

**2015 – 2018**  
**Workplace Based**  
**Learning (WBL):**  
**Tracer Study -**  
**Internships**  
**Final Report**



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The following study is the first of the W&RSETA tracking and tracing study - Internships.
- 51% of the interns participated in the survey, in comparison to 6.3% of employers. Since participation for the employers was low, there was an extension for the survey and more data was collected.
- 51% response rate for the interns is fully representative of the targeted population while the 6.3% for employers is not a representative sample.
- This report is final and aims to respond to and attend to objectives W&RSETA set out in the respect list of feedback.
- This consolidated report includes results for internships and employers (at the current moment).
- This report is divided into three sections:
  - Section A: Implementation Phase
  - Section B: Internship Responses
  - Section C: Employer Responses

# Section A:

## Implementation Phase

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Insurvey was commissioned by the Wholesale and Retail SETA (W&RSETA) to conduct their 2015 - 2018 Workplace Based Learning (WBL): Tracer Study – Internships & Employers.

The report describes the findings from the tracer study to determine whether or not the internships achieved its mandated outcomes, also looking at the various trends, challenges and outcomes from the program.

This was the first time the W&RSETA conducted the WBL: Tracer Study – Internship & Employers, and it was crucial that a high response rate is achieved using various applied methodologies, as this would serve as the basis of whether the internship programs are achieving their mandated outcomes or not.

## 2. WBL STUDY OBJECTIVES

- To determine whether or not the Internships achieved the mandated outcome.
- To outline key features, trends, challenges and outcome of the Internship Programs in respective sub-sector e.g., Clothing, Fuel Retails etc.
- To provide further insight into the individual and social benefits of the Internship.
- To determine the learner employment status (absorbed, not absorbed and did not complete), career path and current geographical location of those who have completed internships.
- To determine the nature of employment of interns who received employment.
- To determine whether or not the Internships achieved the mandated outcome.
- The perception of the employers on the value of the internships.

### 3. STEPS FOR CONDUCTING WBL: TRACER STUDY - INTERNSHIPS

The implementation of the W&RSETA WBL: Tracer Study involved the following steps:

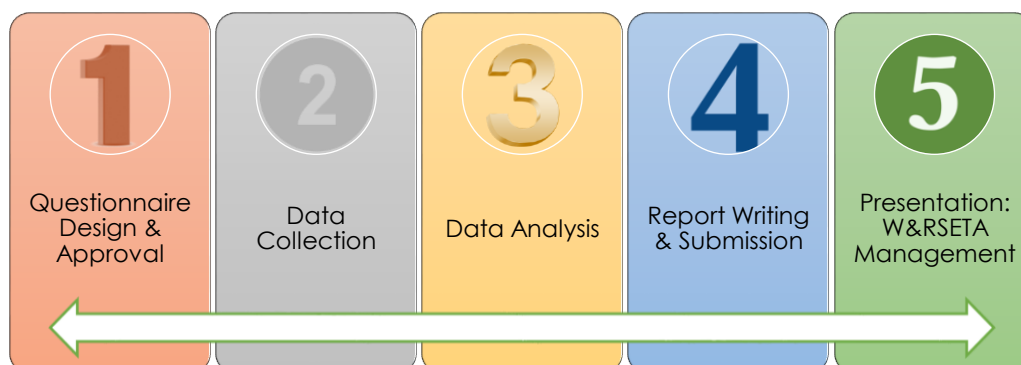


Figure 1

The above steps ensured that we cover all the general stages of conducting the study from start to finish and until we submit the WBL Tracer Study report on time.

After the data was collected, the data was analysed using mixed methods including quantitative interpretation, and thematic analysis.

Reporting entailed condensing all the the data into meaningful content easy to digest for the client and market.

The presentation of the W&RSETA WBL: Tracer Study findings is presented in this report

### 4. METHODOLOGY

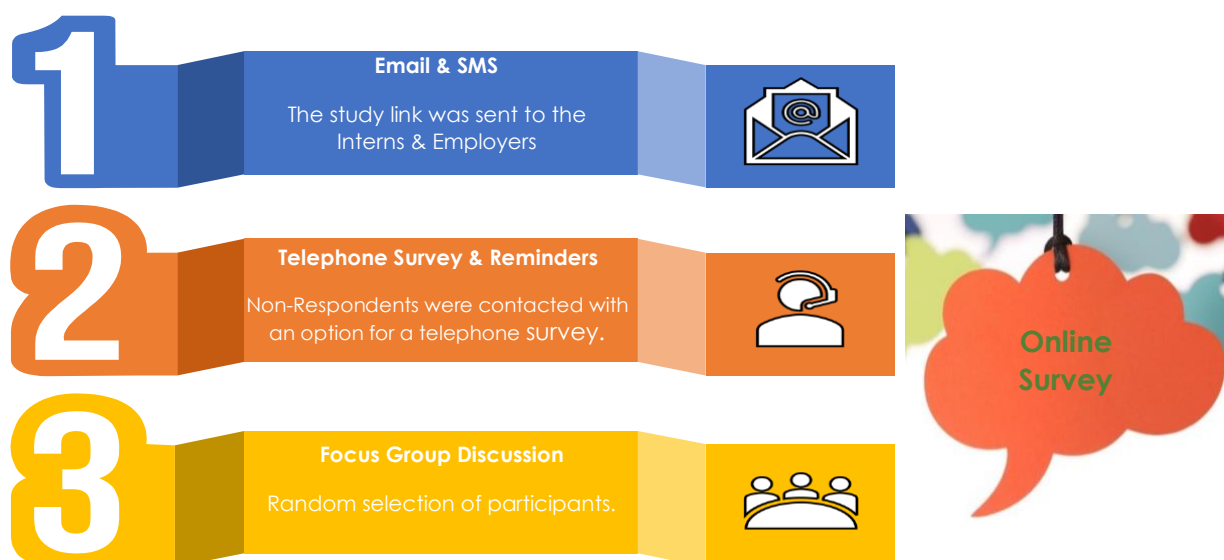


Figure 2

#### **4.1 The research approach (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed) in terms of the research objectives.**

The survey was done by employing a quantitative survey as a method of data collection. The sample used for the survey and the questionnaires was based on questionnaires designed by the Insurvey team and approved by the W&RSETA team. A qualitative method was also used to provide more clarification to the quantitative numbers. The responses for the qualitative questions are verbatim in the report. The reason for this is to capture the essence of the responses and not contaminate these with the opinions of the researchers.

#### **4.2 The size and characteristics of the study or target population.**

Wholesale and Retail SETA (W&RSETA) provided the participants database which included emails and mobile numbers.

#### **4.3 The sampling size and sample technique (random, purposive, etc.) used.**

A non-probability purposive sampling method was used for this WBL: Tracer - Study, and the sample was populated from all the provinces as highlighted on figure 3.

## **5. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**Ensuring participants have given informed consent includes the following:**

- ✓ Participants have the intellectual capacity and psychological maturity necessary to understand their involvement in the study.
- ✓ Participants are making an autonomous decision to participate in the study.
- ✓ Involvement in the study is absolutely voluntary.
- ✓ Participants are aware of the nature and details of the research being conducted.
- ✓ Participants are aware of their right to discontinue in the research study.
- ✓ The researcher is honest to participants about the nature of the study.
- ✓ Participants are in no way coerced into participation in the study.
- ✓ Ensuring no harm comes to participants.
- ✓ Researchers should ensure that no harm is caused to participants of the research project.
- ✓ Occurrences where there is a possibility that participants could be harmed or put in a position of discomfort, should be avoided.
- ✓ Ensuring confidentiality and anonymity.
- ✓ The researcher ensured that the identity of all participants is protected.
- ✓ Protection of confidentiality may involve restricting access to raw data, storing all data securely, reporting findings in a manner that does not allow for ready identification of participants, and obtaining permission for subsequent use of data.



## 6. LIMITATIONS & MITIGATIONS

There has been a significant / positive response rate from the internships in comparison to the employers where the response rate has been poor from the first month of data collection. The following highlights some of the limitations and mitigations relating to the employers:

Limitations	Mitigations
<b>Low Response Rate (3%)</b>	Between February 2021 and April 2021 (three months), we sent two monthly reminders to non-respondents via email and SMS, and majority of the participants / employers whose mobile numbers we did not have. We relied on one channel to send reminders for this group of participants.
<b>Marketing &amp; Communication</b>	Through the weekly project monitoring process and the researchers concern about the low response rate, together with the W&RSETA Marketing department we embarked on an awareness campaign. The campaign was conducted through social media, engaging and requesting the W&RSETA Regional Managers country-wide to communicate and encourage the employers in their respective regions to respond to the survey.
<b>Voluntary Participation</b>	<p>Engagement in the survey was completely voluntary. As a result, it was difficult to anticipate or predict how many people would respond. To mitigate this, we sent multiple reminders to the non-respondents, and embarked on a social media campaign, and there was little improvement on the response rate.</p> <p>It is vital to also note that the same methods applied to the employer's survey, were also applied to the internships which generated a 51% response rate.</p> <p>The sample size for employers was more than 3000 and W&amp;RSETA will need to investigate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The reasons why the employers did not respond,</li> <li>- Is the submitted database accurately updated according to the various stakeholders who have a working relationship with the W&amp;RSETA in terms of</li> </ul>

	<p>their roles, and this will help understand if the survey was sent to the correct stakeholder group?</p>
<p><b>Increase the Response Rate</b></p>	<p>We strive to ensure that we reach a positive response rate / representative sample, though not guaranteed however the researcher will apply methods to ensure that this is achieved.</p> <p>As a result,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The survey for the employers was opened / active again for a minimum of two (2) months,</li> <li>- The weekly / bi-monthly progress report was provided to the W&amp;RSETA with open channels for mitigation in cases where the response rate was low.</li> <li>- The W&amp;RSETA needs to be aggressive with the marketing campaign targeting the increase of employer participation.</li> <li>- The W&amp;RSETA will need to engage with the regional managers country-wide to be the survey advocates to all employers in their respective regions.</li> <li>- The W&amp;RSETA will need to ensure that the database provided / used is updated and categorizes each service provider within the Organisation.</li> </ul> <p>Bi-Monthly from the active / data collection date, the response rate was monitored.</p>

Figure 3

## 7. DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

The 2015 - 2018 WBL: Tracer Study - Internship was actioned for a period of three months between the 01<sup>st</sup> February 2021 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2021 as highlighted on figure 4, and it was sent to all stakeholders who were part of the Internship program during the mentioned period.

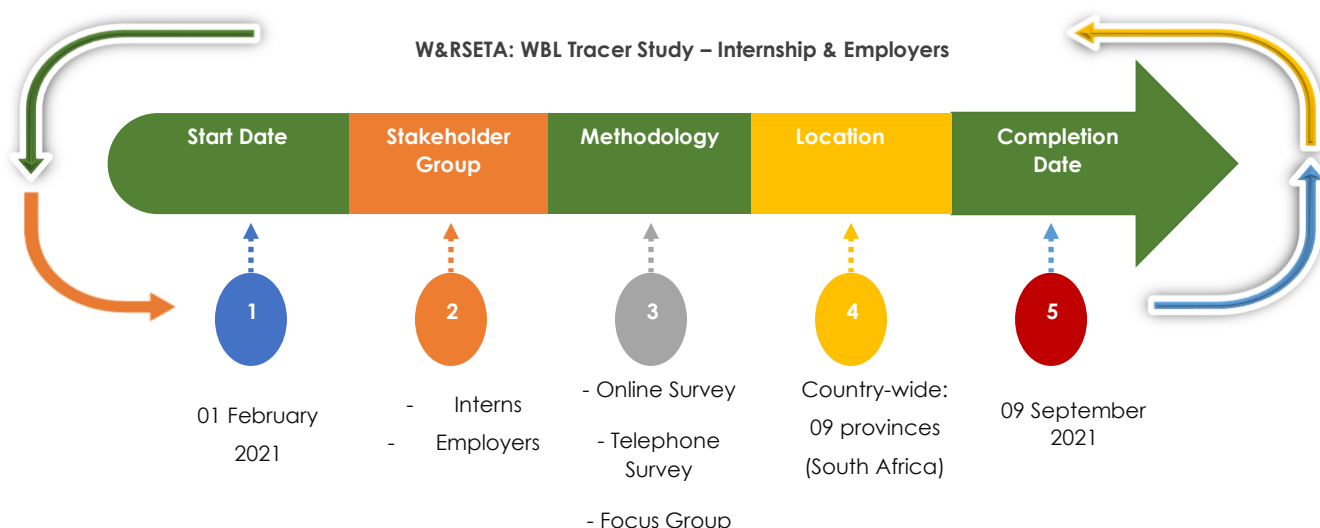


Figure 4

The confidentiality of all the participants was one of the highest priorities, as we ensured that their personal information was not shared with any third party including with the W&RSETA.

The findings on this WBL: Tracer Study will provide invaluable information on the Internship programs and the impact they have, and the information can be used to make wide-range improvements identified and planning initiatives for the delivery of current and future initiatives and programs.

# Section B:

## Internships

## 8. QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

The study was divided into two groups:

- Those who found employment after their internship program, and
- Those who are/were unemployed after their internship program.

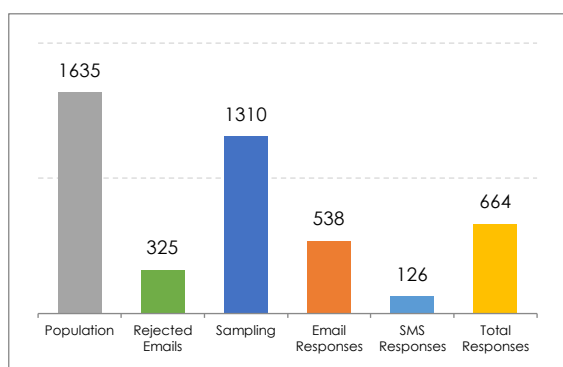
Each group has its own specific questionnaires relating to post-internship activity and the survey questionnaires were formulated according to:

- **General Questionnaires:** Compulsory questions for all the stakeholder groups to answer.
- **Designated Questionnaires:** Each group selected their role and they had access to view only questionnaires for their grouping.

To limit the score of responses to the dimensions provided by the W&RSETA, the questionnaires were mainly closed-ended questions, and also supported by the option to provide comments (Qualitative) where needed which helped to provide insight where depth was needed.

## 9. INTERNS RESPONSE RATE

- **Online Survey:** The multi-pronged approach we used ensured that the stakeholders, who might struggle with network or access to personal computer / internet café to access their e-mails, will also have the option to receive and access the survey on their mobile phone, of which majority of the stakeholders we had access to their mobile numbers.



The overall response rate for the 2015 – 2018 Workplace Based Learning: Tracer study – Internship:

**51%**

### Total Population

Refers to the overall stakeholders we have sent the survey to.

### Rejected Email

Refers to the emails that were rejected after multiple attempts due to various reasons.

### Email Link Responses

Refers to the stakeholders who responded to the survey via email.

### Sampling

Refers to the overall stakeholders who received or the survey was sent to.

### SMS Link Responses

Refers to the stakeholders who only received the survey via SMS and responded.

