THESIS

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Conceptions of Entrepreneurship Among Students at a South African University

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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own work, except where otherwise stated.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to three groups of people:

First, to Black South African university students toiling under the banner of entrepreneurship, often to make ends meet. I hope that this thesis amplifies their voices and that it makes them feel heard, seen and understood.

Second, to farm dwellers still dealing with farm evictions in South Africa and elsewhere in the world, in particular, my family who has been dealing with this issue since 2021.

Finally, I dedicate this thesis to all scholars of entrepreneurship, in particular research that amplifies the voices of informal traders, cooperatives and young adults.

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ABSTRACT

What different conceptualizations of entrepreneurship do South African university students articulate, how do these relate to their own livelihood strategies, and how do they differ from those promoted by universities and policymakers? To answer these questions, this thesis is a multi-level case-study analysis bringing together insights from policymakers, university staff, and students at a South African university with approximately 80% of enrolled students from low-income backgrounds. The theoretical framing of this thesis draws on structure and agency theory, including other bodies of literature concerned about subversion, reproduction and self-regulation. The design includes analysis of the National Development Plan 2030 and National Youth Policies 2015/2020–2030 and findings from 30 semi-structured interviews comprising students, policymakers, and university management stakeholders. The policy players interviewed express mixed views, depending on their positions and roles. Some saw the promotion of entrepreneurship as a way for policymakers and the university stakeholders to avoid dealing with the problems faced by students. Others felt that entrepreneurship was an approach to help students help themselves.

The findings explore the different student understandings of entrepreneurship and responses to their university's promotion. Lack of cash, poverty and hardship are the socio-economic issues dominating their understandings and responses to entrepreneurship. These students struggle to afford basics such as clothes, toiletries, food, and textbooks, despite funding from National Student Financial Aid Scheme. This funding is not enough to meet all their needs. For some students this justifies an interest in entrepreneurship. The findings highlight the differences and tensions in the conceptualizations (understandings) and articulations (responses) of entrepreneurship among students, policy, and the university. A detailed case-study of one student, "Kat", offers further insight on how students subvert policy and their university structure in actioning their micro enterprises.

The contribution of this thesis is a demonstration of how students at university are using agency to subvert the rigid policy promotions of entrepreneurship, and contrasts this with the lived experiences of students. Theoretically the thesis contributes to literature a firm confirmation on how entrepreneurship is conceptualised and practiced differently in society. This thesis rattles the cage of entrepreneurship literature that has since adopted a one-sided approach to the phenomenon. As such it amplifies the voice of students both political and from a standpoint of advocacy. It

questions the state's popularization and promotion of entrepreneurship in South African higher education whilst not accommodating the varying conceptions, motives and practices of entrepreneurship amongst students. This thesis proposes a three-legged transformative model for entrepreneurship. The model suggests that entrepreneurship be treated with a more transformative lens and from a livelihood perspective in both research and policy.

Keywords: Structure and Agency, Livelihoods, Students, Entrepreneurship and Policy

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ANC	African National Congress
ANCYL	African National Congress Youth League
CHE	Council on Higher Education
CIPC	Companies Intellectual Property Company
DASO	Democratic Alliance Students Organisation
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DUT	Durban University of Technology
EFF	Economic Freedom Fighters
EDHE	Entrepreneurship Development in Higher Education
#FMF	#FeesMustFall
GEM	Global Entrepreneurship Monitor
GIS	Geographic Information System
HBU	Historically Black university
HELM	Higher Education Leadership and Management
MP	Member of Parliament
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPC	National Planning Commission
NPO	Non-Profit Organization
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
NYDA	National Youth Development Agency
NYP	National Youth Policy
RSA	Republic of South Africa
#RMF	#RhodesMustFall
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SARS	South African Revenue Service

SASCO	South African Students Congress
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SEDA	Small Enterprise Development Agency
SEW	Student Entrepreneurship Week
SMEs	Small and Micro Enterprises
SRC	Student Representative Council
TOC	Ministerial Universities Transformation Committee
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UCT	University of Cape Town
USAf	Universities South Africa Forum
WIL	Work Integrated Learning
Wits	University of the Witwatersrand
YIBSA	Youth in Business South Africa

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

> *Security does not want us to sell anything on campus including snacks because there are business-renting premises on campus to sell food to students. I sell doughnuts for R7 each. My doughnuts are cheaper than anything else you can find at the cafeteria. You can't get anything for R7 at the canteen. I sell under this ANC youth league gazebo because I am a member and other members support my stall.* (Extract from a conversation with Mahlatsi*, a student at Fundisa University[1])

The vignette above captures the way in which students such as Mahlatsi are juggling their studies and hardship as well as how they subvert the university rules. In these contexts, such students are sometimes labelled "determined" by promoters of entrepreneurship on campus including lecturers, motivational speakers and those involved in the Student Entrepreneurship Week campaign. This carries multiple possible meanings that are often open to interpretation: the student could be determined academically, to succeed at university, or to a make success of their life in general. For Mahlatsi* his stall means offering other students' affordability and a cheaper alternative on campus. His story is one of many covered in this thesis showing the different conceptualisations of entrepreneurship that exist among students.

This research draws on the stories of students. I argue that their adoption of entrepreneurial ways of making a living does not justify telling youths in similar circumstances that they should engage in entrepreneurship. Running a business on campus is difficult for students. As may be seen from the extract above, having to hide from campus security guards is an example of a hardship that students face when trying to sell goods on campus. Students do not enjoy the protection that established businesses do. This makes it inappropriate for the state to promote at mass scale the adoption of entrepreneurship among students, graduates, and unemployed youth. I challenge the South African policy discourse that sees student entrepreneurship as a "silver bullet" which can create the "ideal entrepreneur" and provide access to finance, information, and

[1] A pseudonym chosen for the case institution. The institution has no association with the Fundisa Forum of University Nursing Deans of South Africa.

knowledge capacity, and lead to the creation of a scalable business. In making this argument, I analyse the South African National Development Plan (NDP): Vision 2030 (National Planning Commission, 2012) and National Youth Policies (NYPs) for the years 2015–2030 (Department of Women, Youth and People with Disabilities, 2019). I contest that these macro/country-wide policies have shaped the design of programmes promoting entrepreneurship in South African university campuses. There are many stakeholders who have an interest in promoting formal entrepreneurship, regardless of whether it is compatible with the survival aims of students. Formal entrepreneurship refers to pursuit of opportunities following legal frameworks such as tax laws, company registration and compliance with labour legislation. Informal entrepreneurship, in contrast, is survivalist in nature. It is a form of entrepreneurship common among informal traders. Unlike formal entrepreneurship, it is not based on substantial investments and complex feasibility studies; it is mostly individualistic and micro in scale. For example, a person selling fruits and vegetables on the side of the road, using the money they make to take care of their immediate needs, is engaging in informal entrepreneurship. However, many parties, including mentors, lecturers, governmental agents, and financiers of student entrepreneurship competitions, support formal entrepreneurship. I draw on interview data to depict student experiences on campus amid the popular call for entrepreneurship at university and among students.

> **"Not giving up: Determined engineering student, 28, sells recyclable plastic to finish his studies.** A mechanical engineering student is so determined to finish his studies that he sells recyclable plastic to raise money for food. However, he failed some of his second-year modules in 2014, lost his NSFAS bursary and was removed from the university residence. He built his own shack in the Booysens (Johannesburg) informal settlement in Johannesburg. The young student also started collecting and selling recyclable plastic to get money for food. Speaking to SABC, Mangena said he also sends some money back home: I buy food for myself this side and send some money back home so that my mom and siblings can have some support. Although it's a daily struggle that includes walking 5km to campus, he is determined to qualify." (Lippke, 2018)

The vignette above is from a story that appeared on the news in 2018 detailing the experiences of a student who had to sell recyclable scrap to stay at university. The student is Sam Mangena, and his story was shared widely in media under the pretext "not giving up". His story is

like many others in which students sell their time (services) or products to be able to cover their university fees and living costs and hope to make enough money to help their families financially. Mangena's story shows that informal trading among students is a reality, especially when they are facing exclusion owing to poor academic performance and do not have access to state funding. This story also demonstrates the nature of hardship and the individual struggles that some students endure to stay at university. Like other poverty-stricken members of society, Mangena and other students pursue informal trading to make ends meet.

1.1 The importance and urgency of this study for entrepreneurship in South Africa: Subversion, Reproduction and Self-regulation

Entrepreneurship researchers in South Africa are often enthusiastic about the potential of student enterprise. Many researchers (e.g. Fatoki & Chindoga, 2011; Hendricks & Thengela, 2020) have criticized students for not considering entrepreneurship as an alternative to gaining employment. These scholars have gone as far as criticizing students for being over-reliant on the state: "Graduates should be encouraged to take entrepreneurship as a career rather than depending on government for limited job opportunities" (Fatoki, 2010).

While Fatoki and Chindoga (2011) promotes independence from government through entrepreneurship, they discredit the genuine livelihood challenges experienced by poor students, their families, and communities in which government has a duty to intervene. It discards the voices of students as members of a society who must challenge the state to build an economy that creates jobs, and it disregards the possibility that jobs for some are a fundamental opportunity to earn an income to put food on the table. Indeed, Fatoki and Chindoga (2011) provide a narrow view of what is possible under entrepreneurship. They present a one-sided view of entrepreneurship which states that there is no option to deal with job scarcity but to engage in entrepreneurship, and when students challenge the state to create jobs, they are seen as depending on the government for limited job opportunities. Yet, this kind of research does not consider whether entrepreneurship offers the benefits of a job for a student or a recent graduate and fails to question why people like Sam Mangena face hardship. Even as an "entrepreneur", Mangena makes barely enough to buy food and support his family and still cannot afford to pay his tuition fees. There is a rise of research purporting that entrepreneurship will eradicate poverty, end the job crisis, and help students to become less dependent on the state (Hendricks & Thengela, 2020). This study counters such

research by delving in the student experiences of entrepreneurship, the tensions created by this research and more broadly their livelihood strategies.

Resolving the tensions, friction and disjuncture in entrepreneurship research has become increasingly important as the concept of entrepreneurship continues to dominate both university and policy discussions (Chinyamurindi, 2016). This study provides an important view that entrepreneurship is conceptualized differently in society and by different stakeholders. Entrepreneurship, being the process of starting and growing a business, is not an option for some people; they have neither the resources nor the passion for running a business. Others have the passion but no means to create a business, while some people trade to take care of their immediate needs but do not consider themselves entrepreneurs. Others still are open to all kinds of opportunity, whether in entrepreneurship or finding jobs; they do not differentiate because of their need for an income and to improve their lives.

Like Poole (2018) this thesis provides some clarity about entrepreneurship in practice whilst recognising that the title of entrepreneur is specific to:

> "an individual who creates a viable new commercial enterprise that has produced employment and demonstrated it is a going concern by virtue of having survived market entry for 12 months." Pg. 41

The alignment of this thesis to the urgency of entrepreneurship and how the practice of entrepreneurship enables youth to subvert poverty, and joblessness distinguishes between the entrepreneur and the process of entrepreneurship. The students as a focus population in this study the are not necessarily "entrepreneurs" but social beings pursuing entrepreneurship to subvert lack of incomes, to provide for their basic needs and remain economically active. As Poole, states that:

> "Entrepreneurship (hence) refers narrowly to the process by which such enterprises are brought into existence, irrespective of the particular techniques employed or the entrepreneur's motives." Pg. 41

Poole prompts important issues about the "entrepreneur" experience which involves capacity to create a viable business enterprise that can create employment in its fullest definition which includes the ability to pay minimum wage, provide adequate working conditions. Whilst youth and students use whatever means available to create a viable economic activity for example using a

garage a home to run a printing facility or using their student laptop to build a computer application. This does not make a student an entrepreneur and a student uses this to subvert lack of income and other socio-economic struggles.

Although not making direct reference to social reproduction through enterprise, Rabe, Swart and De Beer, (2019) demonstrate the precariousness of youth in South Africa. In their study of 24 participants belonging to the NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training category) they show that youth feel the pressure of economic inactivity and resort to various forms of activities to keep themselves occupied. This is because some fear losing place in society and opportunities. Hence entrepreneurship over and above it being some form of passion e.g. linked to love of art, it has become a way to keep youth occupied and with a chance of earning a living (Cuervo and Miranda, 2019).

On self-regulation this thesis shows student experiences that demonstrate their passion for what they do as enterprise. For example, some of the student enterprises focus on hair care, offering physical education training to young children, food preparation and environmental care. These passions are some form of self-regulation mediated by the identities of the students and a positive feeling about doing something in society. Although focused on entrepreneur figures Lex *et al.*, (2022) shows that self-regulation is an explanation of passion and performance in entrepreneurship. Because passion is a subjective experience it leaves entrepreneurship a concept that is conceptualised and practiced differently by different people – an argument that is at the centre of this thesis amongst others.

This being the case, this research takes full account of these experiences and clarifies especially the student voices on entrepreneurship, juxtaposed with policy and university promotions of entrepreneurship. It also amplifies these voices advocating for the understanding of the different conceptualisations of entrepreneurship that exist in society. This is an important exercise that will guide entrepreneurship research on a new trajectory that accounts for inequality in the South African society, individual experiences with entrepreneurship, student livelihoods, and hardship.

1.2 Research gap, objectives, motivation and the political contribution of the study

This research contributes to policy and student entrepreneurship research in South Africa. Policies governing entrepreneurship remain technical and shift the responsibility of building successful businesses onto students. Some of these students already live in poverty, are directly affected by unemployment, and have no access to capital for entrepreneurship. Student-entrepreneurship studies often fail to consider the life experiences of students involved in entrepreneurship, their entrepreneurial journeys, and what entrepreneurship really means to them. This research considers all these factors, the diverse student backgrounds, and the varying interests at the juncture of entrepreneurship and student livelihoods. In practice, my research has the potential to inform South Africa's policy research(ers) to take full account of youth voices and the varying real-life experiences of entrepreneurship. I sought to answer the following questions:

- What different conceptualizations of entrepreneurship do students in a South African university articulate, and in what ways do these relate to their own livelihood strategies?
- In what ways do these conceptualizations of entrepreneurship differ, if at all, from those promoted by their university and in policy?

These questions are addressed throughout the thesis. The theoretical considerations provide a theoretical lens through which the research questions are investigated. These considerations furthermore underpin the study's literature review and assist in engaging critically with the research questions. The research methods and the Fundisa University case study chapters provide the reader with an understanding of how the study's data was collected and analysed, and the institutional environment in which the study's data was collected.

By amplifying the voice of the students this study makes a political contribution. This contribution is twofold. First the thesis uses the voices of students in showing their real experience of higher education within the broad spectrum of entrepreneurship and the economy. It provides the contentions of students with lack of jobs, failure of government to secure economic opportunities for citizens and the students' experience of policy mediated by their university. Second and last this thesis provides a visualisation of the students' hustle in entrepreneurship and their livelihoods both on and off campus. Unlike other studies the thesis exposes the way entrepreneurship is experienced by students and takes a critical approach in showing the realities

of students engaged with the practice of entrepreneurship thus rattling the cages of entrepreneurship research by exploring the role of structure and agency, as well how students subvert the confines of the university and their student identity in creating their micro-enterprises (see Chapter 6). The remaining chapters deal with the questions through the findings, interview excerpts and the analysis of the findings.

1.3 Thesis overview: Rattling the cage in entrepreneurship (education) research

Research in entrepreneurship has developed steadily over the years and has advanced to include education as a key component when referring to students' involvement and interests in enterprise. This development gave birth to a sub-field called entrepreneurship education. This thesis contributes to both areas, entrepreneurship and education. As such the chapters of the thesis engage thoroughly these areas and challenges the common patterns of entrepreneurship education research which usually are optimistic about how entrepreneurship is or can deal with economic problems such as lack of jobs, basic needs and lack of opportunities for youth. This thesis challenges these fixed notions of entrepreneurship education research by showing a different angle that is the student conceptualisations of entrepreneurship. This thesis from this understanding it rattles the cage of comfort in entrepreneurship research that seems to be dominated by the optimistic view that entrepreneurship is a ticket out of poverty and a go to solution for government failing to create adequate opportunities for youth livelihoods to thrive.

Much of this thesis amplifies student voices, relating their conceptualizations of entrepreneurship, outside of the frameworks of common entrepreneurship studies such as Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) and/or World Economic Forum reports, which put the interests of capital and government ahead of the needs of citizens at the bottom of the societal pyramid. This thesis comprises 10 chapters that provide theory, data-collection methods, data analysis, and discussions dealing with the main concepts identified in the study's main research questions.

1.3.1 Literature Review (Chapter 2)

In the literature review, I provide definitions of key terms used in the thesis and explanations of the theoretical ideas of the thesis. I provide a critical engagement with scholarly work that focuses on higher education, entrepreneurship, and policy. The first part of the literature review introduces the style in which the literature review is written, and key definitions of the

theoretical concepts used in the study. These parts help the reader to understand the choice of definitions adopted in this study for key terms such as entrepreneurship, student livelihoods, low income, and higher education. I also analyse the key theoretical debates pertaining to higher education, policy, youth livelihoods, and the economy. This exercise will broaden the horizon of the study and provide some understanding of the real issues confronting the South African society regarding youth and student development. This discussion draws on the work of South African higher-education scholars such as Habib, Jansen, Motala, Vally, Pillay, Cross, and Allais.

At the centre of the literature review is the structure and agency literature illustrating the place of the university and how students are using their agency reproduce resistance. #FeesMustFall as a form of resistance (against university fee increases) served as both a political struggle and as an advocacy exercise anchored in student experiences. This struggle is revisited in the literature review of this thesis and is connected to how students use their political voice as agency to challenge and/or even subvert the university structure. This chapter also illuminates the theoretical contribution of the study showing some gaps related to the American-Euro centric view of entrepreneurship and the need for a more holistic view of entrepreneurship in literature.

1.3.2 An Integrated Literature Review on Policy: Entrepreneurship in the Context of the State (Chapter 3)

This chapter builds on from Chapter 2, which frames the theoretical concepts and the literature underpinning this thesis. This, Chapter 3, is an expansion from Chapter 2 focusing on policy literature and the chapters of the South African National Development Plan (NDP) and the broader frameworks of youth policy e.g. the National Youth Policy(ies). The chapter deals with the policy perspectives that dominate discussions about entrepreneurship in South Africa. This domination of policy in the entrepreneurship discourse emanates from the American-Euro centric idea that small businesses and innovations help to grow an economy. In South Africa, a similar view is common: entrepreneurship is also seen as an answer to the lack of jobs, poverty, and inequality in the country. In this chapter I review and critically engage the NDP 2030 and the NYP documents for the years 2015–2030. In doing this I situate this thesis in the broader political sphere of policy making in South Africa. These two main policies regulate development and set priorities for the programmes of the government (and its agencies). The NDP covers a wide-ranging array of priority areas that include education, health, poverty alleviation, infrastructure development,

social welfare, and economic growth. The NYP draws on the NDP to contextualize these priorities under youth-development programmes. This chapter provides policy extracts and reactions to how these policies promote entrepreneurship as a solution to youth dealing with poverty, lack of income, and joblessness, among other social issues.

1.3.3 Research Methods (Chapter 4)

This chapter is a story of the events that transpired before, during, and after data collection. The events leading to data collection were trial-and-error tests to develop a fit-for-purpose research strategy. I discuss in detail the experiences of fieldwork data collection. In addition, I record all the personal and technical struggles I experienced as a nascent researcher but also how they shaped my learning experience. The post-fieldwork data-collection experience provided both the feeling of accomplishment and the feeling of detachment. These feelings come naturally and have made me value the companionship that my participants provided. In the same breath, the completion of fieldwork was an important development in the life of this research study, as it marked the beginning of analysis and reporting of findings.

This methods chapter is another indirect but sharp contribution of this thesis in the broader field of researching students in the south, their livelihoods and their ways of earning an income. The chapter details the application of a qualitative approach to research amidst a global pandemic and in an African higher education context. In addition, this chapter sheds light about the realities of being a researcher faced with students, and other multi-stakeholders in an unequal society whilst traversing fieldwork. Moreover, this chapter explores the meanings of moving places to conduct research on a moving target such as student entrepreneurship and micro-enterprise. For example, at the time of the research, I moved from Oxford to Johannesburg, only to find a country in full lockdown, with the student participants also moving from the city to places they call home due to the university residence evictions applied to students during the pandemic. Therefore, this chapter is a record of applying methodology and leading fieldwork substantively during an unpredictable period.

1.3.4 Policy Discourses on Youth Entrepreneurship: Responsibilisation, Self Reliance, and Economic Agency. (Chapter 5)

In this chapter I present documentary analysis findings derived from two South African policy documents, namely, the 2030 NDP and the NYP documents (2015–2020 and 2020–2030). I report on the policy promotions of entrepreneurship, broadly among youth and specifically on those promotions focusing on students. I sketch out the way that policy works in South Africa, its political influences, and the way budgets are allocated to support policy initiatives. I explain how students have become a target of the policy promotions of entrepreneurship in the same way that policymakers are targeting unemployed youth in South Africa. I also show some of the existing contradictions in the NDP and the NYP about entrepreneurship among youth.

This chapter is the first of the four chapters dealing with the findings of the study. In demonstrating and illustrating the policy discourses on youth entrepreneurship, this chapter shows the scale of the policy issue and lays foundation for the chapters that follow which provide some specific experiences of students (youth), the policy players and university staff involved in the promotions of entrepreneurship. Responsibilisation, Self-reliance and economic agency are the main concepts deal with in this chapter. The chapter serves as a bridge between the literature framework anchored on the concepts of structure, agency, self-regulation, tension and frictions. The policy discourse's language is put to test and its meanings explored alongside the literature underpinning the study. In doing this the chapter sets the scene for the rest of the findings chapters to engage the theoretical concepts underpinning the thesis.

1.3.5 Identity versus the Practice of Entrepreneurship among Students (Chapter 6)

In this chapter I report on the data collected from semi-structured interviews with students, multimedia data, and field notes compiled during fieldwork. I provide first-hand accounts of the topic under study through excerpts drawn from interview transcripts. I categorize the recorded interview responses to deal with the key concepts in the research question: conceptualizations, promotions, differences, and understandings. I used NVivo to code the data and to develop the emergent findings of the study. In this chapter I present typologies and understandings of entrepreneurship among students.

Four main types of typologies and understandings of entrepreneurship are established in the chapter, these include students approaching entrepreneurship to create for themselves opportunities for hustling an income; as a way of applying their skills; ability to own something and approaching entrepreneurship to provide for one's basic needs. These again show the tension between the approach of students to entrepreneurship versus the policy promotions of entrepreneurship that use a particular definition and even examples to describe the process. The chapter then shows how students are using their agency to subvert both the dominant policy ideas of entrepreneurship and the university ideas of how students must involve themselves in entrepreneurship.

The chapter's arrangement begins with clarifying the identity of students in relation to their practice of entrepreneurship. The way the student identities are formulated and how students are self-identifying with entrepreneurship and how others do not is demonstrated in this chapter. The manner that students are experiencing policy, their university campus and livelihoods in the broader society is also shown in this chapter. Excerpts and extracts from interviews are used, including multimedia photographs detailing the ways students are practicing entrepreneurship. Some friction and disjuncture are highlighted in relation to how the students are using self-regulation to do entrepreneurship their own way than in the neat, professional and via the compliant approach that policy promotions as mediated by university seek to suggest.

1.3.6 The Case Study: Student Livelihoods, Structure and Agency in the South African Higher Education Landscape (Chapter 7)

This chapter depicts a picture of Fundisa University, its students, and broader stakeholders. In this chapter, I show the intersections, links, and the breakdown of different working relationships between all the stakeholders. I have used information gathered from the university's website, media, and some interview experiences to tell the story of Fundisa University. This chapter also provides granular details about my campus experience from my visits to Fundisa. I furthermore explain the design of Fundisa University's academic programme and the choices that students have regarding qualifications and study fields. I describe Fundisa University's student composition and racial profile, and I engage critically with its position as a historically Black university. I show how the university is mediating policy promotions of entrepreneurship among its students.

By design this case study chapter connects the methodological approach to the findings, contextualises further the identity of students involved in microenterprise (chapter 6) and provides a path to Kat's story (chapter 8). Effectively this chapter is a bridge between chapters that places Fundisa University in the broader higher education landscape and history of South Africa. In doing this, the chapter re-engages the literature on the posture of the historically black university and how such universities are navigating South African government policy in relation to serving their students. The chapter also re-enacts the stakeholder relations that include students, policy players, university staff and the role of student representatives. Linked again to literature this chapter explores the enactment of policy promotions of entrepreneurship on campus, the university attitude towards entrepreneurship and how the university is used as a structure to mediate policy interests.

1.3.7 Katekani "Kat" – Fundisa Alumnus and Entrepreneur (Chapter 8)

Katekani (or "Kat", a common shortening of this African name) tells the story of one of many students at Fundisa, being exposed to entrepreneurship on campus, graduating and following the path of entrepreneurship. I use interview excerpts, interview notes, and follow-up conversations in the chapter to explain how Fundisa is promoting entrepreneurship among its students. In this chapter, Kat's thoughts about the university's role in entrepreneurship are captured. It provides a full account of Kat's experiences as a young entrepreneur, a young adult family member, dealing with cash, and his attempt to build a formidable business. I go into detail about both the challenges Kat faces as well as his optimism. This chapter narrates a story that is both happy and sad. Kat shares excitement about his business but he also shares deeply about failures and his family depending on him for their basic needs because his father lost his job. In addition, this chapter also details the challenges he must deal with in keeping the business site at which his restaurant operates.

In this thesis Kat's story exemplifies the never-ending challenges faced by youth when navigating and circumventing poverty. Kat's story shows poverty and inequality reproducing itself when he must take much of his micro-enterprise income to support his family because his father lost his job. Whilst the state's policy promotions of entrepreneurship would celebrate a young person being able to pay for their parents and family's living expenses; for Kat this takes away from him hard earned cash that he would have used perhaps for expenses of his own choice. Therefore, Kat exposes the cruelty of policy promotions of entrepreneurship and the kinds of

inequality that policy perpetuates in celebrating that a young person is taking out their income from a micro enterprise activity to cover up a cost of living for an entire family.

1.3.8 Analysis and Discussion of Findings (Chapter 9)

The analysis and discussion of findings chapter consolidates the findings chapters 5, 6, and 7. It moves through reflections of literature on agency and structure, the theories of student development (e.g. Long, 2012) and deals with literature analysis relating to the promotions of entrepreneurship, the social reproduction of inequality and the enactment of #FeesMustFall struggles through student microenterprises. The analysis also recognises the African literature that speaks to agentic actions of youth populations waging struggles against poverty daily through the concepts of *ibaraka* in Tanzania, *umushyikirano* in Rwanda and *vuk'zenzele* in South Africa. Furthermore, this chapter juxtaposes the findings in chapter 5, 6 and 7 exposing the tensions, disjucture and friction in how students experience the policy promotions of entrepreneurship, as well as how these promotions are mediated by their university in favour of policy makers than the in favour of students, and their understandings and practice of entrepreneurship.

In in addition this chapter brings together the critical evaluation of literature, methodological choices, and the reported findings. It combines data and perspectives from diverse levels and settings. I focus on experiences among students and how they compare to one another. I then compare university-management student-policy perspectives and different sets of interview data. This chapter deals with the tensions and contradictions between student conceptualizations and articulations of entrepreneurship versus promotions of entrepreneurship in policy and by the university. In highlighting the nature of the promotions of entrepreneurship on campus, I show the extent of the role that policy plays in advancing this. I also expose the government's shifting of its responsibility for growing the economy, creating employment, and providing adequate funding for students at university onto low-income students by way of its promoting entrepreneurship. This chapter amplifies the voices of students and their responses to the promotions of entrepreneurship.

1.3.9 Conclusions (Chapter 10)

This chapter draws on the lessons learnt from the study. The conclusion gathers the main contributions of the study to both literature and policy. In highlight the study contributes:

- To the broader literature on entrepreneurship, structure and agency. The main contribution of this thesis is that it rattles the cage of entrepreneurship research advocating for a holistic view. As such the contribution of this thesis asserts that entrepreneurship for students is a space to advance agency, self-regulation and is a way to subvert the dangers of poverty.
- In terms of advocacy and political voice this thesis contributes to a newer understanding of how entrepreneurship amongst students is as a social reproduction of self-help or *vuk'zenzele* playing a similar role of an economic #FeesMustFall in quest to fight poverty and improve their livelihoods. Students use entrepreneurship as a platform for an economic voice, experience and as self-help to navigate lack of cash, and to supplement their university allowance (e.g. NSFAS).
- A further contribution of this thesis that is both scholarly and policy focused is the demonstration of an African experience of entrepreneurship demonstrating differences to the American-Euro centric/Silicon Valley approach to entrepreneurship. As such this thesis demonstrates how entrepreneurship is conceptualised differently by different people thus challenging policy and university to develop a more plural approach to promotions of entrepreneurship.
- Methodologically, the study has contributed to a model of studying the practice of entrepreneurship amongst students. The thesis shows how entrepreneurship is a moving target due to student transitions at university e.g. studying a degree, 1st, 2nd year etc; also, how students change their ideas from time to time and their rapid pace of creating new micro-enterprises whenever their current activity is not meeting their needs. Even more so, the pandemic has made it more challenging to study the practice of entrepreneurship amongst students, their conceptualisations of it and their subverting of the dominant policy promotions of entrepreneurship. The methodological approach assists entrepreneurship scholarship to fill the gap on establishing what it means to hold different conceptualisations of entrepreneurship, who to ask and how to do so. The methodology is a recipe for challenging the positive research approach to an approach that is deliberate in amplifying the voices of students, their subversions of poverty through entrepreneurship and the unique practice of the process of micro-enterprise.

The chapter also provides recommendations for improving the policy understandings of student entrepreneurship and shares directions for future research.

1.4 The Flow of the Thesis: Reading the thesis and the stories of participants

The thesis has been arranged to have a logical flow throughout the chapters, in sections and sub-sections. The document flows from literature review anchored on a structure and agency framework followed through by key concepts. The key theoretical concepts are entrepreneurship and entrepreneurialism, self-regulation, subversion, self-responsibilisation and policy. The neoliberal policy posture is also explicated as the context of the study's research problem. The literature review is expanded to include an integrated literature chapter on policy dealing specifically with the practice of policymaking in higher education and from an economic perspective.

Following the two literature review chapters is the research methodology. This chapter demonstrates the rigour applied in both the design of the study and the procedural choices made in carrying out the research project. This chapter registers the political nature of the thesis, it shows the spread of participants and illustrates how it draws from this study's framework in approaching design and further demonstrates through pilot interviews the approach taken to ensure a sound data collection process. This chapter then prepares the reader for the policy discourse (chapter 5) underlying the study, Fundisa University case study (chapter 6) and then the subsequent findings of this thesis.

Chapter 5 expands on interviews with policy makers ushering in essential findings on the perspective of state players on the role of the university in mediating entrepreneurship. It is important that the chapter is placed before the case study of Fundisa that is chapter 6. Because the case study shows how the political voices and interests as demonstrated in Chapter 5 are playing themselves out on the university campus. Equally, the case study demonstrates the student experience in navigating policy influence on their campus.

Chapters 7 and 8 are core findings chapters following through on the promise of the thesis that is to amplify the voices of the students. These chapters connect to the case study and the policy mediation of promotions of entrepreneurship at universities. These two chapters provide granular findings not mixed with any analysis leaving this for chapter 9 of the thesis. In these chapters'

extracts, interview excerpts and key comparisons of experiences are shown. The ways in which students are engaging in entrepreneurship and flowing from being a student to alumnus is demonstrated through Kat's story on chapter 8. These are holistic chapters illuminating the contribution of the study in terms of giving volume to the voice of students and their livelihood experiences in entrepreneurship and micro enterprise.

Chapter 9 is the analysis and discussion of findings chapter. As already explained earlier in this introduction, chapter 9 establishes and brings to the fore the ways in which the study's questions have been addressed. The chapter reworks the theoretical framework of the study proposing a framework model that disrupts policy discourses by giving voice to students and foregrounds the agentic reconceptualisations of livelihoods vis-à-vis the dominant policy discourses. A newly developed theoretical framework is proposed and provided in chapter 9.

Table 1: The Flow of the Thesis/Dissertation

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Chapter 1: Introduction
This chapter introduces the entire thesis/dissertation. It encapsulates the background, purpose and questions of the study. Then explains the organisation of the thesis and prompts the reader about the contents, chapters and the design.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Literature Chapters (2 & 3)
There are two chapters on literature. These are chapters 2 and 3. Instead of one long chapter the thesis has adopted breaking down the literature in two chapters. Chapter 2 covers the key theoretical framing and Chapter 3 focuses on policy literature.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Chapter 2: Literature Review
A theoretical framework on structure, agency and entrepreneurship is laid out and key theoretical debates are engaged in this chapter. The theoretical problem and potential contribution of the study is dealt with.</td><td>Chapter 3: An Integrated Literature Review on Policy: Entrepreneurship in the Context of the State
Building on Chapter 2, this chapter deals with the South African literature on policy by citing the developmental policies of South Africa. This chapter as a form of literature it explicates SA's policy posture.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Chapter 4: Research Methodology
This chapter unpacks how the thesis approaches the research questions and the research inquiry. The methodological and design choices are dealt with in the chapter.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">The Case Study Chapters (5 & 6)</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Chapter 5 details the policy stakeholder roles, insights from interviews with some of the policy players. Then Chapter 6 focuses on the university context and how students navigate a historically black university such as Fundisa.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Chapter 5: Policy Discourses on Youth Entrepreneurship: Responsibilisation, Self-reliance and Economic Agency
This chapter delves into the policy discourse and youth experiences in entrepreneurship more broadly. It uses policy stakeholder interviews in demonstrating the discourse.</td><td>Chapter 6: The Case Study: Student Livelihoods, Structure and Agency in the South African Higher Education Landscape
The case study provides context about Fundisa University, the students and the broader issues of higher education in SA. This chapter is a bridge connecting the theoretical and methods with findings.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Findings Chapters (7 & 8)
These chapters provide findings of the study and are intentional in dealing with the questions of the study. Chapter 7 focuses on student experiences and uses excerpts to demonstrate the themes that emerge from the interviews. Chapter 8 is a story of a figure that wears multiple caps providing an ideal account of being a student, owning a micro-enterprise and finally facing the real-world experiences of running a food enterprise.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Chapter 7: Identity versus the Practice of Entrepreneurship among Students
This chapter uses extracts from research interviews with students and provides typologies of entrepreneurship.</td><td>Chapter 8: Katekani “KAT” – Fundisa Alumnus and Entrepreneur
This chapter flows from Chapter 7, it offers a complete story of the entrepreneurship and micro-enterprise experience.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Chapter 9: Analysis and Discussion of Findings
This chapter consolidates the findings through analysis and proposes a transformative research and practice framework on entrepreneurship, agency and structure. This chapter lays ground for the conclusion(s) chapter.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Chapter 10: Conclusion
The conclusion revisits the flow of this thesis by detailing all key highlights and insights. The chapter sums up the key contributions of the study and ties up the document.</td></tr>
</table>

The thesis flow is based also on the understanding that the term “entrepreneurship” has become a buzzword in closed and open public meetings and investment conferences talking about economic development and employability. This has suddenly created an expectation for materials written about entrepreneurship to be optimistic about it. This thesis, however, breaks from this view of entrepreneurship. It is critical of policy promotions of entrepreneurship and appreciative of the differences that people hold in society when it comes to enacting entrepreneurship.

The work of Honeyman (2016) and DeJaeghere (2017) inspired my undertaking of this research and my writing of this thesis. Honeyman wrote about entrepreneurship in Rwanda, its complex nature and that entrepreneurship means different things to different people in the Rwandan society. This thesis, like that of Honeyman, examines differences while telling a unique South African story of entrepreneurship. In this thesis I draw on DeJaeghere's work on youth livelihoods and policy in Tanzania. Like DeJaeghere, in this thesis I juxtaposed findings across horizontal and vertical lines, explained in detail in the analysis and discussions chapter. By virtue of this, this thesis contributes to scholarship concerned with the different meanings of entrepreneurship in South African society.

The reader of this thesis can expect to be engaged in the core concepts of entrepreneurship, micro enterprise, livelihoods and other concepts that deal with the theoretical framing of the thesis. The framework makes use of structure and agency to explore how students relate (or don't relate) their entrepreneurship activities to their university promotions of entrepreneurship as well as how they subvert the university structure to make possible their microenterprises. Also, the reader must expect policy debate, a political voice and analysis as it relates to how entrepreneurship activity amongst student is like #FeesMustFall and how this activity is also reinforcing or reproducing #Asinamali (we have no money) struggles. The findings chapters demonstrate how students use monies earned from the microenterprises to cover their costs of living and how they share some of their student allowances with family. Altogether this shows the nature of struggle for some form of economic freedom; but the practice of entrepreneurship amongst students and how students articulate it is still found in friction, tension and at a disjuncture with the dominant policy promotions of entrepreneurship; something a reader of this thesis must expect to find also in the analysis and discussion of findings.

CHAPTER 2:
LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review examines extant studies that deal with entrepreneurship in education and the critical debates in higher education about student livelihoods. The discussion of critical debates focuses on #FeesMustFall, economic transformation, and student funding. The literature covers a range of studies in entrepreneurship education by regions, sectors, the concept of a student entrepreneur, conceptions of entrepreneurship, student livelihoods and higher education. This literature review is divided into three broad categories namely the core argument: ways to conceptualize entrepreneurship, South African higher education, and entrepreneurship policy.

2.1 Higher education in South Africa

Rensburg, Motala and Cross (2020) explained the transformation of higher education in South Africa as a post-apartheid programme intended to progress the ideas of a new democracy. Rensburg *et al.* acknowledged that this explanation has resulted in approaches to higher-education transformation that make the concept elusive and loosely defined in research. These scholars also provided the four main connotations of transformation in higher education, namely, (1) equity-driven reform, (2) a new systemic and institutional culture in higher education, (3) new epistemologies and conceptions of knowledge, and (4) the decolonized university and curriculum. The extremity of these positions ranges between the radical change in higher education and simply maintaining the apartheid status quo but changing just a few elements, such as increasing the number of students without any radical reforms in curricula and access (Reddy, 2004).

The core argument in this research centres on the ideas of transformation in higher education and adopting a more inclusive approach to dealing with students and their needs. To understand the way in which transformation can play out in the real-world context of higher education. At this point the study adopts Ebewo and Sirayi's (2018) viewpoint expressing that, for transformation of higher education to be meaningful and visible, it must be Afrocentric, pluralist, affirming of the African culture and identity, and radical. This follows work carried out by the arts and management faculties at the university where Ebewo and Sirayi are academics engaged in a project of curriculum review to reform arts and management studies in a South African university. Unlike research that seeks an easy path to transformation in higher education, Ebewo and Sirayi

call for a deeper look into how Euro-American content in the arts teaching is dominant, leaving very little space and time for African content in arts course offerings.

Choudry and Vally (2020) offer another compelling historical and forward-looking case of student-led reforms in higher education. The theoretical approach of this study follows a similar approach, that is, to explore both historical and modern ideas of transformation and reform in higher education. This case transcends dealing with transformation as a buzzword and instead treats this concept as both historical and modern. Choudry and Vally explained how students in 1968 (a wave of rebellion) had shown radical resistance to colonialism, authoritarian rule, and war. They asserted that the recent #FeesMustFall events disrupt the state commodification of higher education. The student strides to reform higher education are not new in literature but are expressed uniquely among the different student generations. Both the historical and forward-looking perspectives are important for advancing a balance of perspectives in research and for meaningful policy reform(s).

Research remains caught up in the debate of whether a radical reform in higher education is more relevant than partial adjustments associated with transformation or vice versa (Rensburg et al., 2020). Literature records two main voices about transforming higher education: one voice calls for radical changes and the other seeks to preserve the status quo under the banner of transformation. The #FeesMustFall movement is an example of a call for a more radical approach and, aided by #RhodesMustFall, a programme to break the colonial legacy of Cecil John Rhodes, who built institutions to exclude, discriminate and colonize Black Africans (Bosch, 2017). Other research supports that both these voices must be held in balance and seek progressive reforms that do not destroy infrastructure but rather reform the content or curricula offered by universities as a way of transformation (Ebewo & Sirayi, 2018). This view of transforming curricula and not the entire university environment still falls short of the radical reforms for which the students are calling. The Ministerial Oversight Committee on Transformation in South African Public Universities (TOC) assessed transformation in South African universities. The TOC produced a report. The report provides a full picture on areas that universities define as transformation but also shows that reforms that students call for have not been realised including free quality education, decolonised education, and students' welfare on campus (TOC report, 2023).

2.2 Access to higher education and #FeesMustFall

The debate about access to higher education and #FeesMustFall in South Africa is expansive. This subsection focuses on access to higher education as a challenge among low-income students. It contrasts this challenge with the #FeesMustFall developments, which are hailed for emancipating the voice of students. This section, however, is critical and cautious of the fact that #FeesMustFall became a project of elite and city-based universities such as University of Cape Town (UCT), University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) and some universities in Pretoria. Gamedze and Naidoo (2020) also critiqued the sudden attention that media and authorities gave to the elite universities in dealing with the student grievances that for a long time have been a cause for endless protests at the historically Black universities such as Fort Hare, Nelson Mandela, Venda, and Tshwane. The attention given to #FeesMustFall shows a university landscape that is characterized by deep inequity that affects student activism and the voicing of concerns.

Access to higher education in South Africa is still a complex and challenging matter. The challenge involves the dependency on qualifications to increase one's chances of getting a job. Low-income students must fight the registration- and tuition-fee exclusion and find ways to raise the daily living costs such as food, accommodation, and transport while at university (Booysen *et al.*, 2016). The issue that the #FeesMustFall movement sought to address was student debt of those owing tuition fees, accommodation and facing financial exclusion. Webb (2019) showed that the same monetary exclusions covered or provided for through debt reverse the futuristic ideals of obtaining a university qualification, then finding a job, and leading a good life. Instead, those graduates funded through loans face a future of repaying debt and interest. This is a clear demonstration of the complexity of access to higher education in the South African context, characterized by the poverty and inequality that #FeesMustFall sought to confront (Leibowitz & Bozalek, 2014).

Reviews of the #FeesMustFall movement show that the "fallist idea" continues to be a symbol representing the ideals of students, their wishes and hopes (Heffernan, 2018). This means that students are aware of the possibility of mobilizing and bringing a "fall" to those barriers that block them from accessing higher education. Research, however, continues to credit the most developed former White universities for playing a leading role in the #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall student campaigns (Bosch, 2017). This approach raises questions about the

legitimacy of both these campaigns in representing the broader struggles of students in South Africa's historically Black universities (HBUs). In HBUs students are explicit about their dependence on the NSFAS funding, hunger on campus, language barriers and their low-income backgrounds affecting their confidence and academic progress. Yet, students in the elite universities such as UCT and Wits enjoy some support that is not always available in HBUs, such as adequate facilities, funding linked to alumni contributions and the media command that these elite universities enjoy when their students or academic staff embark on protests. As a consequence, literature applauds students at the UCT and Wits for having led the #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall campaigns (Gamedze & Naidoo, 2020) at the exclusion of students from HBUs.

To this effect, Heffernan (2018) noted Jansen's contention that vice chancellors were silenced during #FeesMustFall; however, the Wits vice chancellor at the time, Adam Habib, appeared continually on national TV and in the press. In response, Hefferman argued that:

> In fact, university Vice Chancellors are powerful figures, with access to the sort of public microphones that individual students – never mind workers – rarely have. In America this is known as "the bully pulpit". For instance … Professor Adam Habib, made substantial use of his pulpit during the #FMF crisis on campus, by penning op eds, call press conferences, and appearing on national television and radio shows to propound his position as the head of the university. (p. 437)

This subsection has addressed the variance in student voices in both the #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall campaigns. From a theoretical perspective, the voices of poor and marginalized students experienced further suppression during these campaigns, while students from elite public universities such as UCT and Wits enjoyed the full attention of the media and the government. Some of these students went on to become leaders in parliament and others obtained posts within the same universities and received international scholarships. Before #FeesMustFall, students at the University of Pretoria, University of KwaZulu-Natal and other HBUs had protested but never received the kind of attention that students at UCT and Wits enjoyed. Similarly, literature has focused greatly on #FeesMustFall as a UCT and Wits project. It has failed to capture the other voices from the margins, and I classify such literature as being elitist in the context of higher education #FeesMustFall research.

Like Webb (2019), this research amplifies the voices of students who have not enjoyed the media and research attention that those during #FeesMustFall did. Webb contextualized #FeesMustFall as a protest that mirrors the general struggles of South Africans beyond the walls of the university. Webb's study provides an analysis of how students from townships interpreted #FeesMustFall. Webb found that #FeesMustFall provided an expression of these students' need for collective social mobility and an opportunity to raise concerns about possibilities of unbearable future debt if fee increases continued to dominate higher education. Based on this discussion, I argue that when literature amplifies student voices from across geographical, income and institutional backgrounds, better understandings of their realities are achieved, in this way benefiting the cause of student campaigns such as #FeesMustFall.

2.3 Background: Student voices in South African higher education

This literature review draws on scholarly work that explores in detail the student livelihoods, student experiences in higher education, and entrepreneurship among students. The style adopted in this literature review situates students at the centre of the discussion. It avoids the university-management view of student issues in higher education, such as Habib's (2019) account of #FeesMustFall, which suggests that students do not understand the problems in the system. In his book, *Rebels and Rage*, Habib portrayed and predicated students as unreasonable stakeholders who do not understand the links between the government and the responsibilities of university management. He emphasized that universities must focus on research intensity and their financial sustainability, instead of spending time and resources improving the lived experiences of students at university. When this is read alongside Cini (2019), one can see the silencing of the student voice and other concerns in Habib's research. Cini's research design transcended the university management viewpoints and instead brought them into direct comparison with those of students in exploring the promotions of entrepreneurship on campus.

The student voices are the views and deep-seated experiences of students. Pillay and Mqolomba (2022) summarized that the concerns expressed in the student voices and views included widening poverty, inequality, unemployment, racism, discrimination, exclusion, marginalization, and gender disparities. Pillay and Mqolomba furthermore argued that students transitioning between those pivotal stages of late adolescent identity-formation and becoming industrious adult citizens, started serving the liberatory function of calling truth to power, railing

against the slow and ineffective bureaucracy of (corrupt) government, and demanding more, right now.

Pillay and Mqolomba show the reasons behind the students' raising concerns about the big picture issues facing the South African society today. Examples of such issues are the landlessness among Black people, poverty, hardship, financial exclusion at university affecting access to higher education and lack of state capacity. These students are young adults and want to be heard by leaders of the South African society and their universities. However, they are frustrated with the lack of action by government and universities in response to student concerns. For this reason, a segment of the student population sees itself as having the task of freeing South Africa from the challenges. The ways in which students may go about this mission are diverse and complex; these include political activism, building professional careers and confronting all forms of injustice directly (Favish, 2022).

In this literature review, I refrain from using limited perspectives in researching student experiences in higher education. For example, Walker (2018) focused solely on hardship while paying very little attention to the livelihood strategies of students beyond governmental funding aid. This approach emanates from Walker's preference for Amartya Sen's capability approach in analysing student experience. Unlike Walker, I avoid the use of the dynamic capabilities approach to studying student struggles as an experience in higher education nor do I over-theorize the student experience in this literature review. In the latter section of this literature review, I refer to the work of Walker to explain student hardship and then expand these explanations, drawing on studies that use holistic approaches that amplify student voices. The authors of that literature, however, avoid the assumed responsibilisation of students under the dynamic capabilities approach and the idea that students are simply studying to find employment. Studies following single research approaches and paradigms suffer limitations and arrive at "quick fix" solutions that often stymies the purpose of any research that seeks to amplify student voice.

The literature on entrepreneurship, although different from research regarding student livelihoods or hardship (see Walker, 2018), fails to capture thoroughly the promotions of entrepreneurship on campus. I illustrate this challenge in this chapter and point out the need for researchers to amplify the student voice to deeply understand the meanings that students attach to

entrepreneurship and how these relate to their livelihoods. Using a work-integrated learning (WIL) model both to expose students to entrepreneurship and as a research framework is not helpful, even though it has gained traction over the years. Dhliwayo (2008) and Thamahane, Chetty and Karodia (2017) offered conceptual findings which concluded that adopting WIL to encourage entrepreneurship among students has the potential to help them create new opportunities. These authors furthermore claim that, with this capability, students are best placed to create businesses that may, in turn, create employment. This shows the implications and complications of adopting a simplistic research approach. Such accounts produce single-sided conclusions that do not include the student higher education experience in full. I avoided the WIL approach and other similar models in this study in the interests of developing a comprehensive case study.

Mbuya and Schachtebeck (2016) demonstrated the problem of simple comparison between students studying towards entrepreneurship and non-entrepreneurship degrees. The problem is the simplification of the research procedure and, subsequently, the conclusions drawn from such a study. The study concluded from a sample of 603 participants that students pursing business or entrepreneurship qualifications are self-observed, compared to those enrolled in non-entrepreneurship qualifications. The authors contend that entrepreneurship students can focus on creating successful careers in entrepreneurship. While this is obvious it undermines other factors such as lack of space in other study programmes that can influence students to settle in programmes, they did not originally apply for e.g. a student may have wanted to study a bachelor's degree in psychology but due to space constraints they were admitted in the next available qualification such as Bachelor of Commerce in Entrepreneurship. The study fails to transcend self-observation as a finding and takes little account that self-observation can be caused by some of the students' lived experiences. This limits the understanding of personal factors that affect the decisions to build a career in entrepreneurship. Instead of looking at the factors affecting student decisions to pursue entrepreneurship, Mbuya and Schachtebeck (2016) suggest that entrepreneurship must be promoted more and that entrepreneurs should be allocated time to talk to students about their entrepreneurial journeys:

> "It is, therefore, important that Government and universities work hand in hand in order to stimulate and promote an entrepreneurial culture among the young

> population registered in tertiary institutions." (Mbuya and Schachtebeck, 2016, p.234)
>
> "Entrepreneurs operating in different fields should also be associated in the process in order to share their experience and provide guidance to students who intend to pursue an entrepreneurial career." (Mbuya and Schachtebeck, 2016, p.234)

In my approach to research in the present study, unlike Mbuya and Schachtebeck, I focus on student livelihoods and the different conceptualisations of entrepreneurship among students. This approach amplifies student voices, openly confronts the challenges of researching entrepreneurship and the process of new business creation in the informal sector, an area to which students are usually directed. For this reason, this literature is not funnelled into the capability-approach literature and the general literature in entrepreneurship that focuses on the superficial challenges facing entrepreneurs, such as lack of finance, low-risk appetite, poor skills, and lack of opportunity. Instead, this study deals with systemic issues that create tough conditions for youth to become economically active without undergoing governmental programmes of entrepreneurship. The literature and research barriers served as the motivation for this study's basic approach to literature and the core argument, driven by amplifying student voices in entrepreneurship research.

2.4 Expanding on the mainstream literature on entrepreneurship and the concept of "student entrepreneur"

This section expands on the mainstream literature on entrepreneurship. It first covers key studies and moves to provide an elaborated account of research in the field of entrepreneurship. The section covers three areas namely the broader global literature, African and South African entrepreneurship studies. The remainder focuses on critique of definitions and norms in entrepreneurship research.

The early (American-Euro) literature on entrepreneurship can be referenced to the early work of Adam Smith, The Wealth of Nations and subsequently Myles Mace's work at Harvard Business School where he promoted the teaching of entrepreneurship. However, this section is not a historic passage but lays ground to understand current literature that has drawn inspiration from Smith and

Mace. Arguably these scholars have played a key role in establishing the first debates on entrepreneurship. For example, Mace, initiated a debate on teaching of entrepreneurship seeking to answer the question: can entrepreneurship be taught? This question has since been answered through consensus as such entrepreneurship is taught widely today. This section shows another dimension focused on the socialisation of entrepreneurship through hope and dealing with the dark side of it. Arend, (2020) presents a conceptual paper on hope like the idea that those who amass the means of production can build wealth – same idea as Smith's work. Arend defines hope as the perceived capability, a pathway to attain the desired goals, and motivating oneself. Similar to Arend is Lundmark and Westelius, (2019) contending with the idea of entrepreneurship as being antisocial but made social based on the hope that it can bring in a society or amongst those building businesses. Lundmark and Westelius also argue that entrepreneurship can exploit, unlike Smith, they point out how for example people who are terminally ill are sold products and services that are supposedly helpful all done in the name of entrepreneurship. They point out that whilst entrepreneurship is about ownership of the means of production, inspiring hope and that can be socialised; it still has a dark side that early literature e.g. Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations has not addressed.

The African case for entrepreneurship and literature is based on some principles and one of which is Ubuntu – a philosophy that argues humanness and working for common good. Based on this principle and for other reasons literature on entrepreneurship in Africa covers inclusion, women, youth development and cooperatives thus it is presented as a collective activity more than it is about the owners of the means of production e.g. land, labour and capital. Gartner, (2016) provides some significant perspectives about how entrepreneurship is approached outside of the Sillicon Valley model. Gartner states that entrepreneurship to be understood better needs a wider and non-discriminatory perspective on what constitutes it as an economic and social activity. Thus, shows ways on bridging theory and practice on entrepreneurship. Based on Gartner and other scholars that are widening the perspective about entrepreneurship. Rural entrepreneurship has since found expression in entrepreneurship literature for example land preservation, traditional forms of enterprise from beadwork to indigenous farming have since been recognised as rural entrepreneurship worthy of investment (Donga and Chimucheka, 2024). Furthermore, the broadening of perspectives about entrepreneurship has also broadened literature on women entrepreneurship. Meyer, (2024) in a study of 510 female entrepreneurs established the motivating

factors of staying in business amongst women. Meyer found that strong willingness to grow the business, a positive attitude and escaping unemployment were some of the reasons women entrepreneurs for example have stayed in business. Chrysostome, Barnard and Ika, (2024) show that there is a rise of entrepreneurship amongst women and echo the view that the widening of literature on entrepreneurship has enabled informality and challenging of gender inequality possible. Under the same scope of widened perspectives on entrepreneurship, cooperative efforts to raise capital through short term micro loans have gained popularity. This wide perspective literature indicates that the cooperative approach to raising capital has at least improved entrepreneurship activity amongst youth and women in Ghana (Fieve and Chrysostome, 2024). Because of this kind of approach to literature novel typologies in entrepreneurship have since emerged these include lifepreneurs, those linking entrepreneurship to their lifestyles, part-timers in a form of those working and owning sidehustles, tech-preneurs, and others – this all is due to the opening up of entrepreneurship research to novel perspectives (Chakuzira, Okoche and Mkansi, 2024).

Entrepreneurship studies in South Africa are also not an exception to the wider perspective entrepreneurship literature. They show how entrepreneurship is instrumentalised to deal with social ills such as unemployment, inequality and access to opportunities. Msosa, (2022) explicates the realities of youth without employment. That youth struggles in imagining a future without work opportunities especially those who complete their university education. As such they turn to entrepreneurship. These forms of entrepreneurship that youth turn to include digital and productive entrepreneurship. The digital entrepreneurship is drawn into this discussion as result of the wider perspectives of entrepreneurship. This allows youth to use cell phones and computer software, and internet to create income opportunities for themselves (Friederici, Wahome and Graham, 2020). The following section expands and begins a critical engagement of the varying perspectives in entrepreneurship starting with the definitions of this concept.

The many definitions of entrepreneurship create challenges and tensions within the research literature. This is partly due to an imbalance in views and ideas about entrepreneurship and, more specifically, definitions. For example, studies interested in student entrepreneurship mostly define entrepreneurship as a learning opportunity for students, in which they can build new businesses to learn skills such as creative problem-solving, self-efficiency, proactiveness,

optimism, and articulating a vision (Shields, 2021). The variance in the definitions of entrepreneurship and student entrepreneurship are largely specific to the US context; very little comes from other countries.

Shields and Tonelli (2021) provided a case study of 15 student-run ventures at Millikin University. Their case study has attracted attention in the field of student entrepreneurship and among practitioners interested in training student entrepreneurs through action. These ventures are owned and backed by the university for students to run as owners competing in a market, either selling products or providing services at a profit. These student-run ventures rotate this ownership yearly, when students finish the course. They stated that other schools and programme leaders have registered their interest in adopting the Millikin student-run ventures model. Shields and Tonelli, in response to the requests by others to study and adopt the Millikin University student-run venture model, provided a progressive response by the venture leaders that points to the need to carefully consider the differences by context:

> In the early 2000s, every Midwestern town with a few entrepreneurship advocates and innovative minds set out to create the next Silicon Valley. While there has not and likely will not be a second Silicon Valley, each town has a unique environment that can support a host of entrepreneurial endeavours. Your university cannot become the next Harvard, nor should it try. We all have strengths, weaknesses, and resource disparities. As much as we try to overcome disparities in resources, we are constrained by them. Figure out what works for your university – what fits your environment. Private schools, for example, have different constraints from public schools. There are different legal constraints, risk tolerance, resources, and more. To make student-run ventures (SRV) work at your institution, think beyond the idea itself. An SRV must have resources, support, passionate faculty, and be a fit for your school and/or local community to achieve desired outcomes. (Shields & Tonelli, 2021, p. 44)

Research has different approaches to the concept of entrepreneurship. It defines entrepreneurship in holistic human terms (Krause *et al.*, 2013) and in technical terms (Nieuwenhuizen *et al.*, 2016). Kuratko and Hodgetts' (2004) widely accepted definition of entrepreneurship is an example of a technical definition:

> A dynamic process of vision, change and creation, that requires an application of energy and passion towards the creation and implementation of new ideas and creative solutions. They include in their definition: the willingness to take calculated risks in terms of time, equity, or career; the ability to formulate an effective venture team; the creative skill to marshal needed resources; the fundamental skill of building a solid business plan; and, finally, the vision to recognise opportunity where others see chaos, contradiction, and confusion. (p. 30)

It is important to acknowledge that the language used in Kuratko and Hodgetts' definition of entrepreneurship suffers limitations when the context of livelihood in the developing world is considered. Ochonu (2018) argued that entrepreneurship must be defined beyond the industrial and capitalist experiences of trading. In contrast, Drucker (2014) defined entrepreneurship as a set of behaviours associated with acting, rather than a personality trait, as Kuratko and Hodgetts seemed to suggest. He maintained categorically that risk-taking (and so on) does not make a person an entrepreneur, but their behavioural ability to see a need and devise a means to fulfil it, subsequently earning an income from an entrepreneurship activity, is what makes someone an entrepreneur. This demonstrates the definitional variations and approaches that exist in entrepreneurship.

