

**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A GRADUATE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME IN
ENHANCING EMPLOYMENT AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES
FOR SOUTH AFRICAN YOUTHS**

by

LOUISA MUNYADZIWA MARIBA

submitted in accordance with the requirements for
the degree of

MASTER OF COMMERCE

in the subject

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

SUPERVISOR: PROF MARIETTE COETZEE

(JUNE 2020)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
DECLARATION	i
KEY TERMS	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
DEDICATION	iv
ABSTRACT	v
ACRONYMS	vi
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.2 BACKGROUND TO AND MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY	1
1.2.1 Rationale of the study	6
1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM	7
1.3.1 Purpose of the Study	9
1.3.2 Significance of the Study	10
1.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION	10
1.5 PLAN OF THE RESEARCH	10
1.7 CONCLUSION	12
CHAPTER 2: GRADUATE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMMES	13
2.1 INTRODUCTION	13
2.2 CONCEPTUALISATION OF INTERNSHIP	15
2.2.1 Benefits of internship programme	17
2.2.2 Determinants of an effective graduate internship programme	21
2.2.3 Graduate skills and attributes that enhance employability	28
2.2.4 Impact of mentorship on interns' career development and career choice	41
2.2.5 Processes of running and managing the internship programme at the residential university under study	45
CHAPTER 3: GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY	49
3.1 INTRODUCTION	49
3.2 GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY	50
3.2.1 Student unpreparedness	52
3.2.2 Strategies to enhance graduate employability	56
3.2.3 Responsibility for employability	72
3.4 COLLABORATION BETWEEN HIGHER EDUCATION AND INDUSTRIES	75
3.4.1 Collaboration with other stakeholders	77
3.5 THE INTER-RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYABILITY, GRADUATENESS AND INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME	79

3.6 CONCLUSION	81
CHAPTER 4: LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK	83
4.1 INTRODUCTION.....	83
4.2 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT ACT NO. 97 OF 1998.....	84
4.3 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT LEVIES ACT 9 OF 1999.....	86
4.3 NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY 2009 TO 2014	87
4.4 NATIONAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (NSDS) III	90
4.5 THE HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR SOUTH AFRICA 2010 TO 2030	93
4.6 ACCELERATED AND SHARED GROWTH SOUTH AFRICA.....	96
4.7 JOINT INITIATIVE FOR PRIORITY SKILLS ACQUISITION	98
4.9 CONCLUSION	99
CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	101
5.1 INTRODUCTION.....	101
5.2 FOCUS OF RESEARCH	101
5.3 RESEARCH DESIGN	101
5.3.1 Research Approaches.....	102
5.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	104
5.4.1 Research setting	104
5.4.2 Population	106
5.4.3 Sample.....	106
5.4.4 Data collection	108
5.5 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION	117
5.6 TRUSTWORTHINESS	118
5.6.1 Credibility	118
5.6.2 Transferability	120
5.6.3 Dependability and confirmability	120
5.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	121
5.7.1 The principle of justice	121
5.7.2 The principle of beneficence.....	121
5.7.3 The principle of respect for human dignity.....	122
5.7.4 Deception	123
5.7.5 Anonymity and confidentiality	123
5.7.6 Accuracy	123
5.8 SUMMARY	124
CHAPTER 6: DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF RESULTS	125
6.1 INTRODUCTION.....	125
6.2 GENERAL GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATION OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE FOCUS GROUPS AND INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS.....	125

6.2	NAÏVE READING	128
6.3	THE MAIN THEMES	128
6.3.1	Determinants of an effective graduate internship programme.....	129
6.3.2	Graduate skills for employability.....	132
6.3.3	Impact of mentorship on interns' career development and career choices	137
6.3.4	Impact of interns' personal behaviour on employability	144
6.3.5	Recommendations for planning and managing a graduate internship programme.....	146
6.4	SUMMARY	151
7.1	INTRODUCTION.....	165
7.2	OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY	165
7.3	CONCLUSIONS.....	168
7.4	LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH	171
7.5	RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON THE FINDINGS.....	172
7.6	SUMMARY	173
	REFERENCES	174
	APPENDIX A.....	195
	APPENDIX B1	197
	APPENDIX B2	198
	APPENDIX B3:	199
	APPENDIX B4	200
	APPENDIX C	201
	APPENDIX D	202
	APPENDIX E	205
	APPENDIX F.....	206

DECLARATION

Name: Louisa Munyadziwa Mariba

Student number: 40218538

Degree: MASTER OF COMMERCE IN BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A GRADUATE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME IN ENHANCING EMPLOYMENT AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOUTH AFRICAN YOUTHS

I declare that the above dissertation is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

SIGNATURE

DATE

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

Title of thesis/dissertation:

**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A GRADUATE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME IN
ENHANCING EMPLOYMENT AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES
FOR SOUTH AFRICAN YOUTHS**

KEY TERMS:

Internship programme, work experience, employability, employability skills, graduate skills, graduateness, interns, mentors, employment, career choice

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I would like to thank God for giving me the courage and the will to carry out my master's study.

To my supervisor, Prof Mariette Coetzee, without all your support, patience and understanding, this work would not have been completed. Your expert advice in research made me understand and able to gain vast experience as far as research is concerned.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Prof. Makonde Makatu. Her assistance with and understanding of my frustrations was incredible. Your experience and thorough explanations of the research concepts helped a lot. I will forever be thankful to you.

To my husband, your support and encouragement never went unnoticed. Your love and support and that of our children have been my strength and kept me going, even though, sometimes I felt like giving up.

I am also thankful to my friends and colleagues who were always there for me in different ways. I appreciate their support throughout this difficult journey.

Lastly, without the participants, this work could not be complete. I thank you all from the bottom of my heart for partaking in my study, by sharing your thoughts, experiences and perceptions.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my family, especially, my husband, Alugumi Norman Mariba and my children, Phathutshedzo Chembry Mariba and Fulufhelo Charmaine Mariba, whose love, support and encouragement were so amazing. This dissertation is also dedicated to my mother, an old woman who regards education so highly, who although she was never formally educated, she managed to educate herself through Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) long before it was taken into consideration by many.

ABSTRACT

The research was a qualitative study where it explored and evaluated the effectiveness of a graduate internship programme at a resident university under study. The aim of the study was to find out if the programme was useful to graduates attempting to gain work experience and skills and competencies required in the workplace. Face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted with mentors, line managers (of former interns already in employment) and former interns. Focus-group discussions took place with interns who were currently in the system. The findings show that the programme is achieving its intended outcomes as far as graduates gaining the necessary skills and work exposure. This was made possible because interns are allocated a mentor and workplan right at the start of the programme. They receive constant feedback for them to develop skills and to improve their performance. Achieving these was only possible when the interns themselves were ready to learn and committed to their work.

ACRONYMS

AsgiSA	Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa
AWESOME	Accelerated Workplace Experience and Skills Orientation Model
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements
CCFOs	Critical Cross Fields Outcomes
CHE	Council on Higher Education
CHETL	Centre for Higher Education, Teaching and Learning
CPUT	Cape Peninsula University of Technology
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DoL	Department of Labour
DPE	Department of Public Enterprise
DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration
DST	Department of Science and Technology
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
ECSA	Engineering Council of South Africa
ETDP-SETA	Education, Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority
ETQA	Education and Training Quality Assurance
FET	Further Education and Training
GEAI	Graduate Economic Absorption Indicator
GEM	Graduate Empowerment Monitor
HBIs	Historically Black Institutions
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
HR	Human Resources
HRD-SA	Human Resource Development Strategy of South Africa
HWIs	Historically White Institutions
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IPAP	Industrial Policy Action Plans
IT	Information Technology
ITL	Improving Teaching and Learning

JIPSA	Joint Initiative on Priority Skills Acquisition
MERSETA	Manufacturing Engineering Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority
MICT-SETA	Media, Information and Communication Technology Sector Education and Training Authority
NDP	National Development Plan
NGP	New Growth Path
NIP	National Internship Programme
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NRF	National Research Foundation
NSA	National Skills Authority
NSDS	National Skills Development Strategy
NSF	National Skills Fund
NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
NYDA	National Youth Development Agency
NYP	National Youth Policy
OBE	Outcomes-based Education
PBL	Problem-based Learning
PIVOTAL	Professional, Vocational, Technical and Academic Learning
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SAGDA	South African Graduate Development Agency
SASCO	South African Student Congress
SASSETA	Safety and Security Sector Education and Training Authority
SDA	Skills Development Act
SDI	Skills Development Institutions
SDLA	Skills Development Levies Act
SET	Science, Engineering and Technology
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SSETA	Services Sector Education and Training Authority
SSP	Sector Skills Plans

StatsSA	Statistics South Africa
THRIP	Technology for Human Resources and Innovation Programme
UJ	University of Johannesburg
UNISA	University of South Africa
UP	University of Pretoria
WIL	Work Integrated Learning
WSP	Workplace Skills Plan

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The researcher was convinced that there was a great need for research to evaluate the effectiveness of the graduate internship programme at a residential university in South Africa. The focus is to determine whether this programme is of assistance to youth graduates to secure employment and for them to make informed decisions about their career development. The researcher also believes that the findings of this proposed research study will highly contribute in the improvement of the management of the internship programme at universities and other workplaces in the country at large.

This chapter gave a detailed description of the topics covered. These topics included background to and motivation for the study, the research problem, ethical consideration as well as the research plan.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO AND MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

In the Republic of South Africa (RSA) most of the young people have grown up believing that education is key to a better future, hence, leads to a better life. The perception has motivated some of the youth to work hard to complete their Grade 12 with good results so that they can obtain study bursaries to complete their tertiary education (Manganye, 2008).

The nature and severity of the unemployment problem in South Africa is well known (Pauw, Oosthuizen & van der Westhuizen, 2006; Ramaphosa, 2018). According to Statistics South Africa (Statistics South Africa, 2012) in the 2nd quarter of 2012, South Africa's unemployment rate dropped from 25.2% to 24.9%, whereas during the years 2008 to 2015, the absorption of youth in employment decreased from 36% to 33% (Statistics South Africa, 2016). During the second quarter of 2018, employment decreased by 4.4%, a decrease of 69 000 jobs from 9 817 000 to 9 748 000. The official unemployment rate for youth between the ages of 20 to 24 years old stood at 61.6%, 42% for the 25 to 29 years old and 33% to 30 to 34 years old, and the discouraged work-seekers from 4% to 8% (Statistics South Africa, 2018). Even though the overall youth unemployment had decreased in 2018 as compared to 2012, there is still a concern that youths are

the most affected by unemployment and those discouraged to look for jobs, even more. In 2012, there were 4.5 million jobless people, of whom 67.8% had been looking for employment for over a year or longer. Unemployed youth showed the highest number at 72% and with the highest level amongst them being those between the ages of 15 to 24 years of age who were mainly high school and university graduates. Nearly 40% of this country's youths, between the ages of 15 and 34 years, have never experienced the world of work. Another concern is that of all South African youths without jobs, the number of graduates with tertiary qualifications increased by 24 000 in 2012 (Statistics South Africa, 2012) and 203 076 graduated in 2016 (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2018) despite the overall decline of levels of unemployment. In 2011 mid-year population was estimated at 50,59 million, with only 3.9 million as elderly people from the ages of 60 years and upwards (Statistics South Africa, 2012). This gives an indication that there are more young people than adults in the country and with this huge problem of youth unemployment, South Africa is faced with serious socio-economic problems. According to Chidonga and Fatoki (2012:307), *"The National Treasury of South Africa (2008) notes that the socio-economic costs associated with high youth unemployment include significant poverty, crime, violence, loss of morale, social degradation and political disengagement."*

At the National Executive Committee meeting held from 10 to 12 August 2012, the South African Students Congress (SASCO) raised a concern regarding the racialised and gendered nature of graduate employment in South Africa. They acknowledge that unemployment in this country is both structural and chronic, however, they are concerned that the South African white graduates do not experience as much difficulty in finding employment as compared to black ones. According to SASCO, research has shown that 55% of black graduates take a year or more before they find employment after graduation, as compared to their white counterparts. They went further that statistics show that there are about 600 000 unemployed graduates and about 300 000 positions in the economy which cannot be filled by the unemployed graduates, which unfortunately affects the black graduates the most.

The then Gauteng MEC of Economic Development, Mr Qedani Mahlangu, in his statement of 27 February 2012, acknowledged that youths, both Grade 12 and university graduates, between the ages of 18 to 24 form the single biggest chunk of the unemployed in the Province. In his speech

during the opening address of the Jobs Summit, the current President of South Africa, Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, shared the same sentiment. He said jobs are a challenge in South African history, although, also scarce everywhere in the world, particularly, for the young people. He also said that unemployment is high due to people being denied opportunities to own assets or develop employability skills (Ramaphosa, 2018). In view of the statements mentioned above, there is a consensus that unemployment is 'structural' in nature. According to Pauw *et al.*, (2006), there is structural unemployment, in the sense that there is a mismatch between the types of skills supplied and those demanded by the economy. Structural unemployment occurs when there is a significant gap between, on the one hand, the attributes, such as education, skills and expertise, required for a job, and on the other hand, the availability of appropriately qualified workers to fill those posts. Structural unemployment also refers to situations that arise when jobs change or simply no longer exist because the structure or composition of the economy has changed (Graham & Mlatsheni, 2016). The South African Graduate Development Agency (SAGDA) also in agreement with this fact, indicates that there appears to be an on-going, almost intractable mismatch between the types of workers demanded by the market and those provided by universities and colleges. These days high-skilled labour is required to drive technology and our youth graduates cannot be listed in that category (Graham *et al.*, 2016). SAGDA further indicated that evidence abounds that African students at Historically Black Institutions (HBIs) tend to graduate in fields of study with lower employment prospects, often because they do not meet the minimum requirements for enrolling in high-demand areas like, mathematics, science and engineering. Graduates in this study refer to individuals with tertiary qualifications, such as diplomas and degrees from institutions of higher learning (universities or universities of technology). The Council on Higher Education (CHE) revealed that in 2010, 892 936 students were enrolled in South Africa's public higher institutions; in the same year 153 741 qualifications at all levels of studies were completed (VitalStats, 2012). Six years later in 2016, enrolment increased to 1.1 million (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2018). The number of graduates with tertiary qualifications has increased by 24 000, despite an overall decline of unemployment levels by 49 335 in 2016 (Statistics South Africa, 2012; Department of Higher Education and Training, 2018). In view of the above, young South Africans have become better educated and this has resulted in growth in the graduate labour market, however, there are slim chances of them successfully acquiring job opportunities.

Government acknowledges that there is a skills shortage, but at the same time there is youth

unemployment in the country. To deal with this problem, various sectors have initiated several intervention strategies to find both short- and long-term solutions. Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (AsgiSA) was introduced in 2006 in order to accelerate growth in South Africa. Joint Initiative on Priority Skills Acquisition (JIPSA) was established within AsgiSA, with the main objective of identifying ‘urgent skills needs’ and finding ‘urgent and effective’ solutions (AsgiSA, 2006). Some of JIPSA’s proposed initiatives were to implement special training, such as the internships and training skills’ programme among others. The National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) III of 2011 was introduced with the purpose of improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the skills development system. These strategies represent a clear commitment to encourage aspects like, the linking of skills development to career paths, career development and promoting sustainable employment and in-work progression. They also seek to encourage and actively support the integration of workplace training with classroom learning, and to facilitate the journey human beings make from school, college or university, or even from periods of unemployment, to sustained employment and in-work progression. Furthermore, the NSDS III seeks to promote a skills development system and planning that effectively responds to the needs of the labour market and social equity. The Human Resources Development Strategy was also introduced in 2002 in order to establish an effective and efficient, for example, internship programme aimed at bridging the gap between academic study and competent performance in the workplace. Students and unemployed graduate youths are offered opportunities that will enable them to gain practical work experience over a maximum of 12 months (Department of Public Service and Administration, 2006).

In addition to these government initiatives, some private organisations have stepped forward in the attempt to curb the problem of unemployment for our South African youth. SAGDA has positioned itself as a repository for data on graduate employment and empowerment in the country and the whole African continent. It has established two (2) research focal areas: The Graduate Economic Absorption Indicator (GEAI) and the Graduate Empowerment Monitor (GEM) working in partnership with the University of South Africa (UNISA), National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), University of Johannesburg (UJ), University of Pretoria (UP) and The Education Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority (ETDPSETA). GEAI has been established as research initiative that analyses trends regarding absorption of

graduates into the economy. The research projects seek to answer questions like: *Where do most graduates find jobs? What qualifications and skills do the local and international markets require?* GEM was also established with the purpose of completing the GEAI. GEM investigates *what, who, how and where* activities that empower graduates occur; what programmes various private entities, academic institutions and other organisations like civic or community-based design and implement to accelerate skills transfer and improve the employability of South African graduates. SAGDA has also developed Accelerated Workplace Experience and Skills Orientation Model (AWESOME) which helps provide a conducive environment to speed up the acquisition of relevant skills, exposure and experience necessary to increase graduate preparedness for work (Top Graduate, 2011). AWESOME has similar objectives like those of graduate internships run by residential universities and other organisations in the country. The South African Government has also launched the Youth Employment Initiative. In his opening address, Mr Ramaphosa said the aim of the Initiative is to provide a meaningful work experience for young people that will assist them in gathering the necessary skills that will have a significant and everlasting impact on their employment prospects (Ramaphosa, 2018).

Mentorship plays a crucial role in the management of a successful programme in an organisation. Mentoring is defined as a developmental strategy, promoting a relationship, whereby one person invests time, ability and effort in enhancing another person's growth, knowledge and skills in preparation of greater productivity or future achievements. This gives the learners the opportunity to acquire new skills, knowledge and abilities to enhance their competencies and assist in their career development (Jyoti & Sharma, 2015). This concept has the same objectives in the sense that mentoring becomes effective when roles, goals, responsibilities as well as expectations have been clarified from the onset and feedback is provided for improvement during the entire programme. Leidenfrost, Strassing, Schutz, Carbon and Schabmann (2014) are also of the opinion that mentoring can support career development initiatives, help institutions to communicate its values and behaviours, enhance staff recruitment and retention and provide employees with a sense of belonging. Lorenzo, Grande and Utrilla (2015) define mentoring as a process where a more experienced senior member of the organisation (mentor) takes responsibility for, and actively participates in the development of the skills and leadership of a less experienced junior member of the organisation (mentee). Mentoring normally focuses on a one-to-one relationship between the

mentor and mentee, which ensures individual attention and support for the learner (mentee). The mentor grooms the mentee in order to accomplish their tasks and responsibilities perfectly and efficiently and helps build an acceptable professional behaviour, and facilitates mentee learning and attitude (Lorenzo *et al.*, 2015).

The researcher acknowledges that various research projects have been conducted on internship programme previously. The research by Pop (2009), concentrated on determining whether a graduate internship programme in line with the National Skills Development Strategy contributes to retaining graduate interns in a South African Information and Communication Technology (ICT) company. Koma (2010), conducted a research analysing the implementation of the internship programme policy and procedure in the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA). Baldry (2013) conducted a research for a master's dissertation on graduate unemployment in South Africa: Prevalence, characteristics, and perceived causes. This study, however, will be evaluating whether the internship programme at a residential university is able to assist young graduates in taking informed decisions with regards to their careers and in developing employment skills and relevant work experience to secure permanent employment.

1.2.1 Rationale of the study

A community outreach programme is part of the core business of the residential university under study and in compliance with the Skills Development Act (SDA), this university implements a graduate internship programme. The primary purpose of the programme is to offer workplace experience to young South African graduates in the fields that are scarce and critical in the South African economy. During this process, interns get work exposure and skills relevant to their field of study. The interns are placed under the mentorship of academics and other professionals in specific fields who voluntarily take the responsibility of mentoring these young graduates.

The ETDP-SETA has been funding this programme since its inception in 2007, with 7 participants then. The Department of Science and Technology (DST) in collaboration with the National Research Foundation (NRF) also joined in funding the programme. Their sponsorship is in the form of monthly stipends and training for interns. On the 01st of July 2012, this residential university had a total of 42 interns. The programme is taking place at one residential university,

however, participants are drawn from different parts of the country like Limpopo, Gauteng, Mpumalanga, Kwazulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape Provinces.

1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Young South Africans struggle to find employment immediately after their graduation. This is a result of the education and training systems failing to meet the growing demands of employers for skilled graduates (Rasool & Botha, 2011) so, although there appears to be an oversupply of graduates in general, unemployment for young people is still high in South Africa. This has been confirmed by the president of the country, Mr Cyril Ramaphosa during his speech at the opening of the Youth Employment Service Initiative on the 27th of March 2018. The fear is that, the longer these graduates stay unemployed, the knowledge and theory that they had acquired during their studies, may become eroded and outdated.

According to the Manpower Group, the 2018 Talent Shortage Survey Research Results revealed that employers around the globe have identified a lack of available skilled talent as a continuing obstacle to businesses' performance. The Manpower Group (2012) results also showed that over a third of the employers surveyed, including those in South Africa were unable to find talent their organisations were urgently seeking, since there is a lack of available candidates with the right technical expertise and employability skills, particularly, among young adults. In 2018, the Manpower Group Talent Shortage Survey conducted at about 39 195 centres around the world showed no difference from past results. The results showed that 45% of employers with less than 250 employees cannot find suitable employees to fill job openings, whilst those with more than 250 employees were 67%. South Africa is amongst the list with 32% of businesses needing qualified employees to hire, whereas countries like India, Greece and Japan show between 56% and 89% companies with this problem. Employers in South showed that lack of experience (29%), lack of required hard skills (18%) and lack of applicants (10%) were the most top drivers of talent shortages in 2018. Employers indicated that provision of additional training and development and adjusting education or experience requirements are the most important strategies to implement to overcome talent shortages (Manpower Group, 2018). John Price, Chairman and CEO of the Manpower Group advises that employers must become builders of talent for the future in order to execute their business strategies. In addition, individuals must also have the appetite to learn and

continuous upskilling themselves, hence, will be the only route to secure better and decent employment (Manpower Group, 2018).

Skills shortage in South Africa must be understood by first defining the word “skills shortage.” Mkhonza and Letsoalo (2017) refer to “skills shortage” as a lack of staff with the required skills or ability to perform jobs at the ideal level. They continue that skills shortage exists in an organisation when the workforce is identified as possessing skills lower than necessary for the organization to achieve its objectives. The ETDPSETA has differentiated skills into two categories - critical and scarce skills. Goga and van der Westhuizen (2012:13) explained that the SETAs in agreement with the Department of Labour described scarce skills as “an absolute or relative demand either current or in the future, for skilled qualified and experienced people to fill particular roles, professions, occupations or specializations in the labour market.” On the other hand, critical skills refer to “specific generic capabilities within occupations, for example management skills, teamwork, and other “soft skills.” Furthermore, the Department of Labour has identified two types of scarcities, namely, absolute and relative scarcities. ‘Absolute scarcities’ refer to “the lack of an absolute number of skilled people in the labour market, while ‘relative scarcities’ refer to situations in which people exist in the labour market to fill the positions, but they are not “suitably skilled” (Department of Labour, 2006:13). According to Goga *et al.*, (2012), a National Scarce Skills list is compiled with the intention to provide a full summary of the skills in shortage in South Africa. The list is based primarily on the Sector Skills Plans (SSPs) as compiled by various SETAs, augmented by contributions from several other government departments, including the Department of Home Affairs (DHA), the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the Department of Public Enterprises (DPE), and the Department of Science and Technology (DST). Department of Higher Education and Training (2018) published the National Scarce Skills list based on occupations that are scarce in South Africa. Teachers, investment analysts, payroll clerks, advocates, attorneys, surveyors, town planners, civil, mechanical and industrial engineers, chefs, quality assurers, among others on the list, are regarded as scarce skills in South Africa. The researcher mentioned these occupations specifically to show some of the professional occupational categories that interns, or young graduates may be able to fill if such positions are made available for entrance-level occupation.

1.3.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the Graduate Internship Programme. The study explored whether the work exposure, skills and experience acquired during the interns' participation in the internship programme at a resident university are of assistance to graduates. This, in other words, is with specific reference to whether the programme has had any positive impact on enhancing interns' chances of getting employment. The study also explored whether the programme does assist interns in making informed decisions with regards to their chosen career they qualified for, or to make a career change. In other words, the researcher wanted to find if the programme is empowering graduates with enough work experience and skills to enable them to compete successfully against other graduates for the same job opportunities and to establish elements that contribute positively to the successful implementation of the internship programme. This would be achieved through the following objectives:

- Identify the determinants of an effective graduate internship programme;
- Determine the skills that graduate interns should acquire in order to enhance their chances of employability;
- Determine the impact of mentorship on interns' career development and career choices;
- Describe the impact of personal behaviour in interns' career development and
- Make recommendations of the planning and management of a graduate internship programme.

Based on the above-mentioned objectives, the study sought to answer following questions:

- What are the determinants of an effective graduate internship programme?
- Which skills should interns be imparted with in order to enhance their chances of employability?
- How does mentoring influence career futures of interns?
- How does personal behaviour influence the development of interns' careers during the internship?
- What recommendations should be made with regards to the planning and management of the graduate internship programme?

1.3.2 Significance of the Study

The study is of significance as it will assist universities in improving their graduate internship programmes to enhance the employability of graduates. In addition, it will assist universities in identifying their strengths and weaknesses as administrators and mentors of a graduate internship programme, which in turn may provide universities with the opportunity to apply corrective measures and improve the way the programme is currently run.

1.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

When collecting data through human interaction, ethical issues are important to consider as there are inherent challenges that relate to the inductive and holistic nature of qualitative research. The relationships between the researcher and participants are primarily based on trust (Daymon & Holloway, 2011).

Data was collected from various participant categories - from current interns, former interns, mentors and line managers. Before requesting and inviting participants, approval to collect data was granted by the residential university's management. All those who participated did so from their own free will and were informed of the study purpose and before embarking on the entire process, participants signed confidentiality agreements.

1.5 PLAN OF THE RESEARCH

The report will consist of the following chapters:

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background of the Study

Chapter 1 consists of an introduction as well as the background information of the research study. It also focused on discussing the researcher's purpose and rationale of the research.

Chapter 2: Graduate Internship Programme

Chapter 2 addresses the literature on conceptualizing graduate internship programme. The focus will include - the conceptualization of internships, determinants of an effective graduate internship programme, skills that enhance employability, impact of mentorship on interns' career development and career choices and the impact of personal behaviour on interns' career development. This chapter will also provide information on the process of running and managing the internship programme at the residential university under study. The discussions will detail goals and objectives of the programme, outline on sponsorship and stipends, duration, eligibility, recruitment and selection, allocation of mentors, mentors' roles, the programme's pitfalls and successes, how and when the programme is evaluated, and the interns' retention strategy.

Chapter 3: Graduate Employability

Chapter 3 will discuss gradueness and employability and how these concepts relate to a graduate internship programme.

Chapter 4: Legislative Framework

Chapter 4 will focus on the legislation that led or supported the implementation of the internships in government departments and organisations in South Africa. This will include The Skills Development Act No. 37 of 1998 as amended, the White Paper on Human Resource Management of 1997, the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) III of 2011, the Human Resource Development Strategy (HRDS) 2010-2030, Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGISA) of 2006, as well as the Joint Initiative on Priority Skills Acquisition (JIPSA) of 2006.

Chapter 5: Research Methodology

Chapter 5 will describe the research design and methodology, research questions, population, sample and sampling techniques, data collection techniques and instruments, and issues of validity and reliability

Chapter 6: Data Analysis and Presentation of Results

Chapter 6 will present the analyse the data and discuss these results as the research findings.

Chapter 7: Conclusions, Limitations and Recommendations

Chapter 7 will focus on the conclusions of the results as drawn by the researcher and discusses the limitations of the study. Furthermore, this chapter gives the researcher an opportunity to make recommendations that could be vital in improving the implementation of the internship programme to enhance graduate employability, at various institutions of higher learning.

1.7 CONCLUSION

The South African Government acknowledges the high unemployment rate of young graduates in this country, hence, the introduction of the graduate internship programme and other initiatives in order to help create employment for these group. Internships, thus, have a crucial role to play in the economy of the country. The younger graduates are employed, the better the economy of the country. It is therefore necessary to embark on this research that would help realise the challenges and recommend improvement measures for consideration.

The quality of this research relies on the participants being truthful in their feedback so to help solve the problem at hand. It is for this reason that the researcher opted for a qualitative research to allow participants, during data collection, to give a full explanation of their experiences in the programme, thereby, generating rich, detailed and comprehensive information.

The next chapter discusses the conceptualisation of the internship programmes. The researcher describes in detail topics like benefits of internship programme, determinants of an effective graduate internship programme, graduate skills and attributes that enhance employability, impact of mentorship on interns' career choice as well as the management of an internship programme at a residential university.

CHAPTER 2: GRADUATE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMMES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Since 1994, South African education at both schools and tertiary levels has undergone a massive transformation. While it is appreciated that much effort had been put in improving the standard of education, the schooling system in this country generally remains in shambles (Bloch, 2009). In 2011 an overall 938 201 students had entered South African public universities compared to 541 000 in 2009. According to Department of Higher Education, (2013) of the total number of enrolments, close to 480 000 were enrolled in undergraduate degree programmes, whereas about 290 000 enrolled in undergraduate diploma and certificate programmes. The fields mostly enrolled in, for 2011, were Business Management (288 487 students), Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) (264 447 students) and Humanities (220 326 students). The least enrolled for was education-related studies with 165 000 students (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013). From 2013, SET has become the most enrolled in with 58 325 students in 2016, followed by Education at 39 519 and Business and Management at 28 678 (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2018). This increase in student numbers simply means that more South Africans can access higher education, probably with the Government financial aid, known as the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) and other bursary schemes sponsored by various government departments and private institutions. There is, however, a discrepancy between the higher education system and the workplace. Higher education has a huge role to play in resolving the skills shortage in South Africa, by producing qualified graduates. Employers have always reiterated the lack of skills as their greatest concern, therefore, raising education and skills levels, in required employment areas, by tertiary institutions is undoubtedly crucial (Dacre Pool, 2016).

Many of the university graduates are unable to secure employment. Graduate unemployment refers to the lack of employment of university graduates, due to - the type of qualifications these graduates obtained and the field of study, quality of secondary and tertiary education, graduate high expectations, job search and work experience (Oluwajodu, Blaauw, Greyling & Klenhans, 2015). Unemployment is due to graduates' lack of required scarce skills which is a result of the mismatch between graduates produced and the skills required to move this country into the next economic gear (Graham *et al.*, 2015). Another reason for graduate unemployment is the quality

of school education. Many matriculants enter tertiary education unprepared or underprepared, although they had obtained matric exemption passes, yet they are found to be functionally illiterate (Oluwajodu *et al.*, 2015). Unemployment is more visible in graduates from Historically Black Institutions (HBIs) as compared to those from the Historically White Institutions (HWIs). It is believed that HBIs enroll their students in fields with less job prospects, and employers are biased when it comes to employing graduates from HBIs (Bhorat & Visser, 2010 in Oluwajodu *et al.*, 2015) because of their education and culture (Oluwajodu *et al.*, 2015). Employers approach HWIs more for their graduate recruitment initiatives (Baldry, 2013) because they have trust and confidence in their education (Oluwajodu *et al.*, 2015). Graduates' unrealistic expectations also contribute to them not finding suitable employment. In their research, Sirat and Shuib (2012) found that graduates expect high salaries without the proper skills and the necessary work experience, therefore, they would rather stay unemployed until something decent comes (Paauw *et al.*, 2006; Sirat *et al.*, 2012). Some employment fields, however, have higher demands than others, hence, some graduates take longer finding jobs. For instance, SET and Business and Management have higher employment prospects than the Humanities and Arts (Mlatsheni, 2014). He also indicates job search as another contributor of graduate unemployment. According to Mlatsheni, 2014, many youth graduates are influenced by their social circumstances such as financial resources, lack of labour market information as to where to apply for jobs.

According to Statistics SA Labour Force Survey (2009) and Adcorp (2011), 255 000 and 600 000 graduates, respectively, were unemployed. In the second quarter of 2018, the graduate unemployment rate was 11,9%, which is twice that of their adult graduates' counterparts at 4.4%. The declines in employment were more noticeable in Sales and Services at 57 000, Elementary at 48 000 and Clerical at 41 000. These occupations are normally earmarked by new graduates as entrance positions in the labour market as compared to managerial positions which declined by only 6 000 (DHET, 2018). It is disturbing to acknowledge that the numbers of unemployed graduates had escalated between these years, despite the high numbers of graduates.

Higher education has a huge role to play in resolving the skills shortage in South Africa by producing qualified graduates. Employers have always echoed the lack of skills as their greatest concern, therefore, raising education and skills levels by tertiary institutions is undoubtedly crucial

(Dacre Pool, 2016). As indicated before, Higher Education Institutions do not prepare students adequately for the world of work, irrespective of them obtaining degree and diploma qualifications, hence, an oversupply of graduates who are struggling to find employment (Pham, 2013; Walker, 2015). It can be said that HEIs' primary function is to impart theoretical knowledge to their students and less about practical knowledge. This statement parallels Kruss' (2004: 677) statement that *"universities' education and training roles traditionally have had two functions: a core focus on general education, and a secondary focus on professional education."* There is a need, therefore, to supplement the young graduates' lack of experience gained at tertiary level by offering them opportunities to gain practical work experience and build capacity. This can be done by offering them an opportunity to partake in the graduate internship programmes as one of the strategies for human resource development in this country.

This chapter addresses the literature research objectives of the study on conceptualizing graduate internship programmes. The focus will include the conceptualization of internships, determinants of an effective graduate internship programme, skills that enhance employability, as well as the impact of mentorship on internship programme. This chapter will also provide information on the process of running and managing an internship programme at the residential university under study. The discussions will focus on goals and objectives of the programme, features of the programme, an outline of sponsorship and stipends, duration, eligibility, recruitment and selection, allocation of mentors, mentors' roles, the programme's pitfalls and successes, how and when the programme is evaluated, and the interns' retention strategy.

2.2 CONCEPTUALISATION OF INTERNSHIP

Internships differ according to who is using them and for what purpose, therefore there is no agreed international definition of an internship (O'Higgins & Pinedo, 2018). Internship is used in various contexts in describing anything from unpaid short-term work experience for example, workplace integrated learning to more recognised uses like, paid fixed-term graduate programme, "residency" in a medical facility before being licensed as a qualified doctor. O'Higgins *et al.*, (2018) are of the view that internship programmes provide short-term, practical experience for students, recent university graduates and professionals who anticipate changing their careers. Botha and Bignotti (2016) said that although most internships are typically designed for tertiary students, they are also

open to high school learners and to those professionals who need career changes and are seeking exposure to a desired new field. The main aim of graduate internship programmes is to provide interns with a meaningful work experience that will enhance their employability and skills (CIPD, 2015); it is important also for graduates who seek to learn a particular area or gain experience in a particular field (Bacon, 2011).

Basically, an internship focuses on the provision of “real world” experience opportunities to those whose preoccupation has been with formal learning. For most graduates, an internship programme may be their primary formal introduction to the world of work and therefore may impact positively on building their professional skills (Galloway, Marks & Chillas, 2014). Professional skills can be built by allowing interns to learn by doing and by helping them to focus on their career goals and objectives; internships serve as valuable methods of the career-preparation process. Internship programmes prepare interns with practical expectations of their future and better careers and further provides them with chances to acquire career-search skills and to gain on-the-job experience that will assist them to make career planning (Maertz, Stoeberl & Marks, 2014). Internship experiences differ from entry-level professional positions as they give interns opportunities to assess their workplace environments in order to determine their career goals and make decisions about their careers at an early stage before they make long-term commitments to organisations or institutions, career paths and geographical locations (Sarbadia, 2016).

These programmes usually include rotating interns within various sections in the same department or place them in a specific job role for a defined time period. Being rotated and exposed to all areas of a specific field or a profession may significantly assist an intern to choose an area he/she is most interested in and therefore develop his/her personal development plan and career paths. It may also be a good opportunity for interns to determine whether they have made the right career choice. According to Galloway *et al.*, (2014) internship programmes are crucial in integrating graduate talents and career interests with organisational priorities. Internship programmes are sometimes referred to as “work-study” or “co-op” where students are provided with work experience that complements their education O’Higgins *et al.*, (2018). For instance, a Human Resources (HR) student using his/her educational knowledge on staffing to assist in recruiting and attracting top candidates for vacant positions in an organization, falls in this category. The student

may be typically given projects during his/her tenure that deals with writing job descriptions, developing an exit questionnaire, assisting in job interviews and other HR roles. All these roles will, naturally, be under mentorship of an experienced HR practitioner within the department. The exposure the interns receive will assist them to apply for positions in the HR specialty areas that they like and enjoy the most. Some people like challenging roles whilst others enjoy doing routine jobs. Depending on their interests, interns will be able to make informed decisions as far as their career is concerned. An internship programme provides students with an opportunity to apply their learned theory to the work environment. An intern may be paid for services rendered or perform tasks voluntary. The intern may also be enrolled for college credit or no credit, depending on the requirements of the academic institution, students' desire and the internship organisation (Saniter & Sadler, 2014). These researchers went on to say that an internship programme serves as a professional training to enhance trainees' experience so that every graduate from institutions of higher learning may obtain practical work experience before entering the world of work as professionals. It is believed that an internship programme is an appropriate strategy to alleviate graduate youth unemployment, thus lessening social-related problems (Saniter *et al.*, 2014). The Department of Public Service and Administration in their Public Service Internship Programme manual (2006), explains that the internship they are implementing is a practical programme aimed at assisting with continuous career and personal development for future permanent absorption in the labour market. They differentiate between two categories of interns: firstly, a graduate intern as "a person who has completed a qualification but has been unemployed and needs workplace exposure to enhance chances of future employment." Secondly, a student intern is referred to as "someone who is enrolled at a tertiary education for a South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) registered qualification and is required to obtain practical experience as part of their study programme. This study focuses on the former, that is people who have completed a qualification but are unemployed and needs practical work experience to improve their chances of finding a job.

2.2.1 Benefits of internship programme

According to Saniter *et al.*, (2014), graduates who have participated in the internship programmes are at a distinct advantage over their peers who did not. This statement is similar to Granger (2010:2) that "*an internship is one of the best ways to get your foot in the door of a workplace and interning is a route to meeting and working with successful industry professionals who will model*

success and help you land a position.” Galloway *et al.*, (2014) confirm that graduates who participated in internship programmes have better chances of finding employment than those counterparts who did not participate in internships. Saniter *et al.*, (2014) also concur that graduates with internship experience are more likely to get employment and earn more than those without experience. Interns can also get valuable on-the-job training in the process during their internship tenure that includes, entrepreneurial skills which can be useful in creating their self-employment (Velez & Giner, 2015).

Structured internships are beneficial to both individuals and to employers in as far as skills development is concerned (Guilie, 2013). Interns can benefit in at least two ways from internship - pragmatic and personal benefits (Gower & Mulvaney, 2012).

- Pragmatic benefits

Pragmatic benefits are referred to as benefits that have a direct impact on the intern's knowledge, skills and abilities that are necessary to enter the intern's chosen field. These are increased post-graduation employment, developed and refined technical skills (Pernsteiner (2015), career exploration (Maertz *et al.*, 2014), problem-solving and critical skills, teamwork and communication skills that many employers seek for in employees (Mohaidin, Supar, Ilokahim & Sidik, 2016). Stovall and Stovall (2009) had also indicated that internships give participants an opportunity to learn soft skills, such as problem-solving, critical thinking, decision-making, computer skills and communication skills. During internship programmes, interns obtains work experience that assists them to develop and refine technical skills that help in building their own professional resume (Dobratz, Singh & Abbey, 2014). These important skills cannot be gained through classroom learning. Classroom learning forms the fundamental part of graduates' education and basically only affords learners the opportunity to learn about theory, best practices and techniques (Maertz *et al.*, 2014), however, it is a difficult for teachers to instruct their students how to work in the real world with clients, co-workers, teams and supervisors. All these practical work experiences occur in a real working situation. Graduates who participate in an internship programme have an opportunity to refine skills learned in the classroom by applying and practising them in a real-work setting. When interns have developed job skills, they become attractive to

employers hiring employees for entrance positions. Appointing interns reduces the need for comprehensive on-the-job training, on the part of the employer (Dobratz et al., 2014).

Internships are invaluable in the career preparation process of a new graduate (Paulins, 2008). “*An ounce of experience can be worth a ton of research – especially when it comes to exploring careers*” (Jones, 2006:16). Gower et al. (2012) also believe that internships provide interns with a realistic preview of the industry or profession before full-time employment may be even secured. This experience may be good for interns to determine if the industry or profession they are heading to, holds appeal as a full-time employment; the programme can even raise awareness of opportunities and niches previously unknown. Knox (2008) makes a similar point to Granger, 2010 and Gower et al., (2012) when he says nothing will substitute for experience. He says regardless of how much research a graduate may have done about a chosen field or industry, chances are that some of the ideas graduates have with regards to the field or industry may be incorrect. If graduates get an opportunity to work as an intern in their field of study, it will give them a good idea of what the work is all about. For example, an HR intern will realise whether he or she will be able to tolerate spending most of his/her time administering staff leave. Gordon et al., (2012) believe that interns may be uncertain about working in their chosen field or about what area of the field best suit their personal and professional goals. The practitioners and other professionals that interns will interact and develop working relations with, may be able to help them set their career goals and possibly procure future employment (Knox, 2010; Gordon et al., 2012). An internship experience will also help interns evaluate how they will fit in the field when they get full-time employment. Dobratz et al., 2014 and Velez et al., 2015, in their research studies found that internships form part of learning and career development. Internship programmes provide good insights to careers and industries interns intend to enter and help them make more informed career choices (McManus & Feinstein, 2014; Velez et al., 2015). Graduates may be in a possession of university qualifications, but without experience employers may be reluctant to recruit such candidates (Knox, 2010; Velez et al., 2015).

