as Training and Development Managers and facilitators, Figure 72. A third of respondents were classified as 'Other', with this category generally being made up of line function managers or supervisors of the beneficiary.

Figure 72: Occupation of employer respondent

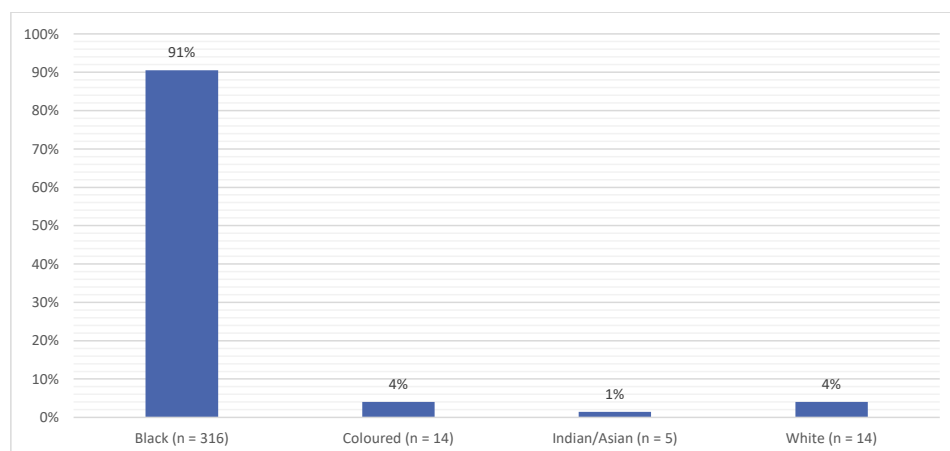


Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

6.2.2 Population group of employer representatives

Figure 73 shows that a great majority, 91%, of respondents are Black Africans, with very small percentages, 4%, of coloured, white 4% and Indian 1% participants.

Figure 73: Population group of employer respondent

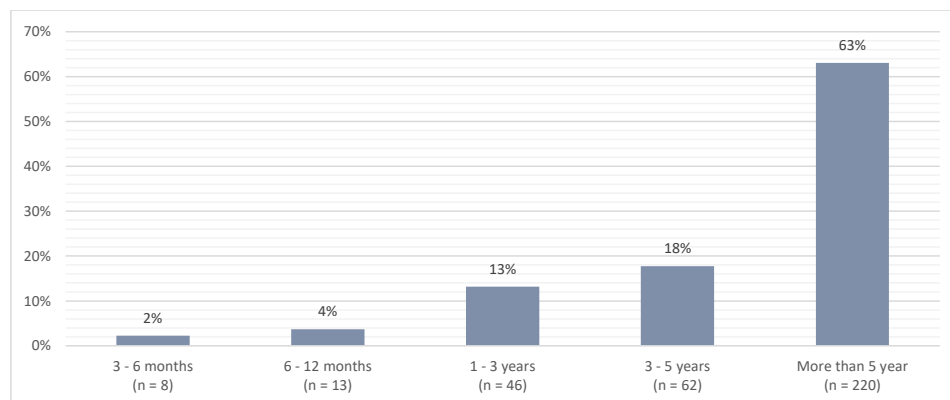


Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

6.2.3 Employer representative's employment history in their current role

The majority, 63%, of respondents reported being in their current capacity within the institution for more than 5 years and 18% had been performing a similar role for 3 to 5 years, whilst about 13% indicated having been in these positions for between 1 and 3 years, Figure 74. Only a very small proportion, 4%, had been in the position for less than a year. This shows that most of the respondents were well placed to give input about their experiences with the beneficiary.

Figure 74: Duration in the current role in the organisation



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

6.3 Employer Company Profile

6.3.1 Economic sector in which employer operates

The ETDP sector predominantly features in government, community, social and personal services, so it was not surprising that the sample included respondents from 296 companies, accounting for 85% of all companies, as it demonstrates that ETDP SETA interventions are targeted towards the sector, Table 65. All the other sectors are represented in the sample, although the percentages are very low, the most significant being 5% in the financial intermediation, insurance, real estate and business services, and 4% in the wholesale and trade sector.

Table 65: Economic Sector of company/Organisation

Economic Sector	Frequency	Percent
Agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing	2	1%
Mining and quarrying	3	1%
Manufacturing	4	1%
Electricity, gas and water	4	1%
Construction	5	1%
Wholesale and retail trade	13	4%
Transport, storage and communication	4	1%
Financial intermediation, insurance, real estate and business services	18	5%
Government, community, social and personal services	296	85%
Total	349	100%

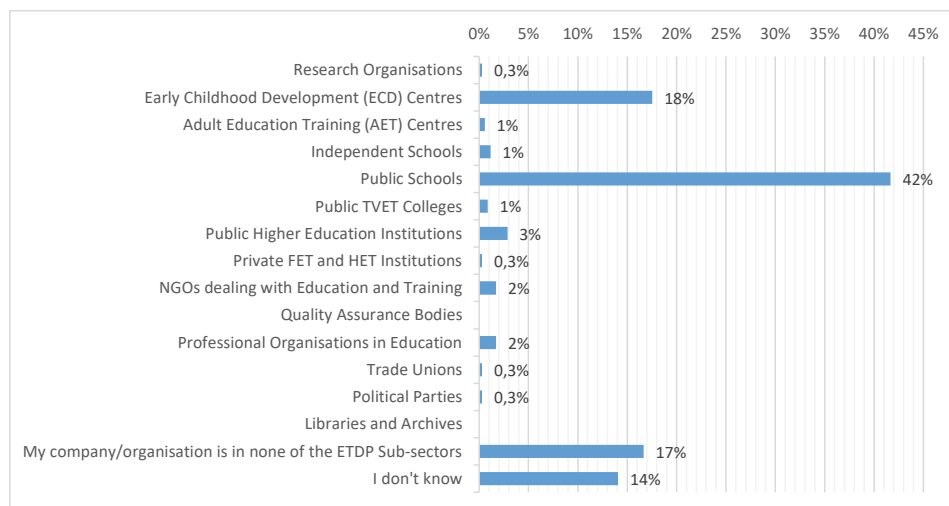
Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

6.3.2 Employers' alignment to the ETDP SETA sub-sectors and constituencies

A large proportion of the employers interviewed, 69% represent the various the ETDP constituencies, with the exclusion of employers from the libraries and archival sub-sector, school governing bodies and quality assurance body constituencies. The public school sub-sector, 42%, as illustrated in Figure 75, as to be expected considering that it is the largest sub-sector within the ETDP sector. This is followed by 18% in the

ECD sub-sector, 3% from public HEIs and 2% each from NGOs and professional bodies, 17% from non-ETDP sectors and 14% who were unsure which sector their companies fell into.

Figure 75: In which ETDP sub-sector does your company/organisation fall?

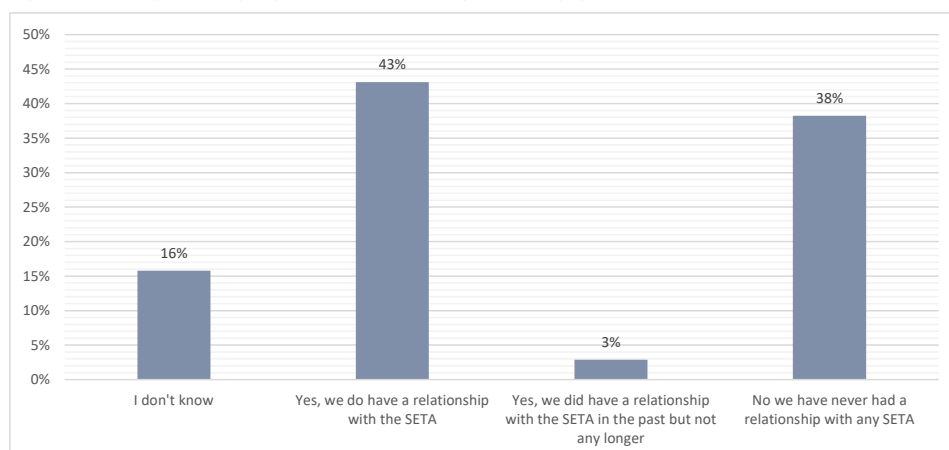


Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

6.3.3 Employer and ETDP SETA engagements

The results reveal that just under half of the organisations, 43% currently have a relationship with the ETDP SETA, and 3% reported having a previous engagement with the ETDP SETA, as reflected in Figure 76. A significant percentage, 38% of organisations reported never having had a relationship with any SETA. Less than a fifth of the respondents, 16% were unaware if there had been an engagement between their institution and a SETA. Given that 85% of the employers interviewed are in the ETDP sector, this suggests the need for enhancing awareness-raising efforts with these employers.

