# Exploring the Relationship Between Internship and Employability

**By**

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree to be awarded:

**Doctor of Philosophy (Education)**

School of Education

University of KwaZulu-Natal

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**2020**

# ABSTRACT

This study aims to shed light on the current debate regarding the role of internships in higher education in graduates' employability. Facing unparalleled challenges to deal with the problem of graduate unemployment, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are gradually anxious with the professional insertion of their graduates in the labour market. Graduates, academics and employers from three sectors of the Mauritian economy – Finance, ICT, Hotel and Accommodation who have participated in internships were interviewed for this study.

This study aims to assess the importance of internships for the employability of graduate students. Three inter-related dimensions are explored. Firstly, the extent to which the introduction of internships in study programmes contributes to the decrease in graduate unemployment rates is analysed. Second, the extent to which the different features of internships, namely those associated with their length and structure, contribute to lower graduate unemployment rates is assessed. Thirdly, the internship approaches, which seem to allow greater job preparedness, namely those related to interns' supervision entailing close collaboration between universities and employers, are discussed.

The key findings of the study were the perspectives on graduate attributes, perspectives on an internship, academic learning for employability, workplace learning for employability, additional learning for employability, and the challenges and opportunities in preparing graduates for employability. Both employers and academics in this study displayed their interest and initiative to lead change in their respective environments and for their benefit. Further, the new collaboration between academics and employers provide graduates with relevant internships.

Results demonstrate that study programmes that include internships tend to significantly enhance graduates' employability, particularly within the universe public higher education institutions. Besides the instrumental value of internships, the impact of the nature and structure of the internship on the percentage of unemployed graduates who get a job after an internship with the same employer are also discussed. Mandatory internships and the inclusion of multiple, shorter internships throughout the degree are negatively associated with unemployment levels because employers prefer long duration placement of graduates. Results also indicate work-based learning can be used as a successful strategy to bridge theoretical knowledge and practice and

enhance graduate employability. These findings provide important insights for the evaluation and/or the design of internship programmes in higher education.

Benefits of internships are extensively reported in the majority of interviews dealing with the professional integration of graduates. There is a consensus that internships can be regarded as an institutional mechanism that facilitates graduates' transition from higher education to work. Thus, showing that there is a relationship between internship and employability.

***Keywords:*** *Internships, labour market, graduate employability work-based learning, graduate attributes, higher education institutions, employers, collaboration, transition, relationship, (un)employment.*

# DECLARATION OF OWN WORK

I, **Julien Pierre Jacques Marie - Jeanne** declare that,

i. The research reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original work.

ii. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

iii. This thesis does not contain other person's data, pictures, graphs or other information unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers.

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Signed: 

**Prof. Labby Ramrathan: _____**

**Supervisor**

**Dr. Fawzia Bibi Narod: _____**

**Co - Supervisor**

**Date: 24.01.2020**

# ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI YAKWAZULU-NATALI

14 November 2014

**Mr JPJ Marie-Jeanne 213573504**
**School of Education**
**Edgewood Campus**

**Dear Mr Marie-Jeanne**

**Protocol reference number: HSS/1486/014D**
**Project title: Theorising the relationship between internship and employability**

**Full Approval – Expedited Application**

In response to your application received 31 October 2014, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol have been granted **FULL APPROVAL.**

**Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.**

**PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.**

**The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.**

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

.....

**Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)**
**Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee**

/pm

Cc Supervisor: Dr F O'Brien & Dr FB Narod
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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the graduates, academics and employers who agreed to be interviewed.

Thanks to colleagues, friends and family for their support and encouragement – especially my wife Sumathi, Joel and Eliezer.

Thanks to Professor Labby Ramrathan and Dr, Fawzia Narod for their patient, positive and thorough feedback. To you my deepest gratitude, I could not have made it to this point without your expertise, encouragement and extraordinary support. You have taught me the invaluable lesson of trusting myself as a researcher.

Thanks to Professor Michael Samuel, Dr Frances Obrien, and my lecturers from UKZN and MIE Higher Education, Research, Teaching and Learning.

# LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| ACCI | Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry |
| ACCI/BCA | Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry & Business Council of Australia |
| BCA | Business Council Australia |
| CBI | The Confederation of British Industry |
| CBI/NUS | The Confederation of British Industries and the National Union of |
| CEDA | Committee of economic development of Australia |
| CIPD | Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development |
| CSO | Central Statistical Office |
| CTI | Charles Telfair Institution |
| DEST | Department of Education and Training |
| DIUS | Department for Innovation, Universities, and Skills |
| DJ&SB | Department of jobs and small business—Employability skills training |
| DLHE | Destinations of Leavers of Higher Education |
| DTP | Dual Training Program |
| ELT | Experiential Learning Theory |
| GCA | Graduate Careers Australia |
| HEFCE | Higher Education Funding Council for England |
| HEIs | Higher Educational Institutions |
| HESA | Higher Education Statistics Agency |
| HRDC | Human Resources Development Council |
| ICT | Information and Communication Technology |
| ILO | International Labour Organisation |
| IMF | International Monetary Fund |
| JEC | Joint Economic Council |
| MITD | Mauritius Institute of Training and Development |
| MKO | More Knowledgeable Other |
| MLIRET | Ministry of Labour Industrial Relations and Employment |
| MoFED | Ministry of Finance and Economic Development |
| MOLISA | Ministry of labour, invalids and social affairs |
| MQA | Mauritius Qualifications Authority |

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|---|---|
| NACE | National Association of Colleges and Employers |
| NEF | National Empowerment Foundation |
| NIACE | The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education |
| NQF | National Qualifications Framework |
| NUS | National Union of Students |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| OLT | Office of learning and teaching project |
| PDP | Personal Development Planning |
| PWC | PricewaterhouseCoopers |
| QAA | Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education students |
| TEC | Tertiary Education Commission |
| TVET | Technical and Vocational Education and Training |
| UK/CBI | UK/Confederation of British Industry |
| UKCES | UK Commission for Employment and Skills |
| UKZN | University of KwaZulu-Natal |
| WBL | Work-Based Learning |
| WEF | World Economic Forum |
| WIL | Work Integrated Learning |
| WSD | Work Skill Development |
| YEP | Youth Employment Programme |
| ZPD | The Zone of Proximal Development |

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# CHAPTER ONE

# THE NATURE, PURPOSE, AND SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH

## Introduction

This doctoral thesis deals with an in-depth study of the internship and employability of people who have graduated. It sets out to understand how graduates, employers, and academics interpret and give meaning to internship and employability to explore the relationship between them. I describe internships in the literature as brief periods of work undertaken by some students during their course of study and during vacation periods, to gain skills that would make them employable. However, internships might also be an indispensable or a mandatory part of a degree curriculum for graduates. Business Council of Australia (2017) asserts that internships can be formal and organised by university staff with academic credit earmarked. The employers may pay an allowance. Students may take part in a more personal, voluntary work for a few weeks. During internships, employers provide students with opportunities to familiarise themselves with the skills needed in the world of work they have taken up. Thus, this internship time may prove crucial to their acquisition of employability skills.

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The period of observation, practise and questioning would allow the trainees to model their employability skills and manage the transition from higher education to work (Dhakal et al., 2018). Policymakers emphasise the importance of developing employability skills for graduates to be equipped in meeting the challenges of the labour market (Montague et al., 2018); Department for Innovation, Universities, and Skills (DIUS, 2008). Overall, this research focuses on graduates who undertook internships, and employers and academics who took part in an internship programme (Yorke & Knight, 2007).

This study explores the role and meaning of internship and employability and explores the context which motivated the students to opt for this internship route as their first work experience. The research draws on published academic research and interviews with graduates, academics, and employers. The study is qualitative and undertakes a comparative analysis of internships in Mauritius and other countries. What I am trying to do is to understand the broader contexts within which education and training systems work. Another point to consider is that I realised it was essential to delve into the systems and policies of countries that have piloted and used the internship approach. I would then be in a better position to choose my approach.

In this chapter, I introduce the focus of the research employability and internship, taking into consideration their origins, and shared understandings. I then elaborate on the Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) academics, graduates, and employers whose internship and employability initiatives make up the experiences grounding my study. In this chapter, I share information on who will benefit from the findings of this study. I end the chapter with a summary of the chapters.

### 1.1 Background to the Study

This section presents the background to the study, which includes the economy of Mauritius and its educational structure. I also look into the difficulties faced by fresh graduates in their attempts to find employment in the local and international context, and employability skills in curricula.

The Republic of Mauritius is a small, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multilingual island nation in the Indian Ocean about 2000 kilometres off the southeast coast of the continent of Africa (WordPress, 2016; Global Travel Press, 2016-2017). Mauritius is an island of 1865 $km^2$ with a population of around 1.35 million inhabitants (World Bank, 2017; Express, 2018). Since its independence from Britain in 1968, the political and economic situation has been stable. The presence of several political parties sustains a parliamentary democracy. Also, over the past three decades, Mauritius has enjoyed a stable political background and a wonderful environment for its macroeconomics.

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Further, with its recognised accomplishments in its campaign aimed at correcting abuses or malpractices, the country has launched measures that brought about a change from a mono-crop economy to one with broadened services, agricultural and industrial activities. I consider the country a middle-income economy with low levels of poverty (International Monetary Fund, 2017). I consider Mauritius to be among the world's faster-growing economies since 1980 (Collins Discovery Encyclopaedia, 2005). The country is now trying to turn into a high-income economy within the next decade. For 10 consecutive years (2006–2016) the island has sustained its first position on the Mo Ibrahim Index of African governance Tthe Republic of Mauritius, 2016). Since 2001 Mauritius has maintained a stable GDP annual growth rate, with an average of 3.89% (Trading Economics, 2017). The country has been successful at attracting foreign investors (Africa review, 2013). For instance, leading sectors of growth include financial services, tourism, information, and communication technology, and real estate. The most important economic growth has been the textile industry, while the offshore corporate has

contributed to external financing. This can be illustrated by it supporting a massive net direct investment. The gross international reserves of Mauritius have risen. Among African economies, they rate Mauritius as the country with the most overall ease of doing business for the fourth time. They also classify it is also 23rd worldwide of 183 economies (World Bank, 2012). The aim of the Mauritian government is to be ranked among the top ten investment and business-friendly locations worldwide (US Department of State, 2012). The key trading partners for Mauritius are the United States, France, the United Kingdom, and China (Bowman, 2018).

The Republic of Mauritius has few natural resources, and Mauritians know that to lead a quality life and to prosper, it is vital for them to produce and to offer the services needed by the local and international community. All the succeeding governments have comprehended the crucial role of education in the economic development of the country both at the local and international levels. Because my study focusses on graduates' internship and employability, I will now present the Higher Education landscape in Mauritius. Higher education (tertiary education) in Mauritius concerns all post-secondary universities and institutions, public and private colleges, technical and vocational training institutes, and Institutes of Technology/Polytechnic (The World Bank, 2017). The first higher education institution at the tertiary level of the country started with the College of Agriculture in 1924. Since then, it has extended its services and now offers various study disciplines in an array of public, private, and regional international institutions (Tertiary Education Commission, 2018). The higher education field in Mauritius is under the supervision of the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) which is itself under the control of the Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research. Thus, the TEC is assigned the authority to shape public and private post-secondary institutions in Mauritius. Besides this, ten public-funded and fifty private HEIs are registered with this regulating body. Most of the private HEIs are local representatives of international universities, offering courses of study ranging from Certificate to PhD with awarding bodies based overseas (TEC, 2018). While the publicly funded universities offer courses in the English language, some deliver their degrees in French.

.Another point to consider is that educational institutions that receive a grant from the TEC offer free education, while private universities claim tuition fees. The TEC has the responsibility of ensuring and overseeing the quality of higher education in Mauritius. Therefore, as a policymaker, the TEC has a significant influence on HEIs, bringing graduates' internships and employability into the focus of public attention. Further, given that the TEC grants government

funds to HEIs its role is also to ensure that educational institutions are accountable to the taxpayers for the best use of resources. For instance, employers contribute a training levy through the Human Resources Development Council (HRDC) which goes into this government fund (HRDC, 2018). Therefore, the employers' contribution to higher education cannot be ignored. Thus, in its quest to ensure quality and relevance in the higher education sector, the TEC works in collaboration with the employers.

The same ministry runs the Mauritius Qualifications Authority (MQA) which regulates Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and is the guardian of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The NQF is a system set up to assess the equivalence of local compared to international qualifications to award recognition to the knowledge, understanding, and skills that a Mauritian has arrived at in the TVET sector internationally (MQA, 2018). The people of Mauritius can gain competencies outside the formal educational and training system. These competencies become eligible for recognition as evidence of prior learning. Over 230 training institutions and thousands of trainers/lecturers in all fields are registered with the MQA (MQA, 2018).

The coherence between higher education and the greater likelihood of employability has been a priority for policymakers in many countries (Griesel & Parker, 2009). Mauritius, a country in which 50% of the young graduates are unemployed, will have to make greater efforts to follow this policy (Central Statistical Office, CSO Mauritius, 2017). It is also acknowledged by policymakers, employers, university academics and graduates themselves that using young graduates is essential (Higher Education Careers Services Unit, 2017). It is ironical that on the one hand, many graduates find it difficult to secure a job, while many employers are on the look-out for ready-made graduates who can contribute to their organisations. According to The World Bank's Country Diagnostic Report for Mauritius (2015), 54% of enterprises across all employment sectors of the island cannot hire suitable candidates. Academics often acknowledge that, although graduates are endowed with the content knowledge, they may not, on their graduation, have the requisite job skills in their fields of study (Dacres Pool & Sewell, 2007). Although this may be one reason accounting for graduate unemployment, the other primary concern of the government in Mauritius with 50% of unemployed youth is finding appropriate outlets for the graduates. The Central Statistical Office (CSO Mauritius, 2017) confirms that most of the unemployed graduates are those who specialised in Management, English, French,

History, and Agriculture. Graduate jobs are available in the Engineering field, Information and Communication Technology, Finance, Aquaculture, Accommodation, and Hotels.

Other reasons put forward for the unemployment of graduates include skills mismatch, global economic pressures, the rapid development of technological know-how, job shortages, lack of entrepreneurship skills, and globalisation among others (Johannes & Missay, 2014; Peace Child International, 2015). The government of several countries such as the USA, Europe, the UK, and Australia, have commissioned agencies to find solutions to the unemployment of young graduates. For instance, in a report from the UK Commission for employment and skills (UKCES, 2009), I identify two things as being of crucial importance. First, the Commission wants every educational institution and provider of training to treat the employability of their students as part of their core business. Second, the commissioner needs a united and consistent policy and a structure for funding training professionals in employability skills. As a result, many HEIs include internship experiences, (apprenticeships), and workplace learning, also known by various other names (Business Council of Australia, 2017). Although both governments and employers recognise the prominent status of the mixed knowledge, competencies, skills, and attitudes in the workplace, they are in favour of inserting these qualities into the curriculum for internships (UKCES, 2009). Many employers try to work up a business idea that describes internships as a period during which it allows employers to try novel ideas to take the first run on their competitors and improve their internship time. This strategy should be a persistent one whereby some employers may do more than their competitors to improve their internship level, continuing to do so (Tanaka, 2015). Many studies are now searching for the connections between graduate abilities from an academic context vis-à-vis the working context. These studies try to grasp the nature or meaning of graduate powers (Jackson, 2013; Billet, 2011; OECD 2014; Tsukamoto 2016; Clements & Hays, 2012). The government and employers find graduates must gain skills and knowledge in work experience (Australian Government, 2018; DJ&SB, 2018a) Some graduates experience difficulty in transferring learned skills from one place to another (Billet, 2011). A study carried out by Tomlinson (2017) finds that mature interns have the essential means, skills, know-how or authority to move from one organisation to another. As a result, we consider these graduates as having become lifelong learners. They know how to learn and succeed in any assessment of their recent knowledge (Clark, 2017). Organising and inserting employability skills in the curriculum may be rewarding. The World Bank (2015) reports that 57.7% of the interns, recruited by the employers and who were engaged in a study course, were later confirmed as full-time employees. HEIs believe they have the learning environment to make

trainees or interns employable graduates, to equip them for their long-life careers. However, Tomlinson (2014) has inferred that graduates and employers have identified a set of employability or soft skills they consider essential apart from the technical skills required for success in the chosen domain. Previous academic knowledge is not enough when they join an enterprise. The time spent at any workplace may prove difficult because of the gap that exists between previous academic achievement and the skills needed on the job.

### 1.2 Motivation and Personal Background

This study emerged from my extensive experiences in internships programme and interventions related to employability. I was involved as an organiser of internships, placing apprentices in industries for over fifteen years. I worked as a Coordinator at the Mauritius Institute of Training and Development (MITD) I was responsible for the organisation, implementation, and management of the apprenticeship schemes and internships programme at both national and international levels. These programmes included paid and non-paid internships and apprenticeships for youngsters aged between 16 and 24 years in various fields, such as engineering, hotel and tourism, finance, and management. The internship and apprenticeship periods were of one year or two years duration for full-fledged graduates while placing students in the workplace varied from two weeks to twelve months. I was also responsible for recruiting interns to work in management and teaching fields for my organisation, and I acted as a supervisor and mentor for these interns. From this position, I gained life experience as an organiser and a mentor.

I was also involved with internships when I joined the National Empowerment Foundation (NEF) under the umbrella of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (Miffed). Miffed set up a Youth Employment Programme (YEP) with the Joint Economic Council (JEC) of Mauritius, which represents the Federation of Employers. As a consultant, I set up and oversaw various projects within the YEP in 2008. For instance, the Placement and Training Programme part of YEP aimed at helping unemployed undergraduates and postgraduates aged between 16 and 30 years to secure an internship to develop employability skills. These graduates, who hold qualifications in various fields, gain employment through placements over one year or a lesser period. We award employers who recruit interns 50% of the monthly grant paid to interns by MoFED. This financial incentive is believed to encourage employers from all sectors such as financial and accounting, scientific and technical, manufacturing, accommodation, and food

services (hotels and restaurants), wholesale and retail trade, and information and communication to take part in the YEP programme.

My third involvement was in the "Services to Mauritius" (STM) Programme, set up in the year 2008, for young graduates or postgraduates. I facilitated inexperienced people with an internship in the public sector for capacity building purposes. Thus, they gained the skills, knowledge, and work experience at a top-level, for example, as Executive Officers in ministries and public institutions. A central feature underlying this YEP concept is the duration of the internship. The duration was one year and could be extended for another year (MoFED,2017).

Also, I was responsible for a team which set up the "ICT Skills Development Programme" comprising two incentive programmes, the "Training and Work Placement Scheme" and the "Work-Based Learning" designed for tertiary education students. For the second incentive scheme, I give employers the opportunity of identifying and selecting students who have the capacity before graduation from university, offering them a "Work-Based Learning." The placement is of one-year duration.

Finally, I was involved in the "Accelerator Project" in which policymakers encourage graduates to create their own entrepreneurship business (MoFED Budget Speech, 2017). In this scheme, it allows young graduates and developers to set up technology companies. The government helps these graduates by giving them tools that engage them in entrepreneurship. The programme is a Public-Private-Partnership set up to democratise the economy through entrepreneurship (MoFED, 2017).

In my professional capacity, I have noticed many points of connection and disconnection that can influence graduates, employers and academics' participation in internships, and which may impact employability. My experiences as an organiser of internships and my interactions with various stakeholders have made me realise the need to explore the factors that influence the choices that stakeholders make about their participation in internships. Of particular interest to and forming the core of this study, therefore, are the conditions that influence stakeholders' understanding of the product and the process of internship and employability.

### 1.3 Context of the Study

Industrial placements were piloted during the past years of the first collaboration between a Singapore Polytechnic and a Mauritian counterpart in 1995 (Bartolata, 2015). These internship ideas were further promoted during the year 2000 by the British Government in collaboration with the University of Mauritius (University of Mauritius, 2008/2009). Subsequently, other new Business School introduced internship programmes, based on the Australian and German models which are described in more detail in the literature review. To date, graduates from the fields of engineering, management, agriculture, hotel, and tourism, finance, Information, and Communication Technology among others have enjoyed these programmes. Graduates who could not access internships were thus deprived of opportunities for recruitment by employers. It is also important to highlight that this decision is the current practice in many countries. Therefore, the labour market will continue to prefer fresh graduates with higher academic levels and technical skills rather than accepting undergraduates as trainees or interns (MLIRET, 2017a, b). The internship programme was re-vamped in Mauritius in 2007, in collaboration with British partners, to strengthen the one existing. In particular, these new internships provide a platform to help train and develop the employability skills of HEI students (University of Mauritius, 2008/2009). The number of graduates is progressively on the rise every year, and employers are demanding more qualified graduates. Conversely, the absence of graduate jobs in some fields has compelled some graduates to take jobs that did not need a degree, earning lower salaries. I came across very limited literature on the statistics of internship and employability in Mauritius.

I discuss the broad local context in this section, including employability, HEIs and internship practices. Statistics Mauritius (2017) shows a decline in the following section in the rate of economic growth over the period from 2006 to 2012. Such statistics associated the decline with the adverse impact of the economic crisis in America and Europe, both countries being major export markets for Mauritius. There was, therefore, an increase in the unemployment rate higher among potential young workers. The Central Statistical Office (CSO) Mauritius (2017) discovered a new trend revealing that many youngsters holding tertiary qualifications were among the unemployed. The CSO invoked two reasons for justifying growing graduate unemployment. First, there was no deliberate creation of jobs, and second, there was a mismatch between demand and supply, graduates' demand and employers' supply of labour. Besides, there was a lack of graduates with work experience, a shortage of career information, counselling, and job search services (Statistics Mauritius: Labour Digest, 2016). It was then assumed that unemployment was responsible for the rise in social problems. This led the government to take

what we considered as necessary measures to solve the problem (CSO,2017). The government took several measures to address the problem of unemployment among the youth. The measures included an increase in access to technical and vocational education and the setting up of a diversified field of training. More emphasis was laid on internships given that the transition from school to work had proved to be more efficient with internships (Betchoo, 2017; Bartolata, 2015). The government invited employers to collaborate with universities and to organise internships for young graduates. The collaboration between employers and academics proved crucial and was successful.

In Mauritius, the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relationship, and Employment is a devoted specialised organisation or services which addresses youth unemployment. In many developed countries, such as France and the United Kingdom, specialised agencies and ministries provide support to unemployed youth through a serialised set of programmes or events, workshops, seminars, career, and job fairs, and other similar projects. The United Kingdom, for example, set up the Skills Funding Agency, the Jobcentre Plus and the Department for Work and Pensions (Riley et al., 2012).

### 1.4 Problem Statement

Employers invest in the skills, knowledge, and attitudes of graduated students. However, they are dissatisfied with fresh graduates who come to the labour market (Burgess et al., 2018). On an international level, the number of unemployed young graduates is high compared with older people in the labour pool. According to Tran (2015), even more noticeably, graduates out of university and finding themselves in the labour market, are looking for a desirable job that matches their qualifications. They risk facing the effects of the global unemployment crisis. Employers complain that too many graduates lack work experiences and cannot be used. Many researchers have found reasons for fresh graduates being unemployed. They highlight that graduates, for instance, have a lack of employability skills, such as communication skills, low self-esteem, poor language, and communication skills. They do not have the right technical knowledge, sound judgment and maturity level (Tsukamoto, 2016). In their study carried out and involving 312 organisations in Malaysia, Yen, Kamariah, Pai & Huong (2010) found that 77.6% of the participants believed graduates have a deficiency in the required skills to be efficient in the workplace. The International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2016) points out that the global unemployment crisis is already causing significant misery for over 74 million unemployed people in the 15 to 24 age group. The Office for National Statistics, UK (2017) reported that

15% of fresh graduates did not gain employment after graduation. John (2012) reports that South African employers emphasise that graduated students cannot solve problems complicated in structure. They risk missing professional, academic, and social skills as their unemployment develops. Davids and Esau (2012), concede that South Africa is facing the same problem as found in Mauritius. There is little unanimity in opinions in Mauritius about the nature and reasons for the unemployment problem (The Mauritian Central Statistics Office, 2016; Coe, David & others, 2002). In particular, the unemployment problem of recent graduates in Mauritius has been solved in the last decade (MoFED, 2017). Unemployment can affect economic welfare, reduce production, and weaken human capital. As mentioned, the Mauritian economy has been experiencing growing unemployment over the past few years. There are limited studies on the unemployment of fresh graduates in Mauritius, and therefore, it is essential to consider the concept of employability.

### 1.5 Rationale for the Study

The rationale for this study is to understand the broader context of how internships and employability help graduates find employment after graduation. Because of the lack of Mauritian literature on internship and employability of graduates, there is no evidence on the extent to which internship and employability have affected the Mauritian youth. The only available national statistics for Mauritius on graduate unemployment come from the year 2016, mentioning that there is little agreement in opinions on the graduate's unemployment problem. Besides, the International Monetary Fund (IMF, 2017) associates the unemployment rate of graduates in Mauritius with wages, which limit the skill quality, and an inadequate creation of the needed jobs. The lack of soft skills in the graduated students' population is well known to researchers (OECD, 2017; Billet, 2011; The Confederation of British Industry (CBI, 2010). Employers report that there are skills mismatches between what they teach in the classroom and what we need in the workplace (Jackson, 2015). The responses from HEIs to this need are internships and work-based learning (Billett, 2012).

One solution may lie in training programmes and by helping graduates in their search for jobs. One of the immediate answers can be to help unemployed graduates become associated with volunteers and try their hand at entrepreneurship in Non-Governmental Organisations. Not all graduates, however, have the potential to become self-employed as entrepreneurs. Another solution is to provide an opportunity for graduates to gain employability skills through internships. Employability as the core of this idea is presented by employers as the power to earn

significant employment (Clarke, 2015). It is also important to highlight the relevance of the degree that may prove decisive in the quest for employment in the desired domain. However, employers prefer graduates who have as a base something more complex, employability skills (Yorke & Knight, 2006). Policymakers, in their agenda, invite employers to work as partners with universities to organise internships for graduates (Robbin's Report, 1963). Graduates can apply what they learn in classrooms in the workplace under professional supervisors/mentors. Successful graduates in internship can get a job either with the same employer or another employer. In many studies, we recognise HEIs as the first subscribers to the growth of knowledge, attitudes, and transferable skills (Harvey, 2005; Yorke & Knight, 2006). Internships can contribute to graduate success and future career development (Gore, 2011). In my study, I explore the relationship between internship and employability of graduates. The study intends to illuminate to academics, employers, and graduates on the constituents of internship experiences that lead to significant results for participants. Also, the findings of this research will help university staff, academics, advisers, career development officers, employers, HEIs and graduates to promote internships. Last, it will help graduates in fulfilling their cognitive acquirement of earning skill and career development goals (Billet, 2011). Training graduates in internships and employability skills can help to combat the unemployment rate of graduates. This study will add to the existing body of knowledge on youth service, graduate unemployment, skills development programmes, and community development. It will also provide a baseline for further research into internships and employability, assisting in graduates' employment.

### 1.6 Research Questions

The primary objective of this study is to explore the relationship between internships and employability

To achieve this objective, I pose a central research question: What is the relationship between internship and employability?

I answer this question through a discussion of the following four sub-questions:

1. How do graduates experience internships?
2. What are the higher education academic staff experiences of internships?
3. What are the employers' experiences of the internship?
4. How do these experiences lead to employability?

## 1.7 The Terminology of Key Terms

### a. Young graduate

Some researchers define "graduate" as any person who has completed tertiary qualification, while others disagree with such a simplistic definition. For instance, Altbeker and Storme (2013: 4) assert that "this can mislead since it obscures significant differences in labour market results for people with different tertiary qualifications." Thus, a graduate can be deemed to be the "holder of a university degree which includes a bachelor's degree or equivalent and higher education qualifications" (Van der Berg & Van Broekhuizen, 2012: 2). The Government of Mauritius Youth Employment Programme (YEP), considers a graduate to be an individual who holds a degree. Eligibility to include in the YEP is that graduates must be between the ages of 18 and 30 years old.

### b. Internship

An internship is a structured and supervised work experience. They connect it to a degree, career goal and the experience of a student. Students have to improve their academic career and personal growth in internships.

### c. Graduate Internship

A graduate internship programme is the "first formal introduction of graduates to work, which may impact on shaping their careers in both the organisational entry and establishment phases of their career cycle." (Kanye & Crous, 2007; Burgess et al., 2018).

### d. Employability

There is no consensus among researchers on a standard definition of "employability." (OECD, 2016). The Confederation of British Industry (CBI, 2010:3) argues that "employability makes up a set of attributes, skills, and knowledge that all labour market participants should hold to ensure they could be effective in the workplace–to the benefit of themselves, their employer and the wider economy." Employability is about the power to earn and preserve employment in the open labour market and the power to move between jobs. It encompasses the set of skills needed by employers in the workplace (Australian Qualifications Framework, 2015). Pool and Sewell (2007: 280) consider employability as: "having a set of skills, knowledge, and understanding and personal qualities that make a person more likely to choose and secure occupations in which they can be satisfied and successful." Employability skills are sometimes recognised as soft skills (Suneela, 2014).

### e. Graduate employability

Dhakal et al., (2018) signals that "while there are disparities in classifying employability, there is an extensive understanding of what qualities, characteristics, skills and knowledge frame employability both and for graduates. Employers expect graduates to have technical and discipline competencies from their degrees but need graduates also to display broader skills and qualities that include team-working, communication, leadership, critical thinking, problem-solving and managerial abilities." Thus, for an individual to become employable, he or she needs skills to preserve his or her job and to progress in the workplace.

## 1.8 Overview of the Study

In Chapter One, I provide a general summary of the research study and clarify the key elements by explaining how the research is shaped. I reflect on how the research is guided by the trust because it is authentic. I state my motivation, the context and the problem statement of the study. I further explain the rationale and the objectives; the critical questions and the terminology of essential terms used. I present an outline of the study before and closing the chapter.

In Chapter Two, I introduce a literature review which depicts others' work associated with the research topic. The latter includes internships, employability, and roles of stakeholders, the academics of HEIs, graduates, and employers.

In Chapter Three, I show the theoretical framework on which I base this study.

In Chapter Four, I provide the elaborated methodology and research design that I adopted and complied with to finish this study.

In Chapter Five, I present the findings and analysis of the data considering the critical research questions.

In Chapter Six, I interpret the results and discuss the findings.

In Chapter Seven, I end the dissertation with a synthesis of the findings. I discuss the limitations of the study and its practical constraints. I then highlight the contribution of this research to knowledge. I also discuss the impact of my study on all those involved in internships and suggest a recommendation for future research.

I end with references succeeded by an appendix of connected documents.

# CHAPTER TWO
# REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

## 2.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I planned and identified the phenomenon-relationship between internship and employability.

This chapter analyses the literature associated with the research questions set out in the introductory Section 1.7 on the experiences of graduates, employers, and faculty staff/lecturers on internship and employability of young graduates. In most countries, including Mauritius, graduate internship, and employability has become a critical policy topic of recent years (Wilson Review, 2012; Artess, Forbes P & Ripmeester, 2011; Jackson, 2015). The reasons for this increasing interest are that of discussions are growing on the social economy and the increasing number of graduates every year (The Confederation of British Industry & Pearson, 2012; World Bank, 2017). The importance of finding an outlet for fresh graduates in the labour market has always been a central preoccupation of policymakers. The Mauritian Government claims that economic growth is reached when the employability skills of students are strengthened through internships (Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (Budget Speech, 2017). Also, raising the soft skills would ensure that Mauritius remains abreast of what is being achieved elsewhere. This is especially so in that beliefs about social inclusion, opportunity, and social justice are associated with employability (Department for Education and Skills, 2003; World Bank, 2017).

The gap in the knowledge associating employer and graduate's views has led to a critical review of the literature on internship and employability. Also, it was clear from surveys and interviews locally and abroad that the content offered in higher education courses does not meet the demands of the world of work and is therefore inappropriate. (Andrews & Higson, 2008; ILO, 2016). Many researchers explore the works of peers on the two ideas (Yorke and Knight, 2006, 2007; Jackson, 2015; Rothwell & Rothwell, 2017). Further, the works of other researchers who have divergent views on employability and internship have also contributed to this study, for example, Hilage and Pollard, (1998); Yorke (2006); Billet (2011); Pegg, Waldock, Hendy-Isaac & Lawton (2012); Speight, Lackovic & Cooker (2013), Holmes, (2013), Tran (2015), and Montague (2018).

This chapter starts by examining the existing conceptualisations of internships, employability,

and practices similar to internships within the policy and research literature. I then scrutinize the perspectives of the stakeholders' academics/lecturers, graduates, and employers. First, I carried out an analysis of the data collected. The findings helped me to explain and to understand whether there is any relationship between the internship and employability of graduates and the nature of this relationship. In this way, I hope to achieve the primary aim of this chapter which is to find the gap/s in the present research.

## 2.1 Internships

Over the past decade, most authors who researched internships recognised such as platforms on which they discussed the unemployment of graduates (Billet, 2010; Jackson, 2015; World Economic Forum, 2016). In other studies, researchers have reported the role of HEIs which they considered suppliers of novice undergraduates in the labour market. (Wilton, 2011; Speight et al., 2013; Monteiro, Almeida, & Aracil, 2016). In this study, an internship is an experience in which a student takes part in the day-to-day functioning of a workplace under the supervision of a mentor (Syer, 2012; Wilson, 2012; Wibrow & Jackson 2016). I intend the internship to be the representation of a proper environment within which student interns find themselves and come to discover a unique industry or job thus enforcing knowledge and skills gained at university. Graduates' internship is one form of both the Work-Based Learning (WBL) and the Work Integrated Learning (WIL). This study uses the words “intern,” “student,” and “graduate” because students undertake internships at undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate levels. In this section, I have covered the relevant and instrumental measure of experiences related to working for the three principal participants - HEIs, interns, and employers. It attempts to show how Mauritian Higher Education is managing study courses in a particular context. The findings will help to compare the equivalences with other universities on an international level. I also introduce an overview of internship definitions, an internship in the international landscape, the rationale for internships, and internship as work-based learning and work-integrated learning.

### 2.1.1 Overview of Internship, its Aims, Processes, and Organisation

I describe the definitions, aims, processes, and organisation of internships. The next section moves on to the definitions of the internship. ILO (2016) highlights that students who have worked for the organisation are expected to fill 37% of graduate job vacancies. An internship allows students to work for a particular employer on a full-time basis, where they earn experience and gain basic knowledge in their selected fields of study. Interns can gain experience in graduate employment for at least one year (Billett, 2010; Tomlinson, 2017). Students build career

opportunities and negotiate contracts with other interns and key figures within the organisation and with customers. The people they come to know on undergraduate internships can be influential contacts when they seek for graduate jobs and job references. Undergraduate and graduate students who undertake internships, consider joining an enterprise to gain a wealth of relevant work experience (Employability and Career Forum Employability, 2017).

#### 2.1.1.1 What is an Internship?

An internship is a choice for graduates to take part in a planned and supervised work experience conducted by professionals in their fields with a career-oriented goal (Puthucheary, 2017). The internship offers short-term, temporary work which lasts for a few weeks or up to twelve months (General Statistics Office of Vietnam, 2017). Many employers offer internships of six to twelve months on a sandwich basis to graduates. According to Smith (2017), internship for students may be paid or unpaid. However, employers prefer to recruit an employee who has undertaken a paid internship for at least twelve months. Graduates can complete one internship or multiple internships with the same or different employers. An internship may be compulsory or not for many students; this may depend on the curricula of the particular many universities. The duration of internships equals the time taken by graduates to gain experience in the workplace (Montague et al. 2018). Internships contribute to the students' personal and professional development through work assignments (Office of learning and teaching project, 2018). Students complete this training and development before they graduate from the university even though, sometimes, they continue and end their internships after graduation. During their internships, students practise what they have learned in their field of studies in classrooms, under supervising professionals and other employees (Rothwell and Rothwell, 2017) assert that internships allow graduates to gain valuable experience that may help them secure future employment, the skills being in demand by employers. I discuss the aims of internships below.

#### 2.1.1.2 Aims of Internship

In this section, I describe the aims or goals of internships. In an analysis of internships, Clarke (2017) reports that an internship is an opportunity for students from colleges or universities to work at an undergraduate education level to gain on-site experiences. Undergraduates put into practise their academic theoretical knowledge in the work environment (Jackson, 2015; Yorke, 2006). They access professional positions, meeting professionals in their career choice and concerns (World Bank, 2015a; MOLISA, 2018). Much research has found that internships are an ideal "win-win" situation for all stakeholders involved, such as, academics/lecturers,

graduates, and employers who enjoy these experiences (Dhakal et al., 2018). The stakeholders feel that they have reached their objectives when internships are deemed satisfactory.

#### 2.1.1.3 Employability Skills as an Aspect of Learning within Internship

During their internships, graduates learn the essential employability skills needed by employers under supervising professionals from industries (Burgess et al., 2018). Much of the published writings on internships pay particular attention to the contributions of internships to the students' personal and professional training and development (Prikshat et al., 2018). Besides, HEIs consider compulsory internships as mechanisms that provide the interns with more information about the expectations of the labour market of graduate skills (Tsukamoto, 2016). Internships also allow universities to devise study programmes (WEF, 2017).

Employability skills are an important aspect of learning during an internship. A key purpose of an internship is to provide students with the comprehensive skill set desired by potential employers. Some of these being, professionalism, honesty and integrity, adaptability, problem-solving, reliability, self-confidence, and leadership skills.

#### 2.1.1.4 Organisation of internship

The following section describes how various stakeholders organise internships. Academics/lecturers organise internship in collaboration with employers to expose graduates to the world of work. In a recent study (World Bank, 2017), academics/lecturers organised internships for graduates and postgraduates by exposing them to specially designed and supervised work in a workplace environment. Mentors (supervisors/experienced workers from industries) gave training to graduates in professional subjects, recommending that supervising support and instructions be supplied to the graduate interns in the workplace (Sin & Neave, 2016). Supervisors involve graduates in work but can also consider job shadowing as a part of the training. Students' internships may not be associated with a specific occupation, but when internships are compulsory, students complete the same before continuing to professional employment (Jackson, 2015). Related internships, such as in the legal and medical professions, end with an examination which students must pass before their first employment in the profession (Choo, 2017). The shortest duration of the practical work experience is one year. Interns receive an allowance at lower rates with a work contract or in the form of volunteer work or they are unpaid (Tanaka, 2015). Internship opportunities can vary across the university and may form part of the curriculum or be optional (Finn, 2016). Students may earn academic credits,

however, sometimes, there is no credit linked to this experience (Business Council of Australia, 2017). Besides, internships may be full-time or part-time as a "one-off" training or may be scheduled for three consecutive years, in which students accomplish various programme levels of training per year (Social Research Centre, 2018). The duration of these internships may be for two weeks, or up to twelve months (Tanaka, 2015) as decided jointly by academics and employers.

In preparing the student for an internship, many responsibilities come into play and the first is that of the academics overseeing the internship process. Also, there is a need for academics to comply with the content of the curriculum to provide disciplinary knowledge, how the student is introduced and assimilated into a new work environment has the potential to influence the effectiveness of their learning, therefore a carefully designed and supported transition from higher education to the workplace by academics help produce an effective learning environment. Academic facilitators (staff) must provide academic and professional essentials at the outset of the transition, provide support throughout the students' placement and keep in regular contact with them (Tomlinson, 2017).

Existing literature reveals unfavourable results for internships, supporting the demand for further research (Schwab, 2016). Researchers refer, for example, to graduates who have followed no internship programme and yet have done very well in the enterprise, raising doubt about the need for a compulsory internship. A similar situation affects the nature of compulsory internship in employment rates. The imposed responsibility defeats the natural motivation of graduates (Tsukamoto, 2016). It may also increase negative feelings linked to the learning experience. Former studies relate compulsory internships to graduate employment rates because the collaboration between HEIs and employers is missing. Many types of research assume that stronger links between HEIs and employers improve internship and can become a mechanism for employers to be more involved in curricular development (Tsukamoto, 2016; Jackson, 2015).

### 2.1.2 Internship in the International Landscape

The survey carried out by CrnkoviÊ-PozaiÊ (2016) for the European Training Foundation (ETF) discloses that internships have many forms and names across nations. Studies have reported the internships of students in most states of America's practical training for students during or after their graduation (Tynjälä, 2008; Billet, 2011; Jackson, 2016). In Spain, for example, the standard practice for students to undertake internships is only after graduation (CrnkoviÊ-PozaiÊ, 2016).

In Mauritius and France, students undergo internship during their degree course and after graduation. For the last decade, post-graduate internships have emerged because of the high unemployment of graduates in Mauritius (MoFED, Budget Speech, 2017) Germany, for the same reason started by the post-graduate internships (CrnkoviÊ-PozaiÊ, 2016). With the coming of the Bologna Reforms (European Commission or EACEA or Eurydice, 2015), 47 countries and over 4 500 HEIs have fine-tuned their academic programmes to a specific level. Many organisations have continued to adapt their higher education, resulting in a workable combination, modernising degrees and fortifying their quality assurance mechanisms (CrnkoviÊ-PozaiÊ, 2016). Practical training is a central element in increasing graduates' employability. Thus, the government uses public funds to finance internships for graduates. Countries reporting top percentage rates in practical training, among others, include Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Andorra, Latvia, and Romania. The European Parliament (2005) recognises the need for the insertion of practical training as part of professional qualifications into various tailored study programmes, for example, for pharmaceutical and medical studies (Skills Future.sg, 2017b). Many countries insert on a compulsory internship for particular applications and institutions. Denmark, Austria, Estonia, Finland, Romania, and Portugal are examples of European countries in which the practical training within the pharmaceutical and medical studies has become compulsory. Graduates must hold professional experiences compulsory for short duration courses and other professionally appointed licenses and Master's degrees in France. All higher education courses in Moldova, Montenegro, Russia, Slovenia, and Azerbaijan include mandatory or optional internships in their courses.

Many authorities promote an internship in higher education programmes by providing public funding (European Commission or EACEA or Eurydice, 2015). This body has asked eighteen countries to allow for incentives to a number or all HEIs to increase the number of internships. Such motivators can be financial when governments invest or contribute to the expenses of internship courses, even if internships are not compulsory. Greece, Italy, Poland, Scotland, Spain, Sweden, and Turkey have taken full advantage of these incentives. Another approach is for the government to give the fund and financial incentives to the companies that manage internships, in Bulgaria, for example. Denmark is the only country in which it is compulsory to pay an allowance to interns because policymakers believe that an individual cannot work without pay (CrnkoviÊ-PozaiÊ, 2016). In Mauritius, the joint Private and Public Partnership (PPP) funds the internship of university students and post-graduation internships as mentioned in Chapter One Section 1.2. (MoFED Budget Speech, 2017). The Mauritian Government funds the

Apprenticeship Scheme for the Vocational Training of youth aged 16 to 25, those who are learning an occupation or trade at the craft level. The model of apprenticeship is the German dual-training model in which the trainee spends four or five days in the workplace and one day at a vocational training centre.

Other countries, including Malaysia, Singapore, UK, Canada, Australia, and South Africa have the same model of internships, often referred to as "sandwich placements." (Highfliers, 2014). These internships formalise the work experience opportunities which form part of a degree programme. With the sudden increase of unemployed youth in Germany, the authorities have devised another internship model called the post-graduation internship (CrnkoviÊ-PozaiÊ, 2016). The high unemployment of young graduates in Germany and Mauritius over the last decade has made it difficult for the first batch of degree holders without experience to find the right job. Thus, the post-graduation internship has proved necessary its duration is of at least one year. Several other countries have launched what I have called the "dual" degree that puts together theoretical studies in HEIs with professional experience from the workplace. In this system, HEIs and employers agree to a contract which provides students with applicable skills and competencies (European Commission or EACEA or Eurydice, (2015). Such "dual" degree courses are present, for example, in Spain, Poland, Belgium, Germany, and France. The next section details the rationale for an internship.

### 2.1.3 The Rationale for an Internship

Several studies have found that internships are worthwhile to the three primary stakeholders, graduates, academics, and employers (Dhakal et al., 2018; Jackson, 2015; Brook 2012; Griesel & Parker, 2009). During their internships, students gain work experiences (WEF, 2016) and become involved in their career exploration (Manpower, 2016a). Besides, they apply what they have learned in classrooms to the work environment under supervising professionals (Pegg et al., 2012; WEF, 2017). They also contribute to advancing the organisation. Earlier studies have reported that internships give valuable experiences to graduates that help them in securing a job (Mohd Salleh et al., 2018; Prikshat et al., 2018). Internships promote the growth of graduates being offered the chance to develop the eight preferred employability skills by employers (Business Magazine and Verde Frontier Employability Survey, 2016). Graduates also enjoy the awareness of workplace culture (Khare, 2016). Research studies suggest that internships provide facilities for networking ahead of time for graduates (CTI, 2017). Graduates incorporate the unrecognised employers' network within the organisation in which they undertake placements.

Graduates have the possibility of seeing for themselves the possibilities of jobs in other organisations. Internships can increase graduates' self-esteem and cut down on the cultural "entry shock" from the university to the work environment (Bochner, 2003). CTI (2017) concedes that graduates earn money or credit, offer professional networking contacts, and build up self-confidence and job search for skills as they discover their skills, abilities, and talents.

Internships offer a band of other rewards to employers. The study of Jackson (2014) reports that internships allow for a risk-free way for employers to test potential employees. Nankervis et al., (2018) hold the view that employers considered the internship concept positively. They consider that assessing a graduate's potential is more practical and rewarding when they discover how graduates conduct a role on-the-job. Employers prefer the live demonstration of students' in-service to testing a short written descriptive summary of events from graduates. Besides, the live assessment of graduates is better than a written report on the interviewees' performance (Jackson, 2014). Internships give employers access to quality interns as graduates contribute fresh ideas to the workplace (Montague et al., 2018). Using interns reduces recruitment and training expenses. Internships provide employers with cheap labour while employers feel confident that interns will return to the organisation after graduation, such resumption will involve little or no further training (Prikshat et al., 2018). Last, but not least, internships make the partnership between academic institutions and the employers stronger, leading to potential benefits, such as technology transfer or exchanges (Nankervis et al., 2018).

Internships offer the opportunity for HEIs to benefit from the employers' feedback and contribution in the design and development of curricula (Rola-Rubzen & Burgess, 2016; Nankervis et al., 2018). Internships strengthen the alumni and the community and allow the transfer of learning more comfortably for students. The placements of students are easier when collaboration exists between HEIs and employers. This collaboration helps employers to recruit students after their graduation. The student's connection to the university enhances when universities make the experience easily accessible. Academics/lecturers are also in favour of internships that allow students to learn in a proper work environment (Tomlinson, 2017). During internships, academics/lecturers can integrate academic and professional subjects. Students who are engaged in the educational internship programme usually work with an academic/lecturer and often register for academic credit as part of this experience (Clarke, 2017). This arrangement ensures that students are not only accountable to the workplace but also their faculty for their work. Internships allow the classroom to be just part of the education necessary for success in

the actual world of work as they are crucial for HEIs. Rising unemployment worldwide has led many countries to include internships in their curricula (Finn 2016). It can, therefore, be shown that internships strengthen the image of the qualifications and that HEIs are attracting better calibre students. The next section discusses the internship as work-based learning and work-integrated learning.

### 2.1.4 Internship as Work-Based Learning (WBL) and Work-Integrated Learning (WIL)

Various researchers acknowledge the organisation of internships by HEIs as the working out of an institutional mechanism to help students' transfer from university to work (Dhakal et al., 2018). I present these learning strategies used by HEIs as work-based learning (WBL) and work-integrated learning (WIL). It details these strategies in sections 2.1.4.1 and 2.1.4.2.

#### 2.1.4.1 Work-Based Learning

Work-based learning (WBL) is an educational, elaborate and systematic plan of action that allows students to take advantage of the practical work experiences in a workplace as opposed to the academic world-life. In the workplace, students can apply whatever academic knowledge and technical skills they have learned in classrooms, developing their employability (North Carolina State Board of Education, 2000-2017). WBL entails a recorded planned programme of study that uses the workplace environment for student learning. WBL programmes may be formal, non-formal, informal, structured, or strategic (UNESCO, 2012; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2016). Employers train staff, coordinating their work and occasionally allowing them to meet other community members (Keevy & ChaKroun, 2015). Dhakal et al., (2018) agrees that work-based learning units' theory with practice and the tacit forms of understanding. Earlier research suggests that in the WBL experiences, the employer may or may not allocate an allowance to interns and the training is career-oriented (Prikshat et al., 2018). During WBL, students find motivating opportunities to engage in and increase their learning. WBL's experiences may include apprenticeships, internships, business or industry field trips, job shadowing, entrepreneurial experiences, cooperative education, school-based enterprises, and service-learning (Dhakal et al., 2018).

Employers respect work-based learning because the competencies gained by graduates are those that employers need in the workplace. For example, to earn a degree or a professional

certification, various professional people in domains such as health, legal, and educational, complete a compulsory internship.

