

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND
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SCHOOL OF GEOGRAPHY, ARCHAEOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL
STUDIES



**University Curriculum Development for Hospitality Management Programmes: A
Perception from the South African Hospitality Industry**

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

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Ethics Clearance Number H21/08/29

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“The financial assistance of the National Research Foundation (NRF) towards this research is hereby acknowledged. Opinions expressed and conclusions arrived at, are those of the author and are not necessarily to be attributed to the NRF.”

DECLARATION

I, Awo Ama Dede Quartey, certify that the contents of this thesis, including all data, figures, tables, and other information, are entirely my own original work.

This thesis is being submitted to the University of the Witwatersrand's Faculty of Science in Johannesburg for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. It has never been submitted to another university for examination.



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ABSTRACT

The rapid growth of the tourism sector and a need for skilled personnel necessitates the development of academic curricula to address skills gaps. However, some Higher education institutions have included hospitality modules in curricula to produce a professional workforce, maximise the industry's potential and promote economic growth and national development. While these programmes have a theoretical foundation, the delivery of content has been hampered by structural and institutional difficulties. Utilising an online semi-structured survey of 34 hospitality companies, open-ended questions and extensive literature, this thesis explores the challenges of curriculum development in the hospitality management discipline, ways of developing curricula, and stakeholder involvement to ensure comprehensive curriculum development in South Africa. Moreover, it investigates employers' satisfaction with the competencies of graduates and Work-Integrated Learners and the competencies that are desirable and required to enhance the employability of graduates. The findings show that regardless of the multiple challenges and the solutions that have been put forward, industry representatives are on the whole satisfied with the various competencies of graduates and Work-Integrated Learners. When combining the levels of agreement (strongly agree and agree), most representatives agreed that upholding professional principles, listening skills and adjustability are the most desirable skills. Other skills mentioned were having a friendly attitude when serving customers, confidence, trustworthiness, and verbal and written communication. Upholding professional principles, an optimistic attitude, a willingness to assist, communication skills, and teamwork are among the top competencies needed to augment the employability of graduates. The research revealed that although the curriculum envisaged practical training, multiple stakeholders' engagements, and performance indicators, it nonetheless emphasises theory over practical application, takes too long to develop and is outdated regarding the market trends. The research concluded that there is not enough current industry input with the constant changes that are occurring within businesses. This thesis recommends strong ties between universities and the hospitality industry to understand current trends, constraints and skills needed to boost the sector.

Keywords: Curriculum development, tourism, hospitality management, sustainability, employer satisfaction, graduates, Work-Integrated Learning

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ABBREVIATIONS

BCOE	Basic Conditions of Employment
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development
FEDHASA	Federated Hospitality Association of South Africa
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
ITTC	Institute of Tourism Travel and Culture
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
NCV	National Certificate Vocational
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
RII	Relative Importance Index
RSD	Research Skills Development
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SDG/SDGs	Sustainable Development Goal/s
TH&E	Tourism, Hospitality and Events
TVET	Technical and Vocational Educational and Training
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USA	United States of America
WIL	Work-Integrated Learning
WSD	Work Skill Development

CHAPTER ONE

FRAMES OF REFERENCE

1.1 Background to the Study

Globally, tourism continues to play an important role in different countries economies and national development. As a result, tourism is now being integrated into in the curriculum of higher education systems in many countries across the globe. Studies have been conducted on curriculum development for tourism/hospitality (management) programmes in the United States of America (USA) (Ritchie, 1995; Milman, 2001; Dopson and Tas, 2004; Mills et al., 2009) in Australia (Wells, 1996; Wang and Ryan, 2007; Dredge et al., 2012) and in Europe and Asia (Cooper and Westlake, 1998; Caruana and Lau, 2014; Thapa, 2018; Hyasat, 2022). The development of curricula that are specific to the tourism and hospitality discipline is essential for creating systems for stakeholder involvement in curricula change, bridging skills gaps, providing high-quality service, creating more jobs and bettering economic and national growth (Ritchie, 1995; Wang and Ryan, 2007; Caruana and Lau, 2014; Bello et al., 2019; Griffin, 2020; Xu et al., 2022; Mota, 2023). Stakeholder cooperation guarantees alignment between tertiary education institutions and industry requirements (Philips, 2023). The involvement of numerous tourism stakeholders enhances the relevance of the curriculum and programme content for the industry, eventually bettering graduate employability and job readiness (Renfors et al., 2020; Philips, 2023). It is important to update tourism curricula to meet the demands of the labour market and to present recent graduates with the skills and knowledge they require to compete in the market (Burlacu, 2023). Formal training introduces vital elements of control into curriculum development which can be used to direct teaching and learning processes and guarantee that students obtain the needed competencies (Nyanjom and Wilkins, 2021).

The dissemination of content at the graduate level has been impeded by the inability to decide on the exact course goals, the need for industry involvement, internship opportunities being harder to find, and the lack of access to contemporary technology and physical spaces to engage in online learning (Dopson and Tas, 2004; Mills et al., 2009; Jameson-Charles, 2012; Xu et al., 2022). The latter three are a result of the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic (Xu et al., 2022). Xu et al. (2022) examined hospitality and tourism higher education in Hong Kong after COVID-19. Xu et al. (2022) disclosed that online education was a problem for students

and academics. These issues have negatively affected their ambition, concentration, and social networks and raised doubts about their chances of locating a job in the industry (Xu et al., 2022). One can deduce that the pandemic has made us more aware of the necessity of staying up to date with current technology, as without it, students will fall behind in their studies and employers will not be pleased with their skill sets if they choose careers that require extensive use of these tools.

Unlike the USA, Australia, and some developed nations in the north, the tourism and hospitality industry in most developing nations, especially in Africa, have not achieved the intended results due to interconnected institutional and capacity challenges (Mukolwe and Cheloti, 2016; Olowoyo et al., 2020; World Travel and Tourism Council, 2023). Mayaka and Akama (2015) examined advancements in Tourism, Hospitality and Events (TH&E) in tertiary education and the issues surrounding curriculum development and its implementation in Africa, with a specific emphasis on Kenya. These authors argued that there are tensions between national needs and global impacts, in addition to conflicting theoretical principles and educational perspectives. An example of this tension has to do with the growing availability and demand for online education. On one hand, educational institutions can reach more students globally (Mayaka and Akama, 2015). However, it exposes institutions and their curricula to international competition (Mayaka and Akama, 2015). There are diverse theoretical frameworks used by academics from geography, sociology and economics in the tourism field (Mayaka and Akama, 2015). Geography theories comprise agglomeration theory, location theory and evolutionary economic geography (Hassink and Ma, 2017; La et al. 2021). The tourism economic theories also used by sociologists consist of modernization, dependency, globalization and world system (Ukabuilu and Igbojekwe, 2015). A similar observation was supported by Manwa et al. (2011) in the Botswana's tourism education. These authors concurred that tourism education and training in the country do not mirror the requirements and priorities of businesses, society, and government. A similar observation was made by Asirifi et al. (2013) that hotel managers in Ghana believed that the courses being taught in institutions of higher education are theoretical and that the curriculum should be steered by the present requirements of businesses. A similar argument was pointed out by Sadik (2017) that there is an insufficient focus on hands-on skills within an extremely theoretical hospitality curriculum in Ghana. Similarly, Moyo and Özgüt (2022) found that internships in the field of tourism and hospitality management in Zimbabwe offered minimal training in hands-on

competencies. Aina (2010) argued that what is required in tertiary institutions on the continent is real transformation; plans that will guarantee changes in the structure and procedure of knowledge production are particularly significant. Studies within the discipline of tourism and hospitality in South Africa have discussed curriculum development at higher education institutions (Geldenhuys, 2003; De Wet, 2009; Hewson, 2010; Jugmohan et al., 2022). The literature cites curriculum challenges, such as excessively theoretical curricula that offer insufficient exposure to industry, resulting in a shortage of skilled graduates (Jugmohan, 2010; Razack, 2017). As a result, the issues facing the skill and development training in South Africa's hospitality and tourism industry are not immune to what pertains to Africa and other regions of the globe (Sadik, 2017; Renfors et al., 2020; Xu et al., 2022).

The curriculum in tertiary institutions should focus on the skills and knowledge that industry requires for future graduates to be employable and increase the satisfaction of their employers. Studies worldwide have dealt with industry's views concerning the employability of graduates in the tourism and hospitality sector (Chan, 2011; Dhiman, 2012; Wang and Tsai, 2014; Ayad, 2022). The research aids universities in bettering and developing tourism and hospitality curricula, preparing graduates for the rapidly changing tourism business environment (Chan, 2011; Dhiman, 2012; Wang and Tsai, 2014; Ayad, 2022). Moreover, studies carried out have also focused on competencies and other factors required for graduate employability in tourism and hospitality businesses globally (Raybould and Wilkins, 2005; Zehrer and Mössenlechner, 2009; Harkison et al., 2011; Kleeman, 2011; Sisson and Adams, 2013; Wardle, 2014a; Caiyod et al., 2015; Ali et al., 2017; Scarinci et al., 2022). The purpose of the studies was to identify any gaps between industry and student expectations of desired qualities in graduates/employees (Raybould and Wilkins, 2005; Harkison et al., 2011). This would allow the curriculum to be revised to better reflect the demands of industry (Sisson and Adams, 2013).

Similar to global studies, employability research in tourism and hospitality in Africa (Owusu-Mintah, 2016; Owusu-Mintah and Kissi, 2017; Sadik, 2017; Sadik et al., 2021; Ayad, 2022) also aims to enhance curricula, to best prepare students for the workplace. Studies have also focused on the employability of tourism and hospitality graduates in South Africa (Moolman, 2012; Moolman and Wilkinson, 2014; Naicker, 2017; Razack, 2017; Wakelin-Theron et al., 2018; Ndlovu and Cupido, 2021). These studies were conducted to either provide a foundation for developing curricula, achieve educational reform or increase graduates' capacity to gain

and maintain employment (Moolman and Wilkinson, 2014; Wakelin-Theron et al., 2018; Ndlovu and Cupido, 2021). Perceptions of graduates' employability were somewhat similar, with researchers noting that tourism graduates lack skills, work readiness, and training (Jugmohan, 2010; Razack, 2017; Wakelin-Theron et al., 2018). The reason is that some tertiary institutions do not provide Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) in their tourism programmes or there is insufficient exposure (Wakelin-Theron et al., 2018). Thus, curriculum transformation is necessary as it will ensure that graduates are appropriately trained, and the tourism industry will therefore continue to prosper (Caruana and Lau, 2014; Du Preez et al., 2016).

1.2. Problem Statement and Research Gap

1.2.1. Challenges Involved in Curriculum Development

Several studies have been conducted on curriculum development in the hospitality and tourism field globally (Milman, 2001; Dopson and Tas, 2004; Deale et al., 2009; Deale and Barber, 2012; Renfors et al., 2020; Zizka, 2022). Most of these studies have been conducted in the USA. These studies have indicated diverse problems relating to skills gaps, the content of curricula, and a divergence of views regarding the importance of sustainability topics in the courses of study (Milman, 2001; Dopson and Tas, 2004; Deale et al., 2009; Deale and Barber, 2012; Renfors et al., 2020; Zizka, 2022). A number of studies have addressed curriculum issues in the field of tourism and hospitality in Africa (Barron and Prideaux, 1998; Hewson, 2010; Jugmohan, 2010; Manwa et al., 2011; Asirifi et al., 2013; Erisher, 2013; Mayaka and Akama, 2015; Razack, 2017; Sadik, 2017; Mahmoud, 2018; Moyo and Özgüt, 2022). Similar to the global studies there are skills gaps; however, they appear to be more pronounced in Africa in addition to a lack of capacity and infrastructure. More studies in Africa have indicated a lack of sustainability principles in the tourism and hospitality curricula (Barron and Prideaux, 1998; Moolman and Wilkinson, 2015; Fehlner, 2020; Moonga et al., 2022) than global studies (Zizka, 2022). Fehlner (2020) argues that insufficient education is one of the main causes of a widespread lack of awareness about sustainability. Fehlner (2020) further states that the lack of sustainable tourism education is as a result of a vague concepts, that is, tertiary institutions are not sure about how to apply a concept that has not been sufficiently defined and explained.

Tourism, hospitality and events education specifically in Sub-Saharan Africa faces daunting difficulties that necessitate inventive techniques (Mayaka and Akama, 2015). These difficulties include different stakeholders with conflicting interests, various types of educational technology and a lack of a platform for stakeholders to plan out the future of tourism education (Manwa et al., 2011). Furthermore, there are challenges of a shortage of physical educational resources in universities, low staff confidence, a shortfall of employees, a lack of financial support, poor financial development, a lack of appropriate social facilities and infrastructure, and insufficient teaching assistance (Mukolwe and Cheloti, 2016). In addition, institutional management and academic employees appear hesitant to use funds (Olowoyo et al., 2020). Mayaka and Akama (2015) argue that the social setting that TH&E education has to thrive in the present era of unparalleled change and unpredictability is especially varied and complicated. The authors thus explored the problems affecting the development and execution of curricula in Africa, with a focus on Kenya (Mayaka and Akama, 2015). They argued that although it is vital to focus on the local and national settings of TH&E education, the difficulties must be properly understood within a larger global setting (Mayaka and Akama, 2015). Manwa et al. (2011) assessed tertiary education institutions providing tourism and hospitality qualifications to ascertain the degree to which these institutions confront Botswana's human resource requirements and concerns. Their research has established the disparity between the tourism curriculum and the sector's skill needs (Manwa et al., 2011). Although several studies in the tourism and hospitality field have identified the challenges of curriculum development (Milman, 2001; Jameson-Charles, 2012; Erisher, 2013; Razack, 2017; Sadik, 2017; Mahmoud, 2018). An analysis of these challenges from a global, regional and local perspective was lacking. Mayaka and Akama (2015) examined the multiple problems confronting curriculum development in tertiary education institutions from a local and national context, framed within the global context. Therefore, this research closes the gap in literature by analysing curriculum development challenges in the tourism and hospitality management field from a global, African, and South African context.

1.2.2. Strategies for Developing Tourism and Hospitality Management Curricula

Research on curriculum development and skills development is scarce (Milman, 2001; De Wet, 2009; Hewson, 2010; Jameson-Charles, 2012; Kriel and Van Lill, 2015; Ndlovu, 2015; Thapa,

2018; Renfors et al., 2019; Olowoyo et al., 2020). Milman (2001) presented a case study using a qualitative method to enhance the undergraduate hospitality and tourism management curriculum at a higher education institution in the USA. Business representatives considered the curriculum as “technical” rather than a “management” experience with a strong emphasis on the food and beverage aspect; and highly suggested building up the hotel portion of the curriculum (Milman, 2001). Milman (2001) indicated that both industry and alumni groups suggested that the curriculum at the university has to be reassessed to include more subject and skill-building themes. Renfors et al. (2019) provided an instance of developing tourism programmes to strengthen the advancement and competitiveness of global tourism in the Central Baltic Region. The requisite competencies were pinpointed by taking into account the setting and prospective applications of knowledge and skills (Renfors et al., 2019). The stakeholders viewed the provision of competencies as too generic and surface level, and tertiary education partly addresses the requirements of the employment market (Renfors et al., 2019). This might be seen as a strong indication of lack of coordination between tourism businesses and lecturers (Renfors et al., 2019). Several solutions were offered such as the creation of networks, to close the gap (Renfors et al., 2019). Jameson-Charles (2012) used a relationship management approach to investigate tourism education in a nation in the West Indies. The study’s goal was to establish the degree to which the approach could be included in education (Jameson-Charles, 2012). The findings showed that industry needed several competencies for employment, in addition to other employability abilities (Jameson-Charles, 2012). The businesses voiced concerns over the lack of workplace readiness of students once they graduate (Jameson-Charles, 2012). Jameson-Charles (2012) suggested cooperation between businesses and academia to improve the calibre of graduates.

De Wet (2009) applied problem-based learning in hospitality management at a South African university of technology, considering the nation’s requirements for skills development. The author recognized that the largest problem is not having enough time to fully adopt problem-based learning (De Wet, 2009). Hewson (2010) investigated the views of the hospitality industry and sector staff in postsecondary institutions on the choice and arrangement of culinary education in a hospitality management qualification. According to Hewson (2010), curriculum developers in higher education had limited knowledge of the industry. Moreover, there is a lack of academic precision and information on hospitality qualifications (Hewson, 2010). As a result, academics and sector representatives should improve their understanding of

the industry and hospitality qualification design, respectively. In reaction to the challenges of curriculum development, several academics, decision-makers, and analysts have addressed these intricate issues and suggested various solutions to improve the development of curricula. Kriel and Van Lill (2015) pinpointed the deficiencies in tertiary institutions in producing graduates with the abilities needed by hospitality employers in South Africa. According to Kriel and Van Lill (2015) hospitality management programmes in South Africa's tertiary institutions focus on a variety of operational abilities and continue to be vocationally oriented. The findings revealed that operational abilities, for example, Food and Beverage courses, were thoroughly offered in courses of study (Kriel and Van Lill, 2015). Insufficient skills development in management and communication, for example was concerning (Kriel and Van Lill, 2015). The research suggests that universities readjust their programmes to the field's changing realities (Kriel and Van Lill, 2015). Similarly, Olowoyo et al. (2020) researched into the degree of preparedness of several South African Technical and Vocational Educational and Training (TVET) colleges to fulfil the requirements of the hospitality sector. These scholars noted that a large number of the colleges lacked the needed capabilities to fulfil the novelty and changes of this subject and recommended frequent reviews to align with industry demands (Olowoyo et al., 2020). Ndlovu (2015) examined the degree to which the curriculum fulfils the training requirements of the hospitality sector. The author noted that tertiary institutions are not producing well-informed graduates who are extremely skilled with favourable perceptions of employment, advising that curriculum design should include WIL to enhance the employability of graduates (Ndlovu, 2015).

Studies globally have proposed strategies to improve the curriculum such as integrating sustainability and other competencies into programmes by using a variety of methods to do so and partnership with all stakeholders to improve courses of study (Jurowski, 2001; Milman, 2001; Boley, 2011; Deale, 2013; Millar and Park, 2013; Thapa, 2018). Research in Africa has proposed the inclusion of sponsorship from a variety of sources to obtain qualified employees and infrastructure, the inclusion of sustainability in the curriculum, and increased cooperation among stakeholders through programmes such as WIL (Manwa et al., 2011; Maphosa et al., 2014; Mayaka and Akama, 2015; Ndlovu, 2015; Mukolwe and Cheloti, 2016; Fehlner, 2020; Moonga et al., 2022). Industry and its dynamic nature have the potential to bring about change in curriculum development. Industry's perspectives on the ways in which the tourism and hospitality management curriculum should be developed bearing in mind skills development

is limited (Milman, 2001; Kriel and Van Lill, 2015; Thapa, 2018). Additionally, industry's perspectives of how these curricula should be developed to incorporate sustainability is limited globally (Jurowski, 2001; Millar and Park, 2013) and in Africa (Fehlner, 2020). This current study fills the gap in literature by offering the South African hospitality industry's perspectives on how the curriculum should be developed generally, considering skills development and including sustainability principles.

1.2.3. Stakeholder involvement in curriculum development

A number of studies globally (Milman, 2001; Caruana and Lau, 2014; Thapa, 2018), regionally (Manwa et al., 2011; Babalola, 2019; Mathenge et al., 2022) and locally (Hewson, 2010; Thapa, 2019; Mbewe, 2020) have identified the stakeholders who are involved in curriculum development. However, there is a lack of government involvement (Manwa et al., 2011; Caruana and Lau, 2014; Babalola, 2019). Manwa et al. (2011) stated that increased stakeholder representation in curriculum development is needed. The research showed that curriculum development in Botswana is either franchise oriented or represents the interests of the tertiary institutions, with little to no involvement from governments, businesses, students and the community. As a result, tourism education does not seem to reflect the requirements and priorities of these stakeholders (Manwa et al., 2011). Therefore, this study seeks to identify stakeholder involvement in curriculum development, this includes industry, government, community and student.

1.2.4. Employer satisfaction of graduates and WIL learners

Tourism contributed approximately 3% to South Africa's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2016 and 3.7% in 2019 (Statistics South Africa, 2018; Statistics South Africa, 2021). The sector is important for economic growth and national development. For the sector to continue its contribution to national development, graduates should be equipped with the skills that the industry requires. However, the tourism industry lacks the skills and expertise required to meet these goals (Jugmohan, 2010; Razack, 2017; Wakelin-Theron et al., 2018; Molefe et al., 2019). Molefe et al. (2019) opined that graduates' lack of enthusiasm, pessimistic outlook, absence of self-management, insufficient learning competencies, and the incapacity to market themselves as a brand are significant constraints to the growth of the industry. Similarly, Wakelin-Theron

et al.'s (2018) study showed that graduates have inadequate information about the industry and what is required to meet the global trends of the industry. In addition, Jugmohan (2010) revealed that the majority of employers from tourism businesses were unsatisfied with the workforce generated by tertiary education programmes because of a lack of soft skills and a mismatch between what was taught and industry standards. In a similar vein, Razack (2017) found that employers regard the tourism qualifications of the workforce as too theoretical with insufficient practical skills and needed competencies to accomplish the goals outlined by the NDP of 2012. Researchers attribute the lack of skills, professionalism, productivity and entrepreneurial abilities among tourism and hospitality graduates in the nation to a prolonged curriculum development process, the lack of time to effectively implement courses and insufficient human and material resources (Geldenhuys, 2003; De Wet, 2009; Ndlovu, 2015). Other scholars related these issues to skills gaps at high schools where most of the teachers lack the required training to educate students, which is a major problem in schools that offer tourism as a subject (Jugmohan, 2010; Velempini and Martin, 2019; Booyens, 2020).

Globally, literature on employer satisfaction shows that managers are satisfied with graduates' competencies (Getty et al., 1990; Tudy, 2017; QILT, 2019;). Literature in Africa shows partial satisfaction and complete dissatisfaction with the varied skill sets of graduates in the tourism and hospitality industry (Mayaka, 1999; Wakelin-Theron et al., 2019; Commey, 2021; Ngoepe and Wakelin-Theron, 2023). Literature dealing with employer satisfaction with WIL Learners is limited in the tourism and hospitality field (Wardle, 2012; Khuong, 2015; Carty, 2021). Therefore, this research addresses both employer satisfaction with hospitality graduates' and WIL learners' competencies from the perspective of the South African hospitality industry.

1.2.5. Desirable and employability enhancing competencies

Studies have looked at the skills that are desired and required to improve graduates' employability in the global tourism and hospitality sector (Milman, 2001; Raybould and Wilkins, 2005; Chan, 2011; Harkison et al., 2011; Kleeman, 2011; Dhiman, 2012; Sisson and Adams, 2013; Caiyod et al., 2015; Ali et al., 2017). Similar studies have been conducted in Africa (Anthony, 2015; Owusu-Mintah, 2016; Owusu-Mintah and Kissi, 2017; Sadik, 2017; Commey, 2021; Ayad, 2022) and in South Africa (Moolman, 2012; Kokt and Strydom, 2014;

Moolman and Wilkinson, 2014; Wessels, 2015; Razack, 2017; Wakelin-Theron et al., 2018; Wessels et al., 2023).

Globally, managers in the hospitality sector are anticipating that graduates will be prepared for employment, equipped with skills necessary to help them reach their objective of increasing profits (Commey, 2021). From a global perspective, businesses and students have different expectations about what qualities graduates/employees should possess, these are problems that academics and businesses have to handle (Raybould and Wilkins, 2005; Harkison et al., 2011). Furthermore, the quality of graduates from universities in Malaysia have been criticised for their employability and acquisition of soft skills, such as communication and social skills (Chan, 2011). From an African perspective, literature and dissatisfaction from businesses indicate a discrepancy between graduates abilities and those needed by the sector (Anthony, 2015; Owusu-Mintah and Kissi, 2017). Concerns have been raised in Ghana about academic system's inability to generate employable graduates (Sadik, 2017). This issue is more severe in hospitality education, where the programmes structures may not adequately prepare graduates for work in the sector (Sadik, 2017).

One of the greatest issues facing the industry is the lack of expert competencies relevant to the sector (Kokt and Strydom, 2014). Some personnel in South Africa maintain the view that students are not sufficiently equipped for the expectations of businesses, and as a result complain (Wessels, 2015). The perception in the tourism sector that students are not capable of obtaining and maintaining employment poses difficulties for students, postsecondary institutions and the sector (Wessels, 2015). The pressure to produce employable graduates is considered as one of the most serious problems confronting present-day tertiary institutions (Moolman and Wilkinson, 2014; Wakelin-Theron et al., 2018). This suggests that the numerous qualifications conferred by tertiary institutions must mirror the tourism sector's requirements (Wakelin-Theron et al., 2018). Other difficulties include a great discrepancy between employers and graduates regarding the most essential competencies (Razack, 2017). Additionally, hiring and maintaining employees in a very customer-centred and service-oriented sector is problematic (Kokt and Strydom, 2014).

Fewer studies have examined or identified employers' views regarding the importance of graduates or students sustainability expertise globally (Jurowski, 2001; Millar and Park, 2013;

Ali et al., 2017; Ali et al., 2018) and in Africa (Moolman and Wilkinson, 2014; Razack, 2017; Sadik, 2017; Fehlner, 2020). It is vital that students are aware of green practices in hotels and that graduates should be able to communicate with their employers regarding green practices that are being developed (Millar and Park, 2013; Sadik, 2017). These are among the competencies that are valued globally and in Africa and thus it was important to determine their significance to South Africa's hospitality industry. Studies conducted in South Africa have revealed that an important attitude and subject of study that aids graduates employability is environmental stewardship and responsible tourism (Moolman and Wilkinson, 2014; Razack, 2017). These studies, however, did not examine the particular green practices that are beneficial to employers. This study fills in the gap in literature by exploring employers' perceptions of important graduate competencies, which include knowledge of diverse green practices.

Drawing from the global debates on employability, curriculum development and the link between the tourism and hospitality discipline and the challenges faced in the curriculum, this study first, analysed curriculum development challenges in the field of hospitality management, from a global, regional and local perspective; and second, how university-level curricula in South Africa should be developed to become more comprehensive, thereby imparting industry-relevant skills and knowledge that contribute to better work performance, revenue generation, overall GDP, and national development. Curriculum development at universities plays an important role in equipping students and graduates with the necessary skills for employment. By developing more practical curricula (Chabongwa, 2014), institutions become involved in repurposing education for skills development. Thus, tertiary institutions should incorporate WIL into the curricula to provide hospitality students with hands-on training that they balance with abstract information (Naicker, 2017; Nomnga, 2021), and to guarantee the transferability of competencies and an effortless move for all stakeholders into businesses (Naicker, 2017). This study investigated whether representatives from hospitality businesses—such as hotels, lodges, and resorts—are satisfied with the skills of graduates and WIL learners, and to identify the skills that are desirable and necessary to enhance graduates' employability.

1.3. Research Aim and Objectives

This study aimed to investigate the views of the South African hospitality industry regarding curriculum development at universities. The objectives of the study were:

- i. To analyse the challenges experienced in curriculum development within the discipline of hospitality management.
- ii. To examine how the curriculum in the discipline of hospitality management should be developed.
- iii. To ascertain the stakeholders who play a role in the development of hospitality management programmes.
- iv. To evaluate the employers' satisfaction regarding competencies exhibited by graduates and WIL learners in the field.
- v. To determine the specific competencies that are desirable and needed for augmenting the employability of graduates.
- vi. To ascertain the implications of the findings for the wider context in developing nations.

1.4. Research Questions

In light of the above research objectives, the following questions guided the research process:

- i. What are the challenges in curriculum development within the discipline of hospitality management?
- ii. In what ways should the curriculum within the discipline of hospitality management be developed?
- iii. Which stakeholders play a role in the development of hospitality management programmes in the South African universities?
- iv. To what degree do the employers in South Africa express satisfaction with the competencies of graduates and WIL learners in the field?
- v. What specific competencies are desirable and required to enhance the employability of graduates in the field of hospitality management?
- vi. What are the implications of the findings for the wider context in developing nations?

1.5. Rationale of the study

The purpose of this present research is to fill in the knowledge gaps mentioned in Section 1.2. It also seeks to ignite discussions on what is needed to drive curriculum development in order to meet the broad objectives outlined in South Africa's National Development Plan (NDP of 2012). It will thus, enrich the data to make up for a lack of information and create room for enhancing knowledge.

This study is particularly interested in sustainability because of its importance in society. It is important for graduates to be aware of the principles and goals such as Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, Quality Education and SDG 6 Clean Water and Sanitation. Target 4.4 of SDG 4 indicates that there should be a notable rise in the number of youth and adults with required job-related competencies by the year 2030 (United Nations, 2015). Target 4.7 states that every student should, by the year 2030, obtain the competencies required to further sustainable development, including Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and sustainable lifestyles (United Nations, 2015). Training is a means of acquiring such knowledge and skills. According to Junyent and de Ciurana (2008), a determining factor for attaining a culture of sustainability is training offered by universities for prospective specialists. Furthermore, as indicated by Govender and Wait (2017), higher education is required to incorporate WIL into curricula and qualifications to encourage the career advancement of students. They further indicate that WIL is an extremely useful opportunity for educators to combine theory and practice, introduce future graduates to the work environment, and examine their experiential learning (Govender and Wait, 2017). Moreover, WIL improves the employability of students (Jacobs, 2015). It also paves the way for acceptable workplace interaction and entrepreneurial opportunities. This study set out to understand industry's perspectives on the competencies that are desirable and required to improve the employability of graduates.

As argued by Vargas et al. (2019), advancing towards sustainable development is an important challenge worldwide. Annan-Diab and Molinari (2017) argue that sustainable development has been pinpointed as a key area of concern for managers, governments, universities, non-government organisations, and the media. According to Jones et al. (2017), the tourism and hospitality industry is one of the influences in the world economy and comprises a broad array

of environmental and social effects. Barber et al. (2011) argue that, considering the growth in hospitality businesses around the world, the environmental effects should be comprehended and controlled. Barth et al. (2007) point out that higher ESD has to be involved in the discourse about sustainable methods of living and working. Leal Filho et al. (2018) argue that it is necessary that universities transform to aid as representations of social justice and environmental protection and encourage sustainability learning. The incorporation of ESD and the United Nations (UN) SDGs within primary and secondary education in different parts of the world, for example, bettered students' actions regarding their surroundings and equipped them with longer-lasting perspectives and abilities (Davis, 2012; Benavot, 2014; Zguir et al., 2021). This is applicable to tertiary education institutions. Target 6.3 of SDG 6 'Clean Water and Sanitation' indicates that by 2030, water quality should be raised by lessening pollution, limiting the release of harmful chemicals and materials, and significantly increasing recycling and safe reuse worldwide (United Nations, 2015). Higher education does play a part in developing awareness about water management and other green practices such as waste management, energy management and air quality management (Karleuša et al., 2009; Ali and Anufriev, 2020). In this context, the study aims to comprehend the viewpoints of the hospitality sector on the knowledge and skills needed from graduates such as sustainability and green practices.

As indicated by Ahmad (2016), green business embraces the publicising and manufacturing of environmentally friendly products. Ahmad (2016) points out that green organisation procedures promote company pursuits that are advantageous for the environment and assist in attaining ecological success. According to Mbasera et al. (2016), green practices in hotels comprise water management, energy management, solid waste management, air quality management, eco-friendly purchasing, public consciousness, and controlling permits. Bayne et al. (2012) argue that the purpose of every one of these practices is the development of a business's own and/or its supply chain's ecological capability, such as their carbon release, waste management, and water utilisation. Research has been conducted on green practices in United Arab Emirates hotels (Al-Aomar and Hussain, 2017), green plans for hotels in Pennsylvania (Singh et al., 2014), best green approaches for hotels in Taiwan (Wang, 2012), reconsidering green procedures in hotels in Spain and Chile (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2017), green procedures concerning Malaysian green hotels and resorts (Yusof and Jamaludin, 2013), eco-friendly practices in hotels in South Africa and Zimbabwe (Mbasera et al., 2016), views

regarding these practices in hotels in South Africa (Sucheran and Moodley, 2019), hotel managers' awareness of the effects of green tourism on hotel business operating budgets in Zimbabwe (Zengeni et al., 2013), the degree to which green operations procedures have been embraced by hotels in the coastal region of Kenya (Karimi, 2014), and clients' views of the central commercial activity of hotels' in connection with green procedures and the emerging purchase-related loyalty (Ham and Han, 2013). In a recent study, found that restaurants applied green practices that lower prices and offer positive impressions among consumers. Studies show that hotels and restaurants are implementing green practices (Yusof and Jamaludin, 2013; Karimi, 2014; Mbasera et al., 2016; Alonso-Almeida et al., 2017; Moise et al., 2021; Baloglu et al., 2022). As indicated in Section 1.2.5 an awareness of green practices by students and graduates in the hospitality field is valued by employers globally and in Africa (Millar and Park, 2013; Sadik, 2017), and was thus important to establish in this context.

1.6. Theoretical Considerations and Literature Review

An overview of the body of research on curriculum development, employer satisfaction of graduates and WIL learners and the competencies that are desirable and needed to improve the employability of graduates is provided in this section. It addresses the literature on the subject matter from a global, regional (African) and local (South African) perspective. In Chapter Two, the theoretical considerations and literature review are covered in more depth.

Numerous challenges have been identified in the literature on curriculum development in the tourism and hospitality field. Among the challenges of curriculum development are: finding a focal point or strength in the tourism and hospitality management curriculum, discovering specific aims that satisfy the constantly rising demands of businesses, funding and managing financial restrictions, limited time for programmes' courses to be implemented completely, and a lack of skilled educators (Milman, 2001; Dopson and Tas, 2004; De Wet, 2009; Hewson, 2010; Mayaka and Akama, 2015). All regions had the problem of skills gaps. However, it appears that the issues are more pronounced regionally and locally. Globally challenges deal more with the content of the programme (Milman, 2001; Dopson and Tas, 2004; Renfors et al., 2020). For example, Renfors et al.'s (2020) research in the northeastern section of the European Union found that the tourism courses are noticeably similar and even uniform. While regional and local issues are also content-related, i.e., programmes are too theoretical (Jugmohan, 2010;

Asirifi et al., 2013; Razack, 2017; Sadik, 2017), they are also focused on a lack of infrastructure and capacity (Barron and Prideaux, 1998; Mayaka and Akama, 2015; Mahmoud, 2018). Researchers have put forward strategies to deal with the problems facing curriculum development in the field. A common strategy globally and in Africa is collaboration among stakeholders in curriculum development (Manwa et al., 2011; Jameson-Charles, 2012; Mahmoud, 2018). Studies have identified that there are numerous stakeholders involved in tourism and hospitality curriculum development (Milman, 2001; Mills et al., 2009; Caruana and Lau, 2014).

There has been more research on employers' contentment with graduates than their satisfaction with WIL learners (Getty et al., 1990; AC Nielsen Research Services, 1998; Griesel, 2003; Alao et al., 2009; Griesel and Parker, 2009; Wardle, 2012; Khuong, 2015; Krakovetskaya et al., 2016; Tudy, 2017; Brits, 2018; Molefe et al., 2019; Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT), 2019; Carty, 2021). Globally, employers were satisfied with the competencies of graduates (Getty et al., 1990; Tudy, 2017; QILT, 2019;). However, employers were dissatisfied with WIL learners in Europe and Asia (Khuong, 2015; Carty, 2021). Employers in the hospitality industry in Africa expressed varying degrees of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the competencies of graduates (Mayaka, 1999; Molefe et al., 2019; Wakelin-Theron et al., 2019; Commey, 2021; Ngoepe and Wakelin-Theron, 2023). It is therefore important that graduates are aware of the skills that are desirable and required to improve their employability. Globally, employers value interpersonal skills in the tourism and hospitality industry (Raybould and Wilkins, 2005; Tesone and Ricci, 2005; Chan, 2011), and some studies have shown that sustainability is another crucial competency (Deale, 2013; Millar and Park, 2013). Similarly, in Africa, it seems that conversational skills are also valued, along with flexibility (Sadik, 2017; Hossny, 2018). Locally, professionalism and practical skills are valued in the tourism and hospitality industry (Kokt and Strydom, 2014; Moolman and Wilkinson, 2014; Razack, 2017; Wessels et al., 2023). This study also listed and discussed several theories, models, and frameworks on curriculum development and skills development (Fitts and Posner, 1967; Romiszowski, 1981; Ritchie, 1995; Gursoy and Swanger, 2004; Cecil and Krohn, 2012; Mayaka and Akama, 2015; Bandaranaike, 2018; Thapa, 2018), that could be used in the construction of programmes to better develop students for the industry.

1.7. Summary of Methodological Considerations

This section is devoted to a discussion of the methodology used in this research. The present discussion is a summary that precedes a more in-depth examination of the methodology in Chapter Three. For a study of this nature, it is important to adopt a concise and comprehensive methodology. Babbie (2013) defines methodology as the science of discovery, the processes for scientific investigation. According to Abass (2022), research methodology is the science of learning how research is achieved. Abass (2022) argued that it is also the structured, conceptual analysis of the techniques used in a discipline. Chellapalli and Kumar (2018) define research methodology as a science of accumulating, pinpointing, and introducing truths in such a manner that it results in discovering some facts or perspectives of the real world. According to Brynard et al. (2014), a research methodology is a group of procedures for gathering information that requires consideration of the arrangement, structuring, and carrying out of the study to act in accordance with the requirements of truth, objectivity, and validity. In light of these arguments, this section is divided in the following order. The first sub-section section discusses the various research philosophies used in the study. The second sub-section consists of the research design, which comprises a discussion of the following: a semi-structured questionnaire, a description of the research site, study population and sampling procedure, data collection tools, and data analysis for the study. The information on which this study is based was collected in the field. Data was analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. The main data collection tool that was employed was an online semi-structured questionnaire. Chapter Three of this thesis provides a detailed account of the step-by-step methodological approaches that were used in this study.

1.8. Scope and Limitations of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to provide valuable insights that can be used to strengthen curriculum development and improve the alignment of graduate competencies with industry demands in the field of hospitality management. By utilising appropriate theoretical frameworks, this study seeks to enhance comprehension about the acquisition and development of skills within the realm of hospitality education, with a specific emphasis on the South African context. This study examines the challenges encountered in university curriculum development and how the curriculum within the domain of hospitality management should be

developed, specifically in the context of South Africa. Furthermore, the congruence between the proficiencies possessed by individuals who have completed hospitality management programs from all South African universities and the requirements set out by businesses operating within the hospitality sector is assessed. The necessary skills that contribute to the improved employability of graduates are examined, in addition to the implications of the results for the broader context in developing countries.

Empirical data was gathered from October 2021 to April 2022 and was used to investigate the outlined research inquiries. The research methodology utilised in this study was quantitative and qualitative in nature, with a specific focus on a sample consisting of 34 South African hospitality businesses comprising hotels, lodges, and resorts. Specific provinces included Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), the Western Cape, Mpumalanga, and the Eastern Cape. The idea was to obtain responses from various hospitality companies in South Africa. Employers consisted of various managers, for example, training and development, group talent, and general managers. The hospitality companies—specifically lodges, hotels, and resorts—were selected because these establishments require the services of students for job placements (Sumayia et al., 2014). Managers were also selected purposively because they deal with students and graduates and can give an overview of what is required in the field. Only questionnaires were used as the sole method of data collection. Interviews with resorts, hotels, and lodges would have improved the research. There was a delay in the PhD programme due to COVID-19 and a change in the researcher's initial topic focusing on the role of stakeholder engagement at the University of Johannesburg. The university was unable to participate in the study due to increased online activities and obligations; more time was required beyond the stipulated completion date as interview schedules had to be changed to a questionnaire. As a result, the research thus only focused on industry.

1.9. Ethical Considerations

A set of ethical guidelines was developed to direct the study. These follow the University of the Witwatersrand's ethical guidelines. Bonnici et al. (2021) define ethics as a system of moral principles that are focused on what is right and fair for the community and its inhabitants. An awareness of ethical principles and processes helps a researcher avoid wrongs that might happen and helps describe one's role as a researcher (Johnson and Christensen, 2017). Ethical

considerations are vital, and it was the researchers role to guarantee the rights of the respondents such as their informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity. Every procedural and ethical aspect was taken into account. This study was not conducted until it had received ethical clearance from the University of the Witwatersrand (Appendix E). Before data collection, participant information sheets containing informed consent were given to all participants, which provided information about the research, thereby enabling the participant to make an informed decision. The accepted elements of consent are 1) supplying relevant details, 2) respondents' ability and understanding, 3) willingness to respond and liberty to refuse or pull out after the research has begun, and 4) confirmation of consent, normally in writing (Blanche et al., 2006). Regarding the issues of confidentiality and anonymity, participants were told that any details regarded as confidential shall not be revealed to other individuals. In addition, participants were informed that they would remain anonymous in the final report. This research used online questionnaires to collect data from representatives from hotel businesses. Gatekeeper letters were sent to hotel businesses requesting permission to question them. The data that was collected during this study is in electronic form and stored on an external hard drive which will be protected by a safe password. Data will be stored for six years before being destroyed.

1.10. Definition of Key Concepts

Concepts such as curriculum development, hospitality, hospitality management, higher education, skill, and sustainability are briefly defined.

1.10.1. Curriculum development: Issuing from the Latin verb “currere”, which means to run, the noun curriculum translates as “racecourse” (Leyendecker, 2012; Mondal and Das, 2021). Previously, the word curriculum has been used to explain the courses taught throughout the classical period of Greek civilisation (Leyendecker, 2012). The phrase currently refers to an array of learning experiences in a specified programme, resulting in a defined result (Moye, 2019). Adeleye (2021) defines curriculum development as the process of organising learning opportunities meant to lead to specific transformations in students and the evaluation of the degree to which these changes have occurred.

1.10.2. Tourism: Tourism is defined as a social, cultural and economic phenomenon that occurs when people travel to other nations or locations outside of their regular surroundings

for leisure, business or individual reasons (Chacky, 2023). Transportation, hospitality, travel assistance and information, and entertainment sectors make up the tourism industry (Meng, 2022). This study will focus on the hospitality sector of the tourism industry. Tourism management encompasses combination of procedures, principles, forms and managerial strategies, that enhance the efficient management of the industry and its employees (Ziyadin et al., 2019). The purpose of tourism management is to balance revenue and economic development with services to tourists, safeguarding the environment and maintaining cultural diversity (Lestari et al., 2020).

1.10.3. Hospitality: Anwuri and Nzei (2022) define hospitality as the connection between an owner and their visitors, and the display of kindness in greeting and seeing to the fundamental requirements of customers, specifically those related to food, drink, and lodging. The present study will use this definition to understand hospitality. Hospitality management education is about the management of hotel and catering companies and acquiring knowledge and abilities about these operations (Christou and Chatzigeorgiou, 2019).

1.10.4. Higher education: Higher education, or tertiary education in some nations, refers to all postsecondary education, comprising public and private universities, colleges, technical training institutes, and vocational schools (The World Bank, 2017; Sarkodie et al., 2020). Cambridge Dictionary (2021a) defines tertiary education as “education at college or university level”. According to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) (2012), tertiary education builds on secondary education, offering learning tasks in specialised spheres of education. Its objective is learning at a high degree of complexity and expertise (ISCED, 2012). Tertiary education involves what is often known as academic literacy but also comprises advanced vocational or professional literacy (ISCED, 2012). Within higher education, a student is defined as a learner who has not completed their degree, a graduate is a former student who has completed their degree, and a scholar is a seasoned academic.

1.10.5. Skills: Cambridge Dictionary (2021b) defines skill as 1) “an ability to do an activity or job well, especially because you have practised it”, 2) “a special ability to do something”, or 3) “a particular ability that you develop through training and experience that is useful in a job”. This study will use the latter definition to describe a skill. Skills development is usually used to speak about the productive abilities obtained via every level of education and training in

fixed, casual, and on-the-job settings (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, 2018). It allows people to become completely and productively involved in their livelihoods and to have the chance to adapt these abilities to face the changing requirements and opportunities of the financial system and job market (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, 2018).

1.10.6. Sustainability: Oxford Learner's Dictionaries (2021) defines sustainability as 1) “the use of natural products and energy in a way that does not harm the environment”, and 2) “the ability to continue or be continued for a long time”. Mat Aron et al. (2020) define sustainability as providing for the needs of the present generations without endangering the needs of subsequent generations. The goal of sustainability is to maintain economic growth while preserving the environment and societal needs (Mat Aron et al., 2020). Sharifi and Simangan (2021) noted several dimensions of sustainability such as environmental, social, financial and political. Reijnders (2021) defines environmental sustainability as preserving vital natural capital for transferral to the next generation. Natural capital comprises a combination of natural resources that offer advantages to communities and industry (Dias and Ferreira, 2023). Pollard (2024) defines social sustainability as the attainment of social objectives, for example equality and positive interpersonal connections in ways that are long lasting and resilient. According to Nalwoga (2021) financial sustainability is the capacity of an organisation to function with stable net income and an increasing net asset base carefully balancing assets with liabilities. Ziemba and Grabara (2024) stated that political sustainability is the political system's capacity to continue contributing to the welfare of society by successfully undertaking governmental activities and encouraging communication with residents and companies.

1.11. Thesis Structure

This thesis is made up of six chapters. Chapter One is the frames of reference, this chapter comprises the background to the study, the problem statement, the research questions, as well as the research aim and objectives that will guide the research process. The research gap and rationale, methodological considerations, scope of study, and ethical considerations are also discussed. Chapter Two covers the literature review where arguments around curriculum development in hospitality higher education, education for sustainability, and employer satisfaction of graduates are reviewed. Chapter Three consists of the methodology, the step-by-step process of data collection for the study is covered. Chapter Four presents the research

findings from the respondents who participated in the research process. In Chapter Five, the findings from the different industry representatives are analysed, discussed, and supported with existing literature. The conclusion of the thesis, recommendations, and future research are then presented in Chapter Six.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter is dedicated to the literature review. Blanche et al. (2006) disclosed that a literature or information review places one's studies into context by revealing how they fit into a particular discipline. A literature review examines and critiques past and present arguments on a specific subject. Benacherine (2019) argues that it raises a coherent string of previous relevant results on a particular issue that would confirm, disprove, and/or produce an original departure. This chapter defines key concepts and explores past and current arguments about curriculum development for tourism and hospitality programmes. Education for sustainability concerning the hospitality and tourism curriculum is addressed. Contemporary arguments regarding skills development, the skills required in the tourism and or hospitality industry, employer satisfaction with graduates and WIL learners, and the competencies needed to enhance the employability of learners are presented. Higher education transformation in South Africa is also explored.

2.2. Concept of Employability

2.2.1. Definition and Role of Employability in Service Delivery in the Labour Market

Employability concerns acquiring and remaining in employment, it includes having the capacity to move independently and to adapt well to changes linked to one's job in the present uncertain labour market (Naderiadib Alpler et al., 2021). Commey (2021) points out that it is necessary to enhance the ability of hospitality personnel to hold important roles in the sector to improve competitive positioning and provide better services and customer satisfaction. Therefore, the hospitality sector in a country such as Ghana, for example, can increase its competitiveness by raising its reputation and boosting economic viability (Commey, 2021). Wessels et al. (2023) research in South Africa concluded that using the recognized managerial competencies directly connected to the accommodation industry will elevate service delivery levels and further graduates' employment desirability. In order to guarantee that every employee exhibits the desired competencies and attitudes throughout their services, employers

should start the initiative of enrolling their employees in training classes (Kimeto, 2020). Kimeto (2020) argues that this could lead to a consistent increase in Kenya's standard of services rendered. Ultimately, the employability of public sector personnel is an important component in the provision of public services (Vermeeren and Van der Heijden, 2022).

2.2.2. Different Factors of Employability and how they are Interlinked

Personal characteristics, social experiences, and on-the-job training have a substantial effect on university students' ability to acquire and sustain employment (Jiang et al., 2023). University students must grasp that information, comprehension and learning capacity, individual-management, empathy, general competencies, expert skills, and professional development are essential elements of employability (Jiang et al., 2023). The conceptual framework for enhanced graduate employability (Figure 2.1.) illustrates that the ability of degree holders to obtain and secure a position is as a result of the development of the right sets of knowledge, skills, attitudes and a broad array of barriers/elements, specifically: individual aspects, personal situations, business procedures, local influences and macro-level determinants (Green et al., 2013; Moolman, 2017).

The red shaded area in Figure 2.1 illustrates that competence comprises a range of competencies attitudes that a person should possess to be considered as qualified or employable (Moolman, 2017). In the context of any discipline, a graduate would need to have a thorough knowledge of theories, ideas, guidelines, methods and practices of the field (Moolman, 2017). Several generic skills, which include reading, writing, numeracy and collaboration are also required of them, which relate to the limited conceptualisation of employability (Moolman, 2017). Other generic attributes that hospitality management graduates should have are being industrious and productive, managing one's time, the capacity to present good quality work and being able to multi-task (Moolman and Wilkinson, 2014). Ahmad (2018) argues that businesses are increasingly searching for highly competent employees where competencies such as generic skills operate throughout the company.