Figure 76: Does your company/institution have any direct engagement with ETDP SETA?

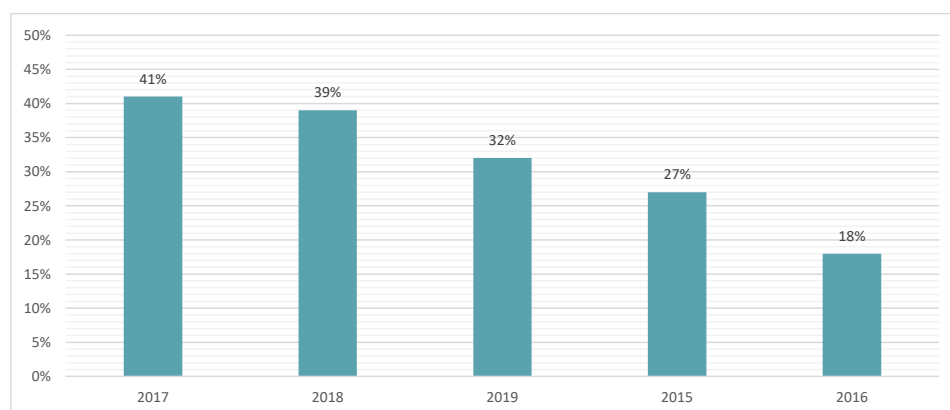


Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

6.3.4 Employer hosting of ETDP SETA beneficiaries

Employers were requested to indicate whether they had hosted or employed at least one ETDP SETA beneficiary during the study reference period, from 2015 to 2019. Figure 77 shows that 41% of employers reported having hosted beneficiaries in 2017, slightly fewer in 2018, 39%, with a further decline in 2019 to 32%.

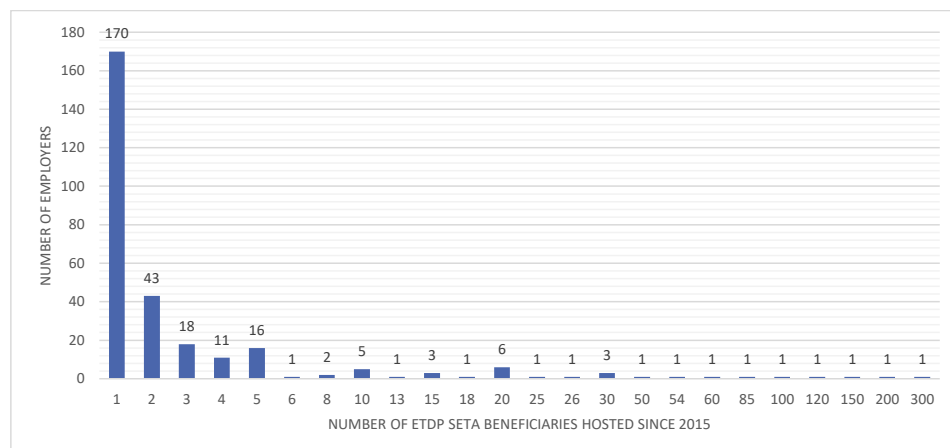
Figure 77: Thinking about the past 5 years can you please select each year you have hosted/ employed/ supported at least one ETDP SETA beneficiary?



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

The next question sought to establish the extent to which organisations are hosting beneficiaries taking part in the SETA skills development and training interventions. Figure 78 indicates that the 291 organisations have either employed or hosted 1305 ETDP SETA beneficiaries across the five interventions between 2015 and 2019. Of the 291 employers, 170 reported having hosted one beneficiary, 43 reported having hosted two beneficiaries and one employer reported having hosted 300 beneficiaries. It is evident that more could be done to encourage a larger number of organisations to ensure that they facilitate access to the ETDP SETA skills programme for employees and unemployed people, including graduates.

Figure 78: How many ETDP SETA beneficiaries across the different interventions has your organisation supported since 2015?



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

The recently amended B-BBEE or BEE scorecard enables companies to maximise their skills development points, which now account for 20% of the points they can earn if they spend between 3% and 6% of their payroll on SETA-accredited learning initiatives, depending on the category of the business. Learning interventions include learnerships, bursaries, apprenticeships, WIL and internships. Importantly, a new indicator includes spending 2,5% of their levy amount on bursaries for Black students in HEIs (Schedule 1 of the Amended Codes of Good Practice on Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Amendment Act 2003 (Act No. 53 of 2003), 2019).

Table 66 provides an indication of the different recruitment channels used by employers to recruit beneficiaries into their organisations. Whilst slightly over a third, 35% of the organisations failed to specify the recruitment techniques used, a fifth of employers, 22% reported recruiting beneficiaries for learning interventions internally. One in seven, 14%, organisations recruit via online job sites, and about 11% recruit via ETDP SETA offices. About 11% recruit beneficiaries through the institutions of higher learning and training, including TVETs, 7% and UoTs, 4%, and 2% from other universities. Very few organisations recruit learners through training providers, 2% and labour brokers, 1%. One employer indicated that it approaches high schools directly for its recruitment purposes.

Table 66: How do you generally recruit learners into your company/organisation?

Recruitment approach	Frequency	n %
Recruit internally	104	30%
Recruit via ETDP SETA	54	16%
Recruit from TVETs	32	9%
Recruit from UoTs	19	5%
Non-UoTs/other universities	11	3%
Recruit from training provider	11	3%
Recruit directly secondary school	1	0%
Recruit from labour brokers	7	2%

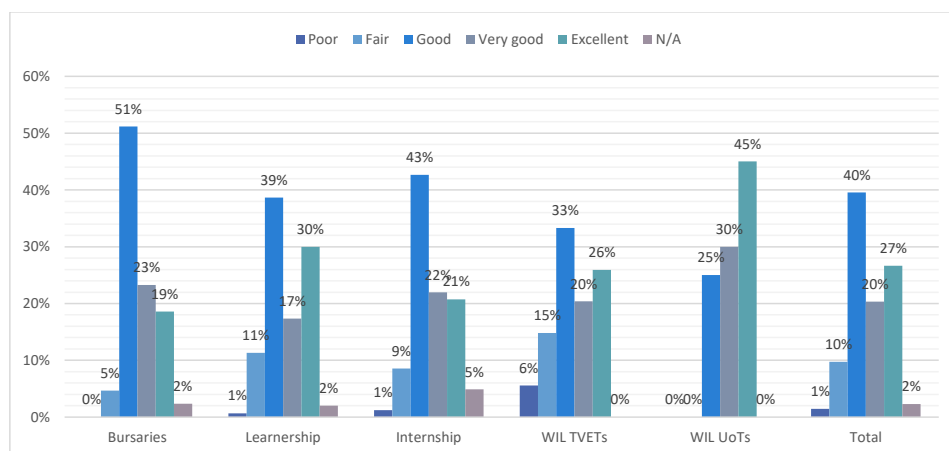
Recruitment approach	Frequency	n %
Recruit via online job sites	65	19%
Other	167	48%
Total	471	136%

Source: HSRC ETDp SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

SA's lag in quality of basic education has been widely documented, and evidence of this is found in the World Bank's Human Capital Index (HCI), which measures the amount of human capital a child born today can expect to attain by the time they reach 18 years of age. This index provides a measure of the productivity of the next generation of workers in the economy, and not unexpectedly SA ranks 126 among 157 countries for which such data are available. It attributed this ranking to the low quality of basic education received (Mlachila & Moeletsi, 2019).

