Using Co-Design to Discern and Overcome Barriers to Employment in Cape Town

Research to understand unemployment and technology

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UCT KNOWLEDGE CO-OP

- **The UCT Knowledge Co-op facilitated this collaborative project.**

  See http://www.knowledgeco-op.uct.ac.za or

  Contact us at barbara.schmid@uct.ac.za / 021 – 650 4415

- The research for this presentation was conducted as a Masters Dissertation based on a request for such research by the **Afrika Tikkun.**

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Introduction

- Unemployment is at over 26% in South Africa

- youth unemployment rate is over 20% higher than the adult unemployment rate from 2004 to 2014

- Several NGO and agencies have been created to attend to the situation:
  - Afrika Tikkun
  - TZN
  - Harambee
  - NYDA

- Participants: Student job seekers and their trainers

Problem Statement

▶ Low-skilled job seekers face several difficulties in job searching, many of which can be lightened by the use of technology.


▶ Thus in this research, we sought to assist job-seekers to alleviate the job searching process. We worked with unemployed participants in NGO-run job-readiness courses to co-design and co-develop an ICT-based solution to directly address their needs.

Existing Applications

	Presence (mobile) web/mobile	Type of registration	Cv creation	Motivation letter creation	Job notification	Job matching method	Other
Indeed	Mobile & Web	Profile creation (must have)	Yes	No	email	Deliver results according to your search criteria	Crawling Employers pay for accessing the service (Pay per click)
Baba Job	Web	Profile creation Sms facility	No	No	email, sms	Do match jobs, look for what suit you from a pool of jobs available on their website	Domiciled in India and targets low to medium income jobs (blue collar)
LinkedIn	Mobile plus web	Create profile	No	No	email		Social networking plus job seeking
Giraffe	Web	Access strictly by profile registration	No	No	Sms		
Gumtree	Web	Create profile	No	No	Email	Search randomly for job you want	Not specialised, buyers and sellers also meet on the site
Khanya job Network	Web and mobile	Profile creation with SMS/Email notification option	Yes	Yes	Email, sms	Yes, exact job send to seeker according to their specific needs	Target mostly unskilled job seekers

Methodology

- Participatory Co-Design
- Tell ⇔ Make ⇔ Enact cycle
- Multi-directional
- Cycle 1a: tell, make, No Enact
- Ideas mainly one directional of creating a job searching platform
- Cycle 1b: tell, enact
- Cycle 2: make, tell, make, tell, enact
- Cycle 3: make, tell, enact
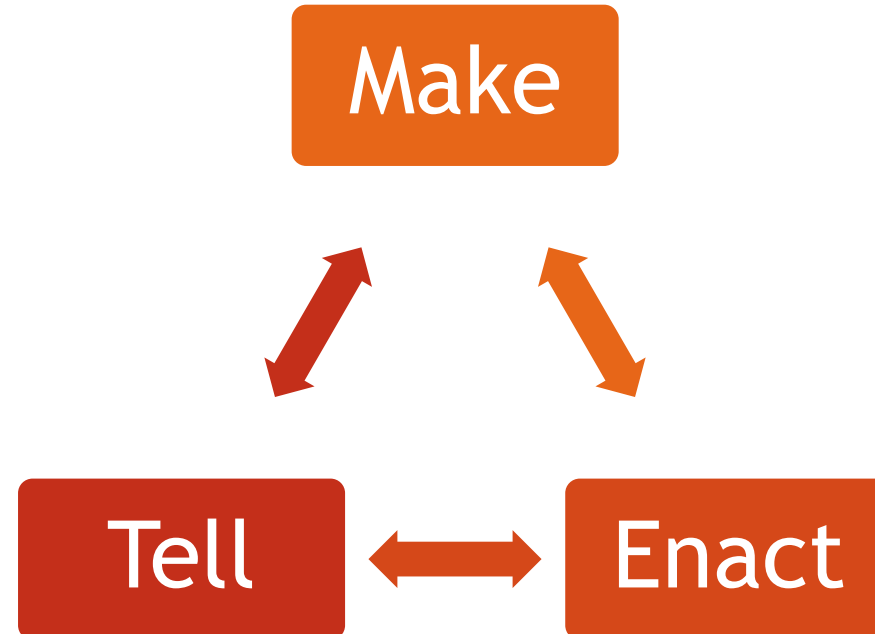
Research Cycles

Cycle	Activities List
Cycle 1	Trainer interviews (2 per NGO) In depth Student Interviews (2 per NGO) Brainstorming workshop (1 per NGO)
Cycle 2	Prototype Design One-on-one Cognitive walkthroughs
Cycle 3	Working Prototype Design One-on-one Cognitive walkthroughs Two-week Deployment

Khanya Job NETwork

Curriculum Vitae for Sandile Somlota

I am energetic, proactive, industrious, trustworthy, punctual, sociable, team player, goal-oriented and well organized. I have an excellent command of English language both written and spoken. I have a work permit to work anywhere in South Africa. I also have ten years of teaching experience and I enjoy working with children.

