

# **Advancing the entrepreneurial potential of Screenagers: Investigating Generation Z perceptions of youth entrepreneurship development in South Africa**

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## **ABSTRACT**

In 2019 the International Labour Organisation (ILO) indicates that youth unemployment continues to be a global societal issue as 59.1 million people between 15 and 24 years of age are unemployed. 'Youth' can be classified as the cohort Generation Z (i.e. Screen-agers) who are technology capable individuals born between 1995 and 2012 (Ramachandiran & Dhanapal, 2018:2117). In a developing country such as South Africa, youth at this age finalise their primary-, secondary- and tertiary education. This study investigates the perceptions of Generation Z students, towards factors influencing the development of youth entrepreneurship in South Africa. A newly developed survey questionnaire was completed by two-hundred-and-twenty-eight students between 18 and 24 years of age who are in their final year of high school and on the verge of seeking employment after their high school graduation or consider selfemployment by establishing their own Small, Medium and Micro Enterprise (SMME). The findings indicate that South African Generation Z experience difficulty in becoming entrepreneurs due to obstacles such as culture, education and governmental policies. The study also suggests the practical application that the South African government and nongovernmental organisations should amend youth entrepreneurship funding programmes and that Generation Z youth should be encouraged to pursue entrepreneurship as an employment option in their respective communities. The study contributes to academia by pointing out the need for entrepreneurial curriculum development for Generation Z students as it is currently either inadequate- or non-existent in terms of entrepreneurship education and training programmes for the youth.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurial development, Entrepreneurship, Generation Z, Questionnaire,

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