It was in this context that the survey sought to assess employer perceptions of learners' quality of basic education at the start of the learning intervention. Figure 79 shows that an overwhelming 87% of employers provided a positive assessment of the learners' quality of basic education, with a quarter of those indicating the quality as being 'Excellent', 27%, a fifth indicating that it was 'Very good', 20% and more than a third who rate it as 'Good', 40%. A distribution of responses by the learning interventions shows that almost all employers hosting WIL UoTs beneficiaries perceived the learners' basic education to have been of very good quality. Similarly, bursary beneficiaries were also rated as having had a good basic education, 97%. Learnerships, internships and WIL TVET beneficiaries received ratings of between 79% and 86%.

Figure 79: On average how would you rate the quality of the learner's basic education prior to commencing with your company/organisation?



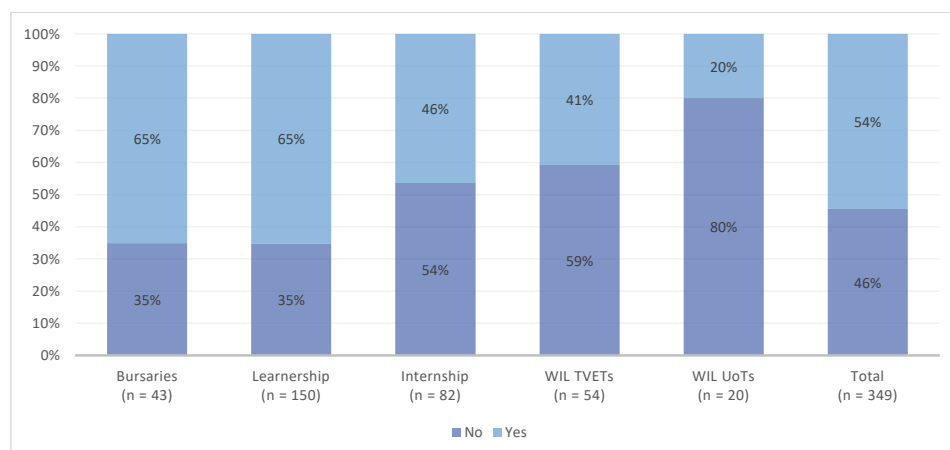
Source: HSRC ETDp SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

We also asked current employers whether the beneficiaries had been in their employ at the time they participated in the SETA learning programme. Over half, 54% of learners who participated in the learning programme, were still currently employed by that employer.

Apart from the sample size, which varies, 65% of bursaries and learnership beneficiaries reported that they were still working for the same employer that they were working at when they received studies/training,

Figure 80. However, only 20% of WIL UoTs beneficiaries were currently employed in the same company where they had undertaken their placement.

Figure 80: Was the ETP SETA beneficiary (who gave us your contact details) working for your company at the time they were pursuing their studies/training?

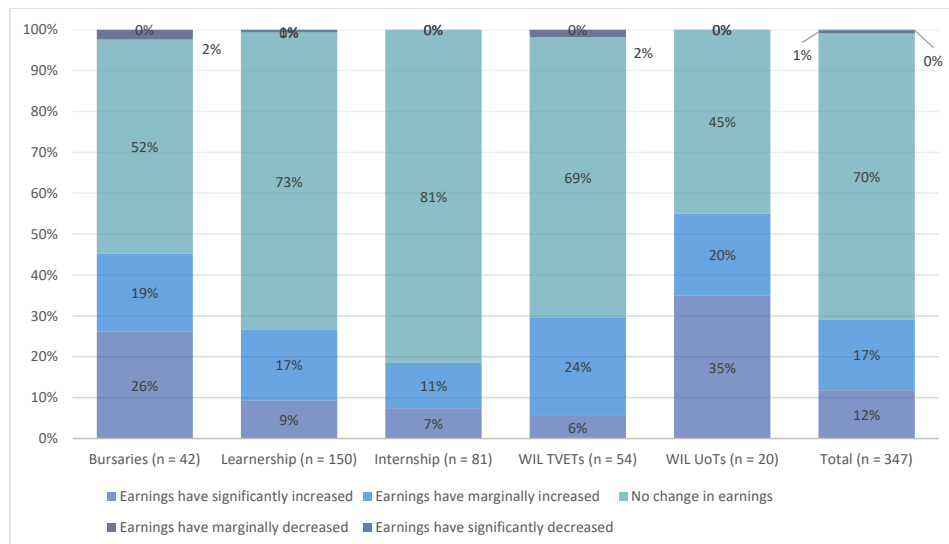


Source: HSRC ETP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

The study then investigated the possible effects of training on the wages of the beneficiaries. Figure 81 shows that 70% of employers reported that the earnings of the beneficiaries remained the same, while 17% observed only a slight increase in the earnings of the beneficiaries, and 12% reported that beneficiaries experienced a significant increase in earnings after completing the learning intervention. Internship and learnership beneficiaries, 81% and 73% respectively, were overrepresented among those who did not experience any changes in the earnings. Conversely, beneficiaries who experienced slight, and significant changes in the earnings were commonly found among bursary, 45% and WIL UoTs, 55% beneficiaries. WIL TVETs beneficiaries were significantly more likely to have experienced a slight increase in the earnings.

According to the ILO framework (Elder, 2009) discussed in section 3, an employee's transition is completed when they find themselves in a regular and satisfactory job, the possible implication being that the 70% of beneficiaries, Figure 81 who had experienced no change in their wages may be dissatisfied and on the lookout for better-paying work-based employment.

Figure 81: In what way did the earnings of the employee change as a result of the learning intervention?

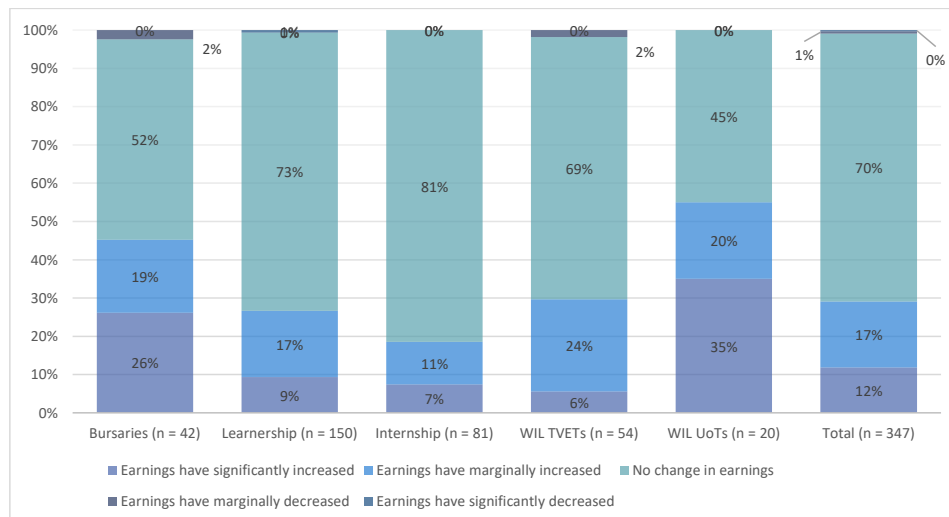


Source: HSRC ETD P SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

6.4 Outcomes for ETD P SETA-funded Beneficiaries

This section seeks to understand from the employer's perspective, the benefits which the employee derived. The study probed if there had been any changes in employee earnings by asking the question 'In what way did the earnings of the employee change as a result of the learning intervention?'.