### Total Responses

Refers to the total number of stakeholders who responded to the survey.

Figure 5

- **Telephone Survey and Reminder:** The non-respondents were randomly selected and contacted for the telephone survey. To ensure compliance, the telephone surveys were recorded and the respondents' answers were captured and saved electronically. The participants who did not have time to do the telephone survey, this method also served as a

reminder for them to respond to the email and or SMS link sent to them and respond to the survey.

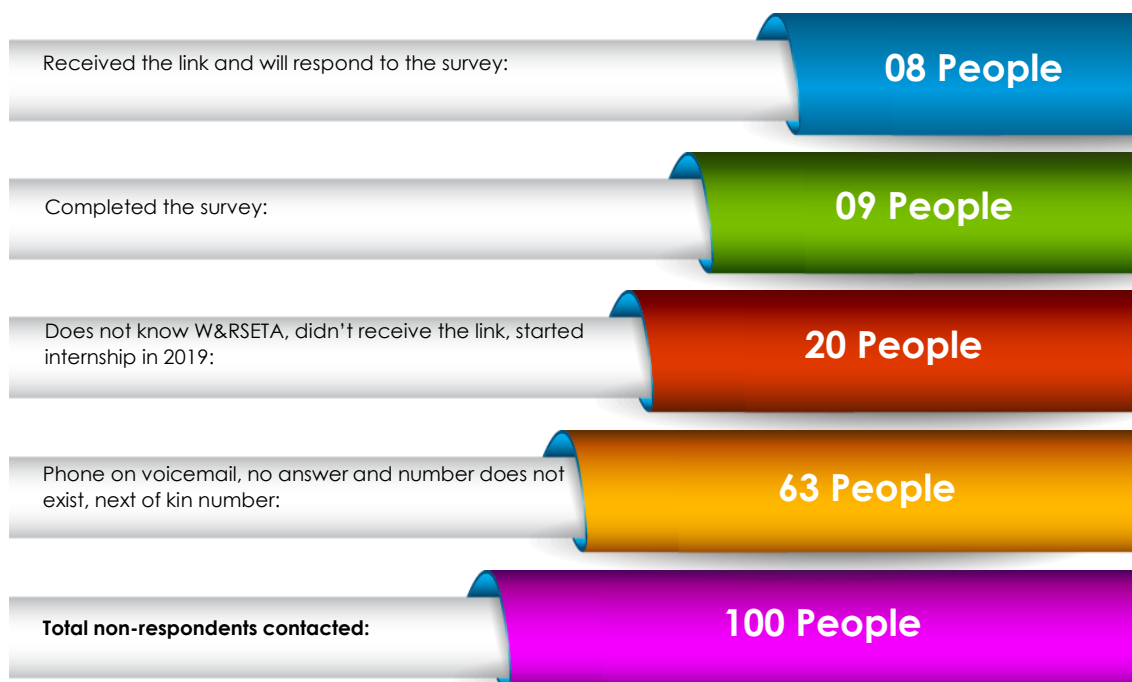
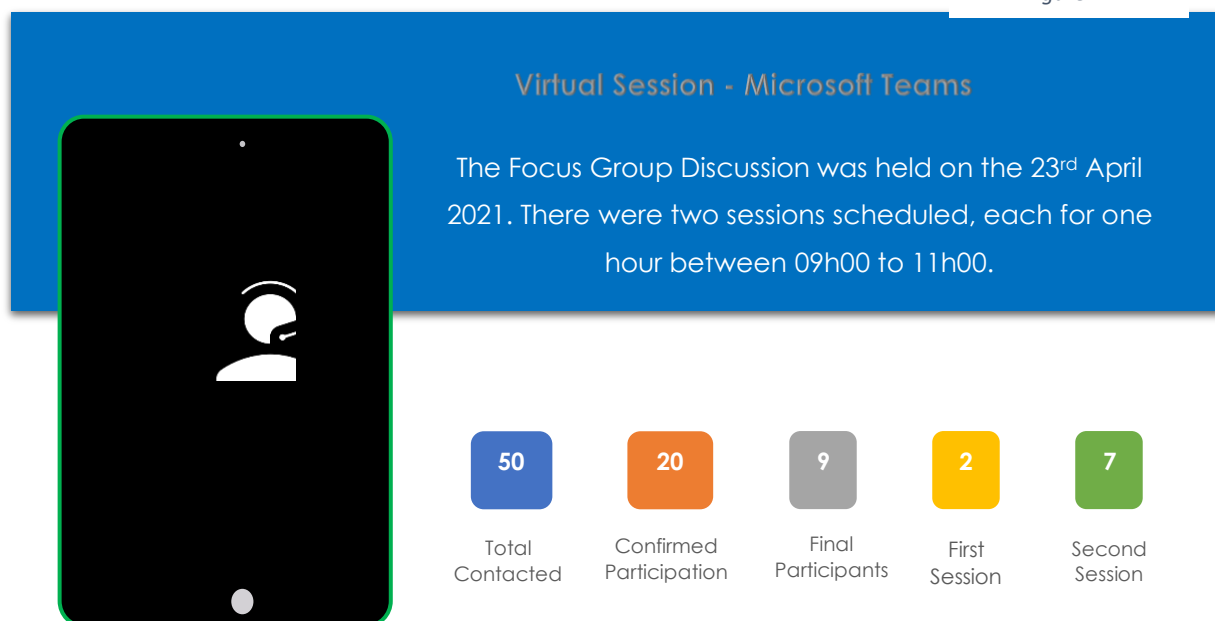


Figure 6

- **Focus Group Discussions:** The interns were randomly selected from all participants who completed the survey across all the nine South African provinces. For ethical consideration the participants were sent a consent form which elaborated on the purpose of the Focus Group Session and confidentiality (their personal details / identity will not be shared with any third party, including the W&RSETA).

Figure 7



## 10. FINDINGS

W&RSETA is rooted in the South African context with the mandate to facilitate skills training. W&RSETA is on its way to reach out their mandated outcome, but through this research, some challenges have to be faced and mitigated before this.

### a) Internship Benefits

- The benefits of the internship are felt or evident in a lot of interns' lives. On a personal level, the mere provision of knowledge and an experience is something that the interns verbalized to appreciate.
- It is something that they recognized could be made possible only by W&RSETA.
- Benefits on a social level are also evident as the interns are going into their societies and applying the skills that they have attained.
- One of the interns in the Focus Group Discussions stated how he has been able to use his internship skills to create CVs, business plan and project plans for people in his community so they could also advance themselves and the community.
- However, it is poignant to note that the same people who are headed into the societies and making these impacts, in most cases are unemployed and cannot easily advance themselves. This is an area where W&RSETA can look to invest in and also try to make a difference.

### b) Employment Status/Absorbed Interns

- 69% of the interns are employed on a full-time basis, 26% of these are employed on a part-time basis, and 5% are self-employed.
- The number of interns that have been absorbed by employers affiliated with W&RSETA is significantly high, but also strikingly almost equal to the number of the interns NOT absorbed. W&RSETA needs to engage the employers to get a quantitative evaluation of how many interns each one absorbed, did NOT absorb and the respective reasons for each of the above.
- 50% of the interns stayed at their original company/were absorbed by the original company.
- From the 50%, most of the interns did not stay out of their free will, 18% of these interns stayed because they could not secure another job.
- Intrinsically motivated reasons were the subsequent reason for staying, as interns stayed for personal development, career stability and job satisfaction respectively.

## 11. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- W&RSETA needs to invest in getting knowledge and research on the societal and socio-political impacts of the lives of the interns to make more impactful and relevant interventions. 97% of the interns are Black and 3% are Colored. The bulk of the interns stay in townships, using public transport to go to work.
- The funding W&RSETA provides needs to be suited for the people included in this category, in consideration of what their living conditions on the ground are. Some interns verbalize that the funding is appreciated, but falls short to cover the cost of living surrounded with the internship.
- W&RSETA needs to start investigating ways they can make the internships benefit interns after the internship. The impact and benefits of the internship are being felt at a community level, but are not being felt on an individual level as the interns are finding it hard to secure employment post-internship.
- The W&RSETA needs to put focus on ways that increase career and job satisfaction for the interns as most of the interns leave original companies for intrinsically motivated reasons, and elements affiliated with career growth. Only 8% of the interns have approached one company. This means the W&RSETA needs to give attention on strategies aimed at keeping interns in their original companies.



## MAIN REPORT

The results are structured in four categories and each highlighting the total number of interns who responded as follows:



Figure 8

**All the quantitative questionnaires were compulsory for the interns to respond and the qualitative responses were optional for the interns to answer.**

## 12. DEMOGRAPHICS PROFILE – Applicable to both employed and unemployed interns:

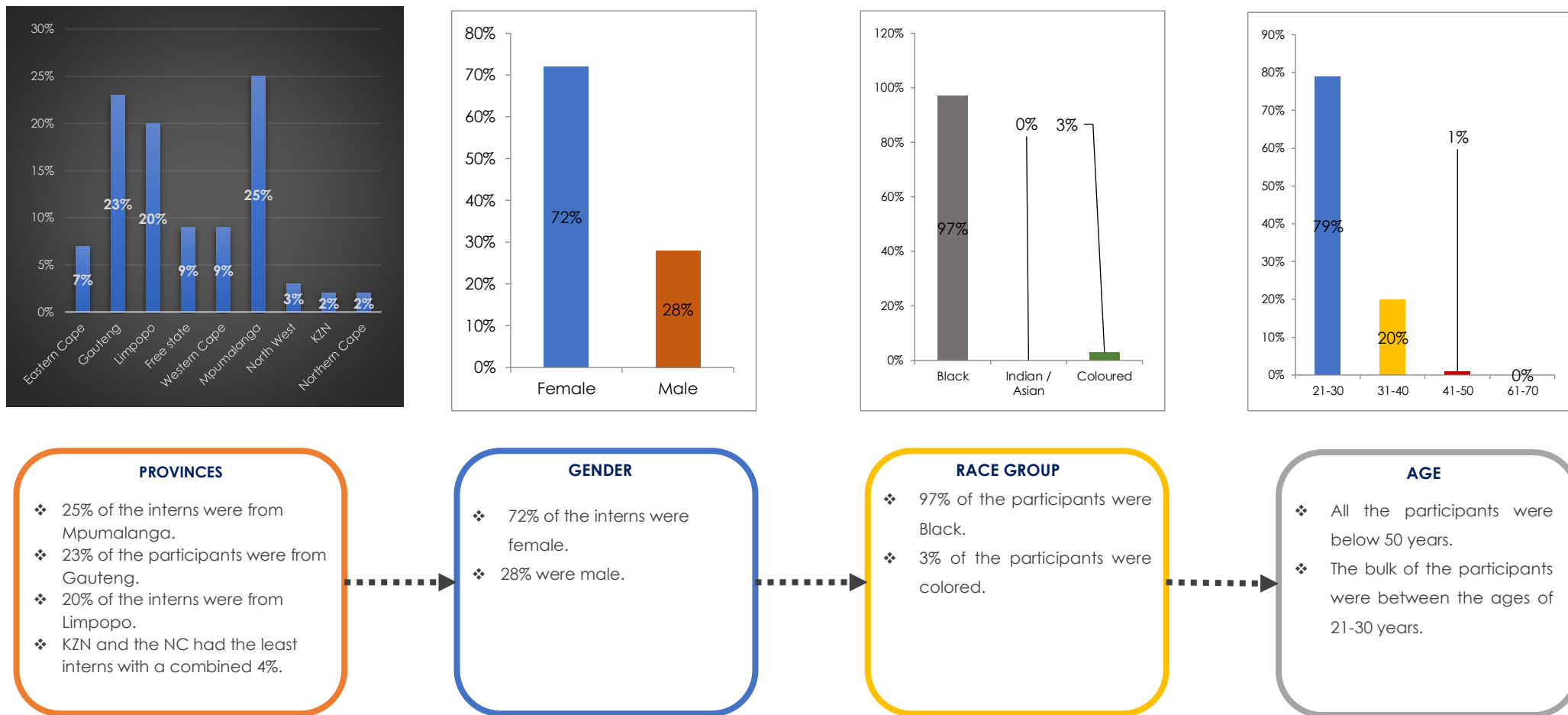
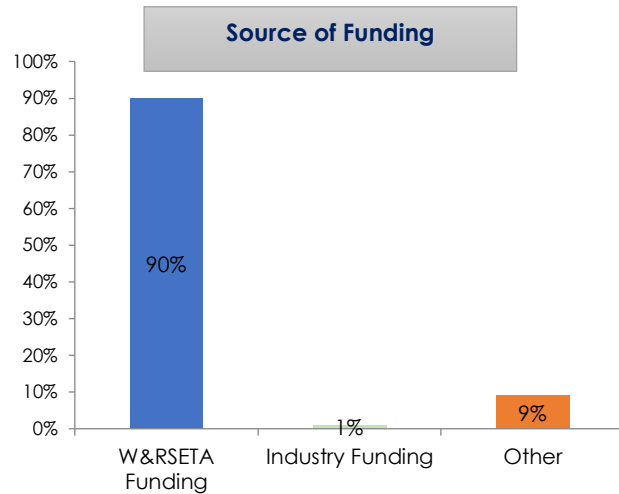
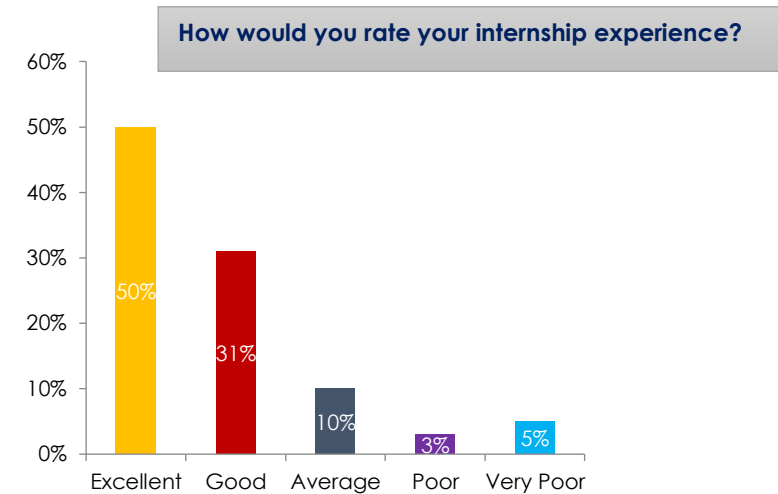


Figure 9

### 13. GENERAL QUESTIONNAIRES - Applicable to both employed and unemployed interns:



- ❖ W&RSETA catered for most of the funding for the interns, this funding served 90% of the participants.
- ❖ Industry funding catered for 1% of the funding while other sources were responsible for 9%.



- ❖ 81% of the interns found the internship to be useful, 50% of these rated their experience as totally positive.
- ❖ 8% of the interns had a negative experience in the internship.
- ❖ The trajectory for the internship experience for W&RSETA is positive with a 79% overall score.