The dotted line that divides the competence domains suggests that each of these domains may reflect contextualised (disciplinary) competencies and non-contextualised (generic) competencies (Figure 2.1) (Moolman, 2017). Furthermore, as indicated by the arrows

connecting the disciplinary and generic competencies in each of the domains, these competencies are all interconnected (Moolman, 2017). Personnel in the hospitality sector, for example, are expected to communicate successfully with clients and customers and have knowledge of the basic vocabulary used in the field (Marneros et al., 2021). These are related and required in the industry; the former can be considered a generic skill and the latter as disciplinary knowledge and skill. In tourism and hospitality, the value dimension (Figure 2.1) includes efficiency, mastery and ethics, whereas the attitude dimension comprises thoughtful speech and a considerate attitude (Gallarza et al., 2019; Andriyani et al., 2022). Instead of being viewed as a distinct competence domain, meta-competencies are regarded as a group of capabilities within the skills category, examples are interaction, personal growth, inventiveness and problem resolution (Figure 2.1) (Moolman, 2017). According to Moolman (2017) these competencies are vital to the development and improvement of other competencies, and thus overarch them.

Individual factors not only include skills (Anaam et al., 2020), but demographic characteristics, and disposition such as attitudes to teaching and learning, outlook on work and internships (Green et al., 2013). Behle (2020) stated that personal conditions centre on the environment, for example, family conditions, living situations, or geographic location. However, Igwe et al. (2022) classified family under the category of ‘institutional factors’, along with cultural, social, legal and financial aspects. Igwe et al. (2022) argued that these aspects when combined with individual factors impact on the development of employability competencies. The obligations placed on tertiary education to guarantee graduates have the necessary competencies to transition well from a learning context to the workforce are increasing (Browne, 2021). Higher education institutions thus influence the development of these skills. Commey (2021) concluded from reviews that to ensure employability in the hospitality sector, graduates’ skills should be aligned with industry requirements. Local contextual elements include the number of vacancies in the local labour market, quality of positions relating to the profession or skill level, and the location of jobs in relation to residential areas and transportation networks (Green et al., 2013). In addition, Sanders and Wong (2021) indicated that local contextual factors include industry demand. After graduates secure employment due to industry demand for example, employer practices are critical and consist of career development programmes and policies (Edgell and Lee, 2023; Ng et al., 2024). Moreira et al. (2022) argues that encouraging the development of important competencies is the best method to retain personnel in a

company. Haas and Hadjar (2020) state that macro level factors include the structure and arrangement of the national tertiary education system such as fees and financial assistance, the openness of the education system and labour market. Green et al. (2013) noted that macro-level determinants include rules that control entry to the labour market, such as policies pertaining to migration and equal rights, as well as the formal education system which comprises curricula and training policies. Moolman (2017) however, distinguished Higher Education Institutions from Macro-level factors as illustrated in Figure 2.1.

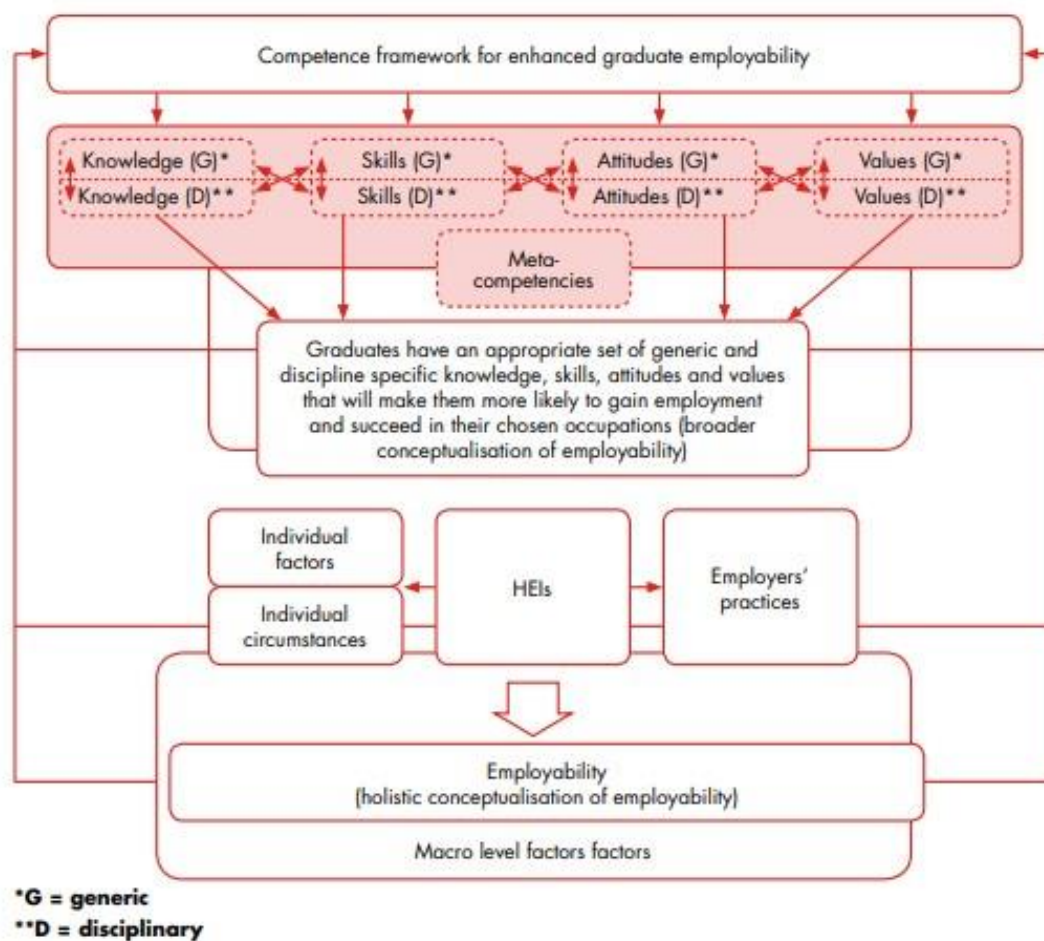


Figure 2. 1 Conceptual Framework for Enhanced Graduate Employability

Source: Moolman (2017)

2.2.2.1. The Role of these Factors in Ensuring Employability

Hosain et al. (2023) argued that individual factors such as competencies and aptitude allow recent graduate job seekers to satisfy employers' demands and adjust to changes in the employment market. These abilities not only make them qualified and esteemed but also ensure they have sustainable career paths as anticipated (Hosain et al., 2023). Competencies and abilities enhance future professionals (Hosain et al., 2023). Contrary to individual factors, individual circumstances are detachable from a person, student or graduate and impact the capacity, zeal or social pressure to occupy or maintain a job opening (Behle, 2020). Tertiary education also contributes to an individual's employability through assessments, while employers determine whether to recruit graduates from these institutions (Isharyanti, 2021).

Taking into consideration local contextual elements, such as the location of jobs, one of the problems businesses situated in mountainous areas encounter is the instability of employees (Tran et al., 2024). Only a few employees remain with businesses for extended periods because of extreme weather conditions and distant geographical locations (Tran et al., 2024). Alpek and Tésits (2020) maintain that it is usually a city nearby with stronger financial indicators that can account for increased employability. It is evident that the area in which a business is located is very important as it can affect one's employability. Therefore, in order to make employees feel comfortable at work, incentives should be given, for example, cars to take them to remote areas. In order to accommodate employees and their families, houses should be built in the vicinity where they work. If it is not convenient for employees to be at the workplace, they should be given the opportunity to work from home at any given time

Macro-level factors such as policies impact employability, in Slovakia, one of the active labour market policy initiatives is Graduate Practice (Gabrikova and Svabova, 2023). The aim of this intervention is to assist young school-leavers to obtain first work experiences and connections with prospective managers (Gabrikova and Svabova, 2023). Based on the net effect of the initiative Graduate Practice, the intervention had a positive effect, increasing the employability of young job candidates by 10% in the first twelve months and by 16% in 24 months (Svabova et al., 2019). This indicates that those who were involved in the initiative in 2014 stayed in the labour market on average 2.4 months longer in the first year than those who were not involved, and 3.84 months taking into account the second year (Svabova et al., 2019).

2.2.3. Significance of Employability to the Sustainability or Growth of the Tourism Sector

The development of employability competences is increasingly regarded, not only by tertiary education institutions, which play a crucial role in this context, but also by students, who rely on these competencies for their entry into workforce, and businesses, which are experiencing challenges in hiring and retaining personnel, especially in the tourism sector (Melo et al., 2023). Özkoç and Çalışkan (2020) argue that employability is crucial in the growth of professional competence and dedication in the tourism industry. Employability capital has become an important element impacting success in the workplace (Wakelin-Theron, 2023). Tour guides for example, must have particular competencies such as enthusiasm and exceptional interpersonal skills to be successful in their profession (Wakelin-Theron, 2023). Commey (2021) argues that the ultimate display of skills will augment the employability of hospitality graduates and assist them in establishing rewarding jobs in the sector. Wakelin-Theron et al. (2018) indicated that both the tourism industry and graduates recognized that offering services to customers and ethical behaviour at work not only benefit an individual's profession and job environment, but also promote the long-term sustainability of businesses.

2.3. A Synthesis of Literature on Curriculum Development and Tourism from a Global Perspective

2.3.1. Global Challenges in Curriculum Development

Tertiary education curricula are crucial for offering quality and appropriate educational courses and resources for current and future students in the USA and in other countries around the world (Khan and Law, 2015). Regarding the difficulties in developing curricula, Renfors et al. (2020) raised concerns with the tourism curriculum in the central Baltic region; stakeholders expressed dissatisfaction that the degree programmes are noticeably similar and even uniform. They are of the opinion that tertiary education institutions do not adequately address the demands of the employment market and that skills delivery is excessively broad and insufficient (Renfors et al., 2020). This might be viewed as strong evidence of a dearth of cooperation between educators and the tourism industry; thus, forums and engagements would benefit all stakeholders (Renfors et al., 2020). Le et al. (2018), noted that industry professionals

in Vietnam consider the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical experience as a serious hindrance in tertiary education hospitality courses. Similarly, Zuccoli and Korstanje (2023) study in Argentina indicates a mismatch between theory and practice in tourism education. During interviews, experts raised concern regarding outdated tourism research and curricula citing lack of access to major publications or linguistic problems as valid explanations (Zuccoli and Korstanje, 2023). Similarly, within Indian institutions of higher education, students are instructed with out-of-date curricula that do not inform them about employable competencies (Sonwane, 2020). Outdated curricula are not limited to hospitality but occur in the medical field in India, for example (Deswal and Singhal, 2016; Deswal et al., 2017). Tran (2010) argues that learners are hampered in their ability to effectively fulfil the demands of the job market as a result of outmoded teaching techniques and evaluation strategies. It is the responsibility of higher education institutions, academics and administrators to offer exceptional education while adjusting to community requirements and technological changes (Hrivnak, 2019; Guàrdia et al., 2021). Advancements in teaching and learning technology, for instance, allow academics to assess students' progress, nonetheless, there are problems with keeping up with these improvements and grasping the usage of these tools (Hrivnak, 2019). When using these tools, expert assistance should be sought to avoid potentially outdated teaching and learning methods.

Milman (2001) argues that pinpointing an area of specialisation or a strength in the tourism and hospitality management curriculum is a serious problem for both departments and administrators. Moreover, students, graduates, and business representatives were of the view that the outcome of the cooperative education programme did not equip graduates for employment (Milman, 2001). Milman's (2001) study in the USA for curriculum development used a strategic analysis approach with the implementation of a qualitative methodology. According to Milman (2001), the strategic analysis procedure entails a comprehensive assessment of the internal roles of an organisation, such as its advantages and disadvantages, and its environmental possibilities and risks. Similarly, Dopson and Tas (2004) employ the Tyler model to describe curriculum development, they contend that the constant challenge facing academics is to pinpoint specific aims for the curriculum that fulfil the ever-increasing requirements of the sector. Therefore, the issues noted in the studies mentioned earlier deal with the content of the programmes. Additionally, the latter addresses a problem related to the course outline. This could be solved through diverse research in the field.

Researchers have mentioned the challenges of sustainability education globally (Deale et al., 2009; Deale and Barber, 2012; Zizka, 2022). Zizka's (2022) findings show that most of the leading programs globally presently provide between zero and five sustainability courses in their undergraduate hospitality/leisure management programmes. This illustrates that their provisions for sustainability or sustainability-linked programmes are inadequately represented in their programmes (Zizka, 2022). Zizka (2022) further argues that this does not imply that they do not incorporate sustainability into other programmes or activities, however it is unclear from the material obtainable on their web pages that they do so. Hospitality/leisure management programs globally need to re-examine their undergraduate courses to produce effective social change representatives for the contemporary workplace (Zizka, 2022). Deale et al.'s (2009) descriptive research (with a sample of 151 representatives of the International Council on Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Education) investigated the provision of sustainability education in hospitality courses. According to Deale et al. (2009), academics revealed that sustainability education is being integrated in the hospitality curriculum, although to a certain extent. Deale et al. (2009) argue that, nevertheless, what is evident is that it did not yet seem that sustainability education was essential to teaching in this area. On the contrary, as indicated by Deale and Barber (2012), even though sustainability within education was considered to be essential with every stakeholder category, it is evident from the results that there are dissimilarities in perspectives and practices about the environment, in addition to what themes need to be incorporated within the curriculum and how educational programmes must be taught. Sustainability is essential because it provides the opportunity to guarantee that we maintain and conserve our natural world. However, a lack of cooperation among stakeholders may be the reason it is underrepresented in the curricula.

With regard to stakeholder participation, Jameson-Charles (2012) indicated that industry personnel were engaged to a limited degree in the internship component of the course through curriculum design and development in the Caribbean. Ritchie (1995), Mills et al. (2009) and Jameson-Charles (2012) acknowledge the need for industry engagement in curriculum development. Additionally, Bathla et al. (2020) found that there is a considerable lack of coordination between hotel businesses and hospitality management institutions in India, which has resulted in a significant gap between the curriculum and business trends. Thus, stakeholders and tertiary education should have a relationship and continuous interaction to increase

understanding of the demands of businesses so that programmes developed would be appropriate (Jameson-Charles, 2012). Bathla et al. (2020) argue that it is essential that businesses regularly provide feedback to universities in order to ensure that students are receiving the most recent information throughout their classes. Participation from stakeholders, including industry in curriculum development is required to identify the desired competencies of the sector for the overall success of the curriculum and students.

2.3.2. Transformation Strategies in Global Higher Education

According to Yoopetch et al. (2021), service industries are widely regarded as being among the enterprises that are expanding at the fastest rates around the world, especially in developing nations, where the tourism industry plays an essential part in fostering economic expansion. Improving the quality of the workforce can support the growth of the sector (Yoopetch et al., 2021), this should begin with those in secondary education. Studies have focused on transformative education (Boyd and Myers, 1988; Carnicelli and Boluk, 2017; Paul and Quiggin, 2020) and transformation in education for sustainability globally (Bell, 2016; Leal Filho et al., 2018). The authors conducted these studies in order to implement transformative education in institutions by either using service learning, developing competencies such as critical thinking skills, or enhancing sustainable development principles (Carnicelli and Boluk, 2017; Leal Filho et al., 2018; Paul and Quiggin, 2020). Carnicelli and Boluk (2017) have been creating a chain of tasks and projects using service learning to attain transformative education (Carnicelli and Boluk, 2017). Service-learning can be the pedagogical technique that, as a result of its difference from conventional pedagogies, can disturb the norm of self-reliance, teacher influence, and student inaction (Carnicelli and Boluk, 2017).

According to Martin and Hughes (2011), WIL gives learners the opportunity to reduce the gap between their current educational standing and the professional undertakings they intend to pursue in the future, so advancing their individual as well as professional skills. Martin and Hughes (2011) argue that WIL is a triadic collaboration among the learner, organisation, and tertiary institution. Mentorship programmes should be used to guide students on various aspects of their future career trajectory. Keating (2012) proposed, based on results, that students in WIL programmes be given a devoted mentor who is appropriately experienced and occupies a role within the business structure of the setting, which enables them to be accessible to the

learner. Through service-learning, students will be able to engage with other stakeholders and acquire the necessary personal and workplace competencies, rather than only focusing on knowledge and skills gained from higher education. Mustafa (2019) contends that universities need to devote greater effort to training and introducing students to the job market providing them with greater interaction and integration with tourism and hospitality businesses.

Environmental changes caused by the activities of people over many years have caused concerns about rising carbon dioxide emissions and sea levels, climate change, and loss of biodiversity (Melissen, 2013). There is consensus that particular activities by people, groups, businesses, and countries can negatively impact the world now and in the years ahead (Melissen, 2013). Playing a role in reducing or finding answers to these problems is often regarded as being eco-friendly, environmentally responsible, or acting sustainably (Melissen, 2013). In addition, aligning with the United Nations' (UN) SDGs is the best way to protect the environment (United Nations, 2015). Research has focused on education for sustainability globally (Tilbury, 2011), in the USA (Cortese, 1999), in European and Latin American universities (Junyent and de Ciurana, 2008), in Germany (Scheunflug and Asbrand, 2006), in Australia (Tilbury, 2004; Sterling and Thomas, 2006), and the United Kingdom (Sterling and Thomas, 2006). Kuzich (2011) noted that the general agreement among sustainability experts is that education should be re-oriented toward an entire, multidisciplinary systems strategy in order to bring about great transformation in the attitude needed. Such transformation requires a grasp and action competence around the interrelationship of all four elements of sustainability: environmental, political, financial, and social/cultural (Kuzich, 2011).

According to Jurowski (2001), the sustainability of businesses in the tourism and hospitality field is determined by employers who embrace sustainable development standards within the framework of their management philosophy. Jurowski (2001) argues that attaining this objective requires the incorporation of the standards of sustainable development within the hospitality and tourism management curriculum. Researchers examined hospitality and tourism business executives' perspectives of sustainability in the workplace during COVID-19 in North Carolina, USA to contribute to the development of sustainability education (Deale, 2023). Authors have also examined sustainability in tourism and hospitality education globally (Jurowski, 2001; Busby, 2003; Deale et al., 2009; Boley, 2011; Deale, 2013; Millar and Park, 2013; Melissen and Damen, 2014; Zhang and Tavitiyaman, 2022; Zizka, 2022). These studies

were conducted to 1) integrate sustainability in curricula, 2) identify the degree to which sustainability is included in the curriculum, 3) assist in curriculum development/design (Jurowski, 2001; Busby, 2003; Deale, 2013; Millar and Park, 2013; Melissen and Damen, 2014; Zhang and Tavitiyaman, 2022), and 4) create a connection between the reputation of schools, sustainability programmes and practices, and genuine student involvement (Zizka, 2022).

Boley (2011) explored how to implement sustainability throughout hospitality and tourism courses. Boley (2011) states that possible alternatives for offering instruction about sustainability comprise additional optional courses on the topic, linking or associating sustainability with certain majors, giving a free hand to professors, or including sustainability throughout the course of study instead of in a particular lecture or a specific major—namely ecotourism, even though these specific courses are essential. Similarly, Jurowski (2001) indicated that in comparison to one programme on sustainability, the modular method assists learners to realise how to use the elements in particular topics and business fields. Sustainability should be incorporated in every module in order to build hospitality and tourism business leaders who have a managerial ideology that will apply the elements of sustainable development (Jurowski, 2001). Moreover, programme content must constantly be revised to include ever-changing sustainability ideas and applications through cases and assignments (Millar and Park, 2013). Millar and Park (2013) propose that classes in hospitality comprise a multifaceted (ecological, social, and financial) notion of sustainability that considers practical work settings (e.g., scarce supplies and fiduciary obligations of managers). However, Kuzich (2011) identified four elements of sustainability, that is, political, environmental, financial, and social/cultural. These could all be integrated into hospitality management lectures in order for students to obtain an in-depth understanding of sustainability.

Deale and Barber (2012) highlighted that there are differences between businesses, college educators, and students' views on sustainability in the hospitality curriculum. They further indicate that their research comprised participants from the USA and around the world (Deale and Barber, 2012). Deale and Barber (2012) argue that in order to ensure that sustainability in hospitality education is significant for learners and hospitality businesses, the interests of every group must be aligned. This was the case in the research conducted by Barber et al. (2011). The authors examined the value of environmental topics in hospitality management curriculum

using an online survey. The researchers asked business personnel, students, and college instructors to rank what issues they viewed as appropriate to the hospitality management curriculum (Barber et al., 2011). As stated by Barber et al. (2011), even though not statistically significant, the first three subjects reported were waste management, developing sustainable business models, and training and education. According to Barber et al. (2011), the topics were reported by the groups almost equally (Barber et al., 2011). Other topics considered relevant were transforming the conduct and views of customers, purchasing principles, an awareness of customer demand, energy management, water management, and environmental standards among others (Barber et al., 2011). Regarding the importance of alignment with stakeholders, Jameson-Charles's (2012) study based on a relationship management perspective recommends that the university must communicate with stakeholders to have an increased awareness of the requirements of businesses so that the curriculum developed would be appropriate. Thus, input from stakeholders in curriculum development is necessary.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) should be included in tourism and hospitality curricula. Key performance indicators are quantifiable measures that are deployed by firms to evaluate the degree to which fixed operational and planned goals are realised (Bîrzu, 2020). Lindberg et al. (2015) expressed that KPIs play an essential part in the process of observing the performance of a business. They can be used to pinpoint instances of poor performance as well as the possibility for enhancement (Lindberg et al., 2015). Key performance indicators are vital and ought to be taught in the curriculum in order to help students advance their understanding of how to assess the accomplishments of individuals and industry.

Joo-Ee and Jo-Ee (2015) explore the views of learners concerning OHS training within the context of hospitality education in Malaysia. The results indicate that most learners found such instruction to be applicable within their work setting (Joo-Ee and Jo-Ee, 2015). Additionally, a sizeable percentage of learners displayed a lack of awareness of their rights to a secure business setting – the vast majority were not aware of the health and safety guidelines that apply to hotels (Joo-Ee and Jo-Ee, 2015). Joo-Ee and Jo-Ee (2015) argue that there is a need for further developments in hospitality education within the country in order to increase learners' knowledge of workers' rights, notably in connection to OHS. Balanay et al. (2014) argue that minimising dangers from harm and sicknesses among working university students can be achieved by incorporating OHS approaches in the curriculum, bolstering OHS programs

via university health offices and increasing OHS knowledge among university learners, employers, and academics. When students and graduates begin working in the industry, they need to keep abreast of the regulations that govern their conduct in order to follow the rules and prevent repercussions that may ensue from not adhering to the directives. According to the findings of a study by Ko and Tavitiyaman (2015), tourism students are of the opinion that the subject of labour legislation is of utmost importance and noted that they have faced labour law matters in their respective places of employment. On the contrary, according to students' work experiences, their managers do not regard labour law in the same way (Ko and Tavitiyaman, 2015). The majority of students are junior frontline employees; their encounters with legal matters are restricted due to their employment responsibilities (Ko and Tavitiyaman, 2015). As a result, their views on managers' preferences could vary from the managers' real perceptions (Ko and Tavitiyaman, 2015).

2.3.3. Stakeholders Involved in Curriculum Development

Khan and Law (2015) alluded that the function of curricula in tertiary institutions is necessary for the provision of excellent and appropriate academic programs and facilities for current and prospective students in the USA and other areas around the globe. Milman (2001) points out that the case study conducted in the USA for tourism and hospitality management was beneficial in reorganising a curriculum and creating current programmes that might be advantageous for students to prosper in the time to come. Milman (2001) points out that the focus groups that were conducted aimed to pinpoint issues identified by different stakeholders that might affect curriculum development. The current curriculum comprised faculty, students, alumni, businesses, and additional sources such as published information from the university and multiple informal discussions with the programme's Chair (Milman, 2001). Cooper and Westlake (1998) disclosed that at the macro-level, government, industry requirements, and funding impact the planning of the curriculum, as do academics and students who are involved in the process. According to Lu et al. (2015), involving students in curriculum development fosters an awareness of joint duty between lecturers and students. Lu et al. (2015) argue that the extra role puts students in control, inspiring them to become creative and informed in programme content before beginning lectures.

A number of stakeholders from different societal levels must be included in the development of curricula. This will guarantee a range of viewpoints and thorough curriculum development. Caruana and Lau (2014) found that the principal stakeholders involved in curriculum development at the Institute of Tourism Travel and Culture (ITTC) in Malta are its board and its director who finally formulate policies. Caruana and Lau (2014) further opined that educators hold some views because of the place that they may fill on the ITTC subcommittees; however, the final decision-making lies with the board. ITTC students are represented on a few subcommittees and may give their input (Caruana and Lau, 2014). Caruana and Lau (2014) used a procedure comprising a thorough analysis of the information governing the ITTC to discover the primary stakeholders that might have an interest and impact on the ITTC curriculum for tertiary institutions. Surprisingly, government involvement was lacking in Milman (2001) and Caruana and Lau's (2014) research. Whereas Caruana and Lau (2014) identified the board and director within the University as eventually developing policies. Other studies mention the involvement of numerous stakeholders in curriculum development, without indicating the degree to which they are involved. Interestingly, Thapa (2018) disclosed that the standard procedure for programme development in Nepal is only provided by one specialist, therefore the process of consulting with industry stakeholders was novel for Mid-Western University. This procedure is a positive development because industry standards are essential in ensuring that graduates are equipped with the needed skills. Tuma and Sisson (2019) argue that it is critical to collaborate with community partners to enrich teaching and learning. This collaboration helps develop educated nationals with solid democratic principles and a sense of public duty (Tuma and Sission, 2019). These individuals can solve significant concerns in society and advance public welfare (Tuma and Sisson, 2019). The authors assert that collaborating with community groups enriches the hospitality and tourism management curriculum in the USA, encouraging academics to align their course with the city, national, and international communities (Tuma and Sisson, 2019). A community's involvement is crucial in developing curricula as it offers social relations, which may comprise individuals from diverse backgrounds, emotional encouragement, and acceptance.

2.3.4. Employer satisfaction with graduates and WIL learners' Competencies

Regarding the topic of employer satisfaction, research has been conducted on employer satisfaction of graduates in Australia (QILT, 2019), managers' contentment with the

performance of recent college graduates in the Philippines (Tudy, 2017), a procedure to investigate manager satisfaction with expert competencies of graduates in Russia (Krakovetskaya et al., 2016), industry satisfaction with graduate competencies in Australia (AC Nielsen Research Services, 1998), and managers' evaluation of the excellence of graduates on the bases of their amount of skill in their present supervisory roles in the USA (Getty et al., 1990). Managers' assessment of the achievement of recent graduates is a vital element that colleges should consider to ascertain how appropriate and receptive their course of study, programs, and services are (Tudy, 2017).

Getty et al. (1990) surveyed 60 personnel who employed graduates at the University of North Texas Division of Hotel and Restaurant Management. All of the employer surveys suggested that graduates had high competency in eight of the ten most significant skills (Getty et al., 1990). However, when input was gathered from just hotel managers, it was discovered that graduates were outstanding in seven of the ten skills (Getty et al., 1990). All hospitality managers ranked professional appearance and composure, cultivating positive relations with clients, and keeping professional and ethical principles at work as their top competencies. Processing hotel arrivals and departures, adhering to management processes when overseeing employees, and projecting grace and a polished appearance. In a similar vein, QILT (2019) found through their online survey that the majority of employers in Australia are satisfied with graduates' technical, foundation, adjustability, cooperative and employability competencies. Similarly, Tudy's (2017) survey found that all competencies had extremely satisfactory rankings, strongly demonstrating that the college is developing graduates who meet business requirements. The competencies comprise computer skills, personality, groupwork, adaptability, comprehension, quality of tasks, responsibility, organisation and planning, certain work-related information, maths skills, productivity, oral communication, written communication, certain work-related expertise, creativity, and inventiveness, addressing issues, critical views, research and analysis and time management. Tudy (2017) indicates that the participants who were specifically selected were employers and staff managing forty businesses and establishments in the Davao area from various sectors. They further state that respondents were specifically selected because their businesses or establishments had staff who were graduates of the college from 2008–2009 to 2013–2014 (Tudy, 2017). It appears that employers are satisfied with the hard and soft skills of graduates. This could be the result of great cooperation and alignment between higher education and industry needs in these

developed and developing (Philippines) nations. In addition, countries such as the USA and Australia have burgeoning tourism industries and multiple opportunities for students for practical learning during their qualifications (Kinyuira, 2017; Sachs et al., 2017; World Travel and Tourism Council, 2023).

Wardle (2012) conducted a study to illustrate the practical results regarding WIL for the improvement of hospitality graduate qualities, as well as employability. In addition, Wardle (2012) investigated graduate and industry satisfaction regarding WIL in Australia. Wardle (2012) found that, regarding the readiness of students sent to managers for WIL positioning, out of a total of 72 employers, most (44) rated the experience as not applicable, 14 rated the experience as average, and eight indicated above average. Fewer employers gave an excellent (1), below average (3) and extremely poor rating (2) (Wardle, 2012). Wardle (2014a) study in Australia, concluded that graduates who have been involved in WIL in their tertiary education are more pleasing to employers and that great and diverse contexts of involvement with the WIL approach greatly improve the perceived employability and performance of hospitality graduate personnel. However, research in the tourism and hospitality field in Ireland and Vietnam shows employers' dissatisfaction with the quality of WIL students, citing their lack of dedication to the sector (Khuong, 2015; Carty, 2021). The literature in the tourism and hospitality field is limited regarding employer satisfaction with WIL learners/Cooperative education (Wardle, 2012; Khuong, 2015; Carty, 2021). Therefore, research has been identified in other fields such as science, engineering, manufacturing, and the service industry (Sharma and Sivagnanam, 1997; Jiang et al., 2015; Jaaffar et al., 2016). Employers were very satisfied with the skill sets of engineering students such as their ability to follow instructions and the capacity to learn in Australia and Canada (Sharma and Sivagnanam, 1997; Jiang et al., 2015). However, there was a need for oral communication and writing skills from students (Sharma and Sivagnanam, 1997). In addition, leadership and inventiveness received the lowest ranking from employers, the former as a result of learners not being able to display these attributes during a short work term (Jiang et al., 2015).

The ability to follow instructions is essential in any field of study because it allows one to learn and develop during work placement, which will help one to show that attribute as a future graduate employee. Jaaffar et al. (2016) found that, except for entrepreneurial competencies, most of the managers from the services and manufacturing industries in Malaysia were

continuously highly satisfied with undergraduate trainees or interns employability competencies, such as interaction, communication, reasoning, and administration abilities. Jaaffar et al. (2016) indicated that there is alignment between the industry and tertiary education institutions regarding the provision of employability competencies in WIL programmes. If higher education and industry alignment exists, employers will be more satisfied since students will have already been taught and acquired the essential competencies that industry demands from them. Tertiary institutions should continue seeking methods to maintain and enhance their course of study, programmes, and services to level up in developing acceptable achievers with required competencies in the field (Tudy, 2017).

2.3.5 Desirable Skills and Employability Enhancing Competencies

World Youth Skills Day took place on the 17th of July 2018 under the topic “Youth Skills for Sustainability and Innovation”. Those in attendance included leading executives, policymakers, officials of diplomatic regions, UN bodies, youth groups and civil society (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 2018). It examined how to provide the youth with quality and appropriate 21st-century skills that equip them for the future and enable them to confront the main issues and opportunities of the present time, such as rapid digitalisation and climate change (UNESCO, 2018). Jayathma Wickramanayake, UN Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth, indicates that quality education is vital to prosper in the job market, and urged to ensure that the youth is provided with skills and knowledge to handle changes in technology (UNESCO, 2018). Lecturers and business representatives play a major role in ensuring that the youth is equipped with the necessary skills.

Researchers have explored the abilities needed by employers of graduates in the hospitality industry in Australia (Raybould and Wilkins, 2005; Wardle, 2014b), in New Zealand (Harkison et al., 2011), in the USA (Kleeman, 2011; Sisson and Adams, 2013), the tourism and hospitality industry also in the USA (Milman, 2001; Tesone and Ricci, 2005) and in Asia (Lu, 1999; Chan, 2011; Dhiman, 2012). The final aim is to train students to be skilled personnel who satisfy the demands of their employers (Tesone and Ricci, 2005; Wang and Tsai, 2014). Lu (1999) found through the use of questionnaires that human resource managers in Taiwan valued interpersonal skills including collaborative team development, pleasant customer service,

communication, and multilingualism more than conceptual and operational competencies. Milman (2001) found that both business personnel and former students' groups in the USA suggested re-examining the different elements of the curriculum and dealing with more subject and capacity-building topics, such as multiculturalism, foreign language needs, interaction, practical management know-how, interpersonal skills, time management, headship, decision-taking, teamwork, policy planning, product development, and analytical abilities. Raybould and Wilkins (2005) used a generic skills framework to gather data through a sample survey of hospitality managers in Australia. The findings reveal that employers regard relationships with other people, finding solutions to problems, and self-management skills as top competencies for students to have (Raybould and Wilkins, 2005). Tesone and Ricci (2005) noted that employers require the following competencies in the tourism and hospitality industry: teamwork, communication skills, clientele services, general knowledge, appearance, an understanding of performance standards, and reasonable expectations of their job.

Chan (2011) points out plainly that soft competencies are viewed as critical competencies for employment in Malaysia, as they improve graduate employability in the tourism and hospitality field. Caiyod et al. (2015) and Agarwal (2021) found that soft skills such as effective communication affect the employability of graduates in the hospitality industry. Chan (2011) argues that managers are usually inclined to use an all-inclusive capable staff that is informed and qualified in both interpersonal and technological skills. Chan (2011) states that apart from presenting soft competencies in the curricula, Malaysian regional universities and instructors should make certain that educating and studying must be learner-based and give sufficient room for undergraduates to converse, form higher-order thinking competencies and answer everyday issues (Chan, 2011). Dhiman (2012) examined industry's views concerning tourism management employability skills in India. Dhiman (2012) noted that the findings reveal that there is some consensus among managers regarding the tourism management competencies needed for accomplishment in employment in the current tourism business arena, which are basic understanding and competencies, destination stewardship competencies, political and ethical competencies, improved human resource competencies, and dynamic competencies for employment. Employers seem to favour interpersonal skills for employment. This is significant since the tourism and hospitality sectors are customer-focused, and having competencies in this area will guarantee the effectiveness of the industry. Proficiency in multiple/foreign languages is considered important. This is accurate because the tourism and hospitality

industries attract individuals from all over the world and one's own country, thus communicating to them in their native tongue is essential.

Although Pradhan's (2015) research is based on the employability of Library and Information Science graduates at a university in India over a decade, it was found that having satisfactory communication competencies is extremely essential in improving the employability of professionals in the industry. According to Pradhan (2015), having a strong command of spoken English and the ability to communicate precisely are two valuable skills that can help one secure desirable work positions. Pradhan (2015) argues that it is necessary for educational institutions to acknowledge and address this information, subsequently rebuilding their curriculum to ensure that graduates meet the requirements of the labour market. Sonnenschein and Ferguson (2020) argue that managers regard communication as a key competency that institutions need to foster in order to advance learners' communication abilities, to fulfil the demands of their job.

Studies have explored the significance of sustainability competencies for students and graduates (Deale, 2013; Millar and Park, 2013; Ali et al., 2017). Ali et al. (2017) investigated the opinions of hospitality managers on technology for sustainable development and the suggestions for hospitality education, specifically the employability of graduates. The participants were mostly from Europe, Asia, and the Middle East (Ali et al., 2017). As indicated by Ali et al. (2017), employers were constantly realising the importance of sustainability for their companies. The researchers found that, although it is not presently a priority in terms of critical employability competencies, particularly, for hotel businesses, related businesses are becoming more aware of the implications of sustainability qualifications (Ali et al., 2017). On the other hand, Millar and Park (2013) examine the views of hospitality executives on sustainability in education in the USA. In-depth interviews were done with eleven executives (Millar and Park, 2013). The interviewees agreed that students must familiarise themselves with sustainability in a thorough way instead of concentrating merely on environmental conservation in order to operationalise the concept in any specific case (Millar and Park, 2013). Furthermore, an interviewee highlighted that recent hospitality graduates must be capable of informing their managing directors regarding recent sustainability trends that are being developed, suggesting that graduates must be capable of discovering those trends and communicating them to their future managers in an understandable and appropriate way (Millar

and Park, 2013). Similarly, Deale (2013) argues that attempts in the accommodation sector of the hospitality field seem to be concentrated greatly on green building and eco-friendly practices to increase financial sustainability, and students should know how to use these concepts and practices if they are to be made business supervisors and overseers of sustainability. Deale (2013) presents a short outline of sustainability in general in hospitality and tourism businesses and presents content material regarding sustainability that may be beneficial in hospitality and tourism education in the USA. Ko and Lu (2022) noted that several employees in restaurants are hospitality students' and the only way to decrease food waste in the organisation is by training them to be highly efficient. Students should familiarise themselves with sustainability trends. These trends are in the areas of water, waste, air, and energy management. This could be for their future promotion (Deale, 2013) or to inform curriculum development. These trends could be communicated to stakeholders using social media (Ali et al., 2018), PowerPoint, and other online tools. Hospitality industry professionals in Australia and USA are impacted by candidates social media profile in terms of employability (Sutherland et al., 2019; Kwok and Muñiz, 2021). Employers preferred posts with images about nutrition, food preparation and events (Kwok and Muñiz, 2021).

O'Leary's (2012) study in the United Kingdom concluded that employability is improved through integrating three essential elements: content, capability, and character. Content deals with the actual content of the curriculum and is an aspect that tertiary institution representatives can handle themselves (O'Leary, 2012). Capability focuses on how the curriculum is delivered and the chances it provides for advancing soft skills, for example, teamwork and communication (O'Leary, 2012). Managers can be beneficial in this area (O'Leary, 2012). Character emphasises a student's growth on a personal level during their time at tertiary institutions (O'Leary, 2012). This is a topic that refers to both curriculum content and after-university activities (O'Leary, 2012). The study investigated the effect of teaching entrepreneurship on the employability outcomes of scientists and engineers (O'Leary, 2012). Capability comprises using programmes such as WIL to develop skills in graduates. It can thus be argued that WIL is a method to improve students' competencies.

2.4. A Synthesis of Literature on Curriculum Development and Tourism from an African Perspective

2.4.1. Challenges in Curriculum Development in Africa

Tourism and hospitality curricula in most developing nations especially in Africa are burdened with interconnected institutional and capacity challenges. In particular, these challenges are skills-related (Barron and Prideaux, 1998; Erisher, 2013; Mayaka and Akama, 2015; Mahmoud, 2018). Mayaka and Akama (2015) conducted a study in Kenya, based on a curriculum space model, and argue that, in the TH&E curriculum space, tensions exist between local demands and worldwide impacts in addition to competing principles and concerns. According to Mayaka and Akama (2015), a key observation is that a lack of skilled academics in the TH&E disciplines has brought lecturers from various fields such as economics, geography, and sociology. Mayaka and Akama (2015) argue that, considering the different educational positions of tourism academics, very often tourism and hospitality investigations were handled in the educational and disciplinary confines for scholars. These investigations were directed by different paradigm positions and occasionally conflicting theoretical principles and educational perspectives (Mayaka and Akama, 2015). They further indicate that there are problems with funding and handling budgetary restrictions (Mayaka and Akama, 2015). It can be suggested that TH&E academics meet with academics from other disciplines who are teaching TH&E and reach a consensus on the paradigms, theoretical principles, and educational perspectives needed within the disciplines. This is to ensure that no conflicting theoretical principles arise. This will establish a strong foundation for the new academics and serve as a correct measure for those established academics who have deviated from the principles put in place.

Similar to Mayaka and Akama (2015), Barron and Prideaux (1998) discuss the challenge of a lack of competent academics. After examining tourism development in Tanzania, Barron and Prideaux (1998) consider the functioning of a small number of hospitality academics in the nation and underline views concerning environmental recognition by employees and learners. According to Barron and Prideaux (1998), only one (1) educator out of six (6) indicated environmental education is needed. The findings suggest a lack of environmental knowledge by educators, leading to an omission of such topics in the curriculum (Barron and Prideaux,

1998). Similarly, research has shown that sustainability concepts either did not exist or were not completely incorporated into tourism curricula in Sub-Saharan Africa (Fehlner, 2020; Moonga et al., 2022). Consequently, graduates finish their degrees with short-term perspectives on tourism and do not understand the value of safeguarding their nation's environment (Barron and Prideaux, 1998). Assistance with the supply of textbooks and other educational resources is vital and would help every institution (Barron and Prideaux, 1998). Moreover, the university must make sure that the curriculum consists of current topics that are relevant to students, businesses, and the community. With respect to the students, this will impress upon them a reason to continue their education, with the guarantee of available work after graduation (Khutsafalo and Makambe, 2020) and knowledge of what is expected of them at the workplace. Barron and Prideaux (1998) argue that direct engagement, possibly through collaborations between institutions in developed countries and those in Tanzania, would produce the greatest advantages, which would help in the establishment of contemporary techniques and practices. Given these arguments, it is therefore valid to have sustainable collaborations among institutions in different nations around the globe.

Sofola (2014) maintains that outmoded curricula are a common concern in many universities in Sub-Saharan Africa. This is largely because of limited familiarity with scientific advances produced in other nations, which hampers academics' ability to incorporate these in their course material (Sofola, 2014). Erisher (2013) disclosed that a major problem in Zimbabwe's hospitality field is that the curriculum does not incorporate key skills required for the hospitality sector. Similarly, Mahmoud's (2018) research in Egypt explored the extent to which the curricula at private tertiary institutions matched business requirements and incorporated the needed skills for hospitality job success from the view of educators, students, and executives. Mahmoud (2018) found that hotel executives and educators have similar attitudes regarding the value of hospitality programmes and needed skills. As indicated by Mahmoud (2018), the present hotel education curricula can only realise the outlines of business expectations; they mostly concentrate on equipping undergraduates with wide frameworks of general and conceptual understanding, providing few distinct expert competencies, for example, the capacity to work successfully and proficiently, the capacity to converse with visitors, oral competencies and language, comprehending visitors requirements, and the capacity to employ educational knowledge practices. From the above, the curriculum either lacks or barely incorporates industry-specific skills. This could be due to a shortage of skilled educators and

poor stakeholder cooperation (Barron and Prideaux, 1998; Manwa et al., 2011; Mahmoud, 2018). Manwa et al. (2011) state that only a small number of businesses in Botswana provide placements for tourism and hospitality students due to a lack of capacity. A close examination of these arguments seems to suggest that there is a need for more representation of students in firms and greater involvement from all stakeholders in tourism education (Manwa et al., 2011; Mahmoud, 2018). This will require that managers who have interests in the programme be readily available and have the zeal to follow up and ensure implementation and success.

2.4.2. Transformation strategies in African Higher Education

Researchers have explored transformation in higher education in Africa (Obikeze, 2003; Assié-Lumumba, 2005; Aina, 2010). According to Obikeze (2003), transformation involves developing something novel or different via the reshaping of the essential component of the old. Obikeze (2003) argues that transformative education is a process of university education, the plan and enforcement of which are aimed at producing a number of personal, institutional, and public transformations within a particular period of time. As indicated by Aina (2010), despite more than fifty years of involvement and increases in “transformations”, tertiary education on the continent comprises organisations, systems, and procedures that lack clear principles and aims or a mission and vision linking them to the main problems of their national and international settings. Aina (2010) states that universities in Africa have 1) weak and deteriorating infrastructure, which consists of insufficient structures, apparatus, research facilities, and connectivity; 2) insufficient personnel due to the brain drain, large admission, and underqualified employees; 3) inadequate research and in most instances, research disconnected from teaching; and 4) obsolete and usually irrelevant instructional techniques and programmes. Aina (2010) argues that what is needed is change, this will consist of experiential and epistemological breaks with past ways of doing things.

The hospitality field in Africa faces challenges due to insufficient qualified lecturers and inadequate support for instruction (Barron and Prideaux, 1998; Mayaka and Akama, 2015; Mukolwe and Cheloti, 2016). According to Mukolwe and Cheloti (2016) the university in Kenya is short-staffed with only four full time educators in the entire department of Tourism and hospitality management. Due to this, part-time employees are needed (Mukolwe and Cheloti, 2016). To address these issues, it is essential to train more lecturers and provide them

with the expertise required in the hospitality field. In addition, insufficient institutional management can be remedied via enough sponsorship from the government and other sources, which will guarantee universities hire the most capable personnel and obtain the equipment and infrastructure needed (Mukolwe and Cheloti, 2016). It would be useful to appoint postdoctoral fellows to create a group of future scholars who, through their plans and studies, identify shortcomings in these areas and suggest appropriate solutions to improve on these challenges. With regards to hospitality training, Erisher (2013) argues that it must not be separated from actual practice and those responsible for developing curricula should collaborate with employers to guarantee a solid connection between theory and practice. Mayaka and Akama (2015) are of the opinion that, postsecondary education institutions and TH&E sectors will thus require higher degrees of participation with other members. Manwa et al. (2011) recommended that if all the main players can cooperate, the possibilities are that Botswana's tourism and hospitality sector may outperform its competition, in light of the country's distinctive tourist attractions such as the Okavango Delta, Chobe National Park and Central Kalahari Game Reserve. With regard to participation in curriculum development, it is crucial to involve industry, scholars, and alumni due to their diverse knowledge. This leads to the conclusion that including more stakeholders in curriculum development is the most practical course of action.

Researchers have examined the role of education in creating a sustainable society in Africa (Nyerere et al., 2014) and ESD on the continent (Manteaw, 2012; Dipholo and Biao, 2013; Tikly, 2019). Nyerere et al. (2014) indicated that African countries are now highlighting the value of tertiary institutions, scientific investigations, and novelties in an attempt, to industrialise and improve the rate of financial growth, and to fulfil the social expectations of their people while simultaneously guaranteeing environmental wellness. More and more African countries recognise institutions of higher education, science, and technology as crucial to the attainment of sustainable development (Nyerere et al., 2014). Thus, sustainable development should be incorporated to a greater extent in tertiary education curricula.

2.4.3. Stakeholders involved in Curriculum Development in African Higher Education

The development of tourism and hospitality curricula at the regional level involves a number of stakeholders. Mathenge et al. (2022) noted that developing curricula is an ongoing procedure

that comprises subject matter specialists, professional experts, governors, alumni, and the hospitality sector. However, Babalola's (2019) research on tourism and hospitality education in Nigeria found no indication of government strategies to promote education-industry research partnerships, irrespective of their undeniable significance to the economy of the country. According to Babalola (2019), the development of competencies to satisfy the requirements of different stakeholders is often viewed as a partnership between the industry and tertiary education institutions. Babalola and Oluwatoyin (2014) argue that in order to develop present and future directors, it is imperative that both stakeholder groups (industry and higher education) carry on conversations on the present problems in hospitality and events education and training. Thus, one could argue that rather than being restricted to business and higher education, curriculum development should incorporate all stakeholders in order to become more comprehensive. According to Manwa et al.'s (2011) research in Botswana, they argue that there is a demand for more representation of stakeholders in tourism businesses, in curriculum design and development. They further indicate that students are the main stakeholders in tourism education and suggest that they be given a chance to connect with several stakeholders via their courses (Manwa et al., 2011). This will bring a wealth of information on the practical and current experiences into the program. Mathenge et al. (2022) argue that the hospitality department at the university is required to initiate and maintain positive relationships with every stakeholder engaged in the curriculum development process. It might be established that a quality curriculum will produce graduates with competencies valued by employers (Mathenge et al., 2022). The university department is therefore crucial in uniting all stakeholders, and this will enhance the curriculum by bringing in a variety of perspectives that will help students become better future employees.

2.4.4. Employer satisfaction with graduates and WIL learners' Competencies

Concerning employer satisfaction, Mayaka (1999) evaluated the practice and instruction of tourism businesses, including industry satisfaction regarding the competencies of their workforce in Kenya, and Alao et al. (2009) surveyed employer satisfaction of graduates at the University of Botswana. According to Alao et al.'s (2009) results, the organisations questioned were for the most part satisfied with the competency levels of the university graduates, except for the leadership/management competencies where 59% of the organisations were reasonably satisfied with the competencies level. Alao et al. (2009) argue that this led to 90% of the

administrators suggesting that their companies may continue to employ graduates from the University of Botswana. Ayad's (2022) research aimed to examine the employability competencies of tourism graduates in Egypt and Saudi Arabia using a quantitative technique to collect data. Managers in the tourism sector in Egypt evaluated graduates' competencies as very high, with the best rankings for enthusiasm for work, commitment to community principles and consideration for one's physical appearance (Ayad, 2022). On the other hand, critical thinking, the ability to direct, inspire and empower others, and the effective use of technology received the lowest ratings. The findings of the latter competency indicate a serious gap in knowledge and skills of graduates in this area throughout their programme, which should be dealt with in the time to come (Ayad, 2022). Employers in the previously mentioned studies appear to be satisfied with some graduate competencies; however, there are still areas that need improvement, thus there should be more of an alignment with higher education.

Some studies that show employer dissatisfaction with the competencies of employees/graduates in the region (Mayaka, 1999; Francis et al., 2020; Commey, 2021). Mayaka (1999) argued that when taken as a whole, the data shows that tourism managers in Kenya are discontented with the competencies of personnel at the supervisor and mid-level management levels and express moderate contentment with frontline-level staff. Similarly, Francis et al. (2020) examined the competencies gap between the hospitality and tourism industry in Kenya and graduates in the field. They also explored industry's perception of the performance of university graduates in comparison to TVET graduates (Francis et al., 2020). Questionnaires and interviews were used to gather data from a sample of 200 employers from 2–5-star hotels (Francis et al., 2020). According to the results, 59% of respondents indicated that graduates from all tertiary institutions with whom they engaged lacked the operational and technical abilities necessary to work in the division to which they were appointed (Francis et al., 2020). Francis et al. (2020) noted that the institution uses supply-driven training rather than demand-driven, resulting in a lack of employees with the necessary skills and training for the industry. Similarly, Commey (2021) explored the degree to which graduates in the hospitality industry in Ghana exhibit the competencies required of them by employers. Unexpectedly, as stated by Commey (2021), a Mann-Whitney U test indicated that none of the necessary competencies were displayed by hospitality graduates. This indicates a gap between the human resource supply from hospitality academic institutions and the knowledge and skills needed by the sector (Commey, 2021). Thus, the degree to which managers are satisfied with their

employee's capabilities is an indication of the standard of education and training obtained (Mayaka, 1999). In agreement with the latter, graduates will be appealing to employers if a high level of training, teaching, and learning is achieved through their studies. Employers will be more satisfied with graduate competencies if they work with other stakeholders to develop the curriculum; at this stage higher education will be cognisant of industry needs.

