A Critical Investigation into the Vocational Curriculum Alignment to the Needs of Industry: A Case of National Certificate (Vocational) Hospitality Studies at a Technical and Vocational Education and Training College in Gauteng

by

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Declaration

I, Rudo Mazhinye, declare that the research report titled: ***A Critical Investigation of Vocational Curriculum Alignment to Industry Needs: The Case of the National Certificate (Vocational) Hospitality Studies at a Technical and Vocational Education and Training College in Gauteng*** is my own work and that it has not been submitted for any other course or degree and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references. This research report is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master of Education degree in Education and Work at the University of the Witwatersrand.

Name……Rudo Mazhinye Date: 15 August 2018

Signature…R. Mazhinye…

Dedication

Dedicated to the memory of my late mother and son Andile,

To my two boys, Lil Vel and Bongani, and

most of all,

To Velaphi, the love of my life

and my inspiration.

Acknowledgement

My sincere gratitude to the following people who immensely contributed to the successful completion of this study:

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Abstract

The National Certificate (Vocational) (NC(V)) hospitality studies qualification in Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges is an aspect entrenched in the NC(V) policy documents in order to produce a skilled labour force for a sustainable economy. Its main purpose is to enable the students to attain the imperative theoretical knowledge, practical skills, applied competence and understanding required for employment or entrance into higher education. The primary purpose of this research was to investigate whether the current NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum in TVET colleges meets the requirements of industry. The interviews were used to explore; the perceptions of employers in the hospitality industry on the work readiness of the NC(V) graduates, the NC(V) graduates' and the lecturers' views on whether the type of training offered align to the needs of industry. The findings from document analysis were used to corroborate the findings in the interviews. The study has found out that graduates exit college without the basic practical hands-on skills and the soft skills that are deemed to be critical if they are to be employable. Hospitality services National Qualification Framework (NQF) Level 2 – 4 practical activities were found to be insufficiently offered as compared to the theoretical aspects even if the Learning Outcomes (LOs) in the Subject Guidelines (SGs) for the subject are heavily laden with practical oriented learning outcomes. This revealed an undisputed need for the inclusion of both current practical and theoretical knowledge within the NC(V) hospitality studies qualification so that the graduates are in possession of contemporary and relevant skills to gain employment and transferable skills to traverse the labour market, thereby maintaining their employment. Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) was found to be missing within the curriculum, and it was recommended that WIL with credits be made a part and parcel of training as it would help in the attainment of both the hard- and the soft-skills that students would not acquire in college. The study established that due to the dual professional nature of TVET lecturers, it is difficult for colleges to employ fully qualified lecturers who are in possession of both the trades and the proper vocational pedagogical training coupled with current and relevant industrial experience needed for the implementation of any vocational curriculum. A lack of training resources was found to be one of the impeding factors in the implementation of this curriculum. Partnerships were illuminated as one aspect that could help colleges build a vocational curriculum that aligns to the needs of industry. The NC(V) hospitality curriculum has also been found to be outdated and lagging behind the ever changing world of technology. In vocational programmes this can be a warning sign for the end of that programme and the institution that offers it.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

CBT	Competence-based training
CHE	Council of Higher Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DoE	Department of Education
HOD	Head of Department
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
ISAT	Integrated Assessment Task
LME	Liberal Market Economies
LO	Learning Outcomes
NBI	National Business Initiative
NC(V)	National Certificate (Vocational)
NQF	National Qualification Framework
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SAG	Subject and Assessment Guideline
SENAI	National Service for Industrial Training (Serviço Nacional de Aprendizagem Industrial)
SETA	Skills Education Training Authorities
SG	Subject Guideline
SSACI	Swiss South African Co-operation Initiative
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
WBE	Work-based Experience
WIL	Work-integrated learning

Chapter 1: The Scope of the Study

1.1 Introduction

In order for vocational programmes to be effective and relevant they need to remain responsive to quite a number of issues that include more importantly the needs of industry, shifts in technology, the needs of the students and the society at large. With the great advancements in technology, the skills profiles within jobs and the jobs themselves are rapidly transforming. This situation places huge expectations on the TVET systems in servicing and responding to the fast changing needs of employers, as well as the job aspirations of students. A vocational curriculum that is unable to adapt to the changes in the knowledge economy in relation to the needs of the labour market and the needs of students, quickly becomes outmoded and loses relevance, resulting in graduates in these programmes being considered unemployable (Wedekind & Mutereko, 2016a). This could lead into the loss of credibility on the vocational programmes and the TVET institutions offering such programmes. Workers need contemporary and relevant skills to gain employment and transferable skills to traverse the labour market and so maintain their employment. Similarly, employers need a highly capable and adaptable workforce so that they can positively contribute to the economy of the nation.

The TVET system is currently under scrutiny in South Africa (Gewer, 2010) and there is implicit tension amongst the three major stakeholders which are; the government, employers and the TVET institutions. This is because the TVET system is not meeting the needs of the economy and society as a whole. The government needs to improve strategies to respond to the labour-force needs of the country and TVET is seen as a means of providing these necessary skills. TVET colleges have an interest in providing knowledge and skills to trainees, while being pressurised by prevailing economic and social conditions to respond to the challenges of the relatively high levels of unemployment and the demand for a more flexible and skilled labour-force. The employers on the other hand, prompted by industry sectors need to boost percentage growth rates in their respective sectors (Oketch, 2007). Adequate and appropriately trained skilled workers, particularly citizens, will help to provide this. Employers are concerned that the perspective of educational planners is focussed inwards on the education system and not on the needs of the industry with regard to providing the required specialised manpower for the good of the economy (King, 2012).

According to the African Union (2007) the productivity and competitiveness of a nation in the economic world order is dependent on a well-educated, skilled and adaptable workforce. In order for South Africa to address the socio-economic changes currently taking place and thereby survive in the modern world, the country must ensure that the youths and adults are well-equipped with the best and the latest skills. Gewer (2010) and Wedekind & Mutereko (2016a) say that this could be achieved by having TVET programmes aligning their curricula to labour market demands. This implies that TVET programmes' curricula should ensure that the practical and theoretical lessons are both effective and efficient to achieve the desired outcomes necessary for the world of work. The most obvious linkage between human resources and local growth is the quality of skills in a local economy (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2007). This means that to prosper, local hospitality businesses need a pool of skilled and diversified labour in their sectors, and must rely on the capacity of local education systems to provide appropriately qualified graduates. This type of economic argument is influenced by both the social efficiency and human capital theories (Becker, 2002 & Schultz 1961) which view education as an investment in the human capital required for the flourishing of the economy, which in turn enables citizens to gain their basic needs. This is used in favour of TVET and remains important in political debates and a powerful influence on economic and education policies. However, there are many challenges facing the TVET system in many countries including South Africa. For instance, Gewer (2010) expresses that the South African system continues to produce graduates in the NC(V) programmes that are not recognised by most employers and therefore, on completion these young graduates loiter the streets or get employed in jobs that they did not train for. As a consequence, major changes need to be introduced as soon as possible for the good of these young people and the economy.

This first chapter intends to introduce the study by explaining the background to the study and by highlighting the problem statement, aims, objectives and the research questions of the study.

1.2 Background to the study

The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) in 2007 introduced the NC(V) at public TVET Colleges in an effort to tackle the priority skills demands of the South African economy. The NC(V) comprises 20 vocational programmes for which hospitality studies is one of them and these are offered at NQF Levels 2, 3 and 4. According to Gewer (2010) the rationale behind the NC(V) curriculum was to provide school leavers with the necessary foundation to enter into the workplace and be easily trained into specialised mid-level occupations. The NC(V) hospitality students enroll for 4 vocational subjects which are;

- Food Preparation
- Hospitality Generics
- Client Services
- Hospitality Services

and 3 fundamental subjects which are;

- Mathematical Literacy
- English First Additional Language
- Life Orientation

These subjects are all covered at NQF Level 2 – 4, and all the subjects are understood to be necessary to prepare students for entry into the hospitality industry. For a student to progress to the next level they should have passed all the 7 subjects. The 4 vocational subjects should have a 50% pass mark and the final mark consists of the Internal Continuous Assessment (ICASS), Integrated Summative Assessment Task (ISAT) which is more of a practical examination and an External Examination. The pass mark for Mathematical Literacy and English are pegged at 30% and that for Life Orientation at 40%. The question is that is the NC(V) hospitality qualification really equipping students with adequate skills if they are expected to achieve such low marks. It is this background that has prompted the researcher to find out if this curriculum does furnish these students with the skills needed in the workplace.

Around the world TVET is widely seen as having a key role in promoting both economic and socio-economic growth, increasing productivity, empowering citizens and alleviating poverty. One of the most important features of TVET is its orientation towards the world of work and the emphasis of the curriculum on the acquisition of employable skills. For example, the NC(V)

policy and the Continuing Education and Training (CET) Act No 16 of 2006 stipulate that the NC(V) at NQF Level 4 enables students to acquire the necessary knowledge, practical skills, applied competence and understanding required on the job market in a particular occupation or trade, or entrance into higher education. However, loose links between TVET qualifications and jobs are evident in many countries as TVET programmes are very often not designed to meet observed or projected labour market demands. According to the African Union (2007), the emphasis on TVET programmes appears to be on helping the unemployed to find jobs, without any attempt to match training to available jobs. This situation has resulted in many TVET graduates not finding jobs or finding themselves in jobs for which they have had no previous training. For instance, the African Union (2007, p. 22) in their document entitled, *Strategy to Revitalize Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Africa*, state that in almost all countries in Africa, large numbers of graduates coming out of the TVET system are unemployed, although opportunities for skilled workers do exist in the economy, some of those who are in employment are in trades that they did not train for. Furthermore, as researched by Wheelahan (2015, p. 36) 'only from 30% to 40% of vocational graduates in Australia and Canada work in the occupation for which they have been ostensibly trained.' While Australian and Canadian vocational graduates report that their qualification was important for them in gaining work and that it is useful in their work, most vocational graduates work in occupations other than the ones directly associated with their qualification. This means that in these countries, employers use most vocational qualifications to screen job applicants for potential, rather than as a signal of specific knowledge and skills. This situation has brought into sharp focus the mismatch between training and labour market skill demands. Furthermore, critics argue that the lack of inputs from prospective employers into curriculum design and training delivery are partly responsible for the mismatch (African Union, 2007).

In 2007, the NC(V) which then was a new set of qualifications, was introduced in the South African TVET colleges. According to DHET (2012) the qualifications indicated the government's intention to provide a valuable, vocationally-centred alternative as a post-school qualification that could be delivered to a large mass of young people in order to curb the problem of unemployment in South Africa and as 'a general-vocational school-leaving qualification, one which could ultimately serve the learning needs and aspirations of approximately sixty percent of learners in their last three years of education' (Umalusi, 2013, p. 1). However, 'the quality of NC(V) curricula in terms of learner outcomes (UNESCO-

UNEVOC, 2014, p. 4) has been controversial since its introduction' (Gewer, 2010, p. 10). In fact, there is a concern that the content of the NC(V) does not accurately align with skills requirements in the industries concerned (Gewer, 2010; Wedekind & Mutereko, 2016a). Although strong vocational programmes increase economic competitiveness, the NC(V) programmes like other TVET programmes in other countries have currently been reported to have;

- failed to meet labour market needs
- not adequately prepared young people for jobs
- been separated from the fast-changing world of modern economies (OECD, 2011, p. 9).

This shows that there is 'a mismatch between the skills taught and those demanded by firms today' (OECD, 2006, p. 30). Apart from this, Gewer (2010), in his study, *Improving quality and expanding the further education and training college system to meet the need for an inclusive growth path*, found out that in response to a persistent skills supply crisis, five of the largest companies in the construction sector financed the re-writing of the NC(V) Civil Engineering and Construction curriculum. Companies engaged in the Technical Business Skills Partnership have acknowledged that similar work needs to be done on the mechanical engineering curriculum. The general consensus is that the quality of training in TVET colleges is low, with undue emphasis on theoretical knowledge and the attainment of certificates rather than on skills acquisition and proficiency testing. The curriculum quality, inadequate instructor training, obsolete training equipment, and lack of instructional materials are perceived to have been some of the factors that combine to reduce the effectiveness of training in meeting the required knowledge and skills objectives. High quality skills training requires appropriate workshop equipment, adequate supply of training materials, more especially good quality curriculum content and practice by learners.

Furthermore, in 2011 and 2012 Umalusi conducted a research which investigated the quality of the curricula underpinning the NC(V) hospitality and tourism qualifications on NQF Level 4, their assessment and search for international examples of good practice to strengthen the South African qualifications (Umalusi, 2013). The Umalusi research found out that the NC(V) hospitality written curriculum does not clearly enough specify the general aims, pacing of the subjects and the pedagogic approach in the Subject Guidelines. It also concluded that all the

three NQF Levels of the curriculum lack adequate breadth and depth, nor are there sufficiently strong links between the NQF Levels. However, some concerns still remained untouched, especially in relation to the curriculum alignment to the skills needs perceived by the hospitality industry to be important. The identified gap makes this research of significance. It is against the outlined background that the researcher was prompted to find out if the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum aligns with the needs of the hospitality industry.

1.3 Significance of the study

The study may deepen our understanding of an under researched part of the South African education system, and specifically in a vocational field that is key to the development of South Africa's economy. This study seeks to add some literature into the already existing body of literature on the quality of the curricula underpinning the TVET NC(V) hospitality qualification in South Africa. The study may also help the TVET system in the country to assess the expectations of industry in relation to their skills needs. It may also help the Department of Higher Education and Training to identify the challenges faced by students in training and their implications for national development. Low priority has been accorded to this topic and limited studies have been carried out in South Africa. It is for this reason that formal research is required to determine whether the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum aligns with the needs of the hospitality industry in South Africa and how the challenges can be addressed in an attempt to spearhead the development of a well-designed curriculum for a better sustained human capital development. The research may also act as a litmus test of the relationship between industry and TVET colleges regarding training, adaptability and practicability within the context of the South African post-school education and training environment. It is hoped that TVET college lecturers will benefit from the insights presented in this research report, and that they will use these to enhance their expertise and improve the ways in which they share knowledge with students. Equally important is that the new insights will hopefully benefit students in such a way that they will leave the college environment with appropriate skills to suit industry requirements. Lastly, the findings and recommendations in this study may also inform national policies and action plans aimed at promoting quality and relevant TVET in South Africa. Moreover, this study may serve as a good base for researchers willing to work more in the areas of NC(V) hospitality curriculum re-development.

1.4 Statement of the problem

The thrust of the NC(V) hospitality studies programme in TVET colleges is the production of graduates that are well equipped with the vital theoretical knowledge and practical skills ready for the job market. This has been supported by Jackson (2013) who says that it is widely accepted that enhancing students' employability is integral to TVET programmes and that graduates leaving these institutions should be confident not only that their knowledge, skills and capabilities for entering the world of work are appropriate, but that they are able to articulate these to potential employers. However, despite all the investments, policies and thoughts towards the programme, industry still feels that it is not getting enough from the NC(V) TVET graduates. This is according Gewer (2013) who states that feedback from some industries is that, while the theoretical knowledge of NC(V) graduates is fairly sound, graduates are often seen to be significantly lacking in practical skills. The NC(V) programmes are understood to be theoretically based, they ignore the most important aspect of a vocational curriculum; the practical component. Therefore, the graduates tend to lack the hard skills that are desired by industry. This could mean that there is also a misalignment between the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum and the needs of industry. The extent to which the NC(V) hospitality curriculum can equip the trainees with the skills that the employer requires has not been well researched.

1.5 Research questions

The research has one question and three sub questions. These are;

1. to what extent does the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum in TVET colleges satisfy the needs of the hospitality industry?

1.1 what perceptions do the graduates have with regard to the relationship between the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum and the needs of the employer?

1.2 what expectations do employers have regarding the NC(V) hospitality studies graduates employed in their companies?

1.3 what are the views of the lecturers with regard to the relationship between the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum and the skills needs of industry?

1.6 The aims of the study

The aim of this study is to determine whether TVET colleges in South Africa produce NC(V) hospitality studies graduates that are of good quality and ready for the world of work in terms of relevant skills necessary for their entry into the job market. The data, findings and recommendations of the study may help to enhance the development of the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum and the TVET system, more especially concerning its partnership with industry.

1.7 Objectives of the study

- to highlight the expectations of industry regarding the NC(V) hospitality studies graduates
- to investigate if training received at college by the graduates is perceived to be relevant to the world of work
- to understand student perceptions of the transition from study to work
- to establish the extent and nature of partnership between industry and TVET colleges
- to examine the views of the lecturers with regard to the relationship between the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum and the needs of industry.

1.8 Delimitations of the Study

Demarcating the research serves the purpose of making the research topic manageable from a research point of view. The omission of certain aspects does not imply that there is no need to research them (Welman & Kruger, 2003, p. 245). As this is a dissertation of limited scope, a clear demarcation to make it manageable at the required scale is very critical.

1.8.1 Geographical delimitation

The empirical study has been limited to the graduates of one purposively selected TVET institution in Gauteng offering NC(V) hospitality studies. It has been concerned with the examination of the vocational curriculum alignment to industry needs, with special reference to the NC(V) hospitality studies programme. The reason being that it made the research more

manageable for the researcher, who is based close to this particular college. There are more than fifty TVET (private and public) colleges offering NC(V) hospitality studies in South Africa and findings from this study are thus, exclusively, though not solely generalised to the selected institution and applicable to the graduates who were based at this particular college.

1.9 Structure of the Study

To meet the objectives of the study, this paper is arranged as follows;

Chapter One: The Scope of the Study

The chapter introduces the study highlighting the background of the study, problem statement, aims, objectives, the research questions and possible study outcomes.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This chapter reviews available literature related to the study by capturing the views of other scholars. Through the literature review, the research was able to explore the important components of a vocational curriculum. This has also enabled the researcher to have a deeper understanding of the topic and then proffer a new dimension or point of departure.

Chapter Three: Research design and Methodology

This chapter discussed the research design and methodology that were utilised by the researcher. The design, data collection methods and instruments as well as the sampling techniques were clearly outlined. Specific reference was also made to the research ethics followed while dealing with the participants.

Chapter Four: The findings of the study

This chapter plainly displayed the findings to the study with respect to the interviews and the document analysis.

Chapter Five: Discussions of the findings

This chapter showed the discussions based on the findings of the study in chapter four.

Chapter six: Summary, Limitations and Recommendations

This chapter forms the conclusion chapter of the study. The researcher presents recommendations to various stakeholders and what future researchers may need to research

upon in relation to the topic. The limitations to the study and ways to deal with them are outlined in this chapter.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This review of literature is located within the context of TVET because the TVET vocational curriculum and its relationship to industrial needs forms the central theme of this research. It focuses on the concept of an extended view of curriculum alignment to industry needs with a view to investigating the level of alignment of the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum to the needs of the hospitality industry in South Africa. The general contemporary perspectives were mainly dwelt upon in this literature review because very little in terms of hospitality curriculum is available. This chapter first deals with the theoretical framework of the study, which is the demand-led approach to training as opposed to the supply-side model. The chapter explores the purpose of TVET in general. The next section within the chapter seeks to explore the notion of TVET as a coordinated ecosystem. The ensuing section deals with curriculum alignment. This is then followed by an exploration of the two types of knowledge associated with vocational knowledge. These two types of knowledge are deemed to be crucial in building up a complete being who is ready for the new world of work. Lastly, the chapter seeks to explore literature on work integrated learning (WIL) as a component in a vocational curriculum, more especially in hospitality studies.

2.1 The Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Introduction

The primary purpose of any TVET system is the development of an adequate workforce with the right skills to meet the demands of the labour market. This means that the whole point of a TVET system is to develop people for the current and future needs and demands of the employer. The World Bank (1992, p. 128) affirms that 'TVET, by design is intended to develop skills that can be used in a specific occupation or job.' In addition, Okolocha (2012, p. 5) states that;

> *TVET is a specialised education designed to furbish graduates through the development of their technical skills, human abilities, cognitive understanding, attitudes and work habits in order to prepare them adequately for the world of work or position them practically for self-employment after graduation.*

Although the ultimate objective of TVET is employability and employment promotion, most TVET systems, according to UNESCO-UNEVOC (2015), Wedekind and Mutereko (2016a)

and The World Bank (1992) face the challenge of matching the skills, knowledge, attitudes and values of the students of the system to the needs of employment. The perception that the TVET system should meet the needs of industry dates back to the 1970s and 1980s in South Africa as well as internationally (Wedekind & Mutereko, 2016a; World Bank, 1992). What justifies this idea is a general critique of TVET that suggests that it is too school-like (Mutereko & Wedekind, 2015; Umalusi, 2010), out-dated (Oketch, 2007) and totally out of touch from the world of work (Gewer, 2010). Most TVET curricula have not been updated in a very long time. Yet, in the knowledge economy there has been a rapid growth of economic, social and technological changes globally (David & Foray, 2003; OECD, 2006; UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2015), thus most TVET systems are lagging behind. Therefore, the critiques of TVET propose that training be made current, relevant, flexible and adaptable by responding to the fast changing demands of industry. This could be made possible if training providers establish strong partnerships with industry in determining the curriculum and by linking their academic staff and students to workplaces (Wedekind & Mutereko, 2016a). This is so they can learn on the job for the enhancement of skills that are desired by industry. It is for these reasons that the researcher decided to use the demand-driven approach to education and training as this study's theoretical basis.

2.1.2 The demand-driven approach in training

The paradox of today's global labour market is that in many advanced economies there are high levels of unemployment against a backdrop of a skills gap leading to underemployment and unfilled vacancies (Kraak, 2013). This skills mismatch problem is the reason why the demand-led approach to training has become so important in recent years. The demand-driven approach attests that it is for employers and other actors in the world of employment, to define what the student needs to be able to do – the employment specification. The employment specification describes what the student must be able to do in the workplace. In fact, this specification defines not just what a student from a TVET programme needs to do (Manfield, 1989, p. 8) it describes what, for example, a competent waiter needs to do. Manfield (1989) went on further to say that it is the role of the educational professional or the training provider to use this specification to define what the student needs to learn and how the learning will be evaluated. This is so because employers have more knowledge about labour market matters – and educationalists know more about the process of learning. Therefore, a demand-led approach in training is one driven by a clear and highly responsive sense of the employers' needs by training providers. According to

the UNESCO's (2012) main discussion paper for the Shanghai Conference: The demand-led approach looks at the efficiency and effectiveness with which TVET supports favourable outcomes for learners in the world of work, and the extent to which TVET can meet labour market demands for skills. Keep (2012) argues that for the TVET system to meet its economic objective, it should be (a) accountable to key stakeholders; (b) responsive to local, national and global labour markets and (c) attractive to prospective learners, their communities and employers.

Furthermore, according to Zizys (2014) this approach to training places emphasis on aligning policies and programmes with what employers do to meet their own staffing needs in a manner that supports them in improving their human resource practices while contributing to positive labour market outcomes for workers as well. The approach considers the following;

a) the employment requirements which answers the question – what does the student need to be able to do in employment?
b) the learning requirements which deals with the question – what does the student need to learn to be effective in employment?
c) the assessment requirements which answers the question – how will we know what the student has learned and is able to do in employment?

Manfield (1989) and Zizys (2014) further assert that the employment requirements should be linked to the learning requirements, which are the basis for a vocational curriculum. These have to be defined by or with the help of employers and can also be used to audit the content of the curriculum to check if it is relevant to labour market needs. Proponents of this approach contend that if a TVET system has too loose a connection to the labour market, it can lead to declining relevance of vocational education, which could result in a system that is disconnected from the world of work and could lead to undervalued skills (Gamble, 2013; UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2015; World Bank, 1992). Therefore, any vocational curriculum needs to contain clear, understandable and detailed employment requirements. This as outlined by Anane (2013) and the UNESCO-UNEVOC (2015) is to ensure that the problem of skills mismatch, which has been identified by industry as a major cause of unemployment is addressed. Besides, employers expect graduates to be 100 per cent job ready, to be able to hit the ground running on inception. (World Bank, 1992, p. 129) The World Bank's review of TVET literature concluded that most modes of training prior to entry into the labour force can yield good returns when the training

is closely linked to effective employment demand, that is, when training is demand-driven, because alone, TVET does not create jobs (Tikly, 2013; World Bank, 1992). Tikly (2013) further argues that the demand-led approach requires that the TVET system be looked at from the industrialist point of view, whereby the needs of the employer are considered holistically, rather than looked at from the general education point of view. This is because TVET has been deemed to be most effective where its objective is to fill an existing or anticipated need for skilled workers. Leitch (2006, p. 76) states that 'demand-led routes in training must put businesses in the driving seat so that the providers design training provision that is more flexible in order to adapt to the changing conditions in the workplace.' This ensures that the graduates from TVET programmes do meet the needs of industry. This sort of provision is far more attractive to employers and so is far more likely to lead to increased responsiveness than it does in attempts to plan provision on behalf of employers.

A lot of researchers on the demand-led approach contend that the purpose of the TVET system should be mainly economic productivity. This means that all TVET students once qualified should respond by producing what consumers (the employer) want, which in turn, will assist in economic growth meaning that the TVET System should deliver human resources according to labour market needs. Furthermore, Gamble (2013, p. 206) says that the proximity of the vocational curricula to the workplace is the 'golden wand' of successful TVET. Therefore, the system should be focused on skills development for employability by preparing graduates more directly to meet labour force requirements (OECD, 2006; UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2015; World Bank, 1992). To orient TVET towards skills development for employability and meet the demands of the economy, this approach does not only require partnerships with employers, but also linkages and partnerships among numerous players in the system. For example, there should be strong partnerships and collaborations with sectoral organisations, business associations and chambers, employer associations, and other government departments (Maclean & Pavlova, 2013; UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2014) so as to support recruiting, training and supporting career advancement among employees, particularly those at the lower-end of the experience and/or skills spectrum.

The demand-led approach has a lot of penetration with employers and could be relied upon as it produces clear, positive labour market outcomes. Graduates from a TVET system that uses this approach to training as given by the OECD (2006);

- are more likely to be in the labour force, both shortly after completing their education and several years after completion, and are more likely to be employed because the employability of graduates who possess skills that are related to the demands of the labour-market are enhanced;
- are more likely to be employed in a job that is directly related to their training;
- have better earnings in the short and longer term; and
- report high levels of job satisfaction and security.

This is due to the fact that training that is demand-led has been shown to be more effective as it offers a clear and secure transition between education and employment, knitting the two together as a way to both build skills and connect an individual to a career. It also involves; on-the-job training (a method of acquiring familiarity with the world of work), employer involvement and sponsorship. 'These seem to be associated with more positive outcomes than classroom training and programmes that do not have connections to industry' (Zizys, 2014, p. 24). For some time, Germany's success in economic growth and youth empowerment and maintaining comparatively lower rates of youth unemployment, including during the recent recession, has been attributed to its TVET system, one that has adopted the demand-led approach. Busemeyer and Trampusch (2012) state that this is because the TVET systems in the country have been supported by industry in addition to the strong economy because TVET should focus on serving the employer and the employee needs. Thus, the emphasis on this approach is on ensuring that TVET qualifications are 'relevant' and prepare students for the world of work.

2.1.3 The supply-side approach to training

Unlike the demand-driven approach, the supply-side approach to training provides explanation for poor quality of TVET and its inability to stimulate economic growth, employment and national development. In this case, TVET is based on the design of the curriculum, a specification of the knowledge and skills the student needs to learn (Manfield, 1989, p. 1). Its objective is to solve broad social problems which are not related to existing or anticipated demand for skills, making TVET is a stand-alone activity. Implementing the supply-side

approach to training involves governments and donor agencies promoting TVET as a means of achieving a variety of social objectives (OECD, 2012; World Bank, 1992). These objectives have included among other things, supplying a labour force to stimulate growth by avoiding skill bottlenecks, improving the employability of the disadvantaged, providing a path to wage employment for women, increasing the stock of working people with new or upgraded qualifications and diverting youth from aspirations for white-collar employment and higher education (Kraak, 2013; Reddy, Bhorat, Powell, Visser, & Arends, 2016). In this approach, students are recruited into planned courses that aim to anticipate demand (Leitch, 2006) meaning that training programmes or skills provision are planned. This has generated provision to become 'supply-driven' to meet those plans and poorly articulated employer demand. This has resulted in TVET curricula that are referred to as being out of touch with the needs of industry, thus contributing to industrial decline, not training people adequately and not giving them useful skills.

According to the OECD (2012, p. 31) 'the supply-side approach assumes that skills are synonymous with education and training qualifications and/or years of work experience, and that market forces create strong incentives to ensure workers' skills are fully and efficiently used within the firm. This approach ignores the actual process of skill utilisation by firms and the complexities and impediments to developing and utilising the productive potential of a firm's workforce (OECD, 2012). It is thus characterised by large-sized public sector institutions, providing training based on what they perceive is needed within a state-led industrial development framework. This means that training is not often designed to meet the observed and projected labour market demands, hence, the strong mismatch between labour market needs and vocational courses. Unlike the demand-driven approach, training is therefore, rendered less effective when addressing supply-driven objectives. Table 2.1 overleaf shows the differences between the demand-driven approach and the supply-driven approach.

Table 2. 1 The differences between supply- and demand-driven training

Supply-driven approach	Demand-driven approach
Public institutions plan supply of training	Private actors such as firms and training institutions play a role in planning
Public resources fund training institutions directly without the use of competitive bidding	Training institutions compete for public funding
Training focuses on what planners deem appropriate for productive sector development. There is limited use of consultation with private sector. Providers are more removed from the employers and thus less responsive	Training programmes are market-orientated: training institutions contact private sector firms to identify demands and firms agree to provide internships to trainees or take them in for WIL
Employability goals are not put into consideration	The main aim of training is to increase the employability of graduates

The supply-side model has received considerable criticism in that it has not produced the expected outcome regarding the numbers of skilled people (Kraak, 2013) especially in the UK and South Africa. Evidence put together by the World Bank (1992) and Kraak (2013) displays that efforts put together for the supply-side model have proved to be unsuccessful, being based on mistaken assumptions about the nature of employment and skills demand and about the capabilities of formal training institutions to bring about social change. The complexity of how training develops skills for the workforce is not captured by the supply-side approach which presumes that there is a simple relationship between qualifications and occupations. Besides, history has it that the supply-side planning of this type cannot effectively meet the needs of employers, individuals and the economy (Leitch, 2006, p. 74). This is because in this approach 'TVET provision is poorly articulated with labour market demands and TVET is not contributing towards socio-economic development needs as much as expected' (UNESCO, 2012, p. 5). In support, Kraak (2013, p. 5) posits that 'it is the product market and/or

competitive strategy of a firm that determines a firm's demand for skill – and certainly not national government's skills policy.' Albeit, Wedekind and Mutereko (2016a, p. 4) are not in agreement to this sentiment as they say that 'at a broader level, curricula need to respond to policy requirements (regulative and symbolic) such as labour laws, or affirmative action, or health and safety regulations that may not always be identified by employers as requirements.' Wedekind and Mutereko (2016a) further mention that social, cultural and environmental matters need responses in the curriculum that enhance abilities and proficiency in a broader sense but which identifies with industry. The training provider needs to respond to a variety of different other elements such as its human and physical resources, managerial capacity, and location in developing its curriculum. on the other hand, Allais (2012) points out that improving TVET needs a focus on education, instead of the highly regarded employer needs. Improvements in TVET can be focused on; building strong institutions, re-designing of curricula, and lecturer training. These elements may not be related to the employer-led approach, but broadly focuses on improving TVET and the needs of the employee. It is however argued that a well prepared employee that is able to enter and remain in the workforce and provide added value to the industry can be achieved if employers are part and parcel of the training process to ensure the best outcomes for the industry and the employee alike.

2.2 The purpose of technical and vocational education and training

The main purpose of any TVET system is to develop enough labour force with the right skills to meet labour market demands (Oketch, 2007). The African Union (2007) in its report on African countries in developing a new strategy to revitalize TVET in Africa concurs by stating that one of the most important features of TVET is its orientation towards the world of work and the emphasis of the curriculum on the acquisition of employable skills. This is supported by an argument made by Clarke and Winch (2006) who say that Germany's industrial superiority was due to its greater emphasis on vocational education. TVET plays this role by transmitting values, skills, knowledge and attitudes that are necessary to perform certain skills in a modern sector of the economy. This unlocks and expands people's potential as well as their ability to adapt to changes in the dynamic world (Anane, 2013). Subsequently, TVET unlike general education provides critical access to the knowledge, skills and ideas that students require to become productive members of their communities and impart specific job-relevant skills which make them more readily suitable for a given job (Dasmani, 2011). Similarly,

Maclean and Pavlova (2013) contend that the purpose of the TVET system should mainly be economic productivity, and that the system should be focused on skills development for employability by preparing graduates more directly to meet the requirements of the labour force. DHET's (2012) overriding emphasis on the purpose of TVET within the post-school education and training system is to prepare workers for the labour market, or to enable individuals to earn sustainable livelihoods through self-employment or establishing a company or cooperative. DHET (2012) go on to mention that the main purpose of these colleges is to train young school leavers in order to furnish them with the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary for employment in the labour market. In general, it is true to say that TVET programmes present possible opportunities for people to obtain education, training and employment through skills and knowledge for the different trades that the programme offers. Wolf (2002) concurs to the idea of graduates getting employment by stating that TVET institutions are expected to produce graduates whose competencies raise the prospects of getting a job. This means that the technical and vocational skills acquired are supposed to raise individuals' job prospects and productivity which in turn leads to economic growth. McGrath (2012, p. 624) builds on these two arguments to affirm that TVET systems are built on two key productivist assumptions, which are:

1. training leads to productivity, leads to economic growth (training for growth);
2. skills lead to employability, lead to jobs (skills for work)

As a result, enterprises are expected to become more competitive and make a greater contribution to economic growth, on condition that those trained in these institutions actually matched the requirements of the labour market.