Figure 10

Figure 11

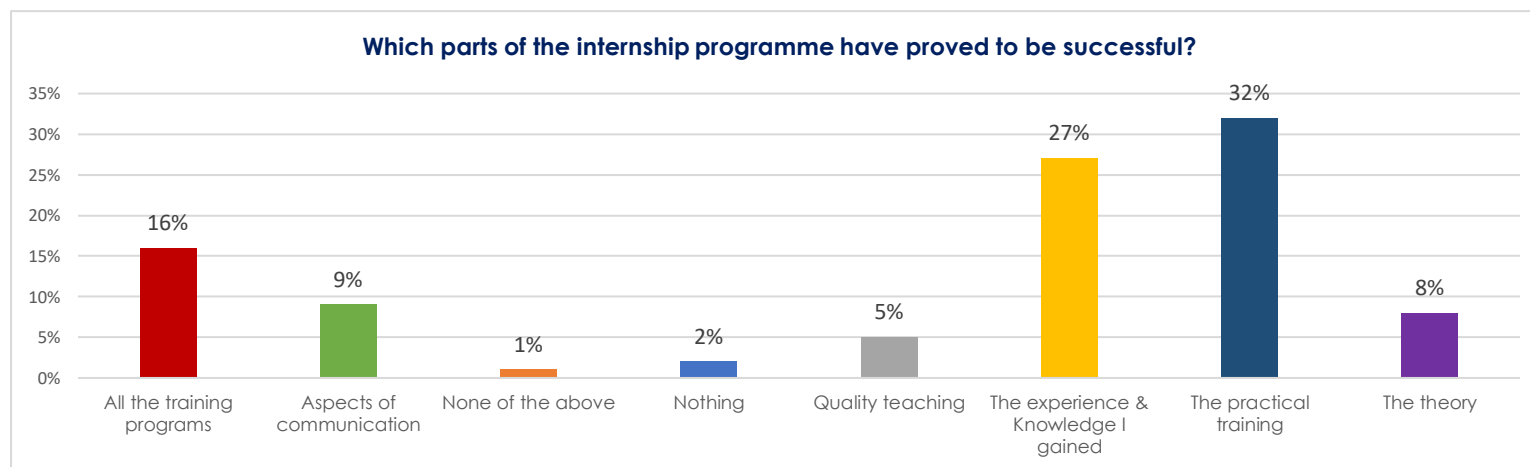
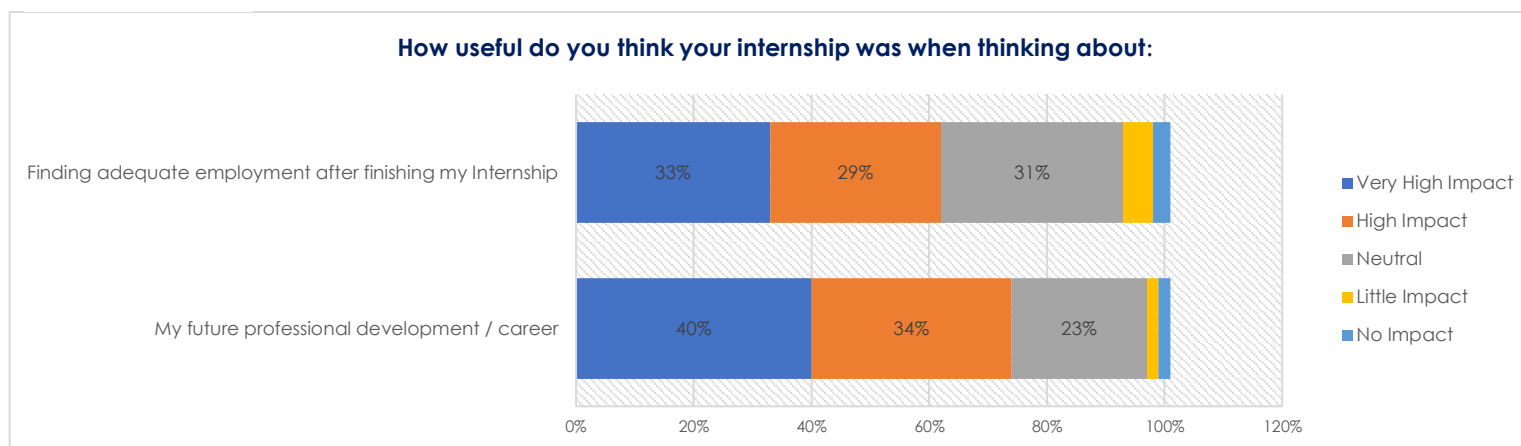


Figure 12

- The overall score for the usefulness of the internship is 74%. This score is highly reflective of the positive impact that the internship has had on interns.
- Combining this data with qualitative responses from Focus Group Discussions, we can further assert that, the internship has had a positive impact on interns even beyond W&RSETA. The knowledge acquired through the internship and during the internship is still useful in terms of career development and also finding and creating employment.
- 74% of the interns agree that the internship was useful for their future professional development and also their career. Only a combined 4% of the interns scored this statement negatively. This strongly affirms that that internship has a positive impact on the interns.
- 62% of the interns agree that they found adequate employment after the internship.
- 31% of the interns are not certain with regards to this dimension. The lack of certainty might be due to the fact that some interns did not find employment, or found employment that has not been adequate for them. Interns in the focus group discussions stated how some of them are employed, but not within the line they interned for, or unrelated trades.

## 14. COMPARISON QUESTIONNAIRES: Employed and Unemployed Interns

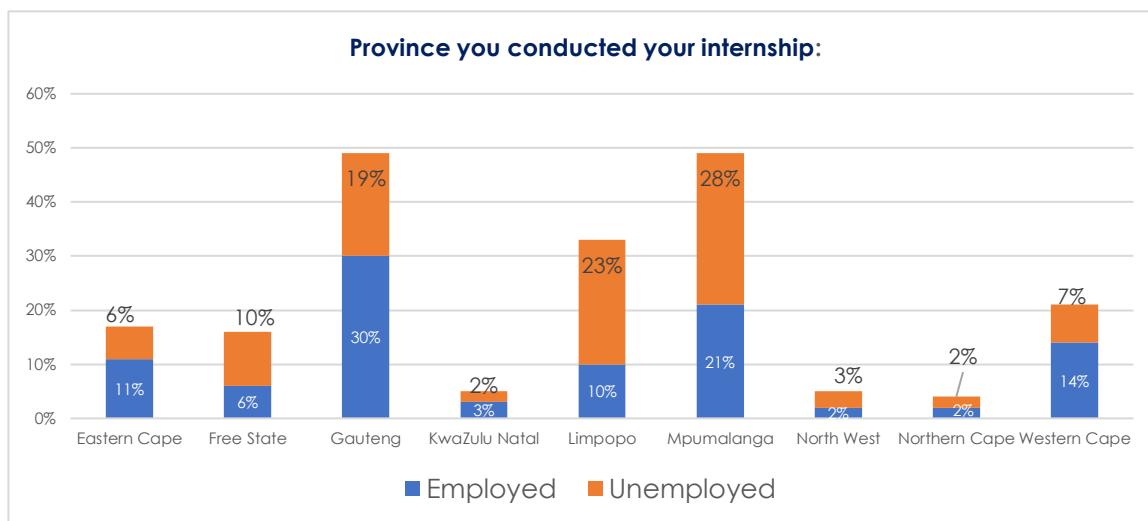


Figure 13

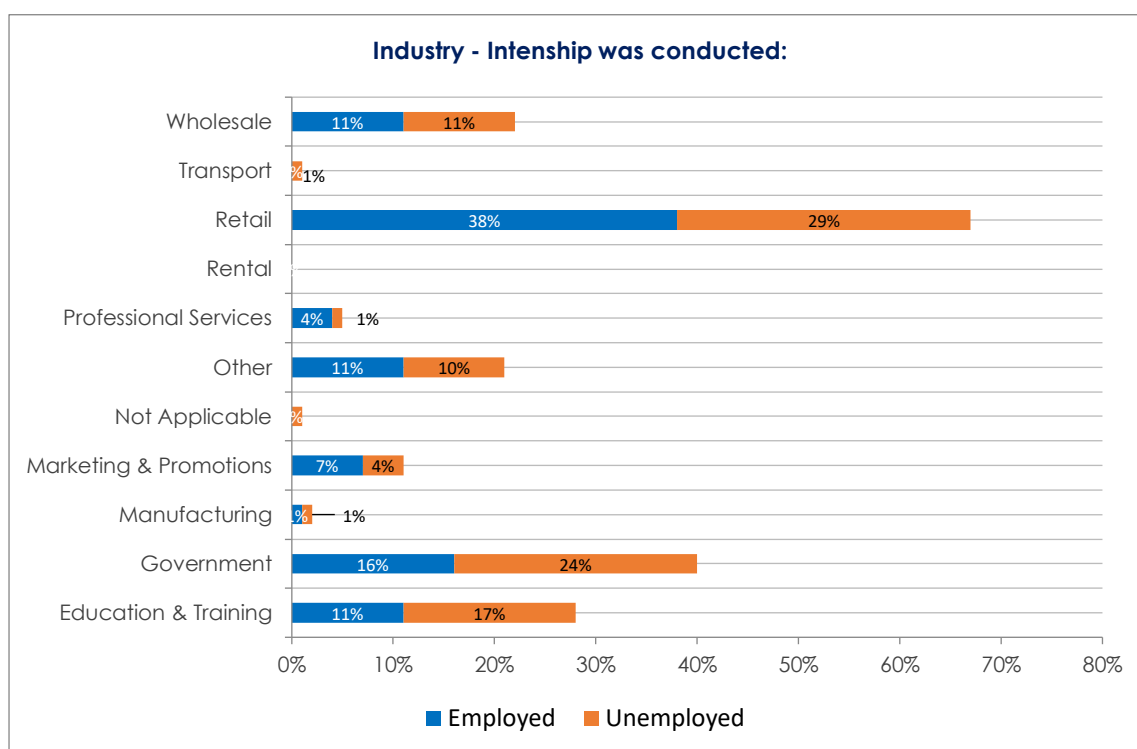
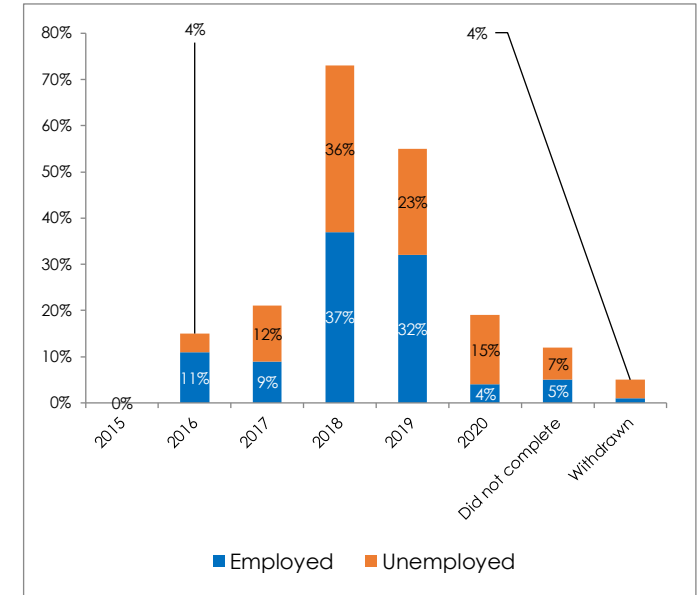
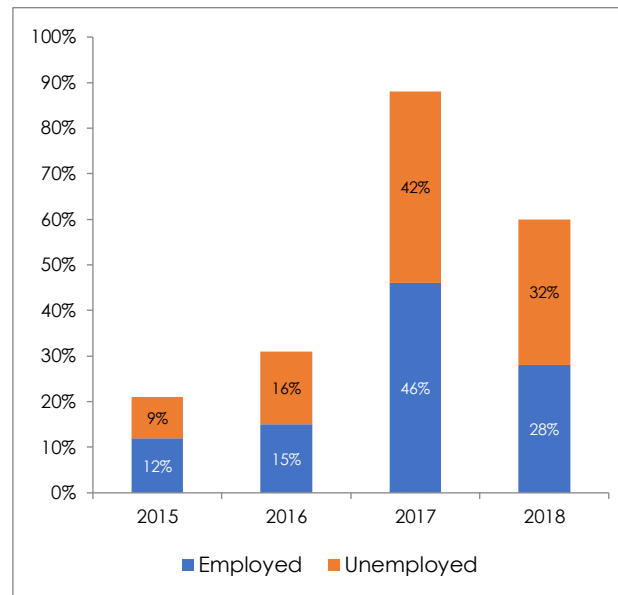
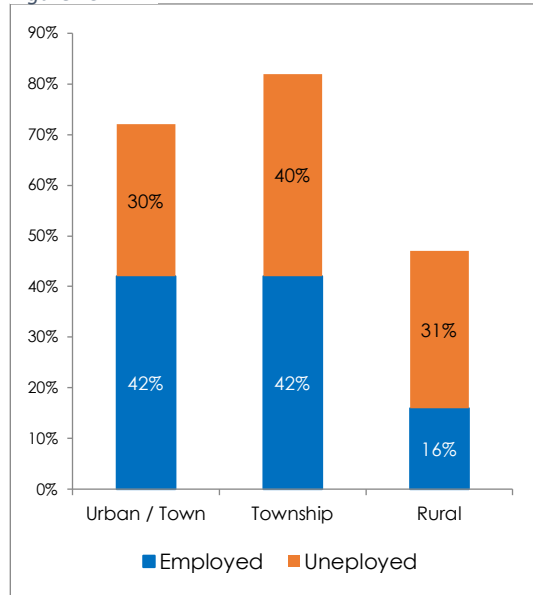


Figure 14

Figure 15



#### Area / Location you are staying:

- ❖ 82% of the interns combined are based in townships.
- ❖ Employed interns are evenly distributed in townships at urban/town with 42% of them in the respective dwellings.

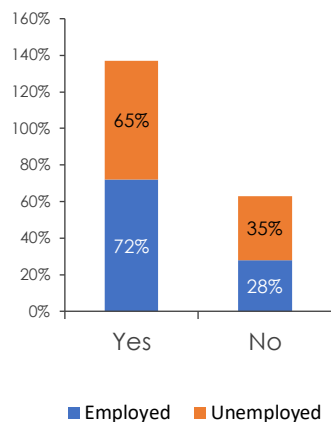
#### Start - Internship Program:

In 2017 saw the most interns starting their internships for both employed and unemployed interns.

#### Complete - Internship Program:

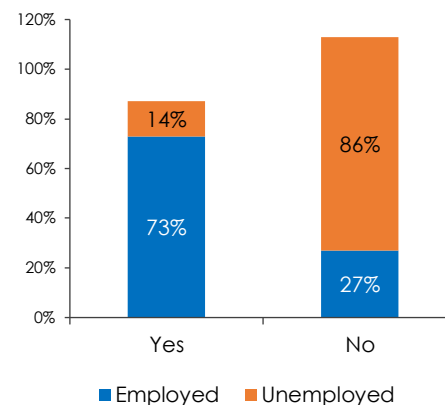
- ❖ Only 4% of the interns combined did not finish their internship.
- ❖ More employed interns completed than unemployed interns in 2016, 2018 and 2019.
- ❖ More unemployed interns completed in 2017 and 2020.
- ❖ More unemployed interns did not complete their internship.