2.4.5. Desirable Skills and Employability Enhancing Competencies in Africa

Education and skills development are the greatest problems confronting Sub-Saharan Africa (World Economic Forum, 2014). Tertiary education plays a role in skills development (Babalola and Oluwatoyin, 2014). Babalola and Oluwatoyin (2014) indicated that the diploma and bachelor programmes in Nigeria comprise developing valuable workers for the tourism and hospitality industry to face the problems of the present century; developing a set of key abilities such as inventiveness, business, and lateral thinking among students; and preparation for a position in the vast service sector by advancing transferable skills so that graduates may obtain scholarly and practical regard for the functioning, planning, and management of TH&E as an organisational pursuit.

Studies have explored the competencies that are either required or needed for graduates' employability in Africa (Anthony, 2015; Owusu-Mintah, 2016; Owusu-Mintah and Kissi, 2017; Sadik, 2017; Hossny, 2018; Commey, 2021; Ayad, 2022). Anthony (2015) used surveys and interviews to evaluate the skill needs in the hospitality sector in Ghana from the viewpoints of educators and industry. The results revealed the sector's desire for leadership competencies (for example, the capacity to inspire others), administrative skills (keeping private information safe and being informed of business policies), technical skills (managing emergency cases), and conceptual competencies (creative thinking) (Anthony, 2015). Owusu-Mintah (2016) investigated managers' and tourism graduates' perspectives on the competencies required for graduates' employability in Ghana. The findings from the cross-sectional research with 25 managers show that creativity, serving clients, and the ability to work in a team were rated highly by employers. It appears that creativity is required in both studies as a result of the dynamic nature of the hospitality industry (Anthony, 2015; Owusu-Mintah, 2016). According to Sadik (2017), managers in Ghana stated that experience was extremely vital along with soft competencies such as social skills, friendliness, readiness to be of service, excellent

communication skills, flexibility, passion, and tolerance. Similarly, Hossny's (2018) research determined the competencies preferred by hospitality employers in Egypt. Employers in the hospitality industry require work ethics, flexibility, language proficiency, eagerness, and administrative skills. Ayad (2022) also found that tourism employers in Egypt value language skills, such as knowledge of foreign languages, in addition to tour cost analysis, and technology skills for the workplace. It seems that flexibility and conversational skills are valuable to employers (Sadik, 2017; Hossny, 2018). Employers may desire flexibility since graduates may be required to perform tasks unrelated to their current position or they may be transferred to a different position within the company, in which case they would need to be able to adjust. Communication, on the other hand, is so vital due to the large number of customers that the industry serves, thus it requires the ability to articulate oneself clearly.

It can be argued that competencies alone are not the only factor in boosting the employability of graduates. Nabali's (2019) study on the banking sector in Kenya argued that there appears to be a strong link between various graduate support approaches and employability. Graduate support approaches comprise university or college strategies that inform learners about the labour market by offering chances arranged for them for an ideal move to the job setting (Nabali, 2019). These approaches consist of an introduction to knowledge about the employment market, chances to meet prospective managers, communication with alumni, WIL, electronic portfolios for degree or diploma holders, career consulting resources, straightforward lessons on employability and facilitating job experience via attachments and internships (Nabali, 2019).

2.5. A Synthesis of Literature on Curriculum Development and Tourism from a South African Perspective

2.5.1. Challenges in Curriculum Development in South Africa

Booyens (2020) indicated that tourism and hospitality education and skills training are well established at the secondary and higher education levels in South Africa. According to Wessels et al. (2023), twenty-three tertiary education institutions in the country have been offering qualifications in Tourism and Hospitality Management since the early 1990s. Most of these institutions award diplomas, bachelor's degrees, and professional bachelor's degrees (Hewson,

2010); this applies to postgraduate qualifications comprising honours, master's, and doctoral degrees. Other programmes provided include internships, WIL hands-on training or on-the-job learning (Ezeudji et al., 2017; Winberg et al., 2018; Wessels et al., 2023). In addition, Winberg et al. (2018) noted that although numerous hospitality courses are taught in classrooms, they consist of a practical component, preparing students for employment in hotels and restaurants. Furthermore, researchers such as Dube (2014) and Ezeudji et al. (2017) point out that the tourism and hospitality curriculum prioritises the development of competencies required by the sector. However, this is not the situation at all postsecondary institutions in South Africa, as studies have revealed problems with skills gaps in the industry, the quality of education, the relevance of the curricula to the sector, and the retention of skills (Maphosa et al., 2014; Zwane et al., 2014; Ndlovu, 2015; Wakelin-Theron, 2015; Wakelin-Theron et al., 2019).

Zwane et al. (2014) used descriptive research to identify skills shortages that exist and hinder the tourism industry's capacity to operate effectively. According to the results of the survey given to 141 employers who are registered with the Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Sector Education Training Authority, employers have higher expectations for competence than what students can offer. Employers clearly remark that students are deficient in serving customers professionally and in proactive problem-solving (Zwane et al., 2014). Similarly, Wakelin-Theron et al. (2019) explored how the tourism industry evaluated graduates' competencies. These researchers employed a mixed-method technique with 561 participants, some of whom were managers of tourism companies and found that graduates lacked entrepreneurial skills. Furthermore, actual gaps in knowledge and skills showed a lack of educational background, which is necessary as it is the basis of a tourism qualification and significantly useful in the sector in terms of employment and staff development (Wakelin-Theron et al., 2019). Similarly, Kriel and van Lill (2015) pointed out shortcomings in tertiary education in equipping graduates with the skills needed by hotel managers. The authors found through a questionnaire with 223 responses that the absence of skill development in communication and language, supervision, and leadership abilities, as well as organisational behaviour, was concerning (Kriel and van Lill, 2015). Tertiary institutions play a role in skills development; graduates should join the workforce with the knowledge and expertise they have gained from their education and training at these institutions.

The previously mentioned skills gaps are caused by the poor quality of education at tertiary education institutions which is negatively impacting the growth of the nation's tourism and hospitality industry (Jugmohan, 2010; Chili, 2013; Maphosa et al., 2014; Moolman and Wilkinson, 2015). Maphosa et al. (2014) indicated that curriculum development in South Africa is essentially the responsibility of educators; nevertheless, these academics often lack the required training. These findings corroborate Mayaka and Akama's (2015) research on the shortage of competent educators in the TH&E discipline in Kenya. Similarly, Chili (2013) investigated the obstacles to effective tourism education in South African township schools. The authors disclose that a significant problem that principals and students agree on is teachers' lack of commitment and enthusiasm (Chili, 2013). Students also called attention to issues such as educators' inability to effectively teach tourism courses and disregard for the length of time spent in the classroom (Chili, 2013). Despite their inability to refute other criticisms made against them, several educators stated insufficient assistance from their supervisors as a major problem (Chili, 2013). It appears that the tourism and hospitality disciplines lack qualified educators, with some educators blaming their superiors for this. However, this lack of expertise could be the result of inadequate education and training received during schooling.

The aim of tourism education is to develop people who are receptive to novel ideas, entrepreneurial, competitive, think analytically, and have a thorough understanding of foreign languages, in addition to awareness of the sector (Kırlar-Can et al, 2021). However, Ndlovu (2015) discovered that the existing curriculum primarily produces job seekers rather than entrepreneurs. In that research, a number of managers voiced concerns about WIL, citing a relatively brief internship period (Ndlovu, 2015). They also mentioned insufficient contact between postsecondary institutions and industry and the considerable need for applied research that can be incorporated into business protocols and practices (Ndlovu, 2015). Additionally, it is clear that tourism and hospitality curricula overemphasise theoretical concepts and do not have enough practical application (Jugmohan, 2010; Razack, 2017). Ndlovu (2021) argues that the hospitality curriculum in South Africa must be developed to such a degree that it includes a thorough mix of theoretical knowledge and practical instruction and learning. Du Preez and Simmonds (2014) investigated the essential features of doctoral theses in the area of education's theoretical contributions to subtle differences in curricula, this includes curriculum development and curriculum studies. The issue is that the significant addition of theory to curricula and curriculum development are solely descriptive views and do not reach the degree

of normative curriculum theorising or bring about great transformation (Du Preez and Simmonds, 2014). Curriculum as normative and descriptive comprises statements of what curriculum should be and descriptions of what the curriculum is (Smith and Lovat, 2003). Curriculum as normative (Smith and Lovat, 2003) should be taken into consideration. Curriculum is dynamic and should follow the times in which we are. Given the theoretical courses and the issues faced with WIL (Jugmohan, 2010; Razack, 2017), the WIL component should be spread throughout the courses for students to obtain the required competencies to make it more relevant to industry.

Moolman and Wilkinson's (2015) study in South Africa noted that, regardless of the value of environmental management and sustainability actions (and the addition of relevant skills in each of the four international curricula examined), these were not apparent in the National Diploma and Bachelor of Technology in Hospitality Management curricula. The national curricula do not seem to be on par with those offered by international tertiary institutions. This shows that the diploma and bachelor's programmes are not at the required level and that stakeholders' (academics and industry) input on the inclusion of these competencies in the curriculum is seriously needed. The quality of education could also be impacted by a lack of participation by the sector. The problem with developing curricula at a University of Technology, for example, is the lack of industry involvement and thus an inability to achieve comprehensive curriculum development (Nxesi, 2000, cited in Mkhize, 2014). The research was limited to students' and educators' views of the course (Nxesi, 2000, cited in Mkhize, 2014). Although a lack of industry involvement (Nxesi, 2000, cited in Mkhize, 2014) may not be the case at all institutions, it is advisable for educators to work alongside industry to ensure comprehensive curriculum development.

Researchers and scholars, including Engelbrecht et al. (2017) and Mazhinye (2018), are of the opinion that a part of South Africa's curriculum in Tourism and Hospitality is not relevant to the sector. Engelbrecht et al. (2017) explored the relevance of the National Certificate Vocational (NCV) tourism programme for the sector. A large majority of industry representatives (80%) said it was irrelevant because it did not emphasise real-world experience and the technical competencies required by graduates to gain and maintain employment (Engelbrecht et al., 2017). Similarly, Mazhinye (2018) concurred that the NCV hospitality curriculum did not adequately address the requirements of the sector. For example, employers

and alumni expressed dissatisfaction that the curriculum did not sufficiently align with the sector's requirements due to the ongoing changes in technology and the economy (Mazhinye, 2018). Greater work is needed to increase employers' satisfaction with these programmes.

2.5.2. Hospitality Industry in South Africa: Reassignment of Curricula with the Market Demand

According to Teise and Le Roux (2016), the transformation of education within the country is principally directed at social change. Du Preez et al. (2016) and Paphitis and Kelland (2016) investigated transformation in higher education in South Africa. Du Preez et al.'s (2016) brief literature review on the history of higher education transformation in South Africa reveals that this idea can be grouped into three primary dialogues. Firstly, the structural dialogue deals with the move to a democratic nation (Du Preez et al., 2016). Fundamental in this perspective of transformation is the topic of equality and efficiency of the higher education set-up (Du Preez et al., 2016). The second dialogue is linked to the issue of ideology (Du Preez et al., 2016). Ideology is defined as "a set of beliefs, especially one held by a particular group, that influences the way people behave" (Hornby, 2005, 740). This dialogue requires a greater and deeper grasp of transformation which began primarily due to the Department of Higher Education's 2008 report (Du Preez et al., 2016). This report is built on the work of the "Ministerial Committee on Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions" (Republic of South Africa. Department of Education, 2008; Du Preez et al., 2016). The third dialogue consists of different elements that deal with transformation, for example: epistemology, curriculum, accessibility, equality, organisational and management systems, and teaching and learning (Du Preez et al., 2016). Although, it stresses that higher education transformation in the country should be viewed in the context of internationalisation (Du Preez et al., 2016). This study deals with the third element, i.e., transformation of the curriculum and teaching, which can only occur through the implementation of strategies to address issues.

It is important to include Government Acts in the development of curricula. In South Africa, the aim of the BCOE Act No. 75, 1997 is to "advance economic development and social justice by fulfilling the primary objects (of this Act) which are – a) to give effect to and regulate the right to fair labour practices conferred by section 23(1) of the Constitution – (i) by establishing

and enforcing basic conditions of employment; and (ii) by regulating the variation of basic conditions of employment; (b) to give effect to obligations incurred by the Republic as a member state of the International Labour Organisation” (Republic of South Africa. Government Gazette, 1997). The Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act. No. 85, 1993 was established “to provide for the health and safety of persons at work and for the health and safety of persons in connection with the use of plant and machinery; the protection of persons other than persons at work against hazards to health and safety arising out of or in connection with the activities of persons at work; to establish an advisory council for occupational health and safety; and to provide for matters connected therewith” (Republic of South Africa. Government Gazette, 1993).

Higher education curricula can be transformed through the following strategies. Suitable training and development programmes can bridge the skills gaps (Zwane et al., 2014). As a result, the industry will provide better services, making it a more sustainable sector (Zwane et al., 2014). The lack of experience of academics engaged in developing curricula (Maphosa et al., 2014) can be addressed by giving them appropriate training. Furthermore, Maphosa et al. (2014) suggested that curriculum specialists work with educators to develop programmes and offer professional advice to academics facing difficulties. Maphosa et al.’s (2014) perspective on the inclusion of curriculum specialists in programme development is valid. After providing their services, experts in the teaching and learning department in higher education institutions should follow up to ensure that the correct protocols are being followed, doing so will improve the results of an institutional audit. Thus, in order to ensure thorough curriculum development, educators should obtain the required training and cooperate with other stakeholders.

In order to bridge theory and practice, higher education curricula in tourism and hospitality must integrate academic and professional forms of education and training, such as WIL and internships (Ndlovu, 2015; Winberg et al., 2018). The integration of WIL and internships within the curriculum can improve the skill sets among graduates and enable the absorption of these graduates in jobs at a later stage. In addition, to ensure industry relevance, higher education institutions should collaborate with the government to explore the possibility of offering support through mentorship or incubation programs to graduates who, in return, would then be able to successfully open and run commercial restaurants and hire others in the process (Van der Merwe and Septoe, 2015). Moreover, Ezeuduji et al. (2017) suggest that a

curriculum that offers a complete understanding of the sector's potential and operations will lessen students' fear of finding employment after graduation. Involving government and industry in tourism and hospitality education is beneficial since it will provide students and graduates with additional possibilities to develop their skills and advance their careers. Therefore, a wide range of stakeholders should be involved in the development of tourism and hospitality curricula (Mayaka and Akama, 2015).

Involving multiple stakeholders in the implementation of curricula will accomplish the aims of the NDP (2012) such as increasing employment, improving the quality of education, skills development, and innovation, which will result in reducing poverty and inequality. Similar to the NDP (2012), the Tourism Sector Masterplan's (TSMP) strategic interventions aim to enhance education, skills development, entrepreneurship, economic development, infrastructure and connectivity, and protect the environment (Department of Tourism, 2023). The tourism sector's transition to environmentally friendly products necessitates the inclusion of sustainability in the hospitality and tourism curriculum (Tesone, 2004; Boley, 2011; Van der Merwe, 2015), aligning with the TSMP. The primary objective of the latter is to encourage partnerships between government, industry, and labour in order to guarantee an inclusive and sustainable route that benefits every South African (Department of Tourism, 2023). To fulfil the values and principles of service excellence in the TSMP and ensure the country's success and competitiveness as a tourist destination (Department of Tourism, 2023), service quality should be a prioritised in tourism and hospitality curricula. The curriculum should encompass COVID-19 impacts and industry's future strategies for mitigating them, aligning with the strategic interventions of the Tourism Sector Recovery Plan of 2021 by ensuring the sector's recovery, safe operations, and restoration of tourists' confidence (Department of Tourism, 2021). The TSRP was launched by industry and its partners to confront the pandemic's effects, such as company closures, layoffs, and businesses with reduced capacity (Department of Tourism, 2021). These plans are useful to ensure that higher education, industry, and society as a whole are more cognisant of factors such as sustainability, service excellence, and how to deal with pandemics when they arise. In particular, incorporating sustainability in curricula is beneficial because students gain knowledge about the principles to successfully tackle environmental, economic, and social concerns when confronted with them at the workplace. With regard to the retention of skills, Sibanyoni et al. (2015) contended that the industry's image and prospects should attract and increase the retention of personnel in the sector.

Researchers argue that industry might attract and retain more skilled graduates if it offers higher compensation and opportunities for career progression (Richardson, 2010; Sibanyoni et al., 2015). This is advantageous since graduates who are retained will effectively contribute to curriculum development, improving the process' results and inspiring students throughout their courses.

2.5.3. Stakeholders Involved in Curriculum Development

A number of stakeholders are needed when developing tourism and hospitality curricula in South Africa. Hewson (2010) stated that in order to conduct research on the structuring of vocational knowledge for a hospitality management degree, stakeholders from hospitality education (lecturers, management, programme managers), tertiary institutions (academic development and vocational researchers) and the hospitality sector (management) were invited to be interviewed for research. Mbewe (2020) researched on how well tourism curricula in TVET colleges adapted to the needs of South Africa's tourism sector. Mbewe (2020) indicated that the TVET system comprises various stakeholders, each of whom is required to significantly play a part in the system's success. Mbewe (2020) lists the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), academics, students, and the sector as a few of the stakeholders. The latter study appears to provide a more complete list of stakeholders than the former, which is missing some extremely significant stakeholders, including the national government departments, students and graduates. Thapa's (2019) research offers an even more extensive list of stakeholders involved in curriculum development for new tourism diploma programmes in South Africa. The aim of the research is to provide an overview of a long-term collaboration between Tshwane University of Technology in South Africa and the University of Florida in the USA (Thapa, 2019). There was strong support from various stakeholders, including non-governmental organisations, government departments, and the corporate sector (Thapa, 2019). In South Africa, government involvement in tertiary education aims to change the system in order to engage individuals in decision-making and establish institutions on a trajectory of progress and addressing developmental goals (Akor, 2008). Thapa (2019) noted that the curriculum development team included professionals in their areas of expertise with substantial backgrounds in teaching, publishing, and practical industry know-how. Moreover, faculty specialists from universities in the USA guided the development of the new courses (Thapa, 2019). Every person and business approached offered support in different ways,

including more opportunities to build connections, student internships, jobs, and research collaborations with Tshwane University of Technology (Thapa, 2019). Personal investors and banks can also contribute to producing more educated individuals through their financial support. Shay (2017) argues that there should be tremendous investment in tertiary education in South Africa to increase the efficacy of teaching and learning. Shay (2017) argues that the investment should particularly be in curriculum transformation that pinpoints and erases curriculum difficulties that hinder graduation and gives prospects to every learner, not only those from affluent homes. When developing curricula for the first time it is crucial to consult a variety of stakeholders. However, even if this is not the first time, outside assistance should be sought from reputable universities both domestically and abroad.

2.5.4. Employer Satisfaction with Graduates and WIL learners' Competencies in South Africa

With regard to the topic of employer satisfaction in South Africa, researchers have investigated managers' views of graduate attributes, including an investigation into the gaps between industry demand and satisfaction (Griesel and Parker, 2009), employer satisfaction of Vaal University of Technology graduates: an effort to improve employability (Brits, 2018), and what managers (in the service, manufacturing, and government sectors) consider to be significant qualities and their satisfaction regarding the extent to which graduates present these qualities (Griesel, 2003). It seems that locally, employers are not completely satisfied with the skill set of tourism and hospitality management graduates (Wakelin-Theron et al., 2019; Mbewe, 2020; Ngoepe and Wakelin-Theron, 2023). For instance, Wakelin-Theron et al. (2019) found that the tourism sector perceives graduates to be friendly, outwardly professional, and at ease with technology. However, these tourism graduates lack experience and preparedness for employment due to postsecondary institutions lagging in supplying graduates with the proper combination of information, competencies, qualities, and work experience (Wakelin-Theron et al., 2019). Similarly, Mbewe (2020) concurred that tourism graduates from TVET institutions leave with certain competencies, but lack vital hands-on skills required by the sector. Nevertheless, the results disclosed that several competencies that were mentioned as deficient were included in the tourism curriculum (Mbewe, 2020). Additional investigation showed that the colleges were unable to successfully integrate the curriculum into lecture room activities (Mbewe, 2020). Likewise, Ngoepe and Wakelin-Theron (2023) employed semi-structured

interviews with hotel managers to investigate their level of contentment with the future preparedness of tertiary education graduates. The results show that hospitality tertiary institutions produce qualified graduates with certain employability qualities, for example, entrepreneurship, groupwork, appearance, conduct, and technological know-how (Ngoepe and Wakelin-Theron, 2023). However, managers expressed their dissatisfaction with the following employability competencies exhibited by hospitality management graduates: insufficient confidence, fundamental housekeeping competencies, preparation for employment, communication, self-worth, computer knowledge, professionalism, resume writing abilities, learning, product information, lack of enthusiasm, acceptable behaviour, operational terminology, the language of business, writing abilities, exposure to clients, usefulness and involvement, and interpersonal competencies (Ngoepe and Wakelin-Theron, 2023). It appears that managers are either partially satisfied or dissatisfied with graduate competencies, with two out of the three authors pointing to academic institutions as the problem. However, it should be noted that a lack of stakeholder participation in curriculum development may be the reason graduates fail to exhibit these competencies in the workplace. Therefore, the blame should not only go to the academic institutions but there should be willingness and a concerted collaboration of stakeholders. Although employer satisfaction with WIL is not emphasised in local research, Seager (2019) found that 90% of sector representatives noted that the assessment process of WIL was essential and that students do benefit and learn after being evaluated.

2.5.5. Desirable Skills and Employability Enhancing Competencies

According to Winberg et al. (2018), every course produces graduates with qualities, however, the achievement of required graduate qualities depends on reasonable and comprehensive course inputs. The inputs are dependent on the contributions of various stakeholders, and the outputs are dependent on the effective teaching and training of graduates. The task of generating job-ready graduates is considered one of the most crucial issues confronting present-day higher learning within hospitality management (Moolman and Wilkinson, 2014). Studies have therefore focused on the desirable skills and competencies needed to enhance the employability of tourism and hospitality graduates in South Africa (Moolman, 2012; Kokt and Strydom, 2014; Moolman and Wilkinson, 2014; Wessels, 2015; Razack, 2017; Wakelin-Theron et al., 2018; Wessels et al., 2023). Razack (2017) investigated the competencies required for

employability in the tour-operating sector in the Gauteng province of South Africa. Using surveys with 74 employers, findings reveal that most managers suggested more practical training should be incorporated into qualifications connected to tourism management (Razack, 2017). This indicates that employers prefer graduates who have hands-on skills rather than those who are well-versed in theory (Razack, 2017). Similarly, Wessels et al. (2023) ascertained the viewpoints of employers in the accommodation sector concerning management skills needed in the industry. Nine factors were found in the exploratory factor analysis, however, the ability to serve clients was the most significant factor, followed by problem-solving and the capacity to handle finances (Wessels et al., 2023). A noteworthy finding is that hands-on competencies and prior knowledge before graduation are more desirable to managers than just a postsecondary qualification because graduates are expected to perform management responsibilities when they enter employment with oftentimes little practical training (Wessels et al., 2023). Moreover, employers may value practical training since the hospitality industry essentially includes a variety of services that involve such knowledge to deal with customers.

Wakelin-Theron et al. (2018) found that both their qualitative and quantitative studies emphasise the significant competencies needed in the tourism sector. These include recognising and serving customers, work ethics, verbal communication, willingness to take responsibility, attention to detail, the capacity to work under pressure, time management abilities, and motivation (Wakelin-Theron et al., 2018). Kock and Strydom (2014) investigated what employers expect from graduates using questionnaires completed by 40 participants (Kock and Strydom, 2014). The participants comprised managers who are likely to hire graduates and only those who had a formal and/or informal connection with the Central University of Technology Hotel School were chosen (Kock and Strydom, 2014). Employers considered handling customers successfully, upholding professional principles, an optimistic outlook, flexibility, acting calmly in circumstances, being concerned with service, listening, communication and teamwork skills, empathy in handling customers, and cultural consciousness as essential attributes that students should possess (Kock and Strydom, 2014). From the studies above, one can gather that customer service is a competency that employers value. The hospitality industry largely involves catering to people, thus it is not a surprise that employers deem this skill as important. According to Moolman and Wilkinson (2014), the findings reveal that views and standards can play an important function in increasing the employability of hospitality management graduates. They further indicate that five qualities

(efficiency, professional conduct for employment, portraying a professional image, reliability, and responsibility) were ranked by every Delphi panellist (100%) as absolutely necessary in the first round (Moolman and Wilkinson, 2014). They further reveal that punctuality was ranked as 100% necessary in the second round (Moolman and Wilkinson, 2014). Kokt and Strydom (2014) and Moolman and Wilkinson (2014) both identified professionalism as an important quality. Maintaining professional principles is desired, and graduates with this trait are more likely to get employed, perform more effectively and ensure job satisfaction (Boles et al., 2006; Matendera, 2013; Wilson et al., 2016). Murire et al. (2023) argues that graduates should use social media for their professional growth as it has the capacity to increase the employability. An individuals' professionalism within a business directly affects how stakeholders perceive a company (De Araugo and Beal, 2013). One could also argue that online professionalism could also impact how others perceive an individual and company. This is accurate because, without being professional, customers will not take employees seriously and the business might lose customers as a result. However, if professionalism is sustained, it will, in the long term impact, both economic growth and national development.

2.6. Curriculum Development Models in Hospitality Management and Tourism

A curriculum development model is a structured framework or technique for developing, implementing, and evaluating educational courses (Wu, 1973; Dewi, 2023). These frameworks offer a systematic process for designing successful learning experiences and meeting certain educational goals (González-Pérez and Ramírez-Montoya, 2022). Curriculum development models include instructional tactics, assessment methods, learning objectives, and material selection, all of which must be rigorously linked with educational goals and student needs (Zhang et al., 2020). Curriculum development entails identifying educational goals, creating instructional resources, implementing teaching strategies, and assessing student learning (Romiszowski, 1981). Curriculum development methods, in particular, enable educators to make educated judgments about programme content, sequencing, and delivery (Romiszowski, 1981). Educational theories, pedagogical methodologies, and best practices in teaching and learning all have an impact on the development of these models (Felder et al., 2011). This section interrogates models and approaches that demonstrate many strategies and considerations for developing an effective hospitality management curriculum.

2.6.1. Diverse Approaches and Models to Curriculum Development

The examination of curriculum development models reveals the various approaches used by various countries. These models differ across Europe, North America, Latin America, and Africa. The success of tourism in European countries, for example, can be ascribed to good management models, cultural viewpoints, and government initiatives reinforcing the competitiveness of the sector (Papadopoulou, 2020; Henche et al., 2020; World Travel and Tourism Council, 2023). Management models have a strong connection with the degree of a company's competitiveness in the tourism sector because they either increase or decrease arrivals via service productivity (Papadopoulou, 2020). In some European countries, the management models accepted by government and stakeholders have centred on sustainability pillars (Papadopoulou, 2020). Therefore, the sector should be financially, environmentally, politically, socially, and culturally sustainable to guarantee that businesses functioning in it remain competitive; thus, enhancing national competitiveness (Papadopoulou, 2020). These management models have assisted countries such as Spain and France to rank among the top ten largest tourist destinations in Europe irrespective of the economic recession that marginally affected the continent in 2008 (Papadopoulou, 2020). These countries are also among the largest travel and tourism economies globally in 2022 as illustrated in Table 2.1 (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2023). Henche et al. (2020) presented a management model that can aid town centres to develop competitive cultural, innovative, and historic ecosystems while maintaining the sustainability of their social or economic structure. Management models are therefore essential as they contribute positively to the tourism industry making several countries popular tourist destinations.

Table 2.1. Largest Travel and Tourism Economies in 2022

Total contribution to GDP 2022: (US\$, real 2022 prices and exchange rates, billions)		
1	United States	2,018.3
2	China	582.8
3	Germany	353.1
4	United Kingdom	290.8
5	Japan	257.3
6	France	225.7
7	Mexico	214.6
8	Italy	202.7
9	India	199.6
10	Spain	186.6
11	Brazil	140.9
12	Australia	115.5
13	Iran	108.2
14	Canada	106.2
15	Türkiye	102.5
16	Netherlands	92.4
17	Saudi Arabia	85.0
18	Russia	75.0
19	Philippines	69.3
20	South Korea	59.4

*Lebanon is excluded from the rankings due to its high economic and exchange rate volatility

Source: World Travel and Tourism Council (2023)

Models for the hospitality and tourism field in North America, Europe and Asia incorporate a wide range of strategies, including competency-based approaches (Chung-Herrera et al., 2003; Karim, 2003; Cecil and Krohn, 2012; Testa and Sipe, 2012; Hemsworth, 2019), industry-driven examples (Gursoy and Swanger, 2004; Gursoy and Swanger, 2005; Swanger and Gursoy, 2007; Zahra and Pavia, 2012), technological integration strategies (Hill and Schulman, 2001; Dhaigude et al., 2016; Lee, 2016), and a strong emphasis on sustainability reflecting the industry's dynamic and diversified character and success (Boley, 2011; Perić et al., 2018; Wang and Teng, 2019).

The competency-based curriculum model focuses on creating a curriculum that is based on certain competencies and skills required for successful careers in tourism management (Cecil and Krohn, 2012). It focuses on identifying and integrating critical competencies within the curriculum to appropriately prepare graduates for the industry (Cecil and Krohn, 2012; Testa and Sipe, 2012). With regard to industry-driven models, Gursoy and Swanger (2004) developed a strategy to bridge the gap between industry expectations and existing curricula. The three elements that made up this semester-based model were industry's basic needs,

hospitality essential requirements, and hospitality electives based on industry ranking (Gursoy and Swanger, 2004). Zahra and Pavia (2012) introduce an action-based research project explaining a simultaneous work placement and formal learning WIL model, which combines three elements: theoretical and practical education and advising to provide graduate competencies pinpointed within the graduate profile in Australia. Zahra and Pavia (2012) gathered information from students' reflective learning journals, interviews with educators, and businesses using company assessments and industry satisfaction questionnaires. According to Zahra and Pavia (2012), the WIL model was discovered to be successful, as it improved students' learning experience and enabled the graduate employability competencies via a structured reflective exercise. Both competency-based models and industry-driven models have their merits. The WIL model for example may be considered as both an industry-driven model and competency model because it is formulated to develop key skills in students to fill in curriculum gaps (Gursoy and Swanger, 2004; Zahra and Pavia, 2012).

Other models for curriculum development include educational models and design models (Dopson and Tas, 2004; Annaraud, 2006; Polii and Permana, 2021). The hospitality education model depicts how universities in Russia can develop their curricula by learning from the experience of successful American hospitality programs (Annaraud, 2006). Dopson and Tas (2004) developed a hospitality management programme using the Tyler Model (Tyler, 1949), providing educators and supervisors with a hands-on and helpful manual for the process of evaluating and altering the curriculum. The model emphasises the need to solicit feedback from educators, students, and industry specialists when developing a curriculum (Dopson and Tas, 2004). Exploring the effectiveness of top-down techniques in creating school curricula provides valuable insights. Dopson and Tas (2004) using this model, emphasised the relevance of educational goals, learning experiences, structure, and evaluation. The problem lies in aligning educational programs with industrial expectations, which necessitates careful examination of essential information, skills, and concepts (Dopson and Tas, 2004). Universities build their curricula using models and lessons from other countries as well as from their own nations (Dopson and Tas, 2004; Annaraud, 2006). This is advantageous because the models have been tried and will help universities that are having difficulty developing their curricula. Polii and Permana (2021) devised a design model for a vocational hospitality curriculum that is founded on local wisdom for students in Indonesia. The authors argue that the vocational curriculum development model will be greatly beneficial for deciding on actions or strategies

to enhance the calibre of personnel in the sector (Polii and Permana, 2021). A curriculum founded on local wisdom is beneficial because it is easily obtained from the residents, familiar, and may be easily understood by individuals.

Freire advocates for a transformative approach to education, with a focus on Latin America, where he promoted “popular education” as a catalyst for social change and empowerment (Choules, 2007). His influence transcends regional bounds, influencing global educational discourse and promoting critical pedagogy and quality education programs (Boluk and Carnicelli, 2019; Corbett and Guilherme, 2021). Freire's legacy can be seen in the application of his concepts in a variety of educational contexts, particularly in the areas of social change, social justice, and dialogical pedagogy (Torres, 2008; Roberts, 2010; Pietersen, 2022). Paulo Freire’s contribution has been observed in tourism education, with authors considering the democratic emancipatory possibility of implementing his ideas in the curriculum (Boluk and Carnicelli, 2019). As indicated by Mahmoudi et al. (2014), Freire argues that education begins with social problems and the learners’ life conditions. The educator plays a role by using dialogue to engage students on social issues (Mahmoudi et al., 2014). Freire’s ideas continue to encourage academics, researchers, and the community to review and modify educational systems to better fulfil learners' different needs and contribute to social improvement (Boluk and Carnicelli, 2019; Burns et al., 2021).

2.6.2. Proposed Curriculum Development Frameworks (Global)

- Ritchie (1995) introduces a framework for designing and developing tourism/hospitality management programs in Canada. The framework underscores the need to be aware of the requirements of businesses; it attempts to present a balance of theoretical content and experiential learning as an essential component of the programme (Ritchie, 1995). It also presents a view that balances financial growth and environmental conservation (Ritchie, 1995). Moreover, it seeks to balance the advancement of experiential management competencies with the advancement of an overall understanding of different social science areas and language competencies that are needed to offer an excellent tourism experience on a sustainable basis (Ritchie,

1995). In addition, it highlights the need to enhance the current competencies of devoted individuals, while thoroughly handling a continuing development programme of recent, youthful department members among others (Ritchie, 1995). The above framework presented by Ritchie (1995) is thorough, comprising all aspects that one should consider in designing and developing programmes.

- Luong et al. (2022) proposed a hybrid usage of soft systems methodology for evidence-based teaching, developing an evidence-based teaching framework for the tourism and hospitality profession in Vietnam.
- Adeyinka-Ojo et al. (2020) developed an innovative technologies framework for developing curricula in the tourism and hospitality field in Malaysia. Important digital literacy and employability competencies needed by the hospitality and tourism sector were used in this framework in order to develop such skills in graduates (Adeyinka-Ojo et al., 2020).
- Wattanacharoensil (2013) reviewed studies from American and European settings in order to propose a framework for future tourism curricula. The author argues that these are the continents from which tourism-related knowledge and educational programmes developed (Wattanacharoensil, 2013). In nations where tourism courses are provided, tourism knowledge is said to positively impact tertiary education (Wattanacharoensil, 2013). Wattanacharoensil (2013) presents a tourism curriculum that aims to produce well-rounded graduates who see the tourist business as a fully connected system. This comprehensive approach to curriculum creation enables students to understand the interconnectivity of numerous industry features, such as economic and social-cultural systems, with government, the tourism industry, and the tourism community playing a role (Wattanacharoensil, 2013).
- Thapa (2018) established and followed a workflow framework (alternative paradigm) for curriculum development for tourism and hospitality management programmes. According to Thapa (2018), the implementation procedure used to attain the outcome for curriculum development is as follows: 1) trips to four leading public universities providing tourism and hospitality management bachelor's degrees were organised. The

present curriculum format, prerequisites, and structure were examined against the background of a thematic review (Marshall and Rossman, 1999, cited in Thapa, 2018); 2) considerable discussions were held with stakeholder groups from businesses through individual and focus groups at local, regional, and national levels (Thapa, 2018). During discussions, the needed skills in potential employees were requested (Thapa, 2018); 3) a draft analysis of the current curriculum was created and discussed with stakeholders and experts in the field (Thapa, 2018). Thapa (2018) argues that the curriculum focused on content and business information, capacity building, and hands-on experience. From Thapa's (2018) study, the processes involved in curriculum development can be seen. This is an important process in order to obtain the required skills from industry to ensure an effective curriculum.

2.6.3. African Models or Perspectives of Curriculum Development

2.6.3.1. Curriculum Space Model

Mayaka and Akama (2015) propose a curriculum space model that is influenced by models and frameworks particularly in the USA and the United Kingdom in addition to their own framework for tourism education in Kenya. Mayaka and Akama (2015) disclose that the model expects a wide range of stakeholders to be involved as collaborators instead of competitors at the national and institutional levels. The authors contend that the TH&E curriculum space is variable with multiple potential outcomes, including employability, personal ambition, lifelong learning, and larger societal goals (Mayaka and Akama, 2015). They further argue that outcomes allow students to critically interact with their surroundings rather than explicitly stated instrumental goals, such as core competencies (Mayaka and Akama, 2015). In this sense, the model offers a framework for curricula that not only imparts competencies to students but also offers greater learning experiences and meanings in various contexts (Mayaka and Akama, 2015). The authors argue that the curriculum space is a result of both endogenous elements, such as internal abilities and limitations of tertiary institutions, and exogenous variables, i.e., financial, socio-cultural, and technological factors (Mayaka and Akama, 2015). As a result, the curriculum development procedures and space are socially constructed, institutions are deeply embedded and boundaries between the institutions as social systems and their environments

are blurred. This curriculum space model is valuable because it comprises stakeholders at all levels as well as curriculum outcomes such as key competencies and employability.

2.6.3.2. Employability Skills

Moolman and Wilkinson (2014) point out that the generic attribute framework can play a crucial part in curriculum development and has significance for hospitality education providers, experts, and investigators in South Africa. The framework comprises 90 generic qualities divided into five groups: fundamental, people, thinking, personal, and other (Moolman and Wilkinson, 2014). They further state that if the framework is effectively communicated it can be used as a benchmark to examine graduates' employability and it can encourage students to take an active role in the process of improving their employability (Moolman and Wilkinson, 2014). Moreover, they indicate that it could allow students to understand what is required of them and to observe and consider their individual growth (Moolman and Wilkinson, 2014). While the researchers took care in selecting the generic attributes in the documents according to predetermined criteria, subjectivity could have played a role (Moolman and Wilkinson, 2014). The researchers furthermore acknowledge that some of the attributes in the framework may overlap and be interrelated to one another (Moolman and Wilkinson, 2014). The author's framework is thorough, comprising very important skills including technology skills, which are needed in today's job market. Those skills that overlap and are interrelated to one another should be grouped into the same category.

2.6.3.3. Sustainability and Economic Regeneration

Africa Tourism Monitor (2018) emphasises the 2004 Tourism Action Plan of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as a framework to promote sustainable tourism across the continent. The revised action plan intends to connect the implementation of appropriate regional frameworks and programmes, to maximise the visibility of the tourism industry, and to enhance the sector's development (Africa Tourism Monitor, 2018). Similarly, the African Tourism Strategic Framework (2019-2028) presents methods and actions aimed at achieving goals such as the elevation and recognition of the sector's value to economic change and continental integration, the growth of a competitive tourism sector, tourism development that adheres to sustainability guidelines, and strengthening cooperation between civil society

and government agencies (African Union, 2019). These frameworks are beneficial because they provide a guideline for numerous stakeholders on the continent to achieve efficiency through the stated objectives. They will also enable tourism and hospitality educators in tertiary institutions to link the goals of these frameworks to curricula to enhance graduates' knowledge of the wider society.

2.6.3.4. Sustainability

Moonga et al. (2022) provide a generic model for integrating sustainability in tourism and hospitality curricula in training institutions in Zambia. The model indicates what subject areas could be included in the curriculum at various study levels (Moonga et al., 2022). Hence, topics such as introduction to sustainable education, natural resource conservation, waste management and green transportation may be incorporated into the curriculum in addition to what was already provided (Moonga et al., 2022). A model that incorporates these sustainability areas is extremely comprehensive and will benefit students and in the long run, ensure the growth of the sector.

2.6.3.5. Community-Based Tourism

Jugmohan et al. (2022) suggest the fundamental criteria of a community-based tourism curriculum intended for tertiary education in South Africa. Community-based tourism involves individuals—typically the underprivileged groups—thus, it is imperative to gain a broader understanding of community concerns from multiple viewpoints (Jugmohan et al., 2022). Jugmohan et al. (2022) argue that the development of a community-based tourism curriculum is essential to ensuring that students are aware of the latest developments in tourism that promote a fair society. It is imperative that students understand bottom-up approaches because they provide access to perspectives from different segments of society that do not control resources or have a significant influence over graduates' outcomes.

These frameworks provide significant insights into the construction of curricula for travel, tourism, and hospitality management in Africa. These frameworks help the improvement of education and training in the region by addressing employability and digital literacy, aligning with economic development objectives, stressing community-based tourism, including

sustainability issues, and encouraging a holistic understanding of stakeholders. However, Africa's tourist and hospitality management sector faces significant obstacles, leading to the continent's relative lag behind the rest of the globe (Sifolo, 2021). These difficulties include the poor quality of education at secondary and postsecondary levels, paucity of staff with required competencies and graduates departing the sector (Jugmohan, 2010; Manwa et al., 2011; Chili, 2013; Maphosa et al., 2014; Mahmoud, 2018; Stemele, 2020). In addition, the tourism and hospitality field in Africa is understudied, with a heavy reliance on Western/Eurocentric scholarship, and there is an urgent need for research, vocational education, and training to support the sector's growth (Asirifi et al., 2013; Yankholmes, 2014; Mayaka and Akama, 2015; Sadik, 2017).

Several strategic actions might be implemented to boost Africa's tourist and hospitality management sectors. Firstly, Africa needs to implement programmes to improve digital literacy and encourage the use of information and communications technology in tourist and hospitality operations. This could involve training programs, collaborations with technology suppliers, and financial incentives for technology adoption. Secondly, more sustainable tourism and environmental protection programmes need to be implemented. The third aspect requiring attention in African curricula exists within the domain of scholarship and knowledge management. The curriculum must encourage the extension of research and scholarship in the field of tourism and hospitality management in the continent. This can include research funding, engagement with overseas researchers, and the development of local sector knowledge.

Enhancing the vocational education and training programmes is essential to provide individuals with the skills and competencies required for success in the tourist and hospitality industries. Examples of these enhancements include curriculum development, industry partnerships, and practical training opportunities. It is also important to invest in leadership and management development programs to promote effective leadership in the tourism and hospitality sectors. Additionally, training, mentorship programmes, and capacity-building activities for industry leaders may be included. By tackling these difficulties and actualising these measures, Africa may progress toward rejuvenating its tourism and hospitality management industries, increasing competitiveness, and supporting long-term prosperity.

2.7. Skills development theories and models

The literature review offered numerous theories and models for obtaining competencies and developing skills (Attri, 2018). Attri (2018) noted that these models tend to fit into several groups depending on how the model represents the attainment of skills or improvement of performance. He argues that this subject grouping is proposed as a way to methodically structure the literature review; it is not based on any prior work (Attri, 2018). There are models that are stage-based; practice time-based, or task-based; factor-based; modelling-based; and cognition-based (Attri, 2018). Stage-based models propose that the process of obtaining new information and skills, the growth of expertise, and bettering performance all occur in phases; these include the learning stage model and theory of skill retention (Fitts and Posner, 1967; Kim et al., 2013; Attri, 2018). The practice time-based or task-based models suggest that the process of attaining information and abilities and the advancement of skill happen as a result of repetition; these models include the Mastery Learning Model and Deliberate Practice Model of Expert Performance (Bloom, 1968; Ericsson et al., 1993; Attri, 2018).

Factor-based theories or models indicate the interaction of various aspects in affecting the acquisition of information and abilities and the increase of competencies, examples are the Theory of Successful Intelligence and Skilled Performance Theory (Sternberg, 2000; Langan-Fox et al., 2002; Attri, 2018). The different aspects are both internal and external (Langan-Fox et al., 2002). Internal factors include degrees of consciousness, intellectual abilities, emotion, knowledge, and comprehension of one's thought processes, inspiration, and memory, while external influences comprise interruptions, goals, training and features of assignments (Langan-Fox et al., 2002). Modelling-based theories or models suggest following a specialist through discovery or instruction as a vital process for obtaining information and expertise and the improvement of skills, the Cognitive Apprenticeship model is an example (Collins et al., 1989; Attri, 2018). Cognition-based theories deal with the processes of cognition, learning for the attainment of information and expertise, and the enhancement of skills, examples include Adaptive Control of Thought (ACT), the Theory of Cognition, and the Cognitive Transformation Theory (Anderson, 1982; Anderson, 1983; Klein and Baxter, 2009). Theories on skills development that were not included in the literature by Attri (2018) include the Skills Schema, Research Skills Development (RSD) theory, Work Skill Development (WSD)

framework and new WSD framework (Romiszowski, 1981; Willison and O'Regan, 2007; Bandaranaike and Willison, 2009; Sullivan and Bandaranaike, 2017).

Willison and O'Regan (2007) provide the RSD framework to support the growth of research abilities at all levels and in all academic fields. One of the main goals is to advance lecturers' and learners' understanding of the procedure for developing research skills (Willison and O'Regan, 2007). Lecturers can predict and diagnose students' situations, create goals, and devise effective action plans in order to help students build a big-picture perspective; learners can understand where they are headed and what is necessary (Willison and O'Regan, 2007). They can develop greater independence in certain settings before moving into greater depths of rigour of inquiry in different contexts (Willison and O'Regan, 2007). The RSD framework has been found to be useful for graduates in aiding their learning and as a standard to establish their performance effectiveness (Wilmore and Willison, 2016). However, some graduates perceive that university learning does not require the detailed articulation of aspects such as cognitive competencies (Wilmore and Willison, 2016). This is due to the perspective that these abilities closely match those required for employment (Wilmore and Willison, 2016). The RSD framework may be used to guide course design, structure assessment and learning activities and determine learners' growth at any given point in time as well as their advancement across time (Willison and O'Regan, 2007).

The WSD framework is a two-dimensional conceptual framework that integrates both general job skills and student independence in order to express the relationship between critical self-analysis and teaching and learning in the pursuit of employability (Bandaranaike, 2018). The WSD, which is referred to as one of the Models of Engaged Learning and Teaching (MELT), is a sister framework to the RSD framework. The WSD framework was created to guide and evaluate a learner's development in WIL from start to finish (Bandaranaike and Willison, 2009; Bandaranaike and Willison, 2010). The WSD gives academics a lens through which to analyse and explain the degree of autonomy in work competencies from a learning and assessment perspective (Quijano and Bandaranaike, 2017). The framework allows employers to track the development of learners (qualitatively and quantitatively), and for learners to evaluate their own work skills (Bandaranaike and Willison, 2010). These views can be analysed and tested on a 5-point autonomy scale to examine the dissimilarities between the learner's attitude and the manager's perspective (Bandaranaike, 2018). There are a number of work skills factors

such as Initiative, Resourcefulness, Lifelong Learning, Self-Management, Problem-Solving, and Communication and Teamwork (Bandaranaike, 2018). These were developed as a summary of the plethora of skill factors and graduate traits and outcomes of Australian universities (Bandaranaike, 2018). Learner autonomy can be classified as Prescribed Direction, Bounded Direction, Scaffolded Direction, Open-Ended Direction, and Unbounded. These depict the change from receiving a lot of direction from an adviser/supervisor to following their own set of rules (Bandaranaike, 2018).

It should be highlighted that while the WSD is a useful framework, it must be supported with reliable on-course evaluation, such as reflective diaries, reflective articles, responses from interviews, and self-administered surveys (Bandaranaike, 2018). Therefore, the WSD framework is assisted by on-course reviews, which encourage critical self-reflection (Bandaranaike, 2018). This framework is important to WIL education because it applies feedback from learners, mentors, and managers in reflective practice on the entire WIL course (Bandaranaike, 2018). Khampirat et al. (2019) examined the efficacy of WIL in advancing students' work skills in Thailand using the WSD framework. Findings from the pre- and post-surveys showed that WIL helped students to gain self-assurance, develop initiative, obtain the ability to reflect on whether they have contributed to increased productivity at work (Khampirat et al., 2019). The scholars found that the WSD framework has proven valid and dependable (Khampirat et al., 2019). Sullivan and Bandaranaike (2017) maintain that the WSD framework offers a vital opportunity for young Australians looking for work during or after their university education. They further argue that due to the framework's reflexive and flexible design, academics who prioritise increasing employability across their curriculums have the chance to adjust their assessments to capture critical competencies in job clusters suitable to their fields of study (Sullivan and Bandaranaike, 2017). This narrows the gap among tertiary institutions, learners, and businesses (Bandaranaike, 2018). Quijano and Bandaranaike (2017) found that the WSD framework can be employed internationally and across disciplines to enhance the WIL method of teaching. A primary shortcoming in the research was the implementation of the framework in regional locations where there were few open placements (Bandaranaike, 2018). Thus, examining a learner's advancement with regard to their increasing independence may be hindered due to an absence of facilities (Bandaranaike, 2018). One of the main problems with obtaining manager input was found to be their unwillingness to offer written responses using the survey tool that was given to them (Bandaranaike, 2018).