In addition, Tikly (2013, p. 5) states that 'TVET is perceived to have a fundamentally instrumental function in providing the necessary human capital required by industry.' This is because of the rapidly changing work environment which demands that people are able to acquire new skills and to work across job tasks. The World Bank (1992) advocates for policies to promote TVET systems that are principally seen as an investment in human capital and as a means for supporting global economic growth. African nations have not been left out as they have since adopted TVET reforms since the early 1990s and this has resulted in the formulation of various TVET policies (Dasmani, 2011). According to Ngome (1992) and Okolocha (2012) the trend in Africa, South of the Sahara, is that TVET has attracted increasing attention in recent

years because most states including South Africa recognise the essence that hands-on or practical skills training that are offered in TVET institutions effectively address the need of skilled man-power, artisans and technicians that are knowledgeable in driving the nation's economy forward. The TVET system primarily provides training for what Kraak (2012) and the OECD (2011) boldly assume to be the intermediate-level skills. These are critically required for the future growth of the many nations' economy, as they tend to concentrate on midlevel technicians who hold career-oriented and vocational qualifications required in the sophisticated knowledge economy. Over and above this, TVET has been and remains a common development strategy for many countries around the world. For example, as laid by the OECD (2011) in their policy review of TVET, indicate that Switzerland and Germany have used TVET to equip their youth with skills and knowledge to address the problem of youth unemployment. Similarly, countries such as Taiwan, China and India went further to use TVET as a means for supporting the creation of skilled work force (UNESCO, 2012). TVET systems mostly focus on occupations in the engineering, construction, tourism and hospitality industries including general business and management studies.

However, it seems that there is a great variance between what most TVET systems are producing in terms of the skills, knowledge, attitudes and values of the TVET graduates and what industry and commerce demand in relation to quality and relevance. This is because there is a lack of symbiotic relationship between the two, especially in South Africa. The African Union (2007) proclaims that the strength of a nation lies in its people, as such TVET is key to human development determining the nature of a nation`s development depending on the quality and relevance of skills training offered. Therefore, stakeholders should aim to come up with a solution to this breakdown. Maybe a coordinated ecosystem could be a potential game changer.

2.3 TVET as a coordinated Ecosystem

A coordinated ecosystem in training is a framework that brings together stakeholders in training so that resources and expertise are pulled together (Busemeyer & Trampusch, 2012) for the sake of the graduate and the employer. It is some form of a partnership that brings together stakeholders into training. According to the DHET (2012) coordinated ecosystems can be achieved through proper coordination, integration and cooperation amongst the stakeholders

of education. For higher education providers, there is increased networking with professional practitioners which may inform educators of any changes in current workplace practices and clarify expected skill standards in new graduates, thus facilitating a more industry-aligned curricula design (Jackson, 2014). This in a way might create understanding and good academic input into various TVET issues. Germany represents a strong social partnership model, the dual system, embodying the principle of education as employee and citizen, with a high degree of planning of both the qualification and TVET systems and the central organising concept of *Beruf* (Clarke, Winch, & Brockmann, 2013). *Beruf* is a Germany concept of occupation.

2.3.1 The advantages of the partnership

If the integration system in training is well adopted, it may bring together the TVET curriculum, the labour market demands, institutions and the society at large (Dasmani, 2011; Wedekind & Mutereko, 2016b) for the good of the student and the employer. Other advantages to this partnership are to expand access, enhance quality, achieve equity, develop relevant curricula, enhance student and college performance, ensure positive learning experiences, increase student placement, and generally improve labour market outcomes in the sector (Okolocha, 2012). Gewer (2010) avers that strong links between training institutions and enterprises might improve institutional responses to market forces and might have a positive effect on; quality, relevant curriculum and the creation of better job opportunities for TVET graduates. Therefore, the major reason for college-industry partnerships is the need to ensure that the curriculum for TVET institutions is matched to the needs of the workplace so that graduates have a smooth transition from college-to-work. Reddan & Harrison (2010) also argued that greater focus on outcomes in terms of the attributes, skills and knowledge required, driven by industry demand provides a focus which is likely to result in the shaping of curricula that is more likely to produce a well-trained graduate that is more closely aligned to the needs of industry. The need to create working partnerships between TVET Colleges and stakeholders, particularly industry, is borne out of the intention to make the colleges responsive to the needs of stakeholders, especially, but not exclusively, the labour market (Dasmani, 2011).

Wedekind & Mutereko (2016b) have established that higher education institutions that have worked in partnerships with industry have enjoyed the services of expert lecturers who visit the institutions as guest lecturers. These experts provide current and relevant information,

which is important in preparing students with current skills for the world of work. Through their industrial 'hands-on' experience, these experts have been able to enrich the students that they have taught. DHET (2012) notes that the TVET–industry partnerships, are likely to benefit both the industry and the student as the skills gap is addressed. Students become employable. To be employable people need attributes and skills that are relevant (Mutereko & Wedekind, 2015). The skills acquired in colleges are supposed to raise individuals' job prospects and productivity (Wedekind & Mutereko, 2016b). As a result, industries are expected to become more competitive and make a greater contribution to economic growth, on condition that those trained in these institutions actually match the requirements of the labour market. The hospitality industry nowadays due to globalisation has more specialised requirements concerning the qualifications of their workforce (Inui, Wheeler, Lankford, & others, 2006). They view hospitality education from the perspective of employability as the primary goal, this entails a redefinition of the curricula. Through partnerships, graduates could be able to meet the immediate skills needs of industry so that it realises its vision of enhancing its global competiveness, through staff who operate the modern plant and equipment with precision (Wedekind & Mutereko, 2016b).

In many countries, including South Africa, the TVET institutions on their own have not been able to adapt to the new structure of the hospitality labour-market and the new skill requirements of companies. They continue to attract a great deal of criticism because firstly, they are unable to train skilled workers to meet the requirements of enterprises (Atchoarena & Delluc, 2002). Secondly, they are extremely costly, a situation associated with the high cost of establishing skills workshops with the appropriate technical equipment needed to produce quality and relevant graduates (Nherera, 2000), more especially for the hospitality studies programmes. Atchoarena & Delluc (2002) argue that in many African countries, the infrastructure and equipment of most TVET institutions are for the most part obsolete, inadequate and unable to adapt to private-sector expectations and technological change. Evidently, most states are unable to fully fund these technical programmes and hence the need for partnerships, as other stakeholders in training could be in a position to help fund training programmes.

2.3.2 TVET – Industry Partnerships in South Africa

It seems that there is a great difference between what TVET institutions in South Africa are producing and what industry and commerce needs because there is no close association between the two. Germany's dual training system has succeeded because it has a clear framework for TVET accreditation and quality control, with input from all key stakeholders (Busemeyer & Trampusch, 2012). South Africa could still do the same if it has to be fully launched into the globalised age especially now that technical and vocational preparedness has become increasingly paramount. DHET asserts that there is a mismatch between output of training provider institutions and the requirements of employers (the job market) and that interaction and coordination between providers of education and training and employers was not in place in a formalised manner to enhance relevance in the South African education and training system (2012). DHET (2012) further affirms that unlike the situation in advanced market economies, there is no synergy between industry and academia in South Africa. Therefore, there is a wide variance between the curricula that TVET institutions offer and what industry expects. This points to the fact that industry needs to be involved in training because they are the labour market and thus are the economy. This is why DHET is putting emphasis on the point of promoting the growth of strong partnerships between higher education institutions and employers, since it is believed to be one way of ensuring that graduates produced are of good quality (Wedekind & Mutereko, 2016b). South Africa should not take these partnerships for granted as they have worked wonders for other developed nations.

Efforts by the National Business Initiative (NBI) and Swiss South African Co-operation Initiative (SSACI) in linking industry and TVET colleges in South Africa have not yet bore the fruits that have been witnessed in the advanced market economies. Badroodien and Kraak (2006) mention that efforts by TVET institutions to access industrial opportunities via Private Public Partnerships have also been erratic and are of no benefit in driving the partnership in South Africa. This has also been the cause for the variance between the competencies a graduate acquires at a TVET institution and what industry generally expects and thus reducing their chances of being employable. To remain relevant given the rapid pace of social and technological change, vocational education to be precise could be flexible and adaptable by responding to the changing demands of employers through partnerships (Kraak & Press, 2008). However, DHET specifically forewarns that the possibility of partnerships should be explored within a clearly defined regulatory framework that sets out the parameters for operation (2012).

This could mean that industry involvement in training is no guarantee of flexibility in delivering training. For example, de Moura Castro's analysis of the National Service for Industrial Training (Serviço Nacional de Aprendizagem Industrial) (SENAI) system in Brazil, which is employer controlled and financed, points to bureaucratic rigidities that in some ways resemble those in government-run training systems (de Moura Castro & Levy, 2000). Wheelahan (2016) also argues that firstly, it is not always the case that employers are prepared to invest in training and secondly, that there are not any stipulated effective mechanisms for articulating employer demands for the skills that will be needed for the future and besides, the simple fact that a training institution has approached employers to provide advice on the needs of industry is hardly a guarantee that the mechanism will be a success.

TVET institutions are expected to be responsive to the needs of industry by developing partnerships with industry, to determine vocational curricula in collaboration with employers and to link their teaching staff to workplaces so that they get to understand the changing demands of industry. Students can also be linked to workplaces in what is known as work integrated learning, so that they are able to marry theory to practice. DHET (2012) highlights these as some of the important benefits of such partnerships. This has been said to have worked for developed nations like Germany and the Netherlands, which have long implemented the dual training system. This system has seen TVET colleges working together with industry, resulting in students moving between the classroom and the workplace during training. This has helped produce a holistic graduate who is ready to run once on the job floor, because such type of training is able to help students marry theory to practice. This then leads me to my next section which discusses curriculum alignment in vocational training.

2.4 Curriculum alignment

The infrastructure and systems for TVET institutions and the skills delivered cannot be static due to the fact that the labour market requirements are changing at a great pace, meaning that the TVET systems have to be constantly in re-construction. This is specially the case with training curricula, infrastructure, trainers' skills and market linkages. According to Johanson, Ghiselli, Shea and Roberts (2010) hospitality education has attempted to make significant curricula changes in order to meet the industry's perceived evolving needs. Industry has long

demanded that 'students graduating from industry specific higher education programs possess appropriate skills and competencies required to be and remain competitive' (Abeysekera, 2006, p. 25). Some of the changes taking place in the hospitality industry due to globalisation according to Nelson and Dopson (2001) are; reservation systems, customer service and retention programs and loyalty programs.

Given the shifting nature of all micro and macro-environmental events that have recently occurred the world over (e.g. social cultural changes, technological advances, growing concern over sustainability and green practices, globalism), it appears likely that the competencies desired by hospitality professionals have also evolved. Such significant changes in the competitive environment of business and education, along with changes in the macro-environment, point to the need for curriculum alignment in TVET colleges (Johanson et al., 2010). For instance, the flattening of the world (which has brought about technological changes) has led to a global economy requiring a more globalised perspective which has some implications for education and training. The major one is that the economy and the society that support it place a premium on advances in specialised knowledge (Young & Muller, 2010). This means that in a time of accelerated knowledge development; specialisation, variation (or diversification) and technological change become the dominant social codes and the curriculum comes under increasingly frequent pressure to constantly adapt.

Nevertheless, the goal of hospitality education is to provide industry with graduates that are highly competent and capable of conducting the affairs of business and maintaining a readiness to approach future skills needs without reservation. Therefore, the inefficiency of the TVET programmes and the uncertainty as to their ineffectiveness in training a labour-force with skills matching the requirements of today's labour market means that there is dire need to establish what knowledge and skills need to be taught in TVET colleges. This could be made possible if there was a strong relationship between training providers and industry as the relevance of TVET programmes is brought about by the link between curricula and work requirements. The demand-driven approach in this regard seems to be the most appropriate to help TVET institutions to build their credibility. The content of the curriculum should thus embrace employability skills such as the ability to retrieve information, communication and presentation, planning, problem solving, social development and interaction.

Gewer (2010) articulates that the intention behind the NC(V) programme in South Africa was to more strategically position the TVET colleges to address priority skills demand by delivering sound general-vocational programmes that would prepare young people for entry into the industry of the new globalised era. However, the World Bank's review of TVET literature concluded that most modes of training prior to entry into the labour force can yield good returns if training is closely linked to effective employment demand, that is if training is demand-driven. This is an indication that industry players should provide input on their requirements for TVET graduates, including specific skills and the labour-demand needs in the short and long terms. For instance, Puckett, Davidson and Lee (2012) assert that industry representatives can collaborate with TVET providers to develop curricula in more direct one-on-one relationships and they could also offer funding and other resources for specific training. This can only take place if industry is willing to play its role in developing the TVET ecosystem. The focus should however, be on what the content can contribute to the workplace and how it can help the student develop or encourage reflective thinking. Given the industry's needs for highly skilled graduates, it means that the workplace is the curriculum authority.

In summary, significant changes in the competitive environment of business and education along with changes in the macro-environment point to the need for curriculum alignment to the needs of the employer so that they can respond positively to the needs of the knowledge-driven economy. These changes represent a call for new information and guidance from industry professionals to guide the educational process in the hospitality discipline, if the learning programme is to contribute to the possibility of the graduate progressing to the workplace and thus ensuring its relevance.

2.5 Vocational Knowledge in a vocational curriculum

There is evidence that suggests that serious consideration of pedagogy is largely missing in vocational education and it has been argued that vocational students are the losers as a result of this omission (Lucas, Spencer, & Claxton, 2012). The problem of having ill-trained NC(V) graduates could be emanating from a lack of adequately trained lecturers who do not understand what a vocational curriculum is and what it entails. These lecturers lack the

appropriate pedagogical preparation (Wedekind & Watson, 2012). Such lecturers are unable to provide for both theory and practice; they mostly concentrate on theoretical knowledge. This is despite the fact that vocational curricula are meant to impart skills and knowledge on how to do particular kinds of jobs. According to Winch (2013) they are meant for the impartation of 'knowledge-how' and 'knowledge-that' (theory and practice) to the TVET students. These two types of knowledge when put together are regarded by (Barnett, 2006; Gamble & Young, 2006; Young, 2009) as vocational knowledge, which is also referred to as specialised knowledge. Vocational knowledge can only be dispensed to the student by teachers with specialist knowledge or any other specialist of the subject area or discipline. Young (2006) suggests that vocational knowledge has an orientation both towards disciplines (which help refine psychomotor skills) and towards workplaces. This means that it involves two different types of knowledge, which Mutereko & Wedekind (2015), referred to as theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge (praxis). They further put it as, explicit (codified or written down) and tacit knowledge (2015), which are underpinned by theoretical and practical modes of learning that are necessary for work and everyday life. Therefore, vocational knowledge is influenced on one hand by workplace activities, also referred to by Dewey (1966) as education with production and on the other by systematically organised bodies of knowledge.

2.5.1 The two types of knowledge in a vocational curriculum

Theoretical knowledge, is more general in nature, and is based on different contextualised theorems, and is transmitted by a teacher in the classroom. In support, Gamble (2016) asserts that theoretical knowledge describes specialised disciplinary and scientific knowledge which functions at a general level and is written down and can be learnt as 'theory'. In contrast, knowledge-how, has its primary use in the performance of relatively restricted types of tasks typically, but not exclusively, requiring hand-eye co-ordination and/or manual dexterity, such as, 'planing a piece of wood and drawing a bow' (Winch, 2013, p. 283). According to some intellectualists a key feature of knowledge-how is that it consists in the exercise of a technique or way of carrying out the relevant activity (Winch, 2010b). Such a version is inadequate because there is an important category of agency, namely the ability to practice an occupation, that cannot be adequately expressed either by the concept of skill or the practice of technique because an occupation involves not just the practice of a variety of skills/techniques, but also the ability to operate independently, plan, control and evaluate one's activities.

To further explain the two types of knowledge, it is helpful to look at a TVET system that exhibits such features, for instance that of Germany. Streeck (1992) in Clarke and Winch (2006, pp. 13–14) states that;

> *in Germany the concept of 'occupation', or Beruf, signifies a body of systematically related theoretical knowledge (Wissen) and a set of practical skills (Können), or between knowing-how and knowing-that together with the social identity of the learner.*

In this context *Wissen* and *Können* refer jointly to applied theoretical knowledge that is specific to a *Beruf.* The achievement of such an identity is certified by a diploma or certificate upon passing an examination and is on this basis recognised by all employers as a qualification. On the other hand, the Anglo-Saxon notion of skill is used in a similar way to know-how but, here a worker with skill is understood to possess know-how appropriate to the task in hand and may or may not possess a 'qualification' certifying possession (Clarke & Winch, 2006). This could be compared to what a student attains in Competence-based training (CBT) as explained by Jessup (1989). It is therefore, worth noting that German distinguishes between two kinds of know-how, a broad integrated capacity (a *Fähigkeit*) and a narrow skill (a *Fertigkeit*). Thus, if one has the *Fähigkeit* of being a carpenter, this would consist of, among other things, the *Fertigkeiten* associated with sawing, planing and chiselling (Deng, 2015). However, the *Fähigkeit* also includes the integration of these *Fertigkeiten*, and is associated with underpinning theoretical knowledge and the personal, social and moral dispositions necessary for competent performance. Therefore, giving an account of know-how in terms of skills or the practice of technique/s is not sufficient to describe such broad and complex forms of agency.

2.5.2 The importance of learning through practice

Learning in the workplace is regarded as informal as it involves a combination of learning from other people and learning from personal experience, often both together. In this type of learning, the classroom is not involved. This has led to a strong tradition of TVET questioning the relevance of theoretical knowledge to their work, understanding practice to be based instead on experience and intuition. Across human history, learning through practice has been the single most important process for developing occupational competence. For example, in Europe, for over a millennium before industrialisation, 'the learning of occupations typically occurred in the family, or in small businesses which served and met the needs of their

communities' (Billett, 2013, p. 126). In addition, Winch (2003) states that economic activities at earlier stages of capitalism suggest that much of the relevant knowledge used in the past belonged to the categories of knowledge-how, and to a lesser extent on knowledge-that. The forms of education that sustained such type of learning were in turn more family- and workplace-based than college-based. For example, Lave and Wenger's (1991) community of practice approach in which learning is based on novices learning through imitation and observation at the workplace, leading to the movement from the periphery of a community of practice to becoming an expert in a particular field.

Learning through practice involves a master–apprentice relationship, which accords apprentices with an opportunity to work under the close supervision of an artisan in all aspects of a trade without discursive elaboration (Gamble, 2013). Gamble went on to give an example of a master car mechanic in North Jutland whose apprentices became the best car mechanics in the region, but had hardly ever said a word to them (2013). This is evidence that though it does not result in a formal qualification, learning through practice and experience in the workplace is highly enriching and builds an individual's skills and capacities. This is because according to Webster and Leger (1992) practical knowledge is absorbed through a prolonged process of working with a master practitioner since working alongside an expert allows apprentices to observe and to participate in activities, thereby learn new practices and new perspectives and according to Eraut (2004) to gain some sense of other people's tacit knowledge. Subsequently, Leger and Mothibeli (1988) also mention that tackling challenging tasks requires students to learn through practice, and if well-supported and successful, may lead to increased motivation and confidence in employees. They gave an example of what happens in mines concerning pit sense, whereby the learners learn through experience and observation.

There is growing evidence of the potency of practice-based experiences for learning occupational capacities across the range of kinds and categories of work. This means that more than being an artefact of the past, 'learning through practice is probably still the pre-eminent form of the initial and ongoing development of individuals' skills across a range of nations and cultures' (Billett, 2013, p. 129). Evidently, in contemporary apprenticeship models being enacted in western countries, the practice-based component is usually of far greater duration than the time apprentices are in educational institutions (Billett, 2013). Billet (2013) further

argues that only a few researchers have argued that the college-based components of apprenticeships generate the knowledge required for skilled work. This implies that observation and increasing participation in a task at the workplace characterises learning a practice and thereby bringing about proficiency more than does the theoretical aspect. Besides, Billet (2013) also found out that many employers, particularly those in the informal sector and in smaller enterprises, regard the skills of graduates of the informal apprenticeship system as being higher than those of graduates from formal TVET systems whose curricula is based on bodies of knowledge. This is largely because of their superior practical skills as they are trained on the job. In support Eraut (2004) enunciates that though extensive learning in the workplace does not result in a formal degree or diploma, it is highly enriching and builds an individual's skills and capacities to do work competitively. Moreover, there is a lot of repetitive tasks in experiential learning as an apprentice works his way through, resulting in his know-how becoming increasingly efficient, tacit, and automatic, thereby conferring on him the benefits of specialisation (Schon, 2001). The acquisition of practical knowledge is a highly sophisticated form of imitation and assimilation that requires the help of experienced workers, as a result, substantial experience of artisans in realistic conditions in workplaces is imperative for the creation of competent workers.

However, Young (2009, p. 201) who draws from Durkheim proclaims that, 'experience is a powerful force but inadequate as an epistemological principle and no basis for reliable knowledge or for the curriculum.' Wheelahan (2007) also argues that learning at the workplace is one mechanism through which the working class is denied access to powerful knowledge (theoretical knowledge). Wheelahan (2007) uses Bernstein's argument that abstract, conceptual knowledge is the means societies use to think 'the unthinkable' and 'the not-yet-thought'. Which implies that theoretical knowledge helps graduates to be critical thinkers which helps bring about innovativeness. To put it more simply, the importance of situated understanding should not be overemphasised at the expense of theoretical knowledge because artisans who have the ability to make good situational judgements do not rely on unreflective prejudice, they draw on a well-thought-through and coherent theoretical framework, on knowledge of well-substantiated empirical research and on considered ethical principles to get to decisions in the workplace context (Carter, 2015; Gamble, 2016; Orchard & Winch, 2015). The artisans are able to judge right action in workplace scenarios from a more reliable and informed basis for judgement than intuition. Drawing on the works of Durkheim, Bernstein

and Young, Wheelahan (2015) argues that the neglect of theoretical knowledge, could position TVET as experiential, applied and job-based learning and a solution for students who are unsuccessful in traditional academic learning. The exclusion of TVET students from access to theoretical knowledge could lead to TVET systems that are a prime mechanism for meditating and reproducing social inequality rather than for social inclusion. This means that the inclusion of theory is a better alternative to the notion of experience-based conception of TVET, as it enables the graduates to fully participate in the society and in their occupational fields.

2.5.3 The value of theoretical knowledge in TVET

TVET must relate to the practicalities of occupations, but beyond the most limited training schemes, such as in experiential learning, it must also relate to bodies of knowledge that may well not be occupationally specific. This balanced vocational aspect of TVET is important to producing a graduate who is broadly knowledgeable, responsible and occupationally functional in his/her area of specialisation (Gamble, 2003). This is because theoretical knowledge heightens understanding in individuals. Wheeelahan (2015) also notes that the inclusion of theoretical knowledge closely related to the specific needs in a particular vocational field improves student development and competence. To begin with, concentrating on just the hands-on aspect of training impoverishes students and renders them less likely to be able to respond to stakeholders in the developing knowledge economy (Kotzee, 2014). For instance, the articulation of a skill involves thought and attention, not only by subsuming the intellectual activities involved, but also through the articulation of complex and extended forms of activities (Orchard & Winch, 2015). Orchard and Winch (2015) further state that artisans need theory because they must understand what they are doing and why they are doing it, and must be able to think intelligently about how to do it better. In agreement, Gamble (2013) asserts that vocational knowledge must relate to industry rather than to a task such as in competence-based training (CBT), which is conservatively rooted in workshop practice and hostile to theoretical knowledge. Her argument is based on the fact that many abilities in the workplace embody applied theoretical knowledge. For example, the bricklaying ability, is regarded to depend on knowledge of physics and an ability to apply it (Clarke & Winch, 2006; Winch, 2011, 2013), hence the need to incorporate theoretical knowledge in TVET curricula. This is because in educational terms, theoretical knowledge and its organisation is the essence of curriculum, for without it, the notion of curriculum becomes meaningless. In like manner, Gamble (2016) is of the impression that disciplinary knowledge is the bedrock of every

curriculum. Similarly, Young (2009) favours a knowledge-based approach to curriculum designed to enable all students to gain access to disciplinary knowledge which he sees as the central purpose of schooling. Moreover, the more abstract and wide-ranging the theoretical knowledge, the more applicable it is likely to be to a range of technical processes that ultimately depend on it. Besides, the changing nature of jobs due to economic conditions and continuous technological innovation brings dangers of deskilling (Braverman, 1998) and loss of occupational capacity unless employees have a strong base of theoretical knowledge as this is a substantial educational component. Systematically organised bodies of knowledge are vital to revitalise the TVET curricula as this enables students to create new knowledge based on existing knowledge. Thus providing the conditions which enable them to innovate and change regarding the demands and challenges created by the changing global economy.

Theoretical knowledge also provides an important basis for the cultivation of the intellectual, moral powers and capacities of individuals for better productivity in the workplace (Deng, 2015). However, the students should be able to articulate and integrate these bodies of knowledge into their day to day work activities. Apart from pragmatic applications, theoretical knowledge in TVET enables individuals to move beyond their experience, develop new ideas and envisage alternatives (Young & Muller, 2013). Indeed, such knowledge, as suggested by Wheelahan (2015, p. 752) 'allow society to understand and develop knowledge about the (natural and social) nature of the world' and to conduct its conversation about itself, and considers alternative futures and debates about what it should be like, especially regarding technology. Furthermore, disciplinary knowledge provides a crucial resource for the formation of individuals as complete human beings and in particular, open up many opportunities for the development of competencies taken to be desirable for the knowledge economy (Deng, 2015). It is far more likely that those furbished with theoretical knowledge will more likely be able to make independent judgements within work situations, precisely because they have guidelines and justifications for constructing their own solutions to problems (David & Foray, 2003). Theoretical knowledge, therefore, has intrinsic educational value and significance, worthy of transmission in its own right, more especially in TVET.

If TVET is made more general, students will receive more academic content to broaden their occupational focus and will thereby be granted more opportunity to qualify for advancement

to higher levels of education and for career progression. In response to this, many countries readjusted most of their TVET programmes to contain a larger element of theoretical knowledge and more generic forms of vocational preparation (Maclean & Pavlova, 2013). This is so as to help TVET students acquire relevant knowledge, to prepare them for employment as one would use knowledge-that to inform knowledge-how (Winch, 2009), or to go on to higher education (Barnett, 2006). For example, German and Austrian apprenticeships have enhanced general content within occupational training (Maclean & Pavlova, 2013) as a step to promote permeability to higher education. In order to be permeable within the education system, it is important that TVET qualifications contain a significant technical and general educational elements (Winch, 2013). Barnett (2006) affirms by stating that if a TVET programme is to contribute to the possibility of the student progressing to higher education some degree of non-specificity to the content taught is necessary. Additionally, Gamble (2013) posits that without access to bodies of knowledge in the TVET curricula, the idea of a learning progression that leads to career advancement and mobility will remain evasive. This means that without theoretical knowledge, TVET graduates will find it difficult to progress to higher education. There are quite a number of limitations linked to narrowly specialised trades with weak underpinning knowledge. Firstly, they do not provide for transferability from one job to another and for permeability to higher skill levels (Green, 2011). Secondly, workers whose training was based on experiential learning's scope of activities are restricted, with reduced possibility to move from the trade to managers and beyond. This is because they cannot perform the intellectual functions (Green, 2011) that are needed in the workplace, furthermore, their scope of work, is largely confined to simple repetitive tasks. Thirdly, there is typically a separation between manual and intellectual functions at the workplace, with activities such as, planning and monitoring being carried out by managers, engineers or supervisors (Clarke et al., 2013) whose training is rife in theoretical knowledge. Generally, for learners in TVET to be able to progress, either at work or to higher education, the curricula should to a greater extent be based on bodies of knowledge.

On the contrary, the critics of theoretical knowledge like Ryle in Winch (2009, 2010a) tend to trivialise the role of theoretical knowledge in expert practice and leaves the reader in no doubt that he is of the idea that it is of minor importance. Ryle effectively dismisses the idea that theoretical knowledge has a significant bearing on knowledge-how, he implicitly supports a view of TVET that favours narrow notions of skill and associated training over knowledge

informed occupational practice. Similarly, Eraut (2004) and Wheelahan (2010b) who quotes Marginson (2000) attest that learning has always been across most workers' working lives and is based on learning through their everyday work. The two deny the identification of skill with bodies of knowledge, their argument is rooted on that a workforce may have surplus knowledge that they do not need for the know-how required for the job. They believe that most workers in post-industrial societies require (and will continue to require) only basic skills to operate effectively in most jobs, therefore low-level on-the-job-training will suffice. Moreover, Cully (2003) in Wheelahan (2010b) explains that the relationship between a knowledge economy and increased levels of skills cannot be assumed because knowledge can be fed into machinery (robots) whilst the execution of work may require little intellectual skill. Likewise, Carr (1981) in Winch seems to rule out the role of theoretical knowledge in practice, he argues that 'a plumber does not need knowledge of the theory of hydraulics in order to successfully carry out his work' (2010a, p. 98). Clearly, Carr implies that a plumber should only be trained through experience at the workplace. Additionally, Kerschensteiner (1901) in Winch (2006, p. 384) took to be the insight that 'learning through practical activity is very powerful and effective than passive absorption through instruction.' These assumptions about theoretical knowledge make the role of knowledge-that in occupational action more difficult to appreciate.

Coffield (2000) attests that government rhetoric about developing a competitive edge by building the knowledge economy is overemphasised. It is against this background that Hyland says that all the oratory about knowledge workers who hold theoretical knowledge is, 'at best, pure whimsy and, at worst, fatuous nonsense' (2001, p. 683). Therefore, according to Hyland (2001) the knowledge economy is a myth, whose main function is to feed fears of future mass unemployment and so drive millions of learners on to new and still higher levels of educational attainment. In fact, years ago there existed a class of engineers known as millwrights, who, with regard to scientific-knowledge were uneducated, but were considered to be men of great intelligence, whose tool-boxes contained tools for different trades, and could use these tools with skill and dexterity (Thompson, 1989). The millwrights used to be responsible for both extensive and complex work, and would execute their work thoroughly and intelligently. With this example it is safe to say that theoretical knowledge is unnecessary as the millwrights who were uneducated could still execute their duties, probably they learnt to do their work on the job and through experience. In other words, the demand for high-level knowledge or knowledge workers is grossly exaggerated. Yet TVET systems in many countries including

those whose systems are thriving presuppose that theoretical knowledge is one vital component of successful preparation for practice.

2.5.4 The integration of practice and theory

A dual training system brings together theory and practice and has a broad curriculum that entails a broad-ranging theoretical knowledge needed for an occupation. In this dual system students are employees, who divide their time between a theoretical education in an educational environment, the practice of specific skills in a workshop and controlled performance in operational conditions which cover the range of activities within the workplace (Clarke & Winch, 2006). The aim of this dual training system is to prepare the students for an occupation with legally and socially recognised status equivalent to professional identity (Winch, 2013). Its outcome is conceptualised as an overall occupational capacity as opposed to a bundle of skills specific to particular tasks similar to those produced in CBT. In agreement, Barnett (2006), Gamble (2013) and Wheelahan (2015) say that this training system generates a whole being who is equipped with all the knowledge and skills that he/she requires to be a member of an occupation and not for specific tasks, as it emphasises employability skills which are sought for by the labour market. Consequently, a richer notion of TVET is the inclusion of complex bodies of knowledge that individuals acquire in the process of becoming a member of a community of practice, which they then use as a tool to transform practice. This dual character of vocational knowledge is important for the TVET curricula because in contemporary times, as previously indicated, the world of work demands employees who have a range of knowledge and skills which enable them to think flexibly, to produce quality products and to work across a range of different practical contexts as the market demands from time to time. This implies (Moll et al., 2005) that TVET should provide both theoretical knowledge and well-rounded practical skills to meet the needs of the employer. Generally, in the knowledge economy employers use qualifications as a signal that graduates have specific knowledge and skills needed for a job they want to fill (OECD, 1996), examples include among others nursing diplomas, engineering degrees and welding certificates. Wheelahan (2015) reveals that the content of these qualifications is specified tightly and often their pedagogy is also specified to include bodies of knowledge and minimum experience in the workplace.

Furthermore, Moodie and Wheelahan (2016) note that in transition systems following the CBT approach to training, employers select job applicants with the greatest potential indicated by a strong educational dimension and broad-ranging theoretical knowledge needed for an occupation rather than those with specific vocational skills. This is due to the fact that some jobs are extremely complex, especially in the modern world in which technology has developed so dramatically, yet to train a skilled artisan in each of them requires a particular kind of learning that links the lecture room to the workplace (Moll et al., 2005). Therefore, TVET curricula designers should be fully equipped for the construction of programmes that are responsive to the complexity of the modern workplace, and should be able to incorporate bodies of knowledge in the curricula.

While it is true that the addition of theoretical content to the TVET curricula gives students more flexibility in the job market, the paradox is that the absence of any practical aspect means that they are not ready for the workplace (Young & Gamble, 2006). The implication is that the rounded TVET student should be able to embrace both theoretical and practical knowledge which cannot be separated if the student is to derive maximum benefit. This is because skills in today's industry rely on both practical and theoretical knowledge to enhance proficiency – the ability to do something well and the capability of accomplishing something with precision and certainty (Friedson, 1994). As a consequence, there needs to be an integration of college-based teaching of abstract and theoretical knowledge with practice-based application of that knowledge. The assessment practices need to reflect the complex nature of the knowledge acquired (Winch, 2003) as 'the dual system qualification involves both the assessment of propositional knowledge and its successful integration into occupational practice' (Winch, 2009, p. 13). The outcome for this type of training is informed capacity for 'know-how' but one that is practically unattainable without systematic instruction in a range of relevant propositional knowledge (Winch, 2010a). This means that, there is need to appreciate the fact that systematic instruction in propositional knowledge prior to practice is a necessary component of effective action. To be more precise theory and practice should be seen as indivisible elements within the greater domain of TVET and should be taught as such, free from the separatist demarcating practices that have plagued many TVET systems (Gamble, 2013). Thus, vocational programmes according to Gamble (2013) must be designed to face both ways; that is towards the non-empirical world of ideas and concepts and towards the empirical world of practice and experience.