Figure 82: Changes in employee earnings as reported by employer



Source: HSRC ETD P SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

While on average employers reported that 12% of employees' earnings had increased across all learning interventions, Figure 82, a disaggregated analysis reveals that a third, 35% of WIL UoT beneficiaries' earnings, and a quarter, 26% of bursary beneficiaries' earnings, had reportedly increased after completion.

6.5 Benefits derived by employer of ETDp SETA-funded support to employee

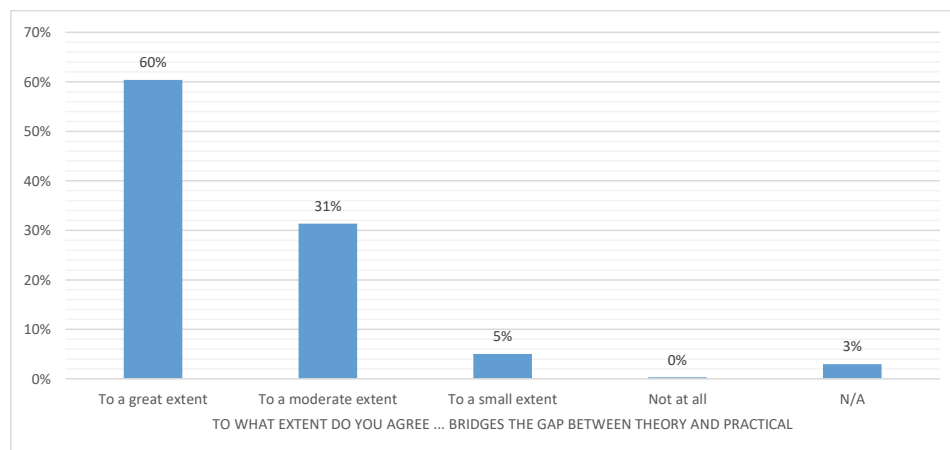
6.5.1 Learning intervention bridges gap between theoretical learning and practical workplace needs

The extent to which the intervention bridges the gap between theoretical learning and practical workplace needs

Studies have documented employer concerns about the 'employability' of graduates, particularly with respect to their lack of technical skills related to the work; more important, even if they had the technical skills, they lacked generic or soft skills such attitude to work, and interpersonal and communication skills. These employers claimed that these were characteristics which made some graduates unemployable, and they relate to the mismatch between what employers want compared to the skills that they leave college with (Wedekind, 2016). Within this context, the study probed employers' perceptions with regard to whether the learning intervention bridged the gap between classroom (theoretical) learning and the practical needs of the workplace.

Encouragingly, as shown in Figure 83, 60% of the employers were to a 'great extent' in agreement that the interventions served to bridge the gap between theoretical learning and practical workplace needs. A further 31% indicated that they agreed to a 'moderate extent'. Not a single employer perceived the intervention as not bridging the gap, and the findings confirm that workplace experience is considered valuable by the employer.

Figure 83: To what extent does the intervention bridge the gap between theoretical learning and practical workplace needs?



Source: HSRC ETDp SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

6.5.2 Versatility of workers across the organisation

Understanding the nature of value that WBL had on ensuring greater employability of learners was probed in a question to employers as to whether the learning intervention had contributed to the development of multi-skilled workers able to work across the organisation. Six in every ten, 63% of the employers were in great agreement that the learning intervention had made such a contribution, with a further 29% moderately agreeing with this viewpoint. Only 1% was not in agreement. The ETDP SETA interventions are clearly perceived by employers as being effective in successfully preparing learners to become part of a multi-skilled and highly adaptable workforce.

Table 67: To what extent did the learning intervention create multi-skilled workers who can work across the organisation?

Extent of multi-skilled workers	Percent	Frequency
To a great extent	63%	212
To a moderate extent	29%	97
To a small extent	5%	17
Not at all	1%	3
N/A	2%	8
Total	100%	337

Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

6.5.3 High-quality employees

The employers were asked whether the SETA learning intervention had contributed to high-quality employees; Table 68 shows that the majority agreed that it had, with 61% indicating that it had done so to a great extent and 30% to a moderate extent. This finding further confirms that the majority of employers acknowledged the benefits of the SETA-funded learning initiative. This is supported in the literature, with employers endorsing WBL as being promising in respect of skilling and preparing employees for success in the workplace (Rodriguez et al., 2016).

Table 68: To what extent did the learning intervention provide employers with high-quality employees?

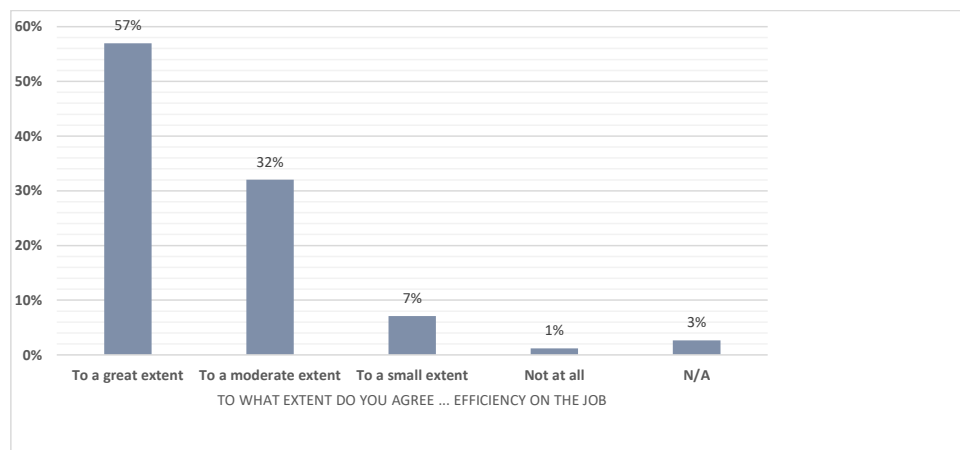
Extent of quality employees	Percent	Frequency
To a great extent	61%	204
To a moderate extent	30%	100
To a small extent	5%	17
Not at all	1%	3
N/A	3%	10
Total	100%	334

Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

6.5.4 Employee efficiency on the job

Employers were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement 'Employees who have gone through the learning interventions were more efficient at doing their job compared to those who received no training'. There was overwhelming agreement by employers, with 57% noting this to a great extent and 32% to a moderate extent, Figure 84. This suggests that employers generally appreciate the skills and competencies imparted through the learning interventions and perceived those who have participated in the programmes as much more efficient in their work.

Figure 84: To what extent employees are more efficient at doing their jobs relative to those who with no training?

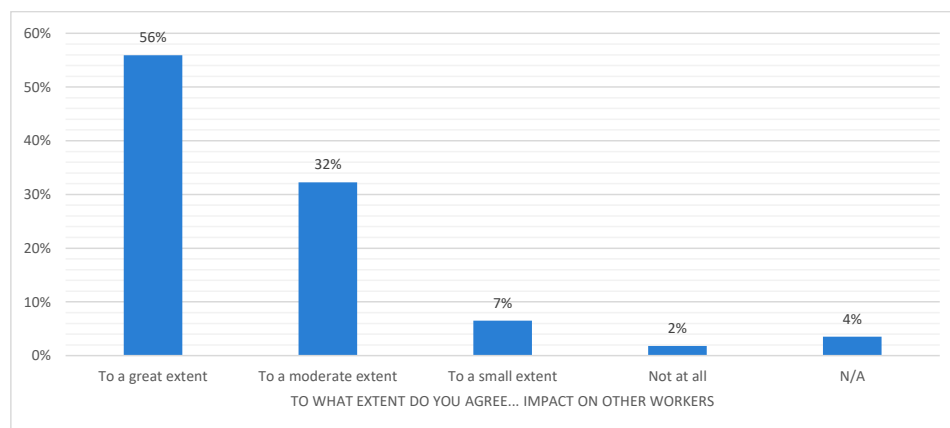


Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

6.5.5 Employees' impact on co-workers

Over half, 56% of the employers agreed to a great extent that participation of their employees in the learning programmes inspired and encouraged other colleagues also to develop their skills, Figure 85. Almost a third, 32%, agreed that employee participation had a moderate influence on other colleagues' interest in skills development.