The Skills Schema is proposed by Romiszowski (1981). He classifies abilities into four main groups: cognitive, psychomotor, reactive, and interactive (Romiszowski, 1981). Making decisions, solving problems, using reasoning, and other cognitive processes are all cognitive skills (Romiszowski, 1981). Psychomotor abilities entail movement, constant awareness, etc.; reactive abilities involve managing oneself: views, emotions, routines, and self-control (Romiszowski, 1981). How one acts towards others is a component of interactive skills (Romiszowski, 1981). The theory holds that skills range along a spectrum from reproductive to productive (Romiszowski, 1981; Hajaraih et al., 2012). Reproductive skills involve following processes while productive skills require applying ideas and approaches. Productive abilities rely on the presence of a body of information, accumulated through experience or teaching, comprising pertinent overall standards, and organised into particular thought or action techniques (Romiszowski, 1981). When referring to the classification of abilities, the terms reproductive and productive should not be interpreted as two perfect categories (Romiszowski, 1981). The majority of skilled pursuits (may) combine both productive and reproductive aspects. However, a pursuit can be placed at some point on a primarily reproductive to mostly productive continuum (Romiszowski, 1981).

Reproductive cognitive abilities involve applying a familiar approach to a recognised category of problem, such as dividing numbers or writing a phrase that is grammatically accurate (Romiszowski, 1981; Romiszowski, 2021). Productive cognitive abilities involve answering current issues and creating advanced techniques, such as proving a theorem or writing originally (Romiszowski, 1981). Reproductive psychomotor abilities include sensory-motor abilities; repetitive or automated activity, such as typing, shifting gear, running quickly whereas productive psychomotor abilities include strategy and organisation abilities; arts and crafts such as creating page layouts, sensible behaviour when using roads and playing soccer (Romiszowski, 1981). Reproductive interactive abilities comprise social practices; trained reactions, such as excellent behaviour, pleasing tone, linguistic habits while productive interactive abilities involve ‘interpersonal control’ competencies, e.g., management, being convincing, having conversations, and salesmanship (Romiszowski, 1981; Romiszowski, 2021). Sutherland (2010), when discussing the reproductive and productive psychomotor abilities, claimed that this would appear to differentiate the technical aspect of the ability from the innovative or artistic portion respectively. Sutherland (2010) stated that this is a very fine

distinction when thinking about, for example, advanced cooking. It could be noted that following the methods of cooking would fall under reproductive psychomotor abilities whereas food decoration, for example, would involve more productive psychomotor abilities, as it involves creativity. Chapman and Lovell (2006), for example, maintain that napkin folding is mostly a motor ability, but when it is performed with greater degrees of expertise, it also involves the employee's inventiveness. The limitation of the Skills Schema is that it did not provide an exhaustive list of skills under each category of skilled activity, however Romiszowski (1981) did indicate "etc." for cognitive skills and psychomotor skills.

Fitts and Posner (1967) developed a theory of stages of learning or skill acquisition; they argued that skill acquisition happens in three stages: the cognitive stage, the associative or intermediate stage, and the autonomous stage (Fitts and Posner, 1967; Taylor and Ivry, 2012). Cognitive abilities comprise overall intellect, while others indicate particular aptitudes in verbal understanding, arithmetic, recollection, spatial ability, etcetera (Chapman and Lovell, 2006). In the cognitive stage of adult skill learning scenarios, comprehending an activity and what it requires is crucial (Fitts and Posner, 1967). A pilot was used as an example, who meticulously discusses every move to be worked on, the precise order of feedback to be made, and the precise perceptual clues to be noticed at every stage (Fitts and Posner, 1967). This is applicable to the hospitality sector, where talks can be carried out regarding the best ways to approach particular tasks, such as preparation, cooking and presentation, and offering feedback as needed. During the intermediate stage of skill learning, old routines grasped as standalone components in the initial stage of skill learning are tested, and new patterns start to form (Fitts and Posner, 1967). In the last stage of skill learning, procedures become more independent, less directly susceptible to cognitive processes, and less subject to interruption from other ongoing tasks or external disturbances (Fitts and Posner, 1967). In this stage, abilities need less processing (Fitts and Posner, 1967). This means that they can continue while acquiring new information or when a person is performing other perceptual or cognitive tasks (Fitts and Posner, 1967). Thus, giving brief instructions to other employees, for instance, may not interfere with a practiced duty such as meal presentation. However, they contend that apparent verbalisation might obstruct a well-developed skill (Fitts and Posner, 1967). To conclude, this stage sees a continued increase in the speed and effectiveness with which a number of abilities are performed (Fitts and Posner, 1967).

2.8. Conclusion

From the literature review, it seems that greater research is needed to explore the challenges associated with university curriculum development in the hospitality field. Existing research shows that the hospitality curriculum on the continent is theoretical, with graduates falling short of the skill requirements expected from managers (Jugmohan, 2010; Asirifi et al., 2013; Razack, 2017; Sadik, 2017; Wakelin-Theron et al., 2018). Skills development through WIL and internships should therefore take priority (Ndlovu, 2015). Moreover, sustainability should be incorporated to a greater extent in the curriculum worldwide as it has been found to be important in hospitality education (Deale and Barber, 2012; Zizka, 2022;). Greater stakeholder participation is needed in curriculum development to increase employers' satisfaction with the competencies of tourism and hospitality graduates on the continent. The models and frameworks of curriculum development and skills development are vital and serve as tools for enhancing the development of programmes.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

3.1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the procedures and instruments utilised to gather the data for this study. Therefore, it is essential for a study of this nature to detail the step-by-step methodological imperatives that were undertaken in this study. By definition, Carmel (2023) indicated that research methodology is a systematic process to address a research problem that involves gathering data using multiple approaches, interpreting the data, and arriving at conclusions based on study data. Ghanbari (2023) pointed out that methodology is a set of approaches, rules, and techniques used by researchers in their investigations. Similarly, Hazrati et al. (2012) noted that research methodology is a set of rules, tools, and dependable and detailed methods for examining facts in order to determine unknowns and solve issues. In the context of this, therefore, a research methodology should go beyond merely being a set of rules for conducting research, it should be founded on the researcher's fundamental philosophical orientation (Blewett, 2014; Ghanbari, 2023).

Every research is predicated on some underlying philosophical presumptions on what constitutes "legitimate" research and which research tools are acceptable for the advancement of knowledge in a specific field (Thomas, 2010). A researcher's position influences every step of the research process, from how the topic or problem is first created, formulated, and carried out to how participants are selected, the ways in which knowledge is created and used, and how results are shared and published (Coghlan and Brydon-Miller, 2014). The philosophical positionality will be presented at the beginning of this chapter, which includes the researcher's ontological, epistemological, and axiological stance, which will be followed by the research design, which includes information on the research site, study population and sampling procedure, data collection tools, and data analysis. The last section consists of the methodological reflections on how the researcher acquired responses from companies, the problems encountered and how the researcher overcame them.

3.2. Philosophical Positionality

The application of the word paradigm—which emanates from the work of Thomas Kuhn, as cited by Maxwell (2005)—involves a number of widespread philosophical assumptions concerning ontology (i.e., the essence of the world) and epistemology (how we can understand the world), assumptions that are usually shared by investigators active in a particular area of study or tradition. Wilson (2001) argues that a research paradigm comprises ontology, epistemology, methodology, and axiology. Ganiyu et al. (2021), for example, observe that a paradigm is a (social) scientist's approach to explaining a perspective of the world, which is based on philosophical notions about the character of social truth and the real world. However, physical scientists also use paradigms.

Ontology, or the study of being, develops the framework for how we, as people, linked to societies, understand the reality in which we exist (Edelheim, 2015). A theory of knowledge, or epistemology explains how individuals acquire knowledge of their surroundings, and how one becomes aware of knowledge (Blaikie, 2007). Axiology is regarded as the philosophical study of value and worth (Henry and Foley, 2018). Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) add that axiology concerns the ethical questions that must be taken into account when developing a research project. In light of this, an individual's worldview or perceived aspects of reality are typically connected with ontological and epistemological components, whereas values and ethics, along with processes, are concerned with axiology and methodology (Reid, 2020).

This research could be approached from a pragmatic, post-positivist, feminist, interpretivist or constructivist position. Creswell (2014) argues that pragmatists accept both an external reality detached from the mind and that fixed in the mind. With regards to knowledge in this perspective, Denscombe (2010) argues that it is founded on practical results and 'what works'. The main standard for determining knowledge is how beneficial it is considered to be and how effectively it works when applied to a practical issue (Denscombe, 2010). With regard to post-positivism, Creswell (2014) argues that the knowledge that originates through this philosophy is founded on precise inspection and measurement of objective reality. Therefore, Creswell (2014) notes that creating numeric quantification of observations and examining the actions of people becomes important for a researcher following this perspective. According to Monteiro and Kahlke (2022), the reality or truth in this perspective is knowable. Moreover, there are

generalisable precepts that control all things. As stated by Hesse-Biber (2010), the feminist perspective (for mixed method research) comprises a focus on women's problems and topics and those of other oppressed groups and a dedication to transformation and justice within society. This study, however, employs interpretivism and constructivism to enrich data and gain practical insight and understanding of curriculum development from the viewpoint of the hospitality industry.

3.2.1. Interpretivism

Interpretivism philosophy is linked to qualitative research. Interpretivism involves tapping into people's experiences and interactions with society and how these shape the meanings they assign to it. The main tenet is that the world is constructed through the meanings individuals attach to it through their experiences and interactions (Le Roux and Oosthuizen, 2010; Pulla and Carter, 2018). This paradigm challenges the investigator to explore the meanings that underlie the understanding of personal behaviour, relationships and the world (Pulla and Carter, 2018). The investigator endeavours to create a comprehensive subjective understanding of individual's existence (Pulla and Carter, 2018). Interpretivism considers an ontology of relativism which emphasises different realities, and a subjective epistemology, in which the investigator uses their own reasoning and cognitive operations to understand the data (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017; Ugwu et al., 2021; Junjie and Yingxin, 2022). Therefore, it is accepted that people are inextricably linked to knowledge (Junjie and Yingxin, 2022). This philosophy was used to uncover the institutional, capacity, and infrastructural challenges of teaching and learning of hospitality management at South Africa's universities and obtain in-depth perspectives from industry. Additionally, this technique was used identify the alternative strategies needed to enhance the teaching and learning of the subject.

3.2.2. Constructivism

Eze et al. (2020) define constructivism as an epistemological perspective of obtaining knowledge that highlights knowledge building rather than knowledge transmission and the recording of information shared with others. Edelen and Skukauskaitė (2022) argue that constructivism deals with how people come to create knowledge. Nzilano (2015) further argues that the principal philosophical perspective for constructivism is that individuals produce

knowledge from their actual environment. Similarly, Espinor (2010) states that the premise of constructivism is that individuals such as students create knowledge from their own experiences and preexisting attitudes. These authors are accurate in their assertion that people create knowledge from their experiences. Individuals might gain insights from their experiences and viewpoints on particular situations in life. Creswell (2014) points out that people create personal meanings from their encounters, meanings geared toward particular material goods or things. Creswell (2014) argues that these meanings are diverse and numerous, guiding the investigator to search for the complexity of perspectives instead of limiting meanings to several groups or views. As stated by Creswell (2014), the investigator's purpose is to understand (or interpret) the meanings other individuals have regarding reality. According to Creswell (2014), subjective meanings are not merely impressed on people but are shaped via associations with others (therefore social constructivism) and via historical and cultural standards that function in people's lives. According to Walle and Tungland (2021), social constructivists argue that individuals are impacted by social and cultural circumstances. Personal views of individuals are partly influenced by their interactions with others and their culture. This is because people spend a large portion of their lives in group settings, such as schools, universities, lectures, curriculum development meetings, and the tourism and hospitality industry, which draws people from a variety of cultural backgrounds. Through communication, opinions about life are formed, whether one realises it or not. Constructivism adopts a relativist ontological assumption, recognising that there are many constructed realities (Charmaz, 2006; Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). During the formulation of research questions and data gathering, open-ended questions were used to obtain industry's perspectives on the difficulties involved in curriculum development, how the hospitality management curriculum should be developed, and the stakeholders who are involved in curriculum development. Representatives had different views regarding the topic, and these were shaped by their previous experiences with other stakeholders.

As argued by Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009), the epistemological assumption of constructivism highlights the subjective position of people; the real world is co-constructed with members. Considering epistemology, the researcher constructed versions of reality (Blanche et al., 2006). Information was gathered to address the research questions on curriculum development. Through her own reasoning and cognitive processing, the researcher was able to interpret the data from open-ended questions (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). In the

interpretivist/constructivist paradigm, a balanced axiology is used which presumes that the findings will represent the researcher's values, trying to offer a fair report of the results (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). A balanced report was given as all the perspectives of representatives regarding curriculum development were considered.

Creswell (2014) points out that the purpose of constructivist investigations, is to depend as much as possible on the respondents' opinions of the case being examined. Creswell (2014) maintains that open-ended questions are preferable, as the investigator listens attentively to what individuals communicate or do in their environment. Creswell (2014) also argues that instead of beginning with a theory (as in post-positivism), investigators produce or inductively form a theory or order of meaning. Therefore, the current philosophy is well aligned with the current study in the sense that this study seeks to understand the perspectives of industry regarding university curriculum development. Various data were collected that show how representatives' views were influenced by prior experiences with university stakeholders and students; examples are the research questions on curriculum development. It is important to acknowledge that curriculum development is a collaborative effort involving various stakeholders, including academics, students, industry, government agencies, and the community. To gain a comprehensive understanding of curriculum development, industry representatives must engage with different stakeholders that impact curriculum development and issues that are relevant to the community. This study, which focused on respondents' views in line with Creswell (2014), employed an online questionnaire to gather information on the challenges with the development of hospitality management curricula, the best ways to develop curricula, the stakeholders who play a role in curriculum development thus answering the research questions outlined in Chapter One. Given the emphasis that open-ended questions are favoured (Creswell, 2014), this study uses questionnaires with open-ended questions (and closed-ended questions) for industry as previously indicated. This was to explore the first three research questions on the hospitality industry's perspectives on curriculum development as highlighted in Chapter One. This study explored a number of theoretical models and perspectives that might lead to the formulation of a theory in later investigations. This philosophy was used to understand the challenges of hospitality management education at South Africa's tertiary institutions through an investigation of contextual elements and the collection of in-depth viewpoints from industry. Furthermore, it was used to determine the

involvement of stakeholders in these programmes and identify different approaches required to boost the teaching and learning of the subject.

3.3. Research Design

According to Kumar (2011, 396), a research design is “a procedural plan that is adopted by the researcher to answer questions validly, objectively, accurately and economically.” Demuth and Fasulo (2022) argue that the aim of a research design is usually to develop a study and ensure its practicality. Thus, the research design aids in providing a practical response to research issues. Kumar (2011) points out that a research design can include information regarding the study outline one intends to employ, how one should choose participants, the methods one chooses to gather data, and the ways in which data is analysed.

There are three types of research methodologies: quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods approach (Stewart, 2021). This research deliberately decided to employ a semi-structured questionnaire comprising quantitative and qualitative aspects as an effective means of addressing the study’s aim and questions on curriculum development and employer satisfaction. The quantitative aspects was used to gather information on employer satisfaction and the skills needed to enhance employability through Likert scale questions. Whereas open-ended questions were used to gather information on curriculum development.

The semi-structured questionnaire comprises quantitative and qualitative aspects. Babbie and Mouton (2001) state that quantitative aspect focuses on the measurement of constructs. Kumar (2011) indicated that the main subject in quantitative research describes frequency, nature of problems and views. Brynard et al. (2014) argue that when using this methodology, the researcher assigns numbers to people’s views. According to Brynard et al. (2014), through calculating and measuring ‘issues’ or ‘items’, figures are generated. Thus, quantitative research quantifies perspectives, yields figures, and is an effective approach. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) is used in analysing data from the quantitative component of the semi-structured questionnaire. Sizemore (2022) indicates that a quantitative methodology emphasises gathering statistical information and generalising it among individuals or describing a particular circumstance. Nykiel (2007) notes that another benefit is that quantitative findings are projectable to the population. Eyisi (2016) argues that a benefit of

quantitative research is the use of statistical information as an instrument for saving time and resources. Eyisi (2016) further reveals that the use of statistics for the study's descriptions and analysis lessens the time and effort which the investigator would have spent in detailing the findings. According to Nykiel (2007), a benefit of quantitative research (if planned, organised and carried out accurately) is that the findings are statistically reliable, i.e., quantitative research can reliably establish whether a notion, commodity, package, etc., is better than the other options.

As indicated by Eyisi (2016), the investigators distance from the respondents is a shortcoming within survey research. Eyisi (2016) argues that the investigator's distance means that he or she is an "onlooker" or an "outsider viewing". With this kind of investigator/respondent relationship, it will be very hard to get a thorough study of the case in its natural environment. However, it can be argued that with open-ended questions within a questionnaire, it is possible to obtain a thorough study of a case although the researcher might not be present to request further clarification. This was particularly useful in this present research to obtain data on the challenges of curriculum development, the ways in which the curriculum should be developed, and the stakeholders involved in the development of curricula within the field of hospitality management in order to arrive at a conclusion on hospitality managers perspectives on curriculum development. A semi-structured questionnaire was selected to obtain an understanding of the perceptions of representatives on curriculum development, employer satisfaction, and the competencies that are desirable and required to enhance graduates' employability. Figures and tables were used to illustrate the data, making it possible to draw comparisons and establish the perspectives that are highly portrayed on the subject.

3.3.1. Description of Data Sources

The primary data used to inform this study was collected from different tourism and hospitality sources, namely online South African Hotels (2021; 2022), Booking (2021), Jarvis (2021), SA-Venues (2021), and the Hospitality 11* brochure—obtained from a company brochure (ethical considerations, identity withheld). The data source chosen for this study is South African Hotels (2021, 2022), which provides a comprehensive listing of hotels situated in South Africa. This selection was made due to the dataset's substantial representation of hospitality and tourism firms inside the country. This internet service is deemed useful and dependable for

facilitating hotel and other bookings inside South Africa and globally (South African Hotels, 2021). It is accredited by travel and tourism groups located nationally and internationally such as the Africa Travel Association, the Japan Association of Travel Agents, Advancing Tourism to Africa, the South African Tour Operators Association, The Association for the Promotion of Tourism to Africa, American Society of Travel Agents, and The Association of Eastern and Southern Africa (South African Hotels, 2021). Additionally, a comprehensive list of the best 40 hotels in Johannesburg was compiled by South African Hotels in 2022. The list, however, included 96 hotels. The selection of these hotels was based on the fact that Johannesburg is the largest city in South Africa. Consequently, it is presumed that these establishments possess the capacity and willingness to accept and employ those who have recently completed their studies. Furthermore, it is worth noting that Johannesburg holds the position of being South Africa's primary economic hub. The development and promotion of urban tourism inside the city are intricately linked to the process of economic rehabilitation and the overall growth of the urban economy (Rogerson, 2002). According to Rogerson (2002), corporate tourism emerges as the most dynamic subsector for tourism development in this urban area.

It was purposively decided to choose the 10 best lodges in South Africa based on data obtained from Booking (2021). Booking (2021) is an online platform that facilitates the connection between a vast number of tourists and a wide range of remarkable experiences, as well as exceptional lodging options, including self-catering accommodations and hotels, among others. It was established in 1996 in Amsterdam and has since developed to become one of the globe's leading internet travel businesses (Booking, 2021). Despite being headquartered in the Netherlands, the organisation maintains a global presence with 198 offices spanning more than 70 nations throughout the globe, including prominent locations such as Cape Town and Johannesburg in South Africa (Booking, 2021). Lodges and hotels were chosen because these entities can accommodate students for industry placement (Sumayia et al., 2014). The experience students gain while working in a hotel varies from that of a lodge (Nomnga, 2021). Furthermore, it is vital that employees, including graduates, possess the capability to cater to a diverse clientele that places significance on residing in habitats that are embedded inside natural surroundings (Suvachart 2021). These areas are characterised by the presence of natural hues and materials, like wood, stone, and thatch (Suvachart, 2021). Graduate employees should also be of service to tourists who may value designer hotels or country houses mainly located in a game park (Finke, 2003).

According to SA-Venues (2021), a compilation of the top 39 hotels in the Drakensberg region was provided. The selection of this website was based on its status as South Africa's largest independent online travel guide, offering a variety of hotel choices suitable for various budgetary considerations. Since 1999, this organisation has been aiding visitors in making plans for their vacations (SA-Venues, 2021). The researcher specifically chose hotels situated in the Drakensberg region due to its spectacular natural landscapes and rich historical and cultural heritage. The Drakensberg mountain range holds the distinction of being the longest and highest mountain range in Southern Africa and is regarded as a valuable renewable and financial resource, in addition to being a prominent tourist attraction in the region (Linde and Grab, 2008). In addition, the uKhahlamba-Drakensberg Park has been designated as a World Heritage Site due to its cultural significance to the San people, as well as its exceptional natural aesthetics (Fordred, 2011).

The researcher utilised Hospitality 11* as a source to identify the participants for the study. The publication by Hospitality 11* comprises a comprehensive compilation of 20 hotels and resorts. Hospitality 11* publishes brochures showcasing various hospitality establishments located in South Africa. According to Hospitality 11*, the organisation was established in 1988 with the objective of offering essential and high-quality hospitality solutions in the region. These solutions aim to facilitate the connection between local and international guests with their respective societies in a manner that is both sustainable and appropriate. Furthermore, the company has rapidly positioned itself as a front-runner in the hospitality industry, with a growing collection of properties. In a recent publication by Jarvis (2021) on Travelstart.co.za, a comprehensive compilation of the top 25 holiday resorts in South Africa was presented.

Travelstart (2021) is the continent's premier online travel agency. It provides a platform for both business and leisure visitors to look for, assess the similarities and differences, and book the most suitable hotels, transportation and vacation packages, and activities, all conveniently available from a single source (Travelstart, 2021). The selection of resorts was based on their ability to offer tourists both rest and entertainment (Stasiowski, 2001). Some hotels and lodges are located within resorts. Hotels, lodges, and resorts provide accommodation services for individuals who are in transit or on vacation. These establishments strive to create a conducive environment that includes effective waste management, reliable water supply, and good air

quality. As a result, when students engage in WIL or internships at these establishments, they are afforded the opportunity to gain a practical understanding of the concepts they have been taught.

3.3.2. Study Population and Sampling Procedure

Table 3.1 Population and Response Rate Per Province

Area	Number of Hotels per Province (Population)	Emails sent	No. of responses obtained	The percentage of responses obtained %
Gauteng	80	67	14	20.89
KZN	63	46	11	23.91
Western Cape	42	36	5	13.88
Mpumalanga	7	4	2	50.00
Eastern Cape	8	6	1	16.66
North West	3	2	0	0.00
Limpopo	4	4	0	0.00
Free State	1	1	0	0.00
	208*	166*	33*	

*1 respondent indicated national and international and was therefore excluded from the Table, however form part of the population.

Source: Primary Data Sources and Field Survey (2021-2022)

It was purposively decided by the researcher to phone all the companies listed on all six data sources used, namely South African Hotels (2021; 2022), Booking (2021), Jarvis (2021), SA-Venues (2021) and Hospitality 11*. The purpose of this was to ascertain the identities of potential participants to whom the questionnaire would be distributed, with the aim of enhancing the likelihood of their engagement in the study. The population comprised 209 hospitality entities as indicated in Table 3.1 above. The survey was distributed to a total of 167 individuals who serve as representatives. These 167 representatives were those from the population who were willing to take part in the study. However, the study had a total of 35 participants who acknowledged their involvement, out of which 34 were considered valid as one of the companies is an academic college that offers hospitality diplomas and certificates and is linked to industry. All representatives from the population who completed the questionnaire formed part of the sample. The response rate was 20.36%. It was calculated by

dividing the number of completed surveys (34) by the number of emails sent (167) multiplied by 100 (Momentive, 2022). Mc Kenna (2014) indicated a response rate of 20% is sufficient if the data is of good quality. However, the response rate per province differs with Gauteng at 20.89% and KZN at 23.91% as indicated in Table 3.1 above. More questionnaires were distributed to individuals in Gauteng and Kwa-Zulu Natal based on the increased number of hotels due to their larger populations. The reason that more responses emerged from Gauteng could be that the top 40 hotels in Johannesburg, according to South African Hotels (2022), are an additional primary data source. In addition, the inclusion criteria is that certain individuals have more knowledge and understanding of curriculum development and are able to provide responses about their satisfaction with graduates and WIL learners. Moreover, those who were eighteen years of age and older were included. Companies that only conduct businesses internationally were excluded from the study.

Table 3.2 Responses of Hospitality Businesses by Province

Province	Number of respondents	%
Gauteng	14	42.4
KZN	11	33.3
Western Cape	5	15.2
Mpumalanga	2	6.1
Eastern Cape	1	3.0
Total	33	100

*1 respondent indicated 'National and International' and was therefore excluded from Table 3.2.

Source: Field Survey (2021-2022)

The study population comprises all tourism and hospitality entities in South Africa as the study is based in the country and data sources were obtained from this group. In identifying the participants for the study, the researcher purposively obtained a sampling frame from online sources and a brochure. These sources were selected because they are either accredited, significant online travel companies, the greatest independent travel guide on the internet, or Africa's foremost online travel service as indicated in Section 3.3.1. These sources included

hotels, lodges, and resorts throughout South Africa, notably Johannesburg and Drakensberg, in order to acquire a diversity of responses from various establishments and regions. As indicated in Section 3.3.1, Johannesburg is the most industrious city in South Africa and as the country's financial centre it is expected that hospitality businesses will be able to engage WIL learners and hire graduates. In contrast, the Drakensberg in KwaZulu-Natal is known for its natural settings, and it is expected that hotels and lodges would hire graduates due to the surge of tourists in the region.

Although 89 hotels/hotel groups were listed on South African Hotels (2021), some hotel groups have joined with others and some hotel groups are found in other areas of the world such as Mauritius, Zimbabwe, and Thailand. These companies were not contacted as the study only focuses on those hotels/lodges located in South Africa. There was also one hotel contacted but an employee said his organisation was renting the building of the hotel and there was no affiliation with the hotel. Companies located in South Africa with headquarters in different countries were included as their base is in the country and they could seek the services of graduates and WIL learners. The number of hotels/lodges located in South Africa according to South African Hotels (2021) is therefore 75. When contacted some hotels indicated that they were closed mainly due to COVID-19, and some hotels stated that they were working with limited staff and therefore could not participate in the study. Emails were therefore sent to 58 of these hotels. The 40 Top Johannesburg Hotels (South African Hotels, 2022) list however, included 96 hotels. The owner of the website was contacted regarding this, and no response was obtained from him. However, emails were only sent to 37 of these hotels because a few hotels could not participate. In addition, the researcher contacted the 10 best lodges in South Africa according to Booking (2021), 25 of the best holiday resorts in South Africa according to Jarvis (2021), 39 best Drakensberg Hotels (SA-Venues, 2021), and Hospitality 11* for reasons discussed in Section 3.3.1. Emails were then sent to representatives who were willing to participate, i.e., 10 lodges, 20 holiday resorts, 23 Drakensberg hotels, and 19 Hospitality 11* hotels and resorts. Several hotels were listed that are under one hotel group, in these cases the head office was contacted because the head office would be able to provide concise information on learners and graduate competencies. One hotel group indicated that it is centralised for training and human resources, hence only one questionnaire was completed by the group. It happened that some companies appeared in more than one list and these companies were not contacted twice to avoid duplication.

Semi-structured online questionnaires were then distributed to managers in the hospitality industry who volunteered to participate in the study. Semi-structured questionnaires were beneficial for gathering data in both numerical and written form. The purpose of these questionnaires was to obtain information about perceptions regarding curriculum development within the discipline of hospitality management at universities and employer satisfaction of graduates and WIL learners. The researcher was able to gain an understanding of managers' views on the challenges that are encountered in curriculum development in universities and how the university curriculum in hospitality management should be developed. This is a result of the difficulties faced in curriculum development. Through personal communication with representatives, the year companies were founded, and their star rating were collected. Company websites and online sources were also utilised to acquire this information as well as broader information about the nature of clients, that is, what they value in a business.

As indicated in Section 3.3.2, the sample consisted of 34 hospitality businesses in South Africa comprising hotels, lodges, self-catering accommodation, and resorts. One employer was selected within each business as the respondent. These employers were various managers, for example training and development, group talent and general managers. They were selected because they were in a position to provide the overall view of what is expected from graduates in the field. The sample of hospitality businesses was drawn from different parts of the country, including Johannesburg in Gauteng and Drakensberg in KwaZulu-Natal due to their likely capacity to employ graduates as a result of their business potential and tourist attractions respectively. An examination of Table 3.2 above, suggests that the majority of respondents that participated in the study came from Gauteng at 42.4% and the least number of respondents came from the Eastern Cape at 3.0%. The reason that more responses emerged from Gauteng could be that the top 40 hotels in Johannesburg, according to South African Hotels (2022), are an additional primary data source. In addition, the province's financial standing may contribute to the vast number of hospitality establishments that can be found there.

Table 3.3 below and Table C1 (Appendix C) provide a description of the type of establishment and sample, respectively. They show that among the hospitality entities that participated in the study, 15 were from hotels/hotel groups, and two were from hospitality entities that did not mention the organisation names. Therefore, the researcher could not identify the type of entity,

when it was established, star rating, or the nature of clients through personal communication or company websites. It was crucial to obtain this information to gain a better understanding of the establishment, its quality and standards, and what makes it appealing to various customers. It is important for students and graduates to be aware of the nature of hospitality businesses, this should be a significant aspect of hospitality management curricula. When determining the direction of future research, it would be interesting to consider whether star ratings and the nature of clients attract different graduate employees to hospitality businesses. Seventy-nine percent of hotels are located in Gauteng with a 1–5-star rating, 36% of those hotels in Gauteng are exclusively 5-star hotels. Eighty percent of lodges are located in KZN, these have a 3–4-star rating, whereas 50% of resorts are located in the province with a 3–3.5-star rating. The oldest business was established in 1914, namely Hospitality 17, a resort located in George, Western Cape, which has a 2-star rating. Hospitality 33, a 3-star hotel in Johannesburg, Gauteng, was the most recent establishment, which opened in 2021. In terms of clientele, lodges in KZN primarily attract tourists who come to experience nature (Hospitality 18, Hospitality 20, Hospitality 22). Resorts in Mpumalanga and KZN cater to guests who value nature and/or family (Hospitality 3, Hospitality 7, Hospitality 12, Hospitality 13, Hospitality 14, Hospitality 31). These provinces are rich in natural beauty; therefore, it is no surprise/expected that resorts in these provinces serve these clients. Hotel guests in Johannesburg include both business and leisure travellers (Hospitality 4, Hospitality 25, Hospitality 27, Hospitality 29, Hospitality 33). Johannesburg, as South Africa's economic centre, necessitates establishments that appeal to both business travellers and those in need of relaxation.

Table 3.3 Establishments Which Participated in the Study

Type of Establishment	Number of respondents	%
Hotels/Hotel groups	15	44
Hotels and Resorts	2	6
Lodges	5	15
Resort	8	23
Self-catering accommodation	2	6
Hospitality entities	2	6
Total	34	100

Source: Field Survey (2021-2022)

3.3.3. Data collection tools

The data collection tool for this study is a semi-structured questionnaire. A semi-structured questionnaire collects both open-ended and closed-ended questions and allows data to be analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. Before the full-fledged research process started, the researcher conducted a pilot study to refine the data tool that was used for the study. The questionnaire was piloted with one industry personnel. The representative said the following about the pilot questionnaire: “I do not have anything to add at this moment. It was well understood and easy to answer.”

A questionnaire is a tool consisting of questions developed to obtain relevant information for analyses (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). Some of the benefits of using a questionnaire are that it is time-saving (as one does not interview participants), it is a very cost-effective method of gathering information (Kumar, 2011), and it allows large-scale research over a great geographically dispersed area (McGuirk and O’Neill, 2016). An online questionnaire was appropriate for this study because the researcher could distribute this tool to hospitality businesses located in different areas of South Africa. Sue and Ritter (2012) argue that electronic and mobile questionnaires are fairly affordable to organise and carry out as the investigator saves on printing, posting, and interviewer and data-entry fees. In agreement with the latter, SurveyMonkey, which the present researcher has experience using, is an affordable option that allows users to create multiple surveys within a plan. According to Chian (2021), the benefit of using questionnaires to gather data is that it allows the researcher to acquire comprehensive information about individual views and encounters and obtain a high response rate. Kumar (2011) argues that the shortcoming of using questionnaires is the low response rate, i.e., individuals do not send them back (Kumar, 2011). However, as indicated previously the response rate was over 20%. Online semi-structured questionnaires were sent to industry to address the research questions related to the challenges of curriculum development, how the curriculum should be developed, the stakeholders who play a role in the development of the curriculum, employers’ satisfaction with graduates and WIL learners and the competencies that are desirable and needed to augment graduates’ employability.

According to Mente (2021), semi-structured questionnaires include both open and closed-ended questions. Tashakkori et al. (1998) note that open-ended and closed-ended response options are frequently included in questionnaires. Mosca et al. (2022) state that using both

types of questions is a common practice since closed-ended questions are useful for drawing statistical conclusions but may require information that is provided by open-ended responses. According to Babbie and Mouton (2001) and Motlhake (2021), open-ended questions enable respondents to present their own responses to questions. As indicated by Reja et al. (2003), open-ended questions can be used (in contrast to closed-ended questions) to determine the answers that people provide voluntarily and to prevent the bias that could result from providing response categories to respondents. Open-ended questions were beneficial for asking respondents about curriculum development thus addressing the first three research questions. More specifically, to identify the challenges experienced in curriculum development within the discipline of hospitality management, to explore how the curriculum in the discipline of hospitality management at universities should be developed, and to determine the stakeholders who are involved in the development of these programmes. Babbie and Mouton (2001) argue that a shortcoming of using open-ended questions is that participants could present answers not linked to the aim of the investigator.

According to Cheung (2014) closed-ended, questions are commonly employed in survey research. As indicated by Desai and Reimers (2019), closed-ended questions are more straightforward to use online because they usually involve only one-key or mouse-press answers and are less cognitively demanding, but these questions can bias the answers. Regarding this research, closed-ended questions assisted in answering the following research questions: 1) To what degree do managers in South Africa express satisfaction with the competencies of graduates and WIL learners in the hospitality field? and 2) What specific competencies are describable and needed to augment the employability of graduates in the field of hospitality management in South Africa? Closed-ended questions were used to ask the following questions: 1) Has your company employed graduates with a hospitality qualification from any university in South Africa? and 2) Has your company engaged WIL learners? Therefore, it is important to ascertain the employment and engagement of graduates and WIL learners respectively, as it will provide a greater understanding of the degree to which employers involve these groups illustrating the actual link between industry and academia regarding curriculum development.

According to Tashakkori et al. (1998) with a more frequently used strategy, one could have fixed answer categories for questions, then an “other” answer category with a blank space. This

may include multiple response questions. A multiple-response question allows respondents to select more than one answer. Swartz (2006) argues that by providing students with a more thorough list of options, the possibility that at least some of the options lie within the students' knowledge base is greater. The latter argument is applicable to all stakeholders. With regard to this current research, a multiple-response question was used to identify which sustainability elements employers believe should be incorporated within the hospitality management curriculum. This question is applicable to the second research objective (which is to examine how the curriculum in the discipline of hospitality management at universities in South Africa should be developed), in that sustainability factors may be taken into account when developing the curriculum.

According to Kumar (2011), the Likert scale, known as the summated rating scale, is an attitudinal scale created to measure views. Similarly, Wilson (2022) indicates that the Likert scale question attempts to discover the participants' outlook towards a specific issue. The survey comprised 5-point Likert scales (Very satisfied, Satisfied, Neutral, Dissatisfied, Very dissatisfied and Strongly agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly disagree) and a 6-point Likert scale (Not important, Slightly important, Moderately important, Neutral, Important and Very important) in this study to ascertain either respondents 1) level of satisfaction with regards to the competencies of hospitality graduates and WIL learners from universities in South Africa, 2) level of satisfaction with the readiness of hospitality graduates and WIL learners from universities in South Africa, 3) level of agreement with the competencies that constitute the most desirable hospitality management graduates in the industry, and 4) level of agreement regarding the competencies needed to enhance the employability of hospitality management graduates. These questions were required to address the fourth and fifth research objectives about employers' satisfaction with graduates and WIL learners as well as the competencies that are desirable and required to improve graduates' employability. The variables for the Likert scale questions were obtained from a variety of literature on employers' perceptions on desirable skills, employability competencies and employer satisfaction (Kokt and Strydom, 2014; Moolman and Wilkinson, 2014; Zwane et al., 2014; Tudy, 2017; Wakelin-Theron et al., 2018). The question about the importance of graduates communicating to employers about green practices that are being developed was obtained from global literature (Millar and Park, 2013).

3.3.4. Data Analysis

Data analysis consists of finding patterns and correlations in the study. Data analysis in this research comprised both quantitative and qualitative analysis as a result of the semi-structured questionnaire that was used. Data on employers' satisfaction with graduates and WIL learners, desirable competencies of graduates, and skills required to enhance employability of graduates were analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26.0. Percentages, means, standard deviations were used in descriptive statistics to explain the data. In order to evaluate the findings of the parametric and non-parametric tests, hypothesis testing was employed, which showed correlations between variables. The open-ended questions on curriculum development were analysed manually using content analysis and thematic analysis. Quantitative analysis is the procedure of gathering and assessing quantifiable and testable data (Panayotova et al., 2023). It entails analysing findings using statistical and mathematical procedures (Panayotova et al., 2023). Qualitative analysis, on the other hand, thoroughly examines the raw data and groups it into themes or categories based on reasonable interpretation by the researcher (Sonyel and Sadaghiani, 2023). Closed-ended replies are statistically analysed, and open-ended replies are content analysed or thematically analysed (Schubin et al., 2021; Dutt et al., 2022).

In order to code the data on SPSS, numerical digits were assigned to the 'value' field and a variety of tags were supplied in the label field depending on the question. For the employer satisfaction questions the following coding scheme was used: 1 represented Very dissatisfied, 2 as Dissatisfied, 3 as Neutral, 4 as Satisfied, and 5 as Very satisfied. The Likert scale was coded as follows for the questions on desirable graduate skills and employability enhancing competencies: 1 represented Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree and 5=Strongly Agree. The 5-point Likert scale was converted to a 3-point scale due to small numbers and to indicate favourable and unfavourable agreement. For the questions on whether employers have hired graduates and engaged WIL learners, Yes responses were coded as 1 and those who indicated No were coded as 2. The frequencies of the coded text were run on SPSS by selecting Analyse, followed by Descriptive Statistics and then Frequencies. Frequencies were used for descriptive statistics. Responses on a 5-point Likert scale may be categorised into three groups: strongly agree and agree form one positive response, strongly disagree and

disagree make up one negative response, and a neutral reply is regarded as it is (Engidaw, 2021).

The variables for the Likert scale questions were obtained from Kokt and Strydom (2014), Moolman and Wilkinson (2014), Zwane et al. (2014), Stankiewicz and Bortnowska (2016), and Wakelin-Theron et al. (2018). Latent variables were created to represent the constructs. The latent variables were 1) Workplace blending and emotional skills, 2) Forward thinking skills, 3) Attitude and values, 4) Social skills, 5) Communication skills and 6) Other generic skills. These variables were not observed, that is, the questionnaire did not contain these sub-constructs, they were implied by the responses. The items of the latent variables were modified from Moolman and Wilkinson (2014) with variables from the previously mentioned authors. Cronbach's Alpha was used as a measure of how well the items in each sub-construct agree with each other. Cronbach's Alpha statistic of 0.700 is considered to indicate adequate internal consistency of items making a construct (Saliya, 2022; Ayeh et al., 2023). Acharya et al. (2023) conducted a study on leisure travel and employed latent attitudinal traits, that is, several indicators are used to identify unobserved factors. The latent variable items that the authors used were taken from previous literature (Acharya et al., 2023). Tests of normality were performed on latent variables.

The research sought to determine whether employers are satisfied with the competencies of graduates and WIL learners. Descriptive statistics were employed to illustrate this. The study went on to investigate whether employers are more satisfied with the competencies of graduates from universities than WIL learners. Shapiro-Wilk test was used to determine whether the sample for graduates and WIL learners fits a normal distribution. King and Eckersley (2019) noted that the Shapiro-Wilk test is used to decide whether or not a sample matches a normal distribution, and it is usually employed for small samples. Shapiro-Wilk test revealed that certain variables measuring the different graduate competencies departed from normality. A p-value less than 0.05 (significance level) indicates a significant departure from normality, whereas a p-value larger than 0.05 indicates a normal distribution. Due to the results of the Shapiro-Wilk test, the Wilcoxon signed rank test was used to compare university graduates and WIL learners on the different competencies. The data tested constitute paired samples as the same respondent gives their opinion about the performance of the graduates as well as that of the WIL learners. This was advantageous because graduates and WIL learners

have obtained different educational experiences. Graduates have completed their studies, while WIL learners continue to take part in their course of study. It was thus of interest to go a step further to explore whether employers are more satisfied with graduates than WIL learners.

The Wilcoxon signed rank test is a non-parametric test that evaluates the significance of the difference between two sets of paired data on an ordinal or interval scale, specifically when the data is not normally distributed (Masrul and Erliana, 2024). This test is appropriate to use when working with small sample sizes or data that does not fulfill the assumptions of parametric tests (Masrul and Erliana, 2024). The H_0 = there is no difference in employers' satisfaction between graduates' and WIL learners' competencies, H_1 = there is a difference in employer's satisfaction between graduates' and WIL learners' competencies. The null and alternative hypothesis are thus as follows: H_0 : = difference between the paired data is zero. H_1 = difference between the paired data is not equal to zero (King and Eckersley, 2019). Another technique employed in the current study is the Relative Importance Index (RII), which will be discussed in the paragraph below.

Relative Importance Index is defined by Tholibon et al. (2021) as

$$RII = \frac{\sum w}{AN} = \frac{5 \times SA + 4 \times Ag + 3 \times Ne + 2 \times D + 1 \times SD}{A \times N}$$

Where SA=frequency for Strongly Agree

Ag= frequency for Agree

Ne= frequency for Neutral

D= frequency for Disagree

SD= frequency for Strongly Disagree

A= maximum weight

N= sample size

Relative Importance Index was used to illustrate the ranking of the items based on their importance in relation to desirable skills and the competencies required to enhance the employability of graduates. The RII achieves the objective (To determine the specific competencies that are desirable and needed for augmenting the employability of graduates) by ranking desirable skills and those needed for employability. Studies have utilised the relative importance analysis to rank criteria based on how important they are (Gündüz et al., 2013;

Rooshdi et al., 2018; Tholibon et al., 2021; Ayad, 2022). The importance of competencies were quantified by the RII technique. 'W' is the weighting that every representative provided on a scale of one to five, where five represents the highest weight and one the lowest (Rooshdi et al., 2018). A is the maximum weight and N is the total sample (Rooshdi et al., 2018). The RII ranged from 0 to 1, with the higher RII (Gündüz et al., 2013) indicating greater importance for the competencies. In addition to the RII, content analysis was used in the current study.

Content analysis is a group of quantitative and qualitative techniques for gathering and analysing data from verbal, written, or online communication (Kondracki et al., 2002; White and Marsh, 2006). Content analysis was beneficial for exploring trends and patterns in data (Stemler, 2001). Vaismoradi et al. (2013) argue that measuring the frequency of various categories and ideas is possible in content analysis. Schreier (2012) identified the stages in content analysis these include selecting a research question, choosing data, creating a coding frame, segmenting data into coding units, testing one's coding frame, assessing, and improving one's coding frame, conducting the primary analysis, explaining, and presenting one's empirical evidence. The researcher first decided on a research topic and questions centred on how the hospitality industry perceives the development of the hospitality management curriculum at universities. After collecting data through a questionnaire, the researcher selected the open-ended question responses and manually coded them. When using coding for open-ended questions, the researcher's foremost emphasis was not on initial codes but rather on the primary questions the researcher intended to address through the study (White and Marsh, 2006). As the researcher read through the data, the researcher highlighted important comments and text segments that related to the questions under consideration, noted others that were significant but were unexpected, noticed similarities in conveying the same idea, and proceeded to compare the categories and constructs that arose via this process with other data and rereading of the same data (White and Marsh, 2006). In the process, the researcher looked for a variety of ideas or different viewpoints (White and Marsh, 2006). These steps were vital to ensure data analysis was structured and interpreted. Secondary data from book chapters, journal articles, government gazettes, websites, international organisations were content analysed and used to augment the primary data to gain an in-depth understanding of the challenges confronting curriculum development and the strategies to deal with these problems. The current study also included thematic analysis.

Christou (2023) argues that the process of thematic analysis involves using a qualitative data set to detect, analyse and interpret themes. Open-ended questions were analysed using thematic analysis. This method was employed to pinpoint institutional capacity, structural and policy challenges associated with developing curricula. In order to conduct thematic analysis, the researcher gained familiarity with the primary data on the challenges involved in curriculum development. The data was grouped using manual coding according to similar items. The various data groupings were then given themes. For example, under the 'Institutional capacity - Human Resources' theme, representatives referred to 'lack of knowledge of industry' 'lack of specialists' 'non-participation of stakeholders' and academics without necessary understanding of practical issues. The themes that were used were created by the researcher based on the data obtained and later defined. Christou (2023) recognised a number of thematic analysis phases. This entails becoming acquainted with research data, creating preliminary codes, looking for and evaluating themes and explaining themes (Christou, 2023).

3.4. Methodological Reflections

The researcher developed contacts with the hospitality businesses in South Africa in order to conduct the study. The researcher used online resources and a brochure to create a sampling frame and then contacted representatives telephonically before sending them the questionnaire. This was helpful as it allowed the researcher to speak to representatives first, inform them of the study and let them decide whether to participate in the research. Representatives who were interested in learning more about the study provided their email addresses, after which participant information sheets and questionnaires were sent to them.

The study employed an online semi-structured questionnaire as the method of data collection. Interviewing techniques may have enhanced the study. However, it was decided that an online questionnaire would be appropriate going forward. Online questionnaires allowed the researcher to obtain responses from those hotels, resorts and lodges listed online and in the brochure. Among the sampling frames, the researcher selected the best lodges, hotels, and resorts that were located in different areas of South Africa for reasons discussed in Section 3.3.1.

Due to COVID-19, some hospitality businesses were closed permanently, and some closed for a short period. Some companies could not engage in the research from the outset, emphasising their busyness, and one employer indicated that their company policy does not allow the researcher's request. There was therefore an unwillingness of some employers to participate in the study. In view of the obstacles, the researcher also used the following method: purposively obtained sampling frames in order to contact/select more companies to participate in the research. In addition, the researcher had to wait till some companies had opened in order to survey respondents, which also resulted in delays.

CHAPTER FOUR EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the empirical evidence that was collected between October 2021 and April 2022 to address the research questions used in the study. The aim of this chapter is to focus on what the study sought to explore and the results obtained. The results were organised and classified in accordance with the study's research questions. Themes pertinent to the research questions were identified through extensive reading and rereading, and they were then used to comprehend how hospitality representatives view curriculum development and satisfaction with the knowledge and skills of graduates and WIL learners. The data obtained is displayed as figures, tables, themes and quotations from the open-ended questions.

The representatives who participated in this study are managers from hotel/hotel groups (44%), resorts (23%), lodges (15%) and hotels and resort entities, self-catering accommodation and hospitality entities each at 6% (Table 3.3). These representatives are mostly from Gauteng (42.4%), KZN (33.3%), Western Cape (15.2%), Mpumalanga (6.1%), and the Eastern Cape (3.0%) (Table 3.2). The views of thirty-four (34) representatives on university curriculum development in the field of hospitality management are presented in the first section. This includes perspectives on the problems faced in the development of the university curriculum, how the hospitality management curriculum should be developed, including the incorporation of sustainability elements and the stakeholders involved in the development of hospitality management programmes. The next section shows representatives' satisfaction with the skills and knowledge of WIL learners and hospitality graduates. This includes their satisfaction with their readiness. Another section looks at the competencies that are both desirable and required to improve the employability of hospitality management graduates. The former focuses on the importance of graduates in hospitality management having knowledge of green practices and being able to communicate with employers about emerging green practices. The chapter's conclusion includes a summary of all the results.

4.2. Institutional, Capacity and Structural Challenges to Curriculum Development in South African Universities in Hospitality Management

4.2.1. Industry's Perspectives on Curriculum Development, Challenges in South African Universities

One of the key questions driving this study was to identify institutional and structural challenges hindering curriculum development in South African universities. Representatives were asked to identify the difficulties encountered in the field of hospitality management using an open-ended question. Out of the 33 respondents who answered this question 15.2% refer to educators' lack of knowledge and experience of the industry and adapting to the realities on the ground as significant constraints to curriculum development in South Africa's universities (Table 4.2.1). Whereas 3.0 mentioned that curriculum development takes too long and that there is not enough time for in-service training among other challenges.

4.3. Strategies for Improving Curriculum Development in South African Universities in Hospitality Management

One of the main questions guiding this investigation was to identify intervention strategies to address the institutional and structural challenges hindering curriculum development in South African universities. Representatives were asked to provide information on how the curriculum within the field of hospitality management should be developed. The goal was to pinpoint the strategies, which included stakeholder engagements, skills development, and the inclusion of sustainability components. These strategies are of interest because they assist in minimising or eliminating skills gaps and other issues experienced in the field.