Clearly, it is neither enough to possess systematic knowledge without operational experience and ability nor sufficient by itself to have operational experience and ability in order to possess the skill. The two must therefore always be fused together. However, theory is not a set of instructions that it cannot be straightforwardly put into practice, it has first got to be recognised as relevant to practice and one has to be engaged in practice to some degree before theory can be recognised as relevant (Winch, 2003). This shows that the relationship between theory and practice in learning to master an occupation is likely to be complex. 'If one cannot practise without theory, and if theory is useless without knowledge of how to apply it, then the two have to be introduced very carefully in order to ensure that they support each other' (Winch, 2003, p. 57). Thus, theoretical knowledge and practice need to be mutually reinforcing. However, certain aspects of practice, even if they have a theoretical logic, need to be acquired through practice and some form of learning by example, such as, through demonstrations by the instructor. In other words, even the formulation of the contextual application of theory fails to capture the fact that large aspects of the practice may be only accessible through some form of learning by participation, theory playing a relatively minor role (Winch, 2003). This is in sharp contrast of Ryle's discussion in Kotzee (2014) who tends to dwell on task-related skills more similar to *Fertigkeiten*, than it does to broad, integrated capacities. In like manner, Hyland (1994) in Gamble (2016) says that most TVET systems favour the use of CBT which offers no coherent account of theoretical knowledge, nor does it distinguish adequately between theoretical and practical knowledge, apart from persistently downgrading theory in preference to practice. Likewise, Ryle's argument in Winch (2009) obscures the role that 'knowing-that' plays in many forms of knowing-how. He maintains that skills are developed through training and practice. In skills approaches, theoretical knowledge becomes invisible and core epistemological issues are ignored. For example, CBT favours performance against theoretical knowledge, such as, where unit standards are supposed to be achieved so that one is able to perform that one particular task (Moore, 1987). For instance, in many liberal market economies (LMEs) TVET is based on narrow, skills-focused curricula which have been widely criticised for not inducting students into the knowledge and skills they need for work (Wolf, 1995). This is because in LMEs, the notion of skill is task-focused, individualised, and disconnected from systems of theoretical knowledge (Clarke & Winch, 2006). Evidently, TVET programmes should link theory to practice so that the product is well-rounded and competent.

In summation, TVET programmes whose curricula is based on theoretical knowledge are concerned with developing socially responsible individuals, who are able to reflect on their own actions in the workplace, but would not be well-rounded if they lack the practical aspect of training. Experiential learning at the workplace helps produce an individual who is increasingly efficient, tacit, and automatic, thereby conferring on him the benefits of specialisation but would lack the knowledge-that that they need for the ability to judge right action in the workplace and for learning progression that leads to career advancement and mobility. This implies that a TVET system that has a strong academic base, integrated with simulatory and probationary experience in which classroom and workshop are articulated with each other, thus bringing together theory and practice is a pre-requisite. This linkage allows for the acquisition of the elements of knowledge and skills that are necessary for the development of a well-rounded student who is relevant to the world of work. Therefore, the old-fashioned experiential learning at the workplace does not have to be superseded, but should rather be adapted to the changing demands of the labour market since all workers in this complex knowledge economy need a conceptual framework for their understanding, decision-making and an ethical orientation to their work.

2.6 Work Integrated Learning (WIL) as a practical component in training

Work-integrated learning (WIL) has been identified as a way of equipping students with knowledge and skills that make them ready for the work place (Abeysekera, 2006). Currently much discussion and focus is on WIL within the TVET sector as a crucial aspect of occupational and vocational learning. DHET (2012) stipulates that students in higher education institutions require to go through a compulsory work place learning so that they develop basic work habits, occupational identity and specific occupational competences. In view of this, the South African TVET colleges according to DHET (2012) have recently been under increasing pressure to prepare graduates for the work environment by including a component on WIL in their curricula to achieve the expectations of industry. This has been the case because one of the roles of higher education according to the Council for Higher Education (CHE) (2011) is to provide industry with individuals who are well trained so that they can respond to the demands of knowledge-based occupations, as well as demonstrate the skills necessary for participating in a global economy. Today's challenging economic situation means that it is no longer sufficient for a new graduate to just have theoretical knowledge of a vocational subject;

increasingly it has become necessary for students to gain those practical skills which will enhance their prospects of employment, more so for the hospitality industry. It is in light of this that higher education had to open up and become more attentive to the interests of the employers.

2.6.1 Why WIL matters?

The nature of knowledge, skill and work have changed as a result of the economic and technological revolutions (OECD, 1996) and these changes appear to be continuing. Increasingly, attention has been focused upon learning in the workplace through on-the-job training or WIL, also regarded as productive knowledge – which Dewey (1966) rightly identified as underpinning the subordinate status of vocational studies, as a solution to problems of skill currency, productivity and international competitiveness (Lucas & Guy, 2013). Much training which normally takes place in colleges, has been perceived as not reflecting the changes occurring in the workplace (Mutereko & Wedekind, 2015) and has also been seen as more general, less tightly focused than is required by the employer (Gamble, 2003). Therefore, 'learning at work can provide an antidote since its hot action occurs in the here and now, in real time, and in real space, with real bodies present' (Hyland, 2001, p. 680).

WIL potentially poses a range of benefits for students. For example, workplaces provide activities and interactions which are authentic in terms of the knowledge to be learnt for work that is undertaken in those settings (Billett, 2001). The workplace's social and physical settings offer contributions that are directly aligned with the activities to be undertaken. They can also comprise genuine, not substitute artefacts, informed interlocutors and situational pertinent social forms, goals and activities that can likely ground cognition (Moll et al., 2005) and lead to the kinds of learning of capacities required for performance in that setting. That is, the activities and interactions have a cognitive legacy associated with the knowledge required for work. Researchers such as Jackson (2014) and Bates (2005) have also acknowledged the importance of WIL in preparing students for their future work environments. WIL is critical in empowering students to be aware of what is expected of them in the workplace and affords them the chance to experience the real work environment(OECD, 2016). The vocational nature of hospitality studies is ideal to utilise WIL as a method of transferring classroom activities to the work place as WIL forces students to marry theory with practice by providing opportunities

for practicing acquired knowledge and skills (Mutereko & Wedekind, 2015). This means that WIL experiences provide students with a bridge between the academic present and their professional future.

The key purpose of WIL is to provide the would-be graduate with the comprehensive skill-set desired by potential employers. Jackson (2014) and Billet (2013) identified 12 transferable skills, although all but 'entrepreneurship' are subsumed within the following: team-working, communication, interpersonal, problem-solving ability, organisational, information technology, numeracy and learning how to learn. These are the kind of skills that new entrants to the labour force are especially hard pressed to acquire. Zizys (2014, p. 22) suggests that these skills are essential for employment and arguably, WIL is the most appropriate vehicle for their acquisition. Although the development of such skills in vocational education is now considered essential as they enable the effective application of graduate disciplinary knowledge and skills in the workplace (Mutereko & Wedekind, 2015) and are regarded by most employers as crucial in determining the employability of graduates, these skills are still not taught in most institutions of higher learning. WIL might also eliminate the matter of chance involved in employment destination observed by Busby (2003). To that end, WIL is the nexus between the academic and the vocational content of hospitality education.

Further, WIL encourages students to reflect on their own learning; gain a better understanding of the world-of-work related to their vocational area and they also learn how to conduct and manage themselves in different contexts (Billett, 2001) – all vital to their employability. Through WIL the students can discover in which direction they would like to steer their career, WIL makes them realise which part of hospitality they want pursue. For instance, in hospitality there are several areas of specialisation which include among others; pastry, housekeeping, front office, culinary and food and beverage services. Having said this, it could therefore be safe to say that applied, contextual learning from real workplace experience is a fundamental method of helping students to develop knowledge and skills, and that learning these skills occur best through real-life experiences that have actual effects. Effort should therefore be made to encourage students to undertake WIL or at least make WIL a part of the TVET programmes curricula because learning by doing reinforces classroom understanding by contextualising knowledge (Inui et al., 2006). Learning by doing also improves the students' psychomotor

skills, which involve manual dexterity; the representation of those activities that are primarily movement-oriented. Certainly, WIL is crucial for the development and refinement of practical skills. Young (2006) states that whilst many of these skills are transferable, there is also the opportunity to acquire specific detailed knowledge. Moreover, Billet (2001, 2013) suggests that a level of maturity is instilled in students and confidence increases because the experience they acquire is rewarding in that they address real problems and the work they produce is used by other people – that is by real clients.

Bates (2005, pp. 2–3) asserts that 'WIL is a partnership amongst three major players which are; the student, the industry mentor and the institution.' These three participants, with the help of a well formulated curriculum could work together to produce a graduate who is more than ready to be on the run on inception at the workplace. For institutions, there are indirect benefits arising from contacts with industry personnel. For example, there is a possibility of industry inputs into course development thus bringing about currency into the curricula, it also opens up opportunities for the placement of students during the WIL sessions and it also brings about increased liaison which leads to improved course provision. For instance, employers could donate resources that are needed in colleges for training, they could also help with the provision of guest lecturers from industry – who have speciality skills. On the other hand, lecturers could also help training managers on how to deal with students while on WIL. Organisations could also benefit from participating in such programs through the provision according to Bates (2005, p. 22) of 'highly motivated students for short-term projects, opportunities to recruit from the pool of students and provision of a forum to sell the industry to students.' What is more, what work experience constitutes is the kind of learning which actually takes place in the workplace: attaining mastery of procedures and of equipment, becoming comfortable with the interpersonal dynamics between supervisors, co-workers and clients, and captivating the corporate culture of how things are done in a certain institution. However, this has not been the case as WIL has been criticised for quite a number of reasons at both theoretical and practical levels.

2.6.2 The disadvantages of WIL

There are a range of limitations associated with learning through work and these need to be understood and included in any informed account. These limitations need to be considered, and

action taken to reduce their impact in any efforts to improve learning in the workplace. Despite the advantages of WIL to the various stakeholders, there is no escaping the fact that 'good WIL is both expensive and difficult to acquire and monitor' (Inui et al., 2006, p. 32). Mutereko and Wedekind (2015) found out that lecturers who were in institutions that practice WIL complain that the assessment, planning and other logistics of WIL are taxing. They revealed that the lecturers have to travel in order to supervise and assess their students and still come back to their institutions to teach and are still supposed to carry out researches for publication (2015). One other issue that discredits WIL is the way the selection of students is done, especially where WIL opportunities are limited. For instance, most employers generally take students' technical competence for granted hence, they place a greater importance on students' generic (soft) skills. This means that more and more employers are increasingly placing a greater emphasis on non-technical and social skills or attitudes such as adaptability, resilience, team-working and communication. Therefore, during the selection process for the WIL program these 'employers put emphasis on these generic skills qualities rather than the technical skills' (Abeysekera, 2006, p. 19) which may disadvantage those students whose generic skills are weak. For example, this would affect those students who cannot communicate effectively and those who are unable to think critically. This group of students are normally bound to fail interviews in relation to WIL. Such an issue could however, be easily solved by modifying the curriculum to place a greater importance on the generic skills that meet the needs of industry. Besides, the OECD (2011, p. 5) articulates that 'the TVET system should provide young people with generic, transferable skills to support occupational mobility and lifelong learning, and with occupationally-specific skills that meet employers' immediate needs.' Additionally, where work placements are secured, employers have been criticised for a range of concerns such as;

a) not monitoring or not ensuring quality learning and leveraging students' knowledge

b) ignorance by employers about learning processes

c) disregard for the expertise and credibility of vocational education teachers

d) poor attitudes of employers to apprentices (Cornford & Gunn, 1998, p. 555).

Instead, employers only ensure that they gain the most out of WIL (Abeysekera, 2006). Jackson (2014) enunciates that employers tend to benefit from WIL by getting short-term employees cheaply, thereby maximising on profits. Thus, some employers regard WIL as a source of cheap labour because they pay students a very little stipend which is almost nothing as compared to

the amount of work that they get to do. For example, Cornford and Gunn (1998, p. 555) revealed that 'in Germany some firms do not train apprentices as an investment, but instead use them as a source of cheap labour.' Cornford and Gunn (1998) further assert that in Australia there is a relatively long history of subsidies and concessions for those who employ apprentices which may also contribute to apprentices in that country being regarded as cheap labour. To add to this, most employers regard WIL as 'trial of employees' without commitment and 'a pool of potential employees' at no cost. All of these imply that the advantages of the placement of students to industry are overtly commercial, being the avoidance of 'turnover' problems, availability of committed individuals and potential contribution by a more serious pool of employees at a low cost.

Not all learning by students which takes place in the workplace is positive and in line with best practice expectations. Most employers do not enhance the students' knowledge and skills. For instance, students not rotated into the different departments of their establishments (Jackson, 2014) particularly in hotels as they are characterised by several departments as previously stated. Billet (2001) on the other hand, identified inappropriate and unhelpful work-related knowledge that is learnt through workplace experiences. Inappropriate learning includes the learning of practices that are sub-standard or prone to cause error, including unhelpful or dangerous shortcuts that restrict the effectiveness of individuals' skills (Jackson, 2014). In addition, most employers have the trades skills in their firms, however, having skills in an occupation does not necessarily mean that an individual has proficiency in teaching those skills to others (Jackson, 2014). As an illustration, a person may be an excellent tradesperson, but may not necessarily have the skills required for training, they may have to go through some specialised form of training to acquire such specialisation. At present, workplace supervisors are not compelled to undertake any training in teaching or instruction (Cornford & Gunn, 1998), a skill that they need when it comes to the training of students in the workplace. Besides, Lucas et al. (2013, p. 25) proclaim that 'vocational instructors/trainers should be holders of both a qualification in a particular trade and in vocational pedagogy so that they can effectively dispense to the students the knowledge and skills that they need for employability in the world of work.' The current situation shows that employers appear to have little or no real understanding of the requirements for effective learning or how to structure workplace experiences so that superior learning and performance result (Jackson, 2013) while the students are on WIL. An uncritical and unrealistic government approach, which expects benefits of

workplace learning to appear without substantial planning and establishment of clear guidelines and training for trainers in the workplace, will not result in increased productivity (Cornford & Gunn, 1998) but rather cause a lot of harm.

Apprentices on training in the workplace often lack opportunities to practise because of the size or highly specialised nature of the organisation in which they are attached (Cornford & Gunn, 1998). For example, opportunities may be provided for expert development in vegetarian cuisine for an apprentice chef who may be employed at a vegetarian restaurant, but few opportunities exist for skill development in other culinary areas (Nelson & Dopson, 2001), such as, meat, fish and poultry. This suggests a need for greater monitoring by lecturers of on-the-job skills being learned and practised by apprentices. Where types of skills available for learning are limited, movement of apprentices to a variety of organisations may be necessary and should be encouraged to provide a broad base for skill learning and expert development within a domain. In practice, this does not always happen, especially in South Africa where WIL is not taken seriously and normally regarded as a waste of time and expensive (Mutereko & Wedekind, 2015). It still appears that the needs of the employers in the WIL process are considered over and above the needs of the students.

The employment of students during WIL is known to bring numerous challenges and problems to companies. For example, in some cases, students would have had little or no experience handling machinery, posing considerable risk to company property (Atchoarena & Delluc, 2002). Therefore, it is in the interests of industry to view the unskilled students as a special breed of employees that need extra supervision and instruction to safeguard company equipment and not compromise quality of service and the image of the company. If at all the curricula in TVET were aligned to the needs of industry, employers would not be faced with such challenges because the graduates would have acquired the basic skills required at a workplace in a given discipline of study (Lockwood & Jones, 1989), that is before they undergo the WIL program. The introduction of inexperienced labour in companies through WIL has serious effects on cost control and profitability (DeFranco & Noriega, 2000). For instance, Corford and Gunn (1998, p. 556) say that ‘employers see apprentices as likely to be low achieving or below average in terms of work related skills.’ Therefore, there is a need for induction at the workplace, supervision, mentoring, providing opportunities for students to

learn and apply their conceptual skills and providing regular feedback to students. These are considered as good practice, but could be very costly to the companies because there is a lot of time involved and under normal circumstances time lost is money lost. Cornford and Gunn (1998, p. 556) further argue that 'trainees, particularly in the first month or so, are certainly novice employees who do not possess a wealth of knowledge and experience,' therefore, they tend to contribute little to productive work, and often cost more to companies than they produce. In most cases, employers invest a lot of money in providing initial training to these new employees on how to use machinery, specialist tools and the like. This could mean that the students need more instruction time which could create higher costs for employers, and could develop skills more slowly and thus generating fewer benefits for the firm (Jackson, 2013). This could lead into WIL being a liability to industry yet, the WIL program should ensure that the employer receives a greater benefit than the costs incurred. On the contrary, this does not mean that these young people are necessarily without the skills needed to do the job, but are perceived as likely to be (Wolf, 2002). What this scenario normally leads to, is a situation where players in industry only accept students from reputable institutions or institutions they have dealt with before.

If WIL is factored into the training equation, it could go a long way in bringing about graduates that are furnished with knowledge and skills that are required by industry. Therefore, training institutions need to work together with industry in the formulation of training programmes to ensure that WIL is made a part of the training package. Some employers may care about the future of young people but cannot afford to hire a graduate fresh from a TVET college if that would generate losses for their business, especially if they have never been on WIL. Encouraging the large-scale provision of WIL opportunities requires programmes that are carefully designed in a way that works for businesses. This could be achieved through partnerships in training. This can help ensure that WIL is both an opportunity to demonstrate support for the student, and is also beneficial for a business' bottom line. With care, learning can often be integrated into productive work, which yields higher benefits for firms, while maintaining learning quality. One element that could drive the TVET colleges forward is the introduction of new curricula that clearly address the need for WIL thus making it relevant to the needs of industry.

2.7 Conclusion

The NC(V) hospitality studies programme if well-developed could go a very long way in supplying the global hospitality industry with quality graduates that are readily responsive to the knowledge-driven economic needs. However, according to the research literature, there are certain things that would have to be in place for this to be achieved. The reviewed literature has revealed that partnerships between training institutions and relevant stakeholders are relevant so that the employers can directly be involved with the training of their future employees. Such partnerships are likely to ensure that the curriculum is more aligned with the needs of industry. Through partnerships, institutions of higher learning could benefit by attaching their staff and students to the workplace through what DHET (2012) termed WIL. Although WIL has its own short-comings, the researched literature has shown how WIL is one central aspect that could benefit graduates in attaining skills and knowledge so that their employability is enhanced. With WIL the student is able to marry theory to praxis and thereby bringing about a fully trained individual who is ready to run once on the job floor. However, there has been an outcry by some employers when it comes to WIL. They have complained that students are not able to operate machines, therefore, they waste a lot of time monitoring students instead of being productive. The reviewed literature has also illuminated that there could be need for TVET colleges to restructure their programmes, through the transformation of the current curricula to ensure that training is demand-driven. New curricula could also be re-designed to address the need for both the practical knowledge (the know-how) which Mutereko & Wedekind (2015) termed knowledge-how and theoretical knowledge (the know-that). The inclusion of these two types of knowledge brings about the dual character of vocational knowledge which is important because in recent times, the workplace demands employees whose training is based on a range of knowledge and skills which enable them to think flexibly. This enables them to produce quality products and to work across a range of different practical contexts as the market demands from time to time. If all these aspects are considered in the re-designing of TVET curricula, the colleges could be in a position to produce skilled human resources that are amongst the most crucial inputs of a modern knowledge-driven economy. This could mean that the TVET system could be in a position to deliver human resources according to what the labour market needs.

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This study aims to find out if the NC(V) hospitality Studies curriculum aligns with the needs of industry. This was instigated by the large numbers of graduates who have graduated from the TVET system who are unemployed, although opportunities for skilled workers do exist in the economy. Some of those who are in employment are in trades that they did not train for. This raised concerns about their inability to provide skills required by the labour market. The study therefore, aims to determine whether TVET colleges in South Africa are able to produce NC(V) hospitality studies graduates that are ready for the world of work in terms of relevant skills necessary for their entry into the job market. The research questions that had to be answered were;

- to what extent does the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum in TVET colleges satisfy the needs of the hospitality industry?
- what perceptions do the graduates have regarding the relationship between the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum and the needs of the employer?
- what expectations do employers have with regard to the NC(V) hospitality studies graduates employed in their companies?
- what are the views of the lecturers concerning the relationship between the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum and the skills needs of industry?

The objectives to the study were to; highlight the expectations of industry regarding the NC(V) hospitality studies graduates, investigate if training received at college by the graduates is relevant to the world of work, establish the extent and nature of partnership between industry and TVET colleges and examine the views of the lecturers concerning the relationship between the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum and the needs of industry. The purpose of this chapter is to describe in more detail the methodology used to achieve the research objectives of this study. The chapter commences with a brief description of what qualitative research is and the reasons why the researcher chose to use it for this study. This is followed by a detailed discussion of the research methodology, research population and sampling, ethical considerations, data collection methods and techniques and the data collection instruments. Finally, the data analysis is discussed.

3.2 Research Methodology

This study is qualitative in nature as it was regarded the most suitable approach to the study, which sought to find out whether the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum was aligned to the needs of industry. Qualitative research is aimed at gaining a deep understanding of a specific organisation or event, rather than surface description of a large sample of a population (Welman & Kruger, 2003). This research emphasised the gathering of data on naturally occurring phenomena from the respondents. The researcher chose this approach as meaning was let to emerge from the participants as it granted an interactive relationship between the researcher and the participants as well as their experiences with the NC(V) hospitality curriculum and the industry in question. This type of research permitted the adjustment of concepts, data collection tools and data collection methods as the research progressed. Qualitative research was chosen because it aimed at getting a better understanding through first-hand experience, truthful reporting and quotations of actual conversations between the researcher and the individual respondents, regarding the relationship between the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum and the needs of the employer. The researcher focused on the respondents' lived experiences by searching for deeper understanding of their experiences with the NC(V) hospitality curriculum so that the objectives of the research would be achieved. Qualitative research is a process of providing descriptive details of the participants of the research. This means that the researcher became an instrument through which data was collected and analysed.

3.2.1 Research population

MacMillan & Schumacher (2012, p. 143) define the research population as 'that group of elements that conform to specific criteria and to which the researcher intends to generalise the results of the research.' This group is also referred to as the universe. The term population itself refers to the establishment of boundary conditions that specify who would be included or excluded from the study. The research population and the sampling procedures and selection used allowed the researcher to gain access to relevant data sources to address the research questions. For the purpose of this study, the population comprised of;

- three hotel training managers (two males and one female) from hotels in East Rand. The three hotels were chosen on the basis that they employed NC(V) hospitality graduates from the chosen TVET college in Gauteng (the training managers represented

the employer because they dealt directly with graduates on inception into the workplace)

- eighteen NC(V) hospitality graduates from a conveniently selected TVET college in Gauteng who are employed by the above mentioned hotels (the three hotels in the study employed 18 NC(V) graduates). Of the 18 graduates, 17 of them were females and only one was male. Evidently, the hospitality programme is dominated by female students.
- six lecturers (one male and five females) in total taught NC(V) hospitality studies in the selected TVET College.

In total the population summed up to twenty-seven (23 females and 4 males). The East Rand area was used for the selection of participants because it was a convenient site for the researcher who herself, resides and works in the same area. She was trying to eliminate time wastage through travelling long distances to data collection sites and to cut travel costs to and from the data collection sites.

3.2.2 Sample selection

The social scientists have neither the time nor resources to carry out a study of a whole population. Therefore, it follows that all research investigations involve sample selection. Babbie (1990) define sampling as the activities involved in selecting a subset of persons or things from a larger population in order to examine these parts, usually with the aim of making judgements about the parts of the population that have not been investigated. This means that education researchers will often want to use data obtained from the study of a sample in order to say or write something about the larger population. Therefore, the major advantage of using a sample is that it is not costly and not time consuming than looking at every member of the population. 'Selecting a representative sample is a key element of research design and requires pre-planning in terms of knowledge of the population to be sampled and rigorous selection procedures' (Scott & Morrison, 2005, p. 219). McMillan & Schumacher (2012) define a sample as a group of participants from whom the data are collected. Babbie (1990) identifies purposive sampling strategy as one element in sampling which is critical to this type of research because the sample selection needs to be useful and meaningful in the context of how well it will allow the researcher to generate data which advances the focus of the research question. This strategy will be explained in the next section.

3.2.3 Purposive sampling

Purposive sampling is selecting a sample on the basis of one's own knowledge of the population, its elements, and the nature of the research aims (Scott & Morrison, 2005). Purposive sampling is essential when researchers are studying a specific characteristic, feature or function. In this instance, the study intended to find out if the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum aligned with the needs of the employer. To ensure that the research collected relevant information; enable increased participation by the participants and avoid wasting time taking samples that had nothing to do with the research topic, the researcher purposively selected; employers who employed NC(V) hospitality studies graduates, the NC(V) hospitality graduates who were in employment and lecturers that taught NC(V) hospitality studies as respondents to the study. She was of the assumption that these respondents were to give her data that was rich and relevant to the study.

This method was also useful as the researcher wanted to study a small subset of a larger population in which many members of the subset were easily identified but the enumeration of all was nearly impossible. Due to the nature of the qualitative study, it was necessary to keep the number of participants to a minimum to enable detailed qualitative data to be collected and so that costs are kept low. A sample size of eleven participants from a population of twenty-seven was selected and this comprised of;

- three hotel training managers in the East Rand area (2 males and 1 female)
- six NC(V) hospitality graduates that were employed by the employers in the study (1 male and 5 females)
- two NC(V) hospitality studies lecturers (1male and 1 female) from a TVET college in East Rand.

The graduates and the lecturers were selected on the basis of availability on the first day the researcher visited the sites. This sample size allowed the researcher to get in-depth insights into the research problem. The question of sample size is critical in a conventional quantitative study as it directly influences the generalisation of study results. However, the sample size of this research is not intended to be representative of the larger research population. Instead, these were selected to allow for the generation of data to develop an explanation of their varied experiences in the context of the research. It is the participants' experiences and the knowledge of these experiences which are critical to this research.

The researcher negotiated entry with each establishment that was sampled for data collection by sending letters to seek permission (see Appendix A and B) for conducting research. The study did not commence until such permission was granted. This process accorded the researcher greater access to the establishments and participants were as a result open and candid in their responses. The researcher presented herself as a bona fide student, researcher and educator whose research intended to fulfil the requirements for a Master of Education Degree. Information sheets (see Appendices C-E) with the full description of the research topic and how the interviews were to be conducted were issued to the participants. For full consent, the purpose of the study was explained fully to the participants, their role as participants and how both the participants and the researcher were likely to benefit from the study. Subsequently, the participants were then asked to endorse their consent to participation by signing an informed consent slip (see example in Appendix F).

3.3 Data Collection Methods and Procedures

Qualitative research has several methods of collecting data, as a result, most researchers often triangulate these methods so that there is credibility and legitimacy in the data. There is often fears that 'all qualitative fieldwork done by a single field worker invites the question, why should we believe it?' It is for this reason that the researcher triangulated two qualitative data collection methods of in-depth interviews with the employers, graduates and lecturers and document analysis. The quality of data would not have been as adequately represented if document analysis was used as a standalone method of generating data, in fact, it was mainly conducted for credibility reasons. Semi-structured interviews were used within this research to give the researcher access to a fuller and fairer representation of the perspectives of the research participants who were chosen for their appropriateness to the research topic. This method of collecting data was selected as the predominant method because the direct interaction accorded the researcher a greater opportunity not only to obtain data, (through listening, probing, gaining access to experiences) but to have immediate and greater depth and clarity on the data provided. This is supported by Welman and Kruger (2003) who state that the use of interviews in qualitative research is to seek in-depth understandings about the experiences of individuals and groups, drawing from a small sample of people, selected purposively, and with a de-emphasis rather than a necessarily whole-scale rejection of generalisability. Observations would not have

allowed the researcher to determine the respondents' attitudes and feelings regarding certain issues in the topic and focus groups would have infringed on the respondents' anonymity and confidentiality.

3.3.1 Pre-Testing

After drafting and developing the interview schedule, it had to be tested to check if it would collect the right information. A representative of each group of respondents was used to pre-test the instrument. Three respondents, one from each group, were asked to participate in the pilot study. According to Macmillan and Schumacher (2012), pre-testing has many functions, one of them being the identification and elimination variation in the respondents' understanding and interpretation of the interview. Pre-testing eliminated the possibility of ambiguity in the working and design of the questions in this study. It further assisted the researcher in assessing the time involved in completing the interviews because this is an important issue which impacts on the respondents' time at work. Finally, Pre-testing assisted the researcher in identifying and rectifying any errors in the sequencing of questions and the technique of asking the questions. Their feedback was considered in compiling the final interview schedule.

3.3.2 Semi-structured interviews with NC(V) Hospitality Lecturers

Two NC(V) hospitality lecturers were interviewed. The researcher visited the participants at the college to prevent waste of time. Each participant was interviewed at their own time. Lunch breaks were used for conducting the research since the researcher did not want to use the lecturers' working hours. The questions on the interview schedule were not rigidly followed. Instead, the researcher used them as a general guide in which emergent questions were asked. This was done so as to give the respondents more room to express themselves. The researcher probed for in-depth responses and guided the interviews to ensure that all areas that relate to the research questions were thoroughly dealt with. The interviews with lecturers were conducted in English. The questions on the guide were open-ended and refinement was made as the interviews progressed. This allowed for a more in-depth understanding of matters. Guiding areas of hospitality domains were established and situational questions as guided by the lecturers' responses were asked. The issues that were discussed included the relevance of the NC(V) hospitality curriculum to the needs of industry, the lecturers' qualifications, how

lecturers incorporated theory into practice into the teaching and learning processes and their perception on the relationship between the NC(V) curriculum and the needs of industry. The interviews with lecturers were complemented by document analysis in which the NC(V) Hospitality Services NQF Levels 2 – 4 SGs and college timetables were analysed. The interviews were held separately with each respondent and each was about 40 minutes long.

3.3.3 Semi-structured Interviews with employers and graduates

The researcher visited the participants at their workplaces. It was, however, time consuming, energy sapping and it required a lot of patience to organise the interviews. In a number of occasions, interview dates and times had to be rescheduled because the employers often had other pressing commitments. The researcher ended up settling for telephonic interviews with two of the employers. The graduates on the other hand, were at times held up because they got too busy at work. The interviews were guided by a broad outline of issues to be discussed in the form of questions. The questions were however, not rigidly followed, but they provided the researcher with a general framework in which emergent questions were asked, so as to give the respondents greater latitude to express their views. The researcher probed for in-depth responses and guided the interviews to ensure that all areas were adequately addressed. It involved asking impromptu and situational questions. These were adjusted to suit the participants' cognition of the hospitality discourse, their language and knowledge of hospitality content. Most interviews were conducted in English although some were conducted in the respondents' mother languages. Open-ended questions which were tailor made for the research participants and refined as the research progressed allowed the researcher to explore deeply into social and personal matters pertaining to the expectations of the employer with regard to the NC(V) hospitality studies graduates and the perceptions of graduates in relation to expectations in industry on what was taught to them in college, their responses were also corroborated to the findings from the document analysis. There are a number of unique aspects of semi-structured interviews that contributed to the rich, insightful results to this study, and these are;

- the opportunity to probe ('help me understand why you feel that way') enabled the researcher to reach beyond initial responses and rationales

- the opportunity to observe, record and interpret non-verbal communication (such as; body language, voice intonation) as part of a respondent's feedback, which was valuable during interviews
- the dynamic nature of the interview process, which engaged respondents more actively than would have been possible in more structured survey
- in some instances, the participants' natural languages were used in order to come to a genuine understanding of their world.

During the interviews, the researcher took notes using pen and paper as well as audio-taping to avoid missing out on any information. She however, could not audio-tape the telephonic interviews with the other two employers. The audio-recordings were then immediately transcribed, typed and then coded later on during the formal analysis process. The researcher chose to use audio-tape recording so that she could be able to save the research data using a standard, interchangeable and long-lasting format, to avoid being unable to use the data, either during the study and/or in the future. Effective research data management is a cornerstone of the responsible conduct of research and its storage and preservation are key elements in the research data lifecycle. The researcher used audio-tape recording in collecting data. Firstly, for the preservation of data that was collected from all the interviews, secondly for the validation of the outcomes of the study through corroboration and dissemination, and thirdly for the maintenance of integrity of the research results. It is also aimed to facilitate a reliable validation and verification of results, thereby help guarantee the quality and authenticity of data. To ensure that the respondents expressed themselves freely during interviews, pre-briefing visits (although limited) were made to each one of them during which, the purpose of the interview was explained.

3.4 Document Analysis

The concept of using more than one method to collect data was used to add comprehensiveness to data collection in this study. Document analysis is often used in combination with other qualitative research methods as a means of contrasting or comparing findings. Such data augmented and triangulated the claims made by the respondents during interviews. The documents that have been used are as follows;

- the Hospitality Services NQF Level 2 – 4 Subject Guidelines (SGs)
- the college time-table

These documents provided the researcher with supplementary research data to ascertain whether the findings from the interviews with the lectures and the graduates were consistent with what was in the documents. Particularly regarding the teaching and learning of theory and practice and time allocation for vocational curriculum. The researcher has also used document analysis because existing data boosted richness and robustness to the data obtained from the interviews by providing parallel data sets and another view of the bigger picture, as well as corroboration and reassurance to the research findings. The information and insights derived from these documents were valuable additions to the knowledge base in this research. An analysis of these documents was necessary because according to Eisner (1991, p. 184) an analysis of documents 'frequently reveal what people will not and cannot say' more especially in interviews.

3.4.1 Analysis of the NC(V) Hospitality Services NQF Level 2 – 4 Subject Guidelines

Hospitality Services, is one of the 4 vocational subjects within the NC(V) hospitality studies qualification whose SGs were used in the analysis. This is due to the fact that, unlike the other 3 vocational subjects, Hospitality Services covers a range of topics, ranging from the food and beverage department, housekeeping, the front office section to the accommodation services department. This means that the subject covers a range of activities related to the departments in hotels. These activities include among others food and beverage service activities, laying of tables, the making of beds, laundry, reception activities etc. Furthermore, a lot of concerns were raised by both the lecturers and the graduates regarding this subject, hence the researcher decided to use the subject in the analysis.

The Hospitality Services SGs were analysed in order to ascertain the extent to which the curriculum leaned towards the needs of industry, and if they did, how and what curriculum activities and content were suggested. They were also analysed in order to establish if there was a relationship between theory and practice in the SGs and to find out if the impartation of soft-skills was considered in training. The learning outcomes from these SGs were used as the unit of analysis (see table on page 912) and these were analysed according to the following themes;

- theoretical knowledge
- practical knowledge
- workplace knowledge and
- soft-skills

These themes were obtained from the data gathered during interviews and the review of related literature. When the learning outcomes in respect of the Hospitality Services were analysed the questions that were taken into account were;

- is there a balance between the amount of theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge in the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum?
- did the graduates have adequate time to practice requisite skills at college during training?
- is there a WIL component in the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum?
- have soft-skills been factored into the curriculum?

