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Do internships educate students for employability? A case study of employer experiences of the TSiBA internship model

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Compulsory Declaration

I declare that *Do internships educate students for employability? A case study of employer experiences of the TSiBA internship model* is my own work, except where indicated.

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

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Abstract

Graduate employment in South Africa is an issue of concern, as most graduates find difficulty in securing employment upon completing their tertiary qualification. Reports by companies' state that one of the reasons for their slow uptake of graduates is that graduates do not enter the job market with the appropriate employable skills and attributes. The question then is how graduates can be educated to attain employable skills and attributes.

This study investigates employer's views about whether internships educate students for employability. A case study of a local tertiary institution, the Tertiary School in Business Administration (TSiBA), was undertaken to determine whether the TSiBA internship model equipped final year students with employable skills.

This qualitative and phenomenological study was conducted by interviewing companies who participated in the TSiBA final year internship. The purpose of these semi-structured interviews was to gather background information about the companies and determine how they came to be involved in the internship and the nature of the projects the students were involved in. More centrally, companies were asked to provide their definitions of employability, skills and attributes and to identify which activities within the internship they believed contributed to students becoming employable.

In addition, unstructured interviews were conducted with two key staff members at TSiBA in order to gain a better understanding of what the TSiBA curriculum, known at TSiBA as the Profile of Graduateness, is and what skills, attitude and knowledge the curriculum aims to achieve.

Interview data was analysed first by clustering the data in order of the questions asked of companies and thereafter according to definitions of the terms employability, skills and attributes. A cross section analysis of similarities and differences was conducted and company data was also compared with the data obtained through TSiBA interviews. Finally, a return to theory allowed for all data to be placed in context.

The findings indicated that in the view of employers, most of the interns had acquired employable skills. The analysis showed that for graduates to become employable they need to be able to interpret and understand the rules which govern the world of work. However graduates did not only acquire this understanding through the internship. Evidence suggests that the TSiBA curriculum as a whole has been able to impart tools which have allowed their students to be included into workplace practice.

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Chapter 1: Graduate Employment in South Africa

1.1 A South African Context

The current unemployment situation in South Africa, says Gill Marcus, South African Reserve Bank governor, is "South Africa's biggest internal challenge, especially the higher than 50% rate among the youth"(Business Day 2010) This is echoed by Bhorat and Lundall (2002) who found that jobs were not being created at a pace that would ensure the necessary growth in employment. As cited by Bhorat and Oosthuizen (2005) in Moleke (2010): "African males have by far the highest unemployment rates, with 55.5% of African females and 42.9% of African males unemployed" (Moleke, 2010:87). This trend is confirmed by Moleke. (Moleke, 2010: 87)

The current unemployment problem is not a simple one that can be overcome merely by creating jobs (Kraak & Young 2005). It has its roots in South Africa's history of apartheid, during which the economic activity of choice was "capital intensive production processes and skilled labour", mostly based in the mining sector (Kraak, 2004: 227). Such capital intensive production and skilled labour, however, contrasted with a mass of unemployed "low skilled labour in both the rural former 'bantustans' and in the black urban townships – a debilitating structural feature of apartheid capitalism that has not diminished in the post-apartheid era" (Kraak, 2004: 227). This has resulted in a large pool of low skilled labour in post-apartheid South Africa, consisting predominantly of African blacks.

The situation is also complicated by the fact that graduates are not being absorbed into the labour market (Bhorat and Lundall, 2002). According to Erasmus & Breier (2009) this fact remains the same, despite the skills shortage in South Africa. This "indicates that the labour demand needs of the economy are not being met by the supply of graduates emerging from the higher education system" (Bhorat and Lundall, 2002: 1). Bhorat and Lundall (2002) also found evidence that the higher education system was not responding to the needs of companies, and that the "poor performance of tertiary qualified workers tends to be concentrated solely among Africans" (Bhorat and Lundall, 2002:1). Although this may be true, this finding applies mainly to graduates who have been disadvantaged by the inadequate schooling they received. According to Letseka, "The specific context of South Africa's higher education is characterised by the challenges of student under-preparedness, lack of epistemological access, and first generation university students, all attributes of the legacy of apartheid education policies and legislation" (Letseka 2010:90) This leads one to

question how higher education can impart skills to graduates that make them employable. Internships may be a vehicle to impart such skills to graduates.

The current study examines the internship offered by a tertiary institution, the Tertiary School in Business Administration (TSiBA) based in the Western Cape. More specifically, I will look at the final year internship project graduating students need to complete in order to qualify with their Bachelor in Business Administration in Entrepreneurial Leadership degree. Referred to as the Individual Practical Project (known at TSiBA as the IPJ) , it is a three-month internship, which requires students to work at the company for four days of the week and to attend classes at TSiBA on the fifth day of the week. The study investigates whether, in the view of employers, the internship that forms part of TSiBA's curriculum teaches graduates skills and attributes that make them employable.

In the first part of the study, employers who host the final internship are questioned to determine whether, according to these employers, this internship provided these students with the desired employable skills and attributes required of graduates when they enter the world of work. The companies are further asked to identify these skills and attributes. Lastly, the company is asked to define the terms employability, employable skills and attributes, within the context of their experiences of the TSiBA interns. This is done against the backdrop of TSiBA's Profile of Graduateness and how it sets out to impart the relevant skills and attributes to these students by means of its four year degree as TSiBA strives to impart employable skills to its students.

1.2 Reasons for Conducting the Study

To give greater relevance to the study's focus on employability, it is important to ask what the significance of employability is, particularly in the South African context. Furthermore, I will explore how 'traditional work' has changed, moving away from the mechanistic mode of work towards creating 'knowledge workers' (Boud & Middleton 2003: 3). I will also explore the impact of this shift in the nature of work on South Africa. In other words, I will discuss how globalisation has emerged as part of the new form of capitalism and how it has affected South Africa's employment situation. In so doing, I acknowledge the role played by the history of the country as well as the current economic situation in the country, which includes the impact of globalisation. With this in mind, I will thus discuss TSiBA's response to graduate employability.

1.3 Changing Nature of Work

The nature of work has changed significantly over time. In Fordism, for instance, workers were hired to follow processes and orders, and to work in a mechanistic manner (Gee et al, 1996). Goods were produced by "hierarchically structured corporations serving a commodities-starved but progressively richer post-World War II population on the developed world" (Gee et al, 1996:, 26). New capitalism, however, is "based on the design, production, and marketing of 'high quality' goods and services for now saturated markets" (Gee et al, 1996: 26). Furthermore, as a result of these "technological and social changes, this sort of 'quality' competition is now fully globalised" (Gee et al, 1996: 26).

1.3.1 Globalisation

According to Kumar, "globalisation itself – the source of so many of the changes leading to Post-Fordism, should be seen as an opportunity as much as a threat" (Kumar, 1995: 53). According to Castells, this new global economy consists of a "new economy of all kinds of businesses and all kinds of activities whose organisational forms and source of value and competition are increasingly based on information technologies, of which the internet is the epitome and the organisation the form" (Castells, 2001: 2).

Castells argues that the new economy can be defined as a combination of three inter-related characteristics: firstly, it is an economy in which productivity and competitiveness are based on knowledge and information; secondly, the new economy is a global economy; and thirdly, by using technology, organisations are able to operate globally (Castells 2001: 2-3).

The first point is that production and competition are based on knowledge. In the new economy, knowledge and information, delivered through technology and information systems, are requirements for success, allowing for "productivity (to be) generated through knowledge and information, powered by information systems (Castells, 2001: 2). Castells cautions us against believing that the global economy is a single economic system, however: "in fact, in terms of jobs, most jobs are not global; they operate in local, regional and national labour markets at the level of planning. But most jobs, if not all jobs, are influenced by what happens in this global core of the economy" (Castells, 2001: 3).

This brings us to the second point, namely, that most jobs are influenced by what happens at this so-called global core of the economy, which is based primarily on the financial markets. Castells states that "polarisation" has increased globally, creating greater divides amongst

the rich and the poor, increasing the social exclusion of the poor. (Castells, 2001: 17). There is a belief that growth in the economy and the subsequent growth in wealth will result in a trickledown effect, but this is not necessarily the case. His critique raises concerns about the volatility of the financial markets. He points out that, should the business cycle and the volatility of the financial markets simultaneously experience a downturn, "the extent of the plunge could be important enough to hamper elements of the key economies substantially" (Castells, 2001: 19). In other words, the global economies could be placed in a crisis, as has been experienced recently in 2008/2009.

The third and final point is the importance of technology, which is used to drive and give capacity to operate these global economies.

1.3.2 Fast Capitalism

According to Gee et al (1996), fast capitalism has resulted from global economic restructuring and from Post-Fordism. The focus of companies participating in the new capitalist markets is to move away from mass produced goods to "selling customised (individualised) goods and services to a niche market" (Gee et al, 1996: 26). This shift has resulted in "the creation of lean and mean, quick and efficient, customer-pleasing and customer-creating businesses" (Gee et al, 1996: 27) resulting in a similar need for workers to be 'lean and mean', 'quick and efficient' and 'customer-pleasing'. The possible implications of this for graduates is that they are required to have the necessary technical skills and mental agility as well as multiple attributes, such as interpersonal and communication skills, and the ability to work in a team. According to Gee et al (1996), the creation of 'knowledge work' and a 'knowledge society' has resulted in 'knowledge workers': "fast capitalist literature often writes in glowing terms about the elevating and empowering effects of knowledge for the new 'knowledge workers' in 'knowledge societies" (Gee et al, 1996: 36).

Management of workers in Fast Capitalism is directed through a change in social identities; for example, workers are no longer referred to as 'workers', but as 'partners' (Gee et al, 1996). In fact, "the realm of work has changed dramatically across the developed world as part of a profound global economic restructuring" (Gee, 1996: 24). According to Castells (2001), globalisation has affected all other types of economies, even those that had previously not been capitalist. The common denominator between these economies is labour, however, as labour is central to *all* economies, "and this is particularly so of the new economy" (Castells, 2001: 2).

Gaining knowledge to operate in these environments appears to be of great importance. The holder of knowledge is best able to participate in this context, because they are capable of having a greater influence both on themselves and on their organizations. This introduces the next point related to so-called Mode 2 knowledge.

1.3.3 Mode 2 Knowledge

Gibbons (2004) introduced a term referring to a new mode of knowledge, namely, one that is not only based on academic learning, but that requires a "new, distinct, set of cognitive and social practices" (Gibbons, 2004: 39). Gibbons refers to this as Mode 2 knowledge, thus distinguishing it from previous forms of knowledge, and describes it as follows:

- Mode 2 knowledge is characterised by "an ability to apply knowledge in different contexts" (Gibbons, 2004: 40);
- Mode 2 knowledge is "trans-disciplinary" in that it is created across various disciplines. Role players from different disciplines to combine their unique understanding and interpretation in order to solve a particular problem;
- Mode 2 knowledge is characterised by its "heterogeneity" (Gibbons, 2004: 40), resulting in partnerships being forged across institutions;
- Mode 2 knowledge "is more socially accountable and reflexive" (Gibbons, 2004: 40);
- Finally, Mode 2 knowledge uses "an expanded system of quality control, (as it) includes a wider more heterogeneous set of practitioners, collaborating on a problem defined in a specific and localised context" (Gibbons, 2004: 40).

In view of these characteristics, graduates who enter the working environment must acquire a greater range of skills, attitudes and competencies, and their personalities and dispositions must be quite different: "The requirement of flexibility, adaptability, and innovation, the development of information technology, and the emergence of the networking firm collaborating to enable competitiveness – have led to new education and training demands" (Kruss, 2004: 675).

1.4 Higher Education Learning as it relates to Globalisation

As stated above, the workplace in the 21st century requires workers to be more flexible and innovative workers. They must be able to work with information technology and to be responsive and flexible to changes. This is not only true of South Africa, but globally as well. Consequently, the higher education system needs to take into consideration these global changes too, particularly when preparing graduates for the workplace (Jarvis, 2000; Kruss, 2004). These changes have resulted in a "new (form of) education and training demands" (Kruss, 2004: 675). Fenwick concurs:

> "Flexibility is a dominant theme among descriptions of the contemporary workplace. Flexible workers (responsive, adaptive, transferable), flexible structures (insecure, fluid, adaptive to consumer demand and changing markets), flexible pay (increasingly contractual) and consequently flexible learning are assumed to ensure organizational competitiveness" (Fenwick, 2003: 5).