Figure 16



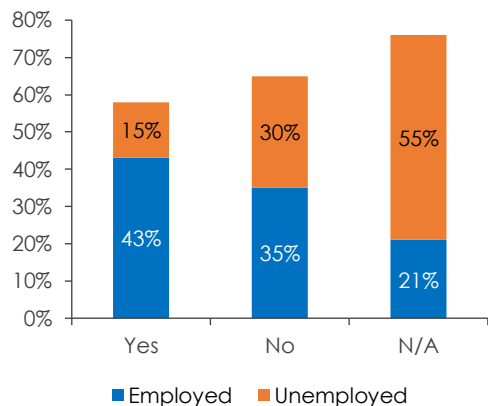
#### Obtaining the qualification for your internship:

72% employed interns obtained their qualification in comparison to 65% unemployed interns.



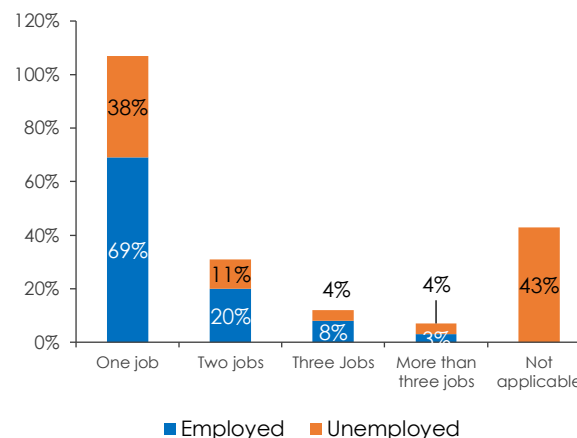
#### Securing a job after your internship:

73% of the employed interns managed to secure their job after the internship, in comparison, only 14% of the unemployed interns managed to secure a job.



#### Placement: Wholesale and Retail Sector:

43% of the employed interns were placed at W&RSETA, in comparison to only 15% for unemployed interns.



#### Number of jobs since completing internship:

- ❖ Most of the interns managed to stick to one job since they completed their internship.
- ❖ 69% for employed interns and 38% of unemployed interns respectively managed to stick to one job.
- ❖ This is the bulk of the actively employed population for both groups.



## 15. EMPLOYED INTERNS

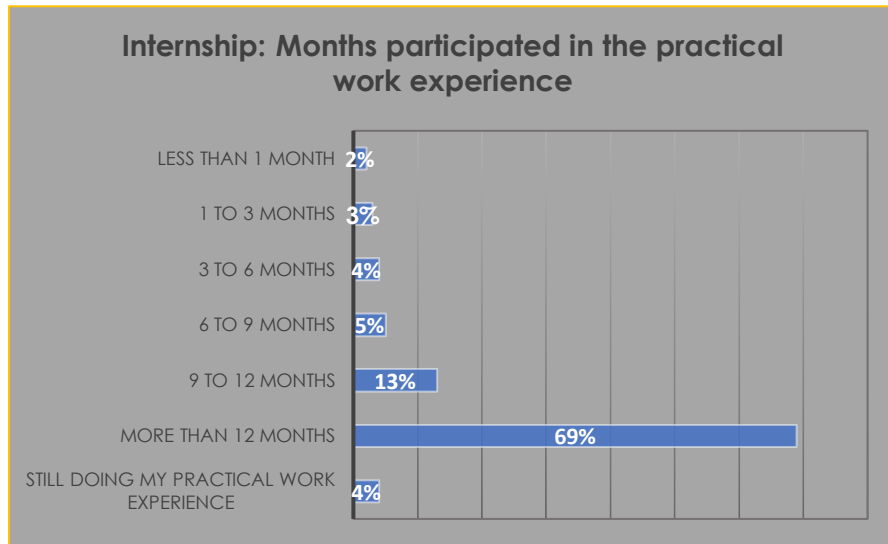


Figure 17

- ❖ Most of the interns (69%) spent more than 12 months in practical work experience, with only 2% of the interns spending less than 1 month.
- ❖ The average time seems to be clearly more than 12 months as the next dominant time is 9-12 months which is taken by only 13% of the interns.

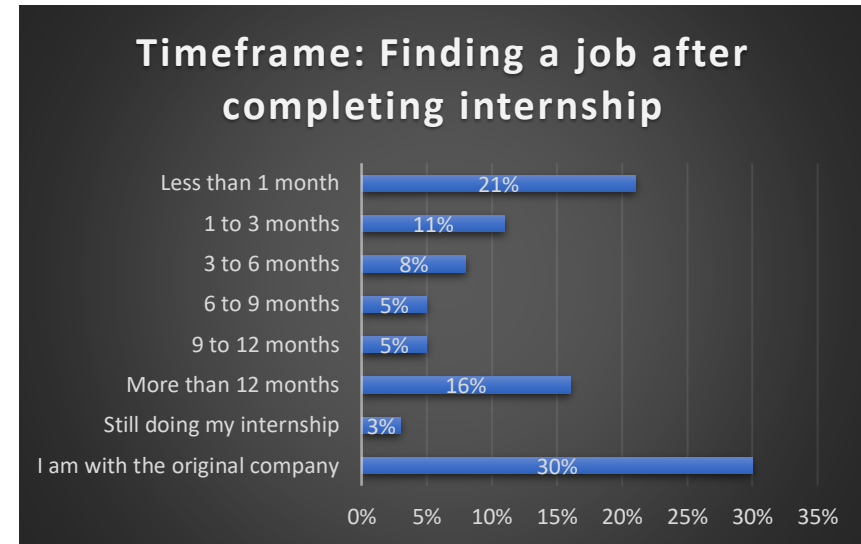


Figure 18

- 21% of the interns take less than one month to secure a job after the internship.
- Although the above number is positive, it is also juxtaposed with 16% of interns who take more than 12 months to secure a job.
- For about 40% of the interns though, it takes them less than 6 months to secure a job after the internship which is a higher number than the 26% who take more than 6 months.

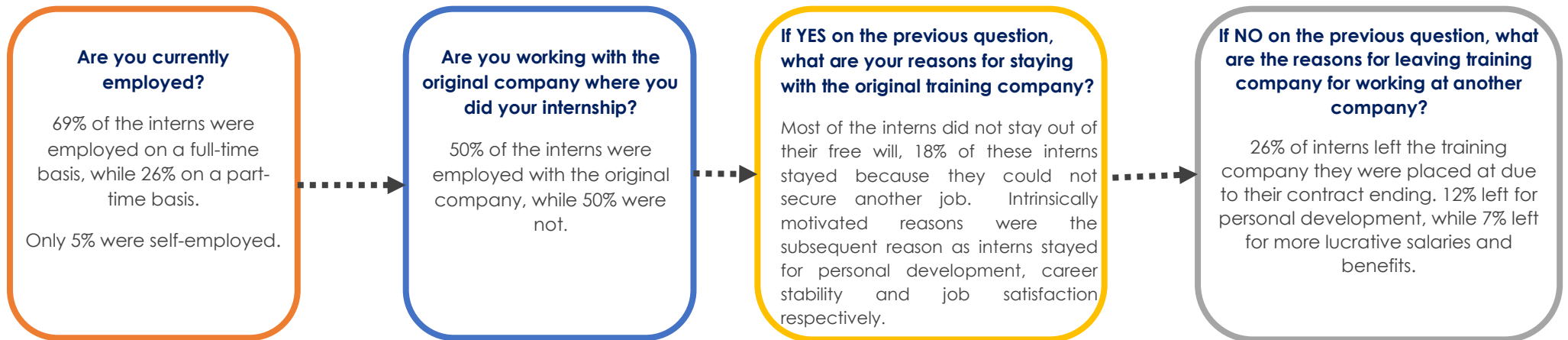
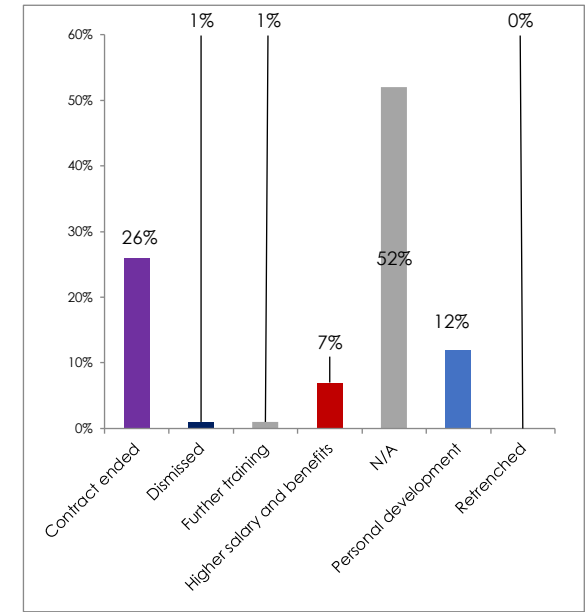
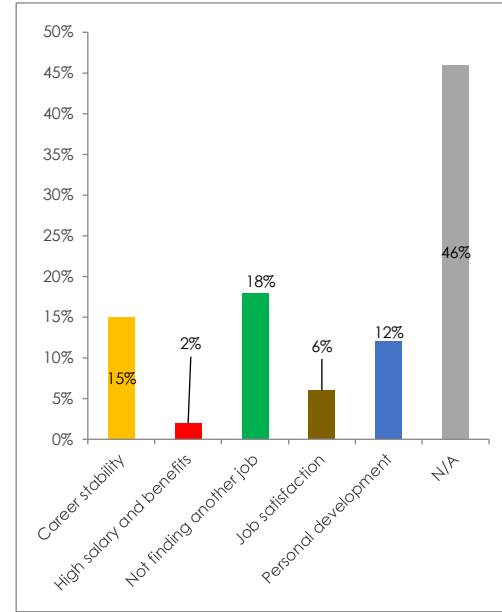
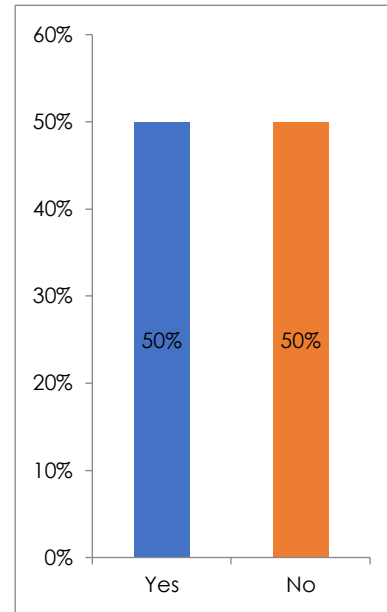
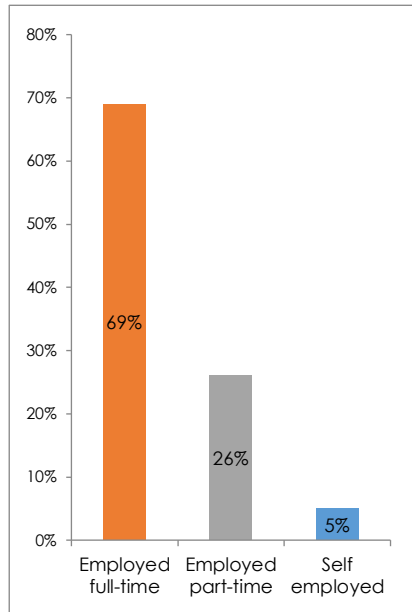


Figure 19

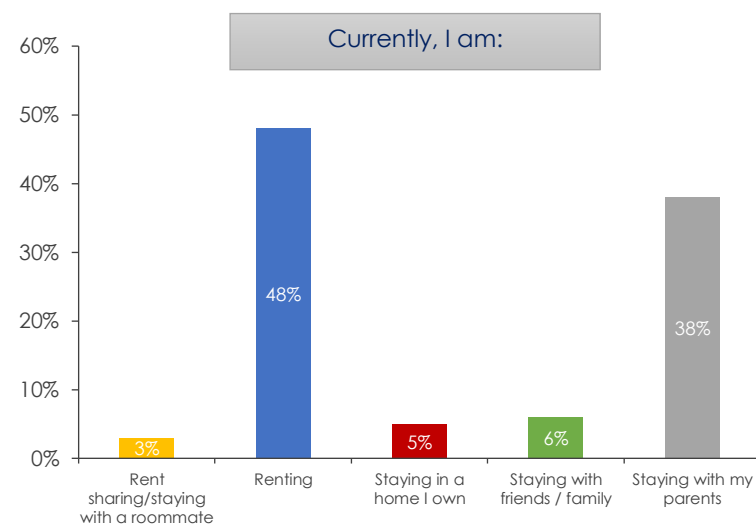
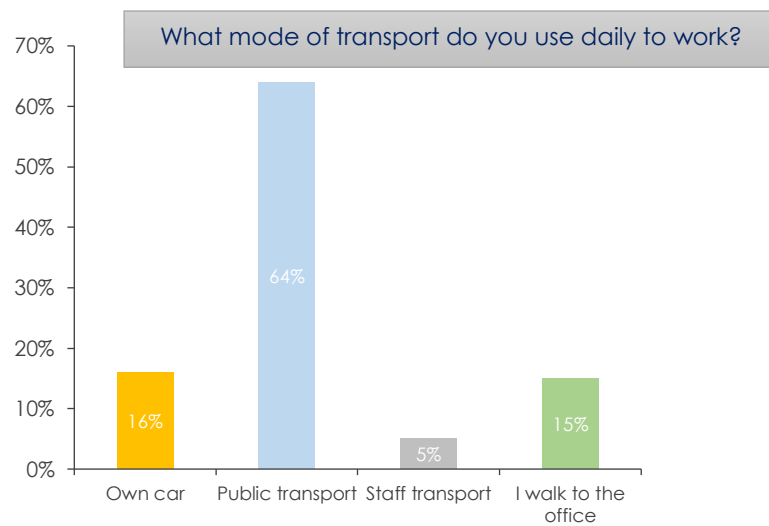
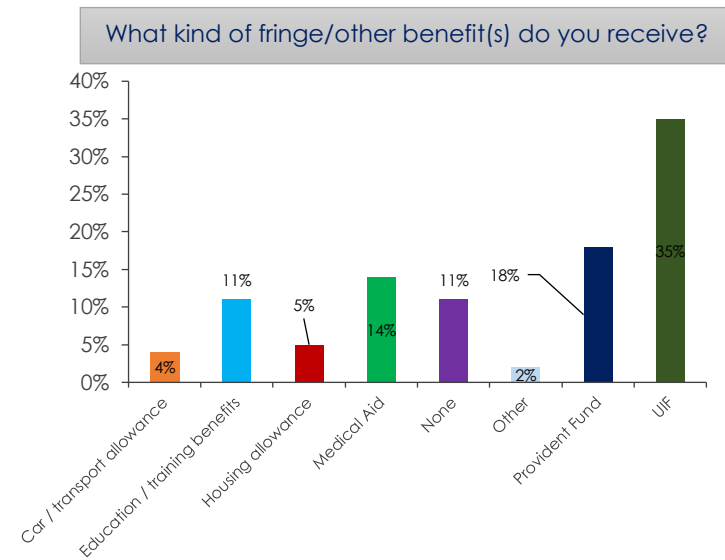
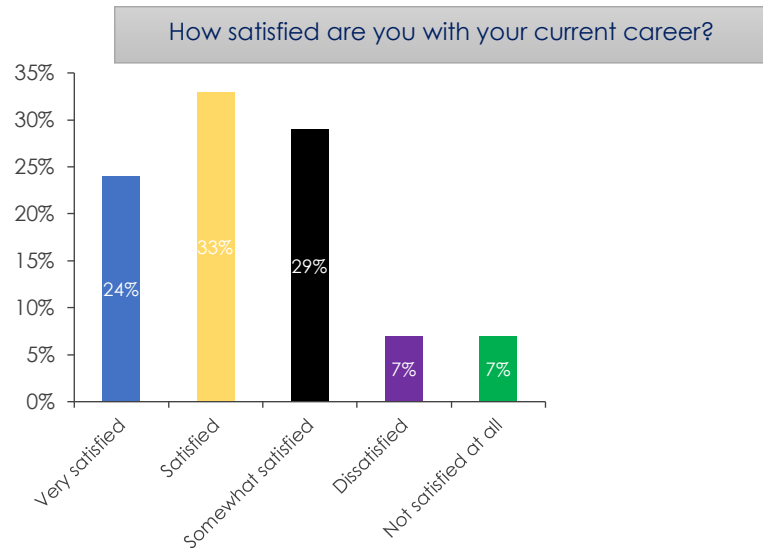