The analyses attempted to pick on those aspects that relate to the teaching and learning process of the programme that will help students attain the skills that match the needs of the employer and the extent to which the content matched the needs of industry. In fact, the main focus was on how the documents reflected infusion of industry needs. The findings from the documents were triangulated with data from the semi-structured interviews. This was to ascertain whether what the lecturers claimed they taught and what the graduates said they were taught or learnt and what the employers said they encountered was consistent and evident in the documents. The documents were analysed one at a time but the findings were later summed up.

3.4.2 Analysis of the college timetable

The college timetable (see Appendix J) was reviewed in order to ascertain the extent to which the amount of time that was allocated for both the theoretical and practical concepts of the SGs matched the time stipulation in the SGs. The analysis of this document was also carried out so as to corroborate the findings from the interviews to make certain that what the graduates and lecturers claimed about the time allocation on the college timetable regarding the teaching and learning of Hospitality Services was consistent and evident in the documents, or whether such information was misconstrued. The questions that were taken into account when the college timetable was analysed were;

- Is there a balance in the amount of time allocated for theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge in the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum?
- did the graduates have adequate time to practice requisite skills at school during training?

3.5 Data Analysis procedures

Data analysis is the application of reasoning to understand and interpret the data which was gathered. The appropriate analytical technique for data analysis were determined by the researcher's information requirements, the characteristics of the research design and the nature of the data collected (Eisner, 1991). The inductive approach was used to analyse the gathered information. With this method what was important to analyse, were the statements of facts inductively derived from the interviews and document analysis. Content analysis was used to analyse data from interviews. This involved reading through the texts and identifying information relevant to each objective and research questions. The gathered data was however, first organised into initial codes which informed the themes that were used in the analysis. The themes in this case were informed by a cross reference of the common emergent themes from the literature review, the data accumulated through personal interviews, findings by other researchers from similar researches, the researcher's expertise, the objectives and the research questions of this study. A theme represents a level of patterned responses or meaning from the data that is related to the research questions at hand. The themes that were used in the analysis of data were;

- theoretical and practical knowledge in a vocational curriculum
- resources in TVET colleges
- work-integrated learning
- soft skills in vocational training
- partnerships in training

Analysis of data was carried out concurrently with data collection as well as collecting the data and subsequent data analysis. The latter approach was more formal and detailed. A mechanical process of sorting the descriptive data collected and also physically separating data was used in arranging interview transcripts and notes from document analysis and breaking it into

manageable units of data to increase the researcher's understanding of the data. The findings were then presented in text in a summary form whilst some responses were quoted verbatim.

3.6 Validity and Reliability

Qualitative researchers in particular are concerned with the accuracy and comprehensiveness of data collected to establish trustworthiness and to persuade readers that the findings of the research are factual and worth reading. Reliability as indicated by Welman and Kruger (2003) is not sought for its own sake, but as a precondition for validity. The main factor to be put into consideration is minimising bias when undertaking a research that will be deemed credible. Therefore, the research design of this study is designed to control and minimise threats to the internal validity and to ensure that credible findings and interpretations will be produced. In any interpretive study it is necessary for the researcher to situate him/herself in relation to the context of the research and to declare possible biases that might influence the interpretation of data (Scott & Morrison, 2005). Each and every researcher brings to each and every research their own experience, ideas and preconceptions which must be eliminated before the research is conducted so as to enhance the transparency of possible research bias (Badenhorst, 2007).

The researcher has been employed as an NC(V) hospitality studies lecturer for the past seven years in a TVET college. She therefore, has an understanding of the current debates regarding the relationship between the TVET curricula and the needs of industry and the work culture of the programme in question. This means that her position renders her the ability to pick up any falsification within the research participants' responses with regard to the research topic. However, the presence of the researcher who herself is a TVET NC(V) hospitality studies lecturer, who might have taught some of the participants and a colleague to one other class of participants may affect the validity of the data provided by the research participants. These participants may behave abnormally (Brink, 1993) and may also seek to reveal themselves in the best possible light or withhold or distort certain information that could be important. The participants may be scared that the given information could be used negatively; either against them and/or their companies/institutions. To counteract this potential problem, the researcher tried to build some form of relationship with the research participants to ensure that there was

some sort of trust between the researcher and the participants by regularly visiting them before she could obtain accurate reliable or credible data.

The researcher's type of work in a TVET college made it possible for her to access and interpret the Hospitality Services NQF Level 2 – 4 Subject Guidelines with ease, as she had knowledge of the content of the curriculum in question, prior to beginning the research. Her knowledge of the curriculum outline gave her the ability to communicate freely with her research respondents. Additionally, the researcher has once been employed in the hospitality industry, this experience and knowledge enabled her to interview the participants from the hospitality industry with confidence since she has background knowledge of the industry. This means that the researcher was in a better position to follow and understand the conversation during the interviews. The researcher has also used a device known as respondent validation to check on the validity of her conclusion. In this instance the researcher's verbatim transcript of interviews that she conducted were returned to the research participants to check and confirm the factual accuracy of the accounts. The participants' post-data perspectives were also used as additional and valuable data for further reflection by the researcher.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Research ethics are indispensable and critical requirements for any research. The ethical considerations in this study involved;

- obtaining permission to interview the graduates, lecturers and training managers from the chosen hotels;
- assuring the directors of the different institutions that the institution names shall remain anonymous;
- obtaining consent from industry and college representatives and graduates to be interviewed;
- obtaining permission from the interviewees to audio-tape the interview;
- assuring the research participants that their operational hours will be respected therefore will use their tea / lunch time breaks for the interviews;
- assuring the respondents of confidentiality of their responses;
- assuring the respondents that they shall remain of anonymous.

Thus, in the presentation of findings and discussion of the data, the researcher did not identify verbatim comments using the respondents' real names. A coding system was used instead; each respondent was identified by a code. In this case code 101 to 102 were used for the lecturers, codes 201 to 206 for the graduates and codes 301 to 303 for the training managers. Furthermore, the respondents were assured that the findings of the research were to be used strictly for academic purposes. The researcher therefore, declared to the participants that the information she was gathering was only to be used towards the completion of the researcher's Masters programme. The researcher also informed the participants that data collected from this research would be stored at Wits School of Education, and that it will be destroyed after 3-5 years, and that she will also safely keep all the data on a flash drive secured by a password and these will too, be destroyed after 3-5 years. Ethical clearance was received from the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Witwatersrand University (see Appendix M). Research involving human participants within institutions, government agencies and universities require specific information to make informed and responsible decisions concerning the ethical acceptability of a proposal.

3.8 Findings and Discussions

That which the researcher has heard, seen, read and now understands was combined into a textual narrative form to bring out some sense from the researched phenomenon. The researcher then presented a discussion of the study findings. These discussions were based on the findings from personal interviews with the selected participants and from the document analysis; the reviewed literature is constantly referenced. Conclusions and recommendations were then drawn on the basis of what the researcher found out and discussed.

3.9 Summary

In this chapter, the researcher examined the design and methodological procedures used in the study. The study was descriptive in nature as it was considered the most appropriate method to the study, which sought to examine the extent at which the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum addressed the needs of the employer. The study sought to solicit the employers', graduates' and lecturers' views and perspectives regarding the NC(V) hospitality curriculum and to what extent it addresses industry needs, through the use of in-depth interviews.

Document analysis was used in order to ascertain whether the findings from the 3 groups of respondents were valid. The researcher explained how the data were collected from the sources of information. In the chapter, the researcher also looked at the study site and justified why participants were all selected from the East Rand region of Gauteng. Data collection methods of in-depth interviews and document analysis were discussed and their relevance in this study were justified. Issues of validity and reliability, ethical considerations and purposive sampling technique in qualitative research were discussed in the context of the study. The next chapters are devoted to data presentation, analysis and interpretation according to the document analysis and the semi-structured interviews, the conclusions to the study, limitations and recommendations.

Chapter 4: The Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the study findings based on information sought on the relevance of the NC(V) Hospitality curriculum to the needs of industry through document analysis and semi-structured interviews with NC(V) hospitality graduates, some hospitality industry employers who have employed NC(V) hospitality graduates and a limited number of NC(V) hospitality lecturers. The research questions that were sought to be addressed are;

- to what extent does the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum in TVET colleges satisfy the needs of the hospitality industry?
- what perceptions do the graduates have with regards to the relationship between the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum and the needs of the employer?
- what expectations do employers have with regards to the NC(V) hospitality studies graduates employed in their companies?
- what are the views of the lecturers with regards to the relationship between the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum and the skills needs of industry?

The respondents' real names were not used for anonymity and ethical reasons, therefore the researcher used codes for each and every interviewee. The two lecturers in the study were coded as Lecturer 101 and 102; the researcher just picked the numbers from the number line. In like manner, the six graduates were coded as Graduate 201 to Graduate 206 and the training managers were given the codes Employer 301 to 303.

The inductive approach was used to analyse the gathered data. With this method what was important to analyse were the statements of facts inductively derived from interviews. The gathered data from the interviews was first organised into initial codes which informed the themes. A theme represents a level of patterned response or meaning from the data that is related to the research questions at hand (Scott & Morrison, 2005). The chosen themes in this case were informed by a cross reference of the common emergent themes from the literature review, the data accumulated through personal interviews, findings by other researchers from

similar researches, the researcher's expertise and the research questions of this study. Table 4.1 below shows the themes that were used in the study.

Table 4. 1 Themes used in analysing the data

Themes used
Theoretical and practical knowledge in a vocational curriculum
Resources in TVET colleges
Work-integrated learning
Soft skills in vocational training
Partnerships in training

4.2 Findings in relation to interviews with Lecturers

Before the researcher could find out the lecturers' views with regard the relationship between the NC(V) Hospitality Studies curriculum and the skills needs of industry, she sought to find out their profiles in order to determine the kind of qualifications that they held because she identified TVET college lecturing staff as the key drivers of the vocational curriculum as they are the curriculum implementers. According to Wedekind and Watson (2012, p. 2), 'the extent to which lecturers have practised their trades in the workplace is an important qualitative dimension of what they ultimately teach the learners.' Therefore, the interviews with lecturers sought to elicit and cross-check data pertaining to lecturers' pedagogic, trade and workplace qualifications and experience. Table 4.2 overleaf presents the findings on lecturer qualifications and workplace experience.

Table 4. 2 Lecturers' qualifications and workplace experience

Lecturer	Academic qualifications	Trade qualifications	Pedagogical qualifications	Industrial experience (Years)	Teaching experience – TVET (Years)
101	Grade 12	Diploma in Hospitality management	Post graduate Diploma in Education	2 years and 9months	5 years
102	NC(V)	Bachelor of Technology Accommodation Studies	None	None	4 years

Lecturer 101 is a holder of a Diploma in Hospitality Management and a Post-Graduate Certificate in Education and specialised in Hospitality and Technology. On the other hand, **Lecturer 102** holds a Bachelor of Technology degree in Accommodation Studies. He is not a qualified teacher because he does not hold any qualification in education. In short, Lecturer **102** unlike Lecturer **101** only possesses a subject matter qualification, with no pedagogical grounding.

When asked about the limitations that they encountered in their effort to implement the NC(V) hospitality curriculum with regard to the type of training that they had, **Lecturer 101** stated that she found teaching NC(V) hospitality quite interesting because she had a qualification in the hospitality trade and was also a qualified teacher and therefore, had the basis of teaching methodology. She said although she at first found it difficult to interpret the syllabus, she quickly found her way as she now calls herself an expert in the field. She also revealed that she has worked in the hospitality industry with no interruption for two years and that she also went to the workplace for WIL during training for 9 months. She also added that the college once took her to industry for practice for 5 days; although she said the 5 days were too short. She went on to say that this experience has to some extent helped her in a positive way when it comes to the teaching of some skills to her students as she now has a rough idea of how things are done in industry although it has been a long time now. On the contrary, **Lecturer 102** admitted that he does not have any industrial experience at all. He said that he has no idea of

how things are done in industry. In order to enhance the quality of TVET, the training, knowledge and skills that the lecturers have is of utmost importance if the TVET system is to churn out graduates that have the right knowledge and skills that meet the needs of the employer.

4.2.1 Theoretical and Practical knowledge in a vocational curriculum

According to Young and Gamble (2006) a vocational curriculum is supposed to address both theoretical and practical knowledge. Therefore, in response to the question on whether theoretical and practical knowledge are both addressed in the NC(V) hospitality curriculum; **Lecturer 101** said that there was no balance between the two, in fact, there was a lot of theoretical knowledge than there was practice. She said that this was confirmed by the time-tables that they were using that seemed to favour a curriculum that is heavily laden by theoretical content rather than practice. She also noted that the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum was too broad and too demanding as it comprises of three fundamental subjects, which in themselves have their own requirements, and the four specialisation subjects which she said in themselves are highly challenging. She said;

> *it is impossible for the student to learn everything because, what is to be taught from the subject guidelines is too long and highly demanding, besides, the subjects are too many, making it difficult to factor in the practical part on the timetables. It is for this reason that we teach most stuff theoretically.*

Lecturer 102 echoed the same sentiments as he also revealed that the learning outcomes for the NC(V) curriculum were more inclined to theory than practice. He said that in comparison to practical knowledge, theoretical knowledge in many instances dominates what is offered by way of the curriculum. This lecturer indicated that they spent most of their time with students providing a lot of drilling exercises theoretically to ensure that students master concepts in preparation for the examination. He stated that;

> *we teach for the exams and assessments because all what the colleges worry about is the certification rate and not what hard skill the student has acquired. If the students fail, we get into trouble, therefore, we would rather save face by teaching for exams. And the way teaching and learning is conducted and how most assessments and examination questions are asked, requires students to know the information in the textbook off by heart, like parrots. There is a lot of information the students must remember, and that is why the focus is on theory rather than practice.*

Both respondents have mentioned that the NC(V) curriculum is heavily laden with theoretical knowledge and has very little amount of the practical component which could equip the

students with the kind of technical skills that industry requires. **Lecturer 102** confessed that what made him teach concepts theoretically was because he did not understand the Subject and Assessment Guidelines that are rather sketchy. He said that;

> *in my first years as a lecturer, I found it difficult to interpret the Subject and Assessment Guideline documents into a concrete teaching programme and content because they are sketchy, and besides, the learning outcomes show the intention of assessments. I would say, our curriculum is more of an assessment one. I think I could have been in a better position if I had a teacher training qualification. I wish the college and DHET would offer some form of pedagogical training to those lecturers that are not trained, things would be far much better, we would at least know what to do once in the classroom or workshop. I also feel that if I had industrial experience I would be able to teach some concepts better, more especially the technical ones.*

He also affirmed that he has never been to industry before, not even during training, he thus said that he does not know much on how things are done in industry. By so doing he then revealed that he is forced to teach concepts by the book. The NC(V) Qualification framework and policy, supported by the Subject and Assessment Guidelines (SAG), are seen by the Department of Higher Education as constituting the NC(V) curriculum. **Lecturer 102** has noted that he sometimes finds it difficult to interpret these documents into a concrete teaching programme/content, as the learning outcomes in the SAG are exactly what assessments are intended to show, specifically what the student will be able to do upon completing a particular topic.

The respondents also put blame on the lack of time for the effective delivery (more especially) of the vocational subjects and more precisely Hospitality Services as Lecturer **101** noted;

> *very little time is allocated for workshops or practical lessons especially regarding housekeeping, front office, bar and restaurant that is why the focus is on theory rather than practice, because of lack of time, and sometimes there is ineffective timetabling, for example, timetables being drawn up for specific periods for subjects which don't take into account setting up a workshop for a practical activity or clearing up afterwards.*

The lecturer revealed that they were always racing against time, as there was little teaching – learning time allocated to the vocational subjects that had content that was too long and too demanding, especially, a lack of time for the practical components. She further added that it resulted in lecturers resorting to teaching concepts theoretically and not practically, thus affecting the type of graduate that is produced by TVET colleges. The lecturers in the study also highlighted that the students mostly go to skills training through hands-on practical activities in the workshops around September every year for just a month for ISAT, a once off

practical assessment that contributes a mark towards the final mark per level. Although by that time of the academic year students would have been exposed to a considerable amount of theory. The lecturers said that most of the time the students find it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to incorporate the theory that they would have learnt throughout the year into practice in just a month.

4.2.2 Resources in TVET colleges

Training resources in the form of physical structures, equipment and consumables are needed if a vocational curriculum is to produce graduates that industry desires. Below are some of the sentiments aired by the lecturers during the interviews concerning the availability of resources during training.

When asked what limitations the lecturers encountered in their effort to implement the curriculum; **Lecturer 101** indicated that they never had facilities that they could use for hospitality services related areas such as, bar service, restaurants, housekeeping and front office. She further stated that;

> *for the hospitality curriculum to be implemented successfully, there is need for fully fitted working kitchens that can serve one station per student, proper restaurants that are equipped, well-equipped computer labs, classrooms etc. and a good supply of consumables. We however, don't have these facilities, there are shortages of training materials in the hospitality section; engaging each student in practical work in our old kitchens and restaurants poses critical problems, considering that most of the equipment is outdated and broken too.*

She went on to say, 'in some cases, consumables are not available in time mainly due to shortages of money to address the requests of different practical sessions.' She went on to say that this is worsened by poor procurement systems and bureaucracy, more especially in public TVET institutions, a weakness that is inherently a government trait. This respondent further stated that this challenge was limiting them as lecturers and was a main concern especially when it came to the dispensation of practical lessons so as to impart the necessary skills to the students. 'This scenario forces lecturers to focus their effort on the theoretical concepts of the curriculum or teach practical components theoretically, thereby failing to inculcate the type of technical skill that industry needs,' she added;

> *we fail to teach the necessary skills because we do not have the facilities, structures and equipment to use during our practical lessons. For example, we only have basic equipment and utensils in the kitchens, which also come in short supply and these*

> *are not quite useful because we have big classes of 30. The equipment that we have in the kitchens is very old and will not help us train our students adequately.*

This lecturer also believes that industry uses new systems and software in taking bookings and stock control, but in college they still teach their students the manual ways of doing reservations and how to do the bin card, and these are very old methods of work. She noted that there was a very serious mismatch of the curriculum to the needs of industry due to a lack of resources. She also mentioned that the time allocated for practical lessons on the timetable was another limiting factor in training. She revealed that timetables mostly do not accommodate the practical aspects of the curriculum and that is the other reason why she resorts to teaching concepts theoretically. Similarly, **lecturer 102** echoed;

> *we do not have enough resources to help us execute the practical lessons. For example, we do not have enough kitchens, the ones we have are not fully equipped. We have nothing to show for housekeeping, front office and event operations. We also lack support structures when it comes to the implementation of this curriculum. We sometimes need help but we cannot get it. The issue of ingredients is a big problem. We sometimes have to forego lessons because we do not have the ingredients and other consumables such as detergents.*

He further reflected that the increase in enrolment and the sizes of classes that they have do not match the type and amount of facilities that they have. He says this resulted in TVET institutions operating under stringent conditions and compromising on quality when it came to training as he stated;

> *the number of students expected in workshops, especially the kitchens and the restaurants is too high, the ratio of lecturer to students is 1:30 this makes it impossible for students to work in a real workplace situation. To provide for this we always divide the groups into two and thus divide the session into two as well. This means that we also cut the amount of time each learner is supposed to be exposed to the practical sessions. The other thing is that we compromise on quality, especially when it comes to recipes. We sometimes don't get the amount of ingredients we need, because we are told there is no money, so we end up grouping students to work on the same task…*

Both respondents said that such resource constraints seemed to have a direct effect on the competence development of the students. Firstly, the amount of time a learner was exposed to a practical learning session was reduced. Secondly, the unavailability of some consumables, use of outdated equipment and shortages of equipment could compromise training as they said they end up focusing on the theory rather than both theory and practice. The respondents have also highlighted that without proper workshop space, consumables, and latest software, the implementation and structuring of the programme was compromised.

4.2.3 Work-integrated learning (WIL)

Jackson (2013) states that WIL has attracted considerable attention as an instrument for enhancing professional practice and developing work-readiness in new graduates. It is for this reason that WIL has been deemed to be a necessary component in any vocational curriculum. This prompted the researcher to find out if WIL was a part of the NC(V) hospitality curriculum.

In finding out the level of the lecturers' understanding of what WIL was and its importance to training, **Lecturer 101** said that she understood WIL and its importance in training. She further outlined that WIL enabled students to gain valuable experience by way of applying what they would have learnt practically in the workplace. She also said that WIL helped to develop the students' skills in interacting with fellow workers, customers and management and discover in which direction they would like to steer their careers. This lecturer also reported that learning in the workplace helped students keep abreast of technological developments in order to maintain a competitive edge on the job market. She added that the students attained the soft-skills that employers mostly put emphasis upon when they advertise jobs. **Lecturer 102** in agreement stated that the industrial workplace, was likely to have modern equipment and changed work practices and skills developed around technology, and thus made it an appropriate setting for training and learning. He went on to say that this meant that the students could achieve more if WIL was a part of the training package. He further mentioned that when students go on industrial attachments they were likely to be provided with an opportunity to practise skills which may not otherwise be available to students at college, particularly in periods of economic downturn. These respondents agreed that WIL was important as a part of training.

The researcher then posed a follow-up question to check if WIL was a part of the NC(V) curriculum. Both respondents said no, it was not. **Lecturer 101** revealed that final year students (NQF Level 4) voluntarily and during vacations, go to seek work-based experience (WBE) with any company of their choice for about 5 to 10 days. It has been revealed that the college was itself not involved and does not do any follow-up visits. This respondent also revealed that WIL in their college although done in a few days was not well organised in that the lecturers have no contact with their students' employers. The lecturers were often unaware of where the students were deployed and what exactly they were doing in the workplace and did not know

which students had volunteered to go on WIL. She also indicated that the students were often in possession of workbooks that were not well compiled and which did not clearly outline what the students should be doing in industry. **Lecturer 102** concurred, he said that sometimes the college asked students to do what they have termed WBE during the students' own free times, during the holidays or weekends. 'They go out there out of their own will and they are provided with workbooks, but only on request,' he stated. He continued to say that none of the lecturers were involved with follow-up because this exercise was not even communicated to the lecturers as it was on voluntary basis.

The research has also found out that WIL was also good for the lecturers as they could also attain modern knowledge and skills that they must transmit to the students during training. This would go a long way in trying to bring in relevance and currency to training. However, the study revealed that some lecturers lacked this component. Concerning industrial experience and training, **Lecturer 101** revealed that she had been to industry for 9 months when she was still in college and had also worked in the hotel industry for 2 years after her initial training. She felt that the skills and knowledge she had and was offering to the students were outmoded as industry was now using new technologies in the form of machinery and systems. She confessed;

> *most of us as lecturers have long been in industry, while some of us know nothing about industry, they have never been. Right now we are not sure if we are teaching the right information and giving the correct skill to our students. For example, I reckon industry uses new systems in billing and taking bookings but we're still teaching our students the manual ways of doing these because we as lecturers lack that knowledge and skill.*

Lecturer 102 revealed that he had never been to industry not even during training and so lacked the industrial touch. He admitted that he lacked the knowledge and skills that industry offered. To this effect, the researcher asked if the college ever attempted taking the lecturers for industrial attachment. The respondents agreed to have been presented with the opportunity to go for WIL by the college during the holidays for 5 days. **Lecturer 101** said she did go for WIL because she herself had long been to industry. She hoped she could learn something new that she could bring to the workshops and the classroom in the 5 days. She however, complained that the 5 days were too few and did not meet her expectations. She believed she could have learnt more if this had been for longer. **Lecturer 102** said that he did not go for WIL because the programme was not compulsory and because he had a lot of personal stuff

that he had to do during that time as he felt that school holidays are his own free time to pursue personal matters.

These respondents have argued that WIL for both the students and the lecturers was not mandatory. This means that it is not a component of the NC(V) curriculum and therefore, not a part of training. This could imply that both the lecturers and students are not obliged to take part in WIL. They have also indicated that the students and the lecturers that get involved do it out of their own will as it is not credited, more especially for the students. Therefore, the problem does not lie with the students or the lecturers but policy and the curriculum itself.

4.2.4 Soft-skills in vocational training

The frequent mention of the term 'soft-skills' by the respondents and their importance to the employer prompted the researcher to do a follow-up question to check if the curriculum contained these skills.

In response to the question about soft-skills and whether they were a part of the NC(V) hospitality curriculum, both respondents indicated that soft-skills were important skills that all graduates should be in possession of if they were to be employed by industry. They added that some people called them employable skills. **Lecturer 101** then went on to give the examples of soft-skills as;

> *a combination of people, social, communication skills, character traits, attitudes, career attributes and social intelligence. that enable people to navigate their environment, work well with others, perform well, and achieve their goals with complementing hard skills that relate to technical skills.*

She then further noted;

> *it is very unfortunate that our curriculum does not contain these skills, we therefore, do not teach them. If at all our students could go for WIL as part of their training, we know they would be able to attain these skills. Most employers are so strict with these and they mostly use them as selection criteria for employment.*

Lecturer 101 also contended that the NC(V) hospitality curriculum fails to match the needs of the employer because it does not address the kind of skills that employers want. She said that the employer wanted more of the soft skills than theory and hard-skills that are emphasised in the curriculum**. Lecturer 102** also gave a list of what he perceived to be soft-skills;

> *communication abilities, language skills, personal habits, time management, teamwork, leadership traits and writing skills.*

He also mentioned that it was sad that their curriculum did not contain these skills and that he always hoped their students could somehow learn these skills before they go to industry. He further noted;

> *our students could obtain such skills if they were involved with WIL, but alas, WIL is not a part of the curriculum either. It has recently come to light that most employers put emphasis on these skills more than they do on the technical skills, therefore I presume that this is why most employers are not happy with our students as it has been reported that they struggle with a lot of things at the workplace i.e. time management and communication skills.*

According to these respondents soft-skills were an important part of training and they wished these could be a part of the NC(V) curriculum. However, an attempt is made to include the soft skills through the teaching of Life Orientation, Mathematical Literacy and English First Additional Language. These subjects must however be probed into to check if they do equip the students with such skills.

4.2.5 Partnerships in training

To address the question of partnerships in training the respondents were asked; to what extent industry experts were involved in the development of the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum; The major concern raised by these respondents was that for vocational education providers, there should be increased networking with industrial experts which might help inform lecturers of any changes in current workplace practices and clarify expected skill standards in new graduates. This could facilitate a more industry-aligned curriculum design. **Lecturer 101** reported that she doubted if there was any link between colleges and industry because of the content that they taught. She felt that if ever there was that link, what they taught would somehow be aligned with what was in industry right now. She went on to give an example of the new systems that industry uses; the new billing systems and software in doing reservations and stock control. She mentioned that their syllabus still required them to teach such concepts manually. She felt that the colleges were failing to keep pace with the new technologies. She further stated;

> *industry and the curriculum must speak to one another, there must be coherence/a link between the two and so industry must also be a part of the development of the curriculum, meaning that, colleges should involve industry when formulating the curriculum, they should not shy away from industry, after all it is only the employer that knows what they need their employees to be able to do. Therefore, partnerships*

between these stakeholders will go a long way in improving training in TVET colleges.

Lecturer 101 went on to say with partnerships, employers are likely to chip in with the provision of places for WIL. That would enhance the attainment of both the hard and the soft-skill for both the lecturers and the students. Therefore, colleges and students would not have to struggle in trying to get work placements. She then suggested that partnerships between industry and TVET colleges should be enforced and be made policy. Even if industry does not show interest, she suggested that there be marketing teams in colleges that could go and face industry and sell the NC(V) programmes to the employers so that they could come on board to form partnerships to enhance training. **Lecturer 102** like **101** believed that industry was not a part of training and that there were no partnerships between the two because industry seemed not to be happy with their students when they employed them. He said that their curriculum seemed not to be updated. He believed that with partnerships, there were possibilities that the curriculum could always be up to date because of the involvement of experts from industry. 'The curriculum must constantly be reviewed and changed if need be to match the needs of the employer, this would be possible with partnerships between TVET colleges and industry,' he said.

These respondents agreed that partnerships in training were important because they keep the curriculum current and relevant. They also said that these partnerships might prompt employers into being donors in relation to the provision of resources that are needed for training such as, equipment, consumables and facilities.

The next section seeks to present the data collected through interviews with a group of NC(V) hospitality studies students in order to get their perspective about how the NC(V) hospitality curriculum matched the needs of the employer. The codes that were used to represent the names of the graduates are Graduate 201 to 206.

4.3 Findings in relation to interviews with the graduates

This section aimed to address the following questions;

- to what extent does the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum in TVET colleges satisfy the needs of the hospitality industry?
- what perceptions do the graduates have with regard to the relationship between the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum and the needs of the employer?

4.3.1 Theoretical and Practical knowledge in a vocational curriculum

Graduates 201 and 206 felt that the curriculum failed to produce the type of graduate that was needed by industry because some of its implementers were not subject specialists and therefore, did not understand the content of the programme in question. They also mentioned that these lecturers were unable to dispense the content of the subjects let alone demonstrate skills to the students. It was also revealed that the lecturers did not even know what was happening in industry. They believed that such lecturers did not qualify to teach in TVET colleges either because they did not have a trades qualification or a pedagogical qualification that could give them the ability to implement a vocational curriculum of this nature. The graduates reported that the lecturers resorted to teaching concepts theoretically. May be this could be due to the fact that they were not adequately trained. The lecturers in the study have reported to be holders of the general education qualification and not the one for vocational teachers. One which would enable them to acquire the pedagogical competencies with didactical approaches which are in line with special characteristics of the field of TVET.

The importance of both theory and practice in a vocational curriculum cannot be ignored if a well-equipped graduate is to be produced. It is this importance that triggered the researcher to find out whether the graduates received sufficient practical skills training at college that matched the practice in the workplace. Most of the respondents gave the impression that the amount of time that they spent in the classroom doing theory work was more than the time that they spent in the workshops and therefore, could not gain enough practical skills to prepare them for industry. **Graduate 201** illuminated that he was surprised to the amount of 'academic' study he had to do at college. He said that he and a lot of other students had been expecting far more emphasis on the attainment of practical skills in order to get employment. He perceived

that if he had in his possession hard skills, he would have been rendered a better candidate by industry. He echoed that;

> *while in college, I was so much exposed to theory than practice, there was no balance between the two. I only got the practical skills that I needed the time I got employed.*

This respondent felt that he could have been a better graduate if more of the practical lessons were done and were included on the time-table. He also revealed that the time-tables that were used did not cater for as many practical lessons as possible. He noted;

> *I feel more could have been done, especially in practice. More time was spent in the classroom doing theory work. And we were mostly taught for the exams and not for the attainment of skills that we so desired for the workplace.*

He further gave the importance of doing things practically, he said, 'when one does something practically, they tend to understand better and it makes sense that way and it sticks visually to the student's mind, besides one also gets to have the skill that industry requires.'

Graduate 202 also noted;

> *not so many practical lessons were covered, more especially with skills in setting up for functions, and unfortunately this was the first section that I worked in on inception in industry. I struggled when I came to industry. What I had learnt in college did not match what I was expected to be able to do at work, I could not lay-out a table, neither could I set them up.*

In like manner **Graduate 203** pointed out;

> *most stuff in college were taught theoretically i.e. the housekeeping part, front office and food service. Because of this there were a lot of things that I could not do when I came to the workplace. e.g. I could not make a bed to the required standard. This shows that it is not the theory aspect that we need most but the hands-on part of things.*

Graduate 205 echoed the same sentiment as **Graduate 203** by stating that bar, restaurant, housekeeping and front office practice were not covered at all. Concepts in these areas were explained to them theoretically and that they never had a feel of the hands-on part of it. She went on to say that this made it difficult for them to fit in snuggly in industry because they did not know how to do a lot of things. All they could do was explain concepts, which was not what industry desired, but the hard-skills that they lacked. **Graduate 204** agreed that they had limited sessions of practical lessons because the college could not afford to build the structures that they needed to use as workshops and also because there was no money to buy consumables such as; ingredients, detergents and other materials. She said that this was the reason why they spent most time in the classroom rather than in workshops practicing. She also mentioned that they only did practical aspects during ISAT.

Graduate 206 also noted;

> *most things we did in college were theory based and in industry everything is hands-on. For example, we never used the bars, restaurants and rooms. Everything was taught to us in the classroom and taught from the textbook. In fact, I feel we were mostly taught to pass the theoretical exams and not practice for work.*

Regarding the relationship between theory and practice this group of respondents agreed that theory was taught more than they were exposed to practice in workshops. Various reasons were given as; practice time not allocated on the time-table, lack of resources to aid training such as, kitchens and equipment, a lack of vocational knowledge by the lecturers and that the lecturers taught them in preparation for theoretical assessments and not for the acquisition of skill.