The national higher education policy in South Africa has defined the threefold role of the higher education institution as follows (Kruss, 2004: 675). Firstly human resources development facilitates lifelong learning through education in order to contribute to the "social, economic, cultural and intellectual life of a rapidly changing society" (Kruss, 2004: 675). Secondly, there needs to be a concentration on high level training skills to train professionals and knowledge workers (Gee, 1996), who are thus able to compete on a global platform. The development of this should "strengthen this country's enterprises, services, and infrastructure" (Kruss, 2004: 675). Finally, it must encourage the "production, acquisition and application of new knowledge [as] "national growth and competitiveness is dependent on technological improvement and innovation, driven by a well organized, vibrant research and development system which integrates the research and training capacity of higher education with the needs of industry and of social reconstruction" (Kruss, 2004: 675). In essence, it would benefit the economy of South Africa, should the higher education system realize its role in producing graduates who are able to contribute to the changing workplace landscape.

As graduates need to be more responsive and flexible to the changing nature of work, higher education institutions in South Africa have tried to address these needs. One of these is TSiBA, which has endeavoured to impart these skills and attributes to its graduates. TSiBA has structured its curriculum around a model called the Profile of Graduateness. In terms of this model, the academic and experiential learning components are incorporated within a

four year degree program, which equips students with various tools to improve their employability. It is through these lenses that we look at the final year internship offered by TSiBA.

1.5 A Brief Introduction to TSiBA

I joined TSiBA as the Career Manager in January 2007 and my employment contract ended in July 2008. During the 18 months I spent at TSiBA, we continuously sought to determine which attributes and skills would prepare TSiBA students for a career. These careers varied from graduates holding corporate jobs, to joining small to medium enterprises, or starting their own ventures. The ultimate goal of TSiBA staff is to ensure throughput of students, but also to ensure their successful placement in a graduate entry level position. In considering this, a central question emerged, namely: "What is graduateness?" In other words, which employable skills and attributes should TSiBA students have in order to be successful in a career? My interest in graduate employability grew out of this question. I was also curious to establish how employers define employability and employable skills and attributes, and to ascertain whether employers look for a generic set of skills, or a template that is used to categorise employable graduates. I also wanted to investigate whether graduates can mould their own set of skills, or whether they have to change into the kind of employee that fits into the culture of any employer or company.

The Tertiary School in Business Administration, otherwise known as TSiBA Education, offers a Bachelor of Business Administration in Entrepreneurial Leadership (BBA) degree to previously disadvantaged students. Such students are defined as Black, including Coloured and Indian students, who, because of the lack of resources at their high schools, would not have qualified for study at mainstream universities. A prerequisite for acceptance into the program is a completed grade 12 qualification.

Established in 2004, TSiBA enrolled its first set of students in January 2005. Of these 80 students, 5 completed their degree in December 2008, while a further 2 completed their degree at the end of June 2009. In total, 7 students were awarded the BBA in July 2009 (TSiBA Interview 1). TSiBA Education, currently situated in the Cape Town suburb of Pinelands, had 231 students in 2009, the year in which this study was carried out (TSiBA, 2009). These were divided into four cohorts. The foundation year, which is the first level, consists of an annual intake of approximately 110 students. Upon successful completion of the Foundation Certificate Course, students apply for the BBA degree. In 2009, there were

60 students registered for the BBA first year, 40 for the second year and 21 for the final year (TSiBA, 2009).

1.5.1 Experiential Learning

In addition to a focus on theory, the TSiBA degree offers pockets of experiential learning, starting in the foundation year and continuing through to the final year. The foundation year is a bridging year between grade 12 and the first year of the TSiBA degree. The experiential learning is part of the Leadership, Entrepreneurship and Career Management curriculum throughout all four years. During the second and the third year, the experiential learning component aims to build the confidence of students by developing specific attitudes, such as "responsibility, initiative, integrity, resilience, communication, team work, field independence, networking and collaboration, creativity, systems savvy, discernment and complexity" (TSiBA – Profile of Graduateness, 2009). Practical skills are developed by means of experiential learning activities, such as "internships, an entrepreneurship centre, community leadership projects, a wilderness experience, third year Individual Practical Industry Project (IPJ), campus management, mentorship and hero speakers" (TSiBA – Profile of Graduateness, 2009). The entrepreneurship and leadership components of the degree are the two majors at the centre of the qualification, and all the other course components build on these two majors (TSiBA Interview, Academic Director).

The internships of the various years provide students with practical learning, as they take what they have learnt in the classroom into the world of work. In this way, students progressively increase their practical skills over the four years of study at TSiBA (TSiBA Interview Academic Director).

1.5.2 Foundation Year

During the Foundation Year, students complete a five-day internship, which lasts from a Monday to a Friday. A workshop on the first day of the internship, prepares students for the work they will be doing, and another workshop on the last day. At the second workshop students provide feedback of the work they did and what they learned. The two workshops take place at TSiBA, while the other days are spent at the company, with students completing the practical aspect of the internship. (TSiBA Interview Academic Director)

1.5.3 First and Second year of the BBA

During the first and second years of the BBA, the internship is twice as long, i.e. 10 working days. Students in the first year of the BBA degree choose their internship, based on their interests, in a company, industry or role function. For the duration of the internship, students work in a specific department as a member of the team and are required to fulfil tasks set out for them by the company and TSiBA. Upon completion of the internship, they are required to complete a written assignment, as a course requirement at TSiBA. (TSiBA Interview, Academic Director).

During the second year of their BBA, students complete a 10-day internship alongside students from a North American university. This requires students from both universities to work in smaller groups and offer basic business consulting to Small Enterprises. These Small Enterprises operate within a business venture, which has a strong focus on creating social change and impact, as well as functioning as a profitable business entity (TSiBA Interview, Academic Director).

1.5.4 Final year of the BBA, the year of the final year internship (IPJ):

The current study focuses on the internship conducted during the final year of the BBA. The final year internship is referred to as the IPJ. The first half of the final year prepares students to integrate their understanding of the operational and strategic aspects of a business. During the first two terms, the curriculum focuses on strategy as a core subject as it relates to a company, allowing students to gain an understanding of how the different business units form part of the greater business. Included in the classroom time is guidance "on how to do research, and in the final year, strategic research in particular. The ability to do industry specific research then forms a critical part of the final internship. Such aspects would include, among other, researching the macro, market and micro environments, industry challenges, a financial analysis of the industry of their choice" (IPJ Course outline, TSiBA, 2009). Final year students complete their internship with a company that operates in an industry of their interest or in which they wish to pursue their career. The students work in the company for four of the five working days in each week, returning to the classroom each Friday. The company requires students to work on a full time basis and to plan, execute and complete a project that is beneficial to the company. Full credits are obtained upon the successful completion of the fully integrated course, consisting of the completion of the working component, the practical project, the industry research report, the sitting of a

knowledge exam, presentation of a Portfolio of Learning covering their personal journey, as well as a presentation of the research and project. (IPJ Course Outline, TSiBA, 2009). The IPJ is credit bearing, and is thus a critical part of their pass mark, as an incomplete or ineffectual attempt will prevent their successful completion of their degree (IPJ Course Outline, TSiBA, 2009).

It is within this context, that the study looks at companies' experiences of the IPJ and their views on whether the internship does indeed provide students with employable skills.

1.6 Research Aims and Summary

One of the primary aims of this research was to (i) investigate whether, in the view of employers, the internship that forms part of TSiBA's curriculum teaches graduates skills and attributes that make them employable (ii) gain an understanding of employers' experiences of the final year internship (IPJ) and (iii) it also sought to gain insight into how employers define the terms employability and what skills and attributes they think graduates need. Employers were also asked whether they believed that the interns, who completed the IPJ at their companies, did in fact meet their definitions of being 'employable'.

However, the study would have been incomplete if only the employers' viewpoint was considered. In addition, it was necessary to determine TSiBA's definition of employability, to investigate what TSiBA students have learnt during their four year degree program, and to establish the goals that TSiBA wishes to achieve through their internships. In order to do this, the study will look at the curriculum model used by TSiBA, namely its so-called 'Profile of Graduateness'. Before doing so, however, Chapter 2 will review the literature on employability, and explore the responses of government, the corporate sector and higher education to the concept of employability, as well as looking at views on how the higher education curriculum could impart employable skills and attributes in order to render graduates employable in the changed workplace of the 21st century. Chapter 3 will outline the methodology undertaken to conduct the study. Chapter 4 will provide vignettes of the various interviews conducted with the internship companies and provide a brief history of TSiBA and introduce the Profile of Graduateness. Chapter 5 will outline and analyse the findings of the study. The conclusion, contained in Chapter 6, will discuss the findings in the light of the research literature, and consider their contribution to our understanding of 'graduateness' and employability.

Chapter 2: Shifting from educating for employment toward educating for employability

In this chapter, I will explore definitions of employability as held by various stakeholders, namely, governments, higher education, academics and companies in the corporate sector. Furthermore, the chapter will consider how curriculum may assist students in developing the skills and attributes sought by companies seeking to employ such graduates. Curriculum and internships will be examined through the notion of the 'USEM Account', Communities of Practice and Habitus.

The discourse of employability has formed part of a global conversation over the past decade. Over the past few years in particular, the debate has moved beyond a "theoretical debate" (McQuaid and Lindsay, 2005: 199): "The concept has become a cornerstone of labour market practices and employment strategies in the UK and elsewhere" (McQuaid and Lindsay, 2005: 199).

The participants in this debate have included governments, international bodies, corporate business and higher education, each with its own agenda with regard to employability. In order to capture the full extent of these conversations, the literature reviewed will be considered under the following themes:

- Employability as defined by governments, academics, and the corporate sector;
- The response of higher education to questions of curriculum and employability, looking at concepts such as the USEM account, communities of practice, and habitus, cultural and social capital.

2.1 Definitions of Employability

Superficially, the concept of employability appears to be straightforward. However, the debate around employability includes various stakeholders, all of whom hold differing points of view and advance differing agendas.

McQuaid and Lindsay (2005) looked at the historical backdrop to employability, which originated in the 1980s and developed in the 1990s. They found that there has been a shift from using the phrase 'finding employment' to 'becoming employable'. They point out, for

instance, that the emergence of the concept of employability came about as governments realised the need to reduce unemployment: they set out to achieve this by providing individuals with skills and allowing them the opportunity to compete in the economy. But "within this context, the drive for employability is more than a means of offering workers the opportunity to develop flexible skills as an alternative to security of tenure" (McQuaid and Lindsay, 2005: 202). In other words, for individuals to become employable more than skill is required.

2.1.1 Employability according to Government

Employability, as defined by international agencies, is seen as a means of creating economic and social prosperity. The United Nations (UN) and various governments such as those of the United Kingdom, Canada and Northern Ireland have directed their definition to focus on alleviating poverty and thereby improving the social and economic conditions for their citizens" (McQuaid and Lindsay, 2005: 198; Moreau and Leathwood, 2006: 306). In the case of the UN, the focus is primarily on the youth and the unemployed. According to Brown et al, "as the developed economies come to rely on knowledge-driven business, employability is seen as a source of competitive advantage because national prosperity depends on upgrading the knowledge, skills and entrepreneurial zeal of the workforce" (Brown et al. 2003: 107).

Employability has also formed part of policy making by various governments, each providing their own definition of employability:

> *United Kingdom:* "employability means the development of skills and adaptable workforces in which all those capable of work are encouraged to develop the skills, knowledge, technology and adaptability to enable them to enter and remain in employment throughout their work lives" (HM Treasury, 1997: 1, cited in McQuaid and Lindsay, 2005: 199).
>
> *Canadian government:* "employability is the relative capacity of an individual to achieve meaningful employment, given the interaction of personal circumstances and the labour market" (Canadian Labour Force Development Board, 1994,: viii, cited in McQuaid and Lindsay, 2005: 200).
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> *Northern Ireland:* "for the individual, employability depends on the knowledge and skills they posses, and their attitudes, the way personal attributes are

presented in the labour market; the environmental and societal context within which work is sought; and the economic context within which work is sought" (DHFETE, 2002: 7, cited in McQuaid and Lindsay, 2004: 200).

