

**TRANSITIONING EXPERIENCES OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS WHO
HAVE EXITED WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING PROGRAMMES:**

A BANKSETA CASE STUDY

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Knowledge and work

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DECLARATION

I declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree Master of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.



Similo Goodwill Dlamini

15 FEBRUARY 2020

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to examine the transitioning experiences of University students who have exited work-integrated learning programmes in South Africa. The study is underpinned by the concept of pathways from higher education to work. The study adopted the DOTS framework which is an acronym for **D**ecision learning, **O**pportunity awareness, **T**ransition learning, and **S**elf-awareness, in the literature to help surface what enables or inhibits employability of WIL programme graduates. The study focused on one industry SETA – the BANKSETA – using a population of participants who were recipients of bursaries in 2015/6 period. These graduates are expected to enrol in Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) programmes to enhance their practical skills and knowledge in the industry. The study sampled 257 respondents out of a population of 1 050 BANKSETA bursary recipients. The majority of respondents in this study were female.

The study found that the respondents' expectations of the WIL programme were consistent with those of BANKSETA and of existing literature. In addition, the WIL programme met the respondents' expectations resulting in two out of every three respondents successfully entering the labour market after the programme. Transitioning from university to the labour market was enhanced by the development of the respondents' pervasive and practical skills and knowledge required by the industry.

The study also highlights the importance of the structure and implementation of the WIL programme including intended learning outcomes, mentorship, integration of theory and practice, and supervision. The study recommends the development of a framework for hosts of WIL programmes in order to ensure graduates' experience is enhanced and consistent throughout the industry. Finally, graduates should be encouraged to enrol in the WIL programmes to enhance their employability in the industry.

KEYWORDS: *Work-integrated learning; Universities of Technology; Transitioning pathways; Graduates.*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

COPYRIGHT NOTICE.....	ii
DECLARATION.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
ABSTRACT.....	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vii
LIST OF TABLES.....	x
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xi
LIST OF ACRONYMS.....	xii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Background and Context.....	1
1.3 Problem Statement.....	3
1.4 Objective of the Study.....	4
1.5 Research Questions.....	4
1.6 Importance and Significance of the Research.....	5
1.7 Research Limitations.....	5
1.8 Structure of Research Report.....	6
1.9 Chapter Summary.....	6

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	7
2.1 Introduction	7
2.2 The Transition from Education to Work: Pathways and Transitions	7
2.3 Employability.....	10
2.4 Work-Integrated Learning	13
2.5 Perceptions of WIL Programme on Preparing Graduates for the Job Market	16
2.6 Chapter Summary	16
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY	18
3.1 Introduction	18
3.2 Research Approach	18
3.3 Research Process.....	18
3.4 Population and Target Group	19
3.5 Sample Size	19
3.6 Survey Questionnaire.....	20
3.7 Data Analysis	21
3.8 Ethical Considerations.....	21
3.9 Validity and Reliability.....	22
3.10 Chapter Summary	22
CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS.....	23

4.1 Introduction	23
4.2 Response Rate.....	23
4.3 Biographic Information	23
4.4 Work-Integrated Learning Programme Experiences.....	27
4.5 Perceptions on Post-Work-Integrated Learning.....	31
4.6 Current Employment Status of Respondents	33
4.7 Discussion of Findings.....	34
4.8 Chapter Summary	37
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	38
5.1 Introduction	38
5.1.1 Transitioning Experiences of WIL graduates.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
5.1.2 Factors That May Enable or Inhibits Access To The Labour Market	40
5.1.3 Implications From The Perspective of The Conceptual Framework	41
REFERENCES.....	42
APPENDIX 1: BANKSETA CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER LETTER	48
APPENDIX 2: INTRODUCTION LETTER.....	50
APPENDIX 3: STUDENTS CONSENT FORM	51
APPENDIX 4: STUDENTS SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE	52

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Race of respondents	24
Table 2: Qualifications of respondents	26
Table 3: Learner Expectations from work-integrated learning programmes	27
Table 4: Learners expectations of the WIL programme	28
Table 5: Respondents' Rating of the WIL programme	29
Table 6: Respondents' perceptions on support during the WIL programme	30
Table 7: Perceptions on post work-integrated learning experience	31
Table 8: Development of pervasive skills through WIL programme	32
Table 9: Organisational skills in WIL programme	33
Table 10: Current employment status of respondents	34

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: **Gender of beneficiaries** 24

Figure 2: **Age of respondents** 25

Figure 3: **Province of respondents**..... 26

Figure 4: **SETA funding of respondents**..... 26

LIST OF ACRONYMS

DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
BANKSETA	Banking and alternative banking Sector Education Training Authorities
BASA	Banking Association of South Africa
NSDS	The National Skills Development Strategy
SETAs	Sector Education Training Authorities
WIL	Work-Integrated Learning
UOTs	Universities of Technology

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to provide the background and context of the study on transitioning experiences of graduates who have been through sponsored work-integrated learning (WIL) in South Africa. The study interrogates the factors that enable or inhibit access to the labour market in the banking sector for these sponsored students. In doing this, the study investigates the Work-Integrated Programme and its role in preparing graduates for the job market. This is done by looking at the transitioning experiences of the WIL programme graduates in this study.

This chapter outlines the problem statement followed by the research questions and significance of the study. Finally, the chapter discusses the limitations of the study and provides the structure of the research report at the end. The next section provides the background and context of the study.

1.2 Background and Context

Understanding the WIL graduates' experiences and factors that enables or inhabits their access to the labor market in South Africa is the central concern this report is investigating. The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) published the White Paper for post-school education and training in 2013 (Republic of South Africa, 2013b). The White Paper provides a framework on the design of training systems, including curricula that require close co-operation between education institutions and employers, especially in those programmes providing vocational training opportunities. The White Paper also clearly outlines the crucial role played by various Sector Education Training Authorities (SETAs) in facilitating workplace learning partnerships between employers and education institutions. In this regard, each industry sector has a responsibility to implement WIL programmes aimed at increasing employment opportunities for the youth in South Africa.

Skills development has been identified as a key requirement for economic growth in South Africa. As a result, the Skills Development Act provides a framework for the development of skills in the workplace. Amongst other things, the Act makes provision for skills development by means of a levy-grant scheme and the establishment of 21 sector-specific Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) to administer the scheme's funds and manage the skills development process.

Each separate economic sector has a SETA, with BANKSETA being the Banking Sector Education and Training Authority. BANKSETA regards itself as an enabler of skills development and transformation in the broader banking and microfinance sector and supports people development through partnerships, skills development, alleviating unemployment and enabling change (BANKSETA, 2017).

The National Skills Development Strategy III (NSDS III) (Republic of South Africa, 2011) emphasises the crucial shift undertaken by SETAs and similar state organs responsible for training and development for specific sectors, from being too focused on numbers of learners entered as an output, to focusing more on the impact that the programmes being delivered have on society, the economy and the labour market. However, the NSDS III identifies a number of challenges that have had an impact on the ability of South Africa's economy to provide increased employment opportunities for graduates (Republic of South Africa, 2011). These include:

- Poor work-readiness and inadequate skills levels of numerous young people leaving formal tertiary education to enter the labour market for the first time, which is exacerbated by inadequate linkages between institutions and the workplace;
- Blockages within the system including a lack of alignment between the various post-school sub-systems (e.g. Universities, Universities of Technology (UoTs), Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges as well as SETAs) (Republic of South Africa, 2011, p.6).

In the Skills Development Act, No 97 of 1998, within the framework of National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS), BANKSETA is mandated to develop skills in the banking and microfinance sector by, inter-alia, (i) encouraging employers within its sector to develop an active learning environment in the workplace, and (ii) providing employees with opportunities to acquire new skills and to progress their careers. SETAs seek to achieve the above objectives through WIL programmes through strategic relationships between universities and the respective industries. For the banking sector, BANKSETA serves as a linchpin to develop skills for the industry, especially in areas regarded as scarce and critical skills. BANKSETA seeks to achieve its mandate through providing students bursaries and then facilitating WIL programmes once these students graduate. For instance, BANKSETA invested twelve million rand in the WIL programme working with six universities in the 2015/16 financial year. This particular funding model benefited a total cohort of

1 050 learners who had obtained qualifications in either the commerce or information technology disciplines.

In light of the above legislative and policy directions together with the strides made by BANKSETA, it is important to understand the influence of the banking industry in South Africa. According to the Banking Association of South Africa (2019), the financial services sector contributes 22% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 31% of corporate taxes. In addition, the country's six largest banks employ approximately 190 000 workers, a figure that has grown by 13,5% since 2013. The industry further provides significant indirect employment opportunities to other industries that it finances to create jobs. The statistics above provide evidence that despite digitisation of the industry, certain skills are still required at the heartbeat of the banking space. Thus, it is imperative for universities to understand the skills required by the banking industry in order to produce 'work ready' graduates - a role played by universities and BANKSETA - to facilitate inevitable growth in the industry.

Contextually, the current SETA model lacks quality centralisation and consolidation of datasets that could effectively illuminate the outcome of the current experiences of students who undergo WIL programmes. The current outcomes of the WIL programmes have limitations in terms of integrated datasets demonstrating throughput, completion and, significantly for this study, transition to the labour market post-programme. Thus, it is important to establish how BANKSETA's WIL programme influences the transition experiences and employability of its recipients in the South African context.

1.3 Problem Statement

The discourse on graduate employability and work readiness has received a lot of attention over the past two decades owing mainly to the ever rising rate of unemployment in the country. According to Statistics South Africa (2020), one in every three South Africans in the working age group is unemployed (Statistics South Africa, 2020). Unemployment is particularly high among the country's youth (55.2% for 15-24 age group) which makes them vulnerable to the pressures exacerbated by socio-economic dynamics facing the nation. In a country with high levels of youth employment, programmes that prepare graduates for the workplace become of paramount importance. Seamless school to work transition is premised on strong relationships between labour market and education. This relationship is further premised on good quality labour market information.

According to Reddy and Krush (2013), South Africa requires a strong foundation of labour market information including credible datasets across the post-school system and labour markets, down to sectoral, occupational and regional levels of analysis. In the same vein, the country requires strong labour market intelligence, meaning research that analyses dynamics, capabilities and constraints in order to reduce employment and improve graduate employability (Mlatsheni & Ranchhod, 2017; Ndebele & Ndlovu, 2019). Consequently, there is a paucity of credible analysis of the factors which influence the transitions from education to the world of work, and more so for university graduates in the South African context.

In addition to the empirical gaps identified above, BANKSETA provides bursaries and WIL programmes to university graduates but there is lack of evidence on the effectiveness of such programmes in the recipients' perspectives. It is thus paramount to establish the perspectives of these recipients about the WIL programme and their experiences post programme. Such evidence is vital for the ultimate evaluation of the NSDS III objectives and for the continuous improvement of the bursaries and WIL programmes offered by SETAs. According to Statistics South Africa (2019), youth unemployment among graduates was 31% (lower than the 55% youth employment mentioned earlier) (as at Quarter 1, 2019 – latest report available) which suggests that being a graduate does not necessarily translate to employment. In this study, it is acknowledged that tertiary qualifications increase the chance of employment but work readiness among graduates remains a challenge. As a consequence, documenting and analysing the experiences of WIL programme recipients during and post WIL becomes a vital tool for improving such programmes and influencing policy and practice.

1.4 Objective of the Study

The study seeks to examine the graduates' experiences of WIL programme and factors that enables or inhabits access to the labor market in South Africa.

1.5 Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following questions:

- (i) What is the nature and scope of skills developed within a WIL programme that could facilitate the transitioning of WIL graduates into the labour market?