In addition to the different definitional approaches to entrepreneurship, the push and pull motivations of entrepreneurship are useful in explaining reasons for variation in how entrepreneurship is conceptualized (Kirkwood, 2009). These motivations point to the reasons that people can turn to entrepreneurship, suggesting that an opportunity is a pull factor and that a hardship is a push factor. Nabi, Walmsley and Holden (2015) defined *necessity entrepreneurship* as engaging in entrepreneurship to earn an income sufficient to cover basic needs and escape hardship, usually by people with a low concern for maximizing profits. These are people pushed into entrepreneurship by the need to secure a survival in the immediate future and under conditions of uncertainty (Eijdenberg & Masurel, 2013). In contrast, an attraction to entrepreneurship, such as an opportunity that carries a possibility of creating wealth and profits, is an example of a pull factor for those with adequate capital resources (Dempsey, 2014). This theory underlines that entrepreneurship is not always a predetermined step or a result of a single motivation. It is an

interplay of the push and pull factors, which, conceptually, are understood differently in society, resulting in the difference in both the conceptualizations and articulations of entrepreneurship.

Little is known or contained in literature about the different conceptualizations and articulations of entrepreneurship. Only a few researchers have demonstrated how these understandings of entrepreneurship are playing out. Ochonu (2018) showed that entrepreneurship, broadly, is enacted through microenterprise, cooperative enterprise activities involving groups rather than individuals, and that this activity among poor communities enables the flow of cash and sharing of resources. In addition, students articulate this kind of activity in numerous ways that are unconventional, such as launching projects rather than businesses as envisaged by policy, focusing on personal branding, and exploring diverse opportunities (Morris, Shirokova & Tsukanova, 2017). However, and as demonstrated in the core argument of this study, more research is required to clarify the conceptualizations and articulations of entrepreneurship among students, including how it intersects with their educational aims amid policy objectives.

I now turn to literature on student entrepreneurship. It is mostly focused on the creation of new ventures rather than on how enterprise fits other aspects of student life. This view is captured more accurately by Nielsen and Gartner (2017), who argue that entrepreneurship among students create tensions for the identity of a student. They furthermore argue that while entrepreneurship has become popular among students from an identity point of view, it leaves students as fragmented selves, with identify confusion, identity risk, identity concealment, work overload, stress, and lack of transparency. This contrasts with research (e.g. Alves, Fischer and Schaeffer, 2019; Ayob, 2021) that follows the popular view that entrepreneurship is vital for university students, using high-profile American cases, as in the following example:

> Mark Zuckerberg launched Facebook as a social network for university students at Harvard facilities. Bill Gates, Steve Jobs, and Steve Wozniak are also examples of students that experimented with new technologies and business opportunities while at the university in their undergraduate years. Although these examples stand for anecdotal evidence, it is also true that they provide reasons to expect student entrepreneurship. (Alves *et al.*, 2019, p.99)

Nielsen and Gartner (2017) attempted to provide a critical view of about identity tensions in student entrepreneurship:

> The tensions between "student" and "entrepreneur" make one question the desirability of accommodating entrepreneurship among students. Do we lose too much in the process? A great deal, however, speaks in favour of student entrepreneurship, and therefore we need to discuss how to make the university a safe – and developing – place for student entrepreneurship? (p. 148)

Nielsen and Gartner (2017) asked important questions that rarely elicit the attention of researchers. The aggressive approach promoting entrepreneurship in all facets of academia leaves very little space for questioning the process, the difficulties that this presents to students, and how students' identities and autonomy are affected. Nielsen and Gartner adopted the position that the promotion of entrepreneurship among students must take an educational approach rather than being simply about driving students blindly into entrepreneurship or persuading them to embark on creating new businesses and then abandoning them or failing to help them make connections to entrepreneurship and their education. Besides that, they need the money to pay for food and send money home while studying. This is the sign of a university that abandons students who are facing hardship, using entrepreneurship as an excuse, or simply calling them entrepreneurs, while they are selling or offering services only to be in university. Nielsen and Gartner's suggestion (in line with Béchard & Grégoire, 2005) that "education should allow for the personal development and autonomy of the individual who is being educated" (Nielsen and Gartner, 2017 p. 25) is accepted in this research and informs the critical view of this study on the concept of "student entrepreneur(ship)".

Research on student entrepreneurship is dominated by work that encourages the creation of start-ups by students (see Ayob, 2021). Some of this work envisages university environments as ideal spaces to create a new breed of capitalists and entrepreneurs. For example, Ayob (2021) drew on data from the Global University Entrepreneurial Spirit Students' Survey, GEM, and World Bank when testing two main hypotheses: (1) entrepreneurship education leads to active student entrepreneurship and (2) regulative institutions aid active student entrepreneurship. Both hypotheses were proven to be true. However, this would have been expected in research that uses data from entrepreneurship-focused institutions whose data seeks to promote their agenda.

Research needs to consider a wider set of data including the broader aspects of the university environment and student personal factors, as pointed out by Nielsen and Gartner (2017).

As Ayob (2021) discovered, role players in entrepreneurship and research purport that "student entrepreneurs" will change universities from being providers of labour to producers of job creators, "the student entrepreneurs". This view is echoed by research that suggests regulating actions for entrepreneurship among trainees or students being exposed to idea of entrepreneurship. Gielnik *et al.*'s (2015) theoretical model is an example of research calling for an intensive drive to push entrepreneurship trainees into action. This research assumes that all trainees in entrepreneurship have a goal or intention to create a start-up, have a high degree of entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and the knowledge required to act. Also, the theoretical model is concerned only with the how and why of action-based entrepreneurship training. It further assumes that action-based entrepreneurship training (learning by doing) has a positive effect on entrepreneurial action and business operation. This type of research fails to expose any potential tensions, disjuncture, and frictions when business creation is prioritized in a process of training.

The literature explored shows gaps that this study seeks to fill. The current literature on student entrepreneurship is largely based on Western experiences among students mostly from middle- to high-income backgrounds. This kind of literature fails when recontextualized for low-income students or when the theoretical models are tested against student experiences in a low-income context. Tonelli (2021) attempted to provide a comprehensive view of student ventures by discussing the way in which these are inward-looking enterprises created to address the needs of students, rather than the outward view dominating literature.

2.5 The core argument: Diverse ways of conceptualising entrepreneurship

A core argument from the literature is that entrepreneurship is conceptualized differently in society and different meanings are attached to it by different people (Ben Letaifa & Goglio-Primard, 2016). This argument is expressed in the study's research questions (as stated in Section 1.2 and repeated here for convenience):

- What different conceptualizations of entrepreneurship do students in a South African university articulate, and in what ways do these relate to their own livelihood strategies?

- In what ways do these conceptualizations of entrepreneurship differ, if at all, from those promoted by their university and in policy?

These questions build on Honeyman (2016) and DeJaeghere's (2017) demonstrations of a need for a subtle understanding of how students conceptualize entrepreneurship. In arguing that entrepreneurship is conceptualized and articulated differently by students, Section 2.3 of this literature review examines the key theoretical considerations guiding this study. Sections 2.4–2.7 deal with student issues of poverty, inequality, access to higher education, student livelihoods, hardship, and the transformation of higher education. The final sections of this chapter, 2.9 and 2.10, discuss the different definitional approaches to the concept of entrepreneurship and provide a review of policy context alongside the definition.

2.6 Entrepreneurship policy

Since the mid-2000s, educational environments have been experiencing a rapid increase in entrepreneurship activity (Liñán & Fayolle, 2015). Entrepreneurship education has mainly been promoted directly to students and has been gaining acceptance despite the complexities, mixed views, and different conceptualizations of entrepreneurship (Ochonu, 2018). Although scholars such as Vally and Motala (2014), Honeyman (2016), and DeJaeghere (2017) cautioned against excessive promotion of entrepreneurship in education, business research promotes entrepreneurship policy. Schimperna *et al.*'s (2022) systematic literature review covering 20 years of research articles published in the United States and United Kingdom shows that universities subscribe to the policy thinking that entrepreneurship must be fostered on campus. This notion of the fostering of entrepreneurship by universities led Schimperna *et al.* to propose further research into various clusters, namely, (1) defining student entrepreneurship, (2) shaping a student's entrepreneurial character, and (3) innovations that universities are developing to help students in entrepreneurship.

The type of research and development in literature proposed by Schimperna *et Al.* finds space and place in various institutions that focus on entrepreneurship. Liguori and Zane (2021) hailed entrepreneurship as a major determinant of economic growth and argued that entrepreneurship as a field of study is an interdisciplinary topic suitable for all students. This view

may partly be true for a business-school context but challenging for students not interested in the practice of start-ups and the emphasis on profit that tend to dominate entrepreneurship teaching.

Other literature offers contradictory evidence on the acceptance of entrepreneurship in educational environments (schools, colleges, and universities). Honeyman (2016) found that students in Rwanda "pushed back the idea of entrepreneurship in education and did their best to hold on to the – real or imagined – promise held out by conventional schooling that success in education will guarantee employment and a stable salary" (p. 138). Honeyman also demonstrated that this population of students saw entrepreneurship as a viable opportunity to pursue in the future, after they attained their educational credentials and were earning a salary. For this reason, I suggest that although job scarcity and poverty can push students into using entrepreneurial ways to earn a living, education is still important for many of them and their future options beyond entrepreneurship.

Students first focus on gaining salaried employment as a legitimate course of action, and that is connected to the life goals of students (Graham, Williams & Chisoro, 2019). This stance partly challenges the government's conviction that entrepreneurship is one of the major channels that the unemployed youth can and/or must use to earn a living. DeJaeghere (2017) showed that it is difficult for students who are without financial collateral to pursue entrepreneurship that can sustain them for a lifetime, nor is it the responsibility of non-poor students to fight poverty through entrepreneurship. Both Honeyman (2016) and DeJaeghere showed that entrepreneurship in education exposes the daily pressures that complicate the lives of poor communities. Honeyman revealed that Rwandan youth in schools were selling chickens, clothes, and biscuits to be able to pay school fees and take care of family. DeJaeghere reported that schools in Tanzania were setting up farms with the help of international NGOs and getting students to do some of the farm work. Furthermore, students were engaging in informal entrepreneurship (selling assorted items) to deal with poverty (DeJaeghere, 2017). The challenges faced by those engaging in entrepreneurship with the help of the NGOs include the chronic lack of cash, family dependencies, and under-resourced survival entrepreneurial activity (Breier, 2010).

Honeyman (2016) and DeJaeghere (2017) provided a critical view of entrepreneurship among students and the responsibility it places on them for fighting poverty. Even so, I suggest that they have fallen short in showing the nuanced meanings of entrepreneurship among Rwandan

and Tanzanian students who are engaged in entrepreneurship outside of international NGO programmes. For this reason, an understanding of students' conceptualizations of entrepreneurship and its paradoxes needs to go beyond the work of Honeyman (Rwanda) and DeJaeghere (Tanzania).

2.7 The Permeating Policy Influence, Inequality and Poverty in South Africa

The context of entrepreneurship literature and research in South Africa is based on state funding for promotion of entrepreneurship on university campus via academic centres researching and driving some form of entrepreneurship at the same time (Vally and Motala, 2014; Rensburg *et al.*, 2020). Because of this the centres locate their work in policy, and they go to proclaim that their strategic priorities are aligned with the South African NDP of 2030, the African Union's Agenda 2063, and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. This shows the extent to which policy obsession, approach and understanding of entrepreneurship is being embedded systematically in the higher education systems in South Africa.

Fongwa (2018) provided possible linkages of the NDP and higher education following their review of the document. Fongwa praised the NDP for its consolidation of policy priorities, stating that other policy documents are largely disjointed. But Fongwa is critical of the NDP's placing universities as "machines" that must produce scientific solutions for society while neglecting the humanities, a field that explains the fabric of the same societies. Like Mabasa, (2022) in Pillay and Mqolomba, (2022), Fongwa critiqued the corporatization of higher education institutions into profit-generating enterprises that exclude fields that do not generate incomes. By virtue of this, students from such fields are under-prioritized or undesired by policies such as the NDP but tolerated by the make-up of the institutions. The Centre for Entrepreneurship at Fundisa University rides on the wave of the policy linkages to the institution and has created additional programmes that are in the fields favoured in policy, such as agricultural science. The further argument for entrepreneurship in policy is the lack of jobs and policy hopes to use entrepreneurship to drive up the number of jobs. The next section offers some context relating to the literature on motivations for entrepreneurship.

Poverty and inequality are common issues in South African research regarding socio-economic development. However, the same research holds a strong view that mass business

success and supportive economic policy are the ultimate solutions to poverty, inequality and the problems emanating from these two issues. In my approach to the literature, I refrain from supporting this view, based on the understanding that business contributes a fair share to the reproduction of poverty and inequality. This section provides explanations of the concepts, the historical and current states of business, and the mining industry as an example of businesses reproducing poverty. This section points out gaps in the scholarly approaches of various scholars vested in researching poverty and inequality in South Africa.

Poverty and inequality in South Africa have historical roots, particularly in the colonial and apartheid struggles (Wilson, 2011). This meant that many Black people oppressed under both colonialism and apartheid could not accumulate wealth; the handful of individuals who managed to do so were those preferred by the system. By virtue of this, poverty among Black South Africans is recorded as being multi-dimensional and characterized by hunger, gender-based violence, unemployment, and an increase in the income divide between the rich and the poor (Fransman & Yu, 2019). The historical roots of poverty and inequality in South Africa continue to rear their ugly head. They are woven into the mining rights reserved in the colonial times exclusively for White landowners and mining companies. Black people even though the worked underground as drillers and diggers did not have any ownership rights. Black mine workers who worked during lost their both their jobs and lives because of their ill health. They were paid very little. In the recent case of 2012 42 mine workers lost their lives in the Marikana Massacre for demanding wage increases in 2012. In this way, inequality is reproduced in South Africa's quest to deal with poverty in the post-apartheid era (Francis & Webster, 2019). The complex links between poverty, inequality and labour/business history require scholars to move beyond the simple analysis that unemployment can redress poverty or inequality but instead, interrogate the historical causes.

Businesses in South Africa, particularly those in the mining and mineral sector, dates to the 1850ss. Wealth has since been transferred from generation to generation of powerful White families, and the wealth systems of Black people have been disrupted in all the military causes of colonialism and aggravated through land dispossession. Again, literature that promotes the idea that businesses need policy support to assist them in dealing with poverty is misleading and fails to account for the complicit behaviour of businesses in enabling poverty and inequality.

Literature regarding higher education, poverty, and inequality is also tainted by the idea that businesses will solve the problem. The work of Volchik, Oganesyan and Olejarz (2018) is an example of research that holds the view that a country's "investment" in higher education increases the levels of human capital of its citizens, in this way achieving competitiveness in global markets and higher economic growth. If viewed differently, this suggests that higher education is an ingredient for economic growth. Such research pays little attention to the needs of society but rather promotes business as a solution for challenges largely created by corporations. The obsession with economic growth has led to overstating the role of business in society and the excessive promotions of entrepreneurship across different areas of research.

The research focus on businesses as a solution to poverty and inequality creates difficulties in understanding these issues in the historical and present context of conducting business in South Africa. Even when literature draws on historical cases, it fails to capture explicitly the role of the mining industrial revolution in the suffering and struggles of Black people in South Africa, as seen today (Wilson, 2011). While some research attempts to consider the multi-dimensionality of poverty in South Africa (e.g. Fransman & Yu, 2019), it still does not provide useful historical cases for the present. When dealing with poverty and inequality, literature must adopt critical approaches.

Contrary to the popular view that big business can solve poverty and inequality using their current models, Westoby (2014) suggested cooperative development as an alternative to build a better understanding of these socio-economic issues. Westboy suggested an equitable approach as an alternative to waiting on businesses to deal with poverty and inequality or simply promoting entrepreneurship or business start-up among citizens. This approach focuses on equipping state-employed community workers and practitioners, their communities and cooperatives with understanding and knowledge that they can use to deal with these issues in their communities. This approach moves away from the capitalistic approach of business, commercialization of crisis, and reproduction of socio-economic problems by outsourcing community interventions to the hands of big businesses.

While literature maintains that the business sector plays an important role in dealing with poverty and inequality, cases to the contrary have also been emerging. Moyo and Munoriyarwa (2021) provided the contrary case of a campaign for affordable internet access in South Africa.

They argued that (universal) internet access is a human rights issue. Their study showed that four major network providers colluded in fixing the price of internet access in South Africa. However, even though they highlighted this important problem, they also fell into the trap of placing responsibility on citizens. Moyo and Munoriyarwa (2021) responsibilises citizens, stating that it was partly due to citizens' lack of action that these corporates were overpricing mobile internet access. This responsibilisation of citizens living in poverty and conditions of inequality produced by businesses at a mass scale is a trap that researchers fall into when studying the societal crisis created by business enterprises.

2.8 The Neoliberal Policy Discourse – Expanding on the Framework

In this thesis the policy discourse is dealt with at three levels and here it expands the theoretical framework of the study. The first is in this chapter focusing on a theoretical basis and lens to neoliberalism and the neoliberal policy mindset that drives entrepreneurialism. Here the thesis extends on the primary framework of structure and agency, to explain the nature of policy discourse as a form of structure. The second level comes in chapter 3 where the South African development policy is delved into and then the third level is in chapter 5 where policy discourses on youth and entrepreneurship are juxtaposed.

In this section neoliberalism is as a theoretical basis to explain and explore the criticality of economic development in student livelihoods, community and dealing with inequality. This theoretical base opens the study to big debates in a developing-country context. Critics of the term "neoliberalism", such as Venugopal (2015), claim that it has lost its analytical value and that its use in research divides social sciences and economics. This holds some truth for studies comparing the two fields, but this study overcomes this criticism by dealing with economic agency of students and livelihoods. This approach bridges the divide that Venugopal highlighted. In addition, this study's focus on big debates such as unemployment, entrepreneurship, incomes, livelihood and higher education are a demonstration of how the concept of neoliberalism is instrumental in holding economics and social sciences together.

With the above in mind, neoliberalism here is defined via Wrenn, (2015) as:

> "…the socialisation process that each individual should be accountable to herself and in so doing, each individual's responsibility to others and to the collective is

> eroded. Society is then comprised entirely and solely of self-interested, atomistic individuals seeking to forward their own agendas. The emphasis on individual accountability and responsibility naturally segues into the power of the individual acting alone. Within neoliberalism, agents are not just taught the ethos of individual responsibility, but more importantly that they are the drivers of destiny: the individual can through the democratic process—via votes or money—determine the structure, composition and path of the state and the market." (Pg. 1233)

Wrenn asserts that neoliberalism is as an ideology driving hyper-individualism. It tends to deter collective action and interests. Wrenn cites three tropes to the narrative of neoliberalism to back the assertion. According to Wrenn these tropes are: (1) the mass privatisation of the state, its goods and services, (2) minimal to zero regulation of industry and (3) withdrawal of state welfare and the dismantling of the welfare state. Under this framing when a state adopts the neoliberal policy mindset leaves individual citizens fending for themselves navigating unregulated prices, even exploitations by big industries chasing profits and inequality gets a real chance to thrive (Aalbers, 2013).

The neoliberal policy structure made of institutions, laws and powers vested in the state promotes letting go of collective action in promoting the interests of individualism (Tett and Hamilton, 2019). Neoliberalism as a form of structure and a policy influence places squarely the responsibility of development on private and profit driven actors assuming that individuals will find their way through the social and economic hierarchies of the neoliberal agenda (Cannella and Koro-Ljungberg, 2017). The problem of neoliberalism as a form of structure is its interest in hyper-individualism versus the collective. In other words, when neoliberal policy fails and when privatisation produces inequality the blame is usually directed onto individuals than it being a failure of structure (Wrenn, 2015). As such entrepreneurship has become one of those concepts used in the neoliberal policy structure narrative that when there are no jobs in a supposedly free and deregulated economy any person can create a business to solve their own economic problems. Vally and Motala, (2014) put this more, frankly, stating that the state uses neoliberal policy to de-risk itself and reputation, because when the state promotes private actors for those at the bottom of pyramid all it offers is a DIY society where citizens will have no one to blame for their poverty and struggles but themselves.

Any research that refers to neoliberalism demands a clear explanation of the concept and its relevance, including criticisms of the manner it is used to deal with the role of the state and influence of markets on the government. Like Venugopal, Flew (2014) argued that the concept is invoked often but is ill-defined. In dealing with this criticism this study furthermore adopts Flew's idea that:

> "the most persuasive accounts (about neoliberalism) are those which identify a particular form of policy related doctrine, or a combination of ideas about the optimal form of market capitalism, combined with concrete proposal for institutional reform that would move societies towards such preferred outcomes… such account sees neoliberalism first and foremost as a series of ideas about socio-economic order." (p. 64)

This research finds expression in the theoretical concept of neoliberalism. It borrows from Flew's idea and focuses on concrete proposals for entrepreneurship education and the way it permeates the socio-economic order of students, their communities, families, livelihoods, and policy. This approach avoids any careless use of the concept of neoliberalism, as critiqued by Venugopal and Flew.

Cannella and Koro-Ljungberg (2017) discussed the characteristics of neoliberalism in higher education. The characteristics they cited are the market-driven focus of universities, where students are clients and staff are service providers; pervasive governmental influence on education provided in higher education; and the fostering of individualism and the silencing of any revolt among students. These explain the essence of action among students countering neoliberalism on campus, protesting unfair policy, and challenging or even contesting power. Like Cannella and Koro-Ljungberg, this study is premised on the view that "supports diverse cultures of thinking and acting to deal with the forces of neoliberalism" (p. 161) in higher education.

The use of the concept of neoliberalism to challenge economic inequity, unfair capital flow and dealing with a global financial crisis is a cause for its relevance. Dean (2017) described neoliberalism "as a thought collective rather than assuming the work of a coherent ideology or state form" (p.115). This progressive view helps this research study account for students' individual and collective experiences of neoliberal policy approaches at the campus. It also accounts for their individual and collective approaches to entrepreneurship; a Schumpeterian

concept covered in the neoliberalism literature. Drawing on the work of Dean, this study identifies the crisis created by entrepreneurship and how, as a feature of neoliberal international policy, it is affecting the lives of university students in South Africa, a country already facing challenges in dealing with inequity and poverty amid the growing wealth accumulation among those who are already wealthy. In response to critics of neoliberalism (e.g. Venugopal, 2015), this study uses findings to suggest progressive approaches to neoliberal policy influence and student livelihoods on campus in the context of the rising calls for entrepreneurship among students.

Wrenn (2015) presented a more critical view of neoliberalism, challenging what she saw as regressive views labelling the concept as confused and divisive (see Flew, 2014; Venugopal, 2015). Wrenn explained neoliberalism as a justifiable call for freedom but challenged moves to privatize state-provided goods and services and to deregulate and deny welfare provisions. These are reasons enough for research to remain alert to the problematic character of neoliberalism in whatever form and shape it shows itself. Wrenn labelled individual agency as inauthentic when freedoms are trampled upon by the tenets of neoliberalism. This study adopted Wrenn's theoretical position on neoliberalism and highlights the diverse conceptualizations of entrepreneurship among students while also being attentive to the role of state support for students.

The literature review drills into structure and agency theory to conceptualise the critical debates on student livelihoods, entrepreneurship, policy and higher education. Structure and agency literature makes up the theoretical framework of the study. In developing a framework, the literature review adopts Crossley's, (2022) definition of structure and agency:

> "…is an always-evolving network of interaction, interdependence and relations between reflexive social actors who are formed (from biological organisms in the human case) within those relations and interactions. It involves rules (conventions and norms), negotiated within the network, and resources unevenly distributed and exchanged across it."

And agency as:

> "agency which actors exercise, their 'mind' and 'self', is not outside of structure but rather emerges within the very interactions and relations constitutive of

> structure. And this makes a difference to structure, not least in the potential for change, big and small, it engenders." (p. 167)

These concepts are expanded up in the theoretical framework presented in the next section. Whilst agency and structure are central concepts in this literature review, they are expanded to explicate policy discourse as a form of structure and livelihood as a form of agency. For example, this literature review builds on Pillay and Mqolomba's, (2022) inquiry on #FeesMustFall in conceptualising structure and agency in South African higher education and in youth livelihoods.

2.9 Building on Honeyman (2016), Vally and Motala (2017), and DeJaeghere (2017)

The thesis builds on the work of Honeyman (2016), *The orderly entrepreneur: Youth, education and governance in Rwanda*; Vally and Motala (2017), *Education, economy and society*; and DeJaeghere (2017), *Educating entrepreneurial citizens: Neoliberalism and youth livelihoods in Tanzania.* These scholars examined policy discourse on education, economy, and the promotions of entrepreneurship in education. They provide an up-to-date discussion on issues of university education, challenges, and contradictions in the promotion of neoliberal policies in education. This review of their work brings together their perspectives and provides a critical analysis of key ideas presented by their research. Vally and Motala provided a South African perspective that explains how education is being reduced to a function of the economy rather than a societal or public good. Honeyman provided the experiences of Rwandan students negotiating the introduction of entrepreneurship in the country's school curricula. Honeyman showed a dark side to entrepreneurship, including the way in which schoolchildren are becoming "entrepreneurs" to afford to go to school, for example, selling products to be able to afford school fees. DeJaeghere confronted policy positions of the Tanzanian government and juxtaposed those with NGOs' promotions of entrepreneurship with the livelihood strategies of school-going youth and alumni.

Vally and Motala (2017) provided a test for the relationship between education, economy, and society. They criticized the assertions that there is a deterministic relationship between skills and jobs, that has also translated into a call for students (by university leaders and policymakers) to seek relevant skills that are supposed to help them secure jobs. This has also translated into mobilizing students to create businesses while they are still studying. Like Vally and Motala,

engages this simplistic view that education must drive entrepreneurship among students and blame a lack of entrepreneurship for poverty and the existing inequality, especially in South African society. In this research I take acritical stance against the use of terms such as "township economy", and "kasi economy." These concepts are problematic and are often used by prominent Black entrepreneurs and government departments (e.g. Gauteng Department of Economic Development) to blame poor township communities for the dire socio-economic conditions in which they live. In the language of entrepreneurship, they are often labelled as communities that lack initiative. For example, Vusi Thembekwayo, a South African motivational speaker and entrepreneur who enjoy invitations from some universities, said the following at the University of Johannesburg's annual Richard Maponya lecture:

> "Fascinating running a business from a township, it really is fantastic. One of the things you learn when you run a business from a township is that you have absolute free time during the day between the hours of nine and three. Because all the people that will come back and make a noise are not there. Fantastic. The second thing is; because it was in my mother's home, rent was very cheap… Of course, if you are looking at a young person coming out of a township who dares start a business to make suits and his name is, Mandla Nkosi as opposed to Tom Ford or Hugo Boss, the risk fundamentals don't hold, but guess what, there was a time Hugo Boss wasn't Hugo Boss." (Thembekwayo, 2017, p. 11)

High education is used to drive this narrative, and those who have education are blamed for not taking entrepreneurial initiative. Often, these speeches are contradictory because, on one hand, they critique the spatial planning of townships, but on the other, they quickly move to suggest that entrepreneurship is a solution to problems facing the township. What is also most problematic is the claim "promising" that if students can be taught, through education, to create micro-enterprises, they stand to become successful, stable, and profitable (Thamahane *et al.*, 2017). This is untrue, even if it is a policy recommendation. In addition, research on entrepreneurship policy fails to place itself within the larger set of issues in society. Unlike the stance of Vally and Motala, most entrepreneurship research fails to deal with the realities of landlessness, dispossessions, and living in poverty while monopolies exploit natural resources and education is reduced to an

economic instrument, rather than an opportunity for people to fully realize themselves and their own ideas.

Vally and Motala (2017) called for a more inclusive view of education's contribution to society than the way motivational speakers, for example, regard the benefit of education for a student hailing from a township. They argued:

> "If the many South African educationists of the past, including I.B. Tabata, W.T. Thibedi, Olive Shreiner, A.C. Jordan, Rick Turner, Ruth First, Steve Biko, Matthew Goniwe, Abu Asvat and Neville Alexander representing the diverse political traditions of this country are to be taken seriously, then the narrow, reductive, and economic ideas on education must be rejected." (Vally & Motala, 2017, p. xx).

Vally and Motala (2017) have performed the difficult and often a daunting job that most researchers avoid. They invoke South African educationists who took a holistic view of education and its function in society. For example, Steve Biko worked for the unity of Black students and Black people. He pursued a noble purpose bigger than the narrow and reductive economic ideas of education. Vally and Motala based the philosophy in their 13-chapter book on the voices that took a holistic position on issues. They stated about these voices that "their legacy give rise to vibrant and vital education social movement in South Africa's recent past." (Vally & Motala, 2017, p. 16). Vally and Motala, in engaging the legacy of educationists and activists such as Steve Biko, provide a critical base for questioning whether university education in its current form instils "in the fullest society the importance of knowledge as essential to the development of citizenry" (Vally & Motala, 2017, p. 16). If so, what type of citizenry are university education, and education in general, instilling among their educated citizens? It is the question that Vally and Motala asks when engaging Steve Biko's vibrant legacy:

> "… for the fullest experience of civic rights and responsibilities, for such elementary rights as numeracy and literacy, accessing public goods, making informed choices, and most importantly for ensuring greater levels of democratic accountability of public representatives and organisations." (Vally & Motala, 2017, p. 16).

I argue further that the promotion of entrepreneurship in higher education and in policy must take a full view of issues facing society. It should also appreciate the historical context of South Africa and seek to always understand the voices of students, and their hopes. Biko, Goniwe, First, Neville, Asvat and other renowned educationists sought to mobilize students and promote university student activism that had influence beyond the walls of higher education institutions. They mobilized students to act on civil- and educational-rights issues and drove the call for democracy. Instead of reducing the struggle to an individual, they sought to act collectively and confront big issues head-on. The individualization of student struggles through the promotion of entrepreneurship among students and the redirecting of society to a *vuk'uzenzele* ("on your own, rise and act") approach departs from the once progressive approach to dealing with societal challenges. Vally and Motala (2017) showed that the university reduction of education to only an economic means clearly reduces it to job-seeking and to the responsibilisation of individual students, to the detriment of their poor families and societies.

This argument calls for a holistic approach to educational experiences that moves beyond the confines of job-seeking or even explaining jobs and/or employment as a reason to pursue education. The argument also contests the haste to convert and interpret education as simply a tool for the economy. Beneficial to this thesis is the way in which Vally and Motala challenged the domination of education by big businesses and the thinking that education simply serves the economy over society. Their approach has advances how in this thesis I am questioning the way that entrepreneurship is promoted in universities among students, how students think about these promotions in relation to their livelihood strategies.

Vally and Motala (2017), however, provided very little about the experiences of students who are caught between the debates about society, education, and the economy. This thesis deals with experiences of students juxtaposed with policy and, by nature of this, advances literature in drawing the experience of students in this position. Even so, Vally and Motala's thorough theoretical analysis of the political system provides a useful basis for arguing an inclusive approach and understanding of all activities that students and their communities devise to build meaningful livelihoods, earn an income, and feed themselves.

Honeyman (2016) studied policy, education, and entrepreneurship in Rwanda. She explored youth livelihoods and the paradox of the situation that calls for self-reliance, creativity

and navigating the tight governmental regulations and controls. In Rwanda the government introduced entrepreneurship as a school subject. Honeyman followed the development of this subject and studied Rwanda's policies for promoting youth entrepreneurship, exploring the language of policy:

> "Explore how these young students and their futures are being represented in policy language, how the course that was intended to teach them to become entrepreneurs was conceived, how teachers and student received and reinterpreted that course within school walls, and what these young Rwandans have done with these ideas after graduation." (Honeyman, 2016, p. 23)

Honeyman amplifies student voices successfully using Kinyarwanda phrases in providing when exploring ways students speak about entrepreneurship in comparison to policy. Students do *ibaraka* ("little jobs") as entrepreneurship; however, Honeyman shows that, according to the Rwandan policy, this is not "entrepreneurship". In engaging policy language about the project of entrepreneurship in Rwandan schools, Honeyman explored *imihigo*, the performance contracts of government employees who are tasked to ensure that the programme of entrepreneurship is implemented in schools. Besides varying contributions from society through *umushyikirano* (national dialogue), the government follows strict policy on entrepreneurship and insists on orderly entrepreneurship. Honeyman explains the meaning of orderly entrepreneurship as a regulated practice of entrepreneurship. Honeyman provides the example that in Rwanda, the government has made certain microscale enterprises illegal, including selling on the roadside without a permit, and other rural forms of entrepreneurship by microscale informal traders. The government now requires business registration and tax payments from such traders. Honeyman showed the nature of contestations that exist in entrepreneurship between society and government:

> Many of these findings from this research are policy relevant; a summary has already been distributed to the government ministries most concerned with these issues, and some concrete policy recommendations are included in the conclusion… (Honeyman, 2016, p. 23).

Furthermore, Honeyman demonstrated how the international idea of entrepreneurship is infiltrating school curricula in Rwanda promoting the idea of creating entrepreneurs that are orderly meaning "registered, organised, attractive, aesthetic, clean and in some settings even

conforming" (p. 15). Honeyman highlighted how the government is using education to infiltrate and control "hustles", including the lives of students who engage in entrepreneurship to earn money to pay their school fees and buy necessities. The policy recommendations provided by Honeyman include the idea that the entrepreneurship course introduced could focus more on how to grow a business from a very low-capital microenterprise to something more stable and profitable. Honeyman suggested that this should be a function of school education. Honeyman's optimism about the prospects for entrepreneurship in Rwanda partly undermine the rich experiences described in her work, which show a clear resource scarcity and hardship for students. Her call for the removal of tight rules and barriers to entry, such as business licencing, provides some hope that entrepreneurship can be a pathway to change youth livelihoods for the better in Rwanda. However, a more critical view about the infiltration of entrepreneurship in education is necessary and will put student holistic development before profit and refrain from pitching entrepreneurship as if it is an obvious "pathway out of poverty" (Honeyman, 2016, p. 241).

In addition to the works of Vally and Motala (2017) and Honeyman (2016) is DeJaeghere's (2017) study of Tanzania. DeJaeghere explored "political and social dilemmas of how to address the continuing poverty experienced in countries in the Global South through entrepreneurship education programmes" (p. 13). The study drew on experiences of two international NGOs implementing entrepreneurship and training programmes in semi-urban and rural communities in Tanzania within and outside of schools. The study considered the diverse meanings attached to entrepreneurship by NGO staff and the youth. DeJaeghere's research has been useful in aiding the inquiry of this thesis when considering the different conceptualizations of students and in engaging critically with the external interventions promoting entrepreneurship among youth in education. This was useful in studying contradictions in the ways in which different people in education, such as managers, lecturers, students, and policy players, conceptualise entrepreneurship. For example, DeJaeghere stated that "the (entrepreneurship) programs are also mediated by the varied and contradictory ways that NGO staff, educators and youths enact them in their context" (p.15). This thesis documents the different ways students enact their livelihood strategies beyond the idea of doing entrepreneurship, with the hope to become formalized, as shown by Honeyman in the case of Rwanda. Instead, this research shows the varied approaches to making a living among university students.

DeJaeghere (2017) provided a compelling study that brings the Tanzanian political thought that Vally and Motala (2017) called "political traditions" (p. 16). DeJaeghere noted that "entrepreneurship, called '*ujasiriamali*' in recent Tanzanian policy, is more than earning an income or starting an enterprise" (p. 17). Of equal importance, DeJaeghere situates the entrepreneurship debate in Tanzania within language and how people are talking about the phenomenon in Kiswahili. "*Ujariasmali*" in policy extends beyond starting a business (DeJaeghere, 2017). Contrary to other policy research on entrepreneurship, the Tanzanian approach subscribes to Julius Nyerere's idea of self-reliance instead. However, research has failed in various respects to explore community, moral belief, and self-reliance as bases for entrepreneurship. DeJaeghere stated that "it is also related to existing moral beliefs and practices of 'kujitegemea', or Nyerere's idea of self-reliance, which emphasizes being an included member of the community, and in turn, supporting the community" (p. 17).

DeJaeghere (2017) engaged the role of international NGOs in entrepreneurship, describing their work as that which supports the creation of enterprising citizens. However, the exploration of the role of NGOs in understanding Nyerere and the commitment to the idea of *kukitegemea* is shallow. This presents a gap in the research. I therefore argue that even though international NGOs are seen as an alternative for introducing and promoting entrepreneurship among the youth, they rarely understand some of the trading practices of the communities with which they work. Instead, they rely on policies that do not account holistically for the different conceptualizations of entrepreneurship in society. For these reasons, research must also examine the motivations among NGOs or institutions for promoting entrepreneurship, especially in societies of which they have little understanding of the different conceptualizations of entrepreneurship:

> By bringing these ideas together, I [DeJaeghere] suggest that these (NGO entrepreneurship) programmes have the effect of making youths into new form of citizen, a social-economic citizen who is neither the enterprising self nor a socialist citizen harkening to Nyerere's project. (DeJaeghere, 2017, p. 17)

DeJaeghere registered a positive view about the policy promotion of a social-economic citizen. Considering entrepreneurship education and training, the Tanzanian policy sees it as transformative. However, researchers must ask the question: Is entrepreneurship transformative? If at all, in what ways? This thesis does not attempt to answer this question but engages critically

with the promotions of entrepreneurship in policy. In addition, this thesis provides a holistic account of how entrepreneurship is conceptualized differently in society.

"The social economic citizen is the result of a transformative potential in entrepreneurship education and training," stated DeJaeghere (2017, p. 17). DeJaeghere recognized the long-term effects that an education can have on youth livelihoods if simply reduced to entrepreneurship education and training. DeJaeghere warned that the programmes of entrepreneurship education and training in Tanzania must reframe and reshape continually to align with Nyerere's philosophy and the ideals of the Tanzanian society. Although critical, the study does not provide other societal views besides Nyerere's already powerful philosophy of self-reliance. In this thesis I attempt to gather other views beyond those of the already powerful voices. For this reason, I recognize the voices of individual students, and their struggles demonstrated in the #FeesMustFall and #RhodesMustFall movements.

DeJaeghere (2017) points out, however, that "this transformation is contingent on a continual reframing and reshaping of these programs to reconsider long-term wellbeing effects on youth livelihoods and lives" (p. 17). DeJaeghere offers a unique perspective on the way that political traditions (e.g. Nyerere's philosophy for citizens to be able to provide for their needs collectively), NGO practices, and local practices of self-reliance, solidarity and reciprocity are conceptualised and practised. This helps provide a holistic picture of how youths shape their own livelihoods and are using entrepreneurship outside of the NGO definitions of it. However, like policy and NGO ideas, DeJaeghere subscribed to the idea that entrepreneurship is a process or method for overcoming poverty. This view prevents us from understanding people's livelihood strategies outside of the assumption that they engage in enterprise simply to deal with poverty or scarcity. Even if this is so, it is still necessary to interrogate individuals' experiences to understand the nature of their poverty. This thesis has built on this gap to bring in nuanced experiences of students engaged in informal selling, provision of services to other students, and the views of those students not involved in any forms of entrepreneurship. Furthermore, it also considers policy experiences and the views of university management, and reviews policy documents to contrast the ways entrepreneurship is understood and conceptualized by different people.

This thesis contributes more holistically to the debate about how entrepreneurship is conceptualized differently by different people. This thesis fills a theoretical gap by deepening

research understandings of how entrepreneurship is conceptualized outside of the promotions of entrepreneurship by international NGOs and governmental policies on entrepreneurship. NGOs and governments are too convinced that entrepreneurship in education will deal with systemic issues of poverty, poor education, health, and other issues of transformation, and even "outsource" the need for government to act on these issues.

The big-picture challenges of landlessness, poverty among youth, hardship among students, and inequality require students to be challenged to think beyond themselves. Dr Lwazi Lushaba, in his lecture at the University of Limpopo (2023), challenged students to situate their struggles in broader society. Like Lushaba, this research challenges the notion that student entrepreneurship is different to other forms of entrepreneurship. In dealing with the differing conceptions of entrepreneurship, this thesis still recognizes that the concept of entrepreneurship is a product of capitalism, is often understood through the American-Euro centric lens and is rarely contextualized through big-picture issues of different societies. For these reasons, this thesis reaches beyond DeJaeghere and Honeyman's focus on curricula and NGO interventions, and Vally and Motala's criticism focused on skills, human capital theory, and jobs. The thesis contributes a holistic perspective about the experiences of students as members of society and as citizens creating their own livelihoods through various means, outside of the influence of international NGOs and differently from their universities' promotions of entrepreneurship.

Similar to the argument of Vally and Motala (2014), this research cautiously accepts that students find their own way into entrepreneurship and can be more accepting of the idea of creating microenterprises. They do so with a view that this can help them to conquer poverty. However, this does not constitute carrying out the vision of policymakers. It is students' fending for themselves to tackle their hardship and lack of income using entrepreneurship in an unconventional way – not creating formal businesses. Krause, Chapman and DeJaeghere (2013) showed that even approaches of creating microenterprises are not always sufficiently understood by governmental ministers and officers (policymakers) tasked with creating poverty-alleviation programmes. They also argued that even educational institutions vested in promoting entrepreneurship as a way of remedying poverty barely understand the microenterprise process. Often university campus managers are taken by surprise that students engage in microenterprise to fulfil their own daily needs and to deal with hardship (Walker & Mkwananzi, 2015).

2.10 Theoretical Framework: Conceptualising Structure and Agency

Literature focusing on structure and agency in South African higher education is sparse and limited. A more direct publication on structure and agency in South African higher education was work of research by Kgaphola, (1999). This means that there is a need to establish new ways of conceptualising structure and agency as it relates to youth pursuing higher education in South Africa. Structure is defined here based on Leibowitz and Bozalek, (2014)'s adaptation of Archer's (1996:1) definition, that structure means "roles, organisations, institutions and systems". Leibowitz and Bozalek focus on South Africa's quest for post-apartheid change and transformation. Their definition places emphasis on the capacity of roles, organisations, institutions and systems. These components dictate power relations amongst stakeholders which include decision making, agenda setting and formation of institutions. In the post-apartheid South Africa, structure and its components have been subject to contestation leaving those with less power to endure being dictated by those with powerful roles e.g. government directors driving social housing programmes, institutions and systems powerful than citizens. A further example can be made from the #FeesMustFall protests for fee free higher education in South Africa where students were faced with powerful universities and vice-chancellors who employed private security to persecute students protesting to have a no fee higher education. On one hand the universities and vice-chancellors were also operating within the frameworks of other powerful bodies such as their university councils, alumni, and in defence of their positional roles. This reflects the nature and practice of agency within the components of structure.

Agency, as defined by Idahosa, (2019) citing Anderson (1980) is 'the capacity for human (beings) to act in their own right". Idahosa adds that 'agency is a necessity for social transformation as social structures do not just reproduce or transform themselves abstractly; such change is rather possible and seen through human action, which is, in turn, influenced by social structures' (p.7). Both these are linked under social structure that relates to how people connect, the distribution of material resources in society, institutions and ways of gaining power. What this makes clear is the constant contestation of power in higher education through protests, programmes and via other means of organising that reflect agency (Idahosa and Vincent, 2019).

Table 2 sketches out the key theoretical factors of structure and agency that this literature engages. These factors present a set of issues that higher education research in South Africa must deal with in connection to student livelihoods, campus experiences, agency, and choice.

Table 2 Structure and Agency Framework - South African Higher Education

Breaking-down Factors of Structure and Agency	
Structure	**Agency**
• The university – Historically Black University • Social structure including family and society • Policy and Government (Neoliberal Policy Agenda) • Organisations Promoting Entrepreneurship on campus	• Student Representative Council (a system with a structure) • Participation vs no participation • Student livelihood practices on campus • Individual agency

Expanding on the above framework factors the literature review here adopts the three (3) Rs of social structure cited from Crossley, (2022). These explain what a university as a structure is used to determine the student experience and how livelihood is as a form of structure mediated by the university experience. These three (3) Rs are:

- *Rules*: argues Crossley that they are forms of conduct, norms and practices created and expected to be obeyed under a social structure. For example, the university as a social structure places on students, staff and society some normative conventions or *habitus* that must be followed or seen to be followed. The rules go onto be a premise for adopting and advancing the promotion of state policies on campus and amongst the campus patrons.
- *Resources*: the university as a social structure enjoys status, prestige and privileges afforded by society, and those who place high value on the university structure. The standing of the university in society as a place of knowledge production and a structured site for delivery of higher education gives it more power and voice.
- *And relations:* according to Crossley, involve the relationship practices of the actors, the processes they use to establish and maintain such relations and the ways these relations

fuel or enable the social structure. In addition, Crossley recognises that the relations are in place to perpetuate the social structure.

Crossley asserts that each of the three (3) Rs of social structure are important. The framework here makes the following deductions: First (1), that there are power plays in the university as a social structure and these cascade from the system hierarchy that involves the state, its policy, the chancellor, the vice-chancellor and the rest of the staff and students. The power play is through the rules that are enforced in the university as a social structure. The second (2) deduction is that when a university is framed as a social structure it is assumed that its actors can engage in some form of relations meaning that a chance always exists for actors to influence the rules-based approach to running the university structure. When in disagreement it means actors can engage each other through the established relations until they reach consensus. The final (3) deduction is that the university as a form of social structure recognises the intangible resources that its status affords it. Therefore, the university as a social structure is far reaching in society with even claims for making a positive impact on people. In doing this the university exercises influence on staff and its people to take on research the makes the university prominent and even drive students towards a community engagement approach that advances the university as an influential form of social structure.

Framing the university as a form of social structure advances this study's theoretical framework to bring into some further theoretical discussion the role of agency when structure is premised on Crossley's three Rs. Already this literature review has provided a working definition of agency in the latter sections of this chapter. Agency in a social structure such as the university in the context of the structure and agency framework of this study means recognising higher education as a field of social struggle(s). This framework view expands the breakdown of the structure and agency factors provided in the breakdown on table 2. Hyper-individualism, self-regulation, reproduction and subversion are some of the concepts that clarify how actors navigate structure through agency.

Wrenn, (2015) breaks down hyper-individualism as the outcome of the neoliberalism narrative that promotes independence amongst actors in society. This alludes to the points made earlier about the posture of the university as a form of (social) structure. In its posturing the

university enacts policies that are based on the neoliberal policy orientation. Students use, therefore, methods and ways to self-regulate into either being good students or choose to serve their own interests. In response to the changing dynamics of the factors of the university social structure as well as rules that facilitate the university space students use subversion or present subversively. Whilst some conform to these rules the #FeesMustFall literature suggests strongly that students subvert their university when it excludes them, when it perpetuates society and also when their university does not place student interests ahead of commodification and other monetary interests (Wangenge-ouma, 2012).

In summary the theoretical framework of the study is premised on structure and agency. The framework explicates the meaning of agency and how agency is a force in subverting university constrains of structure. Moreover, this framework shows how self-regulation is manifesting itself at university amongst different actors. The framework also demonstrates how the university is as a form of social structure and the role of student agency in such a structure. The framework has also explored Wrenn, (2015; and Crossley, (2022) to provide theoretical definitions of structure and agency. Overall, the framework recognises that structure and agency must be mediated by a more powerful logic that recognises the needs of all different actors. Hence the study's argument that: entrepreneurship is conceptualised and is practiced differently by different people.

2.11 Structure, Agency and the Theories of Student Development via #FeesMustFall – Expanding on the Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework on structure and agency has been developed in the previous section. This part examines structure and agency via the #FeesMustFall research inquiry(ies) and South African literature; in other words, this part contextualises the structure and agency framework of the study. In addition, this section works these concepts through the theory(ies) of student development. Mqolomba and Pillay, (2022)

Another set of theoretical considerations in this study focuses on theories and models of student development. Long (2012) provided an overview of four theories in student development:

First are the psychosocial theories covering identity development, focusing on how students think of themselves as autonomous and independent beings, and including racial and

ethnic identity development. Super's career development theory, focusing on occupational choices and the development of career interests, is one such psychosocial theory.

Second are cognitive-structural theories of student development; these focus on how students "interpret and make meaning out of their experiences" (Long, 2012, p. 46). These include Perry's theory of cognitive development, focusing on the student's perception and organization of knowledge, Kohlberg's theory of moral development, which states that the "students' ability to reason affects their behaviour and conduct" (cited in Long, 2012, p. 47), and Park's theory of faith development that posits that students have a way of "discovering and creating connections between/among experiences and events" (cited in Long, 2012, p. 49).

Third are the humanistic theories of student development focusing on the "students' relationship to others and to society. These theories emphasize more the condition for healthy growth and development, and less the development itself" (Long, 2012, p. 50). The main theory under humanistic theories is Hettler's model of wellness brings together all factors of wellness in a holistic manner dealing with the physical, intellect, socio-emotional, spiritual, environmental and career specific well-being.

The final set are the person–environment interactive theories. These theories are concerned with the complexity of the college or university experiences of young adults. Two theories make up the body of person–environment interactive theories, namely, Astin's theory of student involvement and Tinto's theory of student departure. Astin's theory of student involvement proposes that the greater the intensity of students' involvement in college academic and social life, the higher their proficiency in both areas. Tinto's theory of student departure explains student retention. This theory recognizes the ranging economic circumstances surrounding the students' choices to stay at university and earn a degree or depart without one. These include "family support, clarity of purpose for higher education, and cultural and social values" (Long, 2012, p. 52).

Long's overview of the theories of student development encapsulates the realities of student experience, identity, and livelihood. The overview furthers an understanding of key theories in student development for the purposes of this study but also situates these theories in the broader debate about models of student development, their identities, and experiences of campus. It also deals with the socio-economic conditions that affect student livelihoods on campus. These

theories furthermore move this study from dealing with student socio-economic experiences from the single lens of neoliberalism but through a more holistic approach of student development.

The theoretical considerations presented are perspectives that have been considered in shaping the study's outlook. They explain how the study enters the big debates on student development, higher education and the socio-economic issues affecting society. The section started with Venugopal and Flew's view that neoliberalism is a confused concept. This was contrasted with the views of Wrenn and Dean, which state that the concept of neoliberalism still gives voice to realities of life experiences of those affected by privatization, the state's neglecting its responsibilities, and the demise of the welfare state. It is evident from the discussions that neoliberalism remains relevant and necessary in this study to explicate issues in higher education.

2.12 The Conceptual Framework: Student livelihoods, agency, and hardship

Four dimensions make up the conceptual framework of this study. This conceptual framework is distilled from the broader coverage of literature. The four dimensions are student livelihoods, agency, hardship and higher education. These connected dimensions offer this thesis a structure of argument and thought. Student livelihoods explore the lived experiences of students and higher education as already dealt with early in this chapter deals with the educational environment of students. The dimension of hardship is concerned about the societal conditions in which students find themselves including the economic and social elements that contribute to the lived experiences of students. Agency focuses on the ability to act on the part of students and how they choose to act e.g. collectively and/or via a structure or system. The thesis has used this framework overtly in its structuring and in clarifying both findings and conclusions.

The conceptual framework of this study builds on the theoretical and literature elements that have been covered in the preceding sections. The conceptual framework also connects the policy literature covered in the next chapter with the main ideas of the study. Figure 1 below illustrates the conceptual framework of this thesis.

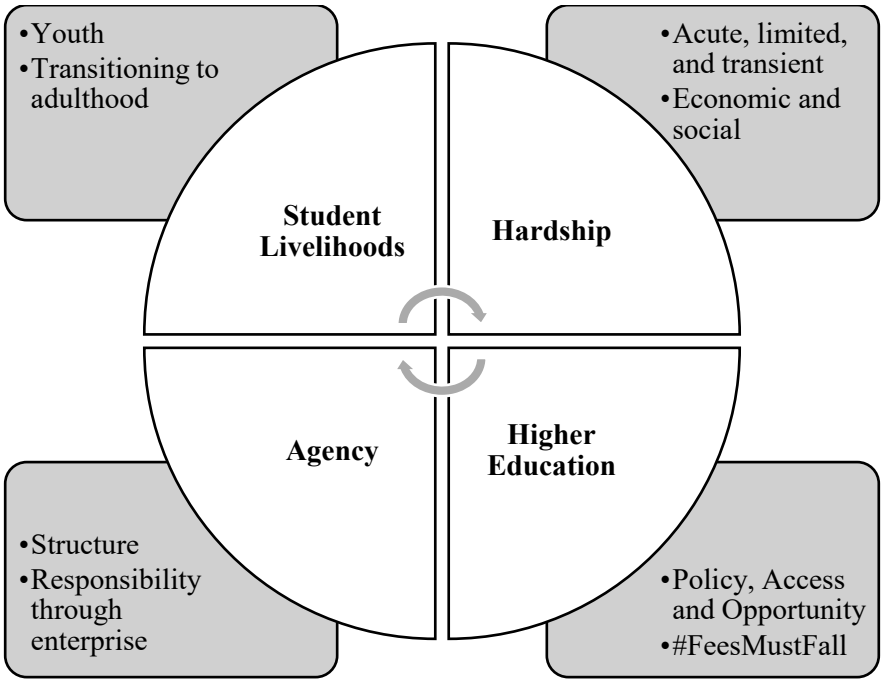

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

In discussing the framework above, here I begin with student livelihoods, then hardship, a focus on agency and revisiting higher education. This framework is integrated with it different parts and reflects the structure or main topical areas covered in this thesis. The theoretical discussion, findings and analysis reflect on this framework as well as the conclusions of this study.

The concept of student livelihood is concerned with how a student or students are navigating their transitional lives between university and their first employment or business opportunity (Doble and Supriya, 2011). This concept considers the social, economic and educational needs of students as well as the steps that students take to meet these (*Higher Education Today: Student Life in South Africa*, 2013). Whilst students receive support from family in a form of motivations, money transfers and social care often it is not enough to cover all the needs of students. Often the student livelihood is filled with demands for accommodation, funds for tuition fees, tutorials and the need for food, and pocket monies to take cover unplanned expenses (Breda and D, 2018). Also student livelihood is concerned about establishing a strong youth identity and at the transitioning to adulthood, because of this students take advantage of opportunities that build their identities and use their educational advantage to transition into either jobs or income earning opportunities (Krause, Chapman and DeJaeghere, 2013).

I now turn to the second element of the conceptual framework. Hardship is a global phenomenon that affects students in higher education. Zhu, Chen and Zhang (2019) explained hardship in both familial and economic terms. They referred to this as family economic hardship and, unlike Walker (2020), they did not individualize hardship. These scholars located hardship in the context of family, economic conditions, and behaviour. In their study of 513 university students, they found that there was a significant correlation between family economic hardship and impulsive, risky use of alcohol. I draw from this study a view that hardship can lead to risky behaviours among students and even breed hopelessness.

In addition to the above, Despard *et al.* (2016) studied the correlation between student debt and hardship. In a study of 5,558 participants, they established that those students and their families considered higher education a valuable investment. However, those students whose tuition and accommodation fees were financed through debt experienced greater social and economic disadvantages. This provides a view of student livelihoods characterized by debt, stress, and hardship, even though the same education is seen as an opportunity to empower students. This also produces exclusions for students who do not qualify for loans or whose family members are blacklisted or do not qualify for credit.

South African literature shows that hardship is part of student experience in higher education, especially in the context of poor and unequal societies such as South Africa (Gerrard & Roberts, 2006). Walker (2020) conceptualized this into three kinds of hardship related to income, namely, acute, limited, and transient hardship. Under *acute hardship*, a student has no secure income year-on-year and lives with multiple insecurities. In the category of *limited hardship*, a student has sufficient disposable family income and has access to a private-sector bursary. Under *transient hardship*, a student may move upwards to limited hardship or spiral down to acute hardship. Typically, a student in this category would have a source of external support, such as a bursary, and access to a laptop, but with little unallocated disposable income to spend on things like clothes. Habib (2019) argued that student hardship is not the responsibility of university executives, but they have a responsibility to ensure that universities produce enough professional graduates. While this is a widely accepted view, it is also true that hardship faced by students is a cause for failure and dropouts and reverses progress in increasing professional graduates (Moodley & Singh, 2015). In addition, Hammett and Staeheli (2013) argued that higher education in South

Africa has been tasked with the huge responsibility of confronting poverty in a context of powerlessness, in which some students have lost hope for personal and social advancement. This research recognizes these broad understandings of hardship and the impact that these have on student life at university, including the choices students make about tackling the challenges they face while at university.

In the face of hardship, students explore limited choices and ways to survive. One avenue is creating survivalist or necessity micro-enterprises (Karanja *et al.*, 2008). During this process, the same students are also encouraged in other ways to see entrepreneurship to secure their future (Nwokolo, 2017). This idea often assumes that students, since they have some educational attainment, can run their micro enterprise during and after university (Peters & Brijlal, 2011). This futuristic view withdraws attention from the real/pragmatic reasons students engaged in the creation of micro-enterprises and avoids dealing with the differences in the understanding and conceptualization of entrepreneurship (Vally & Motala, 2014). Unlike this futuristic view, the present research draws attention to some of the real reasons for pursuing (or not pursuing) entrepreneurship among students, including their general understanding of the concept.

As already discussed, hardship is highly prevalent among low-income students. Many students in higher education in South Africa are poor and black. This means that the livelihoods of many Black low-income students are characterized by hardship. De Wet and Ewemade (2018) provided contextual understandings about youth/student livelihoods in South Africa. In their study entitled “We are small, but we have jobs”, they showed that youth are engaged in informal work and risk completing school. De Wet and Ewemade cited the absence of fathers as a contributor to the involvement of children and youth in informal labour activities. They also acknowledged that some of this labour happens at the behest of parents who believe that earning some cash is better than gaining an education. An understanding of student livelihoods provides researchers an opportunity to consider multiple directions to contextualize hardship more comprehensively, appearing to be a problem affecting children, youths in basic education and youths in higher education.

Even though the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) is intended to lower the degree of hardship among students in South Africa, family needs and poverty still affect students dependent on NSFAS (Bhorat & Pillay, 2017). Many of these students send some of their money

home or feel morally obliged to help their families. As a result, they find it hard to enjoy a meal on campus while they know that a younger sister or brother at home will return from school to a home where there is no food. In this way, NSFAS does facilitate access to higher education for poor and low-income students but does not eradicate the poverty that surrounds its beneficiaries (De Villiers, 2017). For this reason, academia must improve its approach to researching student livelihoods such as of those benefiting from NSFAS. Researchers must desist from the common assumption that students receiving aid are relieved from poverty or those problems associated with their financial statuses. In this study I refrain from this assumption and take an open approach to studying or understanding student livelihoods, aid, and hardship.

I now turn to agency, the third element of the framework, as a tenet defining student livelihoods. Agency means "to act or a state of being in action and/or exerting power" (Chandler-Olcott & Hinchman, 2019). Weissman (2020) asserted that the concept of agency is ambiguous and explained the concept as meaning judgement and choice. Furthermore, on ambiguity, Weissman explained:

> Agency is vague, but useful: it signifies purpose, cause, and appraisal in agents who control circumstances and themselves to some degree. Fire and wind are also controlling, but their actions lack intention, inhibition, and credit or blame. Agency implies those qualifiers. (p. 11)

In this study I contextualize the concept of agency in student livelihoods and hardship in education. I focus on agency to interrogate the dominant view in literature that students and graduates have the power to act and deal with their livelihood challenges or that they have the power to avoid them. I take a closer look at promotions of entrepreneurship among students based on the assumption that students have agency. This is because these promotions entice students to money and sell them hope for power or the possibility of becoming powerful entrepreneurs when their businesses succeed. Because of the power that their schools, programme leaders and policymakers yield through these promotions, students are put under pressure to perform "entrepreneurship". Literature has not probed whether there is performativity among students practising entrepreneurship in a context of learning and juxtaposed this with agency.

