

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND EMPLOYMENT:

Analysing the Perceptions of MKRI's Graduate and Skills Programme Beneficiaries

Project overview

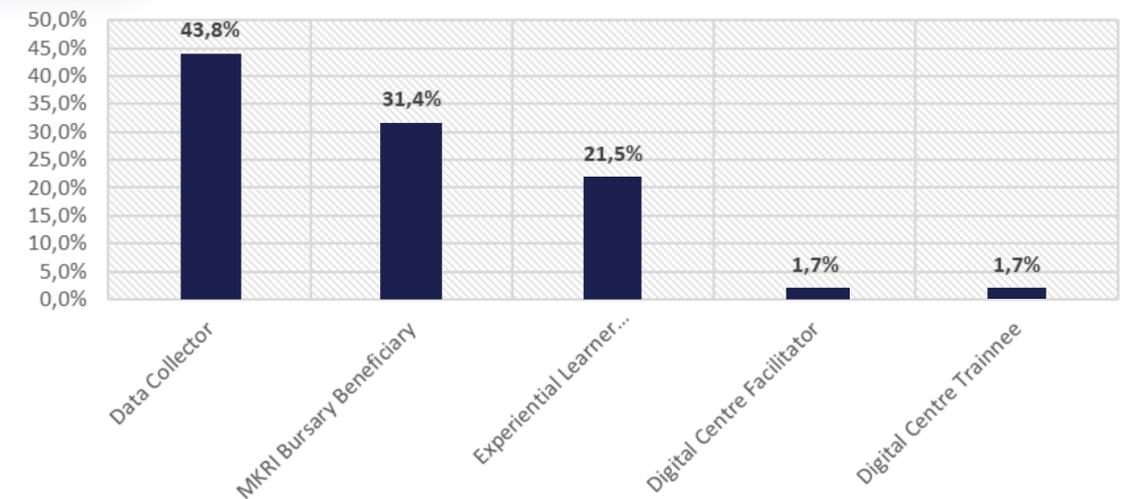
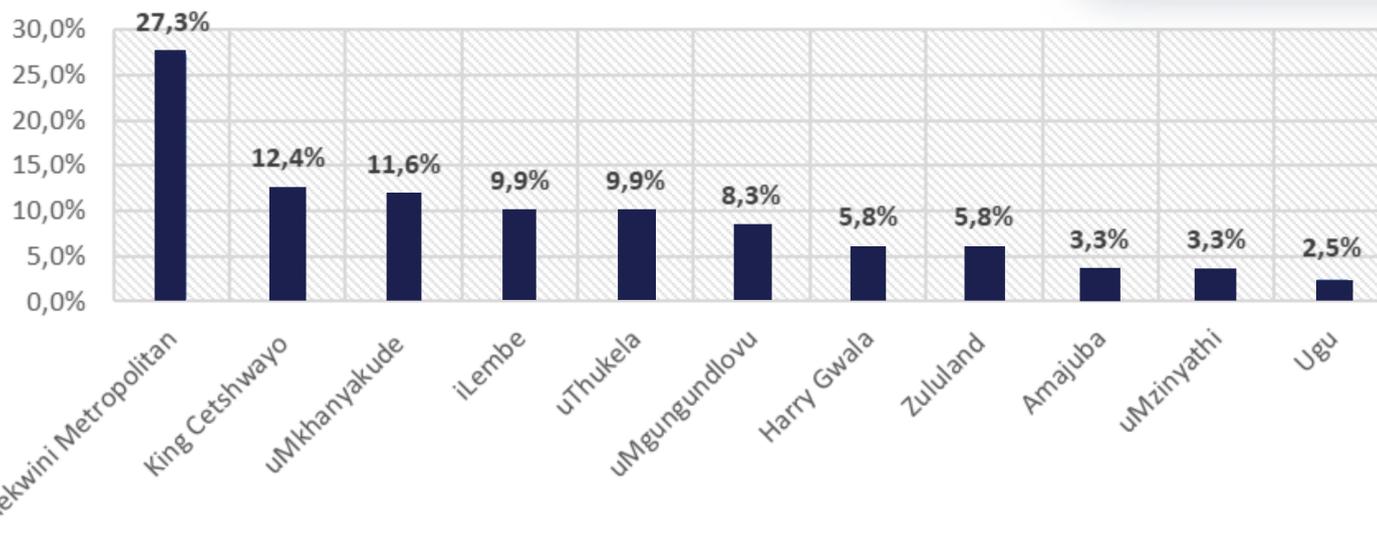
This study sought to analyse the perceptions of MKRI graduate and skills programme beneficiaries on the impact of AI on employment in KZN. The survey investigated aspects of AI awareness, expected industry impacts, job creation or loss, and the potential role of AI in recruitment, job searching, and digital skills development.