Communication skills, also commonly known as “soft skills” are learned during an internship and very valuable to the intern’s overall self-concept. Saniter et al., (2014) point out that it is crucial to learn soft skills for professional and organisational success and these skills can be linked with a

good opportunity for employment. Interns with good communication skills have been found to be comfortable in their professional settings, more aware of their professional capabilities and more confident during interviews.

- Personal benefits

Personal benefits, on the other hand, are enhanced self-esteem, development of professional and social ethic (Shoenfelt, Stone & Kottke, 2013) and positive attitude and responsibility (Dobratz *et al.*, 2014). During the experiences, if interns confront problems and understand them in the professional and application context, they may stand a chance to quickly establish a personal code of ethics (Gower *et al.*, 2012). The study by Galloway *et al.*, (2014) has shown that graduates who participate in internships have better attitudes and are willing to accept responsibilities and criticism knowing that such inputs are necessary in helping them learn and grow. Dobratz *et al.*, (2014) also confirm that confidence and self-efficacy are amongst the soft skills that are fostered by internships. This is also enforced by valuable feedback and positive criticism provided to interns concerning their work and performance, that in turn could lead to interns' job satisfaction.

Interns interact with colleagues, supervisors and clients while performing their day-to-day activities. It is their opportunity to build a pool of network with such people. During the internship, they can expand their professional network by taking time to know the professionals they meet on the job and recording their contact information (Granger 2010); such professionals may be helpful in landing this intern a position. It is true that talents and abilities may be helpful in getting one a job, but friends and contacts may play a strong role in vouching for a position (Knox, 2010).

The focus of these discussions is more on the benefits of interns, however, it is also worth-mentioning how host institutions benefit from participating in internship programmes. The benefits derived by host institutions include skilled labour at a low cost, creativity infusion as well as the opportunity to recruit talent at an inexpensive recruitment costs (Gower *et al.*, 2012; Galloway *et al.*, (2014); Maertz *et al.*, 2014). Internship programmes can serve as trial period for both interns and employers, since interns are being assessed on their suitability and how well they fit in the organization, as prospective employees (Dobratz *et al.*, 2014).

2.2.2 Determinants of an effective graduate internship programme

There are several indicators that determine the effectiveness of an internship programme. In the next sections are some of the factors that could yield the intended results.

2.2.2.1 Orientation

It is essential that interns are warmly welcomed and introduced throughout the organisation, just as organisations would welcome their new employees. Interns are not only new to the organisation, but in many cases, they are new to the professional world of work. To build a quality experience for interns, it is essential that orientation and training occur throughout the duration of the programme. It is assumed that although many interns may have worked part-time as students before, the experience they gained may not have exposed them to issues like, organisational politics, the need for confidentiality and the importance of teamwork (*InternNE.com*).

Orientation of new interns will integrate them into the organisation without delay and therefore assist them to become effective as soon as possible. Grobler, Warnich, Carell, Elbert and Hatfield (2012:226), refer to orientation as “*the process of integrating the new employee into the organisation, and acquainting them with details and requirements of the job.*” These authors outlined several crucial objectives of orientation:

- Acquainting new employees with procedures of the job;
- Establishing relationships with colleagues, including subordinates and supervisors;
- Creating a sense of belonging among employees by showing them how their jobs fit the in the mission, vision and objectives of their new employer;
- Acquainting new employees with the goals and objectives of their new organisation and how these goals and objectives can be achieved;
- Outlining the basic responsibilities of the job;
- Lastly, indicating the required employee behaviour patterns necessary for effective job performance.

Davidson, Kinnear and Fullbrook (2016) concur that orientation is a process that introduces employees to their new work environment and new roles in some instances. If orientation is done well it facilitates a successful transition which benefits both the employer and employee. Kebenei

(2014) explains that orientation is a significant phase in employee's career; it ensures a good start to the job and makes the job to be managed with ease. Successful orientation will ensure that interns are integrated into the culture of the organisation and they receive the necessary support to succeed. Orientation will also ensure that new employees' and interns' goals and objectives are clear, and they are provided with tools to achieve their goals and career development. Orientation is also necessary in assisting interns in establishing interpersonal relationships and networks that are necessary for their career development (Forbes, 2017).

A successful orientation programme consists of three phases (Grobler *et al.*, 2012). The first phase is the anticipatory 'socialization phase', wherein all the learning that occurred before the new employee joins the organisation is highlighted. The second phase is known as the 'encounter phase' where the new employee starts to discover the true "identity" of the organisation. In this phase some shifting of values, skills and attitude start to emerge. The third phase, the 'change and the acquisition phase', is where long lasting changes occur.

Grobler *et al.*, (2012) outlined that in an organisation, depending on its size, various stakeholders get involved in the implementation of the orientation programme. The supervisor, who in this case is the mentor of the intern, is responsible for assisting the new intern in receiving the necessary information which is helpful for the intern to function as effectively as possible. This will include introducing the new intern to colleagues, explaining the duties and responsibilities of the job, as well as the policies and procedures, rules and regulations of the employer and familiarising the new intern with the workplace. On the other hand, the HR department will be responsible for employment issues like intern contract agreement, compensation and monitoring the success of the orientation programme.

2.2.2.2 Meaningful work

Many people need work that is meaningful. People desire their careers and their work to be more than simply a way to earn a salary or pass their time; they want their work to mean something. Work must be able to contribute to something beyond individuals' own benefits, thus, contribute to some other purpose (Martela & Ryan, 2016a). Various studies have indicated that a common reaction of employees to the phrase 'meaningful work' is that it is subjective because what one

employee finds as meaningful would not apply to others. Several researchers have identified the following convergent themes: having purpose, values and goals, spirituality, relationships, service, autonomy, commitment, challenge, achievement, competence and self-realisation (Fairlie, 2013). When something is meaningful, it helps to answer the question, “Why am I here?” (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003), and trying to ascertain the value or worth of the work one does (Lepisto & Pratt, 2017).

According to Lepisto *et al.*, (2017), meaningful of work is based on three aspects: significance, broader purpose and self-realisation. These three concepts will be briefly discussed below. Work becomes significance when it carries a certain intrinsic value. In other words, meaningful work is the degree to which the intern experiences a task as meaningful, worthwhile and valuable. Raub and Blunschi (2014) state that employees feel their work is meaningful based on the degree of significance their work possess and understanding this.

The second meaning of ‘broader purpose’ means that somehow work should contribute to something greater than individuals’ own values, greater than the extrinsic outcomes of the work. It should be more important than just giving one money or earning a salary, although salary is required to survive. Martela *et al.*, (2016a) regard broader purpose as understanding that through work, one is serving something valuable beyond oneself, like usually serving other people. With a purposeful work, one can believe that they can have a positive impact on others. For example, in the case of an intern working as a research assistant to find a solution in fighting TB. Broader purpose can also result in taking an internship job to assist a sibling with tuition fee or providing financially for the family for the time being. He/she can work harder in order to learn and retain the job or be referred to prospective employers.

Lastly, self-realisation has been identified by Lepisto *et al.*, (2017) as the third separate dimension of meaningful work. It is about self-connectedness, authenticity and how much interns can realise and express themselves through their work. It could be about the realization of one’s own potential and purpose, the individual’s passion on the job, strengths and core values in his or her job (Chalofsky & Cavallaro, 2013). Fairlies (2013) emphasizes that self-actualisation and realization of one’s full potential are themes related to meaningful work. Personal growth, as a factor that can be facilitated by meaningful work, could also be one aspect that is constructed by self-

realisation. Some researchers believe from an ethical perspective, that autonomy and self-realisation form the basis of meaningful work (Chalofsky *et al.*, 2013; Martela *et al.*, 2016a). Meaningful work is about realizing one's abilities and talents on the job and that lies with what the employer or mentor offers to his/her employees in terms of duties and responsibilities.

2.2.2.3 Task clarity

According to Jawabri (2017), the 'role theory' differentiates between task outputs (for example, task goals and standards) and activities (for example, how work is accomplished). Task output refers to task goals and the standard of work expected of the intern. Some studies found that clarity of tasks can improve internship effectiveness while the periodic lack or poor work planning of assignments caused frustration among interns (Jawabri, 2017). In addition, unclear roles amount to employee poor performance and contributes to feelings of stress. It is recommended that the rationale behind their work assignments should be explained thoroughly to interns. Developing a job description, providing a reasonable time frame for accomplishing tasks, establishing a clear understanding of what is expected of interns and what must be accomplished are crucial for the internship programmes' success. Task clarity has been perceived to improve the level of internship experience. Mentors and supervisors play a crucial role in this respect by giving clarity on the tasks to be performed (Jawabri, 2017).

2.2.2.4 Job rotation

Job rotation is one key component that will make the programme successful. Job rotation is regarded as a very effective tool that empowers employees, makes them effective, provides job satisfaction and ensures skills diversity in employees' performance (Saravani & Abbas (2013). Job rotation has been practised since the industrial revolution and in today's dynamic workplaces all over the world, as a way of - training and developing staff competencies (Nashmi & Almoayad, 2017), for job autonomy, motivation and increased productivity (Ali-Mohmmadi & Ramezani, 2017). Typically interns rotate between various functions in the same department or are placed in a specific role for a specified period. Job rotation focuses primarily on exposing the interns to one job role or a series of job roles that are crucial to the organisation and at the same time, providing interns with practical learning opportunities (Nashmi *et al.*, 2017). An HR intern would benefit greatly from having exposure in each major HR function, like Training and Development, Labour

Relations, Benefits Administration, Recruitment and others. When interns are rotated, it gives them a holistic perspective of how a department and the organisation functions, and this also encourages interns to build relationships with all the staff in the entire department (Kanye & Crous, 2007).

2.2.2.5 Empowerment

Employee empowerment is the process of enabling or authorising an individual to think, behave, act, and control work and decision-making in autonomous ways (Singh & Dixit, 2011). It is the state of improved self-control of one's own destiny (Heathfield, 2012), feeling of self-fulfilment and growth of self-responsibility (Ugboro, 2016). Empowerment is an essential tool for the enrichment of interns' abilities and capabilities of mastering their jobs; it enables their commitment, creativity and independence at workplace. Through empowerment, interns tend to be at ease and feel effective when dealing with customers, resulting in them requiring less supervision yet have increased sense of self-confidence. It is also necessary to empower interns so that they can make their own accurate and quick decisions and take initiatives to react appropriately towards job pressures (Altтарыsi & AL-Lozi, 2015). According to Al-Ababneh, Al-Sabi and Alshakhsheer, (2017), empowerment further improves employee's knowledge, skills and contribution, to a positive change in an organisation's culture. Heathfield (2012) similarly acknowledges that empowerment promotes interns' autonomy and control of their own jobs and improves their skills and abilities to benefit both their organisations and them. It also increases happiness among interns in their allocated workstations. Heathfield (2012) advises organisations, through their mentors, to create a work environment which promotes interns' ability and desire to act in empowered ways and remove barriers that limit their ability in this regard. Altтарыai *et al.*, (2015) have shown that empowerment increases job satisfaction and reduces role stress. Empowerment is an intrinsic motivation to employees, and it involves giving them autonomy and authority to make their own decisions on the job at-hand and take full responsibilities thereof (Al-Ababneh *et al.*, 2017). Empowered employees develop positive attitudes and behaviours towards their job as they can perform work activities skilfully (Ugboro, 2016) whilst, Singh (1993) found that empowerment reduces role ambiguity among customer-contact employees. Empowered interns can make faster resolution of customer problems, since they can act directly regarding customer complaints without referring problems to their mentors and supervisors as they arise.

This type of empowerment, however, will depend on the training interns receive and the management style of their mentors and pattern of information sharing (Al-Ababneh *et al.*, 2017).

2.2.2.6 Providing feedback on performance

Interns do not participate in the graduate internship programmes just to gather workplace experience but are there to learn as well. In a work context, feedback is usually given from top to bottom, that is, from a supervisor to a subordinate (Atwater & Waldman, 2008). Feedback is the process of observing and commenting on the employees' behaviour and skills to maintain or improve their performance (Comfort & Franklin, 2010). It enhances learning, promotes skills and knowledge acquisition and drives career growth and development (Jasmin & Jasmin, 2015). Giving feedback regarding performance is very significant in improving learning by providing remedial action plans (Atmiller, 2016). Interns will, therefore, need to be given clear feedback on their performance from time to time, by their mentors, to evaluate whether they are on the right track of achieving their objectives and that of the programme. According to Altmiller (2016), effective performance feedback is the architecture for organisations to maintain high quality of performance. Jawahar (2006), believes that providing performance feedback to employees (that is, giving information to interns about the outcomes of their achievements with the purpose of stimulating development and learning) is crucial for maintaining and increasing employee motivation and satisfaction.

Comfort *et al.*, (2010), note that organisations can manage employees' performance feedback either formally or informally. They indicate that formal feedback is a process of performance review that takes place on a regular basis, for instance, once per quarter in a year. They also state that this formal feedback involves looking into past performance and setting targets for the future performance. Interns, together with their mentors, develop work plans with targets that they need to strive to achieve. During the feedback sessions, mentors should concentrate on whether these targets have been achieved according to set standards, and on time. From the given feedback, interns must be able to develop a clear understanding of their target performance, where they are currently at, in terms of the target performance and what must be done to close any gap.

In the case of informal feedback, Comfort *et al.*, (2010) state that feedback is given when a mentor or supervisor, colleagues or anyone in the organization, notes good or poor performance. For

example, a supervisor or mentor can give praise for any satisfactory work that he/she had observed when the intern was performing a job, or comments to a good or poor report that the intern had compiled or produced. Altmiller (2016) concurs that it is in this informal feedback where peers or senior people without any authority over the receiver provide voluntary feedback. Comfort and Franklin (2010) believe that informal feedback is more immediate, as it is given during or soon after the job performance, when an incident is still fresh in the receiver's mind, in order to increase the comments' credibility (Iskander, 2015). Altmiller (2016) concurs that informal feedback is more important than formal feedback as it is communicated on daily transactions. They further state that feedback that is given immediately is effective and is more likely to lead to changes in behaviour. From the researcher's perspective, informal feedback can be more important to interns than the formal one as they need feedbacks immediately, and often.

According to Altmiller (2016), it is easy to provide positive feedback but difficult to provide constructive feedback, also referred to as 'positive criticism'. As much as feedback is important, if it is done badly, it can ruin the whole purpose and result in unwanted consequences (Jasmin *et al.*, 2015).

2.2.2.7 Evaluation of the internship programme

Evaluations are an essential part of any internship programmes and it serves mainly, two purposes. Firstly, an evaluation assists the intern to acknowledge work strengths and areas for improvement. In other words, evaluation aids intern's development and it affords them with an opportunity to identify their weaknesses and strengths as far as the work is concerned. Secondly, mentors and supervisors evaluate the internship programmes to identify areas that need improvement or modification. It is of importance for mentors and supervisors to evaluate throughout the entire internship, not just at the end of the internship (www.boe.ca.gov/exams/sip_supervising_intern.htm). Regular scheduled evaluations help avoid common problems with internships, including - miscommunication, misunderstanding of job roles, and lack of specific goals and objectives - on time rather than at the end when it is already too late. It is, therefore, advisable to mentors and supervisors to schedule a preliminary evaluation as early as in the second or third week after the commencement of the internship. This will help both parties to understand whether the intern's orientation and training were sufficient or if there are specific

areas on which the intern has questions or needs further training (www.boe.ca.gov/exams/sip_supervising_intern.htm).

2.2.3 Graduate skills and attributes that enhance employability

Every graduate when completing their studies, have high expectations as far as employment is concerned. They believe they have the skills to enter the job market, unfortunately graduates are unaware that there is more to a degree than simply using it to apply for jobs. They face great expectations from employers as they think graduates are work-ready; they face great competition for work from older and most probably more highly qualified than them (Huddleston & Ashton, 2018). Studies have shown that while appropriate level qualifications are essential in making transition from school to work, it is employability skills and attributes that make young graduates employable (British Council (2015). Employers are interested in and look for graduates with relevant subject-specific skills, knowledge and understanding (Newton, 2015). This was confirmed by Rudhumbu, Makambe, Mkali and Ndlovu (2016) in their study where they found that university degrees and diplomas are no longer enough to meet the needs of the labour market without soft skills. A graduate must acquire a range of career-specific skills as well as generic transferable skills and attributes after graduation which employers expect them to have, in order to be employable in any career (Tran, 2015). Successful graduates will require greater ownership of their employability skills and the confidence to cope with the economic upheavals, in order to identify and capitalise on career opportunities over a lifetime (Oliver, 2015).

The world of work demands graduates who are competent in specific-discipline knowledge and have the generic skills to cope with the ever-changing work environment. Graduates must be able to communicate effectively, work in teams and think creatively, solve problems and possess sound computer skills (Pitan, 2015). According to Reddy (2016), South Africa has experienced a shift in the growth path in various economic sectors, such as agriculture and manufacturing. These sectors used to employ low-skilled youth, but these sectors now look for a new set of skills and capabilities that young graduates do not possess. The technological trends in the market like the evolution of the 4th Industrial Revolution will require more new skills to deal with technology advancement, as automation takes even further hold on the economy (Sutton Trust, 2017).

Besides graduate skills, employers also expected graduates to have a number of certain personal attributes. The British Department of Education (2018) describes ‘personal attributes’ as a set of non-skilled behaviours and attitudes employers look for, when they hire employees. They may be a set of attitudes or intrinsic abilities that influences an individual to specific behaviours as well as the cognitive adjustment of goals and behaviours. Employability attributes are related to individual dispositions and include, self-esteem, emotional intelligence, intrinsic motivation, self-efficacy and autonomy (Harry, Chinyamurindi and Mjoli, 2018). These attributes are as equally important to employers as employability or generic skills. They include loyalty, commitment, honesty, integrity, personal presentation, enthusiasm, reliability, motivation, ability to deal with pressure and adaptability (Abayadeera & Watty, 2016). The British Department of Education (2018) mentions attitudes, like enthusiasm, resilience and creativity, as being the most important. Harry *et al.*, (2018) confirm that graduate attributes, such as career resilience, career self-management, pro-activity and self-efficacy may positively influence individual job performance, organisational performance and personal career outcomes. CBI (2016) published a Behaviours Framework which highlighted collaborative, analytical, taking ownership, agility and innovative as key behaviours employers look for.

2.2.3.1 Graduate generic skills

Pitan (2016), maintains that due to the pace of changes in the job market, it is impossible to imagine that the skills required in the workplace will remain the same in the 21st century. Newton (2015) states that in today’s challenging world of work, technical skills and academic knowledge are no longer enough for a graduate to find work. Today’s graduates are skilled in their disciplines and possess current disciplinary knowledge and up-to-date technical skills, however, they also need generic skills to compete and collaborate in a dynamic knowledge-economy and world of work. Due to the shifts in the workplace demands of the new global economy, graduates with excellent generic competencies quickly found themselves in higher demand compared to those with only subject-specific, technical skills (Oliver, 2015 & Pitan 2015). There are various, interchangeable terms related to generic skills: key skills, key competencies, transferable skills, graduate attributes, employability skills (Oliver *et al.*, 2015); graduate capabilities (Cavanagh, Burston, Southcombe and Bartram, 2015) and generic graduate attributes (Tran, 2015). Despite all the different labels assigned to these skills, generic skills generally refer to skills and attributes that are useful across

different jobs and life contexts (Cavanagh *et al.*, 2015). On the other hand, Harry, Chinyamurindi and Mjoli (2018), argue that generic skills are “employability skills” used in the application of knowledge and are not job-specific, but cut horizontally across all industries and vertically across all jobs, from entry level to that of the chief executive officer. These skills enable graduates to use their technical abilities as part of a team, in understanding conflicts and to see differences as creative opportunity rather than obstacles. The British Council (2015) refers to generic skills as “soft”; they refer to the ability to do something based more on attitude and behaviour that are very important to employers; they cannot be taught in the same way as “hard” skills can.

- **Graduate generic skills required for employability**

Regardless of economic conditions or level of job growth, according to Rudhumbu *et. al.*, (2016), all employers prefer employees who are knowledgeable, and have the necessary talent and skills to perform according to employers’ expectations. The Talent Short Survey Research Results (2018) revealed that employers always have difficulty in identifying talent especially of young adults. This creates problems for them to achieve their intended goals and objectives. The skills required by different employers differ significantly and it will depend on the responsibility and type of tasks that employees must perform as part of their jobs. Regardless of differences in opinion, there has been some consensus on the importance of “employability” skills for employees. Employability skills refer to certain personal abilities of individual employee, which can be taken from one job to another, used within any profession and at any career stage of an employee (Harry *et al.*, 2018). Mncayi, (2016) and Pitan (2017) concur by pointing out that, although, the future graduate professionals in their fields are expected to have qualifications in the form of a degree or equivalent, employers in addition, look for applicants who can demonstrate the following skills: interpersonal skills, progressive proactive decision-making, teamwork skills, communication and persuasion skills, creative innovative thinking, technical skills, leadership and planning skills, intellectual independence, strategic focus, business knowledge, flexibility, initiative and more. Several studies have been conducted on employability skills. Abayadeera *et al.*, (2016) found that critical thinking and problem-solving, creativity and innovation, collaboration and communication skills are important in today’s workplace and in increasing the global economy.

Harry *et al.*, (2018) in their findings revealed that graduates do not have the competence in spoken and written English or the oral presentation skills employers look for. Employers are concerned that they do not receive what they expect from graduates as far as basic skills are concerned. The basic skills referred to, include numeracy, the ability to use new information and computer literacy. Newton (2015) explains that when employers hire for graduate-level vacancies, they generally value good evidence of the graduates' ability to cope with uncertainty, action-planning skills, communications skills, IT skills, proficiency in networking and team working, readiness to explore and create opportunities, self-confidence, self-management skills and willingness to learn. It is of the utmost importance that graduates possess these skills to be attractive to employers.

From the Right Combination (2016) comprehensive report from a survey conducted with employers in the United Kingdom, it was revealed that employers look for – planning, organising, researching and using information, interpersonal skills, strategic business thinking, communication, leading and managing skills - from college leavers and graduates. In a subsequent report by CBI (2016) in its Skills Framework, it was indicated that new graduates need to research and use information to enable them to make informed decisions and to solve problems. As they progress in their careers, however, they are expected to be more creative and adopt more investigative skills to proactively seek, develop and disseminate new ideas to inform themselves and fellow colleagues on their work. Another research by the British Department of Education (2016) reveals that due to the rise of technological advancement, many occupations even for new graduates at entry levels will enquire some sort of digital literacy. It is, therefore, important for graduates to have digital skills in order to gain employment. The lack of digital skills from young employees also affect those in administrative and clerical roles.

The World Economic Forum (2018) cautioned on the future employability skills that will be needed in 2020, in response to mass automation and digitisation. They say the evolution of the Fourth Industrial Revolution will demand new sets of skills altogether, however, skills like critical thinking, problem solving and creativity that require “human touch” will also be highly required. On the other hand, Abayadeera *et al.*, (2016), argue that decision-making will remain in demand across all occupational levels, that is, in managerial and junior levels.

Not all skills can be learned through academic preparation, although, technical knowledge, communication and interpersonal skills can be acquired through academic preparation. Other competencies, like organisational and management skills are probably best developed through exposure and experience in the workplace. Internships are other ways of gaining all these valuable skills and experience. These, coupled with relevant networking that an intern would have developed during his or her tenure, may provide a pathway for entering the profession.

- **Generic skills frameworks**

The inability of tertiary institutions to meet the growing demands of local businesses for skilled graduates aggravates the lack of appropriate skills by graduate (Kraak, 2008; Tran, 2015). Traditionally, when tertiary curriculum was developed, more emphasis was placed on technical skills which only cover discipline-knowledge and skills, however, now, developers consider generic skills when developing the curriculum (Moalosi *et al.*, 2012). The researcher is of the opinion that these generic skills are covered in the curriculum in its attempt to develop learners to meet the needs of employers in the job market.

In the South African context, the 7 critical cross fields outcomes (CCFOs) referred to as ‘generic skills’ are incorporated in the education and training of learners depending on the levels on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). These skills must be embedded in the courses offered by institutions of higher learning and be assessed in order to ensure that learners acquired the necessary skills at level of learning. These skills are necessary in the workplace, therefore, should be considered essential in undergraduate programmes (Bath, Smith, Stein & Swann, 2004). SAQA defines CCFOs as “*those generic outcomes that inform all teaching and learning and are deemed critical for the development of the capacity for life-long learning.*” SAQA presents the 7 CCFO outlined as follows:

- i. Identify and solve problems in which responses demonstrate that responsible decisions using critical and creative thinking have been made;
- ii. Work effectively with others as a member of a team, group, organisation, community;
- iii. Organise and manage oneself and one’s activities responsibly and effectively;
- iv. Collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information;

- v. Communicate effectively using visual, mathematical and/or language skills in the modes of oral and/or written presentation;
- vi. Use science and technology effectively and critically, showing responsibility towards the environment and health of others, and
- vii. Demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem-solving contexts do not exist in isolation.

In addition, SAQA also identified five developmental outcomes which contribute to the full personal development of each learner and the social and economic development of the society at large. It must be the intention underlying any programme of learning to make an individual aware of the importance of the following:

- i. Reflecting on and exploring a variety of strategies to learn more effectively;
- ii. Participating as responsible citizens in the life of local, national and global communities;
- iii. Being culturally and aesthetically sensitive across a range of social contexts;
- iv. Exploring education and career opportunities, and
- v. Developing entrepreneurial opportunities.

The University of Botswana has identified its graduate generic skills which are relevant to graduates and employers (Moalosi *et al.*, 2012). These generic skills include information and communication technology knowledge and skills; self-directed, lifelong learning skills; critical and creative thinking skills; problem-solving skills; communication skills, entrepreneurship and employability skills, organisational and teamwork skills, research skills, social responsibility and leadership skills, cross-cultural fluency, as well as accountability and ethical standards. Burnett and Jayaram (2012) in their paper show that the major skills shortages in Africa are cognitive, non-cognitive and technical. Through their interviews with 83 employers in Benin, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Senegal and Uganda the following transpired:

Benin employers prefer workers with some university education rather than those with high school education only and they seem to prioritise non-cognitive (especially communication, leadership and decision-making).

In Senegal, the Small and Medium enterprises (SMEs) employers tend to focus on the need for cognitive skills (especially, numeracy and critical thinking) whereas large enterprises look for both cognitive as well as non-cognitive skills.

In Burkina Faso, non-cognitive skills (motivation, discipline and drive to work) and cognitive skills (reading and writing) are prioritised by employers. In sectors like Finance and Construction, technical and vocational skills are needed the most.

Since all countries are concerned with producing employable graduates the researcher's interest goes into looking into western countries, other than those in the African region only. Young *et al.*, (2014) conducted a research in which they identified the generic skills frameworks of different western countries, including Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

The Australian Education Council developed a set of seven skills deemed essential for preparing entry-level employees for the workforce; these are as follows: collecting, analysing and organising information; communicating ideas and information; planning and organising activities; working with others and in a team; using mathematical ideas and techniques; problem-solving and using technology.

The Department of Education in New Zealand worked on their generic skills during the Review of the Core Curriculum for Schools in 1984. In 1993 the Department published the National Curriculum statement in which the focus was to provide guidelines for developing curriculum that would enable learners to develop both basic skills and attributes. Finally, in 2005, a framework of generic skills required was proposed from the industry's perspective as follows: communication, cooperation, computer literacy, creativity and critical thinking.

In the late 1970s, the United Kingdom also saw it right to identify and develop a set of generic workplace skills as its education department was criticised that they had been failing to provide school leavers with skills they need to become successful in the workforce. The UK constructed a "Key Skills National Qualification" in September 2000 which paid a close attention to skills that have impact on an individual's learning, career and personal life. This framework focused on five

essential skills: communication, problem-solving, personal skills, numeracy and information technology.

Judging from all generic skills given above, from all the different countries, it seems all graduates need similar skills to succeed in their future career endeavours. These skills can be built in learners if they are incorporated in the curriculum and assessed correctly. According to the St. Edward's University Centre for Teaching Excellence (2004), the Task-Orientated Question Construction Wheel based on the Bloom's Taxonomy is of assistance to assessors in developing questions for learners. This wheel guides assessors on how to formulate questions that can elicit skills from learners that employers expect to get from graduates. For example, if a learner needs to analyse a concept, a question may require a learner to draw a conclusion on some findings and so forth.

2.2.3.2 Skills shortage

The skills shortage in South Africa is cited on numerous occasions as one of the key features inhibiting economic growth of the country. This was confirmed in the Grant Thornton's International Business Report (2012) and Talent Short Survey Research (2018), when both reports stated that the lack of availability of skilled labour in South Africa and the world is one of the key constraints to business operations' expansion. Rasool and Botha (2011) state that although there are several education reforms, such as changes to school curricula, the country is still facing considerable skills shortages. Reddy, Rogan, Mncwango and Chabane (2018) explain that skills shortage refers to when there is a greater demand for employees of a particular occupation than the supply of employees who are qualified, available and willing under existing market conditions. Mkhonza *et al.*, (2016) describe 'skills shortage' as a lack of employees or people with the required set of competencies required by employers to fulfil their vision, strategies and objectives to successfully drive their business.

Since the beginning of 2000, the South African education system, according to Barker (2003), is producing more university graduates in social sciences than in commerce, science and engineering, hence, an indication that there is a shortage of scientists and engineers. Ardcorp Holding (2013) in their research reported that there were 829 800 unfilled positions for high-skilled workers across a wide range of occupations in this country. These occupations included senior management,

medical, accounting and law professions, technical occupations like specialised technicians and artisans, as well as occupations in agriculture. It was further indicated that from the overall number of 829 800 unfilled positions, 432 100 were technicians, 178 400 professionals and 216 200 managers. The trend is still the same 16 years later. Reddy *et al.*, (2018) in their report showed that engineers and office-support staff are still in the top 10 of the scarce skills in high demand in South Africa. Other skills in shortage on the list are management/executive positions, teachers, legal staff (solicitors, lawyers, legal secretaries), skilled trades, accounting and finance staff, technicians as well as Information Technology (IT) staff. In a research conducted by the Manpower Group in 2018, the results reveal that engineers, accountants, specialist managers and IT technicians, drivers (truck, lorry, heavy equipment and construction vehicles drivers) were found to be in high demand. The Group did not provide information on how many unfilled jobs there are, however, they indicated that 54% of large companies are battling to fill roles whereas 25% of small companies are also facing talent shortages.

South Africa's skills shortage is regarded as critical, although, this situation is not different from other countries. Countries all over the world are experiencing the same problem (Manpower Group, 2018). In 2011, 52% of the United States employers experienced difficulties in filling critical positions within their businesses (ManPower Group, 2011a), citing lack of available talent as the main reason for not filling those positions. In 2013, the top 10 countries that had difficulty in filling jobs were Japan, Brazil, India, Turkey, Hong Kong, Bulgaria, Romania, New Zealand, Israel and Singapore ranging between 85% to 47% shortages (ManPower Group, 2013). The same survey also shows the top 10 biggest changes in the talent shortage by country. These countries are Hong Kong, Turkey, Israel, Greece, India, China, Singapore, Romania, Switzerland and Canada ranging between 22% and 9%. On the other hand, the top 10 jobs employers worldwide have difficulty filling are skilled traders, workers, engineers, sales representatives, technicians, accounting and finance staff, management/executives, IT staff, drivers, office-support staff as well as labourers. According to the survey, 72% of the employers in their response indicated that not being able to fill positions had a medium to high impact on their businesses; only 2% said it had no impact whatsoever in their businesses. The Manpower Group (2018) survey shows similarities with previous surveys as indicated above and with that conducted by Reddy *et al.*, (2018). China, Ireland, United Kingdom, Netherlands, Spain, Norway, France, South Africa, Switzerland and

Australia are the top 10 countries that were hit hard by skills shortage, ranging between 89% and 34%.

It has been a decade between the research done by Barker (2003), Woolard *et al.*, (2003) and the ManPower Group Survey (2018), however, the findings of all these researches are similar. It seems nothing has been done over the years to change the situation, for the same skills shortage is still experienced even today, regardless of the various Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) being established in South Africa with the aim of identifying and finding solutions to scarce and critical skills challenges in this country.

- **Reasons for the skills shortage**

The Department of Higher Education and Training Framework, states that scarce skills refer to occupations which are currently and anticipated in the future, would lack qualified and experienced people. These people are either not available in the labour market or they are available but lack some of the employment criteria (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2016). Scarcity is also associated with high level skills like management and specialized skills; South Africa has a high shortage of people with such skills (Transport Education and Training Authority, 2019). These scarce skills are divided into absolute scarcity, relative scarcity and skills mismatch.

Absolute Scarcity

Absolute scarcity refers to situations wherein suitably qualified and skilled people are not available due to a new or emerging occupation, or due to technological advancement (Transport Education and Training Authority, 2016). New industries like telecommunications and tourism which have evolved to boost the economy, require a new different set of skills and qualifications, altogether. South Africa has to compete on the global market for those skills as they are new and emerging (Oliver, 2015). Technological changes in the workplace also play a huge role on the nature and quality of skills required. The advancement of technology and the development of “artificial intelligence” force employers to look for certain skills from potential employees. Furthermore, technological advancements that support the 4th Industrial Revolution have worsened the skills shortage and youth unemployment (De Lannoy, Graham, Patel, & Leibbrandt, 2018).

It is information like this that students should be provided with, probably in Grade 9, so that they can make informed career choices and be able to choose the correct subjects from Grade 10.

Relative Scarcity

Relative scarcity describes a situation wherein skilled people are available but do not meet other important employment criteria (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2016; Transport Education and Training Authority, 2016)). These are people with inadequate skills levels to take up available jobs in the market (De Lannoy, 2018). For instance, graduate interns have the technical skills but lack other generic skills that they need to land a job and advance in their chosen careers. According to DHET (2016), relative scarcity is a result of various reasons. Firstly, geographical challenges, wherein skilled people are not willing to relocate or work, for instance, outside the urban areas. Sometimes those from rural areas are unable to reach urban areas due to lack of reliable public transport and they cannot afford high housing rentals (Graham *et al.*, 2016). Secondly, due to equity considerations where skilled people are available but do not meet the employer's equity requirements. Each employer must comply with the requirements of Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998. The purpose of the Act is to ensure that every employer achieves equity targets by promoting equal opportunity and fair treatment in the workplace and implement affirmative action measures to uplift designated groups. Mlatsheni (2014) confirms that young male graduates in Cape Town stand a better chance of getting employment than their female counterparts. Thirdly, when there are currently enrolled individuals in education and training programme and are still in the process of acquiring the necessary skills but cannot be available in the short term. Lastly, remuneration and employment conditions have of late emerged as reasons for unwilling to accept offers, therefore, employers are unable to attract the required skills (DHET, 2016).

Skills Mismatch

Aring (2012) says a qualitative skills mismatch occurs where employers do not find graduates employable even when they have the right qualifications on paper. When graduates' skills do not match the needs of employers and higher education system fails to produce skills needed in the

job market, then skills mismatch occurs. Skills mismatch results when an unemployed graduate possesses a higher or lower skills level to match the requirements of a particular job in the market (Mncayi & Dunga, 2016). Skills mismatch is the gap between job skills in an individual's possession and the demands of the labour market. Young graduates have qualifications which are already in abundance and are less demanded by employers (Transport Education and Training Authority, 2016). Walker (2015) concurs that fields of critical skills like Science, Engineering and Technology are in demand by employers, therefore, graduates in these fields have better chances of finding employment after graduation than graduates in Humanities and Arts. Research has shown that skills mismatch is driven by a lack of career planning, guidance and management at high school level, poor mathematics and science education in high schools, a lack of interview and job searching skill, and minimal work experience and exposure amongst graduates (Walker, 2015, Mncayi et al., 2016; De Lannoy et al., 2018).

University Enrolment

In 2009, 837 779 students enrolled in public universities. The majority of students (43.5%) were enrolled in the humanities-related fields which include, education, humanities and social sciences as compared to those enrolled in science, engineering and technology (SET) programme (28.3%) and (28.2%) in the business-related programmes (Department of Education, 2009). From 2010 to 2012 the majority of students enrolled in the Business and Management fields, however, in 2013 enrolments increased in the SET fields, Business and Management followed by Humanities fields. In 2016 A total of 975 837 students were enrolled in public institutions of higher learning (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2016). This shows that more students are accessing higher learning, probably with government financial aid. In 2016, 58 325 students were enrolled in SET fields with a growth of 24.6%, 12.1% in Business and Management fields and Humanities recorded a lower increase of 5.1% between the years 2009 and 2016 (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2016). This shows a paradigm change in enrolment, as more learners are now taking interest in the SET fields.

Migration

Insufficient training and expertise do cause labour shortages, although, brain drain or insufficient

job opportunities are also driving professionals to other sectors of the economy or employment outside the borders of South Africa; this causes a vacuum. The migration of skilled workers could also be attributed to affirmative action, as members from non-designated groups regard employment equity and affirmative action interventions as threatening to their employment (Rasool *et al.*, 2011). With regards to education, the migration of skilled teachers and academics could influence the quality of graduates.

- **Skills shortage by sectors**

Lotriet, Mathee and Alexander (2010) assert that there is a general belief that South Africa is experiencing skills shortage in Information and Communication Technology (ICT). This was confirmed by the Department of Higher Education and Training (2019) in its list of 2018, of occupations in high demand (OIHD) in the ICT Sector. The skills in demand include project managers, application development managers, information technology managers of which they require high level of skills.

In their Sector Skills Plan 2013 to 2018, the Media, Information and Communication Technologies (MICT) SETA has the following positions to be filled: 493 software developers, 451 developer programmer, 402 computer network and systems engineers, 351 ICT systems analysts, 220 computer network technicians and so forth. Lotriet *et al.*, (2010) suggest that the unemployable ICT graduates may be aggravated by the ever-evolving technology, however, this rapid innovation is necessary, if this country would like to remain competitive. The researcher suggests that for new graduates to stand a chance of employment and for institutions of higher learning to stay abreast with new technology, institutions should work together with ICT companies. Companies will inform universities of new technology and curriculum developers will have to infuse them into their curriculum.

The Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services SETA (MERSETA) also experience skills shortage in their sector. There are five industries grouped together under MERSETA; they are automotive, metals, motor, new tyre manufacturing as well as plastics. According to the MERSETA Sector Skills Plan (SSP) 2010/11 to 2015/16, the auto chamber was short of 233 mechatronics technicians, 217 automotive motor mechanics, 70 millwright, 58 automotive

electricians and 43 industrial engineers per occupation. The other 4 chambers also need more employees; most of the qualifications required for this group are not classified as universities and universities of technology graduates. They are mainly employees with low level skills obtained at further education and training (FET) colleges. This implies that it is not only skills from the higher learning institutions which are in demand, but also those acquired from FET. For example, currently, 7000 cranes, host or lift operators and 1895 panel beaters are needed in the sector under the MERSETA.

The Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) indicates that the international benchmark of an average population per engineer shows that South Africa lags other developing countries. For instance, in Brazil and Malaysia, 1 engineer services 227 and 543 population respectively. In South Africa, 3 166 is serviced by 1 engineer.

2.2.4 Impact of mentorship on interns' career development and career choice

It is likely that interns before their first day on the internship programme, will probably feel excited, hopeful and even anxious about the people they will be working with and the situations that they will encounter. Their expectations may probably be high about what they intend to learn and what they will be able to contribute to their host organisations. In situations like these, mentoring plays an important role in the psychosocial and career-related support of employees, especially those young and inexperienced (Ismail, Abdullah & Francis, 2009). Mentoring has been, for generations, known as a function, used to give guidance by senior employees to new or junior employees to achieve their goal of succeeding in their chosen careers (Bear, 2018).

According to Abouraria (2017), mentoring has considerable value to both individuals and organisations. Kram (1985), one of the most cited scholars on mentoring, believes that mentoring has been established as a human resource practice and as an individual strategy for career success. Abouraria (2017) regards mentoring as a goal-focused process aimed at increasing knowledge and competency development. Bear (2018) concurs that mentoring encourages learning and is one of the critical methods of Human Resource Development, of transferring knowledge. It is used to 'nourish' and 'flourish' employees to be successful in their careers and it can play a critical role in smooth transition of new graduates to the workplace (Forbes, 2017). Abouraria (2017) mentions

that personnel who has been allocated a mentor will, more probably, establish high work achievement, career satisfaction and commitment than one without a mentor. Forbes (2017) confirms that successful mentor-mentee relationships can lead to increase in career mobility, job and career satisfaction, compensation, and performance. Through mentoring organisations witness improved performance, competence and development of intelligence and leadership skills (Gozukara, 2017). Having a mentorship relationship in place, therefore, will be beneficial to interns in learning more about their careers from the experts and role models, thereby, assist them in making informed decisions about their careers and they advance more quickly.

Elkin (2006) says because mentoring can be used as a tool in human resource development, it needs to be understood by all stakeholders attempting to use it. As the saying goes “garbage in garbage out”; the quality of the mentoring will determine the quality of the learning and experience the intern acquires (Ryan, Toohey & Hughes, 1996 in Van der Berg, 2012). It is important that from the onset clear professional development needs must be identified and action plan be drawn up in order to achieve the intended goals.

The mentoring relationship can only be successful if built on trust, empathy, respect and confidentiality. Where there is trust and respect between the parties, interns feel comfortable to disclose information and discuss the challenges they are facing in performing their job. In this setup, the mentor also will be able to challenge the intern’s mindset and make provision and support for the intern to learn (Colbin & Ashman in Morgan *et al.*, 2017).

Research also suggests that the relationship is bound to succeed when the mentor and mentee have similar personalities. If mentor and mentee share the same beliefs and values, they can have the same understanding and are able to communicate better (Tolan, Henry, Schoeny, Love-Grove & Nicholas, 2014 in Morgan *et al.*, 2017).

The Economic and Social Research Institute (2016) conducted a research on mentoring for frontline practitioners in Ireland. The outcomes showed that career advancement, improved self-confidence, personal and professional satisfaction and enthusiasm were derived from successful mentoring relationships. The results also show that the mentoring relationship offered the mentees opportunities to build and enhance their professional networks.

