



**TRACK AND TRACE STUDY ON THE 2021/22 CATHSSETA FUNDED
PROGRAMMES**

Final Evaluation Report 2024

Version 3.00D

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	6
ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	12
1. CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT UNDER REVIEW.....	13
1.1 INTRODUCTION	13
1.2 PROJECT BACKGROUND.....	14
1.3 PROJECT PROBLEM STATEMENT.....	15
1.4 STUDY PURPOSE.....	15
1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	16
1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS	16
2. CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	17
2.1 THE SOUTH AFRICAN LABOUR MARKET	17
2.2 BRIDGING THE UNEMPLOYMENT GAP	19
2.3 ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERVENTIONS THROUGH TRACER STUDIES	23
3. CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY	26
3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN	26
3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH.....	27
3.3 TARGET POPULATION AND SAMPLING	28
3.4 DATA COLLECTION PROCESS	29
3.5 DATA CAPTURING, CODING AND SYNTHESIS.....	30
3.6 STUDY LIMITATIONS	32
3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	33
4. CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION.....	36
4.1 DATA ANALYSIS SAMPLE OVERVIEW.....	36
4.2 BENEFICIARY PROFILE OVERVIEW	36
4.3 EMPLOYER PROFILE OVERVIEW.....	42
4.4 BENEFICIARIES PATHWAYS UPON COMPLETION OF THE LEARNING PROGRAMMES.....	47
4.5 RELEVANCE AND USABILITY OF SKILLS FROM THE LEARNING PROGRAMMES	67
4.6 IMPACT OF LEARNING PROGRAMMES ON BENEFICIARY SKILL LEVEL.....	70

4.7	BENEFICIARY PERCEPTIONS OF THE LEARNING PROGRAMMES.....	71
4.8	EMPLOYER PERCEPTIONS OF THE LEARNING PROGRAMMES	74
5.	CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	86
5.1	KEY FINDINGS.....	86
5.2	RECOMMENDATIONS.....	89
5.3	CONCLUSION	92
	REFERENCE LIST	94

List of Tables

Table 1: Data Collection Overview	8
Table 2: Section Overview	13
Table 3: Data Collection Overview	28
Table 4: Employment Status Before and After Training by Learning Programme	31
Table 5: Data. Collection Limitations	32
Table 6: Employment Status Before and After Training by Learning Programme	48
Table 7: Income After the Learning Programme	65
Table 8: Skill Level Before and After Training	71

List of Figures

Figure 1: Conceptual Approach.....	7
Figure 2: Employment Benefits	19
Figure 3: Conceptual Approach.....	27
Figure 4: Illustrative Example: Nature of Employment After Training Data Set	31
Figure 5: Illustrative Example: Nature of Employment After Training Graph	31
Figure 6: Project Ethical Considerations	33
Figure 7: Details of the Highest Level of Education Completed the Beneficiaries	37
Figure 8: Details of the Previous Form of Learning Programme Enrolled in by the Beneficiaries	38
Figure 9: Learning Programme Completion Rate	38
Figure 10: Learning Programme Completion by Type of Programme	39
Figure 11: Beneficiaries' Race	40
Figure 12: Gender Profile of Beneficiaries.....	40
Figure 13: Age Profile of Beneficiaries	41
Figure 14: Geographic Location of Beneficiaries	42
Figure 15: Geographic Location of Employers	43
Figure 16: Employer Sub-sectors.....	44

Figure 17: Employer Involvement in Different Programmes.....	45
Figure 18: Completion of Learning Programmes by Beneficiaries as a Requirement for the Job	46
Figure 19: Employment Status Before and After Learning Programme	48
Figure 20: Nature of Employment of Employed Beneficiaries.....	50
Figure 21: Nature of Employment After Training: Employed Beneficiaries.....	51
Figure 22: Time Taken to Find Employment After Learning Programme	52
Figure 23: Currently Employed by Employer who Conducted Training.....	53
Figure 24: Job in Line with Training Received	54
Figure 25: Reasons for Being Self-employed.....	55
Figure 26: Business in Relation to Training Received	56
Figure 27: Time Period after which Beneficiaries Changed Jobs.....	57
Figure 28: Nature of Employment of Beneficiaries who Changed Jobs After Training	58
Figure 29: Alignment of Job with Qualification Received	59
Figure 30: Position Change for Employed Beneficiaries.....	60
Figure 31: Promotion for the Beneficiary	60
Figure 32: Reasons for Unemployment.....	61
Figure 33: Time Spent Looking for a Job.....	62
Figure 34: Reasons for Studying Further.....	63
Figure 35: Income Before and After the Learning Programme	64
Figure 36: Benefits Contribution.....	66
Figure 37: Extent Skills and Knowledge Acquired through Learning Programme Utilised in Work Tasks.....	67
Figure 38: Usefulness of Skills Acquired During the Programme	69
Figure 39: Extent to which Training Influenced Business Start-up and Growth.....	69
Figure 40: Skill Level Before and After the Learning Programme	70
Figure 41: Increase in Employment Opportunities After Training.....	72
Figure 42: Impact of the Programme on Career Pathway.....	73

Figure 43: Overall Programme Satisfaction	74
Figure 44: Employer Satisfaction with Skills Provided through Learning Programmes	75
Figure 45: Employer Satisfaction with CATHSSETA	75
Figure 46: Employer Satisfaction with Skills Training Providers	76
Figure 47: Employer Satisfaction with Knowledge and Skills Imparted by Training Providers	77
Figure 48: Employer Perception Regarding Whether Programmes Are Beneficial for Employers.....	78
Figure 49: Benefits of the Programmes	79
Figure 50: Challenges Employers Face Regarding Accommodating Beneficiaries.....	80
Figure 51: Improvement in Beneficiary Proficiency.....	81
Figure 52: Effectiveness of Learning Programmes in Addressing Skills Gaps at Organisational and Sector Levels	82
Figure 53: Learning Programme Effectiveness in Instilling Hard Skills Required	82
Figure 54: Learning Programme Effectiveness in Instilling Soft Skills Required	83
Figure 55: Work-Based Learning Programme Improvements.....	84

Executive Summary

As one of the 21 SETAs established under the Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998 as amended, CATHSSETA has the responsibility of implementing various sector-specific skill development programs. These initiatives aim to cultivate a skilled workforce capable of positively impacting economic growth (Rhonda, 2023). On an annual basis, CATHSSETA funds and supports various learning programmes in line with the National Skills Development Plan (“NSDP”) 2030 vision. These include programmes such as Bursaries, Internships, Learnerships and Skills Programmes, amongst others. CATHSSETA not only focuses on outputs in terms of the number of beneficiaries completing their programmes, but further emphasises the outcome and impact of those outputs. For this purpose, CATHSSETA conducts track and tracer studies on an annual basis to determine the pathways and outcomes of beneficiaries that had previously completed CATHSSETA funded learning programmes.

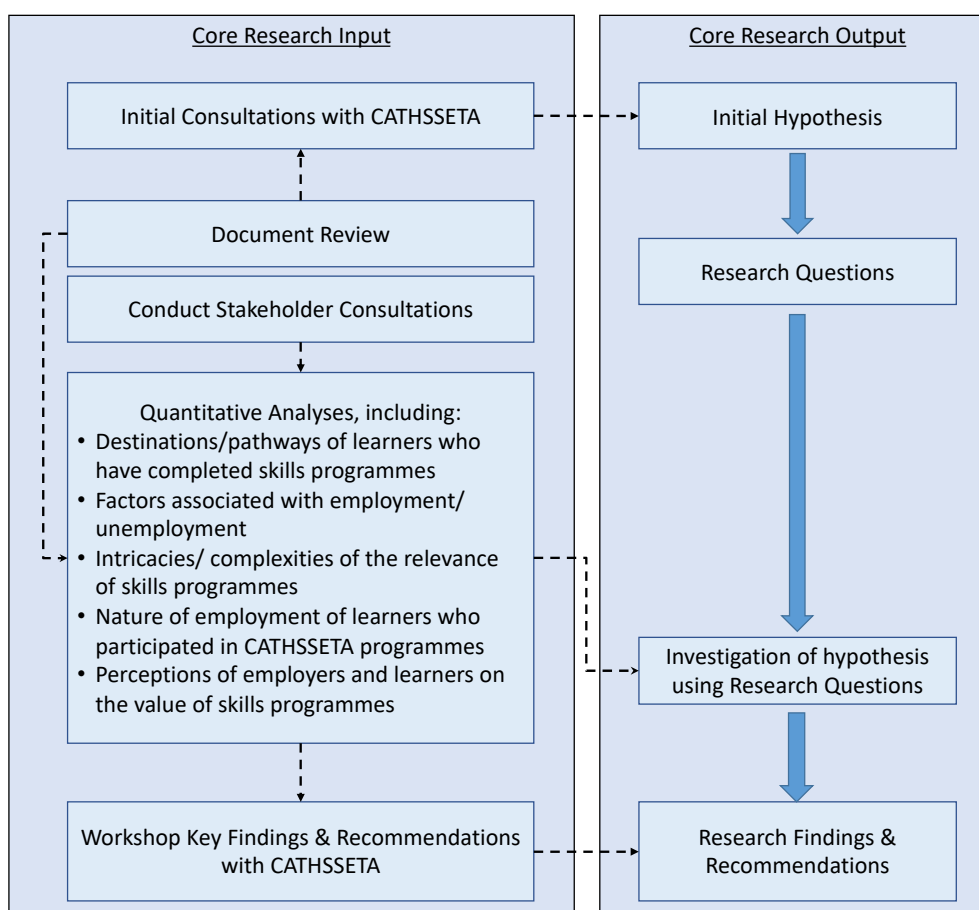
Therefore, in response to the above, CATHSSETA appointed Redflank to conduct a track and tracer study with learners who completed funded learning programmes during the 2021/22 financial year.

This study looked to gain an understanding of the successes and challenges related to the implementation of these learning programmes and offer recommendations regarding improvements to the future design and implementation of such learning interventions. Further to this, the study sought to identify and understand the contribution made by CATHSSETA learning programmes in terms of facilitating employment opportunities and other pathways as well as to understand the perceptions of the beneficiaries of the learning programmes.

This study holds profound implications for both CATHSSETA and the broader landscape of skills development in South Africa. By uncovering further details of the beneficiaries’ journey and the employers experience, the track and tracer study can provide insights into what is working well and what may be improved. These insights provided should, in turn, empower CATHSSETA to make more informed decisions, refine their learning programmes and contribute more effectively to the NSDP and its goals.

Research Methodology

The approach adopted for this project is based on the Track and Trace Outcomes Evaluation and defined research methodologies, customised for this engagement. Use of an accepted Track and Trace methodology, supplemented by added specific research areas of focus, allowed for a technically sound, comprehensive, yet pragmatic approach to addressing the key outcomes for the track and trace study. The methodology is summarised in the conceptual approach below.

Figure 1: Conceptual Approach

The research approach for the study was characterised by a quantitative data approach, with data being collected through CATI and electronic surveys conducted with beneficiaries and employers. A literature review was also conducted.

The CATI surveys involved telephonically interviewing beneficiaries using an online coded questionnaire. This questionnaire assisted beneficiaries with recording the responses provided to the questions. Electronic surveys included an online survey administered through web-based platform. Beneficiaries and Employers completed the survey electronically, via a computer or mobile device. These surveys were used to collect quantitative data through “closed” questions with beneficiaries being asked, for example, to what extent the qualification/training they completed assisted them in carrying out the tasks required at their job, on a scale of “Not at all” to “To a great extent”. Furthermore, open-ended questions were included in the survey in order to provide an enhanced perspective of both beneficiary and employer perceptions.

Following the collection of data through CATI and electronic surveys, data sets were integrated for a comprehensive analysis. This involved merging datasets, ensuring consistency in measurement, and combining findings to provide a more holistic view of the research

questions. Quantitative data collected through CATI and electronic surveys was analysed using statistical methods to uncover patterns, associations, or trends in the data.

In addition to the above, the study included a review of literature. This literature provided insight into the South African labour force, unemployment and the effectiveness of learning interventions and provides context to the findings of the study.

As part of the analysis of the primary data and based on input from the literature review, key findings stemming from the study were identified and noted. Recommendations were formulated in response to these key findings and are presented in Chapter 5 of this Report.

The population for this study included both the beneficiaries of learning programmes (i.e. the learners) as well as employers. CATHSSETA provided a database that included contact details for 767 learners as well as 53 employer contact details. As part of the approach to the study, it was agreed that contact would be attempted with the total available population for these stakeholders, with each individual being contacted at least three times at different intervals and days. This approach was adopted and all beneficiaries and employers for whom contact details were available and accurate were contacted at least three times prior to the attempt being regarded as unsuccessful.

The following outlines the number of completed consultations for both Beneficiaries and Employers.

Table 1: Data Collection Overview

#	Stakeholder Type	Completed Consultations
1	Learners (Beneficiaries)	381
2	Employers	18
Total		399

Based on the completed consultations outlined above, a 49% response rate was achieved for the beneficiaries of the learning programmes whilst a 34% response rate was achieved for the employers.

Beneficiary Profile Overview

A comprehensive overview of the beneficiary, encompassing both their overall characteristics and more detailed information regarding demographics, education, and employment details, was provided through surveys. This included factors such as race, gender, age, and geographic location. Additionally, the study assessed the specific learning programmes beneficiaries engaged in, their employment statuses before and after the learning

programmes, the nature of their current employment, where applicable, and whether they pursued further studies after completing a CATHSSETA learning programme.

The findings show that 83% of beneficiaries who participated in the study completed the learning programme with 31% completing learnerships and 24% completing internships. Further to this, majority of the beneficiaries are African (92%), female (63%), and between the ages of 25 to 35 years old (67%). Gauteng saw the highest percentage of beneficiaries both before (26%) as well as after (33%) the training.

Key Findings

Beneficiary Pathways

As part of the study, the various pathways of beneficiaries who completed the learning programme were assessed. This included assessing those who are employed, self-employed, those who remained at the same job, changed jobs, are looking for a job or have chosen to study further.

As part of the assessment of the various pathways of the beneficiaries, factors such as the status and nature of employment, time taken to secure employment, and the income and benefits received by beneficiaries were assessed. From this, it was found that the learning programmes demonstrated a positive impact, with a shift from 27% employment before the programme to 48% employment afterwards. Additionally, beneficiaries receiving bursaries experienced a substantial increase in employment from 17% to 51% highlighting the positive impact of financial support on employment outcomes after the learning programme.

With regard to beneficiaries' income, findings revealed a positive change which was evidenced by the percentage of beneficiaries earning less than R3200 decreasing from 31% before the learning programme to 8% after the learning programme and the percentage of beneficiaries earning more than R12 801 increasing from 8% to 21%. Further to this in terms of the benefits received, it may be noted that the number of beneficiaries receiving pension fund contributions from their employers is on par with the market, whilst medical aid is slightly lower and UIF is slightly higher.

Relevance of Learning Programmes

The relevance of the learning programmes to beneficiaries was determined by assessing the extent to which beneficiaries utilise the knowledge and skills acquired through the learning programmes in their current work tasks. Overall, the learning programmes appear to be relevant, with the majority (78%) of beneficiaries indicating that they apply the skills acquired through the programmes in their work tasks.

Usability of Skills

Further to the assessment of relevance, the usability of skills acquired by beneficiaries through the learning programmes was assessed. Beneficiaries were requested to provide input regarding the usefulness of the skills obtained from through the programme as well as the extent to which the learning programme affected business growth for self-employed beneficiaries. The skills obtained during the programmes were found to be useful with 97% of beneficiaries indicating this. The positive assessment further highlights the relevance of the learning programmes.

Impact of Learning Programmes on Beneficiary Skills Level

In order to gain an understanding of the impact of the learning programme on beneficiaries, beneficiaries were requested to provide input regarding their skill level before and after the learning programme. The evaluation of beneficiary skills reveals a significant improvement, with beneficiaries rating their average skill level as 6.1 before the programme and 8.4 after the programme, indicating an average skill level increase of 2.3 and an almost expert level of knowledge after the learning programme, compared to an intermediate level of knowledge before.

Beneficiary Perception of the Learning Programmes

Understanding the beneficiary perceptions of the learning programmes is important for CATHSSETA as the perceptions may be used to facilitate programme improvement in order to enhance the effectiveness of the programmes as well as to ensure that the learning programmes are relevant. Findings show that 72% of all beneficiaries who completed the learning programme indicated that they believed that participation in the learning programmes increased their employment opportunities after training, while 61% agreed the programme has “definitely” impacted their career pathway. Further to this, majority of beneficiaries (68%) are very satisfied with the learning programmes, and a further 24% are somewhat satisfied.

Employer Perception of the Learning Programme

Employer perceptions were analysed by assessing employer satisfaction, the benefits and challenges associated with the learning programmes, the effectiveness and impact of the learning programmes on beneficiaries and suggested improvements to the learning programmes by employers.

Positively, most of the employers were either satisfied (56%) or very satisfied (38%) with the learning programmes in providing beneficiaries with the relevant skills required for their job. Further to this, employers were largely satisfied with their interactions with both CATHSSETA and the training providers during the course of the programmes.

Regarding the perceived benefits and challenges, employers believed that the learning programmes are beneficial, noting that key benefits included the contribution to youth development and employment, experience provided to beneficiaries, the enhanced productivity and additional capacity gained through the beneficiaries. On the other hand, the most commonly cited challenge was the time constraints related to the mentoring and grooming of beneficiaries.

According to employers, the learning programmes appeared to be effective and have an impact on beneficiaries with the majority of employers agreeing that the learning programmes enhanced beneficiary proficiency (91%), instilled the hard (100%) and soft (90%) skills required by beneficiaries for effective job performance and played a role in addressing skills gaps at both an organisational and sectoral level (91%). Despite the largely positive perceptions, a significant number of employers (83%) highlighted the need for faster turnaround times with regard to the processing of queries, administration tasks, and payments, noting this as a potential area of improvement for CATHSSETA.

Recommendations

The recommendations outlined stem from the findings of the study discussed in this report. The insights provided aim to empower CATHSSETA to make more informed decisions and refine the relevant learning programmes in order to enhance the impact of the learning programmes on beneficiaries, as it pertains to the career pathways and employment outcomes of beneficiaries. In order to respond to the key findings identified, CATHSSETA may:

- Conduct a biennial review (i.e. every two years) of the learning programmes and curricula to facilitate alignment with current industry needs and demands. This review may include collaborating with industry experts, employers, and relevant stakeholders to gather valuable insights into the evolving landscape and needs of the sector and subsequently updating the learning programmes, if required.
- Undertake a comprehensive study to assess the skills demand and supply within the sector to minimise any potential skills misalignment.
- Consider establishing job placement services as a vital component of its overall support offerings to the sector and beneficiaries in order to enhance the employment prospects of beneficiaries upon completion of the learning programmes.
- Consider streamlining the administrative processes and improving the turnaround times for queries and payment processing in order to enhance employers' overall experience with the learning programmes.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

BCEA	Basic Conditions of Employment Act
CATI	Conducting Computer Administered Telephonic Interviews
CATHS	Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality and Sports
DSI	Department of Science and Innovation
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
HET	Higher Education and Training
MRS	Market Research Society
NDP	National Development Plan
NSDP	National Skills Development Plan
QLFS	Quarterly Labour Force Survey
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
SMMEs	Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
TREP	Township and Rural Entrepreneurship Programme
UIF	Unemployment Insurance Fund
WIL	Work Integrated Learning
YES	Youth Employment Service

1. Chapter 1: Background to the Project Under Review

This Track and Tracer Report presents the results from the Track and Tracer study conducted on the Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality and Sports Sector Education and Training Authority's ("CATHSSETA" or the "client") Funded Programmes for the 2021/22 Financial Year (the "Project" or the "study") for CATHSSETA. This section introduces the document, including background to the Project, the problem statement as well as the research objectives and key research questions.

1.1 Introduction

This Track and Tracer study conducted on CATHSSETA funded learning programmes sought to uncover the pathways of learners who completed CATHSSETA funded interventions during the 2021/22 financial year in order to understand the success of and challenges related to CATHSSETA's interventions, contributing to the broader goals of economic growth and social development outlined in the National Development Plan ("NDP").

The findings presented in this Report are based on consultations conducted with beneficiaries and Employers through online and telephonic surveys. This report further offers insight into the approach and methodology adopted as part of the Track and Tracer study and provides an understanding of CATHSSETA related programmes and the pathways of Learners who have completed these programmes.

The following table provides an outline of the sections contained in this document.

Table 2: Section Overview

Section	Contents	Description
1	Background to the Project Under Review	This section outlines the background for the project, including the research objectives and key research questions that the project sought to answer.
2	Literature Review	The section provides the findings from the desk-based research conducted in order to provide context to this study and includes an overview of the South African labour market, including a view of current unemployment and strategies being implemented in an attempt to mitigate the high unemployment rates as well as background to track and tracer studies, including their purpose and how they may be conducted.
3	Methodology	This section provides insight into the methodology and approach that was adopted as part of this study, including an overview of

Section	Contents	Description
		the data collection process as well as the limitations encountered and key ethical considerations.
4	Data Analysis and Interpretation	This section provides an overview of how data was analysed as part of the study and presents key findings emerging from the study, in line with the project objectives.
5	Discussion of Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations	This section provides a discussion of the findings in response to the key research questions, provides an indication of the key lessons that may be derived from the study and provides key recommendations that CATHSSETA may consider moving forward.

1.2 Project Background

As one of the 21 SETAs established under the Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998, CATHSSETA has the responsibility of implementing various sector-specific skills development programmes. These initiatives aim to cultivate a skilled workforce capable of positively impacting economic growth (Rhonda, 2023). On an annual basis, CATHSSETA funds and supports various learning programmes in line with the National Skills Development Plan (“NSDP”) 2030 vision. These include programmes such as Bursaries, Internships, Learnerships and Skills Programmes, amongst others. CATHSSETA not only focuses on outputs in terms of the number of beneficiaries completing their programmes, but further emphasises the outcome and impact of those outputs. For this purpose, CATHSSETA conducts track and tracer studies on an annual basis to determine the pathways and outcomes of beneficiaries that had previously completed CATHSSETA funded learning programmes.

Therefore, in response to the above, CATHSSETA appointed Redflank to conduct a track and tracer study with learners who completed funded learning programmes during the 2021/22 financial year.

This study looked to gain an understanding of the successes and challenges related to the implementation of these learning programmes and offer recommendations regarding improvements to the future design and implementation of such learning interventions. Further to this, the study sought to identify and understand the contribution made by CATHSSETA learning programmes in terms of facilitating employment opportunities and other pathways as well as to understand the perceptions of the beneficiaries of the learning programmes.

The track and tracer study was conducted across all CATHSSETA sub-sectors and included a detailed assessment of the following programmes:

- Bursary programme
- Graduate internship programme
- Higher Education and Training (“HET”) Work Integrated Learning (“WIL”)
- Learnership programme
- Technical Vocational Education and Training (“TVET”) WIL
- Skills programme.

1.3 Project Problem Statement

As mentioned above, CATHSSETA is committed to aligning its strategic plans with the NSDP and contributing to economic growth. The ability of CATHSSETA to do this is linked to the effectiveness of the programmes that it offers. The contribution that CATHSSETA is making towards capacitating beneficiaries as well as minimising the effects of unemployment, however, is not fully documented and understood. Furthermore, the extent to which CATHSSETA funded learning programmes have facilitated employment opportunities, the professional pathways and the perceptions of the beneficiaries remains an open-ended question. Without a thorough understanding of the experiences of the beneficiaries, CATHSSETA risks operating with very little knowledge and understanding, thus resulting in the inability to refine their strategies and maximise positive outcomes related to their learning programmes. It is in light of this that it becomes crucial for tracer studies to be conducted on an annual basis to determine the contribution of CATHSSETA initiatives and the outcomes thereof. Information solicited through track and tracer studies can assist in the design and implementation of training interventions by enabling the organisation to make data-driven decisions and inform strategic planning.

This study holds profound implications for both CATHSSETA and the broader landscape of skills development in South Africa. By uncovering further details of the beneficiaries' journey and the employers experience, the track and tracer study can provide insights into what is working well and what may be improved. These insights provided should, in turn, empower CATHSSETA to make more informed decisions, refine their learning programmes and contribute more effectively to the NSDP and its goals.

1.4 Study Purpose

The purpose of this study was to highlight the successes and challenges of CATHSSETA funded programmes as well as the pathways of the beneficiaries (i.e. the Learners) that have completed the programmes in the 2021/22 Financial Year in order to enable CATHSSETA to

determine the outcomes of skills interventions across all sub-sectors (Arts, Culture and Heritage, Conservation, Gaming and Lotteries, Hospitality, Sports, Recreation and Fitness, and Tourism and Travel).

1.5 Research Objectives

The following provides an overview of the research objectives for the track and tracer study:

- Determine the pathways of beneficiaries who have completed Learning Programmes.
- Determine the relevance of the Learning Programmes among beneficiaries.
- Determine the perception of beneficiaries who completed CATHSSETA programme.
- Determine the programme's challenges and success thus far.

By exploring the above-mentioned research objectives and obtaining an understanding of the successes and challenges of the programme and the perception of the beneficiaries who have completed the programme, this study should assist CATHSSETA in identifying opportunities that may be explored in order to enhance the Learning Programmes.

1.6 Research Questions

The following provides an overview of the research questions that this study aimed to address:

- What are the pathways of beneficiaries who have completed CATHSSETA Learning Programmes?
- What is the relevance of the Learning Programme interventions among beneficiaries?
- What are the beneficiaries' perceptions of CATHSSETA-supported programmes?

2. Chapter 2: Literature Review

This section provides an overview of the dynamics of the South African labour market, outlining key statistics and trends related to the needs of the sector and the current unemployment trends. Strategies for bridging the unemployment gap are also included in this section, offering insights into the initiatives being implemented in an attempt to address the challenge of unemployment.

Furthermore, the topic of using tracer studies to assess the effectiveness of SETA interventions is outlined. As part of this, the purpose of tracer studies is discussed and an overview of certain “guiding principles” to consider when implementing tracer studies is provided.

2.1 The South African Labour Market

The South African labour market and economy is shifting, with the demand for skilled workers increasing, in order to meet the evolving needs of various industries. As a result of this increased demand as well as the changing nature of work, rapid technological advancements (such as digital transformation) and a lack of investment in skills development, the gap between the skills of the workforce and the demands of the economy is continuously widening. The widening of this gap may further be attributed to the fact that South Africa currently faces a shortage of skilled professionals (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2022).

According to StatsSA’s Quarterly Labour Force Survey (“QLFS”) for the fourth quarter of 2023, South Africa’s unemployment rate, as of February 2024, was sitting at 32.1%. This translates into 7.9 million individuals that are actively seeking employment but are unable to find suitable opportunities (StatsSA, 2024). The youth unemployment rate in South Africa has historically been higher than the national average and according to StatsSA (2024), as of the fourth quarter of 2023, the youth unemployment rate was 44,3%. Factors that appear to contribute to this high unemployment rate include a competitive job market, limited entry-level opportunities as well as the demand for experienced candidates (Sindisiwe, 2020).

According to Vitols et al., (2013), many young individuals initially enter the job market through temporary or contract roles, allowing them to gain experience before transitioning into more stable and permanent forms of employment. Research found that these temporary positions are more common in sectors with seasonal demand such as the Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality and Sports (“CATHS”) sub-sectors (Aleksynska & Berg, 2016). This, in turn, may result in young individuals being more likely to work in these sectors (Youth Futures Foundation, 2021).

While temporary job positions are an option for some members of the youth, the high unemployment rates as a result of limited entry-level opportunities limit the number of people who are able to find positions, resulting in entrepreneurship becoming a notable trend amongst the youth, with individuals choosing to start their own businesses, allowing them to reduce unemployment and create economic activity within their communities (Wijnberg, 2022). The Global Entrepreneurship Research Association (2023) states that 38.3% of the youth aged 18 to 35 have taken part in entrepreneurial activities such as starting a new business or still being in the early stages of a business.

2.1.1 Average Salaries and Benefits Offered to Employees in the South African Labour Market

The average salary for the youth in South Africa depends on factors such as education, skills, industry as well as experience. Generally, entry-level positions offer lower salaries when compared to more experienced roles. The average salary across all sectors and across the workforce as a whole in the country, according to Stats SA (2022) is R24 578 per month or R294 936 on an annual basis. Furthermore, according to Stats SA (2022), the average salary in the hotels and restaurants sector, in particular, was R188 964 per annum, as indicated in their Quarterly Employment Statistics Report.