#### 2.1.4.2 Work-Integrated Learning

The study of Dhakal et al., (2018) found that Work-integrated learning (WIL) uses the same principles and methods of instruction as for the pedagogy of practice. Students incorporate experiences gained in educational and workplace backgrounds. Many studies point out that work-integrated learning makes for more intense learning and development of the students (Kennedy, Billet, Gherardi & Grealish, 2015; ICEF Monitor, 2017). The curricula include the employability skills of work-based learning in the workplace. Another study refers to the published curricular learning in the place of work (Fong & Lin, 2017). The same research points out that WIL provides students with a chance to combine theory and practice in a real working environment (Lin & Ho, 2015). Work-related talents deepen and enhance the students' knowledge and understanding. Students, therefore, develop their skills and knowledge through authentic experiences in a professional discipline-specific practical context (Tsukamoto, 2016). WIL aims to develop students' employability skills and knowledge in the workshop. Orrell's (2011) comments seem to be a fundamental supposition that academics/lecturers cannot teach soft skills in the classroom. Thus, the motive for graduates from all courses is to be work-ready by developing their soft skills (Business Magazine and Verde Frontier Employability Survey, 2016). There is a consensus among researchers that the prime force behind the increase of WIL programmes is the Government-driven agendas (Jackson, 2016). Policymakers wish that academics/lecturers and employers would discuss the shortages of skills to make sure that students gain work experiences and their readiness. The role of the employer in supporting WIL is to admit pre-work incorporated learning actions, for example, the recruitment, and WIL actions. During the WIL experience, the roles of employers can be as helpers, supervisors, mentors, and assessors (Montague et al., 2018). Researchers working on the WIL find an increase in students' experiences with employment and the place of work (Puthucheary, 2017). WIL improves the students' employability or soft skills by making them work-ready.

Many of the current literature on WIL pays particular attention to interpreting the term "work-integrated learning" (PhilipsKPA, 2014; Pilgrim & Koppi, 2012). More recent attention has focused on the provision to insert internships in study programmes by HEIs. I conceive the ideas as learning experiences having the essential qualities for connecting theoretical knowledge and practice, involving active participation experiences (Employability and Career Forum

Employability, 2017). The critical pedagogical relevancy, grounded on the assumption that internships produce open contextualised learning, promotes both professional development and students' self-pride and pro-activity. During their internships, graduates have the opportunity of new networking with professionals in their fields (CTI, 2017; Priyono & Nankervis, 2018). Earlier researches report that a significant undiscovered part of the employability of graduate concerns the purpose and aptness of work-based learning (WBL) or work-integrating learning (WIL) experiences through internships are lacking (Jackson, 2015). WEF (2017) asserts that within a planned curriculum that integrates theory with practice, the term "work-integrated learning" (WIL) relates to an array of approaches and strategies. The term "WIL" is difficult to fix as they have used various terms in various fields to make plain and comprehensible having the same or almost the same characteristics (Dhakal et al., 2018). While other subjects use the term "WIL" in the discussion of different programmes. The acronym "WIL" is also often used with "work-integrated or work-integrated learning, The Co-op or The Co-op education, The Co-op or The Co-op learning, cooperative or cooperative education, cooperative learning, work-based learning, workplace learning, service learning, experiential learning, experiential education, practicum, field practicum, field placement, internship, practice-based learning," to name but a few (Sattler, 2011: 5). The survey carried out by PhillipsKP (2014) reports that only 50% of employers are genuinely familiar with the term "WIL." The study of Nankervis et al., (2018) reports the great debate and discussion among institutional key witnesses about a common concise explanation of the meaning of the term "work-integrated learning." They agree on more or less the hope of reaching unanimity on the definition offered by Billet (2009b). Billet (2009b: v) defines WIL as "the process whereby students come to learn from experiences in educational and practice settings and integrate the contributions of those experiences in developing the understandings, procedures, and dispositions needed for effective professional practice, including criticality. Work-integrated learning arrangements include the kinds of curriculum and pedagogical practices that can help give and integrate learning experiences in both educational and practice settings." (Peters, 2017).

However, most employers are used to specific types of WIL, placements, and internships. Placements include internships and other forms of WIL. We can integrate the internship into the curriculum, varying in length, full-time or part-time, paid or unpaid. Students may arrange for their placements with employers, and placements are organised by HEIs (Montague et al., 2018). I consider the placement model as the most effective form of WIL because the students are learning in the workplace (Nankervis et al., 2018). Industry projects are a common form of WIL

involving the various industry-linked projects undertaken in the workplace (Yimie, 2018). When industry placements are not available, WIL organises learning experiences in an educational setting (Rothwell & Rothwell, 2017). Such approaches cannot be used to make a complete or perfect real-life work experience. WIL has proved very successful and is now viewed with great favour in higher education (Smigiel, Macleod & Stephenson, 2015). The following section addresses employability.

## 2.2 Employability

Employability can be found in literature dating back to 1992. Many researchers have tried to develop classifications of employability. Researchers have started from a broad scope of corrective and ideological views (Hilage & Pollard, 1998; Jackson et al., 2017; Salmi, 2017; Clarke, 2017; Kinash et al., 2016; Dhakal et al., 2018).

### 2.2.1 Overview of Employability Definitions

The cited concise explanation of the meaning of the word "employability," is framed by Hillage and Pollard (1998). These authors state that employability is someone's power to benefit from the first job, preserving employment, and moving between tasks within the same organisation. The individual may take a new job if he or she so wishes. In both the previous or new job, the worker will feel secure, be able to adapt to new conditions and situations and enjoy full job satisfaction.

Lees (2002:3) explains that "Employment and employability are not the same." Employability extends beyond gaining employment. Employability is more about developing qualities to help secure graduate employment within an accepted vocation (Clarke, 2017). It is about the knowledge of gaining skill, with the significance more on ability than being employable. In theory, the focus is on growth, intellectual powers, a delegation of authority, and improvement of the intern. Employment is a by-product of this ability for the task (Burgess et al., 2018; Gupta et al. 2016). Employability has been interpreted differently by many researchers, and therefore researchers find it difficult to reach a consensus on defining employability. Many studies carried out by various researchers (Hillage & Pollard, 1998; Yorke, 2006; Jackson, 2016; Canadian Council of Chief Executives, 2014; Walker et al., 2015; Cavanagh et al., 2015), insist that one general definition of the term "employability" is lacking. Under normal conditions, challenging an agreed definition of employability is crucial because of its complex theory and the existence of associating with several participants. Since there is no way of having a recognised and shared

definition of employability, this results in an indefinite number of personal interpretations and debates. Researchers perceive employability in unique ways (World Bank, 2017; PWC, 2017b; Rothwell & Rothwell, 2017; Walker et al., 2015; The Finch et al. study, 2016; Tran, 2015; Jackson, 2015). As a result, these unique approaches have allowed many definitions of employability to emerge.

### 2.2.2 Employability in the International Landscape

The Canadian Council of Chief Executives (2014) adopted a new benchmark on the employability of graduates from education and training. The new standard measures the outcome of training and education on transferring graduates from a university (education) to the workplace (employment). Employability is complicated in structure and exists in multiple faceted concepts. Many researchers recognise trouble in using employability's definition free from ambiguity (World Bank, 2017). Employability is represented in three stages of education, such as (1) the preparation for employment, (2) the transfer of a student from education to employment, and (3) the remaining of graduates in employment and their continuous trend towards building up knowledge in a career (Clarke, 2017). The analysis of the scale of measurement of employability and the separation into its parts by the level of education in 2017, shows that the employment rates for graduates at EU-level who departed from education or training with tertiary education were 80.8% (Eurostat, 2018). Tertiary graduates may take employment in jobs designated for non-graduates because they wish to enter the labour market. They boost the employment rate of graduates from the university while lowering the employment rates for other graduates. Statistics Eurostat (2018) shows that in Malta, the employment rates of graduates were 96.6% and for Germany, 90.6%. These rates are twice as high as those registered in Greece (49.2%) or Italy (52.9%). For graduates in countries, such as Austria, Denmark, Hungary, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Sweden, the Czech Republic, and the United Kingdom, the employment rates were above 82% of the benchmark target (EU Labour Force Survey, 2018). Research from Graduate Careers Australia (Graduate Careers Australia, 2014) claims the employment rate to be 76.6%, while, in America, the employment rate for graduates is 90.9% (Statista, 2017).

### 2.2.3 Discourses around Employability

The Economist Intelligence Unit (2014) states that although the various definitions of employability try to simplify it by giving it different levels, the term has remained vague and abstract. Therefore, how people /the two parties understand employability is susceptible to

change because graduates, as potential employees, and employers have different perceptions of the term. This assumption proves that graduates and employers use the same definition of employability. Walker et al., (2015) argue that it is difficult to create a unique meaning for employability, researchers and graduates having unique perspectives on the subject. Their divergent views of employability would depend on the employable person, what employers need or centre on developing graduate characteristics. Many researchers contend that there should be a systemic definition of employability accepted by all, comprising the training and preparing of graduates. Employability should cover the wants and demands of employers (Hillage & Pollard, 1998; Burgess et al., 2018; OECD 2016; Gore, 2005; Rothwell & Rothwell, 2017). Speight et al., (2013) in their definition of employability include the skills needed by employers and developing graduates at the workplace. However, employers recognise that employability goes beyond filling skills shortages in an organisation (Nankervis et al., 2018). Monteiro et al.,2016) believes that a graduate's employability can be viewed in two approaches: the possessive and the processual. Graduates who own and apply a list of skills and capacities adopt a possessive attitude. Those graduates who adapt to and enjoy their social, cultural and higher education environment use the processual approach. However, the way graduates move from the school to work is known as the procedural approach. The possessive attitude is the most reliable approach in developed countries. However, many factors such as economic performance and the circumstances of the labour market may dictate which perspective will be used.

Yorke (2006:37) calls for a "set of achievements–skills, understandings, and personal qualities." Similar expressions call for care, for example, "skills" cover various exercises including both what we associate with academia and employability skills. Harvey affirms this issue and repeats that "employability is and defined" can give the gist of the most concise explanation of the meaning of employability as approved by Rothwell and Arnold (2007:5). In simple terms, both researchers describe employability as "the ability to keep the job one has or to get the job one wants." Mohd Salleh et al., (2018), offers a signal that employability is more than gaining employment and so the lack of cohesion or clarity continue around defining employability. Thus, interns gain employability skills in a work context at the employers' workplaces. Both employers and HEIs, therefore, play critical roles in employability skills. They have to propose how to develop the employability skills they will deliver to the graduates' course at the universities and workplaces to achieve results. Business Magazine and Verde Frontier Employability Survey (2016) conclude that the employers should name the skills they need since they will be the user of these skills. Academics/lecturers consider it their responsibility to produce professionals who

are work-ready on graduation. However, they admit that graduates learn and develop employability skills through many experiences in the place of work. The Report on "Employability Skills for the Future" published the eight most common soft skills that employers need (Prikshat et al., 2018). The eight most common soft skills comprise *"communication skills, teamwork skills, problem-solving skills, self-management skills, planning and organising skills, technological skills, lifelong learning skills, and initiative and enterprise skills"* (DEST, 2002: 7). The theoretical knowledge of employability skills that graduates learn at universities now applies in the workplace under supervising professional employees (ILO, 2016; Khare, 2016). Graduates agree that they had the chance to take part in a scheduled programme and worked under supervising professional workers (Walker et al., 2015). Workshop experiences give graduates the possibility of developing work skills, understanding the workplace (Business Council of Australia, 2017).

### 2.3 Policies around Internship and Employability

Over the past decade, most research on internship and employability has involved the three primary stakeholders as participants: HEI academics/lecturers, graduates, and employers. Each has plans which affect their particular perspective of graduate employability (Burgess et al., 2018; OECD, 2016; Kinash et al., 2016). Stakeholders argue that the government acts as one environment for each of them in this study because it dictates the national higher education policy and provides the funding required (Rothwell & Rothwell, 2017). However, much of the current literature on internship and employability of graduates suggests the rise of graduate unemployment and the scarcity of financial resources. HEIs can then react to the labour market demands (Dhakal et al., 2018; Tran, 2015; Walker et al., 2015). According to the agenda of policymakers, HEIs will lead to ready-made supply graduates in the labour market (World Bank (2017). Recent evidence suggests that when addressing the three stakeholders' perspectives on the critical role of policy-making views, the term graduates' employability can be better understood (Monteiro et al., 2016).

The many and varied circumstances and perspectives of these stakeholders produce moral force through which key issues come into view. I present all the stakeholders with the policymakers in a diagrammatic model in Figure 2.1. While graduates are a separate stakeholder group, their internship experiences happened per the partnership and collaboration of employers and HEIs (Jackson, 2015). Even though HEIs enroll students first, they organise their internship in the workplace at defined periods of their university programme (Cavanagh et al., 2015; Jackson et

al., 2017). Students may be on placement on a part-time or sandwich basis and during school holidays at the employers' workplaces (Matthews, 2012; D'Abate et al., 2009; Highfliers, 2014; Nankervis et al., 2018). Students may be mostly in the classroom in HEIs with few direct involvements in the workplace with the employers.

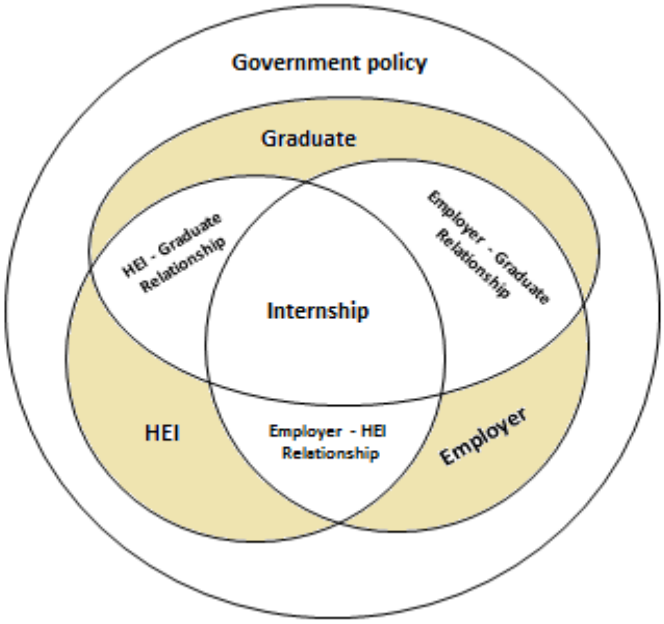


Figure 2.1. Internship and employability stakeholders *adapted from (The Work Integrated Learning Report: A national study. Patrick, Peach & Pocknee, 2009).*

It is essential to refer to stakeholders who have unique knowledge and understanding of the nature or meaning of the perspectives, significance, and interests of each of them in employability. Many researchers argue that policymakers decide the profile of employability over the past decade according to their political agenda (PWC, 2017b; Mehrotra, 2015; Salmi, 2017). From Figure 2.1 above, the internship experience is placed in a particular context and affected by government and higher education policy. In particular, the government finances HEIs through higher education funding models. The next section records the literature about the State and policy impacting on internships and employability.

### 2.3.1 The Impact of Government Policies on Internship

Several studies show the policies that impact on the people's ideas of employability (Gupta et al., 2016; Sin & Neave, 2016; ILO, 2016; Khare, 2016). Policies also have economic concerns in work-readiness and this impacts internship. The government is researching the potential of placement to help graduates, try by "using effort to cope with the economic challenges and fulfill its stated commitment to skill Mauritians for the jobs of tomorrow and close existing skills gaps"

(Ministry of Finance, Budget Speech, 2013:40). The government's support for employability through internships in Mauritius has been further identified by the recent introduction of a Youth Employment Programme (YEP). Also, a Dual Training Programme (DTP) has been set up by the Ministry of Finance & Economic Development (MoFED), in response to HEIs Mauritian's National Internship Scheme (Budget Speech, 2013). Other countries, such as Germany, Austria, France, and Spain, have introduced a post-graduation internship. High unemployment in these countries has made it difficult for fresh graduates without relevant work experience to find the right job (Mohd Salleh et al., 2018; Prikshat et al., 2018).

The first thorough discussions and analyses of employability emerged during the 1960s with the Robbins Report in the UK. The latter describes the role of HEIs as a provider of training of graduates with the essential skills to move into the world of work (Robbins Report, 1963). Recent evidence suggests that higher education is training graduates for work-readiness and this affects the organisation of internships (Leitch, 2006; Dearing, 1997; & Wilson, 2012; Puthucheary (2017). Many studies have tried to explain employability (for example, Economist Intelligence Unit, 2014; the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry Report, 2002; Department of Education and Training, 2002; The Allen Consulting Group, 2007). In their studies, the report highlights economic prosperity for the graduate and the country (for instance, the UK, Europe, and Australia among others) by fulfilling the demands for skills by employers. Business Magazine and Verde Frontier Employability Survey (2016) explain that sound employability skills create a skilled labour force. The idea creates a more active labour market which leads to improved social benefits and a general and progressive increase in prices making productivity more desirable. Thus, employability is caught as if in a mesh of economic, social, moral, and policy businesses (Williams et al., 2016).

Mason, Williams and Cranmer (2014) state that a national employability performance indicator was set up in the year 2000 and the results of graduates were measured. From that time of the year, HEIs in the UK collect and supply data six months after graduation, on graduates' employment status (Harvey, 2001; Gedye et al., 2004). However, Brown (2007) argues that the current measurement of employability is employment. Harvey (2001) states that many researchers have criticised the method used for measuring the employability of graduates and claims that this survey estimates only employment results. Brown (2007) supports Harvey's statement on employability measurement. Pegg et al., (2012) report introducing many comments

about employability in the UK. Employability reports continued to increase, and HEI displayed concentrated attention on employability.

Policymakers kept repeating their concentration on employability and their associations with employers, contributing to increasing pressure on HEIs. In the next section, the stakeholder introduced will be HEIs.

### 2.4 Trends in the Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs)

During the past years, much more information has become available on the growth and size of higher education, dated since the 1950s (Bolton, 2012; HESA, 2012; Jackson, 2016). In 2010, there has been an increase of around 47% of undergraduates in many higher education institutions in developed countries (Bolton, 2012; Morgan, 2012; HESA, 2012). The number of HEIs is also growing (HESA, 2012). HEIs force institutions to play an essential role as contributors to the economic growth of the country (Mehrotra, 2015). I expect academic institutions to develop graduates who would possess employability skills (Business Magazine and Verde Frontier Employability Survey, 2016). These would match the skills needed by companies which will lead to a more prosperous economy. HEIs, understand that these prospects were absent in the 1950s and therefore expectations of institutions have developed (Knight & Yorke, 2003). Government and employers are now expecting HEIs to discuss graduate employability by targeting the growth of transportable and transferable skills in graduates. HEIs are also likely to increase the number of graduates. Salmi (2017) considers employability a part of the Personal Developmental Planning (PDP), an opportunity for work experiences, improved careers guidance, and planning.

In an analysis of HEIs, Wibrow and Jackson (2016) confirm that HEIs all over the world have gained exceptional advantages for their work in growing numbers of employable graduates. Such growth can cause the economy to burgeon. Employability performance indicators were introduced into Europe and other countries from the year 2000. They compel HEIs to supply more information on the employability of graduates (HEFCE, 2011; Clarke, 2017). The pressure put on universities forces them to produce competent graduates. The students leaving the university after graduation must have knowledge, skills, attitudes, productivity, and readiness to undertake recent projects to contribute to the growth of the economy (The Finch et al. study, 2016).

### 2.4.1 The Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and Internship

In a recent study, Montague et al., (2018) infer that HEIs are bound to excel in the delivery of training programmes and more so in understanding the employability of their participants' viewpoints. The development of students' employability skills is a priority because, first, institutions need to supply the demands of employers (Business Magazine and Verde Frontier Employability Survey, 2016). Second, often graduates becoming long-life learners while having a return on their investment in higher training and development (Rothwell & Rothwell, 2017). Rae (2007) concedes that HEIs have already tried an employability scheme since 2000. Unlike this, Nankervis et al., (2018) argue that employers question HEIs' strategies on employability. Employability is fundamental to the policy goals of the government. Research studies have also identified and highlighted that both government and employers view employability as a key economic and social target. Therefore, policymakers and employers are putting pressure on HEIs to carry out more internships in the sandwich model for students studying at degree level (Clarke, 2017). They also compel HEIs to satisfy the needs of students and graduates.

In recent years, there has been increasing literature on the progressive role of HEIs (Robbins, 1963; Leitch, 2006; Dearing 1997; Wilson, 2012; OECD, 2016; Canadian Council of Chief Executives, 2014). Policymakers' strategy on higher education is to keep employability on a continuing agenda (ILO, 2015). The mindset of lecturers' changes when employability skills are inserted into the curricula, and they try to increase their students' engagement to learn these skills (Lin, 2017b). They emphasize the need for HEIs to have an employability onset awareness, responding to both graduates and employers. HEIs all over the world and in Australian universities have answered to the particular importance of employability skills by setting up the identity of qualities of graduates, stating that they will train their students during their studies (Rothwell & Rothwell, 2017). The survey of Montague et al., (2018) concedes that employers ask higher education institutions to take part in an internship and to offer a quality contribution towards economic growth. Further, HEIs are noticed as critical causes in supplying graduates full of competencies that could contribute towards the economy (World Bank, 2017).

Surveys such as that conducted by Dalziel (2012) shows that many universities have tried to develop an employability strategy largely to add value to the qualification offered. They wish to make the training programme more attractive to large numbers of applicants. One strategy is that students receive more opportunities for work experience, although this will depend on the collaborating employer and HEI (Jackson, 2015).

The study of Wilton (2011) on recent policy documents, identifies the central controversy within the role of higher education institutions in a changing world. Universities exist as institutions for creating and spreading knowledge. Universities hold a more student development focus not leading to future workforce demands (Burgess et al., 2018; Monteiro et al., 2016; O'Neill, 2010). Universities are not now, nor have ever been, focussing on preparing inexperienced people for the workforce and careers (World Bank, 2017). The general idea of employability has been disputed in the conventional notions of higher education and has raised many questions on the results of higher education (Cavanagh et al., 2015).

Studies have admitted that academics believed the knowledge taught in universities to be theoretical with understanding a specific field of study (Rothwell & Rothwell, 2017). Other researchers admit that inserting employability skills into the curriculum will cause the content of other subjects to decrease and therefore, present subject matters will not be covered (Majumdar, 2016). In Australia and other parts of the world, most universities now command their faculty staff or lecturers to take responsibility for inserting the graduates' qualities in their curricula into their institution (Chang, 2016b). However, academics refuse to train students in employability skills (Gore & Carter, 2011; Speight et al., 2013). Lecturers prefer to teach according to the underlying philosophy of teaching academic subject matters. However, Wheeler (2008), gives details of the controversy that exists among academic staff as conflicting pressures, scarcity of resources and original opinions. Gore and Carter (2011) defend this idea and argue that on one hand academic staff wish to keep the traditional academic values. Meanwhile, other academics are supporting the employability organised plan and agreed to teach these skills. Monteiro et al., (2016) argue that despite these inconsistencies among the individual perspectives within HEIs, most academics have adopted an employability agenda. I devote HEIs to growing students with their academic programmes and other extra-curricular activities (UTM, 2016). HEIs aims to produce competent graduates not only for the workplace but also for other assignments they will have throughout life. Therefore, in this literature review, the effectiveness of educational institutions will be appraised by employers. Under the employability strategies, the next section will detail the employability terms and initiatives which are carried out in business schools.

### 2.4.2 The Business School

Surveys such as that conducted by Green & Zhu (2010) show that since the 1950s the business school has been considered as the ablest higher educational institution which owns the most significant success stories on employability. As a result, there has been the growth of higher

education institutions such as business schools (Khurana, 2007; Williams, 2010; Jackson et al., 2017). The literature review credits the success of business schools with a high demand for business services (Walker et al., 2015). However, the Business Council of Australia (2017) point out that employers are dissatisfied with the benchmark of experiences that graduates produced. The researcher faced a dearth of data on the impact made on graduates of business schools (Gault et al., 2010). In their analysis, many researchers are concerned about the ethics, values, and models that business schools use in their training in business and management education (Green & Zhu, 2010; Starkey et al., 2004; Tomlinson, 2012). These doubts have existed for ten years (Starkey & Tiratsoo, 2007). The shortage of academic investigations into business schools, despite their growth in popularity over the past decades, has been disturbing. They have cleared so far none of the numbers of doubts. To some extent, questions remained unanswered about the knowledge, skills, and readiness of business graduates who entered the labour market.

Tsukamoto (2016) focuses on how HEIs had inserted employability skills into the curricula of undergraduates to make better or more attractive students and to swell undergraduate employability in universities in the year 2000. HEIs, give due considerations to make the best means used when employability skills are inserted in the curriculum (OECD, 2016). Whether employability skills are imposed by add-on sessions or are skills inserted as an integral part of the curriculum is a continuous debate. Employability skills integrated into the curriculum on several modules will entail their delivery side by side with the academic skills (Barrie, 2006; Tomlinson (2012). Some employers are agreed that HEIs are in favour of developing employability (Nankervis et al., 2018). Still, other employers felt that students would be unaware of the skills they were developing if ever the employability skills were to be inserted into the curriculum. Many employers argue that they can embed employability skills in the curriculum or as an add-on model (Mobd Salleh et al., 2016). Authors have published much literature on the choices of universities between integrating employability skills' the adding on of skills, or both curriculum models (Prikshat et al., 2018; Shanmugam, 2017; Dhakal et al., 2018; World Bank, 2016). The staff of business schools show a lack of emotional involvement in teaching employability skills for the business professions (Gore & Carter, 2011; Walker et al., 2015). Besides, some researchers also highlight the way staff prepares students for their courses (Cavanagh et al., 2015; Wibrow & Jackson. 2016). Such researchers put the competency of these staff into question on how they train graduates for the workplace. The issue raised here is that some academic personnel who work in business schools may lack a specific ability and knowledge of logistics. Staff lack practicality and concern with the user rather than theoretical

possibilities of working in the business profession. Instead, business schools' staff are concentrating more on teaching the theory. They do not satisfy employers with the academic learning side by side with the staff's research (Salmi, 2017; Mehrotra, 2015).

Graduates must undertake internships to compensate for this inadequacy in some employability skills, that business staff have not taught them (Jackson, 2015). The work experience can be part of their degree programme (Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, 2007; Clarke, 2017). However, these internships are available in some subjects such as economics, business, management, and more. It is still more difficult to find placement in other subjects, for instance, Law, and Art and Design (Tsukamoto, 2016). There is a cost for starting and preserving the programme through the supervision of interns and keeping the employer's relationship (Norton, 2016). Therefore, this can be one reason only a few HEIs offer work placements and internships, thus allowing students with more experience in the workplace (Tomlinson, 2017). HEIs have first to set up contacts with employers, gain placements and work experience opportunities, and make available these internships to students who have enrolled in their programme.

HEIs are interested in the professional development of graduates and with planning institutional strategies to help graduates' passage from universities to work, for example, study programmes with internships. This sub-section has dealt with the employability skills and work experience opportunities which they mandated curricula extend to students. HEIs need to perpetuate an effective partnership with employers. An excellent collaborative partnership with providers of placements would benefit the interns. However, this section has also shown that obstacles to HEIs and companies continue.

So far this section had considered the literature about HEIs' positions of a graduate's employability. The following section will discuss the disregarded view in the graduate employability discourse, the graduates' perspectives around internship and employability.

### 2.5 Students' Discourses around Internship and Employability

Many policies documents have tried to motivate placement providers and HEIs and to develop employability skills (Dearing, 1997; Leitch, 2006; Wilson, 2012). Employers need a quality productive workforce, yet they do not consider the graduates, who are not considered in these debates (Rothwell & Rothwell, 2017). Linked with the recent rise in tuition fees, graduates have shifted their expectations about HEIs because of the economic mood and contest for employment

(Summers, 2016). Therefore, graduates have hopes for the occupations which they want to access. They believe their future plays an integral part in their performance, attitudes, and habit. Recent studies suggest that graduates are becoming more guided by practical experience and observation rather than by a theory in their choices for their degrees. Graduates are taking their future more seriously, and have found that employability is crucial to them gaining a job (Prikshat et al., 2018). The graduate perspectives are still not represented in the employability discussions. I have conducted several studies researching into graduate employability, examining the graduates' perspectives on their transfer to work. I use the word transfer or transition. To transfer is to move a person or thing to a unique position or location, for example, "transfer the data"; "transfer the student to the workplace." The transition is a change from one place, state, subject or stage to another (CTI, 2017). Few studies highlight essential employability skills, offering responses to their training and development at the workplace (Jackson, 2016; Clarke, 2017). These studies are the views of the employer on graduate skills or the career destinations of graduates. Other authors agreed that the experiences of graduates in employment are not well-known (Dhakal et al., 2018).

The discussions and analyses of The Employability and Career Forum Employability (2017) argue that internships are a critical means of career exploration for students. Thus, taking part in internships is becoming a robust pathway into most graduates' vacation. Some graduates believe that an internship is an opportunity for them to put into practise what has taught in classrooms at the workplace (Clarke, 2017; Sleap & Reed, 2006). The analysis of Finn (2016) explains that graduates' experience of employability starts in the classroom as they form part of the curriculum. Several studies viewing internships show that if graduates first experienced these abilities in classrooms, they have further developed them in the place of work (Cho, 2016; Taiwan Ministry of Labour, 2017; Fang, 2017). During internships, graduates meet professionals in the workplace, developing employability and technical skills to become employable (Dacre Pool & Sewell, 2007; Billet, 2011). Graduates transform or transfer their theoretical knowledge and skills or attitudes into practical experiences (Rothwell & Rothwell, 2017). Also, they understand the workplace (Williams et al., 2016), working both as a team and on their own (Jackson et al., 2017), and they are trained to gain employment (Mohd Salleh et al., 2018). Employers offer valuable experiences for graduates and internships can play an important role in graduate student professional development (Nankervis et al., 2018). The study of Tran (2015) highlights that internships are not only valuable in terms of skill development but may offer

students an insider perspective on the profession. Graduates know employers recognise internships as being of a high value on applicable skills and work experience.

Graduates prefer to undertake the employability skills training in the actual world of work. They believed that having work experience on their resumés will give them a competitive advantage during a job recruitment interview (Mohd Salleh et al., 2018; Prikshat et al., 2018). Also, they are of the view that employers favour qualified graduates, even though the university does not force them to undergo an internship to gain a degree (Alias et al., 2015). The internship offers an almost ideal learning environment for a student proposing to enter a profession. Graduates work and earn experiences under the control and guidance of an experienced supervisor during their internship. In return, internships allow the students to be assessed as potential job applicants in workplace settings before recruitment (Mohd Salleh et al., 2018). Jennings (2017) views that graduates who completed a paid internship were more likely to receive a job than those without an internship. Thus, this exposure of graduates to the field of work in some discipline gives them a competitive advantage during recruitment interviews.

### 2.5.1 Students' Attitudes and Trends on Internship

Researchers have published many papers on internships and employability over the last three decades. However, graduates' viewpoints are most often missed in the employability discussions (Sleap & Reed, 2006; Birch et al., 2010). Graduate attributes are important factors in planning the curriculum of any university undergraduate programme. Integration of generic attributes in the curriculum ensures that students develop skills that will better equip them for the work environment and self-employment. The study of Holmes (2013) points out that on the small number of times that graduate's views are explored, these are centred either on the career destination of graduates after graduation or in a single case study scenario. Tomlinson (2007: 286) also states that "there has been little recent empirical work exploring how students and graduates are understanding and manage their employability about recent higher education and labour market change." OECD (2016) identifies statistics on the Destinations of Leavers of Higher Education (DLHE) in Great Britain, six months after their graduation. These DLHE statistics are, however, limited to confirming the graduates' perspectives on employability (ILO, 2016). On such views as skills needed, the passage from university to the workplace and the graduates' reaction to their teaching of skills to-date only a few studies have looked at the positions of the graduates (Dhakal et al., 2018). More so, various researchers note that concerns are raised by employers on the competency of novice graduates and the needs of employers to

be addressed (Billet, 2011; Jackson, 2013; HESA, 2012; NACE, 2013; Zhao & Linden, 2011; Nankervis et al., 2018).

The work of Nankervis et al., (2015) further provides evidence on the scarcity of research on developing the competency of students in business education. I associate the missing literature with the complex nature of employability. With the burgeoning number of higher education institutions, the existing numbers of unemployed graduates, and the increase of students, skills development t has become more complicated and multidirectional (Business Magazine and Verde Frontier Employability Survey, 2016). Ultimately, assessing employability becomes more difficult. However, some research exists and has tried to elicit graduates' viewpoints despite the complexities of employability. These results provided useful insights into the graduate perspective.

Tsukamoto (2016) agrees that graduates' attitudes have changed, and they favour their own choices of having a degree which has led to their career path after graduation. For example, the general tendency today is that graduates target a degree which would enable them to gain a wonderful job, rather than select a degree whose content interests them (Mohd Salleh et al., 2018; Prikshat et al., 2018). Graduates choose their preferred subjects, which include business-based, scientific, and professional qualifications. Fresh graduates select, as a priority, a qualification related to work. In the same vein, introducing a fee in HEIs in the UK and other countries in 2012 has changed the mind-sets of students who are now becoming more selective for their higher studies (Kalfa & Taksa, 2015); and today's students could leave education with massive debts. Students expect that their employability skills would improve their difficult financial positions. They also plan to be employable at the end of their studies (Browne, 2010; Khare, 2016). Student's dream of well-compensated employment and excellent prospects after their graduation. They want the highest returns on their investment (Nankervis et al., 2015).

Students try to avoid fierce competition for graduates' jobs in the labour market, avoiding the time graduates take to gain employment. The survey and analysis conducted by the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development, (2006), in the UK, reports that the training programme provides undergraduates with skills transferable into the workplace. Many researchers agree that economic prosperity related to the act of investing in graduates through education and training (Yorke, 2004; Berntson et al., 2006; Tomlinson, 2017). Yeh et al., (2017) confirms that graduates would be a knowledge worker of the future. Graduates are necessary to be up-to-date with

knowledge, skills, and attitudes, aware of new technology and managing in the economic system. Recent knowledge, skills, attitudes, and qualities became essential (Wibrow & Jackson, 2016). Brown et al. (2010) highlight that graduates have to develop skills to enable them to stay employable during their working life. They have immediately made alternatives to what was most profitable for them when competing with other graduates for jobs (Prikshat et al., 2018). It is therefore essential and urgent that graduates' way of looking at employability is for bettering their careers. Graduates now can gain access to supporting documents on internship and employability prepared by HEIs (Sin & Neave, 2016). For many graduates, the type and level of employment are also important, it is not just about gaining a job. Mohd Salleh et al., (2018) argues there are poor graduate-level jobs, while Prikshat et al., (2018) highlight developing "underemployment" or "over-education." Green and Zhu (2010: 24) fix the word "over-qualification" as "disequilibrium, whereby workers hold excess educational qualifications about those their jobs needed." Graduates often cannot secure graduates' jobs and as a result, they take on non-graduate level employment (Clarke, 2017). Tran (2015) reports that some graduates are having their services engaged for non-graduate level employment. For example, graduates now may work at a call centre, in customer service, sales, and administrative positions have surged by almost 6%. Graduates maintain that career prospects on a longer-term basis, supported with a degree, are more favourable to becoming competitive in the labour market. Besides, Walker et al., (2015) foreground that only 4% of graduates are not satisfied by winning their degree, institutions also hold with this belief. Majumdar (2016) asserts that graduates can be promoted and therefore it is still more favourable to be a graduate than to have no higher education qualifications. However, Green and Zhu (2010) argue that not all graduates would move to a better position in life or gain a better job on the career ladder. More so, Elias and Purcell (2004) report that 15% of UK graduates who completed five years in employment after graduation remains in non-graduate jobs, for example, working as a clerk, as factory workers, or in hotels. Also, a well-timed investigation of this problem reported that 40% of fresh graduates are unemployed (Walker et al., 2015). I find it a concern that, as soon as a graduate is underemployed, this was in a non-graduate level job; the graduate might not recover the status of a graduate-level because their skills are underutilised. To support this argument, Mehrotra (2015) reports that they pay underemployed graduates less and develop a smaller number of skills. They do not have the means, ability or know-how to promote such, compared with their graduate-level peers having the same characteristics. The next section presents the internship and students' work experiences.

### 2.5.2 Internship and Students' Work Experiences

A significant and growing body of literature has studied the term "work experience" and covered forms, including, among others, placements, internships, WBL, WIL and shadowing (Prospects, 2011; The OU, 2012; Gault, Leach, & Duey, 2010; NACE, 2012; D'Abate et al., 2009; Artess et al., 2011; Speight et al., 2013; Tomlinson, 2017; Clarke, 2017; Montague et al. 2018). The work experiences might vary from two months to 12 months with, for example, responsibilities' stages corresponding to payment, and job relevancy. For business fields, official course-related work experience was not more challenging when observed and noted than the likenesses or differences to other subjects. Much of the current literature on experience pays particular attention to the most gains to earned by graduates who engaged in work experience. However, regardless of a significant indefinite number of advantages declared, many students neglect the internship's experience during their studies. The survey carried out on graduates' experience by HEFCE (2009) suggests the number of students from the university who undertook an internship was low across most degree subjects. For example, around 203,300 students were enrolled in a full-time five-year degree programme in 2002-2003. To arrive at their first-degree, only 4% of them undertook study abroad, and 8% conducted an internship at HEFCE (2009). The issue becomes more complicated as the number of students in the UK and other countries who committed to an internship programme had dropped (MLIRET, 2017 a, b). In a study, MLIRET (2017 a, b) discloses that 25% of students did not complete their internships. Other studies found that little research and literature on the effects of internship even though the circulated application of internships are well documented (Narayanan, Olk, & Fukami, 2010; Rothwell & Rothwell, 2017). In their work, Cho (2016) reports that students who up took a 12 months internship while following a degree was few. Other researches carried by The National Association of Colleges & Employers (2012) and The Finch et al. study, 2016) show that students enrolled in work experience while studying at university. Sin and Neave (2016) discovered that some graduates undertook work for the allowance, that was only for the money and not for because it offered lessons about a future career. The works of some other researchers supported this finding (Gupta et al., 2016; Khare, 2016).

Recent evidence suggests that students enjoy their work experience (Tsukamoto, 2016). I have applauded such work experiences of students without dissent by the most involved stakeholders. During internships as a first experience, graduates develop technical ability and sense the first onset of professional action. Graduates who undergo internships have higher job satisfaction and become more ambitious. Internships allow graduates to incorporate the informal network of

employers, increasing their chances to discover references which may be of extreme importance for future career options. However, graduates who add the internships' experiences to their academic qualifications in their resumes, have the competitive advantages in the first's attainment job they seek (Montague et al., 2018).

The study of Tomlinson (2017) shows that many students chose a 12-month internship during their university studies. Dhakal et al., (2018) discovered that fewer graduates undertook an internship. Still, many graduates mentioned being concerned about work experience but could not find any placement of their choice or in the proper field of studies (Brook, 2012). Many graduates argued that they own prior work experience. They no longer want to work in companies, for economic reasons. 50% of the undergraduate reported that a short duration internship over the summer holidays month would count as undertaking work experience (Montague et al. 2018). Some graduates have few opportunities available to them after having tried without success to gain work experience. Differences in a position also exist in the graduates' viewpoints. They recognise that exposure in some fields is mandated for the award of a degree, while in other areas, no contract to undergo practical training in the workplace is available (Jackson, 2015). They do not motivate some students to experience internships unless they find it valuable to their careers.

Graduates are shown in the literature as of diverging viewpoints and as having a different engagement with work experiences. The documentary also reflects that employers rate work experience highly, and those graduates who owned no experience would suffer. However, not all graduates in all HEIs are concerned. Graduates in partnership with an increased number of employers might enable a great number of work experience opportunities being made available to these institutions (Tomlinson, 2017). Employability also improved concomitantly with the university from which the student graduated.

I have not researched the viewpoints of graduates on internship and on the employability debates on a large scale (Mohd Salleh et al., 2018; Prikshat et al., 2018). Nowadays, graduates' attitudes and their trends in employability have changed because they wish to get a job as soon as they are graduated (Gupta et al., 2016). They decide on the university courses they wish to obtain employment as soon as they are graduated. Some students undergo internships whether the latter is compulsory or facultative. Still, few students engage in a course on a world level. They understand that a degree improves employability, but they have to gain exposure to experiences

in the workplace to put into practise what they learned in business schools (Billet, 2011; Mehrotra, 2015). This entails that graduates must set up a broad array of skills and ability, in readiness for employability.

### 2.6 Internships for Employability

The rapid increase of higher education has significant and intense effects on the labour markets because employers call for developed employees (Montague et al., 2018). Internships give practical experience in which graduates have purposeful and intentional learning goals, saying what they are learning throughout the experience. Internships provide students with the opportunity of gaining work experience and employers help them get a job (Puthucheary, 2017). The internship is a platform that suggests students' work and permit them to benefit from work experience, knowledge, skills, and attitudes essential to reaching the desired goal in today's labour market. The internship allows students to gather their experiences from the workplace, knowing that they have explored during university (Jackson, 2015). However, employers are more implicated in graduates' work experience than their academic qualifications. Frequently, internships are often the sole means of earning work experience that graduates need to ensure a job, therefore, they form part of graduates' resume (Sin & Neave, 2016). Employers favour job seekers whose resume show that they have undertaken internships successfully, together with work experience. Therefore, in more competitive job markets, graduates with experience need to set themselves apart from the others. Most undergraduate students recognise that having an internship is an excellent chance for a full-time job offer. Employers recruit applicants who already have worked for them (Nankervis et al., 2018).

#### 2.6.1 Students' Graduation and Employability

Employability is fast becoming an essential instrument in a university programme and for the development of fresh graduates (Khare, 2016). Employability attaches particular significance to the supreme graduate goal for which they underwent a university programme, for example, after graduation the graduate level or employment they have ensured. Employability is hardly a concern about increasing work; other features that add to the learning work are needed to designate an individual as employable (Mohd Salleh et al., 2018). These expressions include personal qualities, knowledge, skills, attitudes, experience, and the ability to gain and preserve employment (Clarke, 2017). Therefore, graduates must have more than just the quality of being able to do to obtain a job, they are also compelled to show soft skills to be employable.

In their study, PWC (2017b) confirm that students noted a shortage of their employability skills especially skills in Information Technology. Jackson et al., (2017) notice that employability is reported as an essential item by graduates during their degree programme. However, graduates highlighted that, first, presentation skills, although strongly emphasised in classrooms, leave graduates without sufficient workplace presentation skills. Second, there is a transfer problem in which graduates reported that the workplace needed networking and liaising skills. These skills have been ignored in their curriculum (Ferns & Lilly, 2016). Economist Intelligence Unit (2014) agrees with the study of Mason et al., (2014). Future track discovered that 75% of graduates believed they had the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that employers needed. Future track (2012) further searched the viewpoints of graduates on the extent to which someone had trained them in their internships and the current needs for these skills by employers. The research shows that 62% of graduates were currently using; the skills developed in their training programme for purposes of employment. For most of these graduates, their employability strengthened when they designed the relevant skills during their degree and university. However, some 38% of graduates complain about mismatches in skills development. Graduates told that some skills, for example, teamwork, presentation skills, and communication (spoken), are in great demand by employers. However, even though these powerful skills are in their curriculum, they are growing at the university. Although "numeracy and entrepreneurial skills" are greatly in demand from employers (Nankervis et al., 2018), graduates believed that they do not obtain these skills during their degree programmes. They have a slight chance of developing these skills at a proper level, and graduates say that exploring abilities is neither a priority for employers nor taught in their university programme.

Research studies on employability have to lead the Department of Education and Training (2002) to devise with a list of the eight most common soft skills accepted by employers. They view these skills as having worth, merit or value in the workplace. The survey of Kinash et al., (2016), on the ownership of these skills by graduates, shows that 63.4% of graduates were competent and had a capacity in these eight skills. The other graduates believe themselves to be lacking in these employability skills. They sense that they have not trained for the skills viewed as essential to the companies. Since the employers in the sample consider these most common skills valuable, it can be assumed that one-third of these graduates has not deepened their employability skills. I base these statistics values on a few literature types that exist. The generalisability of much-published research on this issue is problematic. There is a scarcity of research on the internship and employability of graduates (Azevedo et al., 2012; Silva et al., 2016).

Silva et al., (2016) discovered that some undergraduates thought themselves competent for the work they are engaged in. Most graduates sense that their skills and knowledge developed in the classroom are not utilised in their current employment. They report that for what they are doing they have higher skills level than the job needed. Some graduates mention that their university experience has to a degree exceeded ordinary skills. Such answers may come from graduates used in non-graduate level employment (Tran, 2015). Many studies claim that 80% of graduates believed they owned the skills that the employer needed (Salmi, 2017; Gupta et al., 2016). Sivasomboon (2017) maintains that it is their classroom experience that has caused them to be employable. However, 10% of the graduates believed they are not employable on completion of their degree. Another 6% told that it deprives them of the essential skills expected by employers.

The literature showed that students expressed doubt that their employability skills have been increased by their degree. Divergences exist between the soft skills that employers need in companies and those developed in classrooms. However, studying for a degree and having classroom experiences did not lead to employability. To what extent graduation heightens employability will be considered next.

### 2.6.2 To what Extent does Graduation Enhance Employability?

The Quality Assurance Agency (2007) conceives that university is a location where academics prepare graduates for participation in the post-education universe. Ramsey (2016) observes that students must own the skills to distinguish themselves in today's competitive labour market. Also, students grow the ability to change, is easily persuaded to satisfy circumstances marked by continuous change and to adapt to preserve continuous learning (ILO, 2015). The onus lies on universities, who are expected to react to the challenging political and economic environment and employer's demands (General Statistics Office, 2017). Universities have to prepare students for employment (OECD, 2017). Tsukamoto (2016) suggests that the significant purpose of HEIs is to make sure that learners are provided with whatever is necessary to be lifelong learners with knowledge, attitudes, and skills to make this inevitable. Tholen (2014) reports that universities are recognising how to train graduates for the labour market. Universities have increased significance on employability within the curricula (UTM, 2016). Graduates often cited that employment prospects are the primary motivation for continuing a university degree course (Wharton, Goodwin & Cameron, 2014). In a competitive environment, it is necessary for universities is to show what they offer for students' investments. Policymakers continue to underline the prominent status of higher education credentials crucial to economic development,

in satisfying the demands of the knowledge-driven economy marked by continuous change (Kalfa & Taksa, 2015). I also see these credentials to give graduates access to the labour market (Tsukamoto (2016)). Students undertake higher studies at a great cost and often question their return on investment. Policymakers justify the high costs borne by students because graduates go through substantial financial and personal cost engaging in further education. However, research points out that disseminating educational credentials is contributing little or no value to individuals' human capital (Salmi, 2017). Researchers argue that the growth in credentials has generated pressures on middle-class populations who gain further academic success before taking employment rather than thinking of improving their skills, attitudes, and knowledge required to perform the work. In this vein, Clarke (2017) remarks that there is a rise in the number of graduates over-qualified for the employment they take.

Prikshat et al., (2018) claim the embedding of employability within the degree programmes should not conflict with either the academia or the needs of employers. It can be both susceptible to the attitudes or feelings towards academic prospects, while also developing graduates with job skills. The study of Dhakal et al., (2018) show that undergraduate degree programmes contribute to developing soft skills. Cavanagh et al., (2015) concede that HEIs cannot equip graduates with all employability skills because universities aim to give graduates a wide range of skills. Other studies recognise that regardless of the particular importance given to developing soft skills, research goes forward to declare that graduates having the skills and competences for the modern workplace (Business Magazine and Verde Frontier Employability Survey, 2016). World Bank (2017) proves that unemployment and underemployment of graduates are destructive phenomena in their lives. An increasing number of graduates have not found permanent positions in their chosen field of study since the beginning of the economic recession of the year 2007 in America. Nankervis et al., (2018) identify that employers are giving less importance to academic credentials while their values focused on personal attributes and skills of graduates. Employers explain that they define employability more on the graduates' ability to show a broader range of interpersonal skills, communicative and organisational abilities, and team working. The workplace will be discussed in the next section.

### 2.7 The Workplace as Learning Place for Employability

The workplace is a position in which workers carry out individual/collective functions for an employer. It is, an employer's space, such as a factory or an office building. I perceive the workplace as an essential social space, other than a home, for industrialised societies. The

workplace is making up "a central idea for several entities: the worker and his/her family, the using organization, the customers of the organization, and the society" (Jackson & Suomi (2004: 37). Workplaces are learning places for students, and during the internship, the workplace is where the interns put in practise in a real work environment what they learned at university (Tsukamoto, 2016). A mentor/supervisor is allocated to one intern or a group of interns in their field of studies. Supervisors prepare the internship training programme and support the students during their internships. In this section, I present various elements of internships, such as the employers' debates around internship and employability, the skills employers need, the traditional academic skills and knowledge, the soft transferable skills, personal characteristics and behaviours of interns, and the organisations and extra-curricular activities.