4.3.2 Resources in TVET colleges

The most important theme that emerged from the researcher's sources of information was the issue of resources in trying to implement the NC(V) hospitality curriculum. It has emerged from the interviews with the graduates that there was an acute shortage of training resources when they were still in college. They were all in agreement that this challenge posed a negative challenge on their acquisition of technical skills. **Graduate 201** revealed that the speed at which he was expected to work with was too much. He said that he could not keep up pace at first as he was very slow as he was not too sure if he was doing things correctly. He mentioned that his knife skills needed perfecting as he was not exposed to a lot of practice at college for lack of resources. He said that sometimes four students would share one knife, meaning that sometimes one would leave the kitchen without having practiced anything. He also noted that on inception into the industry, he could not operate most machines such as the pasta maker and the salamander. His reasons were that;

> *our college kitchens were so under-resourced and contained only the basic equipment such as, electric stoves and ovens; the sophisticated equipment and utensils that we see now in industry were not there. I think this is the reason why I could not operate these machines the first time I got employed.*

Graduates 203 affirmed that she was unable to use most of the equipment in industry on inception, more especially the ones in the kitchens such as electric mixers, pasta makers and salamanders but most of all she stressed that;

> *the use of drinks machines was a challenge to me. We only learnt the theory aspect of these machines while in college and from the textbooks. We only looked at how to clean them and re-loading them in theory and never in practice because they never existed. I only saw these machines for the first time when I came to industry after completing college*

Graduate 206 had her own challenges when she went to industry for the first time, she divulged that;

> *working in the cold kitchen was a challenge for me. It was embarrassing, I could not identify some ingredients for I had not used them while still in college. For example, I could not identify ingredients such as cilantro, cloves, butter and olive oil. especially those that were deemed to be expensive and the college could not buy.*

She also added that;

> *most systems and methodologies taught in college are not in use in industry today. This is because colleges lack the latest machines for example, omelette makers, steamers and salamanders. In college we still used ordinary frying pans to make omelettes and still used ordinary saucepans and plates as steamers. This lack of proper resources did not adequately prepare us for industry.*

Similarly, **Graduate 204** said that she found it challenging to use machines such as blenders and mixers on inception in industry. She had neither used nor seen any of these in college, if ever they had to mix or blend some ingredients, it had to be done manually. She said that their kitchens were so ill-equipped. On the other hand, **Graduate 205** indicated that they never had facilities that they could use for bar service, restaurants, housekeeping and front office. She then broke out and said;

> *…this affected me a lot, when I came to the workplace, I remember not being able to answer calls, I was never confident about anything, yet if I had used some of these gadgets in college, I would have been a well-equipped graduate. When it came to the kitchen, it was worse because I didn't know most of the ingredients and equipment…*

She further voiced that the modern work systems that are used in industry are not taught in college for example, the use of some software such as, Opera and Amadeus in doing bookings. She then indicated that she felt lost when she went to the workplace and as she was expected to use such software. She actually said that the employers were surprised that she could not operate them.

Graduate 202 echoed the same sentiments when she vocalised that the systems of work she did in college were old and were not in use in industry anymore. She said she could not operate a lot of machines and software on inception in the workplace. She gave examples of systems like Opera and Sales Force which she confessed to have never ever heard of while still in college. She added that there was not even a mention of them in the textbooks or the syllabus. She stated that they were taught how to do for example, reservations and stock control

manually. They were supposed to fill in bin cards and ledgers, in contrast to the use of software that was in use in industry.

The respondents unanimously agreed that training resources are a necessity if any vocational curriculum was to be implemented successfully and if the students were to attain the required technical skills that would make them competent employees who could give the employer what he needed to enhance economic growth. It was made clear that the provision of training resources like equipment, software, ingredients, detergents and workshops in TVET colleges was a challenge based on the information collected from this group of respondents.

4.3.3 Work-integrated learning

The importance of WIL emerged as an important component of training. The graduates were asked if they understood WIL and its importance, and if they had at any given time during their training been for work-integrated learning. All the respondents knew what WIL is as they all tried to define it. Their definitions echoed; the sending of students to the workplace for practice for a set period of time during training. The consensus was that WIL was supposed to be a compulsory component of the NC(V) hospitality curriculum because it enhanced the employability skills of the graduates. The respondents agreed that WIL would furnish students with generic skills such as teamwork and communication skills together with the hard-skills that are required by the employer so that they could hit the ground running once on the job floor. Each one of them had something to say regarding WIL and the NC(V) curriculum. **Graduate 201** said that WIL was not really a part of their syllabus because it was only done on voluntary basis for only a few days (5 – 10 days) in what was termed work-based experience (WBE). He revealed that only a few students were involved, and the majority did not because this exercise was supposed to be done during the holidays. He felt that it could have been better if it was done for marks, done for a longer period of time, and in hotels where the students could get the feel of the entire hospitality industry. He further pointed out that if his placement was long enough and in a proper hotel and not a hospital, that could have given him a deeper understanding of the practical concepts in the hospitality industry. He asserted that what he did was more rushed and done in a hospital and so did not serve the purpose of being in industry for training. He also went on to say;

> *I feel that the hospital actually caged me into doing the same thing over and over again, even if it was for just a few days.*

Graduates 204 and **205** replicated the same point of view as **201** by alluding that they also did their WBE in a hospital and only for 10 days. They also thought that it could have been better if this process was done for longer and in a hotel because they felt they could have gained more skills and knowledge that are relevant to industry. On the contrary, **Graduate 202** revealed that she did not go for WIL. She perceived that if she had it could have made her a better product with more and better skills, more especially regarding being a team-player. She also thought it would have refined her communication skills that she lacked when she completed her qualification. Similarly, **Graduate 206** asserted that she never attended WIL as it was not a part of the curriculum. She also had a feeling that if she had, it could have been beneficial to her, especially for experience's sake. She felt that WIL should be done throughout training from NQF Level 2 to 4 because she discerned that it could have helped her build relationships and develop complex technical skills that were not developed while at college. All what **Graduate 203** could say was that; 'on-job-training should be part and parcel of the curriculum, so that students are able to overcome challenges once on the job floor.'

Regarding WIL, the graduates that did attend perceived that the time they spent doing it was too short. They therefore, reported to have hardly learnt a thing in the 10 days. Those that did not go for WIL felt that they could have been moulded into better employees if they had.

4.3.4 Soft-skills in vocational training

In terms of soft-skills, the graduates were asked if they thought that soft-skills needed to be a part of the curriculum in college and why they thought so. **Graduate 201** emphasised why soft-skills must be taught in college by saying;

> *yes, soft-skills must be included in the syllabus. I say so because I struggled when I came to industry, I never knew what it meant to be a team-player, where one was supposed to work together with others in a project for the same goal. I thought I would always work as a loner. In college such skills were not inculcated in us as the syllabus does not put emphasis on them.*

However, this respondent did not realise that team-work was practiced in college when they worked in groups to do dishes in the kitchens as vocalised by one of the lecturers, although this was done to curb the challenge of shortages. **Graduate 202** also said 'yes soft-skills need to be taught in college.' She then complained of the long hours that she was exposed to work the

moment she got into the workplace. She said that the long hours were hectic and were unexpected. She also said that she was not used to following laid out procedures as she stated that in college they did as they pleased. They would attend class only when they felt like and that college was not strict with being late for class. She went on to say;

> *industry is so different from college, for everything you do, you follow laid down procedures and besides you can never be late for work. It was quite difficult for me to fit in because these skills were not taught or emphasized at college.*

Graduates 206 and **203** concurred by stating that soft-skills were a necessity to every hospitality graduate and so they said 'yes' to having them offered at college. **Graduate 206** said that being polite in the hospitality industry makes one's job very easy, as one must always smile when dealing with clients. This does not come naturally but must be taught in college and so she felt that the curriculum should include such aspects as to how to deal with clients, more especially the importance of smiling and greeting. **Graduate 203** also mentioned that the employees in the hospitality industry should be able to handle situations at the workplace. For instance, how to interact with colleagues and clients. However, **Graduate 205** had a different opinion from the other respondents in this group as she alluded that soft-skills should not be taught in college. Her argument is based on the fact that these skills should come naturally. She went on to say;

> *how does one get to be taught manners, smiling and working with others? Obviously, we all grew up in society, and it is society that teaches these things and not any particular school. Writing skills are learnt in primary school and not in college.*

Most of the graduates felt that it was important to have soft-skills as part of the curriculum in college. They are of the view that graduates without these skills struggled when they got into industry.

4.3.5 Partnerships in training

It emerged from the responses given by the graduates that partnerships in training were very crucial if the NC(V) curriculum was to align to the needs of the employer and if colleges were to produce graduates that have the skills that are needed by industry. **Graduate 201** was not hesitant to say that colleges should build relationships with industry so that the curriculum responds to their needs. He further went on to say that if they worked in partnership, industry would definitely help in the training processes so that it benefits the students. Likewise, **Graduate 202** reiterated by saying that colleges should build up relationships with industry so

that students have contact and can also work while they study so that they gain experience. She also added that colleges lack facilities for training and if they work together with industry it could help in that employers would become sponsors or donors of facilities and equipment needed for training. She went on to say;

> *strong communications with industry is necessary if the curriculum is to be implemented with precision. In fact, the two must work in partnership with one another so that colleges get an understanding of what is happening in industry and industry also get to understand the kind of skill being taught in colleges.*

Graduates 203 and **204** believed that TVET colleges could be in a position to run their own hotels that are managed by students who are studying hospitality at those particular colleges with the help of qualified personnel and experts from industry such as; chefs, waiters and rooms attendants. The students would attain the right skills for employment and this they say could be made possible if the colleges work in partnership with industry. In other words, these two suggested that colleges should strategise to be partners with industry for the betterment of training. In contrast, **Graduate 206** was of the view that colleges could host and invite industry gurus and have them demonstrate some skills such as; knife skills. She felt that if there were tight links between colleges and industries, training would be made relevant.

In the next section, the researcher presents findings on the employers' perceptions about the relationship between the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum and the needs of industry and the expectations of employers regarding the NC(V) hospitality studies graduates employed in their hotel.

4.4 Findings in relation to interviews with the employers

This group of respondents were interviewed in order to answer the following research questions;

- to what extent does the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum in TVET colleges satisfy the needs of the hospitality industry?
- what expectations do employers have with regard to the NC(V) hospitality studies graduates employed in their companies?

4.4.1 Theoretical and Practical knowledge in a vocational curriculum

When asked if the NC(V) curriculum matched the needs of industry, the employers seemed to put emphasis on the need for an addition of practical knowledge to the curriculum so that the students could acquire the technical skills that industry desires. **Employer 301** raised a complaint by saying that;

> *there is a disparity between industry requirements with education and training outcomes. The graduates have done some work in college, but not all of it is relevant. Their practical skill is non-existent and therefore they struggle with the reality of working with equipment and working without recipes. All they are able to do is explain concepts. We don't care about their knowledge of theory; we want them to be in possession of hard skills - to do.*

This respondent perceived that the graduates have a rich gourd of theoretical knowledge as opposed to practical knowledge which she perceived to be of great importance if the graduates were to be deemed employable. She went on to say that these graduates do not have an understanding of the basics of the hotel, kitchen and restaurant operations, including housekeeping. 'It seems to me that theory is taught more than practice' she said. She further revealed that as industry they look at what the graduates are able to do and not what they are able to say, to them theory is not a factor. **Employer 303** shared the same sentiment by pointing out that the hospitality programme done in TVET colleges is too theoretical. He articulated that;

> *students spend too much time in the classroom, yet more time should be spent in experiential learning for the acquisition of the skills. I also have an understanding that they do not have access to workshops while still in college for the refinement of the technical skills which are crucial in the workplace. You always find that when we employ them, they can hardly do anything. Their training should be inclined more on the doing aspect.*

For **Employer 302**, these graduates were not exposed to practical /experiential training when they were still in college. If this was not the case, this respondent said that it would show by their abilities at the workplace. He had doubted they had enough time for practice because the graduates found it difficult to work with equipment, neither could they interpret recipes nor operate machinery and software. He then suggested that these graduates should be exposed to practical training from the first year all the way through the whole 3-year programme.

4.4.2 Resources in TVET colleges

In the interviews with the employers it emerged that TVET colleges lacked the most important resources that they need for training such as facilities, physical structures, equipment and

consumables. They came to this conclusion because the NC(V) hospitality studies graduates that they employed were reported to have practical skills that were non-existent and that they struggled with the reality of working with equipment, working without recipes and that they could not identify some ingredients. This, they assumed to have stemmed from the lack of proper training resources in colleges. **Employer 301** mentioned that she understood that colleges did not have in their possession most of the software that industry uses today because they do not have the money to purchase them, and therefore, when graduates go to industry they train them from scratch on the operation of these software. **Employer 303** also said that colleges lacked the structures, resources, facilities and equipment that were needed to train the students, more especially for the attainment of technical skills that industry needed. He alluded that TVET college graduates were clueless when it came to the knowledge of skills when they got employed. He said that it was because they did not have access to workshops while still in college for the refinement of skills. The lack of resources to enhance training in TVET colleges was a very serious matter which must be dealt with urgently.

4.4.3 Work-integrated learning

The argument that was raised by employers was that a strong theoretical knowledge base did not necessarily guarantee a graduate a job. One technique that could improve students' work readiness and ability to transfer theoretical knowledge into the practical implementation by the employers, was WIL. In order to address the research question; 'to what extent does the NC(V) Hospitality Studies curriculum in TVET colleges satisfy the needs of the hospitality industry,' the employers were first asked if they understood what WIL was and its importance in training. All the respondents seemed to have an understanding of WIL and its importance. They defined it as a form of practical training that students must take up while still at college in order to put into practice what they would have learnt in the classroom. They also mentioned that it was quite important for trainees to go through WIL because they would be able to attain both the hard and the soft skills that they need for work-readiness.

When asked if they would participant in WIL; **Employer 301** affirmed that they were already involved in what the TVET colleges have considered to be WIL. However, she complained about how the whole process was being conducted and how she was also not satisfied with the

standard of knowledge, skill or attitude held by the trainees and the lack of support from the college for both the students and the host employer. This respondent reported that;

> *whilst students are on site we rarely see lecturers taking responsibility for their students as they do not visit the students whilst they are on our property during WIL, this goes to show how unorganised this programme is.*

She was also bitter about the amount of time allocated to experiential training by TVET colleges. She felt that the time allocated for WIL was too short and unrealistic for students to learn a large number of skills involved in the hospitality industry. The industry comprises of different departments such as, housekeeping, front office and food and beverage services, which in itself has different sections like the bar, kitchen, restaurant, room service and stores. This was supported by **Employer 302** who said that the amount of time allocated to experiential training for this programme was not enough, this respondent emphasised that the 10 days allocated to WIL at NQF Level 4 were too few and impracticable for students to learn any skills. He then said;

> *we do not want to participate in WIL because we are likely to lose revenue as we are bound to waste time training trainees who might not even work in our company at the end of the day, besides the number of days that have been allocated for WIL are unrealistic, hence I say it will be time wasting on our side.*

The consensus amongst the employers is that WIL, if done properly could be beneficial to the students, but however, they say that TVET colleges do not have in place a proper laid out programme for WIL. They also revealed that whatever the colleges termed WIL was only done for a few days, which was of no benefit to the students because it was very difficult for them to learn any skills in the few days. The data collected from the employers showed that WIL is of utmost importance to employability and work-readiness, and that students must be given enough time to do it.

The employers have also emphasised the importance of WIL to the lecturing staff in TVET colleges, particularly because they are the implementers of the curriculum. Therefore, lecturers need to be in possession of the current and relevant knowledge and skills so that they are able to teach these to the students if they are to be deemed employable. The employers expressed dissatisfaction at the quality of skills being churned out by TVET colleges due to lack of expertise by some of the lecturers. **Employer 301** noted;

> *generally, both the lecturers and the students are ill-equipped for industry and do not possess the qualities for industry.*

She said that this has been attributed to the fact that some lecturers have not been into industry in a very long time and do not know the current trends in industry, while the other group of lecturers has never been to industry at all. She went on to say that with such types of trainers, it might mean that graduates enter the job market with knowledge that is not flexible enough to be relevant to jobs that are actually available on the job market. She went on to suggest that this problem could be counteracted if the lecturers have the kind of skills that industry desires. She further noted that this could be achieved if they keep improving themselves so that they impart the right skills and knowledge to the students. She suggests that practical training for the lecturers should be enforced and maintained with a Continuous Professional Development programme whereby they have to upgrade their levels of knowledge and skill each year. Nevertheless, **employer 302** revealed;

> *we are faced with lecturers in TVET colleges who will not go through with experiential training in industry themselves, whereby they have to upgrade their levels of knowledge and skill each year, so that they keep abreast with the changes that are happening on a regular basis.*

He contended that the students are taught old methods of work and systems and that this problem stems from lecturers who have not worked in industry, or have not updated their skills and knowledge related to industry. He revealed that the lecturers always feel that they know it all because they have been teaching the programme for a long time, yet the skills that they are in possession of are now outdated and need refreshing. 'There are somethings that we used to do in industry then that we do not do now,' he added. **Employer 302** had a serious disregard for the credibility of TVET lecturers and appeared to enjoy denigrating them;

> *they are (the NCV graduates) useless to us because they don't know anything and have got no skills. This problem stems from their lecturers who have not worked in industry, or have not updated their skills and knowledge related to industry. The lecturers have been too long out of the 'real world' therefore, they teach students old methods of work and systems. They don't know what they're doing.*

The employers have noted that TVET lecturers mostly lacked the kind of knowledge and skills that they need so that they are equipped to teach the students. It has been reported that most of them have not been to industry and some of them have been a long time ago, yet the systems and methods of work are changing on a regular basis and thus are said to be in possession of the old methods of doing work.

4.4.4 Soft-skills in vocational training

On the onset of the interviews the employers expressed a general concern about the poor levels of soft skills often associated with employability as they have indicated that the students are often not prepared for the workplace because they lack these employable skills. **Employer 302** stated that;

> *we have graduates from TVET colleges who do not adapt to industry because they are not skilled in business or in the correct behaviour whilst on our property. They do not have any business etiquette, or basic life skills, as they struggle with working with others. They are ill equipped for industry and do not possess the qualities for industry, more especially accurate writing. Colleges are not teaching these to their students, yet they are the most crucial if they are to be employed. This gets to show that the curriculum that is used in colleges is not relevant.*

He went further to say that they were not in possession of writing skills and have poor communication skills too. These graduates are ill-equipped for industry as they do not possess the qualities for industry. **Employer 301** also aired the same sentiments. She said that the TVET graduates do not possess the soft skills that are needed by industry, such as time-management, team-work and positive attitudes. She noted that this was because they were always late for work and were not able to work with others as team players. Some of them were rude to other workers.

Employer 303 noted;

> *the students struggle with the concept of shift work and generally, have a poor attitude to the reality of work life, thus they lack the generic skills desired by us.*

He also reported that the graduates did not understand that they would be working shifts when they get to the workplace and that they are mostly not time conscious because most of them are always late for work. This respondent also mentioned that TVET colleges are failing to produce the kind of graduates with the kind of skills that they required. He however, also stated that in general, it was difficult to find people with the soft skills that are needed by industry. He thought that colleges were not teaching these to their students, yet they were the most crucial if the students were to be employed.

It is evident from the data collected from the employers that they desired graduates who are in possession of soft skills so that they could be employable. They have reported that the NC(V) hospitality studies graduates lack such skills.

4.4.5 Partnerships in training

Employers seemed to believe that partnerships between industry and colleges did not exist at all. They believed that partnerships could do a lot of good for the students. For example, **Employer 301** mentioned that;

> *we have students who do not adapt to industry because they are not skilled for this industry and for business or are not in the correct behaviour whilst on our property. This goes to show that whatever they are taught in college does not match our needs, therefore there is need for partnerships so industry and colleges can work together to come up with a curriculum that is relevant to our needs.*

Employer 302 blamed the lack of partnerships between industry and training to the providers of education and training;

> *we feel that colleges do not want to work with us. Working together is for the best of the student as we could also help colleges in purchasing current pieces of machinery for the student's practice in preparation for work.*

This lack of co-operation was further highlighted with the following comments made by **Employer 303** who said;

> *the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum is not relevant because the curriculum does not match the methodologies and systems in industry today, as these change regularly. The students are taught old methods of work and systems and I find that this problem stems from the non-involvement of industry in formulating the curriculum and the lack of partnerships between colleges and industry.*

This group of respondents felt that it is colleges that do not want to come on board in the partnerships because they do not want to co-operate in a lot of activities. They mentioned for example, that the lecturers refused to do workplace learning in their institutions and the non-follow up on students during WIL.

The next section presents the study findings based on information sought in order to ascertain the extent to which the curriculum under study met the needs of the employer through document analysis. The documents that were analysed were; the NC(V) Hospitality Services NQF Level 2 – 4 Subject Guidelines and the lecturers' time-tables. Hospitality Services (a module which covers housekeeping, food and beverage services and front office) NQF Level 2 – 4 Subject Guidelines were used in the analysis as this subject featured several times in the interview responses with lecturers and graduates.

4.5 Findings in relation to the document analysis

4.5.1 Introduction

The SGs for Hospitality Services is considered to cover a broad range of topics relevant to developing hospitality service skills in a range of functional areas applicable to different departments (Umalusi, 2013). According to the SGs, Hospitality Services is supposed to produce students with practical food and drinks service, front office and accommodation skills that can be applied in wide hospitality contexts. It is for these reasons that the researcher chose to use just this one subject in the document analysis of the whole curriculum. The data and findings were expressed qualitatively.

Document analysis was conducted because the researcher, firstly wanted to deduce whether the curriculum contained all aspects that would help furnish students with skills that would render them employable. These aspects were;

- theoretical knowledge
- practical knowledge
- soft-skills and
- workplace knowledge which is acquired through action in the work process itself.

According to Umalusi (2008) the main aim of the NC(V) qualification is to equip students with broad theoretical knowledge, practical skills, values and understanding so that they could enter a range of occupations associated with the field and thereafter apply what they have learnt, in the workplace. Secondly, because the researcher worked on the assumption that every vocational curriculum should contain the four components, which are theoretical knowledge, practical knowledge, work-process knowledge and the impartation of generic skills. Thirdly, because the researcher wanted to clarify the conclusions that were drawn from the information collected from the interviews. Lastly, because Eisner (1991, p. 184) asserts that an analysis of documents 'frequently reveal what people will not and cannot say,' especially during interviews. Therefore, through document analysis the researcher was able to make replicable and valid inferences from data to their context, as the findings from the analyses were correlated with the findings from the interviews. The findings from the analysis of the SGs were presented under four predetermined categories which are; theoretical knowledge, practical knowledge, workplace knowledge and soft skills. The SGs were analysed by using a set of chosen learning

outcomes (LOs) as a unit of analysis. The documents referenced in the analysis of the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum are shown in table 4.3 below.

Table 4. 3 Documents referenced in document analysis

The Documents	
1.	NC (V) Subject Guidelines: Hospitality Services NQF Level 2
2.	NC (V) Subject Guidelines: Hospitality Services NQF Level 3
3.	NC (V) Subject Guidelines: Hospitality Services NQF Level 4
4.	The lecturers' time-tables

4.5.2 The findings from the analysis of SGs

The analysis revealed that the NC(V) Hospitality Services NQF Level 2 SG comprises of fifteen topics whilst NQF Level 3 and 4 have seven each. Table 4.4 below shows the topics as indicated on the SGs.

Table 4. 4 Hospitality Services NQF Level 2 - 4 topics

The Topics		
NQF Level 2	NQF Level 3	NQF Level 4
• Glassware • Crockery and Cutlery • Drinks Machines and Equipment • Function Rooms • Counter Service • Takeaway Service • Drinks Service • Beds, Bed Linen and Coverings • Room Service • Toilet and Bathroom Areas • Guest Bedrooms • Floor and Floor Coverings • Public Areas	• Maintain cellars and beverage storerooms • Provide a table drinks service • Provide a table service • Provide a counter service • Provide a takeaway service • Maintain housekeeping supplies • Provide housekeeping services within designated areas	• Serve bottled wine • Prepare and serve cocktails • Provide a silver service • Maintain the drink service • Maintain the cleaning programme in a specified area • Plan and conduct meetings • Maintain the receipt, storage and issue of goods

• Linen for External Laundry • Incoming and Outgoing Telephone Calls.		

The topics in table 4.4 above show that the topics in the NC(V) Hospitality Services SGs are highly relevant to the hospitality industry because they demonstrate skills that are related to the industry. These topics are also practical in nature, as the programme is meant to prepare students for the hospitality industry. For example, front office, food and beverage services and accommodation services are emphasised in the range of topics more especially in the NQF Level 2 SG, while on the other hand the bar and restaurant skills are emphasised in the NQF Level 3 and 4 SGs. Some topics seem to have been repeated across the three SGs, for example, 'Drinks Service'. This topic seems to be more generalised in NQF Level 2 as it just states 'Drinks Service' without stipulating any skill to the topic. The topic seemed to provide for more complex skill in NQF Level 3 and 4 as it states clearly 'Provide a table drinks service' for NQF Level 3 and 'Serve bottled wine' and 'Prepare and serve cocktails' for NQF Level 4.

Each one of the above topics is broken down into subject outcomes and LOs. However, the researcher chose to use only the LOs in the analysis. Table 4.5 overleaf shows the LOs by topic (see table 4.4 above) that were used in the analysis. The researcher picked LOs from 8 of the 15 topics from the NQF Level 2 SG and chose LOs from all the topics in the NQF Level 3 and 4 SGs.

Table 4. 5 The learning outcomes used in the analysis

Hospitality Services NQF Level 2-4 Learning Outcomes as stated in the SGs		
NQF Level 2	NQF Level 3	NQF Level 4
TOPIC 1 • Identify different types of glassware • Demonstrate the correct methods of handling glassware and associated equipment safely and hygienically, including transporting clean and dirty equipment. TOPIC 2 • Explain why damaged crockery and cutlery should not be used and the importance of reporting damaged items to a supervisor. • Demonstrate the correct methods, procedures and equipment for cleaning crockery and polishing cutlery by hand or machine. • Stack crockery safely and carefully. TOPIC 3 • Correctly dissemble, clean and re-assemble these machines using appropriate health, safety and hygiene procedures. • Identify the correct ingredients and restock the machines or equipment in accordance with FIFO principles. Understand why this is important. • Understand the impact of implementing correct cleaning and restocking procedures on customer service. TOPIC 4 • Clean a function room to the appropriate standard before and after use. • Explain basic room set-up requirements. Interpret a function list and set up in an organised and efficient way. • Lay tables according to requirements.	TOPIC 1 • Maintain an organised, clean and secure cellar / storeroom and associated areas. • Identify all the relevant equipment, its usage, operation and cleaning. • Describe and demonstrate basic stock keeping procedures. • Clean and remove waste. TOPIC 2 • Take a drinks order according to procedure • Serve tea and coffee in the appropriate manner. • Identify responses to unexpected situations. • Deal with accidents, breakages, spillages etc. TOPIC 3 • Take drinks and wine orders and serve correctly within the timeframes • Basic selling skills are used • Serve food in accordance with procedure. TOPIC 4 • Understand the importance of good hygiene practices and the implications if these are not adhered to. • Keep food counters, service and dining areas hygienically clean according to procedure • Clear service areas as required. TOPIC 5 • Provide customers with a correct order presented in the correct manner • Be able to recommend ways to improve service levels • Keep all service areas hygienically clean, tidy and refuse free according to procedure TOPIC 6 • Receive delivery of housekeeping supplies completing all quality checks and documentation.	TOPIC 1 • Identify and explain uses of appropriate service equipment and glassware. • Understand the wine making process and its impact on the end product. • Identify different wine varieties; know their basic characteristics and the appropriate food items to serve with. • Provide customers accurate information on wines, promote certain wines and offer alternative options. TOPIC 2 • Prepare and present a variety of cocktails in accordance with organisational procedures. • Identify the various glasses and service equipment and use correctly. • Promote cocktail sales and offer alternatives where appropriate. TOPIC 3 • Take accurate orders and advise customers on menu choice as appropriate. • Locate and use appropriate service items and equipment and understand why it is important to keep sufficient equipment stocks available. • Serve food according to organisational procedures. TOPIC 4 • Implement the procedures for the maintenance of a drinks service. • Describe the legal requirements for the operation of a licensed premise. • Explain the consequences of selling alcohol to under aged or intoxicated persons. • Understand why staff need product knowledge and should comply with service standards.

• Locate and set up audio-visual and other associated conference equipment such as flipcharts, overhead projectors and lecterns. Include room environmental controls such as air conditioning. TOPIC 5 • Describe appropriate procedures for counter, table and room set-up. • Understand the importance of maintaining levels of food service equipment and condiments. • Handle and dispose of waste hygienically. TOPIC 6 • Check, clean and place menus and promotional materials appropriately and correctly. • Inspect service areas and ensure they are clean and hygienic. • Identify food service items, their uses and procedures for handling, cleaning and storing them. • Describe and demonstrate appropriate procedures for use of takeaway food service equipment. • Maintain service areas in a hygienic and tidy manner. TOPIC 7 • Activate environmental controls according to procedure and deactivate once service is over. • Identify appropriate signage and promotional material and place it correctly. • Serve drinks according to procedure using the correct service equipment. TOPIC 8 • Demonstrate knowledge of linen storeroom procedures. • Understand various bedding elements such as pillows, duvets, etc. • Prepare and change beds according to situation-driven procedures.	• Monitor stock levels and inform the appropriate person when levels are approaching the minimum requirements. • Work in an organised and efficient manner. TOPIC 7 • Check daily room allocation and prioritise accordingly. • Understand the importance of checking procedures and implement. • Complete work activities in an organised and efficient manner.	• Devise ways to motivate staff in increasing sales. TOPIC 5 • Understand why it is important to implement a cleaning programme. • Be able to communicate the requirements of a cleaning programme to staff. • Minimise hazards occurring through the misuse or mishandling of chemicals. • Conduct cleaning inspections. TOPIC 6 • Describe standard meeting protocols and the importance of using them. • Describe ways to determine the need and objectives of a meeting. • Understand the importance of reaching decisions in meetings. • Explain ways of managing discussions and problem solving. TOPIC 7 • Arrange a meeting and compile an agenda. • Inform the delegates about the meeting. • Structure a meeting in accordance with the protocols (select a chairperson, minute taker, etc.) • Run a meeting to achieve the objectives within the timeframe.

4.5.3 Practical knowledge versus Theoretical knowledge

The analysis shows that the SGs that have been analysed had topics that were dominated by practical knowledge more than they were by theoretical knowledge. This showed that there was very little incorporation of theory and practice in the hospitality NC(V) curriculum. Furthermore, the LOs that were analysed did not clearly show the infusion of theory into practice, instead, they seem to focus more on the acquisition of practical knowledge and little on the theory. The practical knowledge LOs were identified by LOs such as;

- *clean a function room to the appropriate standard before and after use.*
- *breakdown room set-up after use and store all equipment appropriately.*
- *serve and clear bottled wines.*
- *operate a simple switchboard or telephone handset.*

These LOs focus on the 'how to' part. On the other hand, theoretical knowledge was identified by LOs such as;

- *explain how customer service could be improved.*
- *understand the licence requirements and the consequences of serving alcohol to intoxicated customers.*
- *describe ways to determine the appropriate delegates for a meeting.*

These LOs focus on the 'what' aspects. Observantly, some LOs were difficult to interpret because it was not clear whether they were meant for the acquisition of theoretical knowledge or mastery of technical skills. In some instances, the LOs seemed to be difficult to interpret due to the way in which they were expressed. For example, with 'Identify procedures for handling, cleaning and storing food service items,' it was unclear if the requirement is theoretical-based or practical-based. Umalusi (2013, p. 64), in a similar study has concluded that unclear LOs result in different lecturers interpreting them in their own different ways and under normal circumstances would be regarded to be theoretically-based rather than practically-based, and are thus taught as such.

The analysis of the LOs has revealed that Hospitality Services was more of a practical oriented subject than a theoretical one. This is in contrast to the findings from the interviews. The interviews with all the groups of respondents have established that the NC(V) hospitality curriculum was theoretically based.

4.5.4 WIL as part of the NC(V) hospitality curriculum

There are no LOs on the SGs that illustrate practice in the workplace, as these were meant to be for practice in the simulation rooms and college workshops. The SG documents put emphasis on practical / application activities in the college workshops and not on workplace learning. Besides, there is no time allocation for workplace learning on the SGs. The words that were identified to postulate practice in the college workshops and simulation rooms were; prepare, serve, clean, activate, dispose, provide, receive, store, use, operate, portion, make and respond. Despite the fact that industry requires the same proficiencies, the graduates were still unable to perform such skills as per the expectation of industry. The above finding has depicted that the NC(V) hospitality programme as currently presented in TVET colleges does not have enough contact with the hospitality industry to help students develop the technical skills that industry desires.

4.5.5 Soft-skills in vocational training

During the interviews with all the groups of respondents there was a general concern about the poor levels of soft skills often associated with employability. The respondents indicated that the students were often not prepared for the workplace because they lack these employable skills. The researcher was therefore, prompted to analyse the SGs if they contained any of these soft skills and to find out if they form a part of the curriculum. The LOs were analysed according to the soft skills that were perceived by the respondents during interviews as being important for hospitality graduates to possess. These soft-skills were; communication skills, team-work, time-management, personal traits, writing skills and basic life skills. The mentioned soft skills were deemed to be directly linked to the identity of the hospitality industry, but could not be located specifically in any of the analysed LOs. This means that the analysed LOs did not reflect on knowledge that related to the impartation of these soft skills to the students. This implies that the content on soft skills was not addressed in the curriculum because the LOs in the study have no mention of the development of these skills to the students, and these were plainly so desired by industry. Nevertheless, the demand for better equipping TVET students for the workplace is on the rise globally. Most literature on graduate employability often focuses on the need for soft skills as the most important factor for accessing

and succeeding in the world of work. Therefore, TVET colleges should take it upon themselves to include the impartation of generic skills to their curricula.

The next section presents the study findings based on data sought in order to ascertain the extent to which time allocation on the SGs and the teaching timetables enhanced the acquisition of practical skills that met the needs of the employer. The document that was analysed was the college teaching timetable. During the interviews the respondents raised concerns that the lecturers focused on the theoretical aspects because there was no time allocation for the practical aspects. This enticed the researcher to analyse the college timetable in order to validate the findings from the interviews.

4.5.6 Time allocation in a vocational curriculum

The main focus of using the college timetable in document analysis was to establish whether the responses given by both the graduates and the lecturers with regard to lack of time for the execution of practical lessons for the vocational subjects more especially hospitality services were valid. During interviews when these two groups of respondents were asked the question 'In your own view, were there sufficient practical skills training at college that match the practice in the workplace?' The most common response that the researcher got was 'no', when asked 'why' the common response was 'they were not addressed on the timetable, more especially concerning; front office, restaurant, bar service and accommodation.' The analysis of the time-table is therefore, meant to give credibility to these findings from the interviews.

The SGs that were analysed stipulate that 200 hours of teaching and learning time is allocated per annum for the subject. These 200 hours can be mathematically translated into 218 days demarcated into 55 minute lessons in a year. This means that there is ample of time allocated for the teaching and learning of this vocational subject on the SGs as some of the lessons can be placed into blocks for the provision of practical lessons. This is because there are only about 130 days of teaching and learning on the DHET-TVET calendar per year (see Appendix K). The 130 days exclude the days put in place for assessments. On the contrary, the college's teaching time-table indicated that Hospitality Services NQF Level 2 to 4 are allocated 55 minutes long lessons per day for 6 days in a 7-day cycle on the timetable, (see markings on Appendix J). The 130 days were translated into 18 cycles in a year, which were then translated

into 99 hours per annum time allocation for the teaching and learning of the vocational subject in question. The 99 hours are far too little as compared to the amount of work that must be covered on the SGs. Besides, the SGs stated 200 hours as time allocation for this subject, therefore, the 99 hours are too little as compared to the stipulated 200 hours. Furthermore, the timetable that was analysed did not show any blocks for the practical lessons to be conducted in the workshops.