Figure 85: To what extent it inspires and encourages other workers to develop their skills?

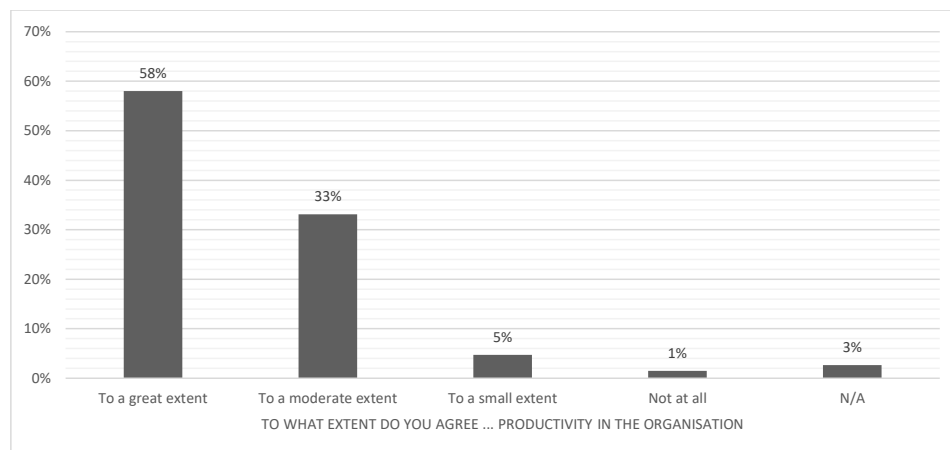


Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

6.5.6 Employee productivity in the organisation

Overall, a large majority of the employers were in agreement with the statement that participation of employees in the learning interventions had contributed to increased productivity in the organisation, Figure 86. More than half, 58%, of the employers agreed with this statement to a great extent and a third indicated that they agreed with it to a moderate extent.

Figure 86: To what extent productivity is increased in the organisation?

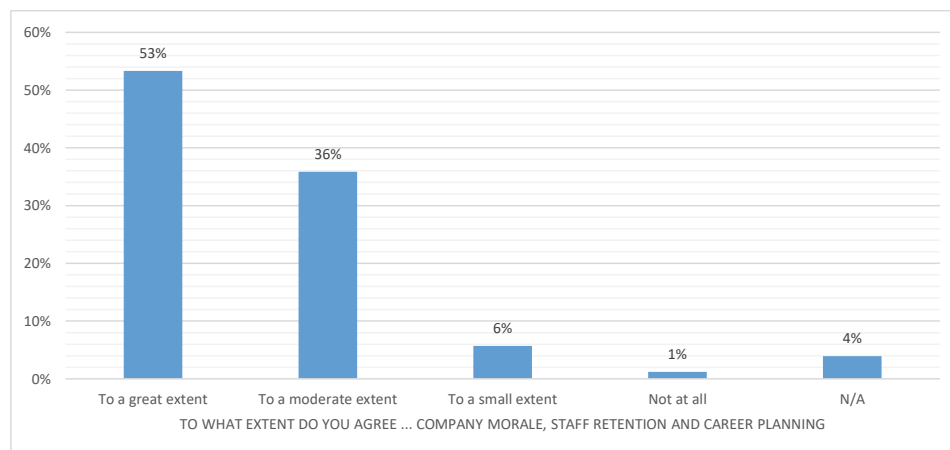


Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

6.5.7 Employee contribution to company morale, staff retention and career planning

About 53% of the employers agreed to a great extent that engaging employees in learning interventions improves company morale and assists in staff retention and career planning, Figure 87. A sizeable proportion, 36% agreed to a moderate extent.

Figure 87: To what extent it improves company morale and assists in staff retention and career planning?



Source: HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

6.6 Conclusion

This section presents findings on employers' perspectives on the value of employees' participation in ETDP SETA-funded learning interventions. The employer interviews were conducted with current employers of ETDP SETA-funded beneficiaries.

The implementation of skills and development programmes by the ETDP SETA is aimed at matching participants to the job market, significantly avoiding the skills mismatch crisis. According to Figure 75, 53% of the sample are employed in the same industry aligned to their learning intervention, and importantly the results confirm that the interventions address sector needs, with 85% of the employers found in the government, community, social and personal services sector in which the ETDP sector predominantly features. Table 47 provides evidence of the sector alignment of employers to the ETDP SETA, including schools, TVET colleges, ECD centres, CETS and public HEIs, by improving capacity of teachers, practitioners, lectures and administrators in ECD, schools, TVET colleges, CETSCs, and universities. Most of the employers interviewed were operating in the ETDP SETA sub-sectors, 69%. The 291 employers interviewed were currently hosting 1305 ETDP SETA beneficiaries. While most of the employers, 170 had hosted one ETDP SETA beneficiary, 43 employers had hosted two ETDP SETA-funded employees and, incredibly, one employer reported having hosted 300 ETDP SETA beneficiaries across the study reference period.

These employers had hosted learners across all five learning interventions who are thus broadly representative of the ETDP SETA-funded learners, although there were fewer employer respondents for WIL UoTs, 6% compared with the other learning interventions. The employers were also distributed across the study reference period, with more respondents having hosted a learner who had completed their learning intervention during the 2017/18 financial year.

Employers are positive about the value of the learning interventions on the learners and benefits that the companies derived. The majority of the employers, 91% highlighted that the learning interventions had served to bridge the gap between theoretical learning and practical workplace needs, with 60% of the employers in agreement that this was so to a 'great extent' and 31% who agreed that it had achieved this to a 'moderate extent'.

Nearly all employers agreed that the learning intervention had contributed to the development of multi-skilled workers able to work across the organisation, with 63% confirming that this was to great extent, with a further 29% moderately agreeing with this viewpoint.

It was evident that most employers appreciate the skills and competencies imparted through the learning interventions and perceived those who have participated in the programmes as much more efficient in their work. More than half of the employers, 57% greatly agreed that these "employees were more efficient at doing their job compared to those who received no training", with a further 32% confirming this to a moderate extent.

Agreement was also high among employers that these employees were inspiring and provided encouragement to other colleagues to develop their skills, with 56% in agreement to a great extent, and 32% who indicated it had moderate influence on colleagues' interest in skills development. This they believed contributed to improving company morale.

A large majority of the employers concurred that employee participation in the learning interventions had contributed to increased productivity in the organisation, with 58% who agreed with this statement to a great extent and a third who agreed with it to a moderate extent.

Overall, a large majority of the employers were in agreement with the statement that participation of employees in the learning interventions had contributed to increased productivity in the organisation, section 6.5.6. More than half, 58%, of the employers agreed with this statement to a great extent and a third indicated that they agreed with it to a moderate extent. They all confirmed that the learning interventions had assisted with staff retention and employee career planning.

The study findings noted that just under half of the organisations, 43% currently have a relationship with the ETDP SETA, and 3% reported having a previous engagement with the ETDP SETA, as reflected in section 6.6.3.3. Almost one in four employer respondents, 38% reported never having had a relationship with any SETA, while 16% were unaware of such a relationship. The implications of the above are several, including that: a) those employers' skills needs may not be addressed in the ETDP SETA SSP, as they would not have submitted a workplace skills plan, and b) their employees may not have been exposed to learning opportunities available to them. Given that 85% of the employers interviewed are in the ETDP sector, this suggests the need for enhancing awareness-raising efforts with these employers.

Noting that overwhelmingly employers found the ETDP SETA-funded interventions beneficial to their institution, this appears to suggest that decision makers in those firms are unaware of this value of such collaboration. It is evident that more could be done to encourage a larger number of employers to increase their contribution to skills development, and this lack of responsiveness of employers is a significant barrier to the realisation of the goal of a skilled and capable workforce which is meeting sector needs and contributing to the growth of the economy and South Africa's developmental and transformational goals.