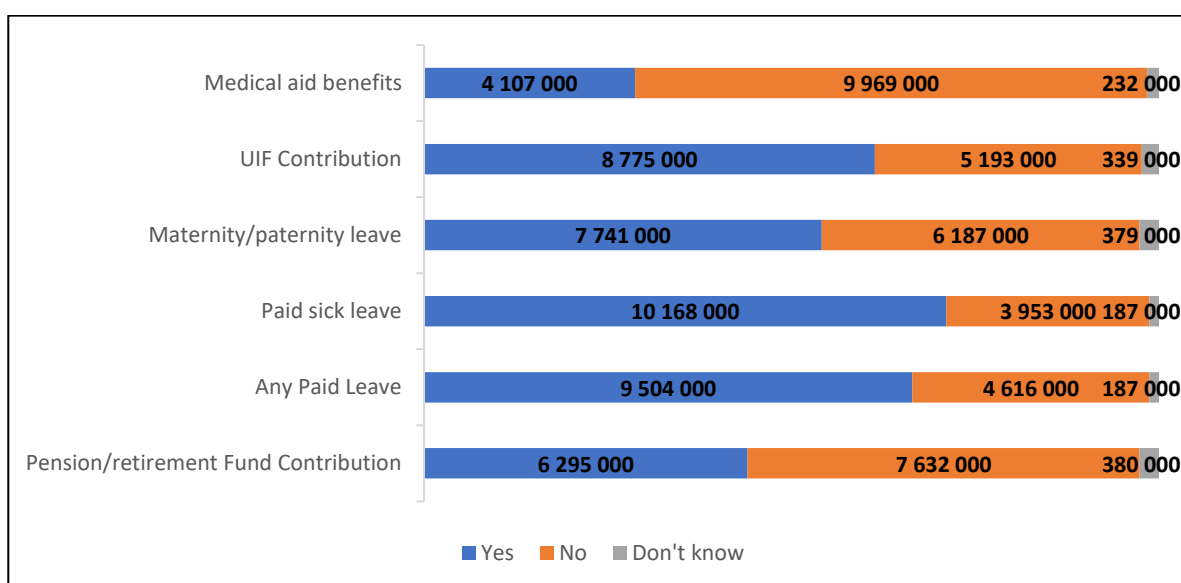
With regard to employment benefits, these tend to vary widely across industries and companies, with large organisations generally offering more comprehensive packages that include medical aid, pension, contribution to the Unemployment Insurance Fund (“UIF”), maternity and other leave and bonuses (CIPD, 2022). The following provides further details on these benefits that are typically offered:

- Medical aid schemes contribute to the cost of healthcare for employees. As part of the benefits offered to employees, employers may subsidise or fully cover an employee’s medical aid contribution, with the exact amount typically depending on the organisation’s policies (South African Department of National Treasury, 2005).
- Pension funds provide financial security for employees in their retirement. Similarly to the medical aid schemes, employers and employees often contribute to these funds, ensuring a source of income after retirement (South African Department of National Treasury, 2005).
- UIF is a mandatory fund that provides short-term financial relief to workers who become unemployed or are unable to work due to illness or maternity (South African Revenue Service, 2023).

- Maternity leave in South Africa is governed by the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (“BCEA”) and the Labour Relations Act. The BCEA states that pregnant employees are entitled to at least four consecutive months of maternity leave. This period includes the time before and after the expected date of the childbirth. During maternity leave, employees are generally entitled to receive maternity benefits either from their employer or the UIF. The amount paid is a percentage of the employee’s salary, subject to certain limits (MyWage, 2023).

The figure below provides an overview of the employment benefits currently being offered across South Africa and provides an indication of how many of the employed individuals in South Africa receive certain benefits.

Figure 2: Employment Benefits



Source: Stats SA (2024)

2.2 Bridging the Unemployment Gap

As stated above, unemployment amongst the youth is currently higher than the national average, with 42% of the youth remaining unemployed. Furthermore, as mentioned the gap between the skills of the workforce and the demands of the economy is continuously widening. In response to this and the high unemployment rates the government has developed several strategies/policies and training interventions in order to combat youth unemployment. While the majority of the existing policies are aimed towards the youth, others also focus on eradicating the unemployment of other marginalised groups. The following provides further details regarding some of these strategies (Hendriks, 2016) (National Treasury, 2011):

- **National Development Plan (“NDP”):** South Africa's NDP outlines a long-term vision for the country aimed at eliminating poverty and reducing unemployment. This plan involves the implementation of several strategies across various sectors to address socio-economic challenges and promote inclusive development. This entails the development of education and skills in order to ensure that the education system is aligned with the needs of the labour market and the workforce is equipped with the skills required for employment in various sectors.
- **Expanded Public Works Programme (“EPWP”):** The EPWP is a government program aimed at providing short-term employment opportunities through public works projects in sectors such as infrastructure maintenance projects, environment, culture and social development. This program is specifically aimed at lower skilled and unemployed individuals and focuses on labour-intensive projects in order to stimulate economic activity and improve the employability of participants.
- **Youth Employment Service (“YES”):** The YES initiative encourages businesses in both the private and public sector to create work opportunities for young people. The goal of this initiative is to provide more young people with the opportunity to learn new skills and obtain valuable work experience, both of which should greatly increase their chances of securing a long-term job.
- **Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises (“SMMEs”) Support:** The government has emphasised the importance of small businesses in job creation and overall economy. In order to support the growth of SMMEs and entrepreneurship several interventions have been implemented, such as the Township and Rural Entrepreneurship Programme (“TREP”) which is a programme aimed at providing both financial and business development support to informal, micro and small enterprises and cooperatives in the rural areas and townships.
- **Skills Development Initiatives:** The leveraging of collaborations between Sector Education and Training Authorities (“SETAs”) and other government departments (such as that of the Department of Science and Innovation (“DSI”) and the MICT SETA which aims to promote digital literacy in the labour market) are initiatives aimed at improving education and training programs to equip the workforce with the skills needed in the labour market.

While the above strategies may assist with reducing unemployment, a multi-faceted approach that includes varying skills development initiatives is also crucial in order to equip individuals with the capabilities needed for the evolving job market. Skills development courses have a

crucial role to play in South Africa as they assist with empowering individuals, allowing them to obtain the necessary skills that should assist them secure and maintain employment opportunities. These courses also play a role in enhancing the capabilities of individuals to assist them in starting their own businesses and playing a role in the economy. Skills development courses are an important dynamic and catalyst for progress within society and the economy (van Zyl, 2018). In the South African context, the Skills Development Act exists in order to ensure the labour force is equipped with skills, ensure more opportunities for skills development are available to employees, ensure room will be made for new workers to gain work experience, and ensure that training and education will be used to address unfair discrimination practises in the workplace (CCMA, 2018).

In line with the goals of the Skills Development Act and in order to address some of the skills shortages and promote skills development, SETAs were established as per the Skills Development Act of 1998. The main objective of the SETAs is to guarantee that South Africa has a workforce that is competent and capable of meeting the demands of an expanding economy (Employment and Labour, 2000) (Rorich, 2022). SETAs, therefore, are a crucial part of South Africa's system for developing skills and have a key role to play in mitigating unemployment in the country.

CATHSSETA, in particular, is primarily mandated to address skills shortages in the Cultural, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality, and Sport sub-sectors. CATHSSETA does this by developing and implementing skills development strategies in order to meet the needs of the sector. This involves identifying skills gaps, developing training programs, and providing funding for training initiatives. CATHSSETA also works with employers and education and training providers to ensure that the skills being taught are relevant to the demands of the workplace (National Government of South Africa, 2023) (CATHSSETA, 2023). The following provides a brief overview of the learning interventions that CATHSSETA currently funds and that were assessed as part of this tracer study (CATHSSETA, 2023):

- **Bursary Programs:** Bursaries are offered to prospective students through institutions of higher learning and employers. Applicants for these bursaries must be pursuing qualifications that are relevant to CATHSSETA subsectors.
- **Learnerships:** These are workplace-based training programmes that consist of both practical and theoretical training for a duration that is determined by the employer. A learnership results in a qualification linked to a trade, profession, or qualification that is registered with the South African Qualifications Authority ("SAQA"). Both

unemployed learners and employed learners can participate in a learnership through an employer.

- **Internships:** Internships are designed to give University and University of Technology graduates/learners workplace exposure which allows them to learn about the industry, gain necessary skills and make professional connections. Internships often involve working closely with mentors, with limited structured training.
- **Work Integrated Learning:** WIL programmes are designed to place learners registered with TVET colleges or HET who require internships to complete their training with employers.
- **Skills Programme:** These are accredited training interventions that earn at least one credit on the NQF. The completion of credit-bearing skills programmes can result in or help individuals earn a full qualification. Skills programmes are essentially for individuals who have a shortage of critical skills or have not obtained a full qualification. Skills programmes can be performed at several levels on the NQF and learners on skills programmes receive credits for every unit standard completed successfully. These units can be carried across as credits for partial completion of qualifications (known as portability of unit standards) and used for changing career paths or diversifying the field of expertise.

Skills development, as promoted by SETAs, such as CATHSSETA, through learning programmes, such as those mentioned above, plays an important role in improving efficiency and productivity in the workplace as employees that are more proficient and have specific skills and knowledge required for their jobs often require less supervision. In addition to improved efficiency, studies have also shown that employees that received adequate training were more self-motivated, had a stronger sense of self confidence as well as an increased perception about their organisational climate than those who received less or no training at all (Naong, 2009). Skills development was also noted as having an impact on an individual's socio-economic status, as employees that acquire skills through training and/or education, have an overall better chance at career progression, increased earnings and improved socio-economic status (OECD/ILO, 2017). Having secure employment and a steady income should also allow individuals to not only meet their basic needs but to also save for their future, invest in their education, and participate in stimulating the country's economy.

While skills development aims to eradicate some of the challenges that the current workforce faces, there are also some challenges that arise as more skills development initiatives are being implemented. One of those challenges is the quality of education being offered and the

uniformity in the standard of education, with this standard of education currently varying depending on which school or institution a student attends (Landrum, 2023). Other challenges such as the adoption of remote learning models as a result of load-shedding, insufficient technological infrastructure and high data costs also limit the number of young people that are able to take advantage of skills development initiatives (Nyamande-Pitso, 2022). Such challenges lessen the chance of gaining necessary skills as well as the possibility of securing employment. In light of these challenges it is, therefore, important that SETAs continue to monitor the skills development initiatives offered and the impact that these are having on beneficiaries. This may be done through studies such as this Tracer study.

2.3 Assessing the Effectiveness of Interventions through Tracer Studies

In line with objectives of the NSDP, SETAs are required to engage in comprehensive impact research and tracer studies each financial year. These studies are aimed at uncovering insights regarding key features, trends, challenges, outcomes and impacts of skills and learning interventions, and applying resultant recommendations to enhance the quality of service delivery by SETAs (Insurance Sector Education and Training Authority, 2020).

In accordance with this ethos, the aim of the tracer studies is to track and locate previous beneficiaries of SETA funded learning interventions and to understand the nature and outcomes of the education and learning programs being delivered. This information serves as a crucial resource that aids in the continual improvement of SETA programs and interventions, particularly within the framework of ensuring and maintaining quality standards (CHIETA, 2020).

Overall, tracer studies, such as those conducted by the SETAs, represent a practical research method aimed at monitoring the achievements of a project post-completion to determine its level of success. Specifically in higher education, there's an increasing demand for tracer studies that provide accurate insights into the dynamics of access to colleges, graduation rates, and the employment prospects of University and Technicon college graduates. These studies aim to comprehensively evaluate and measure the actual progress and outcomes in these areas, aligning with the call to understand the real impact and functioning of higher education institutions (Wildschut, et al., 2017).

2.3.1 Guidelines for Conducting Tracer Studies

When conducting tracer studies, understanding key lessons learnt from other track and trace studies conducted may assist in providing some useful insights into how these studies may be done or how the design of the research may be enhanced (CHIETA, 2020). Tracer studies

carry significant importance and should be conducted periodically in order to achieve progressively improved outcomes. The following section provides a summary of some of the guidelines and recommendations from previous track and tracer studies conducted by other SETAs, including which learners should be included and the timing of tracer studies.

2.3.1.1 Learners to Include in Tracer Studies

The majority of tracer studies typically concentrate on a single cohort or a specific group of students who finished their studies simultaneously. When deciding which Learners to include in the tracer study, the following should be considered (CHIETA, 2020):

- a) Efforts should be made to ensure representation of Learners from different types of learning interventions provided by the respective SETA;
- b) Diverse student demographics should be documented as the research findings will contribute to the national database; and
- c) The involvement of all students within a particular year group should be targeted for comprehensive tracer studies. Given the rarity of achieving a 100% response rate in these studies, the participants in each tracer study should be regarded as a representative sample of all beneficiaries.

2.3.1.2 Timing of Tracer Studies

When considering the Learners to be included in the tracer study, it is also important to consider the timing for the study, namely; how soon after the Learners have completed the programme should the study be conducted. Typically, tracer studies occur between one and three years post-completion, however, it is recommended that (CHIETA, 2020):

- a) Studies are conducted within six to twelve months post-completion. Conducting studies within this timeframe allows for the capturing of the experiences of new graduates while they still have a connection to their learning institution or temporary employer. This approach is valuable for gathering data on how these beneficiaries navigate the transition from higher learning institutions to job searches and eventually into the workplace, offering insights into their real-time experiences and challenges during this crucial period. Upon finishing the programme, beneficiaries may be informed that they can expect inquiries about their career paths and employment status to facilitate the collection of data during the study.
- b) If budget constraints allow, it is beneficial to include the same group of students in longitudinal tracer studies which track the application and relevance of the knowledge, skills, and competencies acquired during their years of study. By following the same cohort over several years, the tracer studies can later examine whether these

individuals have attained the anticipated occupational positions, such as specific roles, salary levels, and other indicators of upward or vertical career progression.

3. Chapter 3: Methodology

The following sections provide details on the approach and methodology that was adopted for the Project. The approach adopted for this project is based on the Track and Trace Outcomes Evaluation and defined research methodologies, customised for this engagement.

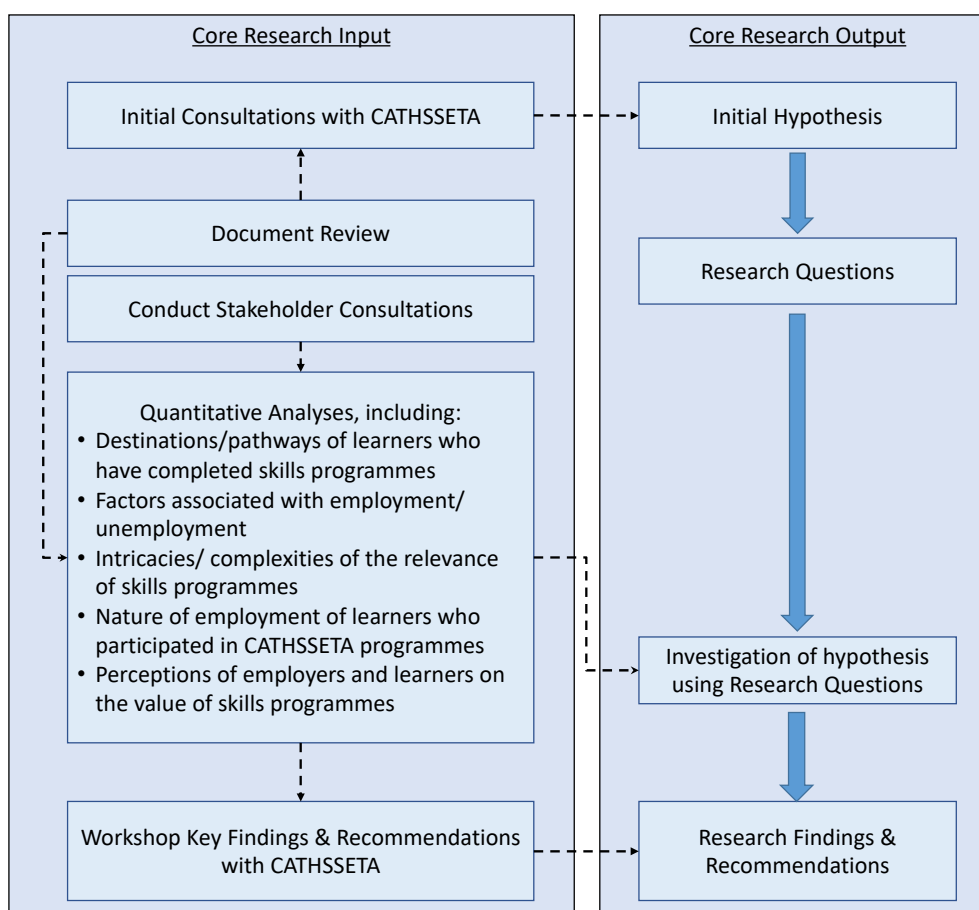
3.1 Research Design

Use of an accepted Track and Trace methodology, supplemented by added specific research areas of focus, allowed for a technically sound, comprehensive, yet pragmatic approach to addressing the key outcomes for the track and trace study. The methodology included the following:

- Identifying key objectives of the research topic.
- Identifying key research questions to be addressed by the study.
- Reviewing stakeholder databases and relevant literature.
- Formulating research approaches.
- Conducting a pilot questionnaire.
- Conducting Computer Administered Telephonic Interviews (“CATI”) surveys.
- Adopting a quantitative data approach and conducting a literature review. Quantitative data was collected from both beneficiaries and employers through a survey.
- Identifying key features, trends, challenges and outcomes of learning programmes in the CATHSSETA sub-sectors.
- Drafting a report and presenting findings and recommendations.

The above is summarised by the figure below.

Figure 3: Conceptual Approach



3.2 Research Approach

The research approach for the study was characterised by a quantitative data approach, with data being collected through CATI and electronic surveys conducted with beneficiaries and employers. A literature review was also conducted.

The CATI surveys involved telephonically interviewing beneficiaries using an online coded questionnaire. This questionnaire assisted beneficiaries with recording the responses provided to the questions. Electronic surveys included an online survey administered through web-based platform. Beneficiaries and Employers completed the survey electronically, via a computer or mobile device. These surveys were used to collect quantitative data through “closed” questions with beneficiaries being asked, for example, to what extent the qualification/training they completed assisted them in carrying out the tasks required at their job, on a scale of “Not at all” to “To a great extent”. Furthermore, open-ended questions were included in the survey in order to provide an enhanced perspective of both beneficiary and employer perceptions.

Following the collection of data through CATI and electronic surveys, data sets were integrated for a comprehensive analysis. This involved merging datasets, ensuring consistency in measurement, and combining findings to provide a more holistic view of the research questions. Quantitative data collected through CATI and electronic surveys was analysed using statistical methods to uncover patterns, associations, or trends in the data.

In addition to the above, the study included a review of literature. This literature provided insight into the South African labour force, unemployment and the effectiveness of learning programmes and provides context to the findings of the study.

As part of the analysis of the primary data and based on input from the literature review, key findings stemming from the study were identified and noted. Recommendations were formulated in response to these key findings and are presented in Chapter 5 of this Report.

3.3 Target Population and Sampling

The population for this study included both the beneficiaries of learning programmes (i.e. the learners) as well as employers. CATHSSETA provided a database that included contact details for 767 learners as well as 53 employer contact details. As part of the approach to the study, it was agreed that contact would be attempted with the total available population for these stakeholders, with each individual being contacted at least three times at different intervals and days. This approach was adopted and all beneficiaries and employers for whom contact details were available and accurate were contacted at least three times prior to the attempt being regarded as unsuccessful.

The following outlines the number of completed consultations for both Beneficiaries and Employers.

Table 3: Data Collection Overview

#	Stakeholder Type	Completed Consultations
1	Beneficiaries	381
2	Employers	18
Total		399

Based on the completed consultations outlined above, a 49% response rate was achieved for the beneficiaries of the learning programmes whilst a 34% response rate was achieved for the employers.

3.4 Data Collection Process

The CATI and electronic survey questionnaire was administered through the use of the survey platform, Survey Monkey. The survey tool allowed for a large amount of data to be collected, tracked and securely stored on the platform. Furthermore, this allowed the response rates to be monitored throughout the course of data collection.

The following provides an overview of the steps followed in order to conduct data collection as part of this Project.

3.4.1 Beneficiaries (Learners)

In order to collect data from beneficiaries, the following steps were followed:

- **Step 1:** Redflank reviewed the beneficiary questionnaire provided by CATHSSETA and proposed updates where necessary. These updates were workshopped with CATHSSETA, and the questionnaire was finalised and coded on the online survey platform.
- **Step 2:** Redflank received a database containing beneficiary contact details from CATHSSETA. These databases were cleaned (i.e., duplicates removed) in preparation for data collection.
- **Step 3:** A pilot was conducted in order to test the questionnaire and identify and correct any potential obstacles with the survey. As part of this pilot, a sample of 80 beneficiaries were selected from the database provided by CATHSSETA and contacted telephonically in order to request their participation in the survey.
- **Step 4:** Following the completion of the pilot, all beneficiaries for whom contact details were available and correct in the database were contacted telephonically up to three times, on three occasions in order to request their participation in the CATI survey.
- **Step 5:** In order to increase the beneficiary response rate, the survey was also distributed electronically via email. This email requested the beneficiaries to follow the link and complete the survey. The beneficiaries to whom the survey was distributed included those who were not able to be contacted telephonically due to their numbers being incorrect or remaining unanswered. Additionally, the CATHSSETA project team assisted with telephonically contacting beneficiaries in order to increase the overall response rate.

3.4.2 Employers

In order to collect data from Employers, the following steps were followed:

- **Step 1:** Redflank reviewed the employer questionnaire provided by CATHSSETA and proposed updates where necessary. These updates were workshopped with CATHSSETA, and the questionnaire was finalised and coded onto the online survey platform.
- **Step 2:** Redflank received a database containing employer contact details from CATHSSETA. This database was cleaned in order to remove duplicates.
- **Step 3:** The survey was distributed to employers electronically via email. This email requested the employers to follow the link and complete the survey. Following the initial distribution of the survey, 2 email prompts were distributed reminding employers to complete the survey.
- **Step 4:** In order to further enhance the employer response rate, employers who did not complete the survey electronically were contacted in order to request them to complete the survey telephonically.

3.5 Data Capturing, Coding and Synthesis

The data presented throughout this report in the form of graphs was obtained through telephonic and electronic surveys. Following the closure of data collection, a data analysis plan was drafted outlining the analysis to be done as well as the presentation of data for each of the relevant questions posed to beneficiaries and employers. Graphs and tables were drafted based on this plan, with the outcomes of this analysis being presented in Section 4.3. to 4.8 of this report. The analysis conducted on these sections aim to synthesise the responses received from beneficiaries and employers in order to meet the objectives and respond to the research questions of the study.

The majority of the graphs presented measure the percentage of beneficiaries and employers who selected a specific option/s over the total number of beneficiaries or employers for that question. The detail below provided an illustrative example of this.

Figure 5 below provides an illustrative sample of survey results related to the nature of employment of the beneficiaries who found employment after the completion of the learning programme.

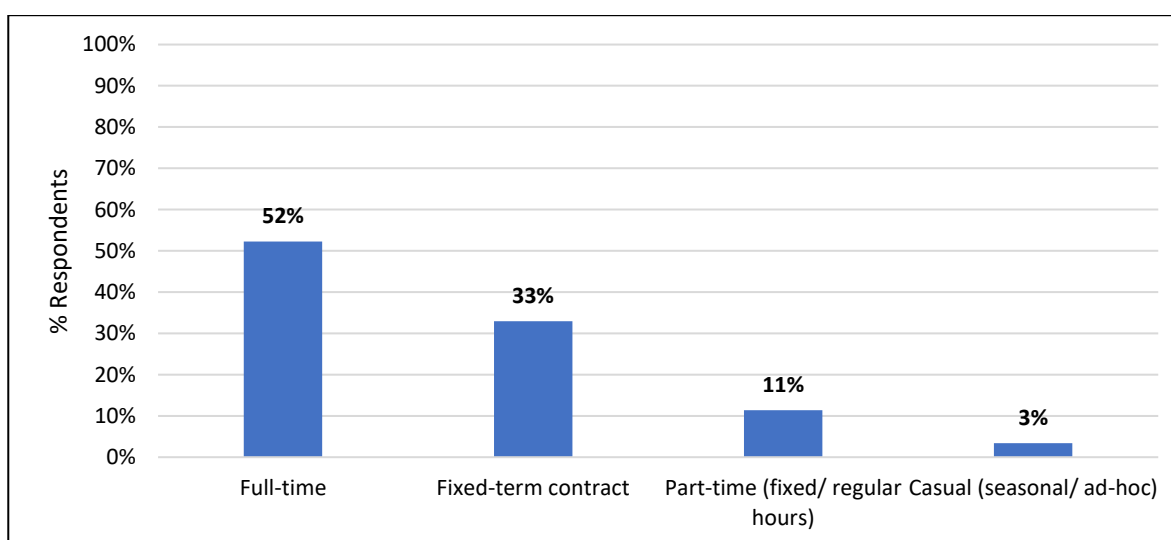
Figure 4: Illustrative Example: Nature of Employment After Training Data Set

What was the nature of this employment?	
Full-time	52%
Part-time (fixed/ regular hours)	11%
Casual (seasonal/ ad-hoc)	3%
Fixed-term contract	33%

Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=88

The figure below provides an illustrative example of how this data is then presented

Figure 5: Illustrative Example: Nature of Employment After Training Graph

Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=88

Further to the overall analysis conducted, where applicable, cross-tabulation was conducted in order to add depth to the results and understand the view per Learning Programme. The table below provides an illustrative example of how these cross-tabulated results were presented.

Table 4: Employment Status Before and After Training by Learning Programme

	Bursary		Internship		Learnership		Skills Programme		WIL (University/ HET)		WIL (TVET)	
	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After
Employed	17%	51%	17%	36%	46%	65%	35%	38%	3%	35%	22%	52%
Unemployed	31%	31%	65%	51%	43%	27%	59%	47%	30%	54%	26%	30%
Studying	53%	14%	18%	6%	11%	6%	6%	12%	68%	11%	52%	15%
Volunteering	0%	3%	0%	7%	0%	2%	0%	3%	0%	0%	0%	4%

Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=298

Further to the analysis conducted as per the above, inferential analysis, in the form of Chi-square tests, was conducted on a number of key areas. The Chi-square test utilised serves as a valuable statistical tool for assessing the relationship between two categorical variables. By comparing observed and expected frequencies, it helps researchers infer whether changes in one variable are significantly associated with changes in another. This test aids in hypothesis testing, providing insights into the nature and strength of associations within categorical data, and guides decision-making regarding the independence or dependence of the variables under investigation (Biswal, 2023). For the purposes of this study, the significance level was set at 0.05. The results of this analysis contribute valuable insights into understanding the interdependence of the studied categorical variables.

3.6 Study Limitations

The following provides an overview of the limitations experienced during the study, including an overview of the steps taken in an attempt to overcome these limitations.

Table 5: Data. Collection Limitations

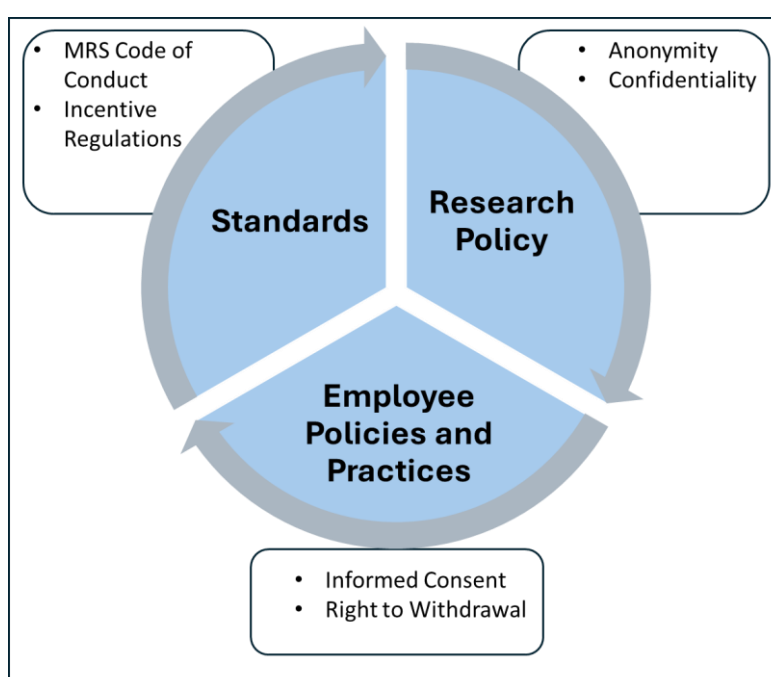
#	Limitation	Action to Overcome Limitation
1	Challenges related to the contact details of beneficiaries were experienced. These included instances whereby the contact details provided were incorrect (i.e. they did not belong to the person included in the database, or someone who had completed a learning programme) or instances whereby the numbers were invalid/non-operational. This limited the number of beneficiaries with whom surveys were able to be conducted.	In an attempt to overcome this challenge and enhance the survey response rate, where a number was invalid, electronic surveys were distributed to beneficiaries to request them to complete the survey. Furthermore, where the number was for incorrect, individuals were requested to refer the enumerator to the correct individual, if practical.
2	Certain beneficiaries, when contacted to complete a survey, noted that they had already participated in tracer studies conducted in previous years. Furthermore, some beneficiaries and Employers declined to participate in the study, with the majority of these individuals indicating that they were not interested in providing input to the study.	Individuals who had previously participated in tracer studies or who declined to participate were flagged in order to ensure these individuals were not contacted again
3	Initially, the number of survey responses received from Employers that had hosted Learners for the various learning programmes was relatively low.	In order to overcome this challenge, up to 3 call attempts were made to Employers in an attempt to conduct surveys telephonically, in addition to 3

#	Limitation	Action to Overcome Limitation
		email prompts that were distributed. Overall, sufficient responses were received from Employers, as agreed between CATHSSETA and Redflank.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Below is a diagram highlighting the key ethical considerations that underpinned Redflank's research and data analysis approach during this engagement.