This analysis has revealed that some vocational subjects that fully relate to the hospitality industry, like Hospitality Services which address; front office, restaurant, bar service and accommodation are not allocated the amount of time they deserve when it comes to the practical component on the timetable. Yet, it is the practical aspect that grounds the technical skills that make the students meet the needs of the employer. While Hospitality Services NQF Level 2 to 4 were evidently taught, they were however, limited to classroom instruction, as the college timetable clearly showed that the time allocated for this particular course did not adequately cater for the range of activities related to restaurant, bar service, front office and accommodation. These activities among others are; food and beverage service activities, laying of tables, the making of beds, laundry and reception activities. Such activities require ample of time for practice. This corroborates with what the lecturers have said during the interviews pertaining the time allocated for the subject on the timetable. The time has been found to be undeniably very little for a practical subject (Hospitality Services) of this nature which is loaded with fifteen diversified topics (NQF Level 2) and several LOs that are also practical in nature. This could imply that colleges did not put into consideration the time requirements for these vocational subjects on the timetable as mentioned by one of the lecturers because of the need to satisfy the time for the teaching and learning of the 4 vocational subjects together with the three fundamental subjects, including the theoretical assessments for all the seven subjects.

4.6 Summary

Markedly, the respondents were united in the view that the NC(V) hospitality curriculum was heavily laden with theoretical knowledge, as all the three groups of respondents said that the students spent a lot of their time in the classroom other than in workshops, simulation rooms or the workplace. The SGs on the other hand, seem to be stressing more on what the students need to be able to do (practical knowledge) and not paying enough attention to what they need

to know (theoretically knowledge) as the learning outcomes are practically oriented, even though a well-designed vocational curriculum should infuse the two kinds of knowledge. The employers have revealed that the graduates can hardly do anything on inception, they considered them to be ill-equipped for industry, and this was blamed on their lecturers whom they perceived taught old methods of work and systems, yet industry is going through a lot of technological changes on a regular basis. Industry insists that the lecturers need to go to industry on a regular basis so that they teach current and relevant skills to the students. The finding was that most TVET lecturers held qualifications in their trade areas, but did not have any pedagogical grounding which could help them in the implementation of a vocational curriculum. This could mean that the lecturers do lack the dual professional identity that they should be in possession of in order to dispense the right skills in the correct manner to the students.

The findings from both the interviews and the document analysis show that learning outcomes that are inclined towards workplace knowledge and the impartation of soft skills are not addressed on the SGs. This has resulted in students failing to bridge theory and practice. This might mean that this curriculum could fail to meet the needs of industry because employers require a graduate who is able to hit the ground running once on the job floor, one who has both the hard skills and soft skills that would render her/him employable. Partnerships in training were perceived to be of utmost importance, especially because industry could help colleges in coming up with a curriculum that is aligned to their needs as it has been highlighted that it is only the employer that knows what skills the employee should be in possession of. The findings have also illuminated the importance of having fully resourced facilities and workshops to help facilitate the implementation of a well-formulated vocational curriculum. However, it has been established that some TVET colleges are not adequately resourced to sufficiently provide for the proper teaching and learning of vocational programmes, hence their inadequacy to fulfil the needs of industry. The analysis of the timetables revealed that vocational subjects are not allocated enough time to cater for their practical nature. The next chapter presents the discussion to the findings.

Chapter 5: Discussions of findings

5.1 Introduction

This study was informed by the need to find out if the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum aligned with the needs of industry, and this was instigated by the proliferation of TVET colleges, which raised concerns about their inability to provide skills required by the labour market. The research questions that had to be answered were;

- to what extent does the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum in TVET colleges satisfy the needs of the hospitality industry?
- what perceptions do the graduates have regarding the relationship between the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum and the needs of the employer?
- what expectations do employers have with regard to the NC(V) hospitality studies graduates employed in their companies?
- what are the views of the lecturers concerning the relationship between the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum and the skills needs of industry?

The objectives to the study were to;

- highlight the expectations of industry regarding the NC(V) hospitality studies graduates
- investigate if training received at college by the graduates was relevant to the world of work
- establish the extent and nature of partnership between industry and TVET colleges
- examine the views of the lecturers concerning the relationship between the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum and the needs of industry.

This chapter intends to give the analysis and the discussions of the major findings from the study. The discussions are organised under the following themes;

- theoretical and practical knowledge in vocational training
- resources in TVET colleges
- work-integrated learning
- soft skills in a vocational curriculum
- partnerships in training
- time allocation in a vocational curriculum.

5.2 The professional identity of TVET Lecturers

In order for a vocational curriculum to be implemented with precision, TVET college lecturers are required to be holders of a trade and pedagogical qualification, and be furnished by adequate and current industrial experience. This means that a lecturer in a TVET college requires a minimum of three domains; 1. Professional Qualification in a particular trade 2. Specialised pedagogical qualification 3. Industrial or work experience. These have been found to be very essential in developing competencies in regard to TVET (Lucas et al., 2012).

The findings from the lecturers referred to in this study suggest that there is a disjuncture amongst the three domains reflected in both qualifications and experience. Such a problem is intensified by the complexity brought about by the dual professional identity of vocational practitioners as both skilled workers in a particular occupation and as vocational teachers. The study has established that some lecturers have subject matter knowledge, with no pedagogic qualification and workplace knowledge and experience. Some have a teaching and trade qualification including teaching and workplace experience. However, lecturers that hold an education qualification have general education related qualifications rather than one designed for vocational lecturers / teachers. This could imply that the lecturers are not able to implement the vocational curriculum. A vocational curriculum would require teachers with a special type of pedagogy – vocational pedagogy. This finding is substantiated by DHET (2012, p. 24) that states;

> *college lecturers in technical fields have, through the years, been recruited from industry. They usually possess technical qualifications as well as workplace experience and knowledge, but little pedagogical training.*

This is supported by Lloyd and Payne (2012, p. 4) who say 'these vocational teachers, incidentally were, until recently, not required to undertake teaching qualifications.' Evidently, there has been a serious omission in the South African vocational education. It could be argued that vocational students have been the losers as a result of this omission. However, the matter of establishing long term pedagogical training for TVET lecturers has been under discussion between the DHET and the relevant stakeholders.

The study findings have revealed that lecturers with no pedagogical qualifications found it difficult to interpret the SAG during the implementation process. This implies that the lecturers

were unable to interpret the curriculum because they may be lacking the right type of pedagogical training. One of the lecturers said that he found it difficult to interpret the SAG documents into a concrete teaching programme because they were sketchy and also because the learning outcomes show the intention of assessments. He thought he could have been in a better position to interpret these documents if he had a teacher training qualification. This finding is upheld by Umalusi (2008) and Wedekind and Mutereko (2016a) who note that the NC(V) qualification framework and its supporting documents are seen more as an 'assessment curriculum' rather than a teaching curriculum, and most lecturers if untrained might have difficulties interpreting them. This could be one factor that affects the quality of graduates that are churned out of TVET colleges. It is very crucial for teaching staff to be able to interpret the curriculum if they are to administer it with accuracy. The teaching staff in TVET colleges have been identified by DHET (2012, p. 24) as 'key drivers of change, their capabilities as subject-matter expertise as well as experts in their trade is of great importance if colleges are to produce graduates with skills that are relevant to the needs of industry.' Additionally, the African Union (2007) proclaims that the delivery of quality TVET is dependent on the competence of the lecturer; competence measured in terms of their knowledge of the subject matter, their technical expertise and pedagogical skills as well as being abreast with the new technologies in use in the workplace.

Furthermore, the lecturers have highlighted that they do not know where to turn to for advice and support regarding the challenges that they are facing regarding the interpretation and implementation of this curriculum, since the subject advisors for the TVET college sector are not known. The conglomeration of subjects (such as hospitality and tourism clustered together) may mean that their Heads of Departments (HODs) may not be able to assist, as one of the lecturers has mentioned that his HOD could not help him as she herself was not a hospitality specialist and did not understand the requirements of the NC(V) hospitality curriculum as she had never received any training. The other reason why HODs are unable to help is that their duties are mainly administrative therefore they are not expected to assist in the interpretation of curricula. This lack of curriculum support might undermine the lecturers' ability to deal effectively with the subject content of the programme, thereby compromising on the quality of the graduate produced. Lecturer training or more comprehensive curriculum guidelines are therefore, of utmost importance.

The issue of overall lecturer competence becomes more complex when experience is factored in as a constitutive component. Lucas and Guy (2013) argue that effective teaching methods for vocational learning are based on realistic work problems and scenarios, led by trainers who have recent and relevant vocational education training and experience. In support, Wedekind and Watson (2012, p. 12) say; 'the extent to which lecturers have practised their trades in the workplace is an important qualitative dimension of what they ultimately teach the learners.' This also relates to their ability to adequately prepare students for the workplace, as they will be able to furnish them with the relevant knowledge and skills. On the contrary, the study has found out that some lecturers did not possess the latest skills and knowledge that change rapidly due to technological changes. One employer said that these skills are critical if the lecturers were to teach current and relevant skills that match the requirements of industry. In agreement, the graduates noted that TVET lecturers could teach effectively if they understood the content of the programme in question, more especially if they possessed the current skills and knowledge.

The study has highlighted that some TVET lecturers are not in possession of industrial experience and knowledge as proclaimed by one lecturer. He said that he had never been to industry and so did not really know what was happening in the world of work. Both the graduates and employers put the blame for the lack of skill by the graduates onto the lecturers whom they said taught the old methods of work and systems. To bridge this gap, the study has established that TVET colleges have put in place WIL programmes for lecturers to be undertaken during the school holidays, so that they are able to obtain or refresh their industrial skills. However, as revealed by the study, some lecturers refused to embrace the programme because they felt that school holidays were their own free time for rest and to pursue personal agendas. The refusal could imply that the lecturers might never be equipped with the latest trends of industry which could help them teach relevant skills to the future employees. Therefore, it is imperative for TVET colleges to look into this issue and perhaps change the days in which WIL for lecturers be undertaken. For instance, colleges could make use of substitute lecturers so that the permanent lecturers have time to go for WIL during school days.

The teaching and learning personnel issues have an impact on the status of the NC(V) graduate. Any qualification delivered by personnel whose credentials are suspect is bound to lose

credibility on the labour market (Umalusi, 2008, p. 63). These could be some of the reasons why employers have a negative attitude towards the NC(V) graduates as they were of the perception that the graduates' lack of relevant skills emanated from lecturers who have not worked in industry or have not updated their skills and knowledge related to industry. This study has revealed that the NC(V) hospitality curriculum might not be the reason why TVET colleges are not producing graduates with relevant skills. The problem could be that the quality of training is poor because the instructors lack proper qualifications, training experience, initiative and motivation to fulfil their responsibilities.

5.3 Theoretical and Practical knowledge in vocational training

According to DHET (2012) the main aim of the NC(V) qualification is to equip students with the necessary broad theoretical knowledge and practical skills to enter the technical and trade fields of employment or proceed into higher education as it is perceived to be equivalent to the National Senior Certificate. This could be made possible if there was an impartation of both the 'knowledge-how' and 'knowledge-that' (as explained in chapter 2) to the TVET students because a vocational curriculum is meant to merge practical knowledge and theoretical knowledge, with significant time allocated to practical activities so that the students are furnished with the necessary skills that industry desires. In addition, Umalusi (2010, p. 13) presumes that 'the NC(V) qualification is supposed to enable students to attain the necessary knowledge, practical skills, applied competence and understanding required for employment in a particular occupation or trade or class of occupations or trades, or entrance into Higher Education.' Similarly, the Department of Education (DoE) (2006, p. 12) states that 'the NC(V) will offer programmes that will consist of theoretical knowledge integrated with the practical knowledge and values specific to each vocational area for the good of the student and industry.' On the contrary, the findings from the study revealed that TVET colleges taught more of the theory than they did the practical skills, despite having SGs that are heavily laden with LOs that are practically oriented.

The analysis of the SG documents has revealed that the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum is characterised by a heavy emphasis on practical knowledge. However, some LOs in the SGs are not clearly stipulated as to whether they were theoretically or practically oriented. The risk associated with this is that such LOs may be interpreted differently by different lecturers, but

are mostly taken to be theoretically based. Precisely, most LOs in the SGs are practical in nature, although there was one or two theoretical LOs in each topic. This shows that there is a thrust towards practice in the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum. In contrast, Wedekind and Mutereko (2016a) found out that the SGs in respect of the NC(V) vocational curriculum were mostly based on theoretical knowledge. The finding by Wedekind and Mutereko (2016a) was affirmed by the respondents in the study who revealed that the NC(V) hospitality curriculum was theoretically oriented because the students spent a lot of time in the classroom rather than the workshops or simulation rooms. The perception by most respondents was that TVET colleges provide theoretical training to the hospitality students more than the practical training needed to fully equip them to practice the trade they were learning. They have in fact criticised the amount of theoretical knowledge given to TVET students. The employers seem not to consider this type of knowledge if graduates were to meet the needs of industry. The respondents have indicated that if the students were to be furnished with the kind of skill that industry requires they needed to spend most of their training time practicing in workshops and not doing theory work.

Furthermore, the study showed that there was a concern that the theoretical training which the TVET colleges provided was generally out-of-date and of a low standard. The findings pointed at the extrinsic and rapid technological change as creating problems for training providers in maintaining curriculum relevance and currency of knowledge and skills. The respondents felt that the curriculum needed to be revised and updated to keep abreast with what was currently happening in the hospitality industry. The lecturers conceded that this failure to keep pace with trends in the industry has rendered their teaching irrelevant. Consequently, TVET college qualifications like the NC(V) possessed poor market credibility and college graduates have had difficulties getting jobs or getting accepted into higher institutions to study further. Nevertheless, this may just be a stereotypical view which might not have been proven.

Despite the practical nature of the programme as revealed by the analysis of the SGs, the lecturers confirmed that they still taught concepts theoretically because to begin with, the work-load was too heavy and this could mean the none completion of the content to be taught before the examinations if they seriously factored in the practical aspects. Secondly, they mentioned that they were always rushing against time because of the inadequacy of time allocation for the

vocational subjects on the time-tables, this ratified the finding from the analysed timetable that showed that very little time was allocated for vocational subjects. Thirdly, because of the lack of training resources to execute the crucial practical aspects of the vocational subjects, which is also brought about by a high lecturer-student ratio of up to 1:30. Lastly, because both the internal and external assessments as divulged by the study were theoretical in nature and students were required to know the textbook off by heart and be able to recite it. This adversely affected the amount of theory the students were exposed to. SAQA (2000, p. 18) avers that;

> *in the assessment of learners, the notion of applied competence is often ignored and assessment focuses on foundational competence or in limited cases, practical competence.*

Similarly, Umalusi's (2013, p. 66) study found out that the hospitality programme SAG documents spoke of practical assessments which were never practiced. This goes to show that teaching programmes, the assessments and examinations satisfactorily reflect theoretical knowledge and not practice. The implication is that TVET college programmes emphasised what the students needed to know (theoretical knowledge) and prepared them for the theoretically oriented examinations and assessments that they have to pass in order to satisfy the certification rate. Attention is not given to what the students would need to do when they go to the workplace. It has emerged that it was a waste of time teaching practical aspects when both the external and internal assessments are theoretically based. It could be for such reasons that the study by Umalusi (2008, p. 62) has come to a conclusion that 'the NC(V) hospitality curriculum in TVET colleges has been modelled on a school / general curriculum approach, which does not make provision for the special characteristics of technical vocational training.' Wedekind and Mutereko (2016a) in like manner, have also mentioned that the vocational curricula in South Africa and internationally are too school-like and are disconnected from the world of work.

In the twenty-first century curricula in all domains of education and training are increasingly called upon in order to prepare students directly for the world of work and citizenship. For this to be achieved, Gamble (2009, p. 38) supposes that 'both theoretical and practical knowledge have to be factored into the curriculum in ways that go beyond an integrational logic…' The connotation is that the rounded TVET student should be able to embrace both theoretical and practical knowledge which cannot be separated if the student is to derive maximum benefit. Skills in today's industry rely on both practical and theoretical knowledge that enhance

proficiency, that is the ability to do something well and the capability of accomplishing something with precision and certainty. To be more precise, theory and practice should be seen as indivisible elements within the greater domain of TVET and should be taught as such, free from the separatist demarcating practices that have plagued many TVET systems (Gamble, 2013). This linkage between theory and practice allows for the acquisition of the elements of knowledge and skills that are necessary for the development of a well-rounded graduate who is relevant to the new world of work. Furthermore, Wheelahan (2010a) claims that in some firms, workers need to be multi-skilled because the knowledge and processes needed by the firms change with every innovation in technology or innovation enacted by a competitor. This also helps eradicate what Braverman (1998) has termed 'de-skilling'. Moreover, nations need an intelligent, adaptable and knowledgeable workforce that can make a positive contribution to the economy. Apart from this, knowledge cannot be cut up into little pieces and students must be shown the bigger picture of what is involved in hospitality right from the beginning and must cover all the aspects of the industry, thus the curriculum must be broad to cover all aspects of the hospitality industry, both in theory and in practice. Therefore, when thinking about TVET educational outcomes, it is important for vocational curriculum designers to determine the best way of developing each type of knowledge in order to produce a balanced graduate.

The DoE (2006, p. 12) clearly stipulates that;

> *the NC(V) … will provide learning experiences in situations contextually relevant to the particular vocational area in which the programme is situated. The NC(V) … will offer programmes that will consist of the academic and theoretical knowledge integrated with the practical skills/knowledge and values specific to each vocational area.*

The analysis of the SGs has however, revealed a different sentiment from this, as it has shown that in the NC(V) hospitality programme, practical knowledge overrides theoretical knowledge, instead of integrating the two, by way of what is offered by the curriculum. As much as the inclusion of a substantive amount of the practical component on the curriculum is highly enriching and builds an individual's skills and capacities to do work competitively, a vocational curriculum is intended to integrate practical and propositional knowledge with significant time allocated to practical activities, so that graduates are able to think critically and also be able to progress, both in the workplace and into higher education. The arguments made in the international literature similarly recognise the need for a theory-practice combination as

work preparation. This has been according to Gamble (2009, p. 4) 'a reformulation of the nineteenth century call for industrial intelligence'. Grubb and Lazerson (2005, p. 7) define industrial intelligence as;

> *mental power to see beyond the task which occupies the hands for the moment to the operations that have preceded and to those which will follow it – power to take in the whole process, knowledge of materials, ideas of cost, ideas of organizations, business sense and a conscience which recognises obligations.*

To be more precise, what is required in curriculum terms, when it comes to TVET is both conceptual knowledge and practical work infused together. DHET (2012, p. 36) has also put emphasis on the fact that, most successful vocational learning takes place as a result of an integration of theoretical learning, workshop-based practical learning, and learning in the workplace. However, the study has revealed that how concepts are taught in college does not connect closely enough with the requirements of industry, since emphasis is placed more on theory. This is because the training system is rigid and centralised which restricts responsiveness to practical demands.

The study has also illuminated that students mostly go to skills training through hands-on practical activities in the workshops around September for just a month for ISAT. Although by that time of the academic year students would have been exposed to a considerable amount of theory, therefore, the students were likely to find it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to incorporate this theoretical knowledge into practice in just a month. The findings from this observation are substantiated by Gamble's (2013) argument that in bridging the gap between theory and practice, students needed to be taught theory or basic knowledge first before they could do practical lessons. It is argued that this would help them to transfer knowledge learned into practice. Moreover, Wheelahan (2015) argues that a sound approach in relating theory to workshop learning in TVET is that theory and practice should be learned at the same time. These findings validate the view that in teaching vocation-specific skills, active hands-on learning in actual or simulated work environments is far more effective than isolated, decontextualised learning.

On one hand, it would appear that there is no deliberate teaching of theoretical knowledge more than practical knowledge, the situation is being driven by the circumstances in the TVET colleges. On the other hand, it could be argued that the lecturers were failing to focus on both

types of knowledge because they were not specialised vocational educators, who would not know the importance of both theory and practice in a vocational curriculum. A qualified vocational teacher would understand the contexts in which vocational education is provided and is able to offer an overview of effective vocational teaching and learning methods so as to bring about the desired outcome. Lucas et al. (2012) attest by saying that vocational teachers have the ability to take the best possible decisions in their many different 'designed learning environments' (classrooms, workshops, studios and training rooms) and so develop the best possible vocational pedagogy for the context in which they teach.

5.4 Resources in TVET colleges

TVET colleges in South Africa offer training in many occupational areas such as; 'hard skill' areas for example, construction, mechanical engineering and hospitality, and 'soft skill' areas such as; business, human resources and office operations in all levels of training. Training in such multiple occupational areas demands a lot of training resources such as, physical infrastructure like workshops, facilities and consumable materials such as, ingredients and detergents. The TVET drive in any nation could be weakened if such resources are in short supply, as these are central and key to the implementation of any vocational curricula, especially those for 'hard skills' like hospitality.

One of the lecturers in the study indicated that the implementation of the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum was a challenge because of a lack of physical infrastructure, facilities, equipment and consumables that they could use for hospitality services related areas such as, bar service, restaurants, housekeeping and front office. She also added that in some cases, consumables were not available in time mainly due to shortages of money to address the requests of different practical sessions. The other lecturer in the interview also noted that they failed to teach the necessary skills because they did not have the facilities, structures and equipment to use during their practical lessons. They only had basic equipment and utensils in the kitchens, which also came in short supply and these were not quite useful because they taught big classes of 30. In agreement to the lecturers' assertions with regard to resources, one graduate revealed that;

> *our college kitchens were so under-resourced and contained only the basic equipment such as, electric stoves and ovens; the sophisticated equipment and*

> *utensils that we see now in industry were not there, I think this is the reason why I could not operate these machines the first time I got employed.*

The rampant lack of training materials and workshops to conduct TVET learning was one of the challenges that the respondents in the study identified as impeding on training. The lecturers in the study bemoaned the lack of resources and the existence of old facilities that were used as workshops for practice as the root cause for failure to impart the relevant skills to the students. This challenge as mentioned by one of the respondents was further worsened by poor procurement systems and bureaucracy in most institutions. The graduates mentioned that they were very lucky to be in employment, taking into consideration that they knew almost nothing, concerning operations. Most of them could hardly identify and/or operate machinery and software on inception in the workplace. This was because they had never used these while at college as the college was under-resourced. The other reason given was that the old-fashioned way of doing work was still taught at college and yet industry was loaded with the latest software. One of the graduates mentioned that;

> *most systems and methodologies taught in college are not in use in industry today. This is because colleges lack the money to buy the latest machines for example, omelette makers, steamers and salamanders and the latest software. In college we still used ordinary frying pans to make omelettes and still used ordinary saucepans and plates as steamers. We also still learnt how to make bookings the old fashioned way. This lack of proper resources did not adequately prepare us for industry as we struggled with the reality of using and operating machines and software that we had never practiced while at college.*

One of the lecturers also pointed out that they still taught the making of bookings manually, while industry used new software like 'Opera' and 'Amadeus'. Industry in the 21st Century has adapted to using new systems of work as the nature of knowledge, skill and work has changed due to the economic and technological revolutions. These changes appear to be continuing and providers of education and training are failing to keep up with the pace due to lack of funding. A curriculum that fails to adjust to the changes in the knowledge field, in technology, in the conditions of the labour market or the needs of the students gets outdated quickly. Such a curriculum could potentially become irrelevant, and as a result the students enrolled in the programme are deemed unemployable. In vocational programmes this can be a warning sign for the end of such programmes and the institutions that offer them. However, it can be argued that the use of old systems enables the learner to grasp the basic understanding of concepts involved in the activities as technology is just a medium, but the idea of making an omelette or making a booking remains the same.

Kennedy (2011) has also observed that facilities like classrooms, workshops, laboratories, studios, equipment and materials are grossly inadequate in most TVET institutions. Where workshops do exist, it is feared, they utilise equipment that is very limited and obsolete, non-functional and did not meet the industry requirements. This was said to result in inadequate practical training. The respondents said this lack of material and equipment made skills acquisition impossible because the time students spent in the workshop was too short to enable them to acquire the skills they needed, given the fact that the college timetable did not accommodate practical lessons. Reid and Shah (2007) posit that it is necessary for students to handle and use workshop equipment regularly so that they learn how to use them in order to develop skills for practical activities. Training resources are a necessity if any vocational curriculum is to be implemented successfully and if the students are to attain the required technical skills that would make them competent employees who can give the employer what he needs to enhance economic growth. This implies that the inadequacy of training in TVET colleges does not solely lie with the curriculum itself, but with other factors that are supposed to support the implementation of a vocational curriculum of this nature. Such challenges could lead into having practical concepts taught theoretically, which might not effectively ground the trainee with competencies expected by industry and commerce. Bacchus (1988) also warns of the fact that if there is a lack of equipment and materials in vocational training, there is a tendency for the theoretical aspect to dominate the practical aspect, thereby denying vocational subjects the opportunity to be taught appropriately. On this aspect, the researcher observed that because of the lack of training resources, integrating theory into practice becomes a challenge.

To ensure the development of holistic graduates with hard and transferable skills that meet the needs of industry, there is need to make certain that a vocational curriculum is supported by a good supply of all the resources that are needed to enhance training. Precisely, the shortage of training materials and workshop facilities to conduct training could critically beyond doubt affect the end product in terms of practical skills acquisition and thus compromising the quality of the graduates produced. This lack of resources in training could simply imply that the classroom and workshop environments in TVET colleges do not reflect the industry standards expected of students in a work context. In other words, it leads to the production of an incompetent graduate who might need to compulsorily undergo a Graduate Trainee Programme on inception into the workplace, which most employers regarded as a waste of time and money. DHET (2012, p. 21) states that ‘DHET will ensure that there was sufficient and up-to-date

equipment, budgeted for, which would be procured on an ongoing basis, and that workshop facilities were available for all programmes.' The findings from the study have just shown that the department is failing to honour its promises.

5.5 Work integrated learning

The study has shown that WIL was an important component in any vocational curriculum since it has the potential of helping students acquire skills (both technical and soft) that simulation rooms and college workshops could not provide. The respondents had varied opinions on the role that WIL could play in the organisation of procedural knowledge in the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum. Most respondents in the study knew what WIL was and favoured it, although they said it was not a part of the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum. Jackson (2014) mentions that most academics seem to shy away from WIL implementation due to perceived increase in workload, thus denying themselves and their students the benefits of WIL, especially for student career prospects, as fluency can only be achieved through practice.

Findings from the analysis of the learning outcomes on the SGs have illuminated that none of the learning outcomes illustrate practice in the workplace. They were meant to be for practice in the simulation rooms and college workshops. The SG documents put emphasis on practical / application assessments and not on workplace learning. Likewise, SAQA (2000, p. 18) says, 'the NC(V) curriculum offers to the students the opportunities to gain practical competence in workshops and / or simulation rooms, but lacks practice in real-world contexts (the workplace), where students were required to adapt their learning so as to function successfully in complex circumstances.' The same observation was made by Mutereko and Wedekind (2015, p. 919) who note that 'the concept of work-process knowledge was almost non-existent in the NC(V) curriculum, as it is not covered sufficiently in the learning outcomes.' In like manner, the lecturers and the graduates reported that it was not obligatory for the NC(V) students to go on WIL, those who did, did so voluntarily. Those students who voluntarily went on WIL did so during the holidays to companies of their choice for 5 to 10 days. Undeniably, WIL was not factored into the curriculum, yet it was considered to be one of the most important components of a vocational curriculum. This is despite the declaration in the Green Paper on Post-School Education and Training by DHET (2012, p. 8) that 'workplace training and WIL must be a central part of our training system.' Billet (2001, 2013) suggests a level of maturity is instilled

in students and confidence increases because the experience they acquire in the real workplace was rewarding in that they address real problems and the work they produce was used by other people – that is by real clients. This is unlike the kind of experience they get when they practice either in simulation rooms or college workshops, whereby everything was simulated.

Comments from the interviews highlighted the importance of the number of days completed in the workplace as of particular importance. The few days in which WIL was said to be conducted in some TVET colleges have been regarded to be insufficient because students were placed into real-world contexts so that they may have the opportunities to take on responsibilities, develop skills, relationships with colleagues and supervisors and to work as members of a team. For all of these to take place, the time factor should be put into consideration so as to allow students to fully experience the varied learning opportunities that occur within an organisation. This is because the acquisition of practical knowledge is a highly sophisticated form of imitation and assimilation that requires time and the help of experienced workers. Similarly, a research by Busby (2003) has shown that students believe they learn on placement in a multitude of areas including technical knowledge and skills, communication, interpersonal skills and understanding about the work culture. This could be made possible if the period for WIL is long enough. In support, Webster and Leger (1992) state that practical knowledge is absorbed through a prolonged process of working with a master practitioner. This points to a need for students to develop social interactions with their workmates that may facilitate their enculturation into the community of practice.

The findings in the study have assumed that theoretical knowledge was already taught in TVET colleges therefore, emphasis needed to be placed on the provision of opportunities to gain 'real world' practical experience in order to develop reflexive competence. The general concern was that the NC(V) hospitality curriculum did not provide ample opportunities for practice in workshops and simulation rooms to consolidate the theory learned in the classroom. According to Cornford and Gunn (1998) this inadequacy can be rectified by the inclusion of the WIL aspect to the curriculum. Jackson (2013, p. 201) also says 'attention can be focused upon learning in the workplace through on-the-job training as a solution to problems of skill currency, productivity and international competitiveness.' In relation to this, SAQA (2000, pp. 17–18) postulates that;

> *most learning programmes do provide learners with propositional knowledge or foundational competence. However, within the context of applied competence, they should also offer learners opportunities to gain practical competence, not only in controlled and defined environments … but also outside the safety of the classroom and laboratory, in real-world contexts, where learners will be required to adapt and re-contextualise their learning to function successfully in complex and unpredictable circumstances. These opportunities enable the development of reflexive competence and self-improvement.*

Furthermore, a significant educational psychology and sociology literature has emerged which has challenged the effectiveness of off-site (at college) learning because of failure of many of the skills to transfer from the training setting to the workplace. For example, Eraut (2004) and Lave and Wenger (1991) are among those who have highlighted the need for learning and practice in context so that learning is made effective and meaningful. These writers have stressed that knowledge is situated, that it is a product of the activity, context and culture in which it is developed and used. Such a theory supports what the respondents in the study are in favour of, 'the need for on-the-job learning'. Bluntly, more than being an artefact of the past, 'learning through practice is probably still the pre-eminent form of the initial and ongoing development of individuals' skills across a range of nations and cultures' (Billett, 2013, p. 129). Mutereko and Wedekind (2015, p. 310) assert that 'there is strong support for WIL in all qualification programmes that seek to bridge or solve the theory/practice dichotomy and improve employability skills of graduates.' Therefore, the importance of WIL being a part of a vocational curriculum in a field such as hospitality cannot be overemphasised as it is widely accepted that enhancing the graduates' employability is now integral to the TVET programmes. Jackson (2014, p. 101) also mentions that 'people leaving higher education should be confident not only that their knowledge, skills and capabilities for entering the world of work are appropriate, but that they are able to articulate these to potential employers.' Clearly, substantial experience of artisans in realistic conditions in workplaces is a pre-requisite for the creation of competent graduates who adequately meet the needs of the employer.

The information gathered from the study showed that industry wants graduates who can collect the baton stick and continue running. The lack of WIL in the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum could make this a bit difficult. This is so because WIL grants students an opportunity to acquire both the soft and the hard skills that match the needs of industry. It means that WIL ensures that graduates who enter the workplace are equipped with the basic hospitality skills, attitudes, values and knowledge. It ensures they are ready for easy transition into a formal workplace, which might not be replaced by a college workshop or simulation.

The lack of WIL has been deemed the reason why employers have perceived this curriculum as irrelevant to their needs. The findings point to the fact that this curriculum was not developed according to the demand-driven approach, as it is evident from the content of the curriculum that industry might have not been consulted when the curriculum was formulated, otherwise WIL could have been bridged. Young (2008) in Wedekind and Mutereko (2016a, p. 17) states that a vocational curriculum needs to be controlled by key stakeholders, the employers, and not by training centres. Patently, this out-dated curriculum needs to keep-up with the needs of industry, therefore, it needs to be revised and updated so that it matches the requirements of a typical vocational curriculum which will put into consideration the infusion of workplace knowledge so that the graduates become employable. The dual training system (school and workplace) implemented by nations like Germany goes a long way combating such disparities. However, the quality of training outside of the institution is difficult to control and therefore, the quality of knowledge issues is an ongoing debate. Additionally, the increased reliance on the attainment of skill in the workplace could mean that the kind of knowledge being developed in TVET colleges is not suitable for the needs of employers.

5.6 Soft-skills in a vocational curriculum

The socialisation of the graduates into the world of work was considered to be an ongoing challenge as the study has highlighted that it was difficult to find people with for example, good communication and customer handling skills. In more general terms, it has been revealed that it was difficult to find graduates with the soft-skills that were needed by industry. The implication was that soft skills such as; communication and social skills were problematic amongst the graduates. It is unfortunate that industry emphasises on such skills than the technical skills. Wedekind and Mutereko (2016b, pp. 379–380) state that;

> *the dominant focus is on generic skills that are linked to attitudes, dispositions and personal characteristics rather than the specific skills required to carry out the tasks associated with the job. This has led to a growing focus on communication and presentation skills, career guidance and such like, rather than job-specific skills.*

In like manner, these soft skills were outlined by one of the lecturers as;

> *a combination of people, social, communication skills, character traits, attitudes, career attributes and social intelligence among others, that enable people to navigate their environment, work well with others, perform well, and achieve their goals with complementing hard skills that relate to technical skills.*

The respondents in the study have indicated that soft-skills were important skills that all graduates should be in possession of if they were to be employed by industry. This is because they are the attributes and skills that people need in order to get employed. In addition, Mehralizadeh, Salehi and Mansur (2008) argue that the dominant discourse that arises from the skills' debate is that generic skills are necessary for employability and increased prosperity. Besides, people also need a broad range of these skills in order to contribute to a modern economy and to take their place in the technological society of the current age of globalisation.