Higher education is the fourth element of the conceptual framework. Higher education in this instance refers to the university access, policy and the struggles of students through protest and picketing seeking to make their institutions better learning environments. Much of access to higher education in South Africa is paid for through government funding through NSFAS. The higher education cost is paid for amongst the other competing demands such as health, safety/policing and social development. Wangenge-Ouma (2012) probed the adequacy of governmental funding to attend to student needs university. This, Wangenge-Ouma did against the debate for free higher education, a dominant view of #FeesMustFall. Besides demanding a 0% increase in fees, the 2015–2016 #FeesMustFall protests called for free higher education, and not an increase in budget allocations for NSFAS (Habib, 2019). According to Wangenge-Ouma's analysis, the demands of the #FeesMustFall protests exposed the inadequacy and unsuitability of the existing NSFAS funding framework; it excluded students considered to be a "missing middle" group. These students' family incomes were more than the threshold set by NSFAS, yet their parents or families still could not afford to pay university fees. For this reason, a more comprehensive view on student livelihoods and hardship in literature is required, including how students use agency, if at all, to deal with social and economic conditions on campus. This thesis explores this in its different chapters and through analysis.

Relevant to the fourth element is Hirudayaraj and McLean's (2018) investigation of the transition of first-generation graduates from graduating to employment. Hirudayaraj and McLean records that while graduates generally find employment after graduation, they still are affected by lack of university-level education in their family. They start at entry-level jobs not requiring a university degree, are excluded from pursuing graduate-level positions, and face discrimination in the recruitment process. These scholars provided empirical evidence that, even with educational attainments, the agency of students from predominantly Black low-income families is severely limited. Forsyth *et al.* (2022) echoed the difficulty caused by the assumption that students have agency. Some literature purports that students have agency. For instance, the #FeesMustFall literature suggests that the student demonstration that led to a countrywide shutdown are proof of agency among students. Such views in literature overshadow the livelihood challenges that affect first-generation university graduates and those Black students (first generation) because they are forced by circumstances to join protest actions. Literature cannot state for certain whether these students would be drawn into such protest actions had their families had the money or to cover

university costs. Also, there's a gap in showing whether the attainment of higher education guarantees agency amongst students and graduates.

2.13 Chapter summary

Literature on entrepreneurship, education and student entrepreneurship stands to improve and attract broader understanding if all facets and factors of both this practice and research are analysed using frameworks from multiple fields. It is essential for entrepreneurship research about students to consider student livelihoods, inequities, the function of educational attainment, and policy. This will address an old problem in entrepreneurship research which pertains to dealing with entrepreneurship as both an economic and technical field in an interdisciplinary manner.

This chapter has provided a theoretical framework partly dealing with the challenge stated above by covering literature structure and agency. Broadly, the framework has shown the inter-relationships that exist between these two concepts. Structure was explained in terms of context and as an arena or a system in which societal relations play out in both economic and in social terms. Agency has been explicated in the framework as the ability and capacity to think, act and choose all done within the confines of a broader structure. The theoretical framework has informed the conceptual framework focused on the structuring of the key concepts of this thesis. The conceptual framework focused on four tenets namely hardship, student livelihoods, agency and higher education. These tenets are carried through into findings and discussions in this thesis.

The two main perspectives on entrepreneurship literature have been exposed in this chapter. These perspectives are the narrow and the broader perspective. The narrow perspective adopts a western American-Euro centric approach to entrepreneurship that relies on the Silicon Valley definitions of this practice. The broader perspective allows an inclusion of more approaches to entrepreneurship and enables plural explanations of how entrepreneurship is conceptualised and practiced differently by different people. While there are mounting debates about the concept of neoliberalism, it still serves as a useful collective term explain concerns about privatization, permeation of higher education by capitalist ideas, and individualizing the struggles of students. These have been demonstrated in this chapter, showing both strengths and weaknesses of the concepts. The next chapter explores the policy and the neoliberal ideas that make up the policy.

CHAPTER 3:
AN INTEGRATED LITERATURE REVIEW ON POLICY: ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE CONTEXT OF THE STATE

This chapter is an integrated literature review of South Africa's National Development Plan (NDP) of 2030 and the two National Youth Policies (NYPs) spanning 2015–2030. The choice of words, messaging and policy commitments promoting entrepreneurship are discussed. In addition, the chapter considers the chronology of the policies and the specific mentions of youth and students in both policy documents. The review shows the policy positions on entrepreneurship amongst you and the way that youth are being drawn into entrepreneurship, and the broader challenges that face other entrepreneurs highlighted in policy.

The chapter comprises four main sections. The first section introduces the two policies reviewed: the NDP 2030 and NYPs 2015–2030. This section deals with the chronology of these policies and the way they are implemented. The second section focuses on the policy messages and the way the state deals with youth livelihoods, their daily struggles, and lack of employment. This section explores the pull and push factors to youth into entrepreneurship. The third section covers the promotions of entrepreneurship in policy. I use policy extracts to discuss the policy promotions of entrepreneurship directed at young adults. The final section situates this discussion within the sector of higher education by focusing on the role of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) in entrepreneurship, as defined in the policy documents.

By design the chapter also prompts the central case study of this thesis that is the South African University Fundisa. Bringing a small part of Fundisa in this chapter clarifies for the reader the context of the policy literature, policy making in South Africa and some of the policy extracts are clarified by bringing up Fundisa University partly in this chapter.

3.1 The National Development Plan (NDP) 2030 and National Youth Policy (NYP)

Since it was introduced in 2012, the NDP 2030 has served as a panacea for all policymaking in South Africa. Various ministers under President Zuma's administration referred to the NDP 2030 in departmental strategic plans and programmes. This policy approach and implementation

of the NDP 2030 continued since 2018, when President Cyril Ramaphosa took over the office of president. Relevant to this study is the DHET, which has shown commitment to the view expressed in Chapter 9 of the NDP that "universities must define their niches to enhance the ability to contribute to national objectives" (National Planning Commission, 2012, p. 318). A small segment of South African universities has since focused on entrepreneurship as their niche to address the national objective of promoting economic opportunity among youth (National Planning Commission, 2012a, p.14) and/or to comply with the demands of the NDP 2030. This emanates from policy promotions of entrepreneurship and pressures on universities to report their contributions towards the national policy objectives. The NDP 2030 is cascaded through different levels of governance at universities to achieve its influence on their approach to entrepreneurship.

> I review the NYP, following Apple's (2017) guidance about researching systems that create inequalities in society. This is not to assert that the NYP is responsible for inequities, but it is a literature review attempt to draw out a policy scenario applicable in the South African context. The NYP's objective is the creation of employment and the promotion of entrepreneurship among young people. It prescribes instruments such as the Youth Employment Accord that seek to drive employment opportunities in the private sector. Like the NDP, the NYP assumes that big businesses are well placed to create employment. The NYP is *a youth-specific policy that focuses on increasing employment chances for young people is needed to prevent the profound personal and social effects of unemployment. Young people who cannot earn their own living find it difficult to move out of their parents' homes and be self-sustainable. They are often marginalised by their communities, unable to find a way to engage meaningfully with society. Young people generally do not qualify for the Unemployment Insurance Fund because it only covers those who have previously held a job.* (NYP, 2015, p. 3)

While the NYP is youth specific, it fails to define youth as a group and some of its unique profiles. Students have diverse and unique profiles, and the NYP often misses the opportunity to cater for them when a blanket reference is made to young people. As a result, the youth institutions developed under this policy have failed to provide effective help to student populations standing at the crossroads of employment and entrepreneurship. The NYP has a long process of applying for funding at NYDA, in this way defying the objective to:

> *strengthen the capacity of key youth development institutions and ensure integration and coordination in the delivery of youth services.* (NYP, 2015, p. 5)

Besides the intensified encouragement of students to think about entrepreneurship owing to the lack of jobs, funding and finance for young entrepreneurs is a cause for tension between students' lived experiences and policy claims. The policy claims that there are:

> *programmes to support young entrepreneurs [which] should focus on enterprise education and training; business development, mentoring and incubation; funding and finance, and access to markets and affordable, well-located premises to conduct business.* (NYP, 2015, p. 19)

Policy is not adequate in capturing the nature of this activity among university-educated youth who turn to entrepreneurship when struggling to find jobs.

3.2 Policy: National Development Plan - Vision 2030

The NDP sets out the broader policy context in South Africa. It sets out focus areas such as poverty alleviation, addressing inequality, economic growth, and job creation. This is summed up as follows:

> *The plan's central goals are expanding employment and entrepreneurial opportunities on the back of a growing, more inclusive economy. This will require deepening the productive base, whether in agriculture, mining, manufacturing, or services. By 2030, South Africa should have a more diversified economy, with a higher global share of dynamic products, and greater depth and breadth of domestic linkages.* (NDP, 2012, p. 124)

The NDP shifts the responsibility of creating jobs to both the private sector and individuals. This is done without adequate availability of resources, infrastructure, or a favourable business climate. More specifically, in the case of students, those considering entrepreneurship are not confident that they would obtain funding and other resources to pursue such activity, and, for those interested in finding a job, their chances are slim because of the high unemployment. For this reason, the NDP fails to respond to the issues of students at university as far as transitioning to independence

is concerned, even though, like the NYP, it places an emphasis on entrepreneurship in educational environments.

3.3 National Youth Policy and National Development Plan in higher education

This section examines the rich descriptions in the NDP of (1) promotions of entrepreneurship, (2) economic transformation, (3) youth livelihoods, and (4) the role of higher education and training in national development. This analysis is situated in the research study's interest to provide a holistic account of policy-related challenges confronting the youth, and the structure of economic opportunities in South Africa. The descriptions expose the policy assumptions of the youth's taking up the identified economic opportunities. They also show how the higher education sector is treated as an arena to experiment with these policy ideas, with the youth in higher education as the test subjects. The last two subsections focus specifically on the roles that the National Planning Commission (NPC) proposed be adopted by universities and the NDP's view of higher education in the national development agenda. The subsections also portray the complex and reiterative flow of ideas in the NDP 2030.

Chapter 9 of the NDP 2030 sets out the role of higher education in the national development agenda. It states that "universities are key to developing a nation" (National Planning Commission, 2012, p. 318) and that they play three main functions. These are (1) to educate and train citizens with high-level skills for the employment needs of public and private sectors, (2) to produce knowledge, and (3) to provide social mobility, given South Africa's apartheid history. These descriptions of the roles of universities emphasizes the need for higher education to be seen as providing for the needs of citizens. Those who come out of the universities must be job ready. This has been echoed in public debates on education, jobs, and the economy. Vally and Motala (2014) criticized the acceptance of this view by policymakers, practitioners, and by some graduates that universities must produce job-ready graduates while in the same breath they expect universities also to deliver fit-for-entrepreneurship graduates based on the view that graduates must create businesses if they do not find employment. However, this view is based on a narrow assumption that universities are simply meant to train people for jobs.

The NDP places the responsibility on universities for both producing knowledge and verifying whether it equips citizens for the changes occurring in society and in the economy. The

NPC suggested that, for these responsibilities to be executed, universities must cultivate a culture of research and development. Furthermore, the NDP states that, for the research culture to be cultivated, the universities must increase the research output and throughput rate for master's and PhD students and create a research environment that is welcoming to all (NPC, 2012, pp. 319–320). This placement of responsibility on universities by the NPC through the NDP 2030 exemplifies the way powerful policymakers can exercise their power over university management or decision makers.

The nature of the higher education propositions made in the NDP focus on historical issues of and futuristic ideas for national development. The NDP is minimalistic in addressing the current issues in higher education. The historical focus of the NDP is described as the need to redress the inequality, social injustices, and the apartheid legacy of anti-democracy. The NDP then states that universities provide opportunities to remedy the issues it describes. Furthermore, the NDP states that universities are important to opening new opportunities to people (NDP, p. 318). Regarding the future-focused ideas, the NDP suggests an increase in university enrolments and a spread between vocational, professional, and generic qualifications. In addition, the NDP states that universities need to increase the output of professionals and improve the educational outcomes at university. This shows the multiplicity of ideas in policy planning and the dominant ideas about areas in which universities are expected to contribute.

These descriptions and statements of the historical and futuristic foci in the NDP draw on 18 proposals (NDP, pp. 319–320) made by the NPC. The proposals can be categorized into four main segments (summarised in Table 3). These segments or focus areas are (1) staff development, (2) student enrolments, (3) an increase in graduates, (4) a conducive university environment, and (5) an inclusive university culture and partnerships. The proposals in the first segment seek to increase the number of PhD-qualified academic staff members and improve the quality of teaching and learning. This leads to the second segment of proposals, pertaining to student enrolments. In addition to staff improvements, the NDP states that student enrolments should increase by at least 70% by 2030, from a starting figure of 950,000 in 2010 (NDP, p. 319). The third segment is about increasing the number of graduates the low number of PhD graduates per million people per year. In 2012, this ratio was 28 PhDs per million. The NDP proposes 100 doctoral graduates per million per year by 2030. It also advises that these doctoral graduates should be in science, engineering,

technology, and mathematics for South Africa to become a leading innovator. The fourth segment pertains to the creation of a conducive university environment that is "welcoming to all" (National Planning Commission, 2012, p. 319). The fifth segment is about seeking partnerships to fill the gaps that the universities are unable to. The NDP states that private providers of higher education are partners that can contribute to enabling quality education and training at all levels. These proposals detail a past of low university enrolments and qualified university staff. They seek to redress by increasing numbers. They also envision the future of higher education, provided that the historical challenges are adequately remedied, including the achievement of an inclusive university environment. Although this is explained in other strategic planning documents, the NDP provides very few insights into the current situation and how it seeks to address the challenges that exist in South African universities.

Table 3: NDP's proposals for higher education

Staff development	Student enrolments	Graduates	University environment/culture partnerships
• Increase number of academic staff members with PhDs • Focus on improving teaching and learning by accrediting lecturers as teachers. • Develop future academics.	• Increase the number of students enrolled at public universities. • Increase student numbers in STEM. • Offer extra support to underprepared learners. • Increase enrolments for master's and PhD studies.	• Increase the number of PhD graduates to 100 for every 1 million people, per annum. • Increase the number of women PhD graduates. • Focus on increasing the number of STEM PhD graduates "to lead innovation". • Support graduates to teach in the post-school system.	• Create a welcoming-to-all higher education/university environment. • Develop and expand university infrastructure, in particular, student accommodation. • Offer extra support to underprepared learners entering the university system. • Strengthen the culture of research and development. • Provide capacity-building grants (address privilege and disadvantage) • Partner with private higher education institutions to provide quality education. • Expand the coverage of distance higher education

The NDP's proposals and ideas about the role of universities show the planning conundrums that exist. The proposals are held between the historical and the futuristic. The government's failure to address at the most basic level the legacy of apartheid in spatial, educational, and social development continues to be evident, and this complicates the adequate future planning. This tends to burden universities with the responsibility to execute NDP policy proposals in an educational environment that represents only a small section of the South African society and using limited resources. Because of this practice, other ad hoc national plans masked as NDP tend to be cascaded down to universities for implementation. One example is the rolling out of the EDHE programme, which is enacted with the help of the Department of Higher Education and is designed to create student entrepreneurs and increase entrepreneurial endeavour among academics. While the NDP has made proposals regarding the role of universities in national development, these take up the capacity of already-constrained universities and "offload" onto the university the function of focusing on the differences that exist among university staff, students, and interest groups. Although the EDHE it is an initiative not mentioned in the NDP, it was founded based on developing capacity at universities and supporting student-led initiatives. This is a further example of how other programmes and initiatives have latched onto the ideas of the NDP in the interests of entrepreneurship. These ad hoc initiatives are seen as programmes that lead transformative efforts to deliver redress and create opportunity for students and staff members.

3.4 Mediating policy: The National Youth Policy promotions of entrepreneurship in higher education

This section turns to the descriptions of the NYP's promotions of entrepreneurship in higher education. Although the NYP makes mention of other post-school programmes designed to promote entrepreneurship, I focus here only on those aimed at university students. I analyse the policy descriptions of the programmes and their statements on how they intend to promote entrepreneurship among youth and students in higher education.

First, the policy sets out that the government, through its agencies, has committed a budget of R2.7 billion (approximately £136 million) to finance youth-owned and -controlled enterprises. This can be described as a financial commitment to fund all programmes intended to increase entrepreneurship among youth for the period of 2015–2020. The budgeted finances are an incentive for governmental agencies to cascade the programmes in such a way that they reach the

bottom of the pyramid, where the students are. Whether or not the students access any tangible financing for their entrepreneurship activity is a different question, but for now, it is important to note that the government has allocated funds for campaigns that promote entrepreneurship among the youth.

Second, the policy promotes specific forms of entrepreneurship. These are activities that create youth-owned and -controlled businesses and/or cooperatives (NYP, 2015). The creators of these policies seem to be obsessed with youth ownership of businesses. For example, the NYP (2015) states:

> *Many young people have started their business or cooperative … The number of youth-owned and controlled businesses in South Africa is not well known due to poor report. Initiatives are being implemented to support youth-owned companies in terms of finance, business skills and market linkages across the public and private sector.* (DPWYD, 2014, p. 19)

> *Programmes to support young entrepreneurs should focus on enterprise education and training; business development, mentoring and incubations; funding and finance, and access to markets and affordable, well-located premises to conduct business.* (DPWYD, 2014, p. 19)

NYP 2015 seeks to create and promote ownership of means of production through entrepreneurship. The policy also promotes "control" as a key aspect in the form of entrepreneurship that youth should pursue. Policy further directs the prioritization of youth cooperatives and the creation of new ones at mass scale as vehicles for entrepreneurship among the youth. These forms of entrepreneurship require youths to aspire to ownership, control, and the cooperative values, which are sections that the policy does not address adequately. This policy ideal is challenged by the majority control of the means of production by White-owned companies. For this reason, policies need to address ownership and control more broadly than to assume that entrepreneurship is an answer to the lack of youth-owned businesses.

The third element of policy is about promoting enterprise education, training, business development, mentoring and incubation as practical mass youth-enterprise-creation activities besides financing. The NYP 2015–2020 promotes enterprise education among youth those in

higher education. It considers universities as fertile fields to cultivate entrepreneurs and instil the values described in the previous paragraph. Governmental agencies such as the NYDA and Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA) regularly present training workshops to promote entrepreneurship and to provide basic business-management skills for those seeking to start a business. These workshops take place on university campuses during the entrepreneurship week in September or October, and students are drawn in to take part by pitching their ideas to potential mentors or funders. Attendance of both the training workshops and participation in business development are requirements for applying for NYDA business start-up funding. Those students showing interest are then enrolled into business-development programmes such as business-planning training, run by consultants, and market-feasibility assessments for those selected to pitch to mentors or investors. In addition, the students receive mentorship and, if selected, they enter incubation programmes promoting formal entrepreneurship and instilling entrepreneurial characteristics and behaviours that are considered desirable in running a business. The policies use incubation as a space to entrench their idea of creating youth-owned and -controlled business that have access to markets and have well-located premises to conduct business. The governmental agencies collaborate with universities and fund the creation of campus-based incubators. These programmes are powerful and leave student participants with little freedom as they create businesses that conform to the norms of policy, such as those that do not require resources such as land. This is because access to land is still a problem, as it is owned in majority by White monopoly businesses and beyond the means for small student-run businesses to purchase.

Furthermore, the fourth identifiable set of promotions of entrepreneurship in policy are the development and support of existing youth enterprises and cooperatives (DPWYD, 2015, p. 19). Policy acknowledges that there are existing youth-owned and -controlled businesses and that these must be supported. It then uses these businesses as examples to attract more young people into entrepreneurship. Ordinarily, these examples are used specifically to promote entrepreneurship as an opportunity for independence from a job and as an opportunity for self-employment – being one's own boss. In addition, these promotions are also used to share propositions about future steps that the government needs to take to better support these youth-owned businesses. This includes, as stated in policy, the "support through procurement opportunities and enterprise development, exploring beneficiation as a tool for creating future industrialists" (NYP, 2015, p. 19). Young

people still have not benefited from procurement, as it remains a problematic issue raised in the more recent NYP 2020–2030.

I now turn to the fifth focal point identifiable in the NYP 2015–2020. This point is about the inter-governmental collaborations that promote entrepreneurship among youth. These collaborations mainly involve the Department of Small Business Development, DHET, and governmental agencies such as the NYDA and SEDA. The collaboration efforts are intended to promote entrepreneurship by creating mass parallel campaigns and support packages for young people aspiring to become entrepreneurs. These collaborations further aim to produce governmental reports about the spending of funds allocated to NYDA for youth enterprise development. This policy intention supposes that reports will portray the governance of the entrepreneurship campaigns as transparent and in a positive light. Policy also uses collaboration to draw out "the challenges faced by young entrepreneurs and profile success stories" across departments (NYP, 2015, p. 19). The way policy frames the purpose of collaborations to promote entrepreneurship among entrepreneurs display the government's self-serving interests. It also shows the government's interest to ride the wave of entrepreneurship in the interest of creating for itself a positive image among all interest groups and youth formations, and to attempt to display capitalism as a system that provides equal opportunity when it does not (Goldman & Tselepis, 2021).

I now discuss the final point focusing on the policy's conceptualized view of how youth-owned and -controlled businesses will and/or must trade, generate revenue, and grow. The policy suggests and promotes that young entrepreneurs must relate to opportunities in the different sectors of the South African economy. The policy further suggests that this must be done through preferential procurement by the government. The policy's conceptual view is that youth-owned businesses stand a chance to trade with the government and can generate good revenues from public procurement contracts. Policy sees this as an opportunity to create a crop of youth-owned businesses that will be developed to comply with tax and labour regulations to benefit from state procurement. The trade, revenue, and growth trajectories of youth-owned and -controlled businesses are conceptualized by policy within the limited frame of public procurement, participating in governmental enterprise-development programmes and achieving growth through market linkages facilitated by governmental agencies. These policy views and suggestions have

very little concern for the inequality and poverty affecting the youth who must create these kinds of business. The policies do not deal with the exclusions and corrupt practices in the governmental processes regarding tendering and procurement.

3.5 Promotions of entrepreneurship in the National Development Plan 2030

In contrast to the NYP, Chapter 3 of the NDP places a greater emphasis on economic transformation and growth than on entrepreneurship:

Policy Extract

> *Economic transformation is about broadening opportunities for all South Africans, but particularly for the historically disadvantaged. It is about raising employment, reducing poverty and inequality, and raising standards of living and education. It includes broadening ownership and control of capital accumulation. In addition, it is about broadening access to services such banking services, mortgage loans, telecoms and broadband services, and reasonably priced retail services. It is also about equity in life chances and encompasses an ethos of inclusiveness that is presently missing. This includes equity in ownership of assets, income distribution and access to management, professions, and skilled jobs.* (National Planning Commission, 2012, p. 138)

The NYP pays more attention to entrepreneurship and sees it as a feasible response to addressing the economic inclusion of youth. The NDP does not adopt this simplified approach to youth economic participation that the NYP does. This presents a policy disjuncture and misalignment. This also means that that youth agencies responsible for youth policies e.g. the NYDA and National Youth Council, seek simple routes such as entrepreneurship in dealing with complex policy matters like economic transformation and ownership of the means of production. The following extracts show how the NYP is mostly preoccupied with promotions of entrepreneurship:

> *Young people feel excluded, largely due to high unemployment rates and their inability to participate economically.* (NYP 2020–2030, p. 13)

> *To deal with the above challenges, a comprehensive youth-specific policy recognises diversity of youth; focuses on improving the education system; increases the skills and*

> *economic opportunities including employment and entrepreneurial opportunities for young people; protects youth who are vulnerable including those with disabilities, not in education, employment and training.* (DPWYD, 2019, p. 14)

The following is a proposed policy intervention on problem-solving for employability and entrepreneurship:

> *Progressively introduce practical subjects such as entrepreneurship and e-commerce, agriculture, computing financial trading and investment, green economy, technical skills, and handwork (artisanship) across the education value chain.* (DPWYD, 2019a, p. 17)

The NYP contains further proposed policy interventions for economic reconstruction (following the Covid-19 pandemic):

> *Introduce innovate ways to support young entrepreneurs in a manner that prioritises removing barriers to and creating spaces to help businesses thrive by making data affordable and targeting sectors that are ripe for innovation.* (DPWYD, 2019a, p. 20)
>
> *The NYDA and the Department of Small Business Development to implement grant funding and business support for 100 000 young entrepreneurs in the next three years.* (DPWYD, 2019a, , p. 20)

Finally, the NYP also proposes policy action for a universal income grant:

> *Support young people and young discouraged job-seekers' efforts to enter labour market by introducing a Basic Universal Income Grant – an incentive similar to the Covid-19 Social Relief of Distress (SRD) grant primarily to support youth to transition into employment or entrepreneurship.* (DPWYD 2019a, p. 20)

These terms show the NDP as a document focusing on the macro issues of development at the exclusion of those specific to individuals and demographic groups. This explains in part the difference that exists in the conceptualizations of entrepreneurship among different people in the South African society.

This section describes the use of the alternative terms in the NDP. I begin first with the use of and reference to economic growth. The NDP 2030 presents six priorities for national

development. Two priorities anchor economic growth. These priorities are stated as "uniting all South Africans around a common programme to achieve prosperity and equity" and "bringing about faster economic growth, higher investment and greater labour absorption" (NDP Executive Summary, p. 16). The NDP, through these priorities, portrays its versatile position and approach to achieving economic development. It seeks to achieve economic development and address vast problems that exist in the South African society.

The economic growth objective is presented in the NDP 2030 as one that, if pursued and achieved, will change the lives of poor South Africans. This plan supposes that economic growth will increase individual incomes, create new jobs, and eradicate hardship for poor households (NDP 2030, p. 117). The NDP 2030 rarely separates job creation from economic growth, and the NPC has used job creation as slogan to promote the NDP 2030 to the public and through this gain support (National Planning Commission, 2012a, p. 16). Although the NDP 2030 sees economic growth as the most significant solution to the problems faced by low-income families and poor people, the plan under-appreciates the problem of poverty and poor citizens.

Furthermore, the NDP 2030 asserts that private and public sector investments in educational infrastructure are needed to support a thriving economy (NDP 2030, p. 324). As with other debates and ideas in the NDP 2030, education and students, are drawn into various plans. The NDP 2030 suggests that technology and market changes require education systems that provide skills relevant within and beyond national borders and across sectors (National Planning Commission, 2012, pg. 324). This view brings together all systems providing education and training – primary, secondary, and post-school players. The NDP 2030's assertions about educational infrastructure disregard any differences and difficulties that exist in how an economy can be supported, and it underestimates the barriers to obtaining educational infrastructure. It portrays the private- and public-sector investments as desirable to create access, affordability, and suitability of educational infrastructure, yet the investments are producing the exclusions that the NDP is trying to address.

3.6 DHET's Role in Government Policy Implementation

I now turn to the EDHE[2], one of the governmental agencies that drives four entrepreneurship programmes at universities. The agency is founded on the NDP and ministerial view that institutions of higher education must contribute to the economy, tackle unemployment, and build sellable solutions. The EDHE has a multi-pronged focus on entrepreneurship, covering student entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship development in academia, and developing entrepreneurial universities. The EDHE creates national entrepreneurship programmes and monitors their implementation on university campuses. In addition, the EDHE pursues national and international partnerships for entrepreneurship programmes on campuses. For example, EDHE has partnered with the Student Entrepreneurship Week (SEW), a German concept of promoting entrepreneurship on campuses. Annually, universities in South Africa are given grants to the value of R10,000 to host the SEW activities in the third quarter of the year.

Universities host the entrepreneurship activities under programmes such as SEW, and others as directed by EDHE. However, some universities are even more intentional about entrepreneurship at a campus level. They have centres for entrepreneurship development, which rolls out incubation programmes and startup support programmes. The Centres for Entrepreneurship at universities as organised by EDHE are aimed at creating founders of new enterprises, support economic development and microenterprises in the communities in which the universities are operating. These centres have a specific focus on supporting students at the university campus to explore business ideas and convert those into viable businesses. These centres respond to EDHE and national calls to confront challenges that face young people, such as the lack of jobs and low involvement in the economy. Through such centres at campuses across the country, policy can rear its neoliberal approach to development, converting students into entrepreneurs and fleshing out partnerships that foster entrepreneurship on campus.

University staff members play a central role in actualizing the plans and programmes set at the level of the governmental agencies. There are four categories of university staff involved in the promotions of entrepreneurship at universities. These are the vice chancellor and senior executive management, administrative staff at top and middle level, and the coordinators in the

[2] EDHE is a government programme promoting entrepreneurship at universities. This programme finds its expression in policy and it is a partnership between government and private sector.

Centres for Entrepreneurship. These staff members are contracted under specific key performance indicators (KPIs) that enforce the top-down policy influence on universities such as Fundisa. The vice chancellor works with the deputy vice chancellors, deans, and senior management staff to develop strategic plans aligned to national policy and processes of implementation. The lecturing staff are supposed to align their curricula to the national goals, although some resist following new ideals or tailoring their lecturing to serve such ideals. However, universities have a way of drawing the policy focus into their classrooms or lecture halls. Fundisa is deeply vested in entrepreneurship, and therefore, most of their students are exposed to the idea of founding a start-up or creating a microenterprise. The coordinators of the Centres for Entrepreneurship follow up such developments in lecture halls by creating space for ideation and the pitching and funding of student ideas. Staff members "tick the boxes" in their KPI checks.

Another segment of staff is the administrative block. These staff members have student-facing roles and deal with inquiries, campus experiences, and the processing of requests from students to participate in the different programmes set up by the university. They include those who create information technology systems that support the broader university and those administrative officers who, for example, promote the work of the Centres for Entrepreneurship at different universities.

The student population at university may be divided into two segments of political orientation: those students who are inactive and those who are active in student politics and political movement(s). These have a bearing on how students co-exist on campuses and the way they process campus developments. Politically inactive students are affected by the broader issues that concern the politically active students. There are other reasons for lack of participation, such as lack of urgency, dealing with a challenging academic programme, and taking time to adjust to the university environment. However, all students, active and inactive, have an awareness of challenges that face students and understand how policy influences developments on campus. The #FeesMustFall protest demonstrated the way(s) in which student movements process and deal with policy-based decisions. The fee increases endorsed by DHET led South African students to protest and demand a 0% fee increase. The protest movement also forced the ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC), to deal with the political ideology underpinning the fee increases. This yielded some consciousness on the part of the ruling class to revisit their decisions about fees.

Students in public universities depend on affordable fees to study at the institutions; any increase would result in more financial exclusions. The student voice, when examined from the perspective of #FeesMustFall, has the potential to break through the layers of policy influence by pushing back through vice chancellors, the DHET, the national government, and the political bodies.

Students have broad arrays of interests, talents, study backgrounds, needs, and aspirations for leadership. Students at each institution elect a student representative council (SRC), a formal body advancing their interests at different levels. The SRC is supposed to challenge the hierarchy that by default places students at the bottom. However, the political approach of most SRCs – affiliating with big political parties – can be found wanting. For example, the South African Students Congress (SASCO), an ANC-affiliated political student movement, was met with criticism during #FeesMustFall. The criticism was that the SASCO SRC was protesting a decision made by their mother body, the ANC. In times like these, students feel betrayed by the same SRC, and feel that it is a hierarchy higher than them. The #FeesMustFall movement therefore showed a more revolutionary approach to how students deal with challenges outside of formal structures, including their SRCs. They confront the government and the governing party or regime directly through revolutionary means and leaderless protests.

The permeation of policy through to the university campus and into student experiences of campus does present contentions. The major contentions are about the role of policy stakeholders in higher education and on campus, the changing views of university management on important issues e.g. cutting budgets for student welfare but increasing budget for entrepreneurship programmes or others, trust for the SRC, and the lived experiences of ordinary students.

The creation of policies on curriculum development and adjustment to meet industry needs is one of the ways in which DHET is changing universities. This demonstrates shifts from a purely academic programme to vocational training at university, hoping to serve the industry demands for certain skills. In addition, however, policy also advocates entrepreneurship among students and graduates. This haphazard move also presents other challenges, such as funding for such students and misery in case of failure. The DHET and university management take little responsibility for all of this.

For the second and final points on the policy influences, I refer to the issues of trust (or lack thereof) in the SRC and the lived experiences of ordinary students. As already indicated, SRCs

in public universities, in the majority, are politically affiliated. In 2015/2016 SRCs were dominated by SASCO, an ANC student branch. During this time, however, students had cause to protest the ANC-led government. The proximity of SRCs to the political ruling class presents issues of trust. The broken trust came about from the trend of the SRCs' spending hours in meetings and conferences only to come out as losers pre and post #FeesMustFall. Students have since developed a lack of trust in SRCs and seen them as seeking political expediency at the expense of their constituents' demands. For example, after #FeesMustFall, some of the SRC members involved in the marches were appointed to become members of parliament. They have since abandoned the cause of student demands, seeing themselves instead as a ruling class that has become more concerned with other societal issues. For this reason, the presence of SRCs in the policy flow and influence is neither a solution nor an alternative to sense-making about policy implications for student life at universities such as Fundisa.

The DHET projects its programmes as being centred on the needs of students. However, students have a different view. For example, the delays in the disbursement of NSFAS funding at Fundisa lead to protests almost annually. This demonstrates that the DHET is out of touch with student realities. Students need the allowances at the beginning of the academic year because they depend solely on this money for various expenses including food, toiletries, accommodation, and airtime vouchers. They also depend on these allowances to be able to pay for public transport to reach Fundisa to register and check into their accommodation. But the delayed provision means that these students – the same students that DHET purports to be concerned about – spend their first days on campus without food and cash for daily expenses until their allowances are disbursed. Although the policy agencies monitor other things, they do not prioritize the immediate livelihood needs of students, consequently creating a disjuncture. Even the entrepreneurship initiatives and allocations of staff fail to address the existential needs that students are concerned about. The neglect of students in policy priorities and structure has detrimental effects on how students traverse university life and their ability to cope with their academic programme.

3.7 Neoliberalism at a Historically Black University: Policy influences and the higher education landscape.

Policy influences public universities approach to teaching, learning, and research. The DHET sets policy for public institutions. While policy is enforced across institutions in South

Africa's higher education landscape, it is greater at some universities than in the historically White Afrikaans and English universities. This is because these institutions have the financial means that allow them to exercise some large degree of financial autonomy in developing new infrastructures and programmes. In contrast, the historically black universities must follow policy directions and keep up with the views of the government about running subsidized qualifications relevant to changing government policy priorities.

Universities as such have established themselves on neoliberal push and pull factors. The push factors include complying with the DHET policies that require the production of employable and industry-ready graduates. Universities are pushed through policy performance indicators and can suffer consequences for non-compliance, such as being called out for not putting employability at the top of the university agenda. Entrepreneurship is a pull factor, as it gives some universities an edge of being a university that produces job creators, but also a benefit of relevance in the broader policy discourse promoting entrepreneurship. Some universities ride this wave of entrepreneurship, raising funding for programmes, naming students with interest in enterprise as "founders", and funding some graduates to grow their start-up enterprises.

3.8 Further Research Perspectives on Policy

As discussed in the earlier parts of this chapter, Vally and Motala (2017), Fongwa (2018), Pillay and Mqolomba (2022) have provided local literature on the problem confronting universities in South Africa. Vally and Motala (2014) critiqued policy influence on universities, including their obsession to contribute to economic growth. They found the higher-education views on economic growth and development reductionist, as evidenced in the following quotation:

> The value of education should be defined in socio-economic, cultural, and political terms, and not reduced solely to the needs of economic growth. Knowledge, skills, and the competencies derived from education and training processes are of course critically important for all societies and the well-being of nations. However, the reduction of their value to the needs of employers in a market-dominated economic system, to the exclusion of their wider societal purposes, is a serious limitation on the social role. (Vally & Motala, 2014, p. 3)

Alexander (2014, cited in Vally & Motala 2014 challenged the growing adoption of policy approaches that seek to dictate what universities say about societal issues and how they talk about them to their students. Alexander stated that policy permeates the university structures of governance, forcing the view that universities must create and maintain partnerships with the government and industry players. In addition, Alexander cautioned against the commodification and vulgarization of knowledge through such partnerships. Fundisa's entrepreneurship approach to the pressing societal problem of unemployment among young adults and graduates is the type of behaviour that Alexander challenged. The approach, instead of focusing on creating globally competent graduates and citizens, is producing new service providers in the name of entrepreneurship. The developments at Fundisa show that universities have created a place for entrepreneurship and use this as their approach to interpreting and dealing with problems in society. The university sees entrepreneurship as an opportunity to use societal problems as justifications for promoting entrepreneurship among students and to direct students to create microenterprises that can "hopefully" address such problems.

Mabasa (2022), in writing about building the free African university, challenged corporatization and social exclusion in South African tertiary institutions. Like Vally and Motala (2014), Mabasa argued that the post-apartheid post-schooling system has made some strides in relation to access, but bemoaned the exclusions produced by the same system (social structure) because of the capitalist approach to development in South Africa. Mabasa added that:

> "The resilience of this social structure, and the forms of social exclusion it produces, is facilitated by policy prescripts based on the principles: minimal state intervention; individualization of social problems; market led development, privatisation, and Eurocentric modernization. These have permeated all social spheres and institutions including higher education." (p. 66)

The policy prescripts outlined above echo the overarching argument in this chapter: that policy influence fragments and stratifies any collective effort among students seeking to deal with complex socio-economic challenges. I argue furthermore that students are driven into believing that entrepreneurship is the solution to their problems both on and off campus. The promotion of entrepreneurship on campus enforces the policy prescripts and influences that policymakers are responsible for cascading down through various structures. This has a detrimental effect on

students and individualizes their social problems and reinforces the ideas of market-led development on unsuspecting students.

Honeyman (2016) and DeJaeghere (2017) explained that universities are pulled into the entrepreneurship agenda of policy by some of the crude benefits that policymakers are made to believe about the phenomenon, both in higher education and for society. Universities are made to believe that having students and graduates who are involved in entrepreneurship improves society through the new jobs that are created. This also adds to the false sense of pride about students who create businesses while studying and the use of the profiles of such students to promote entrepreneurship. This puts some students under pressure, but those students involved or pulled into entrepreneurship become part of a complex social experiment without their knowledge. For this reason, the promotions of entrepreneurship at institutions such as Fundisa, including the policy influence in higher education, require extensive scrutiny.

3.9 Funding for student entrepreneurs

Policy plays an influential role in how entrepreneurship is conceptualized and funded (Alexander, 2011). Policymakers in South Africa remain opaque about the sources of funding for entrepreneurship among students. Financial exclusion is a big problem among young people and makes raising finance for the purposes of entrepreneurship difficult (DeJaeghere, 2017; Honeyman, 2016). Formal channels for obtaining finance are closed to those who do not meet the criteria of bankable business plans, collateral, and creditworthiness, which is the case for many student/youth populations (Alexander, 2011; Fatoki and Chindoga, 2011). The policy expectation that students will create businesses is put to the test by the structural inefficiencies existing in accessing capital (DeJaeghere & Baxter, 2014). Owing to a lack of access to capital, people lean towards micro and informal enterprises that can be created with little cash. This does not take away the real obstacles that young adults/people face in gaining access to capital. Linked to the lack of access to capital is the significant role of the way in which people imagine and conceptualize entrepreneurship. Engaging in entrepreneurship can help overcome some hardship, yet it is not a permanent solution in the eradication of poverty and addressing the many challenges relating to financial exclusions.

Previous research has failed to capture the different conceptualizations of entrepreneurship among students in higher education. Although the scholars whose work I build upon (see DeJaeghere, 2017; Honeyman, 2016) were able to show how these conceptions are formed, their work is still limited to secondary-school students whose aim is to pursue post-school opportunities such as tertiary education. My research focuses on students who are already in university, thinking about their future post-university, unlike secondary school students mostly concerned about pursuing tertiary education, as shown by Honeyman and DeJaeghere. In addition, filling the identified gap moves research to holistic understandings of students' university experience in relation to livelihoods, entrepreneurship, transitioning to a post-university life and moves from the limited technical policy conceptions of entrepreneurship. This study contributes to the research areas of entrepreneurship and education.

3.10 A critical take on the NDP as a neoliberal policy outcome and the impact on higher education

The National Development Plan (NDP) 2030 is an outcome of the first national planning commission that was appointment by President Jacob Zuma (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2010). The first national planning commission consisted of eminent persons and persons of celebrity status. They convened in organised spaces and using their knowledge crafted the NDP. In 2010 the first national planning commission was chaired by Mr Cyril Ramaphosa a billionaire South African President and constituted by academics as well as businesspeople holding professional qualifications. This set-up allowed like-minded individuals to establish or chart a plan for South Africans. By nature, the NDP 2030 is an elite project that is expressed in neoliberal policy ideas and capitalist views of development as already demonstrated in the rest of the chapter.

The NDP has exposed itself through its design process and selection of elite people to the shortfalls of neoliberal policy framework. As a result, the NDP suffers problem of commodification and the culture of job consciousness as critiqued by (Vally and Motala, 2017). They warn about how conversations about the way education and training is undertaken under neoliberalism. Vally and Motala critique that neoliberalism designs training opportunities with the view of advancing capital interests. For example, the idea that more youth must get educational training to serve the interests of capital. Similarly, the NDP has been designed in the education

sections on a view that youth must obtain education to earn jobs by serving wealth capital. Whilst jobs are one of the ways to earn, the NDP has adopted an approach that places trust on the invisible hand of capitalism which does not account to the state or the national planning commissioners. Therefore, the NDP can be blamed for outsourcing government responsibility to transform society through redistribution and via other programmes seeking to achieve equality; instead, the NDP ratifies the dominance of the wealthy few in the economy whilst others serve the interests of capital owners. The government role is silent on radical transformation necessary to achieve equality.

3.11 Chapter summary

This chapter has distilled the policy literature that is dealt with in the rest of thesis. The thesis probes policy implications on students and the neoliberal practice of policy making. In this chapter the discussion of the policy and policy planning has been provided. Moreover, the neoliberal policy approach has been critiqued fairly and scholarly reference made to policy research that is concerned about the NDP. Institutions leading the implementation of policy in South Africa has been probed from a theoretical perspective including the composition of the National Planning Commission. Also in this chapter, policy actors and challengers have been contextualised in terms of policy literature. The policy actors discussed include the national planning commission, the ruling party (ANC at the inception of the NDP), presidential incumbents and government agencies and implementers such as EDHE. Challengers have also been contextualised they include the public, SRCs at university and critical scholars.

The latter part of this chapter has shown that the promotions of entrepreneurship are embedded through policy and how these policy ideas on entrepreneurship are resembled in the whole of higher education in South Africa. The prevalence of promoting entrepreneurship through policy has become huge a project and leaves universities with very little choice but to comply. In addition, I have shown how the government cascades down its neoliberal ideas for development such as entrepreneurship. The influence of the government is far-reaching. It also suppresses other forms of student existence and practice. The chapter that follows is methodology.

CHAPTER 4:
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter is a story of the events that happened before, during, and after data collection. I discuss my experiences of fieldwork data collection, the personal and technical struggles of being a relatively inexperienced researcher, and the way in which they shaped my learning experience. Post-fieldwork data collection has provided me with both a feeling of accomplishment and a feeling of detachment. These feelings come naturally and have made me value more the companionship that my participants provided.

This chapter details the order of events and decisions I made during this research project. I have organized this chapter into five parts: First, I reflect on research in South Africa. This is helpful for a reader who has not had first-hand life experience in South Africa. I also describe the process of fieldwork and my positionality. In the second part of the chapter, I explain my methodological approaches, including the overarching design and the pilot interviews used to test these approaches. The third part focuses on access to and the recruitment of participants. Under this section I provide detailed participant profiles and the motivations for selection. The fourth part focuses on collecting and managing data. I explain how interviews were conducted, recorded, transcribed, and stored. In the final section I discuss ethics and approaches to analysis. I have provided several excerpts from the interviews as part of the discussion on ethics, showing the procedures followed in this research to comply with the research ethics requirements of both the University of Oxford and Fundisa University (as previously stated, this is a pseudonym for the case institution). I also use these excerpts to show the implications of these ethical procedures and practices in this study and for the fieldwork data collection experience. I discuss separately the processes I employed for analysing data, including the use of the NVivo application.

4.1 Methodological approach and research questions

The methodological approach was qualitative and aligns with educational research concerned with the role of policy in education. The approach emanates from a well-established purpose of educational research, shared by Atkins and Wallace (2012), who stated that “we carry out research into education in order to help us – and others – to a better understanding of what

constitutes effective teaching and learning" (p.10). In pursuit of this purpose, this research builds on qualitative research studies including those of Bartlett and Vavrus (2014), Honeyman (2016), and DeJaeghere (2017). Bartlett and Vavrus argued that qualitative research is significant in indicating how national policies and external influence is in practice. Honeyman demonstrated in her monograph *The orderly entrepreneur: Youth, education, and governance in Rwanda* that the conversations and authentic engagements that qualitative research enables allow researchers to explore new areas of research. The methodological approach here deals with a new area of research that is "entrepreneurship in education research", explored better through qualitative tools of research than quantitative measures. DeJaeghere's work dealt with policy and educational research in Tanzania, East Africa, and provides a useful qualitative framework for studying the role of policy in higher education. This framework, drawn from Bartlett and Vavrus, provides ways to compare findings horizontally across participants, then vertically, focusing on the hierarchy of the data and transversally, focusing on time and chronology of events. These all inform the qualitative methodological approach of this study. The approach is inclusive, open to new understandings about education, and embraces the practice of researching education in a developmental context.

Furthermore, I drew on some practical research ideas from Honeyman's (2016) and DeJaeghere's (2017) case studies and experiences of researching entrepreneurship education in Africa. These authors provided practical data-collection approaches that suggest ways to access students in educational settings for research purposes. These approaches include time management, covering a wide range of participants, and strategies for researching in a low-resourced setting. These scholars also provided personal accounts about researching policy, including ways to gain access to policymakers. They demonstrated flexibility when policymakers became available for interviews at short notice and were prepared to drop other things to conduct those. Scholars such as Cini (2019) and Raghuram, Markus and Gunter (2020) highlighted practical challenges pertaining to researching the voice(s) of students. They noted shyness and pretence among students as a barrier to amplifying their views. I consider these scholarly perspectives important, and I looked out for these cues among students during fieldwork. I remembered to encourage my participants to speak as much as possible and to express themselves freely.

For the methodological approach, I drew on Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2018) to explain the qualitative research choices I made in this study. I adopted a qualitative design based on the idea that "the social and educational world is a messy place, full of contradictions, richness, complexity, connectedness, conjunctions and disjunctions" (Cohen *et al.*, 2018, p. 219). They also noted that other approaches, such as quantitative research, cannot adequately capture the paradoxes of the social and educational world as these cannot be easily quantified. I sought to apply a research approach that reaches beyond the crude measuring of intentions and traits, which is the norm of researching entrepreneurship among students in higher education (Nabi *et al.*, 2017). This research engages with the social, educational and policy aspects of entrepreneurship simultaneously. Because of this, the complexity of the conceptualization of entrepreneurship among students, policy documents, and university promotions of entrepreneurship is captured more explicitly. For that reason, the research questions were:

- What different conceptualizations of entrepreneurship do students in a South African university articulate, and in what ways do these relate to their own livelihood strategies?
- In what ways do these conceptualizations of entrepreneurship differ, if at all, from those promoted by their university and in policy?

4.2 The overarching research design: Case selection and the university as a case study

I used a case-study approach as the overarching research design in this research project. Simons (2014) defined a case study as "an in-depth exploration of a particular project, policy, institution, programme, or system in a 'real life' context from multiple perspectives that capture both complexity and uniqueness" (p. 9).

This research is a single case study of a South African public university. For anonymity, the institution will be referred to in this study as Fundisa University. The research site captures two important aspects of higher education in South Africa. First, Fundisa University has adopted a policy of creating access to previously disadvantaged groups by admitting mostly students from low-income households. Unlike the former predominantly elite universities in South Africa which

mainly provided academic degrees, the selected university offers both diplomas and degrees. This promotes diversity in the student population and diplomas grant university access to some of those who would not qualify for admission into traditional academic degree programmes. Second, the university, like several other South African universities, is engaged in the transformation agenda of higher education in South Africa, and in particular the public discourse on jobs, skills, and graduate (Wilson-Strydom & Walker, 2015). Both aspects show that the selected site is representative of South Africa's main higher education issues and that it provides access to a diverse student population, which would have helped in capturing a wide range of responses to the questions raised.

The institution also claims through its website, Facebook page posts, and advertorials to have an overarching entrepreneurial focus, which seeks to open unlimited opportunities for students to become entrepreneurs and job creators. The institution has various incubators and technology stations across campuses. Importantly, this provides an opportunity to understand the extent to which the entrepreneurship focus of the institution is having an impact on the students' conceptualizations of entrepreneurship.

Over 50% of the students attending the institution can be described as coming from low-income households. The institution administers large sums of government-aid funding for students. The financial backgrounds of students dependent on aid influence the choices that they make about their university lives and the livelihood strategies they resort to.

For participant recruitment I adopted the snowball technique. Most of my participants were students from across different study fields and levels. This approach was a deliberate effort to balance participant qualification backgrounds and levels of study to avoid attracting only those students who were already enrolled in entrepreneurship degrees or diplomas. As in the case of Vally and Motala (2014), my research approach considers the different and varied lived experiences of students. This case study also includes interviews with university management stakeholders and policymakers. I took deliberate steps to allow students the rare opportunity to express themselves openly and to treat them not as a large quantity of people readily available to fill in a questionnaire but as individuals who could share in-depth accounts relating to the questions of this study.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with participants and a documentary analysis. Of the 37 participants, there were 30 students, one university alumnus and mentor, one lecturer, one student representative council (SRC) member, and four policy stakeholders. The documentary analysis focuses exclusively on the NYP and the NDP 2030.

The events and actions that led to the recruitment of participants for this research show the role of personal efforts and the variable dynamics involved in data collection through interviews. These include an appropriate approach, developing trust, and having the ability to communicate the purpose of the research project clearly. During interviews I recognized each participant for who they were and told them the reasons I wanted to interview them, in this way departing from the tendency to treat participants as "just numbers".

Contacting the policy stakeholders for this research was surprisingly straightforward and made easier by my Oxford affiliation and networks. I met Shaeera Kalla, a known #FeesMustFall activist, when she was reading for an MSc in African Studies at Oxford. We used every available opportunity (each time we had meetings and when sharing platforms at events) to discuss the developmental issues of South Africa. During fieldwork I asked her to be a participant in my research, and she agreed. At the time she was preparing for a parliamentary interview for the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) board posts. She introduced me to the NYDA CEO, and he agreed be interviewed.

I read the profiles of policy participants from the internet to understand some of their recently publicized projects and commitments. In doing this, I discovered the Youth in Business South Africa (YIBSA) structure, and I contacted the organisation to request an interview. My first two attempts were unsuccessful, but I received a positive response to my third attempt. I found the intervarsity student entrepreneurship competition publicized on the Entrepreneurship Development in Higher Education (EDHE) website and it became a useful point in asking for an interview with the director. I introduced myself to the EDHE director and requested an interview, which they granted. I acknowledged in my interview request email that I had seen the intervarsity entrepreneurship student competition promoted on the EDHE website.

4.3 Researching the student experience in South Africa during COVID-19 and challenges of working in the field

I began fieldwork in September 2020, a day after arriving in South Africa on a repatriation flight. I had not been to South Africa in over a year and a half, since returning for my grandmother's funeral in July 2019. Being able to reconnect with all-things-home, however, was particularly special. This all made arriving for fieldwork an emotional, a teary, and somewhat sad-happy experience even though the Covid-19 lockdown restrictions were still in full effect.

At OR Tambo International Airport, I was among those blocked from exiting to the arrival hall. Only three people got to pass and met their families. The officials explained that they made prior arrangements with the South African High Commissions in London and in Istanbul. The rest of us were informed that we would go into state quarantine for 14 days. Some quarrelled with the officer but there was no chance that we would be released – the military forces were on site, and it was clear that no one in our group was going home. I accepted quickly that I was going to be in quarantine and as soon as we got to the state hotel, I set about finalizing the ethics clearance application with Fundisa University, the main site of my data collection. For the first few days I experienced fieldwork as a hopeless battlefield. The pressure to handle arrangements for the Transfer of Status exam redirected my focus to the finalization of my methodological design.

Even though being at home was a familiar experience, the site of data collection remained an unfamiliar territory. Conducting research with students is difficult, daunting, and challenging in the South African context, owing to weak and expensive internet connectivity and spatial inequalities between cities, towns, villages, and townships where students live. These difficulties were exacerbated by the Covid-19 lockdown and because of this I anticipated that it would be challenging to recruit and retain research participants without putting a strain on them. As a result, I felt responsible for raising funding to provide my 30 participants with internet-access data-bundle vouchers. Together we worked around an unpredictable electricity schedule that weakened phone network signals. Most South African university students come from low-income families and every cent matters to them. My participants nearly all benefit from the National Student Financial Aid (NSFAS) scheme, which means they are from poor financial backgrounds. Conducting my

research required me to be alert to the financial status of my participants and the structural issues that affect them.

The WhatsApp interview experience illuminated other important challenges and highlighted some of the difficulties mentioned in the previous paragraph. For example, one of my participants was babysitting while other family members had gone to work. The children were loud, and we kept pausing to allow the interviewee to attend to their pre-existing commitments. Another participant was with friends in a noisy public area but wanted to proceed with the interview, even so. We found a way around this: the participant moved to a quiet place while still being able to keep an eye on their friends. Owing to persistent network problems, other participants opted for short interview calls or resorted to recording voice notes. I also found myself having to deal with interruptions during the interviews, including unexpected visitors and noisy music in my house because some family members would forget that I was on a call with a participant or would, after a while, assume that I was done. Even though I would be in another room, my family house is small and there is very little to stop noise from the living area carrying into the other rooms. There was also noise coming from outside – an unavoidable experience when conducting research in a congested township such as Protea Glen in Soweto. In my case, children played near the window of my room in the shared housing complex my family and I live in. This mixture of experiences shows encounters that can be distracting to one's concentration. These experiences may be more challenging to understand for researchers or readers of this research who have never experienced South African township life or similar situations.

The individual and micro accounts I have described mirror the greater systemic and economic problems that South Africans face. The problems include high levels of unemployment and a lack of cash among poorer and working-class communities. The lockdown also limited the opportunities of informal traders to generate an income, in this way stripping them of a chance to earn a living for their families. The cost of living is high for students who depend on NSFAS to survive their university experience. The cost of internet data bundles has been criticized by NGOs and interest groups since late 2016 but there has been no significant reduction in the cost, even to this day. This cost prevents most young people from accessing the internet and limits their interactions to free-mode platforms such as chatting only on *Facebook Messenger*. This also limits their job-hunting prospects. I often needed to make trips to the local spaza shop (kiosk/unofficial

store) to buy airtime and try to work out how much was enough – this was when I felt I had spent enough on data bundles from my online banking app. I set out on a search for a cheaper source of data bundles, but it turned out that the banking app and the spaza shop were equally costly. Even though I had Wi-Fi connection, it was limited by the electricity schedule. South African youth in townships must compare prices of almost everything and often make difficult choices, for example, between buying a loaf of bread or a data-bundle voucher that is valid for one day only. It is for this and other reasons that I am grateful to the students who offered to participate in this study, as I am aware of all that they go through to survive each day.

4.4 Fieldwork: Project timeline and building rapport

At first, I was ambitious about the extent of my research project. I originally intended to interview students from universities in three African countries, namely, Kenya, Namibia, and South Africa. I visited Kirinyaga in Kenya and spoke to a head of department who confirmed her willingness to assist in granting me access to interview students at her university. My research in Kirinyaga did not go ahead, however, nor was I able to conduct research in Namibia. My attempt to recruit participants from the University of Namibia was unsuccessful owing to stringent requirements for external researchers wishing to collect data in the country. The requirements included obtaining a permission from the state offices and paying fees. Also, the response to emails and telephonic communication was too slow to guarantee that my research plan would be concluded on time. As a result, I refocused my research on the South African higher-education sector, which felt more familiar to me. Months into my planning, I met an African professor of education visiting the University of Oxford Department of Education. He took an interest in my research, and we narrowed down the project from focusing broadly on South African higher education to a more feasible focus on one South African university as a case study. His words were: “When you have your PhD then you can go do research anywhere you want; for now, focus on getting your degree.” This discussion prompted a conversation with my supervisors in which we agreed to restructure and compile a fieldwork plan that would stand a chance of success in South Africa.

This project was originally set to take five months for conducting both the interviews and documentary analysis. However, this took eight months on account of the Covid-19 restrictions and the length of time it took to recruit and manage participants online. I also experienced delays

because of the July 2021 riots and unrest in the Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal provinces of South Africa. During and after the looting and closing of stores and shopping centres in the major cities, there was a slowdown in reaching and confirming appointments with my participants. My residential area was also affected by the riots and looting.

Interviewing, as a major fieldwork activity in this study, took place in two phases. The first phase prior to actual fieldwork involved five pilot interviews with students, as detailed in Section 3.6. The second phase consisted of the main fieldwork interviews for the study, as described in Section 3.8. During fieldwork, I conducted three interviews per day in the interests of obtaining quality interview data and allowing for time to process the responses and interview notes. This was also necessary for my well-being as a researcher. I set aside an additional three months to complete the transcription, writing up the data from field notes, and for conducting preliminary analysis. Like Almoaibed (2020), I followed a realistic schedule, considering the challenges of conducting interviews on WhatsApp; the timeline reflects all follow-ups, note-taking, and transcription.

4.5 Researcher positionality and the experiences of teaching entrepreneurship in South Africa

As a researcher on this project, I have several identities. I am a student at a prestigious global university, a recipient of the Rhodes Scholarship, a South African citizen, a graduate from a three-year Entrepreneurship diploma, and a lecturer in Entrepreneurship and Business-Management Studies. The Rhodes Scholarship enabled me to conduct this research without worrying about funds to cover tuition, accommodation, and fieldwork expenses. I will first discuss obtaining the Rhodes Scholarship, second, being an entrepreneurship diploma graduate, and finally, my role as lecturer and the difficulties in lecturing in entrepreneurship.

In 2016 I was awarded the Rhodes Scholarship to study at the University of Oxford. I commenced my studies at Oxford Brookes University, where I obtained an MSc in Entrepreneurship, focusing on lecturing skills and credentials in the teaching of entrepreneurship at university. For my master's research I interviewed nine South African lecturers and gathered their perspectives. I then proceeded to read for a DPhil in Education at the University of Oxford, still pursuing entrepreneurship in education. The Rhodes Scholarship made my university life easy

by taking care of major costs: tuition, accommodation, fieldwork expenses, and a stipend. The Rhodes Trust administers the Rhodes Scholarship in Oxford and has, for a long time, been publicly scrutinized for the tainted legacy of its founder, Cecil John Rhodes. As expected, some participants in this study read my profile published on the Oxford Department of Education and the Rhodes Trust websites. They had questions about the scholarship and others sought to understand the experience of studying at an international university such as Oxford. I was open about this position and explained the resourceful nature of the opportunity of being on the Rhodes Scholarship. I also explained to interested participants some benefits that come from friendships, peer learning, and mentorship, which they are also exposed to as university students, even if they are at a different institution.