### 2.7.1 Employers' Discourses around Internship and Employability

The studies of Walker et al., (2015), and Monteiro et al., (2016) show that employers researched graduates' skills during the 1990s. I observed that this does not satisfy most employers with the skills that graduates owned, and; they found it difficult to recruit competent graduates owning the right skills (Jackson, 2016; Clarke, 2017). A large and growing body of literature has perused the internship and employability of graduates (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2014; NACE, 2013; Highfliers (2014). It was found that graduates are inclined to have the only theoretical knowledge, being deficient in practical experiences in the workplace. Employers consider that work experiences were valuable. This allowed interns with the opportunity of arriving at important processes and skills that immediately associated them with the company. Further researches must be carried out to understand the specific needs of employers and the full extent of the skills gap is (Business Magazine and Verde Frontier Employability Survey, 2016). Many documents have been put out on graduate employability from the employers' perspectives (Yorke, 2006; Bowers-Brown & Harvey, 2004; Sleep & Reed, 2006; The Finch et al. study, 2016).

The study of Dhakal et al., (2018) insist that employers' views be centered on the knowledge, skills, qualities, attitudes, competencies, and experiences of graduates. The latter have to display the skills according to the demand of employers for the future productiveness and accomplishment of their establishment. Employers, senior management, human resource personnel, and other key staff are important partners in the wide range of internship experiences. These groups can supply the real-world learning context both on and off-campus. They are important in the employability discussions, and their skill needs are impressed in official policy

documents. Therefore, employers' participation in an internship is imperative for the employability agenda controlled by policymakers (Nankervis et al., 2018). Employers adhere to the government's perspective. Also, academic staff can well use and work in collaboration with employers to augment the employability of graduates (Jackson, 2016). The work of Monteiro et al., (2016) reports that employers offer job placement, internships, and employment for graduates. Employers also take part in the design and development of the curriculum by proposing the essential parts for the existing and next training and development in the workplace (Billet, 2011; Jackson, 2016). However, with the appeals recurring for closer collaboration between university and employers in policy documents, this issue needs significant development (World Bank, 2017). Employers are looking for recruited graduates who hold the proper skills, knowledge, and attitudes to thrive in an ever-evolving and challenging professional environment (Nankervis et al., 2018). Researchers report that employers are in a most favourable position to recognise the skills needs for success in the workplace (Dacre Pool & Sewell, 2007; Walker et al., 2015; Salmi, 2017; Rothwell & Rothwell, 2017; Jackson et al., 2017). Employers undertake to recruit work-ready graduates (Jackson 2016) and dictate the benchmark against which they test qualified recruits.

Over the decades, several studies researching employers' perspectives on employability report feedback as unfavourable and showing a dearth of skills available (Yorke, 2004; Griesel & Parker, 2009; Jackson, 2009; Ben & Roger, 2011; Billet, 2011; Rothwell & Arnold 2007; D'Abate et al., 2009; Dacre Pool & Sewell, 2007; Business Magazine and Verde Frontier Employability Survey, 2016). Thus, picturing a mismatch between the supply side (graduates with the right skills) and the demand (employers' needs of qualified workers). I then focus on various studies on the needs of employers for HEIs to producing ready-made graduates (Nabi & Bagley, 1999; Farwell, 2002; Rothwell & Arnold, 2007; D'Abate et al., 2009; Jackson, 2015; Billet, 2011; Mcquaid & Lindsay, 2005; Dearing Report, 1997, Leitch, 2006; Clark, 2017). There is a large volume of published studies on employability mentioning that graduates ought to have gained many of these skills, if not all, of them (McQuaid & Lindsay, 2005; Muhammad, 2017; Jackson, 2016; World Bank. 2017; World Economic Forum, 2015; Dhakal et al., 2018). These studies also explain that employers are many and varied, with many and diverse opinions. I base the economy on intellectual skills, knowledge, and technology, a working environment marked by continuous change (Burgess et al., 2018). Advances in technology (Canadian Council of Chief Executives, 2014) have been made in a labour market involving more competition. In the recent past, the economy has declined, stopped and started. The needs of employers will increase in

extent. The Confederation of British Industry and Pearson (2012) maintain that the growth in the UK economy will be on developing a vast and robust pool of skills and competencies for the prosperity of the economy facing international competition for business. In another part of the world, many countries are addressing these shortages by devising special internships for graduates. In her study in Australia, Jackson (2017) claims that there were not enough researchers on employability. Much theoretical knowledge is instructed in HEIs which is not exercised in the workplace. As a result, the skills in specific subjects and the culture associated with jobs have been assumed to be without importance. The focus should have changed to personal qualities, behaviours, and soft skills or employability skills. Yorke and Knight (2004) describe that employability skills are named at another time or place as generic skills, transferable skills, and critical skills, - the term "employability skill" is given to "soft skill." Prikshat et al., (2018) argue that the term "skills" is not defined; they view soft skills as "transferable skills," while "hard skills" are referred to as "technical subject-specific skills" (Business Magazine and Verde Frontier Employability Survey, 2016).

The next section will highlight the skills that employers need and the abilities that graduates will display.

### 2.7.2 The Employability Skills that Employers Desired

OECD (2016) highlight the shortage of transparency that exists for the word "skill" which remains as an ambiguous word for all participants of the internship programmes. Employers and graduates also use the words "competencies" and "abilities" to test graduates' employability (Jackson, 2014). Many researchers have tried to group these words into families for reducing complexity and affording comprehensibility. They find the four concerns of graduate employability skills as intellectual skills that stem from tradition, key skills, organisations' knowledge, and personal qualities. Employers so far have set their demands by including intellectual skills, knowledge, experiences, and behaviours of graduates as a basis. Table 2.1 below sets out the different literature on employers' perspectives which categorises an employable graduate.

During their internships, graduates gain an extensive collection of soft skills that are the employers' most preferred employability (soft) skills. These skills make an employable graduate in the eyes of many employers. Besides, graduates expect business awareness and wonderful

**Table 2.1. Employability Skills that Employers' desired**

| **Traditional Intellectual Skills** | **Soft Skills** | **Behaviours & Personal Characteristics** | **Organizations' Knowledge and Extra-Curricular activities** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Knowledge skills–e.g., critical evaluation, logical argument, | Team working and co-operation | Interpersonal skills | Relevant placements / Internships |
| Literacy & numeracy | Analytical skills & problem solving | Communication skills | Member of clubs and societies |
| Information and Communication Technology knowledge & skills | Self-organizing | Motivation and drive | Volunteering participation |
| Technical knowledge | Skills of a leader | Adaptability, flexibility and reacting quickly to change. | A representative of the student union |
| Subject to understanding | Communication skills | Assurance | Cultural awareness |
| Knowledge of principle theories and frameworks | Time management & organisational skills | Positive attitude | Commercial awareness |
| Intellectual ability and ability to learn | | A willingness to learn | Knowledge of the business |
| Written and oral communication skills | | Entrepreneurial spirit Personal independence | |

(Adapted from Lowden et al. 2011)

working experiences. The abilities that employers' demands are an entire range of skills or aptitudes used in a particular field or occupation for a graduate to gain at the university.

Organisations wish to enrol graduates with competencies in a lengthy list of all skills. Nankervis et al., (2015) express concern when some employers enroll graduates in the various fields of study that differed from their career paths. In reality, graduates need an armada of skills that apply to a diverse group of employers. Employers are also concerned about the striking disparity between the results of higher education on quality, the profile of graduates, and the demands of the economy (Montague et al., 2018). In many countries, for example, the UK, Australia, America, South Africa, and others, employability programmes come together in a certain way. The focus on government is a connection made between higher education and work in the workplace (Gupta et al., 2016). Government and employers are forcing HEIs to train and develop employable graduates (Jackson et al., 2017). Graduates who complete their university's degree are considered having the credits, abilities, dispositions, and competences needed in the workplace.

The skills listed in table 2.1, display various weightings. Kinash et al., (2016) has made many researchers on graduates' employability having skills and qualities desired by the employers. The Confederation of British Industries and National Union of Students (2011) and the Canadian Council of Chief Executives (2014) also undertakes researchers to distinguish between many skills and abilities, in their importance, values, and efficacy. However, Cavanagh et al. (2015) argue that these researchers give inappropriate arguments on some skills. They argue that some employers are not coherent about their experiences with some skills. Mehrotra (2015) agrees that weightings of skills have unique values for every employer, and can even occur or exist without the knowledge of graduates.

Wibrow and Jackson (2016) argue that weightings are not the only cause to change the meaning of skills when discussed. However, there are also the stages that graduates have gained in these skills and the rigour of how they have developed these skills. Therefore, for a graduate to be employable, he or she must know the skills owned for employability. Many employers from different companies name many skills. The combination of abilities available and expectations by employers can also guide graduates in their choices of a career. From this research, I can show that graduates who have the highest capacities and skills would have better employability prospects.

### 2.7.3 Traditional Academic Skills and Knowledge

"Traditional academic skills and knowledge," are skills that "form an enormous part of the degree programme to enable students to be an expert in their subject. They include critical analysis, subject understanding, and a developed intellectual ability" (QAA, 2007:3). They commit academic achievements inside the circumstance of the degree field where "graduates should be able to display cognitive skills and techniques specific to business and management" (QAA, 2007:3). Employers are sometimes displeased and discontented with traditional academic knowledge and skills which graduates possessed (Clarke, 2017). Literacy and numeracy skills are grounds for adverse criticism by employers.

According to Finn (2016), the degree classification earned by graduates is by employers as the traditional academic skills and knowledge. As a result, there has been a rise in the contest for graduates' employment. Leaders in companies recruit graduates holding degree classifications from 2:2 to 2:1 as a benchmark (ACT, 2013a). Several studies examining academic skills accept that employers are not satisfied with graduates' basic numeracy and literacy skills (Business Magazine and Verde Frontier Employability Survey, 2016). The World Economic Forum (2016) agree that this finding affects employers. In her study, Jackson (2016) tells that in industry finds that written communication with literacy skills appears among the highest skills searched by employers. The author further elaborates on a UK research where the level at which graduates show literacy and written communication is not at the expected standard. Burgess et al., (2018) highlight that because importance is given to numeracy by employers, they include numeracy tests in their choice and enrolment. 581 employers of small, medium and large companies in different fields took part in a survey carried out by the CBI (2009). The findings point out that only 30% found that graduates performed well in numeracy skills. Large companies favour including numeracy tests in their recruitment. The recruitment of graduates from small and large industries varies (DJ&SB, 2018a). The Australian Government (2017) agrees with these findings and argues that small enterprises lack specific structures for their recruitment. There is a good chance of not using numeracy tests for their recruitment compared with big employers. The study of DJ&SB (2018a) shows that during recruitment, skills tested are performed at an early stage, while other employers are not applying these tests.

Various studies have reported that traditional academic skills develop at the university with the degree is recognised as a benchmark for employers (Majumdar, 2016). Employers use these educational qualifications as references when recruiting graduates. They also include prior work

experiences, personality, behaviour and soft skills (ILO, 2016). A similar general direction is favoured by practitioners' fields (Dhakal et al., 2018). Marketing practitioners believe that a degree in marketing is an excellent starting point followed by the personality of the graduate. Such allows interviewers to choose one candidate in preference to another for the vacancy (ILO, 2016). Next will be a review of the literature on the transferable skills, personal characteristics, and behaviours of graduates.

### 2.7.4 Soft Transferable Skills, Personal Characteristics, and Behaviors of Interns

Academic skills at a degree level are a standard demand in deciding whether a graduate is employable. Besides these educational qualifications, soft skills, individual attributes and behaviours have to be present in the graduate's portfolio (Jackson, 2015; CBI & Pearson, 2012). The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) (2007) outlines that the benchmark for a degree must also include soft skills: presentation, organisation, communication, teamwork, problem-solving, decision-making, and analytical skills which graduates ought to gain at university. However, QAA (2007) does not offer personal characteristics and behaviour because these skills are challenging to assess and to measure at the university level (Business Magazine and Verde Frontier Employability Survey, 2016). Despite that soft skills are inserted into the curriculum, employers still believe that graduates do not display the proper abilities hoped for by employers for productivity within the organisation (Nankervis et al., 2018).

The Confederation of British Industry (CBI) (2012) is representing the voices of over 240,000 companies of differing sizes in the UK, in various fields (McRae et al., 2005). The CBI with the National Union of Students (NUS) (2011:13) reports that "the soft transferable skills comprise self-management, team working, problem-solving, business and customer awareness, communication, application of numeracy, and application." All these focus on an influenced attitude of the model. However, the skills that employers need are unknown (Petrova & Ujma, 2006; Business Magazine and Verde Frontier Employability Survey, 2016), and employers reported that graduates should own a high-level of skills (Dacre Pool & Sewell, 2007; Billet, 2011). The definition of high-level skills is also missing. Positive attitudes are indispensable, and the other properties can build on such, making a more specific skill or competency (Tsukamoto, 2016). Leaders place skills and behaviours in the particular pattern of "power structure" (Manpower, 2016a).

The ILO (2017) survey shows that employers discovered shortages in the skills displayed by graduates. Some skills remain a flaw or weak point and include problem-solving (23%), teamwork (25%), and lacking work experiences (37%). CBI and Pearson (2012:12) "also highlighted concerns over numeracy and IT skills which also remained high on employer dissatisfaction lists." Other subjects in which they do not satisfy employers are international cultural awareness (41%) and graduates' business and customer awareness (47%). Employers, around 30% in the survey, were not filled satisfied with the levels of employability skills. They suggest that consistent and more work be demanded in these fields. Regarding basic literacy and numeracy skills, the ILO (2016) has made known that only 17% of employers in the UK are dissatisfied with the primary use of language by graduates. Besides, 9% of employers are dis-gratified with the grades of graduates' numeracy. Some employers are dissatisfied with graduates' skills (Business Magazine and Verde Frontier Employability Survey, 2016). Montague et al., (2018) agree and approve that employers are not satisfied with the quality of graduates. Besides, there are significant differences in skills and personal attributes separate and distinct from graduates within the same group. The World Economic Forum (WEF) (2017) makes more visible in their report employers who wish graduates who devote to the organisation with a positive attitude. However, ILO (2016) suggests that some graduates do not have a genuine belief in the workplace and this can detract from their positive work attitude.

Employers report that even these soft skills are repeating, they are dissatisfied with a level the soft skills, for example, problem-solving, literacy, and more (Nankervis et al., 2018). Cameron et al., (2018) concede that there is an arrangement over whether there is a gap of skills or how bad if it exists. The problem is that some employers are pleased with the quality of novice graduates while others argued that there would still be a shortage of skills. One significant comment made by Makki et al., (2016) on the learning circumstances which can cause a natural and comprehensible skill scarcity. Learning skills in a university environment does not qualify students to apply such to a workplace environment (Puthucheary, 2017). For example, teamwork undertaken on a project at the workplace would not be the same as teamwork conducted in a degree programme at the university (Jackson, 2016). Skills inadequacy, therefore, is related to or is in a context that is not a general matter that a university can change. OECD (2016) associates transfer to be responsible for the many criticisms voiced out by employers about the shortages of graduate skills. Skills developed at the university on degree programmes, and the problem lied in the transfer from HEIs to work, are two different circumstances (Rothwell & Rothwell, 2017). The educational world and the work environment are different and can sometimes be extreme,

and the skills learned would not match or transferred to a workplace (Business Magazine and Verde Frontier Employability Survey, 2016). One means of sorting out this problem is for graduates to undertake work experiences while they are still at university (Monteiro, 2016). They would then apply what they had been taught in the educational environment to a work environment.

### 2.7.5 Knowledge of Organisations and Extra-Curricular Activities

Employers insist that a degree with a band of trained employability skills is however not enough to qualify a graduate as employable (Jackson, 2016; Tran, 2015). Work experience is also a must (Jackson, 2016). One evocative remark from the literature is the prominent status of gathering knowledge and skill. These result from direct participation in an internship for increasing employability (Rothwell & Rothwell, 2017). Some researchers have studied the views on graduate employability by employers and HEIs. Their findings and the literature highlight that employers, graduates, and HEI, respect and value internship. They assume that placements and internships work well as actions intended to encourage the employability of graduates (Gupta et al., 2016). A research carried out by ILO (2016) on different-sized companies in different sectors also agreed on the high rate of work experience (68%) favoured by employers. Employers from New Zealand also felt the importance of work experience (79%) (Green, Graybeal, & Madison, 2011). Findings are that European employers' value work experience (90%) as high as a critical reason for recruiting graduates (Flash Euro barometer, 2010). Most employers respect work experience as one of the most significant constituents of increasing undergraduate employability (Speight et al., 2013; Business Council of Australia, 2017).

They yearly reviewed vacancies for graduates in the UK on employers who recruited the highest number of graduates. This annual report supports the trends prevalent in other employer research. The findings placed at an angle the more significant employer's perspective and confirmed the emphasis employers laid on work experience (Clarke (2017). Employers from this study say that one-third of the vacancies are devoted to graduates who are already an adviser with the same company. Also, over 50% of employers in the research are not showing interest in graduates who have no earlier work experience (ILO, 2016). I do not consider graduates who have no work experience as being successful in the recruitment and selection exercise (Highfliers, 2014). Students can undergo many forms of work experience, and their earlier work experience can vary. The opportunities available for work experience can last from two to twelve months in duration (MOHE, 2015). Also, work placement can even have other facets of paid or unpaid

internship, responsibility levels, and relevance (Yimie, 2018). However, the work placement is significant.

Employers do not consider an internship of two weeks or fewer than relevant as work experience (Atfield, Purcell & Hogarth, 2009; Puthucheary, 2017). However, the ideal work experience of worldwide scope is debatable: employers have a differing belief on this subject. Tsukamoto (2016) believes that the work experience of several months could be valuable. However, employers prefer to recruit graduates who have undergone sandwich degrees needing at least 12 months internship (Jackson, 2016; Billet, 2011). Most employers' favour of extended work experience as more valuable. Policymakers' try to have graduates undergo at least a 10 - 12-week internship during their holidays (Little & Harvey, 2006; Clarke, 2017).

Employers value relevancy of the work experience – the more work experience, the more valuable to employers. Montague et al. (2018) understand that employers prefer for work experiences which apply to the career the graduate wants to enter. Employers need graduates to own the proper skills which they will practise in the workplace as there are many uncontrolled situations, for example, the economic climate, increased job competition, and others. Caballero and Walker (2010), therefore, underline the proper work experiences of graduates. Tsukamoto (2016), agrees that students who receive an allowance during their internship while still in universities, are on the priority list to gain work, compared with those students who choose unpaid or no experience. Montague et al., (2018) comments that students who are hired in a paid internship, are given extra responsibilities and found too more valued by employers. Students, without payment experiences, spend more time performing administrative works, for example, photocopying documents, clerical works and more.

Jackson (2015) states that employers emphasise on work experience because they want recruits to be performers when hired as employees so that the companies may make immediate benefits. Employers believe that once they use fresh graduates, this would involve the young professionals for at least 18 to 24 months. Thus, they might become competent to become an employee of the company (Stringfellow et al. 2006; Wibrow & Jackson. 2016). In these conditions, the prior work experiences of graduates can help them increase their work-readiness. The recruited graduates become productive and efficient within the company in a shorter period. Rothwell and Rothwell (2017) note that a low number of students are on internship. Work experience has, however, been found worthwhile and employers must consider the employability of graduates. I encounter the

highest decline in the number of students placed in an internship in post-1992 institutions (Highfliers, 2014). Also, the prevailing economic environment and the expanded number of students' choices have caused this situation (Hogarth et al. 2006; Brooks, 2012).

An increased HEIs and employers' collaboration is one method for solving the inadequate number of students undertaking an internship programme and later growing the skills demanded by companies. This shows the need for growth of a collaboration between organisations and universities, in supplying attractive undergraduate employability. The following section will explain the advantages of enjoying a similar partnership from both HEIs and employers.

**2.8 The Partnership Between HEIs and Employers to promote internship of students.**

Clarke (2017) purports that learning refers to having the ability to produce positive results for actions. Internal to the circumstances that surround employability, graduates demand both education and work experiences. They will put into practice in the workplace what they have learned in an academic context and vice versa. Because expectations placed on graduates are high, HEIs, acting on their own, will be in a challenging position. HEIs will train and develop all the skills that graduates needed and will meet the standard needed in the workplace (Kinash et al., 2016). The solution is a collaboration between both university and employer as placed on the agenda of policymakers (Clarke, 2017). Montesquieu et al., (2018) articulate that it is essential to build a strategic working partnership between employers and HEIs, whereby activities by employers are inserted into curriculum design and evaluation. Besides, employers will take the responsibility to recruit more students to expose to work experience opportunities (Puthucheary, 2017). Policy documents and literature encourage this form of a joint venture, which is still at an early stage of development. However, this collaborative relationship will have to be developed further. Lowden et al. (2011:16) explore the absence of "systematic approaches from universities to engage with employers," contributing to the employers' thinking. HEIs could have responded by doing more in reaction to the employability needs of students. The absence of a partnership between universities and employers has led to the claim that students do not have sufficient placements available on offer by employers (Nankervis et al., 2018). Highfliers (2013) find that 57% of employers provided arrangements of 6 to 12 months, on a sandwich basis, to graduates. In this same research, students are in an internship for three weeks duration during their holidays. Some 16% of employers do not pay an allowance to students (Yimie, 2018). Employers who do not offer a placement to students argue that they do not have supervisors to guide students during the internship (Kinash et al., 2016). Over the years, there is

an increasing number of employers who offer a formal work-based experience to students (Matthews, 2012). Even though the demand for placements is not reached because of the high needs of various HEIs (World Bank, 2018).

Lin and Chen (2017) offer that many kinds of literature support that there should be a significant improvement in the partnership between HEIs and employers. They aim to achieve inserting knowledge, skills, and attitudes into the curriculum, providing a mix of academic and workplace experiences. There are, however, obstacles to consider, hindrances to HEI – employer collaboration which includes the lack of a language shared by or having the same connection with the two parties (International Trade Centre, 2017). There also exist different prospects and priorities (Statistics Mauritius, 2016) in gaining the correct state of equilibrium between works in a particular role against more liberal work preparation (Nankervis et al., 2015). These effects make it understandable why university-employer collaboration is recurring in policy documents (Leitch, 2006; Wilson, 2012). Suggestions for promoting the developing of a partnership between employers and HEIs is most welcomed for bettering employability skills.

The driving force behind the battle for employers across the UK and another part of the world is to recruit graduates, and the employers engage themselves in this fight (Brown, 2010). Since developing the relationship between employers and HEIs, several other partnerships developed in different subjects. For example, employers act as guest lecturers, researchers in collaboration with university lecturers, meetings to discuss curriculum issues and inserting new content needed by employers. Merchant et al., (2014) discover that the involvements between HEIs and employers are different. HEIs select employers who have a source of aid before any engagement took place. The approaches of HEIs with big and small companies differ when a partnership is negotiated. Also, the target of essential groups is to select the top-performing HEIs. Smaller companies are directing their efforts to focus on local HEIs where there is an opportunity for them to do so (Chin, 2016). The example in this literature, to a great extent, confirms the divergences between employers. More so, this shows the strong liking of employers with reputed HEIs where they recruited qualified graduates. Highfliers (2013) and The Economic Times, (2016)'s research in the Top Employers in the UK supports this literature and shows that graduate selected by employers are from the best universities.

In recent literature, Prikshat et al., (2018) discover some encouraging results and highlight that, in their sampling, 63% of their employers already have connections with universities. These

associative relations, about curriculum design, provided internships, and work placements that contributed towards the degree programme (Prikshat et al., 2018). CBI is a networking and influential organisation providing support for their employers who are members of this group. The findings from the CBI research might not represent all employers.

The literature provides evidence that some employers, marked by differences, however, are not satisfied with the quality of graduates coming into industrial employment. An employer is a group with many expressions. They make their complaints up of complicated and related parts with differing alternatives. As a result, there is no distinguishing quality of what is acceptable or not. About the quality of graduates that developed, considering the skills needed and as a basis for comparison, each is particular to an individual employer. However, one crucial constituent which surfaced from employers of all industries is that graduates ought to have prior experience. Employers value work experience to a great extent (CBI & Pearson, 2012; Dhakal et al., 2018). Students develop employability skills which are associated with work experience, such as raising the knowledge of business and commercial operations; transferring accomplishments gained in universities to the workplace. Each employer's opinion is different in the duration and the relevance of these experiences. Employers agree that to increase graduates' employability, work experience is critical.

When re-examining the employers' literature, I can see that many opportunities are available for the development and training of graduates. Some years back, these prospects were absent (Yorke, 2012). Besides, if HEIs would not replace the existing curriculum to cope with the new skills needed, the graduates' performances would not improve. Next, transferring graduates from HEIs to discuss the workplace.

### 2.9 The Transfer from HEIs to the Workplace

Making a smooth transfer from college to the workforce also involves getting set up in a new community (Jackson et al., 2017). Graduates have to face the challenges of developing the working world they do not expect while being a college student. Preparing students' transfer is critical. The students' entry into higher education institutions and their transfer into work are explored in this section. The researcher focuses on the students' personal, social and learning development.

Watkins et al., (2017) claims that students who enter university are supposed to have an open mindset which allows them to become independent and free. Students need to change over time, with a supporting and a self-directed approach to learning. To familiarise them with the university culture, students have to engage in the social and study network workshops available during the induction period (Khare, 2016). In similar circumstances, students will gain an early advantage in forming relationships. Students will learn through the workshops, considered as a non-threatening environment. During their stay, students will be exposed to different social support networks, aiding them to sense their link to the institution (Cameron et al., 2017). Students who entered university with high prospects are carrying with them worthwhile wealth for university life (Yimie, 2018).

How they respect the distinct cultures of the company will settle students' preparation for employment (Khare, 2016). Students will also meet employers' expectations with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed by employers (Rola-Rubzen & Burgess, 2016). Tsukamoto (2016) agree that most graduates' reaction to their employment transfers is first experienced as a culture shock when working. In the workplace, graduates are no longer under a zone of stability that shelter most graduates from the universe of the competitive work environment (Khare, 2016). They have to prove their know-how, skills, qualities, and accumulated knowledge of functioning in many and unique work environments (ILO, 2016) Often they experience a problem in this exercise (Watkins et al., 2017). The difficulties that graduates often face in the place of work are a replica of the experiences they performed at the university (Clarke, 2017). The choice of subjects that students studied at the university is not always relevant to the workplace (Yeh et al., 2017). For example, at the university, students studied with no others involved in an environment where they would not have to make concessions. When working as a team, they have to select their preferred team members. In the workplace, they do not have a choice; they work within teams decided by the supervisor, and they are expected to get on with it (Bachtiar et al., 2015). Some graduates experience difficulties in conforming to the various employees who have differing personalities from all others within the team position at the workplace. They realise that members of the team cannot be changed as they could at the university. Because of that, some graduates experienced difficulty in their early transfer into employment in the workplace.

The workplace offers opportunities for the graduates to learn and they choose how they would follow in actions under the support and guidance of their supervisors (Billet, 2011, Watkins et

al., 2017). The twofold engagement at work and the frequent dealings between them are fundamental to realising the skills and knowledge and qualities that the workplace provides. Graduates' involvement is their willingness to undertake training in the workplace when they are given chances to take part in work. Students gain support from the organisation (Carvalho & Rahim., 2017). These affordances are high because of the results of the structured learning at the workplace and the knowledge gained from the daily participation of graduates at work (Khare, 2016). However, employers are not providing access in a balanced or unbiased way for all graduates. The fundamental assumptions from which affordances develop include the views of individuals' competence, the status of work and employment status (Human Resources Development Fund, 2017). Other examples are the race of workers (Chin, 2016), their gender (Fin, 2016), work distinction (Billet, 2011); their relationship, and the workplace of ingroups and associations (Jackson, 2016). Researchers recognise that guided learning strategies increase learning through continuous daily work. Interns who are taking part are told about the firm's growth, and that workplace eagerness is the key to the quality of amassing knowledge and skill. Yeh et al., (2017) explain that involvement in work and learning are synonymous. However, workplaces could become places where disputes occasionally occur. Access to chances to become a participant, in contracting recent projects or those of original splendour to the workplace, are the origin of disputes. There is strong disagreement, for example, between starters and experienced persons (Lave & Wenger, 1991) and between full-time and part-time workers (Bernhardt, 1999). Another divergence is the people's personal and vocational achievement (OECD, 2016) and groups of different characters in the workplace (Finn, 2016). Overall, Clarke (2017) observed that where the affordances are the most productive, the described learning results links are more prominent. In some companies, the product development concern is about the characteristic of an invitation for learning and consented and understood by the graduates.

The workplace has become a necessary context and environment in which they set something for continuing learning. Besides, research into that workplace positions learning for the efficient continuing professional development of graduates (Verma et al., 2016). The research among others involves the critical appraisal of the place of work as a learning context. Researchers explore how unique work positions with incongruent socio-cultural practices promote the developing of differing abilities (WEF, 2017). Dewey's conception of knowledge highlights the relationship between parts and the whole. I cannot isolate thinking from experience. The learner, according to Dewey, is integral to the experience of learning (Garrison, 2006). Other researchers

offer a more visible strategy for providing support and encouragement for learning at work. Examples are supporting participation calling for mentors and or supervisors (Rola-Rubzen & Burgess, 2016). Burgess et al., (2018) maintains that the workplace may give more value to the development and learning of developing practices compared to others. Kolb (1984:38) identifies learning as a cyclic process and in his own words, "Learning was the process whereby knowledge created through transforming the experience." A four-stage learning cycle is Kolb's experiential learning style theory. The learner reaches "all the bases, the concrete and active experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation." Although this model has many critics (Fenwick, 2001a; Jarvis & Parker, 2005; Carvalho & Rahim., 2017), other versions of this prototype have shaped revolutionary pedagogical practices in HRIs, for example, work-based learning, showing the participant with experience. They often report these methods as action learning (Lin & Chen., 2017; Schon, 1995). The two strategies involve more or fewer items such as planning, action, evaluation, and reflection (Yorke., 2006). The work of Merchant et al., (2014) explains learning from the reflective action and the notion of reflection as fundamental to professional practices in the workplace. Action and although linked to continuing professional learning.

### 2.10 Conclusion

Together these studies give valuable insights into the undiscovered part of the employability of graduates about organising and developing internship as a WBL or a WIL. In the rise of graduate unemployment and with a scarcity of financial resources, there is a diffused acknowledgement that HEIs have to be responsible for employers' demands (Finn, 2016; Prospects, 2011). HEIs should offer quality to the work-readiness of young graduates in the labour market (Montague et al., 2018). I associate HEIs with introducing professional undergraduates to recruiting institutions. Within this setting, HEIs have vested a considerable number of resources to work out and in augmenting the employability skills of students. HEIs have created various study courses with internships or some other kinds of education between universities and employers (European Commission, 2014). Despite discussions recommending internships, there is unanimity about the shortages of studies drawn from experiment and observation rather than a theory on the professional economic value of the internship's elaborate and systematic plan of action. Earlier studies point out that the work experiences gained by graduates during internships have shown mixed evidence. I ground proofs on the solid gains of internships on students' (Sivasomboon, 2017) or employers' (Fernquest, 2017) anticipations and opinions. An evaluation of the effect of internships in the workforce's percentage unemployed at any date of graduates,

explaining (un)successful liaising causes, for example, the construction and data formatting of internships is almost absent.

One of the most repeated authoritative declarations about internships is that they add something extra to make more intense or better the professional intromission of graduates in the labour market. I accept internships as a mechanism that helps students' transfer from higher education to work (Weiss, Klein & Grauenhorst 2014; Jackson, 2015). However, this reasoning calls for further examination. First, on assessing contributing internships to improve using graduates and on testing the impingement of internship experiences on the graduate's early career employment are non-existent. Only the views of students and employers' grounds for the gains of internships (Sivasomboon, 2017). Second, little empirical evidence dated before the year 2000 needs to be updated after the post-Bologna Bachelor's degree (Mason et al., 2014). Third, there is a notion that research on mediating causes, such as the learning experience about the way internships are organised and the timing experienced by the students who have planned for their personal development are in conflict. In the literature on internships, I have not seen the role of third parties or intermediaries, for example, the Employers' Associations and other organisations. There is an absence of their role in helping WIL between the three stakeholders: employers, universities, and students which makes up a gap in the literature.

This study tries to discuss gaps above, by examining the relationship between internships and graduates' employability, specifically, the interrelated issues of internships on graduates' unemployment levels before and after their participation in internships.

To summarise, re-examining the literature there is a gap in the knowledge on internship and employability which the researcher would try to clarify. They highlight the mismatch between expectations of companies and graduates and the mismatch between completion of internship and underperformance when starting the first job (Prikshat et al., 2018). There is also a lack of empirical grounds affirming the gains gathered for graduates' employability skills (non-technical skills) after completion of internships. The knowledge associated with graduates and employers' views of internship and employability is an important gap in business school education. I schedule this to arrive at the account of graduate perspectives of employability. Searchers of this research engines identified no reference to a graduate voice in the employability debates. The researcher hoped to study the graduates' experiences during their internship and their qualities in the workplace (CEDA, 2015). This literature review has made more visible both what is

experienced in this workplace/university and the data I neglected, thus showing that the body of literature is not complete.

The chapter ended with the gaps found in the current literature on internships and employability. Chapter Three introduces the theoretical framework which will be used for the study.

# CHAPTER THREE
# THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

## 3.0 Introduction

In Chapter Two, I presented literature on the nature, value, and quality of internship and employability. Further, I showed the fundamental concern around these phenomena and focused on higher education institutions, graduates, and employers. The literature perused provided me with a more holistic notion of the phenomena under investigation. It has shown the shift in research from what graduates do to what they know, and what informs this learning (Billet, 2011). Also, I established that graduates' philosophical theory of knowledge (epistemology) has developed over time and in different spaces.

The focus of this research was to explore the relationship between the internship and employability. There has been a plethora of research examining internship and employability as a separate identity and several diverse theories and models have been used to establish frameworks in which to view internship and employability of graduates. Hence in this chapter, I present some of these theoretical perspectives and models intending to show the range of theoretical perspectives that had influenced the field of internship and employability. Having presented these varying theoretical perspectives, I select two theoretical perspectives as my theoretical framing of this study and show how and why these were appropriate to guide the study process, including the presentation of the data, the analysis of the data and the theorising of the findings. I have thus selected the transfer of learning theory and the experiential learning theory for this study

## 3.1 Theories of Learning and Famous Learning Theorists

I describe in this section, selected theories of learning and education which appear adequate to my interest in internships as a way of teaching/training and learning. I include, among others, human capital theory (1964), and a theory of practice (Bourdieu) (1972). I then introduced the foremost constructivist theorists, Jean Piaget (1973), Jerome Bruner (1996), Lev Vygotsky (1978), and John Dewey (1933). I find it necessary to insert into my research the works of great experiential learning theorists, Dewey (1938), Lewin (1951), Joplin (1981), Lave and Wenger (1990), and Kolb (1984). In my study on internship and employability, Engstrom (1987)'s activity theory, and situated learning theory (1990) set the conditions for the internship to take place in a real-world environment, while the Dreyfus and Dreyfus model of skills' development justifies how graduates develop skills through instruction and practice. Next, I report the

internship progress through the four developmental stages of the internship (Switzer & King, 2013). I also include the Transfer of learning theory (1901), Strategic management theory (1980), Socio behavioural change theory (Transformational Leadership theory (1978), Bronfenbrenner human development theory (1980), and the Work Skill Development (WSD) framework (2017). I conclude this section with the theory of learning (Illeris, 2009), summarising viewpoints from many scholars and theorists.

### 3.1.1 Human Capital Theory

Psacharopoulos et al., (2004a) notice that the human capital theory has roots in the works of authors such as Smith (1776). According to Smith (1776), a person who has spent extended training and has gained enough experience may be compared with an expensive machine, the skills he learned to be replaced him (Goldin, 2014). Schultz (1961) set forth the human capital theory while Becker (1964) continues to develop and to transform this theory. The theory proposes that education and training boost workers' power to produce by contributing to the economic position of an organisation while applying their practical skills. I consider the skills the labour forces as human capital, looked upon as assets /resources. These address the feeling I have provided about people in education and training. Investments increase a person's productivity. I believed in labour economics; the important idea is for the workers to have marketable skills as capital in which they form their investments (Chapman et al., 2014). As a result, investment incentives are crucial to the structure of salaries and earnings. Becker (1994) highlights that the workers' future financial gain increases by raising their long-time wages. I consider Becker's opinion of human capital to be valuable in the production process, a worker's productivity is enhanced in human capital. I understand that human capital is characterised by the collection of skills gained by graduates who have progressed through internships. This stock of skills forms part of the production work. The model explains that I associate the economic part of the human capital theory with money. Human capital matches with any stock of knowledge and skills (either innate or gained) the worker has to contribute to productivity.

Human capital investments include years of schooling, school quality, training, and attitudes toward works. I appreciate this reasoning because, from the data I have compiled, I understand divergences in salaries across graduates that are not accounted for by schooling disparities alone. In the same way, I could appreciate the notion of human capital and scrutinise the variation in salary I observe in the labour market. For instance, employers pay a fresh graduate less than another employee because the graduate has inferior skills. Also, they have not considered the

years of education. I associate pay variances with skills; this is a good place to start with the structure of wage distributions. These authors mention that the human capital theory assumes that the economic condition and employment in a country have been, on graduate employability (Sunderland, 2008; Brown, Lauder & Ashton, 2011; Tomlinson, 2012). They feature the importance that the government (policymakers) assign to human capital. The human capital interest concerns policymakers and employers for the growth/benefit of the country (Piketty, 2015). Policymakers spare no effort to study what the role of higher education is in empowering students with skills, knowledge, and attitudes, that could give them an incentive for lifelong learning (Lees, 2002). In my research, employers and academics pointed out that the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED) (policymakers) organised training programmes in collaboration with employers and academics to support graduates gaining employability skills (MoFED, 2017/18). Researchers recognise that at this level, the state provides funds for training graduates, to empower them to learn various skills and competencies, that may transport them from one place to another in the labour market (Hayward & James, 2004). Many researchers view under a lens the role of higher education in the growth of human capital (Lees, 2002; Johnson & Watson, 2004; Hayward & James, 2004; Hyslop-Marginson & Sears, 2006). Hayward and James (2004) consider that the human capital theory has maintained the employability movement of general education, for example, employers and academics organise internship to develop employability skills for graduates, expanding the economic growth of a country. Human capital theory priorities any activity capable of enhancing individual worker's productivity. Therefore, the notion of human capital adds to the interaction of the labour force between government and international organisations (Schultz, 1971). Schultz (1967) and Nelson-Phelps (1966) view human capital as the capacity for graduates to adapt and to gain employment. In my study, graduates passed through an internship to acclimatise to the workplace environment and to practise their theoretical knowledge gained at universities. After completing their internship, they can adjust to the culture of the organisation, gain employment or move on to other employers. Applying the human, social capital, and capabilities approach, this study addresses the problem ontologically, empirically, and theoretically, in deepening the understanding of theoretical grounding intertwining internship and employability. I see the human capital theory as providing an appropriate theoretical framework for the current study. This model shows the processes involved in individual developing of their human capital through training or gaining skills per on-the-job training.

### 3.1.2 A Theory of Practice (Bourdieu, 1972)

In contrast, the social reproduction in education promoting the work of Bourdieu (1984, 1988) highlights positional competition and status which human capital theory cannot cover. Bourdieu introduces the cultural capital of family and the networks' social capital as fundamental to the act of analysing, instead of additional added components. Bourdieu (1972) outlines an approach to practise resulting from his systematic investigation into the indigenous peoples of northern Africa (Algeria) (1958, 1963, 1964). The model calls the society out on the rational way of behaviour that people put on social control. Bourdieu (1986) emphasises his experiences from the small allotment of the source of wealth within a community. The focus of the work of Bourdieu is the efficient incentive of power in society (different classes and categories). Bourdieu's work reveals how power moves from one place to another throughout generations, safeguarding the social order (Bourdieu, 1972). Bourdieu's (1992)'s theory of practise is dealing with a subject without a practical purpose or intent and the theory of human nature dealing with norms and conduct (Bourdieu, 1992). This approach may relate to various considerations within the subject of research, for example, training and development, marketing and human management (Mayrhofer, Miller-Camen, Ledolter, Strunk & Erten, 2004b). Organisational studies have further applied Bourdieu's Theory of Practice as a theoretical model for their studies. The following sections will help introduce critical thoughts on Bourdieu central concepts, forms of capital, doxa, habitus, capital, and fields.

#### 3.1.2.1 Forms of Capital (1986)

This section looks at critically the theory of Bourdieu's Forms of Capital, its link to higher education and graduate employability. Bourdieu proposes various forms of capital: cultural (embodied state, objectified state, and institutionalised state), social (social bond), and symbolic (capital in whatever form). The researcher includes the cultural reproduction (artistic field, scientific field, and social classes), the habitus (system or structure of resources), doxa (rules), the field (or location), and the symbolic power (a sign, an emblem).

The model of Bourdieu offers a means to uncover information or to determine facts on a phenomenon. I adopted this model to analyse an individual possessing the same social, economic, or educational status in the internship and employability debate. On the one hand, the model should not provide the rule of law on a natural phenomenon for an idea, and it allows thinking on the notion of class, to study the connection of an analytical or descriptive conception, for example, how to build a graduate's employability skills and to associate it with the class

(Jenkins, 1992). My study determines what each person knows about one another and acknowledges the beliefs of habitus, field, practice, doxa, and capital. The feelings also consider the nature of the social class, as it is experienced, understood, and socialised, within the university and in the graduate labour market (Golsorkhi & Huault, 2006). It helps my study to connect to social class and to that of identifying a graduate's internship and employability. Bourdieu (1979), concedes that social stratification characterises the particular part of space occupied by an individual in a committed social group in which a socio-economic status categorises the people. The three social classes that divide modern society comprises the lower class, middle class, and upper class. In my study, these social classes are illustrated by graduates, employers, and academics. In the workplace, graduates from different classes are instructed by supervisors and other employers coming from a different society. The academics are also from different classes.

My study investigates, the nature of the social class - how graduates experience their time on the campus of the university and in the workplace environment. I associate the general inclusive idea of a graduate's internship and employability with the model of social class. Bourdieu's idea of doxa highlights how higher education ignores the guiding rules and reasons within the field of employability, showing the view of capital on a field (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Habitus continues after the expectation to know opportunities created by stakeholders of an internship in the field, and cultural capital redefines the field of higher education (Bourdieu, 2005). The framework provides an individual with the opportunity of investigating the connection between the participants who request advanced employability skills for students (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).

Bourdieu (1997:72), assumes social reality is "an act of the dialectic of internalising externality and externalising of internality" in which he constructs a theoretical model of social practices representing the two opposing parts of objectivism and subjectivism in his various works (Jenkins, 1992). In analysing social reality, Bourdieu (1997) notices that social scientists do not consider social as a rational way of behaviour in their leading research. The whimsy of categorisations allows the graduates to change from non-skilled to the professional worker. Bourdieu (1997) concurs with Berger and Luckmann (1966) who maintain that the social or economic status group builds conscious awareness and a sense of the social world. This socio-economic group plans for their interest in the structure of a social world, while the other

controlled group of people can rebuild the social reality for a fair distribution of power to the parties concerned.

### 3.1.2.2 Doxa (1977)

Bourdieu (1977) adopts the term doxa, recognising assumptions or common sense behind the distinctions an individual makes in any society. He regards the doxa as they are experienced in which "the natural and social world comes along as self-evident" because it covers the idea that comes down on the inside on "the limits of the thinkable and the sayable (the universe of debate) because it comes without saying" (Bourdieu, 1972:164, 169). Thus, field challenges and discusses the agreed-upon truths that society presumes. In contrast to the field, Bourdieu places trust in the doxa and imagines it as higher than a simple vague idea, rather than that of the inherent capacity for coming into being to cause to happen to standard rules and action. Positioning an agent who engages on a field makes evidence without proof or laws that influence his moving radius, the final or latest limiting point of social quality of moving (doxa) inside a social field (Bourdieu, 1972). Doxa makes the general conscious awareness of an individual's identity and sense of what is happening and what is not. Accardo (2006) recognises as evidence of a gentlewoman belonging to the most powerful members of society who should at no time in the past or future have even thought of seducing her game warden or in the other way around because they both belong to different classes (Lawrence, 2002; Gouirand, 2017). Grounded on doxa the group in the special field could assess the person and dictate him or her a place in the field, based on known statements, events or conditions. Doxa occurs when an individual may not remember the boundary of a specific subject that results in different classes of society (field). Bourdieu (1984: 471) explains that the "adherence to relations of order because they structured both the real-world and the thought world, accepted as self-evident." Students' doxa creates rules in a particular field, and the group in the specific field assesses the individual and relates him or her a logical status in that field. In this study, during internships, graduates may not contest and discuss, and have to follow the set of rules and guidelines (policy doxa) of the organisations. Research establishes that the doxa is practical, logical thinking gains from social practice and experience (Chen, 2014).

### 3.1.2.3 Habitus (1984)

The fundamental idea in the sociology of Bourdieu is to realise the "ensemble of schemata of opinion, thinking, feeling, testing, speaking and acting that structures all expressive, verbal, and practical exhibitions and utterances of a person, as the grammar of the language", considering

the habitus (Krais, 1993:169). Habitus is an integral internal part of the cognitive system and a collective consciousness reflecting on the external network of structures of a person. It comprises ideas, opinions, sentiments, thinking, views, motivation, belief, interests and the way an individual makes sense of the world. Through socialisation in the world and family, culture and the environmental condition of education produce habitus. Habitus explains how the actual structure and subjective opinion affect humans, and it has the power to find out our practices and to build our social world. Research supports that the external world also controls our social world Bourdieu (1984) asserts that both the internal and external worlds are dependent subjects, and because of the mobile nature of habitus, no two persons' habitus should be the same. The transferrable quality of habitus includes change with age, travel, parenthood, and education. A central point within Bourdieu's (1984)'s theory is that habitus limits or holds back but does not decide the primary way a person is thinking of activity. For example, seeing emotions or personal prejudices does not influence individuals who are both thoughtful and understanding of their habitus. These persons have the power to discover social fields with relative judgement grounded in developments.

Habitus considers rules or principles, tactics of ideas and actions, which make up its ability to capture continuity and change. Change occurs in various degrees because of the result of the experience gained. Bourdieu (1997:72) describes habitus "as making up for a set of durable, transposable dispositions that regulates mental actions to where individuals know of their influence." Similarly, habitus as an idea exists as a line of approach that explains how social and cultural contents decide on the points of view and actions of a person. More so, habitus is an elaborate and systematic plan of action that forms the rule or standard that delivers reasons that satisfy or fulfil unanticipated performances and positions marked by continuous change or effective action (Bourdieu, 1977). Habitus, therefore, leads our elaborate and systematic plan of action, the unconscious practice that directs at arriving at an individual's objective (Rehbein, 2011). The habitus does, therefore, have a formal and organised structure, while it remains shaped by historical, social and cultural contexts.

#### 3.1.2.4 Capitals (1986)

The term "capital" symbolises both a power relationship and a power resource. The lived experiences (habitus) of a person gained from relative talents of diverse forms of capitals, decide their developing perspectives within a social context and their environment. During his or her daily social collective action, a person exchanges and increases capital. Bourdieu (1986) reports

the forms of capital in four categories: economic, cultural, social, and symbolic capital. Economic capital is instantaneous and translatable into wealth, placed in the patterns of ownership. Cultural capital is transformable, under specific terms, into economic capital and may standardise in the qualifications on the system of education.

The title of nobility regulates social responsibilities that set up social class. Symbolic capital may refer to the source of wealth for a person of honour, prestige or recognition, and acts of respect that one declares within a culture, for example, a war hero. An individual may satisfy the social duties that fix with the possibility of a high standing achieved through success, gaining symbolic capital. Although all kinds of capital are different in quality, they are like one another and can become a unique form (Accardo, 2006; Wilshusen, 2012). On a marketplace for capitals, the fact of being real accepts to substitute for others and promotes as a medium of exchange for one capital (Bourdieu, 1986). A person's financial gain and another available source of wealth, anything of material value, fortune, and revenues are related to economic capital. Ownerships place the roles of the economic capital act as legal tender (Bourdieu, 1986). This form of capital is more straightforward when converting one to another (Rudd, 2003) and sometimes it has the power to decide on the employability. My study, for example, addresses the capacity of people to gain admission to reputed universities and for this to help students gain an internship in prominent companies. Economic capital is inadequate to buying status or position to a (great or small) extent, depending on the standard or reciprocal action with other forms of capital.

Bourdieu (1986:47) identifies three forms of cultural capital: "embodied, objectified and institutionalised. The embodied state is in the shape of progressive tendencies of the mind and body, and the objectified state is in the way of cultural commodities." For example, instruments, machines, and documents are evidence of theories or reviews of approaches. A pattern of representation assigns the institutionalised state. For instance, if qualifications are the proceedings of education, cultural capital is to assume their responsibility. A composed and well-established family and cultural transfer of cultural capital incorporate the shapes of qualifications on the progress of learning. Again, cultural capital is the principal justification for position and statuses estimated by comparison in a social field. Cultural capital "explains the unequal scholastic achievement of children originating from different social classes by relating academic success" (Bourdieu, 1986: 47). In my study, employers selected graduates for an internship, according to their academic achievements and other life experiences. My research presents reasons and arguments in which cultural habits and tendencies relayed by the family are crucial

to success in school (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1979). Bourdieu (1986) argues that culture contributes to most of the areas which extend the qualities of economic capital.