The research findings have shown that there is a clear acknowledgement by the employers that on inception the TVET graduates displayed bad behaviour, had no work ethics, had poor writing skills and could not work in a team. One of the employers noted;

> *we have graduates from TVET colleges who do not adapt to industry because they are not skilled in business or in the correct behaviour whilst on our property, they do not have any business etiquette, or basic life skills, as they struggle with working with others. They are ill equipped for industry and do not possess the qualities for industry, more especially accurate writing. Colleges are not teaching these to their students, yet they are the most crucial if they are to be employed. This gets to show that the curriculum that is used in colleges is not relevant and as it does not meet the needs of industry.*

One other employer went on to say that; 'the TVET graduates struggle with the concept of shift work and generally, have a poor attitude to the reality of work life, thus they lack the generic skills desired by us.' These sentiments were confirmed by one of the graduates who said that she struggled when she got into industry as she never expected to work long hours. She reported this experience as having been hectic and unexpected. She also said, she was not used to following laid out procedures because in college they did as they pleased. They would attend class only when they felt like and that college was not strict with being late for class. 'Industry is so different from college, for everything, you follow laid down procedures and besides, one can never be late for work. It was quite difficult for me to fit in because these skills were not taught or emphasised at college,' she said. One of the lecturers indicated that it was unfortunate that the hospitality curriculum did not contain the generic skills that industry desired and that most employers were so strict when it came to soft-skills. She also said that the employers mostly used the soft-skills as selection criteria for employment.

The respondents in the study discerned that it was vital to have soft-skills as part of the NC(V) hospitality curriculum as it was perceived that graduates without such skills struggled when

they got into industry. One graduate emphasised why soft-skills must be taught in college by saying;

> *yes, soft-skills must be included in the syllabus. I say so because I struggled when I came to industry, I never knew what it meant to be a team-player, where one was supposed to work together with others in a project for the same goal. I thought I would always work as a loner. In college such skills were not inculcated in us as the syllabus does not put emphasis on them.*

The emphasis on the need for generic skills by the respondents in the study is nevertheless, in contrast to what Gamble and Young (2006) propagates for. They emphasize that a vocational curriculum should focus on the impartation of theoretical and practical knowledge so that graduates become employable or meet the needs of industry (2006). Wedekind and Mutereko (2016b) however, state clearly that the three components (theory, practice and soft skills) might not be useful if they are isolated, meaning that they are all crucial to render a graduate employable. Therefore, like theoretical and practical knowledge, soft-skills could also be incorporated into the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum. According to Lucas et al (2012, p. 115) 'there are six desired outcomes in all vocational education and these are; routine expertise, resourcefulness, functional literacies, craftsmanship, business-like attitudes and wider skills.' All of these are acquired through the three afore-mentioned domains. Wedekind and Mutereko (2016b) emphasises the need to understand the relationships between the three domains and to design a curriculum that is sequenced in a proper way, so as to develop the desired expertise.

The consensus from the respondents in the interviews seemed to be that the NC(V) hospitality graduates were not in possession of the soft skills which were regarded to be relevant to industry, skills that could enhance the graduates' employability. The employers perceived that soft-skills were not taught to the students while they were still at college, although it was apparent from this group of respondents that there was a clear need for students to be grounded with a set of these soft-skills. The findings from the analysed SG documents have shown that generic skills were not addressed in the learning outcomes and were thus not a component of the NC(V) hospitality curriculum. Wedekind and Mutereko (2016b) indicate that there is insufficient importance placed on the development of soft-skills by many higher education institutions. Recent research has also found that generally the key competencies – in the form of generic skills are not incorporated in training packages. This was identified as a problem internationally. Jackson (2013) made an acknowledgement that TVET institutions should address the issues of generic skills in the curriculum if they are to be responsive to the needs

of industry. However, it is not advised that generic competencies be taught as a form of a check list but be integrated and contextualised into a curriculum. On this same issue, Mehralizadeh, et al. (2008, p. 104) argue;

> *generic skills are not content-free and so cannot be 'taught' in isolation from the discipline – they need to be developed as part of the normal practice of departments. In addition, it is neither manageable nor desirable to teach these skills divorced from the contexts in which they are used. However, in order for the skills to be developed successfully it is important that their existence within the curriculum is clear…*

The focus is predominantly on helping students to become 'work ready' in terms of their generic skills development. This means that employability skills need to be embedded not only in any one module but must be throughout the curriculum at all levels of training. The non-inclusion of soft-skills on the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum could mean that there is a mismatch between the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum and the needs of the employer, for it is evident that the employer required graduates who have in their possession a bountiful of soft-skills. However, in as much as industry needs ready-made graduates, certain issues like interpersonal relationship, social values and the like should be offered by the industry as induction to the recruited graduates.

5.7 Partnerships in training

The closer the relation between TVET institutions and actual workplace practices, the greater the relevance of TVET curricula and the better the chances graduates could have in becoming employable. Gamble (2013) asserts that proximity of curricula to the workplace is the 'golden wand' of successful TVET as partnerships are likely to bring about relevance and currency to training. Partnerships also ensure that the TVET system contributes to changing the economy to one that relies more on the value-adding skills of its people than on easily replaceable and cheap unskilled labour.

The respondents in the study doubted if there was any link between colleges and industry because of the content in the NC(V) hospitality curriculum that they presumed to be outdated. They perceived that if there was a link, whatever was taught would somehow be aligned with what is in industry right now. They noted that industry was using new systems such as the new billing systems, software in reservations and stock control, yet colleges still used old methods

of work and systems. The NC(V) hospitality curriculum still required lecturers to teach current concepts manually. This implied that colleges were lagging far behind the latest trends for lack of partnerships with industry. It was believed that with partnerships, there were possibilities that the curriculum could always be up-to-date because of the involvement of experts from industry. One lecturer stated;

> *industry and the curriculum must speak to one another. There must be coherence/a link between the two and so industry must also be a part of the development of the curriculum, meaning that, colleges should involve industry when formulating the curriculum. They should not shy away from industry. After all it is only the employer that knows what they need their employees to be able to do. Therefore, partnerships between these stakeholders will go a long way in improving training in TVET colleges.*

This is also affirmed by Young and Gamble (2006) who say, a vocational curriculum needs to be controlled by the employers, and not by the providers of education and training, for it is the employer who knows the kind of skill that he requires. The implication was that employers were able to influence the content of TVET programmes to match them to their needs so that they are made relevant. This could also 'result in vocational education, that is flexible and adaptable by responding to the changing demands of employers,' (Wedekind & Mutereko, 2016a, p. 379). Vocational programmes require a cooperative approach to curriculation which brings together all the stakeholders to create a curriculum for a qualification with currency in both the workplace and higher education. This might also help widespread recognition of the programme by both the students and employers. From what the researcher has gathered, it could be assumed that if partnerships were prioritised in training, the NC(V) hospitality curriculum might be able to focus on outcomes in terms of the skills, knowledge, attitudes and values required by industry. The most common reasons cited by the respondents for partnerships was the need to ensure successful labour market outcomes by ensuring quick absorption of graduates into the workplace. Other reasons invoked included, upgrading machinery and equipment in colleges; student and lecturer placements; the reduction of skill shortages and mismatches; adopting business principles in college management, thus improving TVET college responsiveness to the needs of industry. Hence anchoring the attractiveness of TVET to both students and employers. In corroboration, Lucas and Guy (2013) postulate that industry engagement and collaboration was seen as an important feature to improve the TVET graduates' performance, not only in terms of the content and relevance, but also in terms of enhanced employability and the securing of better outcomes in terms of jobs and access. Education institutions are expected to be responsive by developing partnerships with industry, to determine the curriculum in collaboration with employers and to

link their staff and students to workplaces (Wedekind & Mutereko, 2016b). Partnership programmes could also enable colleges to receive guest lecturers from the industry. These lecturers are bound to provide current and relevant information, which is important in preparing students for the world of work. Partnerships could also allow stakeholders to engage each other on the possibilities and constraints associated with a programme. This could help to strengthen the understanding of some of the educational issues associated with developing a skilled labour force for the good of the economy. Therefore, partnerships are seen as important in improving the quality of training in TVET colleges.

The graduates were not sceptical to say that colleges should build relationships with industry so that the curriculum responds to their needs. They were of the idea that if these two worked in partnership, industry would definitely help in the training processes so that it benefited the students and vice versa, developing a symbiotic relationship. They also added that colleges lack facilities for training and if they worked together with industry it could help in that employers could become sponsors or donors of facilities and equipment needed for training. These sentiments by the graduates echoed the findings of Taylor and Pereira (2004) who attest that in some business-education partnerships, the education partner may benefit directly through receiving funding from their business partner to cover the costs of things like learner bursaries, programme development or resources. Taylor and Pereira (2004) further assert that the business partner may benefit indirectly from the partnership by improving its image in the community and the number and quality of graduates from the college who could become its future workforce. Similarly, DHET (2012) notes that the college – industry partnerships, are likely to benefit the industry as the skills gap is addressed. This is closely related to the fact that partnerships provide educational and/or financial benefits for partners. DHET (2012) highlights this as one of the important benefits of such partnerships.

The employers, like the lecturers and the graduates were of the assumption that partnerships between industry and colleges did not exist at all although it was believed they could do a lot of good. For example, one employer described how the graduates were failing to adapt to industry on inception;

> *we have graduates who do not adapt to industry because they are not skilled for this industry and for business or are not in the correct behaviour whilst on our property, this goes to show that whatever they are taught in college does not match our needs,*

> *therefore there is need for partnerships so industry and colleges can work together to come up with a curriculum that is relevant to our needs.*

This lack of co-operation was further highlighted with the following comments made by another employer who said;

> *the NC(V) Hospitality curriculum is not relevant because the curriculum does not match the methodologies and systems in industry today, as these change regularly. The students are taught old methods of work and systems and I find that this problem stems from the non-involvement of industry in formulating the curriculum and the lack of partnerships between colleges and industry.*

It seems the employers blamed this lack of partnerships between industry and training to the providers of education and training as one of them stated;

> *we feel that colleges do not want to work with us. Working together is for the best of the student as we could also help colleges in purchasing current pieces of machinery for the student's practice in preparation for work.*

The employers in the study have problematised the lack of partnerships in training to TVET colleges who were said to be far removed from the employers because they did not want to co-operate in a lot of activities. They mentioned for example, the lecturers' refusal to do workplace learning in their institutions and the non-follow up of students during WIL. The lecturers on the other hand, presupposed that industry would not involve itself with TVET colleges because they did not understand what NC(V) programmes were all about. In the same way, research has found out that the problem in partnerships lies with the industry as it does not want to be a part of training. For instance, Wedekind and Mutereko (2016a, p. 16) found out that 'employers had no knowledge of the NC(V) qualifications, neither did they have interest in pursuing the qualification as a route to further qualification or recruitment.' A similar study conducted by Islam and Mia (2007) revealed that TVET lacked an effective linkage between training and the world of work because the employers were not forthcoming. Mehralizadeh et al. (2008, p. 102) have argued that 'employers have weak connections with education providers for supporting the acquisition or development of workforce skills.' This is a clear indication that industry has made it difficult to bring about partnerships in training, resulting in practical skills training failing to produce graduates with imperative skills for the job market.

The synergy between industry and TVET colleges in South Africa has been perceived to be very weak, due to the fact that both parties are passing the buck. The employer insisted that colleges did not want to come on board and on the other hand, the colleges were saying that the employers did not want to be in partnership with TVET colleges because they did not

recognise the NC(V) programmes. This could be the cause why there is a wide variance of what was on offer on the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum as compared to what the hospitality industry expected. Efforts by Skills Education Training Authorities (SETAs) in linking industry and colleges have not yet bore the fruits that have been witnessed in other nations whose TVET systems are flourishing. Efforts by TVET institutions to access industrial opportunities through Private Public Partnerships have also been erratic and of no benefit in implementing the NC(V) curriculum in South Africa. Hence, the variance between the competencies that NC(V) graduates acquired at TVET institutions and what industry generally expected, thus reducing their chances of being employable. Partnership programmes between TVET colleges and industry should be established in response to the perceived gap in the TVET curricula. Wedekind and Mutereko (2016a) state that there is a need for a policy framework that guides the roles and responsibility in these partnerships, as it is evident that a coordinated training system such as that of Germany and Netherlands, which has been judged to be effective, maintain links between industry employers and training providers. Given the strong international consensus, partnerships are promoted as a key strategy to facilitate demand-driven education and training provision, improve quality, build links between further and higher education, and prepare learners for formal and self-employment.

5.8 Time allocation in a vocational curriculum

The NC(V) hospitality programme as mentioned earlier is designed to provide students with sound knowledge and skills that integrate both theory and practical competencies in preparation for the workplace (DoE, 2006). Umalusi (2013) states that since the NC(V) hospitality course is intended to be practically oriented, fewer theory than practical components should be taught. Therefore, time allocated for the execution of both the theoretical and practical concepts is of utmost importance as it determines how much skills training and workshop exposure the students get. This is more especially because the practical activities at colleges should form the basis for students to become apprentices, artisans and technicians, particularly regarding those students who do not want to immediately proceed to higher education. The NC(V) practical activities were found to be inadequately offered in the TVET college investigated because of time constraints, more especially time allocated for the practical aspects.

The findings in the study have shown that there was no balance between the teaching and learning of theory and practice in the vocational subjects, especially Hospitality Services. These subjects are allocated less time for the execution of the practical components, particularly where food and beverage services, accommodation and front office were concerned. It was reported that the students did not conduct practical sessions regularly in the workshops, while most of the graduates complained that the time they spent in the practical workshops and simulation rooms was just too short. One of the lecturers said that skills acquisition by the students was impossible as the time the students spent in the workshop was too short to enable them to acquire the skills they needed, given that the college timetable did not even accommodate practical lessons for Hospitality Services. This validated the findings from the analysis of the college timetable, which indicated that Hospitality Services NQF Level 2 to 4 was allocated 55 minutes long lessons per day for 6 days in a 7-day cycle on the time-table. Each year has about 130 days of lecturing as indicated on the DHET – TVET calendar, these 130 days translate into 18 cycles. These cycles give us 99 hours per annum time allocation for the teaching and learning of the vocational subject in question. The 99 hours are far too little compared to the 200 hours that are stipulated on the SGs. The time allocation (99 hours per year) on the college timetable will not suffice the fifteen practically oriented topics in Hospitality Services NQF Level 2, for instance. The 99 hours could however, have been allocated for this subject so that the timetable catered for all the 7 subjects that form part of the NC(V) qualification. Furthermore, the timetable that was analysed did not show any blocks for the conducting of practical lessons. Apparently, the timeframes allocated on the timetables were noted as too short and unfeasible, as it seemed unlikely to have considered the practical nature of the programme. It did not take into account the time available for teaching as well as the value of the students' practical experience. By the same token, Wedekind and Mutereko (2016a, p. 16) posit that 'the reality of the curriculum load and the limited space for practical teaching in TVET colleges, as well as the external assessment requirements, have resulted in very few of the practical components being taken seriously, rather concepts end up being taught theoretically.'

The SGs that were analysed stipulate that 200 hours of teaching and learning time are allocated per annum for the subject. These 200 hours can be mathematically translated into 218 days demarcated into 55 minute lessons in a year. The 200 hours allocated for the teaching and learning of this vocational subject on the SGs could be useful as some of the lessons can be

placed into blocks on the timetable for the provision of practical lessons considering that there are only about 130 days of teaching and learning on the DHET – TVET calendar year. However, Umalusi (2013, p. 71) states that 'the time allocation for the practical work on the NC(V) hospitality curriculum (200 hours) was felt to be inadequate if the volume of work that needs to be covered is taken into consideration, and if the students are to be made ready for industry.' Evidently, this lack of time for practical lessons results in students spending most of the time in theory classes, therefore the practical acquisition of skills is severely compromised. Moreover, if all concepts are explained theoretically, students are less likely to be equipped with the right hard-skills to match the needs of the employer and are unlikely able to execute skills. Yet employers are in need of graduates that hit the ground running. Timetables that do not address the need for the practical aspects defeat the whole essence of TVET, which is viewed as education which equips students with employable skills for a sustainable economy. This implies that students leave college without adequate practical hands-on skills.

Wedekind and Mutereko (2016a) have discovered that TVET colleges produce many graduates that are without the technical skills that are needed by industry. Umalusi (2013) has also unearthed that graduates exit TVET colleges with no hands-on practical competence or very limited competence in practical skills. In a vocational curriculum, the relationship between practice and competence is significant. Besides, according to Wheelahan (2010a) and Gamble (2016) a vocational curriculum must include practical work because applying theory to practice provides the practical experience that is necessary for industry. Furthermore, Gamble (2003) points out clearly that while practice cannot be substituted for theory, neither can theory be substituted for practice. Gamble concludes by stating that both theory and practice have their own place and that one of them is impoverished without the other. Additionally, Reid and Shah (2007) maintain that it is necessary to have adequate time allocated on the college timetables to enable students to learn how to use equipment and to develop skills for practical activities. This lack of teaching and learning time allocated for the implementation of this curriculum could be one of the factors affecting the quality of graduates that are produced and not the curriculum content itself. When it comes to building a real understanding of vocational education subjects and achieving the desired outcomes that match the needs of industry, students need some experience of more extended exploration and opportunities to practise over longer periods of time than what they are currently offered at the investigated TVET college. What the timetable designers have done is to default to the ease of educational timetabling, and

have not taken decisions based according to the learning outcomes desired in a vocational curriculum.

The research findings have revealed that the time allocation on the college timetable for the vocational subjects whose learning outcomes are practically based is inadequate if the volume of work that needs to be covered on the SGs is taken into consideration. The results from the study indicate that students were not exposed to the practical lessons as prescribed by the Hospitality Services NQF Levels 2 – 4 SGs which specify 200 hours of teaching and learning time per annum. Which is time supposed to be spent by students in the classroom for theory and the workshop for practical lessons. In fact, a lot of time was spent in the classroom as evidenced by the findings from both the interviews and the analysed college timetable. Such mishaps are happening at a time when the country is desperately looking for a labour force that is technically skilled in order to solve the current youth unemployment problem and enhance South Africa's economic advancement. In general, the quality of training in the TVET colleges is low, with undue emphasis on theory and certification rather than on skills acquisition and proficiency. It appeared that the TVET system did not prepare youth for a career after college, but merely an NC(V) certificate.

5.9 Summary

This study has highlighted a range of issues in relation to the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum and its alignment to the needs of the employer. From the findings of the study, it is clear that industry requires graduates that are ready to run once on the job floor and this is expected to be done through a well-formulated vocational curriculum that contains all the aspects of vocational training. As evidenced from this study, the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum is not able to provide for this. Firstly, most TVET lecturers who are central and key to the implementation of the curriculum do not have the pedagogical training that they need to be able to implement a vocational curriculum with precision. Some of them do not have the latest industrial skills that they so need in order to impart the best skills and knowledge to the students. This has brought about some difficulties in training and has thus compromised the production of highly skilled TVET graduates who meet the needs of the employer.

The NC(V) Hospitality Studies curriculum is grounded on theory and lacks the practical components that could help equip the students with the skills that are needed by industry. The time required for the practical component is limited, therefore practical concepts are taught theoretically, which does not ground the graduates on the hard skills that industry requires. The importance of the work-integrated learning experience cannot be denied as students are exposed to realities and the competencies that they require in the work place. However, this aspect together with the impartation of soft-skills are not addressed by the curriculum as evidenced in the analysed SGs. Thus, the NCV hospitality curriculum needs to be evaluated for learning outcomes to be achieved in WIL and in generic skills. Clearly, this out-dated curriculum needs to keep-up with the needs of industry and thus it needs to be revised and updated so that it matches the requirements of a typical vocational curriculum which will put into consideration the infusion of both theory and practice, the inclusion of work placement, the inclusion of generic skills in the curriculum, the provision of enough time on the curriculum and the teaching time-tables. If all these are considered on reviewing the curriculum, TVET colleges will to a large extent produce graduates that hit the ground running as required by employers. Graduates that possess both the hard and soft skills that enhance their employability, in other words, graduates whose skills match the needs of industry.

The critical shortage of training resources in TVET colleges as illuminated in the study, has made it difficult for lecturers to impart the so needed practical skills to the students in order to render them employable, they in fact resort to teaching most concepts theoretically and this defeats the whole essence of a vocational curriculum. It is believed that partnerships could bring about the development of a curriculum that is responsive to the needs of industry as these partners could help in the curriculation process. Partnerships could also help in the procurement of more recent machinery for training, however these have failed because the employers are not willing to play a role in training. This could mean that there is very little possibility of enhancing the employability of graduates as there is likely to be a mismatch between industry and training. As much as the TVET colleges are being called upon to be responsive to the needs of the employer, they have little leeway to develop programmes, because the formulation of the curriculum is a national process that is centralised.

Chapter 6: Conclusions, Recommendations and Limitations

6.1 Introduction

This study sought to find out if the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum offered in TVET colleges aligned with the needs of the employer. There was need to carry out this research because it has been reported that a lot of graduates in this qualification are roaming the streets and that some of them are in jobs that they did not train for. This could mean that the graduates are in possession of skills that do not match the needs of the labour market. The research questions that had to be addressed were;

- to what extent does the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum in TVET colleges satisfy the needs of the hospitality industry?
- what perceptions do the graduates have with regard to the relationship between the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum and the needs of the employer?
- what expectations do employers have regarding the NC(V) hospitality studies graduates employed in their companies?
- what are the views of the lecturers concerning the relationship between the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum and the skills needs of industry?

This chapter sums up the research. The study introduced the background and objectives of the study in chapter 1, explored the related literature in chapter 2, outlined the research methodology in chapter 3, presented the research findings in chapter 4 and then analysed and discussed the major findings from the research findings in chapter 5. The purpose of this last chapter is to describe the conclusions and insights derived from the study, make recommendations to the various stakeholders concerned on the basis of the findings in chapter 5 and give the limitations of the study.

6.2 Conclusions

This study has highlighted a range of issues in relation to the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum and its alignment to the needs of the employer. It seems imperative that the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum, which is one of the programmes at the heart of the South African TVET system, be redesigned to enhance alignment to the needs of industry and to improve the qualification's standards. The findings from the study indicate that the NC(V) hospitality

studies curriculum reform is eminent. Such improvements have the potential to contribute in various ways to improved employability, productivity and success rates of the graduates. The findings emphasise the crucial need for a well-formulated vocational curriculum that contains all the aspects of vocational training. Evidently, the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum is not able to provide for this because of the complexity brought about by the lecturers' dual professional identity as both skilled trades-persons in a particular trade and as trained vocational teachers. Lucas et al. (2012) state that vocational expertise in a particular trade is in itself not an adequate basis for teaching because much depends on the way a vocational curriculum is implemented. For example, the extent to which students are engaged with underlying knowledge principles depends to a large extent on the lecturer's pedagogical training, subject expertise and specialised knowledge as well as access to other resources. As revealed by the study most TVET lecturers were not in possession of the kind of pedagogical training that they needed to be able to implement this vocational curriculum with precision and some did not have the latest industrial skills that they needed in order to impart the current skills and knowledge to the students.

Based on the findings from the interviews, the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum is grounded on theory and lacks the practical components that could help equip the students with routine expertise which is the core of working competence. This involves skilled routines, the ability to carry out skilful activities to an acceptable standard and relates to the use of materials and tools with accuracy. It is evident that the practical components were rarely executed in the poorly equipped workshops and simulated environment in TVET colleges and these must suffice as 'industry experience / practical application'. It has emerged that lecturers resort to teaching most practical concepts theoretically because the training resources were outdated or were in short supply. These shortages are urgent hiccups that need to be addressed so that the aim for the provision of the programme can materialise. The TVET programmes, especially hospitality, generally need the latest and up-to-date resources and facilities so that the curriculum could be successfully implemented and students match the requirements of industry. The findings also revealed that the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum was not relevant to the needs of the employer. For instance, both the graduates and the employers have complained that the content taught did not connect closely enough with the requirements of the industry because of the economic and technological changes that continue to take place. These changes have been reported by David and Foray (2003, p. 31) 'to be continuing and that

education and training providers are failing to keep pace.' Colleges still taught old systems and methods of work. What is more, the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum has not been revised in the past decade, even after all the economic and technological changes that have taken place over the years. Therefore, the graduates that are churned out of the system have skills that do not match the current needs of industry.

The study has also established that the overload of the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum together with the restricted time for practical lessons on the college timetables have resulted in the practical components being given little attention if any. Insufficient time and timetabling for a vocational curriculum that does not accommodate practical work means that the students spend a lot of time in the classroom. This means that the students are not adequately trained and therefore, are not ready for the world of work. Classroom teaching and learning environment cannot replace a college simulated environment let alone work placement. Lucas et al. (2012, p. 9) have clearly stated that the best vocational education learning is broadly hands-on, practical, experiential, real-world as well as, and often at the same time, theoretical knowledge. This means that both types of knowledge should be factored into a vocational curriculum. The lack of practice could mean that students are not well equipped to exit the programme and enter the workplace seamlessly.

The behaviour of the graduates while in the workplace as revealed by the study shows that the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum lacked the soft-skills component which could help students build their personality attributes, work ethics and the ability to work with others to mention but a few. These skills have been regarded as employable skills, and if the graduates were without these skills they were deemed to be unemployable. Lucas et al. (2012, p. 53) referred to these skills as 'business-like attitude' that would manifest itself in behaviours such as punctuality, orderliness, willingness to put in necessary time and effort, and displays of customer service that exceed client expectation. It has also been reported that these skills could also be attained when students are engaged in WIL in the workplace. These skills are of utmost importance to the employer therefore, graduates would add great value to their skills-set if the impartation of generic skills was included on the curriculum. Seemingly, the NC(V) hospitality studies graduates did not possess the skills that industry desired because some important aspects of a vocational curriculum were not addressed.

This research has also highlighted that learning by attempting to solve real-world problems in the workplace could be a highly effective means of developing expertise that is desired by the employer. The importance of the WIL experience cannot be denied as students could be exposed to realities and the competencies that they require in the work place. However, it has emerged that this aspect is not fully practiced by TVET colleges as it is not a part of the NC(V) curricula. The respondents in the study supported the inclusion of compulsory WIL on the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum if it is to meet the needs of industry. Industry welcomed WIL as it presumed it could assist the students with the skills that they cannot get while in college. The lecturers assumed WIL could bridge the theory-practice gap while meeting world compliance standards. The students also believed that WIL could make them gain workplace exposure and put theory into practice. If students get exposed to the practical workplace, it may mean that colleges are inviting industrial experts into their lecture halls, thus improving the programme. This means that the implementation of WIL within the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum fosters growth, employability, partnership and a reengineered qualification that meets the needs of the employer. Partnerships could also help in the procurement of more recent machinery for training. However, these have failed because it was perceived that employers were not willing to play a role in training because they did not understand what the NC(V) programme was all about. This lack of partnerships could imply that there was very little possibility of enhancing the employability of graduates as there was likely to be a mismatch between industry and training.

In summation, it appears that TVET institutions in South Africa are having difficulties in effectively implementing the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum mainly because they are not well equipped in terms of training structures, equipment and facilities. This is because the practical component of TVET requires training resources and extended time, both of which are not easy to provide. TVET is rather an expensive form of training in comparison with academic education and thus it is generally affected by the high cost that is attached to the provision of well-equipped workshops, facilities and consumables that support the implementation of any vocational curriculum. Lecturers lack the skills they need for the implementation of the curriculum because of their dual professional identity; both as artisans and qualified vocational teachers. The lack of partnerships between industry and education to assist in the inclusion of current and relevant knowledge and skills in training is futile. WIL and the impartation of

generic skills are not addressed on the SGs; both of which are important in building a graduate that has bountiful employable skills that are desired by industry. If all of these problems are effectively addressed, and the curriculum reformulated to balance off theory and practice it could go a long way in the production of a TVET graduate who has the proper skills for the needs of the employer, one who is able to receive the baton stick and continue running.

6.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations were made on the basis of the findings and conclusions derived from this study to provide TVET institutions, DHET and policy makers with guidelines on how the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum could be improved so that it becomes relevant to the needs of the hospitality industry and enhance the employability of the graduates in South Africa. The bulk of the recommendations emanated from the discussions with interviewees.

6.3.1 Training and professionalisation of TVET lecturers

The study revealed that vocational teachers were until recently, not required to undertake teaching qualifications. This means that a lot of them are not qualified vocational educators however, the professional and pedagogical competence of any vocational teacher is crucial to the successful implementation of a vocational curriculum. Therefore, on-going in-service support on pedagogy should be offered to lecturers who are not trained. This is because vocational teachers need a clear understanding of the variety of teaching and learning methods in vocational education. It has also been established that most lecturers lack industrial training therefore, the researcher suggests that it be made mandatory through policy for all TVET lecturers to undergo industrial attachment as conditions for their employment. This is so they acquire requisite skills and are made aware of the latest changes within the industry. This could help in the production of a competent and relevant graduate because technology in industry is fast changing. DHET should also work in partnership with universities to devise pre-service and in-service courses in methodology and content for lecturers, or rather introduce vocational pedagogy. Such a course could provide the lecturers with a strong vocational pedagogical foundation, including the interpretation of the vocational curriculum, planning and preparation. TVET lecturers will have to be trained so that they are able to implement any given vocational curriculum and to free themselves of traditional delivery practices.

6.3.2 Training resources in TVET colleges

High quality skills training requires appropriate and latest workshop equipment, software and adequate supply of training materials supported by a well thought through vocational curriculum. A lack of well-equipped workshops, obsolete training equipment and a lack of consumables has been perceived to be one of the factors that reduce the effectiveness of training in meeting the required knowledge and skills objectives in TVET colleges. Therefore, the simulated environments and workshops in TVET colleges should be upgraded to provide meaningful and up-to-date experience. Clear directions should be given to colleges to realise this requirement.

6.3.3 Linkage of TVET to the labour market

The ultimate aim of vocational training is employment. TVET programmes therefore, have to be linked to the job market to enhance the employability of their students because partnerships bring about currency and relevance in the curriculum. In this way, the socio-economic relevance of TVET can be enhanced. There should also be increased networking with professional practitioners, as this might inform the TVET lecturers of any changes in current workplace practices and clarify expected skill standards in new graduates. This facilitates a more industry-aligned curricula design, thus satisfy the demand-driven approach to training. Therefore, the improvement of relationships between TVET institutions and employers should be prioritised.

6.3.4 The inclusion of WIL in training

Besides the importance attached to WIL, both the findings from the document analysis and the interviews have revealed that WIL is not a part of the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum. WIL is considered the centre-piece of any successful TVET graduate therefore, a lot of importance has been attached to it by a lot of academics. This is because classroom-based instruction alone does not produce future fit graduates who are adequately equipped for the workplace (Fleming & Eames, 2005; Jackson, 2013; Mutereko & Wedekind, 2015; Winch, 2009). The role of WIL is essential in the development of the desired graduate profile. The competency profile of a graduate as revealed by the study should include discipline specific knowledge, skills and attitudes, as well as generic cognitive skills. It is for these reasons that the researcher suggests that obligatory WIL with credits should be one of the major components

of the NC(V) hospitality programme if the graduates are to be regarded favourably by employers. In other words, TVET colleges should be mandated to incorporate WIL into the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum in order to promote student career development because this is an invaluable opportunity for academics to not only integrate theory and practice, but to expose the students to the world of work.

WIL should be considered as a big part of the NC(V) hospitality graduate capstone, hence best practices have to be practised in order to make it a success. For example, effective workplace learning involving superior skills related to international best practice will only come about if employers and managers have knowledge about learning and are themselves trained to assist in the learning process. This is because having skills in an occupation does not necessarily mean that an individual has proficiency in teaching those skills to the students who are on WIL. An individual could be a good tradesperson, but may not necessarily have the skills required for training others. Therefore, industrialists should make sure that the people that are involved with the training of apprentices at the workplace attain some form of pedagogical grounding so that they can effectively assist the students who are on WIL.

6.3.5 Review of the NC(V) hospitality curriculum

As highlighted in this study, the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum is not balanced, meaning that the quality of training has been discovered to be low, with undue emphasis on practical knowledge rather than on both theory and practice. Therefore, DHET should restructure the programme to ensure that it addresses both theoretical and practical knowledge so that it produces a graduate who is capacitated with the intellect and the skills that are aligned to the needs of the employer. In other words, the curriculum should focus on outcomes in terms of the skills, knowledge and attitudes required by industry. This way, the provision of the programme is made to be responsive to the demands of industry.

The NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum should also be reviewed to reduce the breadth of the topics in the subjects within the programme in order to allow for the introduction of the latest trends in industry. Over all, the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum was found to be very packed and intense, it was found that far too much content is covered in one particular year. For example, Hospitality Services NQF Level 2 has fifteen topics with several practical based

learning outcomes aligned to each topic. This could mean that it is not dealt with more thoroughly. Instead, fewer topics, subject outcomes and learning outcomes would help to narrow the scope down and result in more focused learning. The researcher also recommends it be broken down into different areas of specialisation such as; Front Office, Food and Beverage Services and Accommodation as separate modules in the qualification. This way these areas can be dealt with in more detail. Time allocation for the vocational subjects should be reconsidered because time and practice are required for the acquisition of any kind of practical expertise. The hospitality subject specialists should be consulted in designing a new curriculum.

6.3.6 Adapting to new ways of training

TVET colleges should adapt to new ways of training through running their own restaurants, coffee shops, hostel kitchens and fast-food outlets on campuses. Students could be exposed to a range of experiences such as, the preparation of meals or fast-foods, being waiters, ordering stock, making bookings etc. This type of training develops in students what is known as routine expertise. Once routine expertise is established, it is often very difficult for the student to articulate what it is they are doing, they work with precision without even having to think about what they are doing. This produces the type of graduate the employer requires, one who hits the ground running. It could also help in achieving the aim of the NC(V) hospitality programme, which is plainly to ensure that the programme is world-of-work aligned, both in terms of promoting workplace readiness and through ensuring that occupation-specific outcomes are aligned to labour market demands.