First, my experience of Oxford is based on the kinds of research, educational, and recreational activities that I have been able to participate in. I have listened to speakers in conferences (e.g. Paul Collier), asked questions of the researchers of entrepreneurship education at conferences in other UK institutions of higher learning (e.g. University of Nottingham, Entrepreneurship Conference 2021), and have become more aware of the role that the background of participants plays in the kind of research I am conducting. I felt prepared by the Oxford experience to conduct this research, and I considered that my research participants would ask questions about this experience, including the recreational and educational activities that came with it. I gave my responses to these types of questions at the end of each research interview during fieldwork. One of the questions was from a participant who had just commenced studying towards an Advanced Diploma, who asked, “What is the requirement [to study at Oxford]? Do they only want people who are currently doing their master’s? I just want clarity please.” My response to this question and similar ones was to share briefly about my educational background, decision to go to Oxford, and the website sources they could look at to find comprehensive information about the university’s programmes and admissions process.

Second, in 2013 I graduated with a Diploma in Small Business Management (Entrepreneurship). During the three years of my studies, I took modules in Entrepreneurship, Accountancy, Labour Relations and Marketing. I was set on the road to become a business leader. I excelled in my studies. In addition, I pitched for the Vice Chancellor Innovative Entrepreneur prizes and won R50,000 (£2,100) in business resources to establish a recycling start-up business

that I had pitched. Alongside my entrepreneurship studies, I was working as a mentor for first-year students and as subeditor for the university's student newspaper. I needed cash and wanted to help my family by using access that the university provided to several opportunities as a student. This was challenging, and often I felt overworked and desperate for a more permanent opportunity that would enable me to have a stable life after university. The most positive aspect from my experience studying entrepreneurship was to be introduced to cooperatives. As part of a WIL project, I was placed at a recycling cooperative to assist in their turnaround process. Although it did not work out, I learnt about the challenges that cooperatives face, but also how they have a positive impact on the lives of their members and communities when they are successful. With some of my friends, I then set up the Africa Cooperatives Institute of SA in 2020. Through this institute I have been supporting 70 women-led cooperatives in dealing with governance issues, trade improvement, and using the model to help communities begin to produce products that they use frequently, such as food, clothes, and bricks. I am more in favour of entrepreneurship that is explored through the cooperative model than an individualized approach to it. However, I always remain open to exploring other collectivist approaches to enterprise beyond cooperatives.

Lastly, my career in lecturing in entrepreneurship commenced in 2013, when I was working as a mentor to entrepreneurship students. This job took three hours of my time weekly, and I undertook it alongside other commitments. I was appointed an assistant lecturer from 2015 to 2017, lecturing an introductory Business Management module, until I took up the Rhodes Scholarship to Oxford. In 2021 I rejoined the same institution as lecturer in Business Management. The difficulties in lecturing entrepreneurship and related subjects are the underlying assumptions in the teaching materials. The material authors assume that all students are exposed to business and are from families that are actively engaged in the hierarchy of the economy. However, most students in my class are from poor families, they are consumers of products and own no means of production. Consequently, the students find very little expression or feel overwhelmed by discussion about business, profitability, or acquiring resources to set up new businesses, including property and land, when their families do not have proper housing or running water. I find this challenging, and it serves to expose the economic injustice in South Africa in the absence of transformation in society. Students also feel that the Black business owners and CEOs rise to the positions they are in because of connections or even being awarded government tenders in illegitimate ways. This casts doubt in their minds about the value or legitimacy of Business

Management and Entrepreneurship as a university subject, but equally so, provides a space for confronting the economic injustice and inequality that leaves many Black people impoverished while big businesses rake in huge profits. As I teach business management and entrepreneurship to undergraduate students. I am aware of the lived tensions between the curriculum and everyday livelihood struggles of students.

I also noted, in some instances, that because of my position I could not fully comprehend some of the struggles and day-to-day challenges that my student interviewees underwent. For this reason, I asked probing questions and always sought clarity. This helped me reduce the risk of making assumptions and even avoid doing so entirely. I also went into the research experience noting that my undergraduate experience in South Africa was between 2011 and 2014. Since then, the funding model of NSFAS, campus infrastructure and student needs has changed. I also noted that Covid-19 had introduced further changes and adjustments that were not present during my time as an undergraduate in South Africa. I acknowledge in this research that my understanding of the current undergraduate student experience was limited as a result, since I was not exposed directly to day-to-day student life. I also acknowledged that, as a Rhodes Scholar, I also had most of the funding I needed for my research, unlike some of the participants, who may not have had the funding needed for their studies. This realization helped me to exercise compassion and not to expect that all students will ask me questions about both my Oxford and Rhodes scholarship experiences during research interviews.

4.6 Considerations in exploring the research questions.

All the key concepts in the research questions shaped this research and the instruments used for data collection. These instruments include the interview guide and the approaches for analysing policy documents. The key concepts found in the first question are conceptualization(s), articulation, and livelihood strategies and those found in the second question are promotions of entrepreneurship and policy. These are maintained throughout the process of this research in the stages of participant selection, interviewing, and documentary analysis.

Participants were students, university stakeholders, and policy role players capable of understanding and responding to the scheduled interview questions. The interview questions were designed to be accessible and for this reason, jargon specific to the research field was eliminated,

to avoid confusing participants. For example, instead of asking students what their livelihood strategies were, I would ask students to talk about their needs and how they made up for those. Questions pertaining to background, course choice, university experience, life on campus, life at home, needs, and finance were directed to students. University stakeholders answered questions about options students have on campus, the promotion of entrepreneurship programmes, and funding for student needs. Policy participants offered perspectives on policy development and ways in which their work in entrepreneurship policy is enacted on campus. This is because they allocate some resources for activities that promote entrepreneurship on campus and receive reports. The documentary analysis considered the NYP (2015–2020) and NDP 2030. I sought to explore specific texts about the policy promotions of entrepreneurship in society, among youth and students.

The interview questions directed to students covered the following.

- *Student life experience* pertains to how students experienced life on and off campus, at home, or in other social circles. The intention of the questions under this category was to gather facts about the life stages of students, how university life featured in their day-to-day activities, and other activities they participated in on campus. The answers to these questions provided context about student life and what it means to be a student in a South African university.
- The second category of questions covered *livelihood strategies* and economic options or choices. Students gave accounts of what their needs were and how they took care of these. Students detailed how much they spent on the things they needed, their monthly expenses, incidental expenses, and the frequency of these.
- The third category focused on *future and post-university opportunities*, with questions about plans after finishing studies and support available to pursue those opportunities. The questions asked of students during interviews covered the trajectory of their studies, from decisions about the course choice or options, access, and admission, through to completion and post-university opportunities, including studying further or finding employment. These questions grappled with the students' challenge of whether to choose courses or study programmes that offer skills that are perceived to be in demand or aligning their choices to those that promise entrepreneurship opportunities. Responses to these questions can

possibly provide lessons about the decision that students make in relation to entrepreneurship promotions on campus.

- The final category of questions was about *funding and finances*. Like the second category, these questions focused on the sourcing of monies to pay for studies, regular expenses, and detailed budget descriptions. Under this category, students provided detail about financial contributions from their families, the university, and government funding such as NSFAS, and how often they would receive these funds from the different sources.

The interview questions directed at university and policy stakeholders covered the following areas in line with the research questions.

- *Policy and university stakeholders* explained their knowledge of developments in policymaking as this relates to the second research question on policy promotions in entrepreneurship.
- *University stakeholders* provided detail about campus affairs, their perspectives on student life on campus, and the livelihood strategies they observed among students.
- The *promotion of entrepreneurship* on campus sub-questions probed the messaging about policy-based programmes for youth in general and students at Fundisa University. The question was directed at the NYDA chief executive officer (CEO), EDHE director, and university stakeholders.
- The question about *financing and funding of student activity*, obtaining information about resources available to students to develop their own activities and initiatives on campus and this question was directed at mentors and lecturers.

The questions were open-ended, allowing respondents to provide broad responses and specific follow-up explanations. The concepts contained in the research questions informed the overall research design and the choice of data-collection techniques, the semi-structured interview design, and the approaches to documentary analysis.

4.7 Preparing for data collection: Pilot interviews

The process that has already been described was partly influenced by the pilot interviews conducted prior to fieldwork. Its purpose was to gauge at a small scale the feasibility of the study, improve the study's proposed interview guide, and test the approaches to analysis. It was important

to perform this exercise to gather an understanding of the students as the largest segment of the participants in the study. I sought to discover, for example, their internet connectivity needs, suitable interviewing time slots, their concerns, and the average time they were prepared to spend doing an interview. The pilot interviews followed simple steps involving (1) the selection of participants, interviewing, and follow-ups; (2) transcription of interviews; (3) coding on NVivo (version 12 Pro); and (4) revision of the semi-structured interview schedule. The coding of pilot interviews highlighted areas of improvement required on the interview schedule. The pilot interviews showed that this research study is feasible and can be administered to a larger sample. Two male and three female students participated in these pilot interviews. These participants are students at different South African universities. They were selected based on reachability and their diverse study fields, gender, and levels of study. They were recruited with the help of networks known to me.

Table 4: Profile of pilot-study participants

Student	Gender	Qualification/field of study	Location	University/ institutional profile
1	Male	Advanced Diploma in Management	Johannesburg	(Merged) university in Johannesburg
2	Female	Master of Arts Degree	Turfloop	Historically Black (rural) university
3	Female	Degree in Communications	Turfloop	Historically Black (rural) university
4	Female	Degree in Accountancy	Soweto	(Merged) university in Johannesburg
5	Male	Degree in Education	Johannesburg	Historically White university in Johannesburg

4.8 Developing the interview guide

I designed a preliminary form, using an encrypted Microsoft Office Form, with the view that it would allow me to register participants' consent and collect the following types of data:

- Full names
- Email confirmation
- Confirmation of student status
- Field of study
- Question: Do you consider yourself an entrepreneur?
- Follow-up: Please provide 1 or 2 reasons.
- Funding for studies
- Race
- Gender
- A consent section written to the University of Oxford's template requirements.

The initial feedback I received from the pilot study participants was about the difficulty they experienced when they tried to access the preliminary Microsoft Office Form. Some participants were denied access and others could not activate the form link on the research recruitment poster. I acted promptly on this feedback. I corrected the oversight of only allowing those with Oxford emails to complete the form by enabling non-Oxford email accounts to access the form. I also created a short version of the link to the form. I made it available in full on the research poster and sent the link directly to individual participants on WhatsApp. A lesson I drew from this experience was that the accessibility of a data-collection instrument is as important as the accessibility of participants to the researcher.

In addition to drawing lessons and ideas about enabling participants to access the research tools, I aimed to assess whether the questions on the interview guide were clear and easily understood by the pilot-study participants. I recorded every interview and took notes of any cues or follow-up questions from participants. This granted me an opportunity to improve on questions pertaining to income and frequency. For example, I asked the exact figures about the income that the participants received monthly, including the frequency at which they received it and asked if they shared their income with others. I also broke down long questions to be asked in two parts, such as those pertaining to opportunities and economic choices. For instance, in the opportunities category, I revised one long question into two parts, asking: (1) What are your plans after completing your studies? and (2) What support do you have in pursuing your plans? I also realized after the pilot study the need for follow-up statements that would provide clarity to the response

provided. These follow up statements were: (1) “Please tell me more”, (2) “Please explain”, and (3) asking if the participant had any examples.

From the pilot interviews I generated voice, text, and multimedia data. Managing these sets of data became an opportunity to sharpen my skills in and approaches to data handling. I recorded all interviews in parallel on a computer recording application and, on a voice-recorder. I then labelled all these interviews by date and interviewee initials. I transcribed field notes from each interview, and I labelled and saved all photographs and video clips sent by participants. During this process I understood the limitations and risks of interviewing on WhatsApp, such as the possibility of losing data because of updates to the application or faults in back-up. For this reason, I stored on the cloud. I also mastered my labelling of data and cross-referencing field notes.

In addition to revising parts of the research interview guide, I also considered the pilot interview data when structuring analysis approaches for the research study. I used the data to determine (1) the feasibility of the number of interviews to be conducted, (2) the developing ideas for transcribing and for coding, (3) the types of comparisons to conduct, and (4) best ways to deal with the key terms contained in the research questions.

4.9 Collecting data: Access and recruitment of participants

In this section I describe how I went about data collection. I invited students to register to participate in the study. Those who registered were entered into a pool of participants. I selected participants for the study and individually contacted them to confirm participation; these students also provided some further snowball leads. The criteria for selection can be summed up as follows:

- For students: Registered undergraduate student at Fundisa University and having cellphone or mobile device on which they could be contacted.
- For university stakeholders: Involved with student activities pertaining to student leadership, student life, and entrepreneurship.
- For policy participants: Involved in higher-education policy work, interested in higher-education activism, and understanding student livelihoods.

During the recruitment process I encountered a challenge in my pursuit of balancing racial participation in the study. I hoped to have the Black, Indian, Coloured (mixed race) and White

student populations represented, as is the demography of South Africa. But I was unsuccessful in my attempt to recruit White and Indian (non-Black) student participants in three attempts. In the first attempt I asked a White lecturer at Fundisa to introduce me to non-Black students but did not have the knowledge of any. I asked the lecturer based on the thought that she might know certain programmes or projects that have a wide mix of students. On the second attempt, I asked a Black student who was already participating in this research, who said he had White friends on campus and was willing to share my call for research participants with them. There was no response, even after I carried out a follow-up. In the third attempt I asked a fellow of the Abe Bailey Bursary, a South Africa–UK travel scholarship, to introduce me to White students at Fundisa. She had, however, cut her ties with Fundisa before I began fieldwork data collection.

These unsuccessful attempts did not discourage me in my efforts to carry out the study. I took them as experiences of real challenges of conducting research in a university context that attracts mostly Black students. This is not to deny that having non-Black student participants would enrich this research study. However, the research participants recruited still provided a rich interview experience and comprehensive data, even without some of the non-Black student experiences. A small segment of student participants in the Faculty of Arts still reflected on their interactions with White students, sharing how they were experiencing the campus collectively and along racial lines.

This led me to promote my research to a wider student audience at Fundisa University using different channels. The information was distributed through recruitment poster, sign-up link, sending texts on social media asking participants to register their interest to participate by completing a preliminary biographic data survey, and contacting them through their lecturers.

Among those who expressed an interest to participate were those whose profiles were unsuitable based on the participant criteria of this study. The first group of unsuitable participants, who I did not interview, were part-time PhD students working in executive roles. They did not have the campus experience and would not grasp the livelihood issues confronting a student living on campus. The second group was alumni in general as the focus of the study was on current students. However, I made an exception for one alumnus who played a role of mentor and was therefore considered a university stakeholder.

The 30 students that participated in the study represented a wide range of undergraduate students with diverse student profiles and experiences. The first participant interview, marking the commencement of the interviewing period, took place on 1 April 2021.

It was relatively easy to identify policymakers and university stakeholders but challenging to have them commit to participating in the study. I relied on networks I established prior to negotiating commitment on the side of policymakers and relied on the heads of departments who replied to my requests to get participation from university stakeholders. In some instances, they confirmed participation, including interview appointments, but did not show up. The common excuses were the persistent power cuts, new and urgent commitments, and dealing with Covid-19 infection or bereavement. Among university stakeholders, two interviews with academic staff had to be cancelled after several no-shows at interview appointments. In total, seven interviews with university and policy stakeholders were finalized without the two other interviews of academic staff.

4.10 Research participants

Participants in this research were students enrolled at Fundisa University (also referred to as the institution) and university management stakeholders, as shown in Table 5. Student participants in this research are broadly categorized into (1) those who have created microenterprises or express some general interest in entrepreneurship and (2) those who have no particular or fixed interest in entrepreneurship. This ensures a coverage of the range of experiences and attitudes to entrepreneurship, including its varying articulations. These broad categories were used to ensure that the sampling of student participants captured the differences in how students experience and encounter the idea of entrepreneurship and bring in perspectives from those not subscribed to the idea of entrepreneurship as promoted in policy and within their university.

Table 5: Research interview participants and documentary sources

Focus areas	Unit of analysis
Research participants	• 30 students • 3 university stakeholders • 4 policy stakeholders
Documentary analysis	Source documents: • National Youth Policy (2015 -2020 & 2020 – 2030) • National Development Plan Vision: 2030

4.10.1 Students

The first category of respondents is those who have created microenterprises or have a broad interest in entrepreneurship. They provided an interesting opportunity to understand the articulations of entrepreneurship as put to action among students, the way it is conceptualized, and ways that these differ from the policy promotions of entrepreneurship. This category includes those students who have not yet taken a decision to create any microenterprise but are aware of entrepreneurship activities and projects on campus and have thoughts about the practice.

The microenterprise activity can be linked theoretically to those students who are mostly concerned about earning an income while studying (DeJaeghere, 2017; Honeyman, 2016). Some of these students are those from low-income households pushed by their family income conditions into entrepreneurship, creating microenterprises as a result. Some students see this as an opportunity to explore enterprise and learn by doing. In this category again, there are those students from relatively wealthy financial backgrounds seeking to use micro-enterprise or their broad interest in entrepreneurship to exploit opportunities and use their resources in doing so.

The second broad category of students interviewed are those with no particular interest in entrepreneurship. These students are focused on their studies and are generally not bothered by the idea of entrepreneurship even though promoted in policy and by their university. This group enriched this research with conceptualizations of entrepreneurship that are not tied to any entrepreneurial experience. In addition, this group provided interesting reasons about their own

conceptions of entrepreneurship and their reasons for not engaging in entrepreneurship despite the intense promotions of it in policy and by their university. Table 6 below shows the summarized profiles of student participants.

Table 6: Student participants' information

Category	Research Participants	*n*
Gender	Male	14
	Female	16
Study background (faculty/college)	Engineering	4
	Management	13
	Humanities	1
	Sciences	7
	Arts	3
	Law	1
	Information Technology	1
Level/year of study	1st	2
	2nd	7
	3rd	15
	4th	6

4.10.2 University stakeholders: Alumnus, SRC, and lecturer

I interviewed three university management stakeholders, each representing a different group. These participants were an alumnus, a member of the SRC, and a lecturer. They represent partly the hierarchy that exists in Fundisa. Alumni, SRC reps, and lecturers enjoy some opportunities that are not necessarily open to all students within the university. For example, alumni make up the university convocation, a body influencing the university's governance decisions. The SRC enjoys access to multiple management meetings of the university, has seats on university council and influences some decisions that affect students. Lecturers teach students and conduct research. They are academic members of the institution and play a major role in the experience of students on campus through their teaching and the philosophies they adopt in their

lecturing and assessments. Furthermore, the campaigns intended to promote entrepreneurship are pitched to the lecturers first and only after obtaining approval are they implemented on campus.

The alumnus shared experiences about the institution, student life, and transitioning to the world outside of the university. This provided relevant insights about the university as an arena for student development and a place of preparing for the future. In addition, the alumnus interview provided an example of how some of the alumni talk about the university's promotions of entrepreneurship directed at final-year students.

The SRC is democratically elected by students and given mandate by either their political organization or by the same students. Often the SRC is involved in reactive work of solving problems and challenges experienced by students on campus. For example, students experiencing exclusions on the grounds of finances or academics may consult their SRC for help. The SRC records issues and problems so that they may report them in university management meetings. The SRC is a branch of both university management and students. It is often accused of representing the conflicting interests of political parties that are seen by the university as being responsible for solving the student problems, including additional resource allocation for universities. At times students complain about their demands being unmet because the SRC sides with the university management and, in other instances, the SRC complains of being side-lined or disliked by management for presenting and defending student demands. The SRC is expected by students to manage multiple meetings, representing students in management forums, and delivering on their political mandate or manifesto.

Lecturers teach, conduct research, and provide mentorship to students. The lecturer perspectives in this research are important since they are involved with students through teaching and learning. Interviewing a lecturer has allowed the study to capture the complexity of the role, its intersection with student life, and the needs, options, and choices that students have. The role is present in many phases of student experience, such as course design, lecturing, mentoring, and postgraduate student support. In addition, lecturers attend faculty meetings as members and are recruited to work as agents of university partners, for example, lecturers working as faculty advisors for Enactus (an international not-for-profit promoting entrepreneurship among students at Fundisa and other universities). This and other examples show that lecturers have a voice about the promotion of entrepreneurship on campus and influence the way students explore some of

these. They do this while observing the academic development of students or even the way they are navigating student life.

4.10.3 Policy stakeholders: EDHE, NYDA, YIBSA, and #FeesMustFall activist

The policy stakeholders provided perspective on policy promotions of entrepreneurship directed at young adults (and consequently students). These stakeholders responded based on their roles and scope of work in policy. The EDHE and YIBSA representatives provided a general perspective and insights on policy. The #FeesMustFall activist provided an independent view into the needs of students and shared critical thoughts about entrepreneurship among students on campus. The NYDA representative provided comment on policy development and explained in detail how the policy ideas are enacted. All the interview data and multi-pronged perspectives have been brought together in analysis to form an in-depth research case study.

Shaeera Kalla is an activist of the #FeesMustFall movement formed in 2014 to fight against university fee increases in South Africa. The movement was successful in retaining a 0% fee increase for the 2015 academic year. The movement was broadly concerned about student livelihood on campus. Its focus included student accommodation, exclusions, and decolonization. This research is concerned with the material conditions of students and has used the #FeesMustFall experience and analysis by Kalla, in part, to understand the student life issues, the countrywide student issues also affecting Fundisa, that might not be obvious in the other sets of interviews. The movement communicated nationally and chose a leaderless approach to run its affairs. The insights from the movement enrich this research by showing contradictions in policy ideas, such as providing funding to students to create entrepreneurship initiatives but not to pay for their university studies.

4.11 Data collection

Data collection methods in this case study entailed semi-structured interviews, including the collection of photos and videos from all participants (detailed further below), and a documentary analysis of policy texts. The data collected included biographic data from participants; interviews with students, university management, and policy stakeholders; and data from the documentary analysis of the NYP and the NDP: Vision 2030 of South Africa. The

interview process was redesigned to take place online in response to the changing circumstances and regulations associated with the Covid-19 outbreak.

In this research, WhatsApp was used with the students as it is a popular instant-messaging tool among this cohort. WhatsApp contact numbers of students were obtained from their sign-up forms. On the scheduled date and time of the interview, participants were called via WhatsApp and asked questions as per the research interview schedule. After the interviews a few follow up questions were sent to student participants. Student participants were each credited with a R120 (approximately £6) data-bundle voucher on their network provider for internet access for using WhatsApp during the interviews and sending additional information via the messaging service.

The Microsoft Teams and Zoom applications were used to conduct interviews with university and policy stakeholders. The use of Teams and Zoom was motivated by evidence that these applications were used by these stakeholders in their day-to-day work. The research process also rode on the wave of an increased use of online meetings because of the Covid-19 limitations on face-to-face meetings. The university and policy stakeholders also had to complete the pre-interview survey, consisting of a section requiring person and role information and a section on consent.

Kaufmann and Peil (2020) showed that participants' response rate in internet-mediated research, such as on WhatsApp, is quicker than trying to reserve an in-person interview slot, since these media are part of their daily activity and social interaction. However, these depend on the availability and connectivity of both cellular phones and software applications (e.g. WhatsApp, Zoom, Facebook). Any lack of access to software and cell phones can compromise participation and asking participants to use unusual software can affect the response rate (Almoaibed, 2020). Overall, my chosen design and the use of WhatsApp and the other applications allowed broad participation and some flexibility since the technology was readily accessible to participants.

4.11.1 Recording and transcribing the interviews

I transcribed the interviews manually, except for those longer than 45 minutes. The process of transcription was lonely and an enormous task. I transcribed the longer interviews on Happy Scribe, a tool that transcribes voice recordings. I checked the transcriptions individually for any errors associated with multiple accents picked up during conversion.

During transcription I dealt with anonymity and confidentiality in two ways. First, I assigned a pseudonym to Kat to protect his identity. For those participants who granted consent to be named I have used their real names, and I have mentioned their roles in their respective organisations. Second, all recordings are stored in a secured cloud folder and will be destroyed after the research project is fully completed and thesis finalized after examination. I refer to student participants by ID or number allocated to them, not their real names, to maintain the participant anonymity and data confidentiality.

The interview transcriptions contain information about the date, time, and duration of the interview. All responses have been transcribed verbatim and are recorded under each question, including the exact way that I posed them to the interviewee. The student and researcher personal introductions have been transcribed but the real names of student participants and the name of their university have been censored. This follows the commitment made during the ethics clearance application that the university name will be replaced with a pseudonym in reporting the research findings.

Field notes were taken during all interviews. These notes provide a collection of additional information provided by interview participants. These notes detail other work that the participants did besides studying or working at Fundisa University or things that they took interest in; for policymakers, this included the initiatives they took interest in beyond their governmental roles. The field notes also record the general interview experience, glitches in network connection, feelings of participants, facial expressions, and their thoughts about the research project. These notes support the transversal approach applied in the study.

4.12 Ethics statement

The sample of participants in this research comprised primarily students from low-income households, most of whom are Black and engaged with the idea of entrepreneurship either as a possible option or a preference for survival. I was also aware that some of the students I interviewed had similar university experiences to mine. For this reason, I remained conscious about bringing my own experiences into the research interviews. As such, I reserved talking about my experiences for the end of each interview when participants asked me questions. Brooks, te Riele and Maguire (2014) highlighted the criticisms that can be levelled at researchers who

conduct research on participants who may share similar experiences to the researcher. Using the case of a Black woman who was formerly a schoolteacher, they reported the emotional experience that she had to endure when interviewing her former colleagues in conducting her PhD research. She felt as though she was "riding on the backs of others" to attain an additional qualification. Other criticisms of this include the risk of taking advantage of an easily accessible group of participants without complying fully with research practices and not declaring biases. This research is guided by British Ethics Research Association (BERA) guidelines and has complied with the local requirements for ethical research, in this way freeing this research from some of these criticisms.

It also appears that these criticisms are especially relevant when the research in question is based on pre-existing conditions and other work relationships. The situation in this research is distinct from the dilemma shown by Brooks *et al.* (2014) as I identified participants from an institution that I am not directly attached to and have no history of working with or for. This distinguishes me from a researcher who is researching their own colleagues. I guaranteed voluntary participation for all participants, assuring them that they were allowed to leave the study at any time throughout the process of data collection.

In addition, I learnt other ethical lessons in my engagement with the ethics committee at Fundisa:

- In reporting study findings, I use a pseudonym instead of the university name to protect the institution's public image and to avoid a situation in which the research findings can be used against the university. I chose the pseudonym "Fundisa", which is an isiZulu term meaning "teach". Its root word is "*funda*" mean to learn but the pseudonym surpasses this root word and recognizes the work of teaching in a university and the different connotations attached to it (to teach someone and something meaningful, starting off by recognizing that "someone" as having their own ideas and ability to think). The term "*fundisa*" is used in family, societal, and group contexts when referring to knowledge sharing and raising and nurturing younger people or children.
- In reporting student interview findings, I use pseudonyms instead of the real names of students. The pseudonyms are African names in the languages of the student's

surname (e.g. if the student had a typically isiXhosa surname, then I chose a common isiXhosa first name as their pseudonym). I prefer being addressed by name as it makes me feel recognized, seen, and valid when I have introduced myself to a person or a group of people. I prefer the same approach in this research and throughout the interviewing process I called my participants by their own names. Naming my participants (by pseudonym) in the reporting of findings is important to me for this reason. The pseudonyms used are like the student participants' real names and enable me to report richly on each student's experience. I use pseudonyms sparingly with the university management stakeholders and policy participants. For example, I have used Shaeera Kalla's real name but use positions with reference to the EDHE director, the lecturer, the SRC representative, YIBSA representative, and NYDA CEO for ease of reference and because of the powers vested in these roles.

- Each student received a 1 GB data-bundle voucher, enough to complete the interview call and send multimedia files back to me. Under special circumstances involving bigger files and extensive follow-up conversations, student participants asked for additional data vouchers. I used part of my scholarship stipend to assist these students and encouraged them to ask for more data bundles if they depleted their vouchers during the follow-up conversations.

I had to find creative ways to distribute the data-bundle vouchers. I asked each student participant to confirm the phone number they would use for the WhatsApp communication. The pre-interview texting on WhatsApp with participants, before I issued the data bundles to them, helped confirm their cellular phone numbers. In addition to the cellular phone numbers, I asked the participants to confirm their network service provider so that I could issue the correct data bundle. The participants used common network providers in South Africa, namely, MTN, Vodacom, Telkom and Cell C. I sent confirmation screenshots to each student participant for record purposes.

I experienced a challenge in deciding the point at which I would issue the data bundle: whether before or after the interview. I feared that some participants might

drop out of the project after being issued the data-bundle voucher, without completing the interview. My fear emanated from the fact that it was within their right to drop out from the research study at any point they, in this way creating expenses that could not be accounted for. In contrast, I was concerned that participants that would be unable to participate if the data bundles were not made available prior to their interviews. I was also concerned that some students would not trust my promise to credit them with a data bundle at the end of the interview. My approach to this challenge therefore had to be based purely on mutual trust and the rapport already established with the participants. I asked each of the participants to use their own data for the interviews and I credited their cellular phone accounts immediately after the interviews. In three exceptional circumstances I had to credit the students with a data bundle before the interviews. Those students did not have any of their university-issued data bundles available.

Further ethical factors were considered in the research interviews conducted with policy and university stakeholders. These were to request to record the interviews, allow participants the option to either switch off their camera or leave it on during the interview calls, and give them the benefit of using either their real name or a pseudonym when cited in the reporting of findings. The administration of ethics in this research involved, at the basic level, the consent form completed by each participant as a confirmation of participation.

4.13 Research reciprocity

Eleven students asked me questions at the end of their interviews. First, the questions were about the funding for my studies. The student(s) wanted to know about my livelihood as a South African living and studying in the United Kingdom. They wanted to know if I had accommodation, meals, and other essentials I needed. These students asked me a question common in student conversations in South Africa, where affordability of all student basics is generally a concern. This demonstrates a level of trust developed between me and the student participants.

Interview Excerpt 1

Interviewee: *So, is it covering everything there or do you still need to take out of your pocket?*

Researcher: *It's covering all the expenses that can keep me in the UK basically.*

Interviewee: *How did you fund your studies?*

Researcher: *I got the Rhodes Scholarship.*

Excerpt 1 above is an example of an exchange and shows a specific word choice of a student asking me questions. The words include covering expenses, funding, and covering of "everything". This is common in the manner that students asked me questions. This, in one way, shows the real concerns that the interviewees had about being students and, in another way, their own realities. Being able to respond to them and tell them that I had the basics I needed, even though I was in a foreign country, reminded me of my privileges both as a student at the University of Oxford and a Rhodes Scholar. It was clear to me that they too would use the same opportunity if they had it. For this reason, I had to accept all forms of questions about this, including rather long questions and those about the process of coming up to Oxford or getting the Rhodes Scholarship.

Interview Excerpt 2

Interviewee: *I don't really have a question. How is it being at Oxford, an international university, and how did you get there? I also want to get there.*

Researcher: *Well, that is a good question. I have a long history of studying and I started at a TVET college in 2008. I finished in 2010 and joined university in 2011 and I did my first qualification and finished it in 2013 and did another one in 2014 and finished my master's degree in 2017. ... It is also important to know what you want to study at Oxford if given the opportunity to go and study. That helps a lot of people would like to go and study at Oxford. There are lot of other international scholarships for people who want to go study. ... I got the Rhodes Scholarship to go study in Oxford and I would encourage you to apply for it should you consider studying at Oxford – Google it. There are also YouTube videos of different scholars explaining how they got the scholarship. I also maintained a good academic record through studying and enrolling for postgraduate education.*

In the excerpt above, the participants showed an interest in my experiences, they asked about the Oxford student life experience but also aired their hopes by saying things like "I also

want to get there" (Excerpt 2). I used the opportunity to give a detailed response, as recorded on the excerpt below, starting with the words: "Well that is a good question" (Excerpt 2). This was good practice for me and the best way to return the favour to my participants in the most effective way.

Interview Excerpt 3

Interviewee: *What opportunities are there for other students where you are?*

Researcher: *I am at the University of Oxford. If you get a scholarship you can come up to Oxford. It takes time to apply for each of the available scholarships and require that one creates a distinguishable profile.*

Interviewee: *So, what is the requirement? I am doing an advanced diploma. Do they want people who are currently doing their master's? I just want clarity on that please.*

The other set and direction of questions was about opportunity and the perception that being at Oxford was better than being in South Africa. Echoing this is Excerpt 3 above, from a participant who wanted to know if there were any opportunities for "other" students where I was. The student "othered" herself as not belonging with those in Oxford or those doing PhD or outside of her study setting. This was a challenging question to answer as opportunity comes in different ways and forms, but I responded to the student in the best way I could and that was to take from my experience of coming up to Oxford. I reassured her that there was opportunity for "other" students. The interviewee wanted specific details, for example, the requirements and clarity about the type of study fields she could qualify to study in Oxford. I directed her to check the University of Oxford website to understand the different requirements for admission. This demonstrated my commitment to providing truthful responses to my participants and empowering them to find their own answers to their questions or concerns outside of my research.

The type of questions asked by participants revolved around access and funding to be in Oxford. These questions were similar among those participants who asked questions. The opportunity to ask questions provided an opportunity to reflect on the higher education experience. It also brought into the spotlight the concern about access and funding.

Interview Excerpt 4

Interviewee: *So how did you get there?*

Researcher: *That's a good question. So, I exactly moved along maybe a similar journey as yourself. I got into education. I did my matric and finished it and went to university. I went on with my studies. I volunteered quite a bit and developed a profile and got the Mandela Rhodes Scholarship to do a master's here. After the Mandela Rhodes Scholarship I got another scholarship called the Rhodes Scholarship and that's the scholarship that is paying for me in the UK.*

Interviewee: *That's good, congratulations.*

The question "How did you get there?" shows that the student wanted to find out about how I gained access and where I got the money to study at Oxford, as shown in Excerpt 4 above. I responded by drawing parallels from my academic background to those of the participant to show the real possibilities and difficulties that I encountered when seeking access and funding to Oxford. I also detailed how I built my academic and career profile over time. This was a useful opportunity to share some life lessons with my participant but also to aid their potential. As a researcher, I found this to be a mutually rewarding exercise of rapport-building through information- and knowledge-sharing.

Interview Excerpt 5

Interviewee: *True that. I have got clarity now. So, they gave you accommodation, everything? Is everything arranged?*

Researcher: *Yes, I needed those. So, I got support with all of that.*

Interviewee: *That is very important. Thanks for the information. I would then check and understand the requirements as well and a way of moving forward. I would also be telling other students now that I got the information, I need to also to give advice to them so that they can also see that we as black children or young people have got opportunities to study abroad and be funded. Moving forward at least with the ideas and the understanding that we have, we can at least enhance them to be fruitful in our country and in the international level.*

Even though some of my responses felt to me like blowing my own horn about some of the achievements I attained, I was careful to begin my response telling where I started before, I could attain those achievements. Excerpt 5 above highlights a big challenge in higher education in South Africa, and that is student accommodation. This interviewee asked about what my scholarship provides and used "accommodation" as a standard of providing "everything".

The second form of questions were about my academic track record. This question was motivated primarily by the interviewees to understand how I became a PhD researcher and to understand what it would take if they too wished to pursue academic journeys. One participant engaged on this at length, even trying to understand how I graduated from a diploma to a PhD, something that is extraordinary in his view. My response to this was to share a timeline of my development and my diverse experience in higher education.

Interview Excerpt 6

Researcher: *If I understand your question correctly, you are saying what did I do during my schooling or university days?*

Interviewee: *Yes.*

Researcher: *I completed my schooling or my high schooling through a TVET college. And I came to the University of Johannesburg where I did a qualification in entrepreneurship. I then progressed through various postgraduate qualifications and got a scholarship to go to Oxford where I did another master's degree and now doing this PhD research. So that is the nature of my academic journey.*

It was interesting for me to hear a student participant asking a background question entwined with asking what my DPhil research was about. In my response, I embraced the question and used the chronological approach to respond but also answered about the purpose of my research.

Interview Excerpt 7

Researcher: *As I have said, I am a researcher doing PhD research at Oxford. I am a South African and a Rhodes Scholar. I went to Oxford in 2017 and I returned last year. I have done most of my studying here in South Africa. There is only one postgraduate qualification that I have done away from home; finished it and now I am doing this qualification. My*

story sort of revolves around education. I have always studied and wanted to learn new things. I am just interested now in the experiences of students at universities so hence my research and this interest come from my background. I have been a lecturer for three years before going to the UK and I am back now lecturing at the University of Johannesburg. I have always had an interest in higher education.

The responses to questions about my background, educational experience and my PhD experience had a similar tone. For instance, participants wanted to know about the types of opportunities available for them in Oxford and how I came to be admitted into the PhD programme. In response, I provided details about my personal and academic background. I sought to generate a conversation that would probably lead to detailing the chronology, in which case the participant did not have a follow up. In other words, I was careful not to bombard those participants who asked questions with more information than they had asked for.

I shared about my TVET College experience, then my time studying at the University of Johannesburg and then the University of Oxford. I also explained that I was also a beneficiary of NSFAS, and I was truthful in telling them about the unpleasant experience of being at university without enough money (relying on NSFAS). I also shared my experiences of studying with hopes of improving life at home; though burdensome, it was a feeling that I welcomed, being of the first generation in my family to graduate.

Interview Excerpt 8

Interviewee: *What field are you in?*

Researcher: *I am in the field of entrepreneurship education – so my PhD research is in education.*

The third category of questions posed pertained to my PhD topic and field of study (see Excerpt 8 above). It was easy to answer this question; I stated that my DPhil research topic was "Understanding conceptualizations of entrepreneurship among students in a South African university". I expanded to explain that under the topic I was having conversations with a wide range of students, policymakers, and university stakeholders such as lecturers, mentors, and management about the ideas that students mainly hold about entrepreneurship and how they go about it.

Interview Excerpt 9

Interviewee: *I have a question. What did you study?*

Researcher: *I have studied in multiple fields starting with entrepreneurship, management, engineering and now I am in education. My PhD is in Education.*

Taking questions from the student participants took me back to the composition of my educational qualifications and fields of study I have experience in. Reflecting and talking about my academic record and the fields of study I am trained in made me realize that I am not a social scientist, an engineer, a manager, or even an entrepreneur. The participant in Excerpt 9 above wanted to know what qualifications or study background I have. I respond by showing my dynamic academic journey and my response was open to the participant's interpretation.

Interview Excerpt 10

Interviewee: *You say you are doing your PhD right? What are you specializing in?*

Researcher: *I am doing my PhD in Education. I have a reasonable record of studying up until now. My research is around entrepreneurship education. I ask students questions and talk to them about entrepreneurship. Hence, I got interested in your answer that you were not going to start a company. My work focuses broadly on the experiences of students in HE.*

Interviewee: *What is it that you are studying?*

Researcher: *I am studying for a doctoral degree in Education.*

Interviewee: *What motivated you to do a doctoral degree?*

Researcher: *I have always wanted to study, and I had a progressive academic journey. I got inspired to do a PhD after my university teaching experience. I also think this will be good for me to contribute to higher education.*

As with the other lines of questions, other participants also asked about the DPhil study and my specialization. I got to realize through these questions that not all the participants understood what it means to be reading for a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Education. When a participant asked the question "you say you are doing your PhD right? What are you specializing in?", as shown in Excerpt 10 above, this reminded me of the way my family and friends would ask

the about the focus and the aim of my reading for the PhD in a broad sense. Often, they would ask this question based on multiple interests such as what career I will be able to build out of my PhD experience, trying to know what about education I am researching and even wanting to find out whether the skills gained in the PhD experience are sought after or not. Each time this question is asked I respond by sharing openly my interests in education, starting with my own educational experience and my work in the South African higher education sector that interested me in pursuing a higher research degree. I do all this understanding that the questions are not meant to be tiresome by those who ask them, but they genuinely want to know. I also responded understanding that those students, family members and friends who ask are mostly Black people who rarely have access to PhD holders or researchers.

Interview Excerpt 11

Interviewee: *I want to ask that what exactly is your study about. I know that it is centred around Fundisa, but is it really about?*

Researcher: *The study is like any other study in social sciences in that they are quite interconnected. I am talking to students about their livelihoods and their prospects post university with the view that I would then gather the conceptions of entrepreneurship. Whether at all this is something that features and in what way does it feature. What then my study serves are ensuring that we capture the experiences of South African university students, and we document these, ensuring that policy and other forums understand the lived experiences of South African university students. My study then is with reference to [Fundisa University].*

Interviewee: *So ultimately once you have gathered all these information, written your PhD, and passed. Are you planning on this study having some form of a positive impact on students?*

Researcher: *It's hard to predict that because you have so many other actors or people who are going to have a say in terms of how such research can be adopted. As part of the study, I review the National Development Plan and the National Youth Policy, meaning that the study will have some implications for practice, but it is up to the practice to adopt that. What we will be having is a progressive academic debate in terms of these issues. I think that is an achievement that I feel would be a positive one. I think a study like this one will*

be loud enough to draw the attention of other players into how students are experiencing university and the concerns that students have as they go through the training in thinking about post university opportunities.

Excerpt 11 above is an example of the varying levels of interest in understanding the research study by research participants. “What exactly is your study about?” asked one of the participants, even though this question was answered on the research recruitment poster and in the pre-interview survey. The participant acknowledged that he knew it was about Fundisa, as per the briefs and my introductions both on WhatsApp and during the actual interview. I had a conversation with the participant about the study’s purpose and aims. Even though I shared this information, I also realized that the study was still taking shape and that some of these statements would change after the interviews.

The fourth question was about life in the United Kingdom, as a student and as an outsider. The interviewee who asked the question was interested in race relations, colonial history, and what it took for me to adjust to life in the UK. My response was brief. My experience of the UK was summed up as that of an opportunity to create new networks, learn about other cultures, and a chance to confront my fears. I appreciated the views about colonial benefits that the UK continues to enjoy today but I could not take that conversation further. Rather, I became aware that my scholarship, among other things I enjoyed in the UK, were paid for through colonial proceeds. The final type of questions pertained to opportunities. Two participants asked me about opportunities available for people like them in Oxford. In this instance, “people like them” meant people with a similar profile to them: living in South Africa, where job prospects are low but also interested in pursuing any available opportunities.

Interview Excerpt 8

Interviewee: *If I may ask, do you think it is also possible to lecture in the Department of Sports Science there at the University of Johannesburg?*

Researcher: *I would not know because I am not close to the department, and I do not know much and do not have much information about the UJ’s sports department. So, for accurate*

information you would have to inquire directly with them to find out that kind of information.

Interviewee: *So, do you think that you can go back and lecture at Oxford? Is it your aspiration to lecture there?*

Researcher: *Well, I would not predict that, but I know I will be here in South Africa for a long time. In the future there may be international opportunities, but I would not know whether I would be able to take them or not. But at this time, I know that I will be in RSA for a long time, and I spend my time teaching here.*

The participant questions shown in Excerpt 14 above run along the lines of querying about opportunities for others, such as those participants who asked, "How did you get there? Are there any opportunities for other students?" The participant questions in the excerpt below were based on my background information about my association and work I was doing at the University of Johannesburg (UJ). The student wanted to know if he could become a lecturer at UJ. My answer was a clear yes, given the availability of such a position and that they met requirements. The participant also asked about my aspiration and whether I wanted to become a lecturer at the University of Oxford. This was not something I had thought about before. When I considered this afterwards, I did not think becoming a lecturer at the University of Oxford was one of my aspirations. It was sad to realize that I had not imagined or even thought that I had a place to become a lecturer at the University of Oxford. I regarded myself as having a higher chance of working in academia as a lecturer at UJ than at Oxford. This was an honest moment of reflection, as researcher, which I found beneficial to my research career experience.

The questions, responses and extracts from the interview data and notes display the conversational style of this research. The responses also show regard for participants and their need for answers. In responding, I was careful not to make any commitments and promises of any sort, for example, promising to help a participant apply for the Rhodes Scholarship. Although I have applied and was selected, I still think that applicants are most capable to apply for themselves and consult the Rhodes Trust when they have queries.

4.14 Approaches to Analysis

I used Vavrus and Bartlett, (2009; 2014) vertical, horizontal, and transversal comparison framework to analyse findings in this research alongside the common practice of thematic analysis in qualitative research. I used the framework to study the various contradictions, conjunctions, disjunctures, and differences that exist in the conceptualizations of entrepreneurship among the participants in this study. Theoretically, the analysis is premised on structure, agency, livelihood and entrepreneurship literatures. This type of comparison is useful to analyse practices across different scales, locations, and time. It classifies and categorizes emerging themes across the range of data gathered from interviews.

The vertical approach to analysis in this study considers the varying levels of (1) the conceptualizations, (2) the promotion of entrepreneurship, and (3) policy approach to both the conceptualizations and promotion of entrepreneurship. This approach is based on the view that the research participants form a hierarchy within the university system. For example, university stakeholders are in management; lecturing stuff and alumni are also influenced by policy ideals in the way they think about entrepreneurship and their subsequent promotion of it. I then focused on student leaders and the wide range of student participants. The vertical representation of participants in this study provides an opportunity to make comparisons across the hierarchy and allows the researcher to draw out the differences, conjunctures, and frictions that exist among those in the vertical hierarchy in this case study.

The horizontal approach considers the timelines of entrepreneurship policy, governance regime, and the hype in the promotions of entrepreneurship, as captured in the different interviews and in the policy, documents analysed in this study. For example, the policies, entrepreneurial campaigns, and initiatives are enacted on campus at different times as vehicles to implement the policy agenda on entrepreneurship, that is, to create more entrepreneurs. These policies span over time and have targets attached to timeframes. The National Youth Policies considered in this study cover the years 2015–2020 and 2021–2025. The NDP covers 2010–2030. The horizontal analysis focuses on the promotions of entrepreneurship over these periods and the messaging of the policymakers about entrepreneurship against students and their experiences on campus.

The transversal elements span over time and through the different participant categories in this study. In this research the transversal approach to analysis establishes and identifies any conjunctures, differences, and frictions in both the hierarchical (vertical) and in the policy enactments noted in this study. The transversal approach also gives full expression to the student interviewees' stories and voices. This is done by (1) drawing excerpts from student interviews, (2) identifying themes that apply across approaches (vertical, horizontal, and transversal), and (3) using all interview and documentary analysis data simultaneously. This approach builds into the case study design method in which all participant responses are used substantively to describe the social and the educational context.

4.15 Conducting analysis on NVivo

I performed the analysis of both the interviews data and the analysis of excerpts from policy documents on NVivo, a computer-aided qualitative design analysis system. This computer program is designed primarily to support researchers undertaking the analysis of qualitative data with some usefulness that extends to other kinds of research such as mixed methods (Bazeley, 2010). I used the constant comparison analysis technique on NVivo to generate nodes, keep memos, and to flag thematic areas in the data. The analysis also considers the transversal themes emerging in the study from the wide-ranging interview data. As already stated, this research involves data from 37 interviews and a documentary analysis of two policies. As a result, analysing these is therefore a momentous task. The use of NVivo and its comparison analysis function reduces the strain of manually processing large amounts of interview and documentary data.

I performed the documentary analysis by evaluating and codifying content relating to the discourse about entrepreneurship in South Africa. The NDP: Vision 2030 and NYP are source documents for analysis. Excerpts were drawn from these documents and analysed on NVivo alongside interview data. This process provided a clear picture about policy promotions of entrepreneurship and enabled comparison with the conceptualizations of entrepreneurship held by student participants.

The vertical comparison focuses on the hierarchy or structure of participants in this research: the policy, university, and student stakeholders' data. The vertical comparisons show policy promotions of entrepreneurship versus how these are enacted on campus and versus how

students articulate entrepreneurship. This compares the student, university management, and policy approaches to entrepreneurship, and the differences in conceptualizing entrepreneurship. In addition, the vertical and horizontal comparisons give a unique opportunity to study the backgrounds of students, their livelihood strategies, and their varied approaches towards entrepreneurship, using research interview transcripts as primary sources of data.

The transversal comparison is an important additional line of inquiry focusing on juxtaposing the elements and concepts in the research questions. It considers contextual factors and pulls together the vertical and the horizontal analysis. The transversal comparison is explored in this research in the following ways:

- by comprehensively identifying and juxtaposing the student conceptualizations of entrepreneurship, including how their university environment shapes these, as described in the interviews;
- by highlighting contrasts that exist among student articulations of entrepreneurship;
- by showing contradictions in policy promotions of entrepreneurship versus the reality described by students about their livelihoods; and
- by identifying the critical disjuncture, conjuncture, and contrasts found through analysis in policy and university promotions of entrepreneurship in relation to student articulations of entrepreneurship.

The transversal analysis exercise provides an angle from which the research findings can be reported holistically, probing the student-to-student conceptualizations and articulations of entrepreneurship and how these relate to their livelihood strategies. This research will adopt a story-telling approach in reporting findings to capture the various experiences and realities. The transversal analysis also serves as a foundation for critical story telling in the reporting of findings in this research, like the work of DeJaeghere (2017) and Honeyman (2016).

4.16 What is next?

Nelson Mandela once said: “After climbing a great hill one only finds there are many more hills to climb.” My fieldwork experience was like climbing a hill, knowing that there are many more before me. However, the positive learning experiences far outweigh the downsides. My

experience of fieldwork research was a unique opportunity to sharpen my research-planning and data-collection skills. I emerged from the field experience inquisitive and prepared to confront the challenging questions in my area of research. The next chapters cover findings, discussion, and analysis.

CHAPTER 5: POLICY DISCOURSES ON YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP: RESPONSIBILIZATION, SELF-RELIANCE, AND ECONOMIC AGENCY

> *The Silicon Valley approach does not work in Africa. I get upset when people say fail forward or even that separate your failures. We do not have money, we get it from brothers, aunties etc. where are you going to get a second chance if that business fails.*
>
> *In Silicon Valley you can celebrate failure and still get money. We do not have scarcity, and we must not have that mentality. We have other things that we can work with. Others have mastered the art of bootstrapping. Like the students at DUT, a student started selling eggs at residence (accommodation) selling them to other students and bought 22 crates of eggs and went on to build onto this. Student really do make a plan.*
>
> *What is a problem – when students bootstrap, the socio-economic context we take care of our neighbours and our community. We share what we have. The responsibility is – when you have you must share. This amounts to black tax. There are a lot of students who bootstrapped – but families call on them for help, for example to pay for a funeral, help a cousin or sibling go to school because they have the money.* (Interview Excerpt 6.1 – EDHE Director)

"Bootstrapping", "responsibility", "selling" and "helping families" are some of the words that the director of the EDHE used (as shown in the above excerpt) to explain the experiences of students engaging in entrepreneurship. These students do not have the "Silicon Valley" privilege, infrastructure, or access to big-capital businesspeople, and, for this reason, driving them into entrepreneurship is a route that must be considered with great care. This means thinking carefully about responsibilising students through entrepreneurship to create jobs, when they are already selling different products to help their families deal with a lack of money for education and even funerals. This chapter shares the initial interview findings with policy and university management actors. It brings into perspective the responsibilisation of students under the banner of entrepreneurship. First it explores the responsibilisation, self-reliance and economic agency among individual students at a South Africa university. Second it deals with stakeholder perspectives drawn from research interviews and thirdly it provides excerpts that explain the persistent view

that students must take individual responsibility for government economic policy failure by creating jobs for themselves through entrepreneurship. The following is a brief breakdown of the chapter's main concepts laying some groundwork for the theoretical framing on self-regulation, subversion and analysis of structure and agency framework.

5.1 Responsibilisation of the individual

The individual refers to the student whose responsibilities keep increasing. A typical student at Fundisa would be an NSFAS beneficiary who comes from a poor family. This student comes from a poor socio-economic background; they are probably the first in their family to get university admission and find ways to make up for knowledge deficit because of the school they completed their schooling at. This student not only struggles with curricula, but they are also vulnerable to hunger at university because the NSFAS allowance is only R1,500 (about £75) and can barely cover all the basic needs of a student. The same student is constantly reminded in lectures that there are no jobs available, and for this reason, each student must begin to think beyond finding a job. In this instance, the popular words are: "don't become a jobseeker; be a job creator". This is the kind of messaging that permeates the responsibilisation of students who are already struggling at university.

5.2 Self-reliance

Under the circumstances stated above, students depend on themselves to make it through each day at university. The university conditions dictate that students must be resilient. Late payouts of NSFAS allowances, late registration, and poor living conditions are some examples of situations in which student rely on themselves to speak up, protest, and/or even beg for help. The concept of self-reliance assumes that one has the means to provide for themselves, but this is not the case for students. It means that they endure hardships in the hopes of finishing their studies, graduating, finding employment, and helping their families. The scarcity of employment, however, limits this idea of economic self-reliance. It is in this area that entrepreneurship enthusiasts promote the view that students and graduates must create new businesses. Although some students sell snacks, books, gadgets, and fashion items on campus to be more self-reliant, not all students find it easy to do so. Furthermore, recent graduates find it harder than wealthy individuals to set up new businesses because of general issues facing small business entrepreneurs, such as lack of

funding, competition and even lack of adequate skills. Because of this, self-reliance can be meaningless to an already struggling student selling some items to cover living costs at university. Self-reliance can also signal struggle or even financial strife for a poor student who has no one to call in times of need.

5.3 Economic agency

Students have limited to no economic agency. At Fundisa University over 50% of students rely on NSFAS to pay their fees. They enjoy very few options regarding meals, clothes and even recreation. These students also find it challenging to plan their future from an economic point of view. They have little money and find entrepreneurship tempting to make quick cash. The students' limited economic agency also means that they do not question some of the crude motivations underpinning the introduction of entrepreneurship among students on campus. Students are too needy to ask questions about the agenda of entrepreneurship. They see entrepreneurship as a possible way to uplift them out of poverty, even though research has proven that small businesses are prone to failure.

5.4 The political debate: Responsibilising the individual, self-reliance, and economic agency of the South African student (to be expanded)

The shift from a collective act and the principle of ubuntu, "I am because we are", to *vuk'uzenzele*, "rise and act", is what defines the experience of South Africa's young adult students. Societal pressures such as poverty, inequality, and lack of opportunities force students to take individual steps when dealing with the same challenges continually. In recent times, only during the #FeesMustFall, #RhodesMustFall and student protests, have students acted as a collective against the failures to transform South African higher education. But for some, the same collective action was their individual attempt to land themselves political attention and subsequently parliamentary positions. Vuyani Pambo and Nompendulo Mkhatshwa are examples of those who landed themselves parliamentary positions after #FeesMustFall, now members of the National Assembly for the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) and ANC, respectively. This provides an example of youth rising for themselves and more individually than as a collective. Acting collectively is broken by daily challenges, different pursuits to make ends meet, doing all that is possible to escape hunger at university residences, and securing a future.

This chapter draws on interviews with six stakeholders to explain the individual responsibilization, self-reliance, and economic agency among Fundisa students. The stakeholders are (1) the student representative council president, (2) the regional chairperson of YIBSA, (3) the CEO of the NYDA, (4) a lecturer, (5) the CEO of EDHE, and (6) a #FeesMustFall activist. All of these stakeholders provide rich perspectives and insights into student life, systemic responsibilisation of individual students, self-reliance, and economic agency. Their voices in this study also deal with the conceptualizations of entrepreneurship that students hold and how these relate to the student livelihood strategies from the perspective of these identified key stakeholders.

This remainder of this chapter consists of four main sections that illustrate the stakeholder accounts of entrepreneurship: (1) the role of university stakeholders in South Africa and stakeholder perspectives in the promotions of entrepreneurship at university, (2) the positionality of stakeholders, (3) a discussion of the interview perspectives, and (4) a chapter summary drawing together the main chapter discussions.

5.5 "Blowing the horn" about entrepreneurship: University stakeholders in South Africa

Fundisa, like other public universities in South Africa, attracts attention and support from different role players in the private sector, government, and society at large. The most significant stakeholder is the government, as the driver of both policy formulation and implementation. However, the government relies on partners and stakeholders to activate policies in the university arena. These stakeholders, who hold different views and ideas, are the university council, sponsors, administrative and academic staff, student representative council, interest groups such as #FeesMustFall Movement, and governmental agencies. The student groups are critical of how the university deals with students, while other groups of stakeholders are driven by key performance indicators to activate policy at universities.

These stakeholders also compete regarding their ideologies, and those aligned with governmental policy suppress the student voice. For example, after the #FeesMustFall protests in 2015, different stakeholders provided different ideas about possible solutions to the students' demand for a 0% fee increment and free higher education. These ideas were based on the nature of their interests in the South African university system. The banks opposed free higher education

but proposed lower fees on study loans. In contrast, research sponsored by the DHET (e.g. Fioramonti, 2017) suggested income-contingent loans as an alternative solution to free education. Student movements still insisted on the 0% fee increment and free higher education. This shows the extent of student contestations of policy activation on campus. The fee increment policy sparked different reactions and tensions from various stakeholders. The constant promotions of entrepreneurship among students struggling to find jobs can be likened to the promotion of income-contingent loans when students wanted free education.

The findings in this study show three types of stakeholder interests and perspectives on promotions of entrepreneurship at Fundisa. The first pertains to those stakeholders assuming the policy task of promoting entrepreneurship on campus, as proposed by the NYP and NDP 2030. EDHE, NYDA and university lecturers, supported by the heads of their departments, promote entrepreneurship among students on campus. They organize workshops, provide WIL under the banner of entrepreneurship, and invest in a mentorship programme supporting the creation student entrepreneurs at the Centre for Entrepreneurship. The second group represents student life and, more broadly, the livelihood concerns of students. These stakeholders, unlike the promoters of entrepreneurship at university, are holistically concerned about student life experiences pertaining to accommodation, academic progress, financial needs, and the prospects of students after university. The SRC and the #FeesMustFall activists provide perspectives to this effect. The third type are society youth-based structures such as YIBSA, represented in these findings. YIBSA is a youth movement seeking economic opportunities for youths in South Africa.

Some of the interests and perspectives overlap across the stakeholder groups. For example, lecturers, SRCs and student mentors often get some of their ideas from heads of department, who also provide the resources to run programmes. This group is often compromised and struggles in balancing the interests of university management and those of students. This group is usually aligned with university management and sees the opportunity to serve their management to advance their careers. While this group stands to represent student needs, it is also self-aware not to be perceived as threatening to management and avoids any career-limiting debates or dialogues. This shows that the stakeholders involved in student affairs and promotion of entrepreneurship on campus are too seeking careers and are engaged in jobs that provide income. They execute orders to direct students to entrepreneurship.