Figure 6: Project Ethical Considerations



These 3 key areas are detailed further below.

Standards

Redflank and its employees followed the Code of Conduct set out by the Market Research Society. The comprehensive MRS Code covers research from the inception to design and from execution to use. It is relevant for market, social and opinion research. The principles of the code, which Redflank adhered to, are listed as:

1. Researchers shall be straightforward and honest in all their professional and business relationships.
2. Researchers shall be transparent as to the subject and purpose of data collection.
3. Researchers shall respect the rights and well-being of all individuals.

4. Researchers shall ensure that respondents are not harmed or adversely affected by their professional activities.
5. Researchers shall balance the needs of individuals, clients, and their professional activities.
6. Researchers shall exercise independent professional judgement in the design, conduct and reporting of their professional activities.
7. Researchers shall ensure that their professional activities are conducted by persons with appropriate training, qualifications, and experience.
8. Researchers shall protect the reputation and integrity of the profession.

The MRS further sets out regulations for the administering of incentives, which Redflank adhered to when offering incentives. These regulations are as follows:

1. Members must ensure that where incentives are used to encourage participation in projects, incentives are proportionate and do not constitute, or are not perceived to constitute, a bribe.
2. Where incentives are offered to encourage participation in projects, members must ensure that participants are clearly informed of details such as what the incentive will be and whether conditions are attached to the administering of the incentive, e.g. completion of a specific task
3. Members must ensure that incentives are not offered that require the participant to spend any money. Participants must not be offered price discounts as incentives because claiming the incentive would involve the participant paying the balance after discount. However, the offer of monetary vouchers is permissible if it does not necessitate expenditure on the part of participants.
4. Members should not use the goods or services offered by themselves or their clients, or vouchers for these goods or services as incentives, gifts, or prizes.
5. Members must ensure that participants are not promised as part of a research project that they will receive gifts of the client's goods or of client branded material at the end of an interview. Such gifts are unrelated to the research purpose and amount to direct marketing or promotion.
6. The administration and fulfilment of incentives must not be used by members or clients as a means of collecting participants' personal details for use for other purposes. Where a member offers participants incentives to participate in a client's study, the

member or (or their sub-contractor) should administer the collection of participant's details and the delivery of any incentives promised to them.

7. Members must ensure that where incentives are offered by an organisation's in-house research department or unit, personal details of all participants eligible for the incentive remain confidential and not accessible to anyone in the organisation outside the research department or unit.

Redflank's Research Policy and Practices

As per standard ethical issues and considerations, respondents were given the content, sponsorship, and purpose of the research so that they were able to make an informed judgment about whether they wished to participate. Any assurances, such as confidentiality or anonymity, were also kept (Qualtrics, 2020).

Additionally, Redflank fully disclosed to CATHSSETA the limitations and shortcomings of the research to avoid use of methods that deliberately introduce bias into the results. The research deliverables include information on who conducted consultations, exact wording and sequencing of questions (call recordings), description of the population, sample sizes and the method, place and dates of data collection (call logs), as recommended by standard research practices (Qualtrics, 2020).

Confidentiality

Data collected from all survey tools will be kept strictly confidential and no data or form of data will be shared with any person not authorised to view it.

Informed Consent

An oral explanation of the study and taking of oral consent was carried out in CATI surveys. For electronic surveys, all of the relevant information was given on the first 'page' of the survey or in the email containing the link to the survey.

Right to Withdrawal

Respondents were advised that they could exit the electronic survey at any point. However, they were also advised that they cannot withdraw any responses that have been made at the point of exit – if they wished to 'erase' their responses before exiting the survey, they would need to backtrack through the survey.

4. Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Interpretation

The following sections detail the findings from the data collection through the analysis and interpretation thereof. Additionally, the section provides a brief overview of the data analysis sample.

4.1 Data Analysis Sample Overview

As detailed in section 3.3 of this report, the population for this study included both the beneficiaries of learning programmes as well as employers. Overall, CATHSSETA provided databases that included contact details for 767 beneficiaries as well as 53 employers. As per the Project approach, contact was attempted with both beneficiaries and employers for whom contact details were available and accurate, with each individual being contacted at least three times at different intervals and days. Overall, 378 beneficiary consultations and 18 employer consultations were completed, resulting in a 49% response rate for beneficiaries and a 34% response rate for employers.

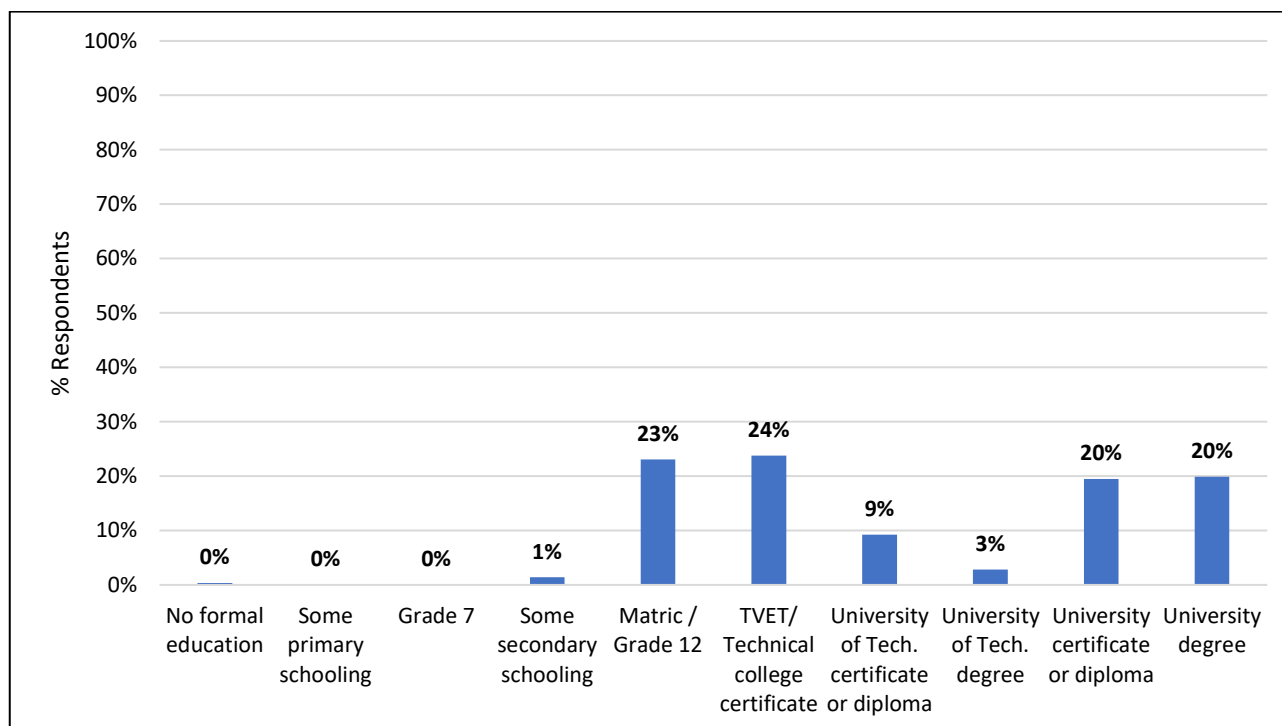
4.2 Beneficiary Profile Overview

A comprehensive overview of the beneficiaries, encompassing both their overall characteristics and more detailed information regarding demographics, education, and employment details, was provided through surveys. This included factors such as race, gender, age, and geographic location. Additionally, the study assessed the specific learning programmes beneficiaries engaged in, their employment statuses before and after the learning programmes, the nature of their current employment, where applicable, and whether they furthered their studies after completing a CATHSSETA learning programme. The following sections provides an overview of the profile of the beneficiaries that completed the survey, in line with the factors mentioned above.

4.2.1 Details of the Previous Form of Learning

The figure below details the highest level of education successfully completed by the beneficiaries.

Figure 7: Details of the Highest Level of Education Completed the Beneficiaries



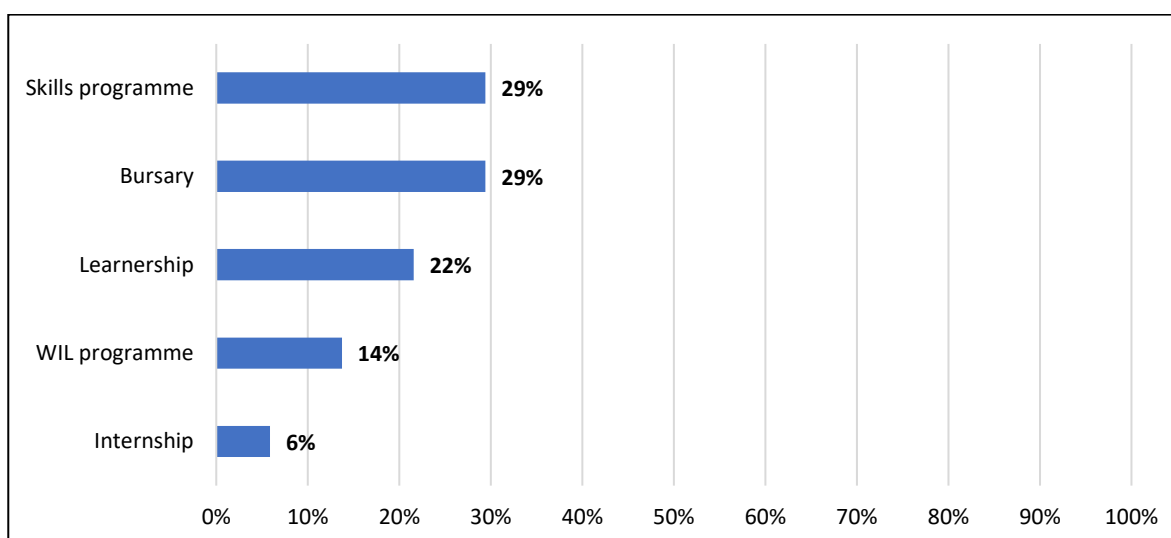
Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=282

As seen in the figure above, 23% of beneficiaries have successfully completed a matric level qualification, followed by 24% who have completed a TVET/ technical college certificate. 20% of beneficiaries have either completed a University certificate or diploma or a University degree.

Further to the above, the figure below illustrates the previous forms of learning programmes that the beneficiaries had been participated in.

Figure 8: Details of the Previous Form of Learning Programme Enrolled in by the Beneficiaries



Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

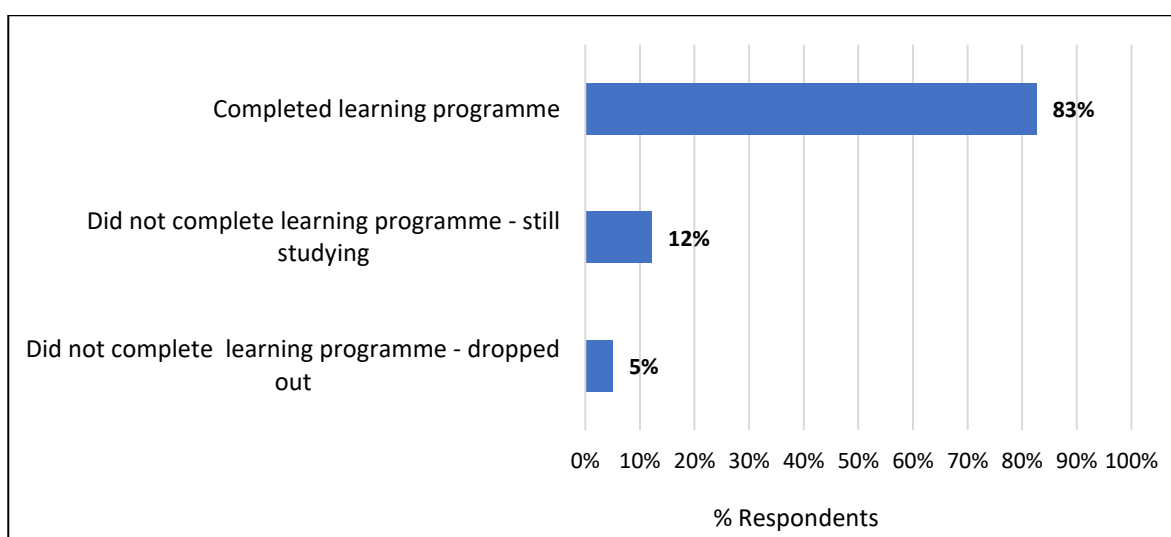
n=51

As can be seen in the figure above, of the beneficiaries who indicated they had been enrolled in a previous learning programme, 29% of beneficiaries were previously enrolled in skills programmes, while 29% of beneficiaries had previously been enrolled in bursary programmes. Additionally, 22% of beneficiaries had stated that they were enrolled in learnerships before the programme.

4.2.2 Learning Programme Completion by Beneficiaries

Figure 9 below depicts the completion rate of the beneficiaries who participated in the study.

Figure 9: Learning Programme Completion Rate



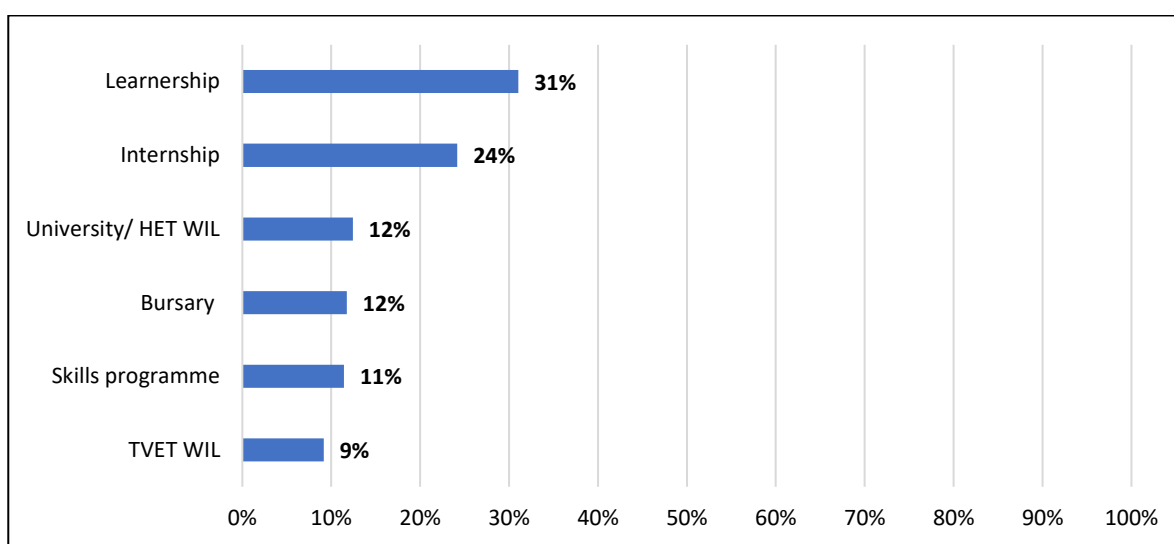
Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=432

As can be seen, 83% (n=357) of the beneficiaries that participated in the study completed the CATHSSETA funded learning programme that they were a beneficiary of. Beneficiaries that had not completed their learning programme due to them still studying made up 12% (n=53), whilst 5% (n=22) of beneficiaries indicated that they had dropped out of the learning programme. Some of the reasons cited by beneficiaries as to why they dropped out included pregnancy, falling sick and finding job opportunities elsewhere.

The figure that follows provides an overview of the various CATHSSETA-funded learning programmes that the beneficiaries who responded to the survey participated in.

Figure 10: Learning Programme Completion by Type of Programme



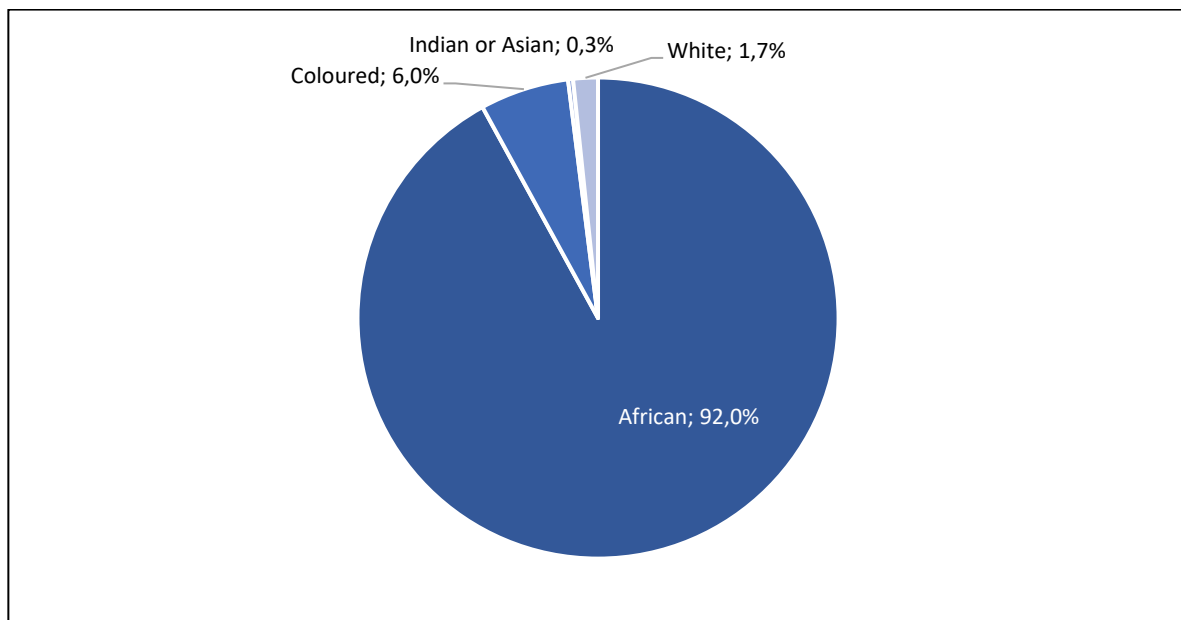
Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=306

As per the above figure, beneficiaries that were enrolled in learnerships accounted for 31% of the respondents, whilst 24% were involved in internships and 11% completed a skills programme. Learners that had completed or were busy with a University/ HET WIL programme accounted for 12% of beneficiaries, whilst those that had completed a TVET WIL programme accounted for 9%. Learners that received bursaries from CATHSSETA made up 12% of the total beneficiaries.

4.2.3 Race

The figure below depicts the racial demographics of the beneficiaries that participated in the study.

Figure 11: Beneficiaries' Race

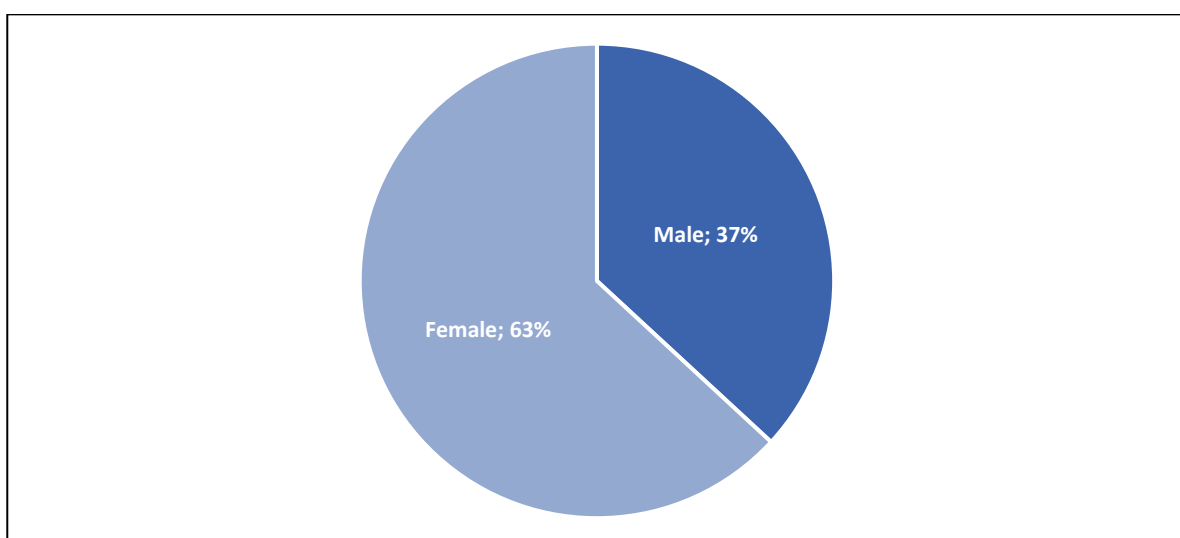
Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=301

As illustrated above, 92% of surveyed beneficiaries were African, whilst 6% were Coloured, followed by White beneficiaries who accounted for 2% whilst Indian or Asian beneficiaries represented 0,33%.

4.2.4 Gender

The figure below represents the gender distribution of the beneficiaries who participated in the study.

Figure 12: Gender Profile of Beneficiaries

Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

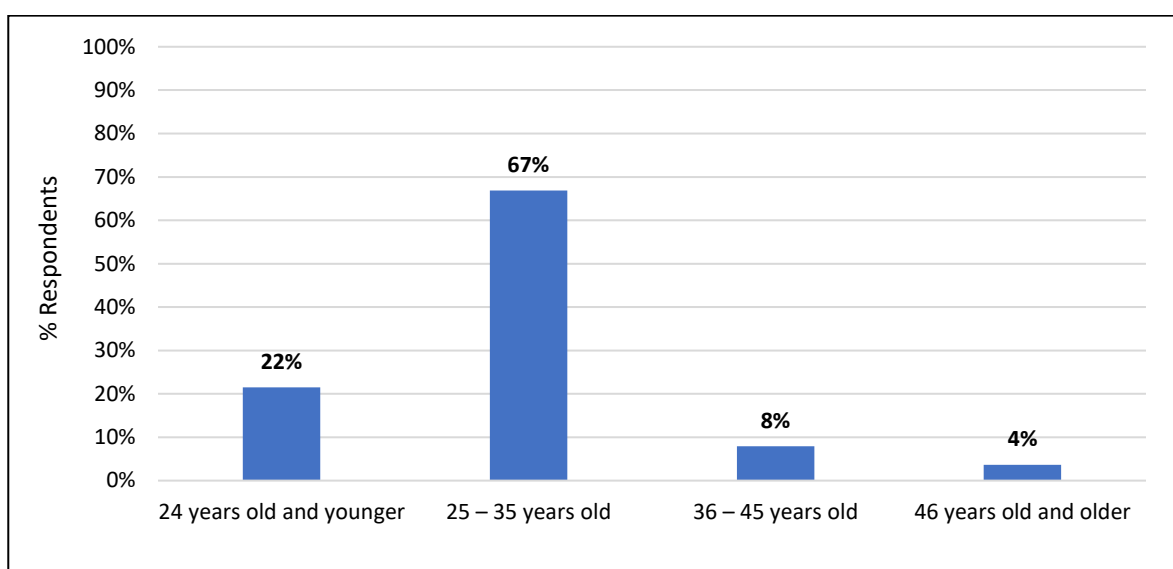
n=302

As seen above, 63% of the beneficiaries who participated in the study are female, whilst 37% are male.

4.2.5 Age

The figure below illustrates the age distribution of survey beneficiaries.

Figure 13: Age Profile of Beneficiaries



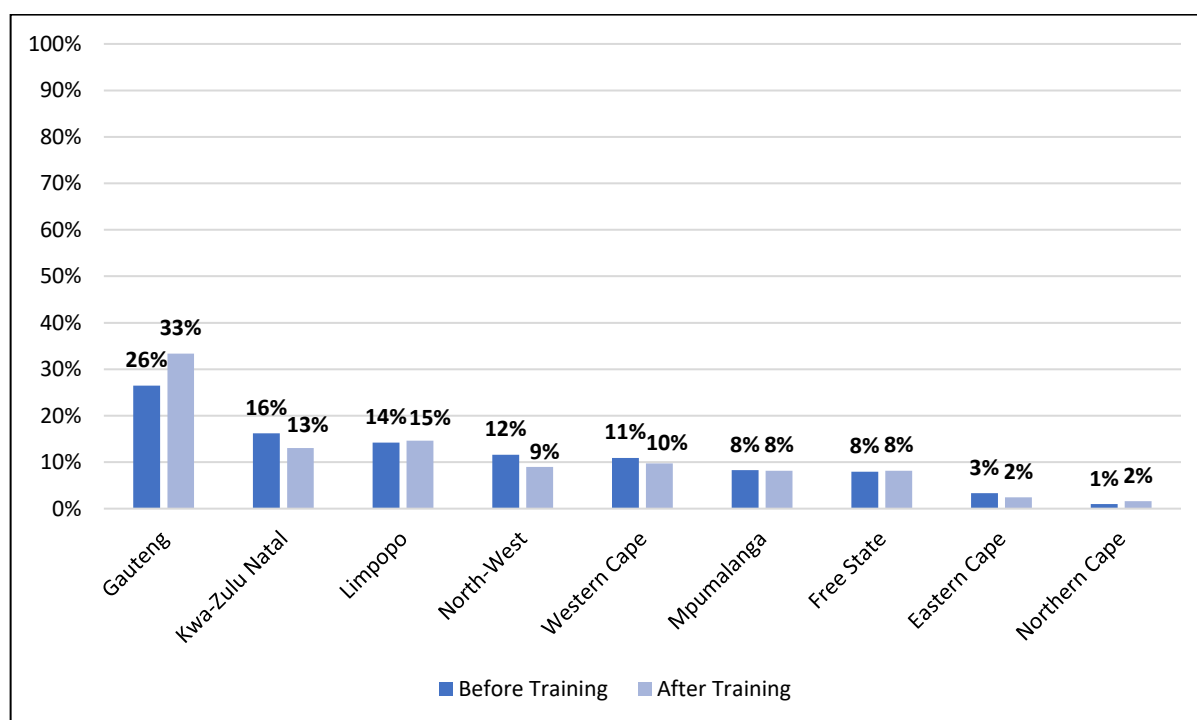
Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=302

As illustrated above, 89% of the surveyed beneficiaries were 35 years old or younger in age, with 67% of the total beneficiaries being between the ages of 25 and 35 and 22% being 24 years old or younger. Of the remaining beneficiaries, 8% were between the ages of 36 and 45 years old, whilst 4% were 46 years old or older.

4.2.6 Geographic Location of Beneficiaries Before and After the Learning Programme

The figure below depicts the geographic location of beneficiaries before and after the CATHSSETA funded training intervention.

Figure 14: Geographic Location of Beneficiaries

Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=302 (before training) *n*=123 (after training)

Before training commenced, 26% of Learners were located in Gauteng, followed by KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo, which accounted for 16% and 14%, respectively. The Northern Cape and Eastern Cape had the lowest percentage of beneficiaries before training with 1% and 3% of beneficiaries located in these provinces, respectively. After completing their training, 33% of beneficiaries were in Gauteng, representing an increase of 6% when compared to the percentage before training. Limpopo had the second largest number of beneficiaries, with 15% staying in the province after training. Only 2% of beneficiaries were located in the Eastern Cape and Northern Cape after their training.

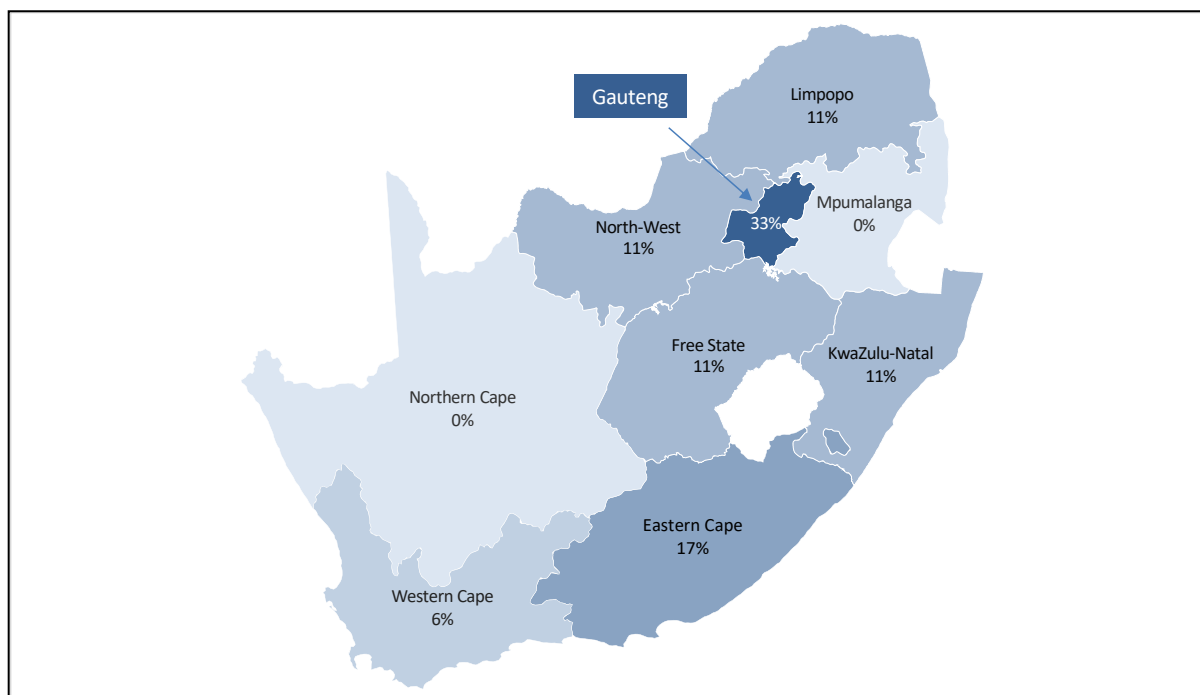
4.3 Employer Profile Overview

In addition to seeking input from the beneficiaries of the learning programme, the study also sought input from employers. This section provides an overview of the geographic location, sub-sector affiliation and learning programme involvement of the host employers who participated in the study.