2.2.4.1 What is mentoring

Workplace mentoring occurs when a senior member in an organization, who is an expert in a field, with advanced knowledge and experience (mentor) undertakes to support the psychological and career development of a less experienced member (mentee). This engagement can happen as part of formal organisation mentoring programme or informally between the two parties to support the psychological and career development of a less experienced member (Doerwald, Scheibe & Van Yperen, 2015). Mentors participate in the systematic skills development and leadership abilities of their mentees to meet the mentees' learning goals and to foster professional development through transfer of skills, knowledge and attitude (Jones, 2012; Forbes, 2017).

2.2.4.2 Mentoring functions

According to Kram (1985); Johns, McNamara and Moses (2012) and Forbes (2017) mentoring has two functions or components: a career function and psychosocial function. Career function focuses on the career advancement of a mentee. This will involve giving challenging assignments to interns and fully exposing them to their career as they begin. All these activities will assist interns in career progression, not necessarily within the current organisation but anywhere in the future (Morgan & Rochford (2017). This can be expected as the purpose of an internship is to prepare graduate interns for the world of work by providing them with working experience, exposure and skills that will enhance their chances of employability in the future. Employment opportunities can arise internally or externally. It is of note that mentoring is not always concerned with the development of the intern to benefit the organisation in the long run, but rather, the intern him/herself. The career-oriented functions include coaching, protection, and sponsorship with the viewpoint of providing activities to help the interns at work (Kram, 1985).

These mentoring functions, according to Scandura (1998) are referred to as 'vocational career support' and the psychosocial functions are known as 'social support functions'. Sponsorship is when the mentor acts in a proactive manner to benefit the intern's career by supporting their suitability for promotion and career-benefiting assignments (Morgan *et al.*, 2017). Protection of the intern, although, it is similar to sponsorship, in this case the mentor protects the interns from undesirable assignments and internal politics which may harm their career development or advancement Coaching occurs when the mentor provides interns with advice, analysis, and

feedback with the intention of improving decision-making, organisational fit, and skills of the intern (Doerwald *et al.*, 2015). Mentors challenge interns by suggesting the acceptance of challenging assignments in order to assist them build on their variety of skills. Mentors also expose their interns to senior officials in the organisation who are decision-makers to assist them in creating their own internal and external networks in the process (McDowall-Long, 2004).

Psychosocial functions on the other hand, focus on the personal development of a mentee. It includes a high sense of competence, self-esteem and effectiveness in role acquisitions, and it involves behaviours such as counselling and role modelling (Morgan *et al.*, 2017). The functions involve confirmation and acceptance, counselling and friendship that are aimed at improving the protégé's psychosocial development. Confirmation and acceptance are the process of the protégé building a sense of self as a professional through the mentor affirming and understanding the protégé's experiences (Morgan *et al.*, 2017). The mentor also functions as a counsellor for the protégé by listening to their issues and strategies and offering advice to assist in their decisions. Mentors also provide friendship and act as a role model for protégés (McDowall-Long, 2004 and Morgan *et al.*, 2017).

2.2.4.4 Mentoring for career development

Interns, like most workers, consider work the main activity of their life. Interns when they think about their career it is understandable if they feel uncertain and clearly would like to identify an ideal choice once and for all, even while knowing that most people do not have linear career paths. Every intern seeks passion, security, and personal growth (Cuerrier, 2004). According to Rolfe, many mentoring programmes are aimed at assisting participants like interns with career management. She indicates further that career management involves assessing the current reality and making informed decisions about the future. It requires reflection, where the intern will make thoughtful assessment of him/herself and the situation he/she finds him/herself in, as well as actions, which are deliberate movements toward selected goals. Assessing the current situation involves interns getting a clear picture about what they like and dislike about the current situation. The interns must investigate the nature of the work they are exposed to, the work environment and the impact the interns' work would have on their lifestyle. Assessing the situation will assist in determining future possibilities and to make informed decisions as far as career choice is concerned

since they will be able to explore and evaluate those possibilities. An intern, therefore, will not “go alone” in this career-development journey; a mentor’s additional experience will add another perspective.

2.2.4.5 What interns learn from mentors

Mentoring is a developmental process that supports and facilitates learning (Parsloe & Wray, 2004). Learning can be defined as either a product or a process (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007). A product is where emphasis is on the outcome of that learning, that is, a change in behaviour (Gagne, 1965 in Jones, 2012); it is a process when we focus on what happens when the learning takes place (Kolb, 1984). In this instance, the researcher is concerned with the outcomes of learning, that is, learning as a product. Kram (1996) defines personal learning as the acquisition of knowledge, skills or competencies that contribute to an individual’s personal development. Hezlet (2005) notes that research tentatively supports the proposition that mentoring enhances protégés’ cognitive, skill-based, and affective learning. This parallels Wanberg’s (2003) four potential areas for learning or change for the protégé: cognitive learning, skill-based learning, affective-related learning and social networks based on the adult’s basic learning theory (Knowles, Swanson, & Elwood, 2011).

2.2.5 Processes of running and managing the internship programme at the residential university under study

2.2.5.1 Objectives of the internship programme

According to the Policy on Staff Development (2009) of this residential university under study, their internship programmes focus on South African unemployed graduates who need work experience to enhance their chances of employability. These graduates must be in possession of a 3-year qualification obtained from universities and university of technologies in South Africa. The applicants for internship programme must not be older than 35 years prior to the commencement of the programme. Two different internships are sponsored by the ETDP-SETA and the DST-NRF.

2.2.5.2 Processes and procedures for hosting interns by departments within the residential university

Line managers who are interested in hosting interns in their departments or centres or institutes communicate in writing to the Staff Development Committee through the Organisation Development and Training Unit. The Staff Development Committee will then consider suitable programme in line with the university's strategic objectives, and policies as well as ETDP-SETA and the DST-NRF guidelines. The Organisational Development and Training Unit will then develop and submit funding proposals to the ETDP-SETA and the NRF-DST for registration and possible funding for approved learning/work programme. After approval of the internship programme by the sponsors, then the results are communicated to the relevant line managers.

2.2.5.3 Recruitment and selection

The internship opportunities at this residential university are advertised in the media, especially in the local newspapers, like the Mirror, to give opportunities to the local community; they are also advertised on the University website and intranet. The shortlisting and selection interview for internships are done by a panel comprising of the Director Human Resources and or his or her representative (Chairperson), two members from the host department (one of whom should be the Dean or Director and the mentor), Head Organisational Development and Training or his or her representative and one representative from internal structures or organised labour (Policy on Staff Development, 2009).

2.2.5.4 Contract agreement

Successful candidates for internships are required to enter into a non-renewable contract of 12 months with the residential university and the sponsors before the commencement of the programme. The university shall provide the successful intern with work, a mentor, facilities, appropriate training, supervision and support in the work environment in order to achieve the intended outcomes of the programme. Interns shall abide by the conditions stipulated in the agreement and those by the host departments, the residential university, the sponsors, as well as the Disciplinary Procedure and the Grievance Procedure manuals of the university (Policy on Staff Development, 2009).

2.2.5.5 Development of work plans

According to the Policy on Staff Development (2009), interns do not have job profiles, however, together with their mentors, work plans are developed detailing all the training needs of the interns and the way and when they will be implemented. The work plan is specific to the candidate's field of study or aspired career.

2.2.5.6 Monitoring and evaluation

Every month the ETDP-SETA receives evaluation reports on interns from their mentors, whereas the DST-NRF requests them on a quarterly basis. Twice per year, during the programme, both sponsors send their staff to monitor the progress of the programme. Interviews with both the interns and the mentors are conducted as a form of evaluating the smooth running of the programme.

The Organisational Development and Training Unit monitors and assesses methods for the review of the performance of interns/learners and compile an evaluation report once per year (Policy on Staff Development, 2009). At the end of it all, the evaluation of the programme is conducted with all interns. The reason for this evaluation session is to ascertain whether the programme has achieved its intended objectives, as well as, to share the experiences and challenges that the interns came across. This session also indicates to the co-ordinators whether there should be improvements made to the programme in the future.

2.2.5.7 Payment of stipend

This residential university is not responsible for paying stipend for the interns. Participants in an internship programme receive their stipend from their respective sponsors on a monthly basis through their bank accounts. Interns are not entitled to benefits applicable to the residential university's employees (Policy on Staff Development, 2009).

2.2.5.8 Termination of internship programme contract

According to the Policy on Staff Development (2009), an internship may be terminated based on the following grounds:

- When the termination date stipulated in the contract is reached.
- If a participant is fairly dismissed by the university for reasons related to the participant's conduct or capacity as an employee; and
- The participant and university agree to terminate the contract/agreement due to other reasons.

2.2.5.9 Certificate of service

According to the Policy on Staff Development (2009), on termination of the contract, interns are entitled to a certificate of service. The certificate must state:

- The intern's full name;
- The address of the residential university as an employer;
- The starting and ending dates of the intern's contract;
- Short description of the interns' training and experience they gained, and
- The reason for termination of the contract. Interns who terminate their services with the residential university prior to the expiry of the contract, however, will receive a testimonial letter from their mentor.

CHAPTER 3: GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Worldwide, higher education institutions are under increasing pressure to produce graduates who are prepared for the world of work. Employers prefer graduates who possess the right and desired skills and attributes for employment. Griesel and Parker (2009) view that generic skills and attributes that signify student gradueness are essential in the successes of employers' businesses. Also, gradueness is important to employers in the creation of required workplace cultures where innovation, adaptability and flexibility should prevail (Thompson, Treleaven, Kamvounias, Beem & Hill, 2008 in Coetzee, 2012). Unfortunately, employers report that graduates lack those skills and attributes (Parker *et al.*, 2009 & Chetty, 2012). It is the responsibility of higher education institutions to contribute to the new knowledge-based economy which is driven by highly skilled, competent and flexible graduates. This can be made possible by improving gradueness in the graduates that they produce (Chetty, 2012). Higher education must see to it that their graduates are employable by importing them with the necessary employability skills. Bridgstock (2009) concurs by explaining that in a rapidly changing knowledge context, with intense and advanced technological economy, the focus should be to develop and produce graduates with attributes that are relevant for decades, that will best serve graduates, employers and the society at large. It is of utmost importance that graduates possess career management skills that allow them to proactively navigate the world of work and self-manage their career-building process. Pool and Sewell (2007) assert that graduates entering the world of work in this 21st century are not expected to be only employable but also be able to sustain their employability during their career life by constantly acquiring new skills and updating the ones they already possess. Fallows and Steven (2000) note that in the current dynamic world of employment, job stability is no longer of importance and of concern. Employees move from one job and one employer to another as often as possible. Glover, Law and Youngman (2002) argue that today, for graduates to be employable, gradueness needs to prevail. Graduates should be capable of prioritising and setting goals, be proactive in the management of change, possess the necessary skills for self-advocacy and networking in order to cope with changing circumstances, engage themselves in life-long learning and be able to work with changing teams.

This chapter seeks to discuss in detail the employability and gradueness concepts and their relation to a graduate internship programme.

3.2 GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY

Graduate employability is recognized as one of the main objectives of university education, hence, quality of education from universities and other institutions of higher learning is measured through the contributions they make towards employability (Sumanasiri *et al.*, 2015). The concept, employability, is not new and it has been subjected to many studies by various researchers in the last few decades (Sumanasari *et al.*, 2015; Smith, Ferns & Russell, 2014; Pool & Sewell, 2007, Knight & Yorke, 2004; Hillage & Pollard, 1998). The studies, however, have not come up with a conclusive defining evidence on employability as this a complex concept. Adding to this complexity are the different views that different stakeholders, like students and universities have on what employability entails. In addition, employers hire graduates based on their knowledge and skills in their field coupled with qualities and abilities to do the job (Tran, 2016). Universities need to consider both students' and employers' perspective on graduate employability and include them in their curriculum in order to respond effectively on the needs of industry (Shivoro *et al.*, 2018).

Hillage *et al.*, (1998) are the pioneers to research and write about employability. They define 'employability' as the graduates' abilities to secure initial employments after graduation, maintain them and be able to move between positions in their chosen careers, either within the same organisation or elsewhere. It will be meaningless to gain employment and later, either, be stuck in the same job, or be unable to grow within the profession, or be unable to secure another job if required. Individual employability relates to competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes) that a person possesses and how they utilise them in performing the job (Bridgstock & Cunningham, 2016). This was confirmed by Greenbank (2015) when he says that student employability cannot be reduced to only a set of skills, but their behaviours, values and qualities are a strong influence on their capacity to make effective transitions to employment or self-employment. He also highlighted key areas of employability as, decision-making capability, values, self-belief or self-efficacy, proactivity and confidence. In an evaluation of an intervention aimed at developing unemployed graduates' employability, the work of Bandura (1997) was drawn and Hazenberg,

Seddon and Denny (2015) found a relationship between increased self-efficacy and successful job-seeking behaviours, and that perceived self-control is prime to self-efficacy. Turner (2014) argues that self-belief is a key aspect of employability development and it can be developed within the context of disciplinary knowledge. Higher education institutions, thus, need to foster self-belief in students so that they can believe that: (1) their ability can be improved; (2) that it is possible for them to achieve their goals; and (3) that the environment they find themselves in will allow them to attain their goal.

Bridgstock (2009) in Shivor *et al.*, (2018) goes further by indicating the contribution of the qualification not only to the profession but also to the community. He defines, employability, as the qualities, skills and understanding that a university community agrees on that its students should be able to develop during their time as students at an institution and, therefore, shape the contribution graduates are able to make to their profession in the workplace, as well as being citizens. Yorke (2006), provides another angle and defines employability as a set of achievements that include skills, understanding and personal qualities that are crucial to graduates in securing and become successful in their chosen career for their own benefit, the workforce, their community and the economy. Minten (2010:68) states that “*employability can be defined as the capability of obtaining and keeping fulfilling work. It is the ability to move self-sufficiently within the work environment to achieve potential by means of sustainable employment.*”

The definition by Hillage *et al.*, (1998) include four main elements of employability: (1) employability assets, where graduates’ knowledge, skills and attitudes have a direct impact in them being able to secure employment. (2) Deployment, which directly refers to graduate’s career management skills used to describe the personal capacities that enable graduates to effectively manage their careers. The ability to manage one’s career skilfully becomes an integral component of graduates becoming and being employable. (3) Presentation, which refers to the ability of the graduate to present him or herself appropriately, in order to secure a suitable employment relevant to his or her chosen field; it is concerned with “job getting skills”, like Curriculum Vitae (CV) writing, motivation letter for employment, work experience and interview techniques in order to convince the interview panel. This could be in the form of designing their CV, letter of motivation for employment or even presenting themselves well during job interviews to convince the

interview panel. Lastly, (4) refers to graduate's personal circumstances and external factors. This points out that a person's ability to make the most of their "employability assets", depends on their personal circumstances like family responsibilities or being unable to access job interviews due to lack of funds to travel in order to attend interviews, as well as the current opportunities available in the labour market, either scarce or easy to find.

Employability has two main aspects: discipline-specific skills and generic skills. All these skills are necessary as the former are key to a graduate's career development and growth whereas the latter are applicable to many job roles and professions (Shivoro *et al.*, (2018). For example, a Human Resource graduate may have knowledge of handling recruitment and placements of staff, but he or she must be able to plan and organise interviews and be able to communicate to all relevant stakeholders, all the necessary information regarding the interviews. On the other hand, an accountant graduate can have knowledge of reconciling ledger books but must also be able to use required accounting software, like Pastel, in order to do that.

Higher institutions of learning are the main stakeholder responsible for helping students to become employable (Bennett, 2016), however there are various reasons that lead to unemployability. One of the main causes being student unpreparedness.

3.2.1 Student unpreparedness

There is no doubt that some students are not well prepared with skills, enough for them to enter the world of work, even those who get the opportunity to acquire a higher education degrees or diplomas. Horn (2006) and Cuervo (2016) mention that students are ill-prepared for the modern world of work.

Students are classified as those from Model C schools, township schools, inner-city schools and rural schools (Lange (2007) in Yield (2010). It is obvious that students from Model C schools will be better prepared than students from the other schools mentioned above. Lange (2007) in Yield (2010) explains that Model C schools generally are well resourced and students from those schools are exposed to a broad range of career prospects. This sentiment was shared by Wilmot and Merino (2015) who confirmed that South Africa is characterised by under-resourced schools and

under-qualified teachers, especially in the rural and historically disadvantaged black schools. They further indicated that students from rural communities, generally, do not have access to information technology in the form of computers and internet; some do not even have access to televisions in their homes. Leibowitz (2017) believes that these resources can play an important role in the education of these rural young people by exposing them to the outside world, as well as to different careers and the world of work. For instance, an IT student is expected to have some basics in computer literacy, and some students to have practical, hands-on experience of laboratory work. Unfortunately, most schools, especially those in rural communities, do not have the infrastructure and resources, or sufficiently qualified staff to carry out those teaching components (Leibowitz, 2017).

There are other reasons that lead to students' under-preparedness. Wilmot *et al.*, (2015) conducted a research that investigated the factors that facilitate success for disadvantaged higher education students. In their research they had interviews with various lecturers and students. Interviewed lecturers blamed a poor schooling system for students' under-preparedness. They indicated that most students lack skills in literacy and numeracy and almost all students in higher-order cognitive skills. If a student cannot read or write properly, either at school or tertiary level, that student will not be able to acquire other skills necessary for employment. Reading and writing are regarded as the 'basic' skills on which other graduate skills rely heavily on. The interviewed lecturers continued saying that language skills of undergraduates are generally unacceptable as they are very low in standard, particularly, those students who had studied in their first language. Maddock and Maroun (2017) agree by mentioning that curriculum in secondary school is failing to equip prospective university students with the higher-order language-thinking skills that the students require. Oosthuizen and Cassim (2016) investigated the low proficiency levels in the languages of teaching and learning. They found that it is difficult for first year students in higher learning institutions to understand the content of lectures. Furthermore, students find it difficult to voice logical arguments about the course of module content, and they lack sound academic approach towards texts, class tasks or test questions which require sophisticated argument structure or abstract scientific content. Oosthuizen *et al.*, (2016) did some work on academic literacy and they outlined that academic literacy, which includes reading, writing, and speaking, are the main reason for success or lack of academic success, for university students. All learners in higher learning are

taught and assessed in English and students find themselves grappling with learning new and advanced subject matter in English.

The ever changing of the school curricula is also to blame. Curriculum 2005 was introduced in order to rectify the inequalities of the past in the education system, however, the Outcomes-based Education (OBE) implemented in South Africa did not yield the intended outcomes as it had done in other parts of the world. The implementation of Curriculum 2005 (C2005) was full of confusion amongst teachers, as well as the education system managers. The confusion was about the fundamental conceptual framework, the philosophy of the OBE and the content of the new curriculum (Fiske & Ladd; 2004) in Molapo (2016). The Department of Education introduced the curriculum without sufficient training for teachers, therefore, C2005 was brought along with new terminologies which teachers could not access, with financial constraints hampering access to, amongst others, learner and teacher support materials, particularly, for educators in rural areas (Jansen (1998) in Molapo (2016). There were some schools which had the learning resources required, they were, however, not happy with all the paperwork required. Those without the necessary resources like those with poor infrastructure and large classes, experienced serious problems with the implementation of the curriculum (Bjorklund, 2015).

Stoffel (2008) in Molapo (2016) indicates that C2005 emphasised outcomes but not input, learner-centredness instead of teacher-centredness and active learning instead of passive learning. In this case, teachers would play a facilitating role in utilising multiple teaching and assessment techniques. All these was intended to bring new and exciting changes in South African education, which would consider, learners' experience. The intentions were good, however, teachers raised their dissatisfaction with the implementation of OBE, since there was insufficient training for teachers to take up the curriculum. C2005 greatly challenged the teachers, as they were to implement something, they themselves did not understand, hence, they could not teach the learners. Furthermore, teachers complained that OBE concentrates more on speaking and less on writing and reading (Molapo, 2016). Literature has indicated that writing encourages reading ability of students and it helps them develop their cognitive processes. Subjects like history and mathematics are learnt through reading and writing and OBE did not emphasise reading and writing (Wilmot *et al.*, 2015).

According to Maodzwa-Taruvinga and Cross (2012), after several interventions and consultations by the Education Elected Committee, the Minister, Mrs Angie Motshekga announced the abolishment of OBE in 2011 and it was replaced by Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS). CAPS emphasised strongly on implementation and the needs of educators by stressing the importance of subject / discipline knowledge. Like OBE, CAPS have shown signs of failures. Wilmot and Merino (2015) assert that the introduction of CAPS system was not helpful in remediating the problems encountered with OBE as there are high statistics of students' poor academic performance, particularly, in their first and second years at universities. Many secondary students are battling with complexity of coursework and drop out even before reaching matriculation. From a research conducted by Maddock and Maroun (2017) with teachers, all indicated that OBE contributed to the high drop-out rates and failure in South Africa. They maintain that OBE just passed learners with any level of knowledge, students did not write formal tests and all tasks were normally open-book exercises. Furthermore, OBE did not teach learners creativity and according to the respondents, creativity leads to critical thinking. CAPS on the other hand did not do any better as it had put tremendous pressure on the learners. The respondents agreed that learners and students are not equipped well for their next level of education as they lack basic skills and techniques, as well as subject knowledge. CAPS did not encourage thinking and therefore the analytical skills needed in English and Mathematics were not taught, especially, in public schools. They further said even learners who obtained As and Bs in their matriculation results, struggle to achieve 50% at the university. This comes as a result of teachers dropping the standards in setting learning assessments (Maddock *et al.*, 2017); this has created a huge problem for lecturers in tertiary institutions.

Hall *et al.*, (2005:25) found that '*many teachers experience the teaching profession negatively, have low morale and experience little job satisfaction*'. Bjorklund (2015) adds that the other cause of low morale among teachers is the increased stress levels caused by increased workloads. The workloads of teachers are increasing as a result of the bigger class sizes, the new curriculum and its continuous assessment requirements, amongst other things. This can mean that most teachers are staying in teaching due to lack of opportunity for employment somewhere, hence, should an opportunity avail for better employment somewhere, they will not hesitate to leave the teaching profession.

Cuervo (2016) mentions that schools do not prepare student for some academic competencies, such as, how to study, time management and independent learning. As a result of this lack of preparedness, students' transition to higher education is made much more difficult. This has been confirmed by Maddock *et al.*, (2017) when the outcomes of their research indicated that students are ill-prepared for tertiary studies. Nevertheless, under-preparedness cannot be blamed on school-level learning only, universities also contribute to under-preparedness of graduates in terms of their graduateness. Several authors have raised their concerns that employers are reluctant to recruit and appoint graduates due to their lack of generic skills, although they may be equipped with technical skills. According to Maddock *et al.*, (2017) failure of both OBE and CAPS in the South African school system and the urgent need for skilled people in South Africa raise much concern. Learners are ill-prepared for tertiary education and again receive poor teaching at the university. Even worse, one lecturer was worried about the standard at tertiary level being downgraded to accommodate failures. He cited that Economics I at his university is now a multiple-choice test to aid students to guess their way to passing and possibly getting 70%, even though they know so little of the subject. Another lecturer cited concerns about his first-year students' poor reading, writing and critical thinking skills. Another argument on the issue of under-preparedness of graduates is that, lecturers lack exposure and experience in teaching diverse group of learners. A new approach of teaching should be sought other than the traditional one that they are used to in order to accommodate all students Cuervo (2016).

3.2.2 Strategies to enhance graduate employability

Higher education institutions need to consider how they can enhance graduates' employability capabilities as well as the disciplinary expertise of its undergraduate students. In order to supply the labour market with the right candidates, higher education teaching and learning must be able to provide the necessary required skills, therefore, institutions' leadership must make strategic decisions about how their curriculum content and co-curricular activities, pedagogies should be improved. There are strategies that institutions of higher learning have adopted to ensure that their graduates possess the necessary employability skills to land them their first job and for them to have a successful career. Below is an explanation of those strategies.

3.2.2.1 Embedding employability skills in the curriculum

The concept of enhancing employability skills by embedding them in the curriculum has gained importance in the higher education sector not only in South Africa but across the world (Shivoro, Shalyefu & Kadhila, 2017). Tertiary institutions are under pressure to produce graduate who are work-ready. According to Tran (2015), this pressure comes as a result of higher education institutions offering outdated and irrelevant curricula that lead to ill-prepared university graduates. Osman, Weerkkody and Hindi (2017) suggest that to deal with the pressure, these institutions have been trying to embed employability skills in their curricula through classroom teaching and work-integrated learning (WIL). According to Su (2014) in Hill, Walkington and France (2016), during the stages of curricula design, higher institutions must make decisions on what curriculum content should be included and what type of extra-curricular activities should form part of the curriculum. All stakeholders including universities, employers, graduate alumni and educational policy makers should be involved in course design to enhance the development of graduate employability. Employers will provide what graduate skills they look for from graduates and that should form part of the curriculum. Jackson (2014) in Shivoro *et al.*, (2017) suggested that lecturers should integrate the graduate skills and attributes together with the subject-specific knowledge and skills to build employability in the subject content as suggested by employers and other stakeholders. In addition, students themselves must concentrate on the development of their own identities, graduate attributes and professional identities that they will cultivate during their learning process rather than having their identities constructed for them through teaching by lecturers and by external organisations when they complete their studies. By so doing, students will develop graduate attributes relevant to them and to employers out there, and they will be aware of the skills they are supposed to gain during their studies.

York and Night (2006) in Aryasri and Reddy (2016) have highlighted several issues when universities are embedding employability into the curriculum, either in new or revised ones. According to them, there is no one size fits all when employability is included in the curriculum and therefore diversity of students and their learning needs must be taken into consideration when developing curriculum along those lines. They also indicate that capability, personal development and planning approaches can be used to enhance employability.

Teaching pedagogies also have their way of enhancing employability. Many universities are including active learning, introducing teaching that engages students with real life situations and structured workplace experience in the form of WIL (Aryasri *et al.*, 2016). WIL has been confirmed by Yorke and Night (2006) as contributing in enhancing graduate employability skills and attributes. Universities worldwide include WIL in their curricula as part of their teaching and learning strategies. In higher education, WIL broadly refers to on-campus and workplace learning activities and experiences which integrate theory with practice in academic learning programmes. It represents a collaborative effort between the industry and higher education to enhance student learning through facilitating the application of theory into real-life practice (Bates, 2011; Tran, 2016). In South Africa, CHE (2011) developed a document with guidelines for the implementation of WIL in higher education. The guidelines describe the alignment of teaching and learning within the main four different curricular modalities: work-directed theoretical learning, problem-based learning, project-based learning and workplace learning. Similarly, a university in Australia has adopted the WIL framework developed by O'Shea (2008), wherein all their undergraduate students in accounting are given an opportunity to experience WIL as part of their learning (Leong & Kavanagh, 2013). This framework depicts four types of WIL as follows:

Type 1 – Professional practicum: This is a supervised, unpaid work-based students' placement that provide them with the opportunity to explore their chosen field, while developing and demonstrating the relevant professional standards, ethics and competencies and gaining course credit. Type 2 – Work placement: This gives students an opportunity to complete unpaid work, supervised and supported in a professional role related to students' studies. Course credit is applicable in this regard. Type 3 – Industry and Community Projects: This takes the form of either once-off unpaid work or community-focused projects that provide students with the opportunity to put their newly acquired knowledge and skills into practice in the world of work. Type 4 – Work samples and training: This may involve work-related events or projects, work-related events designed, delivered and supervised by the university as part of a course, such as field trips, visiting professionals, industry-based case studies and university-supported participation in community and industry activities. WIL is considered one of the key strategies for promoting employability of graduates, however, it can only be effective when supported by appropriate pedagogical strategies and quality assessments (Rowe & Zegward, 2017).

Yorke *et al.*, (2006) suggest five stages for embedding graduate skills in the curriculum. During the first stage, all students must be able to demonstrate the eight identified abilities per level of their education and in the specialist subjects they have chosen. These skills are communication, analysis, problem-solving, decision-making, social interaction, global perspectives, effective leadership and aesthetic responsiveness; these are embedded in the whole curriculum of a degree programme. The second level is employability in the core-curriculum. A university may opt for one or two modules to drive the development of employability skills and attributes. Jackson (2013) in Shivor (2017) explains a case where a module was dedicated solely to developing employability skills in a Bachelor of Business Programme. The module had four learning units that were aimed at enabling students to acquire various employability skills through practical experience in a workplace. The third level embed work-related learning throughout the curriculum but not at any particular stage of the learning. During this learning, students are placed in the workplaces for up to one-year placement. At the fourth level, modules related to employability are situated within the curriculum. These modules are aimed at developing the students' skills at the very beginning of the study programme. These modules are based on the notion that if students can develop their personal autonomy early in the beginning of their studies, then it will bring them long-lasting benefits. It is at this level where universities can develop modules that are designed to engage their first-entering students in learning experiences that can equip them with skills necessary for creativity and innovation. In the final level, universities can facilitate work-related learning parallels within the curriculum. In this case, students are employed part-time while studying full-time. Tran (2016) says this work experience could be a good collaboration with institutions where students are working as part of the requirements for fulfilling certain degrees. This will work perfectly provided the work experience gathered is related to the study programme of the student.

Biggs (1996) with the introduction of construction alignment, states that curriculum is integrated when is aligned with learning outcomes, teaching and assessment strategies. In aligned teaching, the curriculum is stated in the form of clear objectives and the level of understanding that students will require rather than a list of topics to be covered. Teaching pedagogies to realise the intended learning objectives are also identified from the beginning. Biggs and Tang (2002) were the first to implement construction alignment at the Polytechnic University of Hong Kong aimed at achieving

improved and measured student learning outcomes across the university and linked to teaching quality. Aryasri *et al.*, (2016) share the same sentiment with York *et al.*, (2006). They believe that if curriculum is well developed, it can influence the four USEM model for employability components; these are, Understanding of subject, Skills, Efficacy and Meta-cognition.

3.2.2.2 Learning outcomes

Curriculum primarily aims to address the needs of its local environment. In the South African context and globally, the curriculum must be able to promote graduateness and employability, therefore, the learning outcomes must be intended to achieve those specific needs. Learning outcomes are referred to as graduate outcomes or graduate attributes and are defined as “*being something that students can do now that they could not do previously – a change in people as a result of a learning experience*” (Watson, 2002:208). Learning outcomes should focus on transferable competencies that can be observed and be assessable.

Graduate outcomes serve as tools for programme and course designs (Biggs & Tang, 2011). When higher learning institutions design their courses and programme, their main concern should be what learning outcomes students intend to achieve after having been taught but not, what topics have to be covered in the syllabus.

In OBE it is importance that the intended learning outcomes are clearly understood by the students. These learning outcomes will clearly define the competences that students must develop, but not what teachers intend to teach (Biggs *et al.*, 2011; Erikson & Eriskon, 2018); in this regard, the curriculum will be designed around students. Furthermore, learning outcomes must highlight what students are expected to know in order to pass, therefore, teaching activities and assessments must be aligned to the learning outcomes for each subject or module. Havnes and Proitz (2016) in Erikson *et al.*, (2018), however, are against the idea of students being told what exactly they need to learn. They believe that students will learn that only and not strive to increase their knowledge and skills any further. Crebert *et al.*, (2004) and Trelearen (2008) confirm that in order to embed generic skills, generic learning outcomes must be aligned with the criteria and these learning outcomes must incorporate the CCFOs as discussed in detail in 2.3.1. above. By so doing, the value of graduate skills or attributes will be emphasised to students and this will further help to

pay attention to students' future careers. Teachers can achieve the intended learning outcomes by activating a range of verbs from high to low cognitive level. The highest referring to activities such as reflecting and theorising, whereas the lowest being memorising and recalling with various levels of activity in between (Biggs *et al.*, 2011). Erikson *et al.*, (2018) on the other hand, advise that when formulating learning outcomes, the lecturer should select the verbs that describe the student's future ability in relation to subject matter. This simply means that, in the first year, for example, a student is expected to be able to describe and explain a concept, and then in the second year is expected to analyse or criticise a concept.

▪ **Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive skills**

Bloom (1956) develops six levels of skills, popularly known as the 'Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive skills' that curriculum developers must infuse when developing learning outcomes in their curricula. Those levels are - knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. These levels are described hereunder as follows:

- **Knowledge:** What is it that the students know? What content do they know?
- **Comprehension:** To what degree do students understand that which they know? How deep is their comprehension?
- **Application:** Can the students apply the knowledge they have learned, for example, by using it in a different context other than the one in which the knowledge was originally acquired?
- **Analysis:** Can the students analyse information and systematise knowledge, for example, by categorising different aspects and/or comparing them with one another and arranging them according to specific criteria?
- **Synthesis:** Can students recognise the interdependence and links within the acquired knowledge content, and can they integrate knowledge at an overarching level so that it leads to new insight?
- **Evaluation:** Are the students able to make their own deductions and judgments, for example, the merits of an intellectual argument or the quality of a creative adaptation of previous knowledge?

These levels can be infused in the curriculum and build up to one another, depending on the level of student learning, for example, from first year to final year of a degree of study, and depending on the programme of learning.

3.2.2.3 Teaching and learning strategies

In higher education, students are taught mainly to enhance themselves with graduate work-related skills in order to boost their competitive edge in the job market (Thompson & Rayner, 2017; Kadhila *et al.*, 2017). According to Coetzee and Schmulian (2012), universities have designed and developed various teaching and learning initiatives to address professional or graduate-skills development. The development of employability skills in university students compels lecturing staff to have informed knowledge of current industry practices, as well as an awareness of how different workplaces have been structured and how they function. Academic staff must move beyond traditional lecturing and have teaching skills as well as knowledge of using a range of teaching methods (Commonwealth of Australia, 2007, Cameroon & Woods, 2016). Researchers have also given their opinions with regards to strategies that could assist to enhance graduate employability. For instance, some suggest that employability skills can be incorporated alongside subject-specific knowledge and skills (Saunders & Zuzel (2010) in Kadhila *et. al.*, (2017), whereas Jackson (2014) suggests that employability skills must be fused into the programme of study where employability skills are part of the learning outcomes of the degree. Academic staff should devise opportunities for developing graduate employability skills in their courses, to create students' work-readiness skills (Jackson, 2014). Students should be given ample opportunities to be more involved in experiential learning programme like WIL and in community projects. For instance, programmes, such as those in science and IT have a strong work-readiness component as part of their curriculum, therefore practical teaching methodology must be adopted in this regard. Graduate skills need to be developed, regardless of the field of study that a student has chosen; that way students can relate and reflect on their own experiences, at the same time gaining the necessary skills for future working life situations. Assignments challenging students intellectually, interactive assignments and case studies can be implemented in the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills of students (Rich & Dereshiwsky, 2011). Critical thinking is one of the generic skills that graduates must possess in order to gain employment; these challenge

students' intellectual capacity. It is a skill that must be developed, practised and continually integrated into the curriculum in order to engage students in active learning.

- **Engaging students in active learning**

In order to enhance employability skills of students, lecturers should do away with the traditional teaching method of pouring learning into students' heads, resulting in them becoming passive learners. Efforts must be made for students to engage in active learning (Hyun, Ediger & Lee, 2017). Active learning is any teaching method, other than a lecture, that involves learning in active learning. It involves anything course-related, during which students do not simply watch, listen and take notes. During active learning, students become actively involved and become more responsible for their education (Stover & Ziswiler, 2017).

Barrie (2004) emphasises that lecturers do not share a common understanding of the nature of the teaching of generic skills outcomes nor of the teaching and learning processes that could best facilitate the development of the generic outcomes. Collaborative or team-based learning, cooperative learning, case-based learning and problem-based learning, work shadowing, business simulation (Fortin & Lagualt, 2010) are some of the instructional methods that can be applied to promote active learning and it is also applicable to university classes in an effort to enhance graduate skills (Prince (2004) in Hyun *et al.*, (2017). This is also possible, when students demonstrate, collaborate with peers, make presentations and other collaborative activities (Alghamdi & Deraney, 2017).

Fortin *et al.*, (2004) also highlight that the use of case studies, group discussions, in-class student presentations, individual group research projects, role plays, and simulations can be used to acquire the principles of ethical conduct, professionalism and professional skills. Gabbin and Wood (2008) support that group work with accounting students can be considered to develop teamwork skills. They concur with Ballantine and McCourt Larres (2009), when in their study of final years students taking advance accounting course at a United Kingdom university, they found that cooperative learning enhances students' interpersonal and communication skills, especially, their verbal, listening and tolerance skills. Dyball, Reid, Rodd and Schoch (2007), in their study also

found that cooperative learning has positive impact on the development of graduate skills relating to self-management, planning and organising.

Large lectures discourage student participation and engagement between the lecturer and his or her students is limited. It has been highlighted that the less the participation, the more difficult it is for the lecturer to determine the level of students understanding (Richards and Velasquez, 2014 in Stover *et al.*, 2017). These interventions, however, enhance students' active learning and critical thinking by exposing them to the kinds of problems they will come across in the future in their workplaces.

Students are encouraged to work in team settings, since the emphasis is for students to develop self-management skills, problem-solving skills, time management skills while engaging in meaningful tasks. Most of the tasks are completed in class in the presence of a lecturer and all classmates, therefore students are compelled to engage with each other and with the lecturer to give advice and provide immediate feedback (Timmerman & Morris, 2017). In active learning students participate in the gaining of their knowledge, learn by doing and thinking as they are doing the activities. It draws upon students' own initiative and sense of responsibility for their own progress (Alghamdi *et al.*, 2017); this sentiment is shared by Aryarsi *et al.*, (2016). They maintain that employability skills can be enhanced by introducing problem-based learning (PBL) approach in the curriculum. They state that students are more motivated when engaged with real life situations that lead to self-confidence, reflective thinking and articulation. During PBL students engaged with each other in discussing their current understanding of the problem, and where they lack in their knowledge, before they embark on researching on the topic to find more information to solve the problem at hand.

Active learning suggests provision of a learning space where the role of a lecturer is that of a facilitator and classrooms are also converted into learning spaces. There are some challenges in implementing active learning, however, it has a positive impact on student learning outcomes. The convention of active learning classrooms is not easy nor cheap. Active learning classrooms will need students to be in possession of ICT equipment like laptops, classes with multiple projectors, electronic whiteboards, round desks and chairs, desks microphones and all those necessities

required for the smooth running of the sessions. Lecturers also need to undergo training to learn to use these technologies at their disposal (Stover *et al.*, 2017).

- **Use of technology in teaching**

Research has shown that technology can be used as a pedagogy in teaching and learning skills. It can be useful in classrooms to open a new area of knowledge and provides a tool that has a massive potential to change the existing traditional teaching methods (Gilakjani, 2017). These days, many undergraduate students are the born-frees and millennials. They are used to gadgets like cell phones, iPads and laptops to interact with their friends through social media, blogs and online forums (Turner, Solis & Kincade, 2017). Teaching this cohort with the use of technology can enhance their learning and they can become active learners. Wanner (2015) concurs that with all net technologies, such as wikis and e-portfolios, students can be motivated in various ways and this helps them to engage with their peers, teachers and the course material. Technology can be used as a teaching tool in all the fields of learning. Tulbure (2011) maintains that this teaching strategy to the current students will promote engagement, keep students motivated and help them make connection with what is taught in the classroom to the things they value the most outside the classroom. This new generation of students need technology-enhanced teaching strategy that is flexible in delivery, relevant to the course they study and interactive. Technology does not replace the tools for quality teaching, they are considered as add-on supplements to improve teaching. Technology-based teaching and learning can be used in different ways to help both lecturers and students learn about their subjects. This includes educational videos, stimulation, storage of data, the usage of databases, mind-mapping, guided discovery, brainstorming, music, World Wide Web (www) that will all make the learning process more exciting, engaging, fulfilling and meaningful. Students are not limited to textbooks and learning material. On the other hand, with technology, teachers can design their lesson plans in an effective, creative and interesting approach that would encourage students' active learning (Ghavifekr & Rosdy, 2015).

Hermans, Tondeur, Van-Braak, and Valcke (2008) in Ghavifekr *et al.*, (2015) identified three main stages for ICT to be regarded as an effective teaching method - integration, enhancement and complementary. Integration involves implementing the right use of ICT in a subject area that involved complex concepts and skills to improve student's achievement and attainment.

Enhancement involves the use of ICT to put emphasis on a topic being taught. Finally, complementary involves the use of ICT to aid and support the student's learning. This approach allow students to be more organized and efficient as they can take obtain the notes online, submit their assignments and research work by email from anywhere, as long as they are within the deadlines and are able to look for information from various sources provided online, in order to complete their work (Hermans *et al.*, 2008 in Ghavifekr, 2015).

- **Students' approaches to learning**

Students adopt approaches to learning based on the type of activity required of them, and the significance this type of activity has in their learning. In addition to this, students choose to use different strategies and approaches according to the subject content, learning context and situations they find themselves in. Also, different students follow different approaches based on their educational background and personal experience. Personal interest and prior knowledge of the subject matter may also play a huge role for students in selecting a certain approach to learning (Biggs, 2003 in Islam & Shafiq, 2016). Student do not learn in the same manner; they adopt different approaches to learning.

At institutional level, learning approaches have influence on the curriculum designing and its implementation. Biggs *et al.*, (2011) show that effective learning changes how students see the world around them. The information students acquire will not necessary bring change to them, however, the way this information is structured and how students think with it, does all the difference. Learning, therefore, is about conceptual change but not just the information the students acquire during the learning process.