The following profiles detail the role of university stakeholders in the promotions of entrepreneurship. I show the role of EDHE in promoting entrepreneurship in South African universities, with reference to Fundisa. In addition, I profile the NYDA and its role in promoting entrepreneurship among youth in South Africa. I then turn to the university management's approach to student livelihoods, articulations of entrepreneurship among students, and the university's own promotions of entrepreneurship.

5.5.1 Entrepreneurship Development in Higher Education (EDHE)

EDHE is a national initiative funded by the DHET to promote entrepreneurship in all South African universities. EDHE runs the annual inter-university (intervarsity) entrepreneurship competition. The competition receives entries from a league of students at different levels of entrepreneurship development. The levels include those with attractive first-stage ideas, the second group are those with some business plans, and the third stage is a competition among students with existing enterprises. An existing enterprise in this context means those student projects that have made a sale and can prove this by way of a bank statement or a record of financials. EDHE has expanded its reach to encourage other academics to adopt an entrepreneurial approach in their teaching and to launch enterprises based on their research. EDHE further encourages academics to support the EDHE student entrepreneurship programmes on their campuses and recruits some to become members of the Entrepreneurship Teaching and Learning Community of Practice (a group within EDHE).

> *In 2018 another COP [community of practice] was launched. The student-preneurs. We hear about EDHE, but we are not included – saying nothing about us without us.*
>
> *The work focused on building the university structures that would support the aspects of entrepreneurship. We had an indaba for student-preneurs. We then agreed to launch a student-preneurs COP. We asked universities to nominate a student to be part of the Central COP.*
>
> *We did not want a student with other roles including the political ones. We believe that the entrepreneurship space must be kept apolitical. We do not want to have this space hijacked.*
>
> *Unofficially a lot of the work encapsuled in the NDP transfers and translates into our work. It was never an official response to existing policy. HRDC [Human Resource Development*

> *Council] has done some work around policy – the idea was then born. One of chief directors had to drive this campaign – Angela van Staden.*
>
> *In the absence of policies focusing on entrepreneurship development in HE we put in policy development in our programme. But this is only in the conceptual stages. This will be in collaboration with the Department of Higher Education; we will do the research, but the Department will drive it forward and that should amount to a policy framework.* (Interview Excerpt 6.2 – EDHE Director)

As shown in the excerpt above, EDHE's mission is partly derived from the NYPs 2015–2020 and 2020–2030 and the NDP 2030. EDHE is endorsed by the government to create student entrepreneurs. EDHE has conceptualized events for gathering student entrepreneurs (also referring to them as "student-preneurs") together. The entity continues to build a strategy for comprehensive entrepreneurship activity among students on various campuses. It also drives research on the subject and contributes to policy framework plans of the DHET as far as student entrepreneurship is concerned. EDHE's programmes focus on (1) increasing the uptake of entrepreneurship among students (DWYPD, 2019, p. 10); (2) present entrepreneurship to students as an alternative to job seeking; and (3) support a culture of innovation, Fourth Industrial Revolution, employability, and entrepreneurship. With regard to the NDP 2030, EDHE can be described as focused on (1) the African development agenda aimed at increasing innovation coming from universities and converted into products that solve problems (NDP 2030 Executive Summary, p. 22); (2) driving active citizenship among students based on the view of the NDP 2030 that citizens are sitting back and waiting for the state to deliver; (3) contributing to existing university systems of innovation through entrepreneurship approaches that cut across students, lecturers, and researchers.

5.5.2 National Youth Development Agency

The NYDA, unlike EDHE, is not limited to engagements with university students. The NYDA has a broader focus on youth affairs. The agency provides small business grants, partners with employment agencies to help youth secure employment, and manages the Solomon Mahlangu Scholarship. The NYDA's function is also derived from the NYPs and NDP. This means that the programmes of the NYDA are informed directly by these policies, as per the mandate of the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities. The NYDA programmes focus

broadly on (1) educational and economic opportunities for youth in South Africa NPC, 2012a, p. 14); (2) "inculcating the spirit of entrepreneurship amongst students in institutions of learning" (NPC, 2012, p. 139) and (3) providing financing and support services for youth-owned and controlled small businesses.

> *Looking at the evolution of NYDA, Umsobomvu offered loans, but at NYDA we offer grants. We moved away from a loan-funding model to grants. We follow the development and training perspective. We have detailed value chain that includes SEFA [Small Enterprise Finance Agency], SEDA [Small Enterprise Development Agency] and provincial entities doing a lot of work.*
>
> *We funded over 6,000 entrepreneurs and trained over 100,000 of them.*
>
> *As South Africa, we are very different from other countries. Here we are dominated by large businesses. There is not much support going into supporting small businesses.*
>
> *We have been working on designing employment stimulus. Eleven billion rand has been put aside but only 5% will go to big businesses. There is lack of confidence in small business.*
>
> *There are big supply chains, and these are severe; they penetrate deep rural communities. This makes it hard for small businesses to have access to markets.*
>
> *Young people still want to work – you fund youth to start businesses, for example, run a kitchen as a chef and make R7,000 – but if they find a job at a hotel paying them R12,000, they'd leave the business for the job.* (Interview Excerpt 6.3. – NYDA CEO)

The excerpts above are testimony to the work of NYDA and draw attention to the perceptions held about small businesses. Also, the challenge of low income generated by small businesses is pointed out by the NYDA CEO as the reason some young adults give up their micro or small businesses to take up corporate jobs. Their businesses do not produce the income they need to buy houses, cars and other items, nor can they obtain bank credit to grow their businesses. The NYP documents state that the function of the NYDA is to (1) provide career guidance alongside the DHET and the Department of Basic Education; (2) develop and support the existing youth-owned and -controlled businesses working with the Department of Small Business Development, and (3) support youth absorption into employment and the general well-being of

young adults. The NYP confines the NYDA to the role of a governmental agency responsible for implementation. The NYP, unlike the NDP, provides a more detailed view of the role that NYDA must play in the process of implementation. Also, the NYP requires the NYDA to partner or even tag along with the Departments of Higher Education and Training, Basic Education, and Small Business Development to achieve both educational and business outcomes. The NYDA is stretched between policies, departmental commitments and its own internal ideas and programmes.

> *From a purely public image – NYDA lost credibility due to mismanagement and corruption. This made it difficult for the organization to be a credible voice of youth in society. Systems were not functional and a toxic work culture. We had a high salary bill – we had multiple problems including perception. The perception issue persists even today as it is it take time to resolve.*
>
> *From a very internal perspective – the agency since 2014 has been able to achieve clean audit outcomes. We have transitioned from the legacy ERP [enterprise resource planning] systems to our new ERP. We have eradicated the toxic work culture to more collaboration and trust.*
>
> *The challenge is looking at the young person on the ground. People still feel that "what is the relevance of NYDA if young people are faced with so many problems?" But I think it is a misunderstood view of the NYDA. I think besides the improved day-to-day operations of the NYDA, people still think negatively about the agency.* (Interview Excerpt 6.4 – NYDA CEO)

Although set up to assist youth businesses, the NYDA suffers negative reputation like most other government agencies, as shown on the excerpt above. The agency's offices are not fully operational in all regions despite a high salary bill. The spending on staff costs is cited by the CEO as a problem that leaves the agency with limited finances to implement its core programmes. In essence, the NYDA promotes entrepreneurship among youth even when it provides inadequate support in this area and while the organization itself is poorly resourced. This shatters the dreams of youths who genuinely want to pursue entrepreneurship, but the promotions mislead those students who meet NYDA at campus roadshows, leaving them with high hopes yet not knowing that it can scarcely support the student-youth to whom it promotes entrepreneurship.

5.5.3 Youth in Business South Africa

The lack of adequate services from the NYDA and the lack access to economic opportunities for youth are the reasons for the founding of organizations such as YIBSA. YIBSA is a youth-driven body that holds the government accountable for creating economic business opportunities for youth in South Africa.

> *So as far as the policy development is concerned, we are trying to use, well, we are using unofficial channels to influence policy so that what that is, is the networks that we have with MMCs, MECs and to a certain extent, ministers that are in departments and with links to small businesses, so these relationships, we're trying to influence them independently. Because we realize in South Africa you have a huge challenge as far as policy development is concerned. We have a huge lobbying network of corporate interests that squeeze out any person who is trying to come into this ecosystem and suggest policy … [that] they're used to, right, so a lot of policy, that is policy and small business policy through groups, and they influence the policy so that it benefits what they want to achieve. So, if the policy is saying that these companies must set aside 1% of their net profit after tax to small businesses, these are causes that give the power to these companies.* (Interview Excerpt 6.5 – Gauteng Chairperson of YIBSA)

However, the organization often finds itself integrated into governmental planning and swallowed into large strategic sessions and meetings organized by the same government and agencies it seeks to hold accountable. This is demonstrated in the excerpt above, regarding the involvement with members of mayoral committees (MMCs), and members of the Executive Councils (MECs). The government system is sizeable and dissolves any divergent policy thinking from YIBSA; instead, it realigns such youth organizations with its own mandates. By nature of this, YIBSA's role in advancing business among youth is compromised in holding the government and its agencies accountable in their support for youth-owned and -controlled businesses. YIBSA has strong base on university campuses in South Africa and uses facilities at these campuses to conduct meetings. Because of this, YIBSA manages to connect with students interested in creating businesses, and some members of the organization offer to mentor some of the students. In addition, YIBSA was established by university graduates seeking to ensure that business opportunities are open to youth in South Africa, and the organization has since sought to pursue

the promises made in policy. As a result, YIBSA can be described as well placed to deal with concerns about these policy promises for youth in business and entrepreneurship.

Fundisa University falls within the region that the Gauteng branch of YIBSA covers. The organization mobilizes students on policy issues relating to business and entrepreneurship, as articulated in the NYP 2015–2020 and 2020–2030 documents. These promises that YIBSA is pursuing are therefore representative of all issues confronting youth businesses, and YIBSA tackles the interventions promised in policy. YIBSA uses its regional, provincial and national structures to hold the government accountable for (1) the allocation of funding for youth-owned businesses; (2) to end bureaucracy and paperwork required whenever youth-owned businesses seek support from the government, such as licensing their businesses or applying for a loan from the Small Enterprise Finance Agency (another government agency) (DWYPD, 2019, p. 11); (3) to earmark supplier development contracts and governmental procurement opportunities for youth-owned and -controlled businesses; and (4) to implement (radical) economic transformation by increasing support for Black youth-owned businesses and entering into key business sectors of the economy such as mining, manufacturing and agriculture, which are predominantly White-owned industries.

> *So, it's the— It's policy that looks on the surface to be assisting the small business sector but is putting the power in the hands of the corporates because at the end of the day, if they do not want to. Help businesses in retail or if they only want to help businesses in retail. The policy allows them to do that. But without sounding long-winded, how we are influencing policy is basically through these one-on-one relationships with have and not going through the official channels of being in a committee that is going to draft the white paper. Is that being that is that is not what you are basically trying to use our networks and the relationships we have and at some point, trying to also use our political will to apply pressure so that changes come forth.* (Interview Excerpt 6.6 – Gauteng Chairperson of YIBSA)

The contestation of support for small businesses versus big businesses casts doubt on whether governmental programmes intended to help small businesses are adequate, and whether they are good enough to attract new entrepreneurs or new graduates to build careers as entrepreneurs. The excerpt above shows how entrepreneurs are raking up "crumbs" and leftover

customers from mainstream retailers. This suggests a tightly closed market for small or community businesses and an aggressive infiltration of big businesses, even in small communities, leaving no market space for new start-ups. This contradicts the NYDA's aim of supporting well-established youth businesses; because the market is tightly closed by big businesses, newcomers must create informal microbusinesses, either trading from home or on the roadside.

> *The burden of unemployed youth is going to be felt by the youth in the future. So, what we are trying to put out there is the message of an alternative to whatever it is that you might be studying or supplementation of what you might be studying. You might be studying engineering that, well, coming with a message of "these are the opportunities that are available in the manufacturing sector". So, in these conversations, in those workshops that we're having, we're aiming to spark those ideas in these students for them to realize that employment is not necessarily the only route.*
>
> *There are other alternatives. I can apply my education, my knowledge on an interplanetary space or landscape to progress myself. So these are the engagements that we are planning to have already of a programme that we are shopping with our stakeholders for them to sponsor, which is this roadshow that will be going around Gauteng, firstly to the high schools, secondly to the universities, to speak about what entrepreneurship is, what it could be and what it could do for those students who are in a country like South Africa that has so many problems.* (Interview Excerpt 6.7 – Gauteng Chairperson of YIBSA)

It is essential for an organization to exist that champions the policy promises regarding youth-owned and -controlled businesses. The excerpt above, however, shows that YIBSA, besides its impression that it can hold policymakers accountable, also depends on them to sponsor the organization's activities and interventions. The challenges facing youth continue to escalate and become even more complex to comprehend if a more radical and youth-driven lobbying is not established. For example, despite the calls to prioritize youth-owned microenterprises and cooperatives, to break through to create youth enterprises in key economic sectors, and to redistribute land for youth in rural areas, none of these have happened. The NYDA and other governmental agencies have very little to show for themselves regarding economic transformation as one of the policy's promises. The work of YIBSA fails to yield any influence in achieving the policy promises, even though the organization continues its pursuit to hold policymakers

accountable. Consequently, student entrepreneur "hopefuls" at Fundisa must rely on themselves to make a success of their own business ideas, rather than rely on organizations such YIBSA. These lobby organizations also place the personal interests and ideas of their leaders ahead of the youth collective struggles.

5.5.4 Student needs and livelihoods: SRC and lecturer perspectives

The SRC and lecturers often try to find ways to align themselves with the university council's objectives and ideas about student needs. They understand student challenges but choose the superior directive to promote entrepreneurship at university. However, some SRCs are more radical in their approach to student leadership in that they demand that student needs be attended to adequately and hold an opposing stance to entrepreneurship. In the following paragraphs, I deal with the SRC and lecturer perspectives, and their place in promoting student entrepreneurship at Fundisa.

The SRC is interested in the ways that management deals with the needs of students and how the proposed interventions are helping the students. The SRC is also concerned about the speed at which interventions are implemented and their immediate impact on students. As a political organizer, the SRC is mostly prepared to mobilize student strikes and pickets if some of the policy interventions are not implemented rapidly. For example, SRC has organized student marches when the payment of student financial allowances has been delayed and protests academic exclusions and lack of accommodation. But it is the same SRC that has political-party affiliations with various political structures in parliament. For instance, at Fundisa, at the time of research interviews, the SRC was led by SASCO, an ANC student movement. For non-affiliating students and political analysts, it is a puzzle to understand how the SRCs are unable to foster policy change through their political-party affiliations.

> *At Fundisa we have institutional SRC, and we have local SRC. We have six campuses across South Africa. All the six campuses have their own SRC, and this is where I fall. The SRC has a president general, deputy president general, secretary general, treasurer general… like that. It comes to institutional, local then faculty reps, departmental reps. I am in local SRC dealing with issues in my campus. I am also an ex officio for institutional SRC whereby if a campus is faced with an issue, they cannot solve the institutional SRC*

has to jump in and assist. They give campus-based SRC to report to them – so when they go to Council, they can present the report.

In any SRC you are deployed by your own organization. For example, I was deployed by SASCO, I am also a member of SASCO. If SASCO needs me, I must attend to the issues. But I must differentiate between my organization and being an SRC because I must assist EFF and DA [Democratic Alliance] students, not only SASCO students. (Interview Excerpt 6.8 – SRC President at Fundisa)

The SRC uses some of its influence to bring student issues that are in the margins to the centre of discussion in university management structures. Most importantly, however, the SRC gives a collective of students a political voice and a degree of influence in decision-making about the students. The South African SRC the Progressive Youth Alliance became known in the early 2010s for its slogan "nothing for us without us". This and other campaigns have since centralized the role of the SRC. However, political tensions and differences among members of the student political structures are a reason for the sabotage of strategy and even the pursuit of their student development and prioritization agenda.

These structures are aligned to political parties. For example, if you are SASCO you will be aligned to ANC Youth League provincial. At the end this structure reports to Luthuli House. The footprint of the political parties is at the university. You may find that students have a legitimate call, like #FeesMustFall. That was a legitimate call, but at the end of the day, you find that political structures are fighting. If students are fighting, they are fighting the ANC government. If you are a SASCO member, automatically you are fighting your own government, the ANC. Somewhere there is a contradiction. Students are funded by either ANC or EFF to push their agenda. This is huge. What we should do as institutions of higher learning, we must limit this. Each time on campus you see there is an ANC tent or EFF tent. I don't know [sounding overwhelmed].

Some is condoned by these structures. Because remember, this is about numbers. If I have been in the system for four years to seven years, I have been on the leadership position for seven years, this means in terms of the consolidation of power, I have [more] power than someone who has stayed for three years. Because they come and go. Therefore, the longer a student stays and is aligned to these structures, it is likely that you will have powers and

> *know the system. Once a student knows how procurement of the buses or cafeteria is being done, they end up being engaged in wanting to know every tender done at the university. That is what normally happens. This is condoned because those students who give management headache, they end up giving them staff posts because management wants to utilize them as resident assistants or working as admin assistant at the clinic.* (Interview Excerpt 6.9 – Lecturer at Fundisa University)

The SRC holds Fundisa, their university management, and council accountable to the NDP 2030 vision that suggests that universities should (1) provide a diverse range of study programmes; (2) offer support to underprepared learners; (3) expand university infrastructure, in particular accommodation; and (4) improve teaching and learning. Even though the SRC aligns to the NDP's views, they seek a different approach to implementing these ideas. They seek an approach that is radical and speedy. The excerpt above, however, shows that the SRC itself is also embroiled in politicking, advancing personal interests, and even staying at university longer than the expected student tenure, "hopping around" qualifications. This behaviour shows dwindling commitment on the part of the SRC to deal with student problems, welfare, and the delivery of fee-free higher education. The student political movement members prefer to engage in contestations of power and landing a seat at the table with management. It appears that those who are elected also want to be seen positively by university management through aligning with them and at times sacrificing the wishes of students. Despite all this, they argue that, even though they align with the objectives of the state, the state fails them. If the state does deliver, it fails to deliver the preferred types of accommodation or inclusive learning programmes, and it frequently delivers late. The SRC, however, still enjoys comfort, the stipends given to them, having their tuition fees covered by the university, and proximity to management. These subsequently help them advance their political careers from branch, to regional, and into national structures.

Lecturers promote entrepreneurship in the lecture halls and through course materials. In addition to lecturing, conducting research, and supervising research, lecturers are expected to promote entrepreneurship among students. Lecturers are further challenged to find creative methods to teach their subjects, while at the same time being inundated with demands from student movements to deliver a decolonized curriculum and in other contexts asked to provide learning that equips the students with skills for work – or even both. This shows the nature of the lecturing

role and the competing priorities that affect the ways lecturers engage with their university environment and students.

> *So, as I was saying I am a lecturer; my work is to teach. I don't know, way back, we used to teach people like the— to find a place, but now you give them the flesh and the bones. I find that the high-school level or even the level— some of them are not at the level that you expect them to be competent. For instance, the surprise you got it somewhat in he or she can hardly comprehend demand or supply curve, let alone elasticity. Each time we are repeating things that are supposed to have been done long ago. We are no longer lecturers because we are teaching. Business incubator or initiatives that are driving students towards saying they should aspire to start businesses one day.* (Interview Excerpt 6.10 – SRC President)

Not all lecturers promote an entrepreneurial attitude among students at their institutions. However, they teach entrepreneurship to students as part of their programme or expose them to initiatives that promote entrepreneurship among students, such as EDHE. The excerpt above shows that this can be challenging, since students arrive at university with challenges of comprehension. Lecturers end up teaching foundational basics in their subjects to help students understand better and improve on their existing basic knowledge. Lecturers are burdened with the additional load of exploring entrepreneurship with students at Fundisa, with some exempted because of their areas of specialization or ability to avoid being pulled to the agenda of promoting entrepreneurship among students on campus. The NYP 2015–2020 echoes the idea that students must be exposed to entrepreneurship or similar practice, stating that:

> Every qualification at university should be coupled with an experiential component to ensure that graduates have experience when they qualify. This will require universities to partner with the private sector, ensuring they produce skills the private sector needs. (p. 23)

This means that lecturers must think about ways to infuse practical skills components in their training and seek to satisfy the neoliberal market skills demands. However, these are not always clear, and opportunities to train on the job are scarce. Under these circumstances then, students are directed to create start-ups, which they can use to build learning experiences, but these put students under pressure. In addition, these start-ups take time and money from students who are already struggling with a demanding academic programme and living on a limited income.

Poverty is an insult to all of us; our students are historically very poor. So, any source of income or any money that they might be exposed to that they didn't have before can make them to off ramp to the main studies.

It Depends on the type of job as everything is about the salary scale. If it is above the minimum threshold. Let's say the minimum threshold in SA is R10,000 [about £500]. An example, if a student can earn around 10,000 or more, I can assure you, they will leave the school Because the students are already working and the same time attending, to supplement their income.

Most of them, the I find them some of them have become sales rep, some of them become marketing agent. Some of them do secure, like, good jobs becoming bankers. While doing their studies full-time. Right. Some of them get internships in government. Some of them often get internships or good jobs in accounting or auditing firms. So, there are a lot. (Interview Excerpt 6.12 – Lecturer at Fundisa University)

The excerpt above is a further account by a lecturer who has witnessed student experiences on campus. The lecturer contended that students find ways to deal with their historical poverty. They seek out jobs and focus on working while studying. Fundisa is a residential and a face-to-face/contact university. However, the need for students to find work while studying at Fundisa defeats the university's statutory mandate of being a residential university. This also applies to entrepreneurship among students. It prompts the question of how entrepreneurship among students, as promoted by the university, is changing the institutional mandate.

5.5.5 The #FeesMustFall movement

The #FeesMustFall movement has no direct or obvious links to the promotion of student entrepreneurship on campus, but it is a movement that registers clear concerns about student livelihoods on campus and the way education is being commodified. #FeesMustFall takes a critical stance to policy enactment on campus and to the suppression of student political voices on campus. The #FeesMustFall approach is one that recognizes students as members of society before they are members of the university. Because of this, those in #FeesMustFall explain their challenges as being the same as or very similar to those faced by society and youth in general. In 2016 the #FeesMustFall and #RhodesMustFall activists took issue with university fee increments causing

fees to be unaffordable to poor students, a lack of income among the youth, and poor curricula lacking robustness at universities. These place the #FeesMustFall movement at the centre of the debate about student livelihoods, income, and funding.

> *The #FeesMustFall was an organic movement and came about because of the fee increases that were happening at the time following the failure of negotiations. Students are outnumbered in council. Accomplished people sit on council and the SRC sitting on council could not make any progress. NSFAS could not pay for 2,500 students, and fees were above inflation. The people on council could not relate. Even students who were told that NSFAS would pay for them, the financial aid did not pay. The University went on to exclude those students. The University was concerned about cashflow.*
>
> *The SRC went on a 1-million-a-month campaign and raised 4 million, but this was a drop in the ocean. The university sponsored a hundred but this was also not enough. None of stakeholders were budging, the university blamed government, and the government did the same. This felt like being intelligent was not worth it if you are poor.* (Interview Excerpt 6.13 – FMF activist)

The excerpt above explains the student-led action of the #FeesMustFall movement and its attempt to deal with student struggles on campus. #FeesMustFall found expression in the higher-education transformation thought that (1) participation must be increased for Black students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds (NPC, 2012a, p. 40), (2) the state must incentivize youth entry into the labour market (p. 19), and (3) in order to address inequality, better educational and economic opportunities must be created for young people (p. 14.). The #FeesMustFall reasons with issues facing poor students across South African universities. The activism displayed helped push the government to keep university fee increases at 0% in 2017. Fundisa students were among those saved from paying increased university fees following the #FeesMustFall protests and national shutdown.

The following section builds on the previous sections in providing granular perspectives about making sense of the stakeholder roles in promoting entrepreneurship at Fundisa University, their encounters with students, and student livelihoods.

5.6 Making sense of stakeholder perspectives

Using interview excerpts, I make connections between interview accounts and the policy interests of stakeholders, as already described in the previous sections. I also report and reflect on the policy realities of entrepreneurship promotions and student livelihoods, as described in the stakeholder interviews. The structure of this section highlights first, the EDHE director's experience in working to promote entrepreneurship on campus. Second, it provides the interview perspectives of the lecturer, SRC president, and #FeesMustFall activist Shaeera Kalla. These are mostly internal views of the university experience of students. Third, this section discusses YIBSA's contestations of the university and other stakeholders' approaches to entrepreneurship. Finally, it explains the external view of campus reality of entrepreneurship, drawing from the interview conducted with the CEO of the NYDA. These interview perspectives show how different stakeholders are dealing with the promotions of entrepreneurship.

The EDHE attracts R18 million [*£900 000*] to promote entrepreneurship on university campuses. As already mentioned in the previous section, EDHE is funded by the DHET. At Fundisa, EDHE has appointed a lecturer to be a member of the community of practice focusing on promoting entrepreneurship. Students at Fundisa are made aware of the EDHE intervarsity entrepreneurship competition when entries open. They submit their entries, and those selected pitch their ideas at a regional competition before advancing to the national competition. Only one overall winner is selected and receives start-up funding to the value of R100 000. There is no record of a Fundisa student who has won the overall price before. In EDHE students compete for funding in front of a judges panel.

> *Unofficially a lot of the work encapsulated in the NDP [2030] transfers and translates into our work… It was never an official response to policy.* (Interview Excerpt 6.14, EDHE Director)

However, the EDHE director stated that there is a lack of policy in support of the EDHE and called for a newer policy to focus on entrepreneurship work on campuses. The director also called for collaborations, stating:

> *In the absence of policies focusing on entrepreneurship development in higher education we put policy development in our programme. But this is only in the conceptual stages.*

> *This will be in collaboration with the Department of Higher Education, and we will do research, but the department will drive forward and that should amount to a policy framework.* (Interview Excerpt 6.14, EDHE Director)

As in the above statement, the EDHE's director suggested experimentation with programmes at universities in terms of entrepreneurship. EDHE leads the experimentation through entrepreneurship competitions, bootcamps and by collaborating with academics on campuses. This signals a state of unreadiness on the part of government and the promoters of entrepreneurship in in finding space to understand the livelihood strategies of students within and outside of entrepreneurship activity. This is evident in the range of requirements for start-up entrepreneurs. Policy players expect company-registrations, patents, and an already operating business. According to the EDHE, students are drawn into entrepreneurship by a system that is not fully ready to support their entrepreneurship endeavours. By system EDHE refers to the start-up requirements, upfront bank fees to set up a bank account and fees for registration and comply with the tax laws. This system does not consider start-up entrepreneurship.

The EDHE has a unique, exclusive, and complex identity in pursuit of promoting entrepreneurship on campus. For instance, the EDHE insists on being an apolitical space (and not a policy project), positions itself as an Africa-focused entrepreneurship-in-higher-education organizer and developmental, not competitive, in its dealings. As an apolitical space, the EDHE rarely sees entrepreneurship as a course within which inequality, race, and class can be discussed, but also excludes students who advocate political solutions to and views of matters of student livelihoods. The EDHE has a rather exclusive approach to participation, described by the director as a community of practice (COP) for student entrepreneurs ("student-preneurs):

> *We did not want a student with other roles including political ones. We believe that the entrepreneurship space must be kept apolitical. We do not want to have this space hijacked. We have been creating a platform for student-preneurs online. A kind of database-like platform.* (Interview Excerpt 6.15, EDHE Director)

The director cited money as not being the problem but networks (people to help students create good businesses), and critiqued Silicon Valley, acknowledging the differences in entrepreneurship by context and the survivalist nature of micro enterprises among students. As the director of EDHE put it:

> [Regarding finance and Silicon Valley] *Everyone still believes that you have funding. I do not believe in that – but I believe that you must have lot of things not just funding. This is Africa. People have been eating the Silicon Valley lies and this is not Silicon Valley… the approach does not work in Africa…. We do not have money; we get it from brothers and aunties etc. Where are you going to get a second chance if that business fail. In Silicon Valley you can celebrate failure and still get money.*
>
> [Regarding students and microenterprises] *What is a problem when students bootstrap, the socio-economic context we take care of our neighbours and our community. We share what we have. The responsibility is that when you have your share. This amounts to black tax. There are a lot of students who bootstrapped – but families call on them for help, for example to pay for a funeral, help a cousin or sibling go to school because they have money.* (Interview Excerpt 6.16, EDHE Director)
>
> [In response to creating network(s)] *Very often the biggest need is not funding but access to network. Our student entrepreneurs have networks to advance their businesses. We host events, during the competition we bring CEOs all the 28 finalists [representative of all South African universities]. These CEOs are from established businesses. We create a space for speed dating, it is an opportunity to get contact.* (Interview Excerpt 6.17, EDHE Director)

The EDHE also involves other stakeholders in its processes with an objective to keep the "Silicon Valley" approach and competitiveness at bay where private-sector CEOs are involved. This also highlights the need to understand the developmental approach further and what is meant by it being African than copying Euro-American approaches to entrepreneurship.

The NYDA is a national agency for youth development under the office of the president of South Africa. It is a product of the NYP and an ANC response to coordinating youth development. Although the NYDA attempts to separate the political and organizational agendas, this rarely happens. Youth aligned to the ANC have in the past occupied the leadership of the NYDA, and the agency remains unpopular among youth seeking funding for their businesses. As a result, NYDA has had to undergo several stages of redevelopment and restructuring, including finding a more suitable CEO. The present CEO described his role as:

> *My role as CEO has been to settle the organization on a policy and development path.* (Interview Excerpt 6.18, NYDA CEO)

The CEO also stated:

> *From a purely public image – NYDA lost credibility due to mismanagement and corruption. This made it difficult for the organization to be a credible voice of youth in society. Systems were not functional and a toxic work culture. We had a high salary bill – we had multiple problems including bad perception.* (Interview Excerpt 6.19, NYDA CEO)

The NYDA does not control the NYP and the process of formulating it. The minister in the presidency for youth, women, children, and people with disabilities is the owner and custodian of the NYPs. The NYDA CEO has hopes that political changes bring some certainty in policy, and this can help address issues of youth more significantly:

> *We were reaching a reflection point – the nine or so years were not good for development in South Africa. There was lack of economic growth and there was no social mobility.* (Interview Excerpt 6.20, NYDA CEO)

Furthermore, in funding entrepreneurship the NYDA provides grants and treats lack of funding as a problem. Unlike the EDHE, the agency has an intentional programme to fund youth "entrepreneurs" and provides training:

> *We funded over 6,000 entrepreneurs and trained over 100,000 of them.* (Interview Excerpt 6.21, NYDA CEO)

The NYDA still battles in dealing with perceptions pertaining to the promotions of entrepreneurship in educational institutions, including universities, and in providing a range of services targeting the university-based youth (students). The one exception is the provision of the Solomon Mahlangu Scholarship, although fading over the years. Students, once at university, seek the attainment of their educational qualifications, which they believe guarantees them some amount of career freedom. However, the NYDA has a contrary view. The CEO asserted that:

> *a societal perception is that the ticket out of poverty is still seen as going to school and getting a job… [but] this cannot be ruled out, as it works for people.* (Interview Excerpt 6.22, NYDA CEO)

The above is also true for a government that is failing to create entry jobs for youth. The promotions of entrepreneurship by the NYDA are therefore caught between what works for youth, their aspiration to attain educational qualifications, and the appetite for young people to take the risk of starting new businesses.

The capacity failures to assist youth to start businesses is a reason to doubt the promotions of entrepreneurship shown in policy. YIBSA critiques the government and NYDA for the lack of capacity to assist youth in businesses. The organization also sees entrepreneurship as becoming riskier for youth, given the high rate of failure among small businesses. In addition, the chairperson of the Gauteng region (at the time of the interview) remarked that there is a deep lack of knowledge among the youth about entrepreneurship:

> *So, the biggest problem we have here, is youth not knowing what they don't know. There are all these assumptions and presumptions about what entrepreneurship is and what it can do. But not knowing what they [youth] don't know is the biggest problem that we realized … from engaging with not only the study who are trying to come into the ecosystem, but reverse engineering it from the stakeholders who couldn't also tell us exactly what the needs of the youth are. This means they (too) don't have systems in place to figure that out.* (Interview Excerpt 6.23, YIBSA Chairperson Gauteng)

In view of the research argument of this study, the reasoning of YIBSA about the unknowns of entrepreneurship among makers and implementers of policy is a cause for concern and an opportunity to acknowledge that there are problematic differences in how entrepreneurship is conceptualized. This negatively affects the interventions aimed at using entrepreneurship as a solution to the challenges – misdiagnosed as they are – facing youth.

I now turn to the interview with the lecturer. This interview brought up numerous issues also found in the reactions and views of the EDHE, NYDA and YIBSA representatives in response to this study's question asking how policy promotions differ from those promoted by the university. The lecturer provided what Fundisa defines as entrepreneurship: the university suggests that entrepreneurship is an opportunity for self-employment, also an opportunity to be a job creator instead of a jobseeker, and a chance to generate an income or be one's own boss. The lecturer shared:

> *Business incubator and/or other initiative[s] are driving students to aspire to starting businesses one day.* (Interview Excerpt 6.23, Lecturer)

The lecturer also shared that, once students are encouraged to generate money, they go on to seek full-time jobs (such as marketing agents or bank tellers) while also studying full-time:

> *Some secure, like, a good job at the bank… or become marketing agents while doing their studies full-time, students need money..* (Interview Excerpt 6.24, Lecturer)

While the university seeks a neat and policy-aligned incubator approach to promoting and exposing students to entrepreneurship, the students see this as being introduced to money-making. They then seek out any possible and feasible opportunities to generate money, including taking full-time work. This may cause them to neglect their studies or puts pressure on them as both full-time workers and full-time students.

The final perspectives about student livelihoods I record are holistic and are representative of student voices. These perspectives are from the SRC president of Fundisa and Shaeera Kalla, a 2015 #FeesMustFall activist with a broader involvement in NGOs and societal development work. The SRC president focused on her roles as president and as a member of SASCO, a national student organization aligned with the ANC. Her work entailed ensuring that NSFAS allowances were paid out on time and assisting students to obtain internet access. She believed policy and the university were aligned in their approach to entrepreneurship, and she expressed the belief that all students must be treated equally. Because of this, she did not see student-preneurs as special in any way or deserving of special attention. She briefly stated that:

> *Those who want to start their businesses start their annual entrepreneurship week, NYDA comes, businessmen, and student submit their business plans and get invited to present.* (Interview Excerpt 6.25, SRC Chairperson)

The issue of entrepreneurship is not a problem to the SRC, nor an area of interest for them, because they see it as a programme that is well run by other stakeholders.

Shaeera Kalla took a comprehensive view of issues affecting students. This included a background of #FeesMustFall that focused on improving campuses more holistically, especially in service of poor and low-income students. Framing the #FeesMustFall's role is Kalla's interview statement that:

> *#FeesMustFall exposed that higher education was not designed to accommodate poor students and the majority, including the infrastructure and curriculum. We did not want to import knowledge from elsewhere that did not talk about our history, reality, and our futures here.* (Interview Excerpt 6.25, #FeesMustFall Activist)

5.7 Chapter summary

The stakeholder activities are at the centre of student life at Fundisa. The role of some of the stakeholders, such as the NYDA, YIBSA and #FeesMustFall movement, extend beyond the students' university experience. The influence of these stakeholders is present in society. The NYDA provides grant funding to youth in various communities, YIBSA promotes youth-owned businesses. The #FeesMustFall movement confronted systemic issues beyond the university, such as the insourcing of workers at Wits, a call for decolonization, and following on from #RhodesMustFall to challenge inequality in South Africa. The SRC addresses daily issues and challenges facing students on campus, and lecturers deliver teaching and learning. The EDHE is uniquely placed as a national agency directly promoting entrepreneurship in South African universities. All these stakeholders place demands on students. They require students to cooperate, participate, and subscribe to programmes. This chapter has shown that stakeholder roles hold power in entrepreneurship. Stakeholders protect their own interests over those of students and oblige management calls to promote entrepreneurship over student voices requesting basic amenities on campus. University "staff" such as lecturers, SRC members (student interests) on university stipends, and the EDHE focus on protecting their careers by promoting entrepreneurship in the manner they see fit within the university management's overall strategy. Because of this, students' demands for jobs after university are silenced and promotions of entrepreneurship amplified under the banner of *vuk'uzenzele,* "rise and act". These promotions individualize, responsibilize, and isolate students or recent graduates with no means to create new businesses. A better approach to promoting entrepreneurship is necessary for meaningful stakeholder involvement and for an enhanced life experience beyond university.

The stakeholders must be further mobilized to use their power and influence to advance both students and society. These stakeholders must realize that entrepreneurship is too narrow and singular an approach to dealing with poverty among students and youth. Entrepreneurship alone is insufficient, but a more inclusive approach to student development and economic welfare is

necessary. Jobs, internship, graduate trainee opportunities, apprenticeship and other skills-based programmes must be entwined within the stakeholder efforts to uplift youth and students. The current view of entrepreneurship as an answer to job creation is unsustainable and is burdensome for the already poor students at Fundisa University. However, job and graduate-training opportunities stand to improve the incomes of new graduates or final-year Fundisa students almost immediately, while entrepreneurship is a long-winded process that poor students cannot survive.

CHAPTER 6:
THE CASE STUDY: STUDENT LIVELIHOODS, STRUCTURE AND AGENCY IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION LANDSCAPE

This chapter presents the case study of Fundisa University. The chapter focuses on social and academic life at Fundisa, the institution's position in the South African higher-education landscape, and the university's role in supporting and mediating the government's position on entrepreneurship. The focus on social life and academic life deals with campus experience for students. The institution's position in the higher-education landscape is a profile of the institution in comparison to others. The discussion of Fundisa's role in the government's position on entrepreneurship deals with messages and programmes by the university that drive students towards creating microenterprises.

Fundisa is a former Technikon, now known as a university of technology. South Africa universities of technology provide diploma programmes focused on both vocational and academic skills training. Fundisa is a product of a higher-education reform project that took place in 2004 and was constituted through the merger of four institutions in Pretoria. The project was aimed at increasing student admissions and creating more university spaces for previously disadvantaged students. This also was to promote the development of Black and female academics. Another aim served by the project was to consolidate resources and to build new reputable universities in a post-apartheid South Africa.

Fundisa grew to become an inter-provincial university with two campuses in two rural provinces of South Africa. These rural campuses offer a limited number of programmes that are also offered at Fundisa's Pretoria campus. The university attracts students from diverse backgrounds, mainly those hailing from small towns and rural regions of South Africa. The university's developmental message resonates with students, their parents, and the government. The university has a student body that is active in politics, sport, and recreation. The university also promotes entrepreneurship as a skill that its graduates will receive from the institution, regardless of their chosen programme of study. This is because the university runs workshops, bootcamps, and open-to-all entrepreneurship programmes on campuses in partnership with

governmental agencies, mentors, and other independent stakeholders. These all play a role in the student life and experience at Fundisa.

6.1 The campus experience at Fundisa University

The Fundisa university campus experience is driven by students, business activities, and staff members. Students are the main users of the campus facilities, from lecture halls to sports facilities. Students attend lectures, following their different timetables covering six faculties of the university. Lectures begin at 8 a.m. and conclude at 7 p.m. The interaction between lecturers and students happens in lecture halls and during consultations in lecturers' offices. Besides lecturer–student interactions, students also interact with faculty and departmental staff members or course administrators for matters related to assessments, academic records, and any other inquiries. These interactions inform how students experience the services offered by Fundisa.

Student political activity also dominates the student campus experience. Visitors walking through campus are greeted by ANCYL, EFF or Democratic Alliance (DA) Students Organisation (DASO) gazebos occupied by student political leaders. At the beginning of the year, these stalls are set up to recruit new students to become members of the student political structures. Towards the end of the year (September and October), they are used to campaign for SRC positions and to mobilize students to vote in those SRC elections. In corridors, student leaders paste various posters and notices. These notices are about general meetings, joining national political campaigns, visits by national leaders for those student organizations that are affiliated with national political parties (such as SASCO to ANC, EFF student command to the EFF, and DASO to the DA), and other activities. Students contest power on campus and promise students deliverables, such as timely payments of NSFAS disbursements, efficient allocations of beds at residences, speedy resolution to student complaints, and lobbying for increases of budgets allocated for student entertainment. The contestation of elections intense and is usually conducted among senior students who have longer campus experience than new or first-year students.

The campus business activities include bus transport services, off-campus accommodation service providers, student cafeterias, and students selling various products and services on campus. Students commute between campus and the off-campus residences using the university-contracted bus services. On campus, the buses of this service occupy a large parking lot, where students queue

for their respective buses. These transport students to accommodation approved by the university and other private accommodation in the city's business district. Also, on campus are outlets operated by contractors who sell food takeaways and stationery to students. These outlets are less popular among students because of the prices they charge for both food and stationery. Students prefer buying their food from informal traders selling near the campus entrance. These traders also bring with them cooking apparatus, ready-to-cook ingredients, and packaging for takeaway food. Students feel that they can bargain with these informal traders, as opposed to paying the fixed prices in shopping outlets on campus. In addition to this informal trade, students also sell items such as sweets, airtime vouchers, doughnuts, and bags on campus. Other students advertise services by putting up posters, for example, about providing IT assistance for students needing software updates for their laptops or other basic computer repairs. Students also work as agents distributing pamphlets for businesses that are outside campus but targeting students with their products and services.

As already discussed, staff members (lecturers and administrative staff) have multiple opportunities to interact with students. I now turn to the role of staff members regarding students' experience on campus.

First, security is provided mainly by externally contracted and checked personnel. Security staff control access to and the activities that may take place on campus. Students who sell goods on campus, for example, are often reprimanded by security. They are not allowed to sell on campus, and consequently, the security guards are continually shutting down any selling on campus by students. The security personnel are instructed by their supervisors and university management to protect the interests of the rent-paying business in the student cafeteria. Security also must maintain order during student protests and escalate any security risks beyond their control.

Second, the administration staff are spread across the university divisions. This group is found in admissions, faculties, departments, and in the graduations division. They ensure that student records are kept and that the university administrative procedures are adhered to. They further promote institutional integrity when administering assessments and are involved in quality assurance.

Third, lecturers conduct teaching and learning. They also conduct research. They are also involved in various activities that promote institutional citizenship by mentoring students, partaking in activities organized for alumni.

Finally, the executive is responsible for institutional governance and efficiency in the operation of the university. The executive deals with set targets for research, academic excellence, and student affairs. The executive rarely interacts with students directly but does so through the university hierarchy. Students at Fundisa usually refer to the executive as "management".

The campus experience at Fundisa is characterized by interactions between students, student-lecturers, lecturers and administrators, and executives. The business activities on campus also inform the students' experience regarding the way in which students access basic amenities such as affordable food, accommodation, and stationery. The student political activities provide students with some opportunity to voice their experience and to rise through leadership hierarchies. Both the business and political activities inspire students to take a stand as active citizens of their campus. This includes selling products on campus (like the other business contractors with permission to do so), patronizing the informal traders at the gates, and the political leadership roles advance students into power structures of the university.

6.2 Academic programme at Fundisa University

Fundisa offers a wide range of programmes and qualifications in engineering, management, the arts, sciences, humanities, and business. Among the range of qualifications offered is the Diploma in Entrepreneurship. This qualification is designed to prepare students and graduates to start and run a business by equipping them with the skills to do so. This qualification is accredited by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) and presented by the university's Department of Entrepreneurship. This qualification is linked to the university's Centre for Entrepreneurship. The centre helps students to find resources to start their new enterprises.

The DHET regulates the design of academic training programmes at universities such as Fundisa. By academic programme, I refer to the courses that Fundisa offers for its students across faculties. Two DHET agencies – SAQA and the Council on Higher Education (CHE) – provide accreditation for qualification offerings at public universities. These regulatory bodies give students, their parents, and citizens in general confidence about the qualifications that universities

such as Fundisa offer to the public. The regulatory bodies certify the quality of the qualification offerings. These bodies also regulate the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) levels. Diploma qualifications offered by Fundisa are rated NQF Level 7, which signifies an undergraduate-level qualification of three-year duration. The highest level is 10, for doctoral degrees.

By virtue of policy influence and the need to comply with SAQA, the academic programme at Fundisa aspires to industry expectations. These agencies pursue industry relevance over the academic virtues of training students. These programmes, even when industry driven, barely provide employment guarantees for graduates. The CHE can benefit from being distanced as an agency, reviewing institutional processes and quality, as the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations does. However, this cannot be sustained, since the CHE enforces a curriculum that is designed around the needs of industries or potential employers. It also protects the interests of private businesses in curriculum management.

The failure of private enterprises to create full employment for graduates has created a need for alternatives. Entrepreneurship is one of the alternatives. Fundisa University promotes entrepreneurship as a way for students to create opportunities for themselves. In addition, the university encourages entrepreneurship among the graduates as a response to the lack of opportunities in the private and public sector. This happens while the DHET and its agencies claim that qualifications are industry relevant and evaluated against employment criteria. However, this has been proven to be false by the lack of jobs and by the sudden rush to create both student and graduate entrepreneurs.

Vally and Motala (2014) argued that the pursuit to infuse economic development and subjects such as entrepreneurship into higher education, with idea of skills development and job creation, prevents research from considering the most fundamental approaches to education. Pillay and Mqolomba (2022) added to this argument that the monetization of higher education amid student outcry for freedom is unjust. The policy interest in the production of graduates that are perceived to contribute to job creation is pervasive. It overlooks the outcry recorded by Pillay and Mqolomba during #FeesMustFall, during which students shouted "*Asinamali*!", which is isiZulu for "We have no money!"

The academic programme is central to the student experience at Fundisa. Students find ways to address problems that stand to jeopardize any prospects they have of earning their qualifications in the minimum allocated time. Furthermore, students hope to graduate and earn jobs that might provide them with income to change their personal circumstances. Since Fundisa attracts students from low-income families, funding is always an issue. Students worry about money to buy food and clothes and to cover other incidental costs. These needs are essential to student life and, when taken care of, mean that a student will not go to lectures hungry. The following section turns to student life at Fundisa.

6.3 Student life at Fundisa

The search for funding plays a central role in the lives of students at Fundisa. Policy acknowledges that low-income students need funding to access higher education, and that without funding, poor students will be disadvantaged. Students at Fundisa are largely dependent on NSFAS funding and external funding through private-sector bursaries; only a small number of students can afford to pay for their tuition, books, and living costs from their own sources of funds. Most students still depend on funding support. Students who qualify For a NSFAS funding receive on average about R1,500 (about £75) per month. From this allowance, they buy clothing and food, pay for entertainment, or even send some of this money home to their families.

The internal NSFAS funding processes leave students frustrated in institutions such as Fundisa. The frustrations include the late disbursement of allowances, long queues for inquiries, and delays in the communication of the outcome or processing of inquiries. The failures in the NSFAS funding processes exacerbates the struggles of poor students, making bleak the view of first-year students from rural areas, who are already uncertain about their potential to succeed. Walker and Mathebula (2020) showed that NSFAS processes need to be smooth and free of error to meet the needs of students in a meaningful and a dignified manner.

The poor experiences of students on campus, linked to both funding and their livelihoods in general, often lead to campus unrest. In 2015 students from universities across South Africa embarked on campus protests. These protests were known as #FeesMustFall. Although these were primarily about fee increases, other issues were raised, such as lack of funding, poor processing of allowances, the “missing middle” students, the need for curriculum reforms, and transformation

of the university campuses. These were also promoted under the #RhodesMustFall movement at UCT. Fundisa university students engaged in various protest actions on their own campuses to compel their university's executive management teams to deal with their needs and concerns. The dawn of #FeesMustFall served to illuminate the struggles of students at Fundisa.

6.4 Fundisa University in the South African higher-education landscape

Fundisa is the pseudonym for the South African university on which this research study focuses. I have dealt with the reasons for using a pseudonym under the research ethics section in the Research Methodology chapter. Fundisa University is representative of the landscape and architecture of higher education in South Africa. This landscape is underpinned by post-apartheid transformation focusing on broadening opportunity for participation. Consequently, the architecture or structure of higher education is divided into vocational and academic studies. The vocational section has for a long time been concerned with the employability of graduates. This concern has recently spilled over into universities offering traditional academic degrees (Ebewo & Sirayi, 2018; Yende & Mugovhani, 2021). Fundisa's concern about employability is reflected in their pursuit of entrepreneurship programmes aimed at eradicating unemployment among their own graduates. The university's Entrepreneurship Centre states in its mission statement that it seeks to address the lack of jobs for Fundisa graduates and the wider public.

The institution has broadened access for Black students in response to the apartheid imposed higher education exclusions. Fundisa has about 60,000 students across seven faculties, namely, Arts, Science, Engineering, Information Technology, Economics, and Business. The institution has eight campuses spread across Gauteng and Mpumalanga provinces. The university employs between 755 and 800 academics and about 4,800 administrative staff members. In addition to the faculties, there are six centres of specialization, classified as centres of excellence, which are research-driven entities led by professors. The Centre for Entrepreneurship is not classified as a centre of excellence; it is led by coordinators driving and promoting entrepreneurship among students.

Like all universities in South Africa (26 in all), Fundisa has a diverse student population, ranging in both educational and financial background. Fundisa is a predominantly Black university and was constituted by a merger of four former technical and vocational institutions. To give

context about the educational backgrounds of the students that Fundisa attracts, I discuss briefly the divisions in the schooling system in South Africa. The students at Fundisa are mainly those from Quintile 1–3 schools. These are non-fee-paying schools, as defined by the Department of Basic Education (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2020). Quintile 1–3 schools are in rural and township communities. These schools are attended predominantly by Black learners, their learners or pupils benefit from a feeding scheme, and they receive free stationery packs at the beginning of the year. Those who cannot afford uniforms are also given uniform packs, with the help of social workers. These lower-quintile schools also struggle to obtain basic teaching and learning resources. They are often overcrowded and inadequately resourced. Those that are resourced with computers, laboratory equipment and fully functional classrooms battle with criminal activities and the theft of their property. Although the university does also attract students from Quintiles 4 and 5, most of its students are from the schools in the lower quintiles. One of the differences in Quintile 4 and 5 schools is that their students are still liable for paying some fees in addition to the government subsidy that the schools receive.

Regarding the financial backgrounds of students, three categories may be identified across higher education in South Africa, including at Fundisa. The first category are low-income poor students. These students depend on the student financial aid scheme (NSFAS) to pay for their university studies. They are required to provide proof of income and demonstrate their need on the application forms (Walker & Mathebula, 2020). The second category are students known as the "missing middle". These students are from homes that have some income but not enough to provide for the needs of all family members; the income is above the threshold, however, for them to qualify for NSFAS (Walker, 2022). These students are generally the children of low-earning professionals and other middle-class families. The list includes nurses, police, teachers, retail workers and those employed as general workers in the government and private sector. These students are disqualified from NSFAS since they can provide their parents or guardians' proof of income in a form of pay slips and bank statements (Whitelaw, Branson & Leibbrandt, 2022a). Affordability and the number of dependents that the incomes provide for are rarely considered. The lack of money at home to finance studies and lack of funding from NSFAS leaves these students in a gap between possible funding sources – no money at home but no possibility of being funded by the university or NSFAS because there is proof of family income. For this reason, they are referred to as the "missing middle" students (Whitelaw, Branson & Leibbrandt, 2022b). The

third category of students are those with sufficient income to cover their tuition, accommodation, and living expenses while at university. All these different students meet and interact at Fundisa and in other universities, where their differences play out in their everyday lives.

Fundisa takes a different approach to processing some of the challenges that students face regarding finances and their general experiences at university. The university promotes entrepreneurship and hopes to help students raise their income, to spark creativity and to direct them to something meaningful. The university's Centre for Entrepreneurship coordinates and promotes entrepreneurialism among students. The centre's mission, as stated on their website, is to assist students, recent graduates, and emerging enterprises to access mentors, capital, shared space, professional assistance, and other services that will ensure the successful development of their business ideas. Furthermore, the centre claims that its focus is on developing enterprises in rural areas, townships, and mining towns.

The focus of Fundisa's Centre for Entrepreneurship resembles the broader university's interest in low-income students and their communities. The centre structures its programmes to support students attempting or creating new enterprises. The centre also supports microenterprises owned by members of the public based in rural areas from which most of Fundisa's students hail. The centre subscribes to the view that the development of enterprises can alleviate the income challenges facing both students and their communities. Furthermore, the centre combines the lack of jobs with the need to create businesses. The centre states on its website that it serves start-up businesses and the creation of jobs for the country's economic development.

I turn to international literature that further explains the Fundisa university case study through the lens of push and pull factors. Fundisa is pushed into entrepreneurship by policy; this according to the mission of the Centre for Entrepreneurship. The centre's mission statement provides that it is committed to the economic growth priorities of the NDP. The policy push factors recall for Honeyman's (2016) question: "We will help the state, but will the state help us?" (p. 196). In asking this question, Honeyman sought to understand the permeation of Rwanda's entrepreneurship policy in schools. Honeyman revealed that students practise entrepreneurship only to earn academic credentials, unlike the view in policy that these students will create jobs as entrepreneurs. According to Honeyman, the youth in her study sought a government that can solve the jobs crisis without placing the responsibility on them. The youth felt neglected by their

government and therefore had a systemic responsibility to themselves through entrepreneurship, much as is the case at Fundisa. The challenge is framed further in the following section as the pursuit of policy alignment at all costs by the university.

6.5 Seeking Policy Alignment: A University Pursuing Policy

Fundisa University pursues transformation and aligns itself to policy frameworks in South Africa. The Fundisa University's 2020–2025 strategic document names the institution as a university of people and one that applies knowledge practically. In this section I discuss the layers of policy frameworks and how these permeate through Fundisa. The national government sets priorities that are then converted into national plans and documents such as the NDP. These are translated into different focus areas from which universities must chart their own visions or demonstrate contributions. In the case of Fundisa and other similar institutions, the NDP 2030 is a major document of reference, followed by the DHET policies and priorities, enacted in the university's vision, which includes goals to improve on rankings, and finally, the demands of students. Universities at most times claim to serve the interests of students; however, the general dissatisfaction of students exposes differences in the policy–university–student priorities. Figure 4 shows the flow of governmental promotions of entrepreneurship at university. This diagram shows a top-down policy approach influencing decisions made by universities such as Fundisa.

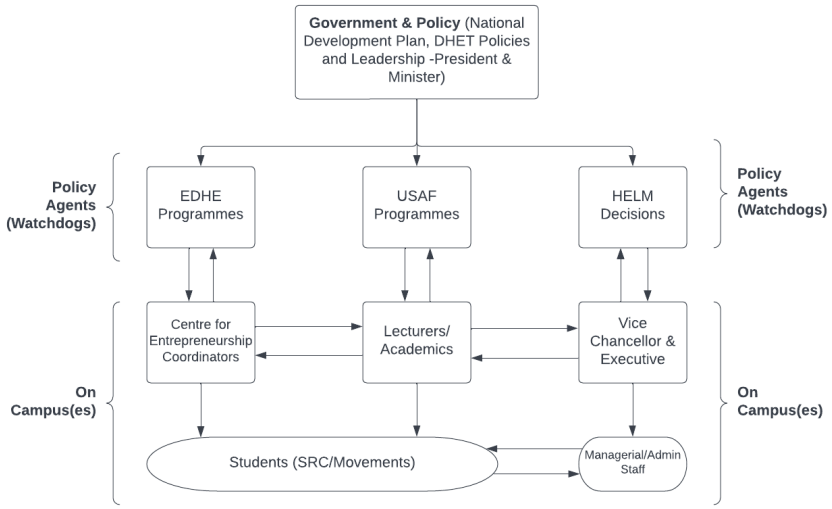

Figure 2: Mediating and supporting governmental positions on entrepreneurship.

The main entity at the national level is the DHET. Government and policy at national level signify the authority of ministers and their commitment to the ideas of the NDP 2030. The DHET decides how universities and vocational training colleges contribute to national development, drawing from the NDP. The minister in Higher Education was first appointed in 2009, following the splitting of the Department of Education into two separate departments, namely, the Department of Basic Education and the DHET. The powers were separated, and different ministers appointed, clearly defining their work as contribution to national development.

The DHET has established eight agencies to monitor and evaluate the performance of universities in the policy priorities. The foci of these agencies are diverse. They deal with capacity development, scientific research, vocational training, contribution of higher education in national development, compliance, quality assurance, and graduate employability. I focus on two of the agencies – call them policy watchdogs – for their monitoring, evaluation, and programming roles.

Universities South Africa Forum (USAf) is an all-round agency of the DHET that monitors student success at universities, deepening the role of the sector in South Africa's democracy and social cohesion. USAf also guides transformation programmes in the sector, such as ensuring that racial and gender quotas in admission and employment are met by universities. USAf set itself on a mission to oversee plans for transformation, building capable leadership and supporting the participation of higher education in the growing of an inclusive and competitive economy. The second agency to which I refer is Higher Education Leadership and Management (HELM). HELM was founded in 2002, when mass-scale university mergers and acquisitions were taking place. HELM provides university vice chancellors and senior managers with insights about challenges facing higher education, and skills to manage their institutions in an ever-changing environment.

These two agencies are preoccupied with building an efficient higher education sector that is linked to policy ideals as set out by the national government. The downside of this approach is that it reduces the autonomy of individual institutions while amplifying the views of the already powerful and high-ranking universities such as UCT, Wits, Rhodes University, the University of Pretoria, and the University of Stellenbosch. This is because these agencies are built and led by academics and leaders who are mainly graduates of the already successful universities. While this is helpful, it limits the chances of other newly established universities to realize their own

trajectories without the surveillance and enforcement policy ideas on poor universities by both powerful universities and government.

Fundisa University is situated at the bottom of this framework. It is the campus arena in which the policy influences play out and a space where the university staff mediates policy. The policy influences that play out at Fundisa University as shown on figure 4 and include the implementation of the Centre of Entrepreneurship programmes promoting entrepreneurship among students and the public. This initiative is premised on the ideas of Chapters 3 and 9 of the NDP. Chapter 3 supports the development of entrepreneurial activities in response to unemployment. Chapter 9 focuses on the role of higher education in employability and innovation, such as entrepreneurial activity among students. Lecturers, SRC members and university executive office-bearers such as the vice chancellor and their deputies play multiple roles in enabling policy on campus. They are responsible for implementing curricula, operating university systems in support of policy interventions such as the NSFAS funding administration, and equitable campus reforms driven by SRCs. All these interactions are built on mediations and interpretations of policy by university management stakeholders (lecturers, professors, senior managers, student leaders, etc.) who turn policy positions into campus operational programmes.