4.3.1 Geographic Location

Depicted in the figure below is the geographic location of employers that were involved in the CATHSSETA funded training interventions.

Figure 15: Geographic Location of Employers



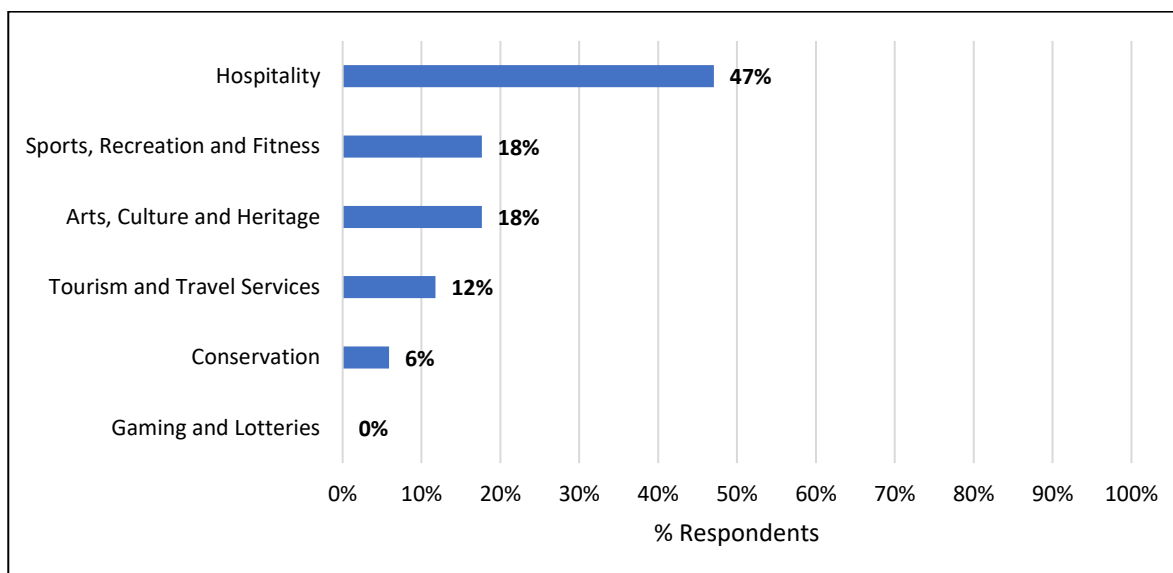
Source: CATHSSETA Employer Track and Tracer Survey

n=18

As can be seen above, 33% of the employers that responded to the survey were based in the Gauteng province, followed by 17% which were based in the Eastern Cape. Employers based in KwaZulu-Natal, North-West, Limpopo and Free State each accounted for 11% of all employers each. None of the employers that responded to the survey were based in either the Northern Cape or Mpumalanga.

4.3.2 Sub-sector

The figure below provides an overview of the sub-sectors that the employers who were involved the CATHSSETA funded learning programmes operate under.

Figure 16: Employer Sub-sectors

Source: CATHSSETA Employer Track and Tracer Survey

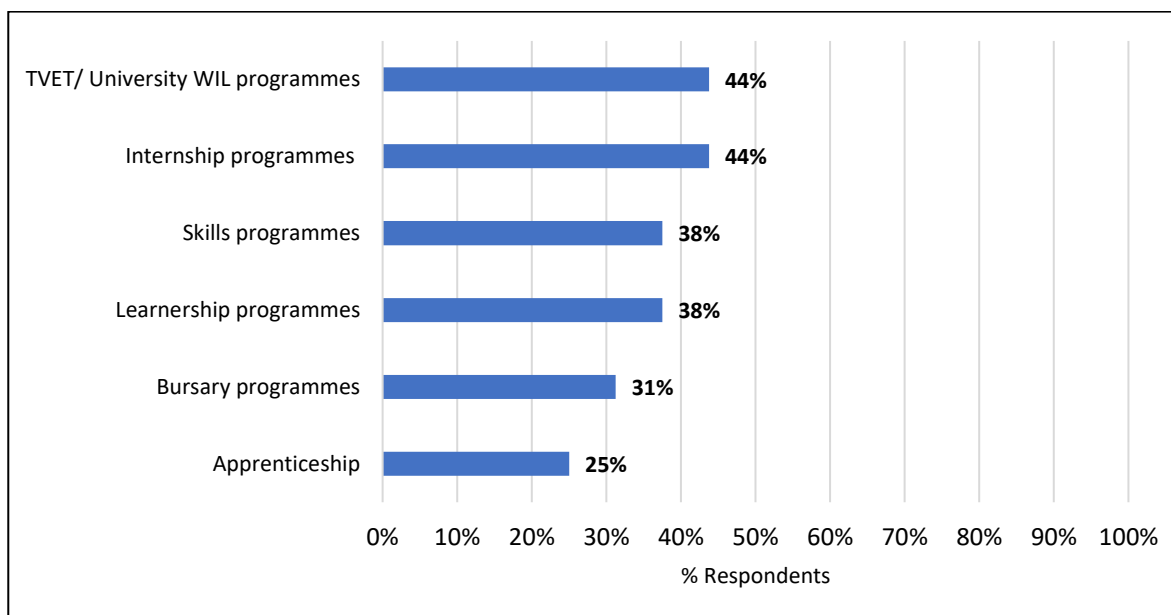
n=17

As can be seen, 47% of employers that responded to the survey operated within the Hospitality sub-sector. Employers from the Sports, Recreation and Fitness as well as Arts, Culture and Heritage sub-sectors each accounted for 18% of employers, whilst employers from the Conservation sub-sector accounted for 6%. None of the employers that responded to the survey were in the Gaming and Lotteries sub-sector.

4.3.3 Employer Involvement in Learning Programmes

The figure below illustrates the different programmes that employers have been involved. As part of the survey, employers were able to select more than one programme.

Figure 17: Employer Involvement in Different Programmes



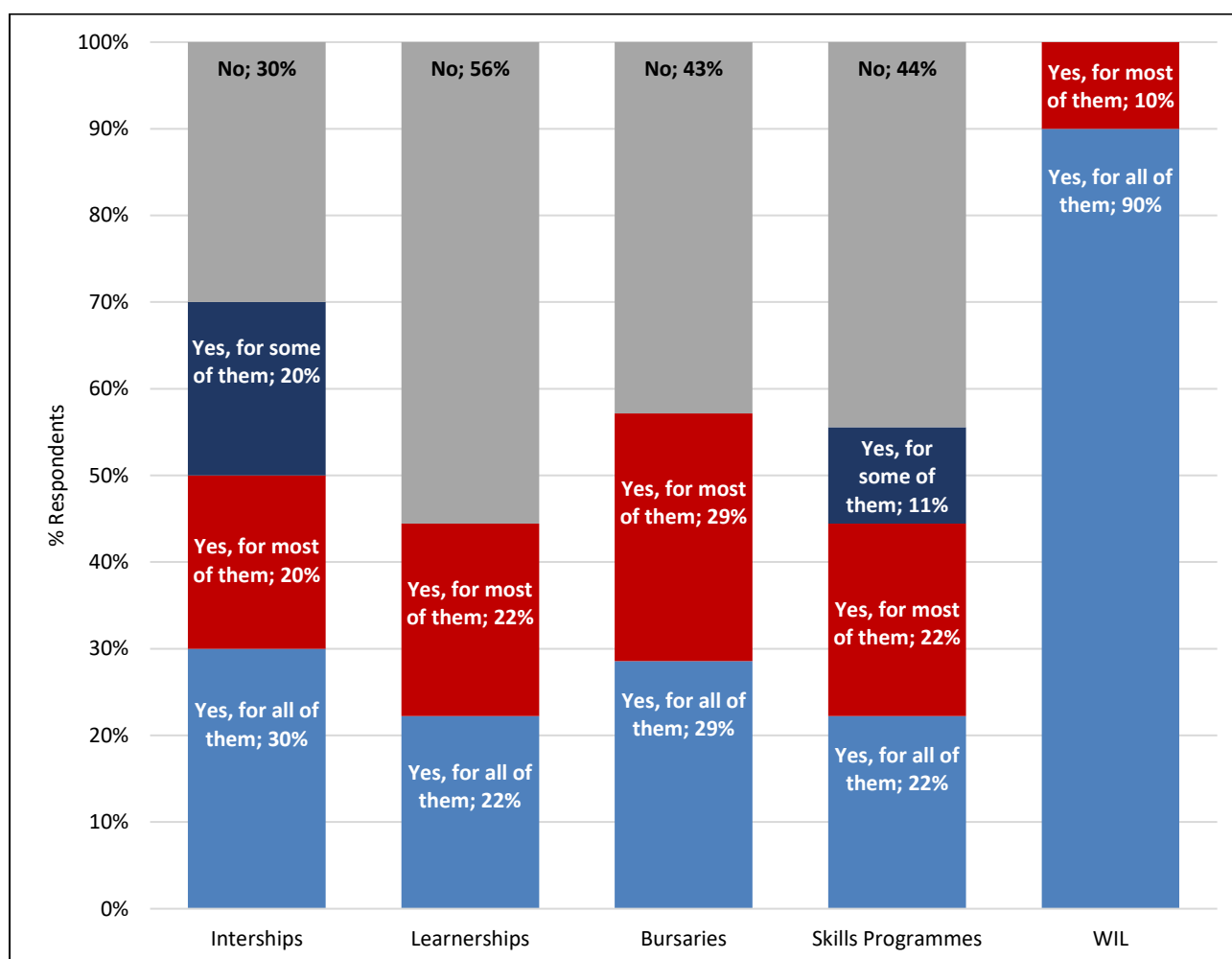
Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=16

As illustrated in the figure above, employers were mostly involved in TVET/University WIL programmes and Internship programmes with each programme being selected by 44% of employers. 38% of employers indicated that they were involved in both Skills programmes and Learnerships, whilst 31% of employers were involved in Bursary programmes and 25% were involved in Apprenticeships.

In addition to understanding the learning programmes which employers had been involved in, the survey also looked to understand whether the completion of the various learning programmes was a requirement of the jobs that beneficiaries are currently working in their organisation.

Figure 18: Completion of Learning Programmes by Beneficiaries as a Requirement for the Job



Source: CATHSSETA Employer Track and Tracer Survey

n=16

As can be seen in the figure above, the learning programme which was a requirement for most beneficiaries was the WIL learning programme, with 90% of employers indicating it was a requirement for all beneficiaries, and 10% of employers indicating it was a requirement for most beneficiaries. The learning programme which was a requirement for the fewest beneficiaries was the learnerships, with 56% of employers indicating that it was not a requirement for beneficiaries. In terms of the internship programme, 30% of employers noted that completion of the programme was a requirement for all their employees, 20% of employers noted that it was a requirement for most of their employees, 20% stated that it was a requirement for some of their employees whilst 30% noted that it was not a requirement for their employees.

In terms of bursaries, it can be seen that 43% of employers stated that completing a qualification through a bursary programme was not a requirement for the beneficiaries. Conversely, 29% of employers noted that it was a requirement for most beneficiaries whilst

29% noted it was a requirement for most beneficiaries. It can further be noted that just over 40% of employers state that completing a Short Course is not a requirement for the job. On the other hand, 22% state that it is a requirement for all beneficiaries, with the same percentage of employers stating that it is a requirement for most beneficiaries. The graph further illustrates that 11% of employers state that completion of Short Courses is a requirement for some beneficiaries.

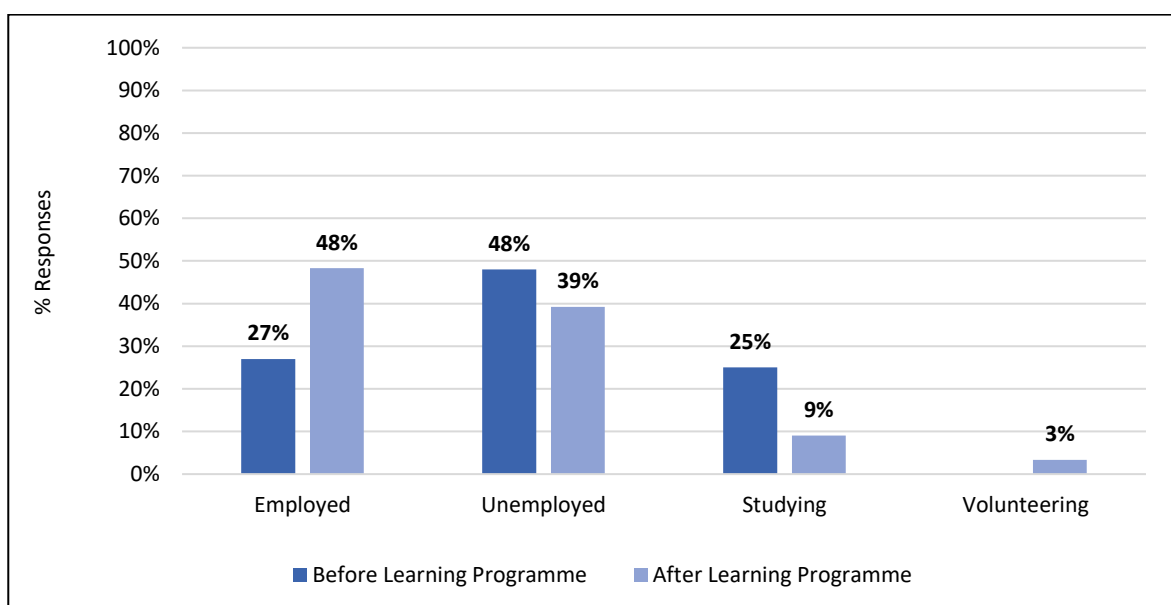
4.4 Beneficiaries Pathways Upon Completion of the Learning Programmes

A key objective of the Track and Tracer study is to understand the pathways of beneficiaries upon completion of the learning programmes as this facilitates the evaluation of the effectiveness of the programme, provides valuable feedback for the improvement of learning programmes and further provides insights into the impact of such initiatives. By tracking the pathways after completion, CATHSSETA, employers and training providers can ensure the continued relevance and adaptability of learning programs to meet evolving professional needs.

The sections below provide further insight into the pathways of the beneficiaries that participated in this study and who completed the learning programmes.

4.4.1 Status and Nature of Employment Before and After Training

The figure below illustrates the change in employment status of beneficiaries before and after completing the respective learning programmes. Employed beneficiaries include those who found employment, changed jobs, became self-employed or remained at the same job after the programme. Overall, 48% of beneficiaries were employed after completing the learning programme.

Figure 19: Employment Status Before and After Learning Programme

Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey n= 302 (before training) n=298 (after training)

As can be seen in the figure above, 48% (n=144) of beneficiaries were unemployed before the learning programme, whilst 27% of beneficiaries were employed, and 25% (n=76) were studying. Following the completion of the learning programme, as depicted in the figure above, 48% (n=144) of the beneficiaries were able to secure employment, whilst 9% (n=27) pursued further studies, and 3% (n=10) volunteered. However, 39% of beneficiaries remained unemployed. The relatively high levels of unemployment post completion of the learning programmes may, thus, be an area to investigate further to ensure that the learning programmes are providing the necessary skills and experience that will enhance the employability of beneficiaries and that align to the sector needs.

The table below contains further insight regarding the beneficiaries employment status before and after training, segmented according to the various learning programmes.

Table 6: Employment Status Before and After Training by Learning Programme

	Bursary		Internship		Learnership		Skills Programme		WIL (University/HET)		WIL (TVET)	
	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After
Employed	17%	51%	17%	36%	46%	65%	35%	38%	3%	35%	22%	52%
Unemployed	31%	31%	65%	51%	43%	27%	59%	47%	30%	54%	26%	30%
Studying	53%	14%	18%	6%	11%	6%	6%	12%	68%	11%	52%	15%

	Bursary		Internship		Learnership		Skills Programme		WIL (University/HET)		WIL (TVET)	
	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After
Volunteering	0%	3%	0%	7%	0%	2%	0%	3%	0%	0%	0%	4%

Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey n= 302 (before training) n=298 (after training)

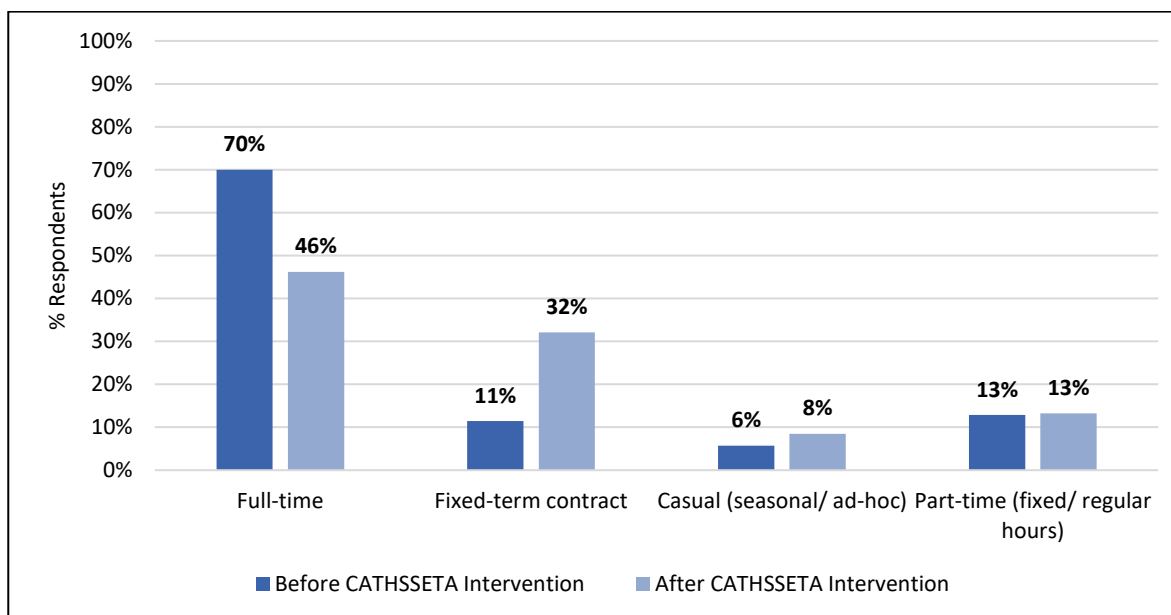
As outlined in the table above, 51% of beneficiaries who received bursaries from CATHSSETA are employed, representing an increase of 34%. Across the learning programmes, Learnerships had the highest number of employed beneficiaries upon completion, with 65% of beneficiaries indicating this. According to Mazza (2021), it may be noted that learnerships provide both theory as well as practical working experience. The nature of this programme may, therefore, play a role in contributing to the employability of the beneficiaries that participate in learnerships.

Furthermore, the learning programme with the fewest employed beneficiaries upon completion is the University WIL programme, with 54% of beneficiaries noting that they are unemployed. It may be noted that WIL programs are either done at the end of an individual's degree, during the final year of study or throughout the study period. It can be observed that TVET WIL contained the largest number of beneficiaries that decided to continue studying, indicating that these beneficiaries may have conducted their WIL programme during the course of their degree.

Inferential Analysis: Employment Status after Training and Learning Programme

Chi-Square tests, using a significance level of 0.05, reveal a significant relationship between the type of learning programme and the employment status of the beneficiary after completing the programme, implying that whether a beneficiary is employed or unemployed after participating in the programme is likely to differ per learning programme.

In addition to assessing beneficiaries' employment statuses, the nature of employment for beneficiaries that were employed before and after the CATHSSETA funded training intervention was also assessed. The figure below illustrates these results.

Figure 20: Nature of Employment of Employed Beneficiaries

Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=70 (before training) *n*=106 (after training)

Of the beneficiaries that were employed before the training intervention, 70% were employed full-time, 11% were on fixed-term contracts, whilst 13% and 6% were employed on a part-time (fixed/regular hours) basis or casual (seasonal/ad-hoc) basis, respectively. The figure illustrates that 46% of beneficiaries that were employed after the training were employed on a full-time basis, 32% were on fixed-term contracts, 13% were employed on a part-time (fixed/regular hours) basis and 8% were casual (seasonal/ad-hoc) employees.

Key Findings

- The learning programmes demonstrated a positive impact, with a shift from 27% employment before the programme to 48% employment afterwards
- Beneficiaries receiving bursaries experienced a substantial increase in employment from 17% to 51% highlighting the positive impact of financial support on employment outcomes after the learning programme. Furthermore, 65% of beneficiaries who participated in learnerships were employed upon completion of the learnership. Further analysis revealed a significant relationship between the type of learning programme and beneficiaries' employment statuses.

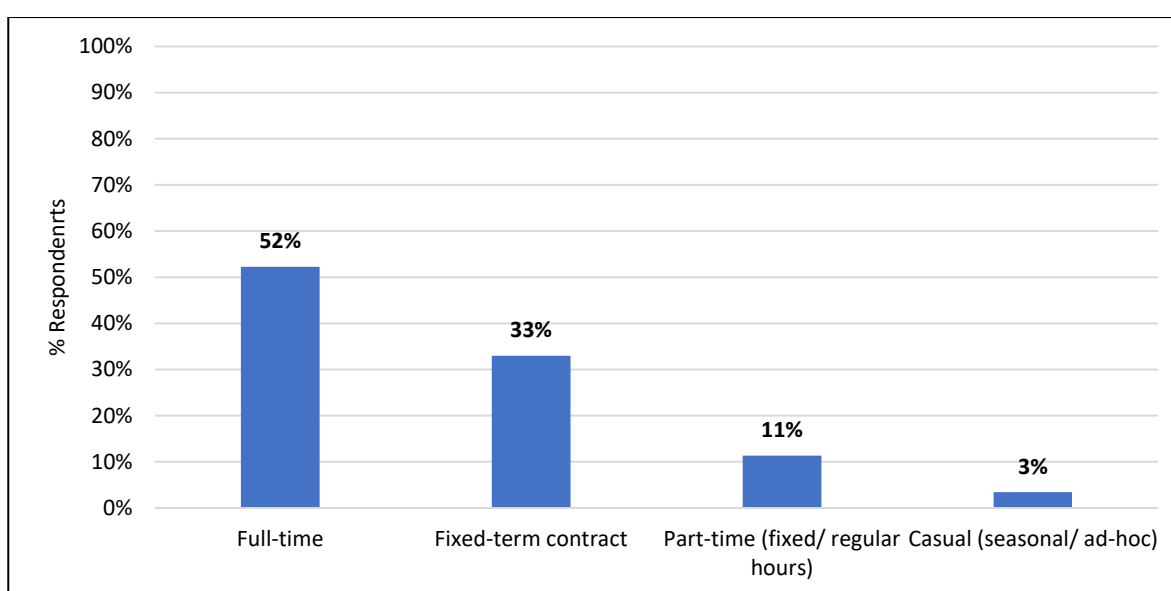
The subsections that follow below seek to explore further details regarding the pathways followed by beneficiaries upon completion of their respective learning programmes in order to understand the specific impact of the learning programmes.

4.4.1.1 Employed After Training

The section below aims to provide further insight relating to the employment of beneficiaries upon completion of the learning programmes, including the nature of the employment found, the time taken to find employment and whether the employment found is in line with the training received. Understanding the nature of the beneficiaries employment is crucial for evaluating the effectiveness of the learning programmes as well as identifying areas for improvement.

As noted in the section above, following the completion of their respective learning programmes, 48% of beneficiaries indicated that they were employed – with 31% of these beneficiaries obtaining formal employment. The figure below illustrates the nature of employment of the beneficiaries who indicated they were employed after training.

Figure 21: Nature of Employment After Training: Employed Beneficiaries



Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=88

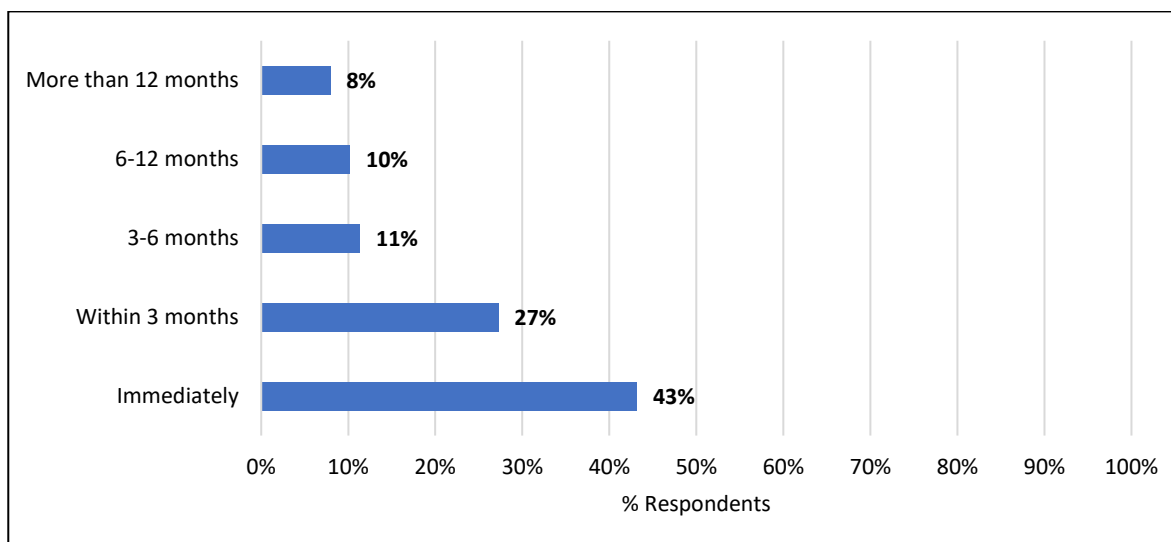
As illustrated above, 52% of the beneficiaries who were able to find employment were employed on a full-time basis (i.e. with a contract that lasts indefinitely or until the date of resignation or retirement (Adams & Adams, 2021)), while 33% of beneficiaries were employed on fixed-term contracts (i.e. with a contract that expires automatically on the arrival of a specific date (Adams & Adams, 2021)). Additionally, 11% of the beneficiaries who secured employment were working on a part-time basis with fixed/regular hours while 3% were casual, seasonal employees.

Inferential Analysis: Nature of Employment After Training and Learning Programme

Chi-Square tests, using a significance level of 0.05, reveal a significant relationship between the type of learning programme and the nature of the employment after completing the programme, implying that the nature of the employment found after participating in the programme is likely to differ per learning programme.

In addition to assessing the nature of employment, beneficiaries were requested to indicate the time it had taken them to find employment after completing training. The figure below highlights these results.

Figure 22: Time Taken to Find Employment After Learning Programme



Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=88

As seen above, 43% of beneficiaries indicated that they were able to find employment immediately after they completed training, 27% secured employment after 3 months, while 11% noted that it took them between 3 to 6 months to find a job. Additionally, 10% of beneficiaries indicated that it took between 6 to 12 months, while 8% said it took more than 12 months to find a job after they had completed training.

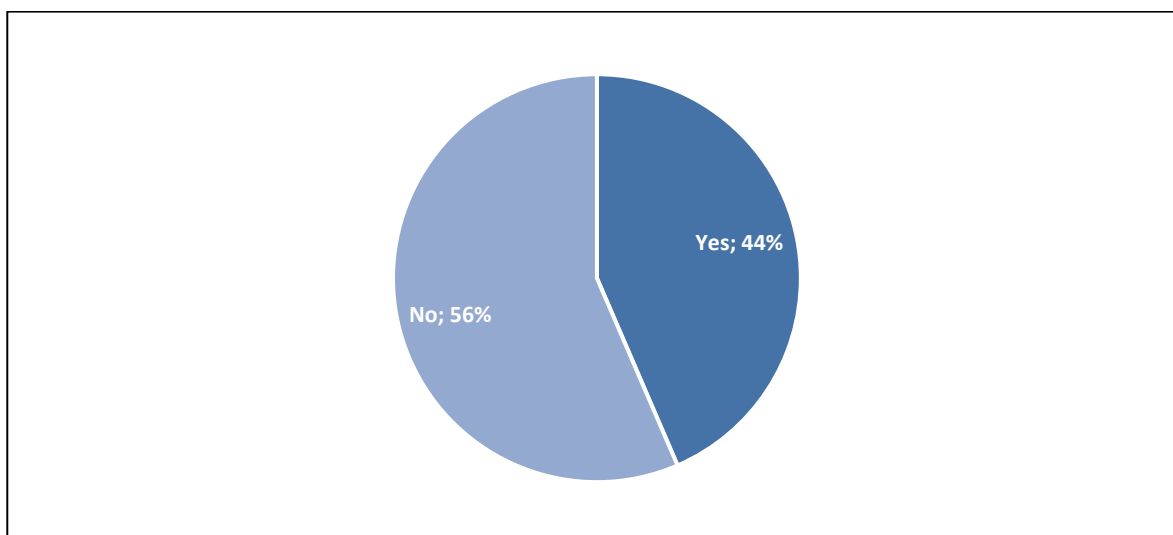
As can be seen above, 29% of beneficiaries did not obtain employment within 3 months of completing the learning programme.