There are two familiar distinct approaches to learning – surface and deep approaches to learning (Islam *et al.*, 2016). Surface approach to learning refers to the students' intention to complete the requirements of tasks with little or minimum efforts. In this approach, they tend to focus on the different fundamentals of the task separately, for example, signs, factual data, words and formulae rather than on the entire task. In addition, students see tasks as an external burden and prefer to memorise to pass assessment instead of understanding or reflecting on the subject matter. Biggs (2003) states that students at universities may choose surface against deep learning based on their

heavy workload, insufficient time to complete tasks, their lack of choice in learning strategies and their high anxiety. The inappropriate assessment procedures and misunderstanding of requirements by students contribute in their choice of surface learning. On the other hand, deep approach to learning refers to students applying the most appropriate cognitive activities to accomplish tasks in a proper and meaningful manner. In this case, students analyse, synthesise and evaluate main ideas, author's argument, themes, principles or successful applications to get the proper underlying meaning of the task as a whole. They can relate tasks with real life situations, compare with their personal experiences and with other relevant knowledge (Biggs, 2003 in Islam *et. al.*, 2016). Baeten, Dochy and Struyven (2008) strongly believe that a deep learning approach is one of the foundations of life-long learning, meaning that a modern and recent university graduate requires a deep learning approach to succeed in the modern world (Male, Bush & Chapman, 2010). Lecturers are also responsible to motivate and inspire students by guiding and 'pushing' them to adopt appropriate approach to learning. Their delivery of learning in the classroom is also crucial in instilling interest in students and their learning approaches. For example, students will choose surface approach if the lecturer does not bring out any deep discussion of the topic, only assesses students in multiple choice questions and uses short answers to give feedback (Biggs, 2003). To strengthen deep learning, universities should ensure effective teaching and appropriate assessment system to foster students' interest in a subject or module. Universities have a responsibility to ensure that their curriculum seeks to empower students to become lifelong learners by becoming active participants in the construction of their own knowledge and not become passive receivers of knowledge (Blitzer & Botha, 2011). When deep learning approach is encouraged, students take an intrinsic interest in their learning while enjoying it at the same time. Deep approaches to learning promote high quality learning in higher education; to the contrary, surface approaches lead to poor-quality learning (Entwistle & Ramsden, 2015).

3.2.2.4 Assessing graduate skills

Hodges (2008) sees assessment of students as a complicated but important aspect of education, as it plays a crucial role in preparing students for the world of work. Brown, Bull and Bury (2013) regard assessment as the heart of student experience and therefore assessments are at the core of formal higher education (Angus & Watson, 2009).

According to SAQA (2005:3) assessments are “*regarded as a process through which the applied competence of student is assessed.*” In this context, graduates are expected by employers to be able to perform in the real work situation what they have learned in their studies, however, Bryan and Clegg (2006) raise concern as to how well these assessments support teaching and learning in the process of preparing graduates for employment. Historically, assessments were a method to rank students or on their failure or passing, rather than to enhance their learning (Schuwirth & Van der Vleiten, 2011). Students, like lecturers can also be strategic in that “*they allocate their time and focus their attention on what they believe will be assessed and what they believe will gain good grades*” (Gibbs, 2006a: p.23). It is important, therefore, to design assessments that support the development of competencies. Lecturers can easily direct the students on what objectives to achieve for each learning task by making use of assessments. What students regard as important is largely influenced by assessments (Lemiski, 2011). This means that, as asserted by Biggs and Tang (2011) it is assessment but not curriculum that defines how and what students will learn. The choice of assessment is crucial and if assessments are properly aligned, they could produce the intended outcomes (Biggs & Tang, 2011).

Institutions of higher learning are responding positively to assessing generic skills by spending a lot of time refining their assessment strategies to suit the needs of the students (Hodges, 2008). This initiative is supported by David-Johnston (2007) since they highlighted that using only traditional models of assessment can be problematic as it is difficult to validly measure learning of a certain model using inappropriate tools that are designed for a different model. Most of traditional models are not designed to assess the required kind of learning like soft skills, graduate capabilities and attributes, personal development and transformation. Some models of assessments are implemented to assess learning, like tests, assignments, class presentations and examinations; these techniques mainly assess knowledge. Relying solely on the same models of assessment as mentioned above, deprives students of opportunities to demonstrate the acquired knowledge, develop the graduate skills and be able to apply them in the work situation (Adams & Mabusela, 2014). Traditional assessment instruments must not be replaced with new ones, they may however be supplemented with those that focus more on the educational impact (Schuwirth & Van der

Vleitein, 2011). According to Gibbs, (2008), assessments must focus on assessing graduate attributes rather than assessing, solely, knowledge acquisition.

Falchikov and Thompson (2008) confirm that traditional methods rely on techniques like closed-book examinations and essay-type assessments that are known to focus mainly on summative assessments. Summative assessments are not suitable for developing graduate skills. Brown, Bull and Bury (2013) describe some of the strategies that may be effective in assessing graduate skills as follows:

- *“Written papers measure recalled knowledge, familiar problem-solving strategies, recalled understanding, and the capacity to think, structure thoughts and write quickly and independently under pressure.*
- *Coursework has the potential to measure the capacity to retrieve and select information from external sources, to deepen understanding and develop problem-solving skills and strategies*
- *Assessing the product of an assessment task such as project or group project, some tutors and students are exploring and assessing the process involved. The justification for assessing processes is that it helps students to develop their own assessment of the skills required. The personal or professional skills of time management, working in a team, negotiation and project planning are useful processes to assess and reflect upon in projects*
- *Collaborating learning when used in conjunction with peer and self-assessment can deepen understanding, develop teamwork, skills and draw attention to the processes required for effective group work.”*

3.2.2.5 Academic staff development

The role of teachers in higher education should be measured in terms of graduate skills imparted to students for getting jobs (Raza, Majid & Zia, 2010). Research has shown that students or graduates are under-prepared with skills for employment. One of the reasons for lack of employability skills is due to the inability of teachers to produce graduates with these necessary skills. According to Cameron and Woods (2016), the size and shape of South African institutions

of higher learning has changed drastically over the past 20 years. This has resulted in more students who are under-prepared being able to enter higher learning. Lecturers are now faced with challenges of teaching large classes, yet, they are supposed to meet the needs of these diverse under-prepared students. In addition, lecturers are expected to maintain or increase the student throughput rates; this too, puts them under pressure to perform.

Besides being experts in their fields, the role of academics has been shaped into those of facilitators of learning (Stover *et al.*, 2017). Lecturers are expected to be engaged and be proficient in curriculum design, teaching and assessment of learning, as well as the integration of new technologies in teaching and learning. Moreover, academics are required to have effective pedagogical skills for the delivery of appropriate student learning outcomes. For instance, lectures these days make use of technology in teaching and other teaching strategies like the work-based learning, case studies, amongst others. Many institutions have identified and are implementing specific teaching and learning strategies; they also have mechanisms and instruments in place to improve quality of higher education (Henard & Roseveare, 2012). The Improving Teaching and Learning (ITL) Resource (2004,6) says the reality is whether academics have spent many years in teaching and have extensive experience as practitioners; there is still a challenge in developing subject-specific experts into excellent teachers, therefore it is essential that higher education be engaged in and devoted to staff development. Staff development refers to *'developing the capacity of higher education academic staff to fulfil their professional roles effectively by providing appropriate training, education and capacity building'* (ITL Resource, 6:3).

It was revealed that some institutions tried to avoid the development of academic staff by appointing experienced practitioners working in the corporate world and in the public services. Even though those individuals are experts in their fields, conversant and advanced in the newest technology needs of their profession coupled with good managerial skills, their pedagogical expertise may be limited, or even more so, than those academics with teaching experience (ITL Resource, 2004,6).

In South Africa, higher learning institutions mostly conduct staff development on informal basis, although, some have more formal development for academics as a way of responding to the call for improved teaching and learning strategies. Staff development cannot be taken for granted. It

is a way of acquiring the skills and knowledge to improve teaching and learning practices. Staff development should be embodied in the commitment by academics to the scholarship of their teaching practice, and seek to reflect, research and build theory and improve practice (ITL Resource, 4,6).

Some universities have designed professional development programmes as an outcome of collaborative reflection on the teaching and learning quality, that are designed on the values of the university, and identity and expectations of the faculties (Henard *et al.*, 2012; Cameron *et al.*, 2016). For instance, in the resident university under study, their Centre for Higher Education, Teaching and Learning (CHETL) facilitates academic development workshops in teaching and learning, curriculum development and course design, assessment and moderation of learning twice per semester in a year, especially for new staff as part of their induction programme. They also offer a Post-graduate Diploma in Higher Education, free of charge to academic who wish to acquire the formal diploma. Another university, the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) has developed and implemented the so-called Curriculum Officer Project. The project is implemented with a view of transforming teaching, learning and assessment practices in that university. The project, hence, is aimed at empowering lecturers in improving their teaching and learning in their respective departments and faculties. The project has been a success, between 2009 and 2011 more than 40 curriculum officers were operating in all six faculties of CPUT (Henard *et al.*, 2012).

Due to pressure on institutions of higher learning to produce employable graduates, Fry, Ketteridge and Marshall (2009), in their handbook for teaching and learning in higher education, show that lecturers are expected to include employability skills in their teaching, regardless of under-prepared students. Cameron *et al.*, (2016) continue that the depth of engaging in employability skills will depend on the nature and the level of the module the lecturer teaches and the activities that students will undertake in that module. They further advised that the skills and attributes to be taught must be clearly stated from the beginning, in the outcomes of the module. Furthermore, and most importantly, students must be made aware of the skills to be learned in that module and their importance in their future careers and how they will be achieved. All these can be achieved if lectures are able to relate graduate skills and attributes to their disciplines and modules they teach. Taking large classes of ill-prepared students into consideration, lecturers need to develop

relevant pedagogies and assessment strategies (Hill, Walkington & France, 2016). Lecturers can only overcome these challenges through professional development and getting assistance from academic development practitioners through continuous workshops and seminars.

3.2.3 Responsibility for employability

Research has proved that employability is a collective endeavour, hence, it is the responsibility of higher education, individuals and employers.

Graduates' chances of being employable can be increased if higher education institutions establish programmes as well as provide teaching and learning that is responsive to this ever-changing employability skills. It is assumed that there is a direct link between the universities and the labour market (Pheko & Molefe, 2017). It is also suggested that universities should, if possible, alter their curriculum to close the gaps identified; a curriculum that has a balance between learned theory and practicals. The lack of practicals has been a major challenge in providing graduates with the required employability skills and attributes (Pheko *et al.*, 2017). According to Charity (2017), employers often look for work experience even for entry level employment, which is a disadvantage to young graduates.

To increase graduate employability, it is crucial that higher education institutions establish and strengthen good relationships with employers. Employers can provide important advice to institutions on how to improve employability skills and attributes. The success of a university's graduates finding employment, can mean attracting more prospective students to that university. Those students would be more employable owing to their greater innate abilities and potentials (Edgar & Castro, 2015).

Emphasis is placed on the higher institutions to assist in creating employment opportunities for their students by offering curricular that are responsive to the needs of the economy, however, the onus also rests with the individuals themselves. Individuals need to take responsibility for their own learning and initiative to become employable. They must involve themselves in updating their knowledge and skills through continuous learning to enhance their employability. They should not expect that the university will perform these functions for them and they themselves take a passive reaction to their learning (Callan, 2014 in Lazarus & Ferris, 2016) Students must take

responsibility for identifying, planning and addressing any employability skill limitations which they believe they may have and not depend on circumstances surrounding them (Lazarus *et al.*, 2016). During studies, students need to understand what prospective employers will require from them so that they can at the same time take initiative in their self-development plans that could assist them during recruitment. They have a responsibility of developing their own employability. Taking responsibility of your own learning is consistent with the expectations of professional positions, in which an employee is expected to take responsibility and exercise initiative in relation to his or her work tasks. When graduates are employed, they will need to grow professionally to become for instance, managers and professionals in their chosen fields (Pheko *et al.*, 2017). According to Douglas and Morris (2014) in Lazarus *et al.*, (2016) future careers of graduates also depend on them taking charge in determining their own learning needs, identifying the learning resources, choosing activities and evaluating the outcomes of their learning.

Arocena *et al.*, (2007) indicate how employers benefit by promoting and making space for skills development to enhance employability, and providing organisational structures, where employees practise some degree of autonomy and take the opportunity to utilise their skills. By so doing, it is possible for them to enhance their prospects for becoming ‘employers of choice’. Evidence from case studies of Microsoft (Bonfiglioli, Moir & Ambrosini, 2006) also show that broader societal efforts to encourage employability, through acts of corporate social responsibility, can generate strategic advantage to the employers through the development of intangible assets, as well as it being of broader societal value. This suggests that although there has been a shift towards individuals taking greater responsibility for employability through self-help and development, employers and the state have not, and they should take such a responsibility.

3.3 GRADUATENESS

Coetzee (2012) in Goodman and Tredway (2016) holds the thought that graduateness and employability are not a single concept but are separate in nature, therefore, in defining them, they should be treated as separate concepts that relate to each other. She maintains that graduateness is the effect that completing a degree or any other qualification from an institution of higher learning has on an individual graduate’s skills, knowledge and attitudes. According to Barrie (2004), the skills and attributes that constitute graduateness are considered as very crucial outcome

of university learning experience. Individual's graduateness implies that although graduates may possess degree-specific knowledge, technical transferable meta-skills and personal attributes, these are generally accepted as indicators of their work readiness and employability (Coetzee, 2012 in Goodman et al., 2016).

Graduateness, according to Wheelahan (2002), refers to the combination of graduate skills and attributes at different levels of functioning knowledge that include implicit learning and tacit knowledge that graduates should acquire during their formal study programme. Graduateness' skills and attributes address the three holistic overarching attributes which are regarded very crucial and important outcomes of a tertiary institution learning: (1) scholarship - which refers to students attitudes towards the knowledge they had learnt, the manner in which they think and do their work and the tools and methods they use to learn, (2) global and moral citizens – students' attitudes or their stance towards the world they live in and living in the world itself, lastly (3) life-long learning - students attitudes towards themselves and living in the world (Potgieter, 2017). She went on to say as scholars, students must be leaders in producing new knowledge through research or inquiry, critique and combination of both. This means that students must be able to apply their knowledge in solving complex problems and be able to apply their knowledge to solutions with confidence and ease. As global and moral citizens, students must willingly fully contribute to society in a meaningful, ethical and responsible manner, by taking advantage of their roles in their local, national and global society. Lastly, as life-long learners graduates must continue learning more new skills and knowledge so to be abreast with new developments in their career, society and the world.

There are eight (8) core skills that Coetzee (2012), identifies as core skills and attributes that constitute student's graduateness. These are – being interactive, problem-solving and decision-making, continuous learning orientation, enterprising, presenting and applying information, goal-directed behaviour, ethical and responsible behaviour as well as analytical thinking skills. These skills assist in cultivating the three overarching attributes as indicated by Potgieter (2017) above. Graduateness can be easily achievable if universities when developing their curriculum infuse graduate or generic skills, for instance the CCFOs as identified by SAQA as well as by capacitating academic staff to realise the importance of graduate skills and how to infuse them in their

curriculum. In addition, Kreber (2014) describes pedagogies for gradueness that can foster transformative learning for the long term; that can also lead to deeper understanding of the subject and the learner self. Those pedagogies require students to question and defend their knowledge claims and that of others, to apply and broaden challenges to their academic knowledge through experiential learning. These pedagogies are aimed at fulfilling the following five conditions (Kreber, 2014:98):

- (1) *“They provoke students to critically reflect on their assumptions, beliefs and values and thus afford them opportunities to move beyond frames of reference that limit how they make meaning of their experiences;*
- (2) *They require and encourage students to take risks, take a stance and ‘go public’ with their knowledge claims, subjecting these, willingly, to the critical scrutiny of others in an environment characterised by trust.*
- (3) *They help students ‘to construct themselves as active subjects’ (Boud 2007, 18) who make personal judgements about their own learning and consider this as an integral part of the learning process.*
- (4) *They require students to become personally invested in the issues they are learning about in university courses and consider what these mean to them on a personal level and how they can make a difference to the world.*
- (5) *They engage students in experiential ways of learning, requiring them to relate abstract academic content to concrete real-life issues of social relevance.”*

3.4 COLLABORATION BETWEEN HIGHER EDUCATION AND INDUSTRIES

Higher education institutions are influenced by the industrial revolution, globalisation and knowledge economy to reconsider their focus in education. Modern universities are forced to shift away from their traditional focus of just producing graduates with degrees but towards focusing on relevance and application. Universities need to be responsive towards economic development and are expected to solve the problem of unemployment, especially among the graduate youths and alleviate skills shortage. Producing employable graduates is a key measure of successes of HEIs these days, however, there is no clarity as to what exactly HEIs must do to achieve that (Wedekind & Mutereko, 2016). Universities must seek industry assistance in making their

graduates more employable. Information on what set of skills and competencies are required by employers, can be provided by working together with industry itself. This information is very important and will assist if included when curricula are being developed and will be crucial in preparing students for employment. The need for graduate skills that are also ever-changing emphasises the importance of designing curriculum and pedagogical approaches of learning in tertiary education to the needs of the labour market (Edgar *et al.*, 2015). The need for curriculum change is not new, York and Knight (2006) had expressed this view long ago. They said for higher education to develop a curriculum relevant for producing the necessary employability skills, business and industry must evaluate the competencies on offer by HEIs and identify additional skills that need to be included in the curriculum.

The importance of HEIs-industry collaboration is not new in South Africa. Government also supports these partnerships and accepts their roles in economic development, by establishing funding schemes like the SETAs and the National Research Foundation's Technology for Human Resources and Innovation Programme (THRIP) in order to encourage university-industry collaborations (Wedekind *et al.*, 2016).

Most of the collaboration between universities and industries are focused on research and innovation (Ramazan & Rachel, 2014). Government's sole primary goal for establishing THRIP was to help industries to become competitive in the use of new technologies through research collaborations with institutions of higher learning (Anderson and Freebody, 2014 in Wedekind, (2016). Firstly, universities conduct scientific research and give the results with regards to producing information which is directly applicable to new production and technological development. Secondly, universities will also provide recommendations for industrial innovation processes either through the education of graduates who become industry researchers or through staff mobility from universities to industries. Industries will then take the information for new product development, commercialisation, market knowledge and employ university graduates with the necessary skills for producing such products (Uddin, Khan, Uddin & Solaiman, 2015).

Some collaborations between the two partners have facilitated workplace opportunities or work experience for students through internships and work-integrated learning (Chillas *et al.*, 2015). According to the Department of Higher Education and Training (2013), the White Paper for Post-

School Education and Training indicates that university-industry collaboration, through funding from SETAs, are beneficial to industries in addressing the skills gap. Work-integrated learning (WIL) in the form of service learning, internships and so forth, enable students to acquire skills which cannot be learned through classroom learning (Allan *et al.*, 2015; Bates & Hayes, 2017). Universities consider WIL as one of the strategies for developing employability skills in students and enhancing employment opportunities for graduates. Universities need to place their students in the actual business environment for effective learning in the industry (Allan *et al.*, 2015).

According to Groenewald (2009) in Wedekind *et al.*, (2016), university-industry collaboration must facilitate the production of graduates with scarce skills, however, this has been neglected and raises a serious concern considering skills shortages through mismatch.

3.4.1 Collaboration with other stakeholders

Besides industries, there are other stakeholders that could play a crucial role in curriculum development, that could lead to improving graduate employability if collaborated with. According to Meyer and Bushney (2008), there is a multi-stakeholder-driven model which has been developed in higher education for excellence in curriculum development. This model was developed, as it was assumed that the current efforts at curriculum development do consider little stakeholder consultation. According to these researchers, a total of 18 multiple stakeholders were identified as follows:

SAQA	Provides the overall national quality standards and registers qualifications that should meet real national needs.
Learners	Are at the centre of OBE curriculum development as users of education products and services.
Alumni	Past learners have attempted to apply what they have learnt and should thus know what works and what does not.
Employers	Providers of employment will know whether learners have been sufficiently educated to do the employers' work. Employers present the viewpoint of practitioners in the workplace.

Government departments	Higher education programmes also address government needs, for example, economic growth, public services and labour market reform.
Local universities	Benchmarking and co-operating with other universities and sharing lessons and research projects. Results would enrich the curriculum.
International universities	Curriculum alignment with global universities ensures that international best practices and a global curriculum is created and applied.
Consultants or specialists	Internal and external subject-matter experts may provide specialist knowledge that could enrich the curriculum.
Mentors and coaches	Academic, workplace or external mentors and coaches could share their knowledge and wisdom, thus, contribute to curriculum development.
SETAs	Know what the major skills priorities are in their sectors. Higher education could ensure that these priorities are sufficiently addressed at both curriculum and programme levels, and that life-long learning paths are created.
ETQAs	Set clear quality criteria that should also be met by higher education institutions.
Professional bodies	These bodies can provide specialist and professional advice regarding a profession, field or sub-field.
Advisory bodies	Having external advisory bodies providing independent input could play a significant role to ensure that cutting-edge content is embedded in curricula.
Community	The community and their representative bodies may have an interest in the outcome of higher education offerings.
Research institutions	Private and public research organisations may possess leading-edge research results that could inform issues to be addressed in higher education curricula.

Private providers	Many private providers have developed good partnerships with private and public companies and may thus add significant value to the curriculum development process.
Assessors and moderators	Can provide inputs and feedback that could be used for quality improvement of curriculum development and assessment practices.
Academics	Play a critical role to ensure that curricula are continuously updated by using their knowledge of specialized fields and expertise.

Source: Author

According to Uddin *et al.*, (2015) there are strategies for quality education through university-industry collaboration. Amongst others, the following are some of the strategies universities and industries can adopt to ensure success in their collaborations:

- Policy Framework for Quality Education where rules, regulations, policies and performance indicators are clearly developed to ensure accountability between the parties. These ensure integrity and non-corrupt activities between the parties during operation and management.
- Promoting university-industry collaborations has been mentioned as one of the strategies. In this regard, high standards of corporate governance, rule of law that includes protection of property and contractual rights, as well as transparency are developed to ensure successful implementation of the collaboration.
- Quality assurance and incentives. This enables a regulatory environment, in the form of providing clear and streamlined registration processes, ensuring that effective quality assurance systems are in place and providing incentives for partners to ensure success.

3.5 THE INTER-RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYABILITY, GRADUATENESS AND INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

Referring to the gradueness and employability concepts above, their challenges can be overcome by implementing graduate internship programme. As Coetzee (2012) has indicated, gradueness

and employability are vital in this knowledge-economy which is technology-driven. Employers these days look to employ graduates who will add value as quickly as they possible can. Employers are in other words, not prepared to spend much time and money in training graduates as new employees in fulfilling their new operational roles. Employers seek specific personal attributes and competencies from graduates. These attributes and competencies represent their personal growth and development that are cultivated during their studies in tertiary education (Steur, Jansen & Hofman, 2012).

Unfortunately, Chetty (2012) maintains that gradueness that higher learning graduates possess is not enough for employability, however, graduate internship is beneficial and can assist in developing the required attributes and competencies that employers require. In Chapter 2, item 2.1.1 benefits of internship have been described in detail, however, it is worth mentioning that graduate internship gives employers opportunity to screen potential candidates for future permanent positions (D'Abate, Youndt & Wenzel, 2009). From the researcher's experience in managing the graduate internship programme at her resident university, she can testify that a few of the participants have now been employed permanently as a result of participating successfully in the programme. Wilson (2012) in Artess, Hooley and Mellors-Bourne (2017), shares the sentiments that in order to enhance graduate skills levels, and ensure smooth and effective transitions between classroom learning and the labour market, students need increased opportunities to acquire relevant work experience during their studies. He suggested sandwich degree programme; internships and work-based degree programme can play important roles in achieving this. Beard (2009) attests that hiring graduates with internship experience can increase the efficiency of the organisation and can positively affect the bottom-line by lowering costs that are associated with staff turnover. Graduates also learn to adapt to the culture of the organisation. Being aware of the culture of the organisation is crucial as graduates tend to learn the way things are done within that organisation.

Kerwin, Odio, and Sagas (2014), in their research, found that depending on the amount of learning opportunities available, students could gain some skills that could be transferred back to the classroom and to future positions in their chosen careers. When conducting their research, they broke down this category into three sections: “knowledge, job-specific skills, and transferable

skills” . From participating in the internship with a variety of tasks, every intern can be provided with more job-specific skills moving forward in their professional career from the experience. Also, getting a bit of work from multiple sections, within the same department, for interns to have exposure in multiple tasks, is more effective and beneficial for interns (Fukami, Narayanan, & Olk, 2010). A research by Helyer and Lee (2014) in Artess *et al.*, (2017), examined an internship programme; although it was not an embedded part of a higher education programme for graduates who studied for a business degree at a university in north-east England, the programme found positive outcomes for all parties including graduates, the employers, and the institution on progression into employment, particularly for those with low attainment. All these parties reported value in both developing and articulating several transferable skills as a result of and a perceived advantage in learning these skills in a real workplace.

3.6 CONCLUSION

Graduate employability is a topic that has gain momentum in South Africa and worldwide. Employers have voiced concern that graduates lack employability attributes that include qualities, and skills beyond subject-specific skills. Institutions of higher learning must come up with strategies that will build employability skills within their curriculum so that graduates become employable and competitive in the world of work. They need to produce graduates who can perform better and more efficiently in a 21st century workplace, taking the 4th Industrial Revolution into consideration. It is, however, not the sole role of the universities to see to that it is achievable, but students themselves, alumni, employers and other stake holders must play their part to see this happening, by participating in curriculum development and reviews, employers accepting students and graduates to obtain workplace experience and so on.

This chapter has brought to light the reasons for lack of employability, showing that it is also a result of student’s unpreparedness from a very young age to when they enter the university and the challenges that lecturers encounter as a result. The chapter also highlighted some of the strategies that can be used to promote employability at universities and how crucial collaboration is in building those attributes. The use of workplace learning as part of the curriculum or graduate internships plays an important role in enhancing relevant attributes that assist graduates in their

careers. It is also important that students, although, they have their own views of which attributes are necessary, are made aware of the attributes sought by employers.

CHAPTER 4: LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The South African Government has demonstrated its commitment to promoting skills development in the workplace and to the unemployed, as well as guaranteeing the quality of training and education by implementing legislation and frameworks to alleviate poverty and improve the economy (Maasdorp, 2013). This was due government inheriting a population in possession of low educational and skills levels (Ferreira & Rossouw, 2016). Government, however, has stressed the importance of skills development in South Africa. It is for that reason that several legislations related to skills development have been passed since 1994. Government believes that proper implementation of skills development legislation will ensure a better skilled, confident and satisfied employee (Gwija, 2014), therefore skills development currently remains a priority in South African policies. This chapter will investigate Skills Development Act (SDA), Act 97 of 1998 as well as the Skills Development Levies Act (SDLA), Act 9 of 1999.

Government realized that the youths and graduates are also affected by unemployment and they have formulated several policies that deal directly with the problems of youth unemployment. There is this one specific policy that would be relevant for our discussions, the National Youth Policy (NYP) 2009 to 2014 (NYP, 2015). This policy was not included in the initial planning of this study; however, it fits very well with the discussions of this chapter and it will add value to the discussions.

In addition to the Acts mentioned above, there are various strategies and initiatives which were developed to drive and promote the implementation of skills development (Mckrill, 2015). Furthermore, these strategies were put in place as replacements for discriminatory frameworks for education and training, prior 1994. These include the Human Resource Development Strategy (HRDS), NSDS III, White Paper on Human Resource in the Public Sector of 1997, AsgiSA as well as JIPSA.

Hendricks and Loggenburg (2015) suggest that the skills development legislation and frameworks described above strive to assist graduates to secure decent permanent employment through

improvement of their skills. They further state that these skills development legislation and frameworks highlight the importance of personal development, training and education for the South African economy and for individuals.

This chapter focuses on the various forms of legislation and frameworks that govern skills development in the workplace and employability skills to assist graduates to enter the world of work.

4.2 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT ACT NO. 97 OF 1998

The Skills Development (SDA) No. 97 of 1998 was launched in 1998. The Act was promulgated with the main aim of ensuring that skills in the workplace are developed and improved. Kraak (2008) in Aigbavboa and Oke (2016:54) states that *“the SDA came into existence as an innovative approach to skills development that sought to redress past educational imbalances.”* The Act encourages employers to offer their workplace as an active learning environment, offer opportunities to employees to acquire new skills and provide opportunities for new entrance in the labour market to gain employability skills and work experience (SDA; 1998). Employees, including interns would be provided with opportunities to learn new skills in areas of shortages, be re-skilled to stay abreast in their fields and be afforded opportunities to gain work experience to enhance their chances of getting decent permanent jobs in the future; that would be a perfect start for their career development. The Act replaced the Manpower Training Act No. 56 of 1981, the Guidance and Placement Act No. 62 of 1981 and the Local Government Training Act No. 106 of 1996 (Ballies, 2008). It was again amended in 2008 to provide new responsibilities for the National Skills Authority (NSA) and the SETAs as well as to broaden the objectives of the Act (SAQA, 2016).

The Act does not give clear reference to graduate internships, instead it makes mention of learnerships and skills programme. According to Raphotle (2012), SETAs offer a variety of learning programmes in the form of learnerships, skills programme and graduate internships. At the resident university under investigation, there are employed interns sponsored by various SETAs - Services SETA (SSETA), ETDP and Safety and Security (SASSETA). SETAs came into operation on 1 April 2000 and were established by Section 9(1) of the same Act (Turner,

Halabi, Sartorius, Arendse, 2013). This was confirmed by Raphotle (2012) showing that Chapter 3 of the SDA made provision of the development of SETA constitution; SETAs perform important role in developing and implementing SSP of the sectors they represent. The SETAs make use of the skills development plans in the form of the SSP, Workplace Skills Plan (WSP) and the skills audit to identify the skill gaps and to determine the future skills needed in the organisations and how to address them (Machika, 2014). The purpose of these SSP is to ensure that relevant SETAs have the relevant, reliable recent information of the skills available and needed in their sectors, in order to assist in resolving skills shortage and unemployment (Balwanz & Ngcwangu, 2016). The WSP outlines the training needs and identifies skills requirements and plans to address these issues. All employers with more than 50 employees are required to compile a WSP that will be approved by their relevant SETAs (Ncube, 2016). Lastly, the skills audit explores the existing skills of the workforce - which skills are presently lacking and which skills will be required in the future (Erasmus *et al.*, 2013). These are the plans which organisations devise and implement nationally and workplace strategies to ensure skills development of the South African workforce (Aigbavboa *et al.*, 2016). In order to address the real skills needs of the economy, it will largely depend on the SETAs' ability to accurately identify those needs and have plans to execute them. SETAs can develop well-researched plans that will have a positive impact on the skills needs of the economy. SETAs can do that by making use of their internal research capacity within their specialized research units or contract their research work to the best research institutions and universities to conduct research on their behalf (Human Resource Development Council, 2013).

As indicated above, graduate internships are planned and funded by the SETAs through the National Skills Fund (NSF) administered by the National Skills Authority (NSA). The NSA develops the NSDS and administers the NSF as already mentioned above. It is through these funds that graduate internships, learnerships and other skills programmes are funded (SDA, 2008). It can, therefore, be argued that internships are also recognised by law and should be classified under learnerships or skills programme. Both these programme focus on equipping employed or unemployed learners with first-hand experience and skills in their chosen field in the workplace. According to Raphotle (2012), SETAs initial target was to support workers, however, over the years since their establishment, they have allocated grants to both the unemployed youth and adults to participate in learning programmes, including graduate internships. SETAs are not training

service providers and they do not offer or deliver training. They do, however, ensure that the implementation of training or programme are aligned to the SSP. They have also put in place procedures for service providers in accordance with quality assurance requirements, to carry out learning programmes. All providers must be registered by a quality assurance body, the Education and Training Quality Assurance (ETQA) in case of SETAs, or any other bodies like Umalusi in case of universities and universities of technology. In case of SETAs, all service providers must be accredited, programmes are then developed and approved, and providers again need to be accredited to deliver such programme; their assessors and moderators also must be registered in SETAs databases (SDA,2008).

In case of graduate internships, interns must be allocated a mentor, together with his or her mentor an intern develops a workplan. Interns' performance is evaluated on a monthly basis and reports thereof are submitted to the funding SETA (Raphotle, 2012). According to the research conducted by the Human Resource Development Council (2013), it transpired some SETAs have structured how their internships for graduates and candidacy programmes should take place. Candidacy programme are those programmes linked to professional registration after a student attains a required qualification. Some SETAs have clearly defined what is required of the employer when participating in internship and candidacy programme, set standards in terms of work experience, as well as how performance evaluation and monitoring will be conducted.

The SDA Amendment Act 37 of 2008 established many bodies including the Skills Development Institutions (SDI). The relevance of the SDI is that it provides an advisory service on matters related to skills development, monitoring and provision of skills programme.

South African government is not the only one with legislation and frameworks to regulate internships. The Botswana government established the National Internship Programme (NIP) in 2008. As in South Africa, this programme was implemented as an attempt for their graduates to gain valuable work experience that would be of assistance to gaining full-time employment in the future (Powell & Short; 2013).

4.3 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT LEVIES ACT 9 OF 1999

The Skills Development Levies Act 9 of 1999 was passed in 1999. The purpose of this Act is to

fund education and training of employees and unemployed, including graduate interns. Each organisation is compelled to pay 1% levy of its payroll in order to ensure that skills are developed (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2016). The Act was later revised in 2010 to provide for clear and recognizable definitions of “Director General” and “Minister.”

The NSF receives 20% of levy income, which is approximately R2billion per annum. These funds are aimed at funding skills development initiatives and projects that are identified in the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) as national priorities. Its role is to support the government strategies by funding skills development to ensure that there are enough required skills in place for implementation (Human Resource Development Council of South Africa, 2013). For employers to access funding from SETAs from the 1% levy they pay, they need to compile the WSP that SETAs will first approve. They can access funding in the form of mandatory and discretionary grants. Mandatory grant is funding that the organisation automatically receives after their WSP has been approved, based on their 1% levy paid to SETAs. On the other hand, discretionary grants are in the form of learnerships, internships, student bursaries, skills programme that SETAs will make a call to institutions to apply for (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2016). The NSF has also developed partnerships with several government departments, such as the Departments of Trade and Industry, Public Works as well as Rural Development and Land Reform. These partnerships enable that the NSF to acquire advice and knowledge on the skills needed and in delivering such skills NSF also approaches universities, government departments and municipalities with regards to the skills development required for funding for proposals to be reviewed and approved by the grants’ committee. Modes of disbursing discretionary grants to funded institutions can be done in various ways. They can be disbursed directly to employers, to training providers, to a company that is managing the implementation process or in projects that SETAs manage internally using discretionary funds (Human Resource Development Council of South Africa, 2013).

4.3 NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY 2009 TO 2014

The NYP 2009 to 2014 was developed by the NYDA, which is a merger between the Umsobomvu Youth Fund and the National Youth Commission. The policy identified gaps in the education curriculum that prevented youth from acquiring employable skills (NYDA, 2015). The policy

recommended that opportunities for young people be created for career guidance, work-life related skills and job searching, within government departments and other stakeholders like private entities. Furthermore, the policy encouraged volunteering in order to get work experience in the public sector (NYDA, 2015).

The policy has been reviewed and amended and is currently running from 2015 to 2020 (NYP, 2015). The NYP 2015 - 2020 considers the progress made and builds on the successes of previous policies since 1994. The policy reinforces existing interventions, introduces new ones and detach those that have not worked well. Progress was acknowledged during the implementation of the NYP 2009 to 2014, however there is still much to be done. Access to education and skills development has improved, although, the quality of education and educational outcomes remains a challenge. A lot of young people are still unemployed yet are not in training of any kind. The NYP (2020) has proposed some strategic policy interventions that will fill the gaps and resolve complications of the previous policy and address the needs of the youth. It details new interventions, consolidates the mainstreaming of youth development in programme run by key role players, particularly, those in government, maps the process through which progress on policy implementation will be assessed and lastly, specifies the monitoring and evaluation mechanism for accountability and continuous improvement of interventions (NYP, 2015).

The NYP 2020 proposes youth economic participation and transformation by supporting them to be absorbed into employment and skills development and by growing the youth to become self-employed. The skills that they need to prepare them for the world of work must be identified and training in them provided, therefore, it was suggested that the Department of Higher Education and Training and the Department of Economic Development should engage with businesses and employers to devise a plan on how to prepare the youth for the workplace.

The other suggestion made in the NYP 2020 was developed to provide youth with work exposure, on the job training, internships and volunteer opportunities. It was indicated that lack of work experience constraints youth from getting employed. The Department of Labour, the NYDA and other institutions have been successful in recording and placing young jobseekers, thus, their services need to be expanded. Employers, especially young firms, do not prefer employing and

training new entrants, but with the support from and the strategy as developed by Department of Higher Education and Training, small firms may be willing to hire new entrants.

The public service internship programme should be able to create 60 000 internships opportunities or at least be able to reach 5% of total youth employment requirements. This can be made possible if government departments, municipalities and other government entities link the internship programme to their human resource development strategies. Companies must also be engaged for them to commit to giving opportunities to young graduates and learners who require internships, apprenticeships and work-integrated learning. In collaboration with the Department of Higher Education and Training, Department of Labour must head a national job-fairs campaign and convene *indabas* on work placements to assess what really works when it comes to work-placement services. The Department of Higher Education and Training must also coordinate the national campaign to place university students and graduates in universities who need work experience to start or own entities. All universities must publish their rate of placement of their students and graduates.

The NYP 2020 has been formed by and it interacts with various pieces of policies and frameworks, however, only the ones that deal with skills development and youth employment will be highlighted in our discussions.

The New Growth Path (2011) was developed to focus on employment and economic growth of young South Africans. Naidoo and Mare' (2015) explains that NGP was established to implement a job-intensive growth strategy due, mainly, to the global financial crisis that created some developments which constrained economic growth; NGP was a necessity as a different approach was required. Although NGP emphasized 'social equity' as well, job creation was the success measures. It did not only take into consideration lack of employment opportunities, especially young graduates, but it also identified that there is a need for 'better' jobs in South Africa. The NGP had proposed some extensive interventions that will enable job creation, for instance, Industrial Policy Action Plans (IPAP), as well as the need for quality education and skills development (Naidoo *et al.*, 2015).

The Youth Employment Accord which was launched in 2013 as part of the NGP is a strategy that prioritises youth unemployment and skills development (Department of Economic Development, 2010). There are six key elements of the Accord, however, only three related to skills development and employment of young people are indicated below:

- Education and training – to provide improved education and training opportunities for students whole study period, from graduation to first employment;
- Work exposure – by means of connecting youth with employment opportunities through job-placement schemes like graduate internships and work-readiness programmes in case of school leavers;
- Public and private sector measures – by increasing the number of young people employed both in the public and private sectors through the “youth brigade.”

Various government departments have also developed their policies in line with addressing problems that prohibit young people from participating in the country’s economy. The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), in response to the challenges faced by the youth, developed an Industrial Policy Action through its established youth directorate. The policy was formulated due to the lack of skills and work experience which were identified as obstacles that prevent young people from full participation in the economy (Department of Trade and Industry, 2008). They therefore prioritised sectors for youth-job creation and developing entrepreneurship opportunities.

The National Youth Service Development Policy Framework (2002) was formulated in order to prioritise the development of young people through them volunteering in both public and private entities so to gain work experience which would enhance their chances of gaining employment (NYDA, 2015).

4.4 NATIONAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (NSDS) III

The release of the NSDS by the Department of Labour in February 2001 (Department of Labour, 2000b:1) showed the government’s efforts to redress the inequalities of the past, in education and training. The NSDS was developed as a tool to implement the mandate of the SDA and the Skills Development Levies Act of 1999 and it has progressed over three stages (Department of Higher Education and Training; 2010c).

The NSDS had seen two revisions since 2001, before the third version, the NSDS III was launched in 2011. It was supposed to end in 2016 but it was extended to March 2018 (Lolwana, Rossiter & Dieltiens; 2012). The NSDS I covered the years 2000 to 2005 and was launched in 2001. It was titled “Skills for productive citizenship for all.” Basically, it had five objectives and twelve success indicators. One of the objectives was to assist new entrants into employment and that should be achieved by March 2000. By then, at least 80 000 youth under 30 years of age must have enrolled into the learnership programme. Furthermore 50% of those who completed learnerships must have been employed or created employment for themselves, or at least are studying full-time (Raphotle; 2012; Grawitzky; 2007).

The NSDS II covered the years 2005 to 2010 and was titled “Skills for sustainable growth, development and equity.” It was also based on five objectives but with fifteen success indicators. It was purposefully designed to overcome the key weaknesses of the NSDS I. At this phase, SETAs were encouraged to have direct relations with FET colleges, and to encourage Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) up to Level 4. Furthermore, SETAs were expected to assist learners from FET colleges and graduate from universities to gain work experience through work-integrated learning and graduate internships, both locally and abroad. SETAs must also make sure that 70% of those who benefited from the programme should be placed in employment or be self-employed (Raphotle; 2012), or at least 10 000 of them must have started their own sustainable new ventures to be operational 12 months after completion of the programme (Grawitzky; 2007).

In NSDS I, focus was mainly placed on lifelong learning driven by demand for employees in the workplaces, in both public and private sectors, whilst NSDS II emphasised quality of training and skills development in the workplace. There was also a concern on the need for promotion of employability and the need to gain knowledge and work experience, in order to gain employability skills (Department of Higher Education and Training; 2011). The graduate internship programme was then taken into serious consideration where government and other institutions started to implement them to create employment chances for new graduates. The downfall, however, was that, in some institutions and other SETAs, the provision of quality skills was problematic and needed improvement. SETAs were concentrating more on meeting of targets which they had failed to achieve (Department of Higher Education and Training; 2011).

The NSDS I and II had their own challenges, therefore, the Department of Higher Education and Training saw a need for NSDS III. This strategy came into existence in 2010 and was intended to run until 2016, however, the then Minister of Higher Education and Training, the Honourable Dr Blade Nzimande, signed a Government Gazette on the 2nd of October 2015 to extend the NSDS III by 2 more years, to March 2018 (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2015). Compared to the last two, the NSDS III is more like a strategic document than an operational one. The researcher's statement is supported by the fact that the strategy is informed by government initiatives like the Human Resources Development Strategy of South Africa, NGP, IPAP just to mention a few that the Department of Higher Education and Training (2011) had initiated. The NGP for instance, is the policy that focuses on the improvement of the whole education system in order to produce skills required for economic growth (Lolwana *et al.*, 2012).