These definitions have a common thread, which is the ability of the individual to develop employable skills, in order to engage in economic activity, provided there is a supportive environment, support from society and ease of entry into the labour market. In the case of Australia and the United Kingdom, the focus is shifting towards addressing the changing nature of the job market, and taking into account how these changes affect graduate employment and the growth of their economies (Moreau and Leathwood, 2006).

South Africa has also entered the debate around employability with regard to higher education. Kruss (2004) suggests that, within the South Africa context, students are able to create their own employment – moreover, they "should be prepared with the relevant skills" (Kruss, 2004: 680). Higher education thus faces the challenge of shifting from educating for employment toward educating for employability (Kruss, 2004: 674). In others words higher education should not only prepare students with the academic knowledge to secure entry into the labour market, but also provide additional employable skills and attributes.

2.1.2 Employability according to Higher Education

In 1994, the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) in South Africa set out the three-fold role of higher education institutions:

- "*Human resource development:* the mobilisation of human talent and potential through lifelong learning to contribute to the social, economic, cultural and intellectual life of a rapidly changing society" (Kruss, 2004: 675).
- "*High-level skills training:* this requires the development of professionals and knowledge workers with globally equivalent skills, but who are socially responsible and conscious of their role in contributing to the national development effort and social transformation" (Kruss, 2004: 675).
- "*Production, acquisition, and application of new knowledge:* national growth and competitiveness are dependent on technological improvement and innovation, driven by a well organized, vibrant research and development system, which integrates the

research and training capacity of higher education with the needs of industry and of social reconstruction" (Kruss, 2004: 675).

Kruss thus contends that South African universities should do the following:

- Meet the expectation that graduates are able to 'hit the ground running'; in other words, ensure that graduates are able to add value to a business relating to the tasks they perform and that they need minimum training to perform their roles.
- Meet the expectation that students have "tacit knowledge, skills and dispositions that positively contribute to the work environment" (Kruss, 2004: 680)
- Extend their training to "new vocational and professional categories, especially scarce skills and existing professionals and generic degree programs" (Kruss, 2004: 680)
- To ensure that qualifications link to the workplace (Kruss, 2004).

2.1.3 Employability according to Academics

According to McQuaid and Lindsay (2005) "employability skills and attributes can be seen as broadly covering the overlapping areas such as attributes and skills. They are: *essential attributes* (basic social skills, reliability, etc); *personal competencies* (diligence, motivation, confidence, etc); *basic transferable skills* (including literacy and numeracy); *key transferable skills* (problem-solving, communication, adaptability, work-process management, team-working skills); *high-level transferable skills* (including self-management, commercial awareness, possession of highly transferable skills); *qualifications and educational attainment work knowledge-base* (including work experience and occupational skills); and *labour market attachment* (unemployment/employment duration, work history, etc)" (McQuaid and Lindsay, 2005: 208).

Hillage and Pollard (1998, cited in McQuaid and Lindsay, 2005) have provided a comprehensive definition of employability. They suggest that employability can be defined as an individual's ability to gain initial employment, maintain employment, move between roles within the same organisation, obtain new employment if required, and (ideally) secure suitable and sufficiently fulfilling work. Furthermore, the extent to which the individual is able to attain these goals is determined by the interaction of four components of employability, namely:

- *"Employability assets:* including baseline assets, such as basic skills and essential personal attributes (for example, reliability and honesty); intermediate assets, such as job-specific, generic and 'key' skills (e.g. communication and problem solving); and high level assets, such as those skills that contribute to organisational performance (for example, team work and commercial awareness)" (Hillage and Pollard, 1998, cited in McQuaid and Lindsay, 2005: 207).

- *"Presentation (skills):* defined as the ability to secure an appointment to an appropriate position through the demonstration of employability assets (e.g. through the competent completion of a curriculum vitae or application form, or participation in an interview)" (Hillage and Pollard, 1998, cited in McQuaid and Lindsay, 2005: 207).

- *"Deployment (skills):* referring to a range of abilities including career management skills (e.g. awareness of one's own abilities and limitations, awareness of opportunities in the labour market, and decision-making and transitional skills) and job-search skills" (Hillage and Pollard, 1998, cited in McQuaid and Lindsay, 2005: 207).

- *"Contextual factors:* or the interaction of personal circumstances and the labour market: Hillage and Pollard accept that the individual's ability to realise the assets and skills discussed above will to some extent depend upon external socioeconomic factors, personal circumstances and the relationship between the two. External conditions such as local labour market demand and employer attitudes will further influence the availability of suitable opportunities, while personal circumstances will affect the ability of individuals to seek and benefit from opportunities." (Hillage and Pollard, 1999, cited in McQuaid and Lindsay, 2005: 207-208).

The dominant perspective is that employability rests with the individual and not the company, thus shifting the responsibility of employment from the company (employment for life) to the individual. For the individual, "employability depends on the knowledge, skills and aptitudes they possess, the way they use those assets and present them to employers and the context (personal circumstances and labour market environment) within which they seek work" (Moreau and Leathwood. 2006: 308). In other words, being or becoming employable has now shifted away from companies, placing the responsibility on the individual to acquire the knowledge, skills and attributes desired by companies. This concept of employability is further discussed in the next section, which looks at the needs of companies.

There are also some critiques of current definitions of employability. In contrast to Hillage and Pollard (1999), Brown et al (2003) contend that employability does not lie within the individual's ability to "gain initial employment, maintain employment and obtain new employment if required" (Brown et al. 2003: 110). Instead, they argue that economic conditions will dictate whether an individual is employable or not, as "employability is a relative concept that depends on the laws of supply and demand within the market for jobs" (Brown et al. 2003; 110). They further define employability as "the relative chances of acquiring and maintaining different kinds of employment" (Brown et al, 2003: 111). Although this is a valid argument, the complexities of understanding employability cannot be simplistically attributed to basic economics. The broader context of social, environment and personal capacity or ability needs to be considered as well.

2.1.4 Employability in the Corporate World

A review of the literature has shown that companies are seeking employees who are able to add value to the company in a short time-frame, as companies do not wish to spend much time and money to train graduates in their way of operating. Company requirements have also changed as a result of globalisation. As discussed in Chapter 1, globalisation requires workers who are flexible, responsive and able to adapt to changing customer needs, which leads to greater organisational competitiveness (Fenwick 2003). The luxury of graduate trainee programs is often not offered, so graduates are no longer given an opportunity to acquire workplace skills through such programs. Instead, employers want graduates who are able to add value as quickly as possible (Butterwick and Benjamin, 2006; Yorke and Harvey, 2005). Furthermore, the impact of globalisation has resulted in companies seeking knowledge workers. As discussed in Chapter 1, knowledge workers must be able to sell their skill in a global market, to work with information technology and to be responsive and flexible to any changes (Gee, et al 1996). It is the companies' expectation that the graduate trainee programs should be incorporated into the qualification offered at institutions of higher education (Yorke and Harvey: 2005).

Companies also seek particular personal attributes and competencies, requiring more than a qualification to access the labour market. Moreau and Leathwood (2006) acknowledge the "influence of cultural and social capital on recruitment and promotion processes" is playing a significant part in securing employment. Social capital is the networks of lasting social relations: who you know, and cultural capital is accumulated through the process of education: what you know. In other words, academic qualification, personal attributes and

cultural and social capital can contribute positively to being employable and successful in the world of work.

Yorke and Knight (2003) have also found the following:

> "employers want graduates with knowledge, intellect, willingness to learn, self-management skills, communication skills, team-working and interpersonal skills, but the Association of Graduate Recruiters (1995), who are a UK recruiter and university organisation, suggests it comprises career management skills and effective learning skills; self-awareness, self-promotion, exploring and creating opportunities, action planning, networking, matching and decision making, negotiation, political awareness, coping with uncertainty, development facts, transfer skills and self-confidence." (Yorke and Knight, 2003: 6-7).

General conclusions which can be drawn is that: the definition of employability shifts constantly depending on who is at the centre of the discussion. International institutions seek to redress social and economic injustices, while governments focus on the development of skills and personal attributes so that individuals are able to engage with the labour market. Higher education focuses on imparting academic knowledge to create a pool of professionals and knowledge workers, while corporate wish to include graduates who are able to add value to the organisation in a short time frame.

This study incorporates both the definition of employability provided by Hillage and Pollard (1998). They acknowledge the need for (i) basic and essential attributes and generic skills such as communication (ii) be able to competently apply for a position, with the appropriate documentation, (iii) have self-awareness and be aware of the labour market, (iv) acknowledging that external factors such as social and economic factors and internal factors such as personal circumstances will affect the individual's ability to seek and benefit from opportunities.

2.2 Curriculum and Employability

The purpose of higher education institutions is to impart an academic perspective to this debate, in addition to preparing graduates with skills that are directly related to the world of work (Kruss, 2004). This has led to a "call for higher education to become more responsive to societal and economic needs, globally and in South Africa, [which] is largely premised on the desirability of a more direct and closer relationship between higher education and economic development" (Kruss, 2004: 674).

A key question to ask is, whose role is it to impart employable skills to graduates? In other words, should companies rely solely on higher education to do so? Should higher education serve only an academic purpose? The debate is thus whether higher education should be "developing a highly skill(ed) workforce or whether it should be more responsive to the expectations of industry, or if its primary role should be to ensure economic and societal prosperity" (Kruss, 2004: 673).

Should government ensure that certain national initiatives are in place to facilitate the process of imparting employable skills, as this relates to the importance of the prosperity of the society and economy?

In the UK, there has been a particular focus placed by the government on higher education institutions to assist students to prepare and seek employment upon graduation. This focus has shifted from teaching employable skills through a single course, toward acknowledging that these skills should be incorporated into the curriculum as a whole. The following section, will focus on discussions of the literature on how the curriculum can be used to achieve greater employability.

2.2.1 The 'USEM Account'

The desire to explore the close relationship between curriculum and improving graduate employability stems from the need to understand the ways in which graduate employability can be enhanced (Yorke and Knight, 2006).

Yorke and Knight's (2006) concept of the USEM Account is the most frequently used, as it is acknowledged as a "well known and respected model in the field of understanding employability" (Pool and Sewell, 2007: 2). USEM is "an acronym for four inter-related components of employability, namely understanding, skills, efficacy beliefs, and metacognition" (Pool and Sewell, 2007: 2).

As cited previously, employability comprises, among other things, "skills, understandings and personal attributes that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy" (Yorke and Knight:, 2006: 567). This definition is useful because it provides a context to the concept of the USEM Account, which similarly relates to "understanding, skilful practices, efficacy beliefs and metacognition" (Yorke and Knight: 2006: 567).

In an attempt to develop a theoretical perspective on employability, Knight and Yorke (2002; 2004) have put forward the USEM account of employability, in which there are four broad and interlocking components:

- ***U***nderstanding (of the subject discipline, and of other matters pertinent to employability "and of matters pertinent to performance in an organisation (Yorke and Harvey, 2005: 48). In essence, graduates need to have a practical understanding of the work environment and "to develop the practical intelligence" (Yorke and Harvey, 2005: 51). It was felt that academia did not "develop skills in time management, prioritizing of work, and working with others" (Yorke and Harvey, 2005: 51), all of which are important skills in the workplace

- ***S***kilful practices in context, in other words, the manifestation of academic and practical intelligence (Sternberg, 1997), as appropriate, and taking into account Lave and Wenger's situated learning theory (Yorke and Harvey, 2005: 48).

- ***E***fficacy beliefs – including a "range of personal qualities and attributes that have bearing on the chances of a graduate being effective in work and social life" (Yorke and Harvey, 2005: 48). These include personal qualities, including self-theories and efficacy beliefs. One of the desired personal qualities indicated by employers as important is communication. "This goes beyond the construction of essay-type answers to assignments and examination questions to include the skills of summarizing, extracting key points, presenting to others in various situations and using appropriate media and making effective use of the internet." (Yorke and Harvey, 2005: 50). Other qualities mentioned are: critical thinking and analytical reasoning. According to Williams (2005), "the category of personal attributes is defined as attitudes and abilities that enable individuals to monitor and manage their own learning needs, to contribute to and monitor their own work, and to collaborate with others in high performance work teams." (Williams, 2005: 38).