Embodied cultural capital comprises both the benefited and the inherited properties in the passive way of one's self. In the embodied state, the cultural capital forms a permanent arrangement of tendencies and makes up one's total of attributions associated with the mind or human capital (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1985). A particular way of action means to arrive at a result of the expression. This entails time for labour and of teaching or striking on the mind by frequent educational activity or repetition. The conventional technique is of engaging one ethnical group for compatibility in opinion and action with others (Bourdieu, 1984). Gaining integrated cultural capital can become the work of the person.

An individual owns objectified cultural capital comprising tangible and visible objects, such as tools or arts, memorials, any of many gadgets that can develop musical tones or sounds and these objects are transferable to the ownership of another person in their physical state (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990;). These cultural commodities can carry the cultural capital of the changing economy. Although an individual owns an objectified cultural capital, for example, by owning a painting, the person can know and recognize the nature of the artistic meaning of the art. Such happens if he or she has the right backgrounds and if throughout history he has gained knowledge from the former cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986). However, relying on the cultural capital does not come with the sales agreement for the painting except if it happens at the same time and by a cause free from external control and constraint, for instance, when a seller prefers to explain the painting to the potential buyer.

Institutionalised cultural capital comprises accepting the cultural capital owned by a person by various institutions, for instance, most in the pattern of academic certification. This certification formalises the educational testimonials or qualities and recognised organisations' approval. This idea acts in its highest role in the labour market because it allows a full arrangement of cultural capital to show in an individual qualitative and quantitative measurement. The recognition of the institutional procedures makes the natural transforming of cultural capital into economic capital. Institutions compare the holders' qualifications, for instance, of two individuals having received their degrees from different higher organisations (Bourdieu, 1986).

Social capital now is of the possible available source of wealth associated with anything owned or controlled by a long-lasting network (Siisiainen, 2000). For example, the interconnected system of more or less institutionalised connectedness of intimate familiarity and credit exist (Bourdieu, 1986). Another example could be to become a member of a group supplying each of its members with the act of allowing for the blessing and approval of the owned capital. Members would receive a testimonial or a certificate which several fields of the world recognise. Social capital also symbolises an individual's state of being in total and complete social relations. A person or group gains this available source of wealth, and this group of people interconnects through many associations by using an institutionalised network (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Social capital occurs comparable to a set of permanent social relations, an interconnected system of matters or people, and it is near the collective action. These states of connectedness are present almost in the working state, in material and symbolic substitutes which support in preserving them (Bourdieu, 1986). They can further prove and assume responsibility for the act of using a standard name, for example, of a family, class, school, and party. Besides, a set of institutional laws guides social capital which comprises purpose and intent at the same time to comprehend and communicates with those who experience them (Coleman, 1990). People invest in social capital and now accepts the substitution of other capitals (Coleman, 1988). Social capital may commit to an identifying name suggesting status or role and commanding work for its introduction and preservation (Bonnewitz, 2009).

Symbolic capital connects by shared characteristics, rewards, and acknowledgement, recognising capital using colleagues' challenges in a subject (Bourdieu, 1997). Bourdieu (1980; 1986; 1998a) projects shared knowledge and the realisation of the prominent quality of capital. So, "on a social field, economic, social and cultural capital changed into symbolic capital" (Bourdieu, 1972:53). The work of credit for symbolic capital depends on the field, assuming the system or the quality of being of practical use to capital. Bourdieu (1997) describes symbolic capital as the resources accessible to a person by honour and serves as a value within a culture. Foundations of public statements, events or conditions of social perspectives in a selected society distinguish between symbolic capital that determines what makes and uses capital. The power for symbolic capital to use depends on valid exercises or social interactions. In that case, symbolic capital cannot commit to a specialised institution or be objectified or incorporated into the habitus and symbolic capital lives, it develops only in two or more separate conscious minds in reflection (Siisiiinen, 2000). Figure 3.1 summarises the specific capital proposed by Bourdieu.

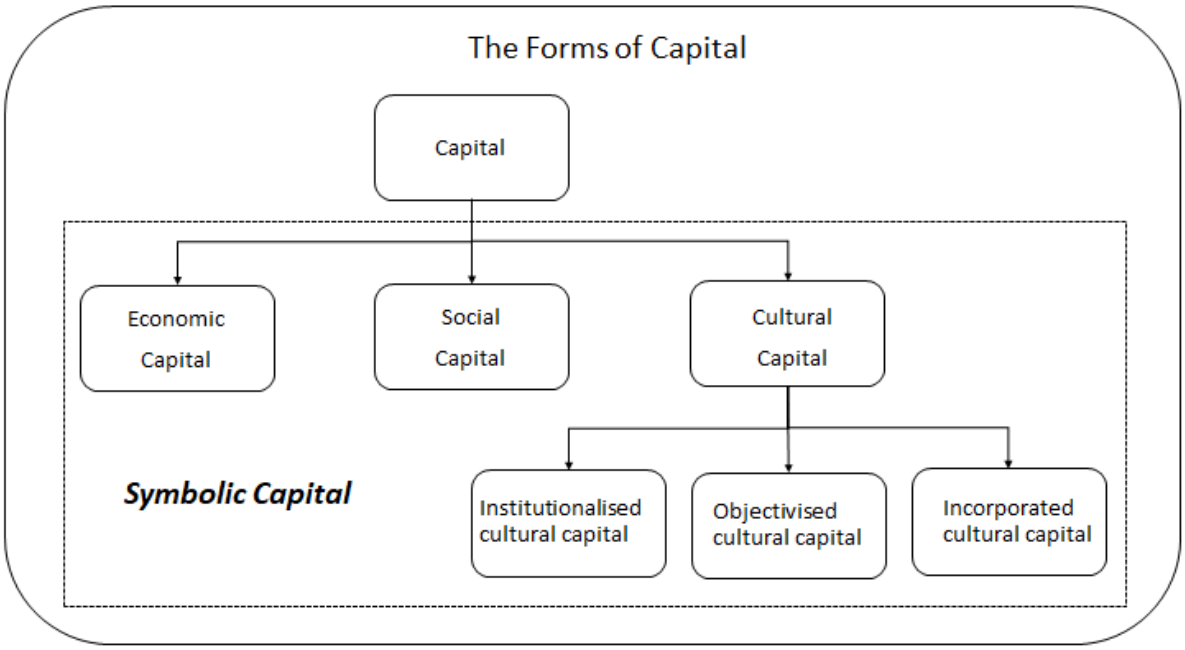


Figure 3.1 The Forms of Capital (Bourdieu, 1972; Hermann, 2004).

### 3.1.2.5 Fields (1986)

The field is one of the core ideas adopted by Bourdieu's (1986) theory in which he establishes the social positions of agents, and further associates habitus and capital with the view of the field. There are specific rules for the field, agent habitus, and agent capital which interact and decide their location. This model belongs to an integrated space of drives and conflicts, comprising a systematic arrangement and a network that finds the connection that affects peoples' habitus. Fields represent fields of an argument in which participants undertake to control several available sources of wealth such as economic, cultural and social capital, taking over the control of institutionalised connections grounded on observable codes or rules. However, with or without authorisation, mechanical connections have a specific and organised structure by cultural norms or practices. Within a field, the proportional talents of the several capitals influence the dominant or subordinate places that a person and a group of participants own. The battle for the ownership of capitals in this place shows the odd distribution of accessible and ready for use resources. The individual and arrangement of parts of fields shift without interruption as power relationships between dominant and subordinate participants become greater or larger and keeping participant's place in a stable society. Both dominant and subordinates' participants may be inactive, although both dominant and subordinate actors may dispute one another for the control of the resource. They all by unexpressed agreement accept the rules and that these forms of controversy recognise as lawful while others are not (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Swartz, 1997). Individuals, therefore, adopt an elaborate and systematic plan of action to distinguish

themselves from other groups and position themselves in a helpful position through the excellent control of capital (Rudd, 2003).

Perreault (2003) trusts that the abstract or general idea of deriving from the field makes up institutional and cultural circumstances. It addresses the concern that widespread demonstrations of social capital divide networks from broader political economies, class structures, and visionary theorisation. The theory of practice by Bourdieu (1972) connects all three most essential ideas, such as the dispositions of participants (habitus). It not only displays their survived experiences but also depends on varying capital talents and the limits of fields made up of rules. Regarding the study, working out on the theory of practice of Bourdieu in analysing human actions is that it supports for a more liberal understanding, for example, understanding how actors - faculty staff or lecturers, graduates, and employers - act together inside their social world in receiving and being able to control various resources.

Bourdieu suggests three central or core ideas: field, habitus, and capital in explaining social practices (Hermann, 2004; Golsorkhi & Hualt, 2006). The theory of practice forms flexible theoretical actions meant to resolve the trouble whose principal constituents must never be studied on their own or apart from one another. However, when explaining the theory of Bourdieu, I need to refer to all the dominant aspects. I try to find any deductive growth of arguments that reach the truth by the act of changing one logical argument for another. Another essential distinct feature is that for the connection among habitus, fields, and capitals develop causes "social practices as Bourdieu explained in an equation: (Habitus x Capital) + Field = Practice" (Bourdieu, 1984:101). In this chapter, I describe below the three core theoretical frameworks of Bourdieu in examining social, cultural, economic, and ecological practices of employability during the internship.

These sections review Bourdieu's theoretical model and how to apply it to the goal intended to reach for my research. To understand the relationship between internship and employability, I have filtered it through Bourdieu's theory of practice.

### 3.1.3 Constructivism Learning Theory

Constructivism concerns that learners build their understanding and knowledge of new material by reflecting and connecting with prior knowledge (Reiser & Dempsey, 2012). I build/construct knowledge, not transferred. Learners are active and show what they have learned in distinct

ways, completing tasks that let them construct their knowledge (Mascolol & Fisher, 2005). The originators and essential contributors who understood through constructivism, express that a person builds his or her learning abilities/processes over time through experience and surround knowledge. These were: Jean Piaget (1973), Jerome Bruner (1996), Lev Vygotsky (1978), and John Dewey (1933).

At a later stage, Dewey and Vygotsky's works had amalgamated with the research of Piaget in child psychology into the general method of constructivism. The critical basic theory of constructivism is that learners' study by doing rather than by observing. Scholars carry previous knowledge into the learning place. They must comment on and re-assess their consideration of the recent knowledge. Understanding, formulation, and re-examination are recurrent until employees can show their understanding of the subject. Grounded in the research of Piaget and Vygotsky, constructivism and social constructivism are two comparable learning theories which share two central philosophies:

1. Learners are dynamic in building their knowledge, and
2. In this knowledge-building process, social interactions are crucial. The constructivist views of learning emphasise the dynamic role of the learner in making thoughtful, logical communication

The constructivist views of learning emphasise the dynamic role of the learner in making thoughtful logical communication.

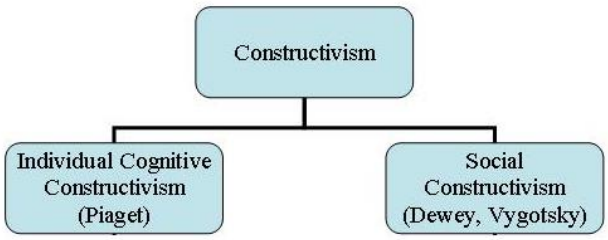


Figure 3.2 The research of Piaget, Dewey & Vygotsky blended.

In my research on whether there could be a relationship between internship and employability, I further discuss the works of Piaget, Vygotsky, and Dewey in paragraphs 3.1.3.1 (Piaget), 3.1.3.2 (Vygotsky), and 3.1.4.1 (Dewey). I have also included other learning theorists such as Lewin (para. 3.1.4.1), and Kolb (para. 3.1.4.3).

The complex theory of constructivism cannot escape our attention if we are to explore graduates' meaning-making on learning in the proper work environment. The supervisors and other employees in organisations shoulder the responsibility of ensuring that this materialises. In my study, the collaboration between academics and employers has proved useful during internships. Graduates were active in constructing their knowledge of individual project work, and they co-constructed knowledge for more significant project works. They showed their knowledge through creativity and collaboration, discovery learning, used unique processes in problem-solving, at two developmental levels. I recognise graduates as key players in the workplace and believe that such a significant change can help explore understanding; students have developed employability skills and pedagogical practices. Similar thoughts allow me to have a better insight into how internships are being effected in the workplace. However, if I uphold a socio-constructivist view of the learning process, it makes it difficult to reduce to nothingness the human dimension. I must focus on the principal actors in the teaching/learning process.

#### 3.1.3.1 Piaget (1971)

Jean Piaget (1971), recognised as one of the 'fathers' of the constructionist movement, focus on how individuals make sense of the communication between their practices and their thoughts. He focused on the development of human beings in what is happening with a person as unique from the development guided by other persons. Piaget (1971), positions the constructivism camps on individual cognitive structures which centres on the reaction of a person, and his or her experience and the progress through which he or she understands the process. Cognitive constructivism emphasises the development of meaningful learning by focussing on the cognitive process that takes place within individuals. The proximal locus of cognitive development reflects that understanding is to invent (McLeod, 2018). For example, individual children construct knowledge through their actions in the world. In my study, graduates reported that during their internship, they manipulated objects/ideas (tools, equipment, and machines), inventing/reinventing knowledge through interaction with supervisors and other employees in a work environment. The supervisors provided an environment that encouraged interns to interact and ask probing questions. I regard the learner as dynamic and graduates in the ICT working on computers made available new learning opportunities. From a constructivist viewpoint, the training of supervisors represented a basic strategy in the restructuring of curricula on psycho-pedagogic training programmes. As a result, I perceive a greater professional effect of Piaget's (1952)'s theory on current practice focusing on active, hands-on learning. The constructivist theory holds that learners are active receivers of ability but are brighter in the procedure (Piaget,

1952). They are more active in creating meaning and knowledge, and this directs to a student-centred approach in which the student guides his/her learning. Technologies (computers) helped shape knowledge theories, which engage the graduates further and make sure of important and flexible learning. Nanjappa and Grant (2003), find that graduates' work as inventors. They use technology for interpreting and organising the know-how that they offer to other persons. Piaget's (1952)'s theory refers to constructivist influences on learning concepts and other educational approaches. There are mixed results from this theory with the above authors supporting these techniques while others were against the theory.

Piaget believes that intelligence is absent at birth, not hereditary for the individual because of the way children model and understand the world around them. The theory of cognitive development of Piaget (1936) draws on how experience shapes intelligence. Children have divergences between their previous knowledge and what they discover in their surroundings and then adapt to their thoughts (McLeod, 2015). Efforts in the fundamental interaction between the person and his or her natural world create intelligence (Kolb, 1984). Piaget (1936), in his studies, shows that action is the key for infants and adolescents as they applied this action to fulfil with their immediate concrete environment. They operate by abstract thinking, which is coherent, with the power to interpret symbols. As a result, growing up children, in their approach, knows how to transfer stages that are being identified (Singer-Freeman, 2006). The changes move from a stage, in which knowledge takes place, succeeds and form part of the experiences that caused it, to a symbolic level. At this phase, knowledge includes iconic mental representation (image). The images have a self-directed position from the experiences, and they form two phases of concrete experience and in accord with stable forms of operations (Kolb, 1984). Piaget's (1936)'s model of Learning and Cognitive Development makes up these essential developmental processes. The researcher will use this theory to understand the stages in which graduates gain learning experiences in the workshop during the internship.

I consider learners in adulthood as children. Many adults have understood the many constructs but could not carry them into real-world positions, hence impeding them from forming associations with other aims or ideas. Experiential learning furnishes an occasion for adults to "learn through discovery." In my research, I provided graduates with the opportunity of engaging in complex problem-based learning when they took earlier cognition and formed links to the practice they were engaged in. They formed products that may not occur, the end product in a

concluding answer, but gave them to practice and came up with fresh ideas and the capacity for rational thought.

Piaget's cognitive theory comprises three essential units: ideas or schemas, the adaptation that changes the passage from one phase to another, and the steps of cognitive development. The essential part of learning originates in the frequent interaction of the mental operation of a change of ideas or an internal representation of the world to go through in the environment. It assimilates events or experiences from the environment, converting them into ideas or schemas which form the purest and most significant form of units of such knowledgeable examples. This allows us to build a presentation to the mind in the form of an idea or image of the environment. Piaget (1952: 7) defines a schema as "a repeatable action sequence, having unit actions that are interconnected and governed by a core meaning." Piaget (1952) considers the schema as units of intelligent behaviour, a means of organising knowledge. The schema is in the cognitive stage of development and comprises objects, actions, and abstract ideas. An individual uses the schema, a set of mental representations of the world, to understand and to react to the combination of circumstances at a time. A person stores these mental images and applies them when needed, for example, a person who has a schema of having food in a restaurant. The schema is in the person's mind kept as a pattern of behaviour, laid aside for future use. The pattern comprises selecting a plate from the menu list, ordering food, consuming it, and paying the bill. A "script" is the name given to a similar schema when the person recalls from memory and applies it when needed to a position.

Piaget (1936) suggests four stages of cognitive development. First, the sensorimotor stage (or on the sensory and motor coordination of an organism or the controlling nerves) starting from birth to age 2. Second, the pre-operational stage, in which children guess and discover words and pictures (language), from age 2 to 7 years. Third, the concrete operation stage (children imagine concrete results) from age 7 to age 11. Fourth, the formal operational stage (the teen or a young developed person from maturity onward considers in abstract terms and argue on the conjectural matter) from age 11 to adulthood. All children experience the stages in the same order but may advance through the stages at their own pace. Some children may never arrive at the later stages.

Critics of Piaget's experiential learning include Dasen (1994) who argues that Piaget did not look at the effect of social settings and culture influencing cognitive development. Hughes (1975) considers that Piaget leaves something undone when he does not notice what a child is

doing (competence) and what a child can show when given a specific task (performance). Other researchers have questioned the generalisability of Piaget's data because his sample was a combination of his children and his colleagues' children. The sample was not insignificant, but children coming from high socioeconomic status families in Europe framed it.

Piaget's (1936)'s theory of learning and cognitive development proposes a learning theory as a model, a unifying move towards education that covers the experience, opinion, understanding, and behaviour. Piaget's theory involves the experience, idea, reflection, and action, which form the first continuous non-spatial whole for developing the graduates' thoughts (Kolb, 1984). Applying Piaget's theory of learning, this study addresses the graduates' progress during the internship.

#### 3.1.3.2 Vygotsky (1978)

Both Vygotsky's (1978) social development and Vygotsky's social constructivist (1978) have to base the common constituent of "social" on actions in which individuals continue talking to one other or engaging in pleasurable matters together. Also, constructivism exists in human society, as interacting with the person and the group, or to help humanity as members of society, for example, the keywords "development" and "constructivist." On the one hand, social development is most concerned with the technical aspects of developing the mind while social constructivist focuses on gaining knowledge. One understands how culture shapes development through linguistic communication, social interaction, and the organisation of society.

Vygotsky's model is seen to provide an appropriate theoretical framework for the current study. Social development emphasises that socialisation affect a graduate's learning (Vygotsky, 1978), individual exchanges, and the internalisation of what they share. Research has shown that when working in pairs (teamwork), joint actions encourage both learners to communicate with each other (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky points out that all the work that involves knowledge comes from the reciprocal social movement between at least two persons. Therefore, learning is not adapting internal representations to allow a changing understanding of reality, but the course of action intended to integrate instruction into skill in a community. Vygotsky believes that a person involved in social actions among learners or students working with better-experienced peers on a joint enterprise will be abler than students who are learning on their own. Vygotsky (1978) reports that social interaction has a vital role in expanding knowledge. In my research, the social change gives access to developmental techniques in which supervisors from industry and the

coordinators from university act as mediators for the students during an internship. During their placement, the students apply these experiences to what they have learned in universities in a proper work environment. In similar circumstances, both lecturers and supervisor's negotiation are to resolve the differences in the two unique environments that allow the intern to internalise on human society and its members. The student can further learn how to carry out a role or action in the workplace. In the internship, the academics/lecturers attend to the students and motivate them with leading reflection as they move towards problems that exist in workplace environments. The supervisor supports the students with relevant issues appearing in the proper work environment. In concert, the three groups of people build the idea which aims for social common or reciprocal action. The students develop applicable skills, knowledge, attitudes, and competencies with the aid of academics/lecturers, supervisors and other clients.

Vygotsky's (1934)' social development theory and the theory of cognitive development came into existence via researches over several decades. These theories of Vygotsky (1978) underline the principles of the fundamental common action and the role of society in refining knowledge. The researcher argues that the community shares the dominant role in the action intended to achieve the "making meaning." However, Vygotsky (1978: 90) points out that "learning is a necessary and universal of the way of developing an organised culture, the human psychological work." Otherwise stated, social learning precedes development. Vygotsky elaborates on both social and cultural matters that move towards cognitive development. An individual cannot understand the personal growth set within the social and cultural context without referring to it. Two important principles of Vygotsky support his theories: The More Knowledgeable Other (MKO) and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1978: 86). The MKO is a person or an adult who has a higher education or a high ability status on actions and principles. He or she may not be an educator or even an adult. This could be an inexperienced person or a child who has more experience or is more knowledgeable than his or her peers, therefore known as MKO. The MKO can likewise be an electronic tutor or peers within the classroom. In contrast, the ZPD is essential arguments on the capacity of what a learned to accomplish on his or her own without external help or what the learner can do with the support of a knowledgeable peer or adult (Vygotsky, 1978). For example, a learner cannot assemble a motor by himself/herself and needs the help of a worker or a qualified person to develop the skills that apply to future action. Vygotsky (1978: 86) determines the Zone of Proximal Development as "the distance between the developmental level as determined by independent problem-solving; the potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance in collaboration with

more capable peers." The theory justifies that the cognitive development of gaining skill and knowledge takes place in the ZPD. For instance, the typical social actions of graduates working with equals who are more experienced on a joint initiative of the task could enable interns who are self-learners. Vygotsky (1978) accepts as a right that learning moves ahead of development. Besides, when an intern faces new knowledge, an intermediary educated person, or someone similar will aid the intern to make sense of the unique experience and prior knowledge already earned by him or her. During internships, guidance and support from supervisors/mentors and other employees of an organisation are essential to developing graduates.

Vygotsky (1978) pursues the social constructivist theory. The social mutual action of a group produces social constructivism centres on human development. Social context influences the advancements in the stages of knowing people learning from one another builds knowledge. I regard the constructivism theory as knowledge of construction being of both a cognitive and social process. The learner must take part in the action through social debates, meanings and stable collaboration, thus completing knowledge. As a result, learning occurs with the help of other people, for example, between an intern and a supervisor or between two interns during the internship. Participants develop higher mental actions. Vygotsky (1962) believes that an individual's active learning takes place through interaction while discussing, negotiating, and sharing participants' perspectives. The role of the supervisors is to engage interns in understanding their workplace. They invite interns to inquire and to collaborate while taking part in any activity on their internship programme (Sapp & Zhang, 2009). Vygotsky is likely to have emphasised the role that young graduates play in their development. They discover and develop new understandings or schema through social interaction with a skilful supervisor or mentor who acts as a role model (Billett, 2004). The interns try to understand the instructions provided by the supervisor or mentor (often the colleagues or other employees). He or she afterwards internalises the data, applying it to lead his or her performance. Both the supervisor and the intern work in collaboration to interpret information and build meaning with a rich significance or implication. They try to find solutions to issues that belong to the real-world. Students build their understanding and education through repetitive technique with the help of the supervisor (Billet, 2000). The social constructivist theory draws attention to the role of learners in organising and linking ideas or arguments while interacting with the natural world (Vygotsky, 1978). They reflect on a subject or question over a period, raising questions to understand better how to interpret the context and search for answers to relevant issues.

During internships, the supervisor becomes a promoter of learning, trusting that collecting knowledge and skill that results from direct participation in actions within an environment affect the learner. In reality, the collective and reciprocal action happens between the intern and his or her environment. Therefore, knowledge and skills have a base of active experience. The supervisor's role calls for forming the learners' real training from the environment. Research has shown that the environment promotes skills that lead to developing the learner (Billet, 2011) and that through an internship, controlled learning allows and encourages social constructivist learning. Since then, in this education, students manage their learning. The constant support of other people in the workplace makes the interns more confident. They are more liable to feel at ease questioning and reflecting on procedures for learning. Vygotsky (1978) and Dewey (1916), in their research, explain the collective social action, development procedures, and reflective learning. The theory shows the existence of an interplay between active learning and the learner's interaction while gaining experience. Learners can, by induction, show and translate information into construction or non-structure which they want to know, that is cognitive constructivism. In this model, learning is a growth process that calls for change and building on earlier learning experiences, for instance, how interns move from one experience to the next higher one.

### 3.1.4 Activity Theories (1987)

Activity theory considers an entire work/activity system (including teams, organizations, etc.) beyond just one actor or user. This comprises the subject (person group), object (experiences, knowledge, and products), rules, tools and artefacts, a separate effort, the community and activity (results, success, and well-being (Engestrom, 1987). The model underlines the differentiation between the aim of an action and its results, while the results can be much better. The triangle Engestrom often uses with no mention of the productive capacity for rational thought of the fundamental work of Vygotsky, Leontiev, and others. However, the triangle provides researchers with a mental representation of an equivalent practical world as opposed to the academic world position. The academic setting is all-inclusive in scope and clear to the mind. In purpose, the activity theory understands the mental capacity for rational thought or the mental ability of a person (Bertelsen & Bodker, 2003).

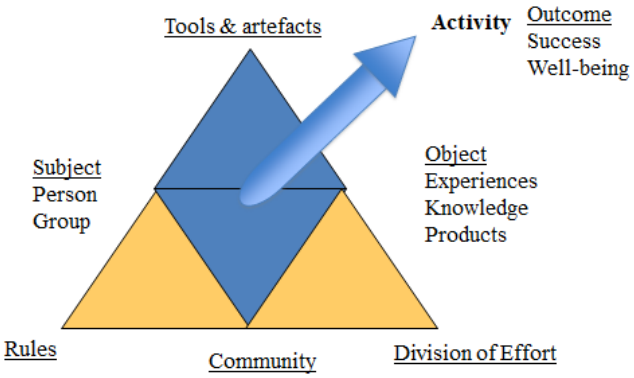


Figure 3.3. A collective activity system (Engströem, 1987)

The activity theory disapproves of detached individuals as lacking the first entity that is being analysed in a study (Bertelsen & Bodker, 2003). I consider this approach to be a descriptive instrument for a system of rules all on "who is doing what, why, and how." However, an action is seldom that simple. The approach supplies a tool with which researchers evoke and understand human activity. In research methods, the approach is a practical lens using the qualitative method. Last, the theory provides a way of seeing and studying a remarkable development, finding out rules, and causing inferences across reciprocal action.

Activity theory reports actions in the interrelated of social and technical aspects of an organisation through six related elements. Engstrom (1987) redefines the activity method as a conceptual system expanded by more nuanced arguments, including:

(1) object-orienters—the activity system's aim;
(2) Subject or internalisation—workers used in the activities; community or externalisation all workers needed in the activity system (Figure 3.4); in the social context;
(3) Tools or tool mediation—the ideas used by workers in the system. Tools shape worker-structure
(4) Mutual action; they alter with increasing experience. The knowledge also varies;
(5) division of labour—social-economic classes, the structure of data having various degrees staged in a tree-shaped structure of activity, dividing operations among employees in the system, and
(6) rules—norms, and principles governing events in the system.

Activity theory helps in explaining how human artefacts and social organisation intercept social policy. This starts with the belief in an activity considered as an organisation of human "doing" through which a person improves an object to gain the needed result (Bryant, Forte & Bruckman, 1981). The person uses a tool which may be external (an electrician's tool kit, a computer, or a

machine) or sometimes internal (a plan). For example, during internships, the whole idea of students learning skills is that they learn the skills of someone who is more experienced than them, the supervisor/mentor who supports them. In particular, the supervisor introduces a topic or skill, guiding them through it so they can learn, and then the supervisor allows them to practise on their own. Activity theory encourages the supervisor to consider the composite relation between people, institutional arrangements, and norms placed across the partnership (Roth & Tobin, 2002). In internships, the academic and the workplace are different systems. Research has shown that both educational and the workshop have various "tools" and needed outputs. These differences affect the abilities of students to transfer learning from the classroom to the workplace environment (Le Maistre & Pare´, 2004).

The socio-cultural form of activity theory allows for a set of human actions and connects the person to the social level (Engstrom, 1999). The unit of analysis is the natural process of admitting the individual or many entities considered as a building block working towards an object, therefore, adopting the specific rules and the active relationships that arise inside the activity system of rules (Engstrom, 1999; Barab, Evans & Baek, 2003). In the workplace, the graduates work in a team with supervisors and other employees of the organisation. They all work towards a goal within a community of practice, irrespective of their ages, belonging to a social class or academic level. I recognized one of the powerful points of activity theory as that it associates the specific subject with the social genuineness—its researchers both through the facilitating activity. Roth and Lee (2004) consider Science Education as involvement in the community with associations to the cultural and historical evolution of this society. Subjects (people or groups) get used in science activities, and they use tools to address a scientific idea. Besides, they act with one another, with devices and means of entering the community of learners. They work by building knowledge, gaining the results that are precise (Engstrom, 2005).

I noticed that activity theory was a governing instrument for equating the university and the workplace. The theory also clarifies the many problematic transitions between classroom and work environment. I viewed the comparison as most pertinent and informative when comparing activity in university and similar activity in their similar workplace environments. In my study, I have preferred to scrutinise the professional academics in the finance, ICT, and accommodations (hotels) sectors. These academics prepare graduates under controlled conditions in universities, assuming that students will transfer knowledge into the workplace

which was gained in the classroom. Classrooms and workplaces are unique activity systems (Le Maistre & Pare, 2004).

I used activity theory as a lens in my qualitative research method because it provided a method of understanding and analysing the phenomenon of internship and employability. Activity theory helped me in finding patterns and making inferences across interactions. I described the phenomena and presented them by using language to persuade.

### 3.1.5 Strategic Management Theory using "Resource-Based View Approach"

Fahy and Smithee (1999) believe that strategic management helps to achieve the sustainable advantage of any company and that the resource-based view (RBV) offers strategists a means of testing potential factors that can be deployed to confer a competitive edge. The RBV is a managerial framework used to determine the strategic resources a firm can exploit to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage (Wernerfelt, 1984; Prahalad & Hamel, 1991). It is a fact that not all resources are of equal importance, nor do they possess the potential to become a source of sustainable competitive advantage. Lowson (1991) argues that the sustainability of any competitive advantage depends on the extent to which resources can be imitated or substituted. However, understanding the relationship between the sources of advantage and successful strategies can be very difficult in practice. Thus, an impressive deal of managerial effort must be invested in identifying, understanding and classifying core competencies. Also, management must invest in organisational learning to develop, nurture and maintain key resources and competencies. Organisation learning includes the training and development of graduates in employability skills as they may become future employees.

RBV focuses attention on an organisation's internal resources to organise processes and get a competitive advantage. The resource-based view suggests that organisations must develop unique, firm-specific core competencies that will allow them to outperform competitors by doing things differently (Lewis & Kipley, 2012). Barney (1991) states that, for resources to hold potential as sources of sustainable competitive advantage, they should be valuable, rare, imperfectly imitable, and not substitutable. Graduates armed with employability skills and knowing the culture of the organisation are in a power position. Thus, the strategic management theory using the "resource-based view approach" was seen to provide an appropriate framework for the current study. The study also tries to explore the social constructs embedded within the structure of an internship to develop employability skills in graduates.

### 3.1.6 Behavioural Theory of Change

Behavioural change theories are an attempt to explain why behaviours change. Models of behaviour are more diagnostic and geared towards understanding the psychological factors that explain or predict a specific behaviour, whereas theories of change are more process-oriented and aimed at changing a behaviour (Van Der Linden, 2013). Each behavioural change theory or model focuses on different factors in attempting to explain behaviour change (Bandura, 1977). Of the many that exist, the most prevalent that I used in my study were self-efficacy, learning theories, social cognitive theory, theories of reasoned action and planned behaviour, and the trans-theoretical model of behaviour change. Elements such as self-efficacy are common to several of these theories. According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy is an individual's impression of their own ability to perform a demanding or challenging task such as facing an exam or undergoing an internship. I base this impression upon factors such as the individual's prior success in the task or related tasks, the individual's physiological state, and outside sources of persuasion. Self-efficacy is thought to be predictive of the amount of effort an individual will spend in starting and maintaining a behavioural change. Therefore, although self-efficacy is not a behavioural change theory per se, it is an important element of many of these theories. Applying the behavioural theory of change to my study addresses the transformation or change in behaviour of graduates during and after their internship ontologically, empirically, and theoretically, in deepening the understanding of transferring learning during an internship.

### 3.1.7 Bronfenbrenner Human Development Theory (1980)

Bronfenbrenner´s ecological systems theory is the theory of human development. It is used in articulating the process of human socialisation and it has been a key to understanding education. Bronfenbrenner (1979:27) defines human development *"as the process through which the growing person gains a more extended differentiated, and valid conception of the ecological environment, and becomes motivated and able to engage in activities that reveal the properties of, sustain, or restructure that environment at levels of similar or greater complexity in form and content."* According to him, the utmost goal of any scientific effort is to understand in a systems way the processes and results of human (graduate) development as a common equation of man and environment (workplace). Bronfenbrenner has helped shaped Lewin's behaviour model into the human development model to suit straight development description needs with certain restrictions. Bronfenbrenner emphasises the influence on the development of different levels and size environments, in the first place – social and cultural environments. Although Bronfenbrenner described it as a theory of human development, from the start the developing

individual was viewed as enhancing, and being influenced by, the environment. Bronfenbrenner viewed development as emerging from the interaction of individual and context.

Development is a series of such processes that intermediate the interaction of the qualities of person and environment to produce permanency and change in a person's qualities in life. Based on the applicability of Bronfenbrenner´s developmental theory to a phenomenon, we conclude that development and education are distinct things, even if they are present at the same time. The goal of education is to support optimal development. If research, instead of development, focuses on education, the object of the study changes. In this way, it becomes much clearer why there is a specific need for the theory of the phenomenon of education and its research. At some point, certain environmental conditions produce different developmental results. The outcomes depend on the personal qualities of the individuals, living under these conditions. The application of such a person environment-interaction model to human development is one of the most promising directions, although challenging theoretically and methodologically. Thus, Bronfenbrenner´s theory is the very systems theory that allows tackling many environmental factors and many persons in different interactional relationships, roles, actions, and processes. Applying the Bronfenbrenner theory to this current study addresses the various results gained by fresh graduates at the end of their internship. Small and medium organisations who recruit graduates for an internship might give different outcomes after internship compared with graduates recruited by big companies.

### 3.1.8 Work Skills Development (WSD) Framework (2017)

Bandaranaike and Willison (2009/2016) revised the Work Skill Development (WSD) framework using a combination of graduate attributes (Graduate attributes in Australian Universities, 2010), Bloom's taxonomy (Bloom et al., 1956). The WSD is a tool that enables both academics and employers to monitor qualitatively and quantitatively the progress of students, and students to self-assess their work skills. The model articulates six work skills facets – initiative, resources, lifelong learning, management, problem-solving, and communication - and maps the level of student autonomy using five defined Levels - prescribed direction, bounded direction, scaffolded direction, self-starting direction and open direction (Bandaranaike & Willison, 2016). They directed these facets on by placing students via input in a reflective journal, a progress report and a reflective essay. Comprehensive interviews on each student's progress and achievement based on the principles of WSD were conducted, one with the student and the other with the employer. Thereafter, the student perceptions were compared and contrasted with the employer perceptions

to assess progress during the placement. The data collected enabled the employer to explore and perform the student across a comprehensive range of accredited employability skills. The findings include improvements in the work skills of graduates or their non-performances. The WSD highlights the level of competence gained by graduates and any discrepancies by employers. Both graduates and employers agree on the remedial actions to be taken. The WSD gives valuable feedback to the student in assessing future employability. Students can review, reflect on, and so adjust their workplace engagement, receiving critical feedback. This is an innovative, inclusive measure of performance that has the potential to be adopted in many disciplines. The Work Skill Development (WSD) framework was seen to provide an appropriate framework for the current study. This model shows the processes involved in individuals developing their employability skills through assessments, interviews, and a written paper. Applying the WSD, this study addresses the problem ontologically, empirically, and theoretically, in deepening the understanding of graduates' progress during internships.

### 3.2 Dreyfus and Dreyfus Skill Development (2005)

The Dreyfus and Dreyfus (2005) model of skill accomplishment is grounded on how learners develop skills through conventional instruction and practice. The first model suggests that a learner goes through five clear-cut stages comprising novice, advanced beginner, competence, proficient (ability), and expert. Employers decide that attainments must be gained through experience in their work, including the act of improving skills from beginner to expert. As a novice during an internship, a student follows the rules as dictated in this context, with no responsibility. An intern develops coordinating principles to attain competence at the special rules that apply to the particular task. Thus, decision-making characterises power in selecting a course of action. People show the quality of having exceptional ability (proficiency), knowing how to draw conclusions and invent their patterns to develop plans. The series of competences with a distinct pattern of advanced practicality is about interns moved from fixed attachment to rules to a non-rational way of arguing grounded on tacit knowledge (Dreyfus, 2004). Tacit knowledge is problematic to transfer to another individual using marking it down or verbalising. For instance, how to ride a bicycle, or how to use sophisticated equipment requires much knowledge that even professional is challenging to transfer to another person. Unique experiences help learners to gain skills in becoming an expert at following a practice. Dreyfus and Dreyfus (2005) recommend that students detach from the ability they owned and to approach an expert skill in a new project. Research has shown that interns practising in the workplace improve their skills per time, practice, and reflection (Hannon, 2000). Students engaged in a

community of practice are more profitable as they enjoy practice in communicating with colleagues and clients. The supervisor guides the students to work within a group or groups and independent projects, studying applicable problems particular to the subject, and finding out the means to address such matters. However, the only criticism of Dreyfus and Dreyfus' model rests on the argument that no evidence stemmed from experiment and observation for the current existence of stages in the growth of ability (Gobet & Chassy, 2008). Students make low progress when experts are not supervising them in the field (Gobet & Chassy, 2009).

### 3.3 Developmental Stages of the Internship (Switzer & King stages, 2013)

Switzer and King (2004, 2009, 2013) report that an internship's progress through four stages: expectation, exploration, competence, and result. During the expectation stage, interns need to overcome anxieties and make known their skills to colleagues and clients. The interns create personal earning goals and try to understand the culture of the workplace environment. They know the aim and mission of the business (Sweitzer & King, 2004, 2009, 2013). Exploration, the next stage of the internship, sees the intern conform with others, to the values of the organisation, and discover the concerns that need immediate attention. They question themselves about the quality of being familiar with the demand for skills and knowledge. The third stage of the internship is competence, the way of changing in the form, shape, or appearance of the students as they felt would achieve essential tasks (Sweitzer & King, 2013). Learners are better coupled to the social learning surroundings, sense themselves convinced and remains in a specific condition of self-awareness. Fourth is the culmination at which stag interns assess their performance and find out the characteristics of transferable skills. This involves narrowing the gap with co-workers and customers before collecting know-how or ability that answers from direct engagement in cases or actions (Sweitzer & King, 2004, 2009). Research has found that in internships, interns have to go through these four stages to become an expert in their field of study or practice.

### 3.4 Model of Learning Theories

I introduce my experience of the developments of learning as these can occur from many origins as declared in the preceding section. I refer to the four kinds of learning:

- experiential (gaining knowledge during a relationship of mutual understanding or trust and agreement between people, felt participation);
- presentational (imaginal) (getting data on the modelling of experience through perception, creativity, and insight)

- propositional learning (having knowledge detailed in plans through the exercise of the understanding), and
- practical (gaining experience of how to organise something by a repetition of specific skills).

Illeris (2009: 21) aims to "present an accessible, coherent understanding of human learning…, attempts to cover the whole subject area by current knowledge in this field." The author suggests a comprehensive analysis of learning theory by examining each aspect of reasoning, emotive and societal learning. At the next stage, he associates the isolated factors to clarify the multifaceted learning method. Illeris (2009) constructs his theory of learning by summarising viewpoints from many academics and theorists. I see Illeris' analysis of previous learning theory and his developed theory are instrumental.
Illeris (2009: 32) defines:

> *"human learning is the combination of processes throughout a lifetime whereby the whole person–body (genetic, physical and biological) and mind (knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, emotions, beliefs, and senses) – experiences social situations, the perceived content of which is then transformed cognitively, emotively or practically (or through and combination) and integrated into the person's biography resulting in a continuously evolving (or more experienced) person."*

Illeris (2009) starts with Piaget (1971) and hence rejects the behaviourist theory. In his definition of learning, he considers the model of experiential learning of Kolb (1984) an essential component. I interpret the emotional aspect of learning, but not as a theory of learning (the theories of Freud). Illeris describes the aspects of learning to mention only personality, motivation, and reflexivity which I discovered to be limited. Vygotsky suggests the standard modules of learning interaction, social learning, and socialisation on which Illeris (2009) builds the social constructivist theory. Illeris (2009) positions the person in the world and education with Dewey (1938). He speaks and summarises Dewey 's concept of experience and pedagogy. Illeris further intensifies his theory of learning by connecting the phases of learning on life stages while fitting in biological and psychological stages. He highlights four different life phases: childhood, youth, adulthood, and mature adulthood. Mostly, I concur with Illeris's learning phases. In the next step, Illeris (2009) discourses on the impact of a cognitive, an emotional, and a social dimension on learning results through Wenger's (1998)'s communities of practice, institutional learning, informal learning, and organisational learning. Besides the learning

theories, reflection and reflective teaching (I highlight Schon, 1983), I acknowledge postmodernism per one of its representative authors.

My favourite part of Illeris' theory of learning is that in which he summarises all the advanced learning theories. Illeris (2009) introduces a wide-ranging definition of the learning progression:

> *". . . I see it (learning) as an entity that unites a cognitive and social dimension into one whole. It combines a direct or mediated interaction between the individual and its material and social environment with an internal psychological process of acquisition. Thus, learning always includes both an individual and a social component, the latter always reflecting current societal conditions, so that the learning result has the character of an individual phenomenon which is always socially and societally marked."* (Illeris, 2009: 227).

Illeris (2009) offers a triangular illustration categorising the philosophers on a range among the learning spaces. Figure 3.4 shows the three dimensions when engaging in learning.

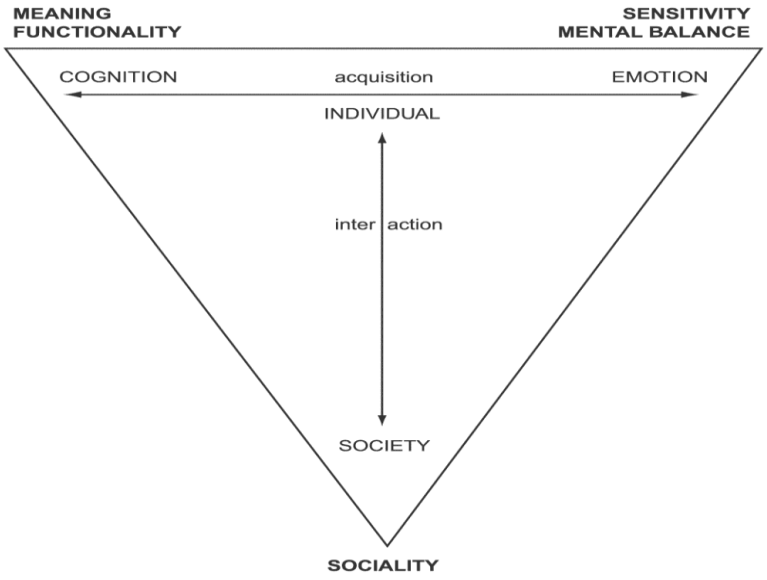


Figure 3.4. The three dimensions involved in education (Illeris, 2009)

On the triangular illustration, Illeris (2003) ranks the matching theorists who engage with the theories of learning. The knowledge (cognition) identifies Piaget as the vertex, and Freud is at the emotional (feelings and motivation) vertex. Kolb, Dewey, and other researchers find their places among the theorists, fall in between other theorists. At the cognition vertex, Illeris identifies Vygotsky who shared the theoretical contribution. Wenger's (1988)'s communities of

practice are in the middle. The drawing offers a concise classification of the mentioned theorists' inclination and named "positions in the learning theoretical tension field" (Illeris, 2003: 237).

The three dimensions model highlight that learning stated by Illeris as the fresh material begins with one of five stimuli of the process:

- "Perception" – "where the surrounding world comes to the individual as an unmediated sense impression" (Illeris, 2002: 98);
- "Transmission" – wherein another person delivers information of transmits specific sense impressions or messages" (Illeris, 2002: 98);
- "Experience" – "limit the word so that experience presupposes a particular activity, i.e., that the learner is not receiving, but also acts to enjoy the interaction" (Illeris, 2002: 98);
- "Imitation" – "occurring when the learner tries to imitate or reproduce another's actions" (Illeris, 2002: 98), and
- "Activity or participation" – "where the learner is engaged in a goal-directed activity taking part with others as in a community of practice" (Illeris, 2002: 98).

A graduate education to gain skills takes part in both the intellectual and emotive extents. Social communication between supervisors and other employees will affect this learning experience. The graduate internalises academics and society's prospects. They need well-educated graduates to do in today's world. They apply the three dimensions of learning – cognitive, emotional, and social to adult learning integration.

### 3.5 Theoretical Framework for the Study

In this chapter, I address almost these major theories regarding learning production and learning to emanate out of the scholarly community. The learning theories have enabled the researcher to examine the principles underlying pedagogic relationships amongst academics, employers, and graduates. Amongst others, I identified two theories which are more important for the theoretical framework of this study. The transfer of learning theory and the experiential learning theories stand out in Chapter 3 as the main theoretical framework of this study. These foundations provided the explanatory framework for understanding whether there is a relationship between internship and employability. The framework enables research such as that enacted and reported on in this study to size up both the social and epistemic relations both to and within knowledge. The study allows understanding how the transfer of knowledge is understood in terms of the re-contextualisation of curriculum knowledge into pedagogic knowledge, and how each stakeholder

understands his or her role in relaying and translating this knowledge to and for graduates through teaching, training, and learning activities and relationships.

### 3.5.1 Transfer of Learning Theory

Thorndike and Woodworth (1901) introduced the transfer of learning (transfer of practice) as the dependency of human conduct, learning, or performance on prior experience. I describe the transfer of learning as the process and the extent to which experiences (transfer source) affect learning and performance effectively in a new situation (the transfer target). However, Helfenstein (2005) argues that there remains controversy about how the transfer of learning should be conceptualised and explained, what its prevalence is, what its relationship is with learning and whether it exists at all. Knowledge transfer involves the application of learned knowledge while completing tasks or solving problems.

Transfer of knowledge goes far beyond repeating memorised material but is about being able to take old knowledge and experiences and apply such old knowledge to a new concept, also being able to use both the new and old knowledge to solve a problem never encountered before. Bransford et al., (2000) identified four key features of learning as applied to transfer. These include the necessity of initial learning, the importance of abstract and contextual knowledge, the conception of learning as an active process; and the notion that all learning is transferred. With this conception, teachers can help students transfer learning not just between contexts in academics, but also to a common home, work, or community environments. The goal of transfer is for students to generalise the knowledge they have learned in school to practical environments such as home, community, and workplace. I saw the transfer of learning theory as providing an appropriate framework for my study. Applying the transfer of learning theory, this study addresses the problem of graduates' transfer of what they learned in universities, and what they put into practice in the workplace. At the end of the internship, graduates should show a transformation in their capability of handling problem-solving issues and other employability skills.

Supervisor support is an important dimension of the social aspect of learning. It refers to whether managers and supervisors reinforce and promote the use of new skills on the job. They facilitate the training transfer when graduates perceive that supervisors are supportive in this way. An important qualifier here is that when supervisors are coercive, this minimises the effect.

Support from peers and colleagues is another important dimension of the social aspect of learning. Peer support maybe even more important than supervisory support in promoting training transfer. A person's motivation to transfer training back to the job is shaped during the learning experience. It comes as no surprise that when trainees perceive learning as relevant, useful, and valuable, they are more likely to apply their learned employability skills.