Figure 20

### 15.1. Currently, I am:

- 48% of the interns are renting while 38% are staying with their parents. An important aspect of these statistics is that they are directly related to the cost of living for interns.
- In the Focus Group Discussion, interns stated how they are dependent on the funding provided by W&RSETA solely for their survival.
- Those who are renting verbalized how they need more funding as they have to pay rent and also cater for their living.
- The bulk of interns are facing this predicament. If we combined all the interns who are renting, they form 51% of the interns and the policies and funding strategies of W&RSETA needs to be aligned with these.
- The group of interns renting also are likely to statistically fall into the group of interns who use public transport (65%), this is an extra expense that has been absorbed by the interns.
- It is also poignant to note that 15% of the interns actually walk to the office.
- It is imperative for W&RSETA to investigate if this is from lack of resources and transport or if they are located near the office.
- W&RSETA must further investigate how much the interns have to walk to get to the office to see if this is bearable within a full working day.
- W&RSETA must use these figures to develop strategies that are geared towards the bulk of the interns who are within these categories.

## 15.2. How satisfied are you with your current career?

- With an overall score of 65%, most of the interns are satisfied with their careers.
- 57% of the interns agree that they are satisfied with their careers.
- It is concerning to see that 29% of the interns are not sure if they are satisfied with their career.

This is indicative of interns being in the wrong career or just taking a path provided to them which eventually becomes counterproductive for the interns and the company.

- From the Focus Group Discussions, it is apparent that interns opt to choose certain career internships but the option is not availed to them, which W&RSETA might look into aligning to increase satisfaction.
- 14% of the interns are not satisfied with their careers. From this section, it is important that W&RSETA runs constant surveys and research with current interns in a bid to dip-stick into the career interns are in and if these are aligned with what they studied, and where they see themselves in their careers.
- These sessions can take the form of career building and guidance which is initiated before the internship, at the beginning, and during the internship. W&RSETA, might also look into creating internships which are specifically for careers chosen by interns and not assigning them to internships.

### 15.3. Is your family's economic well-being dependent on your employment?

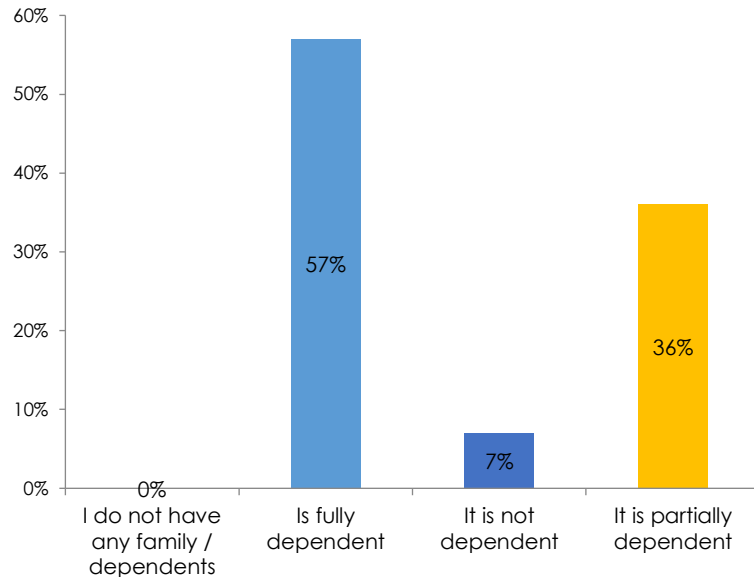


Figure 21

- ❖ Most of the interns have dependents in the form of family or other people that rely on them for survival.
- ❖ Only 7% of the interns do not have any dependents reliant on them for survival.
- ❖ 97% of the interns are Black interns, and 62% of the participants stay in the township.
- ❖ It is important for these figures to be viewed as one body as they allude to the social reality of this demography.
- ❖ Black tax is a reality in Black societies and also in townships specifically.

- ❖ W&RSETA is serving and working with this demography and have to be cognizant of how every aspect of the strategy implemented goes to socially affect this group.
- ❖ 93% of the interns are supporting other people in one form or the other so if this need is not met, this has a direct impact on their well-being which reflect on performance, lack of satisfaction from career and generally lowered fulfilment from the internship/career.
- ❖ One of the objectives of the survey is to determine the impact on the social benefits for interns, the area of Black and Coloured social rootedness and socio-political challenges should form part of the resolve of W&RSETA.
- ❖ Currently, it is hard to determine this impact apart from providing a base of knowledge which is empowering for the interns, but not in a specific way.

#### 15.4. What is your gross monthly salary?

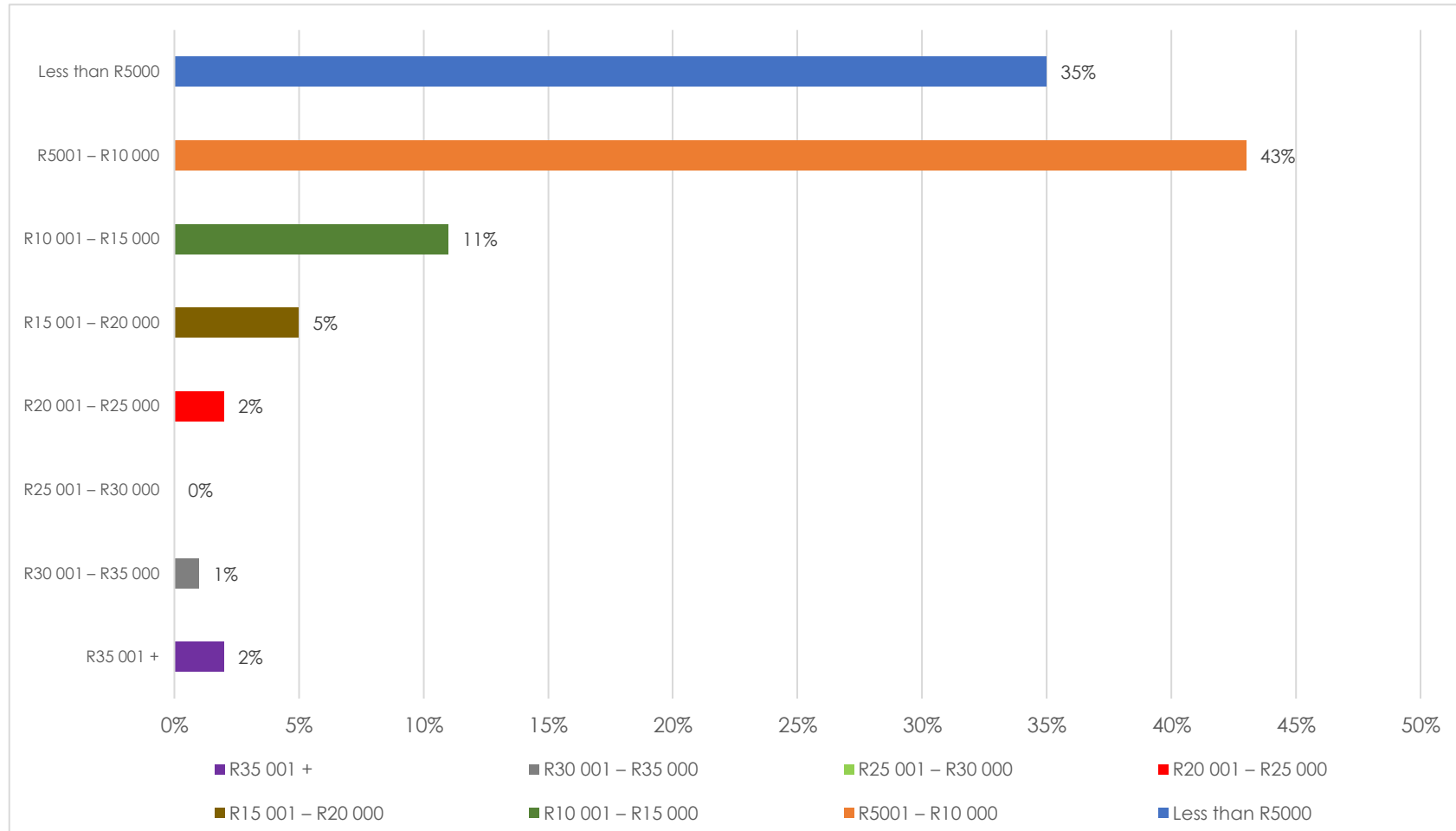


Figure 22

- ✓ 78% of the participants earn a salary that is R10 000 or less. This encompasses interns in the 97% bracket of interns whose salaries are supporting other people. This automatically makes them providers of 2 more people.
- ✓ Although the bulk of the interns fall within the top 1% of the most earning South Africans (Visagie, 2013), this has to be contextualized with the rampant inequality in the South African context and also the number of people supported per household.
- ✓ The statistics are heavily skewed to and based on one person households. However, the data collected from the research starkly show that the interns are predominately from Black households, and the average number of people per household is 4 people (February, 2016).
- ✓ The results also show that the interns are supporting other people and their salary is used for this. This provides further evidence that the households for the interns have more people, and potentially others external to the households.
- ✓ In this regard, the earnings of the interns which is mostly R10 000 or below sections them into the lower class or at best squeezes them into the lower middle class when expenses are considered.
- ✓ The UCT Liberty Institute categorises the number of adults in the country according to the monthly income of the household they live in. The categories are the following: Ultra poor (Household income less than R3 500), Survivors (R3 500 to R8 000), Skilled strugglers (R8 000 to R22 000), Lower middle class (R22 000 to R40 000), Upper-middle class (R40 000 to R75 000) and Top end (R75 000 and more) (van Heerden, p. 1), this evidence further classifies most of the interns under skilled strugglers.



## 16 UNEMPLOYED INTERNS

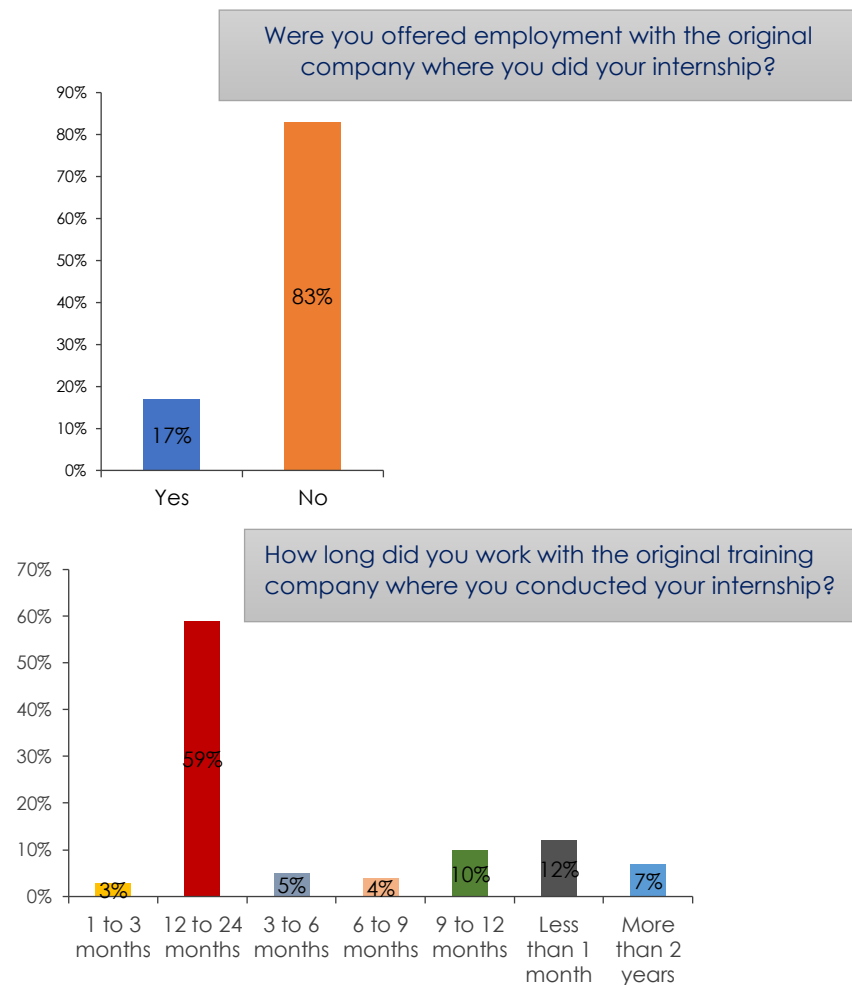
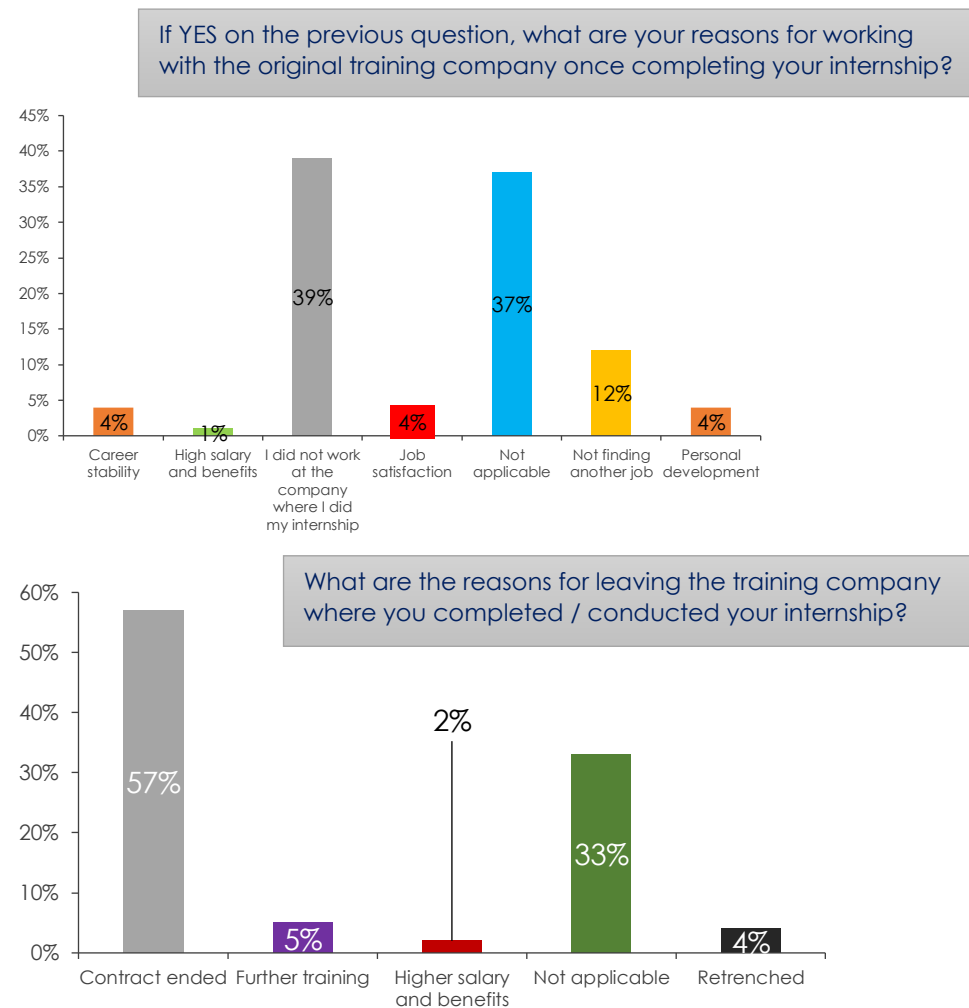


Figure 23



**16.1. Were you offered employment with the original company where you did your internship?**

- ❖ 83% of the interns were not able to secure employment with their original company.
- ❖ Only 17% of the interns were able to secure employment.