Personal Information
Name: Sandile
Surname: Somlota
Nationality: Zimbabwean
PassportID number: CN129439
Date of birth: 1975-09-18
Marital status: Married
Home language: Shona
Contact Details & Address
Phone number: +27747222888
Email address: jaykuso432@gmail.com
Physical address: 24 Main Road, Observatory, Cape Town
Province: Western Cape
Qualifications and Skills
Qualification 1: Degree
Skill 1: Driving
Skill 2: Waiter
Skill 3: Selling

Cover Letter for Sandile Somlota

24 Main Road, Observatory, Cape Town
Western Cape

30 September 2017

Address of employer
Address of employer
Address of employer

Employment Application Letter

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Sandile Somlota. I have the following skill/s Driving, Waiter, Selling however I am applying to your company particularly for the [position to be inserted based on job] role. I am energetic, proactive, industrious, trustworthy, punctual, sociable, team player, goal-oriented and well organized. I have an excellent command of English language both written and spoken. I have a work permit to work anywhere in South Africa. I also have ten years of teaching experience and I enjoy working with children.

I am interested in the vacancy relevant to one or more of my skills. Please contact me at the following number +27747222888.

Yours Faithfully,

Sandile Somlota

Findings –Cycle 2

- Allow both phone and computer to access the website
- Use province in address
- ID number to both ID number and Passport number
- Some participants may feel all they have is matric although they have N4, N5, N6 certificate/s.
    - National Certificate N4
    - National Certificate N5
    - National Certificate N6
- **Participants have skills or certificates that employers do not care about**
- Tips are useful
- Having SMS too for notifications is useful
- Would like to use the application

Findings -Cycle 3 (1)

- Participant 6: "It saves me from moving around. I don't have to go to dogs" > Saves time and transport costs

- Why participant 1 doesn't use his phone often to find jobs: "Because the connection costs some bucks" > Is expensive

- Participant 9: "…I just found out that that [the Khanya Job Network CV] format is what employers are looking for"

- Participant 5 benefit of cover letter: "… It's easy to read than a cv that have a lot of details"

- Participant 4, stated that, "emailing and SMSing were the best [features] for me. Since I am that kind of person who is always on the internet, it is very easy for me to know what is coming"

Findings -Cycle 3 (2)

- Participant 3 stated, "they give us the available jobs. Instead of going and search for yourselves"

- Self descriptions did not work out so well as there were language errors and poor self-representation.

- Participant 3: "they are different because Khanyo [Khanya job network] send you an email but Job alert give you a late job post… some of job from job alert are the post that I don't qualify for"

- Overall, the participants appreciated the CV and cover letter. Were glad that they did not have to search for jobs by themselves. And one of our participants got a job using the generated CV and Motivation letter.

Findings -Cycle 3 (3)

How has Afrika Tikkun benefited participants?

- Participant 1: "I will have my computer certificate. At least I know how to apply for job and what to do when I am looking for job and what to dress when I'm going for interview."

- Participant 2: "It help me to know how to use computer; How to find a job; How to create your email/CV"

- Participant 3: "It has assisted me in a way that I have developed personally. In terms of communication skills."

- Participant 4: "I now know how to communicate"

- Participant 5: "They help us to know how to deal with interviews, how to search [for] jobs, how to use computer skills. All in all they teach us to be ready for a work environment"

Recommendations

▶ Missed call and send job opportunities as on BABAJOB

▶ For sustainability of SMSes to job seekers, employers pay to access job seekers information as on INDEED

▶ Language learning application

▶ More research into how to offer incentives would be good

▶ Artificial intelligence would be needed to crawl and filter information when the number of users is scaled up.

Conclusion

- We developed an artefact that tackled lack of data and not having cellphones by creating an artefact that was both mobile and web compatible.

- The lack of online job search skills was eliminated by simulating crawled job offers matching users location, skills, qualification and experience.

- Lack of transportation was partially addressed by creating a CV and a motivation letter which could be sent to employers or printed.

- Getting jobs that suit user needs would eliminate hours of looking through numerous irrelevant job offers.

- Both the understanding of a problem as well as its solution should be co-designed by it's eventual users as much as possible. Limitations of user availability, time and financial constraints, language differences and lack of skills affect the participation level possible.

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