- (ii) How does participation in a WIL programme facilitate/not facilitate employability of WIL graduates?
- (iii) How can WIL programmes be strengthened to facilitate more efficient transitioning from higher education into the labour market?

1.6 Importance and Significance of the Research

The DHET recognises the shortage of appropriate data and mechanisms with which to understand the experiences of learners post their WIL experiences (Republic of South Africa, 2015a). The shortage of reliable data on experiences of WIL graduates has further created a condition where SETAs together with the DHET are unable to respond to questions pertaining to the impact created by WIL programmes (Republic of South Africa, 2015a) or how to improve these programmes. Wildschut et al. (2017) further emphasise that SETAs have not always had adequate systems and/or capacity to gather information that would assist in interrogating or demonstrating employment patterns of graduates who have been on the WIL programmes. This study, therefore, seeks to provide some insight on how the WIL programme has impacted on graduates' post-programme transitioning experiences. The study will raise much needed information on the factors that have enabled or constrained the WIL programme learning and work transition patterns that would further influence policy and practice at government, SETA, and banking industry levels in South Africa.

1.7 Research Limitations

It is almost impossible for any research study to be complete without any weaknesses, and inevitably this one also has these. The sampling population is not representative of all WIL learners that have been funded by the SETAs in the country. The research specifically targeted WIL learners funded by the BANKSETA in a specific financial year. This study's questions focused on: transitions of WIL graduates funded by BANKSETA, and factors that have enabled and constrained their trajectories in the South African labour markets. Due to the scope of this study, it did not interview employers and thus does not attempt to make findings around mismatch, but focused solely on the students' transitional experiences, the factors that impacted thereupon and their destinations post-programme.

One can infer that as a researcher, to some extent I was a 'participant observer' because of my intimate knowledge of the WIL programme in the BANKSETA. As noted previously in the study, I work for the BANKSETA, so I have insight into the implementation of the WIL

programmes there. My knowledge and insight could also be perceived as a strength as this provided me with great access to the data.

1.8 Structure of Research Report

This chapter has outlined the background, rationale for the research, and delineated the problem statement as well as the research questions.

Chapter two: *literature review* – theorises the conceptual framework of the study, the significance of pathways and transitioning patterns of graduates. It explores how graduates studies play a role in gathering data about graduates’ destinations, the role played by the universities in producing graduates that are employable, and how the concept of employability links up with WIL programmes.

Chapter three: *research methodology* – describes the quantitative research study approach adopted in the study, as well as data collection and analysis strategy. The study is premised on the ‘experiences of work-integrated learning beneficiaries’ from the universities. The chapter provides a detailed account of the two primary data collection instruments utilised to fulfil this function.

Chapter four: *research finding and analysis* – deals with various themes that emerge from the data collection and analysis exercise. This chapter make findings or statements on whether such programmes produce autonomous graduates, improve the accuracy of work, are able to improve problem solving skills, and are able to produce quality and accurate work.. Through students experiences, we also explored how their skills were transferred and applied.

Chapter five: *Conclusion and recommendations* – presents the overall conclusion of the study by providing an analysis on the experiences of the WIL beneficiaries with respect to the factors that enabled and/or constrained the transition from higher education to work as well their accessing opportunities in the labour market.

1.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter detailed the background and context of the study and ultimately the problem statement. The main research question and sub questions were identified and listed. Finally, the chapter provided the importance and significance of the study.

The next chapter provides a discussion of the literature related to WIL and the discourse on how such programmes influence employability of graduates. The chapter uses literature from international and national perspectives to draw conclusions on the subject matter.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The discussion below outlines the main theoretical areas linked to the study and presents an exploration of work linked to pathways that young graduates navigate from higher education institutions to the world of work. The study also presents short discussions on non-linear transitioning models of young people within education and training institutions, labour-market and workplace. Further to this, the study explores graduates studies in relation to employability. The study then explores the universities in the South African context and explains their role within the South African education system. This will attempt to give an account on whether the universities have kept in tandem with the demands technical skills required by the economy. The last section will focus on WIL, where the study will explore whether these programmes are assisting graduates with applicable skills to transition from academia to the world of work.

2.2 The Transition from Education to Work: Pathways and Transitions

This study is framed around the concept of ‘pathways’ from higher education to work. The pathways concept has received considerable attention in the international literature in recent times as a means to capture transitions from education to work (CHEC, 2013; Imdorf, Koomen, Murdoch & Guégnard, 2017). According to Ecclestone, Davies, Derrick and Gawn (2010), transition has numerous everyday theoretical meanings. The idea of transitions functions in different practical and theoretical contexts, hence there is no agreed-upon definition of what constitutes a transition, as different conceptualisations and theories lead to different ideas about how to manage or support transitions.

Pathways, especially for first-time entrants into the labour market, are today characterised as discontinuous stepping-stone type transitions and differ from the smooth and linear movement of young people from education to work in the past (Wheelahan & Moodie, 2017). According to CHEC (2013), this instability can be attributed to the dramatic changes in labour markets which have accompanied globalisation and the shift towards a ‘knowledge economy’.

In their study, Evans and Furlong (1997) argue that international research on youth transition has employed four metaphors to describe the phases through which research and policy have investigated youth transition over the years. Evans and Furlong show that in the 1960s the initial metaphor was niches, which was taken from the early conceptualisation which utilised an analogy of filling society's niche, thereby fulfilling growth tasks to ensure that successful integration into adult roles is accentuated. The secondly metaphor, pathways, signifies the longer and more complex transition processes that occur. In the 1980s, the emergence of trajectory, the third metaphor, endeavoured to expand the transition notion beyond government-designed pathways to also include the social forces that shape youth transition. Finally, in the 1990s, the metaphor of innovations was developed to express people's active role in shaping their own lives, within the opportunities and constraints that they are faced with. According to Cuzzocrea (2020) and Walsh and Keary (2020), these metaphors have been widely accepted in literature to explain youth transition although the discourse is ongoing.

Earlier, the Finn Report (1991) introduced and explained five main elements of pathways which have had a significant influence on conceptualising research on pathways, and which continue to represent some of the core foundational ideas shaping work around pathways, as they provide a coherent structure of pathways through education and training and into work. These elements are: (i) a set of interrelated experiences provided for progression; (ii), education and training should have a sense of continuity even when individuals cross institutional and sectoral boundaries; (iii), young people should have access to a range of different pathways and should be able to move from one to another without losing ground; (iv), there is a need for effective credit and articulation arrangements to provide smooth bridges between pathways; and (v), signposting (information and career advice) are needed at the start of each pathway and at each junction between pathways.

Pathways have served as influential organising constructs and have a significant impact on educational policy (Mckenzie & Hillman, 2001; Gale & Parker, 2014). Although learning pathways are regarded as a 'journey of learning', the notion is that the pathway analogy is a deterministic idea with a set of trajectories (Carroll & Murray, 2010; Harris, Rainey & Summer, 2006). Harries and colleagues argue that pathways are continuous and directional as they lead somewhere. These pathways have not gone without criticisms in academic literature. For instance, Raffe (2003) argues that assumptions about transitions being on the same course are problematic because these ignore

complexities between education and labour market destinations, family and socio-economic dynamics. In line with Raffe (2003) above, it is evident that informal dimensions of learning and experiences are rarely recognised in a meaningful way within dominant theatrical or policy-based transitions research, mainly caused by the notion that they do not fit comfortably with approaches committed to individualisation and the commodification of learning and experience (Sawchuk & Taylor, 2010; Ramsarup & Lotz-Sisitka, 2017).

There is a need for understanding how non-linear transitions come about, the complexity of transitions and the need to attend to broader institutional arrangements within and across education and training, the labour markets and workplace (Sawchuk & Taylor, 2010; Ramsarup & Lotz-Sisitka, 2017). This view is supported by Field (2010) who argues that the idea of transition does not necessarily imply unilinear change. Literature on youth transition, for example, is concerned with two linked processes of change, both of which have generally been understood as a one-way street: school-to-work and adolescence to adulthood. However, workplace preparation like WIL programmes provide another angle for the labour market discourse.

De Haan (2010) claims that as a result of heightened policy interest, accompanied by wider public attention, research into transitions is burgeoning. For many years, research on transitions was largely concerned with identifying and exploring what scholars such as Sheehy in 1976 called the 'predictable' passage of youth and adult life. In education studies, this has often involved focusing on the transition from school to work as a central transition of people's lives. Neumark (2007) narrows the school-to-work transition analysis, and states that, as reflected in both research and policy discussions, it encompasses two segments of the life cycle of young people. The first is the segment during which students make decisions that shape the link between their schooling and their future career, including both the content of their education and its duration. The second is the segment in which young people leave school and begin to work in the type of jobs that begin to mark the course of their future careers, in contrast to the part-time or part-year jobs in which they sometimes work while in school. These two segments of the life cycle can overlap, and their chronology over the life cycle can vary from person to person depending on their background and geographical location.

School to work transition is to a large extent a phenomenon of modern economies in societies with mass schooling, in which youth spend many years in general academic education before entering the workplace; the question then arises of how to link schooling and work (Neumark, 2007; Sawchuk & Taylor, 2010). These scholars have argued that part of the driver for

the rise of mass schooling was rapid industrial change at the end of the nineteenth century which diminished the role of crafts and therefore weakened apprenticeship as an institution for acquiring workplace skills. This implies that programmes such as apprenticeship became less desirable as societies prefer college studies. Thus, WIL programmes become necessary in the shaping of graduates' skills and preparation for the labour market.

A large body of literature pertaining to transitions comprises of graduate destination studies. Graduate destination research is highly underdeveloped in South Africa and there is no systematic attempt to understand graduate pathways outside a few sporadic institutionally-based surveys (CHEC, 2013). It must be noted that graduate destination studies provide a valid source of information for policy making and impact studies. South Africa is currently showing more interest in graduate destination surveys, particularly those assessing the notion of different pathways from study to work. Springing out of the pathways and transitions is the employability of the graduates by the relevant industries as discussed below.

In this study, I will focus on the transition process of WIL graduates and how the pathways provided by the educational policies enable or inhibit the supply of technical skills in the labour market.

2.3 Employability

Graduate employability plays an important role in the transitions of university students and the nature of curricula offered by higher education institutions. Employability can be understood as a set of competencies that enables adult learners and employees to secure sustainable employment, as such competencies comprise the knowledge, skills and abilities required to take responsibility for and perform a variety of job tasks, as well as the capacity to adjust to changing labour markets demands (Clarke, 2018; Knight & Yorke, 2003; Williams, Dodd, Steele & Randall, 2016). Employability embraces meta-cognition, that is, mindfulness in the learning that facilitates the evolution of the thought process of individuals to a higher level of comprehension (Jackson & Wilton, 2016). Thus, training institutions like UoTs use WIL programmes to enhance the thought process of individuals in order to make them more employable.

Employability can also be regarded as a multidimensional concept, that can be considered from the subjective perspective of the student or graduate in terms of his/her confidence and preparedness for the world-of-work (e.g. abilities, interest, skills, knowledge); it can also be considered from an objective perspective of government and policy-makers, employers and universities, all of which take stock of graduate outcomes (Yorke, 2006). In my study, I will look

at the WIL programme graduates experiences in relation to how the programme contributed to their employability opportunities within the South African labour market.