7 Validation of Theory of Change

7.1 Cross-cutting outcomes

This section discusses the evaluation findings with regard to the outcomes that were articulated in the reconstituted intervention ToCs in section 4.4. It uses the foregoing findings to assess the extent to which the highlighted pathways are functioning as per logic in each of the intervention ToCs.

7.1.1 Transformation Outcomes

The transformation outcomes in terms of pathway of increasing access to PSET for previously disadvantaged people has been confirmed as reported in sections 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4.

7.1.2 Employment Outcomes and impacts

In reviewing the evidence presented in section 5.9 it can be concluded that ETDP SETA has contributed significantly to the realisation of the employability outcome, when we consider the net transitions into employment and out of unemployment. There was a 37% positive net transition, which means that more people moved into employment than into unemployment (Table 64). This pathway is confirmed.

7.1.3 Increase the pool of qualified, skilled and capable workers responsive and relevant to the sector needs

Outcomes related to the path of increasing the supply of scarce skills were generally confirmed through the employer survey, see section 6, with employers overwhelmingly reporting on the value of the ETDP SETA learning intervention programme for their respective institutions.

7.1.4 Sector and constituency stakeholder commitment to learning and skills development

The theory of change identified sector stakeholders as integral to providing outcome pathways related to increasing the pool of qualified, skilled and employable workers, enhancing employer productivity, efficiency and reduction in recruitment are all confirmed, as reported in section 6. This pathway is only partially confirmed.

7.1.5 Outcomes in respect of quality mentoring and supervision provided to employees

Outcomes related to quality mentoring as a pathway to increasing employees' employability and increasing the percentage of learners achieving relevant qualifications. Findings in respect of this outcome were reported in section 5.6.2. This outcome was partially confirmed.

7.1.6 ETDP SETA design and administration of learning interventions

Whilst the study was an outcome and impact evaluation, in the process of gathering data challenges relating to realisation of outcomes emerged which have a direct bearing on the realisation of outcome pathways in respect of learners acquiring qualifications and learners' access to quality workplace exposure. The first relates to SETA administration, details of which can be found in sections 5.1.1 and 5.8. In addition, issues relating to the design of the WIL interventions were highlighted in sections 5.8.2 and 5.8.3. This has impacted on a few pathways not being fully confirmed and which have been covered in this section 7.

7.1.7 Outcomes with regard to transition durations

Overall, when we consider the net transitions into employment and out of unemployment, there was a positive net transition, which means that more people moved into employment than into unemployment, as reported in section 5.9. This pathway is confirmed in respect of short transitions for those previously employed and those who have acquired higher-level qualifications such as those offered by universities and UoTs. However, the findings suggest longer transitions for those who had no prior post-schooling education and whose qualification is a diploma or certificate, particularly those offered by TVETs.

7.2 Specific Learning Intervention Outcomes

7.2.1 ToC outcomes with regard to Bursaries

Bursaries have three pathways (see section 4.4.1), with outcomes related to the path on increasing the supply of scarce skills generally confirmed through the employer survey, see section 6. Outcomes related to increasing the proportion of those from previously disadvantaged backgrounds were noted in section 5.3.4 in respect of gender and youth, section 5.4 in respect of socio-economic background, and section 5.2 in respect of spatial distribution of bursary recipients, and this path was partially achieved. Outcomes related to stakeholder willingness to participate in supporting skills development are reported in section 7.1.4, with this path also not fully realised.

Pathway confirmation: No changes are proposed in respect of the pathways as articulated in the Bursary ToC.

7.2.2 ToC outcomes with respect to Learnerships

Learnerships have four pathways, as illustrated in section 4.4.2 based on the stated objectives of the intervention. The employer evaluation outcomes as reported in section 6 corroborated that ETDP SETA beneficiaries have increased occupational or applied knowledge, and beneficiaries having access to accredited training which contributes to addressing scarce skills are both confirmed. The path in respect of certification was partially confirmed as reported in section 5.1.1. Outcomes in respect of access of learners to quality mentoring are reported in 5.6.2 and further assessed in section 7.1.5, confirming that this path was not fully realised.

Pathway confirmation: Consolidation of pathway 2 and 4 is proposed in respect of the Learnership ToC with the new path being 2: 'Employers provide quality training to learners delivered through capable training providers.' Introduce new pathway 4: 'Effective targeting of beneficiaries from previously disadvantaged backgrounds.'

7.2.3 ToC outcomes with regard to Internships

Internships have four key pathways (section 4.4.3), with outcomes relevant to the stated objectives of the intervention. Outcomes relating to employers willing to host interns, namely enhanced occupational or applied competencies, are confirmed as reported in section 6. Outcomes relating to qualified mentors and being knowledgeable about the sector are reported in section 7.1.5 contributing towards improving employability of workers is partially confirmed for both these pathways. Outcomes in respect of stakeholder participation are addressed in section 7.1.4, with neither of paths fully realised.

Pathway confirmation: Consolidation of pathway 2 and 3 towards a new pathway 1: 'Qualified mentors available and quality career guidance provided to learners.' Introduce new pathway 3: 'Effective targeting of

beneficiaries from previously disadvantaged backgrounds.' Amend pathway 4: 'Strategic partnerships contribute to a functioning skills ecosystem.'

7.2.4 ToC outcomes with regard to WIL for TVETs

WIL TVETs have three pathways based on the stated objectives of the intervention, as illustrated in section 4.4.4. Outcomes related to employer willingness to host learners as it relates to increased employee workplace exposure is reported in section 7.1.4, with this path partially realised. The employer evaluation outcomes as reported in section 6 in respect of beneficiaries having the requisite occupational knowledge and increased sector-specific skills and thus increased employability is confirmed. Outcomes relevant to beneficiary access to mentoring is reported in section 7.1.5, with this outcome also partially achieved.

Pathway confirmation: Consolidate pathways 2 and 3 into a new pathway 2: 'Training and mentoring is relevant and addresses scarce skills and employability of workers.' Introduce new pathway 3: 'Effective targeting of beneficiaries from previously disadvantaged backgrounds.' Introduce a new pathway 4: 'Strategic partnerships contribute to a functioning skills ecosystem.'

7.2.5 ToC outcomes with regard to WIL for UoTs

WIL UoTs identified three pathways as articulated in section 4.4.5. Outcomes related to employer willingness to host learners, including increased percentage of learners with workplace exposure, is reported in section 7.1.4 with this path partially confirmed. The outcomes relevant to the path on increasing the supply of scarce skills were generally confirmed through the employer survey, see section 6. Outcomes relevant to beneficiary access to mentoring are reported in section 7.1.5, with this outcome also partially achieved.

Pathway confirmation: Consolidate pathways 2 and 3 into a new pathway 2: 'Training and mentoring is relevant and addresses scarce skills and employability of workers.' Introduce new pathway 3: 'Effective targeting of beneficiaries from previously disadvantaged backgrounds.' Introduce a new pathway 4: 'Strategic partnerships contribute to a functioning skills ecosystem.'

7.2.6 ToC outcomes with regard to Employers

The Employers ToC identified five pathways based on the stated objectives of the intervention (refer to 4.4.6). Outcomes related to the path of increased productivity are reported in section 6, and the outcomes related to reduction in scarce and critical skills are reported in section 7.1.3 of the employer survey with this path confirmed. Outcomes relevant to increasing employers' capabilities are confirmed in section 6, while outcomes relevant to capable mentoring are reported in 7.1.5 with this path being partially confirmed. Employers' responsiveness to incentives, as evidenced in the pathway in respect of increased employer efficiency (reduced costs) and reduction in recruitment costs, was confirmed in section 6. However, the pathway in respect of increased uptake of learners by employers as reported in the same section is partially confirmed. Ownership of skills planning by employers is similarly reported in section 6 and this path is partially confirmed.

Pathway confirmation: Merge pathways 1 and 4 as articulated in pathway 4: 'Prospective employers well targeted and willing to host learners.'