The NSDS III did not merely take over the two strategies that came before, but it draws lessons from the two. According to Raphotle (2012), the NSDS III sought to improve the effectiveness and the efficiency of skills development. That meant it would serve as the blueprint for skills development in the whole country until 2018. It has moved away from focusing on quantities and targets like the first two strategies, to focusing on relevance, quality and sustainability of skills training programme (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2011); hence, in the NSDS III government has also done away with short courses, unit standard-based qualifications to Professional, Vocational, Technical and Academic Learning (PIVOTAL) or full qualifications including those offered in professional areas of study. These programmes commence when learners start studying for their degrees to when they enter internships and other skills programme (Department of Higher Education and Training; 2011). It was realised that learnership qualifications do not have institutional base and that, as well, had become a challenge.

The NSDS III strongly promotes partnerships between public institutions of higher learning including FET colleges, private training providers, SETAs and employers in ensuring that cross-sectoral and inter-sectoral needs are addressed. This for the first time will require employers to play a key role in talent pipeline. They will become involved in curriculum development or reviews to ensure that students are taught what is relevant to the labour market and what the employers look for (Nzimande, 2011). Government must be commended for this initiative since

most graduate had had no or irrelevant skills and, although, not all graduates will be absorbed at the same time, those who may still be unemployed after graduation, it will not be a skill problem, but, maybe, lack of experience; that will not be much of a problem as graduate internship will assist in this regard.

Finally, according to Du Toit and Van Zyl (2012), NSDS III makes provision for the new Framework for Cooperation in the Provision of Career Development (2013). In this provision SETAs have been mandated to provide career guidance in line with the NSDS III. The Department of Higher Education and Training together with SAQA take the lead in driving the implementation of the framework (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2012). There are nine objectives to be achieved in the framework. Ensuring comprehensive and coordinated career guidance is provided at critical stages in learning is one of those objectives which is found to be relevant and worth mentioning. It is the hope of the government that if career guidance is provided in - Grade 9 when learners choose subjects, Grade 10 to 11 when learners make career choices, Grade 12 when learners apply to attend tertiary education and looking for jobs and finally when they complete their studies or graduate - then the unemployment rate may be reduced (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2012). This way graduates will have qualifications which the employers are looking for. The only challenge would be whether, despite having the right qualifications, these graduates will possess the right skills. For proper and effective implementation of this framework, Provincial Career Development Fora would be set up in all the nine provinces (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2012). This initiative would eliminate the structural employment problem, since learners will be informed of what jobs are there in the labour market and which subjects to follow. NSDS II emphasised learnerships, normally at Level 3, ABET and new venture creation (DHET; 2011) without advising learners on careers currently required in the market.

4.5 THE HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR SOUTH AFRICA 2010 TO 2030

Before the HRDS-SA 2010 – 2030, the first strategy, the then National Human Resource Development Strategy (NHRDS) was launched in 2001 by the two Ministries of Education and Labour (Jordan, 2014). The strategy was again revisited in September 2010 in order to clarifying the objectives and priorities of the strategy which were unclear in the 2001 strategy. The new

Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa (HRDS-SA) has been formulated for 2010 to 2030 (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2016). It was called the “*Human Resources Development Strategy for South Africa: A nation at work for a better life.*” Its aim was “*to maximise the potential of the people of South Africa, through the acquisition of knowledge and skills, to work productively and competitively in order to achieve a rising quality of life for all, and to set in place an operational plan, together with the necessary institutional arrangements, to achieve this*” (HRDS, 2010:7). The purpose of this strategy, therefore, is to enhance skills through education and training.

The first strategy built up a sound foundation for implementing an effective human resource development in South Africa. This strategy detailed five objectives, with a few indicators and indicative actions assigned to different structures of the economy, like institutions of higher learning, SETAs, private and public sectors, amongst others (NHRDS, 2001). There are, however, two objectives worth mentioning; one of them was to improve the supply of high-quality skills, particularly, scarce skills which are more responsive to societal and economic needs (NHRDS, 2001). This objective was intended to encourage institutions of higher learning to enroll more students in the fields of scarcity, like in Science, Engineering and Technology. It also encouraged employers to place graduates from Further Education and Training (FET) and Higher Education (HE) in employment. The other one was about supporting employment growth through industrial policies, innovation, research and development. In this regard, the objective indicates that there should be enough funds for research and development. HE institutions should continue to research on matters that are responsive to social and economic needs. Furthermore, HE institutions should form partnerships with industries and other sectors of the economy (NHRDS, 2001) for them to be relevant in their curriculum and be able to place their graduates in the form of internships and even permanent employment. According to the Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa (HRDS-SA, 2010-2030), there were shortcomings in terms of institutional measures and capacity for research and knowledge production; an indication that monitoring and evaluation were poorly done.

The HRDS-SA (2010-2030) was then launched in 2010. It was developed to be a central plan to co-ordinate both private and public sector initiatives that seek to assist all individuals to reach their

full potential, specifically, in social and economic fields that improve productivity and employment. This revised HRD-SA took over and formalised many of the initiatives and structures fostered under the Joint Initiative on Priority Skills Acquisition (JIPSA), which expired at the end of 2010 (Stuart, 2010). The JIPSA Secretariat assisted for at least a year after the revised HRDSA commenced to support with the transition. One of its key success indicators was the improvements in the Human Development Index (HDI) for the country. More on JIPSA will be discussed later in the chapter.

Unlike in the NHRDS 2001, the Ministry of Higher Education is solely responsible for the HRD-SA, but not a joint responsibility with the Ministry of Labour anymore (Stuart, 2010). Like the NHRDS 2001, the HRDS-SA 2010 aimed to encourage, in its twenty-year plan, multi-stakeholder participation, a five year strategic year plan, and a one-year implementation plan with annual targets and timeframes (Stuart, 2010). As a result of failure of the first strategy, there was a clear need to revise it and overcome shortcomings identified and respond to new challenges that had risen. The HRDS-SA (2010:13) identified the following as some of the challenges:

- *“There is a need for credible capability to identify the demand for priority skills and to formulate effective short-term strategies to ensure supply in a manner that mitigates the negative impact of any shortages in growth. Supply should include the development of talent within timeframes.*
- *There is a need for credible capability to identify the demand for priority skills and to formulate effective short-term strategies to ensure supply (including the development of talent within timeframes) in a manner that mitigates the negative impact of any shortages in growth.*
- *There is a need to ensure optimal responsiveness of education and training activities to the country’s development agenda, and the demand for skilled human resources in the labour market.*
- *There are pressing challenges related to the quality of learning attainment and competency acquisition within the skills development pipeline, starting from basic education.*
- *The effectiveness of public education and training institutions, in general, has yet to reach*

optimal levels.

- *The current challenges about effectiveness have made it difficult for the country to reap the rewards when compared with international levels of public and private investment in education and training.”*

In line with the HRDS-SA 2010, the Limpopo Department of Education held a Human Resources Strategy Summit in 2010. The objectives of the summit were - to link graduates to employment, to ensure integration of all training in the province, to encourage partnership and collaboration amongst government departments, industries and tertiary institutions, to establish a consolidated skills database in response to the economic needs of the province - just to mention some. The then MEC of Education, Mr N Masemola, indicated that the provincial HRD strategy was developed to support both the HRDS-SA (2010) as well as the NSDS III (2010). He further alluded that through that summit, institutions of higher learning are expected to deliver qualifications that addresses the needs of the industries, therefore, there was a plead for the support of business partners in the forms of bursaries and internships in order to reduce scarce skills gaps, by enhancing employment for graduates and by also creating for them a conducive environment for learning (Masemola, 2010).

4.6 ACCELERATED AND SHARED GROWTH SOUTH AFRICA

One of the frameworks that the ANC government embark on to assist graduates was through Accelerated and Shared Growth South Africa (AsgiSA). It is an initiative which was launched on 6 February 2006, by former Deputy President Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka. It was meant to bring together businesses, and labour communities in a combined effort to attain 6% economic growth rate and to halve the official unemployment rate from 30% to 15% by the year 2014 (Mlambo-Ngcuka, 2006; Stuart, 2010).

AsgiSA aimed to halve the unemployment from 28% in 2004 to 14% by 2014 and to halve the poverty rate over the same period. To achieve these goals, growth needed to be at least 4.5% in average, between 2005 and 2009, and at least 6% from 2010 to 2014 (Tshikululu Social Investment, 2010). With AsgiSA, the government aimed at increasing infrastructure as well as skills development as their medium-term educational intervention. The plans for infrastructure

development was a challenge, as there was a shortage of skills, including professional skills, such as engineers and scientists, managers such as financial, personnel and project managers, and skilled technical employees, such as artisans and IT technicians. To combat this predicament, one of the skills enhancement projects included deploying experienced and retired professionals and managers to local governments to improve project development implementation and maintenance capabilities. The project was managed by the Development Bank of Southern Africa and was expected to deploy an estimated total of 150 expert staff, with the first 30 to be deployed by April 2006. During the project, new graduates would form part of the team; they were included for the sole purpose of skills transfer. It is worth mentioning that under AsgiSA, South Africa experienced a growth four years in succession and achieved an investment growth of more than 20%. Due to this effect, jobs were created, hence, unemployment rate was reduced from 27.9% in 2004 to 20.7% in 2008 (Ferreira *et al*, 2016).

In her speech, Mlambo-Ngcuka (2006), indicated that government was convinced that to achieve AsgiSA's goal of halving unemployment and poverty by 2014, organisations should work more closely with women and the youth. The Umsobomvu Youth Trust was driving several initiatives, of which many of them entailed youth volunteers, to support a range of skills development programme. One of the interventions targeted unemployed graduate for jobs or learnerships. That was the same reason that in projects where experienced and retired professionals were deployed, new graduates formed part of the team. New graduates were party to the project for the sole purpose of skills transfer. One of the short-term projects was to develop a scarce skills database in line with over 100 individual projects of AsgiSA (Mlambo-Ngcuka, 2006).

AsgiSA was established to determine priorities and became a platform to communicate, monitor, evaluate and report, as well as intervene where required, to addresses obstacles that hinder implementation. In improving education, AsgiSA developed several interventions such as Dinaledi programme which was aimed at increasing several Maths and Science graduates. The other programme initiated by AsgiSA is the Quality Improvement, Development and Upliftment Programme which aimed to improve literacy and numeracy levels starting at the primary education

“While AsgiSA had achieved a certain level of success, unemployment, however continued to grow while GDP growth declined. In the end, the future of the programme was uncertain as government

made no official announcement regarding the fate of the AsgiSA policy” (Steenkamp, 2015:59). Ndhambi (2015) concurs that when President Jacob Zuma took office in 2009, there was silence around AsgiSA and it appears to have died a quiet death, however, there was no official decision to abandon the initiative. The 2008 JIPSA annual report was the last official document published by the Presidency (Ndhambi, 2015). AsgiSA was then replaced by NGP in 2010. Like AsgiSA, NGP emphasized on the country investing more in training and education, amongst others, aimed at creating five million jobs by 2020. NGP was supposed to work together with IPAP which was adopted in 2013. Its aim was to assist in job creation which would boost economic growth and employment (Ferreira *et al.*, 2016).

4.7 JOINT INITIATIVE FOR PRIORITY SKILLS ACQUISITION

Joint Initiative for Priority Skills Acquisition (JIPSA) was a 3-year sister programme that addresses skill shortages. Both JIPSA and AsgiA’s were to identify skill shortages, while increasing the level of skills needed through the placement of professionals (Annual report, 2008; Stuart, 2010). JIPSA was initiated as a vehicle to support AsgiSA in responding to the shortage of suitably skilled labour (Stuart, 2010), however it was replaced by the HRD-SA and expired at the end of 2010. The then Deputy President, Ms Baleka Mbete indicated that JIPSA was meant to be implemented for a short duration, to respond to skills shortage. It was felt that it was time to adopt a sustainable long-term approach towards addressing the human resource development challenges by establishing the HRSD-SA (Annual Report, 2008).

During JIPSA existence, several initiatives were launched to combat shortages of artisans and technicians. Sasol, Eskom, Transnet, Anglo Platinum, Arcelor Mittal SA and Gold Fields partnered with government to provide training in about 5 000 skills (Ndhambi, 2015). In March 2008, 18 879 people were registered for artisan training over the two years, with a shortfall of 6121, from the founding of the programme. The target was to train 12 500 artisan learners a year, over a two-year period (JIPSA, 2008).

JIPSA was an initiative that identified and facilitated the achievement of skills priorities in support of the South African’s AsgiSA’s economic growth objectives. It was launched in March 2006 by Deputy President Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka and was extended twice beyond its initial

expected lifespan. It expired on 31 December 2010 and was replaced by the Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa (HRD-SA). The HRD-SA took over many of the functions of JIPSA and provides a more thorough basis for all national human resource development. Until it expired, the JIPSA Secretariat ran parallel with the HRD-SA to support development.

4.8 WHITE PAPER ON HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT OF 1997

The White on Human Resources Management in the Public Sector was a way of government to facilitate the development of human resource management practices that would ensure efficiency and effectiveness from all government employees. It encourages public service employees to be multi-skilled and constantly being skilled to keep breast with new trends and changes in their chosen fields and be efficient in their work processes, such as in the use of technology. In other words, the policy strives to create a culture in the public sector where employees are well managed, are competent and are also committed to their work by delivering quality-acceptable services to all people. The policy emphasises that employees need to be trained and developed in order to perform exceptionally well. Another thing the policy points out is performance management. Performance management of employees should serve the purpose of enhancing performance, detecting poor performance and having proper measures on how to deal with poor performance. The results of poor performance may, in turn, lead to further development through training and other developmental interventions.

In Chapter 5.10.1 of the White Paper, it highlights that employees in the public sector who are devoted to their work, should be afforded an opportunity to develop further and broaden their skills in order to benefit themselves and the public at large. Each employee, however, is responsible for his or her development; each person must be able to identify his/her own training and development needs in order to get the necessary support.

4.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter tried to define the South African skills development and its strategies in detail. The government main's concern was mainly the development of skills through education and training. Government also ensures that skills are built by compelling employers to pay levies. It has been noted that many strategies were also introduced to create employment and ensure economic

growth. It has also been highlighted that SETAs have a crucial role to play in developing skills needed in the economy, by providing correct information on which skills must be developed in their SSP, and by providing funding to execute the planned programmes and constant monitoring during the projects' implementation. It is also advisable for SETAs to form partnerships and forge good relations with employers and other stakeholders, like universities and professional bodies. By so doing the implementation of programmes which will meet the national skills targets in their respective industries, will be made possible.

Government also realized that youths of South Africa are also affected badly by not having the required skills and therefore not getting proper jobs. National policies specifically for youth graduates were developed in order to give them the opportunities to be placed in the workplace, to get exposure and to get the necessary skills for employability.

CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins by outlining the focus, the design and approaches of the research. It also describes the research methodology selected for this study, how data was analysed and interpreted, how trustworthiness was establishment and lastly, how ethical considerations were ensured.

The researcher adopted the qualitative research methodology for this study. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with former interns, mentors and line managers of employed former interns. Focus group discussions were conducted with the then current interns. The process and instrument used to analyse data are also discussed in this chapter.

5.2 FOCUS OF RESEARCH

The research focused on problems higher institutions' graduates are faced with - they are unable to find proper, decent employment, based on their qualifications, after completion of their studies, due to lack of employability skills and graduateness. The research intended to establish whether an internship programme could be the answer in enhancing employability and graduateness skills. The study focused on answering the following questions:

- What are the determinants of an effective graduate internship programme?
- What skills should interns be imparted with in order to enhance their chances of employability?
- How does mentoring influence career futures of interns?
- How does personal behaviour influence the development of interns' career during the internship?
- What recommendations can be made with regards to the planning and management of the graduate internship programme?

5.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a blueprint of how the researcher intends conducting the research. The research design focuses on the outcome – as to what kind of study is being planned and what kind of results are aimed at (Babbie, 2013). This statement was emphasised by Mohajan (2017), when

he stated that research design focuses on the kind of study being planned and the kind of results the researcher would focus on. Maree (2016) adds that a research design is inclusive of the problem statements and type of evidence required to address the research questions.

In this chapter, the research design that was used to conduct the research will be described. Research design includes the research methodology implemented, sources of data, sample size and population, sampling methods, data collection methods, research procedure, data analysis and interpretation, as well as issues of validity and reliability.

5.3.1 Research Approaches

A research approach is a plan of action that provides direction to the researcher in conducting the research, systematically and efficiently. It assists the researcher in investigating the problem of the research and in answering those stated questions (Bryman & Bell, 2015). According to Creswell (2015) in Mohajan (2017), there are three main types of research approaches: quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods. All these approaches must involve systematic, explicit and disciplined research in order to find the most appropriate and reliable outcomes. This study made use of a qualitative approach despite its shortcomings of findings not being generalisable to a larger population and the amount of time needed in collecting data (Clur, 2016). The qualitative approach was necessitated for the thorough investigation on the effectiveness of the programme by actively engaging participants in a detailed discussion by means of interviews and focus-group discussions. Hutter, Hennink and Bailey (2011) describe qualitative research as an approach that permits the researcher to study experiences of individuals in detail, by using a specific set of data collection methods, such as in-depth interviews, focus-group discussions, observation, content analysis, visual methods and life histories or biographies. This approach allows the researcher to classify matters from the participants' perspective and understand the meanings and interpretations that they give to behaviours, events or objects (Saldana, 2016). The researcher needs to be unbiased, neutral, curious, empathic, flexible and a good listener. Mohajan (2017) also mentioned that in a qualitative research approach, participants need to be studied in their natural settings. Participants should be enabled to identify how their experiences and behaviour are shaped by the context of their lives, such as cultural, social, economic or physical contexts in which they live. In conclusion, a qualitative research approach studies phenomenon

in their natural settings, attempt to make sense of and interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people ascribe to them (Saldana, 2016). The various types of qualitative designs include phenomenology, case study and grounded theory.

5.3.1.1 Phenomenology

Phenomenology is another approach which is applied in qualitative research in which researchers aim to establish new understandings of human-lived experiences, normally obtained through interviews (Charmaz, 2014). In this approach, a researcher investigates a phenomenon and it is used to study areas where there is little information or knowledge about the phenomenon and when trying to establish how participants make sense of their experiences (Tuffour, 2017).

5.3.1.2 Case study

A qualitative case study examines a phenomenon within its real-life context. Data are collected on or about a single individual, group, or event. In some cases, several cases or events may be studied. The primary purpose of a case study is to understand something that is unique to the case. Knowledge from the study is then used to apply to other cases and contexts. Qualitative case study methods often involve several in-depth interviews over a period with each case. Interviews explore the unique aspects of the case in detail, more so than would be typical for a phenomenological interview (Creswell, 2009).

5.3.1.3 Grounded theory

Grounded theory is a type of inductive thematic analysis which was developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967). Grounded theory is a set of interactive techniques designed to identify categories and concepts within text that are then linked into formal theoretical models (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). According to Charmaz (2014) grounded theory is a set of methods that consist of systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analyzing qualitative data to construct theories grounded in the data. The process entails systematically reviewing units of text which can be words, paragraphs, or larger units of text as they are collected, creating emergent codes for those units, and writing memos that expand on the created codes and the relationships between codes. This process is repeated until data collection is completed.

As in any qualitative approach, generic research approach seeks to understand how people interpret, construct or make meaning from the experiences they have gone through by making use of elements of more than one established (Kahike, 2014). The researcher considered a generic qualitative research design as it combined the elements of more than one established or well-known qualitative designs. Various but similar set of questions were prepared for different category of participants. That is, all four groups of participants were asked questions based on the relevant information required from each of them. In this regard, although the research designed considered more than qualitative approaches, it not necessarily guided by those. In most cases same questions are asked and participants been of the same category. Furthermore, a combination of qualitative techniques in the form of semi-structured interviews and focus group was considered to collect data. These techniques are commonly used in most qualitative research designs.

5.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology highlights the overall strategy of the research and addresses issues such as the population, sample, data collection as well as establishing the trustworthiness and dependability of the results. It is also used to organise and structure the study in a systematic manner from its inception until completion (Clur, 2015). According to Polit and Hungler (2013), the research methodology follows a series of steps, however, it also depends on the research questions asked. The research methodology in this study covers the research setting, population, sample and data collection

5.4.1 Research setting

A research design also describes the physical location where the research was conducted. This research was conducted at a resident university in the Limpopo Province. Focus-group discussions took place in the Library Committee Room. All interviews were conducted in the comfort of participants' office spaces, except for 2 interviews which were conducted telephonically.

5.4.1.1 Entrée and establishing the researcher's role

The researcher firstly designed an interview guide with a list of interview questions which the researcher formulated based on literature review, personal experience, advise from fellow HR professionals working within the same department, as well as guidance from the supervisor. .

According to Jordaan (2014), there is no limit to the number of interview questions that should be asked, therefore, the interview questions for the different participants were designed in a manner to highlight the participants' understanding of their own experiences and their perceptions of the phenomena (Vosloo, 2014). The researcher was responsible for questioning and probing participants during interviews. According to Janesick (2015), researchers must gain permission to conduct research with individuals from the ethics review committees or boards before conducting interviews. The researcher first applied for permission from the Ethics Committee at UNISA to conduct the research. After the permission was granted by UNISA, permission to conduct research and to utilise the available data was also sought from the tertiary institution where the study was conducted. The same was done with employers of employed former interns. Names and contact details of former and current interns and their mentors were obtained from the tertiary institution's records filed in the Organisational Development and Training Unit. After the permission was granted, the data collection process began.

The researcher fulfilled the role of interviewer to collect data from participants and made use of a combination of techniques to obtain the information. According to Lopez *et al.*, (2013), a researcher can use funnelling, probing and paraphrasing techniques. Funnelling is starting interviews with general questions and then proceed to specific topics later. Probing is when the researcher ask questions and makes statements on the matter for participants to explain the matter in detail. Lastly, paraphrasing is when the researcher repeats exactly what the participant had said so that the participant can confirm that the interviewer had understood everything correctly. According to Lopez *et al.*, (2013), when emotions and frustrations arise, the interviewer must be able to offer the necessary support and refer that person for counselling should it become necessary. The most important role of the researcher is to remain objective as far as possible and to avoid directing interviews to any intended outcomes (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

The other roles of the researcher include - the recording of transcriptions during the interviews, making notes during proceedings, and analysing and interpreting the data. In this study, the researcher made use of contractors to assist with taking notes during proceedings, a transcriber and data analyst.

5.4.2 Population

A target population refers to all the members of a group who meet the criteria specified for a research investigation (Babbie and Mouton, 2010) while, the larger group to which the researcher intends to apply the research is called the population (Anozie, 2017). The target population of this study includes interns currently participating in the programme between the ages of 22 to 35 years of age, former interns, mentors as well as line managers or employers of former interns.

5.4.3 Sample

A sample in a research study is a portion of a population or universe. The population referred to is at many times considered to be a group of people on which required information is obtained. Sampling involves decisions about what data the researcher wants to collect and analyse and how such data will be accessed (Patton, 2015). It is the way specific data sources are selected to collect data to address the research objectives (Yin, 2014). It is always crucial that such decisions are taken in the early stages of research depending on the focus and topic of research at hand which include where to sample, what to sample and whom to sample (Yilmaz, 2013). Mentors, current and former interns as well as employers of former interns represented the unit of analysis, with the aim of evaluating the effectiveness of the graduate internship programme.

5.4.3.1 The sample size

It is not possible or feasible to study every member of a population, hence, researchers make use of sampling. The sample refers to the participants who are selected from the population to participate in the study (Patton, 2015). The size of the sample will depend on several factors, such as the phenomenon being studied and the availability of participants. There is no fixed rule on the absolute number of participants to use for data collection, however, smaller samples are used in a qualitative research approach (Yin, 2014). The main aim of qualitative research is to gather information enough to understand the complexity, depth and the context surrounding a phenomenon under study (Chamaz, 2014). In other words, with a qualitative research approach, the 'richness' of the collected data is more important than the number of participants. Some authors estimate the sample size, by the number of interviews to be conducted rather than the number of participants (Guetterman (2015). Although there are different opinions on what the

sample size should be, Creswell (2015) suggests between 5 and 25 participants. Corbin *et al.*, (2015) suggests 6 interviews, whereas Fusch and Ness (2015) indicate that sample size does not matter. A total of 34 participants were selected for interviewing in this study. Of the 34 participants, 15 were current interns, 10 were former interns, 6 were mentors and 3 were line managers. This number was deemed ideal to gather the information required. According to Charmaz (2014) a small number of participations might allow saturation of data very early during the interviews, whereas a larger number can provide the necessary required data. Data saturation refers to a point where any further information gathered does not add any new information and thus further information becomes redundant and is of no use to the study or the research reaches a point where a sense of closure is attained (Korstjen & Moser, 2018). In this study there was no information which did not contribute to the study nor withdrawal by any participant.

Samples were done from a total of 237 interns who participated in the internship programme between the years 2012 and 2017. The then overall current interns were 128 and former interns were 109. Participants were between the ages of 22 and 35 years old, regardless of gender and field of study.

The then current interns were sponsored by the Services SETA, ETDPSETA and NRF. From each sponsor 5 interns were sampled. On the other hand, 10 former interns were sampled. 4 Interns were from the NRF and Services as they had sponsored the majority of interns and 2 interns were from ETDPSETA. Former interns who were currently employed had less than 2 years working experience because they were still mastering their profession.

5.4.3.2 Sampling criteria

Sampling criteria refers to the criteria used in the selection of a segment of the population (Patton, 2015). The criteria must be appropriate for selecting an adequate sample which is truly representative of the population (Creswell, 2015). In this regard, it is of essential to choose the right sampling technique; a non-probability sampling technique was utilised.

5.4.3.3 Sampling methods

There are two well-known types of sampling methods, namely, probability and non-probability sampling. In probability sampling every unit of the target population has an equal possibility of

being selected in the sample. With non-probability sampling, the number of elements is indefinite or cannot be identified individually. This study made use of non-probability sampling as the participants met specific characteristics (Somekh & Lewin, 2011). The study targeted a specific group of people and the findings would not be generalised to the population. Random selection of a sample from the population is inappropriate in non-probability sampling. Researchers prefer subjective methods to decide which elements should be included in the sample, therefore non-probability sample does not give participants in the population an equal chance of being included in the study. It is necessary for a researcher to determine which non-probability suits the study best. Purposive sampling technique is the most common described technique of sampling in qualitative research (Gentles, Charles, Ploeg & McKibbin, 2015). A purposive sample is a non-probability sample that is selected based on characteristics of a population and the objective of the study. Purposive sampling is different from convenience sampling and is also known as 'judgmental', 'selective', or 'subjective' sampling. It was deemed suitable for this research because the participants were known to the researcher as they had interacted on official and some also on a personal level. According to Patton (2015), purposive sampling is used to select interviewees based on the knowledge describing a group or culture to which this population belongs. Yin (2011) in Gentles *et al.*, (2015) explains that in purposive sampling, participants are selected based on their possession of anticipated rich and relevant information on the study. The idea behind this qualitative research was to purposefully select participants or sites to assist the researcher in understanding the research problem and questions. This does not necessarily suggest random sampling or selection of a large number of population or sites, as typically found in the quantitative research, but the choosing of individuals who are well-informed about a phenomenon of interest to the researcher, available and willing to participate in the study (Creswell, 2015).

5.4.4 Data collection

Data refers to facts which are disorganized and have no meaning, yet. In some cases, the data may be structured, but the data normally lacks use in a particular context (Mohajan, 2016). Data collection involves the generation of large amounts of data making use of different ways of recording what has been said, like audio or video recording and handwritten notes, during interviews (Sutton & Austin, (2015). A study can make use of primary or secondary data (Creswell, 2015). This study collected primary data by means of interviews and focus-group

discussion with the participants, in the sample. The interview schedule is attached as Appendix B1.

5.4.4.1 Sources of data

Sources of data refers to the various means or origins of data that is collected for analysis (Creswell, 2015). Information was gathered through primary and secondary data sources. Primary data are those that the researcher collects for the first time; this information is factual and original. Primary data is collected with the aim of finding solutions to the study problem through recordable spoken or written words and observable body languages, interactions and actions of participants (Lopez *et al.*, 2013). Secondary data refers to existing data which was produced by other researchers for other purposes (Douglas, 2015). According to Mohajan (2017), secondary data are those collected by the current or another researcher for a previous research. Researchers who have limited time and resources, can make use of secondary data to conduct their researches. Secondary sources of data may include government publications, journal articles and internal records (Mesly, 2015).

As regards to this study, interviews were conducted with former interns, their employers, and mentors. A focus-group discussion was held with the then current interns. Apart from the primary source of data, this study was supported by a literature study to obtain secondary data. Secondary sources of data can be internal or external. This study made use of internal secondary data and the data sources included the following: legislation and policies on internship, adverts, work plans, internship contract, mentoring agreement, University records on statistics on internship enrolment, employment success after completion of the internship, application forms and resume of participants

5.4.4.2 Literature Review

A literature review can be defined as *“the selection of available documents (both published or unpublished) on the topic, which contain information, ideas, data and evidence written from a particular standpoint to fulfil certain aims or express certain views on the nature of the topic and how it is to be investigated, and the effectiveness evaluation of these documents in relation to the research being proposed”* (Ridley, 2008:3). A literature review should enable the researcher to

provide a detailed state of knowledge and allow the researcher to address major questions in a research area. The scope of a literature review will depend on the purpose of the study and the extent that reference must be made to the work of other scholars (Ridley, 2012). Blaxter *et al.*, (2006) in Ridley (2008:9), stated that the purpose of a literature review is to locate the research project, to define its context or background and to provide insights into previous research.

5.4.4.3 Data collection methods

In a qualitative research approach, the methods of data collection are particularly important. Many studies have used a qualitative approach to study people's subjective experiences, opinions, and beliefs that researchers cannot measure numerically (Percy, Kostere & Kostere, 2015). According to Sutton *et al.*, (2015), there are a variety of methods of data collection in a qualitative research approach which include observations, textual or visual analysis (e.g. from books or videos) and interviews (either with a group or individuals). Many qualitative researchers prefer using interviews and focus-group discussions as the most common method to collect data. Interviews are preferred as they offer rich and detailed information in understanding individuals' experiences, perceptions and opinions (Merriam, 2016). In this study, data was collected through interviews and focus-group discussions, however, the interview questions were designed based on secondary data such as a literature review, internship contracts, mentoring agreements, work plans and reports. These sources of secondary data were very useful in planning the questions for the collection of primary data. A different but similar set of 4 interview questions were designed for the 4 different groups of the target population. The interview questions were peer reviewed by colleagues in the administrative and academic departments of human resources. Unfortunately, limited feedback was received from colleagues in the academic division.

- Interviews

Before the interviews were conducted, the purpose of the study and why they had been selected to participate were explained in writing to the participants. After they had agreed to participate, they were requested to sign the consent and confidentiality forms. They were also informed that participating in the study would be voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time if they wished to do so. The time and venue of the interviews were also communicated to all participants in advance.

Jacob and Furgerson (2012) in Dikko (2016) emphasized the importance of conducting interviews in a comfortable setting that eliminates distractions and noise. Not only would this help with getting more detailed information, but it would also facilitate the recording of data. Former interns were interviewed in a focus-group at the University's library hall. The library hall was chosen because it is a quiet place without noise and no distractions were expected as a "Do not disturb" sign was pasted on the door. The other participants - former interns, line managers of former interns and mentors - were interviewed in the comfort of their offices.

The researcher made use of semi-structured interviews using open-ended questions. As indicated in 5.4.1.1, the researcher prepared an interview guide with predetermined questions based on the phenomenon under study. Face-to-face semi structured interviews were conducted. Although there was an interview guide, the questions were adapted according to the responses provided by the participants. According to Dikko (2016), adapting questions according to responses given is standard practice when using semi-structured interviews. Interviewers thus have the freedom to change the questions, time allocated for the interview and wording based on the responses and needs of each interview. The other reason for using open-ended questions was because the researcher wished to get more detailed information from participants based on their experience, perceptions and opinions. Based on the responses, the researcher was able to make follow-up questions. Semi-structured interviews thus provide greater flexibility in obtaining information which the researcher might not have been familiar with. The researcher tried to build good relationships with the participants in order to create easiness and help participants speak freely (Dikko, 2016). The participants were all well-known to the researcher, yet, the researcher followed protocol and introduced herself and confirmed again the purpose of the interview and the rights of the participants. The interviews began with social conversations to encourage participants to discuss freely their experiences and beliefs and to also develop a good relationship with them. According to Anozie (2017), a rapport can also be built between interviewer and interviewee by beginning with easy questions and moving to complex questions near the end. This was also the approach adopted during all the interviews. Participants were encouraged to discuss in detail their experiences and perceptions of the internship programme at the university under study. They were also informed that should they not feel comfortable to share some sensitive personal

information, they would not be forced to do so. This happened mainly in the focus-group discussions where current interns were not familiar with each other. The confidentiality of the sensitive information they shared was not guaranteed even though all participants signed the confidentiality agreement.

- Focus-group

A focus-group meeting was held with current interns at the time. Overall 15 current interns availed themselves for the interviews. The meeting took approximately for 1 hour 37 minutes, 2 minutes more than the initial planned time. Most actively participated in the discussion as they experienced no threats from raising their opinions and being honest. Due to the dominance of some in the discussions, some interns were left out, feeling uncomfortable to take part in the discussion even though the researcher tried to encourage them to raise their own opinions. Interviews were conducted with former interns, mentors and line managers. Almost all the individual interviews were conducted face-to-face because most of the participants were physically available on campus. It was only 1 employer and 1 former intern who were interviewed telephonically. All individual interviews took between 30 to 40 minutes, although all interviews were scheduled to last only between 30 (with former interns) and 45 minutes (with mentors and line managers).

5.4.4.4 Recording of data

The recording of data refers to ways in which data is captured to be processed at a later stage (Patton, 2015). During the process of interview sessions, the collected data may be stored in many ways; one way involves taking notes. It is a simple and easy tool to use and it does not create unwanted reactions by participants. Other tools that can be used to record data are audio and video recording. These two data recording tools require consent from participants before employing them (Anozie, 2017).

One of the current interns, who was not taking part in the research, was requested to take notes of the proceedings. Handwritten notes were taken during all interactions with participants. Consent was also given by participants to audio tape the interview proceedings as a backup in case the notes did not capture all what was being discussed. The recorder was tested before use, to ensure that it is in good working condition or order, however, during lengthy discussions the tape recorder started to suddenly pause and continue again without notice. During the interviews the researcher

took field notes. The field notes were used as a personal journal by the researcher to jot down what the researcher observed in terms of facial expressions and gestures of participants as they explained their feelings, emotions and experiences. Both the recordings and notes were later handed over to an expert transcriber. The researcher also typed all interviews verbatim and these documents were password protected on the computer. All recordings were brought back to the researcher after being transcribed by the transcriber. The tape recorder and notes were safely kept in the researcher's office. These notes were also used when the recordings were transcribed.

5.4.4.3 Transcription of the recordings

Transcription of recordings or data is the process in which the researcher or transcriber converts data from the verbatim spoken format to a written format for analysis (Stuckey, 2014). In this case collection of data from participants through semi-structured interviews and focus-group discussions' recordings and notes were handed to the transcriber to transcribe. The transcriber was requested to sign a confidentiality agreement to guarantee that there would be no disclosure of information to unintended individuals. All audio recordings were transcribed verbatim and the accuracy of the transcription were checked with some of the participants in each category.

Table 5.1 provides a verbatim recording of some of the interview questions and responses from participants during the focus-group discussions, and interviews with former interns, mentors and line managers of employed former interns.

TABLE 5.1: VERBATIM ACCOUNT OF QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

First category: Current Interns

Questions

'Does the programme offer you sufficient opportunities to learn new skills?'

Responses

'Yes, I am based in an academic department and I am looking forward to become an academic one day. I am given ample opportunity to do tutorials, participate in departmental and school-wide research. I will be travelling to Spain in October with my

mentor to present a paper. Therefore, the opportunity offered is preparing me to become a future academic'.

From those of you who are doing postgraduate degrees, how many of you attended SPSS Training?

- *'I did*
- *Me too*
- *Me too*
- *Yes, I did attend*
- *Me too*
- *Me too'*

'So, do you think the skills you acquired will come handy when you do your research?

Yes, I am now able to analyse my research data and assist other students who need help. Like I said I have gained a lot.

Thank you, what about the others? Those in IT Services what can you say? Are you been given opportunities to learn new skills?

Yes, we have. At UNIVEN there are no practicals at all in our Computer Science degree. We only did theory and nothing more. This internship taught me the practical part of IT. I am now able to solve problems on the computer'.

Second category: Former Interns

Questions

‘Would you have acquired the skills you have if it had not been for the Internship programme?’

‘How did the internship programme contribute to your confidence and assertiveness in the workplace?’

‘How did the internship programme equip you with the skills to deal with unfair treatment and office politics?’

Responses

‘No. I managed to get the job because of the skills I acquired’.

‘No, the internship played a vital role in acquiring the skill I have acquired’.

‘No, not really. I have learned a lot of skills when I was under the internship at your university’.

‘It contributed much to an extent that my mentor(s) can give me responsibilities and tasks and will know for sure the way I will execute them in a sound and professional manner’.

‘To a great extent, I can work with confidence, independently and efficiently’

‘I am now more confident because I now believe in my abilities in practical work than before when I did not have the experience’.

During inductions, we were taught not to be involved in office politics. It was emphasised that whenever we encounter unfair treatment we should report to relevant people.

‘The internship programme opened my eyes on what to look out for when it comes to injustice and now, I know what is fair and what is not’.

‘I don’t get involved with matters that do not involve me. And I was never treated unfairly during my tenure’.

Third category: Mentors**Questions**

‘How do you ensure that Internship programme expectations meet workplace expectations?’

‘How are Interns’ personal career goals linked to the allocation of tasks and responsibilities?’

‘Which skills do you focus on when you prepare Interns for the job market?’

Responses

‘Over and above allowing interns to participate in all departmental activities, the mentor at some point stop to check what has been planned in the intern work plan and ensure that gaps are filled’.

‘Interns are given chance to work alongside me on administrative duties, research, lab work, procurement, teaching, marking assignments and meetings’.

‘I give guidance and in-house training’

‘As mentioned earlier, the intern work plan is drawn to cover all the departmental activities, which adopt the shape of the university mandate’.

‘What I prefer doing is to ask the intern on the very first meeting with him/her and ask where they would like to see themselves in the next few years. That way I can figure out what would make her happy in the workplace. Then focus on that as we go along’.

‘Interns are placed in different departmental sections based on their personal career goals and they are given tasks and responsibilities around that’.

‘As mentioned above, report writing, time management, meeting deadlines, basic computer skills’.

'communication, presentation skills and teamwork as core skills for the area of professionalism in the Marketing and Communications field'.

'Presentation skills, communication skills, office administration, research skills and community engagement'.

Source: Author

5.5 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Qualitative data was analysed using the thematic analysis approach. The researcher collected all the data as provided by participants during the interviews and focus group discussions. Before the data was organised according to themes, a transcriber reviewed the data. The researcher then assigned codes to organise data into meaningful themes. Themes were created based on the objectives of the study as follows:

Theme 1: Determinants of an effective graduate internship programme

Theme 2: Graduate skills for employability

Theme 3: Impact of mentorship on interns' career development and career choices

Theme 4: Impact of interns' personal behaviour on employability

Theme 5: Recommendations for planning and managing a graduate internship programme

The Atlas Ti version 8 software was utilized to apply the thematic approach. Atlas Ti is a powerful workbench for qualitative data analysis, mainly for large sections of text, visual and audio data. The software is ideal for text analysis and interpretation using coding and annotation techniques. The network-building feature in the software allows the researcher to visually connect selected texts and codes by means of diagrams (Smit, 2002). To conduct the analysis, data were cleaned and entered on excel sheets. Data formatting was performed prior to their importation into the software. Necessary symbols were also inserted for the software to correctly separate data variables. The captured data was stored in an Atlas. Ti 8.4 project file (Hermeneutic Unit or 'HU'). The data was categorized according to different concepts through open coding. Using the array of

coding functions such as open coding, code by list and code in vivo, the first layer of data was coded. Additionally, open coding was done on the data where a quotation was captured as a code. Furthermore, several open codes were generated in vivo and later grouped together based on their relations so that major codes could be generated and emerged as themes of the study. Open coding involves categorizing phenomena into discrete concepts and categories through close examination of the data set (Elliot, 2018). The codes were mainly created using the main themes related to the study objectives. Codes were further classified into code families using the code manager tool. This allowed for categorization of codes in relation to objectives/interview questions.

Thematic Network Analysis (TNA) was adopted for this study. This allowed the data to be linked deductively and compared to existing theoretical concepts to form a network of linkages between the theoretically driven themes. The codes-primary document table tools were also used to analyse the data. The codes-primary document table technique was utilized to generate graphs and tables.

5.6 TRUSTWORTHINESS

According to Amankwaa (2016), trustworthiness or the rigour of a research refers to the degree of confidence in the data that the researcher has collected, its interpretation as well as methods used in ensuring the quality of the study. Usually, researchers refer to concepts of validity and reliability to demonstrate the quality of their studies, however, these are complex terms derived from quantitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 2013). On the other hand, quantitative data is concerned about the reliability and validity of the results; qualitative data, focuses on the integrity and robustness of results (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). According to Cohen and Crabtree (2008) in Hammarberg, Kirkman and de Lacey (2016), qualitative research must be ethical and apply appropriate rigorous methods. *“Validity in qualitative research refers to the extent to which the data is plausible, credible and trustworthy; and thus, can be defended when challenged”* (Bashir, Afzal & Azeem, 2008:35). Qualitative research defends the integrity of the results by using different data collection methods. This assists in establishing the trustworthiness of the research results. Lincoln *et. al.*, (1985) identified the following criteria for evaluating trustworthiness: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability:

5.6.1 Credibility

Credibility is defined as the confidence in the truth of the findings of the research. This requires proving, in one or more ways, that the research was aimed at maximizing the accuracy of identifying and describing whatever is being studied, especially as judged by the groups of people being studied (Lincoln *et. al.*, 2013). The rigour of the study is established in qualitative research by adopting various credibility strategies. The researcher made use of member checking, triangulation and expert review or peer debriefing strategies to enhance credibility.