- ***M***etacognition – reflective practices (following Schon and others) and self regulation are prominent (Yorke and Harvey, 2005: 48). The ability to reflect is highly valued by employers where the expectation is that the graduate would have the "self-confidence to decide whether a matter could be handled alone or whether the support of a senior colleague might be needed" (Yorke and Harvey, 2005: 53). According to Williams (2005), "personal mastery (and) self-direction" have gained importance when looking at generic skills required of graduates (Williams, 2005: 39). Williams further speaks of "emotional intelligence and self-understanding and (a) willing(ness) to learn, positive attitude to change and complexity and mastery of mental models", strongly aligning these traits to reflective practices, as understood in the USEM account (Williams, 2005: 39).

The above components of the USEM Account, namely understanding, skilful practice, efficacy beliefs and metacognition, cannot provide benefit to students when they are only taught in the classroom. They become beneficial when coupled with experiences gained outside the classroom, especially through exposure to the workplace by means of an internship (Knight and Yorke, 2003).

In an earlier article, Yorke and Knight (2003) highlight the importance of employability skills being threaded through the various programmes offered in a degree course. They argue that "student learning that makes for strong claims to employability comes from years, not semesters; through programmes, not modules; and in environments, not classes" (Yorke and Knight, 2003: 4). They also refer specifically to "four ways to enhance student employability" (Yorke and Knight, 2003: 4), which are summarised as follows:

1. Work experience: generally, employers prefer to hire individuals who already have work experience; as a result, degree programs need to include work experience in degree programs, thus increasing the competitiveness of their students (Yorke and Knight, 2003: 5). Such work experience can take the form of casual part-time employment, or placement in formal cooperative education programs (Yorke and Harvey, 2005: 52).

2. Entrepreneurial modules: these need to be incorporated throughout the degree course, and not as a stand-alone module (Yorke and Knight, 2003: 5).

3. Career advice: the program design and delivery should not be tagged on as a stand-alone option outside of the course, but be integrated into the curriculum (Yorke and Knight, 2003: 5).

4. Portfolios, profiles and records of achievements: these can be used to teach students to summarise the skills they have learned, to reflect on their personal attributes, to keep track of their achievements, to collect evidence in the form of certificates, for instance, to identify their career goals, and to decide on a course of action for attaining these (Yorke and Knight, 2003: 5).

2.2.2 Internships

An internship allows students to gain valuable experiential learning. According to Beard (2007).

> "well-organized and carefully supervised programs enhance the student's ability to integrate academic knowledge with practical applications, improve job / career opportunities after graduation, create relevance for past and future classroom learning, develop work place social and human relations skills, and provide the opportunity for students to apply communication and problem-solving skills." (Beard, 2007: 208)

Internship practices are widespread across companies and industry, not only in South Africa, but across the world. However, although the practice of internships has increased, not much empirical research has been conducted on them (Narayanan et al, 2010; D'Abate et al, 2009). The literature identifies the purpose of an internship for students as a learning experience that imparts learning tools, which enables them to acquire relevant skills, to learn about their strengths and weaknesses, and to "develop the student professionally before entry into the marketplace" (Beard, 2007: 210). In addition, students gain experience, which allows them to apply the theory they have learnt in a work context. Students who complete internships are also often more successful at being placed upon completing their degree (Beard, 2007). Internships also give companies an opportunity to screen potential recruits during a period where there is no obligation to employ the intern permanently (D'Abate et al, 2009). Beard reports that the "NACE (National Association of Colleges and Employers) Executive Director concluded that this is a clear indication that hiring students with internship or co-op(erative) experience can increase the efficiency of the organization and positively affect the bottom-line by lowering costs associated with turnover" (Beard, 2007: 211)..

Internships assist students to fit into the culture of the company and to socialise with colleagues. Narayanan et al (2010), for instance, argue that when students join a company directly after leaving university, they experience "cultural differences, (which) may pose additional challenges and acquisitions for learning for the carrier" (Narayanan et al. 2010: 62). Through "improve(d) decision making and self efficacy", interns learn to adapt to the culture of the organization, and to fit in (Narayanan et al, 2010: 62).

2.2.3 Communities of Practice

Central to the notion of an internship is the merging of the theoretical and practical components of the academic work learnt during the course of the degree, and the opportunity to acquire new work skills. Through this form of experiential learning, students are given a chance to acquire and apply knowledge, skills and feelings in an immediate and relevant work setting. Experiential learning thus involves a "direct encounter with the phenomena being studied rather than merely thinking about the encounter, or only considering the possibility of doing something about it" (Smith, 2001). To provide a holistic view of the learning, specifically learning during an internship, the discussion would be incomplete without a consideration of Lave and Wenger's (1991) concept of a community of practice.

> "A community of practice is an intrinsic condition for the existence of knowledge. ….thus, participation in the cultural practice in which any knowledge exists, is an epistemological principle of learning. The social structure of this practice, its power relations, and its conditions for legitimacy define possibilities for learning." (Lave and Wenger: 1991, 98)

The concept of community of practice is part of the Situated Learning theory. Lave and Wenger (1991) speak of two conceptual dimensions, namely, communities of practice and legitimate peripheral participation: "Legitimate peripheral participation provides a way to speak about the relations between newcomers and old-timers, and about activities, identities, artifacts, and communities of knowledge and practice. It concerns the process by which newcomers become part of a community of practice" (Lave and Wenger 1991: 29).

Key to the learning in communities of practice is acknowledging that learning takes place in the form of social practice as well, and not only in formal communities of practice settings. In a study conducted by Boud and Middleton (2003), it was also found that informal learning provided as much learning as formal learning, within a community of practice (Boud and

Middleton, 2003: 194). According to Lave and Wenger, 1991: 153, as cited in Hodkinson & Hodkinson (2003) the following describes social practice as an aspect of learning:

> "As an aspect of social practice, learning involves the whole person; it implies not only a relation to specific activities, but a relation to social communities. Learning only partly – and often incidentally– implies becoming able to be involved in new activities, to perform new tasks and functions, to master new understandings. Activities, tasks, functions, and understanding do not exist in isolation; they are part of broader systems of relations in which they have meaning. These systems of relations arise out of and are reproduced and developed within social communities, which are part of systems of relations among persons. [Learning] is itself an evolving form of membership. We conceive of identities as long-term, living relations between persons and their place and participation in communities of practice. Thus identity, knowing, and social membership entail one another." (Hodgekinson et al, 2003: 177).

Learning is also affected by the "dispositions of the individual teachers" (Guille and Young, 1998: 8). So not only does social practice inform learning in a community, but also the individual dispositions of those within the practice.

The desired outcome for learning within a community of practice is not always guaranteed, however, as each person participating in the practice, does so with their own cultural background and societal influence. These backgrounds and influences might allow the participants in the community of practice to contribute to one another's learning or they may hinder the learning, depending on their view of the world, as well as the rank and power that each person holds in the group.

Through an internship, "the newcomers, [or in this case students] become part of a community of practice" (Lave and Wenger, 1991: 29). In other words, legitimate peripheral participation does not only imply allowing newcomers to become part of an established community of practice, but even more so speaks about the relationship that develops between newcomers and old-timers. In their description of legitimate peripheral participation, Lave and Wenger state: "Legitimate peripheral participation provides a way to speak about the relations between newcomers and old-timers, and about activities, identities, artifacts, and communities of knowledge and practice " (Lave and Wenger, 1991: 29).

Thompson (2005: 153) provides a useful and clear description of the various learning theories as they relate to communities of practice. According to him, these "epistemic

characteristics of communities of practice" relate to theories of learning, theories of social constitution, theories of practice, theories of identity and theories of situatedness" (Thompson, 2005: 153).

2.2.4 Habitus, Cultural and Social Capital

"Pierre Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* is frequently drawn upon in work on learning and knowledge in organizations" (Mutch, 2003: 383).

Bourdieu's defines habitus as follows:

> "The conditionings associated with a particular class of conditions of existence produce habitus, systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them. Objectively "regulated" and "regular" without being in any way the product of obedience to rules, they can be collectively orchestrated without being the product of the organizing action of a conductor. (Bourdieu, 1990:53).

Bourdieus' definition of habitus is complex and lengthy, so I draw on Mutch's (2003) definition of Bourdieu's habitus as follows:

> "Bourdieu's notion of *habitus* is not just about embodied forms of practice, but modes of thought that are unconsciously acquired, that are resistant to change and are transferable between different contexts." (Mutch, 2003: 388)
>
> "The communities of practice literature, by contrast, focuses on changes brought about through practice itself." (Mutch, 2003: 388)

As discussed by Mutch, although the concept of *habitus* in the strict definition as intended by Bourdieu, does not fit snugly with the concept of communities of practice, it is important to recognise how the one theory in turn influences another (Mutch, 2003). "Bourdieu (1984) argues that it is not that people are influenced by, and influence the social structures around them, in a dualistic sense. Rather, those structures are represented through individuals, in what he calls their *habitus*. *Habitus* is a largely internalised, subconscious battery of dispositions that orientate a person's actions in any situation" (Hodgkinson et al, 2004: 175). In other words, one's *habitus* is formed throughout one's lifetime and it is influenced by one's experiences. By saying this, a comparison could be drawn between the influences and learning that is imparted through participation in a community of practice as being critical to forming a work *habitus*. However, a dilemma arises, as Bourdieu seems to suggest that one's *habitus* cannot be changed, whereas Lave and Wenger (1991) assert that, through communities of practices and legitimate peripheral participation, learning can change or affect skills and attributes.

Harold Bauder drew on the concept of habitus when he conducted research amongst immigrants from South East Asia and Yugoslavia, who were seeking employment in Vancouver, Canada. These immigrants were assigned to the worst jobs, resulting from their lack of credentials. They experienced racial and ethnic discrimination and found that their skills were systemically devalued. They struggled to speak and understand the language, which resulted in another barrier to entry. The "workplace conventions maybe equally exclusionary" and may have been "… unable to internalise the codes of conduct of the Canadian workplace" and so unable to judge the employers expectation" (Bauder, 2005: 82).

These rules can be understood by applying Bourdieu's concept of *habitus*:

> "Bourdieu observes that *habitus* is class and group contingent, and that specific *habitus* shapes a particular set of rules of engagement within a given group. The ability to follow these rules signifies a person's membership of the group, and the skill to 'play' by the rules guides a person's status within the group. (Bauder,2005: 82)

Bauder thus found that the immigrants found it difficult to enter Canadian employment networks because they did not have the same values or appreciate the same things. He found that the South East Asian immigrants became reliant on family members to find work, where as the Yugoslavian immigrants were not familiar with networks, as they "lacked strong family networks" and because "hiring practices that existed in former Yugoslavia typically relied on formal qualifications and institutional networks, rather than personal and social networks"(Bauder,2005: 93).

Linking this to the study performed by Brown et al (2003), it appears that cultural and social capital and *habitus* play important roles in providing the ability to rely on past social experiences in order to understand and play the game: "management of employability is largely a question of how cultural capital is translated into personal capital" (Brown et al, 2003: 120). In other words, employability not only places a premium on tertiary qualifications and personal qualities, but one also needs to take cultural and social capital into consideration, as "decades of research [have] shown that when one shares the same cultural literacy as [one's] teachers and employers, it does not guarantee one's success but it greatly increases the probability of achieving it" (Brown, et al, 2003: 120).

2.3 Summary

In summary, this chapter has discussed a number of definitions of employability, from the perspectives of governments, higher education institutions, the corporate sector and individuals. A closer look at these definitions has highlighted a host of influences that might affect a graduate's successful employment application. Such influences include intrinsic abilities, which when appropriately nurtured through a well-structured curriculum, should culminate in displaying appropriate workplace behaviour or attitudes. Influences also include external conditions such as economic forces which might not be favourable to a supply of jobs relative to the demand. In addition, it appears that communities of practice, *habitus* and cultural and social capital must also be considered as important factors when considering employability. The relevance of higher education, in particular the role of the curriculum, was also examined, specifically looking at how employable skills and attributes can be imparted to students by means of a well-structured curriculum.

Chapter 3: Methodology

"Methodology situates understandings of truth, objectivity, and the construction of knowledge". (O'Leary, 2010: 286). In this chapter, I will discuss the methods used to gather the research data, the interview process, the interpretation and presentation of the data, the validity of the study, and any ethical concerns. It was intended that the research process would be truthful and objective and that it would contribute to existing knowledge.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, my research focussed on the final year internship project that graduating students at TSiBA need to complete in order to qualify with their Bachelor in Business Administration in Entrepreneurial Leadership degree. The question considered whether, in the experience of the companies that hosted them, the internship provided the interns with employable skills.