**16.2. If YES on the previous question, what are your reasons for working with the original training company once completing your internship?**

- ❖ 24% of the interns responded to the question.
- ❖ 50% of the participants stay with the original company on the basis that they were not able to find a job.
- ❖ Intrinsic motivation and job security account for 48% of the reason's interns stay with the current company.
- ❖ Career stability seems to be very important for interns as they contemplate a potential job change, This accounts of the larger portion of intrinsically motivated stays at original companies.

**16.3. What are the reasons for leaving the training company where you completed/conducted your internship?**

- ❖ 85% of the interns left the training company as a result of the contract ending.
- ❖ Combined with the 5% who were retrenched, 90% of the interns left when they did not opt to leave.
- ❖ 10% of the interns left out of their own will, the dominant reason for this was to further their training. This could be a signal for the area of gap that the W&RSETA internship has.
- ❖ Only 3% left as a result of a higher salary, which, as reflected in the previous question does not seem to be a major factor in leaving or staying.

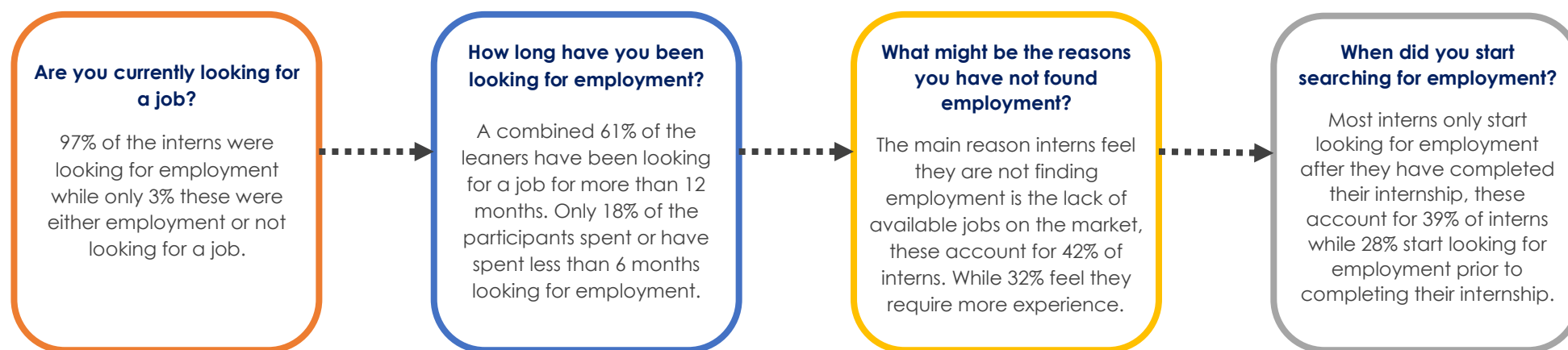
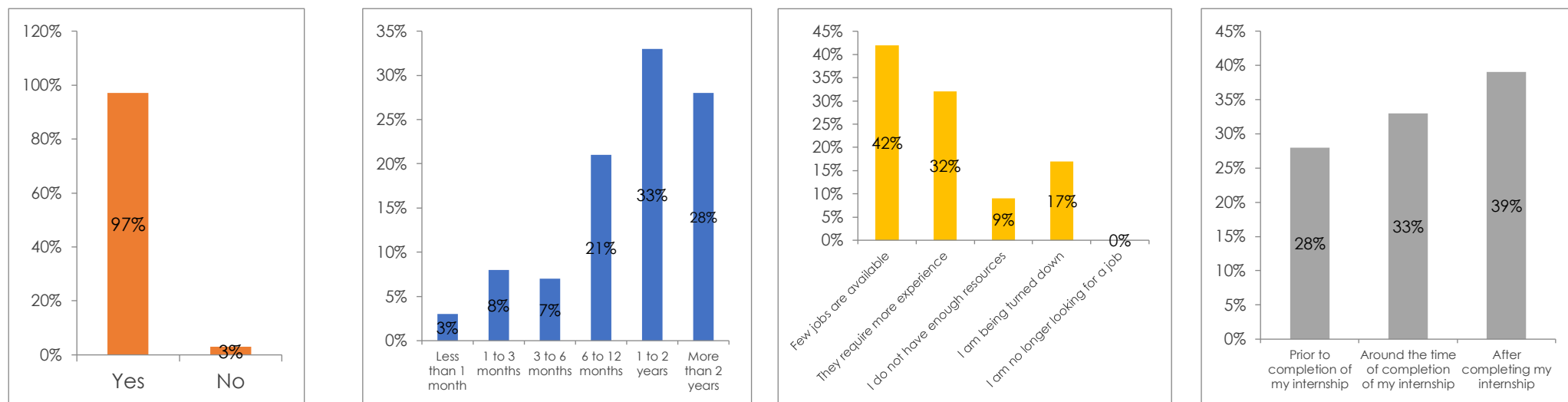
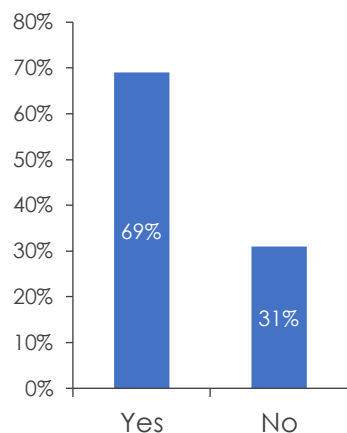
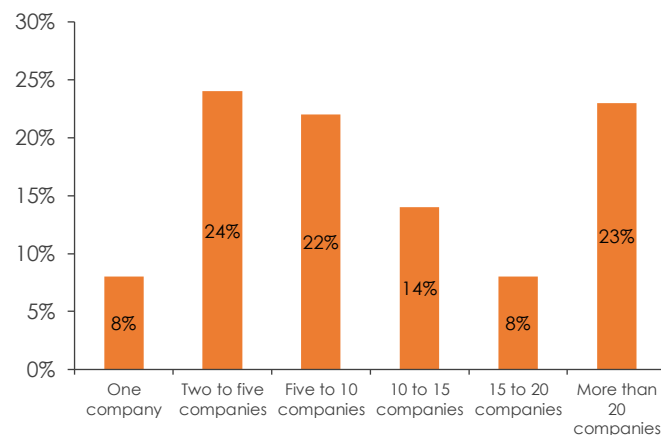


Figure 24



#### Have you ever considered self-employment?

69% of the interns have considered self-employment, while 31% have not considered self-employment.



#### How many companies have you approached for employment?

Most of the learners are actively in the hunt for new employment.

About 45% of the interns have approached more than 10 companies for a new job.

Only 8% of the interns have only approached one company. This means the W&RSETA needs to give attention on strategies aimed at keeping interns in their original companies.

#### How many companies invited you for an interview?

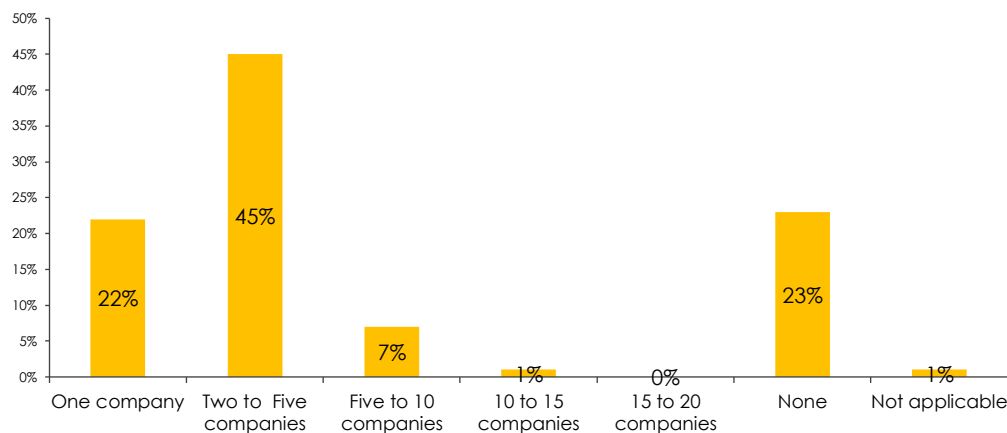


Figure 25

## 17. PLACEMENTS EXTERNAL TO W&RSETA



NB: The sizes of the words are proportionate to number of mentions.

Figure 26

- Most of the interns are still unemployed after they complete their internships (30%).
- From those who are employed, and external to W&RSETA, they occupy the Department of Health (13%).
- 13% of those who are not in W&RSETA are employed within the retail space (13%).

## 18. WHAT KIND OF SUPPORT WILL YOU LIKE W&RSETA TO PROVIDE YOU WITH TO FIND EMPLOYMENT?

### THE RESPONSES ARE IN VERBATIM

#### 18.1. LIKES ABOUT THE INTERNSHIP

##### 18.1.1.SATISFIED

- Absolutely satisfactory
- All in all the internship was a great experience . But the treatment you'd get from some permanent employees is sickening,some feel as though interns are there to replace them but Im happy that the Tr.
- Everything about the program was perfect.
- Everything and the was nothing that I disliked
- Everything it was good
- Everything was perfect
- Everything went well

##### 18.1.2.GAINING KNOWLEDGE

- Acquiring working skills
- Adapting knowledge
- because I'm gainng knowledge
- Being trained on the Job by people with years of experience

##### 18.1.3.PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

- Being able to perform tasks that I was given that was best feeling and I like the fact that duties was deleted to me over and over so I didn't have to get bored during working hours
- Being exposed to switchboard
- Being trained at store was good but some of the managers were not good they would ill treat us. Staff compliments were good and I learned from them
- Did provide what my practical experience needed
- Experiencing the real workplace
- Gaining experience /always putting a blame if something is wrong

## 18.2. DISLIKES ABOUT THE INTERNSHIP

### 18.2.1. STIPEND DELAYS

- Delays of the stipend was something i dnt like
- Earning our stipends a little bit late
- I did not like late stipend
- I did not like the delays in payments
- What I didn't like is that we didn't get paid on time sometimes we would not get paid for two to three months

### 18.2.2. CONTRACT ENDING

- Didn't like when Contract came to an end
- Didn't like when Contract came to an end
- Duration of internship was shot I would have liked it to be 2 years
- During Internship everything was great. Was just bored when the Contract came to an end

### 18.2.3. WORK ENVIRONMENT:

- Didn't like my work place the environment was very toxic, racism and discrimination.
- Work overload
- Work place placement
- Working hours. Working on the weekend
- Working overtime
- WRSETA did not take us serious as a result we did not even complete the 18 month period so hi could we get the letters of experience?
- You get the idea of work environment before you sign any obligations with them

## 18.3. PREFERRED SUPPORT

- Vacancies:
- Advertise more jobs
- Alert me for job opportunities
- Alert me when there are posts that I can apply for
- Alerting me of applicable vacancies and refering me to the companies that might need my skills.
- Alerting me when opportunity arises for employment.
- Alet when there's a job vacancies
- By advertising my cv

- By emailing me available post
- By finding me something that's related to what i have studied, because while i was busy with my internship i didn't get the right placement and for that i didn't get my Business management Diploma cau
- By giving me funds to start my business or guving me internship
- By helping me find a job since i was doing a human resources management. I will be so very much grateful if i can get an employment. I believe that with this Seta anything is possible.
- By helping me to find job
- By informing me of other opportunities
- By offering a job
- Employ me

#### **18.4. SUPPORT**

- Any kind of support would be appreciated even if it is sharing of job opportunities
- Any support
- Any support or any help i can get would be greatly appreciated
- Any support will be appreciated
- Any type
- Any type of job that will suit my qualifications... I have obtained National N Diploma in Business Management with 4 years working experience.
- Financial support
- Financial support to start up my own business

#### **18.5. FUNDING**

- Bursary / Funding/Start Capital.
- Data and travel fees
- Data or airtime to help search for jobs online
- Finances
- Financial & psychological support
- Fund me
- Fund me in order to further my studies in finance
- Fund my small business of sewing clothes
- Fund us to start our own businesses since companies are not hiring anymore OR atleast help us secure interviews



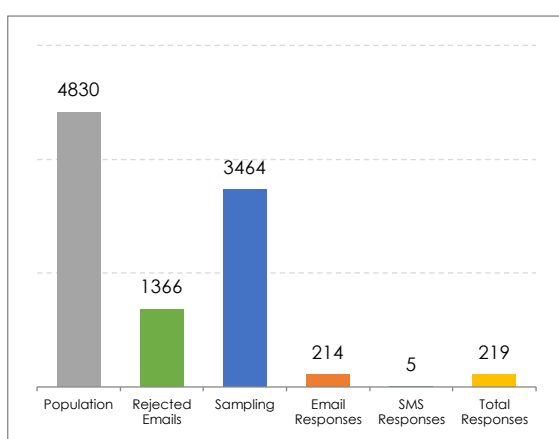
# Section C:

## Employers

## 19. EMPLOYERS RESPONSE RATE

- **Online Survey:** The multi-pronged approach we used ensured that the stakeholders, who might struggle with network or access to completion tools, will also have the option to receive and access the survey on their mobile phone, of which majority of the stakeholders we did not have access to their mobile numbers.