Member checking is the most important criterion in establishing credibility. The researcher must verify the themes and patterns that emerged with the research participants. Member checks can either be formal or informal (Candela, 2019). It is the process that enables the interviewees to check and verify the information they provided during the interview (Anney, 2014). At the end of the interview and focus-group discussion, the researcher summarized the recordings for transcription by a data analyst. One participant in each category received a copy of the translated interview session recordings in order to confirm whether the information recorded accurately reflected the participants' viewpoints. If there was a difference, the information was edited to ensure validity. Fortunately, all the participants who received the recordings confirmed it as a true reflection of the proceedings.

Another strategy that the researcher used to enhance credibility was by making use of triangulation. Triangulation is a method used by qualitative researchers to check and establish validity in their studies by analysing a research question from multiple perspectives (Guion, Diehl & McDonald, 2011). It involves the use of multiple methods, investigators or sources and theories that will lead to more valid, reliable and diverse construction of realities; triangulation assists the researcher to reduce bias (Flick, 2017). In this research there were two (2) types of triangulation employed, namely, methodological and data triangulation.

Methodological triangulation refers to the use of multiple qualitative and/or quantitative methods to report the results. For example, the results from the surveys, focus-groups and interviews could be compared to see if similar results are obtained. If the conclusions from the different methods are the same, then validity is established (Gapp & Harwood, 2017). No formal field observation was undertaken, however, observations on how participants reacted and responded to questions during interviews and focus-group discussions were considered by referring to the field notes.

Data triangulation involves the use of diverse sources of information in order to increase validity of the study (Gapp *et al.*, 2017). The researcher involved current, former interns, mentors and line managers of employed former interns during the process of data collection. Secondary data like internship policies, intern work plans, among others were also used to formulate interview questions.

Lastly, the researcher used external validation to enhance the credibility of the research study by making use of expert review or peer debriefing strategies. Peer debriefing is the process where the researcher seeks support from other professionals who are willing to provide scholarly guidance. Feedback from peers helps the researcher in improving the quality of the research findings (Connelly, 2016). The researcher requested the colleagues in the academic Human Resources and Labour Relations Department as well as peers in the non-academic Human Resources Department to review the research questions in terms of wording and relevance. Same was done with the researcher's supervisor and the relevant Committee at UNISA, however, only the colleagues in the non-academic Human Resources department responded and the questions were approved by the relevant Committee at UNISA.

5.6.2 Transferability

Transferability refers to the extent to which qualitative findings can be transferred to (or have applicability in) other settings or groups (Lincoln *et al.*, 2013). Transferability, thus, involves demonstrating the applicability of the results of the study in a particular context, to others. To ensure transferability, the researcher made a detailed description of the data available to afford the participants the opportunity to get a better understanding of the phenomenon under study. The participants were purposely selected which helped the researcher to focus on key informants who were knowledgeable about the phenomenon.

5.6.3 Dependability and confirmability

Dependability and confirmability are established by means of an audit trail. The researcher is responsible for providing enough information so that another researcher reading the study would be able to reach similar conclusions (Connelly, 2016). Dependability refers to the stability (reliability) of data conditions overtime. Confirmability refers to objectivity, meaning, the

potential for congruence between two or more independent people about the accuracy , relevance or meaning of the data (Annelly, 2014). Confirmability is thus concerned with establishing that the data represent the information the participants provided, and that the interpretation of those data are not fabrications of the researcher's imagination (Hadi & Closs, 2016). The researcher in this study ensured that all data collected during interviews and focus group (in the form of notes and tape recordings) and all information gathered from secondary sources were recorded accurately and completely.

5.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Researchers may not take lightly the protection of participants in a research study. Due to the in-depth nature of qualitative research, ethical considerations are significant, especially when conducting face-to-face interviews (Roshaidai & Arifin, 2018). Before the research was conducted, an ethical clearance certificate was obtained from UNISA's Department of Human Resources Management Research and Ethics Committee. A permission to conduct research and to utilise available data was also granted by the university under study. The following ethical issues were considered during the research:

5.7.1 The principle of justice

The right to privacy involves the freedom a participant has to determine the time, extent and circumstances under which private information can be shared or withheld from others. The right to privacy is invaded when private information discussed with participants during interviews is then shared with others without their consent (George, 2016). The researcher did not force participants to reveal information that they felt was invading their privacy, and thus respected their privacy. Furthermore, information shared during the interviews were regarded as private and was not shared.

5.7.2 The principle of beneficence

The concept of beneficence means 'doing good'. It is the duty of the researcher to explain to participants the purpose of the study, the possible risks and the benefits that will be accrued from it (Akaranga & Makau, 2016). Participants who were participating in the research were informed of the possible risks before they agreed to participate in the research. One risk identified was lack

confidentiality as confidentiality could not be guaranteed during focus-group discussions, however, the risk was mitigated by requesting all participants to sign confidentiality agreements before the interviews took place. Unfortunately, participants, especially interns who had encountered negative experiences, found it difficult to report such incidents. Participation in the programme did, however, have some benefits, such as the following: current interns regenerated the knowledge and learned from each other during the discussions; mentors, former interns and line managers received opportunities to relive their experiences and to make recommendations for the improvement of the internship programme at the university under study.

5.7.3 The principle of respect for human dignity

Informed consent is a major ethical consideration when conducting research. Consent is given voluntarily when people know and understand what they are involving themselves into. To participate in a study, those requested to participate need to have a full understanding about the study and have the freedom of choice to participate or not. Giving informed consent also demonstrates that participants' right to autonomy is protected and the rights of an autonomous individuals can be incorporated through self-determination (Creswell, 2015). Participants give informed consent to participate when they have been provided with the purpose of the study to be undertaken, the methods to be used in the study and the possible risks and benefits of the study to them (Bryman & Bell, 2015). A letter confirming informed consent was also issued to the participants before the commencement of the interviews. This was done to ensure that respondents participated in the study out of their own free will and with a clear understanding of the research project. A detailed explanation of the research purpose, processes and the rights of participants was also provided in the local official language (English) to enable understanding. It was also highlighted that participants have a right of withdrawing from participating, anytime, if they changed their minds. All participants were required to sign their informed consent form as an indication of their permission to be part of the study. Informed consent also refers to the right of participants to full disclosure of the funders of the study (Akaranga *et al.*, 2016). The participants in this study were informed that the study was for a master's Programme at UNISA and it was not funded by any organisation but by UNISA as part of the bursary for postgraduate studies. Compliance with the requirements of informed consent enabled the researcher to conduct this study in an ethically sound manner.

5.7.4 Deception

From an ethical point of view, researchers are required to be upfront with participants about what the research is all about and what it intends to achieve. This information was given to all participants when the invitation to participate in the study was sent out. Participants knew exactly what they were getting themselves into and they did agree to participate freely and voluntarily. According to Akaranga *et al.*, (2016) deceptions often occur when researchers become biased to protect the interests of the sponsors of a research project. In this case, no parties had a vested interest in the results of the study because the results of the study were aimed at improving the internship programme.

5.7.5 Anonymity and confidentiality

Anonymity and confidentiality are maintained when participants' names and identities are not revealed during data collection, data analysis or the reporting of the findings (Roshaidai *et al.*, 2018). Anonymity, hence, refers to when the identity of a participant is kept undisclosed (Creswell, 2015) and participants are protected when their identities cannot be linked with responses. In this study, the responses could not be linked to particular individuals; this was done through excluding their names from the interview guide and response sheets. The researcher, however, was not able to guarantee anonymity during focus-group discussions.

Confidentiality takes place when the researcher can manage the privacy of information. Participants were advised not to reveal private sensitive information if they did not feel comfortable to do so. To maintain confidentiality, all participants were required to sign a confidentiality agreement. They all signed statements, before the start of each interview, agreeing to protect the security and confidentiality of identifiable information. Data was also kept safely and away from public viewing in order to maintain confidentiality; only the researcher and the transcriber had access to them. The typed notes were also saved in a password-protected document to prevent any unauthorised access. Data will be retained for five years and thereafter all stored data will be destroyed.

5.7.6 Accuracy

Connelly (2016) warns that researchers must ensure that data is represented in a manner that accurately reflects the results of the study. The information shared with participants must be clear and understandable without technical or scientific jargons. The participants were carefully selected, and data was collected by using multiple collection methods. A professional data analyst was contracted to analyse the data for the study. These steps ensured accuracy.

5.8 SUMMARY

The methodology used in this research enabled the researcher to get a deep understanding as to whether the graduate-internship programme is helpful or needs to be improved. The inclusion of various participants in the study assisted the researcher to get perspectives from people in a variety of positions (interns, managers, and others). Furthermore, the researcher used multiple data collection methods to ensure the accuracy of data and research findings. The researcher tried to comply with all ethical considerations to ensure the trustworthiness and dependability of the research findings. This concludes the discussion on the research methodology. The next chapter will discuss the analysis of data and results of the study.

CHAPTER 6: DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the results of the data analysis and the findings on the effectiveness of a graduate internship programme at a university. The information collected becomes crucial in “painting a picture” on how effectively the programme could be run. A set of 4 similar questions were designed for a set of 4 participants, therefore, the results for the interviews and focus groups with similar themes (that complemented each other) will be reported together in this chapter. Data was collected through semi-structured face-to-face and telephonic interviews as well as through focus-group discussions.

The chapter first reports on the biography of participants and then proceeds with the results of the data analysis based on the following objectives:

- Identify the determinants of an effective graduate internship programme;
- Determine the graduate skills that interns should meet in order to enhance their chances of employability;
- Determine the impact of mentorship on interns’ career development and career choices;
- Describe the impact of personal behaviour on interns’ career development, and
- Make recommendations for the planning and management of a graduate internship programme.

6.2 GENERAL GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATION OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE FOCUS GROUPS AND INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

It is essential to have a diverse sample as it enhances the credibility of the study. The overall characteristics of the participants who were current interns then are depicted in Table 6.1. In terms of gender, 6 participants were male while 9 were female. All participants were black showing that the institution is dominated by one racial group. Regarding age, 3 were between the ages 22-25, 10 were between the ages of 26-30 and 2 were between the ages of 31-35 years. Most of the participants spoke Venda (7) and Sepedi (3), while 4 were Tsonga and 1 spoke Isizulu.

Table 6.1 Biographical characteristics of Focus Group

Category	Biography	Biography	Frequency
Current interns	Gender	Male	6
		Female	9
	Race	Black	15
	Age	22-25	3
		26-30	10
		31-35	2
	Home language	Venda	7
		Tsonga	4
		Sepedi	3
		Zulu	1
Occupation	Intern	Current interns	15

As regards the biographical characteristics of former interns, Table 6.2, illustrates the characteristics according to gender, race, age and language. 10 former interns participated in the study. From the total, 6 of them were male while 4 were female. Their age distribution was as follows; between 22-25 years (3), 26-30 (4) and 31-35 (3). Half of them were Venda speaking and the other half spoke Tsonga. Worth noting is the fact that they were all blacks.

Table 6.2 Biographical characteristics of individual interviews

Category	Biography	Biography	Frequency
Former interns	Gender	Male	6
		Female	4
	Race	Black	10
	Age	22-25	3
		26-30	4
		31-35	3
	Home language	Venda	5
		Tsonga	5
Occupation	Intern	Former interns	10

The characteristics of line managers that participated in the study are outlined in Table 6.3. 2 Line managers were male while 1 was a female with all of them being black. Their age ranged from 45 to 60 years. 2 were original Venda speaking while 1 spoke Tsonga.

Table 6.3: Biographical characteristics of individual interviews

Category	Biography	Biography	Frequency
Line managers	Gender	Male	2
		Female	1
	Race	Black	3
		Age	45
			50
			60
	Home language	Venda	2
		Tsonga	1
Occupation	Line manager	Line managers	3

Regarding mentors who participated in the study, Table 6.4 provides information on the gender, race, age and language of mentors. The majority of participants were female (4) while 2 were male and all of them were blacks. Their age range was as follows: 30-40 years (3), 41-50 years (2) and 51-60 years (1). Four of them spoke Venda, 1 spoke Tsonga and 1 spoke a Zimbabwean language.

Table 6.4: Biographical characteristics of individual interviews

Category	Biography	Biography	Frequency
Mentor	Gender	Male	2
		Female	4
	Race	Black	6
		Age	30-40
			41-50
			51-60
	Home language	Venda	4

Occupation	Heads of Academic and non-academic Departments	Tsonga	1
		Zimbabwe	1
		Heads of Academic and non-academic Departments	6

6.2 NAÏVE READING

During the focus-group discussion, some of the participants showed mixed feelings. Most of the participants were not comfortable talking during group discussions. This was mainly influenced by the group dimensions where some participants were more dominant and thus not giving others a chance to speak. This was addressed through intervening to give each participant a chance to speak. For some, maybe, the unwillingness to talk was caused by the absence of any material rewards for participating in the study. Interns were more comfortable to express their opinions during individual interviews. While some were elaborate, others were less detailed in their responses. Staff members were more eloquent in their responses showing zeal to contribute to the study. This was seemingly because of their experience and exposure to research as well as the desire to contribute towards improving the quality of the experiences for the interns who they were mentoring.

6.3 THE MAIN THEMES

The following main themes emerged from the data obtained during the interviews:

Theme 1: Determinants of an effective graduate internship programme

Theme 2: Graduate skills for employability

Theme 3: Impact of mentorship on interns' career development and career choices

Theme 4: Impact of interns' personal behaviour on employability

Theme 5: Recommendations for planning and managing a graduate internship programme

6.3.1 Determinants of an effective graduate internship programme

The question below was asked during the focus group and individual interviews:

- What are the determinants of an effective graduate internship programmes?

This gave rise to the first theme and sub-themes below:

Seven sub-themes emerged from theme 1:

- *Subtheme 1.1: Impart new and relevant knowledge*
- *Subtheme 1.2: Link interns to job opportunities*
- *Subtheme 1.3: Provide work experience*
- *Subtheme 1.4: Match interns' interest and tasks*
- *Subtheme 1.5: Produce quality interns*
- *Subtheme 1.6: Provide training*
- *Subtheme 1.7: Provide career guidance*

These subthemes are presented in Figure 6.1. All figures were extracted from Atlas Ti version 8 software which was used to analyse the data.

6.3.1.1 Subtheme 1.1: *Impart new and relevant knowledge*

Results revealed that an effective internship programme should impart new knowledge to interns. Apart from imparting new knowledge, graduate internship placements should also provide relevant knowledge to graduates. This encompasses practical knowledge that enhances understanding of recipients' specific fields. The view was apparent among all four groups of participants (22), thus, showing its significance as an indicator of an effective internship programme. Below is a quotation of one of the groups that expressed this view:

"Internships are meant to improve the workplace knowledge of graduates, as such effective programme are seen through improving intern's knowledge base in their field of study."

(Former Interns group)

6.3.1.2 Subtheme 1.2: Provide work experience

Apart from imparting new knowledge, internship programme should be a platform for graduates to gain work experience. As such, the effectiveness of a graduate internship programme may be judged upon its ability to provide work experience; 25 respondents alluded to this view. Imparting work experience entails providing tailored practical experience for diverse graduates who in most cases, mainly possess theoretical knowledge. This can be achieved through providing work-related settings, case studies and provision of necessary mentorship. Gaining work experience, reportedly, increased employability after the graduate internship programme. The view was highlighted by selected mentors, line managers and interns.

“Internships provides a good platform for graduates to put theory into practice, provided the tasks they carry out are relevant to their career development and meaningful.”

(Line manager)

6.3.1.3 Subtheme 1.3: Link interns to job opportunities

A former intern highlighted that internship programme should provide avenues for permanent employment, whereas all 15 current interns are of the view that at least the programme must provide network opportunities that could lead them to employment in the future; 2 Line managers indicated that their departments have employed a few of their former interns. This attests to the fact that, institutions offering internships should have plans in place for employing interns permanently or at least link them to other related organisations. This way, internship programmes fulfil their purpose of preparing graduates for employment. This was confirmed by one intern in the following words:

“Our problem is that after internship it is still difficult to find a job because we were never linked or connected to potential employers. Now I am starting to get frustrated because my internship is almost finished, and I will be sitting at home.”

(Current intern)

6.3.1.4 Subtheme 1.4: Match interns’ interests and tasks

The results also highlighted the significance of understanding interns’ interests. As revealed by 12 responses, interns’ interest must be matched with the tasks they were expected to perform. If

interns' interests and tasks could be aligned, it would facilitate learning and professional development among graduates. For instance, interns who are interested in research must be placed in research institutes or be provided with research-related work in order to enhance their research skills and competencies.

6.3.1.5 Subtheme 1.5: Produce quality interns

Responses also showed that internship programmes should produce quality interns. The quality of the interns is highlighted by the depth of their skills acquisition during internship, understanding of the work dynamics and readiness to deliver in their respective fields, at a professional level. This can be determined by the quick absorption of interns in the labour market after internship. The view was alluded to by 15 participants. One of the participants stated the following:

“As a mentor I am judged based on the quality of the interns that I produce. In fact, interns must have high standards of integrity, practical knowledge, organized among other aspects that are expected in the labour market.”

(Mentor)

6.3.1.6 Subtheme 1.6: Provide training

The provisioning of training is also another major determinant of an effective graduate internship programme. All 6 mentors illustrated that, in most cases, interns lack understanding of the practical application of theoretical knowledge. Without being able to transfer learning to the workplace, interns are unable to execute duties effectively. Due to this, there is a need for providing tailor-made training in order to assist interns to make a real contribution. In addition, regular training is required in order to develop astute graduates who can deliver at the highest level and contribute to company productivity. This statement was also attested to by 15 other respondents. One participant noted:

“In order to understand and to develop as an intern, training is very important especially when it is provided by people who are competent in the field.”

(Current intern)

6.3.1.7 Subtheme 1.7: Provide career guidance

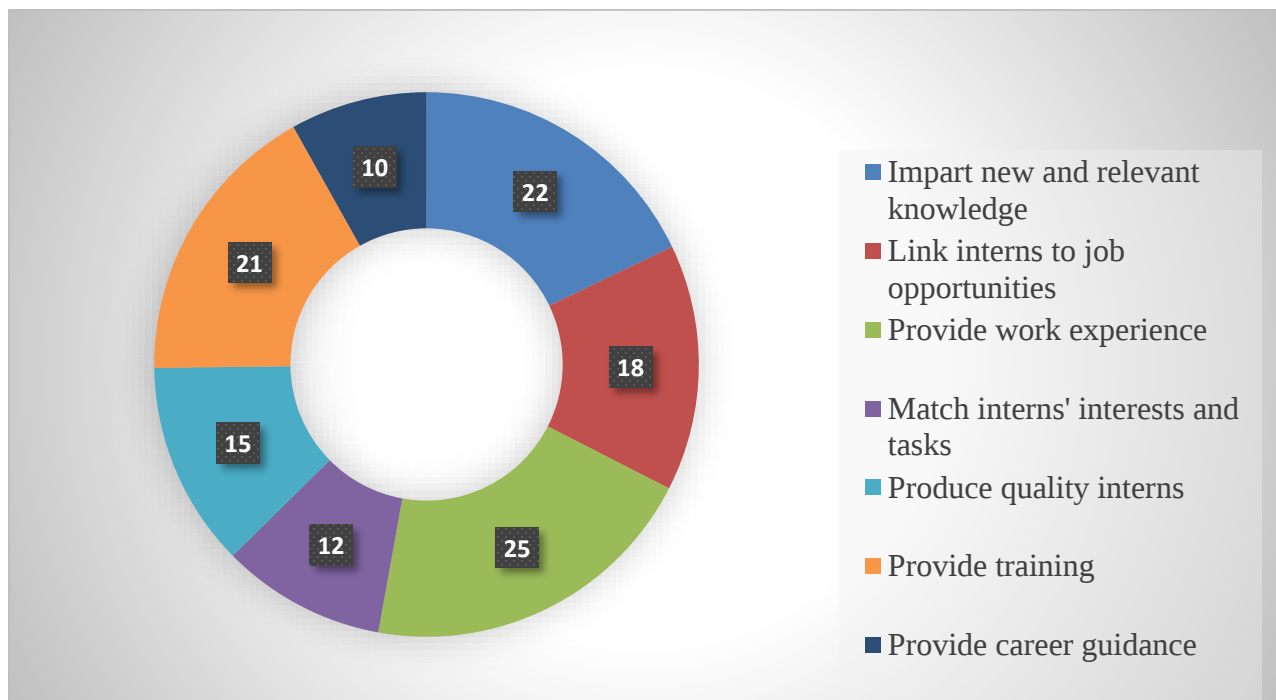
Slightly like the provisioning of training is the provisioning of career guidance. Career

guidance was supposed to be provided by mentors daily. The results revealed that most graduates were not clear about their career aspirations and thus it was vital for mentors to guide them towards certain career paths to facilitate their career growth and professional efficacy. These statements were echoed by all 2 mentors, 3 current and 5 former interns. To emphasize this point one participant is quoted as saying:

“When students graduate, they are normally confused on which career path to follow as they lack career guidance in most cases. As such it is critical to provide career guidance to our interns and that is a major yardstick for an effective internship programme.”

(Mentor)

Figure 6.1 Determinants of an effective graduate internship



6.3.2 Graduate skills for employability

The main and probing questions below were asked during the focus group and individual interviews, which gave rise to the second theme:

- Which skills should interns be imparted with in order to enhance their chances of employability?

Nine sub-themes emerged from theme 2 as follows:

- *Subtheme 1.1: Conflict-resolution skills*
- *Subtheme 1.2: Problem-solving skills*
- *Subtheme 1.3: Diligence*
- *Subtheme 1.4: Ability to operate technical gadgets*
- *Subtheme 1.5: Team-work ability*
- *Subtheme 1.6: Communication skills*
- *Subtheme 1.7: Clientele service*
- *Subtheme 1.8: Work experience*
- *Subtheme 1.9: Job- hunting experience*

The themes are projected in Figure 6.2 which was extracted from Atlas Ti version 8.

6.3.2.1 Subtheme 1.1: Conflict-resolution skills

Results indicated that most responses (4 groups) and (22 participants) highlighted that it was crucial for interns to possess conflict-resolution skills. This is because, conflict is one of the factors that derail work relations and employee productivity. As a result, developing conflict-resolution abilities at an early stage was vital for graduates to secure employment. A verbatim response of one participant precisely highlighted this point as follows:

“Conflict is part of our everyday lives at the workplace. As such we need to learn how to deal with them. I was fortunate to have a mentor who exposed me to such an environment and showed me how to deal with different conflicts that erupt from work politics.”

(Former intern)

6.3.2.2 Subtheme 1.2: Problem-solving skills

Besides conflict resolution skills, 4 respondents indicated that, graduates must possess problem-solving skills. The problems might not necessarily involve conflict, but challenges associated with the work or other social issues. This also include being able to separate personal problems from work-related problems in order to remain productive at work, even amidst a social crisis. One

participant stated the following:

“Problem-solving mechanisms must be one of the major outputs of internship programme. This is because it teaches graduates to be creative thinkers and innovative at the workplace and thus increase productivity and their value at work.”

(Mentor)

6.3.2.3 Subtheme 1.3: Diligence

Diligence in this case is referring to the ability to work independently with minimum supervision; 3 mentors and 1 line manager, reported that, it was critical for interns to be able to work independently and efficiently. Employers value the ability of employees to work independently with minimum supervision in order to avoid micro-management, therefore, diligent graduates have a higher possibility of joining the labour market. Below is a verbatim response from one of the respondents about diligence:

“It is very important that as a worker one must learn to work with minimum supervision. As such internships must equip graduates with integrity to work independently and deliver the maximum outputs.”

(Former intern)

6.3.2.4 Subtheme 1.4: Ability to use technical gadgets

The technological advancement that continue to occur around the world necessitate the need for employees to embrace the use of technical gadgets. Some of the technical gadgets that were mentioned by respondents included laptops, projectors, various applications and software. It was reported that, graduates need to be able to utilize and operate technical equipment so that they could be fully operational in the workplace. These were the views of 18 respondents. The verbatim response below, by one of the respondents, confirmed the need to prepare interns for the world of work in the use of gadgets.

“We are now moving into the fourth industrial revolution where almost every workplace is equipped with electronic devices such as projectors, computers, robots and others. It is important to have the technical knowledge to use these gadgets with minimum assistance. For instance, I learnt how to use the projector now while doing my internship.”

(Current intern)

6.3.2.5 Subtheme 1.5: Teamwork ability

Despite the significance of diligence capacities as indicated in subtheme item number 6.3.2.3, 7 responses highlighted the relevance of teamwork abilities. It was reported that, teamwork abilities assist graduates to build effective and sound working relationships with other employees once they start working. In addition, teamwork enables graduates to learn quickly and grow professionally. In this regard, it is important for graduates to possess a blend of both independent abilities and teamwork skills and apply the skills where necessary.

6.3.2.6 Subtheme 1.6: Communication skills

It is also important for graduates to be able to communicate effectively. Workplace communication channels include horizontal and vertical communication. Horizontal communication refers to interpersonal formal and informal communication with fellow employees daily. Vertical communication relates to formal interactions with management. It is essential for graduates to have a basic understanding of these communication channels. Communication skills is also crucial in the development of work documents, making presentations, resolving conflicts amongst colleagues and so forth. All these views were shared by all 6 mentors, 3 line managers, 10 current interns and 7 former interns, thus showing the significance of effective communication for employability. A verbatim report of one of the participants was as follows:

“For work to run smooth, we really need to have good communication skills to be able to convey the correct messages and to avoid conflicts and delays at workplace. So, we teach them that every time.”

(Mentor)

6.3.2.7 Subtheme 1.7: Client service

Responses indicated that graduates were expected to possess client service attributes. These encompass various ways of handling clients. The major skills in this regard included (1) being highly organized and (2), displaying integrity and time consciousness. Being highly organised helps one impress potential employers during interviews as well as in executing of tasks once employed. Integrity will protect employers against employees who act unethically and engage in actions, such as fraud and corruption. It is also important to demonstrate time consciousness as

reluctance to act swiftly could result in customer complaints and customers taking their business to competitors. Unfortunately, only 1 respondent (line manager) saw this as an important skill interns must learn during their internship programme.

6.3.2.8: Subtheme 1.8: Work experience

It was also noted with concern that most of the graduates do not have the experience required to enter the labour market soon after graduation. 25 Respondents explained that there is a need for providing interns with work experience that is aligned to their career aspirations and the needs of the market. It was also revealed that, voluntary experience is crucial for employability. Voluntary experience is evidence that one is driven and motivated to add value to a business. To elaborate on this point, one participant made the following statement:

“Work experience is required in almost every job advert I have seen so internship must provide a bit of work experience to boost my employability chances.”

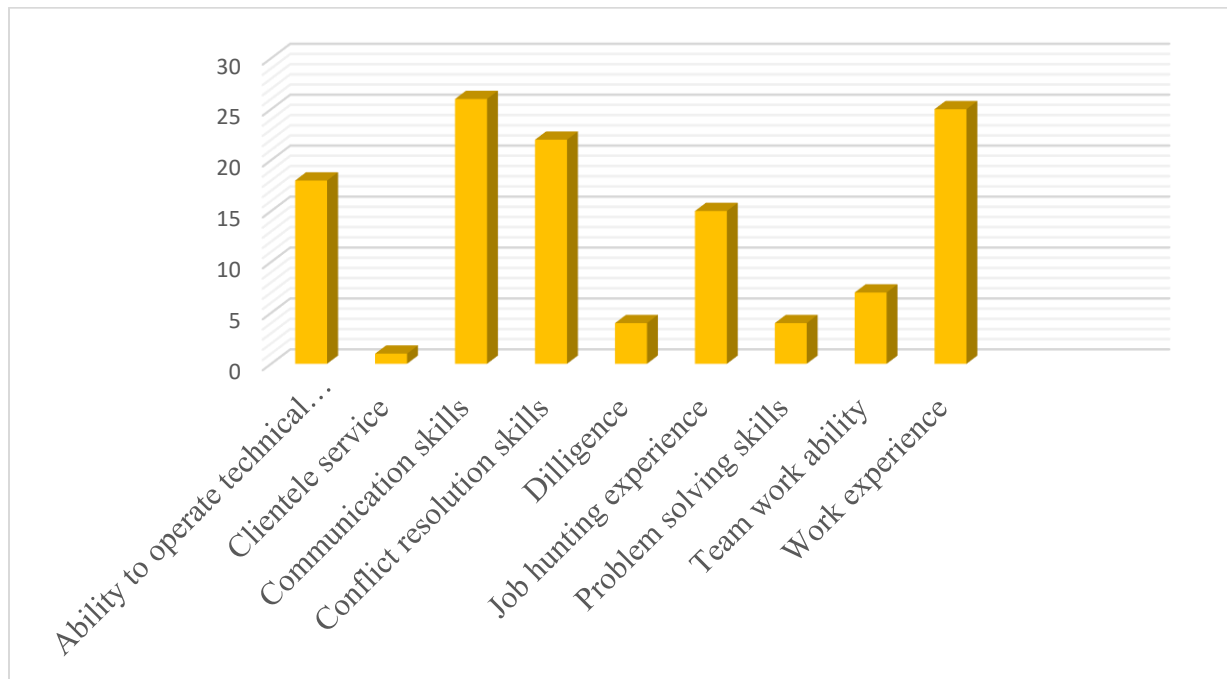
(Current intern)

6.3.2.9: Subtheme 1.9: Job hunting experience

Most respondents, 15, indicated that they needed job hunting skills in order to secure jobs. Applying for jobs, one after another, without any success becomes frustrating. It was revealed that during the programme, interns must learn the skill of job hunting. This entails how to write a CV, a motivational application letter, which questions to expect during the interviews and how best to respond to them. The following is a statement made by one respondent:

“Putting one application after another with no response from employers it almost made me give up looking for employment.”

(Former intern)

Figure 6.2 Graduate skills required for employability

6.3.3 Impact of mentorship on interns' career development and career choices

The main and probing questions below were asked during the focus group and individual interviews and this gave rise to the third theme and subthemes:

- How does mentoring impact on career futures of interns?

Ten sub-themes emerged from theme 3:

- *Subtheme 1.1: Determines career path*
- *Subtheme 1.2: Provides work efficiency*
- *Subtheme 1.3: Develops soft skills*
- *Subtheme 1.4: Undermines career path*
- *Subtheme 1.5: Fails to develop interns*
- *Subtheme 1.6: Develops confidence*
- *Subtheme 1.7 Provides a smooth transition*
- *Subtheme 1.8: Provides inspiration*
- *Subtheme 1.9: Provides social support*
- *Subtheme 1.10: Provides work experience*

Figure 6.3 illustrates the frequencies of these thematic areas while Figure 6.4 demonstrates the network linkages between the themes as well as selected quotations as extracted from Atlas Ti software.

6.3.3.1 Subtheme 1.1: Determines career path

As shown in Figure 6.3, the results indicated that good mentorship has a significant impact on a graduate intern's career path. The view was voiced by 2 line managers, 3 mentors and both groups of interns, thus, showing its universality. Positive guidance by a mentor reportedly enlightens on possible career paths, thus, inspiring an intern to follow a certain career path. In some cases, graduate interns became so passionate about their tasks that, they decided to pursue a similar career after completion of the programme. This shows that, positive mentorship greatly impacts on interns' decisions regarding future employment choices. A quotation in this regard, from one of the respondents appear in Figure 6.4.

6.3.3.2 Subtheme 1.2: Provides work efficiency

A few respondents, 3, reported that mentorship directs the execution of tasks by interns. Worth noting is the fact that interns normally start working without practical knowledge of the work environment. In some cases, interns are placed in fields that are different from their field of theoretical expertise. For this reason, appropriate and patient coaching by mentors help interns to settle in and execute their jobs as expected. To advance work efficiency, mentors may provide information related to protocols in the department, assist interns with dealing with pressure and help interns to resolve conflicts that may occur. One of the respondents articulated the above-mentioned view as follows:

“It is vital for mentors to provide adequate and unconditional support to interns from the beginning to the end of their programme. This assists them to settle in, groom them, and provide directions on how to deliver on various tasks as well as providing moral support to the newly employed graduates who are not familiar with the work environment”

(Mentor)

Two responses further specified that mentorship provides interns with work-handling techniques that are crucial for effective delivery of given tasks. The major techniques include planning, handling work pressure, meeting deadlines and dealing with teamwork dynamics. This is crucial given that most of the interns are young and fresh from the university but expected to work with more matured and older employees.

6.3.3.3 Subtheme 1.3: Develops soft skills

Some interns, 7, highlighted that mentorship is instrumental in the development of soft skills. The major soft skills mentioned included communication, problem-solving and relationship-building skills. These skills are crucial in the labour market, hence it is important for interns to grasp them during the programme.

You see with these interns there are a lot of skills that need to be sharpened especially soft skills that helps them to excel.”

(Mentor)

Apart from the above-mentioned skills, a minority of the respondents (2) highlighted the importance of mentorship to enable interns to transfer learning to the workplace so that it can assist in the transition of graduates from students to employees. Through mentorship, interns also gain confidence to perform different aspects such as presenting, contributing in meetings and representing departments at higher level events.

Helping interns acquire soft skills and exposing them to real work situations play a critical role in helping interns to gain work-related experience. Internships is for many, the first platform in experiencing the work environment and thus proper mentorship provides a foundation for interns to excel in their future work endeavours.

6.3.3.4 Subtheme 1.4: Undermines career path

Despite the impact of positive mentorship highlighted by most responses as illustrated above, 2 former interns reported that poor mentorship can undermine career paths. They noted that some of the mentors were not competent enough to provide positive guidance. This was evidenced by their lack of contribution to interns’ development during the programme. Instead, some of the mentors neither provided interns with any meaningful work nor availed themselves whenever required by the interns. Consequently, some of the interns finished the programme without enough knowledge or work experience as they had expected. In support of the view the following was said:

“Sometimes you are just unfortunate like me to get a clueless mentor. I did not learn much as an intern. All I did was being sent around for petty issues like making copies, delivering mail and the like. I even began to think that maybe I was in the wrong field.”

(Former intern)

6.3.3.5 Subtheme 1.5: Fails to develop interns

In addition to the above mentioned, 2 responses indicated that most of the interns were not placed in their fields of choice. As such they were not benefitting anything from their mentors in terms of gaining work-related knowledge to advance their careers as they had hoped would be the case. Incorrect placement thus seemed to be an obstacle for both the mentor and the mentee.

6.3.3.6 Subtheme 1.6: Develops confidence

It was apparent that positive mentorship boosts individual interns' confidence. This in turn increases self-worth, production and ambitions to follow a certain career. Confidence also helps interns to perform at different levels and in diverse situations. For instance, they can work well with intercultural groups and higher-level managers in an organization or institution; 9 respondents were very positive about the confidence interns gain as a result of participating in an internship programme. This is what 1 current intern had to say:

“When I started, I was nervous and did not know what to expect and how to complete my tasks. But with the support and guidance of my mentor, I have gained confidence in my job and I truly enjoy what I do every day. I have found my passion.”

(Current intern)

6.3.3.7 Subtheme 1.7: Provides a smooth transition

Good internship prepares individuals for the workplace environment. Thus, properly mentored interns easily transition into the labour market as they are employable and flexible. On the other hand, those who are not properly mentored find it difficult to be employed due to their lack of job-market skills and adaptation. 1 Line manager indicated that internship programme must have done a good job, since the former intern came in as a new employee equipped with the necessary skills, hence, was able to start working without much difficulties; 3 former interns confirmed that they did not have difficulties when starting their new jobs as they had learned a lot as interns.

“My boss was very impressed with my work as if I have been long in this job. I only thank my mentor for giving me the opportunity to learn during my internship.”

(Former intern)

6.3.3.8 Subtheme 1.8: Provides inspiration

Mentorship should also be inspiring to the mentees. Mentors are role models to their mentees and in most cases, mentees are inspired to follow the same career as their mentors due to the charismatic leadership that they would have been shown. In some cases, mentees are inspired to even follow different careers due to advice from mentors; 2 Respondents indicated that they were unsure as to whether they would like to continue with their choice career but working with their mentors gave them the zeal to love their careers.

6.3.3.9 Subtheme 1.9: Provides social support

2 respondents said that mentorship should not only be about career development and professional support but should also provide social and moral support to mentees, thus, they should understand the social lives of mentees in order to assist them, morally and socially, in times of need. Social problems might easily distract interns from executing their duties.

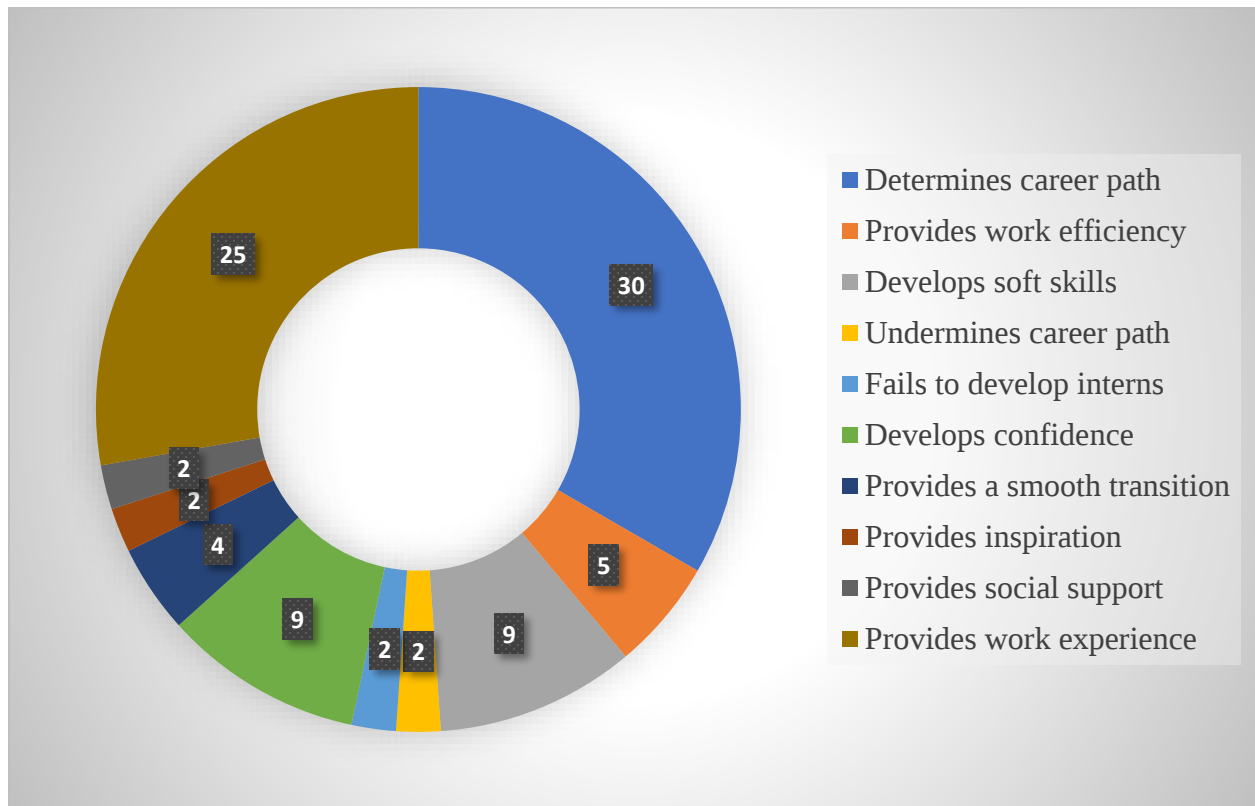
“As an intern, I also face social challenges like when my baby gets sick at home, my mentor should allow me to take some time off in order to take care of her. He cannot expect me to work like everything is fine. We are all human after all.”

(Current intern)

Subtheme 1.10: Provides work experience

Proper internship should also provide relevant experience based on intern's field of study and interest. This will enable interns to cope with practical work experience such as working under pressure, conflict resolution and planning; 25 respondents shared the same sentiments as far as internship programme providing opportunities to gather work experience is concerned.

Figure 6.3 Impact factors of mentorship to graduate interns' development



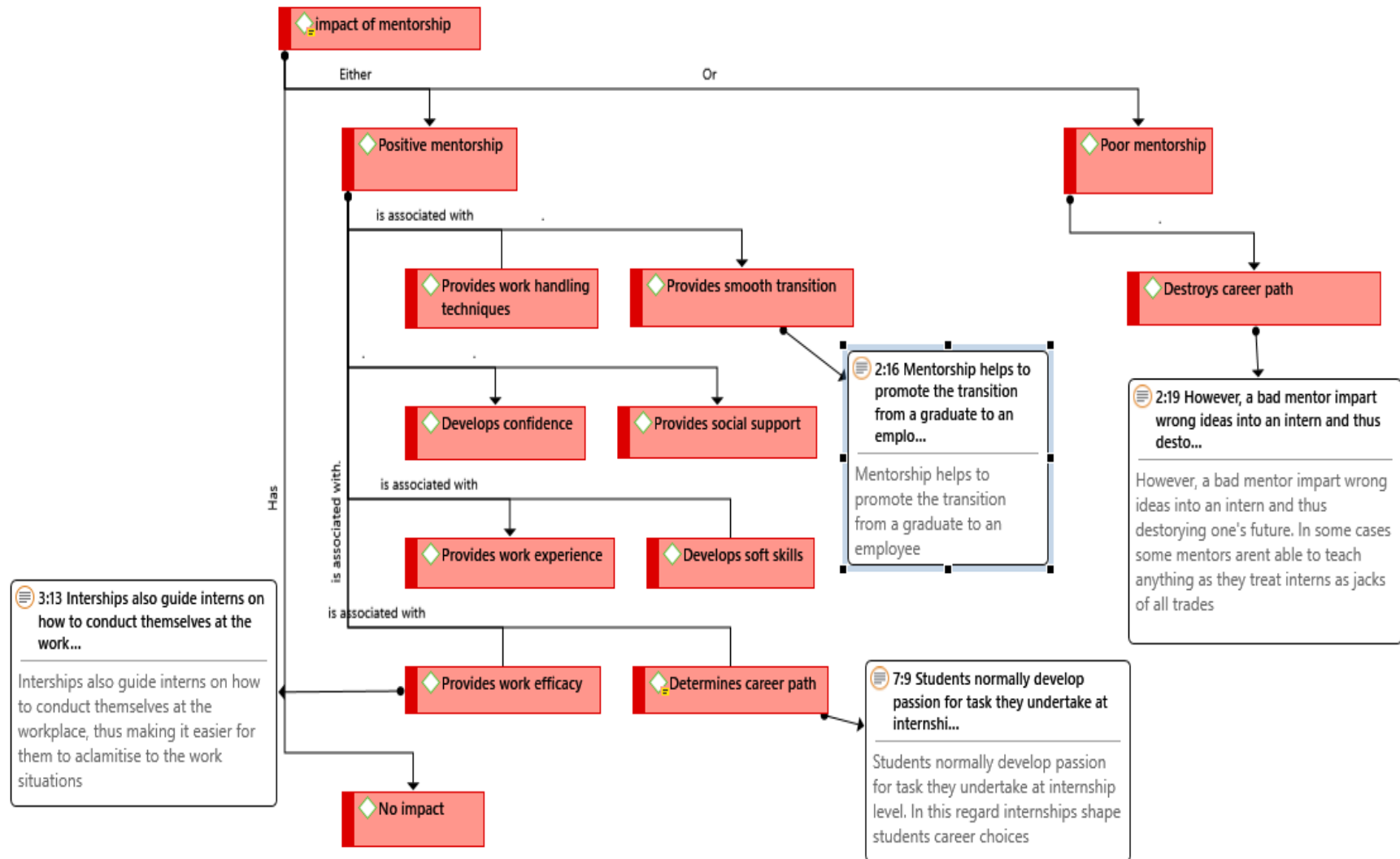


Figure 6.4 Network diagram showing impact factors of mentorship to graduate interns' development

The responses of the interns highlighted some of the strengths and weaknesses of the internship programme. Figure 6.4 provides a network illustrating the linkages between the themes and quotations of respondents.