This study is both a qualitative as well as a phenomenological study. It looked at a group of individuals and their experiences and interpretations of their final year internships. "It focussed on their perceptions, rather than on the socio-historical context" (O'Leary, 2010: 120).

3.1 Research Design

A case study approach was chosen in an attempt to gain an in-depth understanding of a particular group's experience (Leedy et al, 2005). The focus of the case study was twofold. The primary goal was to explore the perceptions of the companies offering the internships, as they were experiencing these firsthand, in order to determine whether the course offered by TSiBA was indeed succeeding in training employable graduates, and preparing them for the world of work. Semi-structured interviews were thus conducted with five companies.

3.2 Choosing a Site

As noted in Chapter 1, I worked at TSiBA in a career services role for eighteen months, working there from January 2007 until July 2008. Although my stay at TSiBA was brief, my role in career services required me to work closely with the final year internship program, as well as co-ordinate and arrange internships for the foundation year students through to the

final year students. I arranged and co-ordinated two of the final year internships, but I did not stay long enough to participate in the internship process. During the course of my employment, I was faced with the constant question as to how we could provide students with employable skills through the career services curriculum, as well as through the other areas of the TSiBA curriculum. As a result, I decided to focus on TSiBA as a case study. I was already familiar with the institution, and knew that I would be able to get easy access both to the companies and to TSiBA. I also added my own experiences of TSiBA to my analyses of the data, which I received from interviews with individuals at TSiBA as well as the companies offering the internships.

Although the primary question of the research project was to ascertain the various companies' perceptions of the internship experience, I was constantly confronted with the additional question as to whether I should interview the internship students too. This was strongly considered at one stage of the research project; however, as the number of participating companies increased and the research project became more focused on the companies' interpretations and experiences of their internships, it was decided not to interview the students. To include the students' experiences and interpretations would have increased the scope of the study too much and prove too large a project, considering the limited time available in which to complete the research project.

3.3 Methods of Data Collection

3.3.1 Interviews

When I first embarked on the data collection process, I intended to use both interviews and questionnaires. The initial intention was to interview the companies that had participated in the final year internship and send out electronic questionnaires to these companies. Ultimately, however, these questionnaires did not seem appropriate, as only a handful of companies had participated in the final year internship project. Initially, it was thought that these interviews would provide sufficient data; however, the data would have been incomplete if information gathered about TSiBA had not been included too. The qualitative approach used thus involved conducting semi-structured interviews with representatives of the companies.

Interviews could only be conducted with companies who had run final year internships for TSiBA. As this was the first cohort of students and as such the first to complete the TSiBA degree, the number of participating internship companies was limited. Being mindful of the

fact that the number of interviews might not suffice to render the study credible, a concerted effort was made to interview all of the company representatives who were directly involved in the internships. Interviews were conducted over an extended period, from July 2009 to April 2010, as this gave me access to companies who participated in later internships. Although five companies were interviewed in the end, a total number of seven interviews were conducted, as four of the internships involved different company representatives and reported to different departments within the same company. Refer to Appendix 1 to view the dates of interviews, the broad categories of the companies, and the roles of the people interviewed.

Even though access to the interviewees was straightforward, one of the companies refused to participate in the project, citing a lack of time. Another company agreed to be interviewed, but they would not answer more than half of the questions, fearful that the information would not be treated as confidential.

Semi-structured interviews

Based on the research question, a set of questions was constructed for the semi-structured interviews. Heeding Maxwell's (2005) advice, the research question informed what would be asked in the interview questions: "your research questions formulate what you want to understand; your interview questions are what you ask people in order to gain that understanding" (Maxwell, 2005: 92). The main line of questioning consisted of the following (see Appendix 2 for the full employer interview schedule).

1. Gaining an understanding of their involvement with the internship and the duration of the internship, and inquiring whether the company approached TSiBA to host the internship
2. Ascertaining the number of interns hosted;
3. Gaining an understanding of the key areas of the business, in which department the intern worked, and the projects in which the intern was involved;
4. Hearing from the company whether they considered the internship to have been successful, why they thought this, and which factors contributed to the success of the internship.
5. Identifying the company's definitions of the terms employability, skills and attributes, understanding which activities enhanced these skills and attributes, and finding out which aspects of the projects imparted these employable skills.

Each interview took approximately forty-five to fifty-five minutes. During the first interview, I made copious notes and recorded the interview. Once I had completed the first interview, I realised that the recording provided sufficient information, as I was able to transcribe the interviews within a maximum of two days after completing the interview. I also found that, if I did not take copious notes, I was better able to concentrate on what the interviewee was saying, and so better able to respond to the questions and to ask further questions for clarification.

My impression was that all the interviewees who participated in the interviews had been as honest as possible with me. It is important to note that, although the interviewees recalled the information in a factual manner, their recollections were only their perceptions of what had occurred and that they could not necessarily be treated as fact.

While conducting the interviews, I was aware not to pre-empt any responses, as well as being cautious to stay true to the interview schedule. This was difficult, as additional questions often came up when I needed to clarify a point.

Unstructured interviews

The primary focus of the TSiBA interviews was to gain a better and deeper understanding of the Profile of Graduateness and to see how each learning aspect with regard to Attitude, Skills and Knowledge was incorporated into the curriculum. The aim of these interviews was not to evaluate the impact of TSiBA's curriculum, but rather to provide contextual background to my main findings. I also wanted to hear how the terms "entrepreneurial leadership", "building confidence through attitude" and "graduateness" were defined.

Conducting the interviews with the two TSiBA representatives was initially not part of the research plan, as this study was not intended as an evaluation of TSiBA's curriculum. However, I felt that the study would be incomplete if it only considered the companies' perspectives. I needed to determine whether the experiences of the companies could be aligned to what TSiBA set out to achieve through their teaching. The key question was how the data collected from the company interviews compared with TSiBA's intended competencies. I therefore held interviews with the Academic Director (interview 1) and Managing Director (interview 2) of TSiBA.

In contrast to the semi-structured interviews with the companies, I conducted unstructured interviews with the individuals at TSiBA. The unstructured interviews in this context were

particularly useful: “Unstructured interviews are, of course, more flexible and more likely to yield information that the researcher hadn’t planned to ask for” (Leedy et al, 2005: 146). I purposefully used the unstructured interview approach, as I wanted the interviewees to speak freely. I had built a rapport with them prior to these interviews, and felt that this approach would be best in order to place them at ease as well as to grant them the opportunity to share their information unreservedly. This approach did indeed yield more information because of its flexible nature.

3.3.2 Documents

In addition to using the TSiBA interviews as a resource, I received the TSiBA Way and the Profile of Graduateness from the Managing Director as well as the final internship project course outline from the Academic Director.

3.3.3 Own Experiences

The role function that I held at TSiBA required my involvement with the internships. I worked closely with the internship companies and I directed the career management curriculum across the four years of the TSiBA qualification. I had a fair understanding of the Profile of Graduateness, the intention of the final internship project, and the history of TSiBA, and I knew which activities took place within the various academic years. I was able to draw on this knowledge and experience when analysing and interpreting the data.

3.4 Organising and Analysing the Data

> “The process of reflective qualitative analysis requires researchers to: (1) organize their raw data; (2) enter and code that data; (3) search for meaning through thematic analysis; (4) interpret meaning; and (5) draw conclusions – all the while keeping the bigger picture, i.e. research questions, aims and objectives, methodological constraints and theory, clearly in mind” (O’Leary, 2010: 257).

I analysed the data in five steps. I had initially clustered the data according to the questions asked, as the interview questions were deliberately placed into an order of gaining an understanding of the business, understanding the nature of the internship project, hearing how the company defined the terms “employability”, “skills” and “attributes” and finally

gaining a sense of which activities enhanced the skills and attributes. Secondly, upon completing this process, I clustered the data as it presented itself through the three key categories, namely, employability, skills and attributes. I allowed these catergories to emerge from the data, rather than imposing categories mentioned in the literature. In the third step, I compared similarities and differences across the various companies' data, looking at similarities and differences in interpretation and definition of the various terms and other emerging themes. In the fourth step, I compared the company data with the curriculum data to see if there was any overlap or similarity with the definitions of these terms in the TSiBA documentation. Finally, returning to the theory and the literature, I arrived at broader conclusions regarding the employers' perspectives on employability, and the extent to which TSiBA's internship delivered these competencies.

3.5 Presentation of the Data

In presenting the data in the chapters that follow, I decided to outline TSiBA's curriculum first, because an understanding of TSiBA's Profile of Graduateness is necessary to appreciate fully the students' level of preparedness for the final year internship.

I then present vignettes of each of the companies and their internships in order to create a story board for each of the interviews. The information provided by the companies was rich in content and provided insight into how the interns coped during their internships.

I draw out the themes, as they presented themselves on a high level, and then take a closer look at the more deeply rooted themes, which emerged through further analysis.

3.6 Validity

Throughout the project, I was concerned about the validity of the study. The concern centred on the limited number of companies who could be interviewed. Achieving validity through triangulation, by "comparing multiple data sources in search of common themes – to support the validity of the findings" (Leedy et al, 2005: 100) proved to be difficult. This was overcome to some extent by taking into account my own experiences at TSiBA and using documented data, which I received from TSiBA. To work towards producing a more authentic work, I looked at a document received from the founding member of TSiBA, called the TSiBA Way. This gave me insight into the history of the institution, and into the reasons for structuring the TSiBA degree in the way that they did. In addition, I studied the course

outline of the final internship project, known at TSiBA as the IPJ. To confirm that the data presented was true and correct, I asked the two TSiBA interviewees to give me their feedback on Chapter 4.

3.7 Researcher Bias and Influencing the Study

I did my utmost not to influence the study or to adopt a biased point of view. I had previously worked at TSiBA, and although my employment contract only extended to eighteen months, I still believed in what they were doing, and I admired the students' achievements. I had to be extremely cautious not to be biased when analyzing the data. When interviewing the two staff members of TSiBA, I also needed to remind myself not to assume the meaning of what they said, but to probe and ask them to explain what they meant. An example of such a term is "field independence" or "scaffolding". The same applied to the companies, as often terms were used which could be interpreted in different ways. An example of such a term was "leadership" or "professional work ethic". I requested the interviewees to clarify such terms.

3.8 Ethics

All interviewers were invited to participate in the project in writing and verbally. Written permission was also received from the Managing Director and the Academic Director at TSiBA, who provided the contact details of the companies who offered internships. The educational institution also gave permission for two of their staff members to be interviewed. Each of these people interviewed from the companies was treated as anonymously.

I asked the Academic Director at TSiBA to provide feedback on the questions, which I intended asking the companies. The reason for this was to ensure that the research project would not have a negative impact on the relationships, which the institution had built with the companies. In order to maintain my ethical obligation to the company interviewees and therefore indirectly towards to the interns, I have used pseudonyms for each participant and the interns in presenting my data (O'Leary, 2010). It is not possible to maintain anonymity with regard to TSiBA, as their internship model is unique and not commonly found amongst other educational institutions. For instance, no other institution refers to their curriculum as the Profile of Graduateness. I have also received TSiBA's permission to name them in this thesis.

3.9 Summary

In this chapter, I discussed my method of gathering and interpreting the data. In the following chapter I will provide the background to TSiBA as a means of providing a context around the TSiBA degree and the Profile of Graduateness.

Chapter 4: TSiBA Curriculum

In the first part of this chapter, I give a brief history of TSiBA, its origin and its mission, as relayed through an interview with two founding members and drawing on documents as well as the TSiBA website. The two TSiBA staff members who were interviewed currently hold the positions of Managing Director and Academic Director. In an attempt to help first generation university entrants obtain a degree, TSiBA developed a four year academic qualification. The founders at TSiBA began with the end in mind by developing the "Profile of Graduateness" which unpacks how TSiBA views knowledge, skills and attributes and how each academic year of the four year program aims to contribute to developing the students level of preparedness for the world of work. This chapter unpacks how TSiBA's leadership views knowledge, skills and attributes, as it relates to this Profile of Graduateness, and it examines how each academic year of the four year program aims to contribute to developing the students' level of preparedness for the world of work.