### 3.5.2 Experiential Learning Theorists

Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) offers a theory of learning from experience and a multi-dimensional model of growth for adults. The theory highlights an individual's experience as they learn, grow and develop. ELT involves the whole person and applies to education in the classroom and daily life because this method of learning occurs everywhere. Experiential supervisors use ELT during internships in the industry because it also addresses learning and educational issues in many training programmes. The study of Kolb, Rubin, and McIntyre (1971) shows that in many studies, ELT has been adopted. A recent study suggests that ELT builds on the theories and claims of scholars whose creative thoughts go progressing the knowledge of learning and education. A vital purpose in a human being's development and education is to combine the works of eminent scholars. This research involves scholars such as Carl Jung, John Dewey, Mary Parker Follett, Paulo Freire, Kurt Lewin, Jean Piaget, Carl Rogers, Lev Vygotsky, and William James. Later, Kolb (1984) makes experiential learning (EL) accessible when he develops the Experiential Learning Model (ELM) grounded on Dewey (1938)', Lewin (1951)', and Piaget (1971)' studies. In response to Dewey's demand, the Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) leads an educational introduction to create an unfamiliar process (Kolb & Kolb, 2017), thus providing a rational foundation for practising ELT. The term "experiential" distinguishes between "ELT" and "cognitive" learning. Paragraphs 3.1.3.1 to 3.1.3.5 give an outline of the studies of the five researchers, Dewey (1938), Lewin (1951), Kolb (1984), Joplin (1981) and Lave and Wenger (1990). The contributions and insights of these scholars mentioned before have allowed a precise, communicated and coherent framework to make experiential learning intelligible. In this era, learning challenges appear for individuals, at every level, for organisations and institutions.

#### 3.5.2.1 Dewey (1938)

Dewey (2011) points out that the method of long-established education was involved with transferring knowledge. Such was inadequate in its approach to supporting the experience of students. Education is the method of conveying knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes, which

can be valuable to a person, while learning is the method of gaining knowledge, skills, and values. I accept Dewey as the philosophical father of experiential education who encouraged progressive education. He was also judgemental of the total "free, student-driven" approach to education, finding that students did not enjoy their learning experience. This was because of their lack of involvement in how to structure their learning approach. (Dewey, 2011). In many educational reforms, Dewey was ahead of his time. I will highlight some chosen questions on my study on internship and employability.

Dewey (2011) detects that children were better at their learning when they work together within their settings and were involved in their school programme. This idea is in line with the needs of employers who trained interns with specific employability skills in a proper workplace environment during their internship as expressed by graduates and employers. Dewey fixed his concept of "instrumentalism" in education on "learning by doing" or "hands-on learning." This signifies that graduates have to learn the theory in classrooms thereafter, applying their classroom learning in an authentic work environment. Dewey formed a theory of knowledge known as "instrumentalism" in which he assumed ideas appeared to exist as tools/instruments to solve problems that occurred in the setting. Dewey believed that an individual learns better through experience. He suggested that such could fabricate knowledge, and thus, it was desirable to confront and to experiment with it. Dewey emphasised that education must be inquiry-based. Dewey (2011) excludes much of the dominant philosophical ideas of the time, which was "behaviourism" as too naïve and insufficient to clarify the multifaceted learning processes. He argued that children should take part in the process of their learning instead of being an inactive receiver of information as was presented by many educationalists of the time (Dewey, 2011). Dewey's social constructivism views of learning in which he emphasises the active role of the learner was well before the constructivist theory of Piaget and Vygotsky (Brooks & Brooks, 1999). Dewey (2011) argues that children are energetic, biological persons, causing both independence and accountability. He conceded that thoughts are associated with social environments and that philosophy has a concern for society. The philosophical education of Dewey aided the open-minded education drive and engendered the progress of experiential education programmes. His approach to learning in a social context became reflected in radical ideas at the end of the 20th century. Smith (1997) finds Dewey to be the most powerful theorist on education in that century and summarises Dewey's beliefs and concepts:

*"Dewey: interaction + reflection and experience + interest in community and demography = a suggestive educative form–Informal education,"* (Smith, 1997).

Another ground-breaking idea for the period was Dewey's argument that schools should grant children a choice that empowered them to associate a present matter with earlier experiences and knowledge. This idea could make education most effective. Dewey confronted "experiential learning" when he suggested that learners take part in their surroundings. Knowledge arises from an active adaptation of the human organism to its environment. Dewey (2011) believed that every adaptive behaviour of a human provides him with some information and that is known as knowledge. The multiple effects of this approach led to many other methods, problem-based learning, and inquiry-based learning.

I grounded Dewey's theory of experience in continuity, where the past and future are essential to the present. Dewey advocated that earlier experiences influence the current position and the experience of the present instant will impact the experience of the future. Dewey further placed interaction as a base for his theory. Dewey's work on education is alive, and present-day experience ascends from the interface between experience and the current situation. Dewey proposes a process of focused livelihood, in which students could take part in an authentic world, hands-on workshops where they could show their knowledge through imagination and teamwork. Students should have the liberty to think about their dreams and thoughts. Dewey advocated that education be implemented in authentic experience.

Dewey (2011) refers to a more well-adjusted method of education in which educationalists, students, and the programme were pre-arranged with the same rank in the learning formula. He believed educators should assume the role of a facilitator and guide, allowing students the choices to learn for themselves and to progress as dynamic and self-regulating learners. In my study, the employers, academics, and graduates represented the three key persons. The professional supervisors instructed, guided and assessed the interns who worked either alone on a project or as a member of a team. The academics organised, coordinated and helped graduates. There is a consensus among researchers who find that Dewey's experiential theory promotes youth and adult education (Kolb, 1984; Beard & Wilson, 2013; Jonker & Liu, 2013). Several essential ideas come into view as a key to Dewey's school of thought on experiential theory. ELT includes the social environment, knowledge, content organisation, the role of the educator, learners' readiness, experience, learning results and feedback (Roberts, 2003). The teacher

organises the knowledge into logical parts in which he or she combines the students' experience with the learning that fosters on student readiness. Dewey (1938) views the effects of this experience on learning which leads to the students' knowledge and readiness in which the teacher gives feedback to the learner, thus allowing learning to restart.

In the experiential learning theory, Dewey suggests that human experience is social and calls for close interaction and of carrying information. He further argues that "the principle that development of experience comes along through interaction means that education is a social process" (Dewey, 1938: 58). The more significant interaction between mature (experienced supervisor) and socialising simplifies immature people (young intern) (Dewey, 1938). For example, during internships, the social relations among supervisors, interns, and other employers help the intern to learn. Dewey advocated that earlier experiences impact on the current situation and the experience of the present-day moment will influence the experience of the future (Dewey, 2011). Dewey's theory of experience was grounded in continuity in which the past and future matter to the present. More so, Dewey's experiential learning theory stresses the quality of being valuable and worthy of knowledge. The philosopher believed that experiential learning allows for settling the chances of the present and what students develop and learn from their experiences.

Dewey's experiential learning philosophy of education highlights the role of the educator in organizing educational experiences. To fulfil this role, teachers must grasp the nature of the knowledge of different learners to discover the environment that will make their experiences meaningful to them. In my study, supervisors have to know the abilities and previous skills mastered by their learners. Planning for experiential learning is essential, although more difficult than for conventional education. Here, one role of the teacher is to decide on a suitable number of student-led activities in which students take part in real-life experiences. Dewey (1938) believes that learning has to match with the instinctive mental and physical development of the individual.

Experiential learning is hand-on learning; it makes up why, how, and when the subject applies such to his or her life. Dewey's (1938)'s brilliant ideas include, for example, democracy and education, experience, reflection, learning, but he was not promoting experiential learning as opposed to other kinds of learning, e.g., classroom learning. His ideas were much broader than that and education was in genuine experience. However, he expresses, "we do not learn from

experience…. we learn from reflecting on experience" (Dewey, 1933). Experiential learning and reflection are interconnected, and experience has to be reflected upon. Creating, a problematic experience during a project will produce the strongest possibility of its reflection. Dewey (1933) is a pioneer who wrote on reflective practice as a careful, systematic search of experience, collective action, and reflection. He finds that the key to the growth of thoughtful theory is that when integrating theory and practice, the recurring in cycles of experience and the imagined practical application of examples are studied from experience. Previous studies have reported that reflection is an essential human activity, as people recollect their practice anew, reflect on it, think on a subject or question over a period, and assess it (Dewey, 1910; Boud, Keogh & Walker, 1985; The Association for Experiential Education, 2016). Researchers suggest learning with experience.

The event under study encourages scholars to interact and to carry out reflection, which allows them to understand and internalise the experience (Dewey, 2011). Reflection is understanding a relationship when a student moves from experience to experience marked by depth of thinking and associations to other experiences and thoughts. Education helps the learner to think through the usual reflection. Education results from experiences that are made meaningful by drawing on existing knowledge and reflection (Dewey, 1997/2011). Dewey (2011) encourages the active learner to ponder on how their feelings decide their ideas where the learners can influence their future common action decision and development once, they reflect on their previous experience.

#### 3.5.2.2 Lewin (1951)

The work of Lewin (1935) on group dynamics and the process of action research have influenced experiential learning theory. Lewin's work results from T-groups and laboratory training. A study has reported and affirmed the T-group as one of the most potent educational creations of this century (Kolb, 1984). Lewin argues that "there is nothing so practical as an excellent theory" and this statement is his dedication to integrating scientific research and social problem-solving (Kolb, 1984: 9). The researchers talk about maximising learning when thinking is coherent. The mutual expression of views of logical arguments (dialectic) attains experiential learning. There is also a balance in the interplay of opposing tendencies (tenseness) between the immediate, concrete experience and analytical disengagement (Lewin, 1935; Kolb, 1984). Lewin (1935) likens this struggle to changes in organisations and improvements. Subjective experience is a vital aspect of experiential learning. Kolb (1984: 10) argues that "the T-groups and the so-called laboratory method give a central focus to the value of subjective personal experience in learning.

So, it stands in sharp contrast to the "empty-organism" behaviourist theories of learning and the classical physical-science definitions of knowledge gain as an impersonal, logical based on detached, aims, and observation." The work of Lewin (1935) shows that action research and laboratory training combine in a final assessment or suggestions to improve performance. He adopts his theory from the electrical engineering principles to depict social learning and problem-solving. The laboratory training method has to base the mutual transaction between an individual and the learning environment (Lewin, 1951). So many times, people think learning occurs in the person. However, learning takes place in society and in an environment that builds learning. Kolb (1984) believes in the cognitive process of gaining skill or knowledge in T-groups. This is to answer to reacting to a defined setting and from a dynamic created by the interns. Bradford (1964:192) reports this learning as "the essence of this learning experience representing a transactional process in which the members negotiate as each tries to influence or control the stream of events and to satisfy his/her personal needs. The individuals learn how they expose their needs, values, and behaviour patterns so they can exchange their views and reactions."

Lewin develops his cycle of activity which allows for an uninterrupted course of action intended towards a goal and assessing the effects of that activity (Kolb, 1984). The experiential learning model of Lewin comprises concrete experience. Four stages are equidistant in a circle, and an arrow links each step that follows with testing and leading back to experience. The model affirms the continuous nature of experiential learning. The model of experiential learning devised by Lewin is the forerunner of the Kolb cycle. In recent research, Kolb and Kolb (2005a) centre on the features of learning spaces that maximise learning and development. They express rationales for making them. A learner takes part in the learning cycle and involves the four ways of the cycle—feeling, reflection, thinking, and action. The learner is in charge of his or her education and allows time for the repetitive and persistent practice that grows ability.

In understanding the developmental model of experiential learning theory, Lewin (1951) makes intelligible the differentiation of learning styles. He qualifies learning style as the early period in an individual's life after his or her physical growth has ended. However, the form alters in mid-career when people re-test their career direction in mid-life. Specialisation comes before integrating into adult growth (Kolb, 1984).

### 3.5.2.3 Kolb (1984)

Kolb provided a useful definition of experiential learning: ELT is "the process whereby knowledge is created through a transforming experience" (Kolb, 1984: 38; Kolb, 2015: 49). The experiential way of learning involves applying the knowledge from the instructor to the practices of the novice, excluding activity formed only in the classroom. Six propositions set up the experiential learning theory: "(1) learning as a technique, not on results; (2) all learning is re-learning; (3) learning needs resolving conflicts between opposed ways of adaptation to the world; (4) learning is a holistic process of adaptation; (5) learning results from a transaction between the person and the environment, and (6) learning is creating knowledge" (Kolb & Kolb, 2008: 4, 5). The Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) of Kolb (1981; 1984) suggests a way of affording children' experience in which they earn skills, knowledge, attitudes, and experience. The traditional classroom setting does not teach these experiences to children. Experiential learning theory may include internships, field exploration, field trips, studies overseas, and service-learning projects. Dewey (1938), Lewin (1951) and Piaget (1971) started ELT and Kolb (1984) builds his model of ELT on this original, presenting a view of the relationship between parts and all the cognitive movement of gaining skill or knowledge, for adult learning. Also, the theory emphasises valuable experience in the particular learning style of action that reaches a result.

Similar to Lewin's ELT, Kolb's model comprises four dimensions: (1) the feeling dimension (Concrete experience); (2) the reflecting or watching aspect (reflective observation) (Kolb, 1984); (3) the thinking dimension (abstract conceptualisation), and, (4) the doing dimension (active experimentation) (McLeod, 2017). Section 3.1.4.2. describes the model in Lewin's Experiential Learning Theory above. Figure 3.4 shows Kolb's Model of Experiential Learning Theory.

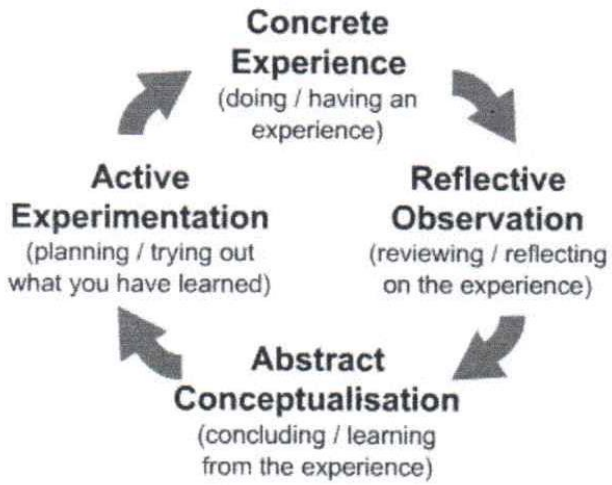


Figure 3.4. Kolb's Model of Experiential Learning Theory (*Adapted from Kolb, 1984: 38*)

Kolb (2015) defines the learning process as the four stages in which each stage is the base for the next learning stage. Many studies show that learners may move in at any phase in the circle. However, they need to undertake all the steps for learning to become the most efficient (Kolb, Boyatzis, & Mainemelis, 2001; Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn, 2010). The learner grasp, or take in, additional information, showing how he or she then changes that data into their views on a theme of the learning process in real-time. I see examples of concrete experience when an intern uses his or her feelings to absorb much stimulating information or many events in the environment (workplace). An intern can work in a team, communicating with other workers, interacting with colleagues, having any other learning experiences. Researcher through observation, treats these experiences by answering the question "What happened?". The learner's reflection helps him or her to comprehend the experience. Following on the experience and reflection; the abstract conceptualisation develops theories. The learner performs activities leading to these findings as he or she experiences this recent knowledge. The learning cycle starts and ends at any position and goes on many times as the intern learns and develops. The best learning occurs when educational approaches discuss each stage of this learning cycle (Kolb, 1984).

An individual develops strength in some more than in other ways and learns better under four learning styles (Kolb, 1984; Kolb & Kolb, 2005). These four learning styles are:

(1). assimilator (values logical truth more than practical applications);
(2). converter (prefers applications of ideas and theories);
(3). accommodator (prefers practical experiences), and
(4). diverter (prefers learning through viewing and collecting information).

The learning styles are unique for different people as several elements shape a person's favoured method (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). A person's growth proceeds through the three stages: acquisition, specialisation, and integration. The "acquisition" level is from birth to adolescence where the inexperienced person learns to do, forming the cognitive structures (Passarelli & Kolb, 2011). The specialisation stage comprises education in a school environment and past work experiences, during which social, educational, and organisational socialisation shape a person's specific learning style. The integration stage, which starts in the mid-career, although is to come later in life, sees the person adopt learning styles different from those previous dominant styles (Passarelli & Kolb, 2011).

Forrest (2004) believes that producing reflection tests these models of experiential learning and ignores the non-experiential ways of learning. Kolb's (1984)'s learning cycle gives inadequate care to goals, purposes, plans, choice, and decision-making, also which make up a unit of learning (Harrison, 2002). For example, Rogers (1996: 108) explains that "learning includes goals, purposes, aims, choice, and decision-making, and not allowed where these elements fit into the learning cycle." Rogers (1996) further proposes at least three forms of learning and argues that specific learning modes for each exist. Therefore, diverse forms of this model have determined, innovative pedagogical patterns in the workplace's development of gaining skill or knowledge and in higher education. The active participation of the learner with experience allows the learner in an approach to solving real-life problems that involve acting and reflecting upon the results. These patterns often report as "action learning or action research" (Ariizumi, 2005; Dilworth & Willis, 2003). The contributions of Kolb (1984) have moved the education model from the teachers' centred to the student-centred' by explaining his model of experience in a technological form. Many researchers in the field have commented that experience has once more become a matter of debate (Cross, 1981; Knowles, 1990; Brookfield, 1990; McKeachie, 1994). Higher education applies Kolb's theory to a greater degree in higher education and other developments in higher intellectual achievements (Cantor, 1997; Lempert, 1996; Kolb & Kolb, 2005; Kuh, 2008).

#### 3.5.2.4 Joplin (1981)

Joplin (1981) stated that all learning is experiential. By reviewing a series of self-defined experiential learning programmes, he developed a five-stage model. Because of the spiral nature of the model, Joplin proposed that experiential learning is cyclical: upon completion of one cycle, another cycle begins. Thus, the experiential learning process is continuous and lifelong. The researcher developed this model to assist teachers in developing their courses by underlining the experiential component of learning. The researcher designed it according to the premise that all learning is experiential and each component of the model must be incorporated into the learning process of all students. Applying Joplin's experiential theory, this study addresses the delivery of the employability programme by supervisors (employers) during an internship. The model comprises a five-stage, hurricane-like cycle in which completion of the last stage connects to the first stage of the next cycle. The five stages of this model include focus, action, support, feedback, and debriefing.

The first stage of the model - focus-, presents the material to be learned and the challenge that will be encountered. The focus can be direct or indirect; for example, the teacher gives a brief presentation or gives the students an instruction list to read to prepare them for the next activity. For indirect focus, the teacher may allow the students to see the equipment that they will use for the activity.

I portray the second stage of the model as a hurricane to characterise challenge and struggle. During this stage, I place the student in a stressful situation in which they have a great responsibility, but also the freedom to fail. The student cannot avoid the problem at hand and can either become familiar or unfamiliar with the skills or knowledge needed to solve the problem. For example, I could give the students a task involving safety aspects in which the situation requires individual responsibility and action.

The third stage involves supporting the students to stimulate their challenging experiences. This allows them to appreciate that they are safe, knowing that help is available if they need it. They can provide support through written, verbal, or physical means.

The fourth stage of the model is feedback which, provides the student with information about their activities. It is more likely to be accepted if the student and teacher share an equal amount of power in the learning process. Also, if the feedback is specific, then the student has an increased chance of understanding the importance of such experience.

The last stage of the model involves debriefing the student according to their specific actions. During this stage, the learning objective is recognised, expressed, and assessed. The teacher ensures that the experience does not go unrealised by the student projects, group discussions, writing essays, or by what doing a presentation can accomplish. It is during this stage that learner's sort and order their observations from the experience and relate those observations to what they already know.

Joplin's experiential learning model sets out to provide an appropriate theoretical framework for the current study. Thus, the model shows the processes involved in an individual (graduate) developing employability skills through training or gaining skills per on-the-job training (internship). The challenge for graduates is to understand directives, perform the job professionally and responsibly while observing all the safety precautions.

### 3.5.2.5 Lave and Wenger (1990)

Lave and Wenger (1990) first used the term "community of practice" to report learning through a practice session and sharing in the activities of a group (participation). Later, they changed the term "community of practice" to that of "situated learning" in which students, as entrants, become a member of a community at the beginning by taking part in low-risk and straightforward jobs (Lave & Wenger, 1990). The researcher frames the Situated Learning Theory on how individuals develop professional skills, increase in scope research on an internship, and how novices turn into experienced people in a social group. This theory helps an individual to become a veteran of a community of practice or a planned undertaking performed by a collaboration (Lave & Wenger, 1991). The tasks are productive and are essential in promoting the objectives of that society. As a result, beginners become acquainted with roles, the system of techniques, and organising rules of the community. They turn into experienced professionals, and their engagement becomes essential for working with the society of learners (Lave & Wenger, 1990).

Wenger (1998) uses dualities, the production, and preservation of a community of practice. Each duality is "a unit formed by two inseparable and constitutive elements whose inherent tensions and complementarity give richness and dynamism" (Wenger, 1998: 66). Many researchers equate the two opposed parts to that of the "yin" and the "yang," that is, two deciding opponents (Wenger, 1998; Hildreth & Kimble, 2002; Barab, Makinster & Scheckler, 2003; Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002). The stresses in dualities can be both creative and restrictive. The four communities of practice are (1) "participation–reification," (2) "designed–emergent," (3) "identification–negotiability" and (4) "local-global" (Polin, 2008: 282).

Situated learning theory has shown that knowledge is presented in the original circumstance that involves its application. Lave presents reasons and arguments I situate in an operation that affects mental contents of developing a skill or experience. Most classroom learning actions that need dealing with a subject without practical know-how are not on situated learning theory. For example, as it took place, learning implanted among any specific behaviour, background, and culture is regarded as an intent. Lave and Wenger assign a name to this, a unique mode of action aimed to solve "legitimate participation". This refers to how learners engage in actions of socio-cultural practice. They develop the practical skills in this exercise that engages students and offers them the means to belong to a community of practice. Legitimate peripheral participation refers to the social organisation of and power to direct the source of wealth (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Again, it takes time and experience for a person to access resources.

Another point to consider is that the word "peripheral" recognises "between newcomers and experienced people who cover multiple, changed, enlisted and comprehensive means of being in the fields of participation determined by a community" (Driscoll, 2000: 72). For instance, Brown, Collins, and Dugid (1989) confirm their suggestions on situated learning and cognitive apprenticeship. They found that there is a not match between conventional learning situations and real-world situations. In particular, social interaction, and the act of working in collaboration are necessary constituents of situated learning. Therefore, when students are connected by participation in a "community of practice" this allows in bodily form specific feelings and behaviours to develop. As the learner goes from the boundary of a community to its centre, he or she is disposed to act. However, he or she causes change, following the culture and accepting the work of an expert.

In the workplace, learners aim to gain professional knowledge, skills, attitudes, and competencies. They continue their internship as the people who compose a social group, a community of practice. Lave's situated learning (1988) discourses on the state of difficulty that is needed to resolve knowledge transfer. The author suggests that learning in nature and environment takes place as a part of the cultural activity in which it exists. Lave (1988) experiences knowledge every day in different circumstances and expects to improve performance. As a result, he accepts that ability is a determined understanding and approval and that social conditions can both limit and hold back, or help to understand. Lave (1988) further mentions that research ought to analyse experience as generalising of skills that involve education and create the role of culture in growing abilities. The individual plans acceptable opportunistic solutions in a normal place to difficulties; individuals do not apply general thoughts or actions proposed to take effect on a problem in their daily thinking. The willingness to share with others in the actions of a group leads to an adaptive "survival" skill, and successful learning (Lave, 1988). Therefore, this belief proposes that learning occurs through social connections, within a cultural, environmental condition, and by associating prior understanding to new contexts. The situated model of education is a unit of the theory of communities of practice which purports that the cognitive action of gaining skill or knowledge should not be considered a mere transmission of know-how but viewed as an implanted and effective procedure (Lave & Wenger, 1991). The authors suggest that circumstances cause this learning within the specific social and physical natural world.

My research is to develop specific words that enable me to tell a story. What can I learn from graduates, employers, and academics that will give me a theory of learning? One thing that this theory offers in my study is the confirmation of the importance of a careful choice of places for an internship; I seek not any experience. If learning is a claim to competence, then there is always an issue of power. Always ask in any community – which voices are being silenced by the relationship of power, for example, power is something that someone with 30 years of experience has. Do my voice and those of the workplace supervisors silence the interns? These silent voices may be those that may have helped me to learn.

### 3.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I introduced the theoretical foundations of this study and the conceptual framework and tools that rest on and build on these foundations. The study has a critical realist ontology and draws on multi-theories of learning as a conceptual framework. The chapter outlined the relevant foundation of this framework drawing on pertinent parts of the human capital theory, Bourdieu's work on forms of capital, doxa, habitus, capitals, and field; the works of constructivism (Piaget & Vygotsky) and experiential learning (Dewey, Lewin, Kolb, Joplin, & Lave and Wenger) theorists.

This chapter has highlighted only the foundations, and the tools that have been needed and used. The next chapter takes us further into the search by explaining how these conceptual tools were translated into organising and analytical tools that guided the gathering, organisation, coding, and analysis of the data of the current research.

# CHAPTER FOUR

# RESEARCH METHOD, METHODS, AND DESIGN

## 4.0 Introduction

In Chapter Three, I explained and discussed the theoretical framework in which I grounded my study. I emphasised the striking features of the literature on the experiences of graduates, academics, and employers who developed an internship. My study aims to explore internship and employability. I also checked the philosophy which corroborates with this study to estimate the methods and design adopted. This section outlines the method for data collection methods and data analysis in this research. I applied the data collection methods to participants' face-to-face interviews guided by a semi-structured interview schedule and interview questions, observing the body language of participants. I further advocated and discussed all the data collection methods used in this research. As opposed to other chapters, this chapter delineates the study design, research sample, and the data-collection instrument. It also negotiates the data-analysis methods, ethical considerations, the researcher's role, and the limits of the study. To make sure of the trustworthiness of the research, I presented and discussed suitable standards which admit participants' check for systematic qualitative research.

My study planned a qualitative research approach and a phenomenological design with an interpretive paradigm. I tried the qualitative methods towards a predetermined goal to cognise the nature or meaning of the experience and stances of employers, graduates, and academics on internship. In this correct approach of designing the research approach, I proposed to answer queries about "what," "how" or "why" of the phenomena of internship and employability rather than "how many" or "how much," which would have been answered by quantitative methods. Domegan and Flaming (2007) believe that when explored by using qualitative data, human learning is more favourable. Also, Guba (1981: 76) recommends that "proper to select that paradigm whose assumptions are best met by the phenomenon being investigated." My research dealt with the learning experiences of internships by graduates, employers, and academics and the practical use of transfer of learning in the workplace. I noticed that qualitative researchers were most of the time referred to as being shown problems with the processes rather than the results or outcomes. I assumed that a situation is recognised by the role of the participants in their interaction and opinion in the event. In describing the processes that characterised the problem, I found qualitative methods to be more relevant than quantitative models. Qualitative methods yielded the insight I expected to explain the participants' role and their views to gain knowledge or skill. For this study, I adopted the qualitative method as correct as the focus was

to realise how a group of individuals or persons within it look at an unusual issue of internship (Bricki & Green, 2007). I discovered that the qualitative methodology matches the interpretivism paradigm (Torrance, 2005) and I applied this approach while exploring the internship and employability of graduates. My role as a qualitative researcher was to investigate these aspects (Somekh & Lewin, 2005). Phenomenology as a research purpose is growing in quality and involves inquiring into the life experiences of individuals and groups. It can allow for a process to explain a profound understanding of this build-up of knowledge or skill from the view of the single participant or the group around a peculiar phenomenon. I struggled to understand the relationship between internship and employability through the behaviour of these graduates, employers, and academics who had taken part in an internship.

Christensen, Johnson, and Turner, (2010) believe that a phenomenologist's comprehensive view of the world and human life is that all knowledge is attained by recognising and building their based design in a unique time. Also, Schwandt (1994) identifies that interpretive research can be referred to as conscious thinking and that it seeks to identify subjects' clarity of outline of a position. I concurred with interpretivists who believed that appreciation and thinking were acts of interpreting matters regarded as subjective. Interpretive researchers, therefore, suggested meaning-oriented methods rather than quantitative ones. I considered there was an urgent desire to undertake more qualitative research that dug for a deeper understanding of the internship. This study established a filling in of this gap as it portrayed, explored and interpreted the stakeholders' beliefs and their build-up of knowledge or skill in an individual's terms rather than through quantification and measurement.

### 4.1 Research Design

For this study, I designed the research based on exploring six graduates, six employers, and six academics' perspectives, and their experiences of internships and their expectations of employability. I grounded my study on ontology and epistemology. Ontology refers to what sort of things exist in the social world and assumptions about the form and nature of that social reality (Creswell, 2003). It is concerned with whether social reality exists independently of human understanding and interpretation. Epistemology is concerned with knowledge and ways of knowing and learning about social reality (Guba & Lincoln, 1998). Two main perspectives for knowing are positivism and interpretivism. Constructivism and 'naturalistic' are terms referred to in the literature and sometimes inconsistently for interpretivism (Guba & Lincoln 1994). The term constructivism is helpful because it identifies the basic principle that reality is socially

constructed; a relativist position that holds the view that there is no external reality independent of human consciousness (Crotty, 1998). The researcher considered "the study of being" (Crotty, 1998:10) or "the nature of reality" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:37) as vital elements for the data collection of information from graduates, employers, and academics. I gave particular emphasis to each stakeholder's individual experiences of transition. I explored the likenesses and differences such as the resources on which the graduates, employers, and academics drew to accomplish their goals and tasks in their participation as unique identities and capacities in internships. I analysed the perspectives and views of the three groups of participants who would give an insight into my understanding of the relationship between internship and employability. To achieve my aim, I conceptualised, a descriptive and interpretive case-study research design using internship workplaces as research sites, employers as providers of placement for graduates, and academics acting as coordinators for internships.

My first challenge was to identify the internship workplace settings, which met various criteria, such as companies that were undergoing a tradition of providing structured internships. I also searched for a knowledge-intensive enterprise that would use graduate-level knowledge and skills. I favoured companies that accepted the practice of hiring graduates from many fields of competences, and organisations that gave opportunities to adhere to the process which shaped a person's internship experiences. I selected three sectors of activities: The Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector, the financial sector, and the accommodation and hotel sectors. I chose companies in these sectors of activities because they turned out to be the most structured and flourishing organisation at present in Mauritius. First, these enterprises had had a continuous expansion over the last decade and continued to select graduates for internships. I have consulted these three unique businesses from the viewpoint of employers and recent graduates. Therefore, there was an opportunity to explore an unexamined phenomenon such as an internship. Second, the ICT, finance, and hotel industries enrolled many university graduates, and these organisations attracted graduates from a range of qualifications and degree sectors, thus providing a blend of student knowledge backgrounds.

My next challenges in this study were negotiating access to (1) the graduates who had progressed through internships, (2) the employers who had experienced and recruited graduates for internships, and (3) academics who had organised internships. I built relationships with participants and with other people referred to "gatekeepers" who could make easy or intervene within my study. This was an essential part of my methods, and how I started and negotiated

these states of connectedness was a fundamental design decision. Bogdan and Biklen (2006) conceptualise these relationships as "gaining accesses" to the setting or as "negotiating entry." Being a coordinator placing graduates in companies for internships, I carried out negotiation and re-consultation with stakeholders who took part in this study. I drew on my fixed contacts with employers to gain formal permission from companies, negotiating access. However, I needed relationships that obliged me to arrive at the information that could answer my research questions. In this qualitative study, I was the pawn of the research, and the research relationships were how I worked out the research. These relationships affected both the participants and myself on other components of the research design. In these relationships, I could facilitate the elements of the study design, such as selecting participants and collecting data. I gave opportunities to stakeholders to designate the places and time I would interview them, for instance, at their workplace or at any other places they would feel more comfortable. What was essential in interviewing for me, was to secure a working research partnership in generating useful information on knowledge by these research participants.

In promoting "multiple access points" to the research site, the Director of the Mauritius Employers Federation recommended me to the Internship programme manager of these companies, who became my direct and continued contacts while planning the fieldwork and during the interviews. With the help of programme managers in companies, I was given the lists of ex-graduates who have progressed through internships and also were employed with the company or elsewhere, as competent leaders, for example, managers/mentors, and academics who were coordinating internships. Companies equipped me with facilities to interview the academies. Gatekeepers also informed the managers of those graduates of my presence throughout the internship period, and that graduates would require to attend occasional contacts with me. From the list of ex-graduate interns, I selected those who had completed their internships and had come from unique backgrounds. The companies encouraged the graduates who had been accepted to volunteer for this research. They received an e-mail request from me to take part in this study, and I explained the research, outlining what they could expect for their participation. I informed them that staff and managers of companies knew of and supported this research, and I guaranteed participant anonymity and confidentiality. All graduates who were invited to take part in the research responded and agreed to be part of the study. From the overall number of graduates available in each of the three fields, I selected a balance of gender among the graduates wherever workable.

Another challenge was collecting data from stakeholders; I knew that they should answer the research questions: and the data analysis had to be in line with the ontological stance of the study. Therefore, in the researching design stages, I made critical choices to collect data. Pascarella (2006) shows that quantitative methods explained the existing relationship between people while, on the contrary, qualitative research methods were indispensable for my study as it made coherent the "why" of a relationship between people. I learned that the qualitative method was, among others, for selecting the remarkable opinions or attitudes of employers, academics, and graduates' experiences while learning. For this study, this concerned qualitative studies in stories with details, for example, the participants who would spell out their rich stories about the theme of the research. Salehi and Golafshani supported a comparable study adopting a qualitative method (2010). Creswell (2007) noticed that someone accepts qualitative methods when issues are difficult to analyse or to understand. I, therefore, selected the qualitative methodology that could produce, develop, and even describe the experiences of individuals. The concept is supported by Hendricks (2009) who gives details of what the study population experiences and gives them manners of seeing. Analysing internships was paramount in understanding the details of all participants' experiences.

### 4.2 The Interpretive Paradigm

The interpretive paradigm, according to Maree and Pietersen (2007), involves researchers to interpret elements of the study, thus integrates human interest into a study. Thus, "interpretive researchers assume that access to reality (given or socially constructed) is only through social constructions such as language, consciousness, shared meanings, and instruments" (Walsham, 2006). The idea behind interpretivism is to analyse data so the subjects' worldview, feelings, and experiences remain unchanged. The use of graduates, employers, and academics, rather than some sort of objective measurement, to organize research data is another major difference between qualitative and quantitative methods. According to the work of Cohen et al., (2007) about "understanding," the root of the interpretive paradigm, this is a research paradigm concerned with understanding the world as it is from subjective experiences of individuals. I envisioned that "understanding" was referring to perspectives and a state of producing something by individuals as they experienced and acted in everyday life, for example, the graduates, the employers, and academics during internships. The interpretive model in this research study was the capability for rational thought, the assumption of the uniqueness of each stakeholder in his/her capability. I considered the perspectives of participants in the study as examples. My principal aim in using the interpretive method in this research was to understand the complexities

of human nature better. I applied the interpretive model because I looked at many reasons from my viewpoints. My belief of interpretive was that access, whether proved about society, was composed through the grammatical construction of language, awareness, and values experienced in common. More so, the interpretive model existed in realising the world as taking place within the mind and the experiences adjusted by individuals' bias. I found out that observation and interpretation underpin interpretive paradigm, and therefore to discover is to assemble data about situations, as to perceive was to arrive at the understanding of that data by presenting a sound judgment by circumstantial evidence and prior conclusions. I believed it would be rather than by considering the identical or consistent elements between the data and the methods which did not represent external reality. I tried to look at the phenomenon through the interpretations that graduates, employers, and academics attached to them. During my research study, I was a participant-observer in the interpretive approach. I expected to know the nature or meaning of phenomena through the significations the interviewees assigned to participants. They involved me and recognised the significances of actions as they appeared within different social contexts.

I observed that findings emerged through critical dialogues in which they debated conflicting interpretations between academics, graduates, employers. It was through this dialectical method they could produce much knowledge and a sophisticated understanding of the social world. For instance, because human perspectives and experiences were taking place within the mind and changed by individual bias, social reality might vary and could have over one view. I imagined the participants' worlds as a particular built society where these realities were multiple, unique to participants, shaped differently. Therefore, they took on different meanings for participants in the study. Wenger (1998) associates this opinion as for the notion of "negotiation of meaning," with understanding and meanings assigned to one another 's experiences. It thus implied that each one's perspectives or realities were expected to be different for stakeholders. Besides, to understand the nature or meaning of these multiple worlds, there was a need for reflection on the reasons determined by or in context with that comprised by the respondents of the research. Wenger (1998) cautions against learning as "doing" and recommends our understanding and the environments in which they took place. Therefore, communities of practice, like other social learning, allowed individuals within different communities and with their surrounding environments to shape the meanings, experiences, identities and learning that took place because of these interactions. To better understand the participants' interpretations, I needed to think about the purposes and significance of the information they gave in our interviews. The keywords of this methodology were collaboration, participation, and engagement.

I placed my research within the interpretivism and constructivist paradigm. Something related constructivism to interpretivism which often handled with critical features of shared meaning and the capacity for rational thought, inference or discrimination. In social constructivism, human interests are important for research and it constructs knowledge through social interaction. Such knowledge is shared rather than an individual experience. According to constructivists, reality is a subjective creation. For my study, participants modelled their know-how within the social-cultural circumstance shaped by their anterior cognition and intellect, and therefore, I positioned myself in the arguments of a constructivist relating to an epistemology discussion. The significance was, concerning society, built on the quality of the world, it carried out the learning environs in such a way there was a close relationship between myself and what was being explored. For example, participants in the research could report or suggest their unique individual experiences in internships. As a result, the planned research environment had allowed me to look at, explore, and understand the participants' experiences in an internship.

Authors of interpretive investigators believed that they understood the meaning of a phenomenon of the society from the experiences about the subjects as opposed to objects significances that individuals assigned to it (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Neuman (2011) maintains that researchers also work with qualitative data, which provided rich descriptions that expressed objects in conversations of social ideas. I adopted an approach of phenomenology which centred on telling the features of an identified element as they were, for example, the lived experiences of graduates, employers, and academics about internship and employability. The interpretive pattern allowed several methods that could be exploited, including phenomenology, ethnography, case studies, and life stories. I opened a phenomenological approach to my study. As this possesses a plan or aims to dig into the knowledge attained by observing the participants in their everyday practices. Some authors viewed phenomenology as the deliberate, systematic search of a human being's experience with a particular event (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997; de Vos et al., 2005). The qualitative phenomenological research was to report "lived experiences" for many people about the theory or the phenomenon. I gathered "thick" information and views from research participants through qualitative research methods, for example, interviews and observation.

I read interviews and observation of participants as the critical methods for data collection within phenomenology. I, therefore, adopted a phenomenological research approach to study graduates, employers, and academics who had experienced internships.

### 4.3 Participants in the Study

In Section 4.1 research design, I presented information about the participants in this study, while, in this section, I would give more details on these stakeholders who had progressed through unique developed experiences in internships.

According to Brink (1996), a research population is an extensive collection of peoples or objects engaged as the central point for a scientific inquiry, and we conduct researches for promoting the well-being of the population. However, it was costly and time-consuming to investigate large sizes of peoples. While Burns and Grove (1993), revealed that a community represented some targeted number of individuals whom the researcher had access to. The chosen population had to be "accessible" to the researcher. I explained sampling as the act of selecting a set whose representatives are representatives of another group of people who showed features of the entire population (Dempsey & Dempsey, 1992). I contended that there were more individuals from the population when the sample was more meaningful, even still there was no simple formula showing how broad a sample should be in a proved study (Polit & Hungler, 1995). For my study, I selected people with purposeful samples who complied with the demand of the study. I negotiated with graduates who have had an experience and had engaged in internships before participating. The other participants, employers, and academics in my study had taken part in internships and employability experiences which enhanced their contribution of knowledge to this research. More so, their know-how added specific information and meanings to make more robust the potential findings.

While with quantitative research, I perceived random sampling to be a formal trend in qualitative research, purposeful sampling was being looked upon as an opportunity for my study. In this sampling, I selected people, or that could best have supported one knew and comprehended the nature or meaning of the critical project (Creswell, 2002): I, therefore, set up the identity of participants by purposeful sampling. Participants were graduates who had gone through internship programmes and were in employment and academics and employers who have had recruited graduates for internship and employment. On personal talks and with a formal request, the Mauritius Employers' Federation provided a list of employers who had joined and recruited graduates with internships' experiences. The selected graduates and employers for this study were on that list.

According to Polkinghome (1989), there shall be a sampling of 5 to 25 participants to work out the opportunities for experiences, Creswell (2007) believes that they needed 10 participants for collecting information in a phenomenological study. Taking these propositions as a basis, I selected 18 participants to set up a sample in this study.

Given the variability of an internship programme across its selected professional, six graduates who had completed an internship programme. Selected graduates were:

- two graduates from Accommodation (Hotel and Tourism) (one male and one female);
- two graduates from the Finance (one male and one female), and
- two graduates from the ICT (Information and Communications Technology) (one male and one female).

For the academics, the university chose two people engaged in executing at least three internship projects or the group owning the most experience in similar projects. Given their capability and skilfulness because of specialised knowledge, six academics who delivered internship-related academic courses to undergraduate I selected university students who had undergone at least one an internship programme:

- two academics in the Accommodation (Hotel and Tourism) Department (one male and one female);
- two academics in the Finance Department (one male and one female), and
- two academics from the ICT (Information and Communications Technology) Department (one male and one female).

The six employers chosen for the study had had experiences in an internship programme and had completed training and developing students and graduates for at least one internship programme. Selected employers in many fields were:

- two employers from the Accommodation (Hotel and Tourism) (one male and one female);
- two employers from the Finance (one male and one female), and
- two employers from the ICT (Information and Communications Technology) (one male and one female).

### 4.3.1 Seeking Permission or Consent

Before conducting the research, I sent out the following correspondence:

- a letter to Graduates to take part in the interview (Appendix 5).

- a letter to Employers to take part in the interview (Appendix 6).
- a letter to Faculty Staff to take part in the interview (Appendix 7).

Bryman (2004) encourages seeking permission from gatekeepers to gain access to the eventual participants. Before I started data collection for this study, I applied for permission from the respective Gatekeepers in the list above to access participants and pertinent documents. A written approval, signed by graduates, employers, and academics was received from each graduate, company, and university involved.

### 4.4 Data Collection Method

I achieved data collection by a request and planning method for collecting and analysing data from various sources to gain a complete and exact image of an area of interest. Besides, other authors considered direct quotations from individuals, more or less of their experiences, attitudes, beliefs, and thoughts (Locke, Silverman & Spirduso, 2010; Collins, Shattell & Thomas, 2005). I applied a formal interview data collection to collect quotes and other qualitative data for my study on the perspectives of graduates, employers, and academics' experiences of internships and employability. I agreed that data collection was a prerequisite part of any research and inaccurate data collection could influence the results of my study, which would conduct no longer valid results. I had already described the rationale for selecting the qualitative approach/method for this study in sub-Section 1.0.

Ritchie and Lewis (2003) affirm that individual interviews are without a doubt the method adopted to a great measure in qualitative research and that interviews make clear the "meaning structure" that interviewees needed to coordinate the experiences gained through an internship (Hatch, 2002:91) My study focused on the results of the interviews and applied interview questions with explorations and guiding questions. In the same vein, I designed both the methodology and pilot-testing before the research. One aspect of deciding and guiding the data collection was how I wrote various facets of internships. This stage involved allowing the participants who were describing their opinions about what was taking place when they experienced internships. I designed three individuals to interview questions for each group of graduates, employers, and academics. Then, I used the interview questions as the data collection instruments for this research. I used documentary evidence and useful findings to substantiate facts or statements as exact as affirmation. For a greater understanding of the internship and employability, I equipped myself well in advance to be present in the area in which the

participants were. I applied this strategy to gain enough time to gather useful information and to understand the subtle difference in meaning, opinion or attitude of what happened. Following this strict planning and preparation, I conducted these field interviews.

### 4.4.1 The Data Collection Instrument

As discussed earlier in this chapter, I utilised interviews in this research as an instrument for data collection because qualitative research includes many advantages. However, some fundamental limits were that interviews were time consuming data-collection instruments (Sarantakos, 2005). As a result, I could interview only a few participants. Maree and Pietersen (2007) regard interviews as conversations with questions. I carried out a semi-structured interview with graduates, academics, and employers to collect the primary data. As suggested by a qualitative researcher I connected by engaging in communication with my participants to understand better the state of their real-world practices. During the interview, the participants were very enthusiastic and were eager to reply to all the questions I asked. They further elaborated on the internship and employability by narrating their personal lived experiences. The semi-structured interview questions helped me to probe further into details regarding their empirical accumulation of knowledge and skills that resulted from their direct participation in internships. Creole, French and English languages were optional languages to be employed during interviews according to the wish of the participants. However, most of the participants expressed themselves in the English language. I found that the interview had unknown or questionable elements that invited participants to elaborate, although it was still limiting and restrictive. The participants were familiar because they had experienced it. They had their opinions and criticisms, and they engaged them to answer the inquiries of the interviews.

I emailed potential graduates, academics, and employers' contributors to take part in the study, which was later supported with a phone call. The interviewees, after having listened to the aim of my study, believed that they knew what I was expecting. To adapt and to satisfy these reasons, I sent an information document two weeks in advance to all participants, supplying the same information that was provided to participants just before their formal interviews. I found it was essential for participants to voice out any expectant feelings or opinions before the data collection. Participants had the freedom and could seek any other information as they needed for the study. Participants enjoyed this time interval to study what I needed from them for their interviews. I also informed them they had the option to drop out of participating even after showing compliance to take part in the study.

During a two-week time, I urged future interviewees to request guidance and to clarify emerging issues that deal with the research. To satisfy or counterbalance the environment, I allowed the participants to select their preference for the place and time of their interview. Among the interpretive method, I conceded that the multiples worlds of work researchers were exploring socially modelled by collecting data, were generally carried on in a logical setting (Newman, 2011). I also looked at searchingly the special time engagement of each participant in these different existing employment Finance, Hotel, and ICT sectors.

I designed the interview questions to clarify the internship and employability of graduates, and the supports and hindrances they identified in their programmes. This study, thus, was expected to fill gaps by improving the participants' points of view on the phenomenon of internships and employability. Copies of the three interview instruments (interview schedule and interview questions for graduates, employers, and academics) are included in Appendices 5, 6, and 7.

The data produced from the question "How do graduates experience internships?" was collected through individual interviews of identified graduates, using semi-structured questions (Appendix 5). The focus was on the graduates' experiences during their internship and work-integrated learning. Graduates answered questions on their achievement with their placement, career development, improved or developed many academic capabilities. They also spoke about the skills they got which involved communication, leadership, job gain, confidence, knowledge of the practice of their subject, and knowledge of the job market. Other graduates' experiences included attitudes, views and expectations, current status, and learning results from their internship.

I gained the data covering the question of the experiences of internships of academics in higher education from interviews (Appendix 7) with selected academics who have organised and take part in an internship programme. The interview showed the university's role in creating comfortable internship experiences and employability skills for graduates. Besides, they set employability skills in the curriculum; it recorded a track record of employment gained by graduates.

I produced the data from the question "What are the employers' experiences of graduate members who have gone through an internship?" When I gathered information from selected employers, using questions (Appendix 6), I was told that they were engaged in internships and

had recruited graduates' employee/s who had gone through an internship. The interview showed the qualities of graduates in the workplace by presenting examples of performances of interns. For instance, graduates learned the eight employability skills, comprising, amongst others, personal skills, management skills, and problem-solving skills. I absorbed at the remarkable experience of both the graduates and employers.

The data generated from the question "How these experiences lead to employability?" were gathered with chosen employers, graduates, and academics, running queries through interviews. The central point of consideration was on the experiences of the participants who took part in internships. Employers recruited graduates' employee/s who had gone through internships coordinated by academics. An analysis of the data gathered could answer the question.