Inferential Analysis: Time Taken to Find a Job After Training and Learning Programme

Chi-Square tests, using a significance level of 0.05, reveal a significant relationship between the type of learning programme and the time taken to find a job after completing the programme, implying that the time it will take to find a job after participating in the programme is likely to differ per learning programme.

The figure below indicates whether the beneficiaries were employed by the same employer that facilitated their training or not.

Figure 23: Currently Employed by Employer who Conducted Training



Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

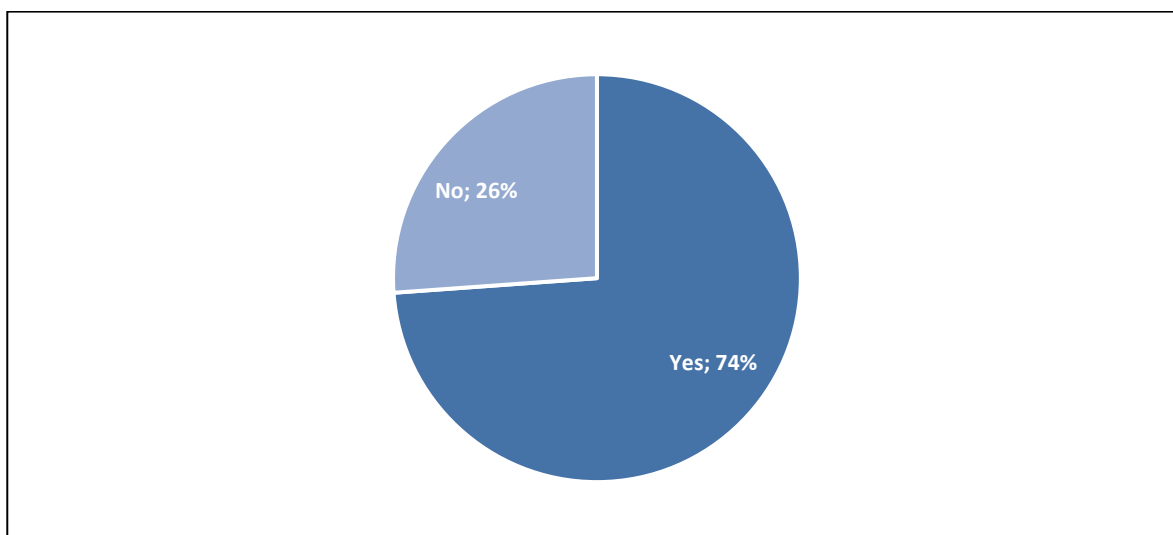
n=85

As can be seen, 44% of beneficiaries indicated that they were employed by the company/employer that facilitated their training. Employers who employed beneficiaries upon completion of the learning programmes cited reasons such as the beneficiaries' strong performance during the programme.

On the other hand, 56% of beneficiaries indicated they were not employed by the company they received training at, with employers citing various reasons contributing to their inability to employ the beneficiaries, including limited financial resources. However, employers have cited their desire to employ the beneficiaries if they had the financial resources to do so.

Further to the above, the figure below explores whether the job that beneficiaries obtained after training was in line with their training or not.

Figure 24: Job in Line with Training Received



Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=88

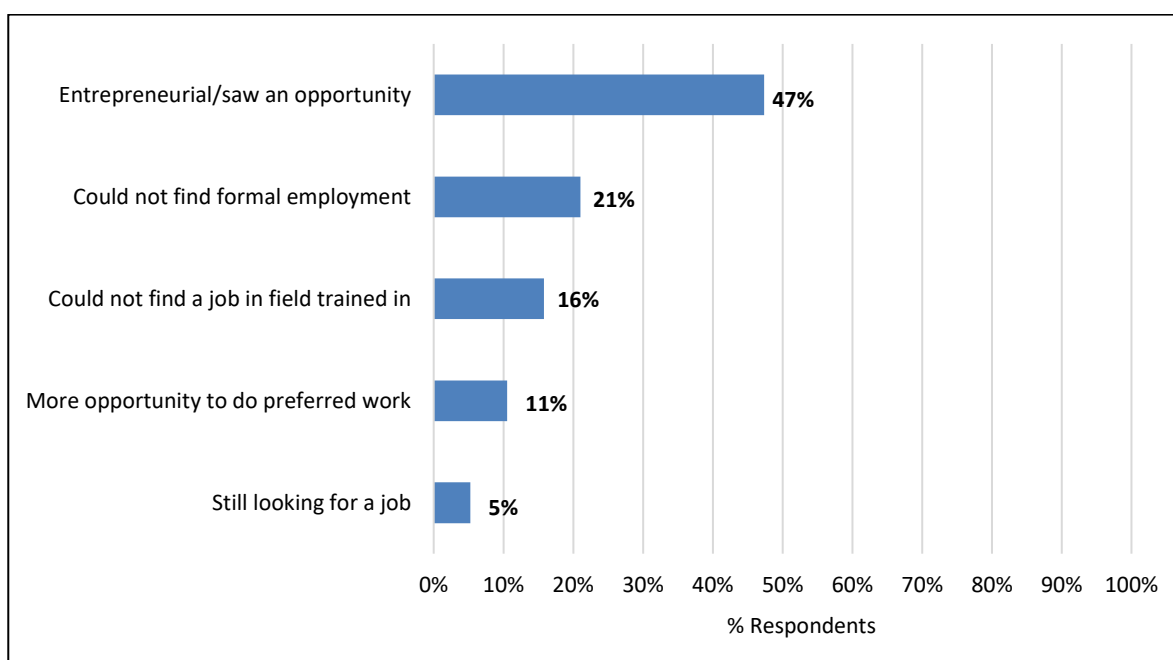
The figure above illustrates that 74% of beneficiaries indicated that their job is in line with the training received while 26% indicated that their job is not in line with the training they received.

Key Finding

- Of the beneficiaries that were able to find formal employment after the learning programme, 52% were employed in full-time positions. It may be noted that 43% of beneficiaries found employment immediately after the programme.

4.4.1.2 Self-Employed After Training

In understanding the pathways of the beneficiaries, it is important to note that not all beneficiaries took the path of formal employment, with 7% of beneficiaries opting to become self-employed and start their own businesses. The figure below provides further detail regarding the reasons why these beneficiaries chose to be self-employed or to start their own business.

Figure 25: Reasons for Being Self-employed

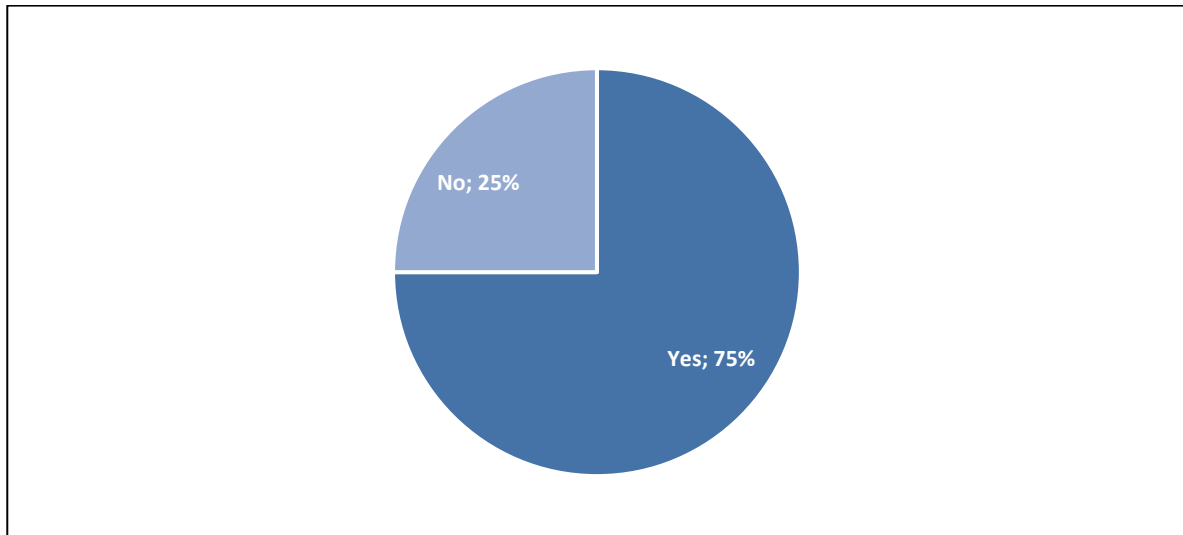
Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=19

As can be seen above, 47% of self-employed beneficiaries cited their entrepreneurial nature and the identification of an opportunity as the driving force behind starting their own business. A further 21% mentioned their entry into entrepreneurship stemmed from challenges related to securing formal employment. Interestingly, 5% are still actively seeking employment while managing their businesses.

As seen above 11% of beneficiaries noted that entrepreneurship allowed them to engage in the work they preferred, whilst 16% noted that they started their own business due to an inability to find employment in the field that they trained in. To delve deeper into these dynamics, the figure below highlights responses from self-employed beneficiaries regarding the alignment of their businesses with the training they received.

Figure 26: Business in Relation to Training Received



Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=20

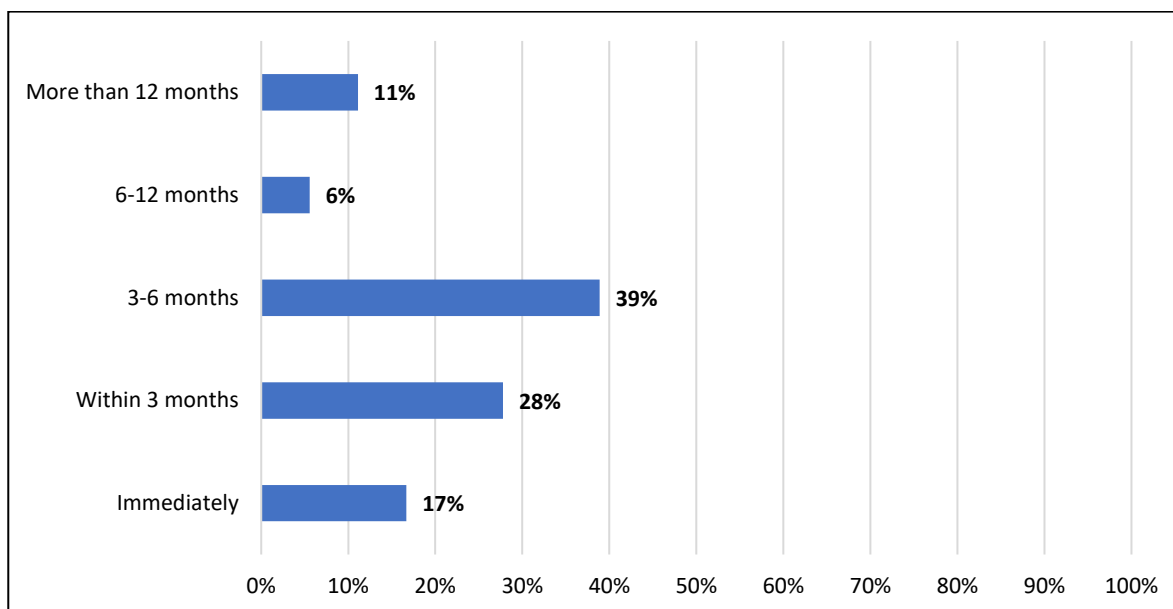
The figure above illustrates that 75% of beneficiaries indicated that their business was related to the training they received while 25% said that their business was not related.

4.4.1.3 Changed Jobs After Training

One of the beneficiary pathways that was assessed as part of the study related to whether the beneficiary changed jobs upon completion of the learning programme. The section below contains details about these beneficiaries.

The figure below provides an indication of how long after the completion of the learning programmes the beneficiaries changed jobs.

Figure 27: Time Period after which Beneficiaries Changed Jobs

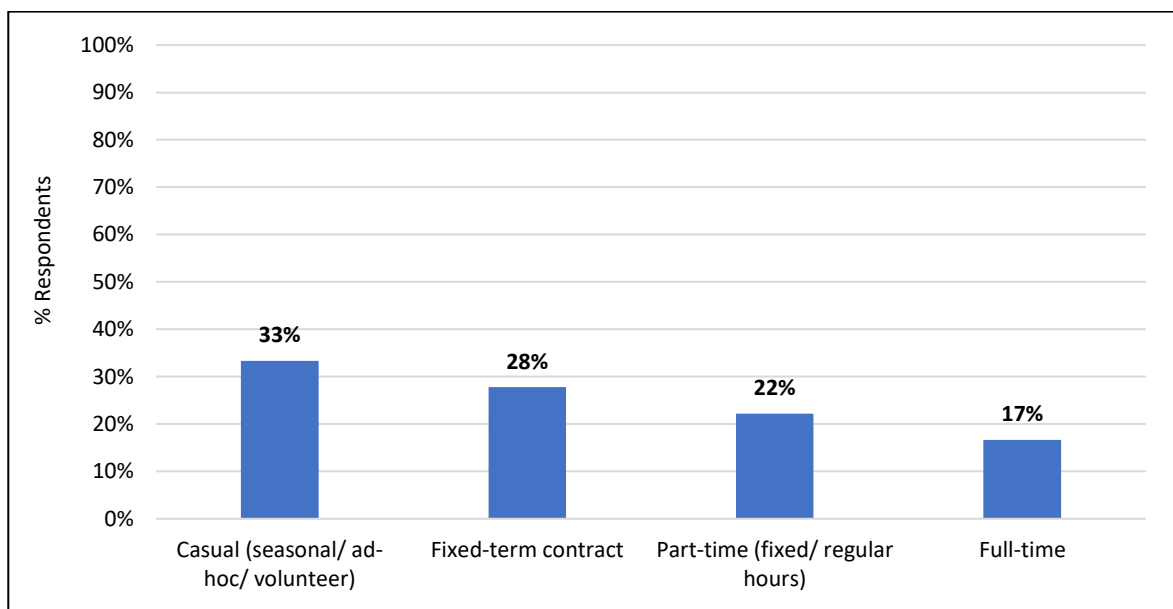


Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=18

It can be noted from the figure above that 39% of beneficiaries changed jobs between 3 to 6 months after they had completed the learning programmes, followed by 28% of beneficiaries who stated that they changed jobs within 3 months of completing the programme and 17% of beneficiaries who noted that they changed jobs immediately. Beneficiaries that changed jobs more than 12 months after programme completion made up 11% of the beneficiaries, followed by 6% of beneficiaries who changed jobs after 6 to 12 months.

In addition to understanding the time period after which beneficiaries changed jobs, the nature of the job that beneficiaries moved to was also assessed. The figure below provides an overview of the nature of employment for the beneficiaries who changed jobs after training.

Figure 28: Nature of Employment of Beneficiaries who Changed Jobs After Training

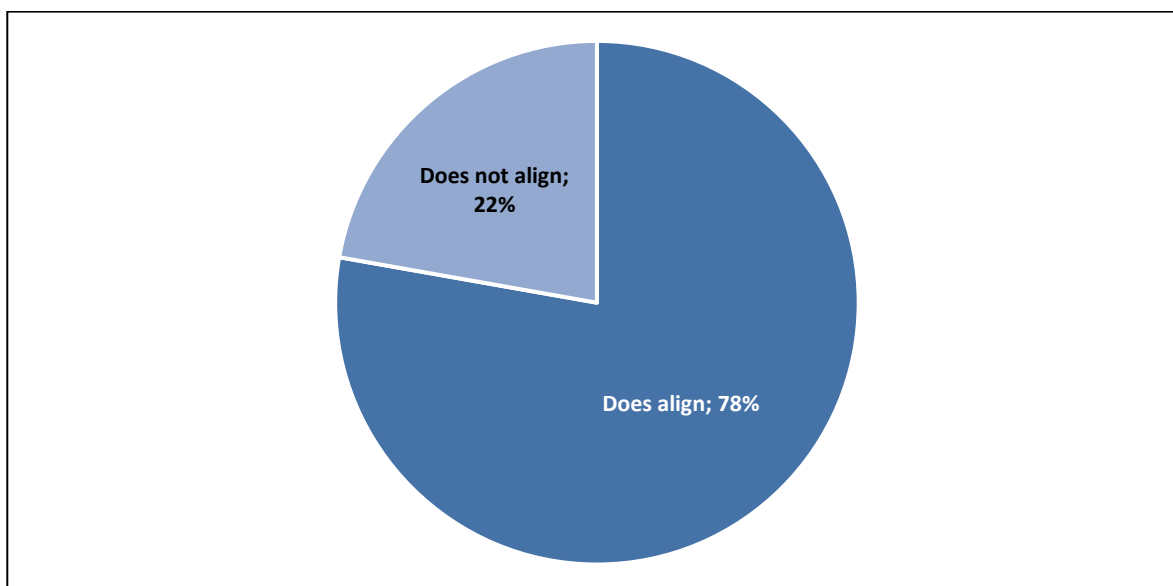
Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=18

As illustrated in the figure above, a third of the beneficiaries who changed jobs (33% are employed in casual employment, followed by 28% of beneficiaries being employed in fixed-term contracts and 22% of beneficiaries being employed in part-time employment. It may be noted that the fewest beneficiaries are employed full-time, with 17% of indicating this to be the nature of their employment.

Further to the above, the figure below offers insights into the alignment of job roles with the qualification of the beneficiaries.

Figure 29: Alignment of Job with Qualification Received



Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=18

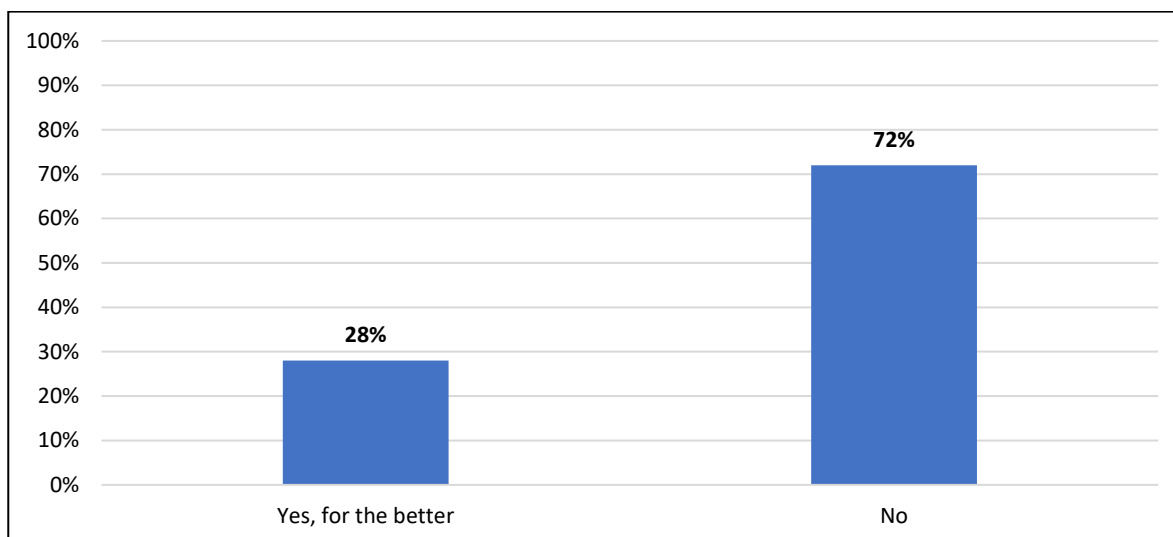
As illustrated by the above figure, 78% of beneficiaries stated that their jobs were aligned with their qualifications, with just 22% of beneficiaries stating that their jobs do not align with their qualifications.

Key Finding

- The high number of beneficiaries who are employed in jobs aligned with their qualification (as indicated by the 78% of beneficiaries who noted this) may provide an indication of the effectiveness of learning programmes in preparing beneficiaries for roles aligned to the sector.

4.4.1.4 Remained at Same Job After Training

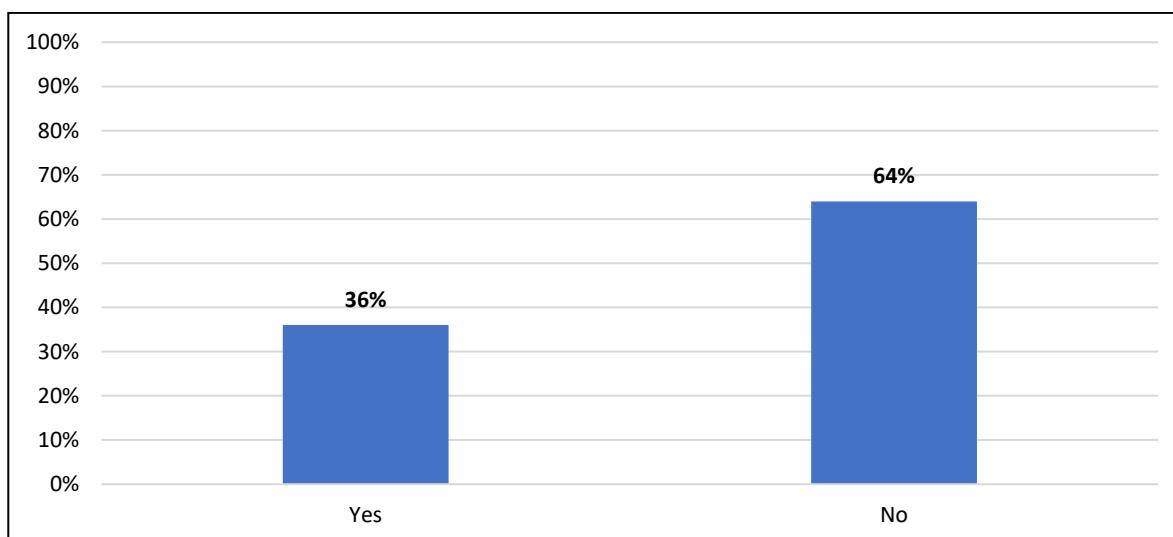
Of the beneficiaries that responded to the survey, 9% noted that they remained in the same job after training. The figures below illustrates whether the learning programmes that these beneficiaries completed led to a change in position or a promotion since completing the training.

Figure 30: Position Change for Employed Beneficiaries

Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=25

The figure highlights that 28% of employed beneficiaries indicated that their position has changed for the better since completing the programme, with 72% stating that things have not changed.

Figure 31: Promotion for the Beneficiary

Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Study

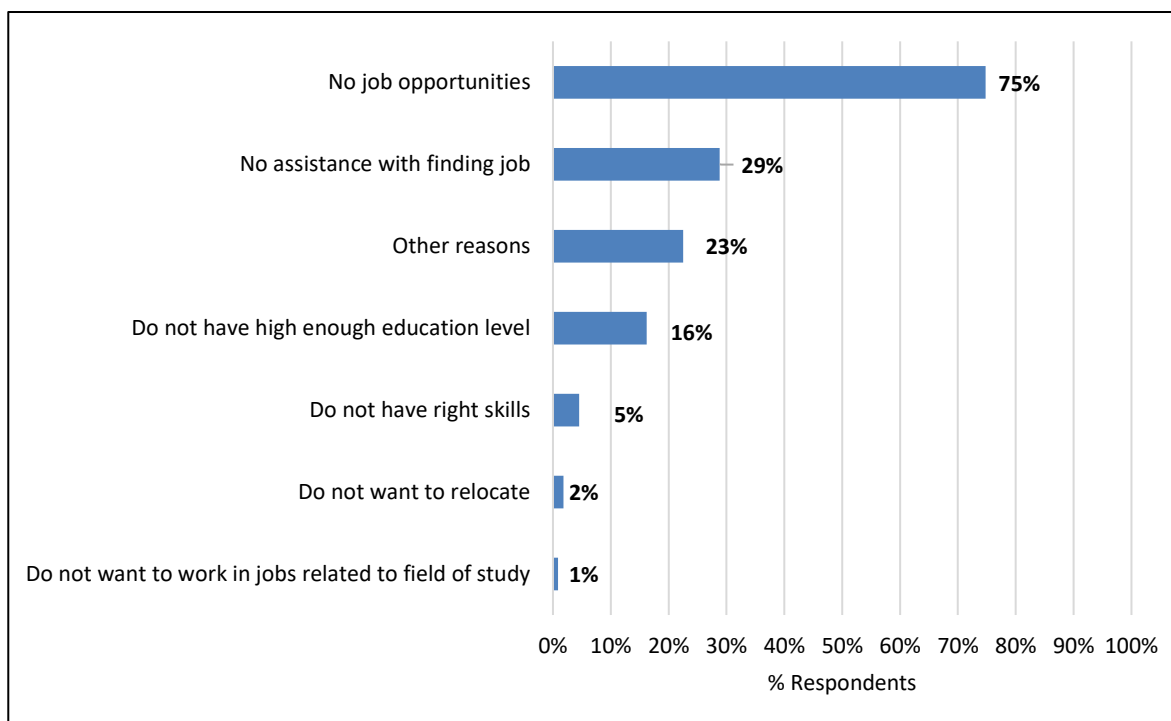
n=25

It may also be noted that 64% of beneficiaries indicated that the qualification or learning programme has not led to career progression or promotion, whilst 36% indicated that the learning programme has led to this.

4.4.1.5 Looking for a Job

39% of beneficiaries indicated that they were unemployed after completing the learning programme. The figure below highlights some of the reasons as to why beneficiaries believed they were unemployed after completing their training.

Figure 32: Reasons for Unemployment

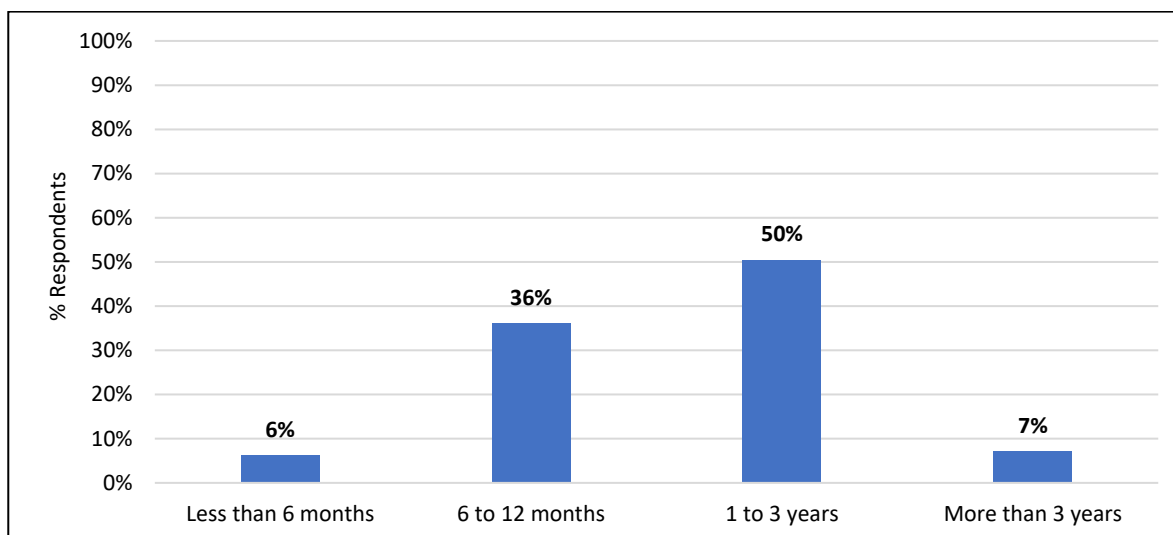


Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=111

It can be seen that 75% of beneficiaries cited a lack of job opportunities as the main reason that they are unemployed, with a further 29% of beneficiaries indicating that they haven't received any assistance in finding a job. The figure above further illustrates that 16% of the beneficiaries believe the reason they are unemployed is that they do not have a high enough education level whilst 5% of beneficiaries believe that they do not have the right skills. A further 23% of beneficiaries stated other reasons for their unemployment, which included not having sufficient experience as well as some companies appearing to only hire internally.

When looking to understand the pathways of the beneficiaries post the completion of the learning programmes, in addition to understanding the reasoning for unemployment, it is also important to understand how long said beneficiaries have been looking for a job. The figure below presents these results.