4.1 The Tertiary School in Business Administration (TSiBA): An Introduction

According to TSiBA's own website:

> "TSiBA Education is a private provider of Higher Education in the field of business education. TSiBA offers a one year foundation bridging certificate in business administration which is followed by TSiBA's Bachelor of Business Administration in Entrepreneurial Leadership. TSiBA specifically targets potential students who would otherwise not have access to tertiary level education, by offering successful applicants full tuition scholarships. TSiBA partners with corporate and individual funders who sponsor the operations and management of the institution. The TSiBA degree is fully registered and accredited by the Department of Education and the Council on Higher Education (No: 2007/HE08/001)." (TSiBA website: http://www.tsiba.org.za/). TSiBA is run on a not for profit basis" (TSiBA Interview Managing Director)

4.1.1 A Brief History

The Tertiary School in Business Administration, commonly known by its acronym TSiBA, opened its doors at the start of 2005. The concept of TSiBA came about when four individuals, two employed by CIDA City Campus in Johannesburg, and two Cape Town based "educationalists working in an entrepreneurial consultancy" met as a result of their desire to provide a"holistic" (education) and to give its graduates, more than the traditional universities were able to provide" (Section 1, More About TSiBA, 2004: 2). The degree would provide students with bridging into tertiary studies and individual attention, counselling, mentorship and many other forms of support and development opportunities.

The four founding members secured funding, initially with the Shuttleworth Foundation. During 2004, the organization sought an appropriate name, as it was to register as a Section 21 company. They chose the name, TSiBA, as an acronym for the Tertiary School in Business Administration, because '*tsiba'* also means 'to leap' in Xhosa.

4.1.2 Deciding the Way Forward

The founders of TSiBA needed to define what type of degree they would offer, or whether they would offer a degree at all. As relayed by the Academic Director at TSiBA, "if we're going to offer a degree, why don't we just take our money and give (it) to students as bursaries and they can take the money and go to CPUT (Cape Peninsula University of Technology) or UWC (the University of the Western Cape)?" (TSiBA Interview Academic Director). However, after speaking with employers, the founders decided that the TSiBA degree would need to play a role in "how (they could) effectively in SA bridge the skills gap" (TSiBA Interview Academic Director). As mentioned in Chapter 1 Bhorat (2002) found that graduates in South Africa, do not easily secure employment. Bhorat (2002) also found that higher education was not providing industry with graduates who had the skills and attributes that were actually needed by industry. According to the Managing Director, employers also emphasised that they wanted "someone with the right attitude" (TSiBA Interview Managing Director).

4.1.3 TSiBA's Mission

TSiBA's mission is "to be an innovative and sustainable learning community that graduates business leaders who ignite opportunity and social change" (Section 1 TSiBA's Way (2): 2007: 2).

During 2004, task teams consisting of industry specialists and TSiBA volunteers were formed. Each task team focused on a specific area (TSiBA Interview Managing Director). From these task teams, members of the TSiBA Academic Advisory Council were selected. The document titled *TSiBA's Way* summarised the purpose of the Academic Advisory Council as follows:

> "From the outset in 2004, our Academic Advisory Council (and in particular the Leadership and Self Development Task Team) sought to identify a composite map of competencies across the diverse areas of development that TSiBA deems important. For each competency area, we sought to identify the tasks and skills, theory and knowledge, data and information, networks and support that underpin them. This was then summarised and depicted in a comprehensive Competency Map. We furthermore identified the values, attitudes and core beliefs that we sought to nurture through the different competency areas and subsequently summarised all of this into the following themes (focusing on a specific theme for each year of the degree)" (Section 1, TSiBA's Way (2): 2007: 3)

4.2 Introducing the Profile of Graduateness

The Profile of Graduateness was created in order to create a map of competencies within the structure of a curriculum. Each year, starting at the foundation year through to the final year, is designed to develop, students Internal Capacity and External Capacity with the aid of an Integral Question. According to the TSiBA interviewees, it is through this process that attitude is moulded. Each section requires the student to reflect on specific questions and to reflect on how the student has grown through the experiences as these relate to the various questions. An example could be to ask students how they developed resilience. The student would need to define resilience and demonstrate by means of an example how s/he developed that resilience.

According to the Managing Director "The Profile of Graduateness components includes: leadership, entrepreneurship, business knowledge and scaffolded knowledge and [it] was based on the model that TSiBA students (came) from disadvantaged backgrounds." The term 'disadvantaged' here is defined as black, referring to African Black, Coloured and Indian students, who come from economically and educationally disadvantaged backgrounds. These facts influenced the design of the curriculum, as many stepping stones had to be put in place to assist students with their learning. The two subjects into which scaffolding was built were Mathematics and Business Communications (literacy). It was assumed that students would require assistance in these two learning areas.

According to the Managing Director, "a lot of it was inspired by CIDA City Campus, as CIDA regards the knowledge which students learn as important, but "so much of education focuses on what we need to know but never focuses on the person who is learning. I took the Cida days to really say that we want our education to also focus on the person itself" (TSiBA Interview Managing Director). In other words, the Managing Director felt that it was not only knowledge acquisition that was important, but learning about oneself also had to form part of the education that TSiBA wished to offer students.

During the foundation year, the leadership curriculum focuses on providing answers to the question "who am I". "Without the confidence to speak up for oneself, one is not able to take charge of one's learning" (TSiBA Interview Managing Director). TSiBA's Academic Director adds that entrepreneurship and leadership are the two major subjects of the degree, and that through the Profile of Graduateness, you ask "what knowledge (you) need to build entrepreneurship and leadership." (TSiBA Interview Academic Director). In this respect, all subjects covered in the degree should underpin the major subjects, which are entrepreneurship and leadership.

When TSiBA registered its degree with the Council for Higher Education, it was noted with interest that the Higher Education (HE) Act of 2007 also states that knowledge, skills and attitude are key to a successful degree. This parallel between the HE Act 2007 and TSiBA's Profile of Graduateness highlighted the importance of centring the TSiBA degree on knowledge, skills and attitude. "And so the Profile of Graduateness basically indicated all the things that you want to build into the degree that needed hand holding that would make it a realistic degree" (TSiBA Interview Managing Director). Initially, the Profile of Graduateness aligned itself with the HE Act 2007, by placing knowledge at the centre, then skills, and lastly attitude. After much thought and deliberation, however, the newest version

of the Profile of Graduateness, shows attitude at the core, followed by skills and knowledge on the outside (see Figure 1 on page 40 below) .

Both TSiBA interviewees agreed that attitude was rightly located at the centre of the Profile of Graduateness: "We said [that] attitude is at the heart of it. Attitude sits in the centre, and then we built skills around it and then we build knowledge around that." (TSiBA Interview Academic Director). When the four founding members of TSiBA and the various task teams questioned employers on where graduates fell short in terms of their employability, employers did not refer to the lack of business knowledge, but "they'll tell you the person does not have initiative, they don't have drive, they're absent all the time, they don't work hard enough. So it becomes all the nebulous stuff, the stuff you can't put into a degree" (TSiBA Interview Academic Director). According to the TSiBA interviewees, this "nebulous stuff", such as learning to take initiative and to be proactive, is added to the TSiBA degree through the Profile of Graduateness.

4.2.1 Attitude, Skills and Knowledge

The Profile of Graduateness consists of three areas of learning, namely, knowledge, skills and attitude, which are integrated into each year of the TSiBA degree.

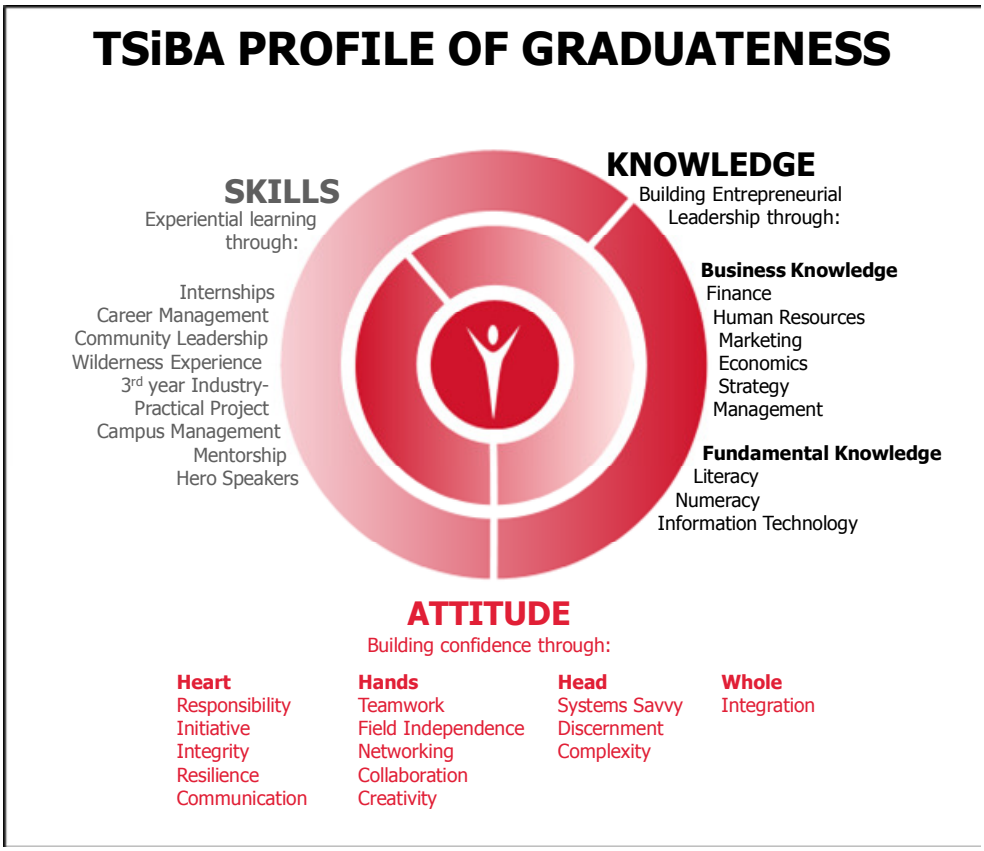

Figure 1: Profile of Graduateness (TSiBA) *Source: Personal communication Academic Director*

In summarising the inter-relatedness between attitude, skills and knowledge, the interview with the TSiBA Managing Director, defined skill "as (the) translation of knowledge" (TSiBA Managing Director). Consequently, the graduate translates knowledge, after applying it through action or in an activity. "You don't just have book knowledge. I don't only speak about theory; I've got a bit of gravitas actually, because I know what I'm doing." (TSiBA Interview Academic Director)

During each of the four years, the curriculum requires students to work with a question that becomes integral to the leadership subject, as well as being 'examinable' by means of a portfolio of learning. This portfolio of learning has to demonstrate how the students interpret each word, as it is presented in the Profile of Graduateness (for example, 'collaboration'), and how they have learnt to incorporate their learning into their functioning.

The portfolio of learning consists of the following:

- Students need to make presentations to their peers and staff members;
- Students are evaluated by their peers and staff members according to an agreed rubric;
- Students need to provide evidence that they understand and have worked with the terms provided in the Profile of Graduateness.

  (TSiBA Interview Managing Director)

Attitude

Attitude is placed at the core of the circle in TSiBA's Profile of Graduateness (see Figure 1). In the first year, the development of attitude is focussed on the individual learning, e.g. learning or showing responsibility, initiative, integrity, resilience and communication. During the second year of the degree, the focus shifts away from the individual to working in teams and learning to collaborate with others. During the third year, students learn to work with complexity and to apply discernment in responding to the world. In the final year, all the learning of the 'heart', 'hands' and 'head' is integrated through the work done during the final internship project (TSiBA Interview Managing Director).

Skills

TSiBA maintains that learning a skill takes place through experiential learning activities, such as internships, becoming involved in community leaderships projects, experiencing survival camps, the final year internship project (IPJ), to name but a few. Mentorship is also regarded as a critical experiential learning aspect of the degree. During the foundation year, groups of four students are assigned a mentor, and during the subsequent years, each individual student is assigned a mentor (TSiBA Interview Academic Director).

Knowledge

The purpose of this learning area is to provide students with the academic background so that they are able to understand functional areas within business. An example would be gaining academic knowledge in finance, human resources, accounting, marketing, economics, strategy and management. Beginning in the foundation year, additional assistance is provided with literacy, numeracy and information technology. These three areas are considered at TSiBA to require assistance through scaffolding. Scaffolding, as I have interpreted it by means of the TSiBA interviews, consists of layered learning provided

to students, where concepts are taught to students in a step by step format, starting from the basic concept and moving to the more complex concepts, thus allowing students to build and develop their understanding with each tier of knowledge gained. (TSiBA Interview Academic Director).