4.3.1. Industry's Views on How the Hospitality Management Curriculum Within Universities Should Be Developed

A survey with hospitality industry representatives provided insight into how the university curriculum within the discipline of hospitality management should be developed. An open-ended question about how the curriculum is expected to be developed was posed. The survey outcomes revealed that of the 32 respondents who answered the question, eight of the responses translating to 25.0% noted that practical training and involving multiple stakeholders are

needed. Whereas 3.1% indicated the following strategies: an examination of industry leaders' operations with a focus on Labour law and Acts, aligned to current market trends, having qualified tutors with hospitality background and experience, by having experienced the industry first hand, as presented in Table 4.3.1.

Table 4.2.1. Challenges in Curriculum Development in Hospitality Management at Universities

Challenges	Frequency in responses	Percentages (%)
Lack of knowledge and experience of the industry (by academics)	5	15.2
Adapting to the realities on the ground/putting what they learn into practice	5	15.2
Changing trends/constant changes within industry	4	12.1
Lacking practicality	3	9.1
Curriculum being outdated	3	9.1
Too theoretical/theory-based	3	9.1
Not familiar with current trends in curriculum development (i.e., not sure).	3	9.1
Takes too long	1	3.0
Tailoring the curriculum to fit with the changing work environment	1	3.0
Lack of discipline, policies are changed to suit the student and not the curriculum	1	3.0
Lack of subject matter specialists coming from hospitality	1	3.0
Not enough current industry input	1	3.0
Deciding what is relevant course information to students entering the industry	1	3.0
Utilising the latest techniques and trends	1	3.0
Placement of students for practical experience	1	3.0
Remaining ahead of what is needed	1	3.0
Non-participation of other stakeholders	1	3.0
Language barrier – lack of understanding of English by most students	1	3.0
Articulate the correct demeanour needed in hospitality	1	3.0
Individuals do not have time	1	3.0
People are not passionate about hospitality	1	3.0
Creating unrealistic expectations	1	3.0
Not enough time for in-service training	1	3.0

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

Table 4.3.1. The Perspectives of Representatives on How the Hospitality Management Curriculum Should Be Developed

How the curriculum should be developed	Frequency in responses	%
Practical training is required	8	25.0
Involving multiple stakeholders	8	25.0
Mindful of (current) industry trends/needs	5	15.6
Involving industry	4	12.5
Different skills and or knowledge should be focused on	4	12.5
Considering Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).	3	9.4
Examination of industry leaders' operations with a focus on Labour law and Acts	1	3.1
Aligned to current market trends	1	3.1
Having qualified tutors with hospitality backgrounds and experience	1	3.1
By having experienced the industry first hand	1	3.1

Source: Field survey (2021–2022)

The perceptions of industry representatives who participated in the study were mixed. The responses to the online survey noted the following regarding including practical training in curriculum development, Hospitality 8 said:

“When in university...include practical training within hospitality industry in all department (sic) to put in practice what they learn...” (Field Survey, 2021–2022).

Hospitality 21 also noted:

“The curriculum should take into account the intense physical and emotional strain placed on hospitality management employees - working long and strange hours when friends and loved ones are at home. There is a great need for practical experience in a real worl (sic) environment” (Field Survey, 2021–2022).

Hospitality 12 supported this view by indicating:

“It should encompass more practical experience with hands on training in management and not just junior level as students” (Field Survey, 2021–2022).

Respondents stated the following concerning different competencies and or knowledge that the curriculum should be focused on, Hospitality 1 stated:

“Management and leadership skills development should be focused on” (Field Survey, 2021–2022).

Hospitality 2 also indicated:

“Start with basic cleanliness, Customer service, understanding booking channels, web and search engine optimization management” (Field Survey, 2021–2022).

Hospitality 6 said:

“...Industry related life skills should be a focus” (Field Survey, 2021–2022).

Hospitality 28 broadly mentioned:

“Theoretical as well as a strong focus on practical” (Field Survey, 2021–2022).

Representatives stated the following regarding the incorporation of KPIs, in curriculum development, Hospitality 16 said:

“By asking active participants in the industry to provide universities with organograms, KPIs and role responsibilities to provide universities with a real view of what staff at different levels do day-to-day and how they are evaluated” (Field Survey, 2021–2022).

Hospitality 3 supported this view by indicating:

“It should be developed with key performance indicators in mind. Finance, Marketing, Human resources etc” (Field Survey, 2021–2022).

Hospitality 7 noted that the curriculum should be developed through the following:

“Analytical study of industry leaders (sic) day to day operations with attention to the Labour Law, The Basic Conditions of Employment (BCOE), Health and Safety act” (Field Survey, 2021–2022).

4.3.2. Industry’s Views on The Incorporation of Sustainability Elements in the Hospitality Management Curriculum Within Universities

The curriculum could also be developed by incorporating sustainability elements. Representatives were asked to identify which sustainability elements should be incorporated within the hospitality management curriculum through a matrix question. All representatives answered the question. Eighty-eight percent (88%) of the responses mentioned environmental elements, while 6% stated the political components as presented in Figure 4.3.1. Their perspectives on including sustainability in the curriculum were of interest since they shed light on the extent to which representatives prioritises the preservation and maintenance of environmental, societal, economic, and political spheres.

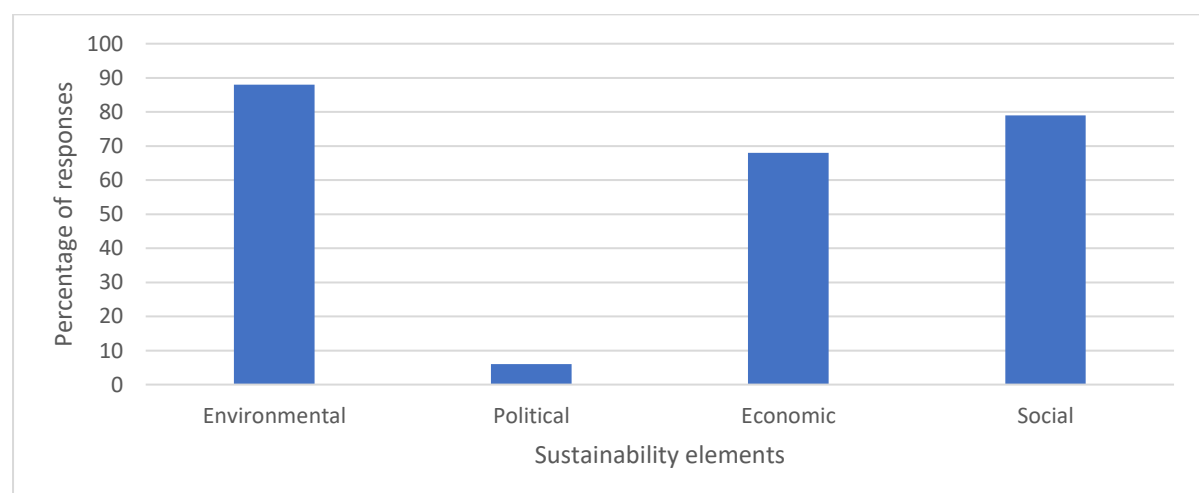


Figure 4.3.1. Sustainability Elements Which Should Be Incorporated Within the Hospitality Management Curriculum

Source: Field survey (2021–2022)

4.4. Stakeholders Involvement in Curriculum Development in South African Universities Within the Discipline of Hospitality Management

Determining the stakeholders who play a role in the development of hospitality management programmes at universities was one of the key questions directing this research. Representatives were asked to provide information on the stakeholders who are involved in the development of these programmes. The aim was to pinpoint whether multiple actors participate in curriculum development. This is of interest as it reveals the stakeholders that provide input and influence the development of hospitality management programmes in universities in the country.

4.4.1 Industry's Perspectives on Stakeholders Who Play a Role in the Development of Hospitality Management Programmes

Respondents were questioned through an open-ended question about the involvement of stakeholders in the development of hospitality management programmes in South Africa. Table 4.4.1 shows the perspectives of representatives. Answers from the Table illustrate that of the 33 respondents who answered this question, 26 of the responses translating to 78.8% are of the view that industry stakeholders are involved in curriculum development. While 3.0% of responses indicated the following stakeholders: curriculum developers, ground operators, tourism board, Federated Hospitality Association of South Africa (FEDHASA), investors, students, media, Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) certified facilitators and suppliers as illustrated in Table 4.4.1.

Table 4.4.1. Stakeholders Who Play a Role in the Development of Hospitality Management Programmes

Stakeholders	Frequency in responses	%
Hospitality industry including industry specialists	26	78.8
Educational institution/Tertiary establishments (i.e hotel schools, universities, training institutes)	13	39.4
Department of Tourism/Government	7	21.2
Local community/communities surrounding hospitality establishments	2	6.1
Guests	2	6.1
Curriculum developers	1	3.0
Ground operators – organisation provides services such as transportation and guides.	1	3.0
Tourism Board – organisations that encourage tourists to visit country	1	3.0
FEDHASA	1	3.0
Investors	1	3.0
Students	1	3.0
Media	1	3.0
SETA certified facilitators	1	3.0
Suppliers	1	3.0

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

4.5. Employer Satisfaction With the Skills of Hospitality Graduates and WIL Learners From South African Universities

The study sought to establish whether employers are satisfied with hospitality graduates and WIL learners' competencies in South Africa. This was a central question leading this exploration. Employers are one of the key stakeholders at universities and their opinions regarding the skills of these groups should be investigated. This aspect was important since it

helps stakeholders learn which competencies employers are pleased with and those skills which should be improved.

4.5.1. Representatives' Contentment With Hospitality Graduates' Competencies

Responses from representatives in the hospitality industry gave insights into their contentment and displeasure with graduate competencies on the job. It is critical to determine their degree of contentment since it informs curriculum development. Representatives were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the competencies displayed by hospitality graduates from universities in South Africa, using a matrix question (Question 8). The 26 questionnaire items of this section are put into sub-constructs determined by literature sources. These are presented in Table 4.5.1 below.

Table 4.5.1. Suggested Names of the Sub-constructs of Employer Satisfaction With the Competencies of Hospitality Graduates

Factors	Questionnaire items	Suggested variable name
1	Confidence, Adjustability, Flexibility, Acting calmly in work situations, The ability to work under pressure	Workplace blending and emotional skills
2	Inventiveness, Optimistic attitude, The capacity to act in anticipation of future situations, The ability to solve problems	Forward thinking
3	Trustworthiness, Having a friendly attitude when serving customers, Knowledge of different cultures, Upholding professional principles, Has knowledge of the industry, Has knowledge of what is expected by the industry	Attitudes and values
4	Leadership, Willingness to assist, The ability to work well in a team, Empathy in handling customers	Social skills
5	The ability to verbally communicate information to customers, The ability to communicate in writing, Being multilingual, Listening skills	Communication skills
6	Time management, Organization, Planning	Other generic skills

Source: Modified from Moolman and Wilkinson (2014) with variables from Kokt and Strydom (2014), Zwane et al. (2014), Tudy (2017), Wakelin-Theron et al. (2018)

4.5.1.1. Workplace Blending and Emotional Skills of Graduates From South African Universities

The descriptive statistics for workplace blending and emotional skills are presented in Table 4.5.2 below. The percentages of respondents who are satisfied with these items are around 50% meaning that there is no overwhelming satisfaction with the current competency of hospitality graduates from South African Universities. Employers were most satisfied with graduates confidence at 56.5% and dissatisfied with their flexibility and ability to work under pressure at 13.0%. The mean scores are barely above 3.00 which is the neutral score. The 5 items of workplace blending and emotional skills have high internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha=0.890).

Table 4.5.2. Frequency Table for Workplace Blending and Professionalism of Graduates

Workplace blending and emotional skills		Very Dissatisfied/ Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied/ Very Satisfied	Mean	Std. Dev
Q8-2-Confidence	Count %	1 4.3%	9 39.1%	13 56.5%	3.65	0.78
Q8-16-Adjustability	Count %	2 8.7%	9 39.1%	12 52.2%	3.61	0.89
Q8-17-Flexibility	Count %	3 13.0%	9 39.1%	11 47.8%	3.57	0.99
Q8-23-Acting calmly in work situations	Count %	1 4.3%	10 43.5%	12 52.2%	3.61	0.78
Q8-24-The ability to work under pressure	Count %	3 13.0%	12 52.2%	8 34.8%	3.26	0.92
Cronbach's Alpha					0.890	

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

4.5.1.2. Forward Thinking of Graduates from South African Universities

The descriptive statistics of forward thinking are shown in Table 4.5.3 below. In terms of employers' satisfaction, an optimist attitude ranks highest among these competencies at 59.1%. Employers are dissatisfied with graduates capacity to act in anticipation of future situations at

26.1%. Optimist attitude has the highest mean score at 3.77. The internal consistency of the 4 ‘Forward thinking’ items is high (Cronbach's Alpha=0.883).

Table 4.5.3 Descriptive Statistics of Graduates' Forward Thinking Skills

Forward thinking		Very Dissatisfied/ Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied/ Very Satisfied	Mean	Std. Dev
Q8-1-Inventiveness	Count %	2 9.5%	10 47.6%	9 42.9%	3.38	0.74
Q8-3-Optimistic attitude	Count %	0 0.0%	9 40.9%	13 59.1%	3.77	0.75
Q8-4-The capacity to act in anticipation of future situations	Count %	6 26.1%	9 39.1%	8 34.8%	3.26	1.05
Q8-14-The ability to solve problems	Count %	4 17.4%	13 56.5%	6 26.1%	3.17	0.83
Cronbach's Alpha					0.883	

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

4.5.1.3. Attitudes and Values of Graduates from South African Universities

Statistical data indicates that the bulk of representatives were satisfied with graduates’ friendly attitude when serving customers at 82.6% and dissatisfied with their knowledge of what is expected by the industry at 17.4%. The Attitudes and Values domain displays descriptive statistics as shown in Table 4.5.4 below. Having a friendly attitude when serving customers has the highest mean score (4.22). The 6 ‘Attitudes and Values’ items have a good level of internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha=0.798).

4.5.1.4. Social Skills of Graduates from South African Universities

As seen in Table 4.5.5 below, the Social Skills domain presents descriptive statistics. The competency with the highest satisfaction rating is willingness to assist (78.3%), together with the highest mean score (4.04). Leadership abilities had the highest dissatisfaction rating at 18.2%. Cronbach's Alpha for “Social Skills” is 0.693, which an adequate level of consistency between the items.

Table 4.5.4 Descriptive Statistics of Attitude and Values of Graduates

Attitudes and Values		Very Dissatisfied/ Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied/ Very Satisfied	Mean	Std. Dev
Q8-7-Trustworthiness	Count %	0 0.0%	7 33.3%	14 66.7%	3.81	0.68
Q8-11-Having a friendly attitude when serving customers	Count %	0 0.0%	4 17.4%	19 82.6%	4.22	0.74
Q8-18-Knowledge of different cultures	Count %	3 13.0%	9 39.1%	11 47.8%	3.39	0.78
Q8-19-Upholding professional principles	Count %	2 9.1%	6 27.3%	14 63.6%	3.68	0.84
Q8-25-Has knowledge of the industry	Count %	2 8.7%	9 39.1%	12 52.2%	3.57	0.84
Q8-26-Has knowledge of what is expected by the industry	Count %	4 17.4%	7 30.4%	12 52.2%	3.43	0.90
Cronbach's Alpha					0.798	

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

Table 4.5.5 Descriptive Statistics of Social Skills

Social Skills		Very Dissatisfied/ Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied/ Very Satisfied	Mean	Std. Dev
Q8-5-Leadership	Count %	4 18.2%	11 50.0%	7 31.8%	3.18	0.80
Q8-6-Willingness to assist	Count %	1 4.3%	4 17.4%	18 78.3%	4.04	0.82
Q8-10-The ability to work well in a team	Count %	0 0.0%	7 30.4%	16 69.6%	3.87	0.69
Q8-12-Empathy in handling customers	Count %	1 4.3%	8 34.8%	14 60.9%	3.78	0.85
Cronbach's Alpha					0.693	

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

4.5.1.5. Communication Skills of Graduates from South African Universities

The Communication Skills grouping displays the descriptive data, as illustrated in Table 4.5.6 below. The ability to verbally communicate information to customers has the highest

satisfaction rating (69.6%), and the highest mean score (3.87). With a score of 13.0%, employers expressed dissatisfaction with the listening skills of graduates. The 4 “Communication Skills” items have a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.699, which indicates a sufficient degree of internal consistency.

Table 4.5.6 Descriptive Statistics of Communication Skills of Graduates

Communication Skills		Very Dissatisfied/ Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied/ Very Satisfied	Mean	Std. Dev
Q8-8-The ability to verbally communicate information to customers	Count %	0 0.0%	7 30.4%	16 69.6%	3.87	0.69
Q8-9-The ability to communicate in writing	Count %	2 8.7%	7 30.4%	14 60.9%	3.65	0.83
Q8-13-Being multilingual	Count %	1 4.3%	12 52.2%	10 43.5%	3.48	0.73
Q8-15-Listening skills	Count %	3 13.0%	5 21.7%	15 65.2%	3.65	0.88
Cronbach's Alpha					0.699	

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

4.5.1.6. Other Generic Skills of Graduates from South African Universities

The descriptive data is shown in the category labelled “Other generic skills” (Table 4.5.7) below. Representatives were most satisfied with graduates organization at 52.2% and dissatisfied with their time management and planning at 17.4%. The means are barely above 3 which is a neutral score. With a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.854, there is a high level of consistency between the items.

Table 4.5.7 Descriptive Statistics of Other Generic Skills of Graduates

Other Generic Skills		Very Dissatisfied/ Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied/ Very Satisfied	Mean	Std. Dev
Q8-20-Time management	Count %	4 17.4%	9 39.1%	10 43.5%	3.30	0.97
Q8-21-Organization	Count %	1 4.3%	10 43.5%	12 52.2%	3.57	0.73
Q8-22-Planning	Count %	4 17.4%	12 52.2%	7 30.4%	3.13	0.87
Cronbach's Alpha					0.854	

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

An additional competency that was important for the study was job readiness as it can assist learners to adjust and function in diverse job contexts. Representatives also indicated their level of satisfaction with the readiness of hospitality graduates from universities in South Africa. Out of 23 responses, seventy-four percent (74%) indicated that they were satisfied (satisfied and very satisfied), while 4% stated their dissatisfaction, as indicated in Figure 4.5.1 below.

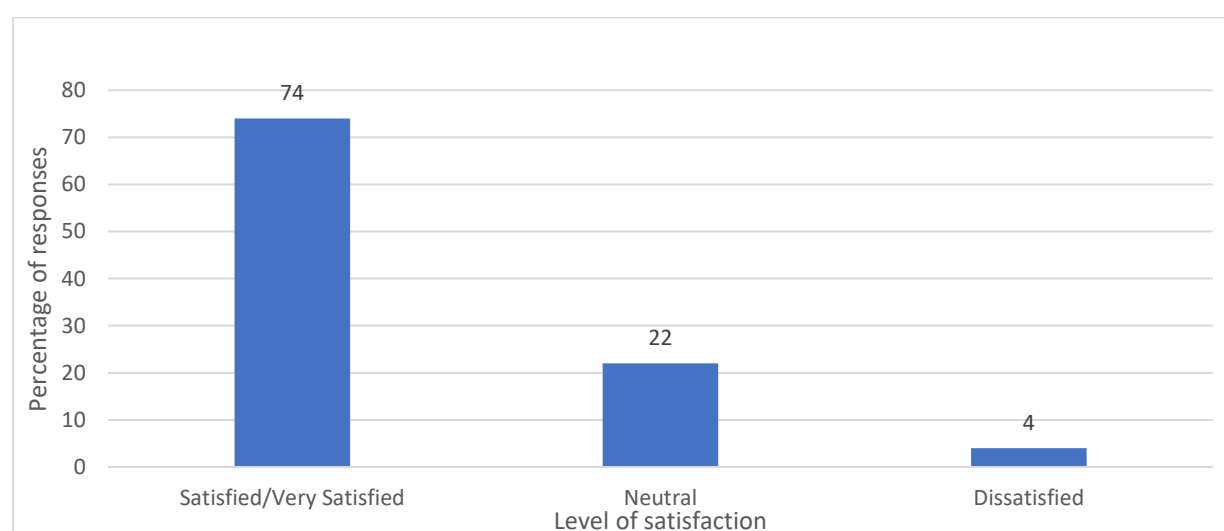


Figure 4.5.1 Representatives' Level of Satisfaction With the Readiness of Hospitality Graduates From Universities in South Africa

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

4.5.2. Representatives' Satisfaction With the Competencies of Hospitality WIL Learners (Question 12)

It was important to survey representatives in order to determine their satisfaction with the various competencies of WIL learners from universities. This provides insight into the skills that WIL learners are well-versed in from the perspective of employers, and it also informs curriculum development. The data in this section presents the frequency distribution of the various sub-constructs identified in the study.

4.5.2.1. Workplace Blending and Emotional Skills of WIL learners

The descriptive statistics are shown in the “Workplace blending and emotional skills” category (Table 4.5.8) below. Acting calmly in work situations has the highest satisfaction rating at 52.4%. Adjustability, flexibility and the ability to work under pressure received the highest dissatisfaction rating of this category at 13.6% each. The mean for acting calmly in work situations is marginally higher than the other means at 3.57. Cronbach’s Alpha for the 5 items in this grouping is 0.919, indicating high consistency between the competencies.

Table 4.5.8 Descriptive Statistics of Workplace Blending and Emotional Skills of WIL Learners

Workplace blending and emotional skills		Very Dissatisfied/ Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied/ Very Satisfied	Mean	Std. Dev
Q12-2-Confidence	Count %	2 9.1%	9 40.9%	11 50.0%	3.41	0.85
Q12-16-Adjustability	Count %	3 13.6%	9 40.9%	10 45.5%	3.36	0.95
Q12-17-Flexibility	Count %	3 13.6%	9 40.9%	10 45.5%	3.41	0.85
Q12-23-Acting calmly in work situations	Count %	1 4.8%	9 42.8%	11 52.4%	3.57	0.93
Q12-24-The ability to work under pressure	Count %	3 13.6%	8 36.4%	11 50.0%	3.45	1.01
Cronbach's Alpha					0.919	

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

4.5.2.2. Forward Thinking Skills of WIL learners

The Forward Thinking category displays the descriptive statistics (Table 4.5.9) below. Optimistic attitude has the highest satisfaction score at 45.5%. The capacity to act in anticipation of future situations receives the highest dissatisfaction rating at 17.4%. For inventiveness, neutral was more than those who were satisfied, this could be because the respondents were unable to choose a side. The means are over 3, indicating a neutral score. Cronbach's Alpha for the 4 elements in this category is 0.932, suggesting high internal consistency.

4.5.2.3. Attitudes and Values of WIL learners

The descriptive data for the Attitudes and values category are presented in Table 4.5.10 below. The responses reveal that representatives are most satisfied with WIL learners trustworthiness and friendly attitude when serving customers at 59.1%. Representatives expressed dissatisfaction with learners knowledge of what is expected by the industry at 18.2%. The items with the highest satisfaction also received the highest mean score at 3.64. The Cronbach's Alpha of 0.928 indicates a high consistency among the 6 items in this category.

Table 4.5.9 Descriptive Statistics of WIL Learners Forward Thinking Skills

Forward Thinking		Very Dissatisfied/ Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied/ Very Satisfied	Mean	Std. Dev
Q12-1-Inventiveness	Count %	2 9.1%	11 50.0%	9 40.9%	3.32	0.84
Q12-3-Optimistic attitude	Count %	2 9.0%	10 45.5%	10 45.5%	3.41	0.73
Q12-4-The capacity to act in anticipation of future situations	Count %	4 17.4%	9 39.1%	10 43.5%	3.23	0.92
Q12-14-The ability to solve problems	Count %	3 13.6%	12 54.5%	7 31.8%	3.18	0.85
Cronbach's Alpha					0.932	

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

Table 4.5.10 Descriptive Statistics of WIL Learners Attitudes and Values

Attitudes and values		Very Dissatisfied/ Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied/ Very Satisfied	Mean	Std. Dev
Q12-7-Trustworthiness	Count %	1 4.5%	8 36.4%	13 59.1%	3.64	0.90
Q12-11-Having a friendly attitude when serving customers	Count %	2 9.1%	7 31.8%	13 59.1%	3.64	0.85
Q12-18-Knowledge of different cultures	Count %	1 4.5%	12 54.5%	9 40.9%	3.41	0.67
Q12-19-Upholding professional principles	Count %	2 9.0%	10 45.5%	10 45.5%	3.41	0.91
Q12-25-Has knowledge of the industry	Count %	2 9.1%	11 50.0%	9 40.9%	3.45	1.01
Q12-26-Has knowledge of what is expected by the industry	Count %	4 18.2%	10 45.4%	8 36.4%	3.32	1.09
Cronbach's Alpha					0.928	

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

4.5.2.4. Social Skills of WIL learners

Using descriptive statistics, the responses show that representatives are most satisfied with WIL learners' willingness to assist, at 68.2% and dissatisfied with their leadership skills at 9.1%, presented in Table 4.5.11. The highest mean score is willingness to assist (3.82), which is higher than an average score. The Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.842 suggests that the 4 items have a high level of interrelatedness.

Table 4.5.11 Descriptive Statistics of WIL Learners Social Skills

Social skills		Very Dissatisfied/ Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied/ Very Satisfied	Mean	Std. Dev
Q12-5-Leadership	Count %	2 9.1%	14 63.6%	6 27.3%	3.18	0.80
Q12-6-Willingness to assist	Count %	0 0.0%	7 31.8%	15 68.2%	3.82	0.66
Q12-10-The ability to work well in a team	Count %	1 4.5%	9 40.9%	12 54.5%	3.64	0.79
Q12-12-Empathy in handling customers	Count %	1 4.5%	12 54.5%	9 40.9%	3.45	0.74
Cronbach's Alpha					0.842	

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

4.5.2.5. Communication Skills of WIL learners

Descriptive data in the Table 4.5.12 below shows that representatives are most satisfied with both WIL learners' ability to verbally communicate information to customers and their listening skills (59.1%). Employers are dissatisfied with WIL learners' ability to communicate in writing at 9.1%. The highest mean score is for listening skills at 3.64. The Cronbach's Alpha statistic of 0.888 indicates that the 4 items have a strong internal consistency.

4.5.2.6. Other generic skills of WIL learners

Descriptive statistics for Other generic skills illustrates that Organisation skills have the highest satisfaction ranking at 54.5% (Table 4.5.13). Planning skills have the highest dissatisfaction rating at 13.6%. The means show a neutral score, i.e., over 3. The Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.923 for the 3 skills suggests that there is a high consistency among the items.

Table 4.5.12 Descriptive Statistics of WIL Learners Communication Skills

Communication Skills		Very Dissatisfied/ Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied/ Very Satisfied	Mean	Std. Dev
Q12-8-The ability to verbally communicate information to customers	Count %	1 4.5%	8 36.4%	13 59.1%	3.59	0.67
Q12-9-The ability to communicate in writing	Count %	2 9.1%	9 40.9%	11 50.0%	3.41	0.85
Q12-13-Being multilingual	Count %	0 0.0%	11 50.0%	11 50.0%	3.55	0.60
Q12-15-Listening skills	Count %	0 0.0%	9 40.9%	13 59.1%	3.64	0.58
Cronbach's Alpha					0.888	

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

Table 4.5.13 Descriptive Statistics of Other Generic Skills of WIL Learners

Other generic Skills		Very Dissatisfied/ Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied/ Very Satisfied	Mean	Std. Dev
Q12-20-Time management	Count %	2 9.1%	12 54.5%	8 36.4%	3.32	0.89
Q12-21-Organisation	Count %	2 9.1%	8 36.4%	12 54.5%	3.59	0.85
Q12-22-Planning	Count %	3 13.6%	9 40.9%	10 45.5%	3.41	1.01
Cronbach's Alpha					0.923	

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

Representatives were asked their level of satisfaction with the readiness of hospitality WIL learners, 'Level of satisfaction' with a 5-point Likert scale was divided into a 3-point Likert scale: Satisfied, Neutral, and Dissatisfied. Out of the 22 responses, 64% of representatives were satisfied with WIL learners' readiness, while 9% were dissatisfied, as presented in Figure 4.5.2 below.

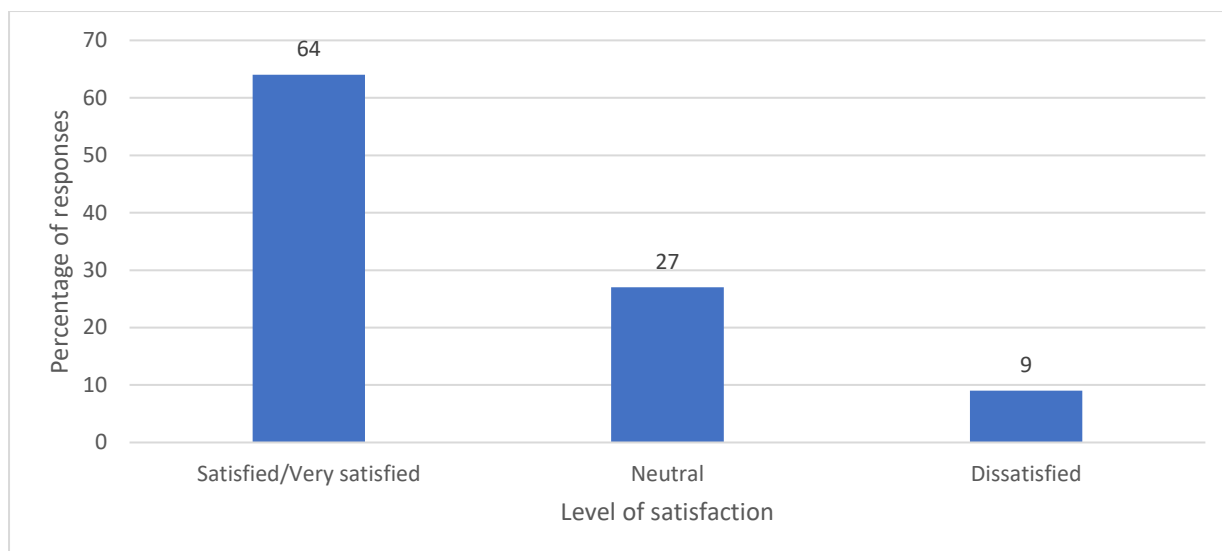


Figure 4.5.2 Representatives' Level of Satisfaction With the Readiness of Hospitality WIL Learners From Universities in South Africa

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

4.5.3. Comparison of performance of hospitality graduates from universities and WIL learners

In this section the research addresses:

Are employers more satisfied with skill sets of hospitality graduates from universities than WIL learners?

In order to address this question, latent variables are computed for each of the six sub-constructs summarised above for hospitality graduates from universities and WIL learners. The mean scores of these latent variables are then compared using t-tests. It is necessary to determine if parametric t-tests can be used by first conducting normality tests of the latent variables created for each of the sub-constructs that measure graduate or WIL competencies.

4.5.3.1. Tests for normality of variables measuring the various competencies

The results in the Table 4.5.14 below show that some of the variables are not normally distributed as they have Shapiro-Wilk's statistics with p -values less than 0.05 (mainly for graduates) which implies significant departure from normality. It is thus appropriate to use non-parametric tests to compare university graduates and WIL learners on how they perform on the measured competencies.

Table 4.5.14 Tests of Normality for the Latent Variables

Tests of Normality						
Latent variable	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	p-value	Statistic	df	p-value
Workplace blending Graduate and emotional skills WIL	0.160	19	0.2	0.895	19	0.040
	0.174	21	0.098	0.953	21	0.381
Forward thinking Graduate WIL	0.277	19	0.000	0.843	19	0.005
	0.152	21	0.200	0.939	21	0.209
Attitudes and values Graduate WIL	0.197	19	0.050	0.862	19	0.011
	0.169	21	0.121	0.932	21	0.153
Social skills Graduate WIL	0.231	19	0.009	0.878	19	0.020
	0.169	21	0.121	0.932	21	0.153
Communication skills Graduate WIL	0.203	19	0.039	0.883	19	0.024
	0.165	21	0.141	0.922	21	0.096
Other generic skills Graduate WIL	0.152	19	0.200	0.954	19	0.461
	0.222	21	0.008	0.925	21	0.111

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

The appropriate paired samples non-parametric test used is the Wilcoxon signed rank test with the results presented in the next section.

4.5.3.2. Comparisons of University Graduates Against WIL Learners on Various Competencies

The null hypothesis states that there are no differences in employers' satisfaction between graduates' and WIL learners' competencies. The null hypothesis is not rejected as the results for the Wilcoxon signed rank test presented in Table 4.5.15 below show that there are no significant differences in the performance of university graduates and WIL as far as the opinions of the respondents are concerned (all p-values are greater than 0.05). Figure 4.5.3 and Figure 4.5.4. show the ranking of satisfaction of graduates and WIL learners by mean scores respectively. It shows the means are marginally higher for graduates than WIL learners in all competencies except other generic competencies.

Table 4.5.15 Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test Comparing University Graduates and WIL Learners

Competencies		Descriptives			Wilcoxon test		
		Mean	N	Std. Dev	statistic	p-value	Comment
Workplace blending and emotional skills	University Graduates	3.54	23	0.73	0.418	0.676	No significant difference
	WIL	3.42	21	0.81			
Forward thinking	University Graduates	3.39	21	0.75	1.316	0.188	No significant difference
	WIL	3.28	22	0.76			
Attitudes and values	University Graduates	3.67	20	0.58	1.445	0.148	No significant difference
	WIL	3.48	22	0.78			
Social Skills	University Graduates	3.72	22	0.57	0.775	0.439	No significant difference
	WIL	3.48	22	0.78			
Communication	University Graduates	3.66	23	0.57	1.034	0.301	No significant difference
	WIL	3.55	22	0.59			
Other Generic Skills	University Graduates	3.33	23	0.76	1.479	0.139	No significant difference
	WIL	3.44	22	0.86			

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

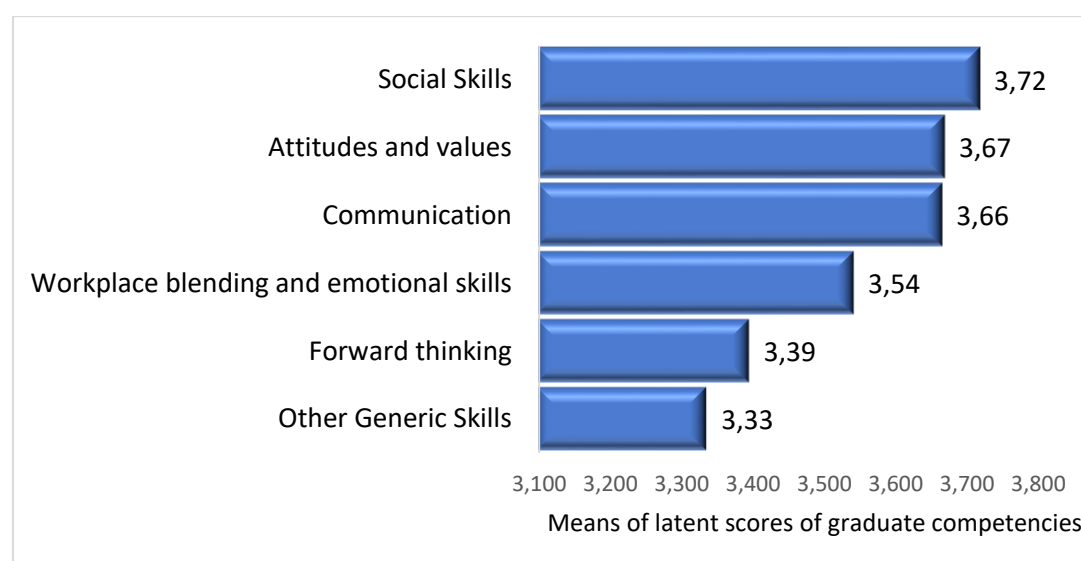


Figure 4.5.3 Ranking of Satisfaction of Graduates' Competencies by Mean

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

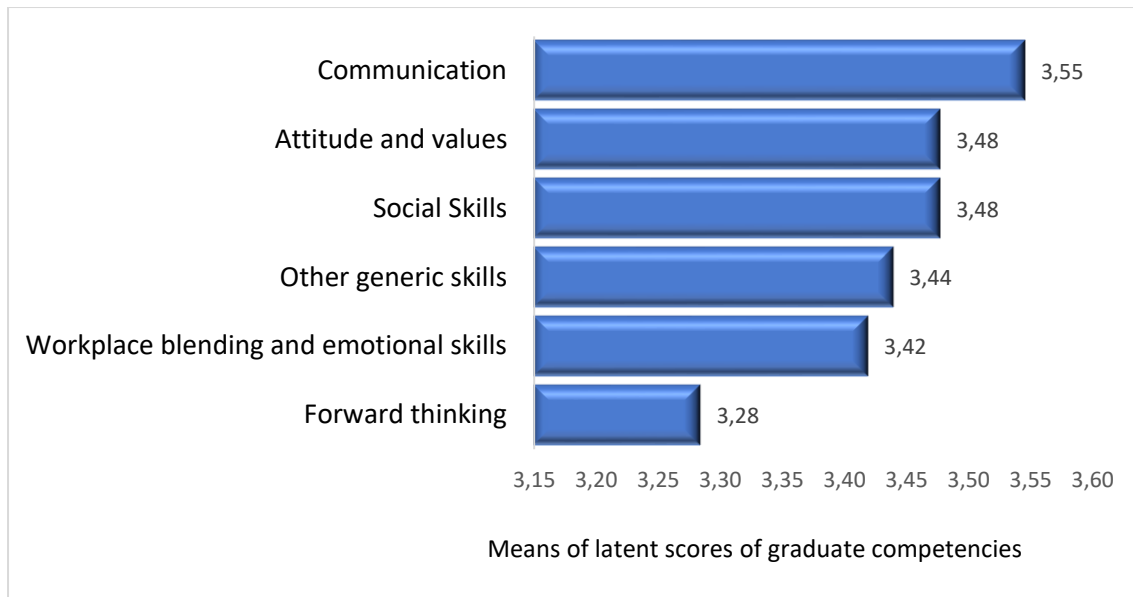


Figure 4.5.4 Ranking of Satisfaction of WIL Learners' Competencies by Mean

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

4.5.3.3 Spearman's Correlation

This section evaluates whether there are associations between the perceived competencies between graduates and WIL learners. Table 4.5.16 shows that most correlations are significant (p is less than 0.05). This shows the consistency of the respondents in the satisfaction rating of both university graduates and WIL learners.

Table 4.5.16 Spearman's Correlation between University Graduates and WIL Learners

Spearman's Correlation (Rho)		University graduates						WIL				
		Workplace blending and emotional skills	Forward thinking	Attitudes and values	Social Skills	Communication	Other Generic Skills	Workplace blending and emotional skills	Forward thinking	Attitude and values	Social Skills	Communication
University graduates	Workplace blending and emotional skills	r										
		p-val										
		N										
	Forward thinking	r	0.744									
		p-val	0.000									
		N	21									
	Attitudes and values	r	0.726	0.449								
		p-val	0.000	0.054								
		N	20	19								
	Social Skills	r	0.867	0.735	0.843							
		p-val	0.000	0.000	0.000							
		N	22	21	20							
	Communication	r	0.643	0.777	0.653	0.770						
		p-val	0.001	0.000	0.002	0.000						
		N	23	21	20	22						
	Other Generic Skills	r	0.579	0.720	0.661	0.707	0.740					
		p-val	0.004	0.000	0.002	0.000	0.000					
		N	23	21	20	22	23					
WIL	Workplace blending and emotional skills	r	0.658	0.150	0.801	0.555	0.244	0.373				
		p-val	0.004	0.594	0.001	0.026	0.346	0.140				
		N	17	15	14	16	17	17				
	Forward thinking	r	0.769	0.705	0.659	0.633	0.529	0.309	0.561			
		p-val	0.000	0.002	0.008	0.006	0.024	0.213	0.008			
		N	18	16	15	17	18	18	21			
	Attitude and values	r	0.714	0.309	0.861	0.662	0.369	0.351	0.923	0.597		
		p-val	0.001	0.245	0.000	0.004	0.131	0.153	0.000	0.003		
		N	18	16	15	17	18	18	21	22		
	Social Skills	r	0.714	0.309	0.861	0.662	0.369	0.351	0.923	0.597	1.000	
		p-val	0.001	0.245	0.000	0.004	0.131	0.153	0.000	0.003	0.000	
		N	18	16	15	17	18	18	21	22	22	
	Communication	r	0.575	0.346	0.702	0.646	0.616	0.475	0.585	0.524	0.620	0.620
		p-val	0.012	0.189	0.003	0.005	0.007	0.047	0.005	0.012	0.002	0.002
		N	18	16	15	17	18	18	21	22	22	22
	Other generic skills	r	0.735	0.363	0.870	0.711	0.350	0.361	0.911	0.569	0.965	0.965
		p-val	0.001	0.167	0.000	0.001	0.155	0.142	0.000	0.006	0.000	0.000
		N	18	16	15	17	18	18	21	22	22	22

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

4.5.4. Tests of the Relationship Between Size of the Organisation and Level of Satisfaction With the Various Skills Sets of Graduates and WIL Learners

This section explores the association that might exist between size of organisation and the level of satisfaction of employers with university graduates and WIL learners.

4.6. Attributes That Are Desirable and Needed to Enhance the Employability of Hospitality Management Graduates

Employer perceptions are critical for understanding the attributes that are considered useful for graduates to develop and are the basis of investigation in this research. Another essential research question this study sought to explore was the competencies that characterise the most desired hospitality management graduates, as well as those required to improve the employability of these graduates. The former question is of interest because it indicates the preferred competencies that employers look for in graduates, and the latter reveals the competencies that graduates must possess in order to gain and maintain employment.

4.6.1. Competencies That Constitute the Most Desirable Hospitality Management Graduates in the Industry (Question 9)

This section looks at descriptive statistics of the competencies that are most desirable of hospitality management graduates from South African Universities. The 27 questionnaire items of this section are put into similar sub-constructs as with those in the section above (level of satisfaction) Table 4.5.1. With the addition of the item the ability to use social media to portray their professional image (Stankiewicz and Bortnowska, 2016), in the attitudes and values domain.

4.6.1.1. Desirable Workplace Blending and Emotional Skills for Graduates

The statistical data in Table 4.6.1 below shows that employers agree that adjustability is the most desirable skill for graduates at 88.2%. The ability to work under pressure has the lowest level of agreement at 79.4%. The means are more than 4 indicating a high level of agreement for this category. The Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.899 for the 5 competencies suggests that there is a high consistency among the items.

4.6.1.2. Desirable Forward Thinking Skills for Graduates

The descriptive statistics show that the most desirable competency in the Forward thinking category is the capacity to act in anticipation of future situations at 85.3% (Table 4.6.2 below). The item with the lowest level of agreement on this category is inventiveness (66.7%). The

mean score of 4 indicates a high level of agreement. The Cronbach's Alpha statistic of 0.858 indicates that the 4 items have a strong internal consistency.

Table 4.6.1 Descriptive Statistics of Desirable Workplace Blending and Emotional Skills

Workplace blending and emotional skills		Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Neutral	Agree/ Strongly agree	Mean	Std. Dev
Q9-2-Confidence	Count %	0 0.0%	5 14.7%	29 85.3%	4.41	0.74
Q9-16-Adjustability	Count %	0 0.0%	4 11.8%	30 88.2%	4.44	0.70
Q9-17-Flexibility	Count %	0 0.0%	5 14.7%	29 85.3%	4.47	0.75
Q9-24-Acting calmly in work situations	Count %	0 0.0%	6 17.6%	28 82.4%	4.44	0.79
Q9-25-The ability to work under pressure	Count %	0 0.0%	7 20.6%	27 79.4%	4.44	0.82
Cronbach's Alpha					0.899	

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

Table 4.6.2 Descriptive Statistics of Desirable Forward Thinking Skills

Forward thinking		Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Neutral	Agree/ Strongly agree	Mean	Std. Dev
Q9-1-Inventiveness	Count %	1 3.0%	10 30.3%	22 66.7%	4.03	0.92
Q9-3-Optimistic attitude	Count %	0 0.0%	6 17.6%	28 82.4%	4.35	0.77
Q9-4-The capacity to act in anticipation of future situations	Count %	0 0.0%	5 14.7%	29 85.3%	4.35	0.73
Q9-14-The ability to solve problems	Count %	0 0.0%	7 20.6%	27 79.4%	4.38	0.82
Cronbach's Alpha					0.858	

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

4.6.1.3. Desirable Attitudes and Values for Graduates

The descriptive statistics reveal that of the representatives surveyed, 91.2% agree that upholding professional principles constitutes the most desirable graduate competency in the industry, as shown in Table 4.6.3 below. Knowledge of different cultures and the ability to use social media to portray their professional image received the lowest level of agreement at 67.6% and 67.7% respectively. The Cronbach's Alpha of 0.890 suggests that the 7 items have a high level of interrelatedness.

Table 4.6.3 Descriptive Statistics of Desirable Attitudes and Values

Attitudes and values		Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Neutral	Agree/ Strongly agree	Mean	Std. Dev
Q9-7-Trustworthiness	Count %	0 0.0%	5 14.7%	29 85.3%	4.59	0.74
Q9-11-Having a friendly attitude when serving customers	Count %	1 2.9%	4 11.8%	29 85.3%	4.59	0.82
Q9-18-Knowledge of different cultures	Count %	0 0.0%	11 32.4%	23 67.6%	4.06	0.85
Q9-19-Upholding professional principles	Count %	0 0.0%	3 8.8%	31 91.2%	4.65	0.65
Q9-20-The ability to use social media to portray their professional image	Count %	1 2.9%	10 29.4%	23 67.7%	4.00	0.89
Q9-26-Has knowledge of the industry	Count %	0 0.0%	8 23.5%	26 76.5%	4.26	0.83
Q9-27-Has knowledge of what is expected by the industry	Count %	0 0.0%	5 15.2%	28 84.8%	4.45	0.75
Cronbach's Alpha					0.890	

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

4.6.1.4. Desirable Social Skills for Graduates

Using descriptive statistics, the responses illustrate that the most desirable competencies in the Social skills category are willingness to assist, the ability to work well in a team and empathy in handling customers at 85.3% each (Table 4.6.4 below). The mean scores are above 4

suggesting high agreement. The Cronbach's Alpha of 0.693 indicates an adequate consistency among the 4 items in this grouping.

Table 4.6.4 Descriptive Statistics of Desirable Social Skills

Social skills		Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Neutral	Agree/ Strongly agree	Mean	Std. Dev
Q9-5-Leadership	Count %	0 0.0%	9 26.5%	25 73.5%	4.21	0.84
Q9-6-Willingness to assist	Count %	1 2.9%	4 11.8%	29 85.3%	4.53	0.83
Q9-10-The ability to work well in a team	Count %	1 2.9%	4 11.8%	29 85.3%	4.50	0.83
Q9-12-Empathy in handling customers	Count %	0 0.0%	5 14.7%	29 85.3%	4.44	0.75
Cronbach's Alpha					0.693	

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

4.6.1.5. Desirable Communication Skills for Graduates

Representatives agree that the most desirable competency in the Communication skills domain is listening skills (88.2%), as illustrated in Table 4.6.5 below. The mean scores exceed 4, indicating high agreement. The Cronbach's Alpha for the 4 elements in this category is 0.699, suggesting adequate internal consistency.

4.6.1.6. Other Generic Skills for Graduates

The responses from the representatives reveal that Time management is the most desirable competency (85.3%) in the “Other Generic Skills” category, as illustrated in Table 4.6.6 below. Time management was also the competency that representatives disagreed with at 5.9%. The mean scores are higher than 4, suggesting high agreement. The Cronbach's Alpha for the 3 items in this sub-construct is 0.811, indicating high internal consistency.

Table 4.6.5 Descriptive Statistics of Desirable Communication Skills

Communication skills		Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Neutral	Agree/ Strongly agree	Mean	Std. Dev
Q9-8-The ability to verbally communicate information to customers	Count %	0 0.0%	5 14.7%	29 85.3%	4.44	0.75
Q9-9-The ability to communicate in writing	Count %	0 0.0%	5 14.7%	29 85.3%	4.35	0.73
Q9-13-Being multilingual	Count %	0 0.0%	10 29.4%	24 70.6%	4.03	0.80
Q9-15-Listening skills	Count %	0 0.0%	4 11.8%	30 88.2%	4.53	0.71
Cronbach's Alpha					0.699	

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

Table 4.6.6 Descriptive Statistics of Other Desirable Generic Skills

Other generic skills		Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Neutral	Agree/ Strongly agree	Mean	Std. Dev
Q9-21-Time management	Count %	2 5.9%	3 8.8%	29 85.3%	4.44	0.99
Q9-22-Organization	Count %	1 2.9%	6 17.6%	27 79.4%	4.29	0.97
Q9-23-Planning	Count %	1 3.0%	6 18.2%	26 78.8%	4.30	0.98
Cronbach's Alpha					0.811	

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

4.6.1.7. The Importance of Sustainability Competencies

The competencies ‘knowledge of the industry’ and ‘knowledge of what is expected by the industry’, as shown in Table 4.6.3, include sustainability and green practices. These concepts are critical in hospitality management education and later in the industry as graduates learn to maintain various practices over time. A substantial number of representatives (that is, 97.1%) indicated that environmental sustainability is important (important/very important) in hospitality management education, while only 19.4% indicated important for the political

element, as presented in Table 4.6.7 below. The Cronbach's Alpha is 0.615 which shows adequate internal consistency between the items.