7.3 Embedding the Theory of Change in ETDP SETA

The application of a ToC approach in an institution has to be addressed through firstly creating understanding of the concept and awareness of its value, the objective being to engender a culture of appreciation and value of ToCs and their integration into the institution. Their value will only be realised if they are institutionalised across all streams of work and by all stakeholders, from the conceptual design phase to implementation, administration, monitoring and evaluation and strategic decision makers.

Three important factors must be borne in mind: firstly, that ToCs are dynamic and therefore need to be reviewed and revised at appropriate intervals when the need arises. Secondly, and more important, the development and revisioning of the ToCs must include stakeholders across the board, both internal and external. This is important especially in defining the appropriate pathways and unpacking the assumptions underlying these pathways. Thirdly, revisions must be based on evidence. The process of reconstructing these ToCs included mainly management of the ETDP SETA, and it is suggested that in revisiting the ToCs a broader cross-section of stakeholders is included, particularly those directly involved in implementation, and also external stakeholders including HEIs and sector and constituency stakeholders.

8 Conclusions and Recommendations

This final section presents the conclusions of the study by briefly summarising the activities implemented, and the key outcomes arising from the study, and then closes with recommendations for moving forward. The overarching objective of the study commissioned by the ETDP SETA was to “understand, explore and document key features, trends, challenges and outcomes of the aforementioned skills interventions in the ETDP sectors”. A secondary objective was to explore employers’ perceptions of the value of these learning interventions.

8.1 Summary of Activities

The study incorporated several different research methodologies towards gathering evidence in response to the study objectives. An extensive desktop review of ETDP SETA documentation and a review of published and grey material formed the basis for the development of a conceptual and analytical framework for the study. This was followed by a participatory process of reconstructing ToCs and results log-frames in respect of bursary, learnerships, internships, WIL TVETs and WIL UoTs learning Interventions. Primary research was conducted with beneficiaries of the five learning interventions and with the employers of currently employed beneficiaries. Secondary data analysis included a literature review of evidence to contextualise our understanding of the research findings and deliver insight into emerging trends impacting the ETDP sector.

The study generated several research documents/research reports, a number of which have been utilised during the study and in the preparation of this report. These reports are listed below:

1. Inception Report;
2. A Literature Review Report;
3. Five Theory of Change and Results Log-Frame Reports in respect of the learning interventions mentioned above;
4. ETDP SETA Track and Trace Fieldwork Report;
5. Final Track and Trace Evaluation Report.

This report serves to provide insights for ETDP SETA decision makers and implementers into the achievements and challenges, in order to assist them in determining how the learning interventions can be improved on in future and to enhance their sustainability. The findings presented in the section that follows are triangulated from various data sources, including primary and secondary data gathering.

8.2 Key Research Findings

The research findings are presented in relation to the broad objectives of the study. Presenting the findings in this manner addresses the key research questions articulated in section 1.3. The key findings report evidence in respect of the following indicators: employment status of the beneficiaries (employed, self-employed and unemployed); employment rates; nature of employment (access to benefits); key achievements and challenges; the wider socioeconomic effects of the interventions on the beneficiaries; career progression for beneficiaries; and employer perceptions of the value of learning interventions (employable people; increased productivity of the company).

8.2.1 To gather data about the **effectiveness** and **impacts** of the skills development interventions indicated above. The impacts could be direct or indirect, intended or unintended.

- The findings are conclusive in that ETDP SETA learning interventions have exceeded in their equity targeting of previously disadvantaged women, youth and Black people;
- In respect of enabling access to disadvantaged learners from households in poverty, the study findings confirm the high prevalence of learners from larger households and those with high poverty prevalence;
- The study also found that half of all beneficiaries were unemployed at the time they commenced with the learning intervention;
- It did not, however, meet its target for people with disabilities;
- However, as elaborated in section 5, there are significant variations in outcomes by learning interventions, with particular focus on recruitment of younger beneficiaries between the ages of 18 and 35 across all interventions, but specifically in respect of bursary interventions.

Table 69 below presents a summary of the evidence generated in respect of the above.

Table 69: Socio-economic and demographic characteristics of beneficiaries

Socio-economic characteristics						
Prevalence of poverty*	11%	69%	71%	80%	60%	65%
Depth of poverty	6%	43%	41%	49%	36%	40%
Severity of poverty	4%	31%	28%	35%	26%	28%
Demographic characteristics (Percentage of indicator only, does not add to 100%)						
Black	97%	100%	99%	100%	99%	99%
Women	53%	78%	68%	76%	50%	69%
Youth (20-35 yrs)	43%	71%	92%	96%	99%	78%
Disability	1%	7%	1%	2%	4%	3%

Source: Authors, compiled from HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020) *Percentage of people below poverty line.

In respect of the **destination of beneficiaries** across all interventions and the reference period, the study found the following:

- 48% of beneficiaries were in some form of employment, with 39% full time and 9% part time;
- 4% were pursuing further studies;
- 1% were engaged in self-employment;
- 47% were unemployed.

In respect of 4% of beneficiaries who were **continuing to study** full time towards another qualification, the findings reveal:

- The majority were registered with universities, 41%, UoTs, 26% and TVET colleges, 24%;
- Almost all of those who were studying were youth aged 20-35 years.
- Two main reasons for undertaking further studies that were given by beneficiaries were “to increase my knowledge and understanding in the industry”, 50% and “to achieve a higher qualification”, 48%.

Of the 47% of **unemployed beneficiaries**, the study found:

- 57% had been without work for a year or more;
- Encouragingly, the study found that 95% of the unemployed were actively looking for work.
- The main reason given by 44% of the unemployed in respect of their unemployed status was the lack of available jobs in the labour market.
- In order for us to establish the presence of reservation wage dynamics in this population, we explored potential attitudes of beneficiaries towards work, and noted that only 3% had ever declined a job offer.

8.2.2 *To understand the **wider effects of these interventions** – social, economic and technical – on individual beneficiaries.*

- The study provides evidence that beneficiaries have gained a range of skills, with more than half, 54% indicating that the training received was highly relevant to the work they were doing.
- All beneficiaries who had secured employment on a full-time basis reported earnings ranging from the lowest at R6,000 (slightly less than double the minimum wage) to R 29,000 per month.
- All reported qualitatively on wellbeing impacts personally and on their households from access to an income;
- Self-esteem and career mobility were also reported by beneficiaries as key outcomes of participation in the learning interventions. This was supported by most beneficiaries, including those who were unemployed.

8.2.3 *To generate evidence of **key achievements** and **challenges** to inform the decision-making process for senior management and accounting authority on programme delivery mechanisms, and how these can be improved in future to ensure sustainability.*

Achievements

As postulated in the literature review in section 3, the SETA's role is to promote the employability of beneficiaries and not necessarily directly their employment. The labour market transition analysis presented in section 5.9 allows for it to be concluded that:

- ETDP SETA has contributed significantly to the realisation of the employability outcome. When we consider the net transitions into employment and out of unemployment, there was a 37% positive net transition, which means that more people moved into employment than into unemployment, as illustrated in Table 64.
- Barring the influence of external factors such as the performance of the economy, one can conclude that ETDP SETA's learning interventions appear to be making some contribution in facilitating the postulated transitions as per intervention ToCs.

Challenges

- Administrative challenges were reported by a quarter of all beneficiaries, 27% in terms of not receiving their **certificates** after completion;
- About 10% of WIL beneficiaries raised concerns about aspects of the design of these learning interventions, including insufficient resources, poor match with their placement and poor quality or non-existent mentoring provided by the employer.

8.2.4 To determine the nature of employment of learners who received employment.

Employed Beneficiaries

Regarding those 48% of beneficiaries in employments the results are favourable, with 80% in full-time employment as outlined below and in Figure 70.