Employers look for employees who are capable of proactive adjustment and action-oriented behaviours; however, it remains a challenge to describe with utmost accuracy the personal characteristics and competencies that would inform agile behaviour (Coetzee & Esterhuizen, 2010). Nonetheless, it has emerged that the concept of employability includes not only academic achievement but also active control of one's career as well as consciousness of and responsiveness to labour market activity (Jackson, 2013). According to Jackson, the concept of employability may be variously described as a psychosocial construct, a set of skills or competencies or a process. An extremely narrow view of employability focuses on whether and how quickly a graduate is able to secure and then hold on to a job (Sin & Neave, 2016).

From another angle, employability may refer to a process where individuals possess specific competencies that augment and make it possible for them to access employment opportunities (Greenbank, 2012). Lastly, Jackson (2013) views employability as multifaceted, indicating various facets which reflect individual characteristics such as competencies and personalities. According to Jackson, employability may include other personal circumstances such as cultural background and personal circumstances, and external factors such as labour market and recruitment activities on the part of employers.

The mandate embodied within WIL can be linked to ideas of employability. It acknowledges that commonly-used terms such as knowledge and skills are replaced by undertakings and skilful practice, respectively (Yorke, 2004; Clarke, 2018). Graduates will therefore develop their own employability in ways that reflect their particular circumstances. Boden and Nedeva (2010) note that tertiary institutions are tasked with developing employability in their learners in order to increase the productive potential of the human resources of organisations. Nurturing employability orientations and the ensuing agility it creates within an organisation is very important. Coetzee (2012) resolves that the construct of employability cuts across several disciplines and incorporates three levels, namely individual, organisation and industries. Consequently, although the definitions are not always consistent and fully resolved, employability has a profound effect on both organisations and employees.

Pool and Sewel (2007) propose that employability consists of four main elements, namely: (i) a person's employability assets, which entail their knowledge, skills and attitude; (ii) deployment, which includes career management skills such as job search skills; (iii) presentation, which is concerned with job-finding skills, for example CV writing, work experience and interview technique; and finally, (iv) for a person to be able to make the most of their employability assets, much depends on their personal circumstances, for example family responsibilities and external factors such as the current level of opportunity within the labour market.

In order for a graduate to achieve an optimum level of employability, York and Knight (2006) propose what is arguably the best known and most respected model in the field, USEM, an acronym for four interrelated components of employability, namely: Understanding, Skills, Efficacy beliefs and Meta-cognition (2006, p. 567). The USEM model forms part of a larger body of research-based scholarly work on employability; however, its strength could also be perceived as a weakness in that it does not assist in explaining to non-experts in the field, particularly the graduates themselves, exactly what is meant by employability. Law and Watts (1977) developed the DOTS model and argue that there are four careers education tasks to be accomplished by each student when facilitating their development and these are, (decision learning, opportunity awareness, Transition learning and Self-awareness) which builds on the USEM model of employability. The Centre for Employability at the University of Central Lancashire in the United Kingdom has been developing practical solutions to enhance the prospects of students and graduates for years. The DOTS programme is based on immersing adult learners in deliberate, intentioned learning experiences in order to nurture the development of competencies such as decision making, being aware of various employment opportunities and their prerequisites, dealing effectively with the transition from higher education to the employment market, and cultivating self-awareness with regards to individual preferences, principles concerns and capabilities (Pool & Sewell, 2007).

Drawing theoretical ideas from this work, the purpose of this study is to use the DOTS model in assessing the following key attributes.

- Decision learning - the kind of decision-making skills the graduates possess which might influence employability.
- Opportunity awareness - knowing what job opportunities exist and what their requirements are.
- Transition learning - includes job searching and self-presenting skills.

- Self-awareness - looks at interests, abilities and values the graduates have that might influence employability opportunities.

To ensure employability, it is critically important that adult learners master the knowledge of their chosen fields of study, so the undergraduates should develop transferable skills in order to become an employable graduate (Clarke, 2018; Williams, Dodd, Steele & Randall, 2016). Transferable skills include a lifelong learning orientation, team member competence, communication competence, self-management, technological competence, autonomy, agility and inventiveness (Carter, Lundberg, Geerlings & Bhati, 2019). Accordingly, life experiences and work context should be included in adult learning in order to enhance their employability capacity (Ndebele & Ndlovu, 2019). Similarly, Jackson (2012) emphasises that work experience is a key factor in perceiving employability competence.

Nurturing of emotional intelligence in undergraduates forms part of the key to the employability model as it enables individuals to demonstrate employability competencies more easily (Beukes, 2010). Furthermore, emotional intelligent individuals are more likely to succeed academically, and emotional intelligence may improve when adult learners are exposed to experiences in higher education environments. Theoretical ideas from the DOTS and USEM typology of employability will be useful in providing insight into the employability of WIL graduates in this study.

2.4 Work-Integrated Learning

Work-integrated learning (WIL) is defined as career-focused learning which integrates theoretical knowledge with practical workplace application within vocationally-designed curricula (Patrick et al., 2008). WIL could also be described as the component of a learning programme that focuses on the application of learning in an authentic learning workplace context under the supervision and/or mentorship of a person/s representing the workplace. This type of learning addresses specific competencies identified for the acquisition of a qualification which makes the learner employable and assists in the development of related personal attributes. Workplace/service employees and professional bodies are involved in the assessment of the learning experience, together with the universities' academic employees (HEQC, 2004, p. 26).

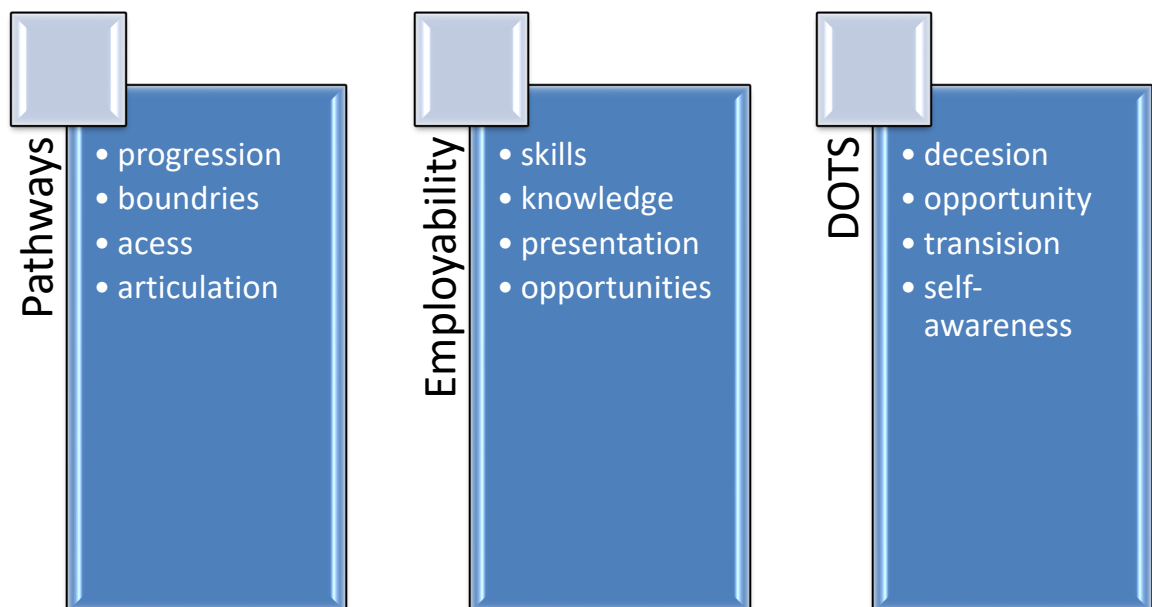
Kolb (1984, 2004) subscribes to the notion of WIL and views it as a catalyst for success for students. Kolb (2004) points out that the current interest in WIL in higher education is closely

linked to government and industry concerns with workplace participation and productivity, addressing skills and labour shortages, and keeping pace with increasing demands and intensifying international competitiveness. WIL has long been perceived and used as a pathway to work-readiness in professional education. Increasingly, however, WIL is being positioned as one of the key opportunities for improving the work-readiness of all graduates, even in areas that have not traditionally been linked to clear employment outcomes. It must be noted that literature has raised concerns about the work-readiness of graduates, not in terms of graduates' lack of disciplinary knowledge but in terms of their generic employability skills.

Kolb (1984) describes this approach as a holistic, integrative perspective on learning combining experience, perception, cognition and behaviour. The experiential learning approach is intellectually premised on the original work and perspectives of Dewey, Lewin and Piaget; these author's views share common characteristics contained in the experiential learning theory. The theory of experiential learning rests on a different philosophical base from the behaviourist theories of learning and idealist educational approaches. In summary, for Kolb (1984) experiential learning provides opportunities to experience concepts as they are applied in practice and to learn in context, which presents learners with similar challenges to their lives that would occur after the WIL programme. It also presents opportunities to develop and apply generic and transferable skills that are formulated as employability skills in challenging situations; and lastly, it provides learners with an opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning, through effective teaching and facilitation by academics, teaching staff, informed workplace-based mentors, practice workers and employers. The conceptual framework underpinning this study recognises that preparation for the world of work is not the only function of the higher education system, as other purposes such as knowledge production in fields not directly relevant to the economy are equally important (CHEC, 2013). Thus, the role of higher education in preparing young graduates for first-time employment in the labour market is a critical function of universities. Du Pre (2010) outlines the role of UoTs in the development of their countries' and regional economies and highlights that these have played a pivotal role in preparing graduates for the workplace, and have achieved this by utilising their research skills to identify societal challenges and needs, and to provide viable solutions accordingly. Du Pre provides a set of useful characteristics of a UoT as development of curriculum for graduates defined by industry and professionals, development of vocational professional education, and technological capabilities that enhance cognitive skills.

In light of the above and in line with expectations from UoTs, university students view their time in tertiary education as a training for a particular career or profession; for this reason, courses that enable students to directly link academic studies with workplace realities have always been popular in universities in general (Tran, 2016; Donald, Baruch & Ashleigh, 2019). Academic ability is just one quality that potential employers look out for in potential employees. WIL programmes assist students to develop the skills necessary to access work opportunities in the labour market (Jackson & Wilton, 2016). According to Bates (2003), graduates often lack employment experience, so placements provide inexperienced students with opportunities to develop a range of skills and abilities relevant to their chosen fields of study.

In an attempt to address concerns around students’ development and to enhance graduates’ chances of success, attention has been given to universities to offer learning that is more relevant and focused, participative and having a global perspective (Wheelahan & Moodie, 2017; Walsh & Keary, 2020). The emerging knowledge economy, progressing technological capabilities, increasing global mobility, and growing demands for economic productivity require a proficient, innovative and competitive work force (Cooper, Orrel & Bowden, 2010). According to Knight and Yorke (2003), education is perceived to have a pivotal role to play and a key mechanism for preparing the population to meet the global demands of the 21st century. Therefore, WIL is internationally recognised and nationally endorsed as a strategy for ensuring students are exposed to authentic learning experiences with the opportunity to apply theoretical concepts to practical tasks, ultimately enhancing graduates employability. The diagram below depicts the relationship or link between the three different conceptual model or frameworks applied in the literature review section as articulated above.



2.5 Perceptions of WIL Programme on Preparing Graduates for the Job Market

WIL programmes are compulsory for UoTs in South Africa. In a study to understand the expectations and perceptions of WIL students before they embark on the programme, Taylor and Geldenhuys (2018) concluded that there is a need to prepare students for the WIL programme in order to minimise gaps. The study found that overall student expectations were not met by the WIL programmes in South Africa as they found themselves doing administrative tasks and working over weekends. However, when using the statistical analysis to compare students' perceptions pre- and post WIL, Khampirat, Pop and Bandaranaike (2018) found statistical differences in the mean scores for the pre- and post-performance of these graduates with higher scores recorded for the post performance analysis. Inadequate feedback from the stakeholders has been cited as a problem area by WIL graduates (Naicker, 2017); as such it is imperative to improve communication between the hosts of these students and the UoTs.