6.3.4 Impact of interns' personal behaviour on employability

The main and probing questions below were asked during the focus group and individual interviews, which gave rise to the fourth theme:

- What impact does the personal behaviour of interns have on their employability?

Five subthemes emerged from theme 4:

- *Subtheme 1.1: Facilitates learning*
- *Subtheme 1.2: Builds working relationships*
- *Subtheme 1.3: Increases work productivity*
- *Subtheme 1.4: Leads to positive recommendations*
- *Subtheme 1.5: Enhances future employability*

6.3.4.1 Subtheme 1.1: Facilitates learning

As shown in Figure 6.5, 4 responses indicated that interns who were committed and willing to learn were more likely to learn new things during the programme. This is due to the fact that, mentors were more inclined to invest in interns who displayed commitment and followed instructions.

“It is highly likely that a well-behaved intern will get favors and attention from the mentor and this might include being taught a lot of things.”

(Line manager)

6.3.4.2 Subtheme 1.2: Builds working relationships

Some responses, 4, showed that, interns' positive behavior can significantly facilitate a conducive and healthy working relationship, particularly, between the intern and mentor. Committed and hard-working interns were reportedly easy to work with as they accept criticism in a positive way and valued feedback. When well-intended feedback is used by interns to make improvements and

increase their skills, a relationship of mutual respect and understanding is established. The following words by a mentor supported this view:

“When the mentor and intern are on the same page, their working relationship will be healthy and satisfying for both parties.”

(Mentor)

6.3.4.3 Subtheme 1.3: Increases work productivity

A good working relationship reportedly culminated in increased work productivity. The view was aired by 1 respondent. It was highlighted that, interns who had a good relationship with their mentors and other colleagues, was motivated to complete tasks and go beyond the call of duty.

“Happy working relationships with my mentor is helping me to love the job and I always push myself to go beyond set limits in order to please him.”

(Current mentor)

6.3.4.4 Subtheme 1.4: Leads to positive recommendations

Results also indicated that, highly-regarded interns were bound to obtain positive referrals from mentors and head of departments to boost their chances of finding employment. Interns who were not able to live up to expectations and did not perform satisfactorily, however, had difficulty in obtaining positive recommendations and subsequently, job offers.

“Interns have always complained that they were not positively recommended and those kind of stories. This is because they were not behaving themselves during their internship.”

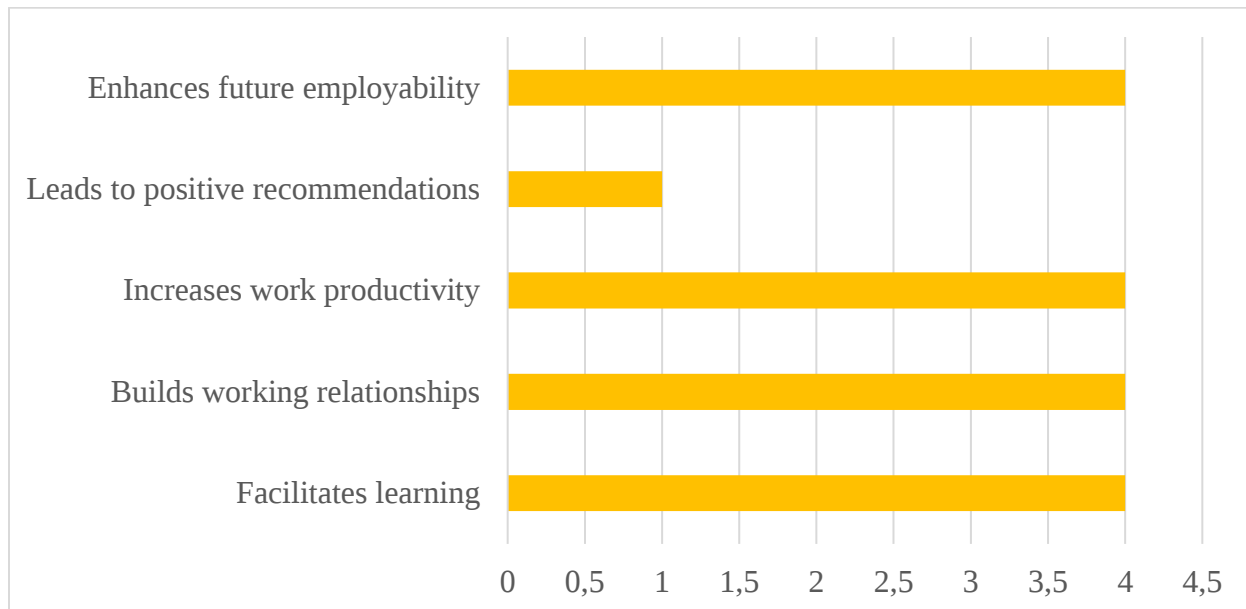
(Line manager)

6.3.4.5 Subtheme 1.5: Enhances future employability

Besides obtaining positive referrals, highly-regarded interns were often considered for positions within the department as soon as positions became available. Interns as well as mentors realised the value of integrity. Interns who engaged in positive work ethics stood a good chance of securing job offers from other companies. These opinions were mentioned by 4 interns. One of them said:

“I believe that my mentor might help me to secure a job if I behave with integrity here.”

(Current intern)

Figure 6.5 The impact of interns' personal behavior on employability

6.3.5 Recommendations for planning and managing a graduate internship programme

The main and probing questions below were asked during the focus group and individual interviews, which gave rise to the fifth theme:

- Which recommendations should be made with regards to the planning and management of the graduate internship programme?

Five sub-themes emerged from theme 5:

- *Subtheme 1.1: Placing interns under appropriate mentors*
- *Subtheme 1.2: Specifying tasks*
- *Subtheme 1.3: Allowing freedom of expression*
- *Subtheme 1.4: Establishing exchange mentorship programme*
- *Subtheme 1.5: Providing customised training*
- *Subtheme 1.6: Incorporating interns into staff activities*

These themes are illustrated in Figure 6.6, which shows the links among the subthemes and selected responses.

6.3.5.1 Subtheme 1.1: Placing interns under appropriate mentors

The mismatch between mentors and interns was reportedly a major challenge in some departments within the university. The weakness normally resulted in interns not acquiring appropriate knowledge, skills and experience for future employability. Consequently, 5 respondents suggested that interns must be placed under appropriate mentors (Figure 6.6). This implies that, graduate interns must be mentored by staff within their field of interest. This would facilitate learning and career development during the programme. 1 Mentor uttered the following:

“It is vital to first check the mentor’s and intern’s field of study and interest as well as the mentor’s capability. This will help to nominate mentors who are progressive and helpful to the interns.”

(Mentor)

6.3.5.1 Subtheme 1.2: Specifying tasks

It was also recommended by 4 respondents that an internship programme should have clear objectives before the programme commences. This included specifying tasks in unambiguous terms to avoid treating interns like ‘jack of all trades’. The specification of tasks would allow interns to master the knowledge and skills required to enhance their professional development. The tasks and objectives of the programme and expectations from interns should be specified in signed contracts. This would also mean that mentors should abide by the requirements of the contract and ensure that interns acquire the necessary experience and skills by means of tasks allocated to them.

“Tasks and objectives of internship programme must be stipulated from the onset; this reduces a situation wherein we are all reduced to messengers and secretaries in our respective departments. We want to gain experience so our mentors must provide us with specific task that are related to our fields of study”

(Current intern)

6.3.5.2 Subtheme 1.3: Allowing freedom of expression

Both groups of current and former interns highlighted that there was a need for mentors to provide room for interns to work independently. This implies reducing mentors’ tendency to micro-manage

interns, thus, impeding their creativity, freedom to express their opinions and making recommendations on work-related matters. It was therefore suggested that, mentors should trust interns to deliver and give them room for making mistakes. One of the participants said the following:

“When you are given the freedom to do things and work without micro-management you can learn a lot even through your mistakes.”

(Former intern)

6.3.5.3 Subtheme 1.4: Establishing exchange mentorship programmes

Current interns and 1 line manager highlighted the need for establishing exchange programme. This would facilitate broader learning under different environments and mentors. Exchange programme might also provide a platform for interns to meet various potential employers as opposed to being placed in one institution. These exchange programme could include national and international exchange of interns. Placing interns in a different country could broaden interns’ understanding of different business environments.

“Interns must be given opportunities to visit other universities and work under different mentors. This will broaden their knowledge base and experience.”

(Line manager)

6.3.5.4 Subtheme 1.5: Providing customised training

Earlier in the discussion, it was mentioned that interns seem to lack knowledge on how to execute their duties due to a lack of experience. For this reason, there is a need for customized-training sessions focusing on real work life situations. This will expose interns to practical work-related issues and equip them with the skills to apply theory to practice and solve problems. Customised training will help interns to understand work-related issues in their respective departments.

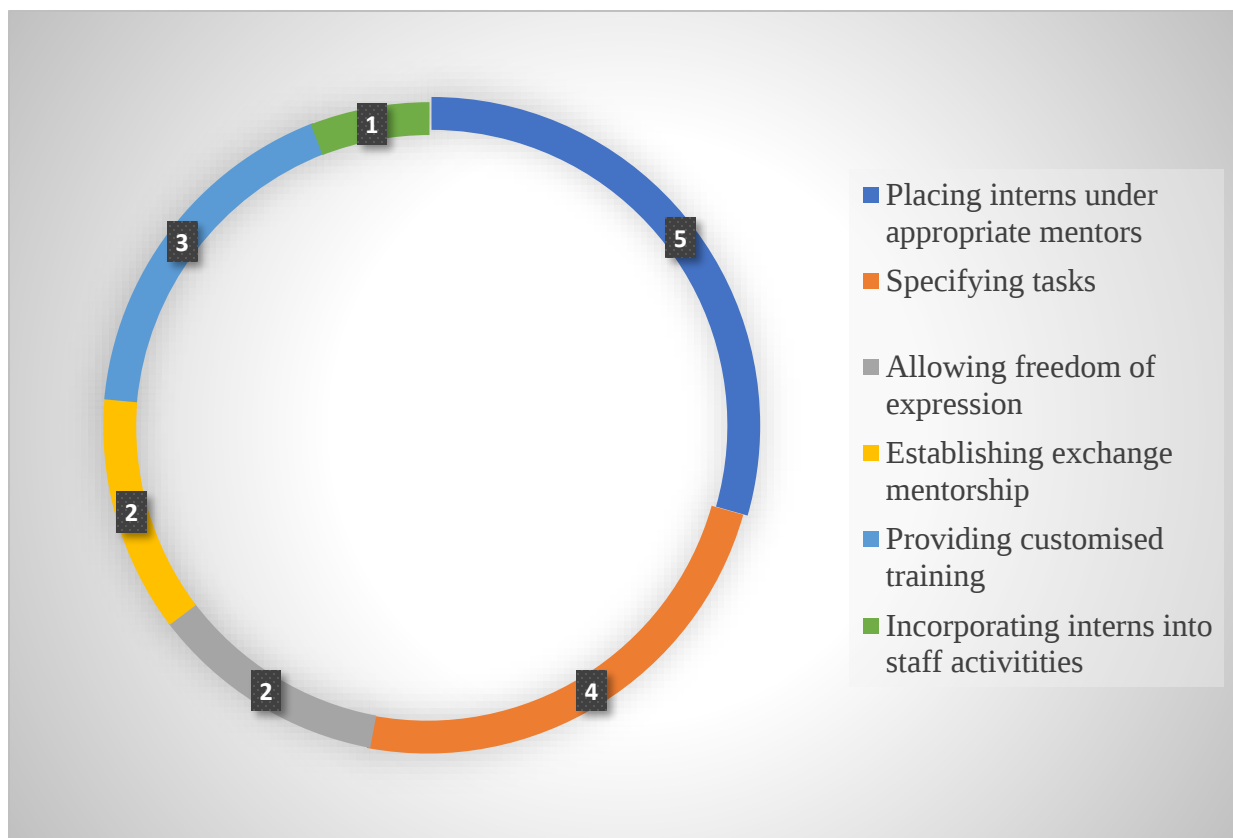
6.3.5.6 Subtheme 1.6: Incorporating interns into staff activities

Some current interns, 10, noted that there was a need for them to be more actively involved in departmental and staff activities such as meetings and workshops rather than being side-lined to logistical work only. This would improve their understanding of the work in their respective departments and thus, facilitate learning. Below is one direct quotation from the group:

“It is discouraging to be left out of important departmental activities such as workshops and meeting where they discuss real work issues. In most cases we are just asked to arrange the venue set up and leave. What will we learn if they continue to treat us like outsiders?”

(Current intern)

Figure 6.6 Recommendations for planning and managing the graduate internship programme



The results of this chapter were compared to some of the studies conducted previously by other researchers.

A study by Knouse and Fontenot (2008) in Kaparellotis, Voutsina and Patsiotis (2018) shows that students that have participated in internship programmes before stand a better chance of hired on a full-time basis by the companies who hired them as interns before. They are also likely to choose a specific career paths which were unknown to them before they participated in those programmes. In concur, Sanahuja and Ribes (2015) described three benefits of participating in internship

programmes as: (a) those that relate to the attainment of job opportunities; (b) those that are related to the gathering and improvement of skills and competencies and (c) those that related to career exploration and career satisfaction. Both studies confirm the findings in this study that internship programmes impart new and relevant knowledge, provide work experience, link interns to job opportunities and provide career guidance.

In terms of skills acquired during the process as interns, literature confirms some skills compared to the findings of this study. Interns who were placed in large companies like IBM developed technical skills, finance skills, communication skills, problem-solving skills, creativity, team-work skills, customer-facing skills and entrepreneurial skills (Galloway et. al., 2014). Bukaliya (2014) study shows that interns require to learn and acquire decision-making skills, critical thinking skills, increased confidence and self-esteem. None of the above studies mention IT or Ability to operate gadgets skills, conflict resolution and job-hunting experience as some of the findings for this study.

Several studies confirm that mentorship plays an important role in career development and career choices of interns. Mentorship enhances job performance and job efficiency (Chew & Wong, 2008 in Joytl et. al., 2015); provides support and career development and boosts confidence (Linn et. al., 2015). During mentorship motivation is crucial as it stimulates optimal performance by interns. Factors that motivated interns towards completion their tasks were related to good work environment, responsibility and opportunity to grow (Kapareliotis et. al., 2018).

The study also found that interns' personal behaviour has influence on their employability outcomes. Rose (2016) has conducted a study on interns' proactive behaviours during internship programme experience. The study specifies that interns' proactive behaviours yield desirable outcomes such as increased job performance and job satisfaction. The study goes further to indicate that proactive behaviours by interns forge positive linkages with people within the organisations that includes other employees and managers. These linkages in turn facilitate access to valuable work-related information, knowledge, resources as well as experience necessary for employment. Parker and Collins (2010) in Rose (2016) confirm that interns' proactive behaviours during internship programmes have become desirable characteristic as it contributes to interns being prospective employees.

For the internship programmes to be effective and successful in achieving the intended objectives, clear expectations, tasks and responsibilities must be clearly defined. Through guidance and support from mentors, interns achieve successful performance (Sanahuja et. al., 2015)

6.4 SUMMARY

Chapter 6 gives a full presentation of the findings of the study. 5 Main themes emerged based on the information collected during both the interviews and the focus group discussions. Both discussions confirmed that internships help interns to develop the skills for employability. It is also a necessary tool interns can utilize in choosing their career paths and developing their careers.

The chapter also provide comparable evidence of findings from similar studies conducted by other researchers during the previous years.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Without doubt unemployment poses a real threat to the economy. In addition to this, graduates entering the labour market seem to be ill-prepared for the challenges of work-life. This is partly due to a poor education system that fails to equip graduates with employability skills. Previously, employers did not mind employing graduates without experience, hence, were prepared to hire inexperienced graduates and train them to perform designated jobs. Today, the situation has changed drastically, and employers seek to employ graduates who have all the necessary skills to perform, with minimal supervision, their jobs.

This chapter concludes the study by providing an overview of the study. The chapter summarises the theoretical foundations discussed in Chapters 2, 3 and 4, provides conclusions on the empirical findings of the study and outlines the limitations and challenges faced. Recommendations for future studies on the topic are made as contributions to assist other researchers in extending this research further.

7.2 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of a graduate internship programme in terms of enhancing employability and career development opportunities for youths in South Africa. It has been mentioned at many platforms and raised many times that our graduates are finding it hard to secure a decent job. The researcher is a Skills Development Facilitator in a South African university and responsible for managing the graduate internship programme. It was, therefore, relevant to determine the degree of effectiveness of this programme. In order to find answers to the effectiveness of an internship programme, the following 5 questions had to be answered:

- What are the determinants of an effective graduate internship programme?
- What skills should interns be imparted with in order to enhance their employability skills?
- What impact does mentoring have in shaping career futures of interns?

- What impact does personal behaviour have in the development of interns' career during the internship?
- What recommendations should be made with regards to the planning and management of the graduate internship programme?

This study comprised of seven chapters which are briefly outlined below:

CHAPTER ONE gave an overview on the purpose and background to the research problem, outlined the research objectives and questions to be answered by the study and specified the research methods. This study aimed at exploring whether the work exposure and skills interns gain during their tenure in the internship programme are assisting them enough to get decent permanent employment and how this research could assist tertiary institutions, especially, universities in improving their internship programmes for the benefit of graduates.

CHAPTER TWO consisted of a research literature relating to graduate internship programmes. This chapter provided statistics of unemployed graduates and the reasons for unemployment were highlighted. The literature study also indicated that unemployment was more applicable to graduates from historically disadvantaged universities. Graduate internship programmes were outlined as a tool for equipping graduates with the necessary skills and work experience sought by employers. Graduate internship programmes offer opportunities to graduate interns to learn from the various areas of expertise at the workplace. Being exposed to workplace issues plays a significant role in developing graduates' skills and competencies that would make them employable. The mentors must ensure that they offer interns with work that will enable them to acquire the necessary skills and experience. Those competencies will enable them to enter the job market and grow professionally. On the other hand, interns must also be willing to learn by accepting challenges with an open mind and positive attitude.

CHAPTER THREE discussed graduate employability and gradueness. The chapter provided a clear differentiation between the two concepts. It was also highlighted that graduates' lack employability skills was due to under-preparedness from schools and

universities, especially those students from rural areas. A huge obstacle in equipping learners and graduates for the labour market is the lack of teaching aids and resources. The curricula, from Curriculum 2005 to Outcomes-based Education (OBE) do not do any justice to the learners, as well as teachers and lecturing staff who are less skilled in this approach to learning. Several researchers have indicated that as much as discipline-specific skills are required, generic skills are equally important. Computing, communication and problem-solving skills as some of the important skills graduate must possess.

CHAPTER FOUR dealt with the legislative framework for promoting or developing graduate skills. Government has shown commitment to promote skills development in the workplace by initiating and funding graduate internship programmes, learnerships and skills-enhancement programmes. Since 1994, Government has passed legislations that support skills development. Some of the legislation includes the Skills Development Act, (97 of 1998) and the Skills Development Levies Act (9 of 1999). These two Acts made provision for the establishment of SETAs that are responsible for developing SSP to close the skills' gaps in the various areas of professions.

CHAPTER FIVE explained the methodology that was used to conduct the research. The research used a qualitative approach where interviews and focus-group discussions were conducted to collect data from participants.

An interpretative phenomenological approach was used in this qualitative research. It was considered appropriate as it aimed at getting a deeper understanding and more information about the effectiveness of a graduate internship programme from the people who have first-hand experience in the programme. In-depth semi-structured interviews and 1 focus-group discussion were conducted during data collection to get to know how participants perceive the programme, their feelings towards the programme and, most importantly, their recommendations on the improvement of the programme. Although there was no questionnaire issued as the research was not quantitative in nature, questions were developed prior to the interviews and focus-group discussions.

The participants were selected using non-probability purposive sampling. All those who had participated in the internship programme between 2012 and 2017 had an equal chance of being selected to participate, however, only a limited number was required. A population of 34 participants were drawn, consisting of 15 current interns, 10 former interns, 6 mentors and 3 line managers of employed former interns.

After data collection, data was analysed using Atlas.Ti computer software programme.

CHAPTER SIX reported on the results and findings of the study. Based on the five objectives, five main themes and 37 sub-themes were identified after the interviews and focus-group discussion were held with participants.

7.3 CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of the research was to evaluate the effectiveness of a graduate internship programme. This was done by identifying the determinants of an effective graduate internship programme, determining the graduate skills interns should acquire in order to enhance their employability and determining the impact of mentorship on interns' career development and career choices. The main conclusions are discussed below.

Theme 1: Determinants of an effective graduate internship programme

It is concluded that graduate internship is effective as it is capable of imparting to interns practical knowledge and to give platform for interns to gain work experience. According to interns, they want to be placed in the field of their interests in order to grow towards that chosen career path. The experience that they will gain in that field with the guidance of their mentors, will greatly equip them towards quality future professionals. In order to gain new knowledge and work experience, interns must be provided with tasks that are relevant and challenging, that will allow them to use their critical thinking and solving-problems abilities.

However, participants felt that in terms of linking interns to job opportunities, employers must device plans to employ them permanently or link them to other companies elsewhere. With this notion, interns are defeating the purpose of internship programme. The purpose

is for them to gather skills and competencies and to gain work experience, then be able to use those in looking for employment. At the end of the programme interns are expected to be ready for employment through the tasks they had perform and the training they had receive. Literature has proven that internship programme also gives interns opportunity for networking. This can yield positive results for interns whose mentors may recommend them to their fellow professionals elsewhere, or even in the same institution for jobs should the opportunities arise. There is evidence that some of the former interns who participated in this research have been appointed by the same departments where they were initially employed as interns.

Theme 2: Graduate skills for employability

It is of utmost importance that while interns are in the process of gaining work experience, they gather some relevant skills too that are necessary for their employability. The specific skills that were mentioned include conflict resolution, problem-solving, communication and job-hunting skills, just to mention a few. These skills were also highlighted in the literature of this study. It is important to have technical job skills, but it is equally important for graduates to possess generic skills. In possession of graduate skills, graduates will be able to deal properly with conflicts amongst colleagues, be able to solve job problems and be able to work independently without close supervision. It is obvious that gadgets like computers are being used daily in the workplace, thus, participants mentioned that they need to be able to use laptops, projectors, and others. It is also crucial for interns to develop communication skills as a way of communicating with colleagues and management and be familiar with communication channels. Internship programme also teaches interns to work with clients in a professional manner. They learn the importance of handling matters on time, being always organised and displaying integrity .

Theme 3: Impact of mentorship on interns' career development and career choices

The research found that mentorship is very crucial for the career development of interns. All participants shared the view that the guidance interns receive from their mentors ensures career paths and impact greatly on their future employment decisions. Some interns indicated that mentorship is instrumental in developing soft skills like problem-

solving and computer literacy. Some reported that mentorship helped in the transition from being a student to an employee. They managed to gain so much confidence that they were able to present their views, however, there were those interns who indicated that their mentors were not competent enough to give them positive career guidance. They also did not provide them meaningful task and in their view, there was not much that they have learned. In addition, some interns were placed in irrelevant field; in fields other than those in their careers, therefore, mentorship was of no use since the things they learned and were exposed to were irrelevant and have no impact on their future employment.

Theme 4: Impact of interns' personal behaviour on employability

Interns are assisted in gaining future decent employment, however, their personal behaviour also influences their success or downfall in their chosen careers. It has been found that mentors prefer interns who are committed, easy to work with and who show respect for other colleagues. It was also indicated that when there is a healthy working relationship between the mentor and intern, it becomes easy for the mentor to consistently give feedback to improve work performance and to gain the necessary skills. It was also confirmed in this section, that mentors may be influential in paving the way for job opportunities with fellow professional or even in the same department, if the intern is intelligent, performs extremely well and is motivated to assist other colleagues in the department with their tasks.

Theme 5: Recommendations for planning and managing a graduate internship programme

The study found that in order to meet the objectives of the internship programme at a resident university, there must be a good match between the mentor and intern. The mentor must be a specialist in his field; moreover, he must show interest to do the mentoring.

There must be clear objectives set that will be binding between the two parties. The objectives need to specify what the job entails, the work plan, expectations and what is not expected, from the onset.

It was also recommended that mentors must give interns opportunity to learn from their mistakes, however, it is advisable that both parties must first discuss what and how a task has to be completed and then give an intern the opportunity to be creative and innovative in performing such a task.

It has emerged that establishing exchange mentorship for interns would be a good idea. It was shown that interns can learn more from various environments and mentors. It may create a networking opportunity for interns should this initiative be taken into consideration.

Finally, interns expressed a need to be included in staff activities like attending departmental meetings, and staff activities like workshops and meetings. That would give them the opportunity to improve their learning exposure and get to understand better the real work situations.

Overall, the results indicated that graduate internship programme is effective in terms of providing interns with employability skills to assist them to secure decent permanent employment and career advancement.

7.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The study was limited to graduates with a minimum of 3-year diploma or degree from institutions of higher learning who had participated in one university's internship programme in the country between 2012 and 2017 only, thus, excluding those who participated prior 2012 and from other universities. The study also excluded graduates from other Education and Training (FET) institutions and did not consider gender nor race.

Interview questions were not quality assured by all parties as only administrative colleagues in the administration human resources department made inputs. Input by academics could have added value to this study.

There were challenges with the recording instrument during data collection. The instrument would stop recording as the interview proceedings were taking place. This

posed a challenge with regards to capturing of all the information, but, although some information could not be recorded, the scribe was also taking notes of all proceedings.

The effect of peer-group pressure and dominance by a few interns can never be fully avoided. To minimize the risk associated with group pressure and to obtain input from all, the researcher made a deliberate attempt to give all participants an opportunity to voice their opinions, hence, encouraged participation.

All participants honoured their appointments, except for 1 line manager who kept on changing the schedule, which eventually delayed the entire process - data collection and data analysis.

7.5 RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON THE FINDINGS

- The results indicated that a graduate internship programme has a positive impact on equipping graduates with employability skills, however, not all mentors are adequately equipped with the necessary skills to mentor interns. It is crucial that all mentors undergo mentorship training so that the effectiveness of an internship programme is not compromised. The appointment of mentors should be done based on performance of interns in the labour market. Even trained, not all mentors have a clear understanding of the purpose of an internship programme and by regarding interns as assistants instead of qualified professionals, the purpose and effectiveness of an internship programme will be jeopardized. Mentors who look interns to attend to meaningless tasks like making copies and to serve as their messengers must be forbidden to continue participating in the university's graduate internship programme. The university conducts survey every three years to follow-up on the whereabouts of its former interns; therefore, judgment may be passed based on the outcomes of those surveys.
- It is also recommended that quarterly monitoring and reviews of the internship programme be conducted. This will assist in detecting problems and challenges that interns are facing early in the process and allow corrective measures to be taken.

- Both interns and mentors must ensure that interns are placed in their field of study to ensure relevant exposure and working experience to better their chances of securing future employment.
- It is recommended that although interns are equipped with work-related competencies, they also need to learn job-hunting skills. The coordinator should arrange one training per each semester for all interns. This could be arranged with the Centre for Higher Education, Teaching and Learning (CHETL) within the university. The Centre offers this type of training to university final year students, tutors, student teaching assistants and student mentors from time to time.

7.6 SUMMARY

This chapter highlighted the conclusions and recommendations of the study. The results outlined the significant role an effective graduate internship programme can play in helping graduates find employment and capitalize on career development opportunities. The study also highlighted the important role played by the mentor regarding providing interns with opportunities to learn, to gain work experience and to receive career guidance.

According to the results, a successful internship programme would equip interns with skills to deal with conflict, problems, technical challenges, teamwork, client service, relationships and finding employment.

The success of an internship programme is however also dependent on the commitment and preparedness of the intern to work hard and go beyond the call of duty. Such behaviour would increase the likelihood of recommendations that could lead to job offers.

The important role played by internship programmes have been acknowledged by government who has recently extended internship programme from 1 year to 2 years. Not only will internship programmes contribute to the employability of students, but it would also play a central part of the National Skills Development Strategy.

REFERENCES

- Abayadeera, N. & Watty, K. 2016. Generic skills in accounting education in a developing country: Exploring evidence from Sri Lanka. *Asian Review of Accounting* 24(2): 149-170
- Adams, JD & Mabusela, MS. 2014. Assessing with role play: an innovation in assessment practice. *Journal of Social Sciences* 41(3): 363-374
- Ahmed, I. Ismail, W.K.W. Amin, S.M. Ramzan, M. & Khan, M.K. 2012. Theorizing antecedents of Perceived Organizational Support: A Literature Review Approach. *Middle East Journal of Scientific Research* 12 (5): 681-693
- Aigbavboa, C. & Oke, A.E. 2016. Implementation of Skills Development Act in the South African construction industry. *The Scientific Journal for Theory and Practice of Socio-economic Development* 5(9): 53-64
- Akaranga, S.I. & Makau, B.K. 2016. Ethical considerations and their applications to research: A case of the University of Nairobi. *Journal of Policy and Entrepreneurship Research* 3(12): 1-9
- Alghamdi, A.K.H. & Deraney, P. 2017. Teaching research skills to undergraduate students using an active learning approach: A proposed model for preparatory-year students in Saudi Arabia. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* 30(2): 184-194
- Ali-Mohammadi, F. & Ramezani, M. 2017. Evaluating the effectiveness of job rotation system and its impact on employees' readiness for job rotation. *International Review* 1(2): 27-35
- Amankwaa, L. 2016. Creating protocols for trustworthiness in qualitative research. *Journal of Cultural Diversity* 23(3): 121-127
- Anderson C. 2010. Presenting and evaluating qualitative research. *Indian Journal of Pharmaceutical Education and Research*: 74(8):141-163
- Anney, V.N. 2014. Ensuring the quality of the findings of qualitative research: Looking at trustworthiness criteria. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies* 5(2): 1-10
- Anozie, C.B. 2017. Literature Review for the Type of Interview in Qualitative Research. *International Journal of Education* (9)3: 86-97

- Arocena, P, Nunez, I and Vilanueva, M. 2007. The effect of enhancing workers' employability on small and medium enterprise: evidence from Spain. *Small Business Economics* 29: 191-201
- Babbie, E.R. 2013. *The basics of social research* 6th ed. Wadsworth Cengage Learning
- Babbie, E.R. & Mouton, J. 2010. *The practice of social research* 10th ed. Cape Town, South Africa: Oxford University Press Southern Africa
- Bacon, N. 2011. Unpaid internships: The history, policy and future implications of the fact sheet. *Journal of Ohio State Entrepreneurial Business Law* 6(1): 67-96
- Baeten, M. Dochy, F. & Struyven, K. 2008. Student's approaches to learning and assessment preferences in a portfolio-based learning. *Instructional Science* 36(5-6): 359-374
- Baldry, K. 2013. Graduate unemployment in South Africa: Prevalence, characteristics, and perceived causes. (Dissertation-MA). Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand
- Ballantine, J & McCourt Larres, P. 2009. Accounting undergraduates' perceptions of cooperative learning as a model for enhancing interpersonal and communication skills to interface successfully with professional accountancy education and training. *An International Journal of Accounting Education* 16(4): 387-402
- Balwanz, D. & Nqcwangu, S. 2016. Seven problems with the scarce skills discourse in South Africa. *South African Journal of Higher Education* 30(2): 31-52
- Barac, K. & du Plessis, L. 2014. Teaching persuasive skills to South African accounting students. *South African Business Review* 18(1): 53-78
- Bates, M. 2011. Work-integrated learning workload: the realities and responsibilities. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education* 12(3): 111-124
- Bates, L. & Hayes, H. 2017. Using the student's lifestyle approach to enhance employability: An example from criminology and criminal justice. *Asian-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education* 18(2): 141-151
- Beard, DF. 2007. Assessment of internship experiences and accounting core competencies, *Accounting Education* 16(2): 207-220
- Beheshtifar, M. Ali-Nezhad, H. & Mekoie-Moghadam, M. 2012. Investigation of Perceived Organisational Support on Employees' Positive Attitudes Towards Work. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business* 4(8): 432-442

- Bennett, D. 2016. *Enacting strategies for graduate employability: How universities can best support students to develop generic skills*. Final Report [Online]. Available from <http://graduateemployability.curti.edu.au/> [Accessed on 14 June 2019]
- Berezuik, S. 2010. Mentoring in emergency care: "Growing our own." *Emergency Nurse* 18(7): 12-15
- Biggs, J & Tang, C. 2011. *Teaching and quality learning at university: the Society for research in higher education*. 4th edition. Berkshire, England: McGraw-Hill
- Biggs, J. (1996). Enhancing teaching through constructive alignment. *Journal of Higher Education*, 32(3): 347–364
- Bjorklund, A. 2015. Eleven Eastern Cape teachers' perceptions of the implementation of the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement. Thesis in pedagogy in the field of curriculum reform
- Blitzer, E & Botha, N. 2011. *Curriculum enquiry in South African Higher Education – some scholarly affirmations and challenges*. Stellenbosch: SUN Press
- Bloch, G. 2009. *The toxic mix*. Cape Town: Tafelberg Publishers Ltd
- Bloom, BJ. 1956. *Taxonomy of educational objectives: the classification of educational goals Handbook I: Cognitive Domain*. New York, NY: Longmans
- Botha, M. & Bignotti, A. 2016. Internships enhancing entrepreneurial intent and self-efficacy: Investigating tertiary-level entrepreneurship education programme. *Southern African Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management* 8(1): a45
- Bhorat, H. & Visser, M. 2010. Student graduation, labour market destinations and employment earnings. Pretoria, South Africa: Employment and economic policy research programme. Human Science Research Council
- Bridgstock, R. 2009. The graduate attributes we've overlooked: Enhancing graduate employability through career management skills, *Higher Education Research Development* 28(1):31-44
- Bridgstock, R. & Cunningham, S. 2016. Creative labour and graduate outcomes: implications for higher education and cultural policy. *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 22 (1): 10–26
- Brinkmann, S. & Kvale, S. 2015. *Interviews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing*. Los Angeles, United States: Sage Publications

- Brown, GA, Bull, J & Bury, MP. 2013. *Assessing student learning in higher education*. New York, NY: Routledge
- Bryman, A. & Bell, e. 2015. *Business research methods* 4th ed. Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press
- Bukaliya, R. 2012. The potential benefits and challenges of internship programmes in an ODL institution: A case of the Zimbabwean open university. *International Journal on New Trends in Education and Their Implications* 3(1): 118-113
- Burnett, N. & Jayaram, S. 2012. Skills for Employability in Africa and Asia. Results for Development Institute California State Board of Equalization. Supervising an Intern [Online} Available from (www.boe.ca.gov/exams/sip_supervising_intern.htm) [Accessed on 23 March 2016]
- Butterwick, S & Benjamin, A. 2006. 'The road to employability through personal development: a critical analysis of the sciences and ambiguities of the British Columbia (Canada) life skills curriculum', *International Journal of Lifelong Education* 25(1): 75-86
- Bryman, A. & Bell, E. 2015. *Business research methods* 4th ed. Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press
- Cameron, A. & Woods, C. 2016. A proposed 'ladder of learning' for academics' professional development in teaching. *South African Journal of Higher Education* 30(6): 176-190
- Candela, A.G. 2019. Exploring the Function of Member Checking. *The Qualitative Report* 24(3): 619-628
- Chalofsky, N. & Cavallaro, L. 2013. A good living versus a good life: meaning, purpose, and HRD. *Journal of Advanced Development Human Resources* 15: 331-340
- Charmaz, K. 2014. *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis* 2nd ed. London, England: SAGE
- Chetty, R. 2012. Graduateness and employability in the higher education sector: A focused review of literature. In Coetzee, M, Botha, M, Eccles, N, Holtzhausen, N & Nienaber, H (eds). *Developing student graduateness and employability: Issues, provocations, theory and practical guidelines*. Randburg: Knowers
- Chindoga, L & Fatoki, O.O. 2012. Triggers and Barriers to Latent Entrepreneurship in High Schools in South Africa. *Journal of Social Sciences* 31(3): 307-318

- Clur, L.S 2015. *Returning to working: Exploring the lived experiences of the cancer survivor* (Masters dissertation). University of South Africa, Pretoria: South Africa
- Coetzee, M. 2012. Distance learning students' graduateness as predictors of their job satisfaction and optimism about future career prospects. *Journal of Social Sciences* 33(3): 305-313
- Coetzee, M. 2012. A framework for developing student graduateness and employability in the economic and management at the University of South Africa. In Coetzee, M. Botha, J. Eccles, N. Holtzhauzen, N. & Nienaber, H. (eds). *Developing student graduateness and employability: issues, provocations, theory and practical guidelines*. Randburg: Knowers
- Coetzee, S.A. & Schmulian, A. 2012. A critical analysis of the pedagogical approach employed in an introductory course to IFRS. *Issues in Accounting Education* 27(1): 83–100
- Comfort, J. & Franklin, P. 2010. *The Mindful International Manager*. Kogan Page
- Connelly, L.M. 2016. Trustworthiness in qualitative research. *Journal of the Academy of Medical-Surgical Nursing* 25(6): 435-446
- Corbin, J. & Strauss, A. 2015. *Basics of qualitative research* 4th ed. Los Angeles: SAGE
- Cord, B. & Clements, M. (2010): Pathway of Student Self-Development: A Learning-Oriented Internship Approach. *Australian Journal of Adult Learning* 50(2) 287-307
- Cote, M.J. (2005). Computer Skills for the Next Generation of Healthcare Executives. *The Journal of Health Administration Education*, 22 (1), 29–48.
- Creswell, J.W. 2009. *Research design: qualitative, quantitative and mixed method approaches* 3rd ed. Los Angeles: Sage Publications
- Creswell, J.W. 2015. *30 Essential skills for the qualitative researcher*. California, United State: Sage Publications
- Cuervo, H. 2016. *Understanding social justice in rural education*. Palgrave Macmillan
- Leibowitz, B. 2017. Rurality and Education. Working paper for SARiHE project [Online]. Available from <http://www.sarihe.org.za/publications> [Accessed on 20 May 2019]
- Cummings, T.G. & Worley, C.G. 2009: *Organization Development & Change* 9th ed. Masan: South-Western Cengage Learning

- Dacre Pool, L. 2016. Developing graduate employability: The CareerEDGE model and the importance of emotional intelligence. *Journal of Education and Training* 49(4): 317-338
- Davidson, M. Kinnear, F.B. & Fullbrook, P. 2018. Evaluation of a multiple-encounter in situ simulation for orientation of staff to a new pediatric emergency service. A single group pretest/post-test study. *BMJ-STEAC* 3: 149-153
- Daskalova, N. 2008. Employment expectations of students. European Working Conditions Observatory. Institute for Social and Trade Union Research [Online]. Available from: <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/ewco/200/03.BG0803039> [Accessed on 05 March 2016]
- Department of Economic Development. 2011. The New Growth Path Framework. Pretoria: Government Printer [Online]. Available from <http://economic.gov.za> [Accessed on 20 July 2016]
- Department of Education. Careers guidance and access for education and training providers statutory guidance for governing bodies, school leaders and staff. London: Department of Education
- Department of Higher Education and Training. 2010c. National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) III. Pretoria: Government Printer [Online]. Available from <http://dhet.gov.za> [Accessed on 14 June 2017]
- Department of Higher Education and Training. 2012. Framework for Cooperation in the provision of Career Development (Information, Advice and Guidance) Services in South Africa. Pretoria: Government Printer [Online]. Available from <http://dhet.gov.za> [Accessed on 31 March 2014]
- Department of Higher Education and Training. 2013. Statistics on post-school education and training in South Africa: 2011. Pretoria, South Africa. Form set Digital [Online]. Available from www.dhet.gov.za [Accessed on 30 March 2014]
- Department of Higher Education and Training. 2015. Extension of the National Skills Development Strategy. Pretoria: Government Printer [Online]. Available from <http://dhet.gov.za> [Accessed on 14 June 2017]
- Department of Higher Education and Training. 2016. Statistics on post-school education and training in South Africa. Pretoria, South Africa
- Department of Higher Education and Training. 2016. Sector skills plan framework and requirements. Pretoria: South Africa [Online]. Available from www.dhet.gov.za [Accessed on 19 April 2019]