Figure 33: Time Spent Looking for a Job

Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=111

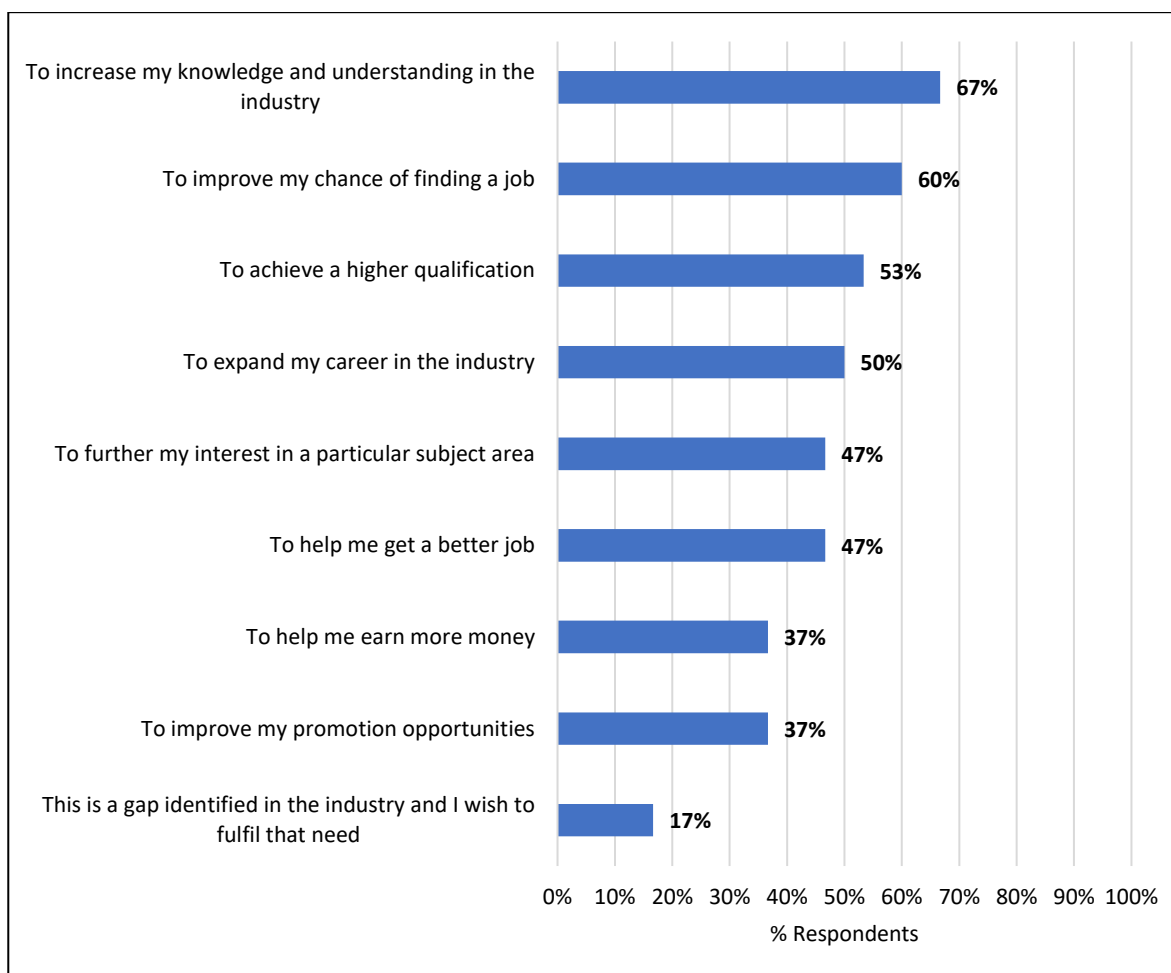
Of the unemployed beneficiaries, 57% have spent more than a year looking for a job, with 50% having spent 1 to 3 years looking for a job and 7% having spent more than 3 years. The prolonged period for which beneficiaries are searching for employment raises concerns about challenges in the employment landscape. While it is a positive sign that 36% have only spent 6 to 12 months searching, having 57% of unemployed beneficiaries search for employment for periods longer than a year highlights potential hurdles and further highlights the need for investigation into the reasons behind these prolonged durations and how, if at all, the learning programmes may be adjusted to promote employment upon completion.

Key Finding

- Half of the unemployed beneficiaries (50%) have spent between 1 and 3 years looking for employment which may be as a result of limited employment opportunities in the sector - a reason which was cited by 75% of unemployed beneficiaries.

4.4.1.6 Studying Further

Of the beneficiaries that responded to the survey, 9% chose to study further upon completion of the learning programme. The figure below provides an overview of the reasons why these beneficiaries decided to study further.

Figure 34: Reasons for Studying Further¹

Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=30

As seen in the figure above, 67% of beneficiaries selected wanting to increase their knowledge and understanding of the industry as the reason for studying further. The second most popular reason for studying further according to 60% of beneficiaries is to improve the chances of finding employment. Furthermore, 53% of beneficiaries stated that the reason for studying further was to achieve a higher qualification.

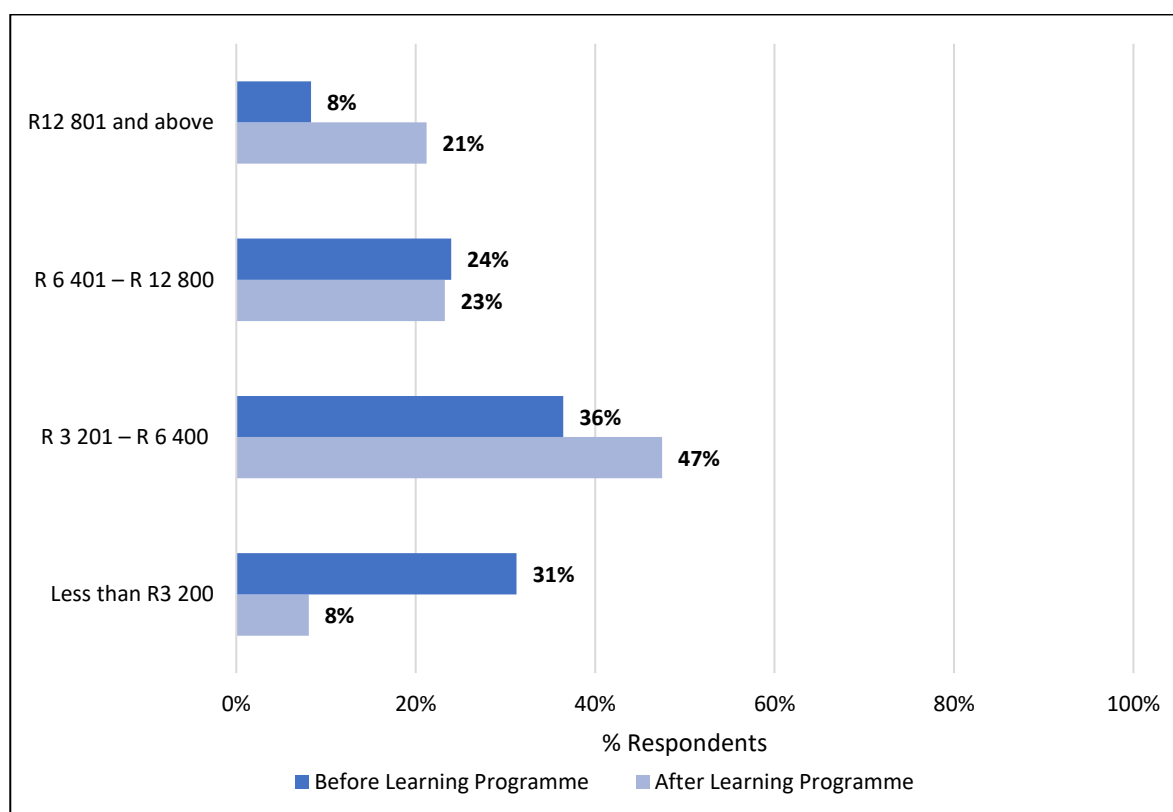
The reason for furthering their studies according to 17% of beneficiaries is because of a gap being identified in the industry that they wish to fulfil. It can be noted that the overall theme in the figure above is related to upskilling oneself and seeking economic opportunity.

¹ Due to beneficiaries being allowed to select multiple responses, results may not tally up to 100%.

4.4.2 Beneficiary Income Status

Understanding the economic benefits that beneficiaries are receiving from their jobs is important as it provides insight regarding the quality of employment for beneficiaries after they have completed the learning programme and their earning potential upon completion of the learning programme, when compared to prior to the learning programme. The figure below provides an overview of the income that employed beneficiaries were receiving before and after the learning programme.

Figure 35: Income Before and After the Learning Programme



Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=96 (before training) *n*=99 (after training)

As can be seen in the figure above, 36% of beneficiaries had an income between R3 201 and R6 400 before the learning programme, followed by 31% of beneficiaries who were earning less than R3 200 a month. Only 8% of beneficiaries were earning from R12 801 and above before the learning programme. A positive change in the income of beneficiaries can generally be seen upon completion of the learning programme, with the percentage of beneficiaries earning less than R3 200 decreasing from 31% before the learning programme to 8% after the learning programme and the percentage of beneficiaries earning more than R12 801 increasing from 8% to 21%. The income bracket with the highest percentage of beneficiaries upon completion of the learning programme was still between R3 201 and R6 400, with 47% of beneficiaries indicating this.

The table below provides deeper insight into the income before and after participation in the learning programmes, per learning programme.

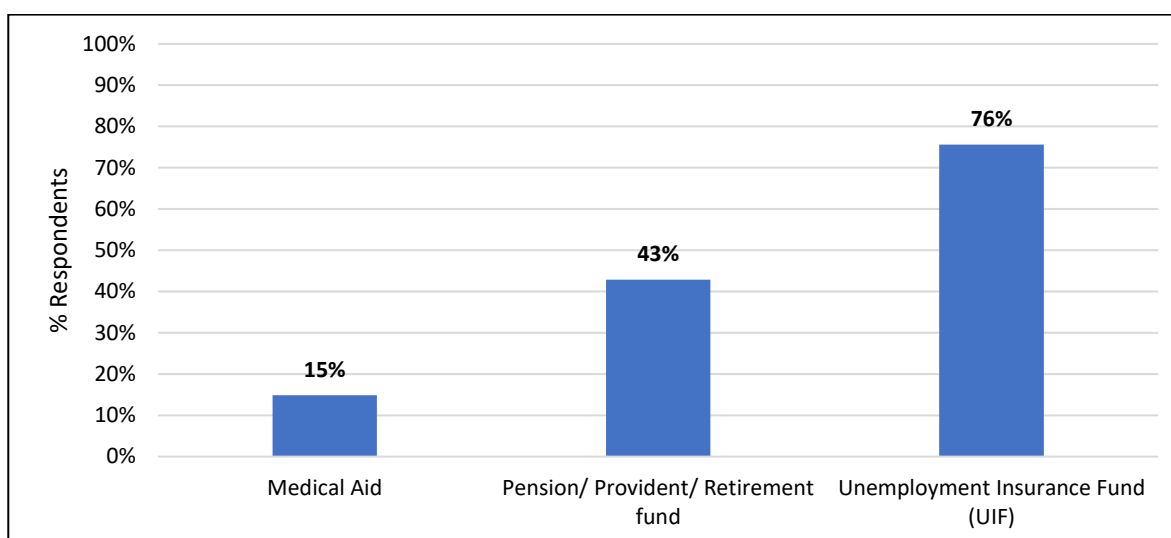
Table 7: Income After the Learning Programme

Income	Bursary		Internship		Learnership		Skills Programme		WIL (University/HET)		WIL (TVET)	
	Before n=7	After n=16	Before n=11	After n=15	Before n=21	After n=44	Before n=9	After n=9	Before n=2	After n=6	Before n=7	After n=9
Less than R3 200	29%	6%	9%	7%	29%	5%	22%	11%	100%	0%	71%	33%
R 3 201 – R 6 400	0%	31%	73%	60%	33%	45%	33%	22%	0%	67%	29%	67%
R 6 401 – R 12 800	29%	31%	18%	13%	38%	34%	33%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
R12 801 and above	43%	31%	0%	20%	0%	16%	11%	67%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

The learning programme with the most beneficiaries that were earning less than R3 200 a month before the learning programme is the University/HET WIL, whilst the learning programme with the largest number of beneficiaries earning R12 801 and above before the learning programme is the bursary, with 43% of beneficiaries earning in this income bracket. The learning programme with the most learners that were earning more than R12 801 after the learning programme was the skills programme, with 67% of beneficiaries indicating this to be their income bracket.

Further to looking at the salary received by beneficiaries, understanding the quality of employment is also important. Yu (2019) notes that there are several indicators that may be used to assess employment quality such as wage, work hours and flexibility, employment security, income security, social benefits, skills and participation. Understanding the various employment or social benefits provided by employers is, therefore a crucial part of understanding the quality of employment. The figure below provides an overview of the percentage of beneficiaries who receive certain benefits from their employers.

Figure 36: Benefits Contribution²

Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=352

As illustrated by the figure above, the benefit received by the fewest beneficiaries is medical aid, with only 15% of beneficiaries stating that they are receiving this benefit. On the other hand, 43% of beneficiaries noted that they are receiving a pension or retirement fund contribution from their employer while 76% of beneficiaries stated that their employers are contributing to the Unemployment Insurance Fund (“UIF”) on their behalf. According to Stats SA (2024), 28.7% of South African employees receive medical aid contributions from their employer, 43.9% of receive a pension or retirement fund contribution and 61.33% receive a UIF contribution. It may be noted that the number of beneficiaries receiving pension fund contributions from their employers is on par with the market, whilst medical aid is slightly lower and UIF is slightly higher. This may indicate that employed beneficiaries have secured employment of an average quality evidenced by the availability of social benefits.

² Each benefit presented in the graph was analysed separately, for example, the graph illustrates that 15% of beneficiaries receive a medical aid contribution from their employer. It can therefore, be deduced that the remaining 85% of beneficiaries do not received this benefit.

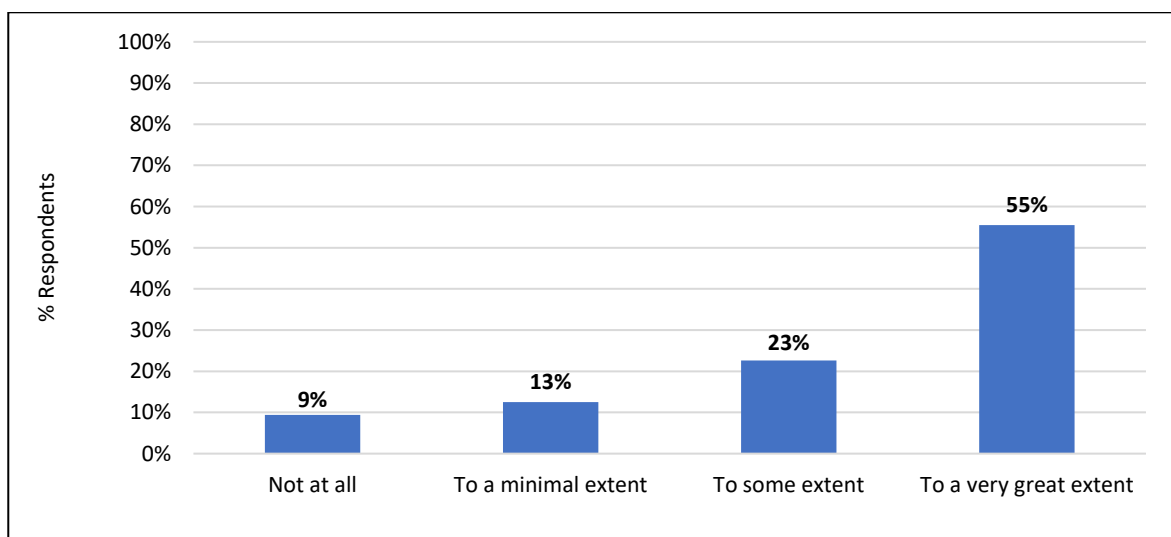
Key Findings

- Participation in the various learning programmes appeared to enhance the earning potential of beneficiaries, with a positive change in the income of beneficiaries being noted upon completion of the learning programmes. The learning programme which had the highest number of learners earning more than R12 801 upon completion of the learning programme was the skills programme, with 50% of beneficiaries indicating this to be their income bracket.
- Based on the assessment of the benefits received, employees appear to have obtained good quality employment upon completion of the learning programme

4.5 Relevance and Usability of Skills from the Learning Programmes

As part of the survey, beneficiaries were asked to assess the extent to which they utilise the knowledge and skills acquired through the learning programmes in their current work tasks, with response options ranging from 'Not at all' to 'A very great extent'. This was done in order to understand the relevance of the learning programmes, which is crucial as it provides an indication of the extent to which the learning programmes align with the practical skills needs of the sector and provides an indication of whether there is a need to adjust the learning programmes. The results regarding the extent to which beneficiaries utilise the skills and knowledge acquired through the learning programme are illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 37: Extent Skills and Knowledge Acquired through Learning Programme Utilised in Work Tasks



Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=128

It can be seen in the figure above that 55% of beneficiaries stated that they utilise the knowledge and skills acquired during the learning programmes to a very great extent, followed by 23% of beneficiaries who noted that they utilise the skills and knowledge to some extent.

On the other hand 13% of beneficiaries indicated they utilise the skills and knowledge to a minimal extent, whilst 9% of beneficiaries stated that they do not utilise the knowledge and skills acquired through the learning programmes at all. Overall, it may be noted that the learning programmes, therefore, appear to be relevant due to the overall use of the skills and knowledge acquired through the learning programmes in beneficiaries' work tasks.

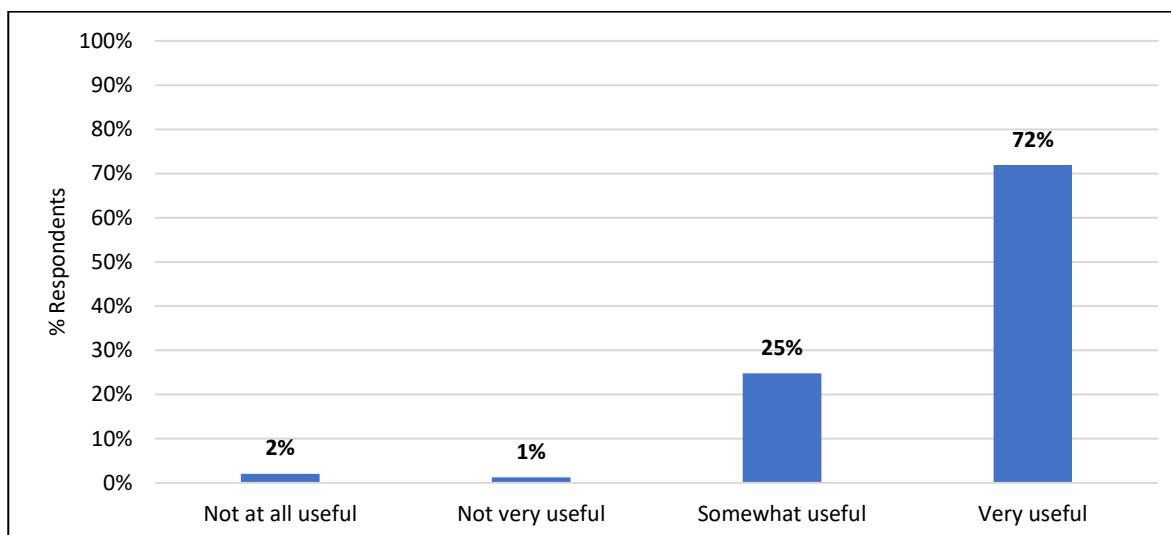
Inferential Analysis: Usability of Skills and Learning Programme

Chi-Square tests, using a significance level of 0.05, reveal no significant relationship between the type of learning programme and the usability of the skills acquired through completing the programme, implying that the extent to which beneficiaries use the skills gained after participating in the programme is not likely to differ significantly per learning programme and that the skills obtained will most likely be relevant, regardless of the learning programme undertaken.

Further to assessing the relevance of the learning programmes, the survey also sought to determine the usability of skills acquired by beneficiaries through the learning programmes. This aims to provide insight into whether the learning programmes are aligned with the needs of the industry and provide skills that are required and relevant to job requirements within the sector. In order to gain an understanding of the extent to which beneficiaries believed the skills they gathered through the learning programmes were usable, beneficiaries were requested to provide input regarding the usefulness of the skills obtained from the programme as well as the extent to which the learning programme affected business growth for self-employed beneficiaries.

These insights are explored further below with the following figure providing further insight into the usefulness of skills acquired during the programme, based on input provided by beneficiaries.

Figure 38: Usefulness of Skills Acquired During the Programme



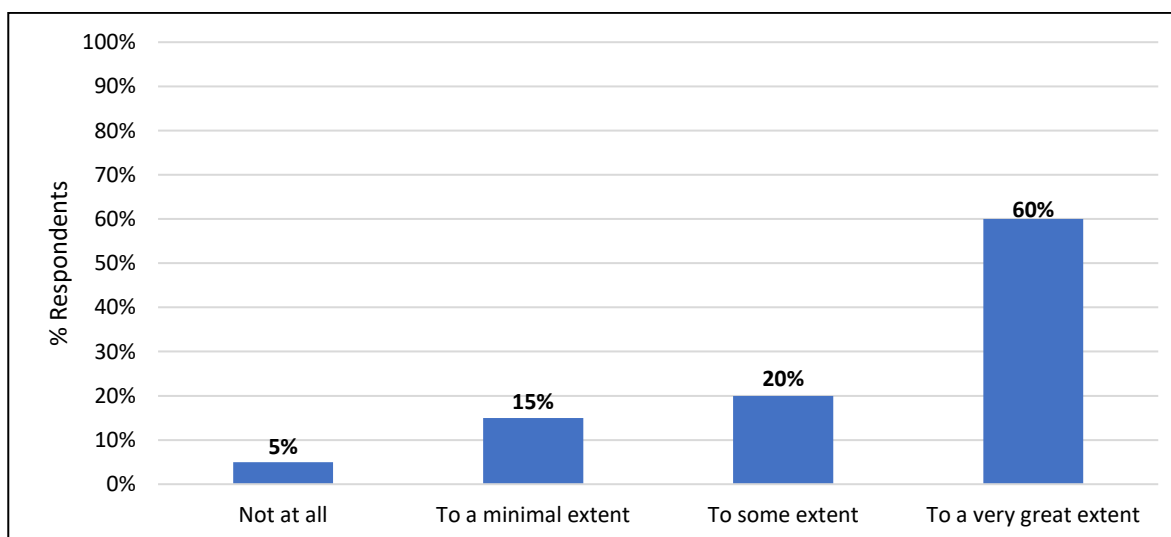
Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=242

It can be noted in the figure above that 72% of beneficiaries found the skills that they acquired during the programmes very useful, whilst 25% of beneficiaries noted that the skills were somewhat useful. Only 1% of the beneficiaries stated that the skills acquired during the programme were not very useful, followed by 2% of beneficiaries stating that the skills were not at all useful. This indicates that skills provided by the learning programmes were, at large, useful, indicating a positive overall assessment of the skills gained through the programmes.

Further to the above, as part of the survey self-employed beneficiaries were requested to indicate the extent to which they believed the training they received assisted them establish and grow their businesses. The figure below illustrates these results.

Figure 39: Extent to which Training Influenced Business Start-up and Growth



Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=20

The figure above highlights that 60% of beneficiaries noted that the training has influenced or assisted their business to a very great extent, while 20% of beneficiaries stated that the training has assisted their business to some extent. In contrast, 15% of beneficiaries stated that their business has been assisted by training to a minimal extent, with 5% stating that it has not been assisted at all.

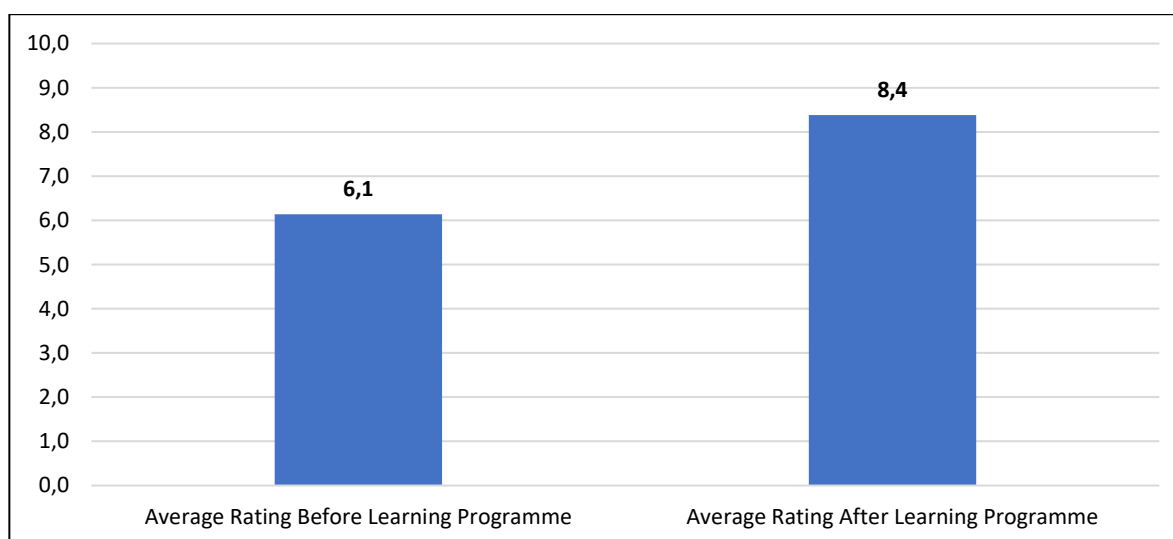
Key Findings

- Overall, the learning programmes appear to be relevant, with the majority of beneficiaries indicating that they apply the skills acquired through the programmes in their work tasks.
- The skills obtained during the programmes were found to be useful with 97% of beneficiaries indicating this. The positive assessment highlights the relevance of the learning programmes.

4.6 Impact of Learning Programmes on Beneficiary Skill Level

In order to gain an understanding of the extent of the impact of the learning programme on beneficiaries, beneficiaries were requested to provide input regarding their skill level before and after the learning programme. The figure below presents a comparative analysis of the skill levels of beneficiaries before and after training.

Figure 40: Skill Level Before and After the Learning Programme



Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=269

As can be seen in the figure above, beneficiaries scored their skill level before the training at a 6.1 out of 10, indicating an intermediate level of knowledge. In addition to scoring their skill level prior to the learning programme, beneficiaries also scored their skill level after the training was completed, with an average rating of 8.4 out of 10 being achieved, indicating an almost expert level of knowledge, after the learning programme. The average rating increased by 2.3

after the training when compared with before the learning programme, suggesting that the learning programmes had a positive impact on the beneficiaries' skill levels.

The table below highlights the difference in skill level before and after training per learning programme.

Table 8: Skill Level Before and After Training

	Before Training	After Training	Difference
Bursary	5.9	8.7	2.8
WIL (University/ HET)	6.0	8.5	2.5
Learnership	6.2	8.5	2.3
Skills Programme	6.1	8.4	2.3
WIL (TVET)	6.1	8.0	1.9
Internship	6.3	8.1	1.9

Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=269

The learning programme with the greatest change in skill level was the bursary with a difference of 2.8. The learning programmes with the smallest change includes internships and WIL TVET, with a difference of 1.9.

Inferential Analysis: Level of Skills and Learning Programme

Chi-Square tests, using a significance level of 0.05, reveal no significant relationship between the type of learning programme and the level of skills of the beneficiary after completing the programme, implying that the skills gained through participating in the programme is fairly consistent across the various learning programmes.

Key Finding

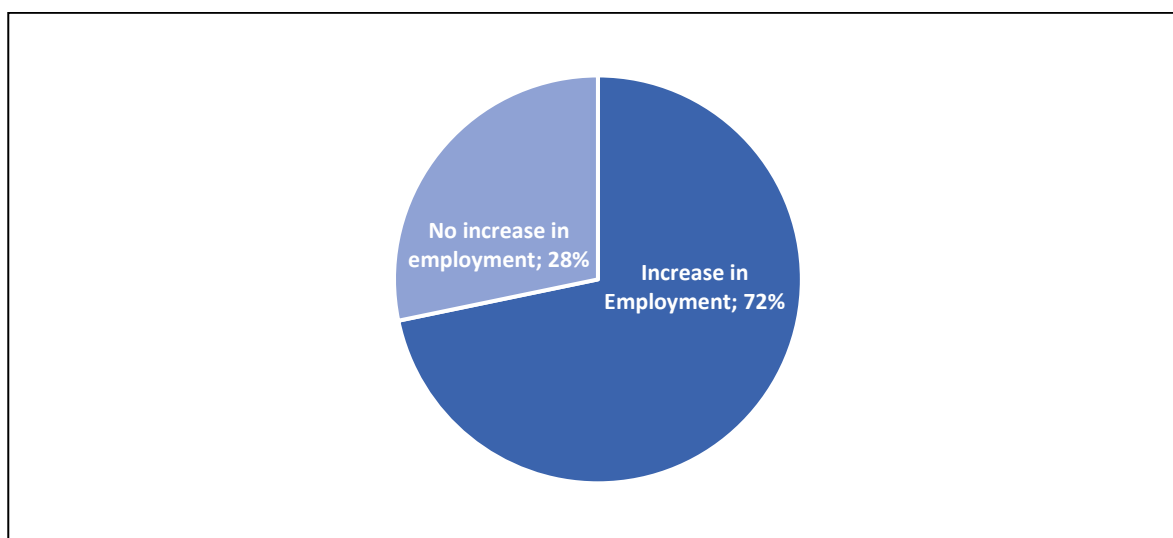
- The evaluation of beneficiary skills reveals a significant improvement, with an average skill level increase of 2.3.