In his study of the New Zealand WIL programme, Nicholas (2017) argued that WIL graduates perceive the programme as lacking common understanding of the relevant terminology, networks, best practice and related policy information. However, Tran and Soejatminah (2016) assert that WIL participants find that such programmes add value to their learning, career aspiration and employability. Using interviews as the research instrument, Dwesini (2017) established that WIL graduates believe that such programmes enhanced their self-confidence, communication skills, time management and professionalism, thus enhancing employability. The success of WIL programmes is perceived as influenced by such factors as culture, language, career interest and type of workplace at which the students are placed (Batholmeus & Pop, 2017). Batholmeus and Pop conclude that for the success of a WIL programme, it is essential that it be well managed and constituted in the target industry, with the universities providing such graduates. Overall, WIL programmes play an essential role in bridging the gap between the classroom and the industry, which has a knock-on effect on the employability of the graduates (Matsoso & Benedict, 2020).

2.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented four key sections that are relevant to explore pathways that young graduates navigate from higher education institutions to the world of work. Five main elements of pathways which have had a significant influence on conceptualising research on pathways and which continue to represent some of the core foundational ideas shaping work around pathways were introduced. They provided a coherent structure of pathways through education and training

and into work. The first element is a set of interrelated experiences provided for progression; second, education and training which provides a sense of continuity even when individuals cross institutional and sectoral boundaries; third, young people should have access to a range of different pathways and should be able to move from one to another without losing ground; fourth, there is a need for effective credit and articulation arrangements to provide smooth bridges between pathways; and lastly, signposting (information and career advice) is needed at the start of each pathway and at each junction between pathways.

In addition, this chapter discussed transitions within the WIL space, and learnt that transitions are widely held to be fundamental features of social life. It could be argued that they are one of the defining characteristics of everyday life in what has been called modernity, second modernity or even post modernity. The literature review further provided an argument that the construct embodied within the WIL concept can be linked to ideas of employability. What surfaced is that a combination of various components enables the graduate learners to unlock doors of employability. They include that the kind of decision-making skills the graduates possess has the potential to influence employability. Being aware or knowing what job opportunities exist and what their requirements are plays a crucial role. Job searching, self-presenting skills and self-awareness unlocks interests, abilities and values the graduates might have to influence employability opportunities. It is also important to establish effective institutional support structures where institutions take the role of linking industry and the university, and thereby assist in the facilitation of linking graduates to the world of work.

In summary, WIL - as a component of a learning that focuses on the application of learning in an authentic learning workplace context under the supervision and/or mentorship in the workplace - plays a crucial role in assisting graduates to access employment opportunities. This is particularly so because this type of learning addresses specific competencies identified for the acquisition of a qualification which make the learner employable and assist in the development of related personal attributes. WIL graduates further concur to the benefits of such programmes as articulated in various scholarly work reviewed in this chapter.

The next chapter discusses the research methodology.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the methodology used for this study. In this section, I describe the sequence of phases embarked upon, namely: data collection and analysis, survey instruments utilised, implementing survey data analysis, and triangulation. I also give an indication of where the study took place as well as ethical considerations taken during research.

3.2 Research Approach

The research design followed an interpretive research paradigm, as the actual purpose of the study was to better understand the transitioning experiences of students and to avoid making widespread generalisations or predictions in this regard. As Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005) put it, the interpretive research approach is a research paradigm that is based on the assumption that social reality is not singular or objective, but is rather shaped by human experiences and social contexts, and is therefore best studied within its socio-historical context by reconciling the subjective interpretation of its various participants.

3.3 Research Process

The study adopted a quantitative approach and utilised a questionnaire. The data collection tool implemented to survey the WIL beneficiaries was a questionnaire which was administered using Survey Monkey. The questionnaire had a total of 50 questions. This study followed a sequence of phases as outlined below:

- **Phase One:** the design of study. This is where population was defined or described, and the elements that met the selection criteria identified. The selection criteria identified the students who had participated in the WIL programme funded by BANKSETA in 2015/2016 as target population for the study. Secondly, the criteria also identified students who studied and graduated from UoTs to form part of the study.
- **Phase Two:** setting up survey instruments. In this section, I set up the survey questions and ensured that they complied with ethical considerations. I also pilot tested the draft survey with interns at BANKSETA in order to receive feedback.

- **Phase Three:** implement survey and data gathering. The survey was implemented using the Survey Monkey data collection instrument. I opened an account with Survey Monkey which enabled us to upload all the questionnaires. The questionnaire consisted of three sections with a total of 50 questions.
- **Phase Four:** data analysis. In this section I segregated the different themes that surfaced from data analysis exercise. These themes helped to explain the different experiences that the graduates went through while on the WIL. Data analysis of the survey information and focus was conducted using the applicable theoretical framework.

The purpose of the questionnaire was to gather information on the graduates' transition experiences post-programme. I collated, arranged and organised the data for analysis myself.

3.4 Population and Target Group

In the majority of data analyses, a sample is used in the research study because of practical limitations and also for the sake of economy (Salkind, 2012; Welman & Kruger, 2001). Population refers to the entity or group of people being studied and from which the sample is drawn (Salkind, 2012; Welman & Kruger, 2001). In the process of conducting research, we need to bear in mind that sampling is a systematic, decision-making process which is aimed at selecting a sub-set of the entire study which will be surveyed in order to collect data that will be representative of the entire population (Salkind, 2012; Welman & Kruger, 2001). The sampling process is anchored to the following three key elements: firstly, familiarity with the population; secondly, the individuals that constitute the population; and thirdly, the sample of individuals that is eventually decided upon (Oprichard, 2013).

In defining the population of this study I considered all recipients of the BANKSETA WIL programme for the 2015/6 financial year. I checked the records and schedule of these graduates and ascertained that the population was 1 050 individuals.

3.5 Sample Size

After obtaining permission from BANKSETA to gain access to the research population, which is the WIL beneficiaries, I filtered the spreadsheet to determine who of the beneficiaries had functioning email addresses. After this process was complete, I remained with a population total of 772, this meant I had to eliminate a total of 278 potential respondents because they did not have functional email addresses.

I then opened an account with Survey Monkey and personally administered the loading of the questionnaire onto Survey Monkey to all 772 participants. According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970) and Loomis and Paterson (2018), the sample size is 257. Sample size was calculated using the following formula which is embedded into the Survey Monkey software:

$$\text{Sample size} = n = N \times (z^2 \times p \times (1 - p)) / (e^2 / ((N - 1) + (z^2 \times p \times (1 - p)) / e^2))$$

Where N = population

Z = Z-score

p = probability

e = margin of error

Based on a margin of error of 5% and confidence level of 95%, the sample size for a population of 772 is 257 participants. This research study sample targeted a cohort who had completed the WIL programme; this hopefully enabled the beneficiaries to render an objective assessment of their experiences unlike if they were still going through the programme. The Survey Monkey questionnaire meant that they could complete the questionnaire online with no supervision.

3.6 Survey Questionnaire

The questionnaire design took the Likert scale approach which is regarded and presented as the most popular type of scale in the social sciences environment, its popularity being sustained by the fact that it is easier to compile than any other attitude scales. Joshi, Kale, Chandel and Pal (2015) define Linkert scales as a set of statements used in a questionnaire to determine participants' preferences in a set of statements. The Likert scale, unlike other scales, e.g. Guttman and Thurstone, may be used for multidimensional attitudes (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005). They are fairly easy to construct and likewise, respondents find that they are easy to comprehend and thus able to complete with little or no difficulty.

A questionnaire was used as a data collection instrument. The questionnaire was divided into the following three sections (refer to Appendix 3):

- Section one: background information
- Section two: work-integrated learning programme (during practical training)
- Section three: work-integrated learning completion (post practical training).

In designing the questionnaire I considered the objective and research questions which this study seeks to achieve and address. The overall study focuses on examining the WIL graduates experiences in relation to skills developed within a WIL programme that could facilitate the transitioning of WIL graduates into the labour market, it also looks at how participation in a WIL programme facilitate or not facilitate employability of WIL graduates. Lastly the study seeks to understand how can WIL programmes be strengthened to facilitate more efficient transitioning from higher education into the labour market. For validity, a pilot test was conducted with BANKSETA employees and errors and issues were addressed thereafter.

3.7 Data Analysis

As discussed in the research process above, once the data has been collected it is downloaded to SPSS 25 for analysis. Both descriptive and inferential statistics are used in the analysis. The pie charts and bar graphs are constructed to depict the data while central measures of tendency like mean and standard deviation - a measure of variability – are used in interpreting and analysing the data. In addition, the analysis includes the use of frequency distributions to provide a holistic understanding of the data.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Being a BANKSETA employee myself made it easier to facilitate access to BANKSETA resources to assist in terms of statistical data analysis. While I acknowledge that my role as manager of the work-integrated learning (WIL) unit at BANKSETA had the potential to influence the power relations around the study, I personally have limited responsibility in terms of day-to-day implementation of WIL programmes. The SETA has three learning specialists assigned to work directly with beneficiaries, institutions and host companies participating in these programmes. This study observed the following ethical aspects of ethical research: I obtained permission from the BANKSETA Chief Executive Officer to conduct this research to ensure that it is legally sound. This letter of permission was provided to the ethics committee.

The study received ethics approval from the University of Witwatersrand, certificate/protocol number 2018ECE041M.

3.9 Validity and Reliability

The researcher applied the rigour of the quantitative approach in relation to the overall planning and implementation of the study to ensure the authenticity and truthfulness of procedures. Cronbach's alpha was used for internal consistency and reliability. This was to ensure that interpretation of the findings was reasoned, sound and confirmed. For validity, a pilot test was conducted with BANKSETA employees, and errors and issues were addressed thereafter. The intention was not to generalise findings but to identify acceptable principles and trends related to the study.

3.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter focused on the research methodology and identified the quantitative approach as the most suitable approach to collect and analyse data. An online survey (questionnaire) was designed and sent to a sample of 257 participants as informed by literature. The reliability and validity of the study were discussed together with ethical considerations of the study,

The next chapter presents findings and analysis of the data.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

The chapter consist of three sections which will attempt address the main objective of the study that seeks to examine the graduates' experiences of WIL programme and factors that enables or inhabits access to the labor market in South Africa. Section one is concerned with explaining in detail the demographic information with respect to gender, age, race, institutions of learning, province, recruitment or on boarding processes, and qualification. Section two dives into the experiences of graduates while undergoing a WIL programme. This section attempts to interrogate whether the expectations of the beneficiaries were satisfied; whether the beneficiaries obtained skills set that were beneficial to future work opportunities with respect to accuracy of work; whether the programme produced autonomous graduates, improved interpersonal relations, increased problem solving abilities, improved quality of work, and transfer and application of practical skills. Section three traces the current situation of the graduates in terms of employment opportunities; identifies what type of institutions employ the graduates; attempts to ascertain whether the WIL programme assisted the beneficiaries to access work opportunities in the labour market; and lastly, discusses the type of direction the programme should have adopted to achieve the ultimate goal of shaping the graduates to be employable. We end of the chapter by providing a discussion on the summary of the findings.

4.2 Response Rate

From a sample of 257 WIL graduates, 82 responded to the questionnaire which was a 32% response rate. The low response rate from online survey is supported by Saleh and Bista (2017) and Loomis and Paterson (2018), who indicate that online or internet surveys tend to produce lower response rates compared to mail or direct surveys. However, Loomis and Paterson (2018) argue that the response rate for online surveys to graduate populations tends to be higher than for any other population, although the rate tends to be lower if the researcher/ surveyor is not known to the participants.