Table 4.6.7 Importance of Sustainability Elements in Hospitality Management Education, Representatives' Perspectives (%)

Sustainability elements		Not important	slightly important	Moderately Important	Neutral	Important/ very important	Mean	Std. Dev
Environmental	Count %	0 0.0%	1 2.9%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	33 97.1%	5.76	0.74
Political	Count %	3 9.7%	5 16.1%	7 22.6%	10 32.2%	6 19.4%	3.42	1.36
Economic	Count %	0 0.0%	1 2.9%	1 2.9%	0 0.0%	32 94.1%	5.35	0.88
Social	Count %	0 0.0%	2 5.9%	0 0.0%	3 8.8%	29 85.3%	5.32	1.07
Cronbach's Alpha							0.615	
Cronbach's Alpha when political elements are excluded							0.768	

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

4.6.1.8. Relative Importance Index of Desirable Competencies

It is desirable for graduates to have a wide range of competencies. Table 4.6.8 and Figure 4.6.1 present the desired competencies in order of ranking. The data illustrates that upholding professional principals ranks first (RII = 0.9294), (Table 4.6.7). Inventiveness ranks last at 27 (RII = 0.7824).

Table 4.6.8 Relative Importance Ranking of Desirable Graduate Competencies

Desirable Graduate Competencies	Response frequencies					Relative importance index	Rank
	SD	D	N	A	SA		
Upholding professional principles	0	0	3	6	25	0.9294	1
Trustworthiness	0	0	5	4	25	0.9176	2
Having a friendly attitude when serving customers	0	1	4	3	26	0.9176	3
Willingness to assist	0	1	4	5	24	0.9059	4
Listening skills	0	0	4	8	22	0.9059	5
The ability to work well in a team	0	1	4	6	23	0.9000	6
Flexibility	0	0	5	8	21	0.8941	7
The ability to verbally communicate information to customers	0	0	5	9	20	0.8882	8
Empathy in handling customers	0	0	5	9	20	0.8882	9
Adjustability	0	0	4	11	19	0.8882	10
Time management	1	1	3	6	23	0.8882	11
Acting calmly in work situations	0	0	6	7	21	0.8882	12
The ability to work under pressure	0	0	7	5	22	0.8882	13
Confidence	0	0	5	10	19	0.8824	14
The ability to solve problems	0	0	7	7	20	0.8765	15
Optimistic attitude	0	0	6	10	18	0.8706	16
The capacity to act in anticipation of future situations	0	0	5	12	17	0.8706	17
The ability to communicate in writing	0	0	5	12	17	0.8706	18
Has knowledge of what is expected by the industry	0	0	5	8	20	0.8647	19
Organization	1	0	6	8	19	0.8588	20
Has knowledge of the industry	0	0	8	9	17	0.8529	21
Leadership	0	0	9	9	16	0.8412	22
Planning	1	0	6	7	19	0.8353	23
Knowledge of different cultures	0	0	11	10	13	0.8118	24
Being multilingual	0	0	10	13	11	0.8059	25
The ability to use social media to portray their professional image	0	1	10	11	12	0.8000	26
Inventiveness	0	1	10	9	13	0.7824	27

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

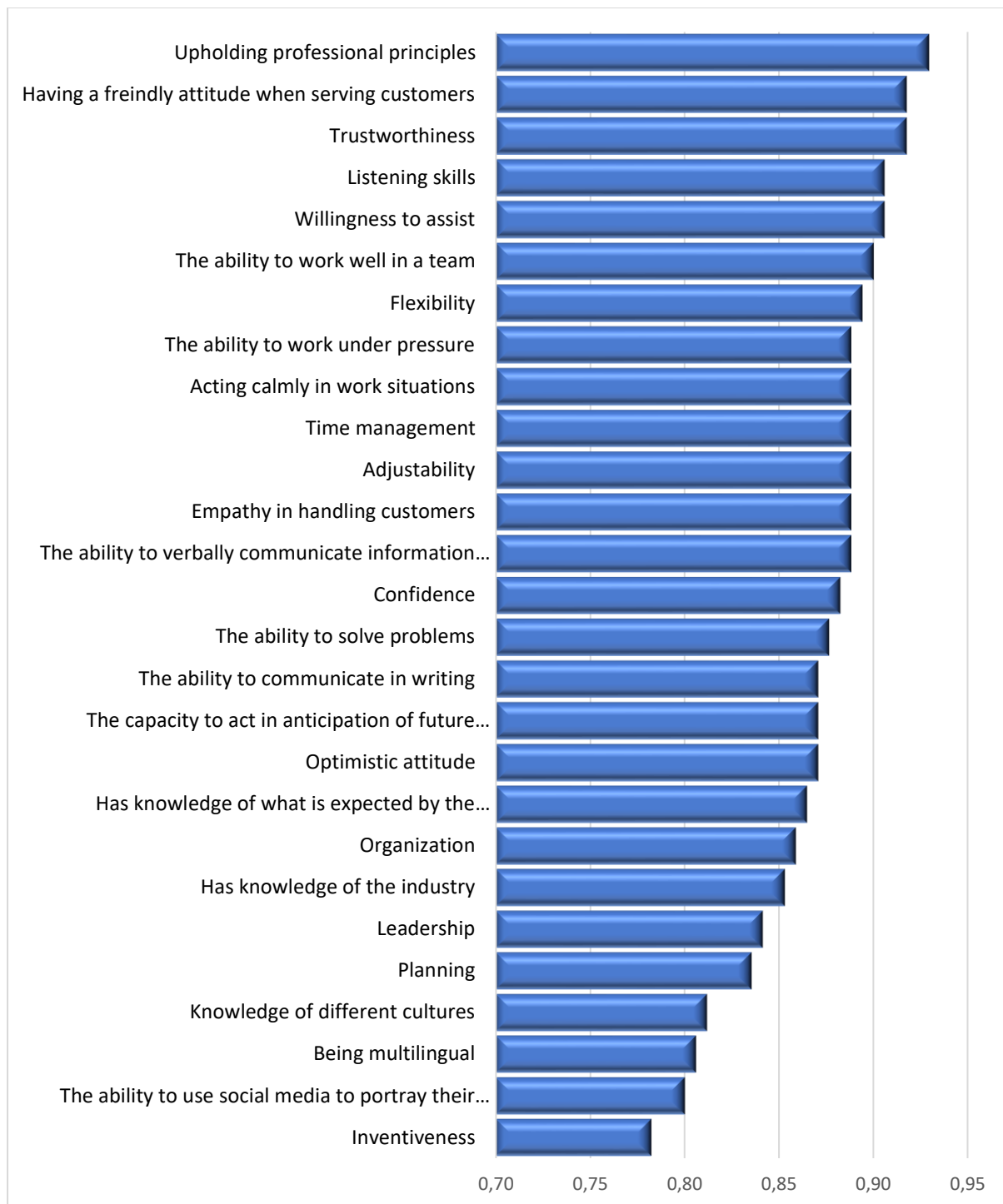


Figure 4.6.1 Relative Importance Ranking of Desirable Graduate Competencies

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

Representatives considered how important it was for hospitality management graduates to be knowledgeable about green practices. A large number of representatives (that is, 97.1%) said that it is important for graduates to have knowledge of energy management practices. Sixty

percent (60%) of representatives who selected ‘Other’ indicated that it is important, as indicated in Table 4.6.9. The Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.750 indicates adequate internal consistency among the 5 items. Twenty-one percent (21%) of representatives provided information about additional green practices that graduates should be aware of through an open-ended question. The green practices suggested are the following: food sustainability, (i.e., sustainable gardening), preserving cultural heritage, community awareness and involvement, carbon footprint, endemic vs. exotic species, human energy, travelling with a purpose, and recycling. Figure 4.6.2 illustrates that it is important for hospitality management graduates to communicate with their employers regarding green practices that are being developed. The majority (that is, 61.8%) of representatives indicated that it is ‘very important’, while no one rated it as ‘not important’ (Figure 4.6.2).

Table 4.6.9. Importance of Knowledge of Green Practices by Hospitality Management Graduates, Representatives Perspectives (%)

Knowledge of green practices		Not important	slightly important	Moderately Important	Neutral	Important/very important	Mean	Std. Dev
Waste management	Count %	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2 5.9%	0 0.0%	32 94.1%	5.71	0.76
Energy management	Count %	0 0.0%	1 2.9%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	33 97.1%	5.68	0.77
Water management	Count %	0 0.0%	1 2.9%	0 0.0%	1 2.9%	32 94.1%	5.74	0.79
Air quality	Count %	1 3.0%	0 0.0%	3 9.1%	4 12.1%	25 75.8%	5.15	1.37
Other	Count %	1 6.7%	0 0.0%	2 13.3%	3 20.0%	9 60.0%	4.73	1.53
Cronbach's Alpha							0.750	

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

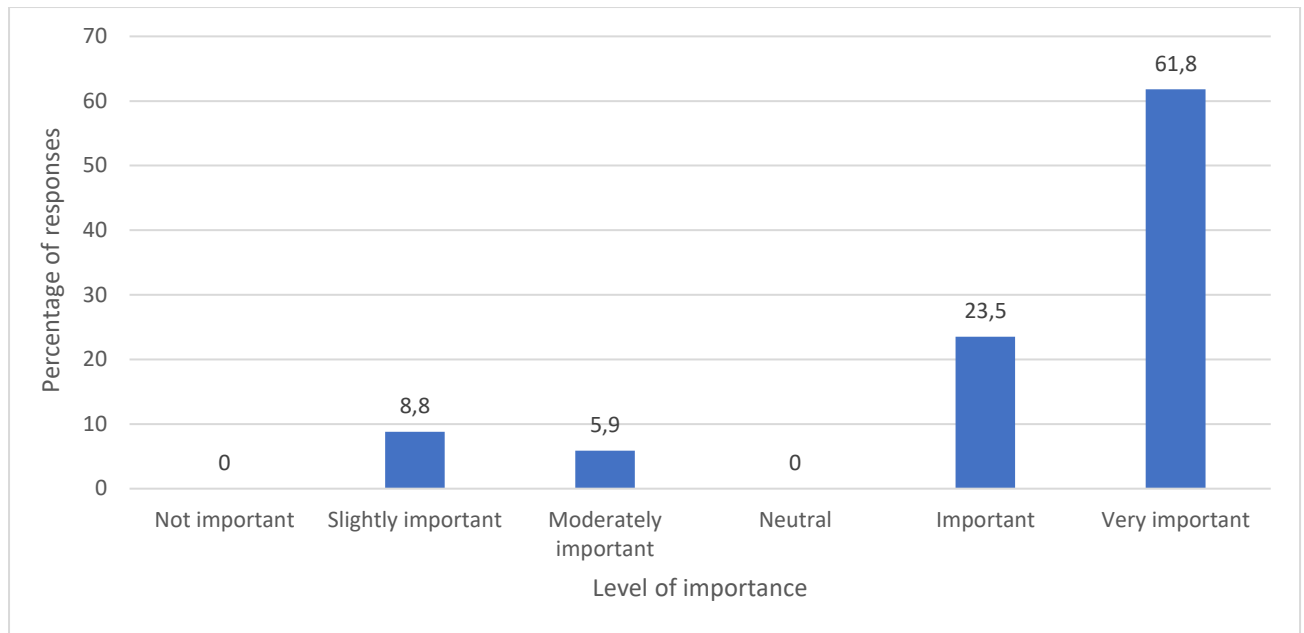


Figure 4.6.2 The Importance of Hospitality Management Graduates Informing Employers on Green Practices That are Being Developed

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

4.6.2. Competencies Required to Enhance Employability of Hospitality Management Graduates in the Industry (Question 14)

This section looks at the competencies needed to enhance the employability of hospitality management graduates. One of the essential questions informing the study was: What are the various competencies that are needed to enhance the employability of hospitality management graduates? The questionnaire items of this section are put into sub-constructs according to Table 4.6.10 below.

Table 4.6.10 Suggested Names of the Sub-constructs of Competencies Needed to Enhance the Employability of Hospitality Management Graduates

Factors	Questionnaire items	Suggested variable name
1	Confidence, Adjustability, Flexibility, Acting calmly in work situations, The ability to work under pressure	Workplace blending and emotional skills
2	Inventiveness, Optimistic attitude, The capacity to act in anticipation of future situations, The ability to solve problems	Forward thinking
3	Portraying a professional image (appearance), Dependability, Having a friendly attitude when serving customers, Knowledge of different cultures, Upholding professional principles, The ability to use social media to portray their professional image, Punctuality, The capacity to act independently, Has knowledge of the industry, Has knowledge of what is expected by the industry	Attitudes and values
4	Leadership, Willingness to assist, The ability to work well in a team, Empathy in handling customers	Social skills
5	The ability to verbally communicate information to customers, The ability to communicate in writing, Being multilingual, Listening skills,	Communication skills
6	Productivity, Organization, Planning	Other generic skills

Source: Modified from Moolman and Wilkinson (2014) with variables from Kokt and Strydom (2014), Zwane et al. (2014), Stankiewicz and Bortnowska (2016), Wakelin-Theron et al. (2018)

4.6.2.1. Workplace blending and emotional skills

The responses from the representatives reveal that adjustability, flexibility and the ability to work under pressure are the skills that graduates most require to boost their employability at 93.3% (Table 4.6.11). The mean scores are greater than 4.5 indicating high agreement. The 5 Workplace blending and emotional skills items have a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.949, which indicates high internal consistency.

4.6.2.2. Forward Thinking

Representatives agree that the competencies required to augment graduates' employability are an optimistic attitude and the capacity to act in anticipation of future situations at 93.3% as shown in Table 4.6.12 below. The mean scores exceed 4, indicating high agreement. A Cronbach's Alpha of 0.892, indicates a high level of consistency between the items.

Table 4.6.11 Workplace Blending and Emotional Skills Needed to Enhance the Employability of Hospitality Management Graduates (%)

Workplace blending and emotional skills		Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Neutral	Agree/ Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Dev
Q14-2-Confidence	Count %	0 0.0%	2 6.9%	27 93.1%	4.55	0.63
Q14-18-Adjustability	Count %	0 0.0%	2 6.7%	28 93.3%	4.53	0.63
Q14-19-Flexibility	Count %	0 0.0%	2 6.7%	28 93.3%	4.70	0.60
Q14-28-Acting calmly in work situations	Count %	0 0.0%	3 10.0%	27 90.0%	4.67	0.66
Q14-29-The ability to work under pressure	Count %	0 0.0%	2 6.7%	28 93.3%	4.67	0.61
Cronbach's Alpha					0.949	

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

Table 4.6.12 Forward Thinking Skills Needed to Enhance the Employability of Hospitality Management Graduates (%)

Forward Thinking		Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Neutral	Agree/ Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Dev
Q14-1-Inventiveness	Count %	0 0.0%	5 17.2%	24 82.8%	4.31	0.76
Q14-5-Optimistic attitude	Count %	0 0.0%	2 6.7%	28 93.3%	4.60	0.62
Q14-6-The capacity to act in anticipation of future situations	Count %	0 0.0%	2 6.7%	28 93.3%	4.57	0.63
Q14-16-The ability to solve problems	Count %	0 0.0%	3 10.0%	27 90.0%	4.63	0.67
Cronbach's Alpha					0.892	

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

4.6.2.3. Attitudes and values

The descriptive statistics illustrates that representatives agreed that upholding professional principles and punctuality are needed to improve graduates' employability at 93.3% (Table 4.6.13). The competencies that 3.3% of representatives disagreed with were the ability to use social media to portray one's professional image, the capacity to act independently, and having knowledge of the industry. Cronbach's Alpha for "Attitudes and Values" is 0.925, which shows a high level of consistency between the items.

Table 4.6.13 Attitudes and Values Needed to Enhance the Employability of Hospitality Management Graduates (%)

Attitudes and Values		Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Neutral	Agree/ Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Dev
Q14-4-Portraying a professional image (appearance)	Count %	0 0.0%	2 6.9%	27 93.1%	4.69	0.60
Q14-9-Dependability	Count %	0 0.0%	3 10.0%	27 90.0%	4.63	0.67
Q14-13-Having a friendly attitude when serving customers	Count %	0 0.0%	3 10.0%	27 90.0%	4.70	0.65
Q14-20-Knowledge of different cultures	Count %	0 0.0%	6 20.0%	24 80.0%	4.27	0.78
Q14-21-Upholding professional principles	Count %	0 0.0%	2 6.7%	28 93.3%	4.73	0.58
Q14-22-The ability to use social media to portray their professional image	Count %	1 3.3%	10 33.3%	19 63.3%	4.03	0.96
Q14-24-Punctuality	Count %	0 0.0%	2 6.7%	28 93.3%	4.77	0.57
Q14-27-The capacity to act independently	Count %	1 3.3%	3 10.0%	26 86.7%	4.47	0.82
Q14-30-Has knowledge of the industry	Count %	1 3.3%	3 10.0%	26 86.7%	4.43	0.82
Q14-31-Has knowledge of what is expected by the industry	Count %	0 0.0%	3 10.0%	27 90.0%	4.67	0.66
Cronbach's Alpha					0.925	

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

4.6.2.4. Social Skills

The responses from the representatives reveal that willingness to assist and the ability to work well in a team are the competencies that graduates most need to enhance their employability at 93.3% (Table 4.6.14). A high level of agreement is indicated by mean scores greater than 4. The 4 ‘Social Skills’ items have a high level of internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha=0.932).

Table 4.6.14 Social Skills Needed to Enhance the Employability of Hospitality Management Graduates (%)

Social Skills		Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Neutral	Agree/ Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Dev
Q14-7-Leadership	Count %	0 0.0%	4 13.3%	26 86.7%	4.47	0.73
Q14-8-Willingness to assist	Count %	0 0.0%	2 6.7%	28 93.3%	4.73	0.58
Q14-12-The ability to work well in a team	Count %	0 0.0%	2 6.7%	28 93.3%	4.70	0.60
Q14-14-Empathy in handling customers	Count %	0 0.0%	3 10.0%	27 90.0%	4.70	0.65
Cronbach's Alpha					0.932	

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

4.6.2.5. Communication Skills

A large percentage of representatives, 93.3%, said that they agreed with the ability to verbally communicate information to customers and the ability to communicate in writing, as represented in Table 4.6.15. The mean scores are higher than 4, indicating a high degree of agreement. The internal consistency of the 4 ‘Communication Skills’ items is high (Cronbach's Alpha=0.856).

4.6.2.6. Other generic skills

Representatives agreed that productivity is required to increase graduates’ employability at 93.3% and planning at 90.1%, as shown by the frequency table (Table 4.6.16). A very high

degree of agreement is indicated by means scores greater than 4.67. Cronbach's Alpha for 'Other Generic Skills' is 0.931, which shows a high level of consistency between the items.

Table 4.6.15 Communication Skills Needed to Enhance the Employability of Hospitality Management Graduates (%)

Communication Skills		Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Neutral	Agree/ Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Dev
Q14-10-The ability to verbally communicate information to customers	Count %	0 0.0%	2 6.7%	28 93.3%	4.77	0.57
Q14-11-The ability to communicate in writing	Count %	0 0.0%	2 6.7%	28 93.3%	4.53	0.63
Q14-15-Being multilingual	Count %	0 0.0%	6 20.0%	24 80.0%	4.23	0.77
Q14-17-Listening skills	Count %	0 0.0%	3 9.7%	28 90.3%	4.70	0.60
Cronbach's Alpha					0.856	

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

Table 4.6.16 Other Generic Skills Needed to Enhance the Employability of Hospitality Management Graduates (%)

Other generic skills		Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Neutral	Agree/ Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Dev
Q14-23-Productivity	Count %	0 0.0%	2 6.7%	28 93.3%	4.70	0.60
Q14-25-Organisation	Count %	0 0.0%	2 6.9%	27 93.1%	4.72	0.59
Q14-26-Planning	Count %	0 0.0%	3 10.0%	27 90.0%	4.67	0.66
Cronbach's Alpha					0.931	

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

4.6.3. Relative Importance Index of Competencies for Employability

A variety of competencies are necessary for graduates to improve their employability. The ranking of the competencies required to increase graduates' employability is shown in Figure 4.6.3 and Table 4.6.17. The results indicate that the ability to verbally communicate

information to customers and punctuality have the highest rankings (RII = 0.8412), as Table 4.7.17 illustrates. The ability to use social media to portray their professional image is ranked last at thirty-one (RII = 0.7118).

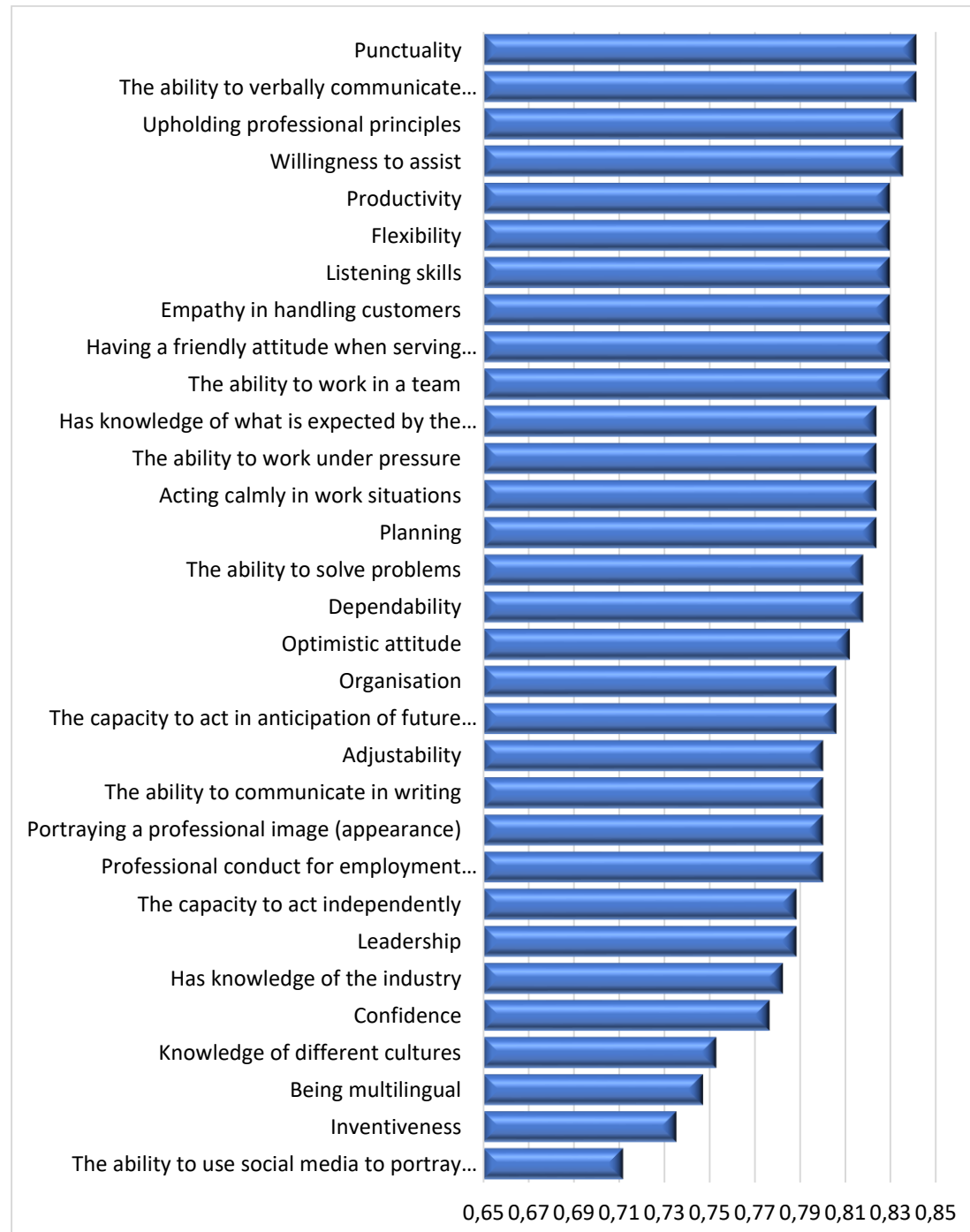


Figure 4.6.3 Relative Importance of Competencies Needed to Enhance the Employability of Graduates

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

Table 4.6.17 Relative Importance Ranking of Competencies Required to Enhance the Employability of Hospitality Management Graduates

Competencies to Enhance Employability	Response frequencies					Relative importance index	Rank
	SD	D	N	A	SA		
The ability to verbally communicate information to customers	0	0	2	3	25	0.8412	1
Punctuality	0	0	2	3	25	0.8412	2
Willingness to assist	0	0	2	4	24	0.8353	3
Upholding professional principles	0	0	2	4	24	0.8353	4
The ability to work in a team	0	0	2	5	23	0.8294	5
Having a friendly attitude when serving customers	0	0	3	3	24	0.8294	6
Empathy in handling customers	0	0	3	3	24	0.8294	7
Listening skills	0	0	2	5	23	0.8294	8
Flexibility	0	0	2	5	23	0.8294	9
Productivity	0	0	2	5	23	0.8294	10
Planning	0	0	3	4	23	0.8235	11
Acting calmly in work situations	0	0	3	4	23	0.8235	12
The ability to work under pressure	0	0	2	6	22	0.8235	13
Has knowledge of what is expected by the industry	0	0	3	4	23	0.8235	14
Dependability	0	0	3	5	22	0.8176	15
The ability to solve problems	0	0	3	5	22	0.8176	16
Optimistic attitude	0	0	2	8	20	0.8118	17
The capacity to act in anticipation of future situations	0	0	2	9	19	0.8059	18
Organisation	0	0	2	4	23	0.8059	19
Professional conduct for employment (behaviour)	0	0	2	5	22	0.8000	20
Portraying a professional image (appearance)	0	0	2	5	22	0.8000	21
The ability to communicate in writing	0	0	2	10	18	0.8000	22
Adjustability	0	0	2	10	18	0.8000	23
Leadership	0	0	4	8	18	0.7882	24
The capacity to act independently	0	1	3	7	19	0.7882	25
Has knowledge of the industry	0	1	3	8	18	0.7824	26
Confidence	0	0	2	9	18	0.7765	27
Knowledge of different cultures	0	0	6	10	14	0.7529	28
Being multilingual	0	0	6	11	13	0.7471	29
Inventiveness	0	0	5	10	14	0.7353	30
The ability to use social media to portray their professional image	0	1	10	6	13	0.7118	31

Source: Field Survey (2021–2022)

4.7. Conclusion

The findings presented in this chapter reveal the multiple perspectives of the hospitality industry regarding curriculum development, satisfaction with the competencies of graduates and WIL learners and the skills that are both desirable and required to improve the employability of hospitality management graduates. Representatives' views on the ways the curriculum should be developed include: through practical training, by involving multiple stakeholders including industry, considering KPIs, and being mindful of current industry trends. This is in light of the challenges encountered, such as changing trends within the industry, lack of knowledge of the industry by educators, the curriculum lacking practicality, graduates unable to put what they learn into practice, and the curriculum being outdated and too theoretical. When developing curricula, attention should be given to the incorporation of sustainability elements. The curriculum should involve tertiary institutions, the government, the local community, and guests. Employers expressed satisfaction with the readiness of hospitality graduates and hospitality WIL learners from universities in South Africa. Between 26.1% and 82.6% of representatives expressed satisfaction with the various skills of graduates, as presented in Table 4.5.3 and Table 4.5.4. Whereas between 27.3% and 68.2% exhibit satisfaction with the competencies of WIL learners (Table 4.5.11).

The desirable competencies that graduates should possess among others are 'knowledge of the industry' and 'knowledge of what is expected by the industry' (Table 4.6.3). These attributes include sustainability and green practices. Employers indicated that sustainability elements are important in hospitality management education, as indicated in Table 4.6.7. It is considered important that hospitality management graduates have knowledge of green practices within the industry (See Table 4.6.9) and the ability to communicate to employers about these practices, as illustrated in Figure 4.6.2. With regards to attributes needed to enhance the employability of graduates, the majority of representatives selected strongly agree for all competencies. The findings presented are used to inform the analysis and discussion of the next section, Chapter Five.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

5.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the applicability and significance of the findings in relation to and within the context of this study, drawing on the empirical findings reported in the preceding chapter. The empirical data has to some extent shown, from the standpoint of the hospitality industry, the challenges involved in curriculum development, how the university curriculum should be developed, and the stakeholders who play a role in the development of hospitality management programmes. The discussion focuses on the research aim and objectives outlined in the first chapter using findings and literature to support these objectives and explores the views, the South African hospitality industry has regarding curriculum development at universities. The research also covered employer satisfaction of graduates and WIL learners, in addition to the competencies that are desirable and needed to augment the employability of graduates.

5.2. An Analysis of Challenges Experienced in Curriculum Development from a Global, African and South African Perspective

5.2.1. An Analysis of Global Challenges Facing Curriculum Development

Institutional capacity challenges were identified in global literature, these comprise curriculum and human resources issues. In the field of tourism and hospitality, literature from Argentina and Vietnam has identified issues such as outdated curricula and gaps between theory and practice (Le et al., 2018; Zuccoli and Korstanje, 2023). Interviewees, in Argentina, particularly academics in the field pointed out that the out-of-date courses of study create a gap between theory and practice, which is difficult to bridge (Zuccoli and Korstanje, 2023). They observe that there are disastrous occurrences and dangers such as pandemics that happen in society and the university lacks essential risk management curricula (Zuccoli and Korstanje, 2023). They argued that the tourism government is not pioneering the way to such a programme (Zuccoli and Korstanje, 2023). A professor argued that the cause of the curricula issues was inadequate English language skills and restricted access to credible global studies in the field (Zuccoli and Korstanje, 2023). The academic continued by saying that English is the language that is widely used in the sector, nonetheless, written communication skills that meet the standards of these

publications is a problem for researchers (Zuccoli and Korstanje, 2023). Argentina is therefore left out of international knowledge production (Zuccoli and Korstanje, 2023). An explanation for the outmoded curricula is limited training of postgraduate students and tourism experts (Zuccoli and Korstanje, 2023).

It appears that outdated curricula that causes a gap between theory and practice is an issue that could negatively impact tourism education in the country. Outdated curricula will leave academics and students with limited knowledge of current discourses in academia and the events in industry. It may also affect students' motivation to work in the industry because what they learn in the classroom may not reflect their experiences in industry. When it comes to employment, an outdated curricula may mean that students lack the necessary practical experience. This could mean that they 1) either will not get employment, or 2) that if they do, they may be demoted or replaced by a more qualified candidate. Tran (2010) points out that inadequately developed and obsolete programmes causes graduates to need more time to adjust to the requirements of the employment market. Due to inadequate training (Zuccoli and Korstanje, 2023), academics and students will also lack the necessary skills which will impact their ability to effectively address the problems confronting the industry. The industry could be impacted by employing these students as it may result in initial low levels of productivity if training in industry is not offered. This may in turn affect revenue generation. Lack of access to journals and a lack of communication abilities means that academics could become content with their circumstances unable to improve their lecture material and contribute to publications. In the global context, the solution to out of date curricula is providing professionals and students with appropriate training and access to resources to enhance the development of current curricula. This training should come in the form of (short) courses in English written communication which should be an integral part of the curriculum.

Le et al. (2018) research engaged sector experts, academics and students using twenty-six in-depth interviews. Every academic agreed that tertiary education courses in hospitality were heavily slanted towards theory, which has prevented students from obtaining the practical components needed by the sector (Le et al., 2018). The gap between theory and practice was widened due to shortcomings in the development of general soft skills (Le et al., 2018). Numerous academics stated that inclusive aspects of internships, that is, training in fundamental competencies have become important in the majority of hospitality tertiary

education courses. However, the amount of time allotted to these programmes has been a problem (Le et al., 2018). Academics further indicated that tertiary institutions had minimal, and in some instances, no influence over their students internships in the field (Le et al., 2018). Although internships provide a practical component, if students do not have enough time to complete these programmes, they will not acquire the skills required by the industry. Lack of soft skills such as communication, teamwork and leadership will affect students by making it more difficult for them to work in the sector. Developing soft skills should be a priority both at tertiary institutions and during internships. Experts should provide training to students, this could bridge the gap between theory and practice. Tertiary institutions should have shared control over industry internships in order to provide students with an idea of what to expect in the sector. During internships, university departments should follow up with industry on the performance of their students.

Another problem identified in research is that sustainability or sustainability-related courses are not sufficiently covered in undergraduate hospitality/leisure management programmes (Zizka, 2022). A content analysis of 50 websites of leading global curricula was done by examining their sustainability curricula and mission/vision statements. As indicated previously the results revealed that these programmes offer between zero and five sustainability courses in their curricula. Zizka (2022) noted that this does not suggest that they do not integrate sustainability into other programmes or initiatives, however, it is unclear from the information available on their websites that they do so. Zizka (2022) argues that the reason for the lack of sustainability content in global curricula is that larger tertiary institutions have more infrastructure and resources to provide more sustainability programmes than specialised hospitality universities. Furthermore, several programme details were unavailable via the recognized university web pages. As a result, the number of courses for several universities may have been lower than anticipated and do not accurately represent reality (Zizka, 2022). In terms of impact, the few sustainability courses that universities provide could make some students more employable than others. These students will be more aware of the need to deal with environmental issues than those students who are not taught sustainability. The undergraduate hospitality curricula should be re-examined to generate agents of change for today's work environment (Zizka, 2022). Leading international curricula that provide more sustainability courses must serve as a model for other institutions. Therefore, encouraging them

to offer courses that protect the environment and ensure that people live in prosperous communities for years to come.

Deale and Barber (2012) noted that although sustainability in education was important for academics, students and experts in the sector, the survey findings show that there are differences in views and behaviours regarding the environment as well what themes should be included in the hospitality management curriculum. Based on the ANOVA, significant differences were found when taking into account respondents' level of interest in topics related to sustainability. Experts in the sector with "high" environmental views showed a significantly greater interest in financial sustainability than academics or students, whereas interest in social sustainability was significantly greater for academics when compared with either students or experts in the field (Deale and Barber, 2012), indicating that academics value equality and positive interpersonal connections in ways that are long lasting and resilient (Pollard, 2024). If a business is economically sustainable it operates with fewer problems. Experts may place a high importance on economic sustainability because they consider their company's financial state going forward. When a business is economically sustainable, experts are more conscious about monitoring how their company operates. Managers can maintain or increase their profits while assisting society. Economic sustainability is important because it allows employers to engage with employees, providing them a wage and other benefits as a result of their performance while ensuring the growth of their business.

With regards to courses of study, the Chi-Square test revealed that stakeholder groups with "high" environmental perspectives differed significantly in their evaluations of the areas that are most and least relevant to the hospitality management curriculum (Deale and Barber, 2012). Experts from the industry with "high" ecological views suggested that altering consumer behaviour and opinions about sustainability and purchasing principles linked to sustainability are the most important subjects compared with the other two groups (Deale and Barber, 2012). Students thought these two subjects were considerably less important than academics and experts did (Deale and Barber, 2012). On the other hand, students with "high" ecological viewpoints considered knowledge of consumer demand as the most important subject (Deale and Barber, 2012). Experts may value altering consumers' behaviour as consumers make up a sizeable portion of the industry, and it is important to change their preferences for purchasing environmentally friendly products in order to avoid the use of potentially harmful materials

that can damage the environment. Purchasing principles are important for companies since they assist them to decide what materials they need to support their clients and the amount of supplies needed to reduce extra costs. Students may find it beneficial to understand consumer demand because they see themselves as customers who want to understand what drives decisions to purchase products, such as the cost, whether it is accessible and their individual preferences. A possible explanation for the differences in opinion among stakeholders could be a lack of cooperation and alignment among the groups. The dissimilarities in viewpoints between the three stakeholder groups (Deale and Barber, 2013), means that there could be delays in making decisions about the curricula. Collaboration between academics, students and sector representatives is vital from the initial stages of curriculum development and research design (Deale and Barber, 2012). Developing a model together and discussing fundamental assumptions could be a useful way to direct this process (Deale and Barber, 2012). Additionally, the establishment of an advisory board that emphasises sustainability would be beneficial (Deale and Barber, 2012). In situations where there are differences in viewpoints, it is important to acknowledge all opinions and come to an agreement on the topics to be taught in the curricula.

Tourism industry personnel in the Caribbean expressed concerns over students' lack of preparedness for employment after graduation (Jameson-Charles, 2012). Data collected from interviews revealed two main themes: 1) participation in curriculum design, and 2) consultation in the development of the internship aspect of the programme (Jameson-Charles, 2012). Jameson-Charles (2012) noted that experts from the sector were marginally involved in the internship portion of the programme through curriculum design and development. This could be the reason for the low level of preparation of graduates for employment. Questionnaires showed that out of the 48 participants from the tourism industry, 75% were very concerned about the degree of cooperation among the entities; 21% expressed concern over the limited communication between the units; and the remaining 4% indicated some degree of contentment with the present condition (Jameson-Charles, 2012). This result shows that the majority of industry personnel were not pleased with stakeholder collaboration. Insufficient cooperation between stakeholders will lead to incomplete curriculum development, preventing students from obtaining adequate information and understanding of the field. Insufficient job readiness among students and recent graduates can have a negative effect on a business. Graduates who lack the necessary competencies to handle their jobs and interact with their coworkers and

clients may lose customers leading to low profits. Graduate employees who are not prepared for the workplace could also lack the competencies to solve problems and also develop new products. Jameson-Charles (2012) suggested cooperation between businesses and academia to improve the calibre of graduates. This leads to the conclusion that including industry in curriculum development is the most practical approach.

5.2.2. An Analysis of Challenges Encountered in Curriculum Development in Africa

As mentioned previously, several developing countries particularly in Africa encounter interrelated institutional and capacity problems that affect the tourism and hospitality discipline. These problems are mainly skills-related (Erisher, 2013; Mayaka and Akama, 2015; Mahmoud, 2018). Mayaka and Akama (2015) observed that academics from different disciplines, such as economics, geography, and sociology were brought to fill positions in the TH&E fields due to a shortage of qualified academics in these disciplines. Mayaka and Akama (2015) noted that prior to the 21st century, students seeking qualifications in the TH&E fields attended overseas institutions. Kenya Utalii College, for instance, supported staff members education primarily in Europe and America (Mayaka and Akama, 2015). The researcher is of the view that they did not return to their home countries with the intention of using the information and abilities they had gained overseas. This could be the reason for the study's findings of a persistent lack of skilled academics in the field. The impact of having academics from several disciplines is that investigations were sometimes guided by different paradigm positions, theoretical tenets and pedagogical viewpoints (Mayaka and Akama, 2015).

A shortage of qualified academics in the TH&E fields will negatively impact the quality of education that students receive, lower their confidence both in the classroom and when they graduate and their hinder their ability to gain employment. Academics who lack competence also produce poor research output and provide limited information on recent developments in their fields. They will be compelled to rely on outdated ideas, unreliable strong opinions from outside sources due to their poor research output. Such ideas will permeate the curriculum, harm students' learning, and subsequently have a negative impact on business practices. TH&E students and academics need to receive more training domestically (and abroad), and it is crucial that they return to their countries of origin to provide their services. In order to address the issue of a shortage of qualified academics in the discipline, lecturers who excel in their

profession and publish extensively in the field should be considered for promotions to ensure retention. This will encourage emerging academics in the field. Academics in TH&E should cooperate with lecturers in other disciplines to develop and reach an agreement about the paradigms, theoretical principles and instructional perspectives used. Consequently, preventing contradictory ideas and building an excellent foundation for new academics and seasoned ones who may have deviated from established principles.

Studies have also revealed that tourism curricula in Sub-Saharan Africa either did not include green concepts and practices or did so partially (Fehlner, 2020; Moonga et al., 2022). Fehlner (2020) conducted quantitative analysis of topics associated with sustainability in fifty-four online tourism curricula in every accredited postsecondary institution in Sub-Saharan Africa. Approximately fifteen percent of all programmes provided in the region contain topics pertaining to sustainability (Fehlner, 2020). Through surveys and interviews a number of academics acknowledged that there was insufficient education and expertise in the area or a broad misconception of the notion of sustainable tourism (Fehlner, 2020). Fehlner (2020) noted that inadequate education is one of the primary reasons for the general lack of understanding regarding sustainability. Fehlner (2020) continues to suggest that the lack of sustainable tourism education is due to unclear concepts, in other words, postsecondary institutions are uncertain of how to put into practice concepts that have not been thoroughly defined and elaborated on.

Moonga et al. (2022) found that essential themes emerged from focus groups and interviews with academics, including the incorporation of subjects in the curriculum. A key subtheme was that for various training institutes in Zambia, there was an absence of sustainability-related content in the curricula (Moonga et al., 2022). Academics criticized management who did not see the importance of teaching green concepts and practices to tourism and hospitality students in comparison to other standard hospitality subjects (Moonga et al., 2022). The result of the curricula lacking emphasis on sustainability is that students and graduates would be ill-equipped to act efficiently when confronted with sustainability-related decisions. Delays in decision making have the potential to harm a company's reputation and result in lost opportunities. Graduates who are not trained in sustainability may lack the confidence to deal with issues when they arise at work. Lack of information or expertise prevents graduates from making positive changes in an organisation (Zizka, 2022). As indicated previously, higher

education institutions should ensure that the curriculum covers current topics that are pertinent to students, companies and the community. Students will regard this as a motivation to pursue their education, with the likelihood of employment after graduation (Khutsafalo and Makambe, 2020). Additionally, students will understand what is expected of them in the workplace. Moonga et al. (2022) recommended that a number of courses be taught, such as preservation of natural resources, keep Zambia clean, waste management and technology, water preservation and energy conservation (Moonga et al., 2022). These programmes must be taught from the diploma to doctoral levels in order for students to gain experience in sustainability before graduation (Moonga et al., 2022). Teaching sustainability at all levels is beneficial because it provides students and graduates with a solid foundation from which to address the problems confronting business and society. With the incorporation of sustainability in the curricula academics will be in a better position to guide students effectively and contribute to debates on the topic.

Manwa et al. (2011) argues that it appears that tourism education does not seem to mirror the demands and urgency of the sector, society and government (Manwa et al., 2011). Interviews were conducted with academics and secondary data from literature and curricula from Botswana's tertiary institutions was used (Manwa et al., 2011). The researchers found that curriculum development in the nation is either franchise oriented or reflects the interests of the higher education institutions, with limited to no engagement from students, industry, community and the government (Manwa et al., 2011). The franchised programmes usually fall short of fulfilling the education and training requirements of local businesses as they are not customized to meet local demands (Manwa et al., 2011). It could be that there is frustration among the industry, community and government due to their limited involvement in curriculum development and the curriculum not being in line with their needs. Insufficient engagement from stakeholders, leads to a one sided curriculum that hinders the development of students' skills. The result of the franchised organisations' influence over the industry is that local cultural activities in the hospitality industry could fade away. For example, the provision of local foods, artwork, performances, using local languages, and dressing in local attire. It is suggested that there be more involvement from stakeholders. Curriculum development should take into account the opinions of all stakeholders including independent and franchise oriented businesses in order to improve study programmes and ensure that students graduate with the necessary skills to work in any type of business.

According to Moyo and Özgüt's (2022) study, research participants noted that internships in the tourism and hospitality management field provided inadequate training in practical skills. Semi-structured interviews with Zimbabwean university graduates who graduated from a North Cyprus programme and tourism employers revealed that graduates are given a brief period for internships (Moyo and Özgüt, 2022). A participant noted that internships are two months long and they come to an end just as students start to get accustomed to particular positions (Moyo and Özgüt, 2022). A possible explanation for short internship duration is a lack of collaboration among stakeholders in order to determine the length of internships and its importance for students' success in the industry. Moyo and Özgüt (2022) stated that a brief internship period made it more challenging for students to acquire sufficient experience. This could lead to the inability to perform tasks efficiently, poor performance at the workplace and reduced productivity. Limited knowledge because of brief internships could cause poor customer interactions or injuries at the workplace. As a result, employers will not be satisfied with students and graduates who initially start employment. Stakeholders identified a need for training that would enhance students' employability competencies with greater levels of cooperation between tertiary institutions and businesses (Moyo and Özgüt, 2022). In addition, extended internship periods, for the duration of a year are important for students to obtain the requisite competencies (Moyo and Özgüt, 2022).

Another problem identified from literature in Africa is a gap between what graduates anticipate from prospective employers (Asirifi et al., 2013). Interviews and questionnaires were conducted with academics, students and employers from the hotel industry in Ghana. When asked if they thought what they had studied in higher education was relevant in the sector, thirty-three percent of respondents indicated yes and sixty-seven percent said no (Asirifi et al., 2013). This suggests that the majority of the workforce are dissatisfied with the education and training they are receiving from higher education. The reason for the unmet expectations is that employers believed that the programmes that are offered at tertiary institutions are theoretical, and that the curriculum must be guided by the current needs of the sector (Asirifi et al, 2013).

Unmet expectations from graduate employees leads to disappointment. Disappointment may suggest that graduates are unwilling to train to obtain the required competencies, which could lead to unemployment. Unmet expectations also leads to searching for new employment opportunities. It implies that higher education institutions were unable to fulfil their

responsibilities, which reflects negatively on the university. The curriculum must be updated to mirror the latest advancements in the sector (Asirifi et al., 2013). During curriculum review there should be cooperation between universities and the industry (Asirifi et al., 2013). Academics, students and industry must collaborate in the development of curricula to guarantee that expectations are met which will lead to contentment in the workplace for students and employers. Graduates are able to operate efficiently when expectations are fulfilled. Graduates should be prepared to put in extra study time and learn from industry in order to make sure they meet the standards of the sector.

Sadik (2017) made a similar argument to Asirifi (2013), that the hospitality curriculum in Ghana over emphasises theoretical aspects and does not sufficiently prioritize practical skills. Focus groups and questionnaires with academics revealed this perception. Sadik (2017) noted that the hospitality curriculum in the country was created largely from a lecturers standpoint by faculty members with limited experience of the sector. These lecturers emphasize fulfilling the requirements of the programme instead of the practical application of competencies in the real world (Sadik, 2017). This frequently results in a gap between higher education and the sector about the courses to be taught and the competencies that students should develop throughout their programme (Sadik, 2017). The absence of practical skills caused by theoretical curricula means that graduates cannot function effectively at the workplace. The impact of the outdated curricula mentioned in the global analysis also applies to theoretical curricula that affect higher education institutions in Africa, that is, students are at risk of not getting hired, or 2) that if they do, they may be demoted or replaced by someone with better qualifications unless training is given.

The researcher earlier came to the conclusion that the curriculum in Africa either lacked or barely included particular industry specific competencies (Erisher, 2013; Mahmoud, 2018). Erisher (2013) discussed the condition of Hospitality training in Zimbabwe. A brief scan of the Hospitality programmes available showed that the majority of them provided only between thirty percent and forty percent content dealing with Hospitality and Tourism management (Erisher, 2013). Another concerning observation was that the lack of programmes relevant to Hospitality is found across the certificate to degree in postsecondary institutions that provide Hospitality qualifications (Erisher, 2013). The reason for this is that in hospitality programmes there is a preference for finance, accounting and science and due to this the system is churning

out untrained hotel managers, front-desk employees, reservationists, cleaning staff and culinary professionals (Erisher, 2013). Similarly, Mahmoud (2018) argues that the current hotel education curricula in Egypt primarily focuses on general understanding, lacking particular professional competencies, such as working proficiency and communication competencies. Therefore, only fulfilling the outlines of industry requirements (Mahmoud, 2018). Employers, students and academics were surveyed (Mahmoud, 2018). The research identifies a basic issue with the existing gap between private tertiary institutions and the sector as a result of insufficient communication between employers, lecturers, and students (Mahmoud, 2018). The absence of particular industry expertise in the curricula could be due to lack of qualified academics and inadequate stakeholder collaboration (Manwa et al., 2011; Mahmoud, 2018). The lack of expert competencies in the curricula will cause academics and students to have a limited perspective of the labour market. Graduates could lack the skills to fill certain jobs or will initially be unable to perform at the workplace due to insufficient competencies. Graduates who lack certain competencies could also find themselves working in low-paying jobs. With regards to curriculum issues, it appears that the same recommendations are given. Sadik (2017) for example, suggests that cooperation between tertiary education institutions and the sector is necessary to improve the curriculum and give graduates the needed competencies for employment. It would also be good for industry and higher education institutions to collaborate with other schools that have the practical know-how, for example, hotel schools or hospitality academies (that are well established with a practical and theoretical basis), to develop practical curricula.

Students in higher education in the tourism and hospitality fields are also impacted by capacity constraints related to skills development. Manwa et al. (2011) found that only a few companies in Botswana provide placements for tourism and hospitality students as a result of a lack of capacity. This hinders students' ability to improve their practical experience in the workplace and could negatively affect their ability to do their jobs once they graduate. Students' development and progress are hampered by their inability to participate in work placements. During placements students may provide new perspectives to employers; but, if they are unable to accept students, businesses will not gain from the ideas of these students. It could be argued that due to capacity issues only a small number of students are able to network with potential employers. These students could have additional job opportunities as a result of this. Students who are not able to participate in placements may lose out on networking opportunities, which

might have a detrimental effect on their career advancement. These arguments seem to point to the necessity of more student engagement in businesses and increased participation from all stakeholders in tourism education (Manwa et al., 2011; Mahmoud, 2018). Employers with an interest in courses of study should be reachable and possess the enthusiasm to follow up to ensure implementation and success.