4.7 Beneficiary Perceptions of the Learning Programmes

Understanding the beneficiary perceptions of the learning programmes is important for CATHSSETA as the perceptions may be used to facilitate programme improvement in order to enhance the effectiveness of the programmes as well as to ensure that the learning programmes are relevant. Within the subsection below, insights into whether beneficiaries perceived an increase in employment opportunities following their training will be explored, followed by insights into the impact of the programme on the career pathway of beneficiaries as well as overall satisfaction with the learning programmes.

The figure below provides insight into whether beneficiaries believed there was an increase in employment opportunities after the training.

Figure 41: Increase in Employment Opportunities After Training



Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=269

The figure above shows that 72% of beneficiaries stated that there was an increase in employment opportunities after training. Beneficiaries cited that the increased opportunities stemmed from the qualifications and practical experienced gained through the learning programmes.

While the majority of beneficiaries responded positively, 28% of beneficiaries noted that participation in the learning programmes had not increased the employment opportunities, with beneficiaries noting that they were still unemployed and that they needed to study further. Beneficiaries cited an overall lack of job opportunities in the sector, a lack of required experience to gain employment within their field of study, and not having received a certificate after completing the programme as some of the reasons for the lack of employment opportunities.

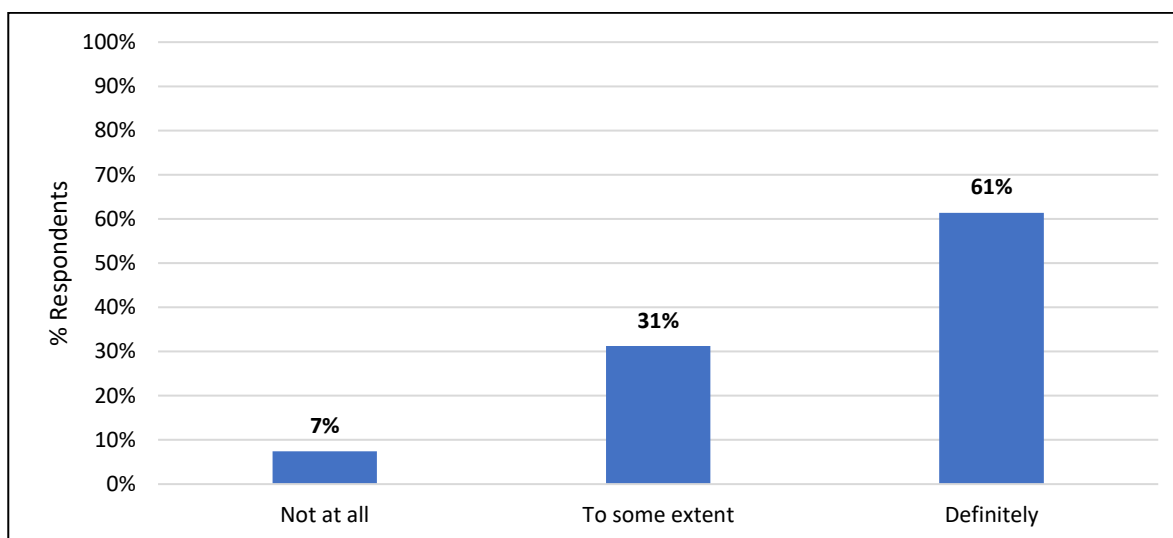
Inferential Analysis: Employment Opportunities and Learning Programme

Chi-Square tests, using a significance level of 0.05, reveal no significant relationship between the type of learning programme and the availability of opportunities for employment after completing the programme, implying that whether beneficiaries feel as if they have more opportunities to find employment after participating in the programme is not likely to differ significantly per learning programme.

In addition to looking at whether participation in the learning programme enhanced employment opportunities, it is also important to understand whether beneficiaries believed

participation in the learning programme provided them with a career pathway. The figure below outlines these results.

Figure 42: Impact of the Programme on Career Pathway

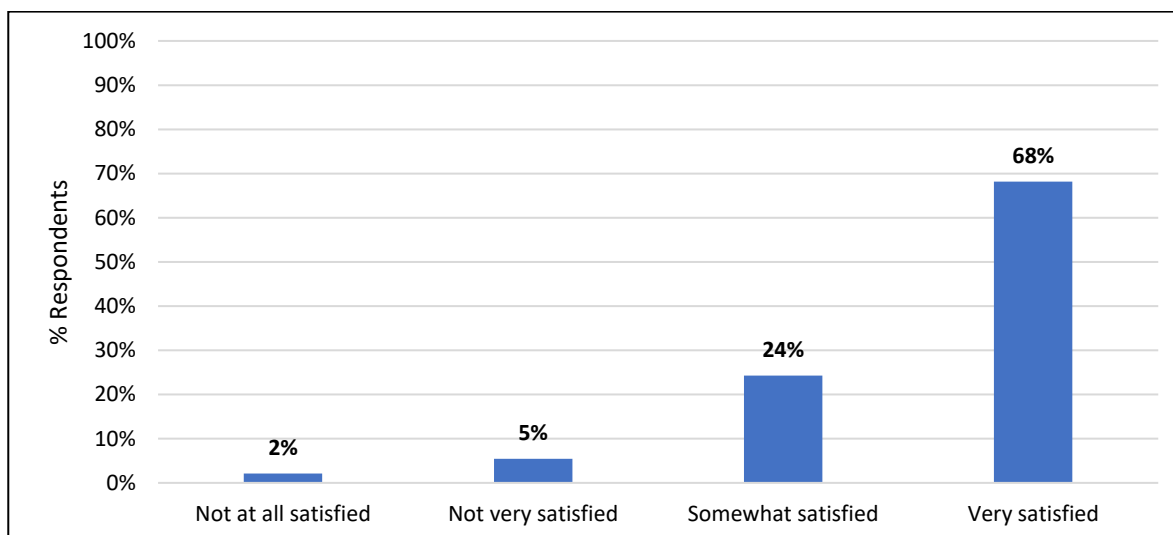


Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer sur

n=269

As illustrated from the figure above, the impact of the programme on the employment pathways of the beneficiaries is notable, with 61% indicating that the programme definitely had an impact, whilst 31% mentioned a partial impact. Only 7% reported no discernible effect.

Further to the above, the figure below provides an overall view of the satisfaction levels among beneficiaries with the learning programmes.

Figure 43: Overall Programme Satisfaction

Source: CATHSSETA Beneficiary Track and Tracer Survey

n=269

The above figure illustrates that 68% of beneficiaries were very satisfied with the learning programme, whilst 24% of beneficiaries were somewhat satisfied. This is supported by feedback from beneficiaries who noted that they were satisfied as they gained valuable experience and knowledge through the programme.

Only 5% of beneficiaries noted that they were not very satisfied and 2% of beneficiaries stated that they were not at all satisfied. Feedback from beneficiaries suggests the timeframe of the shorter learning programme's needs to be extended to accommodate additional time for learning and for beneficiaries to understand the material and information being taught.

4.8 Employer Perceptions of the Learning Programmes

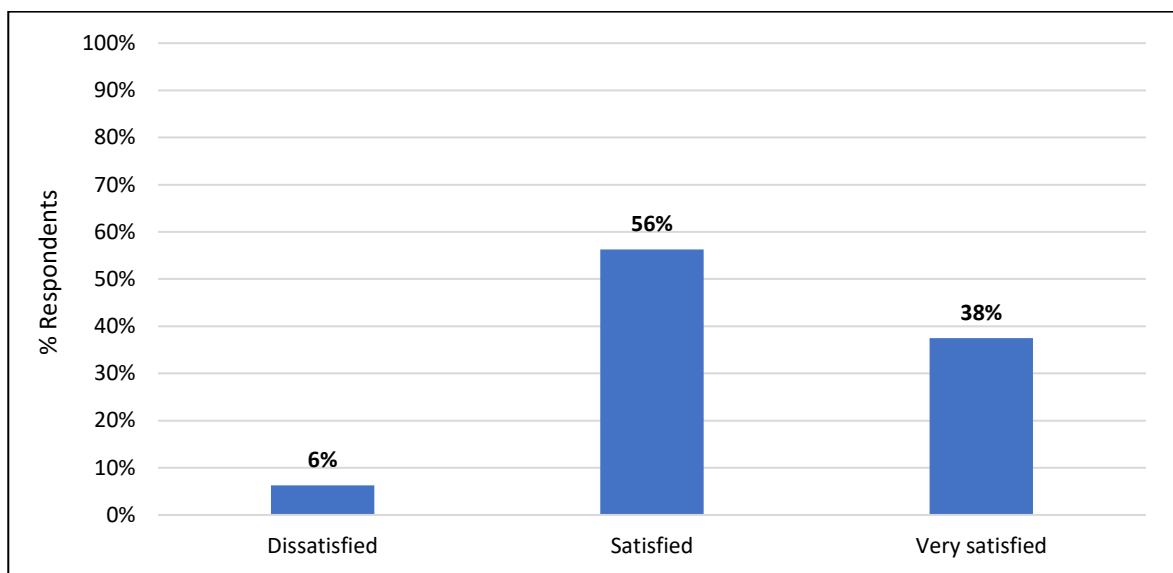
In addition to understanding beneficiary perceptions, understanding employer perceptions of learning programmes is also essential to ensure continuous improvement, ensure alignment with current and future job requirements and assist with strategic planning. This further allows for the learning programmes to be adapted to industry changes and ensure that learning initiatives meet evolving demands.

4.8.1 Employer Satisfaction

This section highlights the levels of satisfaction of employers with the learning programmes and when interacting with CATHSSETA and training providers during the course of the programme.

The figure below illustrates the extent to which employers were satisfied with the learning programmes providing employees with the relevant skills required for their job.

Figure 44: Employer Satisfaction with Skills Provided through Learning Programmes



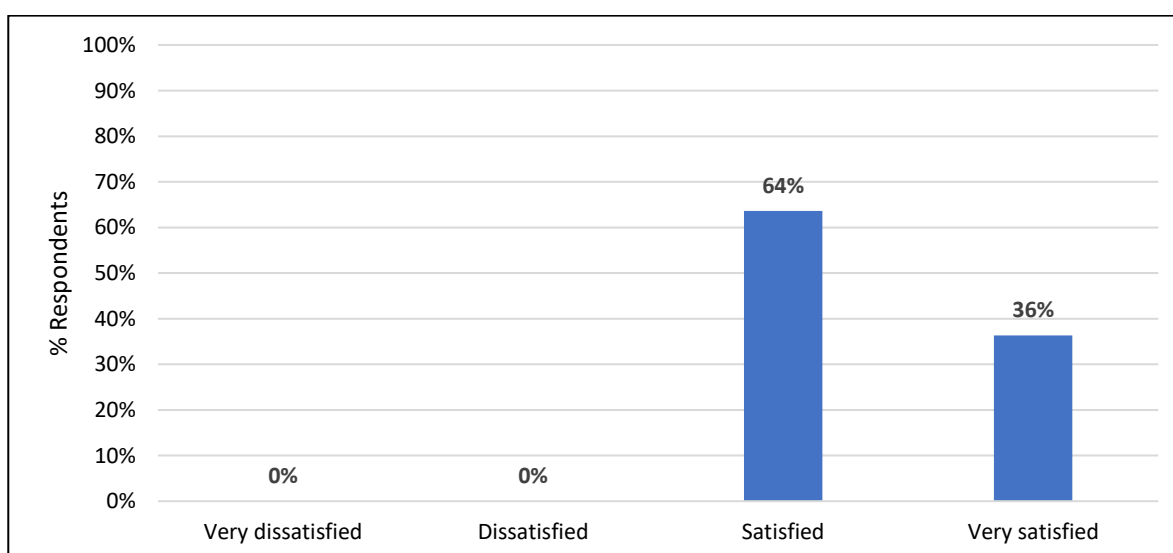
Source: CATHSSETA Employer Track and Tracer Survey

n=16

The figure above illustrates that 38% of employers were very satisfied, while 56% of the employers were satisfied with the learning programmes in providing relevant skills. Only 6% of employers stated that they were dissatisfied with the learning programmes. Understanding employer satisfaction may allow CATHSSETA to assess the quality of the programmes and identify areas for improvement, with the findings from this study suggesting that employers are generally satisfied with the skills provided through the learning programmes.

The figure below illustrates the satisfaction of employers with their interactions with CATHSSETA during the programme.

Figure 45: Employer Satisfaction with CATHSSETA



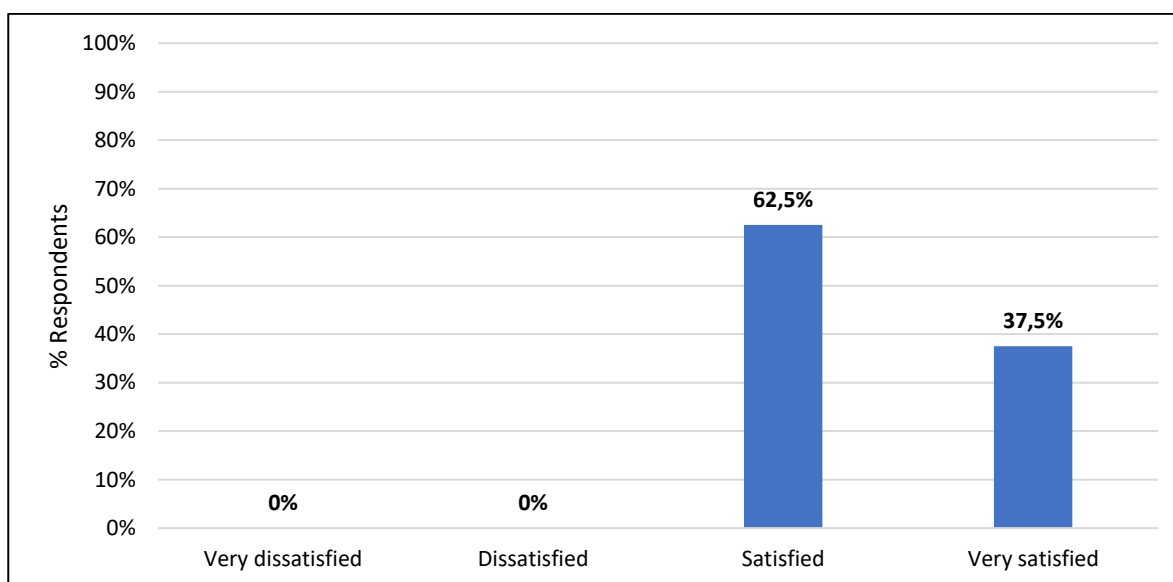
Source: CATHSSETA Employer Track and Tracer Survey

n=12

From the figure above it is evident that just over half of the employers were satisfied with their interactions with CATHSSETA during their involvement in the learning programmes, with 64% of employers being satisfied, and 36% of employers being very satisfied. This is supported by feedback from employers who cited the willingness of CATHSSETA to provide assistance to employers at both national and regional levels.

Further to the above, the figure below explores employer satisfaction with their interactions with training providers.

Figure 46: Employer Satisfaction with Skills Training Providers



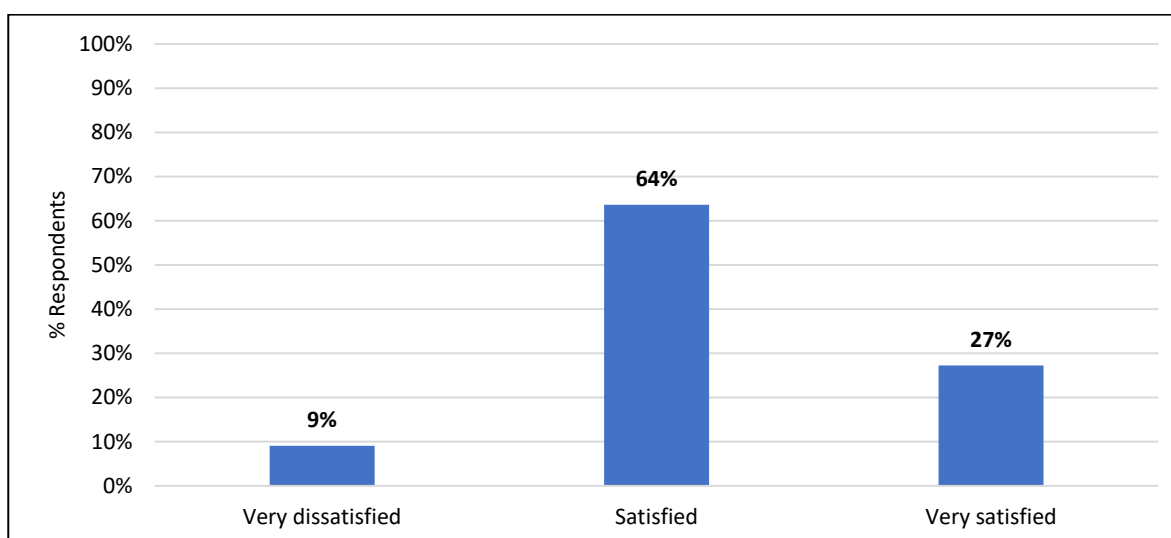
Source: CATHSSETA Employer Track and Tracer Survey

n=12

As can be seen, 62,5% of employers stated that they were satisfied with the interactions that they had with training providers during their involvement in the learning programme, whilst 37,5% of employers stated that they were very satisfied with these interactions.

In addition to assessing employer satisfaction with the interactions with training providers, employer satisfaction with the knowledge and skills imparted by the training providers was also assessed. The figure below illustrates these results.

Figure 47: Employer Satisfaction with Knowledge and Skills Imparted by Training Providers



Source: CATHSSETA Employer Track and Tracer Survey

n=12

As can be seen, 64% of employers indicated that they were satisfied with the knowledge and skills imparted by the training provider to the beneficiaries, with a further 27% of employers indicating that they were very satisfied. Although the majority of employers were satisfied, 9% of employers indicated that they were very dissatisfied, with some employers stating that training providers need more support and resources to ensure that the beneficiaries get the right training and the right industry exposure.

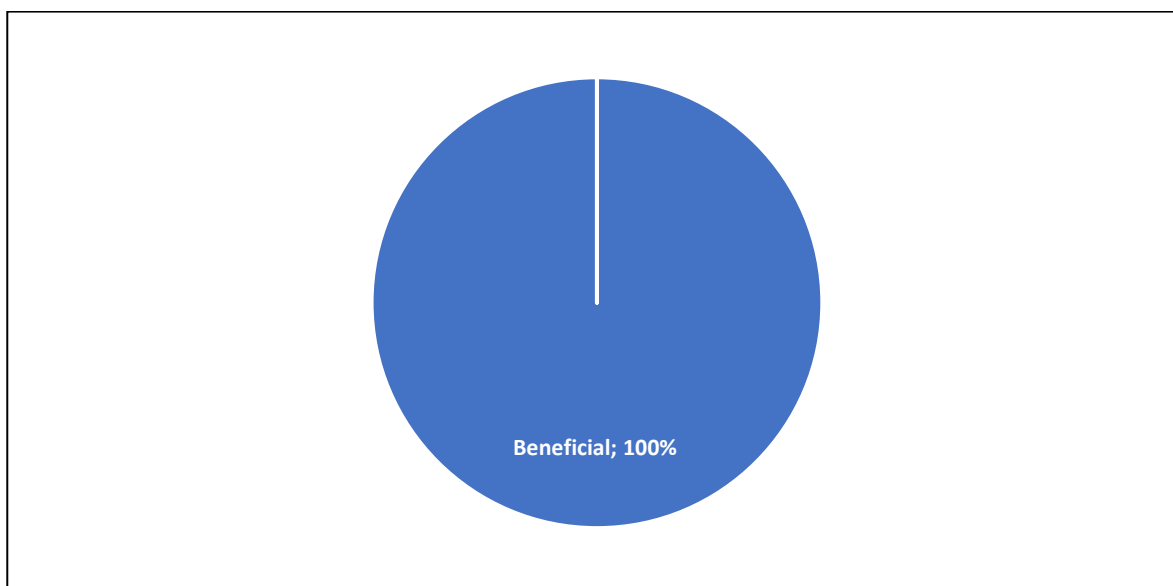
Key Findings

- A high level of satisfaction with the ability of the learning programmes to provide relevant skills was noted amongst employers, with 38% being very satisfied and 56% satisfied, suggesting that employers perceive the skills acquired through the programmes as relevant to job requirements.
- All of the employers expressed satisfaction with their interactions with CATHSSETA during the program indicating a generally favourable experience for employers when engaging with CATHSSETA.

4.8.2 Benefits and Challenges Associated with the Learning Programmes

In addition to understanding overall satisfaction, it is also important to understand the benefits and challenges experienced by employers when participating in the learning programmes. This section details these key benefits and challenges experienced by employers with the figure below outlining whether employers believe the learning programmes are beneficial to employers.

Figure 48: Employer Perception Regarding Whether Programmes Are Beneficial for Employers



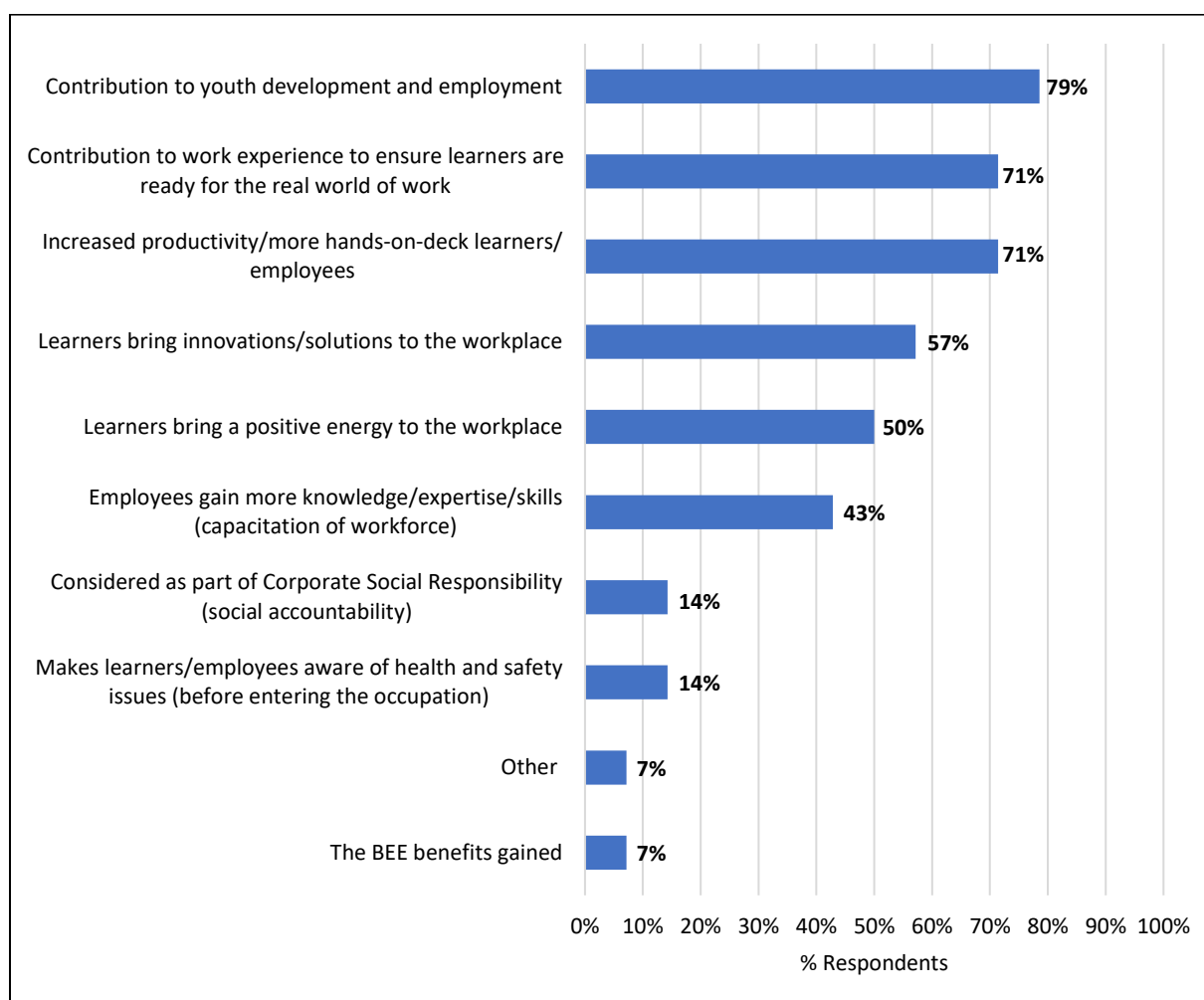
Source: CATHSSETA Employer Track and Tracer Survey

n=12

Through the figure above, it can be seen that all employers (100%) believe that the learning programmes are beneficial to employers, with employers citing that the additional capacity gained through younger and newly trained beneficiaries who provide innovative ideas and skills benefits their organisation.

Additionally, employers cited the ability to upskill and provide opportunities to their employees as a major benefit to them as it motivates employees and increases overall productivity.

In addition to the above, more specific benefits of the programmes to employers were explored. These are illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 49: Benefits of the Programmes³

Source: CATHSSETA Employer Track and Tracer Survey

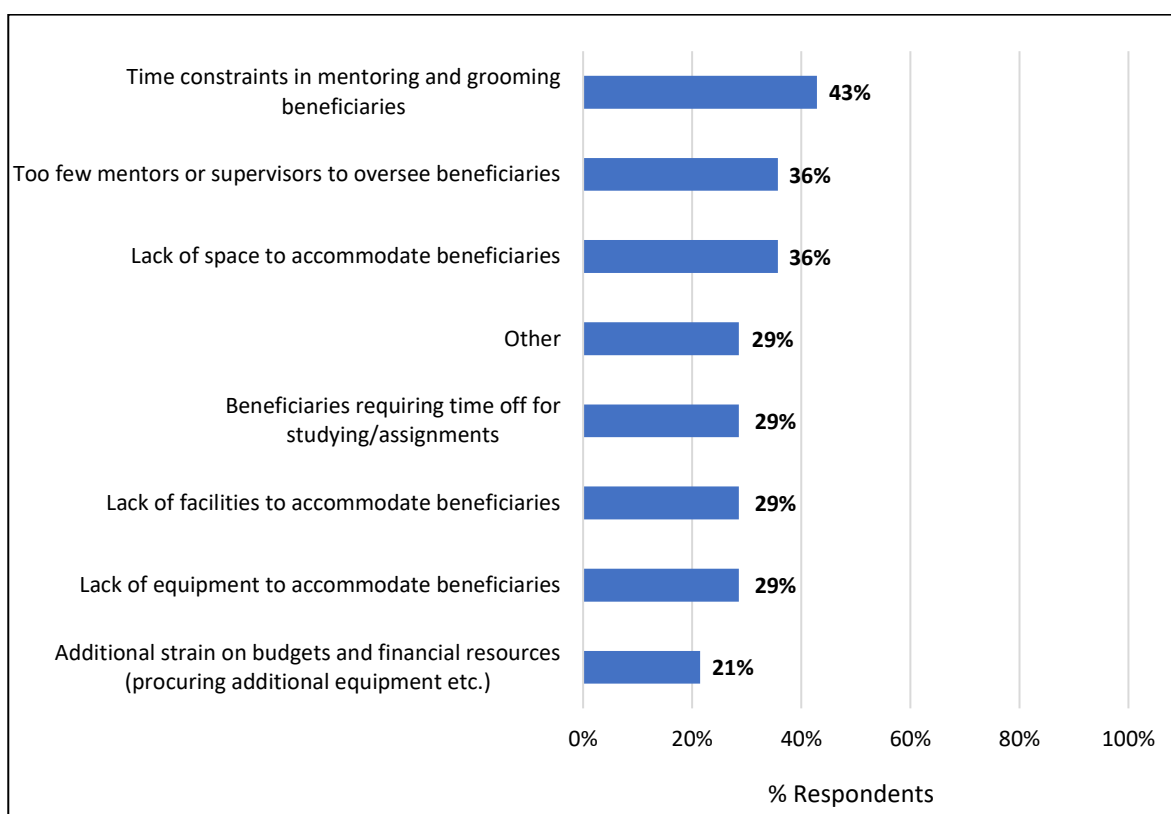
n=14

As illustrated in the figure above, 79% of employers stated that the programmes' contribution to youth development and employment is a major benefit of the learning programmes for their organisation. Furthermore, 71% of employers stated that the programme contributed to work experience in order to ensure that learners are ready for the real world of work, and that the learning programmes resulted in an increase in productivity.

With the major benefits being understood, it is also key to assess the major challenges that employers faced during the learning programme as it pertains to accommodating beneficiaries. These results are illustrated in the figure below.

³ Due to employers being allowed to select multiple responses, results may not tally up to 100%.

Figure 50: Challenges Employers Face Regarding Accommodating Beneficiaries⁴



Source: CATHSSETA Employer Track and Tracer Survey

n=14

The most common challenge, which was cited by 43% of employers, was the time constraints related to mentoring and grooming beneficiaries. Furthermore, 36% of employers stated that one of the challenges was that there were too few mentors or supervisors to oversee the beneficiaries and that there was a lack of space to accommodate the beneficiaries. A lower percentage of employers (29%) cited the lack of facilities and a lack of equipment to accommodate beneficiaries as major challenges, with a further 29% of employers citing the time off required by beneficiaries for their studies as a major challenge. A further 21% of employers stated that additional strain on budgets and financial resources was also a challenge.