4.3 Biographic Information

Of the respondents, 70% were female and 30% were male as shown in figure 1 below.

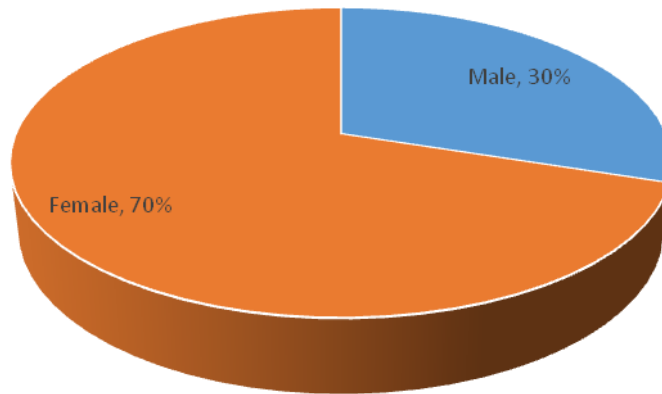


Figure 1: Gender of Beneficiaries

The importance of quality education to unlock the potential of people and to provide economic opportunities cannot be overstated. Therefore, the state’s obligation to provide access to quality education is an exceptionally important one (Franklin & McLaren, 2015). Figure 1 above compliments what the South African government strives to achieve with respect to adhering to set equity targets, which state that at least 54% of women must access more opportunities in the labour market for training programmes. This approach specifically prohibits unfair discrimination based on gender in the form of limiting women’s access to education.

In terms of race, the majority of the respondents (96.30%) were African as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Race of respondents

Race	African	Coloured	Indian	White
Proportion (%)	96.30	1.24	1.23	1.23

Education is an empowerment right, and holds the potential to lift the majority of South Africa’s population (most of whom are Black) out of poverty, thereby contributing to greater substantive equality. In the same vein, the majority of respondents were African/Black graduates. However, the response rate from Black Africans is more than representative of South Africa racial breakdown where Black Africans constitute 80.8% of the population (Silinda, Brubacher & Sidanius, 2019).

Figure 2 below illustrates that 73% of respondents were between the ages 26-30. Only 1.25% respondents were above 35 years of age. The small cohort of respondents above the age of 35 is in line with the funder’s policy to support youth below the age of 35. The emphasis on making

youth employable is further highlighted by Taylor and Govender (2017) who argue that South Africa has an unemployment rate of at least 70% among its youth population.

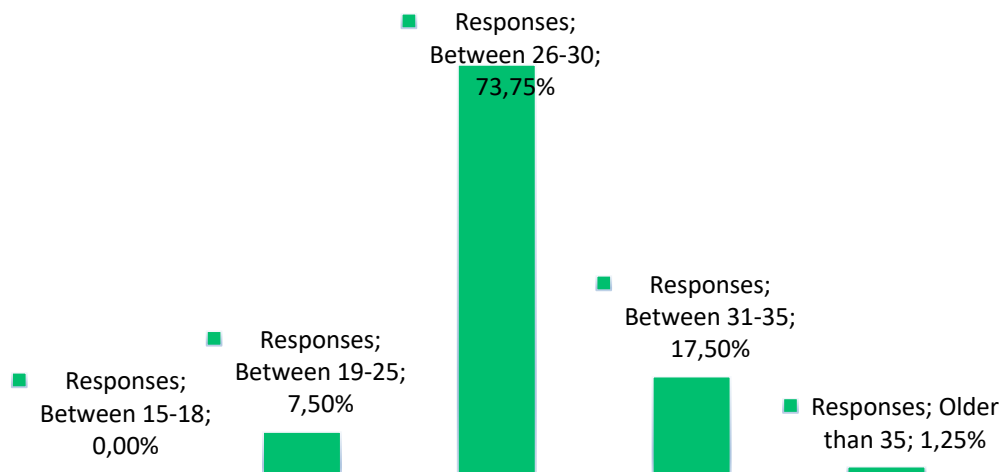


Figure 2: Age of respondents

Figure 3 below shows that a large majority of participants originate from Gauteng province followed by some of the most rural provinces: Limpopo and the Eastern Cape at 16.05% and 13.58% respectively. In terms of the recruitment process for the WIL programme, 25% simply submitted CVs and were accepted, 30% were interviewed and accepted, while 43% went through an assessment process before acceptance. The University of Johannesburg contributed the most (30%), followed by Tshwane University of Technology, Vaal University of Technology and Durban University of Technology with 15%, 14% and 7%, respectively. Significant differences were found between age groups with regard to autonomous graduate $t(51) = 2.739, p = 0.008$. The mean score reveals that respondents below 30 had a lower mean score (**2.5581**) than those above 30 (2.7920) suggesting that the age of the respondents is important in determining the autonomy in the workplace.

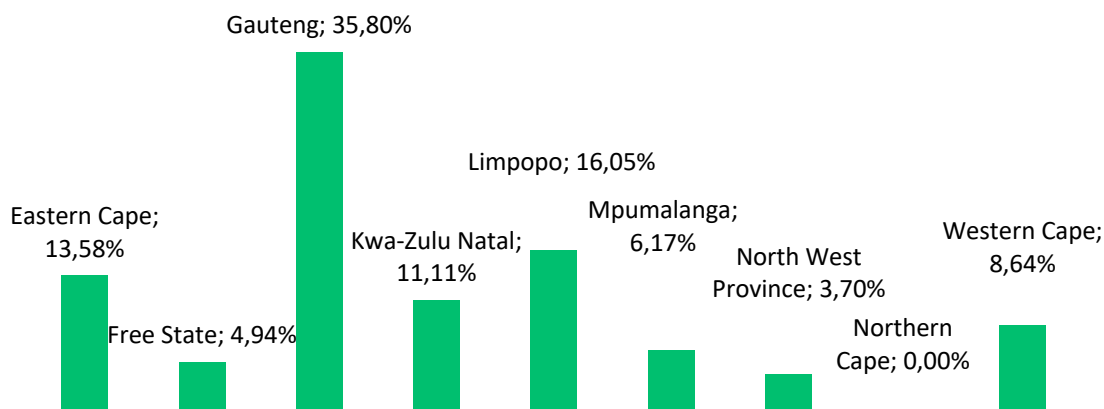


Figure 3: Province of respondents

A large majority of respondents (74%) were first time participants on a WIL programme. Only 25.93% had taken part in a WIL programme before. Of the respondents, the majority (43%) were unsure of who had funded their WIL programmes while 39% confirmed that their WIL programme had been funded by a SETA. Figure 4 below depicts this result.

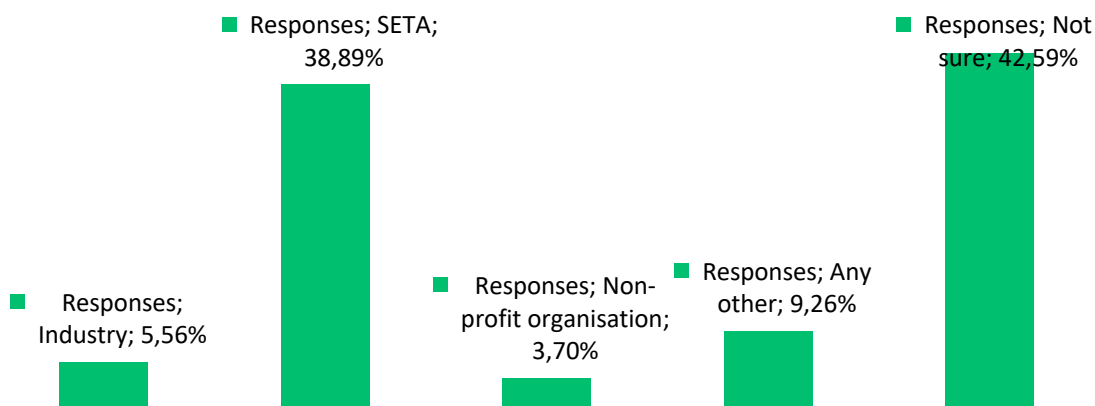


Figure 4: SETA funding of respondents

Finally, in terms of qualifications of the respondents, 67% possessed a National Diploma while 27% possessed a Bachelor's Degree. Table 2 below shows the spread of qualifications among the respondents.

Table 2: Qualifications of respondents

Qualification	Bachelor's Degree	National Diploma	Postgraduate Degree	Other
Proportion (%)	27	67	3	3

According to Wilson and Pretorius (2017), WIL is common for National Diploma holders as these qualifications are offered by universities. This finding is also in line with the WIL programme implemented by BANKSETA. Finally, 93% of the respondents attended their practical in the financial services sector (e.g. insurance/banking services, including call centres) while the balance indicated that they were recruited by other organisations (unspecified).

4.4 Work-Integrated Learning Programme Experiences

This section presents findings on WIL programme experiences from the respondents. Table 3 below is a depiction of the responses as to why the participants decided to participate in the WIL programme.

Table 3: Learner Expectations for WIL programmes

<i>When you decided to participate in the work-integrated learning programme (what were your expectations)? Tick all that apply</i>	<i>Response rate</i>
I wanted to further my education	28.30%
I was interested in the sector and wanted to gain experience to enable me to work in the sector	71.70%
I wanted to move ahead in my career	39.62%
I wanted to gain a higher qualification	16.98%
I wanted to advance my career and get a new job in another sector	33.96%
I wanted just to get a job	24.53%
I heard good things about the programme	26.42%
I wanted to acquire more knowledge and skills on how to do my work better	47.17%
I wanted to gain practical related exposure	50.94%
I thought the programme would help me start a business	1.89%
I had no expectations	0.00%

Given a number of numerous options to choose from, including multiple options, the majority of respondents (72%) indicated that they were interested in the sector and wanted to gain experience to enable them to work in the sector. This finding is in line with the assertion by Tran (2016) and Donald, Baruch and Ashleigh (2019) who conclude that work-based learning is central to graduate employability. In this regard, this could suggest that the respondents understand the importance of WIL in shaping of their careers and ultimate employability. This assertion was further followed by that of gaining practical exposure with 51% of assertive respondents. None of

the respondents indicated that they had no expectations while only 2% thought that the programme would help them start a business.

Although 35% of the respondents did not participate in answering the question on the WIL programme meeting their expectations, it is of concern that only 42% indicated that the programme met their expectations. Table 4 below shows the responses on whether WIL met their expectations based on a Likert scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 strongly agree.

Table 4: Learners expectations of the WIL programme

<i>Questions</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>agree</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Mean</i>
11. Were your expectations met at the end of the practical experience programme?	7.55	16.98	30.19	16.42	18.87	3.32

As shown in Table 4 above, 30% of the respondents chose to remain neutral while 14.5% indicated that they did not agree with the statement that the programme met their expectations. This could be flagged as a concern especially if 55% of the respondents are either unsure or feel that WIL did not meet their expectations.

In terms of gaining opportunities to use new skills obtained from the programme (with multiple options – please refer to question 13), 20% of the respondents indicated that the job they did not relate to what was learnt on the programme, 23% indicated that no new skills were learnt in the programme and 19% used all new skills which allowed them to do their job effectively. These findings are consistent with those of Jackson (2019) who argues that although students perceive WIL programmes useful in preparing them for employability, some question whether their readiness interventions are suitable for all students. On the positive, the respondents indicated that they received good and reasonable quality induction when they joined the programme with only 15% being either unsure of its quality or regarding the induction as poor. These findings are consistent with the WIL best practices highlighted by Doolan, Piggott, Chapman and Rycroft (2019) that require an induction process prior to practice to prepare students for workplace expectations.