Department of Higher Education and Training. 2016. Skills development Levies Act 2 of 2010 [online]. Available from www.dhet.gov.za/LegislationActs/Skills [Accessed on 30 July 2019]

Department of Higher Education and Training. 2018. National list of occupations in higher demand. Pretoria: Government Printers [Online]. Available from www.dhet.gov.za [Accessed on 1 February 2019]

Department of Labour (DOL). 2006. *National Scarce Skills Lists*. Pretoria: Department of Labour

Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA). 2006. *The Public Service Internship Programme: Step by Step Guide*. Pretoria: DPSA

Department of Public Service and Administration. 2007. White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service. Pretoria: DPSA

Department of Trade and Industry. 2008. Youth empowerment framework [Online]. Available from <http://www.dti.gov.za> [Accessed on 14 July 2014]

De Lannoy, A. Graham, L. Patel, L. & Leibbrandt, M. 2018. What drives youth unemployment and what interventions help? A systematic overview of the evidence and a theory of change. High-level overview report [Online]. Available from www.Redix3.org [Accessed on 7 March 2019]

Development Strategy (NSDS) III for a period of two years. Pretoria: Government Printer [Online]. Available from <http://dhet.gov.za> [Accessed on 23 June 2017]

Dikko, M. 2016. Establishing construct validity and reliability. Pilot testing of a qualitative interview for research in Takaful (Islamic insurance). *The Qualitative Report* 21(3): 521

Dobratz, C.L. Singh, R.P & Abbey, A. 2014. Using formal internships to improve entrepreneurship education programmes. *Journal of Entrepreneurship Education* 17(2): 62-76

DPSA (2006): The Public Service Internship Programme: Step by Step Guide [Online]. Available from www.dpsa.gov.za [Accessed on 11 November 2012]

Du Toit, R, & Van Zyl, E. 2012. An environmental scan of career advice services in South Africa. Pretoria: South African Qualifications Authority

Douglas, M. 2015. *Sources of data*. [Online]. Available from: <http://www.onlineetymologydictionary/data> [Accessed on 27 September 2017]

- Edgar, A.G & Castro, M. 2015. Industry participation in developing competencies for employment success: Learning from 3-years of OJT programme of De La Salle Lipa. *Journal of Management* 2(1): 1-20
- Elliot, V. 2018. Thinking about the Coding Process in Qualitative Data Analysis. *The Qualitative Report* 23(11): 2850-2861
- Engineering Council of South Africa. The Engineering Skills Pipeline [Online]. Available from www.ecsa.co.za/documents/.../241110_engineering_skills_pipeline.pdf [Accessed on 14 august 2014]
- Entwistle, N. & Ramsden, P. 2015. *Understanding student learning*. (Routledge Revivals). Routledge: United Kingdom
- Erasmus, B.J. Loedolff, P.V.Z. Mda, T.V. & Nel, P.S. 2013. *Managing training and development*. 6th ed. Cape Town: South Africa
- Erikson, M.G. & Erikson, M. 2018. *Learning outcomes and critical thinking – good intentions in conflict*. Studies in Higher Education, Routledge: United Kingdom
- ETDPSETA. 2012. the ETDPSETA Newsletter 2012 [Online]. Available from: www.etdpseta.org.za [Accessed 27 January 2013]
- Fairlie, P. 2013. Meaningful work, employee engagement, and other key employee outcomes: implications for human resource development. *Journal of Advanced Human Resource and Development* 13: 508-525
- Ferreira, L. & Rossouw, R. 2016. South Africa's economic policy on unemployment: A historical analysis of two decades of transition. *Journal of Economic and Financial Sciences* 9(3): 807-832
- Flick, U. 2017. Mantras and myths: The disenchantment of mixed-methods research and revisiting triangulation as a perspective. *Qualitative Inquiry* 23(1): 46-57
- Forbes. 2017. Seven new onboarding strategies you'll see this year. Available from <http://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescouchescouncil/2017/01/30/seven-new-onboarding-strategies-you'll-see-this-year/#6991aedc7b4> [Accessed on 1 February 2019]
- Fortin, A & Legault, M. 2010. Development of generic competencies: Impact of a mixed teaching approach on students' perceptions. *Journal of Accounting Education* 19(1/2): 93–122

- Fraenkel, JR. & Wallen, NE. 2006. *How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education*. 6th ed. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Fry, H. Ketteridge, S & Marshall, S. 2009. *A handbook for teaching and learning in Higher Education: Enhancing academic practice*. 3rd edition. Routledge: New York
- Fukami, C.V. Narayanan, V.K. & Olk, P.M. 2010. Determinants of internship effectiveness: An exploratory model. *Academy of Management Learning and Education* 9 (1): 61-80
- Fusch, P.I. & Ness, L.R. 2015. Are we there yet? Data saturation in qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report* 20(9): 1408
- Gapp, S.H. & Harwood, I. 2017. Exploring the alchemy of qualitative management research: Seeking trustworthiness, credibility and rigour through crystalisation. *The Qualitative Report* 22(1): 1-19
- Galloway, L. Marks, A. & Chillias, S. 2014. The use of internships to foster employability, enterprise and entrepreneurship in the IT sector. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development* 21(4): 653-667
- Gentles, S.J. Charles, C. Ploeg, J. & McKibbin, K. 2015. Sampling in qualitative research: Insights from an overview of the methods literature. *The Qualitative Report* 20(11): 1772-1789
- Gilakjani, A.P. 2017. A Review of the literature on the integration of technology into the learning and teaching of English language skills. *International Journal of English Linguistics* 7(5): 95-106
- Glaser, B.G. & Strauss, A. 1967. *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. New York, Aldine De Gruyter
- Goga, S. & van der Westhuizen, C. 2012. *Scarce Skills Information Dissemination*. Urbana, IL: Sagamore Publishing
- Gower, R.K. & Mulvany, M.A. 2012. *Making the Most of Your Internship: A Strategic Approach*. Urbana, IL: Sagamore Publishing
- Graham, L. & Mlatsheni, C. 2016. Youth unemployment in South Africa: Understanding the challenge and working on solutions. South Africa Labour and Development Unit, University of Cape Town: Cape Town

- Greenbank, P. 2015. Still focusing on the 'essential 2:1': Exploring student attitudes to extracurricular activities . *Education and Training* 57 (2):184–203
- Grobler, P.A. Warnich, S. Carrell, M.R. Elbert, N.F. & Hatfield, R.D. 2011. *Human resource management in South Africa*. 4th ed. Hampshire: CENGAGE Learning
- Guetterman, T.C. 2015. Descriptions of sampling practices within five approaches to qualitative research in education and the health sciences: *Qualitative Social Research* 16(2): 1-10
- Qwija, S.A. 2014. *Challenges and prospects of youth entrepreneurship in Khayelitsha, Western Cape (Doctoral thesis)*. Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Cape Town: South Africa
- Hadi, M.A. & Closs, S.J. 2016. Ensuring rigour and trustworthiness of qualitative research in clinical pharmacy. *International Journal of Clinical Pharmacy* 38(3) 641-646
- Hammarberg, K. Kirkman, M & de Lacey, S. 2016. Qualitative research methods: when to use them and how to judge them. *Human Reproductivity* 31(3): 498-501
- Heathfield, S.M., 2012. Empowerment Definition and Examples of Empowerment. Retrieved from: http://humanresources.about.com/od/glossary/a/empowerment_def.htm.
- Henard, F & Roseveare, D. 2012. *Fostering quality teaching in higher education: policies and practices: an Institutional Management in Higher Education (IMHE) guide for higher education institutions*. South Africa: OECD Publishing
- Hutter, I. Hennink, M. & Bailey, A. 2011. *Qualitative Research Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA : Sage Publications
- Hazenbergh, R., Seddon, F. & Denny, S. 2015. Programme recruitment and evaluation: the effect of an employability enhancement programme on the general. *Journal of Education and Work* 28 (3): 273–300
- Higher Education Quality Committee. 2004. *Improving teaching and learning staff development*. Resource 6:1-12; 16-18. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education
- Hill, J. Walkington, H. & France, D. 2016. Graduate attributes: Implications for higher education practice and policy. *Journal of Geography in higher Education* 40(2): 155-163
- Huddleston, P & Ashton, H. 2018. *Tell it like it is.: Education and employer engagement, freelance and self-employment. Essays on employer engagement in education*. Abdingdon: Routledge

- Human Resource Development Council of South Africa. 2013. Review of the current skills development system and recommendations towards the best model for delivering skills in the country.
- Hyun, J. Ediger, R.& Lee, D. 2017. Students' satisfaction on their learning process in active learning and traditional classrooms. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* 29(1): 108-118
- Islam, G.M.R. & Shafiq, S. 2016. Surface and deep approaches to learning in higher education: Global practice and lessons for Bangladesh. *Journal of Educational Research* 2(1): 45-56
- Ismail, A. Abdullah, M.M & Francis, S.K. 2009: Mentoring Programme and Its Impact on Individuals' Advancement in the Malaysian Context. *Journal of Industrial Engineering and Management* 2(3): 592-615
- Ismail, A. KhianJui, M.K & Abdullah, M.M. 2009: Formal Mentoring, Gender Type in Mentorship and Individuals' Psychosocial: A Moderating Model Approach. *Pakistan Journal of Commerce and Social Sciences* 2:10-24
- Jackson, D. 2014. Modelling graduate skill transfer from university to the workplace. *Journal of Education and Work* 29(2): 199-231
- Janesick, V. 2015. *Exercises for qualitative research*. 4th ed. Tampa, USA: Sage Publications
- Jawabri, A. 2017. Exploration of internship experience and satisfaction leading to better career prospects among business students in UAE. *American Journal of Educational Research* 5(10): 1065-1079
- Jones, A. 2009. Generic attributes as espoused theory: the importance of context. *Higher Education* 58: 175-191
- Jones, J. 2012. An analysis of learning outcomes within formal mentoring relationships. *International Journal of Evidence-Based Coaching and Mentoring* (10)1: 57-72
- Jordaan, C.J. 2014. *A strategy to link the informal and formal motor mechanic artisan training South Africa* (Doctoral thesis). Tshwane University of Technology, Pretoria: South Africa
- Jyoti, J. & Sharma, P. 2015. Impact of mentoring functions on career development: Moderating structure. *Global Business Review* 16(4): 1-19

- Kapareliotis, I. Voutsina, K. & Patsiotis, A. 2018. Internship and employability prospects : Assessing student's work readiness. *Higher Education, Skills and Workbased Learning Journal* 9(4): 538-549
- Kahlke. R.M. 2014. Generic qualitative approaches: Pitfalls and benefits of methodological mixology. *International Journal of Qualitative Research* 37-52
- Kerwin, S. Odio, M. & Sagas, M. 2014. The influence of the internship on students' career decision making. *Sport Management Education Journal* 8 (1): 46-58
- Knowles. M.S. Swanson, R.A. & Elwood, F. H. 2011. *The Adult Learner*, 7th ed. USA: Butterworth- Heinemann.
- Korstjens, I & Moser, A. 2018. Series: Practical guidance to qualitative research. Part 4: Trustworthiness and publishing. *European Journal of General Practice* 24(1): 120-124
- Kreber, C. 2014. Rationalising the nature of 'graduateness' through philosophical accounts of authenticity. *Teaching in Higher Education* (19)1: 90-100
- Kroeze, J.H. Ponelis, S.R. Venter, I.M. Pretorius, P.D.& Prinsloo, P. 2012. Aligning African Computing Disciplines' Graduate Attributes with International Standards
- Lazarus, D & Ferris, T.L.J. 2016. Assessing self-responsibility in employability competencies among Australian engineering students: Introductory report. *Proceedings of the 2016 International Conference in Industrial Engeneering and Operations Management. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 8-10 March 2016*
- Lemanski, C. 2011. Access and assessment? Incentives for independent study. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education* 36: 565-581
- Lepisto, D.A. & Pratt, M.G. 2017. Meaningful work as realization and justification toward a dual conceptualization. *Journal of Organisational Psychology* 7: 99-121
- Leong, R & Kavanagh, M. 2013. A work-integrated learning (WIL) framework to develop graduates' skills and attributes in an Australian University's accounting programme. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education* 14(1): 1-14
- Lincoln, Y.S. & Guba, E.G. 2013. *The constructivist credo*. Walnut Creek, California, United States: Left Local Press
- Linn, M.C, Palmer, E. Baranger, A. Gerard, E. & Stone, E. 2015. Undergraduate research experiences: Impact and Opportunities. *Science* 347, 1261757

- Loggenberg, B. 2015. *Employees' perceptions regarding the changes in labour broking* (Masters' dissertation) University of South Africa, Pretoria: South Africa
- Lolwana, P. Rossiter, G. & Dieltiens, V. 2012. A review of the Gauteng master skills plan. Education Policy Unit, University of Witwatersrand. Wits: Johannesburg
- Lopez, V. & Whitehead, D. 2013. *Nursing & midwifery research: Methods and appraisal for evidence-based practice* 4th ed. Elsevier: Mosby
- Machika, D.M. 2014. *Capacity building programme for the skills development of employees at the Gauteng Department of Education* (Doctoral thesis). North West University, Potchefstroom: South Africa
- Maddock, L. & Maroun, W. 2017. *Exploring the present state of South African Education: Challenges and recommendations*. University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg: South Africa
- Maertz, C. Stoeberl, P. & Marks, J. 2014. Building successful internships: lessons from the research for interns, schools, and employers. *International Journal of Career Development* 19(1): 123-142
- Majid, M.A.A. Othman, M. Mohamad, S.F. Lim, S & Yusof, A. 2017. Piloting for interviews in qualitative research: Operationalization and lessons learnt. *International Journal of Academic Business and Social Sciences*, 7(4): 1073-1080
- Manganye, S.S. 2008. Preparation of Students for the Corporate World. [Online]. Available from: www.sasce.co.za [Accessed 18 January 2013]
- Mckrill, L.J. *An investigation of enabling and constraining factors affecting the supply and demand of specific biodiversity scarce skills to the biodiversity sector* (Masters' dissertation). Rhodes University, Grahamstown: South Africa
- Mkhonza, J. & Letsoalo, A. 2017. *Understanding skills gaps in the public sector. Public Service Sector Education and Authority*. Pretoria: South Africa
- Manpower Group. 2018. *Talent shortage survey: Solving the talent shortage, build, buy, borrow, bridge*. United Kingdom
- Maodzwa-Taruvinga, M. & Cross, M. 2012. Jonathan Jansen and the curriculum debate in South Africa: An essay review of Jansen's writings between 1999 and 2009. *The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education: Curriculum Inquiry* 42(1): 126-152
- Maree, K. 2016. *First steps in research* 4th ed. Pretoria, South Africa: Van Schaik

- Martela, F. & Ryan, R.M. 2016a. The benefits of benevolence : basic psychological needs, beneficence, and the enhancement of well-being. *Journal of Organisational Psychology*. 84: 750-764
- Masemola, N. 2010. The empowering provincial HRD strategy summit [Online]. Available from www.edu.limpopo.gov.za. [Accessed on 24 April 2014]
- Mayfield, M. & Mayfield, J. 2012. *Effective Performance Feedback for Learning in Organisations and Organisational Learning*. Emerald Group Publishing Limited
- McManus, A. & Feinstein. 2014. Internships and occupational socialization: What are students learning? Developments in business simulation and experiential learning: Proceedings of the Annual ABSEL Conference, 35 [Online] . Available from <https://absel.ojsttu.tdl.org/absel/index.php/absel/article/view/396>. [Accessed on 14 February 2019]
- Merriam, S.B. & Tisdell, E.J. 2015. *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* 4th ed. New York, United States: John Wiley & Sons
- MERSETA. 2010. Sector Skills Plan 2010/11-2015/16: Promoting Artisan Development for Employability
- Mesly, O. 2015. *Creating models in psychological research*. Etats-Unis: Springer
- MICT SETA. 2012. Sector Skills Plan 2013-2018 Version 1.3 [Online]. Available from www.mict.org.za [Accessed on 20 September 2015]
- Mlambo-Ngcuka, P. 2006. Media Briefing: A catalyst for Accelerated and Shared Growth-South Africa (ASGISA) [Online]. Available from <http://www.thepresidency.gov.za> [Accessed on 15 July 2017]
- Mncayi, P. & Dunga, S.H. 2016. Career choice and unemployment length: A study of graduates from a South African university. *Journal of Industry and Higher Education* 30(6): 413-423
- Mohaidin, N.J. Super, M. Ibrahim, M.A. Sidik, M.H.J. 2016. *Employers' perception on internship programme*. Kuala Lumpur: Malaysia.
- Mohajan, H. 2016. Knowledge is an essential element of present world. *International Journal of Publication and Social Studies* 1(1): 31-53
- Mohajan, H. 2017. Research methodology. Chittagong: Bangladesh [Online] Available from <https://mapra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/83457/> [Accessed on 25 July 2019]

- Molapo, M.R. 2016. How educators implement curriculum changes. Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the Degree Magister Educationis in Educational Management. University of South Africa.
- National Treasury. 2011. *Confronting Youth Unemployment: Policy Options for South Africa: Discussion Paper for Public Comment*. Pretoria: National Treasury.
- National Youth Commission. 1997. *National Youth Policy*. Office of the President, South Africa. Pretoria: Government Print.
- Ncube, T.T. 2016. *The intrinsic motivational factors of small and medium business growth: A study of the furniture manufacturing sector in EThekweni Metropolitan area* (Doctoral thesis). Durban University of Technology, Durban: South Africa
- Ndhambi, S. 2015. The Politics of South Africa's Macro-Economic Policy: A critical study of Growth, Employment and Distribution Strategy (GEAR) 1996-2010. Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Political Science – University of Limpopo, South Africa
- Osman, M. Weerakoddy, V & Hindi, N. 2017. Graduate attributes in higher education: examining academics' perception in the Middle East. *Journal of Education for Business* 92(2): 53-64
- Patton, M.Q. 2015. *Qualitative research and evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice* 4th ed. Thousand Oaks, California, United States: Sage Publications
- Parsloe, E. & Wray, M. 2004. *Coaching and Mentoring – Practical Methods for Improving Learning*, London: Kogan Page.
- Pauw, K. Oosthuizen, M. & van der Westhuizen, C. 2006. *Graduate Unemployment in the Face of Skills Shortages: A Labour Market Paradox*. South Africa, 18 - 20 October 2006. Development Policy Research Unit (DPRU).
- Percy, W.H. Kostere, K. & Kostere, S. 2015. Generic qualitative research in Psychology, *Qualitative Report* 20(2): 76–85
- Pernsteiner, A.J. 2015. The value of an accounting internship: What do accounting students really gain? *Journal of Academy of Educational Leadership* 19(3): 233-245
- Petersen, I., Louw, J. & Dumont, K. 2009. Adjustments to university and academic performance among disadvantaged students in South Africa. *Journal of Educational Psychology* 29(1): 99-113

- Pheko, M.M & Molefhe, K. 2017. Addressing employability challenges: a framework for improving the employability of graduates in Botswana. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth* 22(4): 455-469
- Polit, D.F. & Hungler, B.P. 2013. *Essentials of nursing research: Methods, appraisals and utilization* 8th ed. Philadelphia, United States: Lippincott, Williams and Wilkins
- Pop, A.C. 2009. A National Skills Development Graduate Internship Programme as a Talent Retention Strategy. Masters of Business Administration thesis. University of Pretoria, Pretoria
- Powell, M. and Peter Short. 2013. *A Consultation Paper providing a Review and Background of the Botswana National Internship Programme*. The Centre for Employment Initiatives.
- Ramaphosa, M.C. 2018. *Opening Address: Proceedings of the launch of the Youth Employment Initiative*. South Africa. March 2018. Government Press
- Ramaphosa, MC. 2018. *Opening Address: Proceedings of the Job Summits*. South Africa. October 2018. Government Press
- Raphotle, M. 2012. South African Literature Review on the Institutional forms in South Africa Cater for the Education and Training Needs of Out-of-School, Unemployed Youth and of Adults
- Raub, S. & Blunschi, S. 2014. The power of meaningful work: how awareness of CSR initiatives fosters task significance and positive work outcomes in service employees. *Journal of Organisational Psychology* 55: 10-18
- Reddy, V. 2016. Skills supply and demand in South Africa. Human Science Research Council.. Pretoria: LMIP Publication. [Online]. Available from: https://hsrc.ac.za/uploads/pageContent/7429/LMIP_SkillsSupplyandDemand_Sept2016.pdf [Accessed 21 March 2018]
- Reddy, V. Rogan, M. Mncwango, B & Chabane, S. 2018. *Occupations in higher demand in South Africa: A technical report*. Labour market intelligence, Government Printers: South Africa
- Reilly, N.P. Sirgy, M.J. and Gorman, C.A. 2012. Work and Quality of Life: *Ethical Practices in Organizations*. New York: Springer Publishing

- Republic of South Africa. 2001. The National Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa [Online]. Available from <http://www.thepresidency.gov.za> [Accessed on 15 August 2018]
- Republic of South Africa. 2002. The National Youth Service Development Policy Framework 2002 – 2007 [Online]. Available from <http://www.thepresidency.gov.za> [Accessed on 15 August 2018]
- Republic of South Africa. 2008. Joint Initiative Priority South Africa. Pretoria: Government Printer [Online]. Available from <http://www.thepresidency.gov.za> [Accessed on 16 August 2018]
- Republic of South Africa. 2010. Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa 2010 2030. Pretoria: Government Printer [Online]. Available from <http://www.dhet.gov.za> [Accessed 18 August 2018]
- Republic of South Africa. 2015. National Youth Policy 2015 – 2020 [Online]. Available from <http://www.thepresidency.gov.za> [Accessed on 18 august 2018]
- Republic of South Africa. National Youth Development Agency. 2015. National Youth Policy 2015 – 2020 [Online]. Available from <http://www.thepresidency.gov.za> [Accessed on 18 August 2018]
- Ridley, D. 2008. *The Literature Review: A Step-by -Step Guide for Students*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Ridley, D. 2012. *The Literature Review: A Step-by -Step Guide for Students*. 2nd edition Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Robert, P. & Saar, E. 2012. Learning and working: The impact of the “ double status position” on the labour market entry process of graduates in CEE countries. *European Social Review* 28(6): 742-754
- Rolfe, A. Mentoring for Career Development. Synergetic People Development Pty Limited A.C.N [Online]. Available from www.newcastle.edu.au/Resources/Divisions/Services/.../10career.pdf [Accessed on 23 May 2013]
- Rowe, AD.D. & Zegward, K.C. 2017. Developing graduate employability skills and attributes: Curriculum enhancement through work-integrated learning. *Asian-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education* 18(2): 87-99

- Rudhumbu, N. Makambe, U. Mkali, O & Ndlovu, B. 2016. Understanding graduate employability: A case of selected higher education institutions in Botswana. *European Journal of Training and Development Studies* 3(2):1-16
- Saldana. J. 2016. *The coding manual for qualitative researchers 3rd ed.* Los Angeles, California, United States: Sage Publications
- Sanahuja, V.G. & Ribes, G.G. 2015. Effectiveness of business internships on students, employers and higher education institutions: A systematic review. *Journal of Employment Counseling* 52(3): 121-130
- Sandberg, J. 2008. For Many Employees, A Dream Job is One That's Isn't a Nightmare. *Wall Street Journal*. B1.
- Saniter, N. & Siedler, T. 2014. Door open or waste of time? The effects of student internships on labor market outcomes, IZA discussion papers 8141, Institute for the Study of Labour (IZA) [Online]. Available from <https://ideas.repec.org./p/iza/izadsps/dp8141.html> [Accessed on 14 February 2014]
- Schuwirth, LW & van der Vleuten, CP. 2011. Programmatic assessment: from assessment of learning to assessment for learning. *Med Tech* 33: 478-485
- Shelly, G. Cashman, T.J. Gunter, R.E. & Gunter, G.A. 2010. *Teachers discovering computers. Integrating technology and digital media in the classroom.* USA: Cengage
- Shivoro, R. Shaleyfu, R.K. & Kadhila, N. 2017. Embedding graduate employability attributes in management sciences curricula: A case of two Namibians universities. *Journal of Teaching and Learning for Graduate Employability* 8(1): 123-136
- Simin Ghavifekr, S. & Rosdy, W.A.W. 2015. Teaching and learning with technology: Effectiveness of ICT integration in schools. *International Journal of Research in Education and Science* 1(2): 175-191
- Singh, S. & Dixit, P.K. 2011. Employee Empowerment : A Light on the Real Meaning of the Philosophy. *International Journal of Business and Management Research* 1 (90:587-593
- Shoenfelt, E.L, Stone, N.J. & Kottke, J.L. 2013. Internships: An established mechanism for increasing employability. *Journal of Industrial and Organisational Psychology* 6(1): 24-27

Skills Migration in South Africa'. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management* 9(1): 287-298.

Smith, D.J.: (2006): *Legislative Perspective on the Critical Cross-Field Outcomes*.

University of Pretoria. Pretoria: South Africa

Somekh, B. & Lewin, C. 2011. *Theory and Methods in Social Research* 2nd ed.

Manchester, United Kingdom: Sage Publications

St. Edward's University Centre for Teaching Excellence. 2004. Task-Oriented Question Construction Wheel Based on Bloom's Taxonomy

Statistics South Africa. 2011. *Mid-year Population Estimates 2011*. Statistical Release P0302. Pretoria: Statistics South Africa.

Statistics South Africa. 2012. *Quarterly Labour Force Survey, Quarter 1, 2012*. Statistical Release P0211. Pretoria: Statistics South Africa

Statistics South Africa. 2012. *Quarterly Labour Force Survey, Quarter 1, 2012*.

Statistical Release P0211. Pretoria: Statistics South Africa

Statistics South Africa. 2018. *Quarterly Labour Force Survey, Quarter 2, 2018*.

Statistical release P0211. Pretoria: Statistics South Africa

Steenkamp, L. 2015. *South Africa's economic policies on unemployment: A historical analysis of two decades of transition*. A Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree *Magister Commercii* in Economics at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University

Steinmann, N. 2006.: *Fundamentals for Effective Mentoring: Raising Giant Killers*.

Randburg: Knowres Publishing

Stover, S. & Ziswiler, K. 2017. Impact of active learning environments on Community of Inquiry. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* 29(3): 458-470

Streubert, HJ. & Carpenter, DR. 2011. *Qualitative Research in Nursing: Advancing the Humanistic Imperative*. 5th ed. Wolters Kluwer. Lippincott Williams & Wilkins

Stuart, M. 2010. *The National Skills Development Handbook 2010/11*. Rainbow SA publishers, South Africa: Johannesburg

Stuckey, H. 2014. The first step in data analysis: Transcribing and managing qualitative research data. *Journal of Social Health and Diabetes* 2(1): 6-12

- Sutton Trust. 2017. *The state of social mobility*. London: Sutton Trust
- Sutton, J. & Austin, Z. 2015. Qualitative Research: Data Collection, Analysis, and Management. *The Canadian Journal of Hospital Pharmacy* 68: 226 - 231
- Top Graduates: Double Digit Economic Growth. 2011-12. (2): 11. Queensland: Queensland Government Press.
- Transport Education Training Authority. 2016. Heart of skills innovation [Online]. Available from <http://www.teta.org.za> [Accessed on 20 April 2019]
- Tshikululu Social Investments. 2010. ASGISA's quite death – where to next South Africa's economic policy [Online]? Available from <http://www.tshikululu.org.za/asgisa> [Accessed on 19 February 2016]
- Tuffour, I. 2017. A critical overview of interpretative phenomenological analysis: A contemporary qualitative research approach 2(4):51-55
- Turner, M. Halabi, A.K. Sartorius, K. & Arendse, J. 2013. An investigation of the efficiency of South Africa's sector education and training authorities (SETAs). *South African Journal of Business Management* 44(2): 1-9
- Turner, W.D., Solis, O.J. & Kincade, D.H. 2017. Differentiating instruction for large classes in higher education. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* 29(3): 490-500
- Uddin, S. Khan, M.A. Uddin, M.K. and Solaiman, M. 2015. University-Industry collaboration (UIC) for developing skilled and productive business graduates in Bangladesh. *International Journal of Business Management* 5(1), 31-41
- Van der Berg, G.H. 2012. *Furthering the Education of Young Adults – An Analysis of Statistics South Africa's Internship Programme*. University of South Africa, South Africa
- Velez, G.S. & Giner, G.R. 2015. Effects of business internships on students, employers, and higher education institutions. A systematic review. *Journal of Employment Counselling* 52(3): 121-130
- VitalStats. 2012. Public Higher Education. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education.

Vosloo, J.J. 2014. *A sport management programme for educator training in accordance with the diverse needs of South African schools*. A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the PhD degree in Movement Education at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University

Warner, T. 2015. Enhancing student engagement and active learning through just-in-time teaching and use of PowerPoint. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* 27(1): 154-163

Weddle, P. 2010. Why employers don't hire perfectly qualified people [Online]. Available from <http://asg.org/career/resources/articles/hiring-perfectly-qualified-people.htm> [Accessed on 14 October 2017]

Wedekind, V. & Mutereko, S. 2016. Higher education responsiveness through partnerships with industry: The case of a university of technology programme. *Journal of Development South Africa* 33(3): 376-389

Wilmot, L. & Merino, A. 2015. A personal reflection of the impact of adopting a student-centred teaching approach to influence accounting students' approaches to learning. *South African Journal of Higher Education* 29(6): 257-274

Wolff, H.G. & Moser, K. 2009. Effects of networking on career success: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 94 (1): 196–206

World Economic Forum. 2018. *The future of jobs report 2018*. Geneva: Switzerland

Yield, N. 2010. *Some challenges and responses. Higher Education in South Africa. Discourse*. University of Johannesburg. Johannesburg: South Africa

Yilmaz, K. 2013. Comparison of Quantitative and Qualitative Research Traditions: epistemological, theoretical and methodological differences. *European Journal of Education* 48(2): 311-325

Yin, R.K. 2014. *Case Study Research Design and Methods* 5th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Yorke, M. 2006. *Employability in higher education: what it is – what is not. ESECT, Learning and Employability, Series 1*. The Higher Education Academy

Yusuf, N. & Metiboba, S. 2012. Work environment and job attitude among employees in a Nigerian work organisation. *Journal of Sustainable Society* 1(2): 36-43

APPENDIX A



**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT RESEARCH, ETHICS AND
INNOVATION COMMITTEE**

15 November 2016

Ref#: 2016_HRM_017 Name of applicant: Mrs L Mariba Student#: 4021-853-8

Dear Mrs Mariba

Decision: Ethics approval

Name: Mrs Mariba [maribal@univen.ac.za; 082 463 9374]

Proposal: The effectiveness of a graduate internship programme in enhancing employment and career development opportunities for South African youths.

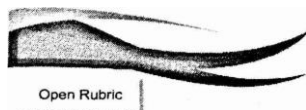
Qualification: M.Com Business Management

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance to the Department of Human Resource Management Research, Ethics Innovation Committee for the above mentioned research. Final approval is granted for the duration of the project.

Full approval: The application was reviewed in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics by the Department of Human Resource Management Research, Ethics and Innovation Committee on 15th of November 2016 and full approval of the projects is granted.

The proposed research may now commence with the proviso that:

- 1) The researcher/s will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
- 2) Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study, as well as changes in the methodology, should be communicated in writing to the Department of Human Resource Management Research, Ethics and Innovation Committee. An amended application could be requested if there are substantial changes from the existing proposal, especially if those changes affect any of the study-related risks for the research participants.
- 3) The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study.
- 4) Considering that the University of Venda require an ethics certificate from UNISA, the researcher



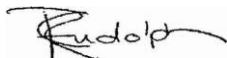
University of South Africa
 Preller Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tswane
 PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa
 Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150
 www.unisa.ac.za

provides the Department of Human Resource Management Research, Ethics Innovation Committee with a copy of the permission letter obtained from the University of Venda. The supervisor of the researcher remains responsible to ensure that the permission letter acquired from the University of Venda is submitted prior to fieldwork by the researcher to the Department of Human Resource Management Research, Ethics Innovation Committee.

Note:

The reference number (top right corner of this communique) should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication (e.g. Webmail, E-mail messages, letters) with the intended research participants, as well as with the Department of Human Resource Management Research, Ethics and Innovation Committee.

Kind regards,



Mrs EC Rudolph
DREG Deputy Chair
Department of Human Resource Management
rudolec@unisa.ac.za



Prof MT Mogale
Executive Dean
College of Economic and Management
Sciences



	INTERVIEW QUESTIONS - CURRENT INTERNS
1	To what extent have you and your mentor outlined both your expectations of the programme?
2	Does the programme offer you enough opportunities to learn new skills
3	How meaningful and relevant is your learning?
4	Which skills do you regard as the most important to have when entering the job market? Why?
5	To what extent should internship programmes equip Interns with strategic skills?
5 6	Which skills, so far you feel you are still lacking that must be covered by the internship programme, are critical in the workplace?
7	Can employability skills such as independence, flexibility, initiative and responsibility be acquired during internship or mostly during permanent employment? What is your opinion?
8	How does performance reviews enable you to develop and improve performance?
9	How do you ensure that the tasks and responsibilities allocated to you are linked to your career goals?
10	How do you cope with having to master a variety of skills
11	To what extent does your mentor take personal interest in your career success?
12	Based on the work you have been exposed to so far, have you discovered as to whether you have made a good career choice that you would wish to pursue in the future? Please explain?
13	To what extent are you as an intern being held accountable for results?
14	To what extent are you currently sufficiently prepared to take responsibility for your actions once in permanent employment?
15	How is your treatment as an Intern differ from other permanent colleagues in the department?

	INTERVIEW QUESTIONS - FORMER INTERNS
1	Would you have acquired the skills you have if it had not been for the Internship programme?
2	Was what you learned in the programme meaningful and relevant to your current job?
3	To what extent has your internship prepared you for the world of work?
4	Which skills that you acquired during your internship are the most important to have in the workplace?
5	How do the tasks and responsibilities allocated to you during your Internship relate to your current job?
6	How much did the internship programme provide you with enough skills to succeed in your job?
7	To what extent did your mentor play a significant role in your career?
9	How did the internship enable you to acquire soft skills such as problem solving, conflict management and decision making?
10	How did the internship programme contribute to your confidence and assertiveness in the workplace?
11	To what extent should internship programmes equip Interns with strategic skills?
12	How did the internship programme equip you with the skills to deal with unfair treatment and office politics?
13	How did your treatment as an Intern differ from being a permanent employee?
14	Can employability skills such as independence, flexibility, initiative and responsibility be acquired during internship or mostly during permanent employment?
15	To what extent are interns sufficiently prepared to take responsibility for their actions once in permanent employment?
16	Which skills, that were not covered by the internship programme, are critical in the workplace or in your current job?

	INTREVIEW QUESTIONS - MENTORS
1	How do you allow Interns enough opportunities to transfer learning to the workplace?
2	To what extent do the admission criteria for Interns result in quality candidates
3	How do you ensure that Internship programme expectations meet workplace expectations?
4	Which skills do you focus on when you prepare Interns for the job market?
5	What role does performance reviews play in an internship programme?
6	How are Interns' personal career goals linked to the allocation of tasks and responsibilities?
7	To what extent are Interns enabled to perform a variety of tasks?
8	To what extent do you take ownership for the task of being a mentor?
9	What were the main reasons for Interns changing their career goals during their internship if any?
10	How do you attempt to teach soft skills such as problem solving, conflict management and decision making?
11	How do you empower Interns?
12	How do you identify and deal with barriers preventing Interns from progressing?
13	How often do you need to meet with your Interns?
14	How much participation and involvement do you allow Interns when it comes to issues beyond the immediate work environment?
15	How often do you need to protect Interns from unfair treatment and office politics?
16	To what extent are Interns treated as colleagues?
17	How was the Intern equipped with employability skills such as independence, flexibility, initiative and responsibility?
18	To what extent are Interns being held accountable for results?
19	Which employability skills do you regard as the most important?

APPENDIX B4

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS - LINE MANAGERS	
1	To what extent does your former intern able to apply now in the workplace what he or she learned during the internship programme?
2	In your opinion, does the Internship programme produce quality candidates based on your observation of your former intern's performance?
3	Which skills are the most important for your former Intern to apply in his or her current job?
4	To what extent are Interns multi-skilled?
5	To what extent does the internship programme equip Interns with confidence and assertiveness?
6	To what extent can Interns be empowered after completing the internship programme?
7	In which areas that you discovered that the internship programme failed in equipping your former interns who is now your subordinate or colleague ?
8	Now that your former intern is your colleague in the Department, to what extent does he or she capable of providing input or making contributions as regards to strategic matters within the Department?
9	How skilful is your former Intern in dealing with unfair treatment and office politics?
10	To what extent do former Interns possess employability skills such as independence, flexibility, initiative and responsibility?
11	To what extent does your former intern prepared to be held accountable for his or her actions when executing his or her duties?

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I, _____ (participant name),
confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about
the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconveniences of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the
information sheet.

I have had enough opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time
without penalty.

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal
publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept
confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recording of the interview session.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant's Name & Surname..... (please print)

Participant's Signature.....Date.....

Researcher's Name & Surname.....(please print)

Researcher's signature.....Date.....

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

09 August 2016

The Effectiveness of a Graduate Internship Programme in Enhancing Employment and Career Development Opportunities for South African Youths

Dear Prospective Participant

My name is Louisa Mariba and I am doing research with Prof. Mariette Coetzee, a professor, in the Department of Human Resource Management towards a master's degree at the University of South Africa. We are inviting you to participate in a study entitled "The Effectiveness of a Graduate Internship Programme in Enhancing Employment and Career Development Opportunities for South African Youths."

I am conducting this research to find out whether or not the exposure, skills and experience that interns acquire during their participation in the graduate internship programme at a university under study, is of assistance to them, as far as finding employment and in making informed decisions regarding their career choices.

According to the records at my disposal, you are one of the **former interns** of the graduate programme under my administration. Approximately ten (10) former interns are expected to participate in structured interview wherein the discussions will be audio recorded for record keeping and quality purposes. I, as a researcher will be conducting interviews with the former interns who will accept this invitation. Interviews will be conducted face-to-face or telephonically, depending on the location of the interviewee at the time. Attached please find the prepared structured questions that I will be asking during the interview. The time allocated for the meeting will be approximately a maximum of 30 minutes. I have until the end of October to complete the interviews.

Kindly note that your participation in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form which is attached hereto. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving any reason.

The study is solely for me in fulfilling the requirements of my master's programme, however, your participation will be invaluable in the improvement and management of the programme, from which current and other prospective graduate interns can benefit.

My study is supported by my line manager as the outcomes of the research will directly affect the management of our programme. No harm or injury is expected as this study does not involve any chemical or any related experiments, but only interviews that will take place on campus or telephonically.

Your response during the interview sessions will be treated confidentially and under no circumstances will your names be mentioned or identified in the report. That is, you have the right to indicate that your name should not be recorded anywhere and that no one, apart from me, the researcher and other identified research team members, will know about your involvement in the research. Your answers will be given a code number, or a pseudonym and you will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings. Any records that identify you will be available only to people working on the study and they will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement.

Hard copies of your answers will be stored by me, the researcher, for a period of five years in a locked cupboard/filing cabinet in my office at the Main Admin Building Office No. 28 for future research or academic purposes; electronic information will be stored on a password-protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subjected to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable. After five years of storing data, all hard copies will be destroyed. Notes taken during the interview will be shredded whereas tapes will be burnt.

There will be no payment or reward to be offered for your participation, the study is not sponsored for anything, other than tuition and other expenses like editing, printing and binding of the study document.

The study complies with the ethical requirements of UNISA as it has received written approval from the Departmental Research Ethics Committee (DREC).

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact me, Louisa Mariba on 015 962 8530 or 082 463 9374 or louisa.mariba@univen.ac.za. The findings are accessible for five years. Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Prof. Mariette Coetzee at 012 429 3008 or 086 6829 268 or at Coetzm@unisa.ac.za. Alternatively, contact the chairperson of the DREC, Ms EC Rudolph. She can be contacted at 012 429 2586 or email her at rudolec@unisa.ac.za.

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

.....

Louisa Mariba

Confidentiality Agreement

Title of Research Project: The Effectiveness of a Graduate Internship Programme in Enhancing Employment and Career Development Opportunities for South African Youths

This is to certify that I, _____, am a statistician of the research project as mentioned above. I understand that I may have access to confidential information about the study and its participants. By signing this statement, I fully agree to the following:

- I understand that any information (written, verbal or any other form) obtained during the performance of my duties must remain confidential and in line with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics. This includes all information about participants, their employees/their employers/their organisation, as well as any other information.
- I understand that any unauthorised release or carelessness in the handling of this confidential information is considered a breach of the duty to maintain confidentiality.
- I further understand that any breach of the duty to maintain confidentiality could be grounds for immediate dismissal and/or possible liability in any legal action arising from such breach.

Full Name of Statistician: _____

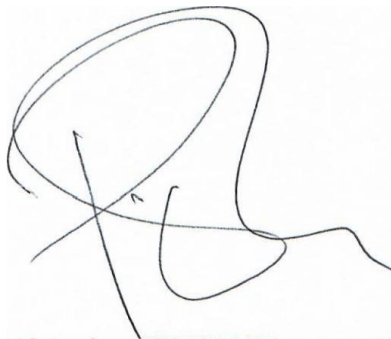
Signature of Statistician: _____ Date: _____

Full Name of Researcher: _____

Signature of Researcher: _____ Date: _____

15 May, 2020

This is to indicate that I, **Dr P Kaburise**, of the English Department, University of Venda, have proofread the research report titled - **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A GRADUATE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME IN ENHANCING EMPLOYMENT AND CAREER - DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOUTH AFRICAN YOUTHS** - by **Louisa Munyadziwa Mariba** (student number: 40218538). I have indicated some amendments which the student has undertaken to effect, before the final report is submitted.



Dr P Kaburise (0794927451)

Dr P Kaburise: BA (Hons) University of Ghana (Legon, Ghana); MEd University of East Anglia (Cambridge/East Anglia, United Kingdom); Cert. English Second Language Teaching, (Wellington, New Zealand); PhD University of Pretoria (South Africa)