Figure 27



The overall response rate for the 2015 – 2018 Workplace Based Learning: Tracer study – Internship is:

**6.3%**

### Total Population

Refers to the overall employers we have sent the survey to.

### Rejected Email

Refers to the emails that were rejected after multiple attempts due to various reasons.

### Email Link Responses

Refers to the stakeholders who responded to the survey via email.

### Sampling

Refers to the overall employers who received or the survey was sent to.

### SMS Link Responses

Refers to the employers who only received the survey via SMS and responded.

### Total Responses

Refers to the total number of employers who responded to the survey.

- The first round of the survey yielded a 3% response rate. The survey was reopened, with the link being distributed internally by W&RSETA to elicit more responses. The response rate after this doubled to 6.3%.
- The non-respondents were sent reminders bi-monthly / once every two weeks for the duration of the project, and the response rate was low.
- We further employed a marketing and awareness campaign with the assistance of the Wholesale and Retail SETA regional managers in all the nine South African provinces, and this also seemed to have failed to increase the response rate.
- One of the contributing factors to the low response rate is our assumption that the database included not only employers but also other service providers who have a strategic working relationship with the W&RSETA, and they did not see it fit to respond as the questionnaires were specifically designed for the employers.

## 20. FINDINGS

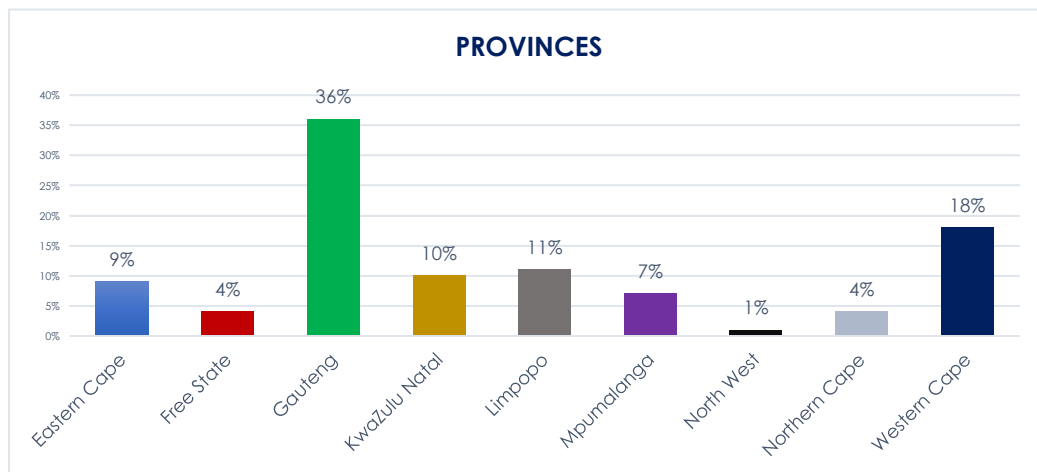
- W&RSETA employee participation is heavily skewed to the Gauteng and Western Cape, demographics possessing 54% of the total participation.
- 66% of the employees have been working with W&RSETA for more than 3 years, with 47% of these, having been working with W&RSETA for more than 5 years.
- 30% of the employers have worked with more than 15 interns from W&RSETA, while 22% have worked with no interns from W&RSETA.
- Number of interns that have been absorbed by employees is significantly high, but also strikingly almost equal to the number of the interns NOT absorbed. W&RSETA needs to engage the employers to get a quantitative evaluation of how many interns each one absorbed, did NOT absorb and the respective reasons for each of the above.
- Overall, employers are satisfied with the performance of the interns from the W&RSETA, at close inspection though, it is evident that there is a lot of challenges that the W&RSETA has to attend to in order for them to increase the quality of the performance and also to be able to maintain trust from employers.
- Within the workplace, the interns from W&RSETA seem to be competent and possessing an understanding of the workplace.
- Putting all the results together, the dominant assertion is that the interns are slightly above average at best, and can execute the tasks assigned to them at a standard rating and not exceptional. This might provide a plausible explanation for why the interns do not stay with the employers for a long time.

## 21. RECOMMANDATIONS

- We highly recommend that W&RSETA define the period between the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 6<sup>th</sup> month of the internship as a critical dropout period. 29% of the total interns are lost or leave companies within this period. This figure is statistically high and signifies required attention and investigation in terms of reasons for leaving, challenges during this period, company and intern match, among other variables.
- Engage the 22% companies to see if they can work with the interns. W&RSETA have companies that they are engaged with but have not received any interns from them, this is a potential gap for W&RSETA.
- Investigate and understand internship withdrawals, a combined 53% of the companies have experienced withdrawals of interns at some stage, W&RSETA needs to engage the employers to understand this churn while also engaging the interns.
- W&RSETA can benefit the interns with more specific and polished trainings, as they might be surpassed by other interns or trained professionals who would be giving a better impression and above average participation.

## 22. GRAPHS: STUDY RESULTS/ANSWERS

Figure 28



- ⇒ Gauteng had the most participations and accounted for 36% of the participants.
- ⇒ 18% of the participants were from the Western Cape.
- ⇒ 54% of the participants in this regard were from the Western Cape and Gauteng.
- ⇒ The North West Province and the Free State Province both have the least participation, with a combined 5%.

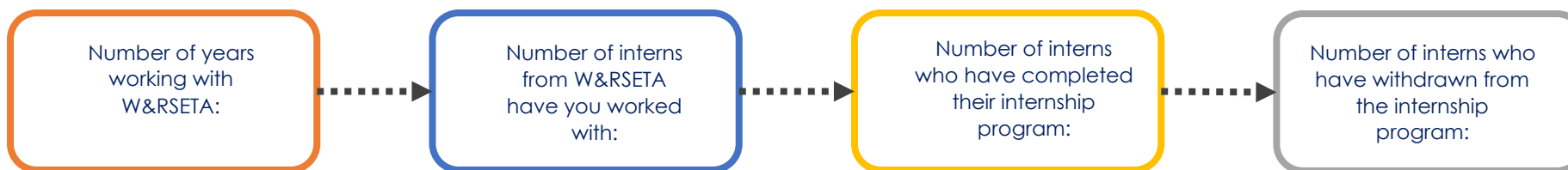
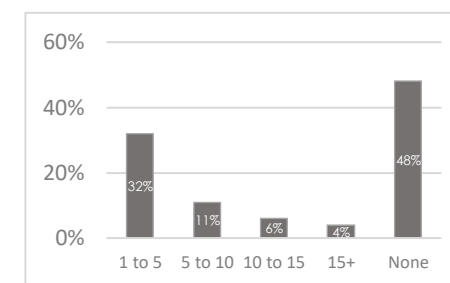
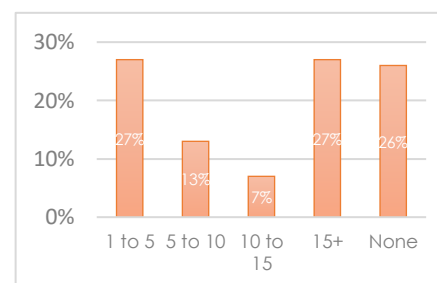
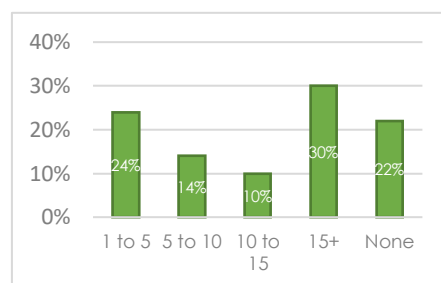
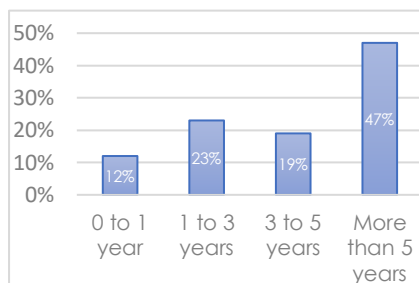


Figure 29

Figure 30

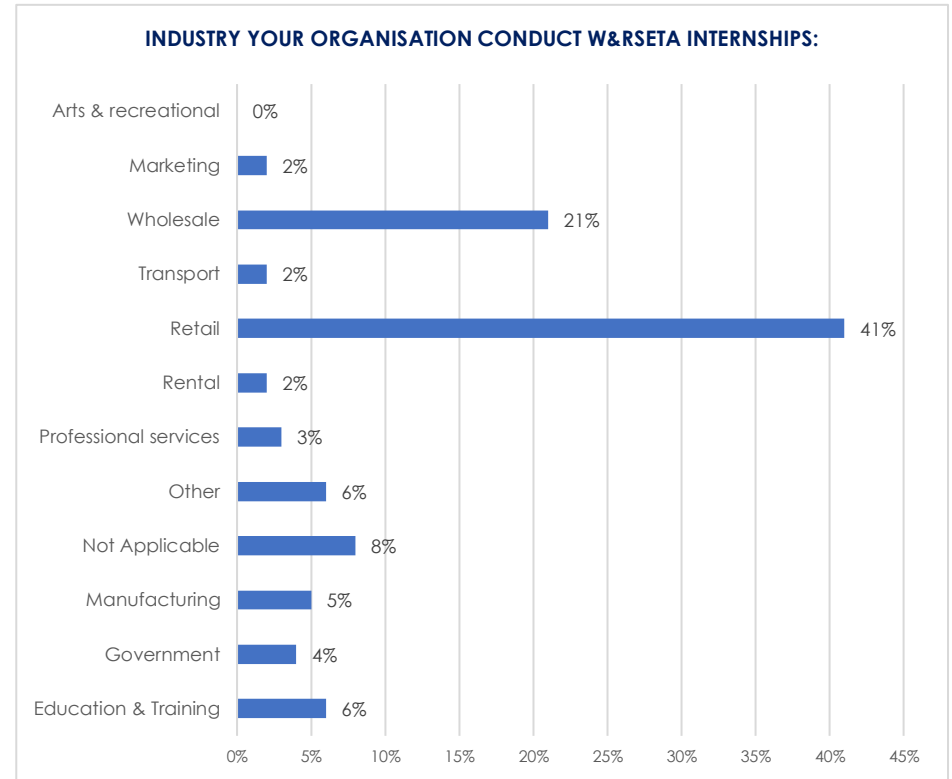
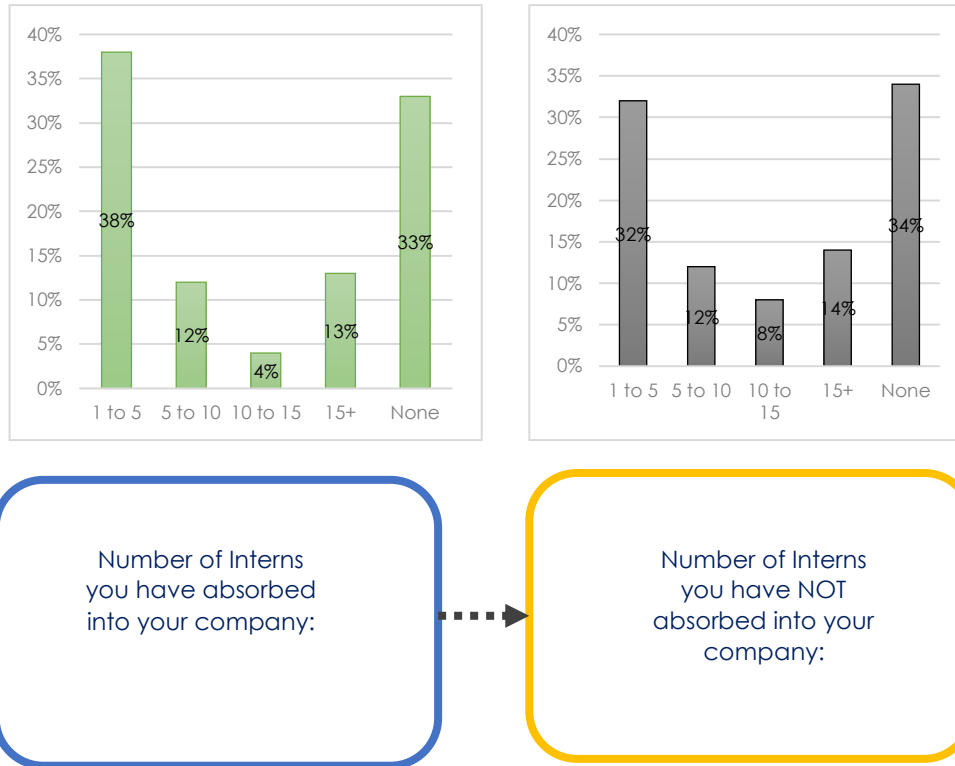