6.6 Supporting and mediating governmental positions on entrepreneurship

Fundisa University's member of senior leader is the deputy chairperson of the NPC. The commission is responsible for tracking the attainment of goals stipulated in the NDP. The vice chancellor is a proponent for graduate employment and graduates who create work. The vice chancellor described graduates from Fundisa as follows:

> "At the heart of these institutions and that of [Fundisa] is the production of future-ready graduates," he said. "[Fundisa] produces graduates who find work and who create work." … "What this university is doing in skilling the economy needs to be calculated. We will be amazed to find the results." (Fundisa's senior leader via Sunday World News – May 2022)

Again, the vice chancellor at the launch of the university's centre for entrepreneurship stated that the university subscribes to the phrase: give a man a fish, he will eat for a day but teach him how

to fish he will eat for a lifetime. This was to echo the university's focus on entrepreneurship to produce graduates that would become entrepreneurs than job seekers.

Fundisa seeks to create graduates who will find jobs and create jobs. This is further echoed by the senior leader's feedback to the NPC that the economy is creating fewer jobs and, therefore, the 2030 job targets will not be met. The vice chancellor pointed to entrepreneurship as a solution to expedite job creation by youth affected by lack of jobs. The vice chancellor is a clear mediator supporting policy promotions of entrepreneurship. By virtue of this, Fundisa focuses on preparing students for jobs and entrepreneurship. The university also directs students to entrepreneurship under the tagline that students need to "become job creators and not jobseekers." Alongside Fundisa are universities such as Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) and Walter Sisulu University (WSU). CPUT's vision is to become Africa's leading Smart University of Technology, globally renowned for innovation, with graduates that shape a better world for humanity and WSU's vision of responding to societal needs in ethical, scholarly, sustainable, and entrepreneurial ways, and delivers future-ready graduates.

These vision statements have become tools for university lecturers, coordinators of entrepreneurship, and student coordinators to drive students in the direction of entrepreneurship. Lecturers use youth entrepreneur case studies that drive the point of entrepreneurship and the do-it-yourself approaches encouraging students to become their own bosses. Vally and Motala (2017) showed that serious limitations exist in this prevailing discourse about higher education and the economy. They argued that even though education improves chances of employability but does not guarantee full employment.

The above shows a deeply entrenched policy influence already criticized in South Africa by scholars such as Vally, Motala (2017) and Pillay (2022). Internationally, scholars such as Honeyman (2016) and DeJaeghere (2017) also added their voices to the criticism of the dominating influence of entrepreneurial policy ideas for both basic- and higher-education curricula. Like these scholars, I argue that the dominant promotion of entrepreneurship at Fundisa can mislead in its promise to respond to job scarcity through the creation of entrepreneurs whilst there are barriers to success for those already practicing entrepreneurship. The view of entrepreneurship for job creation as promoted through campus programmes and the Centre for Entrepreneurship overlooks

the concerns of many students and the problems that students face, such as a lack of income, the struggle to maintain themselves, and poverty at home. A more meaningful entrepreneurship approach is yet to developed. It should, however, be one that processes the challenges of students more holistically than one that places the personal responsibility of solving governmental problems on students.

6.7 University mergers in South Africa: The mega universities

In this section I discuss the birth and formation of Fundisa university, considering the wave of university mergers that took place in South Africa. According to Jansen, (2003) in *The State of Higher Education in South Africa*, university mergers were massive. Jansen also provides the numbers pertaining to mergers. Before the mergers, South Africa had 21 universities and 15 Technikons (technical training institutions). Seven of the universities were White Afrikaans institutions, and four were White English universities. The remaining 11 universities were Black. However, since the mergers took place, different institutions focused on building their own brands and reputation.

Fundisa was born out of a merger of four institutions in the Pretoria city region. In 2002 the minister of education in South Africa, Professor Kader Asmal, announced 10 mergers which saw the formation of the same number of universities. The cabinet approved the mergers. From this process, four technical and formerly Black-only institutions formed Fundisa University in the city of Pretoria. This process created a whole new institution, among others, and changed the outlook of the higher-education sector in South Africa. It ushered in discussions about budget reallocations to support the former Black institutions that were underfunded during apartheid. In addition, this process brough conversations about transformation into the open, starting with racial discrimination in academic appointments and the lack of resources in the former Black institutions. For instance, Archer (2017a, 2017b) called the efforts to transform by the different higher education institutions a potential existential crisis that must be acknowledged. Archer also called the transformation that emerged from the mergers a major historical experiment and an extreme version of concerns about redress and social justice. Archer made an interesting point: policy puts unfair pressure on the universities, as it asks them to drive transformation and to help find opportunities for those denied an opportunity in the past. As discussed by Fongwa (2018), in essence, the Ministry of Education, (2002) White Paper that saw the mergers through, and, more

recently, the NDP show that policy and policymakers are placing a large share of the developmental responsibility on universities. These universities are performing under pressure and with limited funding. They too shift the responsibility to other bodies, and students suffer the consequences. Archer's viewpoint dismisses and minimizes the seriousness of the transformation challenges faced by universities and that this is not a programme that can be abandoned because it appears to be just an extreme historical experiment.

6.8 Chapter summary

Fundisa University's role in supporting and mediating governmental positions on entrepreneurship permeates all levels of university strategy, focus, and student life in general. The vice chancellor is vocal about student abilities to create jobs in an ailing economy. This demonstrates the university's position that students must become survivalist entrepreneurs when they do not find jobs. However, not all the entrepreneurship activities of students are allowed to find expression on campus. Security personnel prevent students from copying informal trading and conducting informal trading on campus. While the university seeks to create job creators through entrepreneurship, very little focus is given to how students conceptualize entrepreneurship activity within the boundaries of the campus. Therefore, the role of the university in supporting entrepreneurship does not help students who see campus as a potential space to exercise these promotions of entrepreneurship.

The popularity of entrepreneurship in the government's speeches and planning is also the reason Fundisa University is focused on the idea. The university's vice chancellor and staff members seek to promote the institution's relevance in the employment and economic-development discourse by focusing on entrepreneurship. This links to the place of Fundisa in South Africa's higher-education landscape. Therefore, the university's support for government agencies' rolling out entrepreneurship programmes on campus is in line with the university's aim to boost its own reputation as a university that graduates "job creators."

The university's investment in an entrepreneurship programme, its Centre for Entrepreneurship, and the vice chancellor's public comments on graduating students who create jobs are demonstrations of the university's position on entrepreneurship. The university supports entrepreneurship promotions by the government. It also views entrepreneurship as a solution to

job creation and as a way for the university to build for itself a distinctive brand centred on graduating people who create jobs in the economy.

CHAPTER 7: IDENTITY VERSUS THE PRACTICE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP AMONG STUDENTS

In this chapter I explore some key findings of this study. I deal with the student conceptualizations of entrepreneurship from both an identity and a practice point of view. I discuss students who identify as entrepreneurs, those who are unsure about their identity in relation to entrepreneurship, and those who admit outright that they are uninterested in entrepreneurship. Their experiences are juxtaposed with their different practices, as some state they are not entrepreneurs while selling products and services on campus like those who identify themselves as entrepreneurs. This chapter then provides granular details about the identity and nature of entrepreneurship among students at Fundisa University. This chapter also reveals the different ways in which entrepreneurship is conceptualized among students. The chapter also demonstrates some ways in which the students are subverting their university and shares the student provided explanations for their choices with regards to their entrepreneurial identity.

I asked the Fundisa University students who participated in this round of the study whether they considered themselves to be entrepreneurs. They completed an online form that automatically assigned IDs to the responses. In the first part of the question, they could choose from three options: yes, maybe, or no. They were asked to elaborate on their response, using a field that allowed filling in of text. Some of the responses were rushed in the same way that the rest of the form had been completed, but they still provided some very honest reasons for the choices. A few of the responses are presented below.

> ***ID 72:*** *Yes, I am an entrepreneur (reading for a Diploma in Contact Centre Management): I sell eggs and chickens at home. What inspired me is that I want to start my own NPO where I donate sanitary pads and toiletries to young girls and boys, and I also want to be able to pay my fees for Somatology (a new course they hope to study after finishing the current one).*

> ***ID 9:*** *Yes, I am an entrepreneur (reading for a Diploma in Survey Engineering): I am operating a micro-finance company; I am doing this because I have been lending people money informally for a long period and now, I have decided to formalize it. I am fascinated*

about how the banking industry operates that is why I am also motivated to run a micro-finance company. Hopefully one day it might be an actual bank.

ID 67: *No, I am not an entrepreneur (reading for a bachelor's degree in medical laboratory science): I've never done anything related to it.*

ID 62: *Maybe, I am an entrepreneur (reading for a Diploma in Information Technology): I chose "maybe" because I do have business ideas. I've jotted few of these down and I am still finding ways to fulfil them.*

I received 89 responses form responses in the three days following the distribution of my research poster and an internet link for the participation form. I felt anxious and excited about the way the interviews were going to look, feel and sound, given the mix and the apparent domination of those students who considered themselves entrepreneurs. I wondered if I was going to get a balanced mix of participants. The form responses show a productive and an overlapping mix that went beyond the "yes, no, or maybe" options.

7.1 Chapter Overview

In this chapter I draw together data collected from student interviews, field notes and photographs received from interviewees. I answer my research questions by drawing out emergent themes and trends from interview data and use interview excerpts, tables, and images to report the findings. I show some categorizations of the data in tables.

The chapter is organized into four main sections. I first discuss the understandings of entrepreneurship among students based on their individual student profiles, such as their course of study, funding for university, and other interests they highlighted in their interview. I use this as a basis to explain the context of this research case study and use this section to help the reader understand the range of understandings of entrepreneurship that exist among students. In the second and third parts I focus on the understandings of those students that are already engaged in entrepreneurship and those showing little or no interest, respectively. I draw out from interview data some of the reasons students gave for the promotion of entrepreneurship on their campus and the rationales offered by those showing low or zero interest.

In the fourth section I address the research questions about the ways in which students make sense of entrepreneurship and its role in their livelihoods. The emergent findings include student experiences of selling products to other students (students seeing one another as a market). In addition, the findings include those students' conceptualizing entrepreneurship as an opportunity to learn new skills, as a practice to be actively pursued on campus, and as something for the future.

7.2 Are you an entrepreneur? Yes, maybe, or no

I begin by discussing in general terms the way in which Fundisa University students conceptualize entrepreneurship. I first draw on the data collected when the student interview participants signed up to take part in the study. One of the questions I asked on the preliminary survey was "Do you consider yourself an entrepreneur?" I required students to select a response from drop-down options "maybe", "yes" or "no". I then gave a follow-up instruction: "Please provide one or two reasons for your answer." I commence by discussing their choices and explanations about their ideas of entrepreneurship, both among those who regarded themselves as entrepreneurs and those who did not. Both questions can be regarded as productive in that students had to choose an option and support it with a reason based on their lived experience.

During data collection I met students from various qualification backgrounds, ranging through the humanities, health sciences, management, engineering, and the arts. These students embodied varying ideas and thoughts about entrepreneurship. Some of those engaged in selling did not consider themselves entrepreneurs or box themselves into any categories of entrepreneurship, such as calling themselves start-up entrepreneurs or survivalist entrepreneurs. They considered themselves as just students with an opportunity to provide something at a price. Some resisted being called entrepreneurs. Some, however, claimed the name "entrepreneur" and wanted to be known as such. This already shows variance in how students at Fundisa University process and conceptualize entrepreneurship.

Here I turn to the findings from the study's preliminary survey specific to the 30 student participants who were interviewed in this study. During recruitment, 89 students expressed an interest in participating in the study and completed the preliminary survey questionnaire, including the questions mentioned in the opening paragraph of this section. From those 89, I selected 30

students, based on my interest to balance the combination of study backgrounds, interests, and levels of study. Here I focus only on the 30 student interviewee survey responses. Of those 30 students, 24 identified themselves as entrepreneurs, some citing their businesses, and others, self-employment and wanting to benefit from economy of South Africa as their reasons for identifying as entrepreneurs. Four students chose "maybe" in answer to the question asking whether they considered themselves entrepreneurs. Two students did not consider themselves entrepreneurs; one provided no reason and the other stated that they had never done anything related to entrepreneurship. Table 7 below, contains some varying extracts showing the different identifiers:

Table 7: Sample student interviewee identities in entrepreneurship

ID	Year of Study	Qualification and Field of Study	Consider themselves an entre-preneur?	Reasons for answer [a]
1	4th	Advanced Diploma in Somatic Therapy	Yes	I wanted to explore my profession in the entrepreneurial world, and the goal has always been to be self-employed
9	3rd	NDip Surveying Engineering	Yes	I am operating a micro-finance company; I am doing this because I have been lending people money informally for a long period and now, I have decided to formalize it. I am fascinated about how the banking industry operates that is why I am also motivated to run a micro-finance company. Hopefully one day it might be an [a]ctual bank.
55	2nd	Tourism Management	Yes	Because I want to ful[fi]l my dreams
59	3rd	NDip Legal Assistant	Yes	I run a business; what motivated [me] is the level of unemployment in the country [that] mostly affect[s] the youth
62	2nd	Information Communication Technology	Maybe	I chose maybe because I do have the mind businesses which I've jotted few [I have a few businesses in mind and have jotted them down] … [but I am] still finding ways [for] how [to] [fu]lfil them.
66	2nd	Diploma in Hospitality Management	Yes	I'm into business because I was raised in a house of entrepreneurs and I'm good in gen[er]ating money

ID	Year of Study	Qualification and Field of Study	Consider themselves an entre-preneur?	Reasons for answer [a]
67	3rd	Bachelor's Degree in Medical Lab Science	No	I've never done anything r[el]ated to it
68	3rd	Diploma in Credit Management	Maybe	I have an organization named Help-A-Student that I started with my friends to help student[s] to apply [t[o] university]
76	2nd	NDip Surveying	Maybe	I'm not runnin[g] a business
78	3rd	Contact Centre Mana[ge]ment	No	N/A
82	3rd	Management Sciences	Yes	I started my business mainly for purposes of supporting my family with the profit it makes and grow a brand [f]or myself.
86	3rd	NDip Retail Business Management	Yes	I want to benefit from the [worth] of our economy

[an] Answers have undergone light editing for punctuation and obvious typing errors. Any other changes have been shown in square brackets.

With these responses, some of the participants provided multimedia (short video clips, photos, business profiles, their website addresses, and social media account links). I solicited these during interviews when my student interviewees described the nature of their understandings and involvement in entrepreneurship. In this part I share three examples of supplementary media showing projects by Fundisa University students. This shows a dominant approach to the conceptualizations and articulations of entrepreneurship among students at Fundisa University, owing to the influence of powerful stakeholders such as lecturers, mentors, and other interest groups. Figure 2 shows an example from one student who packages and sells perfume.

Figure 3: Rea's* Cosmetics – A student packaging and selling perfume

In the next sections I deal more specifically with the two types of conceptualizations that emerged. These are conceptualizations of entrepreneurship by students already engaged in entrepreneurship and those students uninterested in entrepreneurship.

7.3 Understandings of entrepreneurship among students involved in microenterprises

In this section I move on from the basic yes/no/maybe attitudes to entrepreneurship among Fundisa University students to focus on how those students who are involved in microenterprise understand entrepreneurship. I interrogate how they form their thinking and think about entrepreneurship. It is important to note that these students use terms such as "hustling", "starting up", "participating in the economy", and "making cash" as explanations of both their motivations and conceptualizations of entrepreneurship. In this section I show the personal motivations of students that inform their understandings of entrepreneurship. I also show that these students have multiple and overlapping understandings of entrepreneurship. In Table 8 I summarize the different conceptualizations of entrepreneurship discuss these further in this section using examples and by referring to the interview excerpts already provided.

I recorded nine different understandings of entrepreneurship. Of these, three are common among the interviewees. These are understanding entrepreneurship as (1) a quick opportunity to generate cash, (2) as a sense of ownership and (3) as a project to take care of one's needs. I deal

with these in the latter parts of this section. These are based on the dominant idea among the students that entrepreneurship helps people to generate cash quickly. This overlaps with the understanding that entrepreneurship helps with one's needs. The cash generated allows students to pay for their basic needs, as shown in the different sections of this chapter. Students also see entrepreneurship as giving them a sense of ownership. This is because it gives them a rare opportunity to dictate some of their own terms, own stock, and have some degree of control over the flow of their money.

Table 8: Summary of the practice-based understandings (conceptualizations) of entrepreneurship among students involved in microenterprises

Practice-based conceptualizations/ understandings of entrepreneurship	Examples	Interview references
Side-Hustles and creating more opportunities for hustling	Generating cash, raising cash to start a microenterprise	10, 12, 14
A skills-based understanding	Way to use skills gained from lectures or from labs	12, 14
Ownership, registering a business, and formalization	Having a business certificate (obtainable for a minimum of R180, about £9)	12
Needs-based understanding	Students needing to do something that can help them generate cash to buy basic necessities, e.g. clothes, perfume	14, 24

I will now discuss each of the above understandings of entrepreneurship, summarized in Table 8, using different excerpts from the interviews. I will begin by discussing the understanding that thinking about entrepreneurship is the same as doing it.

Interview*[3] *13

> *I was thinking of selling things like bags, and wallets because I saw them, they are cheap unlike those that people sell for R250. They were somewhere around R50 or R80. I was thinking of starting something like that this year and see how it goes.* (Interview Excerpt 5.1)

Thinking and imagining entrepreneurship: Students at Fundisa consider their process of thinking about opportunities to generate cash as doing entrepreneurship. The excerpt from Interview 13 above shows the use of the word 'thinking'. The interviewee explained that she had considered selling items such as bags because these are cheap. They provided reasons for their aspirations of selling or getting involved in entrepreneurship. They considered this enough to qualify them as entrepreneurs. During the interview, the interviewee imagined herself and kept referring to herself as an entrepreneur. The interviewee provided basic calculations of profit that they could make from selling bags bought for as little as R50 (£2.50) or R80 (£4) and then sold for R250 (£12.50). The interviewee saw an opportunity to make some cash and saw themselves as an entrepreneur on account of having identified the chance of making a profit. During the interview she also felt that their engagement with the idea was enough for her to be regarded as an entrepreneur worthy of support and funding afforded to those "avid" entrepreneurs.

Interviewee 13 showed a way of thinking that Interviewee 20 also showed (see the following excerpt). A way of thinking that is pragmatic and concerned about the practical details of start-up a business of selling. The interviewee provided figures and detail about her idea for selling bags and wallets. While Interviewee 20 specified that their idea was to do photography, they were more realistic about their own circumstances. They pointed out that they first needed to finish their studies and named industry barriers that affected their thinking about entrepreneurship. Like Interviewee 13, they provided figures from their exploration of the industry of their interest.

Interview 20

> *First things first, after completing my qualification I want to open my own company which I have already started working on which will focus on advertising photography.*

[3] All interview excerpts are from student interviews.

> *Let's say for example there's a new dress coming out and they want to showcase that dress in a magazine, maybe* Vogue *magazine.* Vogue *magazine does not provide you with a camera, studio, nothing. They just give you a brief detailing what they want and that is it. So, you must use your own studio and equipment. My company will have a studio and other things that will enable one to do all of that.*
>
> *For now, I am still using the start-up equipment and if requires me to go and hire equipment. I will do so as I have done in the past whereby, I did a shoot and had to go hire lighting and so forth. You can hire a high standard camera for about R800 to R850 [about £40 to £42.50], do your thing and return it after two days. I do hire equipment, but I want to get to a point where I have my own and no longer hire.* (Interview Excerpt 5.2)

Both interview excerpts show some of the thought processes that students follow in thinking about entrepreneurship. Both interviewees were concerned about the distribution and availability of resources for them to embark on their ideas. Their stories show that even starting small is difficult in their way of thinking. They raised concerns about time to do the "selling" of their products and/or services (e.g. bags, photography) but even so, maintained that they would pursue this in future. Their conceptualizations of entrepreneurship are, to some extent, limited by the information they hold, their exposure to the sectors they wish to trade in, and their student status. As Interviewee 20 stated, they would like to attain their educational qualifications and cannot do anything that can reduce their chance of success at university.

The side hustles: As the second type of conceptualization, students engage in a practice commonly known as hustling and in the creation of side hustles. Unlike the interviewee with a photography initiative, hustling is not fixated on one idea. It is fluid and focused on taking up as many chances as possible. This means engaging in cash-generating activities while registered as a full-time student at Fundisa University. I focus on interview excerpts that report on the nature of hustling and side hustles that dominate the conceptualizations of entrepreneurship among the interviewees. The following excerpt from Interview 10 reinforces the idea of entrepreneurship as selling something.

Interview 10

> *[Interviewer: I heard you saying that you also sell Herbalife – what is your motivation to sell Herbalife?]*
>
> *To learn new skills in working with people – I also get to know how business works because I am not doing anything related to business.* (Interview Excerpt 5.3)

The excerpt shows the conversation that ensued after I followed up on something the interviewee had said about selling an American lifestyle product range called Herbalife. These products are not available on supermarket shelves as they are sold through agents only. Registered agents who are trained to do door-to-door sales of the product obtain their stock from a local bulk reseller. The student responded by saying that they sold Herbalife to learn skills and to understand how business works. This shows that students see an opportunity to learn skills from structured approaches of selling and as another chance to make up for those skills not being taught in their undergraduate programmes.

> *This year I will need money to start my business – make hotdogs, bake, and make extra cash that I can save for next year for my business. It is not guaranteed that one will get a job after graduating. I will save the money for the business I want to do.* (Interview Excerpt 5.4)

The conceptualization of the side hustle is based on the possibility of making money. The uses of this money vary from taking care of personal needs to using the money generated as capital to start a new business. In the excerpt above, Interviewee 12 needed money (money as a need) to start a business. They thought about making hotdogs and baking to make extra cash as planning for a future of doing business. They recognized the need for money in all aspects of engaging in business. Interviewee 12 was also concerned about not being able to find a job after graduating and therefore sought to raise money to start a business of their choosing. It appears that selling hotdogs suited them as a student, but they will still think about that the nature of business activity they want to be involved in after graduating. This shows that students make a distinction in their thinking about making money as students and doing business as graduates.

> *I have my own photography business and have an NPC [non-profit company] called Help-A-Student. We assist prospective students to apply for university programmes in which they qualify. This makes the admission process easier for the university. In general, that is me.*
>
> *… I started it [the photography business] in 2018, but after matric, but it was not formal. I only registered it with CIPC in 2018. I then came to university in 2019 to study photography.* (Interview Excerpt 5.5)

Skills-based understanding of entrepreneurship: The third case is a skills-based understanding of entrepreneurship among students at Fundisa University. This also involves the skill to combine ideas in the for-profit and not-for-profit sectors. Students demonstrated the use of skills they acquired from lectures and from other practical training at Fundisa University. Above is an excerpt from Interview 14, detailing a process of starting up with just skills to engage in entrepreneurship. This approach is a representation of the varying conceptualizations of entrepreneurship and a way to get started using a skill. Interviewee 14 started a photography business in 2018 and registered it with the South African Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC) in 2019. This excerpt is accompanied by the meanings the interviewee attaches to entrepreneurship.

The interviewee further demonstrates a complex set of interests in entrepreneurship which include selling energy drinks that are scarcely available from large retailers like Herbalife in interview Excerpt 12. The interviewee sells "MoFaya" energy drinks. MoFaya has been popularized by a famous DJ through his selling of the energy drink at traffic lights; this has drawn youths to do the same. His celebrity status attracts students to buy packs of the energy drink from wholesalers and resell them, also hoping to ride on the DJ's fame on social media and in the South African music sector. Students also attend the DJ's motivational sessions, where he encourages them to stock and sell his energy drink. Through students and unemployed youth, the DJ has been able to create outlets by which his product can be distributed. This is seen by Interviewee 14 as an opportunity to make cash and be closer to an influential person such as the DJ, even if they only make a profit of R300 (£15) per week after selling 84 cans.

Interview 14

> *[Interviewer probing: What does entrepreneurship mean to you and how are you practising it?]*

Okay, entrepreneurship for is having a business and developing it on your own. Then accepting that it might succeed or fail. Usually, I do it at school. I sell MoFaya energy drinks to students and on weekends I take other students, who want to learn how to sell, to the traffic lights. I was taught by DJ Sbu and I just heard that he will be selling at a store in Mamelodi. I then spent a whole day with him selling at the traffic lights; that is where my passion came from.

[On selling and making profit] I sell every day. Students come mostly at night [to buy the energy drinks] when they are studying. I would finish a box of 24 energy drinks in two days.

It depends because in a week I can make R300 in profit. I use this to buy more stock but sometimes buy food such as bread and drinks to keep my self-surviving and pushing…

[On selling to other students] The students are supportive. They complain when I run out of stock. I must make sure that I have enough stock. I take it as a motivation to have enough stock. There was a time when I did not sell for a month as I was busy with something, and they complained. So, I went back into selling.

I store it at the residence – in a fridge. We have a place where we put my stock in a small container. My housemates are supportive even in my absence they do sell my stock.

When I finish, I want to start my own business. I do not look for jobs – I am not looking forward to a job. My passion for business is there. I learnt how to write business proposals. That is why I can score some funding money from government. I am looking forward to running my side projects to make money and hire some of my classmates that are not into entrepreneurship, and maybe looking for work or employment. (Interview Excerpt 5.6)

Beyond the conceptualizations of entrepreneurship that have already been stated, Interviewee 14 further conceptualized entrepreneurship as ownership, registering of business rights and formalization. They used the statements (1) “my own photography business and have a non-profit company”, (2) “registered it with CIPC” and (3) the words “but it was not formal”. In their view, registration formalizes the business. In addition, they sought to solve problems of other students by easing the process of registration for university through their non-profit company called Help-A-Student. The non-profit is the same as one other interviewee’s project, shown in

Figure 3, also designed to help students by posting opportunities available for prospective students and heling them to apply for study opportunities. This organization is dependent on donations and volunteers. All these events and approaches explain the conceptualizations of entrepreneurship held by students such as Interviewee 14. The non-profit does similar work to the project by Bridget (another of the interviewees) that also helps students apply to universities. This they consider important, and they define doing this as an enterprise. Figure 3 shows the Instagram page of Bridget's foundation and some of the work done by the organization.

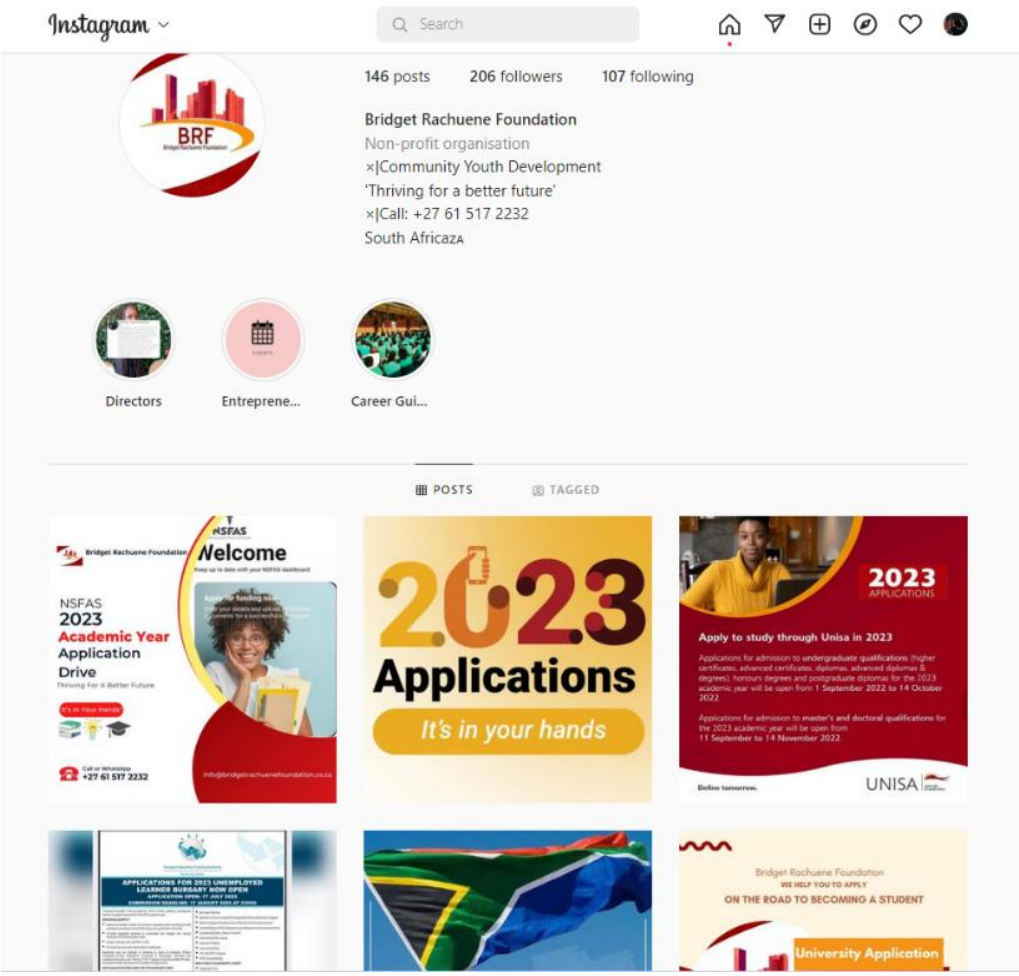

Figure 4: Instagram account of Bridget Rachuene Foundation

Interviewee 14's conceptualizations show development, reshaping, and change over time. For example, the interviewee stated in their interview that when they finished their university studies, they wanted to start a business. They further mentioned that they did not want to be looking for jobs but rather secure funding from the government and employ their classmates. The

interviewee exhibited being in control of events happening in their life and, as a result, presented a fixed view of their future and articulated those aims, such as improving on their current engagement with their business ideas. Unlike those feeling discouraged from seeking money or funding from the government, the interviewee believed they would write proposals for funding and create employment, as the government expects of the microenterprises they fund.

Overall, the conceptualizations of entrepreneurship, in the experience and view of Interviewee 14, entailed selling, generating cash, complying with governmental requirements, conducting business, and creating jobs. In addition to the conceptions of entrepreneurship held by Interviewee 14, was the notion that entrepreneurship is a collective activity. Interviewee 14 stated that in their absence, their roommates would sell energy drinks to those students who wanted to buy. Also, they stated that the need for stock was driven by demand from others, as suggested when other students complained about any depletion of the energy drinks.

Understanding entrepreneurship as academic (like university studies): I now turn to the conceptualizations of entrepreneurship that are linked to the academic study experiences of students.

Interview 21

> *I am 21 years of age, and I am based in Pretoria, South Africa. I am currently doing my second year in Fundisa, [campus name], and doing a Diploma in Hospitality Management. I am also a DJ. I like music and I use my DJing for my side hustle. I push my label and my brand.*
>
> *Yes, as I was saying – I was saying that my course is linked to my course because hospitality is all about food operations. I am doing measurements, how you mix things, how you balance your food, your plate and stuff. Also, in music you know like there is always a strategy that you must do your mixing correctly. Even in cooking you must balance your salt or sugar must not be too much. It also applies to music, when you are busy producing, the bassline must not be more than the kick or the claps, you see.*
>
> *Eh… for a one hour set gig – I charge R600 (£30), so it depends on event managers and what they need. You know sometimes I can get three gigs one day or for the whole of the*

> *weekend – it depends. As I charge R600 per gig, I make sure that the money that I get… [line breaks – interview conducted further via WhatsApp voice notes]*
>
> *[Laughs]… truly speaking, I am passionate about it. I grew up in a side of music as my uncle was a DJ and even my father was once a DJ. So, I grew up listening to music when I was young. There was music everywhere in the house.* (Interview Excerpt 5.7)

Interviewee 21 is a DJ studying a course in hospitality management. This course involves food operations and learning about hospitality services more broadly. The interviewee suggested that the hospitality course has enabled them to understand better their practice of being DJ. They compared musical concepts in DJing to those learnt in their hospitality classes. For example, they likened mixing and measuring in food preparation to mixing music and balancing sounds. This student found their entrepreneurial expressions and contextualized their entrepreneurship conceptualizations within a field of study unrelated to their DJing practice but still linked these together.

Interviewee 21 is a second-year student. From the interview, it was evident that it was important for them to do well in their studies and, if engaged in entrepreneurship, to do what they enjoy the most. DJing three events in one day or for the whole weekend is demanding and challenging but the interviewee was committed, generating cash, and sustaining their energy by linking the practice to their course of study. The student does DJing as a passion project that makes sense to their academic course.

In another part of Interview 21, the interviewee expanded on the conceptions of entrepreneurship underlying their commitment to, passion for, and interest in DJing.

Interview 21

> *Gigs depend on the time of the month because most of the time we get more bookings at the end of the month or at the beginning of the month. Because that is when most event managers host events, and it is when everybody got paid. It is month end. People are excited and are spending – that is when we get most bookings. In the middle of the month, we get less bookings because most of us are not paid – because it is the middle of the month. So, the money that I get from those gigs, I use it to grow myself or my brand. To grow my Facebook page and my Instagram, my Twitter account, and my YouTube, I post my videos*

> *and my updates. I also use the money to hire my studio equipment, monitors and crossovers and emphasizers. That is what I do with the money I get from my gigs.*
>
> *The campus is big, and it was hell of a mess – but I adapted to it quickly since I deal with people as I am a DJ. I am DJ and a producer I know how to socialize with people, you understand. I ended up adapting to the place, I made new friends. Everything started fitting together and then in my studies I did well. I started feeling the support from my family and my mother especially… So, I went hard on my modules. I did not want to disappoint her.* (Interview Excerpt 5.8)

This part of the interview was about the promotion of the DJing project, social skills learnt from the experience, and family. Interviewee 21 has experience in running events and dealing with money, as this relates to being a DJ. As a result, they promoted their services through social media and spent money on improving their offerings. This included booking a stage and other equipment to produce promotional video clips. Interviewee 21 stated that they had made new friends and were satisfied with their academic performance. They cited support from the same friends and family (especially their mother) as a reason for their successes.

Needs-based understanding of entrepreneurship: I now turn to the understandings of entrepreneurship labelled here as need-based conceptualizations of entrepreneurship. These conceptualizations of entrepreneurship are entwined and overlap with student livelihoods on campus. I discuss livelihoods in section 7.6, dealing with students' livelihood strategies. For now, I discuss how students such as Interviewee 24 create microenterprises or begin selling to generate cash to pay for things such as textbooks, clothing, and perfume. This part deals with someone's feeling the imperative to start-up an initiative to be able to take care of their personal needs.

Interview 24

> *You need to hustle for books, sometimes you end up selling something like doughnuts so that you can buy a certain book. And then you also need to dress nice, especially during first year. You do not know that university is demanding on its own. So, the pressure was that we needed to dress and smell nice and perform best so that the ladies can see. It is like a secondary school-based thing whereby everyone will like and want to associate themselves with the top performer.*

> *With me, a lot of people wanted to associate themselves with me and understand my statements and my political wisdom in terms of how I manoeuvre being myself and being a rainbow to most of my peers because I was always in the crowd and talking. I am talkative and people like me in that regard. I also like hustling, not hustling for work, but the hustling of implementing business ideas as I am more into business. So, they wanted to know more, you know in a situation where people want to know more from you. You also need money for yourself so that you can sustain yourself.*
>
> *In the generation that we are in now it is no longer a call but a must. I even myself have got a cleaning company that is also more on fumigation and disinfection services. So, entrepreneurship is no longer a call but a must because now we cannot blame the government when it comes to job opportunities.* (Interview Excerpt 5.9)

Interviewee 24 explained that they felt pressure among their peers to look and smell good. Because of this, they found themselves having to hustle, though not for "work", as the interviewee put it, but rather to develop and implement business ideas. Interviewee 24 did not associate implementing business ideas with "work". They also talked openly about their challenges and shared wisdom with their peers. Because of these pressures and their personal needs, they set up a cleaning company. They called this entrepreneurship – something that makes them independent of the government. Interviewee 24 was in entrepreneurship to serve their needs and to achieve (and/or maintain) financial independence.

Passion and project-based understandings of entrepreneurship: Interview 14 was also about the passion and project-based understanding of entrepreneurship. Some students, like Interviewee 14, are great at talking about their passions and how these have become meaningful projects for them. This provides an interesting overlap in the ways that passion can become a well-planned project that is then referred to as an enterprise, as alluded to by Interviewee 14.

Interview 14

> *First, it was my passion of photography. I also wanted to tell people stories about where I come from. I wanted to stop people from looking at townships as places of criminals without looking at the obstacles that they face in life. I want to tell people stories. Also tell people about the journey of my photography and being able to be successful one day in life. Because of my photography I was offered an opportunity to go to the US but due to*

> *Covid-19 I could not go to showcase my personal project. I opted to go next year, 2022, after graduating.* (Interview Excerpt 5.10)

Interviewee 14 explained that their passion was photography as they wanted to tell people's stories. They wanted to show a positive image of their township community and to demystify those obstacles faced by residents in such communities. They were passionate about storytelling. They rather focused on "passion" projects than attempting to present their work as a business. This is a simplified explanation of the passion-based conception of entrepreneurship. Those involved in it, such as Interviewee 14, tend to avoid the word "entrepreneurship" but use words such "project". This makes their work less about money-making and profits and more about remaining true to their passion. However, it is a rare form of enterprise in this study, as most students were motivated by their survival needs, as shown in the previous sections.

Understanding entrepreneurship as a cash-generating activity: In this part I turn to those conceptualizations of entrepreneurship that are driven by a specific need for cash. In the previous focus on the need-based conceptualization of entrepreneurship, the needs were vast, such as personal-image building by having perfume and dealing with peer pressure. In this part, however, I focus on those student interviewees driven into microenterprises by their need for money. These interviews also saw themselves as problem-solvers who must earn from doing so and are inspired by others who are doing similar things.

Interview 1

> *[Did you do any other thing on campus to earn an income?]*
>
> *With me (chuckles), this one is funny. I was aware of internet-related things from a very young age. So, I would assist people when they want to register things like companies, all these things that needed to be done via phones. There also used to be these old phones that you could reset and change passwords. Most people would have issues with that, so I would assist. In instances where I would be sitting with someone and they share that their phone is giving them problems with something, I would offer to assist. I would assist that person and they would take my number. When they meet someone who has the same crisis, they would tell them about me, and I would advise them. I made petty cash via such things.* (Interview Excerpt 5.11)

Interviewees 1 and 3 provided understandings of conceptualizations of entrepreneurship driven by the need to generate cash. This is further influenced by observing other who do it and the idea of solving the perceived problems of others who are also running microenterprises. Interviewee 1 assisted people to register their businesses online. They charged a fee of about R200 (£10) for this service. Ordinarily this is a service that would be offered free of charge by state agencies but here a Fundisa University student spotted an opportunity to offer the service at a price. They certainly took advantage of information and knowledge at their disposal, such as being able to help people whose phones were giving them trouble. They would rely on word-of-mouth promotion of their offer to help. This conceptualization of entrepreneurship plays into the common American and Eurocentric views, summed up by researchers such as Drucker (2020), that entrepreneurship is about exploiting problems by seeing opportunities where others see a problem.

Interview 1

> *At that time, I would charge R200. That would be separate from the registration fee they had to pay. I would R200 for completing the entire registration process. You would find that in a month I'd assist two or three people. That would mean I have R600.*
>
> *I met this lady from Bushbuckridge, and we became friends. With that NSFAS money, she would have to buy food for herself, food for home, and have money for toiletries and all of that within that R800. To make ends meet, she would sell things such as sweets and snacks on campus. When she gets to campus, she would walk around with a bag of snacks and people would buy, that is how she made money. Outside that, with amaJita [guys] in the smoking zones, there would be those guys who would sell cigarettes outside the school's premises.* (Interview Excerpt 5.12)

Interviewee 1 was inspired by someone they met and the two became friends. This friend sells small-cost items such as sweets and snacks to supplement their income. Similarly, *amaJita* (guys in the neighbourhood) would sell cigarettes and sweets to their peers. This inspired the interviewee to engage in selling and solving the problems of their community and friends by offering to help with company registrations. While all three are doing different things to make money, they are driven by the need to generate money and supplement any other income they may have had, such as a NSFAS allowance. One difference is that offering to register companies at a fee appears like benefitting from the ignorance of others. The common denominator, however, is

the need to generate cash and generate it quickly. This is a view and conception of entrepreneurship held by a handful of students, including Interviewee 1.

Interview 3

> *It was a rough start indeed. The fact that only this year have I been now actually seeing operational growth, as much as it not much but I can track it because it is gradual and getting there. So, with the products, I am currently paying myself at least R500 [£25] a month. As I said it's growth, and with product selling you need money to restock and grow on top of that and not go back to the same stock that you had. With the spa, I'm able to pay myself much more. I'm able to pay myself at least R1,500 [about £75] to R2,000 [£100] because it's services that I'm offering and I'm not stocking anything. I don't know if that makes sense.* (Interview Excerpt 5.13)

Interviewee 3 was a somatology student at Fundisa University and sold body care and massage products. Like the lady selling sweets and snacks and the *amaJita,* they also sold products, although meeting a different need, that is, body care and skincare. The interviewee exhibited a thorough understanding of their product line, pricing and events that played a role in selling their products. While it is cash driven, the conceptualization of entrepreneurship held by Interviewee 3 is also influenced by a clear understanding of the possibilities in the selling of body-care products. This exhibits a cash-focused conceptualization of entrepreneurship and being able to sustain the cycle of products they are selling by restocking timeously.

Understanding entrepreneurship as life challenge: In this part I deal with the understanding which suggests that entrepreneurship is an activity is challenging and, because of this, is desirable. This conceptualization portrays entrepreneurship as a necessary experience for an individual's self-development. Interviewees 30, 4, and 5 provided accounts about their experiences of challenges faced in their pursuit of entrepreneurship and their processing of those experiences.

Interview 30

> *I have opened a small spaza shop. I am in one place. But I must move. I feel trapped… I am at Limpopo.*

> *Yes, before we get there, I am an inquisitive person – I met this guy who advised me about my NPO project and told me that I am playing, I wanted to know why he said what he said. He said I cannot give what I do not have.* (Interview Excerpt 5.14)

Interviewee 30 had a convenience store in their rural village in the South African province of Limpopo. When the interview took place, they were at home and studying online on account of Covid-19. However, the interviewee felt trapped by being in their home province, regardless of the convenience store they were operating. However, this had not deterred them from seeking advice about the NPO they intended to use as a vehicle to solve social problems in their home village. The advice received is discouraging but they were carrying on with the idea despite this, as they used the words "my NPO". Although the interviewee did not divulge further details beyond a brief mention of their NPO, they still demonstrated that they were holding onto the idea that their NPO could solve problems facing their community.

Interview 4

> *I am selling chicken gizzards, like fast food – so I always provide for my needs with that money from my business that I am doing. I often cover these needs monthly from food and clothes. I save money for emergencies. Normally, I do cover them.*
>
> *The sources of income include selling Arthur Ford perfumes. People know me – I make R3,000 to R5,000 from selling.* (Interview Excerpt 5.15)

When Interviewee 4 was faced with challenges and hardship, they resorted to selling food to cover monthly expenses, namely, food and clothes. In addition to food, they also sold perfume and generated between R3,000 and R5,000 (£150–£250) per month. In the South African context, selling gizzards and fast food on the roadside is regarded as an informal microenterprise. The interviewee mentioned the need to save for emergencies, through this raising the challenging life circumstances that influence how they deal with cash and income from the activities of selling. Being needy or strapped for cash informed the conceptualizations of entrepreneurship for Interviewee 4.

Interview 5

> *I opened a micro-finance company. What happened was that after getting the bursary and have adapted to living without money and not used to it. Once you start get access to funds*

> *you start feeling like you have a lot of money on you but little responsibilities. Every time I bought food, I'd always have change left. Some students do have bursaries, others don't. So, I started this thing of, someone would say lend me R50 and I will return it as R70. I did that and eventually thinking that maybe I should try doing this formally and that is when I opened a micro-finance company.*
>
> *It's a challenging and risky business, but I like it and it's good. So far there has been improvement from my side. Another thing is, since I started it, I'm not looking only into micro-finance; there are other opportunities within this market like your policy covers and life insurances covers that, going forward, I incorporate into the business. So, what I now do is that I loan money to people formally, I'm registered with the NCR [National Credit Regulator]. I work hand in hand with it. So far, I have two people that I have employed.*
>
> *My first reason, as I have told you, is that I would informally loan people money, like R50 or R100. So, once I saw that there are companies out there who are doing this formally, like your Bayport, RCS, and Capfin, I saw that this is a nice business if it is doing well. So that is why I started it.* (Interview Excerpt 5.16)

Interviewee 5 provided an account of someone dealing in cash and lending it to others under a micro-lending arrangement. They provided "money for money" and were operating unlicenced in a highly regulated market. This presents an element of risk-taking as a concept in entrepreneurship. However, in this instance the interviewee believed that they were contributing to solving the problem of lack of access to cash among people in their community. Although the interviewee loaned small amounts, ranging from R50 (£2.50) to R100 (£5), they saw themselves as challenging the well-established micro-loan firms, as named in the Interview 5 excerpt.

I conclude this section by stating that the conceptualizations of entrepreneurship differ vastly among those students already considering themselves entrepreneurs and are based on different motivations. In addition, the different motivations provide different ways of conceptualizing entrepreneurship. These include cash, skills, income, and conceptualizations of entrepreneurship based on problem-solving.

7.4 Apathy and postponement towards entrepreneurship: Searching for jobs

In this section I discuss the conceptualizations of entrepreneurship among the students who displayed zero interest in the entrepreneurship activities described in section 7.2. This discussion considers some of the views that the uninterested students articulated about entrepreneurship. I deal with five interview excerpts in this section. These interview excerpts are discussed under three topical areas: (1) students interested in finding jobs, (2) students seeing themselves as professionals, and (3) students holding a view that money is a barrier to entrepreneurship.

I will now deal with the understandings of entrepreneurship among those students interested in jobs, including having jobs in sectors for which they are not trained (e.g. a student trained in call-centre management but finding work as a waiter) and taking any work opportunity available, regardless of one's preferred job. I focus on interviewees 11, 12 and 13.

Interview 11

> *I want to work for a few years. After that I want to start my own landscape company. Yes, and… obviously do what I have always wanted to do when I am successful.* (Interview Excerpt 5.17)

Interviewee 11 was clear that they wanted to have a job for a short period (a few years) before starting their own business. Interviewee 11 felt unready to start their landscaping company and would rather postpone doing so until they had worked for a few years. They did not feel committed to the idea of starting a company per se but rather wanted to lead a successful life or do landscaping as a mark of being successful. It could be inferred that when they feel they are successful through a job, then they will then start their company. This is a more reserved and considered view of entrepreneurship, as shown in the interview excerpt.

The discussion of the first point – that entrepreneurship is only possible with job experience – has been provided in the earlier parts of this section. Table 7 sums up all three of the areas of understandings of entrepreneurship among students who are detached from entrepreneurship, already mentioned in the first part of this section. The professional career outlook and money as a barrier to entrepreneurship understandings are discussed in the remainder of this section.

Table 9: Summary of the understandings among students detached from (not involved in)

Conceptualization and understandings of entrepreneurship among students interested (primarily) in jobs	Examples	Interviewee References
Entrepreneurship is only possible with job experience	Need for professional work experience or graduate training opportunities	11, 12
Professional Career Outlook	Simply interested in a professional career or job and nothing else	13
Money is always a barrier to entrepreneurship	Lack of money or capital to try entrepreneurship	18, 20

Interview 12

> *So, my plans are to get employed in any contact centre in the city. If not, I am planning to start my own business. Already, I have a name for that business; it is called Busi's* Mobile Kitchen. I am planning to sell food to students.*
>
> *Ok, again this year or for now, I need the money to do my learner's driving licence. I decided that when I get my book allowance, I will do my driving lessons. The money I get I will use to get at driving licence. Most jobs require a driving licence.*
>
> *Now I see that call-centre agents are needed… I see through the website called Career…I forgot the website, PNet. Since I will be new to the industry being an agent and I will continue with my studies in contact centre management, hopefully one day I will end up managing my own contact centre. For now, I will apply for team-leader roles. I will apply for a job, but while looking I will run the kitchen. Staying at home is depressing.* (Interview Excerpt 5.18)

Interviewee 12 wanted to work in a call centre in the city of Pretoria. However, they believed that starting a business could be a useful fallback if they did not find employment in a call centre. They had a conceptual name for the business, Busi's Mobile Kitchen, with the intention of selling food to students. Interviewee 12 had no comprehensive plan for the business but an idea of what it might be. Otherwise, finding employment made the most sense to them, and they understood some of the requirements they must fulfil to secure a job, such as having a driver's licence and submitting job applications on time. It is also evident that the idea of starting a food business is

disposable, as they also stated that they would like to start their own call centre in the future. the interviewee had mixed views when it came to their business idea(s) but was more comfortable thinking about a job in call-centre management. The interviewee also saw the business as a possible way to self-distract in case a job did not come through because they feared staying at home and the possibility of feeling depressed as a result.

Interview 13

> ***Interviewee:*** *My course is broad and allows students to choose their career paths. One can become a cadastral surveyor, an engineering surveyor, town planner, GIS, surveyor, and there are a lot. I would like to look for jobs that are under GIS or town planning.*
>
> *I will find piece jobs. If I do not find anything that has to do with surveying, I will try to find something that can give me income.*
>
> ***Researcher:*** *You say your grandmother will support your job search – do you have any other support that coming from her?*
>
> ***Interviewee:*** *Ok, my sister and my whole family are willing to support me. They asked me to fix my CV and send it to them. If they see anything they will submit it. It will be easy for them to give them to people they know and put a good word for me.* (Interview Excerpt 5.19)

Interviewee 13 was very clear about searching for a job in their field of study, without any compromise or consideration of doing any entrepreneurship in the present or future. This student remained determined to find a job, even amid promotions of entrepreneurship around campus; I noted their certainty that they would search for a job in their field. They also described in clear terms the kind of work they were interested in, and they are being prepared for, naming the professional titles, such as GIS surveyor, cadastral surveyor, and town planner. They also explained the kind of support that was available to them from their broader family to pursue a job search. Their trajectory appears streamlined towards job-seeking and using the available support to do so. This student was not interested in switching the same support for pursuit of entrepreneurship or a business venture. They also did not mention any possibility of taking different routes but rather a commitment to professional employment. This also reflects confidence and a feeling of being trained in a field in which jobs are still available for entry-level applicants.

In the following section I deal with interviewees 18 and 20, focusing on lack of money as a barrier to creating a business and opting for a job because of this:

Interview 18

> *Currently I'm fixing my CV and applying for jobs in different companies and art galleries. I have been also taking my artwork that I did in school to art galleries. Some of my artwork is currently at an art gallery in Hatfield. In a couple of days, I will be taking my art to an art gallery in Mamelodi. When I get to these art galleries, I also let them know that I am also looking for a job and leave my CV.*
>
> *Now I don't have capital. If I were to get a job, even if it didn't pay much, I would start something while working. There is someone who told me that I don't really need capital, I just need passion. They also said that maybe art is not my thing, and I did it to get a certificate so I should check if it is really my passion. There is a lot of information coming in and I have just finished school, trying to adjust. So, now I am trying different things. I am thinking of starting a business but at the same time I am thinking that my plan was to find work to save up for capital. Someone said I can start something, and capital will find me along the way.* (Interview Excerpt 5.20)

Interviewee 18 had given up on the idea of entrepreneurship or starting a business. As such, they were fixing up their curriculum vitae and applying for jobs. They have produced artwork and had it displayed in galleries but did not consider this in any way to be considered being in business, but rather a professional creative project that could help with finding a job. The interviewee described their lack of money as an obstacle to any pursuit of business on their part, even though they were once told that all they needed to start a business is passion. For Interviewee 18 this produced self-doubt about their possibly finding job opportunities in the arts because they could not set up a business in the first place. They were caught between conflicting opinions, even though their wish was to find a job, raise capital, and maybe start a business. People who shared their views with Interviewee 18 appeared to ignore their ideas about the trajectory they wished to take. For this reason, Interviewee 18 was dejected and their concern about capital dismissed.

Interview 20

> *First things first, after completing my qualification I want to open my own company, which I have already started working on, which will focus on advertising photography.*
>
> *Currently I don't have any support. It is an idea that I am going to work on this year, and I have already started with proposals but it's just that I haven't gone out to pitch to anyone. But this year I will be doing pitches to people who will possibly fund the equipment that I will need. I will start researching how to find a job in a magazine company in terms of applications and how to go on about it.* (Interview Excerpt 5.21)

Interviewee 20 has been discussed in another section, emphasizing their involvement in enterprise by providing photography services. However, I revisit this interviewee in this part to show how the lack of capital and funding influence how students understand and respond to entrepreneurship. Interviewee 20 was convinced that their enterprise stood a chance of doing better with capital. They have submitted proposals and done pitches but were still unable to attract funding. This casts doubts in their mind about the viability of setting up an enterprise or creating a new business.

7.5 The responses of students to the promotion of entrepreneurship

This section explores the ways in which students respond to the promotions of entrepreneurship at Fundisa University. It attends to how students understand, interpret, and develop meanings about the university's encouraging students to be involved in entrepreneurship. I then also deal with how students speak about, describe, and identify entrepreneurship on their campus and in their communities. I also look at the influences that students have on one another regarding the practice of entrepreneurship on their campus and subsequently how this changes the trajectory of both the promotions and articulations of entrepreneurship among students. For example, some of the interviews showed that students would change their perspective over time: when they saw others selling and calling themselves entrepreneurs, they too became interested, even though they had not previously seen themselves involved in microenterprise on campus in any way. In Table 9 I provide a summarized view of the student responses of entrepreneurship, examples, and interview references, and I discuss these responses further in this section.

Table 10: Students' responses to entrepreneurship

Responding to entrepreneurship (Speaking about it, pronouncing it, and expressing it)	Example (What matters?)	Interviewee
Entrepreneurship as a networking opportunity	Meeting people in powerful roles e.g. CEOs, founders, celebrities	26
Entrepreneurship as a trend	Everyone is doing it – so I'll do it since I might not get a job	28
Entrepreneurship as an exhibition of commitment	It is a tough thing to do like academic studies – doing it shows being a skill for commitment	24
Speaking out the words of motivational speakers	Saying what motivational speakers say about entrepreneurship e.g. DJ Sbu says no money is needed to start out a business only passion and selling	29

I begin with Interviewee 26 to discuss the promotions and articulations of entrepreneurship at Fundisa University:

Interview 26

I am Bonani Chauke, born and bred in a small town called Bokgopong, outside the city of Polokwane in Limpopo. I am currently doing my third year at [Fundisa campus]. I am studying Business Management, a course that deals with management of businesses and organisations. I am also a student activist, currently the chairperson of a student organization called SASCO [South African Students Congress]; I am also in the Student Representative Council as a secretary.*

I think there must be a total review of NSFAS on how it spreads its funding. For example, there is a missing middle that says if your parents earn a certain amount, you do not qualify. But this forgets that parents have expenses and cannot cover academic expenses. At a campus level we have proposed to the rector that we have a fund to draw from stakeholders on campus and around the institution to offer food parcels and little allowance for students who are not recognized as NSFAS beneficiaries but are suffering to get food and

accommodation. We are manufacturing a fund with other stakeholders to assist students who are not funded. To finds ends meet day by day. (Interview Excerpt 5.22)

Bonani* (preferred a pseudonym), is a student involved in student leadership. He was based at satellite campus of Fundisa University and was vocal about the general concerns of students. He complained about NSFAS funding and other expenses that are not covered by the funding, such as transport costs to visit home, clothing, and extra-mural activities such as gym or fitness training outside of normal university space. He was involved in raising funds for those students in need. He was also specific about what he expected from the university with regard to creating opportunities for students, as shown in the next excerpt from the same interview.

Interview 26

What I need now is to have my university to create opportunities for me, I need networking, I need to have profound people around me there are in this city to have my vision realized.

I think right now it is a work in progress. We have recently started to get hold of people who have done it and have done it well. We virtual sittings that we hold with these profound people, and they motivate us, and give us mentorship. We are still searching for the right people to be involved.

Most we prefer entrepreneurs; we find that in any industry you must be an entrepreneur to excel. Even academics, we invite them. One must have a good academic record, also a track record of achievements and academics like you, Mr Sizwe – I am sure I can use this platform to interest you. (laughs)

Yes, we have MJ who is a businesswoman around Polokwane, we would love to have Mr Mphosi who is also a well-known businessman. We would also like to invite Theo Baloyi, the founder of Bathu, and DJ Sbu, of MoFaya. In terms of academics, we have our own Dr Makgabo, Dr Chamano, who is our rector. We would like to open the platform to other speakers and academics, hopefully yourself, but we are still searching.

Most of our students are undergraduate; they will be putting out a blueprint on how to become better at what they do. Of course, each speaker would be characterized under a certain topic that they are good at. We have students that are doing accounting, students doing computer literacy, and those doing IT. We would categorize speakers according to

> *these fields. But we want various departments that are there on campus to speak about entrepreneurship and its importance to students.* (Interview Excerpt 5.23)

His view was that that the university must provide networking opportunities for students. He also appreciated the SRC-led initiative to bring in "entrepreneur" speakers to talk to students on campus about their journeys and even proposed that I should also come. Bonani was positive about the drive for entrepreneurship and articulated entrepreneurship as just networking and letting the students decide on further steps. He believed that meeting "profound people" is enough to engage in entrepreneurship.

Interview 26

> *I think entrepreneurship to graduates, it assists. It gives graduates ultimately an opportunity to go back to society and solve pressing issues. Because there is inequality. It is essential for graduates to tackle pressing issues.* (Interview Excerpt 5.24)

He expressed that entrepreneurship could help graduates solve pressing problems in their communities, such as winning tenders to install sewer systems. Figure 4, supplied by Bonani, is from one of his tendering or contracting projects in his community where there were no functional sewerage and water systems. He cited that other university students could use their skills in fields such as accounting and ICTs can be used to tackle societal problems. Bonani is a member of SASCO, a student body affiliated with the African National Congress. His articulations are like those of the political party's influential leaders, such as the minister of small business development and various members of executive council who are vocal about entrepreneurship among students. His articulations toe a political line.

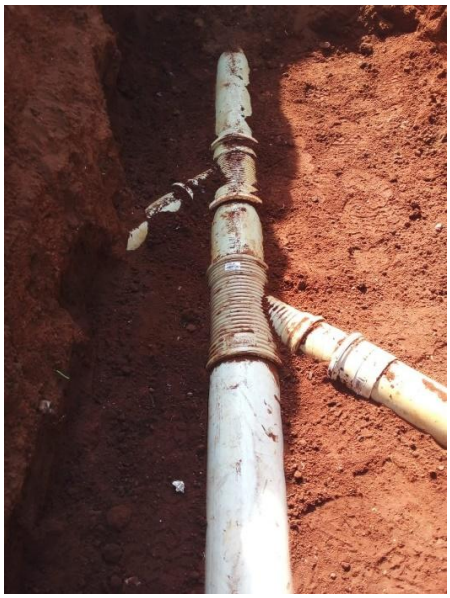

Figure 5: Photographic evidence of entrepreneurship as helping with community struggles.

Another response focused on entrepreneurship as a trend and a grand narrative. I refer to Interview 28 to discuss this type of response.