### 4.4.2 Pilot Testing

Before the implementation, I carried out a pilot testing of the interview schedule to fine-tune the data-producing tools in my quest for the right information results, which were more tailored to truth and therefore correct belief. I believed that pilot testing was thus a technique for determining whether my interview questions, chief witness interview motives, had worked through the struggle in the "real world". Pilot testing also allowed me to test the duration of the interview times and to make sure that the interview questions were clear enough for participants. I checked for any data point for this study as described by Schade (2015). More so, the pilot testing helped me to make sure that every individual in my sample would understand the questions in the same way as I understood it. During the pilot testing, I could identify questions that might make my respondents feel anxious as highlighted by Polit and Hungler (1995). I understood that these authors could refer this pilot testing to alleged feasibility studies which were *"small-scale versions, or trial runs, done to prepare for the major study".*

I planned the interview schedule for three groups of interviewees, employers, graduates, and academics for the pilot testing. I chose a group of three graduates from three different sectors: Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Finance, and Accommodation (Hotel and Tourism). The academics and employers' groups were also from the sectors discussed above. All the interviewees selected for the piloting have had experiences of internships. I developed interview questions for each of the three groups, according to their roles in this study. I then, after gaining their approval, planned with them an interview schedule for the pilot testing. I carried the pilot interviews out according to the planned schedule as given in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1. Pilot Interview Schedule

| **Employers** | **Sectors** | **Date** | **Time** | **Venue** | **Duration (mins)** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Employer 1 | ICT Sector | 12.01.15 | 09.00 hrs | Director's Office | 75 |
| Employer 3 | Finance Sector | 18.01.15 | 09.00 hrs | Company's Office | 76 |
| Employer 5 | Accommodation (Hotel) Sector | 19.01.15 | 09.00 hrs | Company's Office | 82 |
| Graduate 1 | ICT Sector | 13.01.15 | 09.00 hrs | Company's Office | 60 |
| Graduate 3 | Finance Sector | 20.01.15 | 09.00 hrs | Company's Office | 74 |
| Graduate 5 | Accommodation (Hotel) Sector | 26.01.15 | 09.00 hrs | Company's Office | 85 |
| Academic 1 | ICT Sector | 16.01.15 | 09.00 hrs | University | 76 |
| Academic 3 | Finance Sector | 23.01.15 | 09.00 hrs | University | 76 |
| Academic 5 | Accommodation (Hotel) Sector | 09.02.15 | 09.00 hrs | University | 77 |

I conducted the pilot interviews with employers, graduates and academics according to the agreed schedule. The interviews lasted from 55 to 85 minutes, depending on the accuracy of the data got. From the outset, I remarked that most participants were at ease and well prepared for their interventions. I observed that all participants were knowledgeable about internship and employability concerning their position as an actor. The ease of answering questions was mixed. Employers and academics appeared to be well-versed in their participation in internships. They even proposed how they could take part more actively in organising internships. Academics highlighted their difficulties in finding the correct placement for all students. Graduates articulated that the proper work environment differs from their university campus. Two questions were not understood by two graduates regarding their contacts with staff from the university and the duration for further research work. I observed that there was a confusion with some questions which I rectified. Graduates could not understand in which direction and what specific data I wished to gather. However, not all the participants were anxious about all the questions. I repeated some questions and sometimes paraphrased them for the graduates.

After the pilot testing, following the judgments made by the three groups of stakeholders, I adjusted/changed the interview questions for the groups. Thus, I created the questions free from embarrassment or doubt for participants. Table 4.2 showed changed/amended items.

Table 4.2. Amended Interview Questions for Groups

| **Groups** | **Items amended/added** |
|---|---|
| Graduate | • contact with university<br>• research collaboration |
| Employers | • involvement in what capacity with the university<br>• preferred duration |
| Academics | • factors for assessing the quality<br>• extending or promoting internship |

### 4.4.3 Interviews

As highlighted in the previous section, the interview questions have been amended and refined in line with feedback got during the pilot testing. The interview questions for the different stakeholders - graduates, employers and academics are given in Appendices 5, 6, and 7. I then carried the interviews with the three groups of stakeholders according to the samples given in Section 4.3. I accomplished the interviews according to the agreed schedule with the participants and as per the venues selected by them. I give the schedules and venues for the interviews in Table 4.3. Interviews were the techniques by which I discovered the worlds of the study of participants (Maree & Pietersen, 2007), finding the most useful instruments for seeking to understand human behaviour. Kvale (1996:105) says in a formal statement that "it suits interviews for studying people's understanding of the meanings in their lived world. It describes their experiences and self-understanding, clarifying and elaborating their perspective on their lived world."

Table 4.3. Scheduled Time-Table for Interviews

| **Sn** | **Participants** | **Date** | **Time** | **Venue** | **Duration of interviews (mins)** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Graduates 1 & 2 – ICT | 12 March 2015 | 10.00 hrs & 14.00 hrs | Office of the company | 45 |
| 2 | Graduates 1 & 2 – Finance | 20 March 2015 | 10.00 hrs & 14.00 hrs | Office of the company | 75 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | Graduates 1 & 2 – Accommodation (Hotel & Tourism) | 10 April 2015 | 10.00 hrs & 14.00 hrs | Office of the Hotel | 75 |
| 4 | Employers 1 & 2 – ICT | 24 April 2015 | 11.00 hrs & 17.00 hrs | Director's Office Cyber City | 75 |
| 5 | Employers 1 & 2 – Finance | 04 May 2015 | 11.00 hrs & 16.00 hrs | HRM Office of the Companies | 75 |
| 6 | Employers 1 & 2 – Accommodation (Hotel & Tourism) | 18 May 2015 | 09.00 hrs & 15.00 hrs | Director's Office | 75 |
| 7 | Academics 1 & 2 – ICT | 12 June 2015 | 10.00 hrs & 14.00 hrs | Dean's Office of the University | 75 |
| 8 | Academics 1 & 2 – Finance | 22 June 2015 | 10.00 hrs & 14.00 hrs | Dean's Office of the University | 75 |
| 9 | Academics 1 & 2 – Accommodation (Hotel & Tourism) | 26 June 2015 | 10.00 hrs & 14.00 hrs | Dean's Office of the University | 75 |

Before starting the interview, I greeted the participants, made them feel at ease and collected the filled in Consent Forms. I then thanked them for having agreed to take part in my study. I reassured participants about anonymity and confidentiality and informed them they could refuse to answer any question or a part of any question set or withdraw from the interview. It was encouraging for me to note that all participants displayed a collegial and warm attitude and were keen to share their experiences on internship and employability for this study.

I also asked participants whether I could audio record the interviews and all the participants responded. I carried out each interview, which was audio-recorded using a digital audio recorder. I used a digital audio recorder because it allowed me to gather the complete verbal part of the interview and the non-verbal reactions of the participants.

During the interview, I showed empathy with the participants as we navigated through the questions and discussions. I called out the questions in such a way that the respondents believed they could communicate and often, I asked the same questions to all the interviewees, but the proper arrangement of the questions, the exact wording, and the follow-up questions might vary from participants to participants in each group of stakeholders.

I asked for extra probing questions for many participants to gather more in-depth information or to clarify their responses. Marshall and Rossman (1989) find that interview allows for clarification and prompt follow-up omissions because of its interactive nature. Although the questions in the interview schedule provided a guide, I also asked other questions, depending on the participants' responses, also participants could share any other ideas or information. The semi-structured interview was more a deal between the participants and me – we shared a common interest. During the full duration of the interviews, (which lasted between 45 to 75 minutes duration as shown in Table 3), depending on the information I gathered from interviewees. I collected both verbal and non-verbal data and was flexible in paraphrasing to support and to put at ease participants. Besides, I also took special care to use words that were clear and meaningful to the participants to ensure that they were clear about what was being inquired. I also allowed participants to take their time to think and reflect on the questions before answering. During the interview, although my focus was on being an excellent listener, I also took the time to observe the participants' facial expressions and body language and took brief note of these.

I believed I could have argued any question in the interview if ever the participant was allowed sufficient time to reflect on the question and to give the answers that were required of them. I understood that the personality of the interviewer, the place of the interview, and the environment where the interview was carried out, were other reasons which could have influenced the participants. I expressed my gratitude to each participant after the interview for being part of the study. I reiterated and reassured participants about confidentiality and briefed them while I remained at their disposal for any more information they wished to know.

Immediately after each interview, I transcribed the recordings. I planned to distinguish the likenesses or differences of the transcripts, and then I listened anew to the audio recordings to substantiate their truthfulness. I observed and took all the precautions so that the recording machine worked at all times, during and after the interviews.

### 4.5 Data Analysis Methods

For this study, the next step after the interviews was to explore the phenomena of internship and employability from most fresh angles and views and to study the development and reflected on the obscure meaning of the phenomena. Creswell (1998) describes the data analysis for phenomenology as a list of phrases, for example, data managing, reading, memorising,

describing, classifying, interpreting, and representing, and visualising. Moustakas (1994) finds analysis as some full-textual statements of the findings.

I started the data analysis with data management, and I converted the collected data into text units for analysis. For this purpose, I transcribed the sound recordings of the interviews from conversations, word-for-word, and I analysed the written transcripts using interpretive analysis. I re-examined with the sound recordings to approve the quality of receiving high accuracy and consistency of the written translation. The data analysis of the study would lead to the research questions and ingredients of the general items.

The next step in the proceeding was for me to gain a general conscious awareness of the full information gathered during the interviews. I, therefore, read the transcripts of all participants as many times as needed before breaking them into parts to move into codes associated with the content and for arranging or classifying of the transcripts. I progressed through to scrutinised the transcripts, and I used a highlighter to mark essential phrases/sentences on the transcripts to make them more popular arguments, sentences or quotes that provided an interpretation of internship and employability.

I then uploaded the written transcripts of all participants into the Quality Data Analysis Software called "QDA Miner 4.0". The chief role of QDA Miner was to attribute codes to the chosen text sections from the transcripts and to analyse these codes. The software placed the applicable codes associated with internship and employability in the "codes window" of the application workspace. I tagged the codes according to their respective groups. The software displayed the list of codes, recognised as the codebook and the nodes were in the form of a tree structure under which I could find associated codes. The code could be a word, a phrase, or a keyword/s. When coding for this study, I created fresh ideas and categories from the research questions and stored the coding at nodes. Nodes might be "free" in "trees." QDA Miner allowed me to make nodes, coding them as a simple task. As I continued to work, the software made many nodes. Figure 4.1 shows an example of the tree structure as worked out by the QDA Miner software.

QDA Miner software allowed me to bring order and organisation to the data by looking for specific and identifiable codes. I worked with the "queries" command of the software to discover words in the text that showed all happenings of a unique word or phrase. I looked at the content of the source, coded by a particular collection of nodes, and a group of nodes by another group

of nodes to form a theme. However, it is worth highlighting here that the software, in no way, contributed to the identification of themes from the codes. I had to identify the themes through a higher level of analysis. I perceived that data analysis was that of inspecting, cleaning, transforming, and creating data according to a model to identify information that could work, propose conclusions, and defending decision – making. I used the software to decide on the existence, presence, or fact of patterns having a base on coding when the condition of coding and their quality and accuracy were given by the software. I exported the analysis sheet from the QDA software to Excel Sheets where I could further analyse the data at level 2 analysis.

I moved into describing, classifying, and interpreting after having read and wrote the codes and nodes of all transcripts, and I managed the powerful arguments into bigger "units" or themes (analysis Level 2). The word "because" or other close synonyms used by participants in the interviews showed there were the possibilities to uncover themes. I classified these themes according to the views of professionals. Following this exercise, I recouped and assigned new categories of codes at a higher level. Further analysis resulted in developing the two most essential phenomena which I reported in the findings of the study in Chapter Five (Level 3). To use the results, I produced a literary work based on a text description of the "what" participants progressed through their experiences. I devised a clean word-for-word item of information typical of a class or group. Also, statements that represented in a particular field of an investigation of "how" internship experiences had happened were accepted. I further analysed the themes, memos, and fundamental ideas that I recorded. For each interview, I reviewed the re-reading transcripts, ideas, and themes critical to the research (level 1 and 2).

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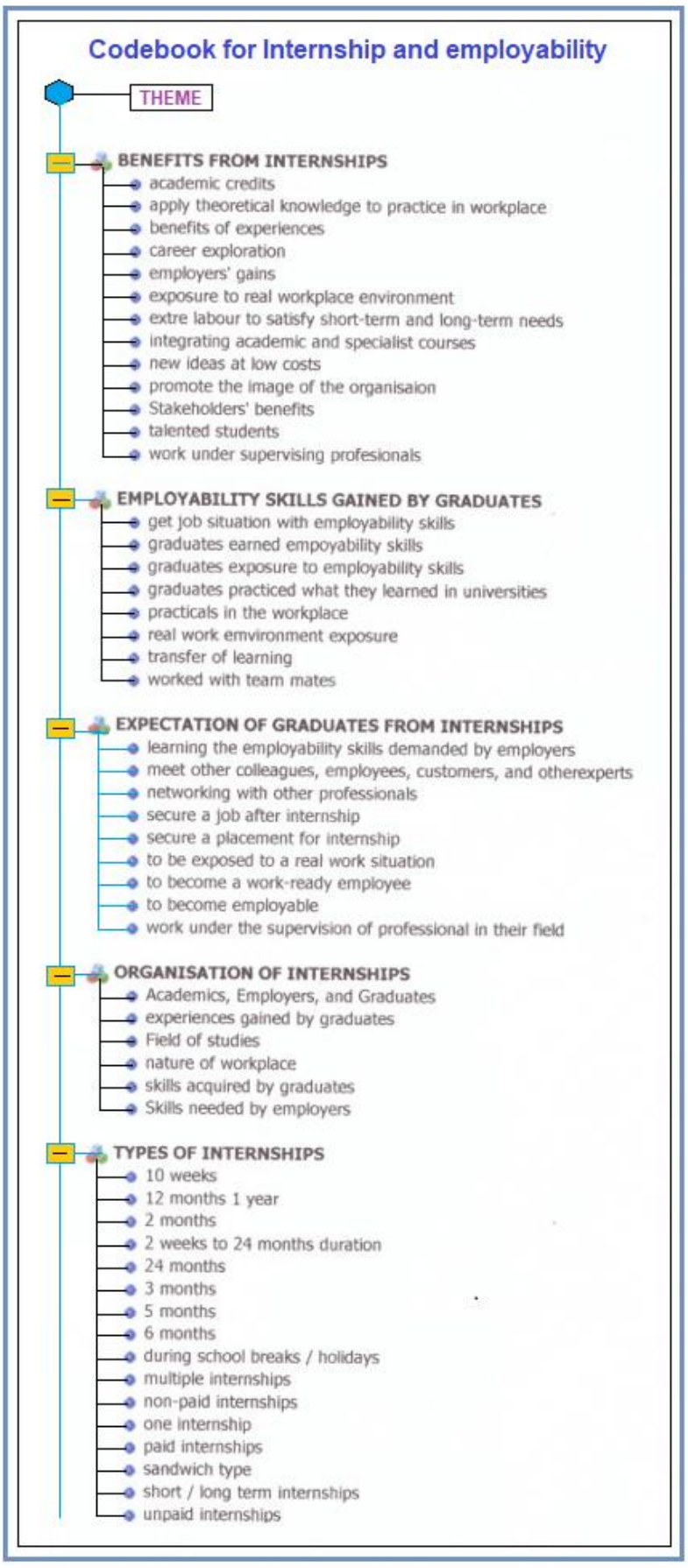


Figure 4.1 The tree structure of the codebook for internship and employability.

use the results, I produced a literary work based on a text description of the "what" participants progressed through their experiences. I devised a clean word-for-word item of information typical of a class or group. Also, statements that represented in a particular field of an investigation of "how" internship experiences had happened were accepted. I further analysed the themes, memos, and fundamental ideas that I recorded. For each interview, I reviewed the re-reading transcripts, ideas, and themes critical to the research (level 1 and 2). I described in Chapter Six, a higher thematic analysis of the topics (nodes) which contributed to the themes (the themes (level 3).

For this section, when I carried out the analysis of transcripts, viewing applicable ideas, combined with the experiences of participants in internship and employability voiced out by them in their interviews. Also, this allowed me making the collected information comprehensible by describing the consistent; I reported those facts (analysis levels 1 and 2). I used these sub-sections for the analysis of a text, and as a guide to the items of the theoretical framework, I dealt with at an earlier stage.

### 4.6 Ethical Considerations

Iacono and Murray (2003: 49) posit that there was a "need to protect vulnerable participant groups while ensuring that demands placed on researchers are not so restrictive about preventing valuable research." In the same vein, The British Sociological Association (2002) posits that researchers should be called out and guarded against the results from research participants that could predict as harmful. Therefore, I designed the ethics of this research with these parameters in mind.

Before I could conduct this research and start with data collection, I had to gain ethical clearance from the UKZN Ethics Committee (see ethical clearance document on page *v*). I had to ask permission for the ethical considerations because my qualitative research comprised human beings, thus entailing ethical issues. I submitted my research proposal to this committee, and the evaluation of the proposal covered the analysis of the potential risk of the research that might affect the participants. The Committee approved this research as they found it not to put any participants or institutions in danger.

As soon as I had permission from the university, I invited the participants to fill in the Consent Forms and a confidentiality covers according to the secrecy document made from BERA (2004,

Guideline 23). I described the informed consent form in an e-mail communication I addressed to the research population requesting their participation. All the participants handed over their filled in consent forms and other documents as required. I kept confidential the identity of the graduates, employers, and academics who took part in the study. I assured participants of anonymity, to enable them to discuss all the issues they needed and raise any issues they were comfortable communicating about, knowing their identity would not be divulged or published. To ensure anonymity, I gave pseudonyms to all participants to hide their identity, and I presented the data in the dissertation in a manner that makes it impossible for anyone else to link the data with the individual research participants. Sometimes, I chose not to use data quotes even though they provided valuable information that would have substantiated findings by square brackets to make sure that the identity of participants and institutions remained anonymous.

I took the responsibility of explaining the ethical considerations to interviewees and also informed me. I would extend the research if required. I selected those participants engaged in internships, whether sponsors or graduates, relaying what the effects of joining in could be and the use to which they could use the data. I reinforced these details by the available written information I developed, including an outline of the research aims, methods and an accessible consent form that were addressed to each participant. I further reiterated this same information at the beginning of every interview, both at the first and second interview stages for graduates and employers. I concur with the argument of Miller and Boulton (2007: 209) who express that "we now research social contexts in which experiences of the agency, power, and risk all shape the qualitative research meet and the question of the power of research and participant is of particular relevance in studies."

After the interviews, I made sure that the data gathered from participants, which could contribute to their identities, remained confidential and that I could not reveal these data under the Law. In reporting findings, I did not insert the participants' names, addresses or any characteristics that somebody could identify them in the reporting results. Also, the participants were informed that they were free to suspend their participation in case they wish to withdraw from the research. They could withdraw for any reason they deemed fit, and they would receive a guaranteed statement from me for their dropout if ever that were the case. I prioritised ethics, which I believed crucial to the study. It was my responsibility as a researcher to respect my participants' trust and protect their identity.

### 4.7 Limitations

Methodologically, this study was built on an analysis of internship and employability in which I used a semi-structured interview data with a qualitative, interpretative approach. The study emphasised on the analysis of interview data which may leave the research open to criticism of being subjective. I grounded this study in the review of the human experience.

Amundson et al., (2010), to increase understanding, identified the focus of phenomenology research through a vibrant, local statement that represented the experiences of participants in internship and employability instead of generalising to others. I contrasted the results with the experiences of participants in another research. Interviews were a fixed source of data because graduates, employers, and academics could only share their views of and views on what had taken place (Patton, 1980). I knew that personal bias, emotion and lack of awareness could have been misinterpreted by the perspectives and viewpoints. Besides, the interview data might also cause experienced or vulnerable participants to call to mind error and self-serving reactions (Hendricks, 2009).

The first and most clear potential weakness of this research was its limited sample size in which the total number of participants was eighteen compared only to the thousands of graduates who entered the labour market each year in many fields, the high number of potential employers, and the increasing number of universities. However, for qualitative research design, some ten individuals could be enough. Although the study did not present a stratified sample of participants of the Mauritian population, it did justice to the favourite category of graduates, employers, and academics. Considering that the research design was a qualitative type, I selected only a few participants. Selecting more participants would not guarantee that better quality information would have been collected.

I noticed another potential weakness of the study as the number of data-collection methods. Instead of applying only a qualitative method, I could have conducted both quantitative and qualitative methods in parallel. A methodological triangulation also could have been adopted, in which I could have had two research methods would have been better than one in a single study. This showed that I could have adopted a collection of more than one method. I could report the richness of the details with an added approach which could confirm or question specific findings of the views of participants, therefore enhancing the truth of the results.

I considered an interview as a context-dependent, social and interviewees complied with the norms of social dialogue with the depth and scope of someone spoke what to influence the respondents' expectations. As a researcher, I wished to find out the social norms for how one showed oneself (Silverman, 1993). I knew of the cautionary notes offered by qualitative researchers about the limits of interview data, and I found that interview data provided access to participants' experiences and modelled accounts of their engagement in an internship. Therefore, realist researchers considered that interview data was useful because interviewees might give correct reports of events. Also, there was more area for interview bias to result, since the information depended on the quality of subjects and researchers (Brenner, Brown & Canter, 1985). Following the social aspect of the interview, I have to separate the distortions from the authentic experiences of the interviewees.

Considering the shortcomings on acceptable limits of the appropriateness of the findings was also significant because I needed to analyse these data. Flyvbjerg (2006) comments on the small-scale nature of case study research in education, for instance in internships, which might lead to this study exposed to criticism. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007) find that critics were for this study which concentrated on its compositions. Since it was a theory used to form, decide, and guide this study, remained clear of these unforeseen complications.

My study aimed to explore the link between internship and employability. I believed the interviews had allowed for plenty of depth to get a comprehensive understanding of how academics, graduates, and employers thought and recognised the issues.

### 4.8 Conclusion

This chapter contained the debates of part of the study which include the research method and design of a study on internship and employability. Chapter Four represented the qualitative research approach and phenomenological design with an interpretive model. I applied triangulation to cut down the risk of underlying systematic distortions in which the scope and understanding of the inquiry developed. In this chapter, I also elaborated on the choice of participants for the study. I discussed and explained how data analysis was carried out the different levels. The chapter ends with details about the limitations of the study and the ethical considerations. The next chapter focuses on the level of analysis of the findings, on the findings of the research.

# CHAPTER FIVE

# FINDINGS THROUGH INFORMATION COLLECTED

## 5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I described the research methodology, the sample, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques which produced the data required for this study. In this chapter, I engage with the generated data through identified themes and sub-themes. As highlighted in this thesis, the present research aims to explore the relationship between internship and employability.

The chapter begins with an elaboration on the process followed in working with the data to arrive at the themes and sub-themes within which the analysis process unfolded. In this chapter, I developed an analytical framework to inform the data display and analysis format, keeping an audit trail of how the findings have emerged and how the collective discoveries through the data analysis present a coherent and holistic picture of the emerging thesis from this study. In Chapter Four, I described how I scrutinised the written scripts of all participants into the QDA Miner 4.0 software for coding data at level 1 analysis. Then, I used Excel Sheets in which I could further analyse the data at level 2 analysis. The chapter concludes with a summary of the key findings from the analysis process: these key findings will become the subject of theoretical engagement in the following chapter.

## 5.2 Analytical Framework that Informed the Data Analysis.

As highlighted above, I develop an analytical framework for managing and organising the data. In this section, I present the analytical framework. I started with the key ideas informing the study, as drawn from literature, and the conceptual framework of the study in elaborating the process of development for analysing the data (see Table 5.1).

Table 5.1. Process Development of the Themes for the Data Analysis

| **Theme** | Academics' perspective | Employers' perspective | Graduates' perspective |
|---|---|---|---|
| Perspectives on graduate attributes | What do academics consider key characteristics of a graduate? | What do employers consider key characteristics of a graduate? | What do graduates consider key characteristics of a graduate? |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Perspectives on employability skills | What do academics consider key characteristics for employability? | What do employers consider key characteristics of employability? | What do graduates consider key characteristics for employability? |
| Academic learning for employability | What do academics consider key academic learning for employability? | What do employers consider key academic learning for employability? | What do graduates consider key academic learning for employability? |
| Workplace learning for employability | What do academics consider key workplace learning for employability? | What do employers consider key workplace learning for employability? | What do graduates consider key workplace learning for employability? |
| Additional learning needed for employability | What do academics consider additional learning that is required for employability? | What do employers consider additional learning that is required for employability? | What do graduates consider additional learning that is required for employability? |
| Challenges and opportunities in preparing graduates for employability | What challenges and opportunities do academic experience in preparing graduates for the world of work? | What challenges and opportunities do employers experience in preparing graduates for the world of work? | What challenges and opportunities do graduates experience in preparing graduates for their life of work? |

Table 4 integrated the participants' views and experiences, rather, with the attributes I gathered from the literature review in terms of the competence needed and how this competence should be developed for employability. I further interrogate this table (Table 4.1) which I transformed to include other conceptual issues related to integrating academic study and worksite learning as depicted in Figure 5.1

The conceptualisation of the concept diagram (Figure 5.1) serves to show how the integration of academic learning and workplace learning combines to inform graduate employability. Figure 5.1 has contributed to strengthening the choice of my themes and sub-themes and contributing to the mix of data, engagement, and assertions made in terms of the analysis process.

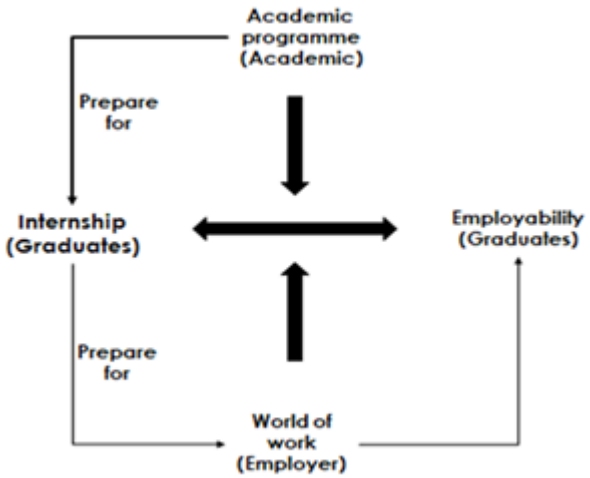


Figure 5.1. Process Development of the themes for the data analysis

A further elaboration of Figure 5.1 is that within the programme design, the academic programme provides students with the hard skills required for the industry or world of work. Also, within the study programme, the last year of study or two years before graduation, academics organise internships for the short- or long-term duration for students, depending on their field of study. The internship could be mandatory or not according to the rules and regulations of the HEIs. Internship prepares graduates to enter the actual world of work and to put into practise what academics have taught them in the classroom, under the guidance of professional workers. Graduates learn employability skills during the internship, and employers assess them at the outcome of their programme. Upon graduation, graduates complete the hard and soft skills required of graduates to take up employment in their respective study fields.

I combine Table 5.1 and Figure 5.1 for the identified themes which I reinforce. These formed the structure of the data presentation and interpretation process. The themes, therefore, include academic learnings for employability, work-site learnings for employability, additional learnings needed for employability and challenges in preparing graduates for the world of work. Two other issues need engagement before embarking on these thematic analyses. These include perspectives on graduate attributes and the purposes of internships. Hence, I start with an analysis of the stakeholders' attitudes on graduate attributes and purposes of internships.

### 5.3 The Stakeholders' Perspectives on Graduate Attributes (Theme 1)

The higher education landscape is evolving and I align it with the goals of the business, government, and education (Ingleby, 2015). The literature on graduate attributes suggests that HEIs have to produce employable graduates to cope with the emerging knowledge economy

(Whalley et al., 2011). Researchers have found that there are critical elements of learning which all graduates must gain as hard and soft skills to be employable (Kagen, 2017).

### 5.3.1 Hard and Soft Skills of Graduates

One of the critical issues to emerge from the study is related to how graduates link hard content and business knowledge and skills to soft skills at a higher level. Hard skills are specific, teachable abilities that an individual need to do a particular job, such as the ability to use software programmes (Andrews & Higson, 2008). Soft skills are self-taught and self-developed; they are less tangible and harder to quantify, such as communicating with others, listening, and leadership. Some necessary soft skills employers are looking for, include strong work ethics, professionalism, a positive attitude, time management and willingness to learn and accept responsibility (Elias & Purcell, 2004). My findings point out that the employers' views about the hard and soft skills required by graduates resonate with that of the literature. In particular, most employers have chosen and preferred eight soft skills as earlier reported by Scaffidi (2018).

Finance Employer1:
*"We develop and train them for the eight employability skills: communication, teamwork, problem-solving, self-management, planning and organizing, IT techniques, lifelong learning, and initiative and enterprise skills."*

Also, employers acknowledged that graduates need hard skills for employability as evidenced by the statement of Hotel Employer 6 given below:
*"During the interview, our HR Manager makes sure that all future interns own the required hard skills such as a degree or certificate, basic computer skills, data analysis skills, mathematical and numeracy skills, knowing foreign languages, engineering knowledge, and planning skills. The generic qualifications in their field of study are important."*

I consider the hard and soft skills, as suggested by the employers, the proper employability skills. These are not different from those that the academics responsible for internship programmes articulate.

Indeed, according to Hotel Academic 5,

"*Students aspire to work more in teams, and also, they developed many employability skills. They also learn other technical skills (hard skills) in their internship. Work placement reinforces the employability of students."*

The data also reveal that graduates do concur that they require both hard and soft skills to secure a job. They acknowledge that they learned hard skills at university and soft skills in the work environment and that both hard and soft skills are complementary (in harmony).

Finance Graduate 2:
*"So, employability skills gained during the internship and the hard skills in our field of study that enable us, graduates, to have better job opportunities. We could take employment in various organisations."*

Taking from the above evidence, there is agreement amongst all stakeholders regarding the hard and soft skills that graduates need for employability. This agreement further suggests that these hard and soft skills are part of the tacit knowledge for employability. Although it was challenging for the participants to articulate in exact terms; they understand the importance of hard and soft skills. The general awareness of the need for such skills does not mean that they have to be the same across the industry. Instead, there are site-specific techniques that need nuances of hard and soft skills. The nuanced hard and soft skills, therefore, need site-based learning (pointing to internship) rather than course-based learning.

Graduates knew that employers were seeking these eight job-specific skills (employability skills) among others when recruiting employees. These skills had various other names, including key skills, core skills, life skills, essential skills, basic skills, and transferable skills. Still, employers favour the term employability skills. Transferable skills are a unique subset of a more comprehensive set of generic skills. These are the talents and abilities that can go with the graduates when they change to a fresh job or career. Transferable skills include basic skills such as clerical, research and planning, computer and technical skills. This may also include some skills particular to specific occupations.

### 5.3.2 The Academics' Viewpoints on Graduates' Attributes

Graduates' attributes are the concern of academics because of the graduate's role in feeding into the labour market in the emerging knowledge economy (Cribb & Gewirtz, 2013). One of the key

objectives of academics is how to enhance generic capabilities and the disciplinary ability of undergraduate students as evidenced by these statements from the following participants: Finance Academic 1:

*"Graduates' attributes for us are that our graduates should have the knowledge, skills, and values to enable them to cope with dynamic employment opportunities. However, they must also understand, through the benefits and constraints of their disciplinary perspectives, who they are and how they might contribute to the quality of being diverse and not comparable to that which they will meet in their local, regional and global communities."*

Hotel Academic 5:

*"We view graduates' attributes as skills, knowledge, attitudes, and values that distinguished from the disciplinary ability associated more with higher education, but which contribute to the profession."*

ICT Academic 4:

***"**This hierarchy develops from graduate attributes as specific knowledge, skills, and values, through graduate profiles. Profiles that refer to the summation of attributes at either programme or institutional level. Thus, culminate in the term "graduate outcome," used to encompass both graduate attributes and graduate profiles."*

An encouraging observation from the above excerpts was that every academic acknowledged being satisfied with their current roles in the academic education of graduate students. Participants seemed contented with their positions and tried to inculcate knowledge, skills, attitudes, and other technical skills into the interns to transform the graduates' key characteristics. Academics are thus seen to be responsible for the students' training process, and from an academic perspective, they have understood the employers' needs vis-à-vis the employability of fresh graduates. Academics believed that students went through a complex transformation from school life to the work environment. Graduates had to adapt their behaviour to conform to different work when they took their places in the labour market.

### 5.3.3 The Employers' Perspectives on Graduates' Attributes.

When I asked employers, who had access to the "*Job Outlook 2018 Survey"* which attributes they most valued in graduates, they unanimously agreed, amongst others, that problem-solving skills, communication and the capability to work in a team were of utmost importance. They

considered these attributes of equal importance (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2019). The statements given below by the participants show that teamwork and problem-solving skills among graduates are considered very important by the employers:

Finance Employer 1:

*"Graduates' attributes are the qualities that graduates own when they claim for a job. When considering people for roles, employers look for certain key qualities and skills. These include commitment, self-improvement, leadership, problem-solving, teamwork, articulation, trustworthiness, autonomy, politeness and confidence. We look for candidates with a solid foundation of soft skills and trust so we can build the rest upon it."*

Hotel Employer 6:

*"Graduate attributes we seek as an employer include problem-solving skills, ability to work in a team, communication skills (written), leadership, a strong work ethic, analytical/quantitative skills, communication skills (verbal), flexibility and adaptability, interpersonal skills, computer skills, planning skills."*

ICT Employer 3:

*"For us, problem-solving skills are the most desired attributes and are of equal importance. Employers also value attributes such as teamwork abilities, written communication skills, leadership and a strong work ethic that they want to see as evidence of one resume. The only other attribute that held its ground with the addition of the new attributes is leadership. It continues to follow the student's major in terms of influence. I find general work experience and no work experience to be more of a deciding factor than a candidate's high GPA (3.0 or above), involvement in extracurricular activities, school attended, and volunteer work."*

The data showed that there is agreement amongst employers on attributes they are seeking in graduates which they employ. It is clear from the data that academic skills are not the primary concern of employers; who seem to value soft skills as a critical attribute. Also, there are specific attributes such as communication skills, problem-solving skills and team working which cut across all fields of study. The employers also agreed that owning attributes is one thing, and adaptation to the world of work is another.

### 5.3.4 Graduates' Perspectives on Employability Attributes

Daniels and Brooker (2014) find that there is a need to engage students with the development of their own student identities, graduate attributes, and professional identities so that they act as an agent in the process rather than having their identities constructed for them through integrated systems and implementation. Students develop graduate attributes because these apply to the sense of self, and they know of the skills they have gained during their studies. They can articulate such to employers (Hill, Wallington & France, 2016). Our data suggest that the participant graduates know of the need for developing the graduates' attributes as part of their studies and during work placement as evidenced by the following statements.

Hotel Graduate 6:

*"We can define graduate attributes as qualities, attitudes, and dispositions that graduates should own when they have completed their course of study. Graduates attributes, according to my experience, are the many skills I learned, some at the university, and most of them on the job placement. For example, communication skills, technology skill, negotiation skills, interpersonal skills, initiative skills, enterprise, planning and organising, and teamwork."*

ICT Graduate 4:

*"Graduates' attributes include many skills that a graduate must have on their resume to enter the world of work. I believe the most important ones are communication skills, problem-solving, and teamwork. Employers need these essentials when recruiting employees. Other skills include presentation skills, leadership, adaptability, analytical skills. Also, graduates must have working experiences and have undergone at least an internship. I took part in an internship programme."*

Finance Graduate 2:

*"So, employability is the skills gained that empower us, graduates, to have greater job events. So, having employability skills will help us get a job. It will make us employable and enjoy having the right attitude, and the mentality for work. We will work in a team, communicate adaptability to change, learning, willing to take the risk, and work experience for a job in our field of study."*

The inputs from the excerpts of interviews show that the graduates have a sense of the attributes that employers seek and which they should gain to become employable. Common amongst these attributes are personal attributes, for example, excellent communication skills. Some are related to collaborative attributes: enjoy working within a team and while others relate to environmental

adaptation, for instance, self-management. Of great significance, these students acknowledged that they learn such graduate skills and attributes on the job. They are outside of the academic learning programme and are self-starters. This is in line with what Daniels and Brooker (2014) argue for – that students should be engaged in developing their own identities. Recognising the need for such soft skills as part of the graduate attributes, academic programmes should, therefore, consider incorporating such learning, integrating the development of such skills into their existing programmes.

### 5.3.5 Resonance between Graduates' Attributes and Job-Related Skills

The joint graduate attributes (knowledge, skills, competencies, and values) are essential pre-conditions for a graduate to have achieved employability (Griesel & Parker, 2009). Hence, these attributes must align with the job-related skills that employers are seeking. The data highlight the importance of having someone supervise the graduates during the internship to ensure that they develop the appropriate job-related skills and attributes as evidenced by the following statement from ICT Academic 3.

*"Well, within the university, we define an internship as allowing our students to integrate competencies and to engage in what they have learned from academics at the university. An internship programme is in our curriculum. Professionals supervised students. They learn about workplace culture. We have always prioritised graduate to join internship programmes and to work with experts in a proper workshop setting."*

Of significance in this excerpt of an academic's answer are three things. The first relates to mentoring opportunity by supervisors to integrate competencies into the world of work. The second is that internship is a part of the curriculum design that allows for curriculum space to develop such integration of knowledge and skills into the world of work. Third, I have recognised workplace culture as a crucial component of internship learning. Griesel and Parker (2009) acknowledge supervisors as being a pre-condition for graduates to access the work environment. We may thus consider an internship as a capstone programme activity that integrates all forms of learning within an authentic work environment.

## 5.4 The Stakeholders' Perspective on Internship (Theme 2)

Students, universities' academics and employers are the major stakeholders in internship programmes (Maelah, Mohamed, Ramli & Aman, 2014). A set of employability skills on a

graduate's resume gives the graduate a better chance of acquiring a job (Pinto & Ramalheira, 2017). In this section of the data presentation and analysis, I engaged with three stakeholders' perspectives on an internship to understand what happens during the internship and the learning that takes place to develop employability characteristics or attributes within students to prepare for employment.

### 5.4.1 The HEIs/Academics' Perspectives on Internship

The data suggest that internship is a planned activity and that academics take responsibilities to organise, manage and create opportunities for internship for their students.

Finance Academic 1:

"*employers complained that some graduates in some fields have difficulty to apply what they learned at the university when recruited as an employee for their first job. We have seen this situation in our organisation."*

Finance Academic 2:

*"Students think because of is inside the book. However, when we expose them to the work environment, they see everything different, in the actual world what."*

Furthermore,

"For year two, and year three, it is for six months or one year. We organised an internship for 4, 6, and 12 months."

ICT Academic 1:

*"How to extend the internship, is by targeting more employers. Because we want to increase our portfolio of employers, so we target more employers so they can come to us, recruit and hire our candidates, our students, to have an internship."*

From these excerpts, academics see the internship as a crucial component of learning. They also consider internships as a planned activity within a programme design, with expectations or outcomes from an internship. Hence the responsibility for creating internship opportunities is institutional. Curriculum planning is the prerogative, sometimes in conversations with other stakeholders, of the academic institution, hence certain learning expectations from internships programme have been deemed to be significant in the curriculum design process. The duration

of internships ranges in time and could be in different years of the academic programme. Hence, academics view the internship as a crucial learning space.

The targeting of more employers to increase the pool of potential employers for internships also contributes to the importance that academics places on internship. In this respect, the academics complain about internship opportunities and this could relate to a more diverse learning opportunity for students during an internship, creating more spaces to spread the students across the work of learning site. These design elements of the internship show the importance that academics places on site-based learning. Through internship programmes, they (the academics) can expose students to a variety of workplaces and, perhaps, the different work skills and knowledge that they can make available to their students. Over one opportunity for an internship within a programme design (*in year one and years two*) suggests that programme design plans the focus of learning across internship placements within a programme.

Of significance from these excerpts of academic views is the organisation of the learning spaces of students/graduates that go beyond the academic institution. Academics recognise that additional learning is possible and needed for graduates to align their learning with work-based usages. These learning spaces at the worksites create opportunities for putting theory into practice, learning from the work environment. Academics serve as coordinators and are accountable to the university for managing internships. A further role played by academics is that of the provider of knowledge and as negotiators with employers for managing the internship programmes (Jackson, 2013).

### 5.4.2 The Employers' Perspectives on Internship

The literature suggests that employer's participation in internships, as stakeholders, has a more influential role (Maertz Jr, Stoeberl, & Marks, 2014). The data generated for this study confirms this statement. Academics view internship as an integral part of the programme design to develop graduate attributes for employability. When academics split the internship period over the expected duration, employers believe that continuity in a site of the internship is necessary for support, development, and assessment of competence.

Finance Employer 2:

*"We take on trainees for two months during their holidays from June to July and then from December to January. We try to have the same trainees because two months were not enough*

*for us, first to train the person, himself because it takes much time, much energy to train that person. One month for training and then only one month to see if the results were enough. We try to keep; we try to hold the same and ask them to come back in December. The same person whom we accept onboard in June, we try to have the same person."*

Drawing from this extract, two perspectives emerge. The first is that employers view internship as a crucial learning space and believe that they need to track the learning and development that they expose the students to (*One month for training and then only one month to see if the results were enough).* Hence their interest in assessing the students' learning. The second is that they see an internship as an extension of the study programme. Hence they would like to employ the same students across the internship period (*we try to hold the same and ask them to come back in December)* for further development. They recognise that short stints of internship without continuity may be a futile exercise in developing graduates.

Hotel employer:
"Some for three months…. some six months depending on their level in their field. Whether they are in their first year of university or completed their study...3 months of training per year… that is nine months internship could be ideal,"

Finance Employer 2:
"Employability is the skills, knowledge, and competencies that enhance a worker's ability to secure and keep a job, progress at work, and cope with change. They can secure another job if they so wish or have been laid off and enter more into the labour market at unique periods of the life cycle."

Drawing from the above engagement on employers' perspective on an internship, employers view the internship as an essential and necessary aspect of student learning to prepare for employment. It is also clear that employers see the internship as a space in which to find potential employees ("Employers have a pool of young fresh potential candidates for future employment." (Employer 6) Employers harness their (students) development to help their (employers) employment needs. They offer the space for on-site learning for students and acknowledge the importance of internship as part of the programme design.

### 5.4.3 The Graduates' Perspectives on Internship

Graduates' perspective on internship is a useful vantage point to understand views on internships, the benefits they derive from the internship and their expectations. Jackson (2015) argues that graduate perspectives on internship are an important element in the success of internship programmes. The data suggests that there is no consensus amongst graduate students in terms of their perspectives. Some regard internships as an opportunity to gain financial rewards.

Finance Graduate 2:

*"Well, I would not have got any allocation; I would not have had the interest to take part in the programme. So, the stipend for us graduate is significant."*

Some graduates see the internship as an income generation opportunity, valuing this aspect of workplace learning rather than as a site to develop their competence for employability.

Some view internships as an opportunity to gain relevant knowledge and skills related to the worksite:

Graduate 3 ICT:

*"I would not take part in an internship programme if ever the work environment is not helpful,"*

Graduate 5 Hotel:

*"go through an internship with or without a salary."*

Yet others view the internship as a prospect for gaining employment after they graduate.

Graduate 2 Finance:

"*So, employability skills gained during an internship allow us to get a job. We could take employment in different organisations.*

He further added: "*Internship is mandatory for me to get a job opportunity. I know that companies are asking for experience and employability skills"* on a voluntary or mandatory basis according to their field of study.

Drawing from the above extracts, graduates view internship opportunities from diverse perspectives ranging from financial incentives to learning opportunities to opportunities of

gaining employment. I expect this diverse view on the internship, students using this opportunity of internship for personal, professional and aspirational reasons. Hence there is value in internships for students. What they expect from an internship may resonate with their situations, personal interests, and personal aspirations. Therefore, the diverse perspectives on internship by students.

### 5.4.4. Concluding Comments on the Stakeholders' Perspectives on Internship

The general perspective of the various stakeholders on an internship is that they all seem to acknowledge the importance of internship as a crucial component of learning and for employability. There are some variations in terms of their expectations. This is understandable when setting their views on internship against their interests. While the academics value internships as learning spaces for graduates to contextualise, their learning gained from academic institutions, employers view internships as means of preparing graduates to meet their work requirements so they can draw future employees from the pool of interns. Students' value internships based on their circumstances and professional aspirations. Hence internships are a space for a multitude of gains, some academic, some workplace experience, some personal and professional.

## 5.5 Purpose of the Internship as Viewed by Stakeholders (Theme 3)

Internships offer students the hands-on opportunity of working in their desired field (Billet, 2012). According to the latter, students learn how their course of study applies to the real world, building up a valuable experience that strengthens them as potential candidates for jobs after graduation. In this section of the analysis, I explore the various stakeholders' perspectives on the purpose of an internship. Although in the previous section, I have engaged with their perspectives on the internship, treating the stakeholders' perspectives on the purpose of internship addresses a key issue around internships the formal curriculum issue of the internship.

Drawing from the data presented by the various stakeholders, it would appear that the purpose of an internship is to provide real-world work experience that can enable graduates to put their academic learning into practice, viewed as the theory-practice nexus, as elaborated in this section.

### 5.5.1 Transformation of Knowledge into Practice

Drawing from West Ventura and Warnick's theoretical foundation for inductive transfer (2007), transferring learning is crucial for graduates to understand how they can develop employability skills. With increasing emphasis being laid on efficiency and cost-effectiveness in the job market, the pressure is on academics to make learning valuable and to prepare students for the job market. Hence, in this sub-area, I present and discuss the roles of the participants in the transformation of knowledge into practice from the data gathered.

### 5.5.2 The Academics' Views on the Purpose of Internships

Academics spend the most time with students at the university, playing a crucial role in ensuring that students achieve the expected competences of the programme design. In line with Jackson (2014), the data suggests that academics are in favour of internships that allow students to integrate academic and professional subjects into an actual work situation.

Finance Academic 1:

*"We at the academy we teach everything on paper, for us it is academic knowledge, but the practical training is very, very important. So, through the internship, the students get exposure to the real world of work. Our students lack these employability skills for their achievement."*

Hotel Academic 5:

"*Yes, what they have learned in class is only a percentage of what they do at the workplace, so everything they have learned at the workplace emanates from their experienced supervisors and other professional workers on-the-job. They shared knowledge; they developed skills and can practice more about what they have learned. "*

Finance Academic 1:

"*The practical training is compulsory during the course. All students must have at least 4 months of placement. We discuss with several companies -an expert in this domain. We develop professionals who have the required knowledge in their fields to make readiness graduates. However, fresh graduates would get employability skills through experiences in the workplace. We at the university, we want our graduates to have employability skills and to do in the job*."

Excerpts from the above data reveal that although academics recognise their contribution to the theoretical knowledge of graduates, they also acknowledge that graduates need practical experiences through internships under the supervision of professional workers in companies.

Academics support the development of content knowledge together with some technical and soft skills among students in the university, while it develops employability skills during internships in actual work situations. Academics recognise that the university does not provide the required environment for graduates to practise in real conditions as authentic sites for the knowledge gained during the coursework component of the curriculum.

Thus, to allow students to gain working experiences, academics organise internship programmes for them in close collaboration with employers in the relevant fields of study. When probing this issue further, I found out that the academics market, organise, and monitor the whole process of the internships (from an earlier quote by an academic - we target more employers so they can come to us, recruit and hire our candidates, our students to have an internship). Internships, organised by academics with the collaboration of employers, provide students with the opportunity of putting gained knowledge into practise in a real working environment (Cooper, Orrell & Bowden, 2010).

The importance of communication and collaboration between academics and employers (or supervisors at the workplace) for proper implementation and monitoring of the internships, is highlighted here. Some academics use internships for collaboration and communication, enabled through their supervision responsibilities associated with the internship.

Academic 4 ICT:

*"So, at the finish of the internship as an academic of the university, we have monitoring visits to see how the internship has taken place. They discuss issues about future collaboration with employers. It is very important there that we go, the object is to communicate to employers."*

Drawing from the above excerpts, academics see the purpose of internship as being practical training through site base learning in authentic work environments. In addition, noting the value of internship, employers use the internship to maintain and expand relationships with the worksite for culture collaboration in supporting the development of graduates for the world of work.

### 5.5.3 The Employers' Views on the Purpose of Internships

Billet (2010) argues that employers allow graduates to earn experience and to gain basic knowledge in their chosen field of study during internships. The data as gleaned from employers supports this argument by Billet (2010) and extends on this by including a planned process of development and supervision for enabling meaningful workplace experiences.

Finance Employer 1:

"*Well, we have different categories because we recruit interns for a short-term period that is, two months during holidays. The second category is for six months. We develop more internships in the community so they can know more about the work environment."*

The various categories of internship suggest that there is some rationale for how an internship is planned and executed. This plan focuses more on experiential learning within the workplace environment.

Hotel Employer 6:

"*For us, a reputable hotel, we find that the internship programme is beneficial for both employers and graduates. Employers have a pool of young fresh potential candidates for future employment. It allows us to contribute to teaching a skill to youngsters."*

In this excerpt, the employer views an internship as an opportunity for students to learn and an opportunity for employers to identify potential future employees.

The primary purpose, therefore, of internship from the employers' perspective is to support the learning programme by developing employability knowledge and skills. Additional benefits include recruitment possibilities from a known pool of potential employees.

### 5.5.4 The Graduates' Views on the Purpose of an Internship

Graduates involved in the educational internship programme work with an academic and often register for academic credits as part of this experience (Gault, Leach, & Duey, 2010). The credit-bearing approach to internship ensures that interns are not only answerable to the workplace (employers) but also to their faculty during the internship period. For graduates, internships allow the classroom to be only part of the education necessary for success in the real world. They consider joining an enterprise to gain a wealth of relevant work experience.

