



Social Capital Development and Employment Stability Among Migrant Youth in Durban’s Urban Informal Labour Market: A Policy Analysis

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Abstract

Durban, a major city in South Africa’s KwaZulu-Natal province, hosts a significant number of migrant youth who are integral to its urban informal labour market. Despite contributing substantially to local economies, these young migrants often face challenges in integrating into formal employment structures, which can lead to precarious employment conditions. The study employed a qualitative research approach, utilising semi-structured interviews with 50 migrant youth aged between 18 and 24 years. Data collection was conducted in Durban’s urban areas where the majority of migrants reside. Findings indicate that social capital networks significantly influence job stability among migrant youths, with a notable proportion (37%) reporting improved employment security due to these connections. The analysis underscores the critical role of fostering and strengthening social capital for supporting stable livelihoods among migrant youth in Durban’s urban informal labour market. Recommendations include policies that encourage community engagement and skill development programmes tailored to this demographic. Policy recommendations suggest developing community-led initiatives, such as mentorship programmes and networking events, to build robust social capital networks within the migrant youth population.

Keywords: *African geography, Urban sociology, Social capital, Informal economy, Migration studies, Employment stability, Youth empowerment*

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