Tables 5 and 6 below depict the experiences of respondents in the WIL programme. When asked to rate the guidance received throughout the WIL programme, from a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is very poor and 5 is very good, the majority of respondents (85% - question 15 in Table 5 below) rate the programme as good with an average rating of 4.04. In addition, 70% (average rate of 3.72 – question 17 below) rated the amount of practical opportunities in the workplace provided by the programme as at least good while 17% rated it as poor and 13% were unsure.

Table 5: Respondents’ Rating of the WIL programme

<i>Questions</i>	<i>Very Poor</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Unsure</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Very Good</i>	<i>Average</i>
15. How would you rate the guidance received throughout the programme?	0.0	9.62	1.92	63.46	25	4.04
16. How would you rate the relevance of the content of the programme?	1.92	3.85	9.62	57.69	26.92	4.04
17. How would you rate the amount of practical opportunities in the workplace provided by the programme?	0.0	16.98	13.21	50.94	18.87	3.72
18. How would you rate the academic support received from the programme?	0.0	3.85	1.92	59.62	34.62	4.25
19. How would you rate the support received from the institution during the practical training?	0.0	5.66	5.66	60.38	28.30	4.11

An overwhelming majority (average of 4.25 – question 18 above) rated the academic support received from the programme as good. Similarly, 89% of the respondents (average rating of 4.11 – question 19 above) rated the support received from the institution during the practical training as positive. These findings are consistent with those of Reddan and Rauchle (2012) who consider support as being an important consideration for the planning and implementation of the WIL programme. It is evident that without both academic and institutional support the WIL programme will not yield the intended benefits for both the sponsor and the beneficiaries. The Levene's Test for Equality of Variances shows that the group statistics is insignificant with p-values > 0.05. This means that the null hypothesis of equal variance is not rejected and it is concluded that there is no difference between the variances in the sample. The insignificant result from the

Levene's Test indicates that the responses from the questions are free from homoscedasticity assumptions. This is further supported by the Cronbach's alpha for internal consistence of 0.78 which is regarded as acceptable.

Table 6: Respondents' perceptions on support during the WIL programme

<i>Questions</i>	<i>Very Poor</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Unsure</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Very Good</i>	<i>Average</i>
20. How would you rate the quality of Mentorship and Supervision received during the programme?	0.0	9.43	16.98	54.72	18.87	3.83
21. How would you rate the quality of the learning material (training plans, working tools)?	1.85	3.70	3.70	55.56	33.19	4.19
22. How would you rate access to internet when needed for studies?	1.85	7.41	11.11	61.11	18.52	3.87
23. How would you rate the support and visits by programme sponsor (BANKSETA)?	1.85	12.96	12.96	42.59	29.63	3.85
24. How would you rate the quality of discussions with fellow students about the experiences throughout the programme?	0.00	1.85	7.41	64.81	25.93	4.15
25. How would you rate the guidance received at the end of the practical training programme?	9.26	24.07	18.52	35.19	12.96	3.19

With reference to Table 6 above, the majority of respondents were positive about the quality of mentorship and supervision received during the programme (average of 3.83 in question 20 above); and the quality of the learning material (training plans, working tools) (average of 4.19 in question 21 above). This finding is in contrast to Jackson, Rowbottom, Ferns and McLaren (2017) whose study on Australian students identified supervision and mentoring as a challenge for at least a third of the respondents. The majority of respondents (average of 3.85) also positively rated the support and visits by the programme sponsor (BANKSETA) as seen in question 23 in Table 6 above. Similarly, the rating of the quality of discussions with fellow students about the experiences throughout the programme, and the guidance received at the end of the practical training programme scored positive ratings with average scores of 4.15 and 3.19 (questions 24 and 25 in

table 6 above) respectively. However, 52% (question 25 above) of the respondents were either unsure or regarded the guidance received at the end of the practical programme as poor. This is quite concerning, especially when the respondents indicated that they had quality supervision and mentoring in Question 20 in Table 6 above.

4.5 Perceptions on Post-Work-Integrated Learning

With reference to Table 7 below, when asked whether the programme gave the respondents knowledge in their current job or future employment opportunities, the majority of the respondents (46%) were assertive while the rest were either unsure or did not benefit at all. In addition, over half of the respondents indicated that the WIL programme gave them practical skills required for their current job or future employment. As seen in Table 7 below, 85% of the respondents felt that the WIL programme enabled them to learn to work under pressure (see question 28 below).

Table 7: Perceptions on post-work-integrated learning experience

Questions	Not all	Not Sure	A lot
26. Do you think the programme gave you the knowledge you are using in your current job or the job you hope to get?	35.19	18.52	46.30
27. Do you think the programme gave you the practical skills that you can use in your job (you have now or the job you hope to get)?	16.67	29.63	53.70
28. Having gone through the programme, I think I can work under pressure better now?	7.55	7.55	84.91
29. Having gone through the programme, I think my work is more accurate now?	3.70	38.89	59.26
36. Having gone through the programme, I feel more confident about writing a report?	7.41	27.78	64.81
37. I understand that it is important to respect others in the workplace, even if they are different from me?	1.85	1.85	96.30

In the same vein, the respondents indicated that they have become more accurate in their work and are now feeling more confident about report writing. These findings are in line with those of Doolan, Piggott, Chapman and Rycroft (2019) who stipulate that communication, practical skills and confidence of the learners are enriched by WIL programmes. Finally, an overwhelming majority (96%) in question 37 above indicated that they now understand the importance of respect and diversity in the workplace. According to Jackson and Wilton (2016), WIL programmes develop

career management competencies required by graduates beyond the programme itself. This finding is also echoed by Jaaffar, Ibrahim, Annuar, Shah and Zulkafli (2016) who assert that pervasive skills learnt from WIL programmes matter for at least five to ten years of the graduate’s career.

With reference to Table 8 below and using a Likert scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being strongly agree and 5 strongly disagree, 81% of the respondents indicated that they can now work with little or no supervision. In addition, as shown in questions 32 and 33 in Table 8 below, an overwhelming majority also indicated that the WIL programme taught them time management skills and independence. Finally, as discussed in question 36 above, the majority of students indicated that their confidence levels improved to the extent that they can raise issues with line management and also engage in robust discussions with workmates. As discussed earlier, these findings are consistent with Jackson and Wilton (2016) who list some of the benefits of WIL programmes to both employers and the graduates themselves. The Levene's Test for Equality of Variances shows that the group statistics is insignificant with p-values > 0.05. This means that the null hypothesis of equal variance is not rejected and it is concluded that there is no difference between the variances in the population/sample. This is further supported by Cronbach’s alpha for internal consistence of 0.80 which is regarded as acceptable.

Table 8: Development of pervasive skills through WIL programme

<i>Questions</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
30. Having gone through the programme, I now know how to work on my own with little supervision.	25.93	55.56	12.96	1.85	3.70
32 The programme has taught me to be on time for work and to manage my time better.	33.33	51.85	12.96	0.00	1.85
33. The programme has taught me skills to work on my own.	33.96	54.72	11.32	0.00	0.00
34. The programme has taught me skills to participate in discussions with my work mates.	38.89	53.70	7.41	0.00	0.00
35. The programme taught me confidence to raise something with my Supervisor/Manager.	32.69	48.08	15.38	3.85	0.00
44. Do you think the programme was well run?	22.22	50.00	18.52	5.56	3.70

With reference to Table 9 below, when asked about organisation skills learned from the WIL programme, respondents indicated that they now understand rules and regulations governing the organisation. The respondents also highlighted that they understand what was expected of them as employees of the respective organisation. Similarly, the respondents feel they can plan better, do problem solving and can extract organisational information required to perform requisite duties. Finally, 72% of the respondents indicated that that programme was well run. Table 9 shows the organisational skills learnt by the respondents in the WIL programme.

Table 9: Organisational skills in WIL programme

<i>Questions</i>	<i>Not all</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>	<i>A lot</i>
31. Having gone through the programme, I now understand that workplaces have rules and regulations that must be followed.	1.89	1.89	96.23
38. Having gone through the programme, I think I plan better now.	1.89	18.87	79.25
39. Having gone through the programme, I think I can solve problems better now.	1.85	22.22	77.78
40. Having gone through the programme, I think I can find and organise information that I need to perform my work.	1.85	7.41	90.74
41. Having gone through the programme, I think I can work in a team better now.	1.85	5.56	92.59
42. Having gone through the programme, I think I am more creative now.	7.41	27.78	64.81
43. Having gone through the programme, I understand how to listen to others.	1.85	9.26	88.89

Interestingly, an overwhelming majority (93% in question 41 in table 9 above) indicated that they can be effective team players while 65% indicated that they are more creative than before. This finding is depicted in question 42 in Table 9 above. Finally, the majority of respondents (89%) highlighted that they understand how to listen to others. These pervasive and organisational skills acquired by the respondents are in line with programme expectations as documented by Doolan, Piggott, Chapman and Rycroft (2019) and Pool and Sewel (2007).

4.6 Current Employment Status of Respondents

With reference to Table 10 below, 63% of the respondents indicated that they were currently employed in banking related institutions while 37% were now unemployed. Of the employed, 73% were employed in the private sector and the balance in nonprofit organisations and the public sector. Similarly, 44% indicated that they were assisted by their WIP programme employers to get employment while 22% did not receive any assistance or guidance at all.

Table 10: Current Employment Status of Respondents

Question 46. What is your current situation?	
Answer Choices	Responses
I am currently employed where I completed my practical training	23.53%
I am currently employed elsewhere	27.45%
Is the industry you are employed at related to the banking and micro-finance sector	11.76%
Is the industry you are employed at unrelated to the banking and micro-finance sector	7.84%
I am currently self-employed	0.00%
I am currently running my own business	0.00%
I am currently studying (after completing the programme I continued with studies)	0.00%
I am currently unemployed	37.25%

Of the employed respondents, 53% were in permanent employment albeit, not necessarily in the banking sector, 32% in fixed-term employment and 15% were in temporary employment. However, it is interesting that despite undergoing work-integrated learning, 37.25% of the respondents were still unemployed. This could be attributed to a variety of reasons including them still being in transition, seasonal effects and industry specific factors.

4.7 Discussion of Findings

As indicated in the literature review, this study is underpinned by the DOTS framework developed by Yorke and Knight (2006). To recap, the DOTs framework is an acronym for **D**ecision learning, **O**pportunity awareness, **T**ransition learning, and **S**elf-awareness. In the discussion below, I use this literature to help me to make sense of the data and to help surface what enables employability of WIL graduates and ascertain the constraints faced the beneficiaries of the WIL programme.

Decision Learning (D), the respondents acknowledge that they learnt how to solve problems and to plan their work accordingly. According to Carter et al., (2019), transferring skills such as teamwork is important in building an individual’s attributes that are needed in the labour market. Of the respondents, 78% indicated that the WIL programmes enabled them to learn how to solve problems and 93% indicated that they have improved their teamwork skills. According to Beukes (2010), nurturing of emotional intelligence in students is key to their employability as it enables them to demonstrate employability competencies more easily.

Opportunity awareness (O), the respondents were assertive to questions relating to practical skills learnt from the WIL programme. The findings also indicate that respondents learnt skills to participate in discussions with their work mates. However, only 65% indicated that they are now more creative than before enrolling in the programme. These findings are in line with those of Doolan, Piggott, Chapman and Rycroft (2019) who stipulate that communication, practical skills and confidence of the learners are enriched by WIL programmes.