Finance Graduate 1:

*"Well, I have had an internship of 3 months in a private company, and when I joined, I completed my internship in the marketing field. We were also running projects, so he (the supervisor) always guided me; he gave me enough information to go ahead."*

Finance Graduate 2;

"*It is compulsory for the programme to undertake this internship because it carries 3 credits."*

ICT Graduate 3:

"*Learning and gaining the eight preferred employability skills allow me to be in a better position when competing for a job in a company. I have joined the internship programme to help with this training. Also, I have more opportunities to get work experience and to get a job in a company."*

Hotel Graduate 5:

*"I would say employability comprises skills, experience, commitment to personal excellence, willingness to take risk, and understanding while during an internship programme, to finding employment. To put the theories learned at university into practice and getting working experience to become employable."*

Finance Graduate 1:

*"I needed to have the experience, experience in the employability skills pertinent to my course, and self-confidence. Training and development, practical training compulsory to get a job occasion. Companies are requesting for experience and employability skills to use new employees. During my internship, they assigned me a supervisor who facilitated and directed me in all my projects. They guided the employability skills during the internship according to the needs of this organisation. I relate them to the goal and objectives of the Corporate."*

The data from these excerpts suggest that the graduates view the purpose of internship as part of their learning experience for employability, which includes workplace experiences. Also, according to the graduates, other purposes of internships include acquisition of earmarked credits, work experience, and employability skills and completion of university projects, and opportunities to put into practise what they have learned at universities.

### 5.5.5. Concluding Comments on the Purpose of the Internship as Viewed by Stakeholders

For the three stakeholders in this study, the purpose of internships is to provide authentic work experiences in which knowledge and skills learned during the academic component of the curriculum are deployed within authentic workplace environments. All the stakeholders also

stated that internships offer other additional benefits. For the academic, collaboration, communication and recruitment of more worksites were the additional benefits for them. The employers viewed internships as opportunities for identifying and grooming their future potential employees; there would be a pool of known graduates from which to draw their future employees. Students see the additional benefit of an internship as providing them with workplace experience that is needed when applying for jobs in the respective fields. Hence the purpose of internships includes core learning and secondary benefits that are linked to the stakeholders' personal or sectoral needs.

### 5.6 Academic Learning for Employability (Theme 4)

Within this theme, I explore the perspectives of stakeholders on what they need to play for employability gained through the academic programme. The reason for exploring this perspective is to establish the academic knowledge and its subject skills needed in the academic programme that students go in developing employability competences. I associate the academics' understanding of employability with their knowledge of the employability skills, delivery of training and development programmes, assessment of employability skills, their approach with companies, and their commitment to corporations. Wilson (2012) claimed that the work-readiness of graduates was a concern for governments, HEIs, and employers because of the academic system, the financial components and the non-exposure of students to working environments. As a result, the government and employers were urging universities to remedy this situation. This specific circumstance has left academics under pressure for more than decades (Matthews, 2012).

Finance Academic 1: "*Because what we teach in theory differs a lot with what we do in practice. We want to bridge the gap between what they teach at university and what they practice on-site. We send students on internships where they will learn and apply these employability skills and others in an actual work situation."*

In this quote the focus is on the gap between academic learning and workplace requirements, suggesting that there is an acknowledgement of gaps in developing workplace employability knowledge and skills.

Academic ICT 3:

*"Together with employers, we develop a new curriculum for them, so they want us to create a more specific curriculum based on the fields in which they are operating. So, they come to us,*

*we deliver the course to the students, and they built up those students the opportunity to work. They helped in the curriculum map and offered placement for students."*

From this quote, there seems to be a collaboration between academics and employers in designing the learning programme identifying what they need of a learning programme that will develop the knowledge and skills expected of a graduate for the world of work.

However, Academic ICT 4:
*"The work environment is always dynamic, employers have high expectations, and we cannot change our curriculum as employers. We teach how it would apply to ICT as a whole. We work according to our curriculum. We will train students during the internship."*

This suggests that it is not always possible to meet industries' needs or aspirations. This academic believes that there is a curriculum that must be followed. Programmes often limit employability skills and knowledge to the curriculum scope, meaning that there are other spaces for learning to prepare graduates for the world of work.

Hotel Academic 5:
"*There is an alignment, but what is more important for employers the difference we can make at the workplace. At university, we cannot create a proper working environment. We are more concerned with the concepts, the academic aspect of the occupation because in hotels they are practising the genuine thing there. So, there is an alignment for the content we deliver at the university, which is the basic and limited competences. We do not deny that, but the most crucial part is what you can learn at the workplace and how you can practice it."*

There is a recognition, from this quote, that university education focuses on generic learning conceptual. Such still needs to be internalised and implemented through practise within a worksite.

On probing further, academics argued that, for example, in finance, they "could not teach all the different prospects of dissimilar companies in diverse circumstances." which supports the notion I focus university education on generic learning for the respective world of work. We, therefore, need more refined learning is therefore for employees to fit into a practical work environment.

Employers have denounced that recent graduates lack employability skills when entering the world of work after graduation. Because of their diverse and useful work operations, employers have a mixed judgment of the competences they need. However, most of them consider employability as the competences of soft skills that graduates learn and implement in an employment situation during their internship.

Hotel Employer 6:

"*Employability is the competences of soft skills that graduates learn and implement in a company during their internship. It includes communication skills, problem-solving and other soft skills… what we can give to the intern are the employability skills required for our enterprise... The graduates learn techniques and skills that will allow them to get a job."*

From this cite, employers focus on the employability skills of fresh graduates. They can train graduates with the skills that their organisation requires during interns' internship. Still, they need to internalise and carry out these employability skills through practice within an enterprise.

On probing further, employers explained that they improve fresh graduates by providing them with practical suggestions and career development programme.

Finance Employer 1:

"*We develop and train them for the eight-employability skill - communication, teamwork, problem-solving, self-management, planning and organizing, technology (ICT), lifelong learning, and initiative and enterprise skills."*

This advocates that graduates cannot meet industries needs at the university level where the programmes often lessen the employability skills. Thus, employers cooperate to develop recent graduates to get a job.

Fresh graduates agreed that it is during their internship in the company they learn employability skills.

ICT Graduate 3:

"*Learning and gaining the eight preferred employability skills allow me to be in a stronger stand when competing for a job in a company. I have entered the internship programme to improve for*

*this training. Also, I have a higher opportunity to get work experience and to have a post in a firm"*

From this quote, a fresh graduate expressed his eagerness to undergo an internship and support that it is through an internship that he gained the precise training in employability skills. It assures him that getting these employability skills would place him in a favourable position to get a job.

Academics and employers organise internship for graduates to allow them to gain experience in employability skills. However, in some fields of study, an internship is mandatory in the curriculum and graduates scored credit when they take part.

Finance Graduate 1:

"*It is imperative for the program I undertake this internship because it brings a reach of 3 credits and without that internship programme, I should not have got my degree."*

From this quote, it shows that in some fields, for example, in the finance sector, it is a prerequisite for fresh graduates to undertake an internship as part of their training programme as spelt out in the curriculum. They debar graduates who do not have experiences in employability skills in this from a degree.

Graduates understand that it would not be achievable for a university to prepare students for a specialised job in a specific field.

Hotel Graduate 1:

"*We figure out that a university cannot equip students for a specific job in a specific field as claimed by employers. I notice that students on graduation, possess the academic knowledge in their field of study and that they could not gain a job. We need experienced and the soft skills that employers need; we have never been learning in a suitable workplace environment"*

Graduates recognised that they were not exposed to a convenient work environment when they studied at university. I consider the employability skills introduced at the university level as broad and do not cope with the working model in an organisation. Thus, the demand for recent graduates to go through an internship by graduation. They accept that employers have high expectations from graduates.

### 5.7 Worksite Learning for Employability Skills (Theme 5)

This theme focuses on stakeholder's views of the employability skills developed during internship programmes. Drawing from the data, there are varied learnings that happen during an internship related to employability skills. Some employers continue to focus on soft skills (as identified earlier) while some refer to the expected learning within an evolving work situation. Hence, besides the usual soft skills needed for employability, there is a recognition of agility in the knowledge and skills required for employability. Workplaces do not remain static; employees must be agile in terms of recent developments influencing the work situation.

Finance Employer 1:

"*Employability is that whenever you have developed in a graduate, a set of skills such as organizing, technology, and computer skills, lifelong learning and initiative and enterprise skills. Students need to do in an actual situation. It is the internship only which will give this opportunity to students to enjoy as a professional in their skills, thus developing them. Work placement reinforces the employability of graduates. Employability is more than employment."*

Hotel Employer 5 confirmed that graduates lack various soft skills when joining the workplace, adding:

*"We observed that the interns we recruited have difficulty to welcome and to talk to the client. They lack communication and interpersonal skills. They also show a deficiency in the way they try to solve problems. However, they learned all these employability skills from the staff, on how to communicate with clients because we are in a business environment. At the outcome of their internship, they could practice their communication skills."*

In these excerpts, the reinforcement of worksite as the site for learning soft skills is still the central purpose of learning. Employability is the key concern of worksite learning (Employability is more than employment), suggesting that learning is central to an internship. There are, however, other views on the learning that takes place at worksites.

Employer 3 ICT reinforces the above assertion of a continued focus on developing and assessing soft skills during an internship:

"*During the internship, we talked to graduates about their soft skills performance, and we ask them if they feel comfortable within the organisation. We talked about their behaviours, their*

*gained employability skills, and whenever need be, we appraise them for their outstanding performance. We try to be friendly and to create a conducive environment in the workplace."*

ICT Academic 4:

*"No, there is a similarity for around 30%; there is a 70% gap that we are still to change. They need effective communication skills and other soft skills. They have the theoretical rather than practical skills, such as students too should have exposure to clients and to practice what they have learned."*

These views on learning during the internship confirm that the major focus on learning during the internship is that of developing competence in the soft skills needed for employability. I place little attention to learning hard skills appropriate to the workplace needs. The reason for this bias in learning is perhaps that employers assume that the hard skills (and knowledge) have already been developed in the student/graduate whilst at university and that their competence has been assessed by the university (*They have the theoretical rather than practical skills*). I could relate another plausible reason for this focus on soft skills learning during the internship period to industry-specific needs (e.g. in the hotel industry, hospitality is vital for the industry). Hence, the way the student/graduate interacts with clients has implications for the survival of the industry (*on how to communicate with clients because we are in a business environment)*. Some employers use internships for training students/graduates for specific workplace competence and to respond to innovations within particular industries.

Hotel Employer 6:

"*Since we are in the hotel industry, there is a top competition. The techniques are strengthening, and they need many high skills."* He further added that: *"This allows us to contribute to teaching skills to youngsters with a structured programme and we seize the opportunity to recruit future employees at very little HR costs."*

ICT Employer 4: "*graduates learned the same software in the university. But they need more practice sessions to become at the required level of standard demanded by employers in a substantial work environment."*

These excerpts from the employers suggest that the learning within internships is more confined to the worksite needs and within an evolving working context. The intended learning is,

therefore, specific to the respective worksites that also requires the student/graduate to be prepared for innovations, evolutionary developments and to know and understand what they require in a substantive work environment.

The students/graduates also confirm this substantive component of learning during internships.
ICT Graduate 3 elaborates on the learning gained during the internship:
*"I undertook that placement because I wanted to learn what real work-life was, so whatever I learned at the university, be it the employability skills found in our curriculum. I wanted to know how it was in the work environment. They told me that the conditions of work are not the same as at a university. Also, I wanted to commit myself to personal excellence, and know how to solve problems because we were very focused at the university on how to solve problems. I wanted to become more skilful and knowledgeable."*

*"The internship at the workplace is where I applied theories learned at the university, but I have learned more practical skills and other technical skills on site. I feel that my behaviour has changed and I am more responsible now. I have learned how to work better in a team, and I have learned how to become proactive. How to find solutions to problems and how to meet clients. So, the outcomes were positive, and I am very grateful to the persons with whom I have worked at the company. They taught many things outside the theory. From the internship programme. I learned how to behave with clients. I enjoyed the way experienced staff counsel clients. I developed my communication skills and presentation skills."*

Finance Graduate 2*:*
*"Moreover, in each department, I have a different mentor. I work under the supervision of an employer there… The supervisor carried out an induction programme on the company to new interns on the first day… telling about the culture of the company and job prospects…. also showing then the organizational chart… prospects. In each department, I have a different mentor."*
Not all students/graduates were exposed to relevant learning during the internship programmes. I often assigned menial tasks to them.

Finance Graduate 2:
"*Maybe having a proper guideline or agenda of the internship would help better, because, during our work placement, we did photocopies, filing, and dispatch. So, it does not relate to our*

*programme itself, to our field of study. So, if a proper agenda, a proper schedule of a work scheme of duty which may improve our experience."*

This suggests that relevant learning related to their field of study is limited sometimes. This may be expected as some companies use interns as additional human resources for their needs, or it places them in sections in which there is a perceived shortage of staff. The intention here is that they do not use an internship as a learning space for employability. Rather, the intention is to use an internship for the additional supportive work that they need at a minimal cost.

Employers recognise that workplace learning differs from university learning; and that the worksite is the place in which specific and futuristic industry learning takes place.

Hotel Employer 6: *"the real work environment differs quite a lot from that of the university in this field. Here, interns have to practice as employees and that soft skills are a must when dealing with clients. Once a graduate is on an internship in a hotel, the intern has to perform as a fully fledge other colleague' workers."*

Hotel Employer 5:
"*Because the theory is not the same as on-the-job training. In theory, they are just learning and maybe a plan, maybe how to start a basic. Ok, but they learned it from the staff, on how to deal with clients, how to do marketing, because we are in a growing environment, especially for placement work. Within our organization, employees have to update their knowledge of the services we offer."*

Finance Employer 1:
*"They lack adaptation because they were academic when exposed to the work environment."*

ICT Employer 4:
*"We try to build for the long term while developing these youths as young as they are. We will be about in two years; these youths can help us look for fresh markets."*

Drawing from these excerpts, the learning that employers intend to engender in the students/graduates is futuristic (growing environment; They lack adaptation), suggesting that they recognise that the academic learning that the students/graduates were exposed to whilst at

university is knowledge and skills of what was and what is rather than what could be within a dynamic and developing working context.

### 5.8 Additional Learning Needed for Employability Skills (Theme 6)

In this theme, I attempt to identify gaps in the learning not covered by the academic programme and the internship programme and which is needed for employability opportunities of graduates. Hence a perspective is given on these missing items in learning through the two components of the curriculum, as viewed by academics, students, and employers. Such would be useful to inform both the academic programme and the internship programme in accommodating these additional learnings that I considered necessary for developing employability skills.

Finance Academic 1:

"There is an alignment for 75%; there is a 25% gap we are still; we are still trying to fill it. The job environment is on the move; employers have high expectations, different companies working in unique ways, so we cannot teach anything available. We try to make things know the root of the different subject matters, but we cannot teach how they would apply it in different companies in uncommon situations."

This quote suggests that the work environment is developing. Hence the learning attained within the university may not keep up with the evolving workplace needs. What we learn is limiting; there will always be these limits to what we learn for employability within a university programme. Hence learning to adapt and keep up with workplace innovations is an additional employability skill needed for graduates.

Finance Employer 2:

*"In the university, graduates have learned much monetary theory, for example, options cumulative, financial engineering at a very advanced, but not at the level we are working in this offshore banking company. What they have learned, a lot, but they cannot apply all these theories in a real-life situation. In terms of the theory, they are excellent, but in practical situations, they cannot perform."*

Drawing from this quote, the focus on university learning is a basic entry-level competence that challenges graduates to engage with more complex industry requirements. This challenge of fitness for a purpose for the industry complexity will continue to exist in the current organisation of university education unless supported by ongoing professional development to upskill and

learn more complex industry needs. Hence, there is a need for ongoing and continuous professional development attitudes in graduates, as additional learning for employability attributes, captured by the quote below.

Hotel Academics 5:
*"Students learned the employability skills and diverse technical skills in the workplace. We recommend students to keep records of their achievement during the internship and their development plan for their careers."*

Being a fully-fledged worker is what the next quote emphasises.

Hotel Graduate 6:
*"Yes, it was a 50-50 thing because what we learn at the university is not what we practice on the worksite. In the workplace, they considered us as fully fledge workers because the clients did not know whether we were on internship. We have to behave like professional hotel workers and perform. I have learned the actual practice with actual clients."*

What it means to be a fully fledge worker, and how one develops this insight within a formal university programme and an internship programme is a concern and an aspect of additional learning?

Employers recognise the value in *"recent college graduates bring with them fresh ideas and skills to the workplace."* They need transferability skills to support graduates who must transfer newly gained knowledge and skills to older employees in industries. Employers hold the view that, besides fresh ideas, interns are also well-versed in the most current technology.

Finance Employer 1:
*"Other ideas that old people do not think about. So why don't we bring an amalgam of ideas that is, bringing old people and inexperienced people together to work as a team? And then to bring something new, new skills or other options they could estimate or value."*

Employers: *"recent graduates from the university come up with fresh ideas, and as interns, they could further shape the future of the company. Interns could become indispensable members of*

*the organisation's team. They could work in a team with present employees and re-branded the organisation as a new company."* (Finance Employer 1).

Taking from the above evidence, it is they understood it amongst employers, that teamwork is one of the indispensable skills that graduates need to become employable.

Employers also recognise graduates to be adaptable and agile.
*"graduates are adaptable and agile; they know how to navigate and master new technologies."* (ICT Employer 4).

We also consider adaptability and agility as soft skills for employability that need consideration in the curriculum, whether at a university or during an internship.

The above evidence suggests that additional learning is crucial for employability skills. All three stakeholders' benefit, from their perspectives, reflecting how they can utilise the gained employability skills owned by graduates.

### 5.9 Challenges in Developing Employability Skills in Graduates for the World of Work (Theme 7)

In this final theme, I explore the challenges experienced by academics, students and employers in developing employability skills and how these challenges might be addressed from now on. The perspectives on employability skills from the views of stakeholders taking part in internships are critical for understanding the employability of graduates.
Hotel Employer 5:
*"For, as we are hotels, many hotels take part in these internship programmes, so we must also take part in a designed a programme that fits what we offer in hotels. We want hands-on graduates. We could help in course design and the employability is that we need to graduate. University has to appeal to employers for their collaboration. Our capacity and performance will boost up, and universities could recruit students for high calibre courses."*

From the above statements, employers expressed their wish to be part of the curriculum design process of the university curriculum to influence the academic aspects of what they require for employability. Employers wish, for a variety of reasons, to collaborate with academics on the organisation of internship in a more efficient manner. They expressed themselves in various

ways. Employers wish to collaborate in the design of curricula and the recruitment of interns. Other employers expressed their concern about their collaboration with academics. From the academic perspective, they have expressed challenges of curriculum change.

ICT Academic 4:

"*We have been since then trying to rework the structure of the programme of our academic programme to match the criteria of employers, to match their demand."*

There are institutional challenges related to collaborating with industry in terms of curriculum changes. Institutions and industry are still at the trying to stage, suggesting that they cannot move beyond the intent phase of collaboration.

These quotes suggest that there may be challenges experienced by industries in influencing the curriculum of universities on the employability skills needed for a quality fit into the workplace. Universities complained that various constraints are hindering them from following the pace of employers in terms of new technology and other advanced technical knowledge to be inculcated into graduates.

The limited-time that university staff comes to the worksite to collaborate with the mentors of students, in supporting and assessing the development of the student, is a challenge to the intention of internship programmes.

Hotel Employer 6:

*"university and employer should collaborate in the internship programme. Universities should encourage employers to work on internship strategies."*

Collaboration between university academics and worksite managers need further development for the exploitation of the learning opportunities and foci of learning possible at worksites during internships. In most cases, the academic staff's involvement in an internship is in search of opportunities for internships. This is where the collaboration ends. The collaboration needs to be extended into the expected learning for employability sphere. In this way, the beneficiaries will be the graduates, employers, and academics in these joint ventures. The joint participation of employers and academics is essential in internship preparation.

Drawing from these above excerpts, there is a level of partnership between some employers and academics for the organisation and implementation of internships. Collaboration on skills development between universities and employers is worthwhile performing some useful complex skills. They require greater collaboration between industry and academics to identify skills sets. The industry may need to re-test their expectations of graduates when work experience opportunities outside of the classroom are not provided. Without close collaboration between industry and the educational institutions, their chances of aligning the curriculum and graduate outcomes with their present and future needs are slim. Some industry research participants suggested that their companies are exploring the viability of identifying proximate vocational and higher educational institutions. Proactive development of beneficial relationships would deliver "perpetual sources of skilled human resources" to meet their ongoing skills requirements.

Probing further on this issue, the above data revealed that employers are not satisfied with their participation in the internship programme. They complained of the weak interaction of universities in involving companies in certain aspects of their internships, where they could have been more active. For example, in the hotel and ICT sectors where there is severe competition, requiring many high-level skills. Employers find that the services and technology are transforming and that the curricula have to be dynamic and in line with the current development.

Not all internships lead to developing employability skills. For example, some employers use intern students/graduate to perform menial and routine work (during our work placement, we did photocopies, filing, and dispatch), while some students do not excel in their internship opportunities (students were at ease when performing some clerical works, but could not apply employability skills, such as communication when left on their own to talk to customers) (Finance Employer 2). This means that there are challenges in teaching and learning within internship programmes, either from the perspective of employers (who provide a low level of workplace engagement during the internship) or from the perspective of students, who, for different reasons (rate of pay during the internship; lack of interest in learning) do not use this learning space for optimal *learning*. Hence, one challenge of an internship is that of commitment to learning, or commitment to facilitate learning during internships.

Employers understand that academics are multiplying their efforts, at least, to keep pace with industries, by working in partnership with employers and by sending graduates on internships.

From the data collected, another challenge faced by academics is a limitation on the academics' side to carry out and to teach employability skills of graduates at the university level. They lack facilities, be it in the knowledge of new technology, and the tools and equipment associated to deliver the training programmes.

Hotel Academic 5:

*"at the university, we cannot create a proper working environment. We are more concerned with the concept, the academic aspect of the occupation, whereas in hotels they are practising the authentic thing there with modern equipment and the latest available techniques. We cannot change our curriculum as quickly as employers do,"*

Also, the physical structures of universities are not like that of companies, which have access to customers in a normal work environment. The theoretical part of employability skills may start at university. However, the true practical aspects of employability skills have to be implanted in a proper environment, for example, in a workplace, and on sites of work. Thus, academics consider internships as a working platform for students to cope with the missing part of the curricula.

The challenges met by employers and academics are many when organizing internship for developing employability skills in graduates for the workplace. However, the viewpoints on employability skills from the interpretations of stakeholders taking part in internships are critical for understanding the employability of graduates. The employers highlighted their difficulty in inserting new technological components in the curriculum, whereas academics argue that they have to implement a broad-based curriculum for a majority of employers. However, employers recognised that academics are doing their best to produce ready-made graduates at the end of their study. Both employers and academics agreed that the workplace is the proper environment for graduates to put into practice what they were taught in the classroom.

## 5.10 Concluding Comments on the Demands in Preparing Graduates for the World of Work

The challenges in preparing graduates for the world of work are many and involve the full participation of academics, employers, and graduates. On further probing, I come across a fourth stakeholder, the policymaker who set up the rules of the game. These stakeholders allocate funds and create policies for the smooth working of the internships. To achieve effectiveness and

success, all stakeholders should commit and take part in internships so they inculcate employability skills into graduates. Thus, all parties will enjoy the programmes.

### 5.11 Conclusion

This chapter presented the data, and analysis related to exploring the relationship between internship and employability. The intention was to discover whether the internship of graduates impacts their employability, allowing them to gain a job. Using two vehicles of data sources, interviews with academics, employers, and graduates, and the literature reviews, this chapter presented evidence to suggest that the graduates' internship has a relationship with their employability skills. With academics, a comprehensive attitude was noted. This focused on the mandatory acquisition of employability skills by graduates on completion of their university courses. While employers need new ready-made graduates with employability skills to perform immediate works on recruitment, graduates also wish to possess these so-demanded generic skills by employers. However, graduates could only gain these employability skills when performing in a proper work environment (employers' workplace). Thus, they have to undergo internships while still at university. A joint partnership between academics and employers is a powerful alliance that allows graduates to access and complete their internship. Employers have access to a pool of ready-made graduates whom they recruit as future employees. Internship of graduates at their employers' base is in line with the university academic courses and is the means of training to enhance the employability of graduates. I present a further elaboration on these findings in the next chapter which offers theoretical perspectives on the findings of the study.

# CHAPTER SIX

# DISCUSSION OF THE KEY FINDINGS

## 6.0 Introduction

The previous Chapter Five presented and engaged with the data produced for this study leading to the thematic analysis and emergent findings of the study. This chapter builds on the analysis by identifying key findings of the study, engaging with them to form the basis for my understanding of the relationship between internship and employability of graduates as directed by academics and employers. Hence, I begin this chapter by presenting the key findings of the study that emerged from the analysis of the interviews of academics, employers, and graduates (Chapter Five). I discuss the key findings using key constructs of my theoretical framing that informed the data collection and data analysis processes. The second aspect of this chapter presents my positioning of the key findings. My position, referred to as the transformation of academic graduates into professionals in their field of study, articulates the relationship between internship and employability of graduates before they join the world of work.

The chapter concludes with a summary of my findings and shows the focus on the last chapter of my thesis.

## 6.1 Key Findings of the Study

Drawing from the interviews of the graduates, academics, and employers, several key findings emerge. These relate to:

a. **Perspectives on Graduate Attributes (Theme 1)**

One of the key findings of the study is that of the key attributes for graduates for employability. I categorise these attributes into what graduates have and what graduates are. A list of Graduate Attributes Framework includes the curiosity for learning that makes a positive difference, courage to expand and fulfil their potential, passion to engage locally and globally, creative problem solvers and researchers, critical and reflective thinkers, effective and influential contributors, and skilled communicators. I portray these graduate attributes as possessions or states of being; they are acquisitions or transformations. It is not clear to us how or when they are realised, or how this relates to curricular design. From my study, there appears to be a general agreement amongst all stakeholders on the key attributes for graduates for employability and these key attributes include a range of hard and soft skills. Graduates concur that they need both the hard and the eight soft skills (employability skills) preferred by employers. Therefore, they try to excel in soft skills that are supervised by professionals in the work environment. This is

consistent with the belief of Brosnan et al. (2016) which is that academics' contribution is to produce employable graduates to feed the labour market. From this point of view, I see that academics inculcate knowledge, skills, attitudes, and other technical skills into students to transform the graduates' key characteristics (University of Edinburg, 2016). Universities understand what employers need for the employability of fresh graduates and believe in the complex transformation of graduates from university life to the work environment. Employers value soft skills as important attributes. The significance of this finding is that graduates learn both hard and soft skills at university, then move to the workplace to apply them under the supervision of professionals. Graduates aim to develop employability skills. There will be linkages between university and employers in terms of the content of curricula and the development of graduates' attributes. However, in the workplace, the graduates will face a plethora of other conditions that exist at the employer's place in a workplace environment, the social aspects during training, the culture, and rules in the organisation.

An important outcome of workplace training that came in the data was a change in attitudes and approaches to understanding. Graduates increased confidence could produce the capacity to deal with uncertainty and complexity. Exposure to different ways of thinking, alternative epistemologies, a different culture and the varied practices of graduate peers, could provide entry into an unfamiliar conceptual scene. The result would not be that the interns had learned about new things; but that the candidates had developed an awareness of the uncertainty and complexity of the areas of an inquiry being dealt with. Their expanding theoretical understanding and epistemological versatility would have changed their practice across multiple fields. For some graduates, understandings shifted from absolute facts and logical right and wrong answers, towards negotiating and balancing original views.

The workplace, besides being a site of work that requires knowledge and skills of the job, is a social field in which people interact in a way to support and promote learning. In this workplace social field, I take it for granted the ways of being, acting, responding, cultural practices and positions of power which the graduate needs to come to know, understand and operate within. This workplace context is, therefore, a social field within which learning takes place through a process of embodiment (Bourdieu, 1986), meaning that the graduate needs to learn within this field to know and understand the way of life as an employee. Hence both the hard knowledge and skills required of the workplace must dialogue with the soft skills that drive the process aspects of working within that work field. One needs to know and understand, for

example, the communications meaningful to the field of work (together with the other eight employability skills).

This common knowledge of what I expect at a worksite (graduate attributes for employability) is therefore expected amongst all linked to developing competence for employability.

**b. Perspectives on Internship (Theme 2)**

The second key finding is that of the perspectives for graduates on internship. An internship is a planned learning activity that is built into programme design to link academic learning with the world of work. Internships are an advertised co-curricular activity that may enhance students' employability, future wages, and employers' talent needs. Regarding the perspectives on an internship, I based my study on the works of various researchers: Dewey (1938), Rogers (1969), Joplin (1981), and Kolb (1984).

The finding is noteworthy in that I found that all experiences are not educational, but all learning is experiential. The internship of graduates yields a plethora of experiential learning practice. Neither they can learn skill nor business ability from books alone, nor an observation of the work and management of others. Both require active participation, during the learning period, in productive operations of real economic importance. I include experiential learning in the graduates' curriculum at the university level. However, universities do not have the proper settings for graduates to develop employability and other technical skills as in a workplace situation, a proper working environment. Thus, the need for graduates to develop and learn these skills during internships before graduation.

From an epistemological perspective, experiential learning aligns with constructivism, which posits that graduates construct meaning from their experiences (Doolittle & Camp, 1999). These researchers suggest that constructivism occurs on a continuum from cognitive to social too radical, varying in the subjective aim, nature of knowledge or reality. The individual graduate constructs meaning, based on the defined nature of that knowledge. Learning occurs on a continuum from meaningless to significant, such as experiential learning. From the interviews, I observed five elements present in experiential learning: 1) direct, personal involvement, 2) graduate initiation, 3) pervasiveness, 4) graduate evaluation, and 5) the essence of meaning. The literature characterises experiential learning in two ways. The first set of theories focused on the process of experiential learning (Dewey, 1938; Joplin, 1981; Kolb, 1984); they relate the second

set of theories to the context in which experiential learning takes place (Dale, 1946; Joplin, 1981). As a result, further development of both facets of experiential learning provides an understanding of how people learn from experience.

Joplin's (1981)' five-stage experiential learning theories that the first stage is "Focus," in which the graduate is first exposed to the phenomenon studied; the second is the "Challenging Action" which involves direct interaction or experience with the phenomenon being studied.

During the action stage, graduates are engaged in processes such as ordering, sorting, analysing, and moving. Stages three and four correspond with the environment in which experiential learning takes place and occurs throughout the process. According to Joplin (1981), the environment for experiential learning should have sufficient "support" and "Feedback." Providing sufficient support by supervisors and mentors during an internship, allows the graduate to be challenged in a safe environment where risk-taking is endorsed and help is available when needed. Feedback is necessary to provide graduates with an assessment of their progress. The last stage of the model is "Debrief," during which learning is recognised, articulated, and tested. It is during this stage that graduates sort and order their observations from the experience and relate those observations to what they already know.

Kolb's (1984)'s work provides the most referenced model of experiential learning. Kolb defines learning as creating knowledge, proposing a cyclical model for experiential learning to comprise four stages, the Concrete Experience, Reflective Observation, Abstract Conceptualisation, and Active Experimentation. Graduates learn through their five senses. They reflect on what they have experienced. During this stage, they transform information through intention. The graduate breaks apart the experience and internalises the information. Graduates test the rules, generalisations, or hypotheses formed in the previous stage. Kolb asserts that during this stage information is transformed by extension, which again involves direct interaction with the phenomenon. Graduates gain practical, relevant work experience throughout their internships. They apply course content as part of the specific experience; and are supervised by both academics and employers (mentors/supervisors). Some graduates receive credit as part of their graduation requirements. Internships offered for academic credit are structured work experiences in which students pursue intentional, faculty-guided learning objectives, reflecting on what is being learned during the experience.

After synthesising the abovementioned theories, I propose the Model of the Experiential Learning Process for this study. Experiential learning begins with an initial focus on the graduate, followed by an initial experience. After the experience, graduates reflect on their observations and then plan generalisations. Using those generalisations, graduates experience the phenomenon again, by testing the generalisations with experimentation. Following experimentation, graduates further reflect and refine the generalisations, thus leading to further experimentation. The experiential learning process is ongoing in a spiral-like pattern. In my study, graduates gain hands-on experience, explore areas of practice, improve their knowledge and skills, and build their professional networks. ("Graduates attributes, according to my experience, are the many skills I learned, some at the university, and most of them on the job placement. For example, communication skills, technology skill, negotiation skills, interpersonal skills, initiative skills, enterprise, planning and organising, and teamwork." Hotel Graduate 6) Graduates work with experienced workers in the workplace environment. Each internship comprises supervised work at an approved field placement and an academic component taught by faculty. Supervisors are experienced employers committed to helping educate graduates, and they provide challenging and interesting professional experiences to interns in the workplace.

Active learning comprises a short course-related individual or small-group activities that academics call upon all students in a class to do, alternating with instructor-led intervals in which they process student responses, presenting fresh information. Active learning includes a professional conception of learning that comprises a dialogical relationship between theory and practice – i.e. internship is a space to dialogue with theory and practice within a supported authentic learning environment. It includes learning beyond the hard skills and knowledge, taking in include social learning and inquiry-based learning. *("We develop professionals who have the required knowledge in their fields to make readiness graduates. However, fresh graduates would get employability skills through experiences in the workplace. We at the university, we want our graduates to have employability skills and to do in the job."*
(ICT Academic 3*)*

Academics, graduates, and employers see an internship as a crucial component of learning. Thus, they consider internships as a planned activity with expectations and outcomes from an internship. Stakeholders' perspectives on an internship are a useful vantage point from which to understand internships, benefits derived from an internship and their expectations.

### c. Academic Learning for Employability (Theme 3)

The third key finding is that of the academic learning for employability. Education may provide certain skills and certification, but it does not provide work experience, nor those technical and soft skills complementing formal qualifications for organisational or industry knowledge that may be a prerequisite for job entry (Dhakal et al., 2018). The problem is that education and the successful completion of vocational and university programmes are not sufficient alone to provide access to an entry position in a chosen career. This is despite the acknowledgement that higher education, is being seen as a pipeline to the world of work. One issue that has been articulated for serious attention is a mismatch between the skills of graduates and those skills required for job entry positions (Tran, 2015). The perceived mismatch occurs across the content, structure, teaching, and assessment of university courses (Tran, 2015), suggesting that they do not align instructional and course designs with the knowledge and skills needs of the industry. This means that institutions need to assess and improve "graduate employability", in partnership with industry support, through internships.

The significance of this key finding is the establishing of the academic knowledge and skills needed, through the academic programme that it subjects students to in developing employability competences. Challenges associated with the employability of graduates are identified by governments, industry and educational institutions as significant constraints on future economic development (Burgess et al., 2018). Employers and the government are concerned as universities are not producing sufficient ready-made graduates to enter the labour market after completion of their university graduation. The issue is what employers need as employability skills that graduates have gained through academic programmes. The extent to which graduates are "work-ready" is indicative of their potential in terms of job performance and career advancement. I have not come across a clear conceptualisation of the definition of work-readiness in graduate employees in the current graduate recruitment literature. Work-readiness is described as a concept with original labels, such as work-preparedness, graduate employability, transferable skills, key competencies, and generic attributes (Cabellero & Walker, 2011; Daniels & Brooker, 2014). Work-readiness is not a recent phenomenon. It persists despite increased investment in the education of youth in many countries that open up opportunities for inexperienced people to enter the workforce (ILO, 2016).

Because of the variance in the perceptions of stakeholders, it is easy to compile lists of graduate work-readiness competencies. However, it is quite a different matter to research to determine

whether these competencies are the actual work-readiness competencies in graduates which will incorporate them into the workplace. Thus, the importance is that, not only is a list of graduate work-readiness competencies identified but also, there is a conceptualisation of work-readiness that is dynamic and relative to the context and nature of the worksite. This makes it difficult to incorporate in a single learning programme, be it at university or the worksite. There must, therefore, be a deliberate collaboration between universities and industries/worksites to complement each other in developing employability skills. Drawing from this insight is that they cannot fix employability skills for employment into a programme design of a university; nor can skill and knowledge development for employability be the express domain of industries/worksites.

For this conceptualisation, I frame graduate work-readiness in strategic management theory using the "resource-based view" approach. The resource-based view suggests that organisations can generate competitive advantage by acquiring or developing resources that are rare, valuable, and hard to reproduce and replace (Finch et al., 2016). We can regard employability as the complex integration and application of five specific resources and dynamic skills, valuable, rare, hard to imitate and to substitute by the market: intellectual, personality, meta-skill, job-specific, and integrated dynamic capabilities. I base this concept on Finch et al.,'s, (2016) study. It extends the notion further to conceptualise that work-readiness can be defined as an integrated dynamic competence that requires the reconfiguration, synthesis, and integration of four resources, viz., intellectual, personality, meta-skill, job-specific—that must be configured by graduates into a holistic, compelling and personal manner that appeals to potential employers. I propose this construct be known as a "Work-readiness integrated competence model" that may serve as a platform for further research into graduate work-readiness.

Intellectual resources are cognitive skills that are complex and involve decision making, problem-solving, reasoning and knowing how to learn from previous situations (Reid & Anderson, 2012). Since previous research has confirmed a strong relationship between intellectual resources and employability across a variety of occupations and contexts, such would fit as one dimension of graduate work-readiness. More so, given that employers perceive specific personality traits as indicators of future performance, contributions and career success, personality resources make up an important dimension of graduate work-readiness. Meta-skills resources also become an important dimension of graduate work-readiness. Recent research has noted these to be important predictors of employability (Canadian Council of Chief Executives,

2014). Job-specific resources show employers that a graduate possesses the minimum proficiencies required to perform a specific role (Finch et al., 2016). Graduates with intellectual, personality, meta-skill and job-specific resources must develop the ability to combine or reconfigure these resources to be work-ready. Such amalgamation will help them in being able to achieve and gain employability.

### d. Workplace Learning for Employability (Theme 4)

The fourth key finding is that learning in the workplace is the work environment in which we develop employability skills. Such involves the viewpoints of academics, employers, and graduates on, not only the employability skills needed by employers but also the diverse learnings that occur during an internship, the soft and hard skills (Dhakal et al., 2018). The internship of graduates cannot be narrowed down to a single aspect, place or individual. It is a coming together with a multiplicity of factors and forces of influence; such factors and forces are the situations that evolve. We can classify workplace learning theories in terms of two basic categories of theorising–learning as a product and learning as a process. The view of learning as a product influenced earlier accounts of the workplace. However, in my study, learning was on learners gaining novel attributes. More recent accounts are very much in line with learning as a process view (Clarke, 2017). Here, the focus is more on learners developing by engaging in the processes of workplaces. The view of learning as a product view and the view of learning as a process fit with the two most influential descriptions of learning, acquisition, and participation that underpin many educational thoughts.

Learning as a product joins with the acquisition image while learning a process accords with the participation symbol. Another point concerns the links between the two basic categories of learning theories and the notions of human capital (Bourdieu, 1986) and social capital (Bourdieu, 1988). Here the connections are more complex. It is too simplistic to align the individual learner by gaining learning as a product with human capital theory. It is also simplistic to contrast this with group learning as a participatory process based on social capital theory. This is so because some significant learning theories challenge the idea that learning has to be only either individual or social. These theories accept that, while all learning is in some sense social, this is compatible with some instances of learning is learning by individuals and other instances of learning which occur at the collective level. In the workplace, graduates from various social classes are trained by supervisors coming from a different society. I associate the general inclusive idea of a graduate's internship and employability with the model of social class. Some social learning

theories include a place for learning by individuals that are different from pure communal learning. Thus, it is a plausible initial claim that both individual and social learning are inherent but important dimensions of workplace learning. In the workplace, each person knows one another and acknowledges the beliefs of habitus, field, practice, doxa, and capital.

Another theory that contributes to the relationship between internship and employability includes the "transfer of learning theory".

In this study, the theory of the "transfer of learning" applies in the workplace environment under the supervision of professionals. I describe the transfer of learning as the process and the effective extent to which experiences affect learning and performance in a new situation (Committee for Economic Development in Australia, 2015). Such theories are outcome-based, concentrating on what is "transferred out" (WEF, 2017) of the learning context. They focus on how skills and knowledge are gained, learning in the original context and how these both impact transfers ("b*ecause what we teach in theory differs a lot with what we do in practice. We want to bridge the gap between what they teach at university and what they practice on-site. We send students on internships where they will learn and apply these employability skills and others in an actual work situation"* Finance Academic 1*).* Using examples, learning with understanding, meta-cognition, and contextualisation in the learning environment are all important to traditional theories on transfer (OECD, 2016). A transfer is influenced by learned perceptions of the learning and application contexts and a range of social and cultural factors such as their willingness to learn from others, approach to seeking feedback, creative use of resources and persistence in challenging situations. The better that graduates can interpret and relate to information in their new context (the workplace), the better they will transfer their gained skills and knowledge. -As stated by Hager and Hodgkinson (2009: 620), "*it is more realistic to view transfer as renovation and expansion of previous knowledge via the experience of dealing with new situations in new settings".*

***Learner Characteristics.*** Learner understanding of the concept and principles of transfer termed "appreciation of transfer", and the pre-conceptions and prior learning they bring to the learning situation may influence transfer (Walker et al., 2015). Certain personal characteristics and attitudes, the propensity for risk-taking, learning styles, job and career attitudes are also important (ACT, 2013b). According to the Ministry of Education and Training (2017), to achieve transfer, graduates must want to apply their new learning in the workplace ("… my previous

presentation skills at university helped me to receive customers" ICT Graduate 2). They link motivation to personality; yet other factors, such as a clear expectation of learning outcomes, a genuine desire for skill mastery, strong self-efficacy, and positive career attitudes, may augment motivation further. The Centre for Future-ready Graduates (2017) viewed that graduates should also have the mental, emotional and physical resources for devoting to transfer ("an acronym used by the supervisor helped me to remember a step-by-step safety procedure. I remembered how to make them easier later when faced with a situation" Hotel Graduate 2).

***Learning Programme Characteristics.*** Tran (2015) concurs that programme content, the similarity in tasks and content between the learning and application settings is they consider settings important, for example, the sharing of cognitive elements. *("they gave me opportunities to apply what I learned and also the proper equipment to perform the service." Hotel Graduate 1*) Understanding the theory behind the skills they are learning and strong perceptions of the relevance of content among learners may improve transfer (Prikshat et al., 2018). *("... my previous knowledge gain at university on this matter helped me to solve the problem." Finance* Graduate 2).

***Workplace Characteristics.*** Clarke (2017) argues that the actual work environment and learners' perception of the work environment including the extent to which they believe it is supportive will influence transfer. A broad range of workplace factors combines to form an overall climate for transfer. These include intrinsic and extrinsic rewards for using new knowledge and skills, and opportunities for practising gained skills and workload, - individuals requiring time to develop their reflective skills and experiment with innovation. ("working in a team under supervision is my best experience on how to solve a problem at the workplace." Finance Graduate 1).

Transfer of learning may be enhanced if the learner recognises similar content in the learning and application contexts. Detterman (1993:17) argues "you should teach people what you want them to learn in a situation as close as possible to the one in which I will apply the learning". This is, however, easier for bespoke corporate training with predictable application context, including feedback on learned efforts to apply to learn in the workplace (Clarke, 2017). In my study, graduates know that "applying what they learned in a classroom situation helped them to solve various practical works in a workplace setting". It is now that they realise the importance of prior theoretical learning.

From my study, I understand the involvement of a supervisor or other employee can facilitate or hinder that transfer. If the supervisor/employee takes the course and lends support, students are more likely to keep and transfer the knowledge. When a supervisor encourages participation in training and use of new skills on the job, this is when the transfer is most successful. If the supervisor is discouraging or uninvolved, this could have the opposite effect.

Freeman et al., (2008) argues that transfer is related to organisational performance. A graduate's motivation, which influences transfer, is related to how conducive the work environment is too high performance. If the learner believes his or her efforts will cause desirable outcomes, they are more motivated they are to learn, and are more likely they are to transfer. Work environment factors such as a commitment to quality, flat structures, and information sharing may, therefore, influence transfer through enhancing motivation (Jackson 2015). The data revealed that positive support from peers, including feedback from the group, is important in reinforcing the training and in encouraging transfer. I believe that supervisors could help by incorporating options for group interaction and feedback within the internship. In addition, this factor can and should include success stories from peers who have already used the training.

**e. Additional Learning Needed for Employability (Theme 5)**

The fifth key finding is that recent developments in higher education have seen a strong emphasis being placed on "work-ready graduates", depending upon noticeable graduate outcomes (Walker et al., 2015; Dhakal et al., 2018). The increasing demand from employers for a graduate to be equipped with employability skills and other technical skills has been normalised in the design of university graduates' capabilities. This is consistent with the notion of Cavanagh et al., 2015; Clarke, 2017), that the job environment is on the move. Different companies work in unique ways, and academics cannot teach anything available. Employers are complaining about the low level of performance of graduates who join the workplace after graduation. What employers need as employability skills and what competencies (theory and practice) are in the curricula reflect the existing gaps and mismatch between universities and the labour market. Thus, additional learning is needed for the employability of graduates. Although both academics and employers know of this problem, they are trying to unite their effort to take proper action to remedy this situation. This is consistent with producing ready-made graduates by academics with the collaboration of employers (Dhakal et al., 2018). Thus, these gaps in theory and practice in the academic's curriculum need to include additional learning for employability and other technical skills. Employability comprises four key elements (Dacre Pool & Sewell, 2007). The first of

these: a person's "employability assets", comprises their knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The second, "deployment", includes career management skills, including job search skills. Third, "presentation" is concerned with "job getting skills", for example, CV writing, work experience, and interview techniques. For someone to make the most of their "employability assets", much depends on their personal circumstances and external factors such as the current level of opportunity within the labour market). My study reveals several issues relating to overall integrating of employability skills into the curriculum design.

It is interesting to note that the current focus on the delivery of employability skills has also appeared to stimulate general interest in curriculum design. Although the curriculum is often presented as an orderly and methodical construction, the actuality is a great deal less straightforward. A diverse range of forces drive the curriculum, some of which are conflicting; its implementation is influenced by the individuals involved in teaching and learning. The problem might come with its actual delivery, thus, the importance of the monitoring and assessment of the employability process. It may also be possible that some academics focus on an issue relating to their fields of learning rather than on the employability skills agenda that does not drive the curriculum. Such suggests that employability skills may not always be the highest priority when curricula are designed. The other issue is of employer consultation has some implications for ready-made graduates and for how far academics should consider the needs of employers when designing their curricula. This is an issue that requires further discussion by practitioners in Higher Education and policymakers at University and national level.

I drew on the work of Bandaranaike (2017) to assist in my understanding of the additional learning for employability. The "*Work Skill Development (WSD) framework is a learning and teaching model applied in Work Integrated Learning (WIL) to facilitate an understanding of a placement role, resource utilisation, planning and management, lifelong learning, problem-solving and critical thinking, and communication in the workplace"* (Bandaranaike, 2017). This framework attempts to narrow the gap between the partnership of placement graduates, academics and employers. The focus of this framework is on teaching and learning work skills through reflective practice and identifying of employability skills. Work Integrated Learning (WIL) refers to a range of pedagogic and assessment practices from practicums, placements, internships, workplace experience or blended learning, focused on gaining job experience. Here, the term WIL is used to identify many internships that integrate academic learning with

applications to the workplace. The framework uses cognitive and affective skill sets and measures. I see levels of autonomy to be an invaluable tool for facilitating the transition from university to the workplace. Given the documented research gap in the mastery of employability skill competencies (Patrick et al., 2008), the Work Skill Development Framework (WSDF) provides informed strategies to fill the gaps and assist graduates in some six skills facets - initiative, resources, lifelong learning, management, problem-solving, and communication. The WSDF maps the level of student autonomy using five defined Levels - prescribed direction, bounded direction, scaffolded direction, self-starting direction, and open direction. In my study, academics highlight their efforts together with employers, to narrow the gap between academic learning and workplace requirements ("*Because what we teach in theory differs a lot with what we do in practice. We want to bridge the gap between what they teach at university and what they practice on-site. We send students on internships where they will learn and apply these employability skills and others in an actual work situation."* Finance Academic 1). WIL may be an inappropriate concept for employability skills because it focuses on complementary learning for academic learning. Internships go beyond complementary learning and include a dynamic learning process exposing students to new learning, adaptive learning and working in developing contexts.

**f. Challenges and Opportunities in Preparing Graduates for Employability (Theme 6)**

The sixth key finding is that the challenges of universities are consistent with the literature. Examples of challenges include the preparation of ready-made graduates who could gain a job after completing their study, the shortage of employers to take part in the internship of students, and the scarcity of employers in some fields. This is consistent with the concept that work-readiness can be defined as an integrated dynamic competence that requires the reconfiguration, synthesis, and integration of four resources— intellectual, personality, meta-skill, and job-specific resources (Dhakal et al., 2018). These resources need to be channelled by graduates into a holistic, interesting and personal narrative that appeals to potential employers. The challenges also include issues of quality of staffing, infrastructure, and resources for teaching, learning and managing school education and low financial resources within the community. Many challenges and issues arise where there are graduate transition and employment problems. Investments in education are made to boost individual and community living standards and are assumed to generate a return to the individual and the community (World Bank, 2017). If this is not the case, then the justification for the heavy investment in tertiary education is difficult to sustain. However, this situation would delay graduate employment.