4.2.2 The TSiBA Foundation Certificate and Three Year Degree Program

Throughout each of the four years, a base of business knowledge, such as finance, human resources, accounting, marketing, economics, strategy and management is developed. Emphasis is also placed on building fundamental knowledge, such as literacy, numeracy and IT skills, as these underpin the learning in business knowledge.

The following section briefly outlines the key learning during each of the four years of study at TSiBA.

Experiential Learning weaved through the four years

According to the interviewees, experiential learning runs deep through all activities at TSiBA, ranging from having a business mentor for each year of study, to completing internships, completing camps, participating in student bodies, engaging in sporting activities, such as rock climbing, resulting in "most of them learn(ing) to experience things" (TSiBA Interview Academic Director). Throughout the four year program, TSiBA students are required to participate in various student bodies. Students take part in competitions, "which means they've got to write up, do presentations, dress properly, and learn how to take a flight to Johannesburg" (TSiBA Interview Academic Director). Students participate in various national competitions and are responsible for making the necessary arrangements to attend these competitions.

According to the TSiBA interviewees, this experiential learning helps students to work outside their comfort zones, and to explore new ways of doing things. These activities contribute to their level of willingness and comfort in exploring new things, showing "resilience, initiative, stretching yourself, pushing the envelope" (TSiBA Interview Academic Director). "You can do everything with all your attitude and all your willingness in the world and all your ability to think laterally and innovatively in the world, but if you don't know basic stuff, if you don't know the language, you are shut out of the world." (TSiBA Interview Academic Director). The terms, 'know basic stuff' and 'know the language' were terms often

used by the Academic Director, when referring to skills and attributes that she considered important for graduates to have in order to be successful in the world of work.

Focus is also placed on developing personal effectiveness through the leadership component of the curriculum: "personal effectiveness is using your knowledge about yourself and your emotional skills with others to get things done" (TSiBA Interview Managing Director). The TSiBA degree is known as the Bachelor of Business Administration in Entrepreneurial Leadership. The leadership course is considered a critical component of the degree, and is weaved through all four years of the program. In the leadership course, introspection, reflection and communication are all important, forming part of the pass mark that allows students to move through each year.

Another interesting characteristic mentioned by the TSiBA Interview Managing Director, is that, through the leadership course, the concept of field independence is taught. "Field independence is a word that comes from the literature of Spiritual Intelligence." (TSiBA Interview Managing Director) The purpose of this was the following:

> "we wanted the students to (have) the capacity to stand out from the crowd when necessary. Don't always go along with the group and be a team player, but when someone needs to take leadership and goes down the wrong track, have the confidence to be independent (in thought and action)" (TSiBA Interview Managing Director).

Foundation Year – "Who am I?"

During the Foundation year, the first year of study at TSiBA, students are required to consider the question "Who am I?" This question allows students to focus inwardly on themselves (Section 1 TSiBA's Way (2), 2007: 3), (TSiBA Interview Managing Director). By completing the course work in the Leadership and Self Development curriculum, students "build confidence through learning responsibility, (taking) initiative, (having) integrity, (and practicing) resilience and communication." (Section 1 TSiBA's Way (2), 2007: 3). As summarised by the Managing Director, the foundation phase "is all about Heart and develop emotional intelligence."

Bachelor of Business Administration: Year 1 – "How can I be successful?"

The integral question during BBA 1 is "How can I be successful?" Through learning about the importance of continuous learning, collaboration and networking, creativity and field

independence, students enhance their ability to develop their personal effectiveness and social intelligence (Section1 TSiBA's Way (2), 2007: 3).

Bachelor of Business Administration: Year 2 – "How do I add value?"

Through exploring the question "How do I add value?" students learn to think of themselves within the greater context of society and to consider the impact of their economic activities. The learning looks beyond the self or the community and so looks to adding value to the country (TSiBA (a), 2007: 3).

Bachelor of Business Administration: Year 3 – "What is my work?"

Through the integral question, "What is my work?" the curriculum encourages students to integrate the lessons they have learned since the foundation year and "ultimately [to be] able to integrate values, beliefs, feelings, rational observations and careful analysis in(to) effective action" (TSiBA (a), 2007: 3).

4.3 Summary

This chapter has given a broad overview of the history and philosophy of TSiBA and a basic understanding of its degree by looking at its Profile of Graduateness. We have demonstrated how this Profile of Graduateness, with its three components, namely Skills, Attitude and Knowledge, is incorporated into each year of the TSiBA program, and finally through the final year internship program.

In the following chapter, I will present the findings that arose out of the interviews, which were conducted with the companies offering internships to the students of TSiBA. The chapter begins with a series of vignettes constructed on the basis of the interviews conducted with the five internship companies who offered eight TSiBA students a three-month final year internship during 2009 and 2010.

Chapter 5: Findings

TSiBA has had an ongoing relationship and partnership with a number of companies since its inception in 2004. These companies have contributed by lecturing on a volunteer basis, provided input into the development of the curriculum at each year of the degree, and have furthermore offered their time tutoring and mentoring students. In addition to this, companies have contributed financially to the operating costs of TSiBA. In this way, the scholarship fund has allowed TSiBA to offer the Bachelor of Business Administration degree free of charge to students. As the relationships developed, some of these companies asked whether they could host internships, with the aim of determining whether the interns could be employed in their businesses. In other instances, TSiBA asked the companies whether they would be willing to host an internship (TSiBA Interview Academic Director).

The interviews for the research project summarised in this chapter were conducted with five companies ranging across four different industries, namely: Financial Services, Pharmaceuticals, Fast Moving Consumable Goods, and Fishing. Of the seven interviews conducted two were conducted in the Fishing industry, one in the Pharmaceuticals and two in Fast Moving Consumable Goods and two in Financial Services (Insurance). These interviews are treated as separate interviews, as they were analysed separately from each other.

Within these internships, each of the interviewees played a pivotal role in "mentoring" the interns and managing the internship process. All the interns were required to complete a research report about the industry in which they worked, and some were also required to complete projects, which related to a specific need in the business.

5.1 Company 1: Fishing Industry – (Dino – Intern1 and Xavier – Intern2)

Two interns completed their internships in two separate divisions within this fishing company. This company is a South African owned fishing company. Its primary business is to package pelagic fish and to freeze fresh fish. The company's operations are based mostly in Cape

Town and in a nearby fishing village. Both the interns were based at the Cape Town premises. The company representative in the Human Resources department Joslyn, secured internships for the two TSiBA students. The first internship took place in the Human Resources department and the second within the Supply Chain Management department. I interviewed Joslyn on the internship that took place in her department. All the quotes below are drawn from the interviews with her.

5.1.1 Dino - Intern 1

Dino completed his three month internship in the Human Resources department. His assignment required him to complete a Human Resources survey, as well as to do basic administrative work in the Human Resources department and to research the fishing industry. For the survey, he was required to interview staff members at different levels of the business, in order to ascertain how good internal communication in the business was. The intern designed the survey, conducted all the interviews, wrote a report with recommendations, and finally presented his findings to the corporate affairs manager.

HR administrative tasks

In his position in the HR administration, Dino was able to complete basic HR administrative functions. Joslyn, the intern's mentor and manager at the company, had lectured him on Human Resources during some period in the degree. She was of the opinion that, through the various projects and activities the intern needed to complete, he had been given an opportunity to see where the theory he had learnt was being applied in a Human Resources department. The Human Resources administration duties, which he completed, also allowed him "to see where theory is applied". She thus felt that this experience had taught him "how it's not so straight forward and easy and predictable and that there's a huge amount of admin that drives us all crazy." She believed that students often identified with a Human Resource role as explained in a textbook, but that this often only teaches limited aspects of the function, which actually requires input into the running of the business at a strategic level. Very little is mentioned of the extensive administrative functions required in the department and students often do not realise that extensive administrative work is part of the daily tasks of the department.

Fitting into the team

Dino was able to fit in well, and made a positive impression on senior management: "there was no negative (aspects) with (his) behaviour, with (his) time keeping, (his) attitude, or (his) approach". Joslyn was pleased that the intern was able to fit in and communicate with

everyone. She felt that it was important that the intern made a positive impression on the staff at head office, particularly the Financial Director, as he was instrumental in developing the relationship between the company and TSiBA.

She believed that a factor that counted in the intern's favour was that he showed a "willingness to work and do things and learn but really an approach which isn't expected to be told everything, but take ownership." In other words, she valued the fact that he was able to work independently, that he was willing to learn what the requirements of the task were and that he was willing to take ownership of the project. She mentioned that, although she provided guidance with the different tasks, for which he was responsible, especially with regard to designing the Human Resources climate survey, the intern realised the importance of convincing staff that he could be trusted to conduct the interviews without bias. He also took the initiative to contact key staff and to set up appointments with them in order to complete the climate survey.

Researching the fishing industry

The research component of the internship was the most important aspect of the final year internship. Dino completed the research and needed to present it to TSiBA as part of his pass requirement. According to Joslyn, Dino was able to complete the TSiBA project as well as the other work that she had set aside for him. Dino was also required to present the research to TSiBA.

The intern was offered a position with the company upon completing his studies at TSiBA. He now works in the Human Resources department, reporting to the HR Director.

5.1.2 Xavier - Intern 2

I also interviewed Andile, the Head of the Supply Chain Management department who was asked by the Human Resources department within his company to host an intern, Xavier, from TSiBA. After a lengthy internal process, and trying to match the intern's desire to work in marketing, it was decided to bring "him on board, (and) that he would have the project in the supply chain environment, but it would have a marketing angle as well." Andile also became the intern's sponsor within the company, providing Xavier with "mentorship and guidance."

Project Blue – an internal company and TSiBA project

The project in which Xavier was involved was called "Project Blue". The project looked at how it might be possible to improve the utilisation of pallets, thereby reducing the number of pallets used in the packaging of tinned fish, which in turn would also reduce costs. Pallets are currently hired from an outside supplier. Consequently, the intern was required to meet with the supplier, to consider the implications of repackaging the cans on the pallets, to consider how customers would handle an additional carton, and whether height would be a problem. How would distribution be affected, and would customers be required or able to transport the pallets differently?

The internship project required Xavier to conduct both a financial analysis of the project, as well as a practical analysis: "Can we do it, and if we do, how we would do it, and what potentially will be the saving?"

Initially, Xavier needed significant guidance and support, as he was overwhelmed by what he needed to do. He dealt with this by maintaining a positive approach, always being "willing to learn, willing to listen and also willing to try his own views." He learnt to prioritize and focus on the important deliverables and to take into account others' views. "Although he was not necessarily an assertive person, he actually followed up and made sure that things happened". According to the Supply Chain Manager, Andile, Xavier was tenacious, and willing to ask for help or input in areas where he did not know what to do. A mistake that Andile had noticed was that, at the beginning, Xavier "was trying to please everybody"; as a result, he was not firm enough to get staff members to provide him with the information he needed to complete the task on time: "But after a while, he said: I have a project and certain deadlines, let me gather the information."

Joslyn sat in on the final presentation, which Xavier made to TSiBA. She was impressed by the fact that Xavier knew what he was talking about: "When he was talking to his audience here who know it intimately, he was very comfortable and able to defend his numbers. He was good." In other words, Xavier was able to justify his cost analysis, and the conclusions that he had drawn.

Xavier was employed by this company after completing the internship. According to the Supply Chain Manager, the decision to appoint someone permanently into a junior project role would be based on whether the project was a viable one and whether the intern was able to deliver a certain standard of work. "So if he did not deliver the way that he did, firstly we might not have gone on with the project and secondly we would not have appointed him."

Other factors that worked in his favour were that he was a "team player", "his drive to actually get things done, his loyalty, by that I mean somebody that takes responsibility for what he is doing." In other words, Andile was impressed that Xavier took responsibility and ownership of the project and that he saw the project through to its end.

5.2 Company 2: Financial Services – Investment Management (Kevin – Intern 1)

Kevin completed his internship in the project office of a Financial Services company, focussing on investment management. The investment industry is typically divided into two distinct functions. One focuses on trading and dealing in assets, while the second focuses purely on administering the activities that have taken place in the first. The financial services company, in which the internship took place, provides an administrative function to two investment companies within the investment industry.