⁴ Due to employers being allowed to select multiple responses, results may not tally up to 100%.

Key Finding

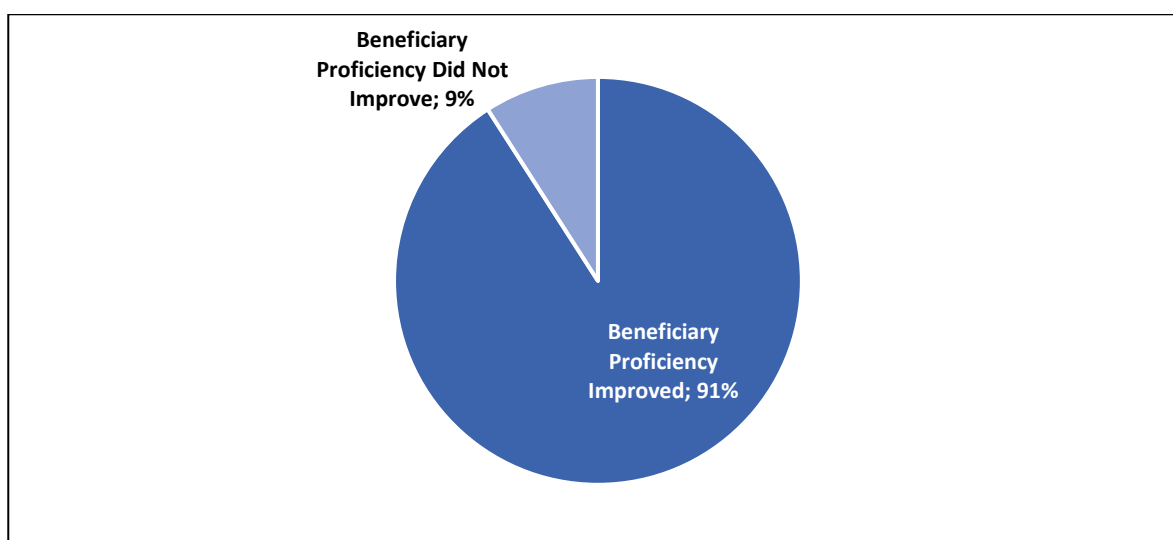
- All employers (100%) believe that the learning programmes are beneficial to employers, with employers indicating that key benefits included the contribution to youth development and employment, experience provided to beneficiaries, the enhanced productivity and additional capacity gained through the beneficiaries.

4.8.3 Learning Programme Effectiveness and Impact on Beneficiaries

This section below provides insight into whether employers believe the learning programmes address organisational and sector skills gaps, whether employers believe the proficiency of beneficiaries increased as a result of the programmes and whether employers believed the learning programmes provide beneficiaries with the hard and soft skills required in the organisational context, thereby providing insight into the extent to which the learning programmes are perceived as effective and whether they have an impact on beneficiaries.

The figure below illustrates whether employers believed there was an improvement in beneficiary proficiency from the start of the programme to the finish.

Figure 51: Improvement in Beneficiary Proficiency



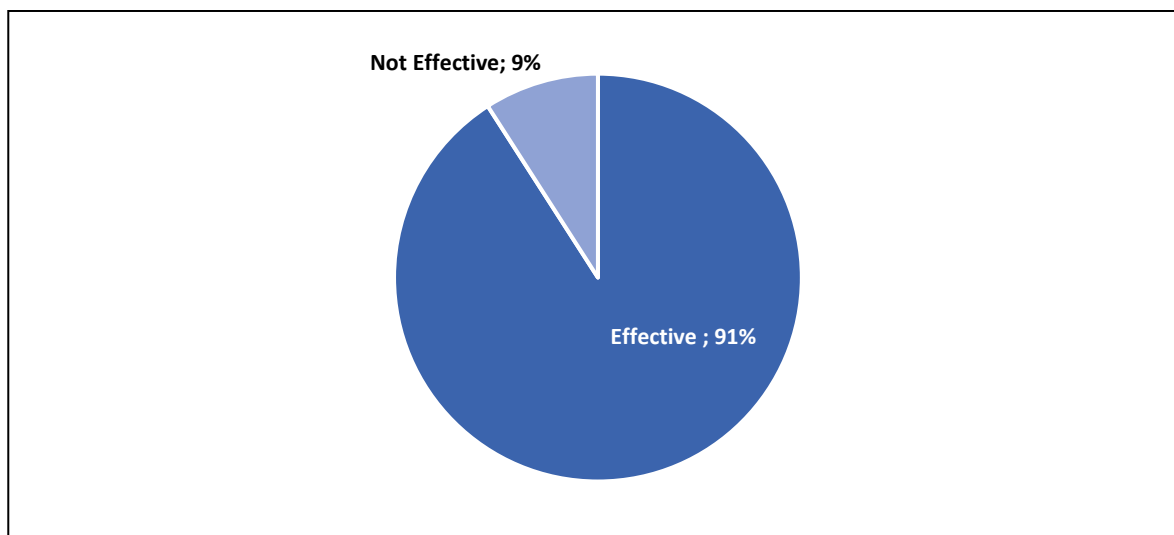
Source: CATHSSETA Employer Track and Tracer Survey

n=11

It can be seen that 91% of employers stated that there was an improvement in beneficiary proficiency from programme to finish, whilst 9% of employers noted that they did not see an improvement in the proficiency of beneficiaries.

In addition to the above, the figure below provides an overview of whether employers believed the learning programmes addressed skills gaps at an organisational and sector level.

Figure 52: Effectiveness of Learning Programmes in Addressing Skills Gaps at Organisational and Sector Levels



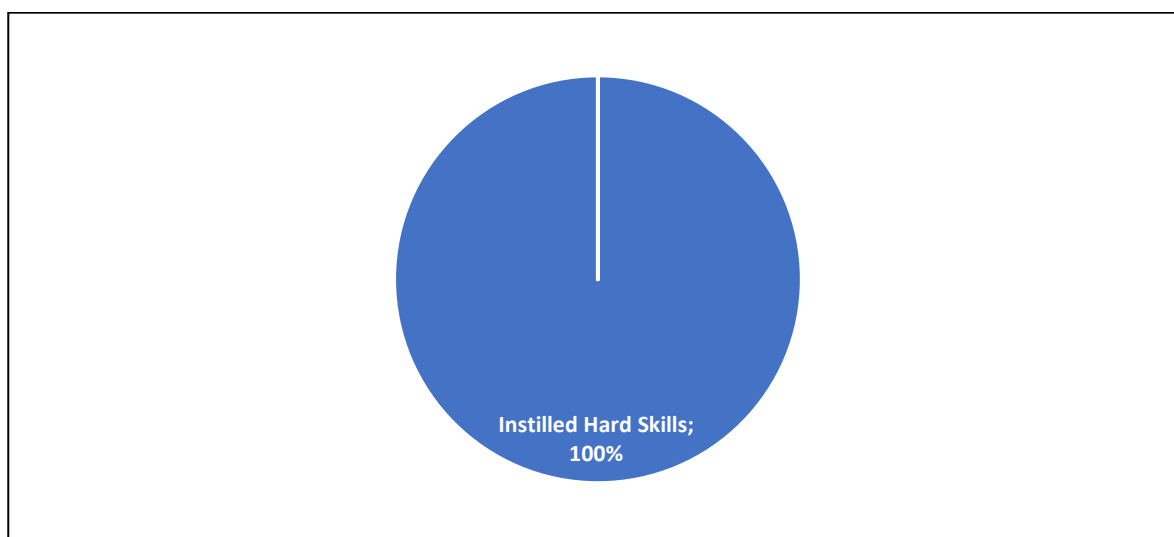
Source: CATHSSETA Employer Track and Tracer Survey

n=11

From the figure, it can be seen that 91% of employers believe that the learning programmes are effective with regard to addressing the skills gaps at both the organisational and sector levels.

Further to understanding whether the learning programmes were effective in addressing skills gaps, it is also important to understand whether the programmes provided beneficiaries with the hard and soft skills they required in order to be able to operate effectively. The figure below offers a comprehensive view of the perceptions of employers regarding whether the learning programmes instilled the hard skills required by beneficiaries.

Figure 53: Learning Programme Effectiveness in Instilling Hard Skills Required



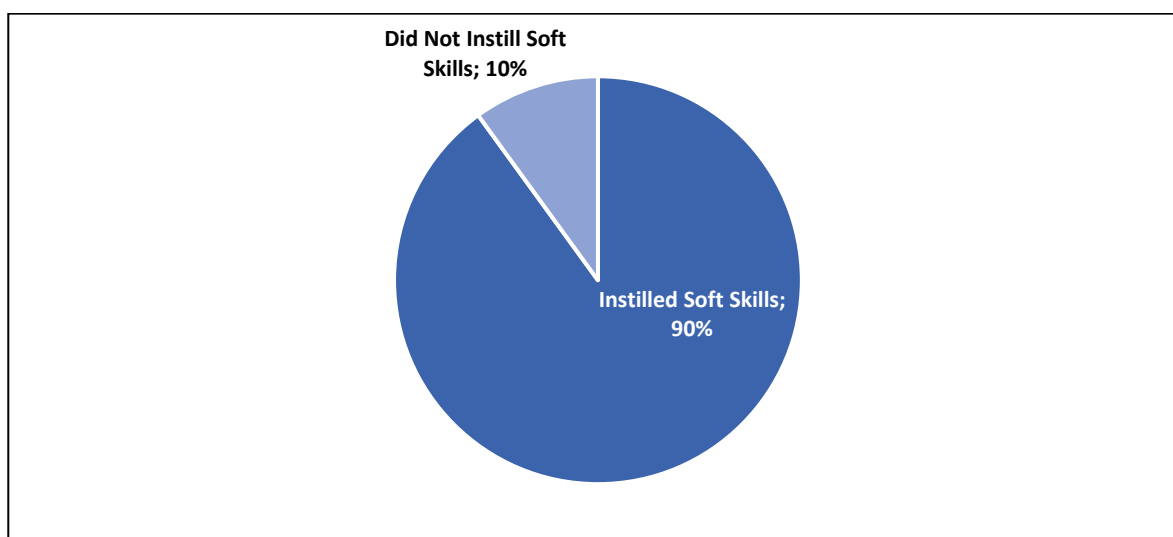
Source: CATHSSETA Employer Track and Tracer Survey

n=10

As can be seen in the figure above, all of the employers (100%) agreed that the learning programmes instilled the hard skills required by beneficiaries.

In addition to assessing whether the programmes instilled the necessary hard skills, it is also important to understand whether the programmes instilled the necessary soft skills, such as professionalism, work ethic and efficiency. The figure below illustrates these results.

Figure 54: Learning Programme Effectiveness in Instilling Soft Skills Required



Source: CATHSSETA Employer Track and Tracer Survey

n=10

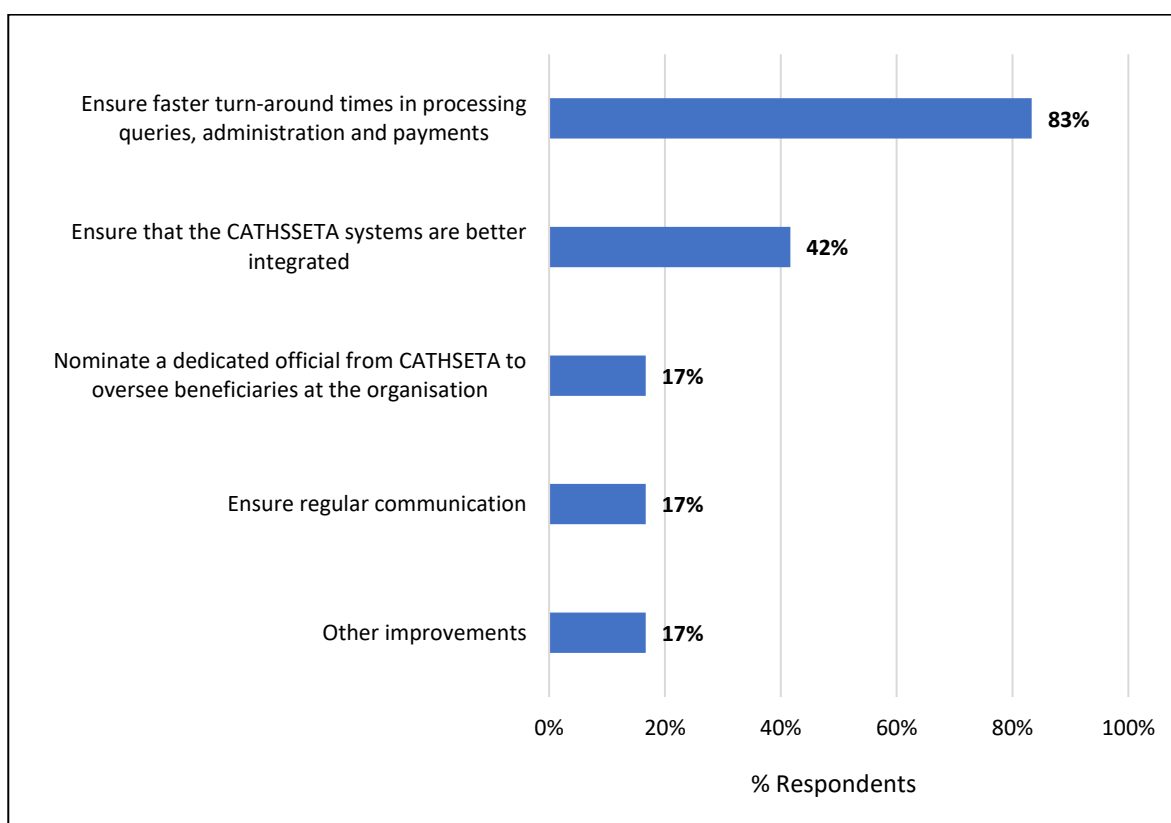
As can be seen in the figure above, 90% of employers agreed that the learning programmes instilled the necessary soft skills required by beneficiaries in order to perform effectively in their role.

Key Finding

- The learning programmes appeared to be effective and have an impact on beneficiaries with the majority of employers agreeing that the learning programmes enhanced beneficiary proficiency, instilled the hard and soft skills required by beneficiaries for effective job performance and played a role in addressing skills gaps at both an organisational and sectoral level.

4.8.4 Learning Programme Improvements

The following figure provides insights into potential enhancements that CATHSSETA can implement to optimise work-based learning experiences, based on input received from employers.

Figure 55: Work-Based Learning Programme Improvements⁵

Source: CATHSSETA Employer Track and Tracer Survey

n=12

The figure above illustrates that 83% of employers noted that an improvement that can be made is to ensure faster turnaround times when processing queries, administration and payments. An additional 42% stated that ensuring that the CATHSSETA systems are better integrated is a key area for improvement. Seventeen percent of employers stated that CATHSSETA should nominate a dedicated official to oversee the beneficiaries at the organisation and that CATHSSETA should ensure regular communication.

A further 17% of employers noted that there were “other” improvements that could be made. Some of the other improvements cited by employers included increasing the duration of the programmes and compensating employers for more of the costs associated with running the learning programmes, such as a management fee for administration costs or by providing a budget for Personal Protective Equipment (“PPE”).

⁵ Due to employers being allowed to select multiple responses, results may not tally up to 100%.

Key Finding

- A significant number of employers (83%) highlight the need for faster turnaround times with regard to the processing of queries, administration tasks, and payments. This suggests a potential area of improvement for CATHSSETA.

5. Chapter 5: Discussion of Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

This section provides a summary of the key findings stemming from the analysis contained within this report as presented in Section 4 above, followed by the recommendations and a conclusion to the Report.

5.1 Key Findings

The following points summarise the key findings of the study and provides the lessons that may be derived therefrom.

1. Demographic Overview

The impact of the learning programme in Gauteng is notable, as evidenced by the increase in the number of beneficiaries securing employment in Gauteng after completing the programme. This increase in employment in Gauteng surpasses that of other provinces, underscoring the programme's alignment with the regional distribution of participating employers, with a 33% being concentrated in Gauteng. Further to this, the study also reveals insights into the types of engagements beneficiaries undertook, with 31% participating in learnerships and 24% in internships.

2. Status and Nature of Employment

The impact of the learning programmes on beneficiaries is highlighted by a positive transformation in employment outcomes for the beneficiaries. The shift from 27% employment before the programme to 48% afterward underscores that the learning programmes have had an impact on employment amongst beneficiaries, to an extent. Notably, beneficiaries who received bursaries experienced a substantial increase in employment, increasing from 17% employment before the programme to 51% after. This increase emphasises the crucial role that financial support can play in assisting individuals obtain qualifications and potentially increasing their employment opportunities. The findings highlight the beneficial effects of the learning programmes, showcasing the impact that the programmes are having regarding the employment landscape for the beneficiaries involved.

3. Beneficiary Pathways

3.1. Employed Beneficiaries (incl. Beneficiaries who Changed Jobs)

The landscape for beneficiaries who noted that they were employed following the learning programmes reveals several notable trends. Firstly, it is encouraging to note that 46% of the jobs secured by employed beneficiaries are of a full-time nature, indicating a substantive level of stability in their employment. Further to this, the majority of beneficiaries were able to obtain

employment within 3 months following completion of the learning programme. It may, therefore, be noted that participation of beneficiaries in the programme appears to place them in an advantageous position in terms of securing employment. The effectiveness of the learning programmes particularly in terms of preparing beneficiaries for roles aligned to the sector was also apparent, with a high number of beneficiaries noting that they are employed in jobs that are aligned with their qualification.

3.2. Looking for a job

Despite the increase in beneficiary employment, findings from the study found that 39% of beneficiaries were unemployed upon completion of the learning programme. Beneficiaries encountered challenges in securing employment, attributing their unemployment to factors including; lack of job opportunities, inadequate job-seeking support, and perceived gaps in education or skills. The reasons cited shed light on the multifaceted nature of the obstacles faced by these beneficiaries in entering the workforce. Notably, half of the unemployed beneficiaries have invested between 1 to 3 years in their job search endeavours. This duration raises concerns and prompts considerations regarding whether there is sufficient demand in the market for the qualifications or courses undertaken by beneficiaries as well as the factors that may be impacting this demand.

4. Income Status Before and After the Learning Programme

Participation in the various learning programmes appeared to enhance the earning potential of beneficiaries, with a positive change in the income of beneficiaries being noted upon completion of the learning programmes, evidenced by the percentage of beneficiaries earning less than R3200 decreasing from 31% before the learning programme to 8% after the learning programme and the percentage of beneficiaries earning more than R12 801 increasing from 8% to 21%. This finding highlights the role of the learning programmes in fostering improved economic standings for beneficiaries of the programmes.

Further to the above, the analysed data highlights variations in the employee benefit landscape among employed beneficiaries, revealing that only 15% receive medical aid, whilst a substantial 76% benefit from UIF contributions. Furthermore, 43% received pension or retirement fund contributions. It may be noted that the number of beneficiaries receiving pension fund contributions from their employers is on par with the market, whilst medical aid is slightly lower and UIF is slightly higher. This may indicate that employed beneficiaries have secured employment of an average quality, as evidenced by the availability of social benefits.

5. Relevance and Impact of Learning Programmes (incl. Usability of Skills)

Overall, the learning programmes appear to be relevant, with the majority of beneficiaries indicating that they apply the skills acquired through the programmes in their work tasks. Moreover, the acquired skills were found to be highly useful with 97% of beneficiaries indicating this. This positive appraisal emphasises the relevance of the learning programmes, indicating that the skills imparted appear to align well with the needs and expectations of the sector and the beneficiaries.

In terms of impact of the learning programmes on beneficiaries, the assessment of skills underscores a significant improvement in beneficiary skills, evidenced by an average increase in skill level of 2.3. Notably, beneficiaries who received bursaries demonstrated the most significant improvement.

6. Beneficiary Perception of the Learning Programme

While the majority of beneficiaries noted an increase in employment opportunities from their participation in the learning programmes, it is noteworthy that 28% expressed a different perspective – noting that involvement in the learning programmes did not result in increased employment opportunities. Beneficiaries within this group reported remaining unemployed and expressed the need for further study in order to further enhance their employment potential. This insight sheds light on the complexity of the impact of learning initiatives, acknowledging that individual experiences and outcomes can vary. The feedback underscores the importance of considering diverse perspectives and tailoring support mechanisms to address the specific needs of those who may not have realised immediate employment benefits from the programmes.

Additionally, while 68% of beneficiaries were very satisfied with the learning programmes, 5% were either not very satisfied and 2% were not at all satisfied. A common sentiment amongst beneficiaries as a reason for this dissatisfaction is the duration of the programmes, with many noting that the programmes should be extended to accommodate additional time to learn and understand the material.

7. Employer Satisfaction with the Learning Programmes

The study indicates notable levels of satisfaction among employers regarding the learning programmes, with 38% expressing being very satisfied and 56% being satisfied with the programmes' effectiveness in providing relevant skills. Furthermore, all of the employers expressed satisfaction with their interactions with CATHSSETA during the programme, indicating a generally favourable experience for employers when engaging with CATHSSETA,

highlighting the effective collaboration and support that is provided by CATHSSETA throughout the learning initiatives.

8. Challenges Regarding the Learning Programmes Cited by Employers

The primary challenge reported by employers, highlighted by 43% of employers, revolved around the time constraints associated with mentoring and grooming beneficiaries. Additionally, 36% of employers identified a shortage of mentors or supervisors as a significant hurdle, coupled with the challenge of inadequate space to accommodate beneficiaries. These findings underscore the practical obstacles faced by employers in effectively overseeing and guiding programme beneficiaries. The combined concerns of time constraints and limited mentorship resources shed light on the need for strategic solutions to enhance the mentoring process and address logistical constraints, ultimately improving the overall effectiveness of the learning programmes from the employer's perspective as well as for the beneficiaries.

9. Employer Perceptions of the Learning Programmes

All (100%) employers who participated in the study agree that the learning programmes are beneficial to them, highlighting specific benefits such as the contribution made to youth development and employment. Additionally, 91% of employers agree the learning programmes are effective in addressing skills gaps at organisational and sector levels and have largely improved the overall proficiency of beneficiaries.

Notably, 90% of employers acknowledged a positive influence on soft skills, emphasising the learning programmes effectiveness in this aspect. With regard to the learning programmes instilling hard skills, 100% of employers agreed the programmes were successful in this regard.

10. Suggested Improvements to the Learning Programmes

A notable 83% of employers identified the need for faster turnaround times in processing queries, administration, and payments as a key area for improvement. This feedback underscores the significance of streamlining administrative processes to enhance efficiency and responsiveness in the engagement between employers and the programme. Addressing this concern could contribute to a more seamless and satisfactory experience for employers, ultimately contributing to the overall effectiveness and impact of the learning programmes.

5.2 Recommendations

The recommendations below stem from the findings of the study discussed in this report. The insights provided aim to empower CATHSSETA to make more informed decisions and refine the relevant learning programmes in order to enhance the impact of the learning programmes

on beneficiaries, as it pertains to the career pathways and employment outcomes of beneficiaries.

5.2.1 Needs-Based Training Design

CATHSSETA should endeavour to ensure relevant training that responds to the needs of the sector is provided to beneficiaries of the learning programmes. This may be achieved by conducting a biennial review of the learning programmes and curricula to ensure they closely align with current industry needs and demands and involve collaboration with industry experts, employers, and relevant stakeholders to gather valuable insights into the evolving landscape and needs of the sector. Valuable insights that may be required for such a review include emerging trends and skills requirements from employers and labour market analysis to understand the demand for specific skills. Overall, aligning the learning programmes with the needs of the sector may assist beneficiaries with securing employment upon completion of the programme.

5.2.2 Minimising Skills Misalignment

In order to address the potential challenge faced by beneficiaries related to perceived gaps in their education or skills, which beneficiaries note may be impacting their ability to find employment, it is suggested that CATHSSETA undertakes a comprehensive study to assess the skills demand and supply within the sector. This proposed research should aim to provide valuable insights into the alignment of CATHSSETA's learning programmes with industry expectations and should look to assess whether the level of qualification or training being provided through the CATHSSETA learning programmes aligns to the level expected by employers in the sector. For instance, if the research reveals that employers seek candidates with an NQF 5 qualification in game ranger training while CATHSSETA's programmes offer an NQF 4, it would highlight a significant mismatch between skills supply and demand. By conducting such a study, CATHSSETA can gain a deeper understanding of industry needs, allowing for the refinement and realignment of its learning programs to better meet the evolving demands of the sector, ultimately ensuring that beneficiaries are equipped with the most relevant and sought-after skills and qualifications.

5.2.3 Job Placement Services

In an attempt to enhance the employment prospects of beneficiaries upon completion of the learning programmes, CATHSSETA may consider establishing job placement services as a vital component of its overall support offerings to the sector and beneficiaries. This may involve creating a comprehensive network of companies that express willingness and have the financial resources to hire programme graduates, that learners may be referred to upon

completion of their learning programme. Furthermore, CATHSSETA may proactively engage with employers across various industries with whom they may foster partnerships, with the goal of enhancing beneficiary placement after completion of the learning programmes, and communicate the value of hiring individuals who have completed their learning programmes. As part of this exercise, it is important for CATHSSETA to identify employers within the industry who have the financial resources to employ graduates. Further to this, CATHSSETA may consider increasing the grant provided to employers in order to fund the employment of new graduates entering the sector. This increased grant should support employers in providing employment opportunities for new graduates as it may act as a stipend for the first year of employment in order for the new graduates to gain experience and skills.

To facilitate direct connections between beneficiaries and potential employers, CATHSSETA may also organise targeted career fairs and networking events. These events may serve as platforms for beneficiaries to interact with hiring managers, showcase their skills, and explore job opportunities. Additionally, CATHSSETA should consider using online platforms, such as dedicated job portals and media platforms such as LinkedIn or industry-specific websites to advertise the successful completion of the learning programmes by beneficiaries each year, thus making the relevant employers aware of newly qualified potential employees. This can provide a scalable and accessible means for both employers and beneficiaries to connect. By actively facilitating these job placement initiatives, CATHSSETA may not only strengthen the link between education and employment but may also contribute to the overall success and impact of their learning programmes.

5.2.4 Enhance Efficiency and Engagement with Employers

To enhance employers' overall experience with the learning programmes, CATHSSETA should consider streamlining the administrative processes and improving the turnaround times for queries and payment processing. This may be achieved by firstly conducting a review of the associated processes in order to identify many potential inefficiencies or areas for improvement. Following this, potential solutions may be identified in order to facilitate more efficient and responsive administrative procedures that can contribute to a smoother collaboration between CATHSSETA and participating employers. This may be achieved by investing in advanced technologies that automate routine tasks, introducing user-friendly online platforms for streamlined communication and document submission, and ensuring a dedicated support system is in place to address queries promptly. By reducing the administrative hurdles and expediting payment processes, CATHSSETA not only demonstrates a commitment to operational excellence but also fosters a positive relationship

with employers, ultimately promoting their satisfaction and continued engagement in the learning programmes.

5.3 Conclusion

This study sought to uncover the pathways of learners who completed certain learning programmes during the 2021/22 and 2022/23 financial years in order to understand the successes and challenges of CATHSSETA's interventions that are aimed at contributing to the broader goals of economic growth and social development as outlined in the National Development Plan ("NDP").

The findings of this report provide valuable insights into the impact of the learning programmes facilitated by CATHSSETA. The positive transformation in employment outcomes, especially for those receiving bursaries, underscores the potential that financial support has in enhancing employment opportunities. Further to this, the employment benefits landscape reveals variations, with a significant percentage benefiting from UIF contributions (with the percentage of beneficiaries receiving UIF being slightly higher than the market) but a relatively low percentage receiving medical aid (with the percentage of beneficiaries receiving medical aid being slightly lower than the market). This may indicate that employed beneficiaries have secured employment of an average quality evidenced by the availability of social benefits. Furthermore, it is important to note that while the learning programmes have provided beneficiaries with career opportunities and professional pathways, to an extent, there remains a lack of job opportunities within the CATHS sector as a whole, particularly for graduates with little to no experience. The suggested partnerships outlined in the recommendations may provide a basis for CATHSSETA to enhance graduates' employment opportunities by partnering with employers and providing job placement services.

The satisfaction among employers with the learning programmes, both in terms of relevant skills and interactions with CATHSSETA, is a positive indicator of effective collaboration and highlights positive perceptions of the learning programmes amongst employers. However, challenges cited by employers, such as financial and time constraints and mentorship shortages, highlight areas for improvement. As noted in the recommendations, the importance of securing job placement for graduates is a vital step in the learning programme administration in order to ensure graduates who complete programmes are absorbed into the workforce. Further resources such as grants and stipends may assist both employers and graduates in this endeavour.

Addressing the concerns related to continuous improvement of the programmes such as faster turnaround times and improved administrative processes may be crucial to enhance overall

efficiency and effectiveness of the programmes and maintain the involvement of the employers in the sector.

In summary, the findings underscore the successes, challenges, and opportunities for refinement within the learning programmes. The recommendations derived from this report can serve as a foundation for CATHSSETA to further enhance the effectiveness and impact of its initiatives, ensuring that beneficiaries receive quality education, relevant skills, and robust support for successful integration into the workforce.

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