- For those in employment the results are favourable, with 80% in full-time employment;
- Two-thirds of beneficiaries are employed in the public sector;
- Regarding the **quality of employment**, it was revealed that the majority, 79% of beneficiaries are registered with UIF, 61% contribute to a pension fund and half, 50% have access to medical aid. These findings indicate that these jobs can be classified as 'decent work';
- The average salary across all five learning interventions is slightly under R13,000 per month, with the lowest salary being R6,700 for WIL TVET beneficiaries, which is almost double the minimum wage rate in SA;
- Importantly, 93% of those who are employed are in the formal sector.
- In respect of **career progression** the findings reveal that a minority of learners received a promotion, 5% and 13% received a pay raise;
- More than two-thirds of the beneficiaries, 68% experienced no change in their careers.

Table 70: Summary of evaluation outcomes: Employer Sector and Nature of Employment

Outcomes	Bursaries	Learnerships	Internships	WIL TVETs	WIL UoTs	Total
Classification of employers by sector						
Public	81%	63%	77%	48%	60%	67%
Private	8%	18%	18%	47%	35%	22%
NPO	9%	15%	4%	5%	3%	9%
Other	2%	4%	1%	0%	2%	2%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Types of employment by formality						
Formal	100%	89%	94%	90%	99%	93%
Informal	0%	12%	6%	10%	1%	7%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Tenure						
Part time	3%	11%	23%	16%	9%	12%
Full time	95%	83%	63%	74%	89%	80%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Nature of contract						
Contract	13%	26%	71%	42%	48%	38%
Permanent	87%	60%	22%	45%	50%	53%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Authors, compiled from HSRC ETDP SETA Beneficiary Track & Trace Survey (2020)

Self-employed Beneficiaries

- 1% of beneficiaries were engaged in self-employment;
- In terms of economic well-being the study found no significant difference between those who started a business after completion of the training programme and those who did not start a business;

- Of the beneficiaries who have started a business, youth between the ages of 20-35 years predominate;
- Most of the businesses operate informally with only 20% being VAT registered;
- In assessing the economic viability of these businesses, a third of these self-employed beneficiaries were earning less than R1,000 and just over a tenth earning between R2,001 and R4,500 a month.

8.2.5 *To pilot a survey of the **perceptions of employers on the value of learnerships, WIL and internships.***

Employer perspectives on the value of the learning interventions were explored in the study and the following was noted:

- The majority of the employers, 91% highlighted that the learning interventions had served to bridge the gap between theoretical learning and practical workplace needs, with 60% of the employers in agreement that this was to a 'great extent' and 31% agreeing that it had achieved this to a 'moderate extent'.
- Six in every ten, 63% employers were greatly in agreement that the learning intervention had contributed to the development of multi-skilled workers.
- There was overwhelming agreement by employers, with 57% noting to a great extent, that 'employees who have gone through the learning interventions were more efficient at doing their job compared to those who received no training'.
- **Firm productivity** is an important indicator for the success of the firm, and overall a large majority of the employers, 91% agreed that participation of employees in the learning interventions has contributed to increased productivity in the organisation.
- Regarding the **impact on beneficiaries**, on average employers reported that 12% of employees' **earnings had increased** across all learning interventions, although a disaggregated analysis reveals that a third of WIL UoT beneficiaries, 35% and a quarter of bursary beneficiaries' earnings, 26% had reported increases in their salaries.

8.3 Conclusions

The foregoing analysis included a thorough interrogation of indicators chosen based on intervention ToCs, including the subjective assessments of the SETA's beneficiaries of the role the ETDP's interventions played in assisting them to secure employment. One can conclude that, among other factors (both external and internal), ETDP SETA's learning interventions appear to be making some contribution in facilitating the postulated transitions as per intervention ToCs. Framed another way, the body of evidence assembled here is incompatible with a hypothesis of no impact. This is more so when the socioeconomic status of most beneficiaries is taken into consideration.

The ToC pathways have generated insights with respect to the pathways that have been confirmed and those which are weak. It has identified intervention-specific assumptions and outcomes that need to be revised. The ETDP SETA is to be congratulated for embracing the ToC approach to monitoring and evaluation of SETA outcomes, with the task now ahead of them to integrate and mainstream its use widely across the institution and in respect of all streams of work from design to implementation, monitoring and strategic decision making.

8.4 Recommendations

The following recommendations are therefore being put forward:

8.4.1 Design recruitment strategies to ensure that the disability equity target is met

It is evident across many government interventions that while the commitment to meeting targets regarding people with disabilities exists, the ability to recruit is lacking. The ETDP SETA is encouraged to develop a recruitment strategy for this group of learners, with engagements with key stakeholders, particularly people with disabilities themselves through their representative organisations.

8.4.2 Revisit recruitment strategies in respect of demographic and socio-economic target for specific learning interventions

Areas which require improvement relate to increasing access to younger cohorts of learners between the ages of 18-35 across all interventions and specifically for bursary beneficiaries to target youth up to 35 years, given that the average age of learners was found to be 32 across all interventions and 40, for bursary beneficiaries as reported in section 5.3.3.

It is further proposed that the ETDP SETA review its targeting of bursary beneficiaries in relation to the ToC in respect of providing support to high-income learners accessing bursary interventions.

SETA recruitment strategies per learning intervention need to be revisited to enable more spatial equity, for example where almost half of all WIL UoT beneficiaries are from the Western Cape.

8.4.3 Ensure further integration and alignment of ETDP SETA programmes within a Theory of Change framework

The need for orientation and the mainstreaming of ToCs in the projects and programmes implemented by the ETDP SETA is highly recommended. This will involve awareness raising and the inclusion of performance indicators to measure the effective integration of ToCs in all programmes implemented by the SETA.

8.4.4 Enhance initiatives to improve learner employability

This is focused on designing and implementing interventions to strengthen employer mentoring and supervision capabilities. Improvements in administration systems regarding the delivery of certification is another area which will contribute to employability. ETDP SETA's role in the supervision of placements is also encouraged as a means of enhancing quality of the WIL placements. In addition, attention needs to be given to how to retain the bulk of the skilled workforce within the ETDP sector.

8.4.5 Increase employer engagements with the ETDP SETA

The relatively small number of organisations who have active engagement with the ETDP SETA needs to be given further attention. The aim would be to increase the number of organisations who host learners and to increase the number of learners benefitting from ETDP SETA interventions in these organisations.

8.4.6 Institutionalising evaluation studies

8.4.6.1 Enhancing the Management Information System records on learners

ETDP SETA should request an alternate number if a landline is provided as the primary contact number for beneficiaries in the skills intervention MIS. Given the relatively high functioning rates of cell-phones, increasing the number of cell-phone numbers would greatly increase the overall response rate. In general this calls for overall improvements to the SETMIS database.

8.4.6.2 Informing learners about such research studies and requesting their participation during induction

Increasing numbers of studies of this nature will be required. It is unclear whether learners are advised in the contracts they sign that they might be called upon to participate in such studies. Even if this is the case, it is evident from the responses that most participants did not remember this. It is recommended that guidebooks or manuals as well as the contract document indicate that such requests will arise, to ensure that learners understand the value of such studies and are thus motivated to participate. This could be reinforced in orientation sessions and forums where learners meet with the ETDP SETA. In addition, newsletters, social media and other related platforms should be utilised to communicate more widely about these surveys.

8.4.6.3 Gatekeeper approval from Government institutions

It is proposed that the ETDP SETA engage with the DHET, Department of Basic Education and HEIs to motivate for increased employer participation. A significant number of the employers are in the public sector. The leadership of the DHET, Department of Basic Education and HEIs need to create awareness among senior managers of the value of such studies and secure prior agreement to participate. Increasing numbers of studies of this nature will be required.

8.4.6.4 Employer awareness of role of SETAs

It is recommended that SETAs in general and the ETDP SETA more specifically work with the Human Resources Departments of employer bodies to facilitate increased awareness of the role of SETAs, and the importance of participation in such studies among the managers at these institutions, beyond those in the Human Resources Departments.

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