Interview 28

> *It is doable, but the problem will start when everyone wants to be an entrepreneur, of which is impossible. We cannot all be the same thing; we must complement each other. We are going to have a crisis because as much as entrepreneurship sounds nice, one cannot just say "I want to be an entrepreneur". One must be creative with entrepreneurship, otherwise we will end up having a bar in every corner because everyone wants to open a business. The profits are going to be low as a result. We will even fail to survive because there are a lot of entrepreneurs. Take for example the taxi industry, back then people used to make money but now everyone who has money decides that they will maybe buy two taxis, making the industry saturated and less profitable. The ones who have been in the industry for some time continue to make money, while the others are suffering.* (Interview Excerpt 5.25)

When I asked Interviewee 28 about their responses to entrepreneurship and its presence on campus, they expressed a view that other students were doing it. The interviewee thought that working together in entrepreneurship can enable students to complement each other and avoid selling similar items and instead stock complementary items. They articulated what in their view

was an undesirable form of entrepreneurship as result of the lack of complementary approaches. They mentioned that the taxi industry in South Africa is failing because of its uniform approach to passenger services and that opening a business (e.g. a bar) on "every corner" is not creative. They found these approaches to entrepreneurship unfair because they only benefit those who are known to customers and have been in the industry for a long time. For these reasons, they did not see an opportunity for themselves in these sectors, only barriers associated with lack of creativity.

Another response alluded to commitment to studies, making the best use of the study opportunity, and the creation of a start-up microenterprise after one has completed one's studies.

Interview 24

> *In the generation that we are in now it is no longer a call but a must. I even myself have got a cleaning company that is also more on fumigation and disinfection services. So, entrepreneurship is no longer a call but a must because now we cannot blame the government when it comes to job opportunities.*
>
> *How many graduates do we have? We have more graduates. Meaning that to eliminate blaming the government we need to start our own businesses so that we can apply for the funding from the government or any personnel who provides funding.*
>
> *You cannot be an entrepreneur if you do not have commitment in your academics; you need to also use the same standard of your commitment. So where does the government come in? The commitment is the same commitment that you are using to pass or to graduate in your diploma level. So, meaning that if you are not going to be committed with your diploma then entrepreneurship is not going to work for you.* (Interview Excerpt 5.26)

According to Interviewee 24, students cannot blame the government for not creating new jobs and failure to grow the economy; students feel that they must do this themselves. This subscribes to the government's popular tagline, "*Vuk'uzenzele*" (an isiZulu phrase that means to rise and do it yourself). This tagline was popularized in 2006–2007 at the end of Thabo Mbeki's presidency (More, 2016). Interviewee 24 impressed upon students that they are responsible for making a success of their studies – a view that they must succeed against all odds. This is like

taking risks in starting up a new venture or business – one takes up such responsibility even though success is not guaranteed.

Interview 29

> *Well, I will speak more about Robert Kiyosaki because I did not pay too much attention [to] Vusi Thembekwayo, although I sometimes watch his videos. Robert Kiyosaki spoke of the four quadrants of life. He taught us the game of Monopoly, if I can put it that way. His vision was about how you invest your money and how to be tax free. So, he mainly touched on certain things about property investment. That is when he told us that he cannot work for money because they print it every day. So, for you to have your own money, you have got to print your own money, so we could not understand how to print out our own money. So, he told us that you firstly start your own business, buy a small property, then after that you buy property after property until maybe you have hotels and whatsoever, then you would be tax free. He said something about giving back to the community. He said that if he builds properties, the more people will have houses, he is a generous man. He then touched mainly on finding a job. He said that the system is trying to teach us one thing which is to focus on getting a job, go to school, get good grades, get a job, and then wait for the taxman. In that way, you will not be rich in life. So, for you to become rich, you must be your own boss. Invest in property, because now the bank is the one that is going to borrow money from you and not you borrow money from the bank, that is how you go. It felt easy when he was saying it, but implementation to some is a difficult journey and not just a small thing as he made it out to be.* (Interview Excerpt 5.27)

Interviewee 29's response to entrepreneurship is based on the ideas of motivational speakers. This interviewee held the view that business provides guarantees to turn one's life around quickly. They drew on speakers such as Robert Kiyosaki and his teachings about the property business. They provided a detailed account of their interactions with and understandings of this author's texts, such as the view that money is not necessary to start a business. This view contrasts with the views shared by many of the other students in this study interested in business.

The interviewee accounts presented in this section showed a variation in the articulations of entrepreneurship among students, including the influences of money, commitment to attaining

one's educational qualification, and drawing on motivations, as shown above. This shows that a space that can hold these different articulations and hear them meaningfully is necessary. I expand on this view on section 7.6 below by focusing on student livelihoods in the context of these varying understandings of and responses to entrepreneurship.

7.6 An overlap between the students' livelihoods, their understandings of, and responses to entrepreneurship

This section brings into context the understandings and responses of entrepreneurship discussed in sections 7.2 and in 7.3. The previous sections dealt with some of the issues of livelihood but in relation to the different expressions made by students. Here, I argue that the understandings and responses to entrepreneurship among students overlap with their livelihood experiences, those of their families, and those of their societies.

I draw on five interviews (11, 14, 24, 5, 28, and 29) in discussing understandings of and responses to entrepreneurship as manifested in student livelihoods at Fundisa University.

Interview 11

> *Let us start with accommodation, I make sure that I behave where I stay because I know if I get kicked out, I will not afford another place because my parents will not afford. I make sure that I clean. For my education, I make sure that I perform academically. I study so that I can pass all my modules and be able to keep my bursary.*
>
> *NSFAS pays for accommodation, my tuition fees, and a monthly allowance of R1,500 [about £75]. And I feel like that it is enough for me. And I get a book allowance.* (Interview Excerpt 5.28)

One of students' top basic needs is accommodation, as shown in Interview 11. The interviewee exhibited a sense of gratitude for their accommodation and would not want to do anything that might jeopardize their accommodation rights. This is not a student who would engage in selling products or running a microenterprise at their current accommodation. The student felt that the monthly allowance provided by NSFAS was enough to cover their basic needs. Interviewee 14, on the contrary, juggled between studies and an enterprise.

Interview 14

> ***Researcher:*** *How do you work around the time commitment, considering your studies and the business?*
>
> ***Interviewee:*** *At first year it was a difficult thing to do. In my second year I was able to run my business formally because I was studying from home. As I say I take what I study and apply in my business, so it relates. What they teach me I use to see if it is going to fail or not.*
>
> *It has been a fun and a stressful experience at the same time. When I arrived, I decided I am going to live the same way I did back at home. So, bringing in my* 'pantsula' *culture and just being me made it easy at university. I maintained my original self and I did not feel the pressure, and I haven't changed. I am still the same person that arrived in the first year.*
>
> *I do not do anything. I only go on campus if I must go, have a shoot maybe in studio. The minute I leave campus I am different person. Because on campus we are formal we do what they want us to do, you see. There are no fun activities I do. I go there for just academics but as soon as I leave, I go back to my street hustle.*
>
> *For me, growing up, I understood that when you have money you must help at home. In terms of groceries – during lockdown my mother could not work anymore I had to make sure that we have something to eat. During lockdown a lot of people wanted to register business – I helped them and that is where most of my money came from.* (Interview Excerpt 5.29

Interviewee 14 regarded himself as a hustler, doing something that his livelihood is built on, being a *pantsula* (a common word used in South Africa for street dancers, also slang for a cool township guy). He also appreciated being able to maintain his original lifestyle while at university. However, he felt that when he generated an income, he had to send some of it home. This is a value held by many people and they live by it. This shows intricacies in the livelihood structure and zero interest in entrepreneurship in the conventional way of setting up a business and selling products or services.

Interview 24

> *Yeah, the funny thing in being a student and then also living as a guy who is young and the need to understand that kind of life in general as a student. So, the social life of it is that you need money.*
>
> *As students funded by NSFAS, they would directly deposit money into our accounts, so on Fridays and Saturdays we would buy alcohol and chill. We would then have used up the money we were supposed to buy food with. So, one would have to call home and request money, hustle or sell a book to have money to buy food. We were living in a world where we had to be adult but also be young people.* (Interview Excerpt 5.29)

Interviewee 24 provided a direct account of needing money being a primary conceptualization and articulation of entrepreneurship among students. They viewed entrepreneurship as an opportunity to generate money that they can use to take care of their needs. This money is used along with the NSFAS funding or allowances. As shown in Interviewee 24's case, they also send money to their families when there is some to share.

Interview 5

> *It was hard for me during the first year because I was not aware of any bursaries, so we had to pay cash for everything. I was raised by a single parent who is a cashier, not a well-paying job, so it was a bit challenging. So, in my first year I had a friend who was older than me who informed me about available bursaries. Fortunately, I was funded by Fundi (NSFAS). At least things got better then at the time. In first year, during the final stages after writing exams and you are supposed to get your results, I couldn't get them due to financial constraints. The following year I did manage to get them as I was funded by the bursary.* (Interview Excerpt 5.30)

Students at Fundisa University face hardship, as already shown in other parts of this chapter. Interviewee 5 was a specific case of lacking cash to study at Fundisa University and having to rely on their single parent for their needs at home and at university. For these reasons, students such as Interviewee 5 consider NSFAS funding as a more stable source of cash than self-pursued entrepreneurship to cover their needs.

Interview 28

> *I think that as an activist, that is one I have observed in different ways. I have seen how students have been struggling, how they have been living, and how they meet their needs. A person who is not in university who does not know [student life]; they would just see students going to university. Another thing to look at is the NSFAS funding. Let us say for example you are woman, you would need cosmetics, sanitary pads, and to just feel good. On the other hand, the government is giving that student only R1,500 [about £75]. I honestly feel like that R1,500 is nothing. People come from different backgrounds where maybe they cannot top that R1,500 up. So, they end making other means to get money to cover their needs. Others might have to sell things – bread, cigarette, and so forth – at res. Sometimes ladies end up being what we call "slay queen" in near clubs because they need to survive.*
>
> *Those kinds of situations lead us to issues of mental health as students then cannot cope academically. The kind of meals one eats a day get compromised. You find that a student only eats once or twice a day because they do not have another option in terms of income compared to the others that I have mentioned. You now find that we have issues of depression and mental health issues. Others will resort to even killing themselves. Suicide cases in universities are very high because of such issues. It is unlike in the basic education system whereby you have a teacher who becomes a mother to you. In university you have lecturers who give you deadlines; if you do not understand, you do not understand. Sometimes you do not even have a textbook. So, you will have students who will commit suicide or drop out but continue to squat at the university although they are no longer a student. They will stay in the vicinity of the university, working in the retail stores but no longer a student.* (Interview Excerpt 5.31)

Interview 28 reinforces the view that cash is a necessity for students. This is especially true at Fundisa University, given that most students come from low-income backgrounds. Interviewee 28 explained the problems about NSFAS funding and the monthly allowance. They stated that the allowances do not consider the needs of female students, such as sanitary items, and explained how this drives such students to engage in relationships or sex in return for money. Although this

is another way to generate cash, it is not classified under the general views of enterprise, as promoted by the university.

Interview 29

> *Well, for example, DJ Sbu came in to teach us about hustling. You know, his entrepreneurship skills were mostly about hustling. He taught us how to hustle, about local brands, how to embrace a brand, how to manage your brand, and how to feel passionate about your brand. He showed us on how to kick open doors for one to be successful. He did not focus on the European brands or whatever, he wanted you to come up with your own brand, your own local brand, endorse your own brand, and knock on doors. He told us about his own life story before fame and on how he managed to get to the top because he is also from the location [township]. He spoke about how he made it from a township to where he is right now. So, I think the university called him because he was a young entrepreneur at the time, and we were also young Black students from townships. Because of that, we could relate to his story and how he made it in life. So, they invited him because of that.* (Interview Excerpt 5.32)

In addition to all the livelihood experiences and strategies previously stated (e.g. making the most out of the NSFAS allowance), students are still pushed into entrepreneurship. They are encouraged to create businesses by people such as DJ Sbu. Interviewee 29 explained that this DJ uses a narrative that he too is from the township but has made it in life through entrepreneurship. This puts those students who identify with his story under immense pressure to think about entrepreneurship.

7.7 Chapter summary

In this chapter I presented the understandings of entrepreneurship among students. I have also dealt with responses to entrepreneurship among students at Fundisa University. I have drawn from the student interview transcripts to show that students understand entrepreneurship as an umbrella term for generating cash (making money), as an opportunity for them to take care of their needs, and as something to consider after university. I have also discussed the different ways they respond to promotions of entrepreneurship at their university. I have shown the ways in which students speak about entrepreneurship in response to their university's promotions of it. The differences,

contradictions, disjuncture, and frictions in both the conceptualizations and articulations of entrepreneurship have been dealt with extensively in the discussion chapter.

CHAPTER 8:
KATEKANI "KAT" – FUNDISA ALUMNUS AND ENTREPRENEUR

> *Every day of my life is hectic, I have to wake up every day and be busy. I am not where I want to be, but I am not stressing about it, I will get there. I look back from where I came from and where I am going – there is so much hope. I can't complain.*
>
> *About my business? It is actually tough man; it is really tough. Since 2017 I have been running the company. We have been hosting entrepreneurship seminars. The last one was in 2019 and the government has been working with us. We need daily income we cannot wait for catering gigs.*[4] (Interview Excerpt 8.1)

The above excerpts are from my interview with Katekani (nicknamed Kat), a graduate of Fundisa University's entrepreneurship programme. He began telling me about his late grandmother, who had been buried two months before the interview. He was reflecting on the memories they created with her. This led to his speaking about his life and stating that it was "hectic", citing the challenges he was facing in business.

Kat offers mentorship to students interested in entrepreneurship. He provides it to those who want to start up new businesses at Fundisa University, where he started his business while studying. He is regarded by his mentors and by staff members at Fundisa's Centre for Entrepreneurship as a shining example that other students should follow. He has become a living testament to the university for entrepreneurship activity among students and alumni.

In this chapter I discuss Kat's personal and academic background, and his business experience in Soweto. After that, I focus on the interview findings and my visit to Kat's restaurant. I draw on his experiences as a student, alumnus, entrepreneur, and mentor. This chapter deals with understanding the conceptualizations of entrepreneurship that students articulate and how these relate to their livelihoods. Kat's story shows how students are articulating entrepreneurship at Fundisa University.

[4] All interview excerpts in this chapter are drawn from interviews with Katekani.

8.1 Getting to know Kat: Young, passionate Black man from Kagiso township.

Kat is a young adult Black African male in his early 20s at the time of the interviews. He was born and raised in Kagiso township, west of Johannesburg. Kagiso is in the West Rand District Municipality that draws its much of its economic activity from mining. According to the Department of Cooperative Governance (2023), the unemployment rate in the district is 48%, and 36% of the population live below the poverty line. The district is home to 890,000 people living in 330,000 households. Only 22,000 members of this population have a matric certificate, degree, or diploma. Kat is one of those people. During the research interviews, Kat described himself as passionate about the development of his community. He cited that the informal trading popular in his community encouraged him to become an entrepreneur. While he was in secondary school, he started selling sweets and doing odd jobs such as gardening for neighbours after school. He believes his community prepared him to look out for every opportunity and use it to make an income.

> *I do believe, and I feel that the university has equipped me with enough knowledge and skills to enable me to prepare for funding proposals, skills to assess the viability of the business idea through a short course at the Centre for Entrepreneurship Development.* (Interview Excerpt 8.2)

Kat's educational background has prepared him differently to many other "hustlers" or founders of start-ups, who have no training in entrepreneurship. He feels that his university education has given him the intellectual tools to work on his business ideas. In his view, these include the ability to assess the viability of business opportunities, problem-solving skills, and the knowledge of running a start-up. For him, these skills are useful for when he prepares funding proposals, manages finances, and promotes his business on social media. He gained these skills at university.

8.2 Understanding Kat's interests in entrepreneurship

In this section I focus on Kat's interests in entrepreneurship and his professional activities, such as being an active alumnus, a mentor, and an event organizer. His further interests in entrepreneurship are catering gigs, cooking at his restaurant, doing deliveries for his restaurant on scooter, and being a promoter of entrepreneurship.

Yes, I am an alumnus that is very active. I do mentor a lot of people. I do have a lot of people that I am mentoring besides the students that are always getting my contacts from elsewhere or even my previous mates. I do have people that are starting businesses who I mentor and who are consulting me asking for advice.

Yes, I am mentoring people. I am an event organizer, cook, and a promoter for entrepreneurship. Definitely, yes… (Interview Excerpt 8.3)

The following sections provide a picture of Kat's activities and interests in entrepreneurship. The order in which the sections are presented, however, does not suggest that these are the order in which they happen or take priority in Kat's life, as his interests in entrepreneurship are parallel and very often happen simultaneously.

8.3 Preserving and taking advantage of the alumnus status

So, if I may make an example for instance, it is easier to manage finances if you… are enabled or you have resources such as your point-of-sale [PoS] systems or Speedpoints or everything in line. When you have PoS you have a purchasing order system, everything gets recorded accordingly. There's a report that informs you of the trends of how the business is doing, what product has sold the most and at what time. When it comes to managing finances, I believe the university has equipped me with a lot of knowledge. (Interview Excerpt 8.4)

Finishing university and graduating with a Diploma in Entrepreneurship was one of many achievements that Kat wanted for himself. Kat prepared for post-graduation life by launching his business during the final year of his studies and attending workshops arranged by the Centre for Entrepreneurship Development at Fundisa to learn more about creating a new business. The Centre for Entrepreneurship offers mentorship and workshops to students registered for non-business degrees in university.

Kat started a restaurant and catering business. One of his first big customers was the Centre for Entrepreneurship Development. Not only did the centre guide him in building a business, but it also used his services.

Kat received a grant of R160,000 (approximately £8,000) from the Centre for Entrepreneurship Development. Any student could apply for this grant, but to receive the funding, they had to stay in a year-long programme involving an entrepreneurship "boot camp", mentorship, and pitching their business ideas. Only Kat and three others made it through all the stages and consequently received this grant. Other students gave up along the way, as they could not handle the various stages of competition. These stages included pitching exercises, including reports and feasibility tests of their businesses. Kat feels accomplished by this feat and feels that his business has potential, since it has proven worthy of the grant that he received. He feels that the programme also prepared him to become a mentor.

> *… the university offered me a grant. Any student could apply for the grant. It is not selective. However, one needs to go through the Start-Me-Up programme. It is a short course from the Centre for Entrepreneurship Development. Where you are being taken through the ideation phase, building phase, where you are being made to make the idea come to life, and where to go, and everything, including coming up with the idea and scaling up from point A to B, then B to C. How my business got funding, is because I attended the full course. After attending it we went to camping and different mentors. We had mentors assigned to us to assess our progress of the ideas that we already had or the businesses we are already running.* (Interview Excerpt 8.4)

Kat is committed to the mentorship programme in the Department of Entrepreneurship at Fundisa. He mentors final-year students on ways to build their own start-ups. He also organizes webinars and workshops focusing on entrepreneurship. He presents at motivational-speaking engagements, at which he talks about his journey in entrepreneurship and shares tips with his audiences about ways to build businesses.

Fundisa uses Kat's story as both testament to the grant support that the university provides to start-up entrepreneurs under the Start-Me-Up programme and to promote entrepreneurship among students. Kat states that the university business grant is not a loan, but he and other grant recipients were encouraged to donate to the university's Centre for Entrepreneurship when their businesses begin to make profit. The centre wants to use such donations to help other students in future. Kat feels this is a great way to pay it forward or to help others be like him. He feels that his business must generate profit to help others. However, this puts Kat under pressure to improve on

sales and generate profit that can help him achieve his own goals and then help other upcoming entrepreneurs at Fundisa.

Kat's business suffers from challenges that small businesses in South Africa face (despite the grant funding he received from the university). These challenges include lack of finance, costly business infrastructure and premises, lack of access to markets, restrictive governmental regulations, and harsh monopolistic competition dominated by few large consumer brands. Kat's restaurant is not protected from these challenges; it is vulnerable to all of them. Regarding finance, Kat does not qualify for bank loans. Although his restaurant benefited from the Fundisa University grant, this is not enough money for him to buy land for his business. He believes owning a piece of land would help his business and attract investment to build a structure. He employs only one person, paying him less that the government minimum wage since his business is not making enough money to pay the full amount of R3,500 (about £175), as set by government. He generates only a small income, as he competes with large fast-food brands.

8.4 Mentoring and organizing events

In addition to mentoring students at Fundisa University, Kat also provides mentorship to young adults in his community. He does this by sharing positive thoughts about self-development and encourages young people to rise and act, no matter their life circumstances. Kat feels that in his community, some young adults are jealous of him; they tell him that that he thinks he is better than they are. He feels more welcomed at Fundisa than in his community. He also feels that students have a better understanding of self-development and perseverance, and they too want to start their own businesses.

Kat also organizes events that promote entrepreneurship, both independently and in partnership with the university's Centre for Entrepreneurship. He gives opportunities to motivational speakers, government representatives, and university representatives to speak to the youth about self-development and entrepreneurship at his events. In his capacity as owner of "Kat's restaurant" (pseudonym), he provides catering for these events, which are organized under his restaurant brand. In one instance he partnered with his local council in Mogale City, where Kagiso township is based. His aim with these events was twofold. First, he wished to create awareness about opportunities in entrepreneurship. In his view, young people from low-income

communities such as Kagiso township must create start-up businesses. Second, his goal was to provide catering for these events through his restaurant business. The events served to endorse his business capabilities, generate cash, promote his offerings and to create a safe space for him to act as a self-appointed service provider.

Although the entrepreneurship seminars concept was well conceived and tested, it failed to continue beyond the first big seminar in 2019 owing to the outbreak of Covid-19 and the fact that the events were not sustainable. Kat explained this as follows:

> *We have been hosting entrepreneurship seminars. The 2019 seminar was the biggest and brought us into life. It got us to be recognized in the West Rand and not only in West Rand, but also by government. I could say I need money daily because if we are working for catering, we won't be sustainable. The last one was in 2019 and government has been working with us. We need daily income we cannot wait for catering gigs. Because it is seasonal it won't give us money.* (Interview Excerpt 8.5)

Kat had organized these seminars since 2017, but without funding from sponsors, these were not viable. The target audience did not pay to access the seminars, and they therefore became unsustainable without external funding. Without funding, these seminars did not fulfil Kat's goal of generating business income from them. He also lacked the capacity to continue organizing the seminars. He had to focus instead on his restaurant, attempting to save it from possible failure on account of low sales and relocating from Pretoria to Kagiso township (as described in the next section).

8.5 Catering gigs in Pretoria

Before the outbreak of Covid-19, Kat's business generated income by providing catering services to Fundisa University departments and other corporate businesses in Pretoria. His business could afford R10,000 (about £500) monthly rent and a salary for one staff member, with enough left over for Kat to pay for his own living expenses in Pretoria. Kat described the city of Pretoria as a desirable location for his business because of the city's corporate make-up, where catering for meetings was a big source of income for his business. Even though he targeted Fundisa and other corporations with his catering gigs, he did not always secure the gigs. These were occasional and limited to repeat buyers. However, when Covid-19 lockdowns were implemented, Kat no longer

secured any gigs, and his business could not afford to remain open. Although his business could afford monthly expenses before the lockdown, it had no reserves to survive an economic shutdown. Like other small businesses and informal traders, Kat's restaurant had to close, leaving him without the money to pay his living expenses in Pretoria. Consequently, he moved back to his family home in Kagiso.

> *We need daily income; we cannot wait for catering gigs. Because it is seasonal, it won't give us money. I thought to myself (last year) 2020 that we should open a restaurant. When we are busy it is going to help our catering business. I opened a shop early 2020, but in March of the 2020 I could not afford rent. I took a risk, but I did not have equipment. The place was good and had equipment inside, but I could not afford. I had to pay R10,000. I organized money to make up the rent, but the business failed because of the lockdown, and I needed to recover the monies I used to pay the rent. I was not working; I did not have enough money. I just made plans to come up with the money the first month, second month, then third month but I could not do it after. I still must recover from these monies.* (Interview Excerpt 8.6)

Kat's experience with catering gigs is characterized by challenges and difficult experiences. It has also been a lonely journey of working out ideas, approaching clients, raising money, and paying bills. His experience shows very little to no enjoyment of the financial aspect of his catering gigs. He was encouraged to carry on with catering gigs after buying some equipment, being able to pay rent in the first couple of months and being open to serve customers daily. However, a lack of regular cash sales, brought on by the national lockdown, made him leave Pretoria and go back home to Kagiso township.

8.6 From Kagiso to Soweto: Cook, driver, and promoter

Kat relocated his business from Pretoria to Kagiso but found it difficult to operate it from his family home. At home, Kat felt obliged to provide for the needs of his family and could not save money for himself and business. Although he did not pay rent, he felt obliged to buy food for his family members. As he was operating his business – a food business – at home, his own family's lack of food was particularly glaring.

> *At home, parents are old. My dad got retrenched – only my mother is working. Because one of them is obviously not working, I must help. And we are a big family… when kids are hungry, I must buy something. I am now home. It becomes difficult to grow the business. I started selling for survival when working from home. What is very important now is to grow the company.* (Interview Excerpt 8.7)

Because of his failure to operate his business from home in Kagiso, he then re-established the business in Rockville, Soweto. I visited his new premises in Rockville and ordered some food to experience his restaurant. One of the first things one sees upon arrival at the restaurant is the outside wall, which is branded with the menu and pricing. In addition to this are banners with the logos of the restaurant and Fundisa University. As I entered the yard where the restaurant operates, I saw the green restaurant space, shown in Figure 6, and the converted shipping container used as a food-preparation facility, shown in Figure 7. The space has benches and tables, and therefore allows for sit-down outdoor dining. We had the follow-up interview at one of these tables.

I waited for about 2½ hours for Kat to be free to sit and talk to me. I understood his circumstances, however, and the need for him to serve his business before anything else. As I was waiting for my chance to interview him, I realized that he was endlessly busy as cook, driver, and promoter. He took a few calls from customers placing orders or enquiring about available menu options. As he was taking calls and talking to some of his customers waiting for their orders at the collection point, he was also packing an order he had received telephonically. As soon as he had finished packing that order, he served the customers waiting and then immediately got on his motorbike with the packed order. He told me that he was going to deliver the order nearby and asked me to wait for a few minutes.

During my visit I also realized the connection he had with his customers. While I was waiting, three customers arrived. He called them by their names and had an idea of the menu items they were probably going to order.

Although Kat stopped operating his restaurant from home to re-establish it in Soweto, he explains that this was ultimately to benefit his family. He felt that his family looks up to him and that his restaurant had to be successful to help with his family's needs. He stated:

> *I want to create something that family can share in. I want to build something sustainable for our family, our siblings, and children. As a result, I will become a great leader and entrepreneur. This will enable opportunities for everyone around me, associates, and everyone. When I am home… it was more difficult because the money that was supposed to savings could not… I could say close to... If I had to put R200 away, I wouldn't, if we did not have bread. At home they are looking at me since I am running a business. My business runs well away from home (more independent).* (Interview Excerpt 8.8)

Kat then began working with his father in the restaurant business. His father takes orders and packs them once they are ready. Kat cooks, delivers orders, and manages the restaurant. He places orders, signs contracts (e.g. the lease contract), and opens the restaurant container in the morning and locks it at the end of business day. Kat rides a scooter to deliver orders. He told me it is fuel efficient; it beats traffic and brings in money for his business because some of his regular customers enjoy the delivery service. He carries a portable Yoco (brand name) card machine with him to accept card payments. Kat also the promotes his restaurant by designing posters, which he distributes on WhatsApp and Facebook to attract orders.

Kat determines the menu, like a chef. He structures it based on the preferences of his regular customers and compiles his restaurant's cooking schedule considering the peak and off-peak times. He cooks the food and his father packages and presents it to customers. His father also cleans after him.

> *I do have the skills that I need to become a successful entrepreneur. However, I do need support in knowledge, in mentorship, in funding going forward… because as you grow, entrepreneurship requires different resources, it requires different knowledge, it requires different mentorship. So yes, I do have the skills that I to be a success. That one is a yes, for sure. However, I still need mentorship to advance further.* (Interview Excerpt 8.9)

Kat believes he has sufficient skills and motivation to be a successful entrepreneur. He is willing to multi-task to make his business a success. Besides these facets, however, he also understands that he needs a mentor to advance his skills and to keep motivated to run his restaurant.

8.7 Kat's limited privilege and opportunity

Kat enjoys benefits that come with his educational background and being a university graduate. Without education, some business owners struggle with record-keeping, basic technology, and maintaining their compliance with governmental requirements. He applies his knowledge and skills in his new business. He uses his computer skills and access to information to comply with laws, and he has made his menu available online. His business is registered with the South African Companies Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC) and he maintains his tax profile with the South African Revenue Service (SARS). These are some privileges that Kat enjoys as a graduate when running his business.

Kat feels confident to explore opportunities beyond his knowledge area of entrepreneurship. Although Kat has little to no background in food preparation and hospitality, his restaurant is a business in the food and hospitality sector. He does, however, have training in entrepreneurship. For this reason, Kat's case shows the role of entrepreneurial skills and one's unique life experiences in creating and sustaining a new business venture. He is a self-taught cook but, more importantly, knows how to acquire further knowledge to improve his cooking skills.

Kat's grant funding is not enough to buy him a piece of land to build permanent premises and to cover the operational costs of his business. This limits its ability to grow rapidly. Although Kat's restaurant is a promising business venture and compliant with various business regulations, making it eligible for financing through government initiatives, it faces the same challenges that most small businesses do. Kat hopes to scale up his business, but he cannot afford to do so, nor can he secure an investment to rent space in an established shopping centre such as Maponya Mall. Big brands and US franchises with investment backing, such as Burger King and McDonald's, enjoy access to such mall premises that Kat and other growing brands can only dream of. Kat's restaurant and other local brands compete with multinational and national brands that sell cheap fast food to Soweto's residents. These brands dominate the fast-growing shopping malls and competitive brands that usually suffocate local businesses such as Kat's restaurant.

8.8 Kat and the day-to-day South African struggle

Kat's story is one of many hopeful young adult entrepreneurs in South Africa. These are young adults who have attained further educational qualifications but owing to lack of professional

jobs, usually turn to entrepreneurship and create new businesses. They seek opportunities and take advantage of programmes promoting entrepreneurship both as alumni and members of the community in townships such as Kagiso and Soweto. Kat searches constantly for opportunities to advance and grow his business; despite the struggles he faces.

Kat wishes to afford a decent house, a reasonable car, and respectable clothing for himself. He believes that his business will grow and afford him these modest goals. Some of his friends are employed in the corporate sector and already have access to these through a salary and bank credit. But Kat believes that building a new business takes time and that, once it is successful, it is more rewarding than a job in a corporate firm. Kat learnt this view from his university entrepreneurship programme. However, Kat endures the daily struggles that big business owners are protected from. They have premises, volumes of customers, and investments. Kat's business grinds to a halt when there are power cuts, as, unlike bigger businesses, he cannot afford a generator for his business. Aspirant young adult entrepreneurs like Kat fail on account of a lack of funding, resources, and adequate mentorship support.

8.9 Kat's articulations of entrepreneurship and a life revolving around a start-up

Kat's interview sheds light on the themes (1) experiences of a young adult entrepreneur, (2) starting up, (3) navigating the university promotions of entrepreneurship, (4) handling cash, and (5) holding onto hope. In this section I present and discuss interview excerpts that characterize Kat's multiple experiences in his restaurant business. I then discuss the way in which Fundisa University's promotions of entrepreneurship have influenced Kat's commitment to entrepreneurship and his livelihood strategies.

8.10 Kat's restaurant in Soweto

Figures 5 and 6 are images of the entrance to and the container from which Kat operates his fast-food restaurant in Rockville, Soweto.

Figure 6: Kat's restaurant tables and gazebo

Figure 7: Container structure – food-preparation facility

Kat lacks the kind of generational wealth and connections he requires to expand his restaurant. The restaurant is not operating at the level that Kat wishes. On my visit I learnt that the restaurant may operate only for a limited number of hours per day as per an agreement with the landlord and owing to safety concerns. The restaurant is located near a popular park in Soweto but is prone to crimes such as robbery. The landlord prefers the restaurant to be closed by 5 p.m., as she resides with family on the same premises. The restaurant facility has seen some improvements with the acquisition of the container, furniture, and gazebo; however, in severe weather conditions, the restaurant does not receive sit-down customers since the space is exposed and in the open. During these times, the restaurant focuses only on some deliveries. This shows that the entrepreneurship promotions and business start-up are not smooth sailing, even with some of the

support (however little) provided by universities or government agencies. Entrepreneurs such as Kat must deal with real resource challenges and land-access problems, which are macro-policy issues that the government has failed to deal with in a satisfactory manner.

8.11 Money

Kat has very little money available for either personal use or business commitments. One of his business challenges has been cash flow. The line between personal and business finance has faded because of his constantly having to spend his own money on his business. Kat must pay monthly rent to the owner of the land on which he operates his restaurant. When he was operating his business from his parents' home, he used money from the business to pay for groceries and the needs of his siblings, as he could not watch his family members struggle with basics. Instead of saving the cash generated by his business, he used the money to provide for his family. His family also began looking up to him for financial support from 2020.

> *I wanted to save R1,000 [about £50] per week, but I could not – that has been postponed. Now that target is being deprived. Because I have to make sure that at home there's everything that is needed.* (Interview Excerpt 5.10)

Even now, Kat's business generates very little income. This means that he still has limited finances available for personal and business uses. He can afford to cover his expenses, but he does not yet have enough money to achieve his dreams, such as taking care of his family members by giving them employment or growing and franchising his business. The lack of profits in Kat's business limits his opportunity to draw money to pay his own salary from the business. This creates challenges for his own ability to access credit and to build a positive financial record that can attract funding or investment for his business. The business can pay other expenses, and Kat can use some of its cash to pay personal expenses, but the business does not pay a consistent salary for him.

> *It is not really running according to the way it runs when I am away from home. The police came to my business to buy and new clients kept coming every day. I have to spend six months… I want to create the business at home and employability… but can I go work out there in a market that will enable me to make profit. My ultimate goal is to make profit. I have to go where I make profit. After I have grown, I can revisit where I come from. It*

means I will not run the business from home, but I will put systems that will make the business run professionally. Once I have made profit, able to save and can do more. Then I will not have to revisit where I come from. I won't be staying at home and running business only at home. But I am going to hire people from home. Than to stay here at home for three years trying to make a living. (Interview Excerpt 8.11)

Kat's livelihood is centred around the idea of entrepreneurship. His view of entrepreneurship is founded on the idea of generating cash in the immediate future but also on his longer-term hopes and dreams of becoming a big business magnate. His livelihood is characterized by scarcity of money and hustling to make ends meet, while maintaining a positive attitude. In material terms, Kat lives with his parents when not renting a room. He still depends on his family for a permanent accommodation, even though he runs a microenterprise. He occasionally helps his family to pay for some expenses, depending on the performance of his business. He also provides for his own financial needs. Kat believes he has a great chance of success through entrepreneurship. He is committed to the idea of being an entrepreneur and puts effort into making his short-term goals a reality. These include selling more food items daily, promoting his business to new people, cutting costs, keeping his restaurant as a going concern for as long as it is possible, and taking things one day at a time.

8.12 Kat's hopes and attitude

Kat hopes to be like Ramaphosa, Motsepe, and Maponya, wealthy Black South African entrepreneurs. He wants to make profit, grow his business, and take advantage of opportunities that present themselves. Whether he will benefit from the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment policy like some of these businesspeople is uncertain. He is prepared to relocate and be where his business can be profitable, but it is a challenge for him to identify such a location. In an interview, he stated the following:

My (ultimate) goal is to make profit. I must go where I make profit. After I have grown (his business) I can revisit where I come from (his township). It means I will not run the business from home, but I will put systems that will make the business run professionally. (Interview Excerpt 8.12)

Kat maintains a positive attitude about his life and the opportunities that his life presents occasionally. He displays enthusiasm in his approach to self-development and preparedness for opportunity. He also holds onto big dreams, such as seeing his business achieve growth and become one that will benefit his entire family. The systemic challenges surrounding him, such as unemployment, poverty, crime, and failure of small businesses, do not concern him. He believes that he will – that he must – make it against all odds. He declared being great, in his own words, as shown in the following excerpt:

> *I am great, I am one person who is enthusiastic, I am happy being – besides having to improve myself every day. I am not where I need to be, but I know I will get there. I wake up each day. Everybody can dream but not everyone can actualize their dream. I have positive energy, accept life but do something.*
>
> *The only thing is that we always need more in our lives. I am not where I want to be, but I am not stressing about I will get there. I look back from where I come from and where I am going – there is so much hope. I can't complain.* (Interview Excerpt 8.13)

Kat's hopes and dreams are valid. In a functional government and economic context, he would achieve them. However, they remain possible only because of his positive attitude and persistence. Kat also understands that these traits are necessary for any entrepreneur. Despite a lack of money at home, his family's dependence on him, and running a struggling business enterprise, he remains positive that his life will improve if he makes a success of his business. An improvement in the business will further improve his prospects to achieve his dreams.

8.13 Finding a job or a purpose

Kat has never searched for employment and but instead took it upon himself to start a business and become a mentor. He chose being an entrepreneur over being jobless. Although it bothers him that his father was retrenched and without work (besides assisting Kat in his business), he does not consider searching for a job himself to help his family. Instead, he wants to build his business. He stated the following during an interview:

> *At home, parents are old. My dad got retrenched – only my mother is working. … We are a big family. … I started selling for survival when working from home.* (Interview Excerpt

8.14; repeated excerpt to emphasize Kat's experience of running a business and taking care of family at the same time)

Although Kat is not actively looking for a job, he does understand the impact his father's job loss has had on his business income. He enjoyed some freedom when his father was employed and earning a salary, but since his father's retrenchment, he had to take care of his family. The retrenchment of his father has taken away some of the freedom he had and placed him under pressure. His business has minimal chances of growing or even surviving if the sales are low and the family is dependent on it for survival.

Even in the challenges he faces in business, Kat still feels that he represents the university's ideals and expectations of an entrepreneurship graduate. He believes that he exemplifies the university's broader promotions of entrepreneurship: that students should create new businesses. In his view, the university sees this as a robust approach to tackle the lack of employment, positioning their graduates as employers instead of job seekers. Fundisa seeks to brand itself as a university where students thrive as entrepreneurs, and Kat has become one of the university's success stories. He therefore believes that he is a branding instrument for the university's entrepreneurship programme.

8.14 The challenges of small and micro enterprises (SMEs) – Human Capital Theory

In this section we move from the previous one that focused on how students position themselves for opportunities post education. Human Capital Theory teaches that any person whose had a good chance of education, on-the-job training and health will achieve intrinsic productive capabilities (Eide and Showalter, 2010). It is true for Kat that his education has provided him with some skills and knowledge about starting a new business. His capabilities have been enhanced by his education and training. Contrary to being trained on the job, Kat followed his passion, founded a business and lead it, he did not have a job waiting for him. Therefore, the human capital theory is significant in illuminating that education still plays a great role in improving the lives of students and alumni such as Kat. In the same light it exposes what might be a struggle for some who might not set up their own enterprise but rather wait for jobs to build their capacity.

Kat's restaurant suffers from the challenges small businesses in South Africa face. This is despite the government's promises to uplift communities through SMEs. The government's supposed support has little impact on people like Kat, who need it the most. It is evident from Kat's story that tangible governmental support, other than the promotion of entrepreneurship, does not reach people like him. It is taking Kat longer than three years, an average time to feel that a business is ready for governmental investment and funding. The stringent criteria make it difficult for his business to qualify for support. The criteria include submission of a bankable business plan, statements of accounts and projections of cashflow. However, he is certain that his business has a track record of operating successfully and hopes this will help his business obtain funding.

> *I have proof of sales; I know what sells and proof of where my suppliers come from. This is the reason I must apply for funding. There is a system already that just needs to be improved daily until we get this container the turn it into a franchise-able concept. I want to open that and start selling. I will make sure that it is sustainable, and it is sustainable going forward, and run efficiently. With the suppliers. After six months we are going to decide on branding, decide policy for the company. As time goes on, when phase 2 comes into the picture we will focus on branding once we have proven that it is sustainable. Phases of work: Phase 1, test the market, and Phase 2, apply for funding.* (Interview Excerpt 8.15)

Kat has accepted the responsibility for ensuring that his business is ready for investment and that it is a proven business concept. He understands the criteria his business must meet to apply for governmental funding. These include being registered with CIPC, being tax compliant, generating income over a period of three months, and passing a site-visit assessment. He believes his business is on track to receive funding since it has a record of suppliers and proof of sales, and he has tested the market. Kat is still undecided as to which funders he will approach, even though he maintains this mental checklist of requirements they might ask of him. The excerpt below shows how his business is developing and traversing different stages of development.

> *When I returned home, I contacted my suppliers and tried to use my equipment. The business did not work out the way I wanted it to. I put up gazebos but still it did not work. I still thought it was because it is a new market. It was a very slow process.* (Interview Excerpt 8.16)

Unemployment among residents of the township where Kat's business operates is a big challenge that confronts his business. This challenge defines Kat's immediate external environment. These people are his target market, but most people in Kagiso and Rockville are earning low wages and work sparsely (in between jobs) and, as a result, they buy only occasionally from Kat's restaurant. These customers are usually breadwinners. Kat said that they would rather buy a bag of chicken to cook for the entire family than a single takeaway meal from his restaurant. He explained this as follows:

> *There were a lot of people not working. I would sell my plate for R50 but people thought they could put R20 and instead buy a bag of chicken.* (Interview Excerpt 8.17)

Although he relocated his restaurant from one busy township street (in Kagiso) to another (near a park in Rockville), the only notable difference is that the business now operates from a container and away from his family home. The pervasive joblessness of his target market persists in both locations. He cited in his interview that if this challenge persists, it will deny him access to funding, even though he is working hard to prove that his concept works:

> *In the township people do not use catering. They do the cooking themselves; they get someone who know how to cook stew and other items on the menu. But here monthly I get a gig from Fundisa. There are also companies around and institutions. For catering, these corporates hire a catering company. They do not do any cooking.* (Interview Excerpt 8.18)

Kat hopes to receive funding. A lengthy process of application for funding, however, awaits him and his business. He will be subjected to stringent screening by officers from funding agencies seeking to assess the viability of his restaurant and the sustainability of the market. The market challenge is already prevalent since most supporters of his business in Rockville are only occasional customers. Kat's other hopes, such as growing the business, employing his family members, and improving his cash availability, are dependent not only on funding to develop infrastructure, but also a supportive market.

8.15 Revisiting the Conceptual Framework through Kat's account

The conceptual framework covers four dimensions or tenets namely student livelihood, hardship, higher education and agency, here it is revisited to connect further the literature and the findings of this study. Kat's story touches on all corners of the framework more especially by

exploring the different phases of his life and development. First, Kat negotiated his access to higher education through NSFAS funding and finding space at university. He comes from a black and previously advantaged family background where for him to become a university graduate was only a dream. But against all odds he gained access through the structural means and as a part beneficiary to the #FeesMustFall actions. However, Kat's story again exposes the realities of being in higher education in South Africa. This involves policy failure to guarantee some opportunities for graduates such as Kat. Under the policy framework Kat must find work for himself or turn into entrepreneurship to survive both at university, and post-university in the face of unemployment, joblessness and hopelessness that is rising especially amongst youth.

On both student livelihood and hardship, Kat provides a story of hope as defined by Arend, (2020) that it is part of seeking new opportunities through enterprise. Kat commenced his entrepreneurship adventure as a university student escaping both hardship and income scarcity affecting his livelihood choices. Kat had little options in terms his spending on basics while at university and did not fully enjoy the NSFAS stipend like many student accounts in this thesis have shown how students are sending money home to help their families in need. Kat draws his livelihood from the NSFAS grant and later from his small business. However, in his trajectory his business was saved through grants from his university's centre for entrepreneurship. Still, he navigates hardship associated with lack of earnings, unemployment and being economically inactive. He resorts to his business to meet his needs and to circumvent hardship.

The final dimension of the study is agency. In this study agency has been defined as an individual's ability to make choices and to act within the available channels to transform those channels and/or attain their goals within defined structures. Kat has acted on the opportunities made available to him by his university structure and by the societal conditions around him. Equally he recognises in all his accounts that he is a contributor to the university and that the choices he makes would have an impact on his community or society. Kat invested his time building a business primarily to meet his needs and subsequently contribute to the economic welfare of his family.

Kat's story challenges the narrow view of entrepreneurship dealt with in literature. He doesn't start in Silicon Valley nor did he start his business with heavy capital backing his enterprise exhibits every day entrepreneurship as defined by Gartner, (2016). Gartner embraces diversity in entrepreneurship and shows the different approaches to enterprise thus validating those creating

enterprises to escape poverty, joblessness and hardship such as Kat. This story and the findings established here continue to show the different conceptualisations and even applications of entrepreneurship as discussed in the core argument of this study that says: entrepreneurship is conceptualised differently by people. Kat conceptualises entrepreneurship as an opportunity to escape poverty and to him entrepreneurship is starting from a micro enterprise using only the available resources escaping joblessness and hardship. The next section summarises this chapter.

8.16 Chapter summary

Kat spoke confidently in the interview and remains hopeful that he will succeed in his business. He takes full responsibility for being proactive in the face of challenges, and he believes that he must not complain about his circumstances. He believes that the success of business will help him deal with most of his challenges. First, he feels that the success of his business will solve many of his family's problems. Second, he wants his business to be an example to that other entrepreneurs can admire and aspire to. Finally, he wants to grow his business interests like some of the well-known Black South African businesspeople.

In this chapter I focused on Kat's various roles and experiences. I discussed his experiences as a student, alumnus, and business start-up entrepreneur, as well as his hopes and family life. When discussing Kat's student experience, I focused on his entrepreneurship diploma studies at Fundisa. His educational background has influenced him significantly in committing to entrepreneurship as a career field. He also demonstrates resilience and other entrepreneurial traits that can be attributed to his training. Kat's identity as an alumnus, his experiences as a business start-up entrepreneur, and his family life are entwined, both by choice and because of his circumstances. He provides mentorship support as alumnus to students who aspire to entrepreneurship at his alma mater academic department. He encourages them to take up entrepreneurship as a career option for themselves, even though he faces struggles. After Covid-19 he still organizes entrepreneurship information events for which his business supplies catering, and event-planning services paid for by sponsors. Kat sees mentorship as a business opportunity that helps his other business generate revenue.

I also discussed Kat's livelihood in relation to his family, income, and cash flow. Kat is unable to save money because of his present circumstances. His business cash is used to cover the costs of

running it but also to provide for his family's needs. Kat's business also experiences a challenge of generating sustainable sales and profit. However, he hopes to apply for funding to develop his business infrastructure to attract more customers and allow him to charge a higher price for his goods. Kat's story portrays experiences of a South African young adult start-up entrepreneur in a useful way. It is useful in that it explains transitioning from university into business; the challenges faced and exposes the inadequacy of government support. It also shows the way in which entrepreneurship interplays with the livelihood strategies of young adult graduates involved in building start-ups.

Overall, Kat provides an interesting case of human capital theory which deals with idea that investments in education, skills, training and healthcare can boost their productivity. To some extent these are true to Kat's account especially the application of his education in his micro business. As the thesis moves to the next chapter it threads with the understanding the education provides student entrepreneurs such as Kat a relevant capacity and skills to act and/or run their micro-enterprises.

CHAPTER 9:
ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This analysis and discussion chapter that consolidates the literature, the theoretical framework and the empirical findings of this study. It provides a meaning making analysis of the policy discourses, identity vs practice in entrepreneurship, the case study on student livelihoods, structure and agency, and Kat the alumnus of Fundisa university. The conceptualizations and promotions of entrepreneurship among students, stakeholder interests and the varying findings are juxtaposed. The chapter also shows the disjuncture, frictions, contradictions, and differences in the articulations of entrepreneurship among both students and the university. This analysis and discussion employ a transversal approach to analysis. The approach juxtaposes the student conceptualizations of entrepreneurship, horizontally, with the varying articulations of entrepreneurship, vertically. The vertical juxtaposition covers students, university stakeholders and policy.

In addition, this analysis re-engages main concepts dealt with in the literature of this study. These are agency and structure showing how students use their agency to subvert the university structure and the state policy's promotions of entrepreneurship. The analysis also demonstrates the reproduction of the #FeesMustFall struggle in how students use entrepreneurship as a means for a livelihood, fighting poverty and to earn some cash. The analysis also deals with Long's model of student development dealt with in the literature of this study. In analysing and discussing Long's model the study shows how student development plays a role in how students apply agency through the process of entrepreneurship as well as their independent conceptualisations of this phenomenon.

This analysis deals with the study's research questions, namely:

- What different conceptualizations of entrepreneurship do students in a South African university articulate, and in what ways do these relate to their own livelihood strategies?
- In what ways do these conceptualizations of entrepreneurship differ, if at all, from those promoted by their university and in policy?

As such, the chapter structure comprises a discussion of the analytical framework, the conceptualization of entrepreneurship, articulations of entrepreneurship, student livelihood

strategies, the promotions of entrepreneurship, and policy. These sections provide a detailed analysis and discussion of student realities regarding entrepreneurship and highlight the challenges that await South African students and their universities amid the dominant promotions of entrepreneurship on campus.

This analysis juxtaposes the promotions of entrepreneurship with the different interview and policy findings to deal holistically with the study's research questions from the lens of structure and agency in the practice of entrepreneurship by students as per the findings on Chapter 6. Students are involved in various forms of micro enterprise outside of the university's limiting structure. As Idahosa, (2019) a structure refers to institutions, policies and the enforcement of governance or rules that regulate participants and agency as an ability to self-regulate or take control of one's situation. Here on the table below a consolidated analysis of how students are taking control of their university experience and providing for their needs through entrepreneurship is demonstrated:

Table 11: Agency and Structure – Promotions of Entrepreneurship in the University structure

Subverting the University Structure and Promotions of Entrepreneurship	
Structure	**Agency**
• The university – Historically Black University (HBU): The university has policies that govern student activity and entrepreneurship is seen by the university as an activity that is to take place or be promoted within the timeline and confines of the Student Entrepreneurship Week, and not as an everyday way of life that involves juggling classes and enterprise at the same time. • Social structure including family and society: These structures involve family supporting the idea of a university where one obtains a degree and finds employment, like the student experiences and views on chapter 6 hoping to find a job and postponing earning cash whilst	• Student Representative Council (a system with a structure): the student representative council play a relevant role in mediating the university experiences of students versus the structural regulations and powers of the university over student life. Although the SRCs pursue different goals once in proximity with university management, with some compromising on student demands to remain in favour with management (see chapter 7) they are duty bound to stay true to student demands and experiences. They provide critical forms of agency in fighting (presenting) the financial exclusions of students, social and welfare

at university. The general assumption is that students must focus on their students and that only after graduating then seek opportunities to earn a living.

- Policy and Government: the university mediates government promotions of entrepreneurship. The National Development Plan demonstrated on chapter 3 demonstrates that the state influences the organisation of the university, the reasons a public university must focus on entrepreneurship and recommends the approach e.g. use entrepreneurship to create jobs. The state policy presents entrepreneurship as a tool to save the state from its failure to build an economic climate that promotes jobs but instead transfers the responsibility of creating jobs to students through its promotions of entrepreneurship like DeJaeghere, (2017) has warned for example about the Tanzanian case study, that the state is transferring the duty of building an economy and creating adequate work opportunities onto students.

- Organisations Promoting Entrepreneurship on campus also enforce the structure of entrepreneurship through international and local actors. These actors are funded by international and local agencies to promote entrepreneurship. Because of the reputational value that these organisations offer e.g. SEW as referred to in KAT's chapter (8) and in Chapter 6 these organisations drive an agenda to see youth enterprises as forms of employment. Occasionally, because of their resource capacity to host trainings and workshops on entrepreneurship these needs and, any other systematic issues emanating from the university structure.

- Participation vs no participation: students have opportunities to participate in university processes. This includes voting in SRC elections, taking part in sports, recreation and the broader academic programme, some students also have a chance to do part-time work as student assistants e.g. KAT worked as a student assistant at the university. However, there are other students that limit their participation to their studies such as those seeking no other opportunity other than jobs when they complete their studies. Also, students that do not see themselves as citizens of the university. The students involved in enterprise subvert the university structure by participating in ways they understand best and suitable to their approach to entrepreneurship. E.g. the students selling their snacks during breaks even when security keeps chasing them away from the university lawns and taking away these products because the university does not want students to sell on the campus.

- Student livelihood practices on campus: students are in constant need of food, other basics e.g. toiletries, clothes and study materials which includes gadgets and buying subscriptions to study materials. In Fundisa students wage a #FeesMustFall kind of agentic approach by using entrepreneurship raise cash to pay for these needs. Unlike the policy assumptions that students are pursuing entrepreneurship to navigate future

organisations embedded in the structure of the university and agencies such as EDHE they also claim credit for some of the gains made by students through the process of entrepreneurship.	possibilities of unemployment. The students are instead engaged in the struggle of "now". • Individual agency: like Poole, (2018) students do not consider themselves entrepreneurs but as individuals seeking a better life that consists of a regular income that affords them the basics they need to sustain themselves. These students like shown in chapter 6 provide at home massage services, perfumes, horticultural services, sell clothing and ready-made food, and snacks to generate an income for themselves. Again, students are using their agency to escape the international NGO pressure cited by DeJaeghere in Tanzania that students must take up entrepreneurship in the manner these organisations and universities are promoting entrepreneurship. Instead, students use these to serve their immediate needs and sometimes of their family members in need as demonstrated on chapter 6 with the experiences of students sending some of their money and NSFAS allowance home to assist their families.

Adopting the structure and agency approach also enables this analysis to engage the big picture concepts of neoliberalism, as used in this study to expose the nature of South Africa's government policy mindset. Neoliberalism is the policy orientation of the South African government in relation to its promotions of entrepreneurship among youth. The government as stated on Chapter 3 uses the NDP (a neoliberal policy document) to promote entrepreneurship amongst students for its own government motives than try to understand reasons students and alumnus such as Kat are pursuing micro-enterprise. Although the concept is widely accepted in policy analysis, I am cautious to avoid any potential misuse of the concept. As Venugopal (2015) critiqued, the term neoliberalism

> "is everywhere, but at the same time, nowhere. It is held to be the dominant and pervasive economic policy agenda of our times, a powerful and expansive political agenda of class domination and exploitation, the manifestation of "capital resurgent", an overarching dystopian zeitgeist of late-capitalist excess." (p. 1)

For this reason, it is important for any research study to be clear about its use of the term and its relevance to such a research inquiry.

The concept of neoliberalism used in this study explains critically the connection between national policy and promotions of entrepreneurship. Olssen and Peters (2005) asserted that, since the 1980s, the role of higher education has been expanded by governments, encouraging university and industry links as a result. According to Olssen and Peters, this trend saw an increase in initiatives promoting entrepreneurial skills, performative measures, and targets for university staff to link with industry. This dilution of activities and the influence of the government at universities that serves political interests over the needs of students is still true today. In this research, I characterize it as a neoliberal and capital project when it comes to promoting entrepreneurship on campus. Literature contends that neoliberalism in education seeks to "remove the buffer of social welfare as a function of the state in the belief that market operates efficiently or is more capable without regulation" (Lakes and Carter, 2011).

Although research remains divided about the use of the term, Peck (2013) showed that neoliberalism is still a useful term in explaining crisis and used the 2008 economic meltdown as an example to explain political-economic global crisis. Peck argued that neoliberalism has always been a disliked concept, even though it is prominent in its application (explaining political-economic situations). Peck furthermore argued that doing away with the concept will not mitigate its still-hegemonic existence nor will it benefit any of its alternatives. This literature review adopts this view of neoliberalism, while bringing into conversation entrepreneurship, education, policy, and youth livelihoods. Apple (2017) suggested that research (and/or researchers) ought to deal with the concept of neoliberalism by providing truthful research about systems that create inequalities.

In Chapters 6 and 7 the thesis shows how youth subvert the neoliberal policy framework. First the youth, like Pillay and Mqolomba, (2022) refers to the agentic struggles for freedom from exclusion via #FeesMustFall the students engagement in micro-enterprise is their action, and a

step subverting the neoliberal norm of waithood at university before one earns an income. These students set up their micro-enterprises and started selling. In dealing with identities that enable the subversion and agency amongst students are the expressions made those students engaged in micro-enterprise, for example their reasons for starting their enterprises are stated as (extracted from Chapter 6):

> Student 1 – ID 82: "I started my business mainly for purposes of supporting my family with the profit it makes and grow a brand or myself. "
>
> Student 2 – ID 86: "I want to benefit from [the worth of] our economy"
>
> Student 3 – ID 66: "I am into business because I was raised in a house of entrepreneurs, and I am good in generating money"
>
> Student 4 – ID 9: "I am operating a micro-finance company; I am doing this because I have been lending money informally for a long period and now, I have decided to formalise it. I am fascinated about how the banking industry operates that is why I am motivated to run a micro-finance company. Hopefully, one day it might be an actual bank."
>
> Student 1 – "I wanted to explore my profession in the entrepreneurial world and the goal has been to be self-employed."

These student accounts show how students are subversive to policy cohesion into entrepreneurship. They are non-conforming to the boxed promotions of entrepreneurship that the NDP suggests is to curb unemployment. The students are using some of their agency to subvert the pressure. Instead, they are seeking to explore their fields of study through entrepreneurship, earn some income, explore future goals and more sharply to break into the big economy that in neoliberal design favours just a few e.g. one of the students hopes to own a bank, not just to create a job for themselves. This echoes a sense of self-reliance on the part of students, taking ownership of their educational benefits and forging ahead to explore their professions and fields through entrepreneurship. The experiences of these students confirm Idahosa and Vincent, (2019) viewpoint that:

> "Agency for change...is in part involved with the interruption of dominant discourses and in part takes the form of material opposition to transformation. It may take the form, for example, of overt questioning not only of what may be said but who may say it, or more subtle forms of persuasion, argument, manipulation and alliance building." (p.38)

The students have not only "blue ticked" the university promotions of entrepreneurship but their reasoning on why they are pursuing entrepreneurship supersedes desperation for jobs as it shows aspirations to earn a share in the bigger economy. Students refuse to be subjects of the National Development Plan's idea of entrepreneurship which excuses the state from focusing on building a better economic climate and the jobs needed to sustain the broader economic activity. Instead, these students are using their agency to wage their own struggle against the stringent conditions of surviving in a society driving capitalist neoliberal policies, including a struggling financial aid scheme such as NSFAS.

Building on this justification, this analysis is divided into four main sections that discuss the results of this study. The first and second sections are conceptualizations and articulations of entrepreneurship among students, and student livelihood strategies. These sections compare and analyse the experiences of students. These focus on how the same undergraduate students, in the same institution and within their wide-ranging qualifications and levels of study, conceptualize and articulate entrepreneurship and ensure their own livelihoods in the context of their university that promotes entrepreneurialism. The third section analyses the promotions of entrepreneurship and how these permeate through the experiences of students at university, their conceptualizations of entrepreneurship, and their livelihoods. The final section brings together the analytical discussion dealing with the disjuncture, frictions, and contradictions in the understandings and responses to entrepreneurship among students, policy, and university stakeholders.