Figure 31

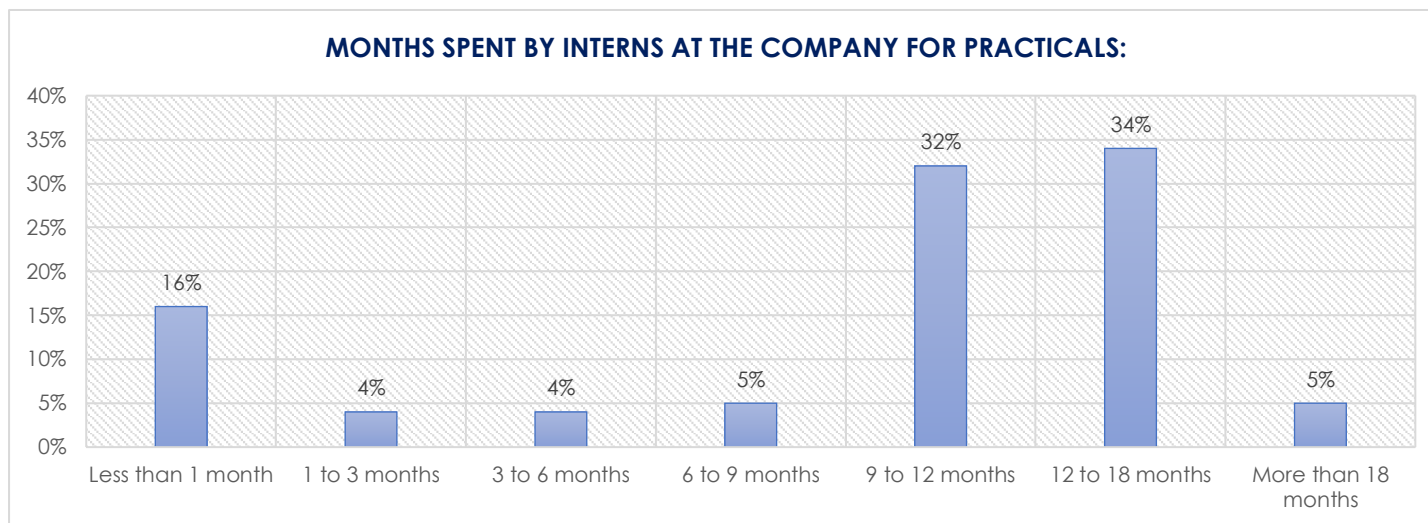


Figure 32

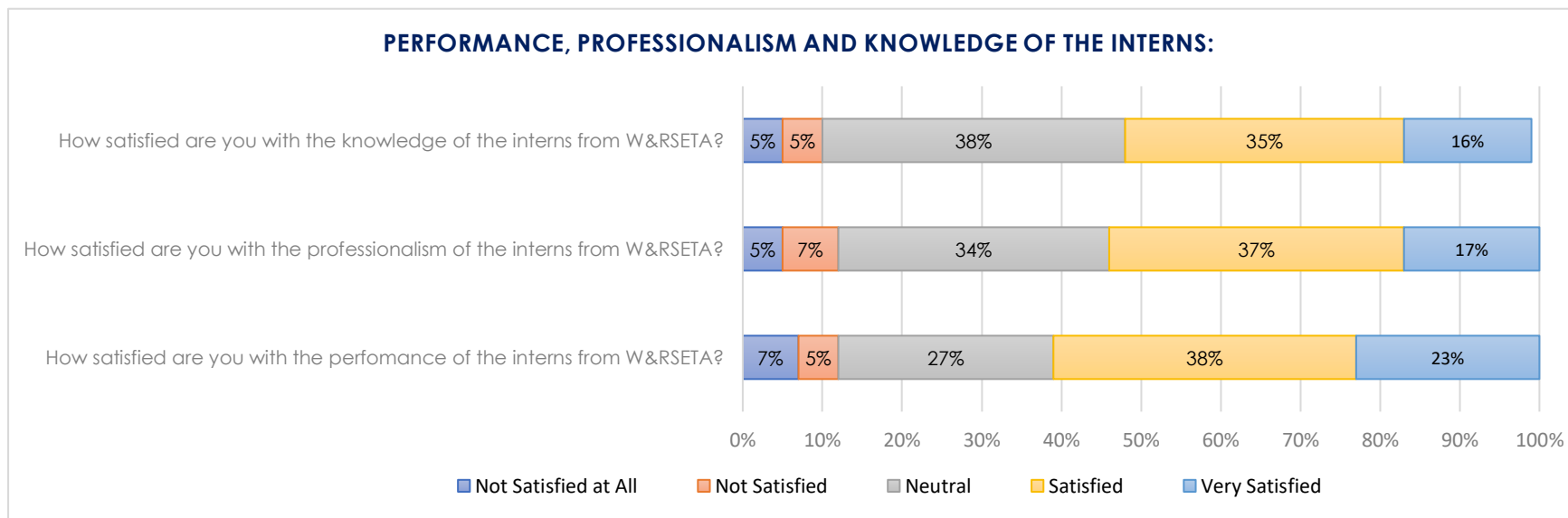


Figure 33

## 23. SECTION ANALYSIS

### 23.1. NUMBER OF MONTHS THE INTERNS WORKED AT YOUR COMPANY FOR THEIR PRACTICAL'S

- 16% of the participants stayed at the respective companies for less than a year for their practicals. Employers seems to signify that 48% of the interns did not withdraw from their internship, and this is slightly in contrast to this number. If a high number of interns are not withdrawing, why is there 16% of the interns who are spending less than a year on their practicals? Where are these interns going after a less than a year with the companies?
- In total, 29% of interns are lost in the first nine months of their internship, not staying with the company for any period that exceeds this. It is apparent that the time between the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 6<sup>th</sup> months are critical periods for retaining and/or losing interns.
- Employers also signify that 26% of the interns did not complete their internships. In alignment with above, it would be beneficial for W&RSETA to investigate the reasons why the interns do not complete their internship in a bid to resolve or bring this number down.
- Active withdrawal of internships is significantly low, and really significant of the suggestion that the high number of intern incompleteness might be initiated by the companies rather than the interns. W&RSETA needs to take serious note of the intern feedback by companies to counter this with.
- One of the direction correlations for the above is the lack of knowledge certainty highlighted by the employers. Only 51% of the employers certainly agree that the interns are knowledgeable. 38% are not certain with regards to the same statement. After working with an intern, a lack of certainty about the knowledge of an intern is a concerning aspect that needs to be addressed by W&RSETA.
- W&RSETA needs to find strategic ways to increase company satisfaction with their interns, in terms of knowledge, performance and professionalism. The low satisfaction here also resonates strongly with the assertion that W&RSETA has worked with 47% of the companies for more than 5 years, but 22% of these have not worked with the interns. By focusing and increasing on professionalism, performance and knowledge; W&RSETA has a better chance of also increasing the number of companies that work with interns.



- It is apparent that, 66% of the interns actually spend between 9 to 18 months with the companies. This is a positive figure both reflecting on the performance of the interns and also their potential development at these companies.

### **23.2. PERFORMANCE - SATISFACTION OF THE INTERNS FROM W&RSETA:**

- Overall, employers are satisfied with the performance of the interns from the W&RSETA, at close inspection though, it is evident that there is a lot of challenges that the W&RSETA has to attend to in order for them to increase the quality of the performance and also to be able to maintain trust from employers.
- Knowledge of the interns is the worst performing within this dimension. Less than half of the respondents agree that they are satisfied with the knowledge of the interns from W&RSETA. It is concerning to note that, 38% of the respondents were neutral with the regards to the performance of these interns. This highlights high doubt and lack of surety in their performance. This can also be the potential explanation for why most participants do not stay long with the employers.
- Performance seems to be the best scoring statement within this dimension. 61% of the respondents agree that they are satisfied with the performance of the interns. This suggests that on the overall, the interns are executing at the expected level, although there are parts of their skills that can be advanced.
- 12% of the respondents are of the assertion that interns from W&RSETA are not professional. This is coupled by 27% respondents who are neutral to this statement which suggests that at best, they are not sure about the professionalism of intern's from the W&RSETA. A deep dive is needed into what this actually entails for employers, is the professionalism not present, or not being carried out in specific tasks or mannerisms of conduct?

## 24. Practical competence & understanding of workplace - Satisfaction of the interns from W&RSETA:

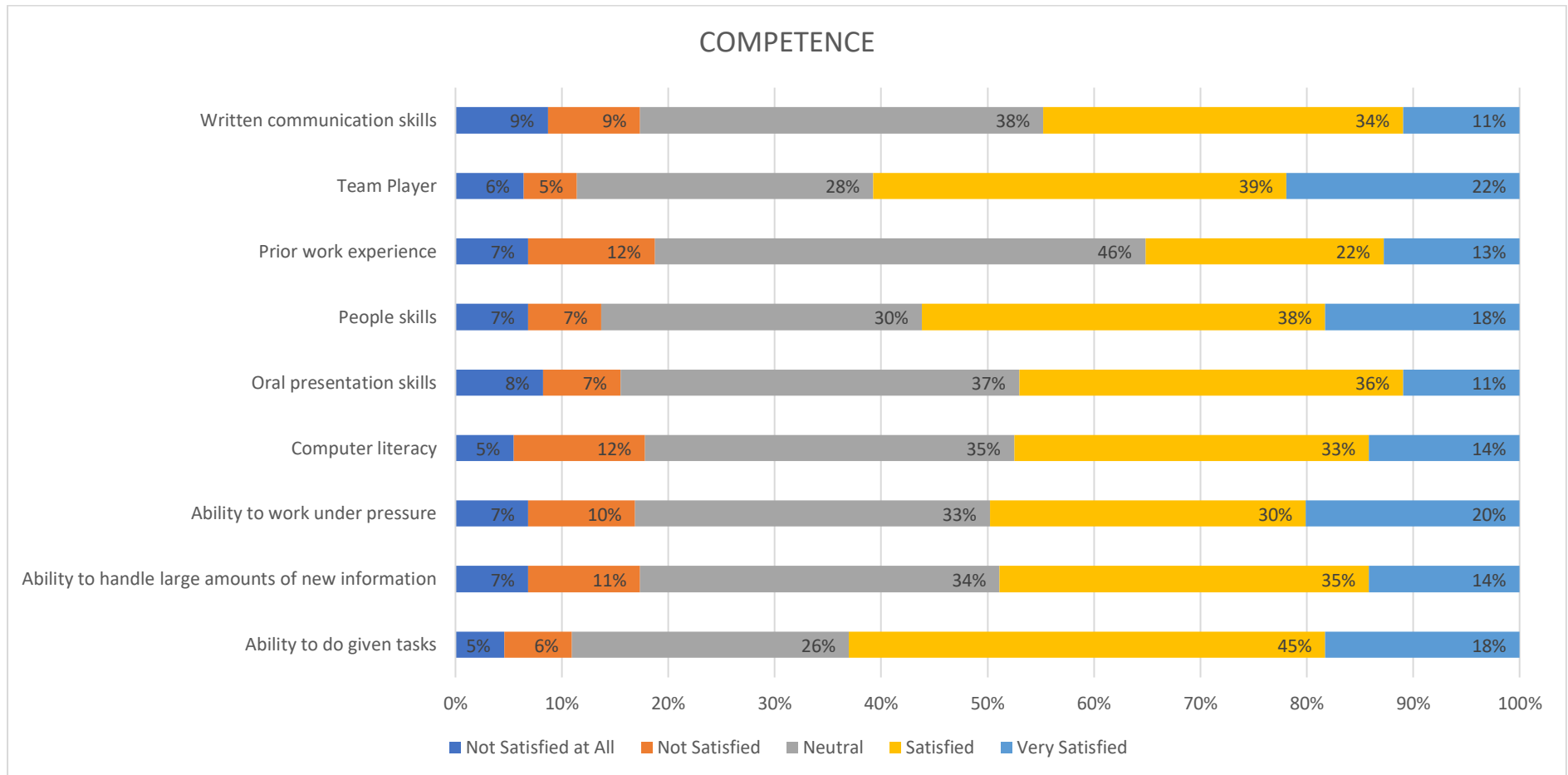


Figure 34

- Within the workplace, the interns from W&RSETA seem to be competent and possessing an understanding of the workplace. The ability to do given tasks seems to be satisfactory for employers scoring 63% satisfaction on this statement.
- Employers assert that the interns are team players who have strong people skills and also possess an ability to do given skills. The latter rating resonates with the evidence provided in the previous dimension with regards to interns being able to execute when in the workplace.
- It is apparent though, that as expected, prior work experience is lacking for the interns, which can be a natural occurrence as most of the interns are just entering the workplace and trying to establish themselves through the internship.
- Oral presentation skills and written skills seem to also be a strong point for the interns as highlighted by respondents. However, W&RSETA could benefit from more trainings here as the responses are not overwhelmingly positive or skewed towards the positive.
- Putting all the results together, the dominant assertion is that the interns are slightly above average at best, and can execute the tasks assigned to them at a standard rating and not exceptional. All but one of the 9 statements had the neutral rating as the highest rating. This is evident of the conclusion reached above. Respondents were not convinced about the performance of the interns, which can be deduced to mean that the interns were good, but did not leave an impression. This significantly aligns with the results shown in the previous questions which might signify why the interns do not stay with the employees for a long time.
- W&RSETA can benefit the interns with more specific and polished training, as they might be surpassed by other interns or trained professionals who would be giving a better impression and above average participation.

## 25. REASONS FOR NOT ABSORBING INTERNS

### THE RESPONSES ARE IN VERBATIM

#### Work Ethic:

- Attitude and Work Ethic
- Due to performance
- No integrity and commitment from the learners we did not absorbed
- They under performed , Where entitled and didn't posses the correct EQ for business world.

#### W&RSETA Admin Failures:

- Incorrect internship started due to W&R Seta fault. Poor skills acquired at the TVET college.
- Seta programs not suited to our line of business
- We did not have interns from WR Seta
- we never had any interns

#### Lack of Finances:

- budget
- Budget constraints as well as Pep Fit
- cost
- Department budget, Intern performance.
- Due to no available vacancies or financial constraints
- Financial constrains
- Lack of funding to pay stipends

#### Vacancies:

- Lack of vacancies within the company
- Less positions available for employment. Poor performing interns. Interns leave without reason
- No space for them in the company

## 26. Which key areas do you hope the interns could improve in?

### THE RESPONSES ARE IN VERBATIM

- Improvement areas for interns resonate with the dimensions that we have measured above.
- Professionalism, knowledge, performance and basic competences need to be improved by the interns.
- Qualitative questions below are able to frame the reference points that need attention regarding the above concerns and they have been arranged to their respective themes:

#### Professional Abilities:

- Ability to do given tasks
- Ability to do given tasks, work under pressure, attitudes and commitment.
- Ability to handle large number of information
- Ability to openly communicate
- Ability to take instructions and work with accuracy
- Ability to work under pressure
- Absorbing, always determined to stand on their own and face challenges that life throws at them
- According to interns are doing well but time management, reporting protocol is still a challenge.
- Handle large amounts of new information and work under pressure
- Work Ethic, Basic Maths, Written and verbal Communication, Willingness to take instructions especially from more experienced non-graduates

#### Communication:

- Communication
- communication and computer literacy
- Communication and Understanding
- Communication skills - written and oral
- Communication skills , Professionalism in the work place , Punctuality, Consistency
- Communication taking responsibility
- computer , communication, more practical at school will also help as the employer doesn't have time to train them basic staff
- Computer literacy and staying abreast of IT development
- Computer, written skills
- Customer service, time keeping, respect for superiors, peers and owners

### Time and Work Management:

- Time keeping
- time management
- Time Management, Office etiquette, Culture and Confidentiality
- To open their eyes and ears and learn at the workplace. Some have the idea that since they have tertiary qualifications some work is below their "status".
- To work under pressure as we are in a fast working environment
- understanding what realistically is expected of them in a work environment and that it is not a holiday

## 27. CONCLUSION

- The kick off project for the 2015 – 2018 WBL Tracer Study – Internship was effected in the year 2021 and was concluded in September 2021. Within this period, participation was significantly high for interns, whose participation rate was 51% in comparison to 6.3% from employers.
- The discrepancies in response rate can be alluded to engagement with employers and interns. It seems there is easier and more engagement with interns than employers. The data reflects that 22% of the employers have not worked with any interns, while 12% of these employers have worked with interns for less than a year. Combined, these groups of employers do not have enough information to engage with the survey and this also contribute to the very low response rate, and part of the data collection limitations for this section of the project
- In total, 883 responses were gathered from both groups. This was from 3 464 employers who received the survey and 1 310 interns (18.5%).
- Engagement between employers and interns highlights potential correlational problems for W&RSETA.
  - There seems to be a high number of interns who cannot secure internships, or those that are aligned with their career trajectory
  - Stipends seem to be very low for interns who are in internships and this has been highlighted as a concern by many interns
  - The above is juxtaposed with a high withdrawal rate by the interns who are in the companies specifically in the first 2 years of the internship.
  - There is also a presence of many companies/employers who have never received interns or have not employed interns. Some of these employers have, through qualitative questions highlight how they hope to receive interns. This needs to be tackled and resolved by W&RSETA

# THE END