This key finding is noteworthy in that these have been in the research domain for a long while now; while they made some interventions at a higher level, yet they persist. The significance of this finding is that both academics and employers know of these challenges to produce graduates with employability skills. As in this study, they suggest having engaged in reviewing and findings ways within the partnership between academics and employers to address these issues, not remaining in isolation (ILO, 2015). However, they found arrangements around these challenges and sought to address the employability of graduates leading to an economic advantage. For example, academics saw the organisation of internship programmes for graduates during their last two years before graduation. They used the success of this formation to build the image of universities. Some academics aimed for graduates to pursue their training in employability skills on campus. Other academics thought of placing graduates on an internship in a company under the direct supervision of professionals. Employers believed that the best solution for graduates who wished to gain employability skills and other related skills was through an internship of graduates. Here, the graduates would be trained and developed in an actual work situation and under the guidance of experienced workers. Sometimes, graduates will be in direct contact with customers and performing the same job as other employees, for example, in the hotel industry. However, both academics and employers thought a management solution essential to improving graduate's performance, motivation, and support. These different pathways suggest that various factors play a substantive role in improving graduates' performance. These varied and unique ways suggest that employers have a repertoire of possibilities for transforming their workplace and that the chosen ways depend on the decisional investment (ILO, 2015) that they have gained a position in deciding and envisioning a graduate's success. The path to a new collaboration between academics and employers is consistent with Dhakal et al., (2018) view through intergroup contextual engagement, whereby they recognise strengths and values in each partner. These recognitions become the inspirations for new social identity constructions.

Another challenge of this study is to change in-built identities in which the graduates became non-employable at the end of their academic programme. This possibility requires a set of fresh insights. This is only achievable when academics enter communication with employers, deriving first-hand information on the needs of employers. In each of the interviews of academics when they came into contact with a new employer, they could identify the needs and challenges that the respective employers were facing. As a result, they proposed practical solutions to change the negative image of the universities. These solutions were academic-based and were within the

capacities of the existing resources of the respective universities. The significance of this finding is that to change the image and identity of a university, we need a fresh perspective. This fresh perspective is achievable through new employers' leadership with an employability background, meaning that new academic should be a recurrent feature in universities to stimulate change. This finding speaks to the motivational element of social identity change in that there has to be a motivating factor or element to start as an academic for social change. With this study, the new employers became the motivational element for university change in they could identify the need for change, find practical solutions to support the changes in the curriculum and convince the university community to aspire to the envisaged university change. New employers, therefore, improved the planned outcome of this change in graduate performance per employability skills, a key indicator of an organisation's image and identity.

This finding is also consistent with notions of transformational leadership in that the new employers wanted a new identity of the organizational purpose of the internship of graduates. Here, this referred to a better graduates' performance in employability skills (Employability and Career Forum Employability, 2017). As noted earlier, graduates' results were the key indicator of a university's success and very much of its image and identity within communities. The concept of identity encompasses the memories, experiences, relationships, and values that create one's sense of self. This amalgamation creates a steady sense of who one is over time, even as new facets are developed and incorporated into one's identity. One's identity comprises three basic elements: personal identity, family identity and social identity. Hence the striving to improve learner's performance as the organizational purpose of the university meant that these new academics had to transform their schools to achieve this institutional purpose. This study suggested personal beliefs, self-efficacy and confidence, and a sense of self as drivers of leadership that led employers to change their company images and identities. The implications of this key finding are that of confidence in employers to lead change. This confidence does not happen. Not all employers are concerned with the recruitment of graduates for an internship or concerned that academics did not invite their participation. The study highlighted that academics are working with more employers in organising job fairs for the recruitment of graduates in internships. The employers' profile is reinforced with minor successes along the way. This means that employers emerge through their profiles and their leadership qualities through their experience of being in various leadership positions along the journey to becoming a notable figure in the internship programme.

The role of academics and employers is to transform graduates. Academics showed that their new mind-set was not to accept the status quo. They used their gained experiences with employers to change their curriculum and their approach to the education of graduates in employability skills. Graduate performance in employability skills is a complex concern and requires multi-perceptual regard. Here, someone has to be in a leadership position with the authority to do something about the status quo. Hence, the concern becomes a stimulus for change. This concern also speaks to transformational leadership in that all the employers blamed academics for the inferior learner's performance of their universities. This personal initiative of the stakeholders is also consistent with transformational leadership qualities that suggest that leaders should lead the change that they envision for their graduates/future employees (Aguilar et al., 2017; Hanushek et al., 2017). Both academics and employers in this study showed their interest and initiative to lead change in their respective environments and for their benefit. This personal initiative to lead graduates' change with employability skills at the end of their academic terms is only apparent if they come into an unfamiliar work environment at the employer's workplace. The thinking behind this assertion is that these stakeholders aspire to personal foot-printing. They are keen to make their presence felt in the university and the organisation as a symbol of their leadership capacity and quality of transforming organised and performing graduates. Further to this assertion is that this transformational change may not be in an educational environment in which academics have been part of its poor image arises from the difficulty of stepping out of the familiar environments to foresee new pathways. Henceforth, a new partnership between academics and employers would then provide graduates with relevant internships in which they would gain employability skills needed when gaining employment.

# CHAPTER SEVEN
# CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

## 7.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I have identified and interpreted a finding that captures the essence of my study. Six themes were covering the perspectives on graduate attributes, perspectives on an internship, academic learning for employability, workplace learning for employability, additional learning needed for employability, and challenges and opportunities in preparing graduates for employability. Employability skills are general skills necessary for success in the labour market at all employment levels and in all sectors. The significant persons who are associated with employability are academics, employers, and graduates.

The purpose of the current study is to explore the relationship between internship and employability and to understand this phenomenon. I interviewed six employers, six university academics, and six graduates who have taken part in an internship project. Interviewees come from three sectors of the economy of Mauritius including Information, Communication and Technology sector, finance sector, and hotel and accommodation sector.

I developed themes from the interview transcripts, journal articles, research reports, and books, through a systematic literature review. I analysed them for their contextual dimensions for internship and employability.

Chapter Seven concludes my study. I present a narrative response to the research questions followed by recommendations to significant persons and structures based on the key findings of the study. This locates the insights and new constructs that emanated from my study. This closing chapter outlines the critical research conclusions, summarises the major discoveries, proposing the contribution to knowledge, impact and practical suggestions. Reflections on the limitations of this study and orientations for future research occur after that.

## 7.1 Research Aims and Objectives

The principal aim of this research is to understand the internship and employability from the graduates, academics' and employers' viewpoints.

In the beginning, I established an interpretation of the literature review in identifying the nature, value, quality, ability, intensity, and therefore the relevance of the information on a graduate's

internship and employability. The review serves to reflect a rational idea of how the graduates, the academics, and the employer's perspectives are now positioned. First, based on the literature review, the graduates' viewpoint on internship and employability has been under-researched, and it does not consider their voices. This study has focused on this gap by moving forward the graduates' voices and perspectives—fear, apprehension, opportunities, what they do not learn in the university, expectations from internships—what they receive from their internships which contribute to their employability, and what they do not have from internships. On many issues, graduates have the same views and perspectives on specific matters related to employers and academics. This study shows that employers' and academics' point of views are aligned. Thus, the literature review exposes a limit within the literature on graduates' perspectives on internship and employability.

Based on these discoveries, it would suggest there are debates about internship and employability, the stakeholders concerned, and the gaps in employability skills. This study has varying and complementary viewpoints and opinions on the mindsets of stakeholders expressed in the literature. For interpretation, in this study, both graduates and employers agree on the urgency of establishing internships. Both parties highlight the soft skills that employers prefer. However, academics afterwards included these soft skills at a higher level in the curriculum.

Curriculum design and development are becoming an essential part of many degree programmes designed. These findings show that university curricula are contributing to developing employability skills according to academics and employers. The soft skills that are more able to attract the interest of employers include a positive attitude, grit, persistent determination, ethics and resilience, communication skills, teamwork, problem-solving skills, self-management skills, planning and organising skills, technology skills, lifelong learning, and initiative and enterprise skills. This finding affirms that employers are searching for these job-specific skills (employability skills) among others when recruiting employees. Besides, no students have gained all their learning experience at the university. Academics are improving the content in curricula to fit in the practical work experiences in complex workplace contexts provided by internships. This research has shown that the employers' demand for ready-made graduates is persistent, and the number of students' wish to take part in internships to gain employability skills is high. The workplace provides opportunities for graduates to gain soft skills and alternative technical skills. Thus, at first, students learn and practise those soft skills at the university, doing so in the employers' workplace at a later stage.

The findings have reported that academics are uncertain of what employers demand. Academics have the perception that some employers are unaware of the future skills they will need. Some employers need specialised skills while others prefer other types of skills. Academics perceive the added complexity of how to supply the needs of all employers. I notice that this concept is a concern given that a sandwich degree course is for four years. In my study, employers expect academics to have inculcated their employability skills before graduation. Academics discuss with employers the content of the curricula. Various meetings with employers give academics the opportunities of improving and clarifying the various curricula which could reflect the workplace, promoting the university's trustworthiness in performance. This resistance to reform by some academics as pointed out earlier is improved by most of the personnel, who encourage comments from employers included in curricula design and assessment. Academics are for including employability skills in the university curricula, preferring to combine what they teach at the university and what graduates practice in the workplace during internships.

The injection of the employability skills into the curriculum by academics' results from the complete cooperation of employers in internships. Employers have consented to offer more places to students for their training and development. Also, employers have agreed to enlist these graduates after their graduation and their achievement of their job placement. The findings support statements from many investigators who find that employers have accepted the duty to enrol more students for internships.

In line with conclusions from this study, I found that both employers and graduates do not agree on the duration of all the work placements. Employers favour long work practices while graduates prefer shorter duration placements. Academics agree with employers on long-term improvement and suggest the sandwich placement as a convenience. The sandwich placement allows graduates to practise in the employers' workplace what someone has taught them in classrooms while still being students at the university. Students may have the choice to start multiple internships with the same or other employers. Some employers offer internships on a sandwich basis for a twelve-month duration. It scared students on this programme.

The first step of analysing the current literature serves to find the gaps in the literature is to ascertain how reliable the present literature is. I, therefore, continued to compile data on the fundamental aim which is the graduates' understanding of internships. The present research highlights that graduates are behind the graduates' perspective of their internships. Graduates

highlighted that they were consulted regarding internship and employability. Once the neglected context of the graduates settled, I then discuss and negotiate with the research objective numbered two to assemble fundamental data from higher academic staff' experiences of internships. I compared the information gained from academic staff against those of the other internship stakeholders: graduates and employers. On completing objective two, I consider objective three: to choose data from employers' viewpoints. Those employers are engaged or have performed in internships. I thus correlate the data collected against those of the graduates' and academics' perspectives. I gathered primary data collection from recent graduates, employers, and academics. I used the policymaker's perspective to analyse the secondary data. Graduates' views are gained for the research into their employability. I assessed and compared the viewpoints of graduates to those of other stakeholders. Thus, the analysis of all the stakeholders' data gives an understanding of graduates' employability through internships. The internship has allowed graduates to have access to unique employability skills, gaining experience being in demand by employers, and practise their research skills. Internships benefitted the three stakeholders, the university, the employer, and the student. Students had the benefit of experience, involved in career exploration, practising what they understood in class in work under supervising professionals and helping in promoting the organisation. The employers' gains comprised new, talented students with fresh ideas, at a low cost, with extra labour to satisfy both short-term and long-term targets. The employer further projected a favourable image in the group of individuals living in a specific region. Employers gained a medium for screening potential employees. Academics benefitted by the programme in creating natural student learning in an environment which was not traditional, allowing the university to set up new partnerships within the community, and integrating academic and specialist courses. Students who took part in the academic internship programme were working with an academic; were registered for academic credit as part of that experience. This entailed that they were not only accountable to the company but also to their faculty for their work. With this increased accountability, students would promote an excellent foundation based on advanced education and practical experience. The university was part of the education indispensable to success in the actual world of work.

I maintained that the university should exercise considerable effort or strength as government, employers, and students wanted greater accountability efforts in employability. Stakeholders demanded a return on invested capital. First, the policymakers' strategy had targets for an experienced workforce that sustains development goals. Second, employers preferred to select

candidates from a competitive pool of graduates. Third, the interns exerted considerable effort to be employable through employability skills achieved through training, emanating from their academic experience. The growth in the economy would depend on developing a large and robust pool of skills from which employers could recruit candidates. Employers were in a stronger position to recognise the skills needed for the success of the organisation. They engaged work-ready graduates. However, employers imposed a benchmark against which they test qualified recruits for employment. The perspectives of graduate employability were not seen in the employability literature (Dhakal et al. 2018).

In my study, graduates attain employability skills in a job situation at the employers' workplace. Academics, in collaboration with employers, organise internships to expose graduates to employability skills in the proper work environment. The philosophical knowledge of employability skills that graduates studied at universities was now practised in the workplace under supervising professional employees. Graduates agreed that the relationship between internship and employability was organised and worked under supervising professional employees. Academics recognised employability as a circle of abilities, understanding that prepared individuals were more workable to organise effective career decisions, that they secured satisfying employment, and became successful in their preferred career. Academics further supported that students needed these employability skills for their performance and that such was favourable for their ambitions. Career services counselled graduates by suggesting their future careers at the university. They identified that employability was more than about growing qualities, techniques or experience to enable a graduate to gain employment or to progress within a respected career. Employability made more reasonable the resolution of changing from one place to another, between jobs, both on the inside and to organisations. For the success of their chosen occupation, graduates also had the power to understand professional courses and specific skills. However, not all the graduates would proceed to a better position in life or a better job in the career ladder. This finding showed that employability would not lead students to fulfil their career goals.

This research, therefore, conforms to the overall aim and the related research objectives. The next part considers the principal findings of this study when dealing with the central research questions, elaborating on the four sub-questions.

## 7.2 Responses to the Research Questions Guiding the Study

In this section, I return to the research questions that guided this study and respond to these questions.

The key research question was: What is the relationship between internship and employability?

The sub-questions were:

i. How do graduates experience internships?
ii. What are the higher education academics' experiences of internships?
iii. What are the employers' experiences of an internship?
iv. How do these experiences lead to employability?

### 7.2.1 Research Question 1 (i): How do Graduates Experience Internships?

Graduates' experience in an internship was one of the four sub-questions outlined in Chapter One. Graduates have varying experiences on the internship challenges, with varying degrees of experiences in struggling to learn employability skills and other relevant technical skills utilised in organisations. They had divergent views of the internship, and these reflections created a mutual or common relationship with the critical realist perspective.

The environment of the workplace was intense, aggressive and demanding of all the interns, even those who had to become familiar with the settings and expectations, finding his or her place amongst colleagues and completing assignments. Depending on the individual student's motivation and identity at the start of the internship, the interns' ways of recognising and reading practices differed, as did the pace and degree to which they could understand the motives in the practices. The realities differed between individuals and groups for developing new skills. Some use this internship to develop their hard and soft skills, some used the internship to explore what it means to work in an authentic work environment, some wanted work experience and some wanted to earn money. Graduates seize the internship for building relationships and networks.

Based on the graduates' interest in an internship, their experiences were mixed. Some graduates enjoyed the experience and benefited from the experience. Other graduates went through the motions of completing a curriculum requirement because the internship was mandatory. Although graduates viewed the internship as an indispensable means which inculcated in them

the essential employability skills to enter the labour market, graduates saw this opportunity for full-time placement.

In this study, graduates discovered that their work experience had improved both their employability skills in particular and other useful technical skills with the competences needed in the workplace. The learnings they received from their internship included problem-solving, communication skills, leadership skills, presentation skills, critical and analytical thinking, presentation skills, teamwork, self-and time management, work-specific knowledge and skills, and enhanced technological skills. Graduates even recognised that employers laid a significant value on essential skills and work experience, thus their motivation for taking on an internship programme.

The graduates' experiences of internship in terms of its duration and number were also mixed. Some preferred longer durations, and some preferred varying worksite experiences. Graduates could select organisations that offer these facilities.

I illustrate the higher education academics' experiences of internships in the next section.

### 7.2.2 Research Question 1(ii): What are the Higher Education Academics' Experiences of Internships?

The higher education academics' (academics) was the second of the four sub-questions which I outlined in Chapter One. Understanding all the contrasting perspectives from the academics provides knowledge of constructing a graduate's internship. Apart from their insufficiency of resources and other constraints, academics have the responsibility of improving the development of students. They knew they were more focused on the theory of learning in universities and that students needed to transfer their theoretical knowledge, skills, attitudes into practical experiences. Thus, academics play the special role of a coordinator for graduates and employers in internships. They believed that graduates should gain a set of employability skills or soft skills and other technical skills that would make graduates employable or work-ready.

Academics' experiences of the internship start with their motivation for organising, coordinating, overseeing, and recording their shared actions with employers for the benefit of graduates. Irrespective of the compulsory or non-mandatory internships for students in different fields, academics see the internships as a significant practical training whereby students are exposed to

work on-the-job for a period. Academics expressed that organising and promoting internship experiences for students through internships is not a simple task. They adopted various roles, apart from being the lecturers for providing knowledge. Academics became coordinators for organising internships, organising job fairs and meeting employers. They visited interns in the workplace and discussed any matters linked to training with employers. They communicated with the mentors or workplace supervisors, tested the interns' performance and decided the final grade for the internship and examinations. Academics also consider that these work experiences exist as an indispensable constituent of their academic programme. They support the students, encourage, and oversee students, while they experience their internships. Academics receive feedback on the behaviour and achievements of students in internships from supervisors.

Academics consider an internship as a temporary placement stage, during school breaks or vacations, and they acknowledge the duration and other conditions with employers. They both form a partnership to organise technical meetings, job fairs, or invite employers as guest lecturers to communicate with students. They further nominate representatives of employers to form part of the University's Committee, proposing the design of curricula and other matters about the collaboration between employers and the universities. They commit employers to recruit students for internships.

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Challenges faced by academics to produce a ready-made graduate include the lack of resources, the difficulty in changing the content of the curricula, difficulty in finding a placement for students for internship and the lack of potential employers to take part in internships. They could not teach all the employability skills and other technical skills at the university level because of the variety in demands of competencies from various employers. Academics believed that students need real exposure to the transforming work environment. Therefore, they encourage students to undergo internships. Some students rejected this opportunity for personal reasons. Academics noticed the adaptation to the site of work was complex for some interns who joined the internship for the first time. While some of them well-matched to the workplace, others considered that they were more competent on the academic side. They were reluctant to be exposed to the work environment. Academics recognised that all students had gained in the workplace came from their experience supervisors, employees, colleagues, and other professional employees on-the-job. Academics reported that they taught soft skills. However, students could only make realistic simulations, since the university platform is not a physical

workplace environment. According to them, the workplace is the unique world of work that allows students to practise during internships.

I portray the employers' experience of an internship in the next section.

### 7.2.3 Research Question 1 (iii): What are the Employers' Experiences of the Internship?

Employers' experience in an internship was one of the four sub-questions outlined in Chapter One. Most employers understand the philosophy by which we do not make universities with the purpose and expect to produce ready students for specific jobs on graduation. However, the experiences of employers in internships are enormous.

It involved employers in internships for various reasons. In many fields, they adopted different goals when taking part in the internship programme. Some employers recruited interns for placement according to the agenda set by policymakers who wished to have a pool of ready-made workers at professional levels. Other groups of employers wished to have free extra labour for a particular time frame. Employers in large organisations took part in the internship programme to safeguard the right image of the company. Further, they wished to conform to their corporate governance practices and to be in line with regulating the organisation. Another employer in a trustworthy company found the internship programme valuable for both the employers and interns, thus allowing students with more professional experience in companies. Employers viewed these qualified interns at the end of their training programme as a pool of new fresh potential applicants for future employment. The internship gave employers the opportunity of contributing to training youths. They accepted the chance of recruiting prospective employees at small HR costs. A group of employers believed that the recent graduates from the university come up with fresh ideas and as interns, they could help shape the future of their companies.

In collaboration with academics, employers negotiated the duration, paid or unpaid transport costs, and other issues about the internships' programme for the students, for example, job fairs, and delivering talks on campus. Through internships, employers allow students to develop and to train in employability skills and other technical skills. Employers provided access to students, to equipment, and tools used in real work. During the internships, employers allocated supervisors to graduates in their field, who serve as mentors, to work with and to guide them. Supervisors help interns to socialise and to feel at ease with other colleagues. Employers train

and develop students in employability skills and other technical skills, appraising their performance. They received academics at the workplace during the internships' visits, giving them feedback on interns. They discussed issues applicable to present and future internships, and the recruitment of graduates. Some employers functioned as a board or committee representatives to advise on the design of curricula and other matters on internships. Employers prepared training plans, giving training in employability skills, appraising interns, giving feedback, and support for graduates in the company. Some employers designed internship programmes that were tailor-made for their specific work environment. Some employers declared that fresh graduates were academic, they were excellent in their technical subjects. However, they could almost not perform in the workplace. Some new interns might have an exceptional level of knowledge in some fields and yet express themselves poorly when arriving at working positions. Employers also found that some components of the curriculum that graduate had studied at the university were not considered applicable to the workplace. Graduates were deficient in employability skills communication, problem-solving, teamwork, leadership, presentation, and management among others. Employers also noticed that the curriculum offered in some field by the university was not good enough and that more practical skills were essential in that domain. According to employers, interns learned from the other employees how to deal with clients and how to communicate and do advertising. They struggled to establish a distinct work environment, comfortable for interns to adapt. Employers who take part in internships recognise that the internship is an organised model for supporting students to develop working experience about their career goals. Through internships, they offer students the opportunity to "learn by doing" in a company environment where professionals in their fields supervise students. Thus, these experiences reflect that together they need something more to enhance a graduate's academic career and personal development. Employers set the workplace as an environment in which graduates learned continuing professional development as graduates. In reality, employers appreciated the workplace that allowed the graduates to apply a theory gained in lecture rooms to practise in the workplace, studying cultural understanding and serving as the learning environment.

Employers who took part in internships were satisfied with their experiences. They understood that they allowed for a situation of assisting graduates to know and understand the nature or meaning of what developed in institutions. They recognised that without internships many graduates might not be capable of understanding how to work under supervision, to work in a team with colleagues, to readjust and deal with the problem. Employers proposed that the

principal aim of internships is to give something favourable or indispensable to graduates a meaningful experience that enhanced their soft skills in the workplace environment.

### 7.2.4 Research Question 1 (iv): How do these Experiences Lead to Employability?

Graduates gaining experience in the field before graduation is critical not only for an effortless transition into the workplace but also for enhancing graduates' career progression and prospects for employment after graduation. In this respect, academics have been called to reconsider the curriculum, the internship work experience, as the link to achieve the above and provide students with the closest window into the labour market. The "hands-on" work experiences in complex real-world contexts provided by internships are becoming a central strand of the curriculum in many undergraduate degree programmes. This connection between academia and the world of work has been valued not only by employers but also by participant students who have claimed many benefits of this unique opportunity, including the enhancement of their academic, professional, and personal development. To achieve these benefits in an effective and valuable way, several key elements need to be addressed.

Responses from the previous research questions have shown academics to include a broader range of attributes that could enable graduates to do the job in the actual world of work through internships. The response in producing employable graduates via the development of the individual abilities and skills of the students has been the incorporation of mechanisms such as supervised work experience into the curriculum. Some claims support that internships are employability signals that contribute to the development of a flexible, skilled and enterprising labour force. Employers have positive views about graduates who have undertaken internships. This reminds us that internship experience is viewed as an important factor which employers use in screening job applicants' resumés. Consistent with employers' statements, they revealed it that students with internship experience have a significant competitive advantage in their quest for employment after graduation. Also, answers from employers favour graduates who have had an internship experience over their peers who have not had one. Employers agreed that those who do not have the internship experience are at a competitive disadvantage in the current labour market. Under such circumstances, internships are necessary links between higher education and a graduate's career. The work experiences were supervised and in a career field of interest to the student. The experience provides an opportunity outside the classroom for these students to explore their interests, to gain practical expertise, and to assess whether they wish to further pursue a chosen field. Students apply classroom learning, theories, and experiences in a

professional setting, to gain valuable work experience, information and new ideas on how to enhance work performance, shape their professional identities, grow in terms of greater self-confidence and maturity, and develop a culture of adaptation to the real world of work by experiencing environmental problems in a complex real-world context. Without a doubt, all these outcomes bridge the gap from the academic to their professional working future, helping students towards success in the labour market. Graduates undergo experiential learning (learning takes place both in the classroom and outside of the classroom), showing that theory reflects the practice and that practice reflects theory, providing a meaningful link between what is learned in the classroom and what is practise in the professional arena. Experiential learning offers students the opportunity of applying and integrating what they have learned.

Responses from stakeholders showed the components of the internship experiences to comprise many elements. These mechanisms comprise the learning plan and the learning objectives, the internship agreement, reflection (reflection is an essential element of any internship since the experience without this essential component is only experienced), and evaluation of graduates at the end of the internship. In the previous questions, stakeholders highlighted the value and benefits of the internship experience.

In the current study, graduates acknowledge that their work experiences have enhanced their employability skills, and they have been recruited by the same employers on completion of their internship. Academics who coordinated and supervised the internships are agreed that the workplace is the exclusive world of work that allows students to practise during an internship. Employers who take part in internships announced that, without an internship, graduates might not be capable of performing as professionals in a work environment. Therefore, it can be deduced that the internship experiences lead to employability. Employers would not recruit graduates with no experience.

### 7.2.5 Research Question 1: What is the Relationship Between Internship and Employability?

In this section, I explore the relationship between internship and employability. Apart from the two phenomena “internship” and “employability” which will be described in this section, “relationship” was another keyword used. A relationship denotes how two or more people or matters are connected. In this study, the two variables were “internship” and “employability.” At the same time that all relationships promised compatibility between the two variables, there

was an argument that approved the two variables were not only agreeing, but that one comprises the other.

Findings from the discussion of the key findings and analytical thinking of the data collected through the stakeholders' interviews, gave the empirical components of this relationship. I analysed the perspectives on graduates' attributes, perspectives on an internship, academic learning for employability, workplace learning for employability, additional learning needed for employability, and the challenges and opportunities in preparing graduates for employability. I came across some thirty (30) most relevant components from both internship and employability. Matching data of the two phenomena showed that all these components are related and correlated. These results substantiated the title of the study's thesis that stakeholders experienced useful perspectives on internship. Also, these results confirmed that stakeholders experienced positive and functional aspects of employability. Further, the results from the common list confirmed that there was a relationship between internship and employability. Also, students who underwent internships were trained and developed in employability skills by employers. The two phenomena – internship and employability – complement each other in perfect harmony. This shows that a relationship between internship and employability is a correlational relationship one.

### 7.3 Who would Benefit from this Study and How?

Findings from my study reveal that the benefit of internships and other experiential learning opportunities is undisputed. Internships connect employers with the community and university and provide the opportunity to foster relationships through mentorship and training. Academics should require or encourage every student to incorporate these internship experiences into their paths toward graduation. Finding from my study reveal that graduates' benefits from internship include:

- career exploration
    - learn about a career field from the inside and decide whether this is the right one
    - work alongside a professional
    - observe the workplace and see whether it matches their expectations
- leadership and skills development
    - opportunity to practise communication and teamwork skills
    - learn new skills

    - provide evidence that you have initiative, are reliable, and have a sense of responsibility
    - apply some ideas learned in school and gain confidence
    - achieve a sense of accomplishment by contributing to an organisation
- networking and establishing of mentors and references
    - meet new people and practise networking skills while establishing a network of professional contacts, mentors, and references
    - open door to advice and guidance
- resume enhancements
    - gain valuable experience and accomplishments to add to the resume
    - create an advantage over other jobs
    - potential for a full-time job offer after the completion of the internship

Employers benefited from internships in the following ways:

- interns offer a fresh perspective and have exposure to fresh ideas
- enhance the company's social strategy by fulfilling social responsibilities
- interns may become entry-level hires
- gain an extra set of hands and receiving part-time help
- offering mentorship opportunities

Universities benefitted from the internship:

- improved reputation
- other forms of funding
- networking to the local community
- external curriculum assessment
- practitioner (employer) input

Internship programmes are positive and offer benefits to all parties involved: the student, the employer, and the institution.

### 7.4 Methodological, Contextual and Theoretical Interests

An effort to understand what motivates graduates, academics and employers' approaches to internship and employability entail researching why they do what they do and the way they do it. As a result, the research involves delving into the understandings of the stakeholders, their thinking, their feelings, their social context, their culture–all those tangible and intangible elements difficult tough to capture.

### 7.4.1 Methodological Interests

Using a semi-structured interview for this research has enabled me to link the participants' viewpoints, their motivations, and beliefs. I could collect useful processes and actions that prompt them. I was, in that way, able to reconstruct the processes of how internship and employability are organised, and the role of each stakeholder. The methodology used, carried me through the different phases of the organisation and implementation of internship from the different stakeholders' perspectives, into the diversity of organisations where significant experiences took place.

Examining internship and employability may appear to deal with methodological practicalities, for example, how to generate data, how to ensure validity and reliability of information collected. The methodological approach using a semi-structured interview was encouraged to mine distant experiences of participants caused by successful or unsuccessful episodes from the past to resurface. I emphasise the human dimension to capture the maximum of information from participants.

I extracted the information from the fieldwork from participants by being flexible in my approach with data production. I know that when dealing with human beings; I have to find adequate means of drawing out the required information for a better insight into the phenomenon under the lens. I was flexible in the research methodology, which allowed me to supplement my tools (such as informal conversations and visual data) and to change tools to accommodate the participants.

### 7.4.2 Contextual Interests

The research, which I carried out on the island like Mauritius, highlighted the impact of contextual features on the development of graduates' conception of internship and employability. The first contextual construct was a local country with an international viewpoint. This encourages a discussion on the local/international level by drawing attention to the restricted number of internships and employability projects that can result from a small population of learners compared with other developed countries.

In Mauritius, as with many other similar countries, individuals who have not experienced the internship and employability projects in life may be prone to adopting a conservative vision of the government policies concerning the internship of fresh graduates. Few graduates, who

studied in the hotel, medical, and engineering sectors, have undertaken an international internship. The positive implications of such contact may lead to implementing a more international outlook and to a unique idea of an international internship project.

### 7.4.3 Theoretical Interests.

At the theoretical level, the concepts that emerge from the study include the beginnings of internship and employability in a multi-cultural and multi-lingual context. Graduates develop and try to understand and appreciate the value and functions of the different internships through the organisations' culture, function, communication, economic, social and so on. All these factors work with one another, and, as a result, shape the graduates' beliefs and principles. Since these factors mentioned above change in nature and are subject to change in different circumstances, the graduates' viewpoints are in constant motion and are busy evolving.

## 7.5 Contribution to Knowledge, Impact and Practical Recommendations

Employers' complaints and arguments have prevailed for decades. Policymakers have been asking for closer university and employers' partnership in the latter years, related to this as a potential claim to the skills shortage. Regardless of this focus, employers' complaints persist. This study has outlined that there are tremendous consequences on the employment of young graduates throughout the years. For example, stakeholders have one of a kind factors of view on conceiving employability for graduates. The drop-in of the graduates' trust has been a grave restriction in the literature. Without a broad perception and grasp of this indispensable view, employability initiatives are growing untrustworthy.

University workforce is under pressure, even although this find out about proposing the moral obligation that employers desire to introduce better sharing, increasing the employability of graduates. Employers want to supply better work experiences as a step toward securing employability for all stakeholders. The recruitment practices of employers have been deemed inefficient when you consider that graduates do no longer display the abilities employers want in the interview. Therefore, employers realise that continuing recruitment approaches do no longer lead to employing the correct candidate. Regardless of this consciousness of this knowledge, employers argue that they have no intention of revising recruitment practices. If this recruitment exercise persists, employers will struggle to employ the right candidates, increasing the Human Resources costs. Instead of insisting that HEIs enhance graduate employability,

employers have to first learn about and test their vain enrolment procedures. They accept that reform would assist them in recruiting graduates with competencies and talents.

This study, therefore, increases know-how in this discipline as it offers three stakeholders' points of view on producing ready-made or employable graduates. The findings then furnish information on how to set up a structure of the relationship between internship and employability. The framework factors to the basic social constructions to enlighten the three stakeholders' points of view of graduate internship and employability. Findings from the analytical questioning of the facts accrued via the participants' interviews, make contributions to the empirical factors of this study.

To summarise, therefore, this lookup creates both empirical and theoretical contributions. First, the empirical share consequences from the data amassed from graduates produce an ultimate evaluation of a situation, developing a mutual or common relationship with other employability stakeholders. The greatest empirical judgments are:

- the relevance of higher education institutions
- the person employers' demands and new ability hopes of graduates;
- work experience covers other situations, which are now not all concerned about having the same capacity, quality, or measure as another through employers;
- social and cultural capital are strong characteristics among the graduate employability conception;
- I refer further affirmation and help to as for in improving university-employer partnerships.

This research aids to promote a perception of the graduate internship and employability concepts, and many pieces of evidence have now moved:

1. to increase the determinations from this research to academics, profession officials, and educators. High-level personnel can, as a result, inform college students of the burdens they face on graduation. University workforce ought to grant besides aid and courage for students to think about for an internship in their first year at university. Staff would aid students to take care of their employability increase in the course of the first stage, and enable them to shape their partnership with academia, accomplishing certification one at the back of the difference for the duration of their degree.

2. academics go into the front line to make more specific their troubles in making sure internship to students, hence they provide three suggestions for this:
   a. HEIs provide more placements and internships for students within the organisations;
   b. HEIs check out other modes of developing behaviours in students and advance a working team, and
   c. to search for also counselling and suggestions on growing college – employers' cooperation
3. employers' enrolment workout routines need reviewing as they do no longer in shape the work.

### 7.6 Limitations of the Study

This research has its limitations. The findings brought about by this research must be regarded as produced by these limits. I highlight three central concerns of limits in this research. Chapter Six analyses the limitations of the study, and an abstract now follows.

First, the most significant limits belong to the sample sizes of the participants. For this study, I selected eighteen participants. These comprise only a few individuals of the thousands of participants in their various fields. For a qualitative approach, the estimated number of participants conforms to the model. A significant result does not require more information than is to be compiled.

Second, another beneficial aspect of this research is the free method adopted. The researcher uses a qualitative and interpretative method to collect data. I used an interview schedule in the face-to-face interview for gathering data. The researcher recorded the data per audio recorder. I represent the body language in written papers by the interviewer. The interviews were fieldwork and were given where participants are working.

Third, the other weakness of this study may be the researcher interviewing the interviewee face-to-face in the interviewees' place of work. During data compilation, the researcher may influence the replies of the interviewees. There is the possibility that the interviewee may mislead or may try to satisfy the interviewer. Here the researcher must be intelligent and attentive to the body language of the interviewee when answering the questions on the matter presented. It is, thus, essential to triangulate or debate the qualitative data compiled with other similar written interview schedule and interview questions as alternatives.

## 7.7 Recommendation for Future Research

The primary purpose of this research was to give attention to the relationship between internship and employability. Even though this research becomes a means to enhance existing perceptions of this view within such a circumstance, there is notable potential to advance work in this field. First, the long-term effect of the economic climate on a graduate's internship and employability reflects the inadequacy of certainty or security. Therefore, one future field for methodical research is to set up facts seeking long-term research. Second, this study encompasses the graduate's means of imagining an internship after graduation, the academics as organisers of the internship, and the employers as the provider of placements during the internship. Third, there is a need for more longitudinal studies that investigate the impact of an internship on employability and career advancement years after the internship experience. Therefore, considering a longitudinal constituent would transform a meaningful understanding of how graduates' attitudes vary in time. Third, another field for a forthcoming work could question graduates about their ability reached in realising internship and employability. This research has progressed through limits in applying a qualitative method. A reasonable step could be to expand on these findings with a quantitative method.

## 7.8 Conclusion

Overall, rich data collected from the internship and employability stakeholders focused on the views of graduates. I also compiled data from academics and employers. The data assembled from the internship and employability stakeholders is both emergent or sustaining our attention. The data, however, affords inadequate information on the views of graduates. The data was better compared to other internship and employability stakeholders. Therefore, the data gained by this study also adds to the dispute.

Exploring the relationship between internship and employability within the social background sets up a well-timed and noteworthy piece of methodical research into this interpretation. However, the economic situation is not fixed long term, and therefore the labour market will always be advancing. An extensive examination of this field is pivotal in keeping informed of present-day views and improvements on the student internship and employability conception.

This chapter has revisited the aims and objectives framed by this research, elaborating on how these have been carried out. There are significant themes in the findings of the relationship

between internship and employability. This chapter has further prompted the limits gone through by this research, which provides for a base on which subsequent research could be built.

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# Appendix 1. Proofreading Services Certificate

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30 June 2020

**To whom it may concern**

This is to certify that I, Lydia Weight, have proofread the document titled: Exploring the relationship between internship and employability by Julien Pierre Jacques Marie-Jeanne. I have made all the necessary corrections. The document is therefore ready for presentation to the destined authority.

Yours faithfully

L. Weight

# Appendix 2. Turnitin Report

turnitin

## Digital Receipt

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THEORISING (EXPLORING) THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTERNSHIP AND EMPLOYABILITY

CHAPTERS 1 – 7

J. P. J MARIE-JEANNE

1

# Appendix 3. GATEKEEPER PERMISSION (for ‘graduates’)

The ‘graduates’ are above 18 years old and according to the Laws of Mauritius, the graduates have attained the age of majority at 18 years old.

## Appendix 4. GATEKEEPER PERMISSION (for representative/s of employer responsible for the internship & employability programme)

Mr. XX

Director / Human Resource Manager

Dear Sir / Madam

I am a doctoral candidate at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. As a requirement of my Ph.D. (Education) I have to undertake a research study. I intend to explore graduates' internship experiences and employability in general and the facilities your organization offered in particular. It seeks to explore: a). the experiences of employability held by employers and graduates, and b). whether there is a relationship between internship and employability. I am seeking your permission as the head of the organization to interview Staff responsible for the internship and employability programme after working hours or at any convenient time, at the employers' place or any specific place guided by employers

The interview will last for approximately 45 minutes and will be digitally recorded. I want to assure you that every precaution will be taken to ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of the information provided by staff. The names of participants will not be on any text and in the study pseudonyms will be used. The identity of the organisation will not be revealed. As with any research conducted under the auspices of the University, my study is guided by strict ethical considerations that protect the participant at all times. Such considerations are anonymity, the confidentiality of responses and the right to withdraw from the study at any time without negative repercussions for the research participant.

It is hoped that the findings of the research will not only enrich my own understandings of the topic but will be used for improving academic programmes and internships. Further clarification can be obtained from Professor Michael Anthony Samuel, Tel 027 31 2607255 and by email amin@ukzn.ac.za. Should you have any questions about your participation and your rights in the study you may contact Ms. Phume Ximba of UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee at ximbap@ukzn.ac.za or call her at 27 31 2603587.

Yours faithfully,

_____

J.P. Jacques MARIE-JEANNE

**Appendix 5. A copy of the letter to the Graduates to participate in the interview.**

# Interview Schedule

## Graduates

In-person Introduction

Hello, ___. Thanks for your willingness to participate in my research about your previous experiences of being an intern. This study will be the focus of my dissertation as I am pursuing a doctoral degree in Philosophy (Education) from the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Hopefully, this study will be helpful to employers, university career services professionals and faculty members who assist graduates in identifying, arranging, and completing internships.

Being able to interview faculty staff, graduates and employers enhance the validity of my study. Information that you share for this study is considered confidential. For my research, your name and any other names of related persons will change. Do you have any questions about the "informed consent form" you have been provided?

I will be audio-recording our interview so that I can give you my full attention during the interview and make sure that I capture every word of your responses to my questions. At a later point, I will also provide you with a chance to review the interview transcript to help verify the information collected today.

During our interview, I am going to be asking you questions about your internship experiences. Please take your time in responding to all the questions. The most important goal of this interview is to benefit from your first-hand familiarity with and interpretations about graduates' internship experiences

At the end of our interview, you are welcome to ask me any questions you have about today's session or my research. Do you have any questions before we begin?

1. We are talking together because you completed an internship during your graduate programme at the university. Please tell me about your internship… [Prompts: For how long have you been

involved? Were you allocated a mentor/ supervisor? Did you receive any allocation/stipend while on an internship? Any unusual experiences during your internship?

2. How do you define 'graduate attribute'?
3. How do you define 'employability?
4. Why did you undertake a placement?
5. What did you hope to gain out of your internship?
6. While you were on an internship, did you have much contact with the university?
7. What might have prevented you from participating in the internship/experience programme?
8. What changes, if any, would have improved your experience with an internship programme? (prompt – documentation –preparation for internship – assessment of your work or learning – finding placement)
9. Does the university involve you as a graduate-in-employment in classroom learning for the student and do you consider this work-integrated learning?
10. What type of classroom experiences do you think replicates the work of work?
11. What do you consider were the learning outcomes (or just what did you learn from your internship?) from your experience of the internship programme?
12. Have you achieved other outcomes, such as research collaboration, from being involved in work placements?

Thank you for sharing your thoughts and experiences with me today. As I mentioned earlier, the information you have provided will be handled confidentially. I will be back in touch to offer you an opportunity to review your interview transcript and receive a summary of my final report. Is your email the best way to get back in touch with you?

Thank you again for your input and participation.

**Appendix 6. A copy of the letter to Employers to participate in the interview.**

# Interview Schedule

## Employers

In-person Introduction

Hello, ___. Thanks for your willingness to participate in my research about graduate experiences in internships experiences about employability. This study will be the focus of my dissertation as I am pursuing a doctoral degree in Philosophy (Education) from the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Hopefully, this study will be helpful to employers, university career services professionals and faculty members who assist graduates in identifying, arranging, and completing internships.

Being able to interview faculty, employers and graduates enhance the validity of my study. Information that you share for this study is considered confidential. For my research, your name and any other names of related persons will be changed. Do you have any questions about the "informed consent form" you have been provided?

I will be audio-recording our interview so that I can give you my full attention during the interview and make sure that I capture every word of your responses to my questions. At a later point, I will also provide you with a chance to review the interview transcript to help verify the information collected today.

During our interview, I am going to be asking you questions about your organization's participation in internship programmes. Please take your time in responding to all the questions. The most important goal of this interview is to benefit from your first-hand familiarity with and interpretations of graduates' internship experiences.

At the end of our interview, you are welcome to ask me any questions you have about today's session or my research. Do you have any questions before we begin?

1. Please tell me about your involvement in a graduate internship. [Prompts: have you had many students placed with you? For how long have you been involved? How are long students usually

placed with you? Any unusual experiences with interns in your company? How do you fit interns into your organisation – e.g., do they have orientation/ allocation of mentors or supervisors?

2. How does your organisation define 'internship' and 'employability?
3. Why do you participate in a university internship programme?
4. Does/did the internship achieve these outcomes for your organisation? Basic skills and understanding? Knowledge & intellectual ability? Workplace skills & applied knowledge? Personal & interactive skills? Factors in assessing quality? Changing workplace practices? Building social cohesion?
5. What might prevent you from participating in the internship programme?
6. What changes, if any, would improve your experience with an internship programme?
7. In your opinion how important is the internship experience for university graduates for your field? Would this internship experience on a resume impact a graduate's chance for employment with you?
8. The practicum experience is supposed to be an authentic learning experience. Was it? Why?
9. Are there particular placement models or lengths that work best for you as an employer?
10. Are you involved with the university/universities in other capacities, and, if so, in which way?
11. How would you like to be involved with universities? In what capacity?

Thank you for sharing your thoughts and experiences with me today. As I mentioned earlier, the information you have provided will be handled confidentially. I will be back in touch to offer you an opportunity to review your interview transcript and receive a summary of my final report. Is your organisation's email the best way to get back in touch with you?

Thank you again for your input and participation.

**Appendix 7. A copy of the letter to the Faculty Staff to participate in the interview.**

# Interview Schedule

## Faculty

In-person Introduction

Hello, ___. Thanks for your willingness to participate in my research about internships about employability. This study will be the focus of my dissertation as I am pursuing a doctoral degree in Philosophy (Education) from the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Hopefully, this study will be helpful to university career services professionals and faculty members who assist undergraduates in identifying, arranging, and completing internships.

Thanks also for your recommendations of graduate participants. I am following up and arranging interviews with graduates who have been recommended by faculty. Being able to interview graduates, employers and faculty enhance the validity of my study. Information that faculty and graduates share for this study is considered confidential. For my research, your name and any other names of related persons will be changed. Do you have any questions about the "informed consent form" you have been provided?

I will be audio-recording our interview so that I can give you my full attention during the interview and make sure that I capture every word of your responses to my questions. At a later point, I will also provide you with a chance to review the interview transcript to help verify the information collected today.

During our interview, I am going to be asking you questions about your observations of undergraduate internship experiences. Please take your time in responding to all the questions. The most important goal of this interview is to benefit from your first-hand familiarity with and interpretations of undergraduates' internship experiences.

At the end of our interview, you are welcome to ask me any questions you have about today's session or my research. Do you have any questions before we begin?

**General university/internship issues**

1. Could you tell me a little about your role within the university and how that role relates to the internship?
2. How does your university define 'internship'?
3. Do you have strategies for extending or promoting an internship at your university? If so how?
4. What do you think are your university's key challenges in the field of the internship?
5. What do you think are the key agenda items surrounding internship, nationally and internationally?
6. Have you got suggestions on how these could address?
7. What policies and structures do you think the government needs to put in place to promote the uptake of internship across Mauritius?
8. Are you involved with employers in other capacities, and, if so, in which way/s?
9. What other issues surrounding internship do you feel need further exploration?

**Internship / student learning & employment issues**

1. In your opinion how important is the internship experience for university graduates in your field? Would this internship experience on a resume impact a graduate's chance for employment?
2. What might prevent undergraduates/students from participating in the internship programme?
3. What were the students expected to achieve from their internships? (That is, what were the learning outcomes or objectives set for the internships?
4. In your experience, which outcomes are most likely to be achieved in an internship? Basic skills and understanding? Knowledge & intellectual ability? Workplace skills & applied knowledge? Personal & interactive skills? Factors in assessing quality? Changing workplace practices? Building social cohesion?
5. Do you think the internship helped undergraduates put into practice strategies they had learned in class? How?
6. Do you see an alignment between what undergraduates are taught in university and what is required of them in employment?

Thank you for sharing your thoughts and experiences with me today. As I mentioned earlier, the information you have provided will be handled confidentially. It would appreciate it that I have access to your documentation concerning internships. I will be back in touch to offer you an opportunity to review your interview transcript and receive a summary of my final report. Is your university email the best way to get back in touch with you?

Thank you again for your input and participation.

## Appendix 8. Informed Consent Form

# Informed Consent Form

## Exploring the relationship between internship and employability

Declaration

I _____ (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of this research project and I consent to participating in the interviews.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire without any negative or undesirable consequences.

_____ _____

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT DATE

# Appendix 9. Participant Information Sheet

## Exploring the relationship between internship and employability

Dear Participant,

I invite you to take part in a research study as part of a study under the auspices of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. This study will examine how the perceptions of employers and Higher Education Institution (HEI) Staff concerning the skills, knowledge, and characteristics which help graduates acquire employability skills.

Four issues are important: a). what is the nature of the relationship between internship and employability? b). how do graduates experience internships? And c) what are the employers' experiences of graduate employees who have gone through an internship? d). what are the academic staff's experiences of internships?

The duration of the interview will be approximately 45 minutes and will be audiotaped. Every effort will be made to ensure that no one will know that you took part in this study. If I use any information that you share with me, I will be careful to use it in a way that will prevent people from being able to identify you. To protect your identity, I will ask you to provide a different name during the interview. You are free to withdraw from the research at any stage without negative or undesirable consequences to me. All information is only intended for research purposes. All data recordings and transcripts will be stored on a hard disk with passwords.

Permission to conduct this research study has been obtained from the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The supervisor of this project is Professor Michael Anthony Samuel, from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, School of Education. Should you have any questions about your participation and your rights in the study you may contact Ms. Phume Ximba of UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee at ximbap@ukzn.ac.za or call her at 27 31 2603587.

Thank you for your co-operation.

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J.P. Jacques MARIE-JEANNE

## Appendix 10. Example of post-interview confidentiality Form

# Exploring the relationship between internship and employability

## Post-interview confidentiality form

It is our goal and responsibility to use the information that you have shared responsibly. Now that you have completed the interview, we would like to give you the opportunity to provide us with additional feedback on how you prefer to have your data handled. Please check one of the following statements:

___ You may share the information just as I provided it. No details need to be changed and you may use my real name when using my data in publications or presentations.

___ You may share the information just as I provided it; however, please do not use my real name. I realize that others might identify me based on the data, even though my name will not be used.

___ You may share the information I provided; however, please do not use my real name and please change details that might make me identifiable to others. In particular, it is my wish that the following specific pieces of my data not be shared without first altering the data so as to make me unidentifiable (describe this data in the space below):_____

___ You may contact me if you have any questions about sharing my data with others. The best way to reach me is (provide phone number or email):

Respondent's signature_____ Date_____

Investigator's signature_____ Date _____