9.1 Conceptualizations and articulations of entrepreneurship among students

The student conceptualizations of entrepreneurship vary, and policies must recognize this variation if they are to intervene meaningfully in entrepreneurship. The conceptualizations of entrepreneurship also represent individual perspectives and livelihood experiences that underpin any entrepreneurial aspirations. This means that a person's view of life and lifestyle plays a role

in the way they think and talk about entrepreneurship. Another element that explains the conceptualizations entrepreneurship is the manner of articulation. This refers to the way an individual acts on entrepreneurship. The articulations are also demonstrated by what the individuals cite as perfect or imperfect examples of entrepreneurship in their own realities e.g. liking the formal versus informal or vis-a-vis.

The student conceptualizations of entrepreneurship gathered from a wide range of students provide the rich understandings of this subject. This analysis deals with the conceptualizations among students who have created microbusinesses, those who have not (yet) created a microbusiness but see themselves as aspirant entrepreneurs, students who are unsure, and those who do not think of themselves as entrepreneurs. The analysis also presents those examples that students see as entrepreneurship and those that they do not see as entrepreneurship and/or entrepreneurial. I analyse these examples to understand the underlying reasons for and perceptions of both the conceptualizations and articulations of entrepreneurship among students.

The students who considered themselves entrepreneurs provided examples of the businesses they ran. One student sold live chickens in her hometown, partnering with her mother. She sourced chicks and her mother reared them. She used some of her NSFAS allowance to buy feed for the chickens. Her mother sold them at the market, and she helped her mother with selling during university holidays. This student classified herself as an entrepreneur. Another student sold MoFaya energy drinks at his residence on campus. He followed the example of a popular DJ and owner of the energy-drink brand, who sold the drink at traffic lights. This student also classified himself as an entrepreneur.

Like Kat, the two student entrepreneurs listed as examples in the previous paragraph found entrepreneurship exciting. Their personal circumstances were, however, their reason for their pursuit of business. Their businesses would be classified as micro and existed to serve their cash needs. These microbusinesses are like other businesses that operate in the shadows of big-monopoly businesses. The dominant monopoly businesses leave very little room for informal markets. As such, the energy-drink and chicken businesses have very few prospects for success beyond their market. For example, the chicken business operates in a market that is easy to enter for other chicken farmers. However, the conglomerate chicken and poultry farms often sell live chickens at a cheaper price than the small farmers ever could. Similarly, DJ Sbu, the energy-drink

brand owner, operates a pyramid system in which the sellers are at the bottom of the pyramid. This kind of entrepreneurship exploits those at the bottom to create comfort for those at the top. An unsuspecting student considers himself an entrepreneur, even if it means working hard and selling as many energy drinks as possible, only to cover the cost of buying more stock while the real owner reaps profits.

The second and third categories are examples explaining the "maybe" and "no" responses to the question that asked whether students considered themselves entrepreneurs or thought of their activities as sufficient for them to be entrepreneurs. The students who responded "maybe" were working on ideas or proposals, or even just engaged in thinking about entrepreneurship or microbusiness start-ups. These are students influenced mainly by their university environment to consider entrepreneurship. The students who responded "no" displayed disinterest and considered entrepreneurship as hard and challenging. These understandings and articulations about entrepreneurship show that students are at different levels in their thinking about microbusiness, and not all of them see themselves as entrepreneurs. Some of them seek jobs after graduating and want a governmental policy that is prepared to help them secure employment.

The contradiction that policy presents for student conceptualizations of entrepreneurship is thus: while it promotes the idea that students must adopt entrepreneurship, it has no facility to support the informality that comes with student enterprises. Students are DJs, sell chicken and energy drinks, and rarely register their businesses to meet the stringent requirements for receiving funding or support from the government or by way of a NYDA grant. Furthermore, unlike the big monopolies infiltrating rural areas and townships, these student entrepreneurs do not qualify for bank loans to grow their businesses. After all, they are only students pursuing university qualifications. Although policies encourage entrepreneurship among students, they fail to meet them at the level of their different ventures. This is reason enough to direct policymakers to those areas of intervention on which they may have a positive impact, such as improving the livelihood of students through adequate funding, accommodation support, and dealing with graduate unemployment by making entry-level jobs more accessible.

9.2 Student livelihood strategies: Structure and Agency

The analysis of student livelihood strategies contrasts policy ideas of "a better life for citizens" with the everyday realities of students. In this analysis I explain the problems encountered by students in establishing meaningful livelihoods and securing income, and their subsequent turning to entrepreneurship. This analysis also links societal struggles to those of students. I point out how students, like street vendors and informal traders in the townships and streets of the city, are having to sell products and/or services to generate some income to meet their needs. I demystify the Euro-American-centric view of entrepreneurship that views start-up enterprises as professional settings with adequate infrastructure, technology, and even sufficient start-up funding. In so doing, I outline the daily struggles of students and community members and demonstrate how the promotions of entrepreneurship through the lens of policy are denying poor communities access to funding, governmental support, and assistance because they do not follow the conventional Euro-American-centric nature of a start-up when uplifting or engaging in entrepreneurship as a means of dealing with poverty and a lack of income.

Students engage in entrepreneurship to deal with cash shortages and to feel a sense of ownership and control in taking care of their own needs. In an uncertain economic environment operating on the principles of neoliberalism, students are having to fend for themselves. They have very little hope of securing jobs or guarantee of income after university. They understand that they need to excel in their studies, even though academic excellence does not guarantee incomes. They instead venture into entrepreneurship informally to earn some cash to cover their immediate financial needs and those of their families. These overburdened students derive their motivation for entrepreneurship from scarcity. They need money. Earning some cash helps them to buy food and clothes (even latest fashion to fit in with their peers), pay for entertainment, and share some of the money with their families. This also helps them to fulfil some of the expectations that their families have of them since they have gone to university, especially if they are first-generation students or graduates. They feel that their families look up to them to cover the costs of living, and the pressure of arriving at home from university only to see poverty pressures the students to pursue entrepreneurship to contribute to the monetary needs of their families.

These student livelihood experiences expose the unfounded preoccupation with entrepreneurship on campuses that is found in the policies. This is because poverty remains rife in

the townships and rural areas from which the students come. Policy fails to engage meaningfully with unemployed youth and poor families to consider entrepreneurship because of the complexities involved in creating any new business, such as allocation of land, the requirement for adequate service delivery by way of water supply and timely waste removal, funding support, and market development. Because policymakers and university management find dealing with all of these challenges momentous, they instead direct their energies and efforts onto driving poor students to entrepreneurship.

Student livelihoods, most often characterized by scarcity and poor family backgrounds, require authentic policy interventions that tackle unemployment, crime, and poverty beyond the current means. Outsourcing of these problems to entrepreneurship by students and young adults proves unhelpful in the context of Fundisa University students. These students, like Kat, are unable to build savings for their microbusinesses since their money is shared with their poor families. The government does not even support their microbusinesses because they do not meet the criteria for support.

In sum, there is an overlap in student livelihoods and their responses to the promotions of entrepreneurship. Students constantly seek quick ways to deal with their daily cash struggles. Their families are mainly poor, and they are too. Although they believe that their attainment of a university qualification will change their own lives, they also want to use every opportunity to change the outlook of their families. Their interface with poverty at home when they visit during university holidays is another reason to seek every chance to earn cash that can assist their families deal with hunger and other needs. For these reasons, the government's vision of entrepreneurship does not help poor students, nor does it appeal to wealthier students. A revised and an in-depth focus on student livelihoods, supported by dealing with their needs adequately, is most necessary. This should include a better programme of policy support directed at wider informal entrepreneurship.

Alternatively the experiences of students confirm that a focus student development is much more urgent for universities and their stakeholders like Long, (2012) summarises the four key theories of this approach. And argues that students are capable beings able to use their knowledge gained at university and experiences in exercising their agency. The four theories are juxtaposed with the student experiences as follows:

First are the psychosocial theories covering identity development, focusing on how students think of themselves as autonomous and independent beings, and including racial and ethnic identity development. These theories are intertwined with student self-regulation and control (Lex *et al.*, 2022). As demonstrated in chapter 6, the reasons of students to undertake entrepreneurship is personal than it is about the calls of the state about using entrepreneurship to create jobs, but rather it is an autonomous choice of each student for example to pursue entrepreneurship because it offers them an opportunity to participate in the economy (Student Interviewee – ID 86). This makes true the claim in this thesis, and specifically in the theoretical arguments in Chapter 2, and the cases of students in Chapter 6 that entrepreneurship is conceptualised differently by different people and actors.

Second are cognitive-structural theories of student development; these focus on how students interpret and make meaning out of their experiences. The entrepreneurship experience of the Fundisa students as demonstrated in the case study of this thesis (Chapter 8) the students have successfully subvert their university's culture and attitudes towards students interested in entrepreneurship. They have escaped performing entrepreneurship under the stringent guidance of their university e.g. around the Student Entrepreneurship Week only, but they are using the process of entrepreneurship daily to secure themselves an income. In this way these students are engaged in their own struggle for earning themselves some freedom and continue standing up for themselves like their predecessors in the Pillay and Mqolomba, (2022) #FeesMustFall movement.

Third are the humanistic theories of student development focusing on the "students' relationship to others and to society. These theories emphasize more the condition for healthy growth and development, and less the development itself" (Long, 2012, p. 50). The students have further shown through their interviews and reasons for pursuing entrepreneurship that this activity enables them to contribute to their communities e.g. Student Interviewee ID 9 has been offering micro cash loans to people in their community to help them, and another has been running a micro enterprise to be able to send some cash to family members in need at home. This has some elements of Ubuntu an African philosophy that suggest being one by another. In Tanzania, DeJaeghere, (2017) encountered this philosophy in action where students involved in *umushyikirano* (entrepreneurship) cared more about one another, the needs of others and shared well-being more than it was about generating money even if it meant exploiting clients. In the case of Fundisa the

students involved and creating micro-enterprise cared more about sharing with their families, and Kat (Chapter 8) is another example of not only caring about family, but also, he works with his father in the micro enterprise he created.

The final set are the person–environment interactive theories. These theories are concerned with the complexity of the college or university experiences of young adults. The connection between person and environment for students can be traced back to the structure and agency discussion in the literature review of this study (Chapter 2). The interactive theories appreciate the complexities of power and students having to subvert university amidst tensions, frictions and disjuncture in their conceptualisations of entrepreneurship versus the promotions of the same phenomenon by their university, and policy. For example, the students see entrepreneurship as a day-to-day activity that can sustain their livelihoods, the university sees it as being limited to a week of promotions such as the Student Entrepreneurship Week (SEW), and even something for a competition run by EDHE (see Chapter 5). The interaction thereof between the university environment and the student in micro-enterprise is one that reproduces a #FeesMustFall attitude of subverting the university's control of student entrepreneurship activities; and one that seeks to postpone entrepreneurship for when it suits the university environment e.g. during SEW as already stated.

The agenda and promotions of entrepreneurship to students on campus, as well as the mediation of policy promotions of entrepreneurship by universities in South Africa via EDHE, and university management subjects the activity to stringent bureaucracies of the university. In chapter 7 the case study of Fundisa shows the conditions of structure that students must face up to as well as other problems such as lack of funding for studies, student debt and lack of social relief on campus for students in need are some of the reasonable considerations students would subvert their university, and policy promotions of entrepreneurship to provide for themselves cash to acquire their needs that the universities are often unable to provide for.

9.3 Policy promotions of entrepreneurship and the internationalisation of policy

This analysis of the policy promotion of entrepreneurship considers the practices of the higher education sector in mediating and supporting entrepreneurship on campus. I compare the documentary analysis in this study with the entrepreneurship perspectives of students,

policymakers, and university management. This subsection gauges the fairness of these promotions and the manner of government responsibility that follows the messaging around entrepreneurship. Furthermore, in this analysis I deal with the misleading tendencies of policymaking that involve drawing students into entrepreneurship and then leaving them to seek funding, infrastructure, and other resources on their own. I consider the challenges of small businesses, failure, and the domination of monopoly businesses.

The mediations of entrepreneurship promotions by Fundisa University are received variably by students, as reflected in their differing levels of interest in entrepreneurship. There are those who find no value in the entrepreneurship programme, those who are not interested, and those who feel that the entrepreneurship schemes offer them some opportunity. Commonly, students and even lower-level university staff are made to believe that entrepreneurship has the potential to grow the economy and consequently create new jobs. This is accepted because students and concerned staff seek answers or a narrative that can make them feel better in their economic context characterized by job scarcity and poverty. Yet, these promotions of entrepreneurship emanate within agencies that are simply matching the requirements of international grants. For instance, SEW [Student Entrepreneurship Week], which takes place on various university campuses has to match the scope of international donors and rarely takes account of informal trading among students and their immediate needs for cash. Rather these donors encourage students to be entrepreneurs in the future and not in the immediate. The mediation of the university in policy promotions of entrepreneurship is preoccupied with the view that entrepreneurship will create opportunities for students and will boost the university's reputation and standing in the popularity of entrepreneurship at universities.

Higher-education policymakers' risk being misconstrued if their promotion of entrepreneurship seeks to responsibilize students to take care of their needs and society through entrepreneurship. Responsibilizing means that governmental representatives and small business development agency workers point students and their communities in crisis to entrepreneurship, then shame these students and their communities when they do not take up entrepreneurship (DeJaeghere, 2017; Krause *et al.*, 2013). The growing calls for entrepreneurship are not always favourable to the conditions of the already poor students and their families. They seek to grade the poor as lazy and not using the opportunity that entrepreneurship presents for them to do something

for themselves. The promotions of entrepreneurship make it believable that everyone can "rise and act" (*vuk'uzenzele*), and that anyone who is not rising is either spoilt or entitled.

9.4 Dealing with the differences: Disjuncture, contradictions, and frictions

This is the final section of analysis. It covers the most pertinent issue of how the conceptualizations and articulations of entrepreneurship differ between students and policy. The differences present a disjuncture, contradictions, and frictions. For this reason, I have used a transversal approach to demonstrate the reality of student experiences in entrepreneurship and the sparse interventions of policy in student entrepreneurship. In the analysis, I also challenge governmental priorities about, among other issues, promoting entrepreneurship versus funding higher education, improving student accommodation, creating new jobs out of building state capacity, and the government's inability to pay small and microenterprise service providers on time. I deal with power dynamics, including the state's upper hand in driving the promotions of entrepreneurship.

The differences are found in the thought processes about the concept of entrepreneurship among students and other stakeholders. Some students consider entrepreneurship to be a "hustle" or an opportunity to generate extra cash on the side, while others consider entrepreneurship to be an opportunity to build a business that will one day be formal. The conceptions of entrepreneurship vary among students, but all are characterized by smallness and seeking opportunities. Policymakers clash with the student thinking processes, since they require professional business plans, registration, and other legal compliance that students generally do not possess. This means that very little support follows the promotions of entrepreneurship. In addition, these promotions of entrepreneurship among students by policy representatives fail to consider student profiles, and so there is no design for packages designed to support student entrepreneurs.

Disjuncture and friction occur when university staff and management mediate entrepreneurship among students. Students protest NSFAS, inadequate services, and the lack of or poor-quality accommodation. These, however, are not fully addressed, yet university management chooses to promote entrepreneurialism as an "occupation". This the #FeesMustFall activists label as hypocrisy: on the one hand, university management cannot adequately handle students, but on the other, promotes students' becoming entrepreneurs. The friction arises from the

"directionlessness" that accompanies the disjuncture. This occurs in the NYDA, YIBSA and SRC's speaking openly about issues they are dealing with but being unable to find common ground or focus areas regarding the youth issues that students face. The NYDA promotes grants that have stringent criteria, but YIBSA, as an organization representing the interests of youth, is unable to shift the agencies from such criteria. The SRC is politically affiliated with national organizations, but its members also protect their own interests and political careers. The representatives rarely want to represent any strong differences in how policy is present among students on campus. Therefore, the same entrepreneurialism has become a force for careerism among those in youth organizations and, consequently, these structures lack robustness to challenge mistakes in the promotion of student entrepreneurship.

The NDP 2030 is a panacea for all policymaking. The NYP draws on the NDP, although conflict exists in that the NDP places emphasis on the formality of businesses. While it promotes the idea of youth-owned and -controlled businesses, the policy obsesses over formality. It gives zero chance to any business that does not fit the mould of a formalized business. Although policy promotes the creation of new businesses among students, it has lagged in dealing with the provisions of a fee-free higher education beyond the #FeesMustFall campaign, creating jobs through building state capacity, and removing legislations that deny graduates access to entry-level jobs. For example, the requirement for new graduates to have extensive experience is a setback for the economy and the lives of the job-seeking graduates. Policy focus must be directed to the areas that affect student life besides entrepreneurship otherwise the current approach produces problematic contradictions.

9.5 Towards a transformative framework on understandings and conceptualisations of entrepreneurship

The conceptual framework of the study and the main argument propose that entrepreneurship is conceptualised and practiced differently by people in society. Moreover, the articulations of it vary from person to person. Under the conceptual framework of the study hardship, (student) livelihood, higher education and agency impact the understandings and the practice of entrepreneurship more especially amongst students at university. As shown in the early parts of this chapter, multi-stakeholders are present in the life and activities of students on and off campus. For example, on campus students are in contact with the university bodies and offices, they also

interact with government services in the form of NSFAS and establish their own initiatives in the form of student societies or groups including organisations such as YIBSA. This demonstrates the agentic interests of students and their ability to mobilise, and to act within the system. Also, within their university students elect representatives in the form of SRC whose task is to defend the interests of students.

On agency this chapter demonstrates the interconnectedness of different stakeholders and the array of choice that students must choose from in seeking assistance or services within their university system or structure. Students at time challenge their university system e.g. #FeesMustFall and at times they also transform their university system for the better when protesting or picketing. Still agency allows them to take up some space in the system to agitate for their own empowerment. In the historic context students would not have an opportunity to run enterprises whilst studying but through what Kat and other students are doing, they have since made it acceptable to find students running hustles or micro enterprises alongside their studies. This is the power of agency demonstrated. At this juncture and based on these conceptual framework clarifications the next section suggests a transformative framework for understanding entrepreneurship in the African student and youth context.

9.6 A Transformative Framework – The *Three-Legged Pot* Transformative Model to Understandings of Entrepreneurship -

Following the analysis and discussion of findings, on this part I propose a Three-Legged Pot transformation model of understanding entrepreneurship in research, policy and practice. This model accounts for livelihood as structure, the university as a social structure, higher education as a both a policy system and a structure and the manifestation of agency in how students subvert their university when exercising agency. This model suggests grounding of research in African concepts such as *motho ke motho ka batho /ubuntu* (South African seSotho and Zulu), *umshyirikano* (Rwanda) and *Ibaraka* (Tanzania). In other words, a more collective approach to entrepreneurship that deals with the frictions, disjuncture and tension is necessary to progress the research field of entrepreneurship education, livelihoods, agency and structure studies related to higher education experience.

The transformative three-legged pot model comprises theoretical clarity, policy posture and entrepreneurship research practice(s) as the legs in the model. Inside the pot are the transformative issues namely livelihood, structure and agency, higher education and the university, entrepreneurship and the micro enterprise. Still fixated on amplifying student voices, the model's three legs and ingredients deals with rattling the cages of entrepreneurship research practice that simply sees students as beings that must be responsibilise for the policy failure of employment creation like claims Fatoki, (2010) and others. As a political and an advocative study, this thesis by contributing this model echoes the view of students during #FeesMustFall saying "nothing about us without us" (Pillay and Mqolomba, 2022). Therefore research, policy and theory on student entrepreneurship, it must be and must be seen to be about the students.

I now turn to the presentation of the three-legged pot model's underpinnings and factors. The analogy of a pot that stands on three legs stems from how three-legged pots are used in the African context. Three legged pots in African families and communities are used for cooking food slowly and for long hours, they are considered stable and withstand open fire, and they also stand firm on the ground (Black Pot Safaris, 2022). As such this model offers some ideas for improving literature and theory when it comes to approaching a hot topic such as entrepreneurship. The model emanates from literature and the findings of this study thus presenting as transformative from the basic views (e.g. (Fatoki, 2010; Beeka and Rimmington, 2011; Afutu-Kotey, 2013; Alves, Fischer and Schaeffer, 2019) on entrepreneurship amongst students.

The model engages collectivism vs individualism, transformative entrepreneurship vs the American-Euro centric approach(es) to entrepreneurship, self-regulation and subversion vs self responsibilisation and the facilitation of equality of actors via structure and agency. The model has three legs and are presented below in no order but as equal players in the model:

- **Theoretical clarity,** on this leg the model suggests that literature considers the stories of KAT, the students leading microenterprise to accept that the process of entrepreneurship means securing a livelihood over prestige as would be the case for someone at Sillicon Valley. Therefore, the American-Euro centric approach does not value much the concepts of *vuk'uzenzele* (South African), *umshyirikano* (Rwandan) and *ibaraka* (Tanzanian) which all mean securing a livelihood through small consistent efforts. Theoretically, these concepts can improve the different understandings of entrepreneurship and advance the

ways that the different conceptualisations of entrepreneurship are carried through in different forms of research. This will expand the research and literature's horizons and will also offer a more transformative approach to entrepreneurship as with the work already started by Vally and Motala, (2014); Honeyman, (2016); and DeJaeghere, (2017).

- **Entrepreneurship research practice,** this leg of the model holds closely to the theoretical leg. What is proposed here is that research practice in entrepreneurship must open itself to livelihood than how it is currently closed. For example, this thesis has shown in literature that entrepreneurship research is preoccupied with its assumption that entrepreneurship or owning a micro enterprise is an equivalent of a job or is seen as curbing unemployment, yet the findings in this study prove the opposite and complex reality of entrepreneurship. Premising entrepreneurship in higher education research on literature on structure and agency is the next big step that this leg of the model demonstrates. The structure and agency literature offers entrepreneurship research a substantive view of how, for example students at an institution such as Fundisa University are navigating their institution as a structure with rules, resources and relations (Crossley's 3Rs of structure). Moreover, entrepreneurship research practice under this model has its cage rattled making space for the concept of agency to be engaged expansively as a framework component. These concepts focus on how students, for example, are embodying agency through self-regulation and subversion against the idea of self responsibilisation through state promotions of entrepreneurship. Also this leg extends on Poole's (2018) urgent call for research practice to clarify itself on the concept of entrepreneur vs entrepreneurship. Poole ask for scholarship in the field of entrepreneurship not to conflate the concepts e.g. a student owning a micro enterprise is not an entrepreneur but must be seen as just a young person seeking to earn a livelihood. As such research in this field must open itself up to seeing the young person and not concluding prematurely to label the student as an entrepreneur.
- **Policy posture** is a leg of the model draws further on the literature's breakdown of the neoliberal policy posture. Following the careful analysis of the policy discourse and its careful breakdown in chapters 2, 3 and 4 I propose a policy approach to entrepreneurship that is collective than one that perpetuates individualism. The policy posture as demonstrated in the latter chapters and through the experiences of policy actors in chapter

> 4 it is evident that the current policy seeks to responsibilise the individual. Like in the manner that Wrenn, (2015) is cited in the literature review, the policy posture and its promotions of entrepreneurship are found wanting and they seek to claim credit for the work of KAT and any other student that sets up a microenterprise. Policy does this by claiming that entrepreneurship is the equivalent of employment whereas for the participants as shown in chapter 7 of this thesis, entrepreneurship is only a gateway to some activity in the economy and is an immediate response to the lack of cash, basics and a way to escape adverse poverty. Therefore, under this model the policy posture separates employment from entrepreneurship.

The transformative model places value on the components or those things that must make up the contents of the pot. These are livelihood emphasis in research and policy and the engagement of structure and agency literature more often in entrepreneurship research to illuminate and illustrate the experience of students as actors in the discourse of entrepreneurship. Furthermore, the components must include thorough contextual engagements on higher education and the university as is the arena in which the different tensions take place and become sources of change (see chapter 5) and to distinguish between other process and entrepreneurship as also a transformative process of creating and owning a microenterprise to sustain one's livelihood.

9.7 Chapter summary

The framework of analysis covered three areas of comparison: the horizontal, vertical, and transversal. The student-to-student conceptualizations and articulations of entrepreneurship explain the horizontal view (across the student participants) of how different students at Fundisa understand and respond to entrepreneurship. This chapter dealt with the various ways students generate cash, for example, by DJing, offering photography services, or selling chickens. This analysis also dealt with students who are not entrepreneurs because of their uncertainty about entrepreneurship. Furthermore, students have different interests, such as those pursuing educational attainment, others seeking political leadership through an SRC position, and those dealing with hardship through entrepreneurship and performing part-time work while studying. These examples all show that different students conceptualize and articulate entrepreneurship differently and that they have individual aspirations, which all are worthy of support.

The vertical approach to analysis reflected the policy-to-student promotion of entrepreneurship, as mediated by their university, Fundisa. The mediating role of the university is powerful in enabling policy ideas of entrepreneurship. The university promotes entrepreneurship as an opportunity for students to deal with the misfortune of employment scarcity. The university also promotes entrepreneurship as a fashionable way for students and graduates to "become job creators" and in this way help society. The analysis showed that this tendency responsibilizes young adults (students and young people) to deal with policy failures, including bad economic policy decisions that have resulted in an increase in unemployment. This includes the government's slow progress in dealing with entry-level job requirements, such as work experience, which disadvantages new graduates. Entry-level jobs in South Africa generally require three years of experience, yet internships in both the private and public sector last on average for just one year and are available to only a few. Policy-to-student promotions of entrepreneurship, as mediated by universities such as Fundisa, are unable to offer a holistic approach to deal with the lack of jobs, low-to-zero income among graduates, and the deteriorating socio-economic context of many South African citizens.

The transversal analysis dealt with the policy, student, stakeholder, and university experiences of entrepreneurship. This analysis considered both the political and policy chronology of entrepreneurship development in South Africa. Since the dawn of democracy in 1994, the ANC government has sought to grow the number of Black businesspeople through the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act. However, the introduction of the NDP in 2012 drives the policy's promotion of entrepreneurship, shielding government from its failures. The transversal analysis exposes how policy does not connect to the prime needs of youth, such as fee-free higher education, service delivery in communities, a government free of corruption, and taxing of monopolies to provide a basic income grant for the poor. This all is labelled by vocal advocates of neoliberalism as simply entitlement. This type of analysis shows that entrepreneurship is meaningless without a government that can deal with all basics. The view that societal crises such as food scarcity, adequate healthcare, and reliable energy supply are all entrepreneurship opportunities shows the crude nature of the promotions of entrepreneurship, as well as the problematic permeation of neoliberalism in the discourse of entrepreneurship.

This chapter highlights the need for a balanced narrative about student socio-economic development. It provides a critical perspective on the neoliberalism that is permeating a university campus through the promotion of entrepreneurship. The chapter also provides examples about the realities of students who, out of their need for cash, have had to engage in informal microbusinesses. These students are often glamorized as "entrepreneurs" but are mainly engaged in informal trading to provide for their needs. The frictions, contradictions, and disjuncture presented show how policy promoters must ride the wave of informal entrepreneurship to keep their jobs, while neglecting these poor students by virtue of the strict criteria and formal requirements that businesses must meet before they may receive some support. Policy promoters are employed by the government and by the university. They have KPI targets detailing the number of entrepreneurship workshops they must facilitate, new entrepreneurship start-ups they must help create, entrepreneurship seminars organized and further quantification of entrepreneurship activities to suit their individual performance targets. The SRC, NYDA, and YIBSA team members also focus on their careers, in which they chase targets for student meetings, take registers, and count the uptake of NYDA entrepreneurship training enrolments and number of start-ups ultimately created.

The analysis and discussion of the findings establishes the following contributions of the study:

- To the broader literature on entrepreneurship, structure and agency. The main contribution of this thesis is that it rattles the cage of entrepreneurship research advocating for a holistic view. As such the contribution of this thesis asserts that entrepreneurship for students is a space to advance agency, self-regulation and is a way to subvert the dangers of poverty.
- In terms of advocacy and political voice this thesis contributes to a newer understanding of how entrepreneurship amongst students is as a social reproduction of self-help or *vuk'zenzele* playing a similar role of an economic #FeesMustFall in quest to fight poverty and improve their livelihoods. Students use entrepreneurship as a platform for an economic voice, experience and as self-help to navigate lack of cash, and to supplement their university allowance (e.g. NSFAS).
- A further contribution of this thesis that is both scholarly and policy focused is the demonstration of an African experience of entrepreneurship demonstrating differences to the American-Euro centric/Silicon Valley approach to entrepreneurship. As such this thesis

demonstrates how entrepreneurship is conceptualised differently by different people thus challenging policy and university to develop a more plural approach to promotions of entrepreneurship.

- Methodologically, the study has contributed to a model of studying the practice of entrepreneurship amongst students. The thesis shows how entrepreneurship is a moving target due to student transitions at university e.g. studying a degree, 1st, 2nd year etc; also, how students change their ideas from time to time and their rapid pace of creating new micro-enterprises whenever their current activity is not meeting their needs. Even more so, the pandemic has made it more challenging to study the practice of entrepreneurship amongst students, their conceptualisations of it and their subverting of the dominant policy promotions of entrepreneurship. The methodological approach assists entrepreneurship scholarship to fill the gap on establishing what it means to hold different conceptualisations of entrepreneurship, who to ask and how to do so. The methodology is a recipe for challenging the positive research approach to an approach that is deliberate in amplifying the voices of students, their subversions of poverty through entrepreneurship and the unique practice of the process of micro-enterprise.

Additionally, and in conclusion the contributions in this study have been made sharp by the three-legged transformative model (approach) to entrepreneurship in three spheres that is research (theoretical), entrepreneurship research practice and policy posturing. The study has not only called out the lack of student voice in the discourse of entrepreneurship but has also demonstrated how student voices can be amplified including the transformative good of recognising such voices. These voices in the margins must be brought to the centre both politically and this thesis is optimistic that the students will move to the centre if no one brings them in. Through microenterprise and by other means they will for themselves claim economic freedom and will transform policy using their own agency.

CHAPTER 10:
CONCLUSION

This chapter sums up the work carried out in this thesis/dissertation. The chapter pulls together the essence of the study's inquiry and shares the key contributions of the study. Also, this chapter refers to South Africa's broader cause for transformation at university (for transforming universities), an experience that the practice of entrepreneurship amongst students has not encountered. This thesis has demonstrated an attempt to deal with the study's two main research questions:

- What different conceptualizations of entrepreneurship do students in a South African university articulate, and in what ways do these relate to their own livelihood strategies?
- In what ways do these conceptualizations of entrepreneurship differ, if at all, from those promoted by their university and in policy?

In dealing with the research questions above the thesis employed broad literature on structure, agency, entrepreneurship and livelihood(s). The literature was drawn from the accounts of African and non-African scholarship in unpacking the phenomenon of entrepreneurship and the different conceptualisations of entrepreneurship. Coming to an end this thesis has through in its nine (9) chapters a golden thread on structure, agency, entrepreneurship and livelihood. The thesis argues consistently that different people hold different conceptualisations, understandings and conceptualisations of entrepreneurship. To establish conclusions, this chapter also refers to the conceptual framework.

The following is the reiteration of the major contributions of the study. These contributions present a potential to make an impact on the transformation work taking place in South African entrepreneurship scholarship, policy and even to the agenda of transforming universities to focus more on the needs of students:

- To the broader literature on entrepreneurship, structure and agency. The main contribution of this thesis is that it rattles the cage of entrepreneurship research advocating for a holistic

view. As such the contribution of this thesis asserts that entrepreneurship for students is a space to advance agency, self-regulation and is a way to subvert the dangers of poverty.

- In terms of advocacy and political voice this thesis contributes to a newer understanding of how entrepreneurship amongst students is as a social reproduction of self-help or *vuk'zenzele* playing a similar role of an economic #FeesMustFall in quest to fight poverty and improve their livelihoods. Students use entrepreneurship as a platform for an economic voice, experience and as self-help to navigate lack of cash, and to supplement their university allowance (e.g. NSFAS).
- A further contribution of this thesis that is both scholarly and policy focused is the demonstration of an African experience of entrepreneurship demonstrating differences to the American-Euro centric/Silicon Valley approach to entrepreneurship. As such this thesis demonstrates how entrepreneurship is conceptualised differently by different people thus challenging policy and university to develop a more plural approach to promotions of entrepreneurship.
- Methodologically, the study has contributed to a model of studying the practice of entrepreneurship amongst students. The thesis shows how entrepreneurship is a moving target due to student transitions at university e.g. studying a degree, 1st, 2nd year etc; also, how students change their ideas from time to time and their rapid pace of creating new micro-enterprises whenever their current activity is not meeting their needs. Even more so, the pandemic has made it more challenging to study the practice of entrepreneurship amongst students, their conceptualisations of it and their subverting of the dominant policy promotions of entrepreneurship. The methodological approach assists entrepreneurship scholarship to fill the gap on establishing what it means to hold different conceptualisations of entrepreneurship, who to ask and how to do so. The methodology is a recipe for challenging the positive research approach to an approach that is deliberate in amplifying the voices of students, their subversions of poverty through entrepreneurship and the unique practice of the process of micro-enterprise.

The universities of technology in South Africa are all adopting a similar developmental rhetoric that is focused on entrepreneurship, innovation, and employability. The Ministerial Oversight Committee on Transformation in South African Public Universities (TOC) assessed

transformation in SA's public universities. The report published in 2023 shows the range of ways institutions have responded to the challenge of transformation. Whilst the report does not make a mention of entrepreneurship it explains transformation at universities as having moved from "compliance-based approaches to approaches which seek to deal holistically with the challenges of teaching and pedagogy, developing research trajectories for themselves which address the country's major developmental challenges and building strong, collaborative relationships with stakeholders such as government, the corporate sector and civil society" p. 11 (TOC Report). This report brings the big picture issues that confront students into perspective including skills development, employability, and developmental trajectory.

Whilst the report focuses on transformation it also provides comparisons across universities regarding their views on contributing to society. Below are extracts from the report showing ways universities are doing and leading transformation.

> *Looking at the transformation foci of the various universities, one can discern a set of universities that appears to emphasise their relevance and wish to contribute to development with broad reference to transformation issues. This is evident in their aspirations to produce graduates who are equipped with skills which make them employable, as well as other desirable attributes. Such universities may also emphasise their desire to contribute in other ways to local development. Many historically disadvantaged universities and universities of technology emphasise an outwardly directed, development-focused transformation commitment. For instance, the vision statement of WSU envisages the university as "a leading African comprehensive university focusing on innovative education, research and community partnership cognisant of continental and international imperatives". Its mission is inter alia to "create a new generation of highly skilled graduates capable of understanding and addressing complex societal challenges, with critical scholarly and entrepreneurial attributes grounded on sound moral work ethics and responsible leadership". (TOC Report, p. 46)*

The interest of this thesis is student voice and how it is amplified by universities. The UP, UKZN and WSU's mission are examples as shown in the extract above and below of the focus of the university on managerial successes than issues facing students. The assessment as provided by the

TOC report shows very little about the work of universities in transforming access to higher education for poor students. The vision and mission statements are focused on how the universities want to compete in higher education as a 'market' but takes very little account for financial exclusions endured by poor students, access to food on campus and transforming society at large.

> *This focus can also be observed in some historically advantaged universities. For example, UP's vision as stated in its 2019 report was "to be a leading research-intensive university in Africa, recognised internationally for its quality, relevance and impact, and also for developing people, creating knowledge and making a difference locally and globally". Similarly, UKZN's 2019 mission was to be "a truly South African university of choice that is academically excellent, innovative in research, entrepreneurial, and critically engaged with society". (TOC Report, p. 47)*

The extract below from the TOC report focusing on the Central University of Technology (CUT) shows some concern about student life citing the introduction of Residence Academic Mentorship Programmes. However, these programmes that would otherwise deal with health, nutrition, academic development, and well-being are intwined with "entrepreneurial mentorship". The reasons for such mentorship are unclear in the context of the programmes besides the entrepreneurship rhetoric that seeks to responsibilise students for challenges they face while at university and after graduating. The message is oversimplified as - become an entrepreneur to deal with your challenges or be entrepreneurial. The TOC report still needs to assess further the meanings of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial mentorship in the vision and mission statements of universities such as CUT.

> *CUT reported having implemented Residence Academic Mentorship Programmes (RAMP) in which students were exposed to entrepreneurial mentorship, community engagement and cultural activities promoting social cohesion. (TOC Report, p.105)*

The idea of economic and skills empowerment among graduates is cutting through the assessment provided by the TOC report. The final extract below shows the extent of university collaborations with industry and government partners are driven towards producing employable graduates. Yet

again very little assessment of student thoughts about how such collaborations could assist in other aspects especially since the concern of the report is university transformation. The outward focus of universities to partner with industry and government agencies can be beneficial. But if it prioritised over inward issues such as student livelihoods, access to finance and inclusion it may be self-defeating. This thesis concludes that the overarching focus on business and entrepreneurship by universities is not sufficient to address issues facing students and graduates. Student voices must be heard and recognised, including the different ways they think and act on entrepreneurship. This potentially can enable all stakeholders to deal with issues that are important to students and achieve balance between the outward, and inward focus.

> *More generally, the five developmentally engaged universities typically linked their expressed commitment to transformation to their aspirations to produce graduates who were equipped with skills and attributes that would make them eminently employable. To this end, a number of them reported on partnerships with different levels of government, industry partners, SETAs and other education providers such as TVET colleges and high schools. Examples of work integrated learning, internships, and so forth, were also commonly reported by the universities in this group. Their approach to teaching and learning was generally expressed in outward-facing terms. For example, one developmentally engaged university expressed the desire to "create a new generation of highly skilled graduates capable of understanding and addressing complex societal challenges, with critical scholarly and entrepreneurial attributes grounded on sound moral work ethics and responsible leadership". (TOC Report, p.148)*

Whilst the TOC report is providing an important assessment about the transformation strides of universities it also exposes how universities are seeing entrepreneurship as a silver bullet by which graduate unemployment and poverty can be addressed. This withstands the different understandings and conceptualisations of entrepreneurship among students. The report also shows a minimalist approach to transformation including the failure of universities to take interest to confront the causes of poverty than simply suggesting that entrepreneurship can contribute to transformation by providing jobs whereas established entrepreneurs are battling and face multiple challenges of doing business. On this part universities such as Fundisa must adopt holistic

approaches to dealing with the student issues than to single out entrepreneurship as a more prominent building block to transformation.

> *Similarly, equipping graduates with skills that will empower them in their transition into the world of work should be the goal of every qualification on offer; and every institution ought to be engaged with local government, business and industry, and communities in their locality, and work on a pact with them to maximize their potential as engaged universities and anchor institutions.* (TOC report, p. 117)

The vignette above is from a recent report by the Ministerial Oversight Committee on Transformation in South African Public Universities (TOC). The TOC is appointed every three years to review transformation in South African public universities in terms of race, decolonization, access, and inclusion. The report makes no direct reference to entrepreneurship but instead refers to the 'transition' to the world of work and university engagement with the government, business/industry, and community.

The 2023 TOC report provides an assessment about the transformation of university education in South Africa. The TOC assessment shows that universities are simply calling for engagement with industry, without providing clear links how engagement with industry is leading to transformation. However, industries harvest talented students through internships and graduate programmes. Again, the voices of students concerned about university transformation in terms of gender, race, and inclusion are not represented, as argued by Pillay and Mqolomba (2022). A similar tendency about entrepreneurship has become evident. Students who are uncertain about future opportunities are directed to entrepreneurship; very little support is available for their development to become well-rounded activist leaders who stand up for their communities. The only choice therefore is having universities and policy suggesting entrepreneurship to students, even when they are already pushed into entrepreneurship by their hardship. The hard work of eliminating hardship and confronting inequality is ignored when entrepreneurship is promoted above other possible ways of dealing with lack of jobs and income among youth.

This concluding chapter offers some concluding thoughts. It covers recommendations and suggests directions for future research.

10.1 Concluding thoughts on the promotions of entrepreneurship

What different conceptualizations of entrepreneurship do students in a South African university articulate, and in what ways do these relate to their own livelihood strategies? In what ways do these conceptualizations of entrepreneurship differ, if at all, from those promoted by their university and in policy? These are the questions that I have dealt with in this thesis. In the study, I considered student views, experiences, and articulations of entrepreneurship. I have also dealt with the questions by seeking to understand the livelihood strategies of students both on and off campus. I also sought answers to the research questions by drawing on policy documents (namely, the NDP and NYP) that guide the promotions of entrepreneurship at universities. In this thesis I have presented the voices of students, university management, lecturers, student leaders, policymakers, and other stakeholders. I have amplified the student voices in this research, in response to the dominant approach to research that tends to prioritize the powerful voices over those of students.

What is evident from this research is that students (and people in general) conceptualize entrepreneurship differently to one another. They also hold conceptualizations of entrepreneurship that are dominated by the challenges they face. These challenges include poverty, a lack of income, and sometimes seeing opportunities to establish sustainable business. For students, entrepreneurship serves various purposes, such as those discussed in the thesis. Pursuing entrepreneurship is a response to university's promotion of entrepreneurship. As universities seek ways to help their students secure jobs once they leave university, they see entrepreneurship as an easy way out, and students are drawn into this area through convincing promotions which suggest that they will become their own employers, as opposed to jobseekers. This disregards the lack of capital, the failure rate of entrepreneurs, barriers to entry, and the possible relegation of poor students to the margins of the economy.

After having considered student, policy, and university stakeholder perspectives on entrepreneurship, I have suggested a holistic and an inclusive approach for promoting entrepreneurship among students at university. This approach moves from pitching entrepreneurship as a solution to social ills but rather as a platform to create dialogue about the economic structure of South Africa and how it affects students, and to promote alternative economic models to support the livelihoods of students and their communities. I have proposed

that universities in South Africa create platforms for frank conversations under the idea of entrepreneurship to capture the changing conceptualizations of entrepreneurship. I furthermore propose that universities expose their students to cooperative models that can help them take greater ownership the products and services they consume, such as student accommodation, provision of meals on campus, and financial services. Students have become consumers on their own campuses without having a say about the cafeteria menus (for example) and other forms of products provided to them. This should be a starting point to empower students to have a voice economically and as citizens of their own campus. The current approach to promoting entrepreneurship asks students to look away from their campuses while these campuses are also arenas in which enterprise is taking place. At Fundisa, for example, a student selling doughnuts reported the following to me when I asked about their selling activity:

10.2 The view from the canteen – from a conversation with a student

> *My stall benefits students because it is cheaper than the cafeteria. A student cannot get anything for R7 [about 35p] from the canteen. But security does not allow us to sell on campus because there are businesses renting premises on campus to sell food to us, but the food is expensive, and students cannot afford.*

This speaks to my proposal that if the universities and policymakers are serious about promoting student entrepreneurship, they must adopt a system that provides students an opportunity to participate in the provision of basics for students on campus at a price that is affordable to them. This can be an opportunity for universities and policymakers to help students develop their own philosophies of serving society through enterprise. The scarcity of food, exorbitant prices of meals on campus, and exploitation of students by accommodation providers present only a greedy picture of enterprise, and one into which students are being drawn through the policy and university promotions of entrepreneurship. These businesses are the kinds of enterprise that students run, alongside the promotions of similar kinds of entrepreneurship by university and policymakers. Unless universities and policymakers empower students to participate in enterprise on campus, the promotions remain unsuitable and will lead students to the greedy path of exploitative capitalist and profit-driven approach to entrepreneurship.

In summary, three main proposals are made for university stakeholders regarding promotions of entrepreneurship in higher education and for improving the understandings of the student conceptualizations of entrepreneurship in policy. In addition, I propose a progressive approach to researching entrepreneurship among students.

The first proposal is that the promotions of entrepreneurship at university must seek to raise the voice of students about how services and products are provided to them on campus. Students are exploited by businesses operating on campuses, yet the same students are vilified for offering cheaper alternatives.

Second, barriers to industry entry for new student-led businesses must be dealt with in policy, and alternative approaches devised and promoted, such as cooperatives and resource-sharing. This requires all stakeholders to delve into student livelihood strategies, understand student needs, seek to alleviate student poverty, and not substitute entrepreneurship for the work of providing students with basics. For example, universities may not simply refer to entrepreneurship among students to overcome poverty or even create jobs. Officials must refrain from using such expressions, and those using this tagline must be brought to understand that this pressures students unfairly and overpromises what they can achieve through entrepreneurship.

Finally, research on entrepreneurship must rise beyond quantifying experiences of students, including the assumption that students are generally too dependent on their universities and governmental funding for basics such as clothes, food, and allowances when they should use entrepreneurship to generate an income independent from the state (Fatoki & Chindoga, 2011). This is a problematic position to hold, yet research into entrepreneurship in South Africa has sought to blame students for the poverty and challenges they face in society (Fatoki, 2010). Researchers must be more interested in how students articulate entrepreneurship, their livelihoods, and the hardships they face, then explore alternative possibilities that university stakeholders and policy can employ to deal holistically with student aspirations to entrepreneurship. This means ensuring that students have their basics covered, they are supported to become confident citizens, their communities are saved from landlessness, and that research into student entrepreneurship questions all elements of society that perpetuate inequality beyond the narrow mindset that students must “rise and act” (*vuk’uzenzele*).

10.3 Key voices: Students, policy, and stakeholders

Another of my objectives in this study was to amplify student voices. They offer real understandings of how students survive university life and experiences. As demonstrated in this thesis, models such as the capability approach and transformation frameworks are often used to study students and their experiences. Through this research, I sought to understand student experiences and livelihoods, and to establish a holistic view of how students conceptualize entrepreneurship and how this intersects with their needs for cash, hardship, and their fear of possible unemployment after graduating. The study captured student voices from a wide range of study fields, levels of study, and across varying conceptualizations and articulations of entrepreneurship.

Policy voices are vast and extensive. This research captured all the relevant policy voices in student entrepreneurship. The NYDA CEO and EDHE director account for the "policy voices" in the study. The NYDA CEO shared experiences and accounts of building a youth-development agency merging predecessor institutions. He also shared experiences of dealing with administrative and governance issues in the NYDA and the way services are rendered in support of youth-owned businesses. The agency provides support to youth businesses, which includes those run by students between the ages of 18 to 35. The EDHE director provided insights into designing and implementing student entrepreneurship-development programmes on campuses. The EDHE invests up to R100,000 (£5,000) yearly into the winning idea of a student entrepreneur. The student entrepreneur's idea must tick all the right boxes and prove to be competitive against the ideas presented by the runner-up student entrepreneurs.

I interviewed four experienced university-based stakeholders: a lecturer at Fundisa, an SRC member, a #FeesMustFall activist, and the chairperson of YIBSA, a youth business organization. These stakeholders provided accounts of wider student experiences at university. The lecturer accounts were wide-ranging, dealing with the experience of lecturing students who are facing hardship, students who have strong political representation, and those who at times miss lectures because they do not have the funds to be on campus or those students battling hunger (again hardship). This voice echoed some of the work by the SRC and the #FeesMustFall activism concerned about student financial and academic exclusions. The YIBSA representative expressed concern about the government's neglect of youth businesses, often regarding them as unready for

investment, and even the lack of trust that the government process casts on youth businesses applying for collateral, subjecting them to stringent checks before any funding is made available. These already poor young adults without collateral or security to pledge for their funding to be approved and therefore often end up excluded. Alternatively, they try to obtain NYDA grants, which, although capped at R50,000 (about £2,500), do not require collateral as other government funding instruments do.

Taken together, the student voices gathered in this study show a discontentment about systematic processes in dealing with students and the youth in all levels of society. These voices call for a more just system of student support in higher education, in which hardship is not a cause for students to choose entrepreneurship; instead, creativity, innovation and serving the public good should be the main or even dominant reason for entrepreneurship among students. These voices are also a cry for a society in which entrepreneurialism is be a choice and not a "must-do" because there are no jobs for graduates and other young adults. They contend that entrepreneurship alone is unsustainable and has low guarantees for success in a society in which there is low consumer spending owing to poverty and inequality. Students at university face struggles that include paying their tuition and accommodation fees, a lack of food, and sending some of their NSFAS allowances to their families in need. These are some of the reasons that these voices resist entrepreneurship. Although seen as positive by some, entrepreneurship will over time be seen as a distraction from more pressing student issues on campus. Especially when the main view of entrepreneurship is that all must "rise and act" – *vuk'uzenzele* while policies including municipal by laws are tough on informal traders, when opportunities for growth are limited to well-funded and established businesses.

These voices also challenge the way university management promotes entrepreneurship. University management uses the concept loosely; consequently, students will begin to question the veracity of statements such as the Fundisa Vice Chancellor's assertion in 2023 that the university is producing graduates who are both employable and will create jobs. If students find themselves unemployed and unable to create jobs, they will begin to see universities as overpromising what they can offer under the banner of entrepreneurship. Therefore, universities such as Fundisa must moderate the dominance of entrepreneurship on campus and assess their own promotions of entrepreneurship, as well as begin to be self-critical about this activity that they are

choosing to promote. As already stated, entrepreneurship will be seen as clouding other important debates and exposed for being posited falsely as a "silver-bullet" solution to youth socio-economic issues.

10.4 Summary of the main findings and making sense of the conceptual framework

This study has explored the different ways in which entrepreneurship is conceptualized and articulated by different people and in different environments, and the key role that livelihood strategies play in influencing a person's direction in entrepreneurship. Student hardship is one of the main drivers of survivalist forms of entrepreneurship. Also, students use the most informal approaches to get started and because of this they rarely benefit from formal programmes supporting entrepreneurship. Those students who try entrepreneurship for the purposes of survival also rarely join campus incubation or start-up programmes because they have no aspirations for entrepreneurship beyond their ability to sell their products or services and making enough money to take care of their needs. These are students who hope to finish their qualifications, get at job, and help their families or parents at home.

The main findings are framed via the conceptual framework of the study. The framework as already presented in the literature review and in subsequent chapters it has four dimensions, and they are student livelihoods, hardship, agency and higher education. In summing up and connecting dots about the main findings of the study I refer to the conceptual framework acknowledging the main ideas presented in the different chapters, the conclusions contained in this chapter and the core argument of this thesis. On student livelihoods this thesis has exposed and explored the different dimensions of a life of a student. It has shown that students are family oriented and they mostly act in the interests of their collective family. Various excerpts in chapter 6 have shown how students are sending some of their NSFAS stipends home in support of their families. The students portrayed here share the little they have with their mothers and siblings – demonstrating Ubuntu and a heart for family members in need. The dimension of hardship follows on livelihood. Chapter 7 and 8 showed how students are turning into micro enterprise to fulfil their income requirements whilst at university. These students are engaged in enterprise for their own prospects but in the immediate they have shown that they use their earning to purchase basics such as food, clothing and to again send money to their needy family members. It is for this reason Kat stated the difficulty of running a food business from his home because his family did not always

have enough food supply – he found it hard to sell food in the same house that did not have food, another act of consideration linkable to Ubuntu.

The conceptual framework expands to cover agency and higher education. In agency it deals with structure and issues of choice. In principle the framework asks what choice do students have? And how are students exercising their agency? These questions have multiple answers. Students are squeezing their interests in the existing system. They are choosing entrepreneurship and enterprise to deal with their challenges. They are challenging the narrow and status quo perspectives of what entrepreneurship can be. From perfume, to somatology, to agriculture and selling food are students seeking to empower themselves through micro-enterprise. Higher education is but, an arena for students to exercise their agency and to challenge the status quo of policy and that maintained by university management. It has been demonstrated on chapter 4 to 7 how students are changing their campus to be a trade place with and without the help of internal stakeholders at their university. These students are purely exercising courage and a #FeesMustFall attitude concerned about making a living. These students are engaged in the act of selling at university to be able to stay or earn a university qualification – although most are NSFAS beneficiaries they understand that their stipends are not enough to cover their needs, and they have since exercised courage and took it upon themselves to set up enterprises whilst study.

The three-legged transformative model for entrepreneurship discussed next as a proposition made from this study offers some further hope about what research can do to improve its ideas about the understandings and conceptualisations of entrepreneurship by students. This proposition offers ideas on how student livelihood, hardship, agency and higher education can be placed in entrepreneurship research that refers to students.

10.5 Summing up main contributions of the study – The Three-Legged Pot Transformative Model for Entrepreneurship (Research and understanding of Practice)

The study's main contribution is to debates around entrepreneurship education and higher education, with a particular focus on start-ups by students and employability among graduates. The three-legged pot transformative model for entrepreneurship offers an approach embedding the different understandings of entrepreneurship in theory, policy, and research practice. This model

suggests that the study of entrepreneurship among students must be researched openly but also place student voices at the centre of the matter. Similarly, research must not take an easy route to suggest that students must simply become entrepreneurs or even job creators to solve the societal challenges that government is failing to address speedily. In addition, this study should assist entrepreneurship research by providing an authentic appreciation of the dominance of monopoly businesses in both new and old sectors of business. They leave very little space for new restaurants, sports centres, podcasts, music channels and manufacturing spaces for newly graduated "student" entrepreneurs. On these grounds, this study contends that entrepreneurship must be seen as part of a myriad of solutions rather than a way for policymakers and university management to hide their failures.

University management and policymakers are engaged in an aggressive campaign of driving and promoting entrepreneurship on campuses as a solution to the lack of jobs for graduates. A question, however, is to what extent this will go. Does it mean the university can absolve itself of its role in skilling its graduates, driving debates about societal transformation, and even exposing the shortfalls of capitalism and the inequality it produces? This all requires a university and policy approach that takes a mixed view of potential approaches that can help students to build meaningful livelihoods as opposed to simply promoting entrepreneurship in the manner that it is currently driven on campus. In addition, such an approach needs to be open and receptive to different conceptualizations and articulations of entrepreneurship, and perhaps even develop instruments to support this diversity.

The findings of this study have also shown that students work on entrepreneurship individually. They start their enterprises and operate them as sole proprietors. Of course, this gives them control over their enterprise and gives them flexibility regarding operating hours, sales targets, and decision-making, which includes closing down when the need arises. The promotions of entrepreneurship uncovered in this study have encouraged an individualistic idea of entrepreneurship. Rarely, if at all, have the campaigns sought to promote entrepreneurship as something than can be a collectivistic activity among students. Instead, the promotions have made out that individual student entrepreneurs would be more successful if they aligned with the conventional definition(s) of an entrepreneur, which suggests an entrepreneur as someone who starts their business to have control over it and takes risk to make profit. For example, SEW

promotes individual endeavours in entrepreneurship and the idea of becoming the next-generation Mark Zuckerberg, Bill Gates, or Patrice Motsepe, figures who have succeeded through a largely individualistic entrepreneurship style, yet are promoted as the champions that others should look up to.

However, these promotions of individual entrepreneurship miss an opportunity to help students organise themselves more collectively and around the common socio-economic issues they seek to deal with in their entrepreneurial endeavours. These socio-economic issues are lack of income, poverty at home, financial and social exclusions, and lack of food. While entrepreneurship suggests simply starting a business, a collective approach to enterprise would place at the centre the reasons students are starting these businesses. Students may then begin to confront such issues more directly and collectively. For example, if inadequate access to food on campus is due to high prices at the canteens, then students acting collectively may challenge this using an entrepreneurial approach. That is, to work out an improved business enterprise that can better serve students on campus and then lobby campus stakeholders and students to act on such an idea. Instead of using entrepreneurship to improve life on campus in a much more impactful way, the promotions of entrepreneurship in their current form suggest that students should start their own businesses elsewhere as a means of dealing with high food prices on campus because of their otherwise being limited to buying from the expensive on-campus canteen.

In conclusion, from the findings of this study, I suggest that the promotions of entrepreneurship on campus be fully conversant with the conceptualisations and articulations of entrepreneurship among students. Furthermore, the stakeholders driving the promotions of entrepreneurship should be more familiar with and take a conscious interest in the issues of students, their struggles, and the ways that students deal with challenges collectively. The #FeesMustFall movement is an example of collective action among students. These stakeholders must them work with students to deal with big-picture issues that deplete students' funds (e.g. expensive accommodation and costly food sold at canteens on campus) and the lack of funding for student enterprises. With these understandings, student cooperatives will emerge to deal with access to food on campus, adequate, and safe and inexpensive accommodation, and begin work to lobby for governmental youth policies that deal with the issue of funding new collective enterprises established by students.

10.6 Challenges ahead, Recommendations and Directions for Future Research

Momentum has built up around the notion of entrepreneurship as a policy to help make sense of challenges facing society. For example, a lack of entrepreneurship is used to explain or is even blamed for the fact that the economy is not growing or that there are no jobs. This is the main narrative of entrepreneurship, and this presents a huge challenge for studies that value a diverse range of approaches and thought about challenges that face society and the collective student body. Entrepreneurship is not the only way to deal with societal ills, if any progress is to be made, but inclusive approaches are required to deal with the socio-economic challenges that students face. If students are encouraged to use entrepreneurship as an approach to deal with challenges in their livelihoods, such as poverty and lack of income, their conceptualizations and articulations of entrepreneurship must be taken fully into account.

I recommend that researchers in the field of entrepreneurship be more intentional about issues of structure, agency, self-regulation and subversion. This helps entrepreneurship research to connect with the broader sphere of issues which include livelihoods, student transitioning experiences from youth to adulthood and to encapsulate how students are navigating the challenges of life more broadly. The technical research approach to dealing with entrepreneurship amongst students has been limiting the research field of entrepreneurship for a long time. More so, it has suppressed the voices of students and has sought to make policy recommendations that endorse the policy narrative of equating entrepreneurship to employment when it is a struggle for economic emancipation.

Future research must deal with the promotions of entrepreneurship at university and how these change the campus space, if at all. Theoretically, such research will also probe how these promotions bring neoliberal ideas and practices into play on campuses. Overall, the future research into student entrepreneurship must take a more critical approach that places more value on student voices than those already powerful ones. This will advance the debate on entrepreneurship and employability among graduates more fairly, considering their hardship, aspirations for the attainment of qualifications, family backgrounds and possibility of alternative solutions other than entrepreneurship.

Furthermore, an interdisciplinary approach to researching entrepreneurship is overdue. This study is one more example of how interdisciplinarity in research entrepreneurship, especially among students, is a necessity and an approach that must be embraced. Interdisciplinarity, if adopted as a regular practice, will help entrepreneurship researchers to take full account of lived experiences and begin to chart new directions for policy, drawing on such research to make decisions. Fatoki (2010) for example is a scholar and lecturer in the field of entrepreneurship and business. Fatoki has been critical of low entrepreneurial intentions among students in South Africa but not considering their livelihood strategies, the understandings, and conceptualisations of entrepreneurship among students and more broadly the experiences of students at university. For research in the field of entrepreneurship to improve it must consider the voices and experiences of students. Finally, South Africa's ever-growing inequality, joblessness, informal trading, gender-based violence and other socio-economic ills call for an interdisciplinary research approach – one that approaches entrepreneurship holistically from the perspectives of social science, business, economics, and statistical sciences. Such research will provide a critical view of the arguments about the role of entrepreneurship in the South African society and our understandings thereof.

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