The modern society is characterised by the increasing application of information and communication technologies (ICT) therefore, ICT education could form a strong component of all levels of skills training. In the globalising labour market, employees are regularly required to update and upgrade their knowledge and skills in order to remain abreast with the rapid technological changes in the workplace. Therefore, the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum should put all this into consideration so that the graduates are well-equipped for industry and prevent de-skilling which comes with the rapid changes of technology.

6.3.7 Class sizes

Class sizes should be reduced if the students are to get optimum practice through practice in workshops. A ratio of 1:15 is recommended for vocational curricula therefore a ratio of 1:30 is far too big for vocational training if the proper teaching methodology in vocational training are to be considered. For training to be effective, there should be more of a one on one between the trainer and the student, especially in workshops.

6.3.8 Tracking of graduates by TVET colleges

Training institutions should track down the employment destination of their graduates. This is because the feedback that the graduates could give could be valuable on the quality and relevance of the training that they would have received. This also provides for the opportunity of their experience-based inputs to be factored into the review of the curriculum and training packages.

6.4 Limitations

According to Scott & Morrison (2005) a condition that goes beyond control and places restrictions on the conclusions of a study and their application to other situations is time. Time for conducting this study clashed with the researcher's formal lecture time and employment since she was a part-time student. The researcher as a result encountered a problem of short visits to build the necessary dialogue that enables the establishment of a natural setting that would have allowed natural behaviours from the participants. Serious financial shortages also hampered the carrying out of the research.

Although the respondents could answer the questions in the interview schedules, which made their responses credible, the data was still perceptual and therefore may not have captured the complete picture of the research problem. To curb the problem, the researcher should in future conduct the research using a relatively large sample that includes people involved in TVET curriculum/policy/strategy-making and administrators, supported by research methods such as college workshops, simulation rooms, and work-place environment observations and focus group studies for better triangulation. It should be noted, however, that the findings in this particular study have been obtained from graduates from only one college in the NC(V)

hospitality programme hence, there must be some concern about the generalisability of these findings. It also needs to be noted that a limited number of participating lecturers were used as respondents, and this cannot provide generalisable findings. In future, the use of lecturers from a range of TVET colleges should be considered. When in-depth interviews are conducted, generalisations about the results are usually not able to be made because small samples are chosen and random sampling methods are not used. Clearly, it is desirable that a larger quantitative study be undertaken using respondents drawn from a wider range of colleges, hotels and socio-economic areas.

6.5 General summary and conclusion to the study

The main aim of the NC(V) hospitality studies programme in TVET colleges is the production of graduates that are well equipped with the vital theoretical knowledge, practical knowledge and soft skills ready for the job market and for progression into higher education. Therefore, this study sought to find out if the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum does address the needs of industry. The employers' lack of confidence in the quality of skills possessed by the graduates could be because of the lack of industrial expertise and pedagogical competence of the TVET lecturers which is crucial to the successful implementation of any vocational curriculum. The TVET lecturer needs both the current industry-training and correct pedagogical training to be able to teach in a TVET college effectively. The critical shortage of training resources (workshops and consumables) in TVET colleges poses a critical challenge when it comes to the implementation of vocational curricula as they should address both theoretical and practical components. If providers have insufficient resources; concepts end up being taught theoretically, thus defeating the whole essence of TVET. Work-integrated learning, if made a part of the NC(V) hospitality studies curriculum would be of great benefit to the students because during WIL students would be able to acquire the new knowledge and skills that are needed by industry and that would render them more employable on completion. Partnerships if taken seriously would go a long way in coming up with a training package for the TVET system that is demand-driven, one that will respond to the needs of industry. This study has revealed that if important aspects are factored into the training of NC(V) hospitality students, the curriculum could ultimately respond to the needs of industry. As much as TVET colleges are being called upon to be responsive to the needs of the employer, they have little leeway to develop programmes because the formulation of the NC(V) curricula is a national

process that is centralised. Further studies are necessary in TVET colleges within the other eight provinces of South Africa. This could add value to the findings of the study. It could also be good for credibility, and the expansion of scope and key elements.

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file:///C:/Users/Rudo/Downloads/SG%20Hospitality%20Services%20L3.GSedit%2027%2006%2007.pdf

Appendix A: Letter to the College Director

Dear Sir / Madam

My name is Rudo Mazhinye. I am a Master of Education Degree Student in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I cordially invite your college to participate in a study that I am carrying out titled: ***A Critical Investigation of Vocational Curriculum Alignment to Industry Needs: The case of the National Certificate (Vocational) Hospitality Studies at a TVET college in Gauteng.*** This college was chosen because it offers National Certificate (Vocational) Hospitality studies.

The research involves gathering information on the work readiness of NC(V) hospitality studies graduates from the NC(V) Hospitality studies lecturers that are employed at your college. This will involve personal interviews with the selected participants. The interviews will also be audio-taped so that I do not miss out on any information. Each interview is scheduled to be about 40 minutes long and these will be conducted during each participant's lunch break. The data will be used only for the purposes of this study.

The research participants will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. They will be reassured that they can withdraw their permission at any time during this project without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating in this study. The participants will not be paid for being a part of this study.

The names of the research participants and identity of the establishment will be kept confidential at all times and in all academic writing about the study. Individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

On completion, the data will be stored at Wits School of Education and on my flash drive and be secured by a password between 3-5 years, thereafter shall then be destroyed.

You can contact me at any time if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

Yours Faithfully

NAME: Rudo Mazhinye
PROTOCOL No: 2016ECE062M
ADDRESS: 35 Dahlia Street, Visagie Park, Nigel, 1491.
EMAIL: rmazhinye@gmail.com
TELEPHONE No: 0725920211

Appendix B: Letter to the Hotel General Manager

Dear Sir / Madam

My name is Rudo Mazhinye. I am a Master of Education Degree Student in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I cordially invite your establishment to participate in a study that I am carrying out titled: ***A Critical Investigation of Vocational Curriculum Alignment to Industry Needs: The Case of the National Certificate (Vocational) Hospitality Studies at a TVET College in Gauteng.***

My research involves gathering information on the work readiness of National Certificate (Vocational) (NC(V)) hospitality studies graduates from your training manager and the NC(V) hospitality studies graduates that you have employed in your establishment. The research will involve personal interviews with the selected participants. These interviews will also be audio taped so that I do not miss out on any information. Each interview is scheduled to be about 40 minutes long. I intend to use the participants' tea or lunch breaks for the interviews. The data will only be used for the purpose of this study.

I have chosen your establishment because it is one of those establishments in Gauteng – East Rand that have employed NC(V) hospitality studies graduates from the participating college.

The research participants will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. They will be reassured that they can withdraw their permission at any time during this project without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating in this study. The participants will not be paid for this study.

The names of the research participants and identity of the establishment will be kept confidential at all times and in all academic writing about the study. Individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

On completion, the data will be stored at Wits School of Education and on my flash drive and be secured by a password between 3-5 years, thereafter shall then be destroyed.

You can contact me at any time if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

Yours Faithfully

SIGNATURE

NAME: Rudo Mazhinye
PROTOCOL No: 2016ECE062M
ADDRESS: 35 Dahlia Street, Visagie Park, Nigel, 1491.
EMAIL: rmazhinye@gmail.com
TELEPHONE No: 0725920211

Appendix C: Information Sheet – Lecturers

Dear Participant

My name is Rudo Mazhinye and I am a Master of Education student in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I cordially invite you to participate in a study that I am carrying out titled: ***A Critical Investigation of Vocational Curriculum Alignment to Industry Needs: The Case of the National Certificate (Vocational) Hospitality Studies at a TVET College in Gauteng.***

My research involves gathering information on the work readiness of National Certificate (Vocational) hospitality studies graduates. The research will involve personal interviews with the selected participants. The interview will also be audio taped so that I do not miss out on any information. Each interview is scheduled to be about 40 minutes. The data will be used only for the purposes of this study.

You have been chosen to participate in this study because you are an NC(V) hospitality studies Lecturer in the participating TVET institution in Gauteng.

The interview is voluntary, which means that you do not have to do it. If you decide halfway through that you prefer to stop, this is completely your choice and it will not affect you negatively in any way.

I will not reveal your identity by using your real name. I will make use of a code so that no one can identify you. All information about you will be kept confidential in all my writing. All collected information will be stored safely and destroyed between 3-5 years after I have completed my research project.

I look forward to working with you.

Please feel free to contact me at any time if you have any questions.

Thank you

NAME: Rudo Mazhinye
PROTOCOL No: 2016ECE062M
ADDRESS: 35 Dahlia Street, Visagie Park, Nigel, 1491.
EMAIL: rmazhinye@gmail.com
TELEPHONE No: 0725920211

Appendix D: Information Sheet – Graduates

Dear NC(V) hospitality studies Graduate

My name is Rudo Mazhinye and I am a Master of Education student in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I cordially invite you to participate in a study that I am carrying out titled: ***A Critical Investigation of Vocational Curriculum Alignment to Industry Needs: The Case of the National Certificate (Vocational) Hospitality Studies at a TVET College in Gauteng.***

My research involves gathering information on the work readiness of National Certificate (Vocational) (NC(V)) hospitality studies graduates that are currently employed in hotels like yourself. The research will involve personal interviews with the selected participants. The interview will also be audio-taped so that I do not miss out on any information. Each interview is scheduled to be about 45 minutes long. The data will be used only for the purposes of this study.

You have been chosen to participate in this study because you are one of those NC(V) hospitality studies graduates from the participating TVET College in Gauteng.

The interview is voluntary, which means that you do not have to do it. Also, if you decide halfway through that you prefer to stop, this is completely your choice and will not affect you negatively in any way.

I will not reveal your identity by using your real name. I will use a code so no one can identify you. All information about you will be kept confidential in all my writing. All collected information will be stored safely and destroyed between 3-5 years after I have completed my research project.

I look forward to working with you.

Please feel free to contact me at any time if you have any questions.

Thank you

NAME: Rudo Mazhinye
PROTOCOL No: 2016ECE062M
ADDRESS: 35 Dahlia Street, Visagie Park, Nigel, 1491.
EMAIL: rmazhinye@gmail.com
TELEPHONE No: 0725920211

Appendix E: Information Sheet – hotel training managers

Dear Sir / Madam

My name is Rudo Mazhinye and I am a Master of Education student in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I cordially invite you to participate in a study that I am carrying out titled: ***A Critical Investigation of Vocational Curriculum Alignment to Industry Needs: The Case of the National Certificate (Vocational) Hospitality Studies at a TVET College in Gauteng.***

My research involves gathering information on the work readiness of National Certificate (Vocational) hospitality studies graduates from you the hotel training manager and the NC(V) hospitality studies graduates that you have employed in your establishment. The research will involve personal interviews with the selected participants. The interview will also be audio taped so that I do not miss out on any information. Each interview is scheduled to last about 40 minutes. The data will be used only for the purpose of this study.

I have chosen you because you are a training manager in an establishment located in Gauteng – East Rand that has employed NC(V) hospitality studies graduates from the participating TVET College.

Participating is voluntary, which means that you do not have to do it, and if you decide halfway through that you prefer to stop, this is completely your choice and will not affect you negatively in any way.

Your name and the identity of the hotel will be kept confidential at all times and in all academic writing about the study. I will use a code to identify you, so that you remain anonymous. Individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from my study.

On completion, the data will be stored at Wits School of Education and on my flash drive and be secured by a password for between 3 - 5 years, thereafter shall then be destroyed.

You can contact me at any time if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

Yours Faithfully

NAME: Rudo Mazhinye
PROTOCOL No: 2016ECE062M
ADDRESS: 35 Dahlia Street, Visagie Park, Nigel, 1491.
EMAIL: rmazhinye@gmail.com
TELEPHONE No: 0725920211

Appendix F: Consent Form

Dear Participant,

Please fill in and return the reply slip below indicating your willingness to be a participant in my voluntary research project titled: ***A Critical Investigation of Vocational Curriculum Alignment to Industry Needs: The Case of the National Certificate (Vocational) Hospitality Studies at a TVET College in Gauteng.***

I, _____ give my consent for the following:

Circle either yes or no

Permission to be audio-taped

I agree to be audiotaped during the interview YES/NO

I know that the audiotapes will be used for this project only YES/NO

Permission to be interviewed

I would like to be interviewed for this study. YES/NO

I know that I can stop the interview at any time and don't have to answer all the questions asked. YES/NO

Informed Consent

I understand that:

- My name and information will be kept confidential and safe and that my name and the name of my establishment will not be revealed.
- I do not have to answer every question and can withdraw from the study at any time.
- I can ask not to be audiotaped, photographed and/or videotape
- All the data collected during this study will be destroyed within 3-5 years after completion of my project.

Sign_____ Date_____

NAME: Rudo Mazhinye

PROTOCOL No: 2016ECE062M

Appendix G: Interview Guide #1: Lecturers

RESPONDENT (CODE): ……

DATE: …….

TIME: …….

DURATION OF INTERVIEW: ……

1. What qualifications do you hold and what are your areas of specialisation?
2. How long have you been an NCV hospitality studies lecturer in a TVET college?
3. Do you have any hospitality industry training and or experience?
4. What impact does it have to the way that you implement the NCV curriculum?
5. Has the college ever attempted taking you for industrial attachment?
6. With regard the type of training you have what limitations have you encountered in your effort to implement the NCV hospitality curriculum?
7. How did the department of higher education prepare you for implementing this curriculum?
8. Is there a balance between the amount of theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge in the NC(V) curriculum?
9. To what extent are industry experts involved in the development of the NCV hospitality studies curriculum?
10. To what extent do you think the NCV Hospitality Studies programme address the needs of the hospitality industry?
11. To what extent do the skill requirements of the industry match the educational priorities (vocational areas) of this programme?
12. What limitations have you encountered in your effort to implement the curriculum?
13. What processes were used to ensure alignment of the curriculum to the training needs of the industry?

14. Do you understand the meaning of work-integrated learning and its importance to training?

15. Is there a WIL component in the Hospitality NC(V) curriculum? if there is, how is it conducted?

16. You have mentioned the attainment of soft-skills in industry, what are these soft-skills and are they a part of the NCV hospitality curriculum?

17. What do you think can be done to improve the curriculum so that it addresses the needs of the hospitality industry?

18. What gaps or limitations (if any) have you identified in the NCV hospitality curriculum?

19. How can support structures/systems for the curriculum be improved?

Appendix H: Interview Guide #2: Graduates

GRADUATE (CODE): …….

DATE: ……

TIME: …….

DURATION OF INTERVIEW: ……

1. To what extent is the content of the NC(V) hospitality programme you did at college meet the needs of industry?
2. What difficulties did you face when it came to the execution of the duties that were assigned to you in the workplace on the transition from college?
3. Are there any content areas of the hospitality programme that you feel could have been addressed more thoroughly during training?
4. To what extent was the training received at college relevant to the world of work?
5. Is the curriculum content adequate for the needs of the industry?
6. In your own view, were there sufficient practical skills training for you at college that match the practice in the workplace?
7. What do you understand by the term WIL?
8. Did you at any time during your training go for work-integrated learning in industry?
9. In your opinion do you think that soft skills need to be taught in college? If so why and if not, why?
10. What in your opinion, could be done by TVET colleges to improve the quality of graduates that they produce?
11. Is the practical component in technical curriculum effectively used in colleges?
12. In view of the experience you have gained in industry so far, what suggestions could you give to the NCV colleges to improve student training.
13. Do you have any suggestions which may help improve the programme?

Appendix I: Interview Guide #3: hotel training managers

EMPLOYER (CODE): ……...

DATE: …….

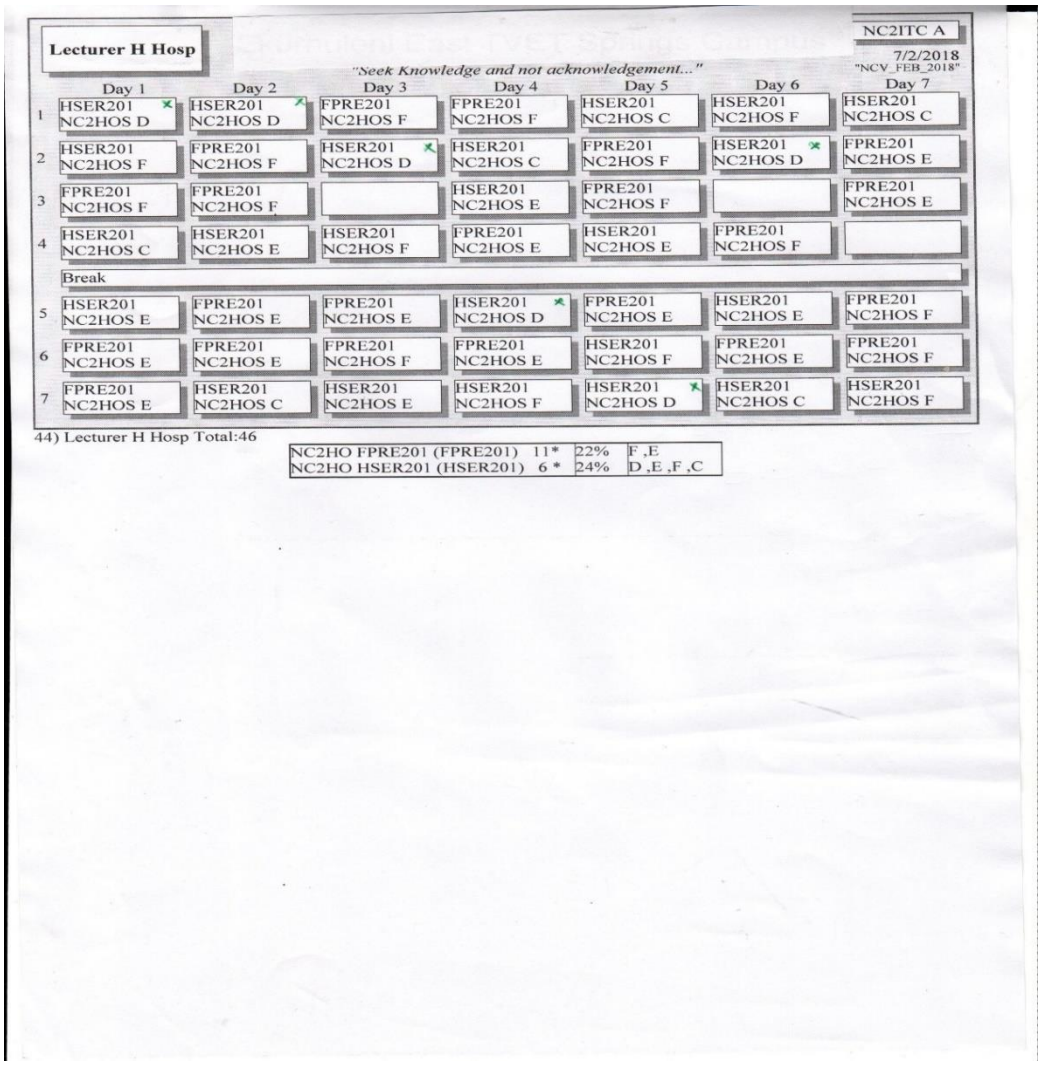
TIME: ……

DURATION OF INTERVIEW: ……

1. What are your expectations when the National Certificate (Vocational) (NC(V)) graduates join your workplace?
2. Are these graduates able to execute all the duties that you assign to them?
3. How relevant has the training received by the graduates at college to the world of work?
4. Did the graduates have adequate time to practice requisite skills at college during training?
5. In view of what these graduates can do and cannot do, what are your suggestions regarding the NCV hospitality studies curriculum?
6. Are you as training managers in industry ever consulted when it comes to curriculum design for the hospitality NC(V) programme? Do you as employers have input to the programme?
7. In your own view, would partnership between industry and TVET colleges help in the production of a graduate who is work ready?
8. What do you think is the importance of partnerships in training?
9. What is it that you understand by the phrase work-integrated learning or work-based experience?
10. What do you think of the work-integrated learning /work-based learning as a part of training for the NC(V) hospitality programme in TVET colleges?
11. If WIL was to be implemented full flight, are you as an employer willing to be a part of it? If yes, Why? If not, Why?

12. Have you ever thought of industry being a part or a stakeholder in skills development? How so?

Appendix J: The Timetable



Lecturer H Hosp — NC2ITC A

"Seek Knowledge and not acknowledgement..." — 7/2/2018 "NCV_FEB_2018"

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
1	HSER201 NC2HOS D	HSER201 NC2HOS D	FPRE201 NC2HOS F	FPRE201 NC2HOS F	HSER201 NC2HOS C	HSER201 NC2HOS F	HSER201 NC2HOS C
2	HSER201 NC2HOS F	FPRE201 NC2HOS F	HSER201 NC2HOS D	HSER201 NC2HOS C	FPRE201 NC2HOS F	HSER201 NC2HOS D	FPRE201 NC2HOS E
3	FPRE201 NC2HOS F	FPRE201 NC2HOS F		HSER201 NC2HOS E	FPRE201 NC2HOS F		FPRE201 NC2HOS E
4	HSER201 NC2HOS C	HSER201 NC2HOS E	HSER201 NC2HOS F	FPRE201 NC2HOS E	HSER201 NC2HOS E	FPRE201 NC2HOS F	
	Break						
5	HSER201 NC2HOS E	FPRE201 NC2HOS E	FPRE201 NC2HOS E	HSER201 NC2HOS D	FPRE201 NC2HOS E	HSER201 NC2HOS E	FPRE201 NC2HOS F
6	FPRE201 NC2HOS E	FPRE201 NC2HOS E	FPRE201 NC2HOS F	FPRE201 NC2HOS E	HSER201 NC2HOS F	FPRE201 NC2HOS E	FPRE201 NC2HOS F
7	FPRE201 NC2HOS E	HSER201 NC2HOS C	HSER201 NC2HOS E	HSER201 NC2HOS F	HSER201 NC2HOS D	HSER201 NC2HOS C	HSER201 NC2HOS F

44) Lecturer H Hosp Total:46

NC2HO FPRE201 (FPRE201)	11*	22%	F ,E
NC2HO HSER201 (HSER201)	6 *	24%	D ,E ,F ,C

Appendix K: The DHET-TVET Calendar

higher education & training

Department:
Higher Education and Training
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Private Bag X174, Pretoria, 0001, South Africa, 123 Francis Baard Street, PRETORIA, 0002.
Tel: +27 12 357 3892, Fax: 012 328 6878, http://www.dhet.gov.za

Enquiries: Ms N Pote
Tel: (012) 357 3892/ 3
E-mail: pote.n@dhet.gov.za / pote.n@dhe.gov.za

TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET) COLLEGE CALENDAR 2018

NATIONAL CERTIFICATES (VOCATIONAL) [NC (V)]

Year	Staff Commences	Classes Commence	Classes End	Examination Dates	Colleges Close	Lecturing Days	Lecturing Staff Service Days
Term 1	08 January	15 January	23 March	15 Feb - 15 March supplementary	23 March	49	54
Term 2	09 April	09 April	22 June		22 June	52	52
Term 3	16 July	23 July	28 September	14 days for internal examinations (see Note 5 overleaf)	28 September	47	52
Term 4	08 October	08 October	30 October	LO P2: 25-30 October 31 Oct - 30 November	07 December	17	45
					Year totals	165	203

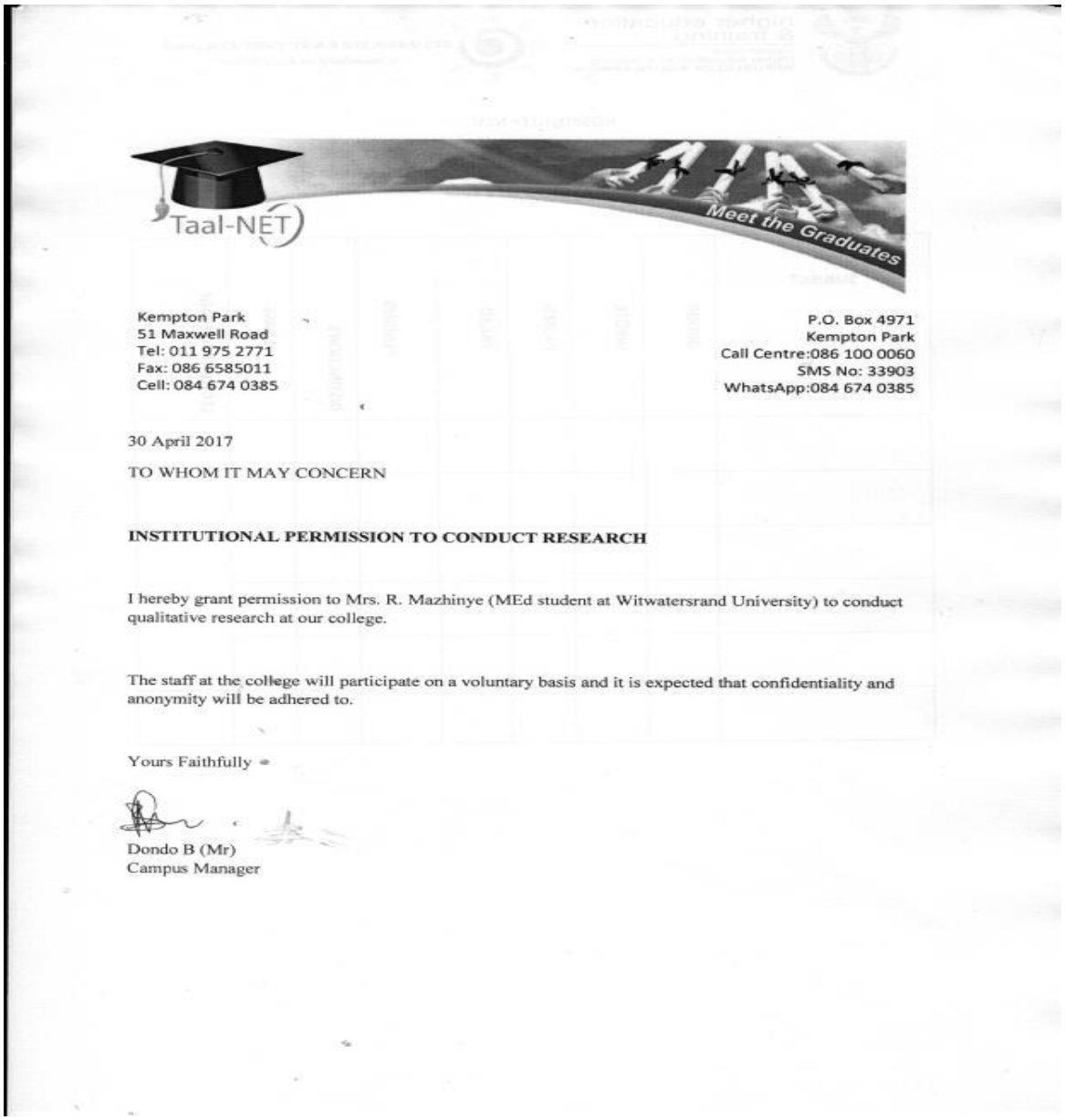
Appendix L: Interview Details

Respondent code	Date of interview	Place	Interview duration
Graduates			
Graduate 301	03 / 04 / 17	Benoni	39 mins 21 secs
Graduate 302	03 / 04 / 17	Benoni	33 mins 01 sec
Graduate 303	10 / 05 /17	Kempton Park	23 mins 01 sec
Graduate 304	22 / 05 / 17	Springs	34 mins 51 secs
Graduate 305	23 / 05 / 17	Kempton Park	17 mins 17 secs
Graduate 306	26 / 06 / 17	Springs	27 mins 23 mins
Employers			
Employer 201	08 / 06 / 17	Springs – telephonic	31 mins 43 secs
Employer 202	09 / 06 / 17	Springs – telephonic	27 mins 05 secs
Employer 203	21 / 06 / 17	Kempton Park	36 mins 12 secs
Lecturers			
Lecturer 101	31 / 05 / 17	Springs	38 mins 42 secs
Lecturer 102	06 / 06 / 17	Springs	37 mins 22 secs

Appendix M: Document analysis schedule – Subject Guidelines

NQF Level	Document	Observations	Comments
2	Subject Guidelines – Hospitality Services	**Theoretical knowledge** –	
		Practical knowledge –	
		Workplace knowledge –	
		Soft-skills –	
3	Subject Guidelines - Hospitality Services	**Theoretical knowledge** –	
		Practical knowledge –	
		Workplace knowledge –	
		Soft-skills –	
4	Subject Guidelines - Hospitality Services	**Theoretical knowledge** –	
		Practical knowledge –	
		Workplace knowledge –	
		Soft-skills –	

Appendix N: Institutional Permission Letter



Taal-NET

Meet the Graduates

Kempton Park
51 Maxwell Road
Tel: 011 975 2771
Fax: 086 6585011
Cell: 084 674 0385

P.O. Box 4971
Kempton Park
Call Centre:086 100 0060
SMS No: 33903
WhatsApp:084 674 0385

30 April 2017

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

INSTITUTIONAL PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

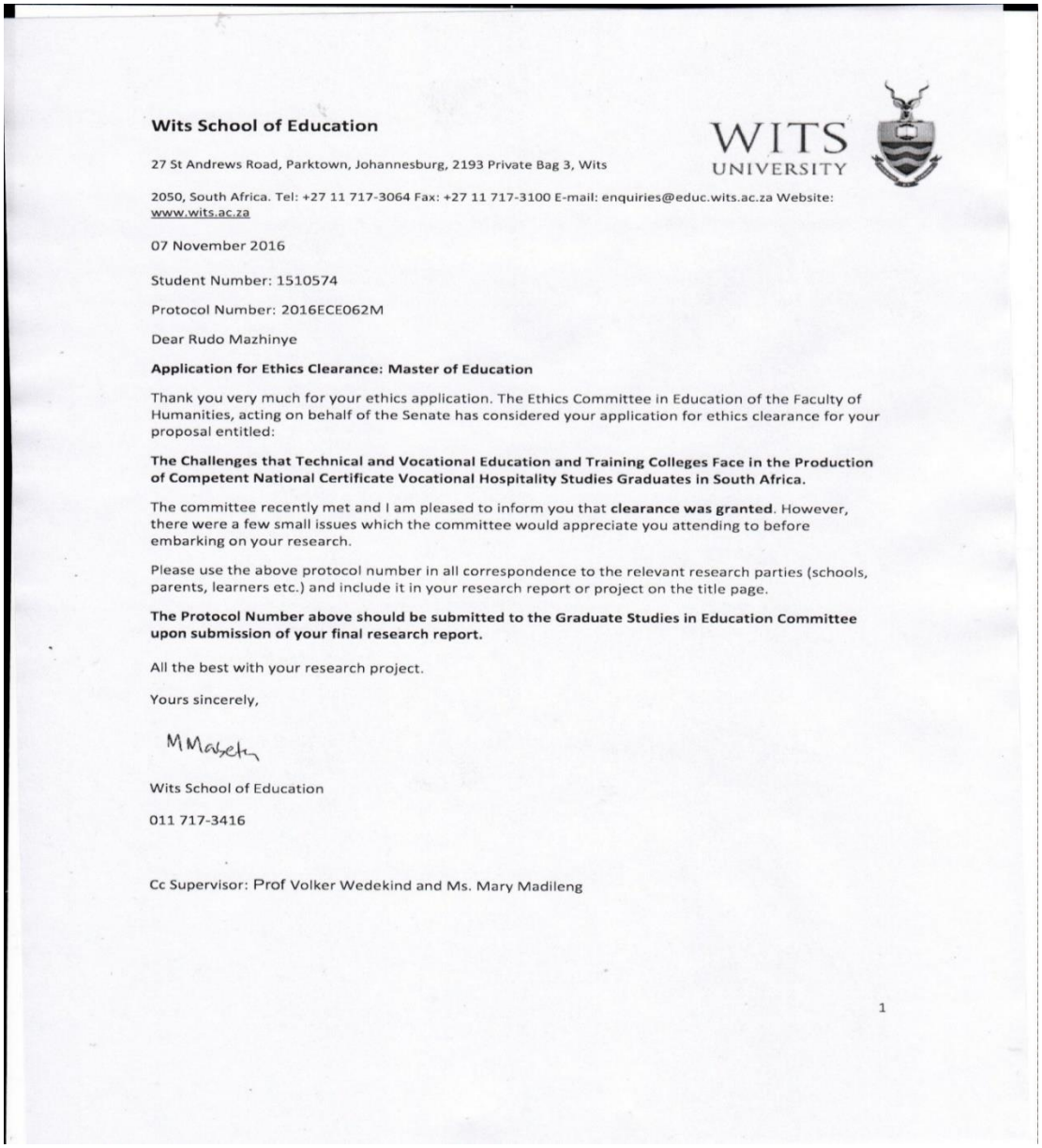
I hereby grant permission to Mrs. R. Mazhinye (MEd student at Witwatersrand University) to conduct qualitative research at our college.

The staff at the college will participate on a voluntary basis and it is expected that confidentiality and anonymity will be adhered to.

Yours Faithfully

Dondo B (Mr)
Campus Manager

Appendix O: Ethical Clearance Letter



Wits School of Education

27 St Andrews Road, Parktown, Johannesburg, 2193 Private Bag 3, Wits

2050, South Africa. Tel: +27 11 717-3064 Fax: +27 11 717-3100 E-mail: enquiries@educ.wits.ac.za Website: www.wits.ac.za

07 November 2016

Student Number: 1510574

Protocol Number: 2016ECE062M

Dear Rudo Mazhinye

Application for Ethics Clearance: Master of Education

Thank you very much for your ethics application. The Ethics Committee in Education of the Faculty of Humanities, acting on behalf of the Senate has considered your application for ethics clearance for your proposal entitled:

The Challenges that Technical and Vocational Education and Training Colleges Face in the Production of Competent National Certificate Vocational Hospitality Studies Graduates in South Africa.

The committee recently met and I am pleased to inform you that **clearance was granted**. However, there were a few small issues which the committee would appreciate you attending to before embarking on your research.

Please use the above protocol number in all correspondence to the relevant research parties (schools, parents, learners etc.) and include it in your research report or project on the title page.

The Protocol Number above should be submitted to the Graduate Studies in Education Committee upon submission of your final research report.

All the best with your research project.

Yours sincerely,

MMaseko

Wits School of Education

011 717-3416

Cc Supervisor: Prof Volker Wedekind and Ms. Mary Madileng

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