5.2.3. An Analysis of Challenges Encountered in Curriculum Development in South Africa

In most cases, the process of developing a curriculum requires dealing with a number of obstacles. The problem of skills shortages was identified in South African literature (Zwane et al., 2014; Wakelin-Theron et al., 2019). Zwane et al. (2014) surveyed employers within a Training Authority and found that managers require more competencies from students than what they can provide. Managers clearly express that students lack skills in proactive problem solving and in professional customer service (Zwane et al., 2014). Similarly, a mixed-method technique involving participants, some of whom were representatives from the tourism industry found that graduates needed entrepreneurial skills. Real knowledge and skills gaps revealed a lack of educational background, which is important as it is the foundation of a qualification in the field (Wakelin-Theron et al., 2019). These skills gaps may be the result of inadequate training for educators or a lack of collaboration among stakeholders. Zwane et al. (2014) argued that it is apparent that there is a need for employers and training authorities to enhance their collaborative efforts to make changes to the current programmes. Skills deficiencies result in a gap between postsecondary institutions and the competencies required by employers. This gap leaves graduates insufficiently prepared for employment, resulting in increased joblessness. Educators may find it difficult to provide courses that satisfy the requirements of the sector, which could result in a loss of confidence on the part of stakeholders. The industry could encounter challenges with hiring suitable staff, this could result in decreased revenue and higher training expenses. The curriculum should be aligned with industry involvement and ongoing updates of programmes. Specialized programmes to enhance particular competencies should be provided to meet industry requirements.

As indicated previously, Moolman and Wilkinson's (2015) found that despite the importance of environmental management and sustainability behaviours (and the inclusion of

competencies in global curricula), these were not apparent in the Diploma and Bachelor's curricula. The research-based competence framework was used in the examination of these curricula (Moolman and Wilkinson, 2015). Although seventy-nine percent of panellists acknowledge that graduates should demonstrate environmental responsibility (Moolman and Wilkinson, 2015), the national programmes do not appear to be on the same level with those provided by global postsecondary institutions. Again, the cause for lack of sustainability in the curriculum could be insufficient stakeholder participation. Students and graduates who have not been introduced to sustainability principles may not have the expertise and skills to successfully deal with the major ecological and social issues that they encounter at the workplace. If sustainability is not taught, lecturers could lose out on possibilities to promote environmental initiatives, reducing the importance and influence of their work. Employers could realize that graduates lack the competencies to assist with sustainability projects, which are crucial to meeting global standards. Students and graduates should be challenged to participate in sustainability projects, in order to obtain experience and a better grasp of problems. As previously stated, there is an urgent need for educators' and industry's suggestions on the incorporation of sustainability competencies in the curriculum.

The results shown in Table 4.2.1 suggest that there are a great number of obstacles impeding the effective development of hospitality management programmes. The underlying findings from Table 4.2.1 established that lack of academics' knowledge and experience of the industry, challenges of adapting to realities, changing trends, and lack of experience on the part of students stand as significant barriers to the teaching and learning of the subject in South Africa's tertiary education institutions. These results are shared by a number of academic publications that indicate that educators' insufficient competencies, students' lack of experience, and constant changes in the industry are challenges in curriculum development within the tourism and hospitality disciplines (Chili, 2013; Mayaka and Akama, 2015; Mahmoud, 2018; Wakelin-Theron et al., 2019).

The findings from Table 4.2.1 indicate that additional institutional capacity issues comprise: curricula that are outdated, excessively theoretical, lack practical applicability and take too long to develop, the placement of students for practical experience, the inability to apply what is learned, not enough time for in-service training, tailoring the curriculum to fit the requirements of the changing workplace, and a lack of industry input and non-involvement of

other stakeholders. It was established that institutional capacity setbacks greatly outweighed the infrastructural difficulties. The findings uncovered that while a number of factors were identified as obstacles to curriculum development, when combined, curriculum issues stand out as important challenges preventing the successful development of hospitality management programmes at universities (see Appendix C, Table C2). These findings are confirmed by Jugmohan (2010), Asirifi et al. (2013), Razack (2017), and Sadik (2017) that an overemphasis on theoretical aspects and a lack of practical application is a problem when developing tourism and hospitality curricula in South Africa and Ghana. These perspectives are shared by Le et al. (2018), who argue that the gap between theory and practice in Vietnam was viewed by business experts as a significant limitation in higher education hospitality courses. Theoretical aspects in the curriculum are vital as they explain in what ways and for what reasons particular facts are linked. The development of new knowledge and conceptual direction is facilitated by a strong theoretical foundation. However, there is cause for concern when the theoretical aspect exceeds the practical component. When this occurs students and graduates do not acquire the hands-on experience they really need to be successful in the profession considering the hospitality industry's emphasis on service, such as catering and customer services. Furthermore, industry cannot find qualified graduates to fill vacancies, which impacts economic growth and national development. The curriculum must therefore be directed by the present demands of industry (Asirifi et al., 2013). It is required that academics, industry, and main stakeholders work hand in hand to develop a comprehensive curriculum that integrates opportunities for in-service learning.

An outdated curriculum identified in Table 4.2.1 could be attributed to a lack of industry involvement in curriculum development, which may hinder educators' familiarity with developments in the sector and prevent the incorporation of trends in programmes. Representatives may have mentioned an outdated curriculum, as programme developers may be resistant to change and unreceptive to novel ideas due to a concern that these ideas have not been tried before and are unaware of their aim and potential advantages. Zuccoli and Korstanje (2023) expressed concern about the outdated curricula in tourism. Sofola (2014) asserts that the prevalence of outdated curricula is a problem that is widespread in numerous Sub-Saharan African universities. This is mostly due to the limited exposure that academics have to scientific discoveries which subsequently restricts their capacity to enrich their lecture content (Sofola, 2014). Out of date curricula have also been a problem in India (Deswal and Singhal,

2016; Deswal et al., 2017; Sonwane, 2020), affecting the capacity of students to successfully meet labour market requirements (Tran, 2010).

The findings of Table 4.2.1 reveal that curriculum development is also a time-consuming process. Hospitality 4 stated that curriculum development is unreasonably prolonged and by the time it is approved it has already become obsolete. Geldenhuys (2003) argued that curriculum development is distinguished by its extended duration and complexity, frequently covering a period of up to three years for its full implementation. The curriculum development process may take longer than expected due to the emergence of multiple perspectives and an inability to reach a consensus on the lessons, materials, knowledge, and skills that should be included in the curriculum. However, if rigorous timelines for curriculum development are put in place, subject matter specialists and advisory boards that routinely meet with stakeholders may be able to come to an agreement earlier.

In the current investigation, Hospitality 21 said that academics developing curricula may not always possess practical experience in the specific industry and, as a result, lack the necessary grasp of practical concerns. The findings from Table 4.2.1 reveal that educators' lack of knowledge and experience of the industry was at 15.2%. As a result, curriculum development will take longer than expected as educators lack the expertise, requiring clarification on various components of the industry. These findings about a lack of experienced educators are similar to those observed regionally and locally (Barron and Prideaux, 1998; Chili, 2013; Mayaka and Akama, 2015). Mayaka and Akama (2015) argue that an absence of specialist lecturers in the tourism and hospitality fields introduces academics from different disciplines, namely economics, sociology, and geography. This is advantageous because the hospitality discipline will never lack academics in such disciplines who are willing to assist. However, academics in TH&E and other disciplines should consider taking hospitality courses to update their knowledge of practical industry components.

In this research, Hospitality 6 indicated that there is insufficient current industry input in curriculum development, which is also highlighted in Table 4.2.1. These findings are confirmed by Nxesi (2000), cited in Mkhize (2014), who argues that the issue with curriculum development at a University of Technology is inadequate industry engagement and therefore an incapacity to obtain complete curriculum development. Even though insufficient industry

involvement (Nxesi, 2000, cited in Mkhize, 2014) may not be evident at every university, it is suggested that academics and businesses work together to provide complete curriculum development. The findings of this current study are in contrast to those carried out by Mukolwe and Cheloti (2016) in Kenya, who found greater infrastructural and capacity challenges, such as lack of tangible teaching and learning resources, inadequate lecturers, and insufficient staff confidence, limited accessible financial resources, low economic growth, scarcity of suitable social provisions and basic structure and inadequate teaching support.

The analysis shows that structural issues such as utilising the latest techniques and trends and constant changes within the sector, affect curriculum development (Table 4.2.1). Changes within society and the hospitality industry are ongoing, and these are necessary to develop the individual and the larger community. For example, when industry trends relating to green practices such as water management, waste management, and energy management are incorporated into curricula, they enhance graduates' and WIL learners' knowledge and understanding of the hospitality profession, equipping them with the skills needed for the workplace. Tertiary institutions, educators, and administrators are tasked with adapting to societal needs and technological trends while delivering good-quality instruction (Hrivnak, 2019; Guàrdia et al., 2021). However, learning to use (educational) technology, for example, can be challenging (Hrivnak, 2019). Thus, ongoing practice with the latest techniques and trends at the tertiary level, as well as acquiring input from stakeholders—especially industry—in curriculum development will ensure programme relevance.

Can stakeholders developing curricula keep up with the continual changes within the industry? It is possible; however, it will require a concerted effort from all parties involved to decide how frequently the curriculum is developed and include the most recent trends that will positively impact the industry. It is important that those involved in curriculum development are aware of the most recent trends so that they can educate students about them and keep up with the industry's constant changes rather than having to regularly alter the core of the curriculum each time innovations take place. The constant evaluation of the curriculum provides the chance to alter programmes according to the developments and shifts in the tourism sector (Burlacu, 2023). Ensuring educators are abreast with developments in the sector, increasing expert training, strengthening stakeholder involvement, and conversing about the advantages of

curriculum changes will ensure the hospitality management curriculum is effectively developed.

5.2.4. Implications of the Analysis of the Challenges in Curriculum Development

The global analysis revealed that outdated, over theoretical curricula in tertiary institutions lead to gaps between theory and practice in developing countries such as Argentina and Vietnam (Le et al., 2018; Zuccoli and Korstanje, 2023). The literature reviewed does not seem to suggest that curricula in developed countries are out of date. This could be as a result of their efficient management models and government regulations that enhance the sector's competitiveness (Henne et al., 2020; Papadopoulou, 2020; World Travel and Tourism Council, 2023). Regional and local literature revealed excessively theoretical curricula that do not place enough emphasis on industry skills (Jugmohan, 2010; Asirifi et al., 2013; Razack, 2017; Sadik, 2017). Outdated, overly theoretical curricula in South Africa limits the capacity of students to obtain the necessary skills for the international labour market. This results in lack of effectiveness and poor economic development. Global literature indicated that the top hospitality management programmes did not adequately incorporate sustainability (Zizka, 2022). Regional literature supports this finding, indicating that sustainability was not fully integrated (or was lacking) in tourism curricula (Fehlner, 2020; Moonga et al., 2022). The fact that sustainability is not thoroughly dealt with in the global and regional literature indicates that it is being taught at some level. However, some regional and national curricula do not seem to be on par with those provided by global tertiary institutions. This is because of studies establishing that Diploma and Bachelor's programmes completely lacked sustainability (Moolman and Wilkinson, 2015). Students who lack knowledge about sustainability will have minimal views of environmental, social and economic issues (linked to sustainability), and will not be able to make a difference in local, regional and global sustainability initiatives.

There were a number of skills development challenges cited in global, regional and local literature. Caribbean literature has shown that graduates are insufficiently prepared for employment in a developing country (Jameson-Charles, 2012). Unmet expectations of graduates in employment were mentioned in regional literature (Asirifi et al., 2013). Skills shortages in the industry have been identified in local literature (Zwane et al., 2014; Wakelin-Theron et al., 2019). Problems with skills development will have a detrimental impact on productivity and service delivery in the hospitality sector, which will negatively impact

developing nation's economies. It could also impact graduates ability to maintain employment which would result in increasing joblessness. Regional literature reveals a lack of tourism and hospitality academics (Mayaka and Akama, 2015). As a result of this, the standard of education in developing countries will decrease if they don't find suitable alternatives. Graduates will not be able to secure employment, which will delay economic growth. The inability to effectively train students due to a lack of capacity (Manwa et al., 2011), influences the growth of qualified graduates in developing countries. A lack of collaboration between tertiary education institutions and the industry (Ndlovu, 2015) could prevent students from developing the desired skills, which would have a negative impact on their employability in both developing and developed nations.

5.3. From the Perspective of Hospitality Industry, How Should the Hospitality Management Curriculum at Universities Be Developed

In order to build the hospitality management curriculum effectively, careful consideration must be given to many different factors such as practical training, emphasising various competencies, taking KPIs and labour law into account and obtaining input from multiple stakeholders. If these elements are incorporated into the curriculum, students will be provided with a full awareness of hospitality business and will be equipped with the required skills and knowledge for successful jobs in the field. Outcomes from Table 4.3.1 indicate that practical training is needed for developing a curriculum in hospitality management. Hospitality 28 said that the curriculum should focus on theoretical and have a strong concentration on practical aspects. It is assumed that more industry representatives stressed the practical aspect since the theoretical component alone cannot be considered.

The findings of Table 4.3.1 highlight that prioritising various knowledge and or skills when developing the curriculum such as management, leadership, sector-related life skills, cleanliness, customer service, booking channels, and web and search engine optimisation management will enhance curriculum development significantly. Research in this area has indicated that the required competencies for prospective employees were requested throughout curriculum discussions in Nepal (Thapa, 2018). According to Thapa (2018), the emphasis of the tourism and hospitality management curriculum was on content and industry knowledge, capacity development, and practical experience. Moreover, Milman (2001) found that industry

representatives in the USA proposed that various aspects of the curriculum be re-examined to handle more subject and capacity development topics, such as knowledge of different cultures, practical management skills, and interpersonal competencies. Mustafa (2019) argues that universities should make a better effort to prepare students for employment by fostering more interaction with the tourism and hospitality industries.

According to Erisher (2013), hospitality training must not be separated from existing practice, and those involved in curriculum development must work hand in hand with industry to guarantee a robust connection between theory and practice. Ndlovu (2021) calls for an extensive hospitality curriculum in South Africa that integrates theoretical knowledge and practical instruction and learning. One could therefore argue that incorporating both theoretical and practical components in the curriculum is the best way to provide students with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful, resulting in well-rounded graduate employees. This involves cooperation with industry stakeholders in order to prioritise present industry trends, KPIs, sustainability, and labour law. Some of these viewpoints are also shared by Jugmohan et al. (2022) that tourism trends and requirements must be examined when improving and developing the tourism curriculum in tertiary education to constantly update tourism students on information that is required. It is therefore important to understand the overall direction in which the industry is headed in order to raise students' (WIL) awareness and ensure job-ready graduates. Key performance indicators are quantifiable measures used by companies to evaluate achievement of their operational and planned goals (Bîrzu, 2020). Lindberg et al. (2015) emphasized the importance of KPI's in observing business performance, as they help identify poor performance and areas for improvement. The curriculum must incorporate KPI's to enhance students understanding of examining personal and industry accomplishments.

According to Hyasat (2022), modifying educational programmes has the advantage of improving students' overall performance in business-related settings. Programmes can be revised by including more sustainability concepts. As indicated before, Kuzich (2011) proposes that sustainability is comprised of four aspects, namely environmental, political, economic, and the social and cultural. In this current study it was found that no representatives advocated for the inclusion of sustainability in the hospitality management curricula in response to the open-ended question that was posed regarding the development of the educational programme.

However, in response to the question, Which sustainability elements should be incorporated within the hospitality management curriculum? the representatives strongly argue for the inclusion of environmental sustainability in the curriculum (See Figure 4.3.1). The results showed that a sizeable majority of responses (that is, 88%) indicated environmental elements, followed by social aspects, which were acknowledged by 79% of responses. Sixty-eight percent (68%) of responses said that economic factors should be included, while only 6% mentioned the political component. Although most responses indicated environmental factors in this study, Millar and Park (2013) found that students should learn about and understand sustainability fully rather than focusing solely on environmental components. Deale (2023) found that with regard to sustainability teaching, learning, and training, respondents expressed agreement with the idea of incorporating sustainability into the curriculum rather than confining it to a single lecture. They underlined the necessity for students to have a more comprehensive understanding of sustainability practices and constant access to explanations and ideas that are relevant to sustainability (Deale, 2023). The incorporation of sustainability into the curriculum is to better prepare students for a sustainable future.

In this study, Hospitality 7 was of the opinion that the curriculum ought to be developed by conducting an analytical study of industry leaders' day to day operations, with attention to the Labour Law, BCOE, and Health and Safety act. In South Africa, the aim of the BCOE Act No. 75, 1997 is to advance economic development and social justice by for example, establishing and enforcing basic conditions of employment (Republic of South Africa. Government Gazette, 1997). The Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act. No. 85, 1993 was established to protect the health and safety of workers and those using machinery (Republic of South Africa. Government Gazette, 1993). The outcomes of Table 4.2.1, namely an outdated curriculum and tailoring the curriculum to match the changing work environment, can be addressed through the inclusion of numerous regulating acts. Global literature has shown that OHS is applicable to students work settings (Joo-Ee and Jo-Ee, 2015). Balanay et al. (2014) recommends that integrating OHS strategies in the curriculum can help reduce risks and among working university students. The findings on the inclusion of health and safety (acts) in this current study are in line with Balanay et al. (2014). Students and graduates should stay informed about industry regulations to minimise possible consequences from non-compliance.

As previously mentioned, only one response to an open-ended question addressed employment acts and labour laws, as Table 4.3.1 indicates. Even though the majority does not declare it explicitly, this finding is a given (understood and accepted as true) and does not diminish the importance of these laws and acts when developing the curriculum. Familiarity with employment legislation and the Health and Safety Act is advantageous for students before they enter the industry. Through this knowledge, possible risks can be avoided (Balanay et al., 2014), and a more thorough understanding of the working environment can be fostered. Literature from a global perspective reveals that tourism students value labour legislation and have experienced labour law matters at their jobs (Ko and Tavitiyaman, 2015). On the other hand, according to the student survey, their employers do not regard labour law in the same way (Ko and Tavitiyaman, 2015). Since students are junior employees, with limited experience with legal subjects, their views of employers' perceptions could differ (Ko and Tavitiyaman, 2015). Whether one is an employer or a student, an awareness of labour law is beneficial to maintain the rights of employees. Labour law guarantees that employees are not discriminated against on any basis and that they receive adequate pay for the work they are engaged in. It is important to put in place educational policies that require the incorporation of labour law and OHS into the hospitality curriculum and other disciplines so that students have a broad understanding of their rights at the workplace and how to prevent negative impacts.

Stakeholder engagement is essential in curriculum development, with representatives recommending involvement from multiple stakeholders, i.e., academics, curriculum creators, business professionals, governments, and students (Table 4.3.1). Similarly, studies have suggested collaboration with stakeholders in curriculum development (Erisher, 2013; Maphosa et al., 2014; Mayaka and Akama, 2015). In addition, Bathla et al. (2020) identified an apparent lack of cooperation between hotel businesses and hospitality institutions in India, which has led to a noticeable gap between the curriculum and business trends. These views are expressed by numerous researchers globally, regionally, and locally who identify these skills gaps (Erisher, 2013; Kriel and van Lill, 2015; Wakelin-Theron et al., 2019; Renfors et al., 2020). Bathla et al. (2020) underscores the importance of industry providing regular feedback to universities to guarantee that students are taught the latest information in their classes. Encouraging strong collaboration among stakeholders is essential to overcoming obstacles in curriculum development, such as an outdated, overly-theoretical curriculum that lacks feedback from industry. Curriculum drawbacks, academics' lack of expertise, and experience

and industry's lack of contribution all prevent the successful development of the hospitality management curriculum. To avoid this, it is advised that all stakeholders cooperate while sharing their expertise to guarantee thorough curriculum development. To obtain diverse viewpoints, policies must be implemented that ensure that different stakeholders are involved in curriculum development.

As previously stated, the development of hospitality management curricula must take into consideration integrating practical training, involving many stakeholders, and being aware of present trends in the sector. Including practical training in the local curriculum ensures that higher education is in line with the requirements of the sector providing students and graduates with the necessary competencies for positions in the local, regional and global sectors. In developing countries, the participation of graduates in activities such as WIL makes it easier for them to acquire the relevant competencies that boost their employability. Involving multiple local stakeholders means that the curriculum is adapted to meet local demands. Engaging multiple stakeholders irrespective of the region could have a positive impact, that is, providing novel ideas to the curriculum. Global and regional stakeholders could also benefit from contributions from the local participants. The employability of graduates could be improved by being mindful of current trends in the sector. It is therefore crucial to be aware of current local, regional and global trends to enhance one's capacity to gain employment and fully serve a variety of businesses around the world

5.4. From the Perspective of Hospitality Industry, the Stakeholders Who Play a Role in the Development of Hospitality Management Programmes in South Africa

Multiple stakeholders such as hospitality sector representatives, industry specialists, educational institutions, the government including the Department of Tourism, the local community, guests, and students play a role in curriculum development. These findings are supported by Table 4.4.1. Most responses (that is, 78.8%) indicated the engagement of hospitality businesses comprising experts in curriculum development. It is the hospitality industry representatives who participated in this study; therefore, it is assumed that they would argue for their involvement in the development of these programmes due to the positive points that they could offer to the process. Industry representatives can contribute to the skills that graduates should be aware of, as well as the various industry trends such as sustainability and

green practices. Hyasat (2022) suggests that universities prioritise improving the quality of programmes via greater participation of industry in the design of curricula. Thapa's (2018) study revealed that discussions concerning curriculum development were held with stakeholder groups from a variety of levels of enterprise. A preliminary version of the curriculum that was developed was subjected to consultations with stakeholders and specialists (Thapa, 2018). Specialist involvement is especially vital since they contribute their wealth of knowledge to aid in the formulation of programmes within the field. Engagement of these specialists can increase the value of the curriculum and guarantee that other institutions will draw inspirations from it when creating their own curricula. It is important to implement educational policies that call for the incorporation of specialist involvement in curriculum development, to strengthen programmes based on current industry trends.

Business representatives and tertiary institutions play a crucial role in developing hospitality management programmes, advising on industry trends and providing theoretical and practical knowledge respectively. As shown in Table 4.4.1, fewer responses identified educational institutions (39.4%) and government organisations (21.2%) involvement in curriculum development. Representatives were accurate in their assertion that educational institutions are involved in the development of hospitality management programmes. Educational institutions are the backbone of curriculum development; without them, it is difficult to produce graduates who are well-versed in the theoretical and practical knowledge offered through teaching, research, and practicals. In higher education institutions academics collaborate to develop courses of study and find common grounds on which operate. Higher education is the place where academics review the curricula to align with industry needs and obtain students' feedback to determine the quality of curricula.

The engagement of government in higher education in South Africa, strives to improve the system by involving people in reaching decisions and promoting progress (Akor, 2008). In contrast, government involvement in curriculum development for tourism and hospitality programmes was lacking in studies conducted in the USA and Malta (Milman, 2001; Caruana and Lau, 2014). Although Caruana and Lau (2014) maintained that decisions made within the institute would impact government agencies. Government's involvement is worthwhile as they may approve particular disciplines or standards, provide funding, and decide on the financial plan universities require, in addition to the legislation governing how universities should be

administered. With regards to curriculum development, government should not be the only source of external advice and funding, Hospitality 20 indicated that investors should be involved in curriculum development. Through their financial assistance investors can help to produce more educated people. Their financial support means that the curriculum is pertinent. Shay (2017) advocates for a lot of investment in curriculum change in South Africa to improve teaching and learning and overcome the barriers to graduation.

Although the local community may not contribute to funding the curriculum, 6.1% of responses in this study indicated their involvement in hospitality management curriculum development (Table 4.4.1). Jugmohan et al. (2022) is of the view that a curriculum that involves the community is necessary to ensure that students in South Africa are informed about the most recent developments in tourism that promote an equitable society. Similarly, Tuma and Sisson (2019) emphasize the importance of community collaboration in teaching and learning to foster learned citizens and enhance curricula. As previously indicated community's involvement is vital in curriculum development as it could promote social interactions and upliftment. Community stakeholders contributions to curriculum development will help to instil local principles in students which will in the long run help students assist the community.

Student participation in curriculum development garnered one of the lowest percentages according to Table 4.4.1, confirming Caruana and Lau's (2014) finding that ITTC students are represented on a few subcommittees pertaining to curriculum design and development. This would seem to indicate that there is a relatively low level of student engagement in developing the curriculum. This may be due to a lack of knowledge of the advantages of involving students in the process. Although Table 4.4.1 does not mention graduates, it is necessary to include both graduates and students in the process. Students can gain numerous competencies from participating in curriculum development such as communication, listening skills, analysis and teamwork skills. Lu et al. (2015) argue that student engagement in curriculum development promotes cooperation between academics and students, innovation and informed learning, motivating students to take charge of their education. From this position, however, one could deduce that the most practical step to take is to involve more stakeholders in curriculum development. Jameson-Charles (2012) suggests that higher education institutions should interact with stakeholders to have a greater understanding of the needs of companies so that the curriculum developed would be suitable. This strategy guarantees that the curriculum that

is offered is effectively aligned with the requirements that are imposed by these organisations. Therefore, the contributions made by many stakeholders during the process of curriculum development are of utmost significance. According to Manwa et al.'s. (2011) study in Botswana, there is a need for increased representation of partners, particularly in curriculum design and development. Greater stakeholder involvement in curriculum development provides multiple viewpoints to consider and enhance the curriculum, meeting the requirements of those involved.

The South African hospitality industry's involvement in curriculum development is an indication that higher education institutions maintain their value in the regional and international sectors. When the sector is involved in curriculum development, there will be a higher degree of practical experience and greater compatibility with industry expectations, resulting in qualified students and graduates who can be employed on a regional and global stage. The lack of student involvement in curriculum development in South Africa is an indication that they may not acquire specific skills from participating in the process. It could have an influence on how they contribute to local, regional and global discussions on the curriculum and could negatively affect their preparation for the job market. In order for curriculum development to be successful, stakeholders in the community and the private and public sectors should be involved in the process. As a result, it is strongly suggested that universities in developing countries convene a meeting at which all important parties participate in order to debate issues about the content of their hospitality management curriculum.

5.5. Hospitality Industry's Satisfaction With the Competencies of Graduates and WIL Learners

5.5.1. Industry's Satisfaction With Graduate Competencies

The purpose of this section is to determine industry representatives' contentment with the skills of graduates. However, it is crucial to establish whether representatives have employed them. Sixty-five percent (65%) of representatives have employed graduates with a background in the discipline of hospitality from universities in South Africa (see Appendix C, Figure C1). This is an above average finding. Wardle (2012) reported analogous results that illustrated that a

considerable proportion of Australian businesses (that is, 61%) have engaged graduates within the hospitality field at various points in time. Industry representatives are satisfied (very satisfied and satisfied) with the competencies of graduates, such as their friendly attitude when serving customers (82.6%) and willingness to assist (78.3%), as illustrated in Table 4.5.4 and Table 4.5.5 respectively. This was confirmed by Wakelin-Theron et al.'s (2019) findings that the South African tourism industry views graduates as friendly. After conducting a quantitative survey with managers, the results showed that industry regards graduates as outgoing, that is, friendly (Wakelin-Theron et al., 2019). Employers ranked this attribute as one of the top three qualities of graduates (Wakelin-Theron et al., 2019). This implies that employers are satisfied with graduates ability to engage with people and positively represent the company. This will increase the overall image of the company.

It is encouraging that representatives in this current study are pleased with graduates' friendliness and willingness because, in the hospitality industry, conduct is extremely important since customers value service and will continue to patronise businesses if (graduate) employees exhibit the right demeanour. Industry representatives in this current study are pleased with competencies highlighted by Romiszowski (2021), such as reproductive interactive skills—which include social practices that comprise good conduct, and productive interactive skills—which consist of capabilities such as communicating with others. Some representatives in this present research indicate satisfaction with graduates' capacity to verbally communicate information to customers and their ability to work well in a team at 69.6%, trustworthiness (66.7%), listening skills (65.2%), upholding professional principles (63.6%), ability to communicate in writing and empathy in handling customers is at 60.9%, optimistic attitude (59.1%), confidence (56.5%) and having knowledge of the industry and what is expected by the industry at 52.2% (Table 4.5.3; Table 4.5.4; Table 4.5.5; Table 4.5.6). For example, Romiszowski (2021) argues that producing grammatically correct writing falls under the category of a reproductive cognitive skill, but producing original writing represents a productive cognitive capacity. Hospitality businesses are people-centred; therefore, excellent verbal and written communication skills will guarantee improved customer relations, making industry representatives content and willing to employ such graduates. It is expected that hospitality graduates have plenty of opportunities for teamwork throughout their university programmes. As a result, when they enter the workforce, graduates are equipped to work extremely well with their colleagues in group settings, increasing effectiveness and output.

As previously indicated, 52.2% of representatives were satisfied with graduates' knowledge of the industry and knowledge of what is expected by the industry, whereas 8.7% and 17.4% were dissatisfied with these competencies, respectively, as shown in Table 4.5.4. Regarding the level of satisfaction with the readiness of hospitality graduates, in this study, 74% of representatives are satisfied, 4% are dissatisfied and 22% indicated neutral as presented in Figure 4.5.1. This illustrates that representatives are pleased with graduates' knowledge of the hospitality industry, which is crucial for them to advance their professional careers. Having such knowledge ensures some degree of independence by preventing the need for assistance at every turn. Representatives also express satisfaction with graduates' preparedness illustrating that universities are providing graduates with the necessary knowledge and skills and that the curriculum is aligned with industry standards. On the other hand, scholars and researchers in South Africa have found that graduates enter the hospitality sector ill-prepared, with a lack of industry knowledge, learning capacities, and managerial skills (Wakelin-Theron et al., 2018; Molefe et al., 2019). Wakelin-Theron et al. (2019) indicated that tertiary education institutions are delaying providing graduates with the required expertise for employment. As previously indicated the sole responsibility for equipping graduates is not on academic institutions, but stakeholders should work closely with educators in developing the required skills in students.

Although most representatives were satisfied with the competencies of graduates. It is important to note that only a small percentage of representatives, indicated a high level of satisfaction, more particularly classified as 'very satisfied', with the varied skill sets of graduates in the hospitality sector. This finding is important because it suggests that there is a need for improvement in this area. Whereas between 4.3% and 26.1% were dissatisfied (very dissatisfied and dissatisfied) with the various skills of graduates (Table 4.5.2-Table 4.5.7). These results are like observations shared by Brits (2018), who determined employers' total satisfaction with the general competencies of Vaal University of Technology graduate employees, where 52.9% were satisfied, 8.4% were highly satisfied, 26.9% were moderately satisfied, and 5.9% were not satisfied. General competencies comprise expertise in English, verbal and written communication, attentiveness, the ability to organise information for presentations, critical reasoning, computer knowledge, reading, usage of technological devices specific to the employment setting, managerial abilities, collaboration, and client service (Brits, 2018). Similarly, Alao et al. (2009) found that a vast majority of businesses in Botswana also

expressed general satisfaction with the proficiency levels of graduates, with the exception of leadership/management skills, which garnered less than 60% satisfaction (fairly) from businesses.

The findings of the present study and the above-mentioned research are in contrast to those observed by Tudy (2017) in the Philippines. In that study, it was found that each ability received an extremely satisfactory rating, which provides strong evidence that the higher education institution is successfully fostering the development of graduates who are able to satisfy industry requirements (Tudy, 2017). This finding reveals that graduates from this university possess a high degree of proficiency when they enter the workplace, fulfilling the expectations of their employers. However, the findings from the present study and those conducted by numerous scholars and researchers listed above are contrary to those of Commey (2021) in Ghana, which showed that graduates lacked all required competencies, suggesting total dissatisfaction with the competencies of hospitality graduates in the field. Commey (2021) used a structured questionnaire to gather data from managers. This current study used a semi-structured questionnaire. However, the employer satisfaction component of the survey comprised structured questions. This aspect is therefore similar to Commey (2021). These contradictory findings offer an expanded view of the subject area and demonstrate the differences in employers' perspectives across countries. It is important for stakeholders in this current study to focus on the necessary competencies, particularly those few skills with which employers expressed dissatisfaction, in order to assist graduates in fulfilling the requirements of their managers.

Employers' are most satisfied with graduates' social skills and least pleased with their other generic abilities (see Figure 4.5.3). Graduates with strong social skills are more likely to successfully engage with clients and partner with businesses in developing and developed countries. With good social skills they will also be able to network with clients from around the world. A lack of satisfaction with graduates' other generic skills, such as time management, organization and planning suggests that productivity will be affected making it more challenging for them to secure employment locally and abroad. Graduates' ability to acquire executive roles could be negatively impacted as these jobs require them to, for example, manage or promote their company, which would call for excellent time management, planning and organizational skills. In global literature, employers have expressed satisfaction with

graduates' organisational, planning, and time management skills (Tudy, 2017). According to regional literature, tertiary institutions equip graduates with competencies to plan and manage tourism and hospitality companies (Babalola and Oluwatoyin, 2014). Therefore, in order to stand out for positions throughout the world, South African graduates as well as those from other nations will be expected to perform in these areas.

5.5.2. Industry's Satisfaction With WIL Learners' Competencies

The measures that higher education institutions are taking in order to create cooperative education programmes to provide students with opportunities for WIL (Brits, 2018) are worth noting. These opportunities are bridging the gap between theory and practice (Brits, 2018). Govender and Wait (2017) argued that WIL provides educators with a valuable opportunity to connect theoretical knowledge and practical experience. As a result, graduates are more prepared for the needs of the corporate environment, and their practical learning is facilitated (Govender and Wait, 2017). According to the findings that are presented in Appendix C, a sizeable majority of representatives (particularly 71%), have engaged WIL learners (see Appendix C, Figure C2). It appears that exposing these learners to businesses before hiring them is advantageous since they will be familiar with operations and would make effective employees. Industry representatives are able to evaluate their overall satisfaction with students' performance following their WIL training. Figure 4.5.2 reveals that 64% of representatives express satisfaction with the readiness of hospitality WIL learners from universities. Similarly, Wardle (2012) found that most managers who assessed students' readiness for WIL in Australia, gave an average rating, with a lesser proportion giving an exceptionally high or severely low ranking. In contrast, as noted previously employers have expressed discontentment with the calibre of WIL students globally, pointing to their lack of commitment to the sector (Khuong, 2015; Carty, 2021).

Khuong (2015) interviewed several participants including the tourism industry on their views regarding internships. Carty (2021) conducted semi-structured interviews with experts in the tourism and hospitality sector. This current study however, used a semi-structured questionnaire to investigate employers' satisfaction with the competencies of WIL learners. The interviews used in previous literature on the topic provide a deeper insight of employers' views whereas the structured questions in this study allow data to be compared to determine

which competencies are most pleasing to employers and which competencies WIL learners still need to work on. It appears that in this current study there is some level of success when it comes to the development of the competencies of WIL learners. On the other hand, it seems that there is a setback in the development of WIL learners competencies in global literature. This could be as a result of brief internships provided (Khuong, 2015). Extended internships are thus necessary (Moyo and Özgüt, 2022).

Representatives expressed more satisfaction (very satisfied and satisfied) with South African WIL learners' willingness to assist (68.2%), trustworthiness, ability to verbally communicate information to customers, friendly attitude when serving customers and listening skills all at 59.1%, organisation (54.5%), confidence and the ability to communicate in writing at 50.0% than other competencies, as presented in Table 4.5.8; Table 4.5.10; Table 4.5.11; Table 4.5.12; Table 4.5.13. Only between 4.5% to 18.2% of representatives were dissatisfied (very dissatisfied and dissatisfied) with various skills of hospitality WIL learners. The remainder of the representatives were either neutral or did not answer the question. Similar to graduates' skills, industry representatives were most pleased with learners' willingness to assist, verbal communication, and friendly attitude. The value of these competencies was previously discussed. Therefore, the following skills that merit attention include trustworthiness and listening skills. Representatives' satisfaction with learners' trustworthiness is highly commendable as it proves that the honesty of learners can be depended on. Industry's contentment with listening skills confirms that learners are able to comprehend information from their employers, preventing misunderstandings which in turn increases productivity. These skills are necessary across many fields, not only hospitality, as they foster strong bonds with coworkers and important connections with guests.

Managers express the most satisfaction with the communication skills of WIL learners and are least impressed with their forward-thinking skills (see Figure 4.5.4). Employers' satisfaction with WIL learners communication skills is evidence that these students will be able to interact constructively with managers during academic exchange programmes and industry internships abroad. These learners will clearly express their views and have a positive impact on the local image/on how international clients perceive them. Managers expressing the least satisfaction with forward thinking skills indicates that tertiary institutions should review their academic programmes, particularly their WIL initiatives, and place more emphasis on these skills. This

finding suggests that students who participate in local, regional and global work placements are less inclined to display inventiveness, effectively solve problems and have an optimistic outlook. This could negatively impact their performance and cause dissatisfaction with employers.

5.6. The Competencies That Are Desirable and Required to Enhance the Employability of Graduates

5.6.1. Desirable Competencies in Graduates

This section identifies desirable skills in graduates. It becomes necessary to examine desirable attributes to understand the qualities that industry finds most favourable. This can enable academics and students to better develop key competencies in students and ensure that they are equipped for the job. The majority of representatives, strongly agreed that having a friendly attitude when serving customers is the most desirable competency. However, when combining the levels of agreement (strongly agree and agree), 91.2% of representatives agreed that upholding professional principles is the most desired competency, as shown in Table 4.6.3. Similarly, Kokt and Strydom (2014) pointed out that maintaining professional principles is an important quality for graduates to possess, and Lu (1999) and Sadik (2017), emphasise the significance of providing pleasant customer service. The hospitality industry is focused on providing services for clients; therefore, having a pleasant demeanour is crucial to fostering a positive work atmosphere. Upholding professional principles is valued, and graduates who possess this quality are better able to enter the field, enhance their performance and guarantee contentment at work (Boles et al., 2006; Matendera, 2013; Wilson et al., 2016). Within an organisation, a person's professionalism has a direct impact on how stakeholders perceive it (De Araugo and Beal, 2013).

Other competencies that constitute the most desirable in graduates include having knowledge of the industry and knowledge of what is expected by the industry. These values are 76.5% and 84.8% respectively (Table 4.6.3). These competencies consist of having knowledge of sustainability and green practices. Responses noted that sustainability elements are vital in hospitality management education. One can therefore argue that because it is significant to

education, it is important in the industry. Table 4.6.7 above shows that 97.1% of representatives consider the environmental component to be of importance. Furthermore, 94.1% and 85.3% of representatives, respectively, indicated that economic sustainability and social sustainability are important. Deale (2023) indicated that sustainability extends beyond the realm of the environment and that the vast majority of respondents underlined the significance of sustainable procedures, teaching, learning, and training in relation to sustainability. Deale (2023) carried out a study on the topic of sustainability education by conducting interviews with fourteen hospitality business executives located in the USA, during the COVID-19 epidemic. The respondents recognised the significance of sustainability practices, but voiced reservations concerning their application, particularly during the pandemic (Deale, 2023). Respondents emphasised the need for innovation and adaptability in order to meet sustainability issues (Deale, 2023). The results from Zhang and Tavitiyaman (2022) reveal business personnel in the hospitality and tourism industry have a more favourable and significant perception of sustainability matters than learners studying hospitality and tourism management in Hong Kong. According to the findings, there is a requirement to resolve the discrepancies in the perceived relevance and viewpoints held by the various stakeholders (Zhang and Tavitiyaman, 2022). The present investigation did not include a comparative analysis; nonetheless, it is consistent with the findings of Zhang and Tavitiyaman (2022) in that it emphasises the significance of sustainability components in hospitality management education and their consequential impact on the industry. Deale and Barber (2012) also noted similar findings that sustainability within education was vital, albeit with all stakeholders. In contrast, Deale et al. (2009) argued that it did not yet appear that sustainability education was significant to teaching in this field.

More hotels that have adopted environmentally friendly procedures as a result of an increase in the number of environmentally conscious customers (Moise et al., 2021). This approach is driven by the goal to improve their overall reputation as well as meet the environmental demands of their guests (Moise et al., 2021). In a recent study, Baloglu et al. (2022) found that restaurants applied green practices that lower prices and offer positive impressions among consumers. In the current investigation, representatives were asked how important it is for hospitality management graduates to have a knowledge of green practices within the hospitality industry. The vast majority of representatives emphasised how important it is, with 97.1% emphasising energy management, 94.1% highlighting waste management and water

management, and 75.8% indicating air quality management, as presented in Table 4.6.9. Knowledge of these practices and their subsequent implementation guarantees the successful operation of hotels, lodges, and resorts and may boost star ratings and improve the reputation of businesses. Barber et al. (2011) explored the usefulness of environmental topics in the hospitality management curriculum using an electronic questionnaire with stakeholder groups. Following Barber et al. (2011), the first three issues that were noted were waste management, creating sustainable company models, and training and education. Other issues considered important were changing the behaviour and opinions of clients, energy management, water management, and environmental standards (Barber et al., 2011). The findings of the current study are congruent with those from Barber et al. (2011) in that employers place a high priority on waste management, water management, and energy management.

In this present study, only 21% of responses were obtained for other green practices that graduates must be aware of, which were not specifically stated in Table 4.6.9 above. Representatives identified the following areas of focus as priorities: food sustainability including—sustainable gardening and food production, preserving the local cultural heritage, community awareness and involvement, carbon footprint, endemic vs. exotic species, human energy, travelling with a purpose, and recycling. Hotels generate a significant amount of organic waste; therefore, waste management, for example, can aid in sustainable gardening within the industry. Using sustainable gardening, costs of fertiliser, and water that would otherwise be incurred can be reduced. According to Ko and Lu (2022), one of the most important factors in reducing the amount of food that is lost or wasted in the hospitality business is the widespread adoption of efficient food handling methods, as well as a complete knowledge and awareness of food sustainability. Ko and Lu (2022) argue that several employees in restaurants are hospitality learners and the food waste made in the building can be lessened only if they are instructed to be skilfully efficient. This would shorten the learning curve for those beginning a new career in the industry (Ko and Lu, 2022).

Effective communication among various stakeholders is essential in the field of hospitality and tourism since it is one of the most important factors in encouraging the learning of environmentally friendly policies and procedures (Zhang and Tavitiyaman, 2022). In the present research, the majority of responses, particularly 61.8%, indicated that it is very important for hospitality management graduates to communicate to their employers about

emerging green practices, while 23.5% of responses mentioned that it is important. All representatives rated this skill with varying degrees of importance, as indicated in Figure 4.6.2. An interviewee in Millar and Park's (2013) study proposed that current hospitality graduates should have the ability to advise their heads about present sustainability trends that are being developed. The interviewee also suggested that graduates should have the necessary abilities to recognise these trends and effectively express them to their potential employers in a manner that is clear and relevant (Millar and Park, 2013). It is vital that universities routinely review the perspectives and expectations of managers in order to increase the employability of graduates (Brits, 2018).

5.6.2. Competencies Required to Enhance the Employability of Graduates

There is a scarcity of research relevant to the necessary skills that might enhance the employability of graduates in the hospitality industry. The current investigation found that the majority of representatives, strongly agreed that punctuality and the ability to verbally communicate information to customers are necessary to improve the employability of graduates (see Table 4.7.17). In addition, a sizeable number of representatives, 90.0% of the total, indicated agreement with graduates' friendly attitude when serving customers and empathy in handling customers (see Table 4.6.13; Table 4.6.14). A large majority of representatives, expressed agreement with graduates' ability to work well in a team, listening skills, adjustability, flexibility, productivity, organisation, planning, acting calmly in work situations and having knowledge of what is expected by the industry (Table 4.6.11; Table 4.6.13; Table 4.6.14; Table 4.6.15; Table 4.6.16). The competencies most required to increase graduates' employability are punctuality and verbal communication as previously mentioned. From a global perspective, scholars have noted that the ability to successfully communicate impacts the employability of graduates in the hospitality industry (Caiyod et al., 2015; Agarwal, 2021). From a regional standpoint, studies on employability skills in Ghana revealed that managers of tourism and hospitality graduates require communication skills (Owusu-Mintah and Kissi, 2017; Sadik, 2017). Authors in South Africa, such as Moolman and Wilkinson (2014), mentioned that communication skills are necessary. Punctuality was also required to enhance the employability of hospitality management graduates (Moolman and Wilkinson, 2014). Even though Pradhan's (2015) study focused on the employability of Library and Information Science graduates at a tertiary institution in India, it was found that

attaining satisfactory communication skills is vital to enhancing the employability of personnel in the sector. These findings demonstrate the value of communication skills in enhancing the employability of graduates irrespective of country or industry. Graduates can connect with their customers and sustain fruitful business connections through excellent verbal communication, which translates into providing good customer service. Punctuality means that newly hired graduates are more productive because they can begin their days earlier. Punctuality reveals that graduates are organised, able to follow directions, and are disciplined. In Africa, particularly in Ghana's hospitality industry, flexibility is a necessary employability skill (Sadik, 2017). Flexibility and punctuality are valued in the tourism and hospitality field in South Africa (Kokt and Strydom, 2014; Moolman and Wilkinson, 2014). As previously stated, managers may require graduates to be flexible in order to carry out responsibilities not connected to their present work, therefore they would need to adjust.

This study found that among the competencies to enhance employability, the ability to use social media to portray one's professional image was identified as least important (Table 4.7.17). It could be ranked last given that some employers may not see its value. It appears that professional behaviour and appearance (ranked 20th and 21st) are more important to employers in the hospitality industry than one's professional social media image (ranked 31st) (Table 4.7.17). Professional online image can be crafted carefully, however, professional conduct for employment and portraying a professional image are difficult to falsify and must be consistently portrayed. Regardless of the position one has in the sector, projecting a professional image is crucial since it influences how customers see the company. A professional and up-to date social media presence could boost networking and employment prospects. Ali et al. (2018) noted that in the global hospitality industry social media is used to share sustainability related messages and principles and interact with clients. However, the usage of social media to portray ones professional image was not mentioned. The literature reviewed on the employability skills in the tourism and hospitality industry was limited regarding social media's usage to portray one's professional image (Sutherland et al., 2019; Kwok and Muñiz, 2021; Murire et al., 2023). These employers seemed in favour of social media to enhance employability (Sutherland et al., 2019; Kwok and Muñiz, 2021; Murire et al., 2023). This current study therefore provides further insight into employers' perceptions of the importance of social media for enhancing employability of graduates.

One could argue that skills alone do not contribute to the increased employability of graduates. There seems to be a strong link between approaches such as WIL and employability (Nabali, 2019). Employability is enhanced by incorporating three crucial factors: content, capability, and character (O’Leary, 2012). Capability deals with how the curriculum is delivered and the chances it offers for improving soft skills, for example, collaboration and communication (O’Leary, 2012). This current study looked at the aspect of “capability” highlighted by O’Leary (2012); it is important to note that representatives in the current study have engaged WIL learners and were pleased with their competencies (Figure 4.5.2; Table 4.5.11; Appendix, Figure C2), indicating that the curriculum is to some extent, providing an opportunity to build skills. It can thus be argued that WIL is a method to improve students’ competencies.

The importance placed on communication skills in the hospitality sector in South Africa is consistent with global and regional requirements. Communication skills will enable local graduates to contend and be hired for managerial, front office, guest relations and numerous other roles both globally and in other African countries. It could also mean that they will be able to retain their jobs if they choose to stay in that employment. South African hospitality industry places a high value on punctuality, and graduates in the industry will also be able to vie for positions globally, regionally and locally, guaranteeing excellence and building credibility. The lack of importance placed on the ability to use social media to portray ones professional image in this study may cause graduates to place less emphasis on their online image, which could result in a loss of networking and job prospects on a platform such as LinkedIn that caters to the local, regional and international markets.

5.7. Statistical Tests: Implications and Relevance

Several statistical tests were employed in this study. Wilcoxon-Signed rank test did not identify any significant differences between the performance of university graduates and WIL learners. This demonstrates that these groups receive comparable skills development. With descriptive statistics, it is useful because it could provide information to universities about the success of educational programmes and WIL initiatives. The RII is crucial for ranking factors which influence employability, for example, different knowledge and skills. The RII highlights vital competencies in the hospitality industry such as punctuality and verbal communication. The findings demonstrate that employers place the most emphasis on attitudes and values and

communication skills. These results assist in better coordinating academic courses with the requirements of the sector. These findings allow academics and policy makers to concentrate on the skills that industry considers crucial for preparing students and graduates for the job market.

5.8. Conclusion

The aim of the research was to explore the perceptions of the South African hospitality industry on curriculum development at institutions of higher education, more specifically universities. The data analysis revealed that representatives have varying views on the challenges faced in curriculum development, how the hospitality management curriculum should be developed, and the stakeholders who play a part in the development of these programmes. The outcomes of the research indicate that it is vital to incorporate various stakeholders, practical training, and KPIs while developing the curriculum. These are absolutely necessary to ensure that the problem of a theoretical curriculum, which has been evident in developing nations is addressed. The analysis shows that it is extremely important that environmental, social, and economic sustainability be incorporated into the hospitality management curriculum. The purpose of this is to get students ready for a future that is sustainable. Effectively mitigating the challenges that are connected with curriculum development, such as changing trends within industry, academics' lack of knowledge of the industry, and a lack of practicality can be accomplished by actively involving a number of stakeholders. It is essential for the process of developing hospitality management programmes to involve industry, educational institutions, and the government. The involvement of these stakeholders may be due to industry's extensive expertise, educational institutions' role as the backbone of curriculum development and government's financing, acceptance of specific fields or norms, and regulations governing the management of institutions. In addition, there appears to be a low degree of student participation in the curriculum development process. This could be because representatives are unaware of the benefits of student participation in curriculum development.