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Distribution of Survey Respondents by District Municipality

121 Survey Respondents

Distribution of Participants by MKRI Programme



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DEMOGRAPHIC RESPONDENT PROFILE

Consent to Participate	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)	Gender	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Agree	121	100%	Female	71	58.7%
Disagree	0	0%	Male	50	41.3%
Field of Study for Highest Post School Qualification	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)	Education	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Humanities	38	31.4%	Honours	31	25.6%
Natural Science and Engineering	29	24.0%	Masters	29	24.0%
Economics and Management Sciences	24	19.8%	Diploma	27	22.3%
Information and Communication Technology	18	14.9%	Degree	26	21.5%
Health Sciences	5	4.1%	PhD	5	4.1%
Education	4	3.3%	Advanced Diploma	1	0.8%
Law	2	1.7%	Matric/ Grade 12/ NCV	1	0.8%
Hospitality and Tourism	1	0.8%	Post graduate diploma	1	0.8%
District Distribution	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)	Location Type	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
eThekweni Metropolitan	33	27.3%	Village	41	33.9%
King Cetshwayo	15	12.4%	Township	36	29.8%
uMkhanyakude	14	11.6%	City/ Town	19	15.7%
iLembe	12	9.9%	Suburb	15	12.4%
uThukela	12	9.9%	Farm	10	8.3%
uMgungundlovu	10	8.3%	Age	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Harry Gwala	7	5.8%	25 - 34	100	82.6%
Zululand	7	5.8%	35 - 44	12	9.9%
Amajuba	4	3.3%	18 - 24	9	7.4%
uMzinyathi	4	3.3%			
Ugu	3	2.5%			

Demographic concentration

58.7% Female

82.6% Most Participants (Aged 25 -34)

Predominantly rural/peri-urban background

63.7% Lived in villages or townships

Diverse academic backgrounds

Economics & Management Sciences

19.8%

Natural Science & Engineering

24%

Humanities

31.4%

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND EMPLOYMENT:

AI awareness, perceptions, and employment impact insights

3 High AI Awareness

97.5%

were aware of AI, and those unfamiliar mostly showed willingness to learn, indicating a readiness for digital skills development

Optimism in key sectors

77.7%

Believe AI will improve Healthcare

83.5%

Agree that AI will reduce wage costs for businesses.

91%

Believe AI will increase productivity

Concerns about AI's negative impact

55.4%

Disagreed that AI will create employment opportunities

71.1%

Cited job loss as the biggest concern

Sectors most affected

11.6%

Government Services

14%

Finance

40.5%

Manufacturing

AI's role in recruitment

71.9%

Believe it will improve recruitment processes

89.2%

Believe AI will impact recruitment

Practical support for job seekers

3.3%

Resume Cover Letter support

12.4%

Interview preparation

15.7%

CV writing

19.8%

Job matching capabilities

47.1%

Believe AI helps align skills to careers.

Opportunities identified

- AI is used to create jobs in robotics, data science, engineering, AI training, and cybersecurity
- Demand is expected for upskilling, entrepreneurship, and AI literacy, especially in rural areas

Balanced but cautious sentiment

- Many acknowledge AI's potential to improve employment systems
- Others expressed concerns about fairness, job loss, and social inequality without proper regulation.