Transition learning (T) was evident in positive responses to questions relating to pervasive skills like respect, teamwork and time management. Of the respondents, 91% indicated that they can now find and organise information that is needed for them to perform their tasks. These findings are consistent with the existing literature which states that WIL programmes develop transitional learning in students like organizational skills, time management and other practical skills (see Doolan, Piggott, Chapman and Rycroft, 2019).

Self-awareness (S), the majority of respondents indicated that the WIL programme boosted their confidence and enabled them to carry out tasks independently. The majority of respondents, 89%, indicated that they can now work autonomously while 79% indicated that they can now plan better. However, confidence in report writing remained low with only 65% indicating that they can now confidently write reports. These findings are in line with existing literature (see Carter et al., 2019; Bates, 2003).

The findings, as discussed below, from this study are, overall, consistent with existing literature. From the first research question that seeks to establish the nature and scope of skills developed within a WIL programme that could facilitate the transitioning of WIL graduates into the labour market in South Africa, the study finds that WIL programmes play an important role in developing relevant skills and competencies that make graduates employable such as time management, self-management, confidence, practical skills, accuracy, planning, organisational skills, teamwork and creativity. This is consistent with Bates (2003) who asserts that placements are central to skills development and the relevant experience required by the labour market. The study respondents showed that these competences and skills were perceived as influencing their ability to access the labour market. According to Carter et al. (2019), transferable skills such as lifelong learning orientation, team member competence, communication competence, self-management, technological competence, autonomy, agility and inventiveness are important in shaping graduate employability.

The second research question relates to how WIL programme participation facilitates/employability of WIL graduates in South Africa. In the main, the majority of WIL graduates wanted

to gain skills and experience to enable them to work in the sector while 25% simply wanted employment when they enrolled into the programme. In addition, the study findings highlight factors like accuracy, creativity, confidence in report writing, and relevant knowledge as affecting their level of employability in the banking sector. Indeed, the sector requires highly technical employees as it deals with public funds. According to Yorke (2004) and Clarke (2018), graduates develop their own employability in ways that reflect their particular circumstances. Thus, factors like report writing and creativity could be viewed as important in becoming employable yet they are based on individual competencies and circumstance. The areas in which WIL graduates indicated low scores are important for their employability as articulated by Jackson (2012). Thus, the findings from this study are consistent with the expectations alluded to by literature (see Carter et al., 2019).

Regarding the third research question which sought to establish how the WIL programmes can be strengthened to facilitate more efficient transitioning from higher education into the labour market, the findings of this study are consistent with experiential learning assertions of Kolb (1984). The respondents surveyed in this study indicated that they learned a lot from the WIL programme and they felt the programme prepared them for the labour market. In line with the findings of Khampirat, Pop and Bandaranaike (2018) that post-performance scores of WIL graduates are generally higher than pre-performance, this study established that the majority of WIL graduates had their initial expectations met by the programme. Furthermore, in line with the findings of Tran and Soejatminah (2016), WIL participants find that such programmes add value to their learning, career aspiration and employability. However, the findings are in contrast with those of Taylor and Geldenhuys (2018) who found that WIL programmes in South Africa do not adequately prepare graduates for the labour market. Unlike with Naicker (2017), this study found that WIL graduates received a lot of support from the academic institution and the host institution.

Overall, the 63% of the WIL graduates indicated that they were employed by institutions related to the WIL programme experience. This indicates that the WIL programme offers graduates opportunities to gain relevant work experience required for the labour market. Coetzee (2012) resolves that the construct of employability cuts across several disciplines and incorporates three levels, namely, individual, organisation and industries. In addition life experiences and work context are important factors in determining employability of graduates (Ndebele & Ndlovu, 2019). Thus, the individual attributes of the WIL graduates play an important role as the banking sector is highly sensitive to skills and confidentiality as it deals with public funds.

4.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented data and results from the survey. It showed that the majority of respondents were female and primarily from the Gauteng Province. The chapter answered the research questions as informed by the objectives of the study which was to examine the graduates' experiences of WIL programme and factors that enables or inhabits access to the labor market in South Africa. The presentation of findings is divided into three main subcategories, namely: biographic information; experiences during the WIL programme; and experiences post the WIL programme. The results show that the WIL programme sponsored by BANKSETA had similar expectations and characteristics as the existing studies in South Africa and internationally. The findings also indicated that the majority of the respondents have subsequently found employment in either the firms that hosted them during the WIL programme or with other employers. Finally, this chapter provided a discussion of the findings and existing literature based on the DOTS framework and the research questions.

The next chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a synthesis of the entire research report, starting with the discussion of existing literature and how it links with the findings of this study. The discussion is informed by the study's research objectives which seeks to examine the graduates' experiences of WIL programme and factors that enables or inhabits access to the labor market in South Africa. The conclusions and recommendations of the study are then discussed.

5.1.1 Transition experiences of the WIL graduates

The transition experiences of university graduates to the labour market has received considerable attention from researchers, practitioners and governments across the globe as they seek to bridge the gap between the labour market and the graduates produced by universities. Notably, universities are at the center of this debate as they have a mandate to produce graduates at multiple level exit channels such as certificates, national diploma and bachelor of technology qualifications. In this regard, pathways, especially for first-time entrants into the labour market, are today characterised as discontinuous stepping-stone type transitions and differ from the smooth and linear movement of young people from education to work as was in the past (Wheelahan & Moodie, 2017). To enhance the pathways and transitioning of these graduates, WIL programmes are facilitated by the industry SETAs in South Africa. In this study, the majority (67%) of respondents possessed a National Diploma qualification while about a quarter (27%) had a Bachelor's qualification. This study found that WIL graduates perceive the programme as beneficial to their quest for employment as it provided them with requisite skills and experience required by the industry. The WIL programme bridged the gap between the classroom and the industry as articulated by Matsoso and Benedict (2020).

Consistent with Reddan and Rauchle (2012), an overwhelming majority rated the academic support received from the WIL programme as good, and the support received from the institution during the practical training as positive. These two findings are important in the planning and implementation of the WIL programme within the post-school sector in SA. However, in contrast to Jackson, Rowbottom, Ferns and McLaren (2017), whose study on Australian students identified supervision and mentoring as a challenge for at least a third of the respondents, the majority of respondents approved of the quality of mentorship and supervision received during the WIL

programme, including the quality of the learning material (training plans, working tools). This study found that at least 70% of the respondents found that the WIL programme was relevant and contained useful content for their professional development. This finding echoes the Council of Higher Education (CHE)'s mission to ensure universities graduates obtain relevant skills and knowledge from the WIL programmes (CHE, 2011).

5.1.2 Factors that may enable or inhibits access to the labour market

In line with the expectations, as articulated by Tran (2016) and Donald, Baruch and Ashleigh (2019), the majority (72%) of the respondents indicated that they joined the work-based learning in order to enhance their employability. This could mean that the WIL graduates understood the purpose of WIL programmes which is to provide them with practical skills and experience needed for the labour market. In addition, these respondents demonstrated strong views that showed that time management, self-management, confidence, practical skills, accuracy, planning, organisational skills, teamwork and creativity were very important for their professional development and required for working in the banking industry. The data showed that they believed they gained both practical skills like report writing, engaging in meetings, self-confidence and autonomy. These views are consistent with existing literature and the mandate of BANKSETA. Interestingly, and in line with Jackson's (2019) findings, respondents perceive WIL programmes useful in preparing them for employability although some question whether the programmes' readiness interventions are suitable for all students.

With regard to pervasive skills acquisitions (post-WIL programme), this study demonstrated that respondents have become more accurate in their work and are now feeling more confident about report writing, and value the importance of respect and diversity in the workplace. These findings are in line with those of Doolan, Piggott, Chapman and Rycroft (2019) who stipulate that communication, practical skills and confidence of the learners is enriched by WIL programmes. In addition, as argued by Jackson and Wilton (2016), WIL programmes develop career management competencies required by graduates beyond the programme itself. These organisational skills acquired by the respondents are in line with programme expectations as documented by Doolan, Piggott, Chapman and Rycroft (2019) and Pool and Sewel (2007).

5.1.3 Implications from the perspective of the conceptual framework

The findings of this study are completely compatible with the DOTS framework developed by Law and Watts in 1977. The findings show that the WIL programme enabled the respondents to deal with decision learning, become aware of opportunities, acquire transition learning (which enabled 63% of the respondents to get employment opportunities after the programme), and finally embrace self-awareness by developing pervasive skills required by employers. As articulated by Kolb (1984, 2004), the notion of WIL is a catalyst for success for students and the findings above concur with this.

5.2 Conclusions

This study sought to examine the graduates' experiences of WIL programme and factors that enables or inhabits access to the labor market in South Africa. The study focused on one industry SETA – the BANKSETA – using a population of participants who were recipients of bursaries in the 2015/6 period. University graduates were selected due to the nature of the curriculum design which enables them to supply the labour market with industry specific graduates. For instance, this study found that the majority of respondents possessed a National Diploma qualification while others had Bachelor's degrees and certificates. These graduates are expected to enrol in WIL programmes to enhance their practical skills and knowledge in the industry.

Although there are existing studies on the discourse, there is paucity of studies that provide evidence from a South African perspective. In addition, the lack of data on the WIL programmes at SETA level remains a research gap, hence this study. The study sampled 257 respondents out of a population of 1 050 BANKSETA bursary recipients. The majority of respondents in this study were female. The study found that the respondents' expectations of the WIL programme were consistent with those of BANKSETA and existing literature. In addition, the WIL programme met the respondents' expectations resulting in two out of every three respondents successfully entering the labour market after the programme. Interestingly, the majority of these respondents accessed employment opportunities in organisations that hosted them during the WIL programme. This is evidence that the WIL programme enhances the employability of the graduates in South Africa.

Transitioning from university to the labour market was enhanced by the development of the respondents' pervasive and practical skills, and knowledge required by the industry. It is evident from the absorption of the WIL programme participants by the market that the programme enables transitioning from university to the labour market, and that the programme creates employment

opportunities for graduates. The study also highlights the importance of the structure and implementation of the WIL programme including intended learning outcomes, mentorship, integration of theory and practice, and supervision. Finally, the DOTS framework is important in framing employability and shedding insights into the understanding of the transitioning and pathways of university graduates in South Africa. Overall, this study finds that the WIL graduates' experiences and perceptions are consistent with existing literature that WIL promotes employability of the beneficiaries (Khampirat, Pop and Bandaranaike, 2018; Tran and Soejatminah 2016; Ndebele and Ndlovu, 2019). However, some attributes such as developing graduates' confidence in report writing and the enhancement of creative skills requires further attention. This could be done in collaboration between the stakeholders involved in the design and development of the WIL programme.

5.3 Concluding Recommendations

This study focused on a small population and sample based only one industry SETA. It is thus recommended that a larger scale study be conducted to understand the dynamics of the WIL programme for universities in South Africa. Additionally, it is important to develop a clear framework for hosts of WIL programmes in order to ensure graduates' experience is enhanced and consistent throughout the industry. Finally, graduates should be encouraged to enrol in WIL programmes to enhance their employability in their particular industry/sector.

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APPENDIX 1: BANKSETA CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER LETTER

10 March 2019

Chief Executive Officer

The Banking Sector Education and Training Authority (BANKSETA)

94 Beker Road

Thornhill Office Park

Vorna Valley, Midrand.

0156

RE: INFORMATION LETTER TO THE BANKING SECTOR AND TRAINING AUTHORITY (BANKSETA) TO REQUEST PERMISSION TO UTILISE THEIR LEARNER DATABASE FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES.