The analysis indicates that the majority of employers are satisfied with the competencies of graduates and WIL learners, with very few expressing dissatisfaction. It could be argued that postsecondary institutions, businesses, and key stakeholders work together to ensure that more WIL students and graduates acquire the requisite skills before entering the labour market. In

addition, to guarantee that the majority of representatives are ‘very satisfied’ with the competencies of hospitality management graduates and WIL learners, there is a need for stakeholders to be aware of abilities that are desirable and required to augment graduates’ employability. Among the principal competencies when combining the level of agreement were communication, adjustability, listening skills, and upholding professional values. Section 5.6 argues that competencies are not the only factor to increase the employability of graduates. Although this present study did not explore other factors, they are vital and include providing individuals with access to WIL and internships, facilitating opportunities for individuals to meet potential employers, and offering career consulting services (Nabali, 2019).

The incorporation of sustainable practices and concepts in hospitality management education is of the utmost importance in countries still on the path to economic development. When it comes to deciding which element of sustainability should be incorporated into the curriculum of hospitality management, the results reveal that responses tend to favour the environmental aspect of sustainability (Figure 4.3.1). In addition, representatives indicated the environmental component as important in the context of hospitality management education (Table 4.6.7). The majority of representatives indicated that it is important for graduates to be aware of energy management practices within the industry. Similarly, representatives stressed the importance of waste and water management for these graduates (Table 4.6.9). In order to prevent pollution, reduce expenses, and boost revenue, the management of water, waste and energy in hotels, lodges, and resorts is essential. Graduates who understand these procedures and who have the backing of industry managers are able to accomplish Target 6.3 of SDG 6. The current research adds significantly to the academic literature on curriculum development within the discipline of hospitality management and employers’ satisfaction with graduates and WIL learners. The empirical data of this research offers a new perspective on the viewpoints of industry on curriculum development and the level of contentment experienced by employers.

CHAPTER SIX CONCLUSIONS

6.1. Introduction

This chapter concludes with important findings on perceptions of hotel businesses in South Africa regarding hospitality management curriculum development at universities. The section comprises three parts, the first part summarises the important findings linked to the research aim, the second part puts forward the recommendations of the study and the final part presents future research directions.

6.2. An Overview of Significant Outcomes

The research set out to explore several facets: the challenges that are faced in curriculum development within universities, how the university curriculum within the discipline of hospitality management should be developed and the stakeholders who play a role in the development of hospitality management programmes all from the perspective of industry representatives. Furthermore, it investigated employers' satisfaction with the competencies of graduates and WIL Learners as well as the competencies that are desirable and needed to augment the employability of graduates. South Africa is dependent on the tourism sector, as Section 1.2 shows the sector has increased its economic contribution to the nation over a three-year period. Skilled employees and graduates within the industry are vital to ensure its success. It is through effective curriculum development that graduates can ultimately obtain the needed skills for employment.

6.2.1. An Analysis of Curriculum Development Challenges From a Global, Regional and Local Perspective

Global, regional and local literature presented challenges related to theoretical curricula. Curricula of this nature negatively impact students readiness for the workforce. The global analysis did not identify any problems with infrastructure or a lack of academic's to lecture content. This finding is expected given that some of these nations in the global north have good management models, making them among the most successful travel and tourism economies (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2023). The regional analysis showed that institutional,

capacity and structural challenges affect curriculum development. This could be due to inadequate stakeholder collaboration (Manwa et al., 2011; Mahmoud, 2018). Based on evidence from the field of research and literature obtained it is concluded that institutional, capacity, and structural challenges hindered curriculum development in South African universities. The results established that industry's constant changes, lack of knowledge among academics, lack of practical application, and outdated and theoretical curriculum were challenges that affected curriculum development. The study concluded that there is not sufficient current industry input with the constant changes that are occurring within organisations. This study filled a gap in literature by analysing curriculum development challenges in the tourism and hospitality management field, from a Global, African, and South African context.

6.2.2. From the Perspective of Hospitality Industry, How Should the Hospitality Management Curriculum at Universities Be Developed

The curriculum should be developed by incorporating practical training, with a focus on KPIs, regularly updating the curriculum to keep in touch with trends of industry, and collaborating with several stakeholders. It will also require emphasising various skills and knowledge and including sustainability elements in the curriculum. Sustainability elements, particularly environmental sustainability, economic sustainability and social sustainability, hold significant importance within the realm of hospitality management education (Table 4.6.7). It is absolutely necessary to incorporate these components into the overall educational experience (Figure 4.3.1).

6.2.3. From the Perspective of Hospitality Industry, the Stakeholders Who Play a Role in the Development of Hospitality Management Programmes in South Africa

Representatives mentioned the involvement of a range of stakeholders in curriculum development, such as industry, tertiary institutions, government departments, the local community, investors etc. There was a lack of literature on investors contribution to curriculum development in the hospitality field. Therefore, it presents a new finding and suggests that their input could lead to individuals with a greater level of education. None of the representatives

mentioned graduates. It would be beneficial to include graduates in curriculum development as they offer vital knowledge that will make the curriculum more thorough.

6.2.4. Hospitality Industry's Satisfaction With the Competencies of Graduates and WIL Learners

Hospitality industry representatives are on the whole satisfied with the various competencies of graduates and WIL learners despite some of the challenges faced in curriculum development. Representatives are most satisfied with graduates' social skills and WIL learners' communication skills. The competencies that representatives are satisfied with include their willingness to assist, friendly attitude when serving customers, confidence, listening skills, trustworthiness, verbal and written communication. There were some skills such as leadership and capacity to act in anticipation of future situations that fewer representatives expressed the most dissatisfaction with. Despite this, it seems that, universities are equipping graduates with the required competencies and the curriculum is in line with the requirements of some managers in the hospitality industry. This indicates that attempts have been made to encourage higher education and industry cooperation in order to guarantee that graduates and WIL learners have acquired the needed competencies before being hired. The challenge of an outdated curricula was mentioned by 9.1% of respondents, which suggests that only a small percentage are of this opinion. These could be the representatives that are dissatisfied with certain competencies.

6.2.5. The Competencies That Are Desirable and Required to Enhance the Employability of Graduates

Upholding professional principles is the competency that is most desirable of hospitality management graduates when combining the level of agreement (strongly agree and agree) of representatives. As indicated previously, graduates who uphold professional principles may be more likely to get hired, perform better, and ensure job satisfaction (Boles et al., 2006; Matendera, 2013; Wilson et al., 2016). Competencies that were also regarded as desirable were knowledge of the industry and knowledge of what is expected by the industry, these comprise sustainability and green practices. It was very important for graduates to have knowledge of water management, waste management, and energy management within the industry. When

graduates eventually enter the workplace, it is important for them to communicate with employers regarding green practices that are being developed. Employers should be informed about new trends in the sector since this shows that graduates and businesses are working together to create positive partnerships that support the industry in all spheres.

The tourism industry is an important contributor to the global growth of service industries, particularly in developing countries (Yoopetch et al., 2021). The sector's growth can be bolstered by enhancing the quality of personnel (Yoopetch et al., 2021), which in turn contributes to the satisfaction of employers with graduate employees. The top competencies that are required to augment the employability of graduates are punctuality and the ability to verbally communicate information to customers. The ability to use social media to portray ones professional image was ranked last. The RII therefore offers an original finding that social media is not given much priority when it comes to graduates employability in the hospitality industry in South Africa.

6.2.6. Implications of the Findings for Developing Countries

The current study examined the significance of the results for the larger context in developing nations. With the numerous challenges that are involved in curriculum development, more stakeholder engagement is required. Initiatives such as WIL guarantee stakeholder collaboration and help students develop the necessary competencies for employment. In nations that are developing economically, it is important for hospitality management curricula to incorporate sustainable elements. Graduates and students of WIL ought to be motivated to learn about water management, waste management, and energy management. Representatives' satisfaction with the competencies of graduates and WIL learners implies that steps have been taken to ensure that these groups have acquired the needed competencies before being hired. This leads to leads to favourable reception by prospective employers due to their competencies exhibited in the workplace. Industry in developing countries requires a variety of knowledge and interpersonal skills from graduates in order for them to operate efficiently and contribute to economic growth and national development.

6.2.7 Statistical Tests: Implications and Relevance

Wilcoxon-Signed rank test was used, and it did not identify any significant differences between the performance of university graduates and WIL learners. This suggests that skills development acquired by these groups is similar. Representatives find specific competencies in the attitudes and values domain to be the most desirable for graduates. The results from the RII show that communication skills and attitudes and values are given preference by these representatives for employability. Therefore, a greater emphasis on these skills is required in all university curricula within the discipline of hospitality management.

6.3. Recommendations

The researcher suggests the following in light of the findings above:

To address the challenge of a lack of industry input identified in global, regional and local literature, tertiary institutions should hold regular stakeholder meetings to keep abreast with current industry skill requirements and trends in order to incorporate these within the curriculum. This will be beneficial for all stakeholders involved and universities will thus be able to develop both WIL learners and graduates who are equipped with the skills and knowledge and who are able to satisfy industry's needs.

In tertiary institutions that offer hospitality management, studies of this nature should be carried out often to ascertain hospitality industry views regarding curriculum development at universities. Also, to come to an agreement on the measures stakeholders need to take in order to ensure effective curriculum development.

With regards to how the curriculum should be developed, at universities, environmental sustainability should be incorporated to a large extent within the hospitality management curriculum as environmental sustainability was found to be very important in hospitality management education (Figure 4.3.1; Table 4.6.7). Other elements such as social and economic sustainability should also be incorporated within the hospitality management curriculum at universities and other tertiary institutions (Figure 4.3.1).

To achieve the SDGs, academics at higher education institutions should relate them to issues in every hospitality management curriculum for students to keep up with the goals of an international organisation that is assisting society at large.

Most employers indicated that it is very important for graduates to have knowledge of water management, waste management, and energy management (Table 4.6.3). However, in hospitality management education, more attention should be paid to knowledge regarding preserving the local cultural heritage since people travel from around the world and some to experience a new culture; thus, graduates should be given the necessary knowledge in this area.

With regards to stakeholder involvement in curriculum development, University and workplace policies should include graduates as contributors to curriculum development. Academics and employers are therefore aware that graduates may be called upon at any time to offer their insights to make curriculum development more comprehensive.

At universities and industry, more focus should be placed on assisting graduates to develop ‘other generic competencies’ such as time management, organisation and planning. Stakeholders from tertiary institutions and organisations should build the forward thinking skills of WIL learners through extensive training. These are in light of the findings on employer satisfaction.

Academics and industry should ensure that students/graduates maintain professional principles since it was the most desired competency. The punctuality of these students and graduates should be guaranteed, and verbal communication training must be given as these competencies align with business requirements for employability. Although ranked last, a few hospitality employers value the usage of social media to display a professional image. Graduates should therefore not dismiss the idea of using social media professionally but should embrace it in order to satisfy the requirements of these employers.

Further studies in higher education institutions should use in depth face-to-face interviews with local participants and online interviews with those regionally and globally to establish employers’ views regarding hospitality management curricula, employers’ satisfaction and employability skills.

6.4. Future Research

Studies that have examined the development of tourism and hospitality management curricula in South Africa include a community-based tourism curriculum for tertiary education (Jugmohan et al., 2022), the hospitality industry's perspectives on the selection and organisation of culinary knowledge within a hospitality management degree (Hewson, 2010), the implementation of problem-based learning in hospitality management (De Wet, 2009), and the creation of an ecotourism curriculum (Geldenhuys, 2003). There is still potential for expansion in industry opinions on the development of hospitality management curricula. Meetings with industry should be held to discuss how useful it is for students and graduates to participate in curriculum development in light of the findings that none of the representatives suggested that graduates are involved in curriculum development. Future research can therefore determine the advantages that result from the involvement of diverse stakeholders in the development of hospitality management courses. More work can be done to examine whether graduates have the hard and soft skills that employers value. This study examined the competencies required to improve the employability of graduates. Further studies can be conducted on not only competencies but also other elements, such as student exchange programmes, study abroad programmes, and WIL and internships that can boost graduates in the hotel industry's employability, albeit in the context of South Africa. In light of the views on the sustainability elements that can be incorporated into the curriculum, future research can look at particular aspects of environmental, social, and economic sustainability within hotels that should be integrated into the curriculum. The WSD framework (Bandaranaike and Willison, 2010) should be applied to studies on skills development and WIL to allow academics, businesses, and students to examine the degree of independence of learners, particularly in the hospitality discipline.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Participant Information Sheet and Informed Consent



Participant Information Sheet

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Awo A.D. Quarley and I am a PhD student in Geography at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg. The title of my study is 'University curriculum development for Hospitality Management programmes: perceptions from the South African hospitality industry'. My research seeks to investigate the views of the South African hospitality industry regarding curriculum development at universities. The study explores who managers think should be the stakeholders involved in the development of hospitality management programmes, how the university curriculum within the discipline of hospitality management should be developed. It identifies what managers think are the challenges that are usually faced in curriculum development within universities. Moreover, it explores employer satisfaction of Work Integrated Learners and graduates.

As an identified part of this research, I would like to ask you to participate in an online questionnaire. This will take 25 minutes to complete. The questionnaire is anonymous as the researcher will not be asking for your name. However, company names will not be anonymized. Completing and submitting the online questionnaire will mean that you have consented to participate in the study.

You will not obtain any direct benefits from taking part in this study, your participation is voluntary and you will not be penalized for not responding to the questionnaire. If you choose to respond, you may withdraw at any stage or not respond to any question if you are not willing to do so. The risk of participating in the study is minimal, that is, the possibility and extent of potential harm are no greater than those imposed by everyday life in a stable community.

The information that you provide will be used for scholarly research and will be safely stored on Seagate external hard drive which will be protected by a safe password. Data will be stored for 6 years and thereafter destroyed. Your information will remain confidential and you will remain anonymous in the final report.

If you require any further information about this study, you can reach me on the particulars listed below.

This research will be written up as a thesis and accessible on the university web page. Research output will include a presentation, seminars and two articles in accredited journals. If you wish to obtain an overview of this research, I will be glad to send it to you.

If you have any concern over the way that the research is being handled, please contact the University Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical), telephone +27(0) 11 717 1408, email hrecnon-medical@wits.ac.za

Yours sincerely,
Awo A.D. Quarley (Ms)

Awo A.D. Quarley, 2088401@wits.ac.za, +27(0) 60 680 6369
Prof. Mhula Danny Simatele, Mhula.Simatele@wits.ac.za Tel: +27 (0) 11-717-6602

Appendix B: Semi-structured Questionnaire

Questionnaire - Curriculum development and Employer satisfaction

Section A: Contact and business information

1. Business information

a. Company

b. City/Town

c. Province

2. Size of organization (number of employees)

- ☐ 1-100
- ☐ 101-500
- ☐ 501-1500
- ☐ 1501+

Section B: Curriculum development

3. Who should be the stakeholders involved in the development of hospitality management programmes?

4. How should the university curriculum within the discipline of hospitality management be developed?

5. What do you think are the challenges that are usually faced in curriculum development within universities

Section C: Employment and level of satisfaction

6a. Has your company employed graduates with a hospitality qualification from any university in South Africa?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

6b. If Yes, which universities or institutions do they come from?

If No, (please skip questions 7 and 8). Please answer question 9.

7. Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the readiness of hospitality graduates from universities in South Africa

- ☐ Very satisfied
☐ Satisfied
☐ Neutral
☐ Dissatisfied
☐ Very dissatisfied

8. Please indicate your level of satisfaction with regards to the competencies hospitality graduates from universities in South Africa display.

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Inventiveness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Confidence	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Optimistic attitude	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The capacity to act in anticipation of future situations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Leadership	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Willingness to assist	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Trustworthiness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ability to verbally communicate information to customers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ability to communicate in writing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ability to work well in a team	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Having a friendly attitude when serving customers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Empathy in handling customers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being multilingual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ability to solve problems	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Listening skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Adjustability	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Flexibility	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Knowledge of different cultures	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Upholding professional principles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Time management	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Organization	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Planning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Acting calmly in work situations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ability to work under pressure	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Has knowledge of the industry	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Has knowledge of what is expected by the industry	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section D: Desirable Graduates

9. Please indicate your level of agreement with the competencies that you believe constitute the most desirable hospitality management graduates in the industry.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Inventiveness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Confidence	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Optimistic attitude	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The capacity to act in anticipation of future situations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Leadership	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Willingness to assist	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Trustworthiness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ability to					

verbally communicate information to customers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ability to communicate in writing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ability to work well in a team	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Having a friendly attitude when serving customers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Empathy in handling customers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being multilingual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ability to solve problems	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Listening skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Adjustability	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Flexibility	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Knowledge of different cultures	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Upholding professional principles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ability to use social media to portray their professional image	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Time management	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Organization	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Planning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Acting calmly in work situations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ability to work under pressure	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Has knowledge of the industry	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Has knowledge of what is expected by the industry	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section E: Work Integrated Learning

10a. Has your company engaged work integrated learners?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

10b. If Yes, which universities did/do they come from?

If No, please skip questions 11 and 12. Please answer question 13.

11. Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the readiness of hospitality work integrated learners from universities in South Africa.

- ☐ Very satisfied
 ☐ Dissatisfied
☐ Satisfied
 ☐ Very dissatisfied
☐ Neutral

12. Please indicate your level of satisfaction with regards to the competencies of hospitality work integrated learners from universities in South Africa?

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Inventiveness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Confidence	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Optimistic attitude	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The capacity to act in anticipation of future situations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Leadership	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Willingness to assist	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Trustworthiness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ability to verbally communicate information to customers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ability to communicate in writing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ability to work well in a team	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Having a friendly attitude when serving customers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Empathy in handling customers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being multilingual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ability to solve problems	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Listening skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Adjustability	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Flexibility	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Knowledge of different cultures	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Upholding professional principles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Time management	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Organization	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Planning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Acting calmly in work situations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ability to work under pressure	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Has knowledge of the industry	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Has knowledge of what is expected by the industry	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

13. Please indicate the competencies that you believe constitute the most desirable hospitality management work integrated learners?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Inventiveness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Confidence	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Optimistic attitude	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The capacity to act in anticipation of future situations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Leadership	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Willingness to assist	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Trustworthiness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ability to verbally communicate information to customers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ability to communicate in writing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ability to work well in a team	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Having a friendly attitude when serving customers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Empathy in handling customers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being multilingual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ability to solve problems	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Listening skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Adjustability	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Flexibility	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Knowledge of different cultures	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ability to use social media to portray their professional image	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Upholding professional principles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Time management	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Organization	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Planning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Acting calmly in work situations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ability to work under pressure	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Has knowledge of the industry	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Has knowledge of what is expected by the industry	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section F: Attributes to enhance employability

14. Please indicate your level of agreement regarding the competencies needed to enhance the employability of hospitality management graduates.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Inventiveness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Confidence	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Professional conduct for employment (behaviour)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Poportraying a professional image (appearance)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Optimistic attitude	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The capacity to act in anticipation of	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

future situations

Leadership	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Willingness to assist	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Dependability	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ability to verbally communicate information to customers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ability to communicate in writing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ability to work well in a team	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Having a friendly attitude when serving customers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Empathy in handling customers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being multilingual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ability to solve problems	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Listening skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Adjustability	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Flexibility	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Knowledge of different cultures	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Upholding professional principles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ability to use social media to portray their professional image	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Productivity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Punctuality	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Organization	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Planning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The capacity to act independently	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Acting calmly in work situations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ability to work under pressure	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Has knowledge of the industry	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Has knowledge of
what is expected by
the industry

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

15. Please list any other competencies needed to enhance the employability of hospitality management graduates.

Section G: Education for sustainability

16. Which sustainability elements do you believe should be incorporated within the hospitality management curriculum?

- ☐ Environmental
☐ Political
☐ Economic
☐ Social

17. Please indicate the degree to which sustainability elements are important in hospitality management education.

	Not important	Slightly important	Moderately important	Neutral	Important	Very important
Environmental	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Political	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Economic	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Social	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

18a. How important is it for hospitality management graduates to have a knowledge of green practices within the hospitality industry

	Not important	Slightly important	Moderately important	Neutral	Important	Very important
Waste management	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Energy management	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Water management	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Air quality management	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

18b. If you selected 'other' for the above question, please specify the green practice/s that graduates should be aware of.

19. Please provide a brief description of the activities carried out under these practices within the industry?

Waste management	
Energy management	
Water management	
Air quality management	
Other (please specify)	

20. How important is it for hospitality management graduates to be able to communicate to their employers regarding green practices that are being developed

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| ☐ Not important | ☐ Neutral |
| ☐ Slightly important | ☐ Important |
| ☐ Moderately important | ☐ Very important |

21a. Are there any challenges regarding green practices within the industry?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

21b. If yes, what are the challenges encountered?

Appendix C: Data

Table C1. Description of Hospitality Entities That Participated in the Study

Name of organisation	Star rating	Established	Location	Type of establishment	Number of employees	Nature of clients – what they value
Hospitality 1	3-star* brand 26 August 2023	1985**	National and International	Hotels	501-1500	Comfort, functional and luxury accommodation
Hospitality 2	They have no star rating, they have not been graded. However, they expect a 3-star* 24 August 2023	2019* 24 August 2023	KZN	Self-catering accommodation	1-100	Luxury accommodation and natural surroundings
Hospitality 3	3-star**	1933* 28 August 2023	Mpumalanga	Resort	101-500	Nature, camping
Hospitality 4	Hotels ranging from 1–5-star* 24 August 2023	1989**	Johannesburg, Gauteng	Hotels	1501+	Recreation, sports, business, family and vacation
Hospitality 5	4 and 5-star**	1999* 28 August 2023	Johannesburg, Gauteng	Hotels and Resorts	1501+	Business or leisure
Hospitality 6	-	-	Mooi river, KZN	-	1-100	-
Hospitality 7	3.5-star* 26 August 2023	1969* 26 August 2023	Park Rynie, KZN	Resorts	1-100	Holiday, natural surroundings, entertainment
Hospitality 8	-	-	Cape Town, Western Cape	-	101-500	-
Hospitality 9	3-star**	1933**	Winterton, KZN	Hotel	1-100	Family, relaxation

Hospitality 10	4-star* 25 th August 2023	1967* 25 August 2023	Cape Town, Western Cape	Hotel	501-1500	Entertainment, boutique
Hospitality 11	4-star**	1988**	Knysna, Western Cape	Hotels and resorts	501-1500	Affordable holiday accommodation, family, relaxation and business
Hospitality 12	3-star**	1943**, 1 September 2023	Bergville, KZN	Resort	1-100	Family
Hospitality 13	3-star**	1941**	Bergville, KZN	Resort	1-100	Family, nature (forests and streams)
Hospitality 14	3-star**	1963* 28 August 2023	Middelburg, Mpumalanga	Resort	1-100	Family-friendly, natural surroundings
Hospitality 15	4-star**	1990* 26 August 2023	Camperdown, KZN	Lodge	1-100	Business, adventure (fishing retreat)
Hospitality 16	3-star* 26 August 2023	1930**	Randburg, Gauteng	Resorts	101-500	Culture, attractions,
Hospitality 17	2-star* 30 August	1914* 1 September 2023	Western Cape	Resort	501-1500	Numerous sporting activities, wildlife, natural surroundings
Hospitality 18	3-star**	1995* 1 September	Winterton, KZN	Lodge	1-100	Enjoy nature and activities (horse- riding, hiking etc.)
Hospitality 19	4-star**	1977**	Port st Johns, Eastern Cape	Hotel	101-500	Relaxation, culture and extraordinary nature
Hospitality 20	4-star**	1998* 26 August 2023	Hluhluwe, KZN	Lodge	1-100	Family, nature- based vacation

Hospitality 21	3-star**	1983* 28 August 2023	Montagu, Western Cape	Hotel	101-500	Relaxation and health
Hospitality 22	4-star**	1999* 26 August 2023	Bergville, KZN	Lodge	1-100	Breathtaking scenery, rejuvenation, luxury, culture, wildlife, activities, family,
Hospitality 23	4-star* 26 August 2023	2013* 26 August 2023	Johannesburg, Gauteng	Self- catering accommo dation	1-100	Low rates, staff speak international languages, access to multiple facilities (entertainment, shopping etc.),
Hospitality 24	4-star* 28 August 2023	2009* 28 August 2023	Krugersdorp, Gauteng	Lodge	1-100	Deluxe suites, wildlife
Hospitality 25	4-star**	2010* 26 August 2023	Sandton, Gauteng	Hotel	101-500	Contemporary living, business or leisure
Hospitality 26	3-star**	1999* 28 August 2023	Benoni, Gauteng	Hotel	1-100	Countryside sites, excellent dining
Hospitality 27	5-star**	Roots can be traced back to 1960. However, in 2009 brand name was formed.**	Johannesburg, Gauteng	Hotel	1-100	Business or leisure, modern cuisine, indoor activities
Hospitality 28	5-star**	2000 **	Johannesburg, Gauteng	Hotel	101-500	Relaxation, luxury, quiet retreat
Hospitality 29	5-star**	1997* 28 August 2023	Johannesburg, Gauteng	Hotel	1-100	Holiday, business, family

Hospitality 30	5-star**	2018* 28 August 2023	Midrand, Gauteng	Hotel	1-100	Luxury, deluxe amenities, breathtaking views
Hospitality 31	3-star**	1973* 26 August 2023	Kokstad, KZN	Resort	1-100	Comfortable accommodation, beautiful indigenous forests
Hospitality 32	3-star**	2010* 26 August 2023	Woodmead- Sandton, Gauteng	Hotel	1-100	Business
Hospitality 33	3-star**	2021* 26 August 2023	Johannesburg, Gauteng	Hotel	1-100	Relaxation, lake views, local attractions, business
Hospitality 34	4-star**	2004**	Johannesburg, Gauteng	Hotel	1-100	Comfort, design, superb service, boutique (small and quaint)

Source: Field Survey (2021-2022)

**Obtained from online sources (Ethical considerations, identity withheld)

* Personal communication (Ethical considerations, identity withheld)

Challenges involved in curriculum development

Determining the themes pertaining to the difficulties encountered in curriculum development was crucial. Table C2 shows that institutional capacity challenges related to human resources was the theme identified most often (19 responses), while the policy theme (1 response) received the least number of responses.

Table C2. Challenges in curriculum development in hospitality management field at universities

Frequency in responses	Challenges in curriculum development themes	Responses
19	Institutional capacity – Human resources	<i>“Lack of knowledge of the industry” – Hospitality 20</i> <i>“...lack of practical knowledge of what the hospitality industry is about” – Hospitality 22</i> <i>“Academics developing curricula do not always have the practical experience in the specific industry, and therefore do not have the necessary understanding of the practical issues” – Hospitality 21</i> <i>“too much involvement from departments that have no idea of the industry” Hospitality 18</i> <i>“Lack of subject matter specialists coming from hospitality” – Hospitality 5</i> <i>“Not enough current...industry input” – Hospitality 6</i> <i>“...non-participation of other stakeholders” – Hospitality 17</i> <i>“It would be challenging to articulate the correct demeanour required for hospitality. The hours, grace and temperament are an adjustment for those who have not worked before” – Hospitality 28</i> <i>“Placement of students for practical experience” – Hospitality 12</i> <i>“Ensuring on the ground relevance” – Hospitality 19</i> <i>“the challenges are to adapt to realities on the ground faced by hotels and the rapid development of IT” – Hospitality 23</i>
14	Institutional capacity - Curriculum	<i>“It's based on theory by academics not by people with experience having worked in the industry” - Hospitality 10</i> <i>“...too much theory and too little practicals” – Hospitality 32</i> <i>“Lacking practicality” -Hospitality 13</i> <i>“practical application of theoretical ideas” – Hospitality 7</i> <i>“Curriculum being outdated...” – Hospitality 24</i> <i>“The development takes too long and by the time it is approved it is already outdated” -Hospitality 4</i> <i>“...lack of research” – Hospitality 24</i> <i>“Deciding what is relevant course information to students entering the industry...” – Hospitality 11</i> <i>“Not enough time for in service training” – Hospitality 33</i> <i>“Tailoring the curriculum to fit with the changing work environment” – Hospitality 11</i> <i>“Challenges come from textbooks scenarios versus real life. We need to collaborate with business owners, management that has real experiences to equip the upcoming Hospitality Experts.” - Hospitality 30</i>
5	Structural	<i>“...Employing the latest techniques and trends” Hospitality 11</i> <i>“With trends changing all the time, its updated information” – Hospitality 9</i> <i>“...constant changes within the industry...” Hospitality 20</i> <i>“Constant change...”Hospitality 15</i> <i>“Changes according to our society's new demands...” – Hospitality 24</i>
3	Not familiar	<i>“I am not familiar with current trends in curriculum development” – Hospitality 16</i> <i>“not sure” – Hospitality 3</i>
1	Policy	<i>“Lack of discipline, policies are changed to suit the student and not the curriculum” – Hospitality 2</i>

Source: Field Survey (2021-2022)

Data on the Engagement of Graduates and WIL Learners

Hospitality Companies That Have Employed Graduates

It was important to explore whether representatives from hospitality businesses have employed graduates with hospitality qualifications from any university in South Africa. In order to better understand their satisfaction with the competencies of these graduates. Twenty-two (65%) representatives indicated 'Yes' and 12 (35%) indicated 'No', as illustrated in Figure C1 below.

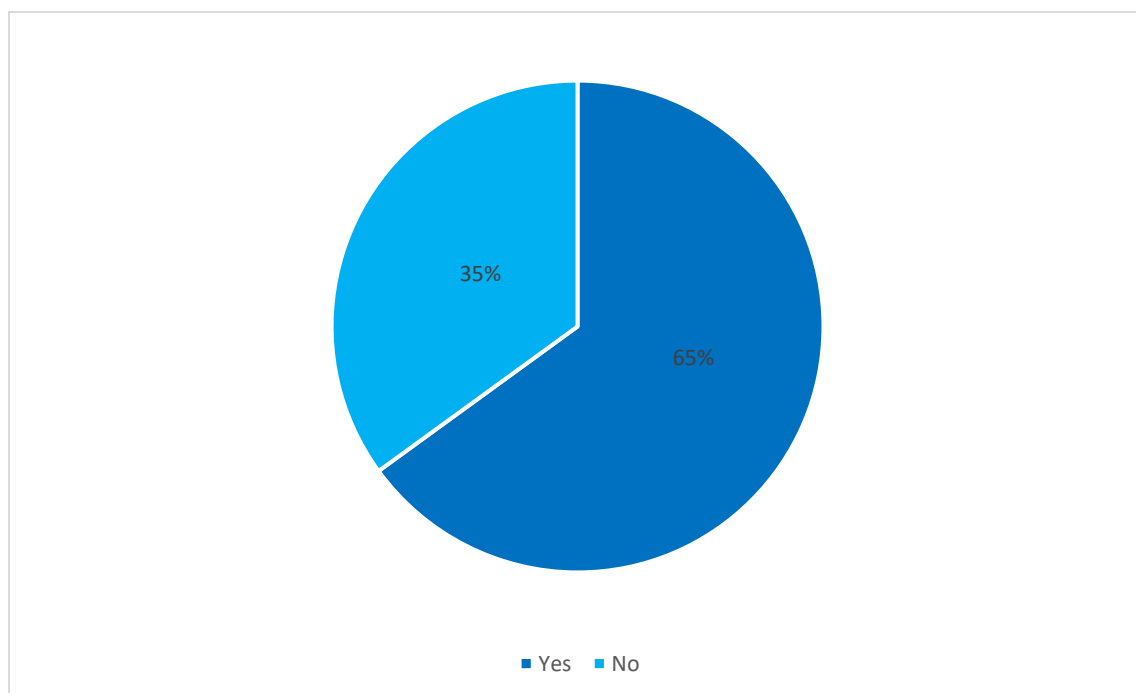


Figure C1. Employment of Hospitality Graduates From Universities in South Africa

Source: Field Survey (2021-2022)

Hospitality Companies Which Have Engaged WIL Learners

It was vital to investigate whether representatives from businesses have engaged WIL learners. This will make it possible to assess representatives' satisfaction with their various competencies. Twenty-four (71%) indicated 'Yes' and 10 (29%) 'No'. The findings are presented in Figure C2.

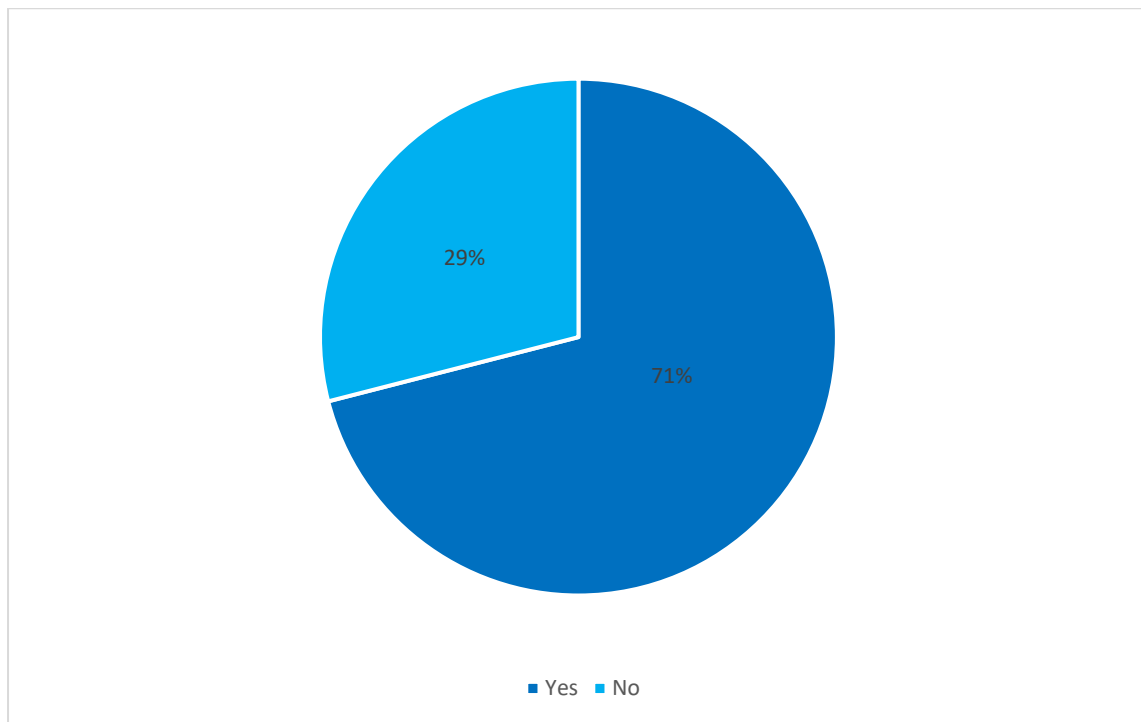


Figure C2. Companies which have engaged WIL Learners

Source: Field Survey (2021-2022)

Appendix D: Ethics Application



Ethics Application for HREC Non -Medical

SECTION A

Complete this checklist to show what documents you have submitted and that you agree with the conditions of application.

- ☒ Completed *Ethics Application Form*
- ☒ Copy of the *Research proposal*
- ☒ Copy of proposed *Research instruments* (e.g. questionnaires/interview schedules).
- ☒ *Participant Information Sheets* (for each different sample group and/or instrument used).
- ☒ *Consent forms* (for each different sample group and/or instrument used).
- ☒ *Relevant permission letters* if required (from, e.g. company's HR department, National authorities such as Government departments, etc.) - consult the *Guidance on the Use of Permission Letters* document.

SECTION B

1. Summary of risk categories of this research project

1.1 Does this project involve human participants?: **Yes**

1.2 I have read and understood the risk categories table: **Yes**

1.3 The applicant must tick the box for the category that best applies to this project:

Risk Category	Tick the appropriate box
No Risk	
Minimal Risk	✓
Low Risk	
Medium Risk	
High Risk	

Applicants must have read the table of risk level category definitions on the final page of this document

1.4 Are participants selected as experts: **Yes**

1.5 Will human participant research involve vulnerable categories: **No**

If YES state which ones:

If YES, how will existing vulnerabilities among research participants be addressed:

1.6 Does this research expose either the participant(s) or the researcher(s) to any potential risks or harm to which they would not otherwise be exposed: **No**

If YES, how will potential risks or harm be addressed?

Participants will be told what the research is about and in view of this therefore, they will make a decision about whether to participate in the study. Furthermore, if they do choose to participate, they may withdraw at any stage or not respond to any question if they are not willing to do so.

NB: Vulnerability is context specific. The term 'vulnerable categories' includes, among others, children under 18, orphans, prisoners, persons with cognitive or communication disorders, people who are traumatised or currently in traumatic situations. Vulnerable categories *do not* necessarily include poor or marginalised communities, older people, women, people with disabilities (unless it results in diminished capacity to give informed consent). Not all research involving 'vulnerable categories' is Medium or High Risk research: here vulnerability must be considered in terms of the nature of the research and the context in which the research is carried out. Where necessary, include details of steps to be taken to facilitate data collection across language barriers (e.g. interpretation or translation).

2. Researcher's personal data

Your family name: **Quartey**

Your first name: **Awo**

Title: **Ms**

School: **Geography, Archaeology and Environmental Studies**

Faculty: **Science**

Your student/staff number: **2088401**

Your email: **2088401@students.wits.ac.za**

Your tel number: **0606806369**

Name and Surname of supervisor(s): **Prof. Mulala Simatele**

Your supervisor's Wits email: **mulala.simatele@wits.ac.za**

Your supervisor's tel Wits number: **+27 (0) 11-717-6602**

3. Research project

3.1 Title of research project:

University curriculum development for Hospitality Management programmes: perceptions from the South African hospitality industry

3.2 Is this research for degree purposes: **Yes**

If so, for what degree?

Full time - PHD,

3.3 Has it been **approved** by the relevant School or Faculty higher degrees committee or other relevant unit: **Yes**

3.4 Will any additional researchers be covered by this ethics protocol (including translators, research assistants, etc. but not including supervisors): **No**

If yes, please specify their names, affiliations and roles:

3.5 What are the aims and objectives of the research? (Please be specific)

The aim of this study is to investigate the views of managers in the South African hospitality industry regarding curriculum development at universities. In view of the above aim, the objectives of the study are:

i. To identify who employers think should be the stakeholders involved in the development of hospitality management programmes?

ii. To investigate how the university curriculum within the discipline of hospitality management should be developed?

iii. To identify what employers think are the challenges that are usually faced in curriculum development within universities?

iv. To investigate whether employers are satisfied with the competencies of graduates and Work integrated learners?

v. To identify the competencies required to enhance the employability of graduates?

vi. To ascertain the implications of the findings for the wider context in developing nations?

3.6 Summary or abstract of the research:

Tourism continues to play an important role in different countries economies and national development. Despite, the importance of the tourism industry and the skills required of graduates, according to Molefe et al. (2019) scholars fail to display some of the basic skills such as self-management, enthusiasm, and the ability to market themselves. This could be due to the way the curriculum has been developed in order to provide basic competencies. By developing more practical curricula (Chabongwa 2014), institutions become involved in repurposing education for skills development. This study is interested in investigating the views of hospitality industry regarding university curriculum development.

3.7 Do you have any financial or material interests or a familial relationship associated with your research participants or with the organisations that you will be involved with in your research:

No

If yes, please explain how you will manage any existing or potential conflicts of interest, if applicable:

4. Formal permission

4.1 Where will the research be carried out? (Please give a specific location)

The research will be carried out with hospitality businesses in South Africa.

4.2 Has appropriate formal permission been obtained, if required (e.g. employer, government department, land owner, etc.):

Not required

NB: Obtaining permission is often necessary when conducting research *within the premises* of a particular site such as an ethnographic study of the functioning of a supermarket or a school, or the way staff interact with clients in a clinic or how members of a closed social media group interact/post on a specific topic. Permission is also required to use data from personal communication with participants or experts. Please note that any research done on Wits University campuses with employees or students of the University requires formal permission from the Registrar. Please read the detailed guidelines on Permission Letters from the Ethics website <https://www.wits.ac.za/research/researcher-support/research-ethics/ethics-committees/>

5. How will data on human research participants be collected (instruments, methods, procedures)? (tick all applicable boxes) (NB: All applicable instruments must be attached to the application):

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| ☐ | Hard copy questionnaires or diagnostic tests, etc. |
| ☒ | Online instruments (e.g. questionnaires, surveys) |
| ☐ | Individual interviews (e.g. structured, semi-structured, etc.) |
| ☐ | Personal communication (e.g. email or informal conversation with experts) |
| ☐ | Group interviews (e.g. seminar/discussion groups, focus groups, etc.) |
| ☐ | Ethnographic observation, participant observation, other informal descriptive, and/or interactive methods (you <u>must specify</u> in the box below) |
| ☐ | Autoethnography |
| ☐ | Community-based methods or techniques such as drama workshops, community theatre, training workshops, participant rural appraisal, rapid rural appraisal, etc. (you <u>must specify</u> in the box below) |
| ☐ | Research on/in therapeutic or counselling contexts |
| ☐ | Putting on your own exhibition / public performance |
| ☐ | Observation of other public performance, and/or public behaviour observation |
| ☐ | Photography |
| ☐ | Video recording |
| ☐ | Audio recording (e.g. of interviews) |
| ☐ | Use of data from social media |
| ☐ | Other research methods or techniques (you <u>must specify</u> in the box below) |

Explanation of **research methods** specified above, and / or explanation of any other **research methods that are not listed** above:

6. Who will the research participants be:

6.1 List the different participant groups (e.g. experts, community members, key informants) you will be working with in your project:

The research participants comprise managers from hotel businesses. All participants will be adults over 18 years of age.

6.2 Description of these participant groups, including age range and sample size, for each group:

Industry professionals (19-65 years), sample size - 89 managers from hotels, 25 managers from resorts and 10 managers from lodges.

7. How will informed consent be obtained?

7.1 How will potential participants be identified / selected / recruited: Hospitality businesses in South Africa comprise hotels, lodges, resorts, restaurants and Bed and Breakfasts (Bnbs). It was purposively decided to select representatives from hotels, lodges and resorts. South African Hotels.com (2021) has a list of 89 hotel groups in South Africa. It was purposively decided to select all hotel groups to explore curriculum development and employer satisfaction. In addition, to hotels, the researcher selected the 10 best lodges in South Africa according to booking.com (2021) and 25 of the best holiday resorts in South Africa according to Russel Jarvis, Travelstart (2021). Purposive sampling was used to select the industry group.

7.2 Will any incentives be offered to participants

(NB: it is NOT compulsory to offer any incentives. Please note for any curricula incentives, permission is required from the Registrar's office and DVC. Fiscal incentives are limited to R150 – see Guidelines document):

No

If YES, please explain:

7.3 How will informed consent be obtained: Other (e.g. online survey)

If you cannot obtain formal written consent, explain why:

Completing the online survey is taken to mean consent to participate in the study.

NB: Attach Participant Information Sheets and Consent Forms for each sample group (please label these carefully), and/or other related materials. It is essential that participants in research be fully informed (irrespective of the method used) and then be able to agree on this basis to participate in the research.

8. Protecting participant identities

8.1 Can confidentiality of participants be guaranteed throughout the data collection process: Yes

8.2 Can anonymity be guaranteed throughout the data collection process: Yes

8.3 Can anonymity be guaranteed in resulting research reports or publications: Yes

8.4 Explain how you will manage issues of anonymity and confidentiality in your project (What will participants be told in this regard?):

1. To protect and ensure the confidentiality of the respondents, each respondent will not be identified by their name but special features or symbols will be assigned which will be used in my write-up. With regards to confidentiality, participants will be told that any details that will be collected will remain confidential.

2. Participants will be told that they will remain anonymous in the final report.

3. Participants will be told that the information that they provide will be used for scholarly research.

4. Participants will be told that, as the researcher, I will be the only one who will have access to the responses that they provide.

Definitions: *Confidentiality*: that any information considered confidential by the participant or researcher will not be disclosed to others. *Anonymity throughout the data collection process*: that you as the researcher will not be able to identify the participant. *Anonymity in the resulting reports*: that the participant's name/identifying data will not be disclosed and that anyone reading your results will not be able to identify the participant. **NB:** While confidentiality may be desirable, it cannot be guaranteed in, for example, focus groups, or ethnographic observations. Similarly, anonymity should be preserved in questionnaires, but cannot be offered in workshop methodologies, focus group research, etc. Participants should have the right to remain anonymous in the final report and this must be respected in handling of all data relating to them. Participants need to be informed about these issues through the Participant Information Sheet.

9. Protection of data during and after the research

9.1 How will the data be protected while the research is in progress? (This includes how the identities of participants will be protected).

The data that will be collected during this study will be in electronic form and stored on Seagate external hard drive which will be protected by a safe password. This password will only be known by the researcher herself and will not be shared with anyone. In the event that the researcher will be in possession of hard copies of the research materials these materials will be kept under lock and key in a cabinet.

9.2 What is to be done with the research data after completion of the project:

☐	Stored in archives (specify below)	☐	Stored in online database (specify below)
☒	Stored in password protected computer	☐	Stored in digital form with all identifying features removed
☐	Stored for future secondary analysis	☒	Destroyed after 6 years

Please specify which archives or online databases will be used (if applicable):

NB: 'Raw' or unprocessed data, especially where the identity or personal data of research participants is included, must be safeguarded and preserved from unauthorised access. Data may be destroyed after use, but preservation in an archive or personal collection may also be appropriate, desirable or even essential. For instance, datasets that contain historically important information or information that relates to national heritage must be preserved and should be placed in a public archive where possible and appropriate. All data should be preserved in a way that respects the nature of the original participants' consent. If you are unsure about the procedure of data management and storage, please contact the Data Services Librarian.

10. Summary CV of applicant

ALL boxes in the following table must be completed by the applicant. Do not attach a formal CV to your application

10.1 List your academic qualifications. Include dates or current registration status:

Bachelor of Social Science in Media and Cultural Studies, Sociology- 2013

Bachelor of Social Science Honours in Sociology - 2014

Master of Social Science in Sociology - 2017

10.2 Describe any ethics content training you have previously received in the previous 3 years (e.g. ethics short courses; online courses; ethics CPD courses; ethical input as part of a research methods course)

I have received ethical input as part of the following courses in my undergraduate and postgraduate levels: PSYC201 Introduction to Research, SOCY305 Research Design - An Introduction, SOCY700 Research Design Methods and Analysis.

10.3 List of instruments or methods used in this project, as listed in Section 5 of the application form (Tick the appropriate boxes and describe these specific instruments if necessary)

☐	Hard copy questionnaires or diagnostic tests, etc.
☒	Online instruments (e.g. questionnaires, surveys)
☐	Individual interviews (e.g. structured, semi-structured, etc.)
☐	Personal communication (e.g. email or informal conversation with experts)
☐	Group interviews (e.g. seminar/discussion groups, focus groups, etc.)
☐	Ethnographic observation, participant observation, other informal descriptive, and/or interactive methods (you <u>must specify</u> in the box below)
☐	Autoethnography
☐	Community-based methods or techniques such as drama workshops, community theatre, training workshops, participant rural appraisal, rapid rural appraisal, etc. (you <u>must specify</u> in the box below)
☐	Research on/in therapeutic or counselling contexts
☐	Putting on your own exhibition / public performance
☐	Observation of other public performance, and/or public behaviour observation
☐	Photography

Video recording

Audio recording (e.g. of interviews)

Use of data from social media

Other research methods or techniques (you must specify in the box below)

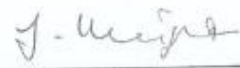
10.4 Describe your previous experience in deploying the instruments or methods of research which you are applying here (refer to Section 5 and table in Section 10.3)

I have used semi-structured questionnaires for my postgraduate (Honours and Masters research). This instrument has been used successfully. The semi-structured questionnaires comprised open-ended, closed ended, Likert scale and multiple response questions. During my Honours research, questionnaires were distributed to second year Sociology students at the beginning of a double period lecture. This was beneficial as students could fill in the questionnaire in the time allocated. During my Masters research, data were collected through questionnaires administered via the internet using Survey Monkey. The reason the email survey was chosen is because respondents can be reached in a short time and it is cost effective (Jansen, Corley and Jansen 2007). The email survey also allowed busy employees to fill in the questionnaire at a time appropriate to themselves.

References

Jansen, K. J., Corley, K. G. and Jansen, B. J. 2007. Chapter 1: E-survey methodology, in: Handbook of research on electronic surveys and measurements, [Online]. IGI Global. Available from: https://faculty.ist.psu.edu/jjansen/academic/pubs/esurvey_chapter_jansen.pdf

Appendix E: Ethics Clearance Certificate

 UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND JOHANNESBURG	
Research Office	
HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL) R14/49 Quartey	
CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	PROTOCOL NUMBER: H21/08/29
PROJECT TITLE	University curriculum development, for Hospitality Management programmes: perceptions from the South African hospitality industry
INVESTIGATOR(S)	Ms A Quartey
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT	Geography, Archaeology and Environmental Studies/
DATE CONSIDERED	20 August 2021
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE	Approved Risk Level: Minimal
EXPIRY DATE	21 September 2024
DATE 22 September 2021	CHAIRPERSON  (Professor J Knight)
cc: Supervisor : Professor M Simatela	
DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR(S)	
To be completed in duplicate and ONE COPY returned to the Secretary at Room 10004, 10th Floor, Senate House, University. Unreported changes to the application may invalidate the clearance given by the HREC (Non-Medical)	
I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to submit an amendment of the protocol to the Committee. I agree to completion of a regular progress report. For Minimal and Low studies, this is due annually on 31 December. For Medium and High Risk studies, this is due twice annually on 30 June and 31 December.	
 Signature	<u>26, 09, 2021</u> Date
PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES	

Myriad Editing
info@myriadediting.com

15 March 2024

To Whom It May Concern,

This letter confirms that I, Jonathan Hawkes, copy-edited Awo Ama Dede Quartey's (student number: 2088401) PhD thesis prior to submission. My focus was purely on grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J Hawkes". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "J" and "H".

Jonathan Hawkes

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