My name is Similo Dlamini, and I am a student at the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am currently enrolled for a Masters' degree at the Centre for Researching Education and Labour (REAL) within the University of the Witwatersrand.

As a requirement of this degree, I am currently doing a study that seeks to investigate the factors that enable and/or constrain the transition from higher education to work, with specific reference to a work-integrated programme of learning. This study will also investigate the factors which enable and/or constraint work-integrated learning graduates' access to the labour market. My research is entitled "*transitioning experiences of universities of technology (uot) students who have exited work-integrated learning programmes. The BANKSETA case study*" This study's approach will focus on: transitions of Work-Integrated-Learning (WIL) graduates funded by BANKSETA. The focus will solely be on the students' transitional experiences, the factors that impacted thereupon and their destinations post-programme completion. I will endeavour to provide feedback to your organisation as well as participants on the outcomes of the research.

As part of the research, I am requesting permission to utilise the database of students who were beneficiaries of the work-integrated learning programme funded by the BANKSETA for the purpose of my research.

I will ensure complete anonymity of participants. I will use pseudonyms and will not mention any participant by their name, title or position.

The data collected will be analysed and documented in a research report. The research findings will be used for academic purposes only, including books, journals and or conference proceedings.

All research data will be kept securely in a locked cabinet and will be completely destroyed 5 years after completion of the project.

Should you require any further information throughout the course of this research, please do not hesitate to contact me on {082 565 3392} or similogd@hotmail.com. A summary of the research report and findings can be made available to you electronically upon finalisation in November 2019 should you wish to receive same.

A meeting with yourself can be set up to take you through the study and the information required from yourself for the purpose of the study. I look forward to your response at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

Similo Dlamini

APPENDIX 2: INTRODUCTION LETTER

Introduction:

My name is Similo Dlamini, and I am a student at the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am currently enrolled for a Masters' degree at the Centre for Researching Education and Labour (REAL) within the University of the Witwatersrand.

As a requirement of this degree, I am currently doing a study that seeks to investigate the factors that enable and/or constrain the transition from higher education to work, with specific reference to a work-integrated programme of learning. This study will also investigate the factors which enable and/or constraint work-integrated learning graduates' access to the labour market. My research is entitled "*transitioning experiences of universities of technology (UoT) students who have exited work-integrated learning programmes. The BANKSETA case study*". This study's approach will focus on: transitions of work-integrated learning (WIL) graduates funded by BANKSETA. The focus will solely be on the students' transitional experiences, the factors that impacted thereupon and their destinations post-programme completion.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research project. You have been contacted because you participated in a work-integrated learning programme that was funded by the BANKSETA. I am asking you to please tell us about your experience on this programme and what has happened to you since you did the programme, so that we can understand whether the programme was useful and how it could be improved in future. Please be assured that your response is anonymous and all information that you provide will be kept confidential and we will not share this outside of the research team. I would like you to take part in the survey questionnaire but before doing so, I want you to know that your participation will be kept confidential. I do not need to know your name and when I write up my research I will use a pseudonym which means that I will make up a name for you. You should also know that you are not obligated to participate in this interview at all and may choose not to answer some or all of the questions.

You may also withdraw from the interview at any time. What you share in the questionnaire will have no negative consequences for you in any shape or form. The information which you provide will be written up into my research report and it is hoped that this information will be used to enhance the experiences of graduates who partake in the work-integrated learning programme sponsored by BANKSETA in the future.

APPENDIX 3: STUDENTS CONSENT FORM

“Transitioning experiences of universities of technology (UoT) students who have exited work-integrated learning programmes. The BANKSETA case study”

Participants’ consent form to complete a questionnaire.

I _____ *(participant’s full name)*

- I have read and understand the information sheet.
 - Yes
 - No

- My participation is completely voluntary and I understand that I may choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time without any punishment or negative consequences.
 - Yes
 - No

- I will also not be advantaged, disadvantaged or paid for participating
 - Yes
 - No

- I do not have to answer any questions I don’t feel comfortable answering
 - Yes
 - No

- I will not be required to write my name on the questionnaire
 - Yes
 - No

Sign _____ Date _____

APPENDIX 4: STUDENTS SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

TRANSITIONING EXPERIENCES OF UNIVERSITIES OF TECHNOLOGY (UOT) STUDENT WHO
HAVE EXITED WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING PROGRAMMES FUNDED BY BANKSETA

1. Section One:

Background Information

* 1. What is your gender

- Male
 Female

2. What is your race?

- African
 Coloured
 Indian
 White

3. What is your age?

- Between 15-18
 Between 19-25
 Between 26-30
 Between 31-35
 Older than 35

4. Which Province do you originate from?

- Eastern Cape
 Free State
 Gauteng
 Kwa-Zulu Natal
 Limpopo
 Mpumalanga
 North West Province
 Northern Cape
 Western Cape

5. Were you enrolled in any practical training (WIL) programme before going the BANKSETA one?

- Yes
 No

6. If the answer is yes, was it funded by industry or SETA?

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Industry | <input type="radio"/> Any other |
| <input type="radio"/> SETA | <input type="radio"/> Not sure |
| <input type="radio"/> Non-profit organisation | |

7. How were you selected or joined the programme?

- I submitted my CV and accepted me
- I was interviewed and then accepted
- I went through an assessment process, the accepted
- Other

8. Which institution did you study/complete your qualification?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> University of Johannesburg | <input type="radio"/> Walter Sisulu University |
| <input type="radio"/> Central University of Technology | <input type="radio"/> University of Free State |
| <input type="radio"/> Durban University of Technology | <input type="radio"/> University of Fort Hare |
| <input type="radio"/> Vaal University of Technology | <input type="radio"/> University of Limpopo |
| <input type="radio"/> Tshwane University of Technology | <input type="radio"/> North West University |
| <input type="radio"/> Mangosuthu University of Technology | <input type="radio"/> University of SouthAfrica |
| <input type="radio"/> Cape Peninsula University of Technology | <input type="radio"/> University of Witwatersrand |
| <input type="radio"/> Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University | <input type="radio"/> University of Zululand |
| <input type="radio"/> University of Johannesburg | <input type="radio"/> University of Pretoria |
| <input type="radio"/> University of Venda | <input type="radio"/> Other |
| <input type="radio"/> University of Western Cape | |

9. What is the highest qualification you had before you started the practical training programme?

- National Diploma
- Bachelor Degree
- Post Graduate Degree
- Other

14. How would you rate the induction received when started the programme

High quality

Poor

Not sure

Good

Very good



15. How would you rate the guidance received throughout the programme

Very poor	Poor	Not sure	Good	Very good
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

16. How would you rate the relevance of the content of the programme

Very poor	Poor	Not sure	Good	Very good
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

17. How would you rate the amount of practical opportunities in the workplace provided by the programme

Very poor	Poor	Not sure	Good	Very good
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

18. How would you rate the academic support received from the programme

Very poor	Poor	Not sure	Good	Very good
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

19. How would you rate the support received from the institution during the practical training

Very poor	Poor	Not sure	Good	Very good
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

20. How would you rate the quality of Mentorship and Supervision received during the programme

Very poor	Poor	Not sure	Good	Very good
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

21. How would you rate the quality of the learning material (training plans, working tools)

Very poor	Poor	Not sure	Good	Very good
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

22. How would you rate access to internet when needed for studies

Very poor	Poor	Not sure	Good	Very good
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

23. How would you rate the support and visits by programme sponsor (BANKSETA)

Very poor	Poor	Not sure	Good	Very good
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

24. How would you rate the quality of discussions with fellow students about the experiences throughout the programme

Very poor	Poor	Not sure	Good	Very good
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

25. How would you rate the guidance received at the end of the practical training programme

Very poor	Poor	Not sure	Good	Very good
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

26. Do you think the programme gave you the knowledge you are using in your current job or the job you hope to get?

- Not at all
- Not sure
- A lot

27. Do you think the programme gave you the practical skills that you can use in your job (you have now or the job you hope to get)

- Not at all
- Not sure
- A lot

28. Having gone through the programme, I think I can work under pressure better now

- Not at all
- Not sure
- A lot

29. Having gone through the programme, I think my work is more accurate now

- Not at all
- Not sure
- A lot

30. Having gone through the programme, I now know how to work on my own with little supervision

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

31. Having gone through the programme, I now understand that workplaces have rules and regulation that must be followed

Not at all

Not sure

A lot

32. The programme has taught me to be on time for work and manage my time better

Strongly agree

Disagree

Agree

Strongly disagree

Neither agree nor disagree

33. The programme has taught me skills to work on my own

Strongly agree

Disagree

Agree

Strongly disagree

Neither agree nor disagree

34. The programme has taught me skills to participate in discussions with my work mates

Strongly agree

Disagree

Agree

Strongly disagree

Neither agree nor disagree

35. The programme taught me confidence to raise something with my Supervisor/Manager

Strongly agree

Disagree

Agree

Strongly disagree

Neither agree nor disagree

36. Having gone through the programme, I feel more confident about writing a report

- Not at all
- Not sure
- A lot

37. I understand that it is important to respect others in the workplace, even if they are different from me

- Not at all
- Not sure
- A lot

38. Having gone through the programme, I think I plan better now

- Not at all
- Not sure
- A lot

39. Having gone through the programme, I think I can solve problems better now

- Not at all
- Not sure
- A lot

40. Having gone through the programme, I think I can find and organise information that I need to perform my work

- Not at all
- Not sure
- A lot

41. Having gone through the programme, I think I can work in a team better now

- Not at all
- Not sure
- A lot

42. Having gone through the programme, I think I am more creative now

- Not at all
- Not sure
- A lot

43. Having gone through the programme, I understand how to listen to others

- Not at all
- Not sure
- A lot

44. Do you think the programme was well run?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

45. Please indicate the sector where you completed your practical training programme

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Agriculture, hunting and forestry | <input type="radio"/> Mining |
| <input type="radio"/> Community & social services (including Government) and personal services | <input type="radio"/> Hospitality & tourism |
| <input type="radio"/> Construction | <input type="radio"/> Transport & storage (logistics) |
| <input type="radio"/> Financial services (e.g. insurance/banking services, including call centres) | <input type="radio"/> Wholesale & retail |
| <input type="radio"/> Manufacturing | <input type="radio"/> Other |
| | <input type="radio"/> |

TRANSITIONING EXPERIENCES OF UNIVERSITIES OF TECHNOLOGY (UOT) STUDENT WHO HAVE EXITED WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING PROGRAMMES FUNDED BY BANKSETA

3. Section three

Post-work integrated learning completion (after practicals)

46. What is your current situation

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am currently employed where I completed my practical training | <input type="checkbox"/> I am currently self-employed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am Currently employed elsewhere | <input type="checkbox"/> I am currently running my own business |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Is the industry you are employed at related to the banking and Micro-finance sector | <input type="checkbox"/> I am currently studying (after completing the programme I continued with studies) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Is the industry you are employed at Unrelated to the Banking and Micro-finance sector | <input type="checkbox"/> I am currently unemployed |

47. What type of company/ organisation employs you if employed?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Private company | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-profit organisation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> State owned enterprise (SoE) | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Government department | |

48. Do you feel that the programme helped you look for a job"

- Yes, the programme actively helped me to look for a job
- The programme gave us guidance but did not give us direct assistance to look for a job
- No, I was not given assistance or guidance in relation to getting a job

49. if employed, what type of employment are you currently in?

- Permanent employment
- Fixed-term contract
- Temporal employment

50. What do you think the programme should have done to help you get a job?