The internship project

In this instance, two investment administrative companies had merged. Each administrative function used different processes and procedures, resulting in different methods of completing similar tasks. As a result of forming one organisation, the companies needed to standardise their work processes and to agree on one set of policies that would govern how the work would be done in future. The purpose of the internship project was to look at ways in which the best practice of each function could be incorporated into a common process. The Project Manager, Anne, also acted as Kevin's company mentor during the internship. She explained, "Kevin's work was to analyse the differences and how two could converge into one process." This would improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the administrative process. The internship project concentrated on engaging with different stakeholders in the business, to find common ground in terms of work structures and ways in which to bring about improvements. Kevin was "earmarked to do the analyses and investigation." "(Kevin) did the analyses and his "outcome was a type of business case." This business case set out to provide a written rationale as to why the business needed one set of policies and procedures to manage the administration of the business and presented the preferred options.

The business was suitably impressed with his delivery. The Project Manager said that "based on the short time that he had to do the analyses and to do the paper, it was an impressive delivery and that is not only from my side – that was words [used] by other people in the business as well." According to Anne, the factors that made his work so

impressive were that he was able to understand both the “technological component” and the “operations component”. Each of the investment companies used different operating technologies and operating systems, and different operating processes too. It was of great importance that the intern understood the key aspects of each of these components, in order to highlight both the similarities and the possible differences: “to complete his analyses, he had to take both worlds into consideration.” He was proactive, and arranged his own meetings. Anne concluded: “He basically ran with it.”

Anne believed that the internship was successful, as it exposed Kevin to the work environment, increasing his knowledge of and confidence in the financial administration business. She also believed that he acquired “certain business etiquette”, as he wrote professional emails and conducted himself in a professional manner when conducting the interviews. “He was goal orientated. No matter how small, he’d reach the goal. I think it was one of his main drivers.” The dominant attribute he showed during his internship was self-confidence: “I could tell that he was self confident. I think this is a good attribute to have. This is not a skill, but an attribute.” Moreover, Kevin’s project was taken up by the business: “they took his work and basically structured it, or customised it to what the real requirement is. So it developed into a business requirement.” Anne was quick to add that Kevin’s work had highlighted a need for the business to relook at how it was completing tasks regarding investment administration, and that the business recognised that it was important for it to change the way it worked in order to be more effective and efficient. Kevin was not employed at the company after completing his degree, however, as he had received a scholarship to study towards an honours degree.

5.3 Company 3: Fast Moving Consumable Goods (Candice – Intern 1 and Hannah – Intern 2)

Two interns completed their internships within the Human Resources department of a Fast Moving Consumable Goods (FMCG) company. The offices of this company are in the Western Cape, South Africa. According to Tom, the company representative who hosted and mentored the interns, the business manufactures, distributes and sells its product directly to market. The interns were involved in two key projects, namely an organisation climate survey and a graduate recruitment program. The intention was to expose the interns to certain aspects of the Human Resources department. The company felt that the interns would be able to grasp how human resources works within the framework of the company’s strategy, and that they would gain an understanding of how human resources could affect

the strategy. Secondly, the interns were given administrative duties within the graduate recruitment team, which gave them a closer look into the process of recruiting new talent into the business.

Completing HR recruitment administration

The two interns were also involved in the HR administrative function related to the recruitment of talented undergraduate students from other tertiary institutions into the management trainee program. "They were not involved necessarily in the interviewing, but [in] the admin stuff of coordinating the interviews and the logistics," explained Tom. He continued, "Similar to the interviews, we exposed these graduates to a stringent and rigorous assessment centre, so they could actually observe how these sessions are conducted."

One of the interns also facilitated three sessions in the two day orientation program for new recruits into the company.

The internal HR survey – an internal company project

Prior to the interns' arrival at the company, an internal HR organisation climate survey was conducted by the Human Resources department amongst staff in the IT department. "The survey measure(d) the climate in the organisation and was followed up with a Your Voice Action Workshop," which set out to discuss the outcome of the survey. The interns accompanied Tom, as he facilitated the workshop.

According to Tom, one of the key skills developed by the interns was their leadership ability. They were included in a set of leadership workshops, which imparted skills such as how to communicate at different levels of the organisation, and how to work in a team. The HR Manager believed that the interns "matured in terms of their leadership capabilities, their engaging style has improved, engaging at different levels of the organisation with senior management and their peers." Other skills included how to be team players, developing a certain work standard, and acquiring "a drive for results." The areas where they were lacking was the "strategic leadership, they will only have that experience when they are in a fulltime job, (where) you look at planning, organising, deliver on time, (and) more innovation." The company also wanted the interns to understand that the activities, in which they were involved, formed part of the greater strategic objective of the company. Tom frequently stressed the importance of understanding the business strategy, as it was "key was for them to understand how the (company's) strategy works." The interns needed to gain an understanding of how every activity in this company was geared towards meeting the company's strategic objectives.

He took great pains in describing the business strategy. During the three months, the interns were required to complete their projects, by weaving the "four pillars of the (companies) strategy" into their work and presentations. These four pillars consisted of:

- Growth: This involved expanding the company's product within the market and so requiring the interns to understand how the product was marketed by creating an experience around their product.

- Productivity: This centred on the manufacturing and operational aspects of the company. Tom wanted the interns to understand that the key focus of the manufacturing and operations aspects of the business was to keep costs low by producing high quality work and reducing wastage during the manufacturing and operations process.

- Responsibility: The products manufactured and sold by this company face much controversy from the external market. The company therefore takes great care to represent its products in a favourable light by becoming more responsive to the needs of communities and working with government on responsible legislation.

- A winning organisation: The company emphasises the importance of becoming competitive in the market segment within which they operate, and is always working towards being considered leaders in their segment.

It was critically important for the HR Manager that the interns understood the full spectrum of the business, and that they did not experience HR in isolation to other business units. Upon graduating the interns were employed on a one year contract.

5.4 Company 4: Pharmaceutical (Luvuyo – Intern 1)

The intern worked in the marketing department of an international pharmaceutical company. This company is active in many regions, and South Africa falls within the Sub Saharan region. The office for this region is situated in Johannesburg, South Africa. As a multinational pharmaceutical company, the various business units consist of research and development of patented drugs, marketing and sales of the product, and the manufacture and distribution of the product.

The internship project formed part of a larger marketing project within the Global Marketing business unit. The nature of the project revolved around researching the feasibility of

accessing the South African market with a new product, which had been researched and developed outside of South Africa. According to Alice, the company representative and internship co-ordinator, the project concentrated on market entry into the South African markets. Luvuyo had to look at "who the stakeholders were in those markets, who to take into account, how to approach them." He had a big advantage "because he had an understanding of the South African market". In other words, the assumption made by the company was that Luvuyo would have a particular South African perspective, and that he would be able to communicate with South Africans, with whom he had to speak in order to gather data from for his project.

This was a 14-week internship, of which two weeks took place in Johannesburg, whereas the last 12 weeks were spent in the international head office overseas. Alice indicated that normally the duration of internships occurred over a period of 1 to 3 years and that Luvuyo only had 14 weeks to complete the work. When asked if she considered his internship a success, she replied "yes, it was successful, both from (the company's) side and of course for Luvuyo. He got in touch with some very, very senior people in the high level of the organisation and he got coaching, from several people and included the chance to increase his visibility. Furthermore "he got the job", in that he was successfully placed in a permanent position in the South African office.

She believed the reasons for his success could be attributed to him being motivated and engaged: "He was engaged, this is the kind of person we want. Being able to perform, the commitment he brings to the engagement, and a combination of having the impact with those [senior managers] really is the key success factors."

Alice attributed Luvuyo's successful internship to his ability to get along with others, namely his personal attributes, as well as being able to network with senior staff members, and in being adaptable and able to fit into the working environment. Interestingly, this was the only company that also acknowledged TSiBA's role in preparing Luvuyo by giving him "a lot of knowledge and insight" in order to perform well in the internship.

5.5 Company 5: Financial Services – Wealth Management and Insurance (Sandile – Intern 1 and Robert – Intern 2)

Two interns completed their internships in two separate divisions within this financial services company. The company is one of the largest listed Financial Services companies in South Africa, with its head office based in Johannesburg. The company furthermore has

offices based abroad as well as in neighbouring Namibia. The business focuses on long-term savings, asset management, banking and short-term insurance. Many of the company's operations take place in Cape Town and the internships were thus completed at the Cape Town premises.

5.5.1 Sandile – Intern 1

The first intern worked within the IT Support division. According to Tracy, the internship co-ordinator at the company and mentor to Sandile, this division is responsible for "provid[ing] an internal support service to client documentation, an incoming call centre, client servicing branches, a finance business unit [and a[strategy for the division and human resources." This division consists of 4500 staff members. Their IT role is pivotal to the effective and efficient running of the technological and administrative function of the broader financial services business.

The intern, Sandile, needed to complete two projects: the first focused on evaluating the potential impact of the Soccer World Cup on the department. He needed to consider how many staff members would take leave during the Soccer World Cup, which flexible working hours would need to be put in place, and whether executives in the business "perceive(d) or [were] prepared for risks" as a result of staff absence.

The second project required the intern to assist a team of 5 staff members in developing a more efficient way of completing their work. This lean management[1] process required the intern to work with the five staff members and assist them to identify their "workflows".

Tracy explained: "So he has to actually sit with them to draw out what their workflows (are) from beginning to end and how could you introduce efficiencies into the workflow process." The intern was introduced to the staff members through a workshop in which the "lean process" was discussed. His responsibility was to assist the staff members to change the manner in which they worked, by "trying to map out [a] better way to do what they do" efficiency. The HR practitioner felt that the intern fared well, considering that he did not have years of experience working in the business. Ordinarily, staff members tasked with this responsibility would have worked and been trained in the area of lean management. She

[1] ***Lean manufacturing*** *or* ***lean production****, often simply,* ***"Lean****," is a production practice that considers the expenditure of resources for any goal other than the creation of value for the end customer to be wasteful, and thus a target for elimination" (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lean_management)*

remarked that “he seems to enjoy a challenge”. and that he operated as an entrepreneur, as he “loves reading so he will go and investigate something and try and understand and make an effort to do that so that he can get his mind around it, what it is and I think the most enjoyable challenge is that he did not shy away from the new things.” He showed he has “a character where (he is) prepared to get stuck in and just keep trying, because [he] enjoy(s) the new part of it.” She was clear that she did not wish to manage him in an autocratic manner, but that she wanted a proactive employee. Sandile was able to meet her expectations, as she praised him for being positive, enthusiastic, open minded and cheerful: “I think people enjoy positivity and cheerfulness in the business as well.”

The HR practitioner Tracy was thus highly satisfied with the level of work produced, mentioning specific attributes that Sandile had displayed: “willingness, attitude, [being] curious, became involved, would run with ideas, he taught himself, remained enthusiastic when he faced hiccups, not pushy and [seeking] clarity of task.” Sandile did not find employment with the company, however, as he opted to take up a scholarship and continue his studies.

5.5.2 Robert - Intern 2:

The second intern, Robert, worked in the division responsible for the training and development of all staff members across the business working in South Africa and Namibia. The number of staff in South Africa alone is approximately 15000. This division provides four different areas of training, namely:

- Employee development offered to staff members, who are not yet in leadership roles within the organisation;
- Staff members holding leadership and management roles;
- E-learning and technology; and
- Administrative support.

A benchmarking and research based project

According to Sally, the HR practitioner and internship co-ordinator and mentor, Robert needed to complete two projects. The project request from the company required him to focus on an “integrated development strategy”: “One of the areas that [we] don’t have [is] an

integrated development strategy [at] the middle and executive level of leadership so I really wanted him to say what [the business] is currently offering [and] to benchmark [this] with the best companies internationally." The business had bought a database, which the intern could use. According to Sally, the company found no benefit in the work that Robert performed on this task. Consequently, the company appointed a permanent staff member to complete the task. A subtle suggestion, and one that Sally constantly apologised for making, was that she felt that the work delivered by Robert lacked the same depth of research that she had seen other university graduates produce.

TSiBA internship project

The second project that Robert completed had been set by TSiBA. This project required him to research the company's role "in financial services and [to] look at all kinds of aspects [about this industry]." Sally's view of the TSiBA project was that "It seemed to be a much more general approach to the [business], looking at the business in the context of the industry." Robert spent a considerable amount of time completing his TSiBA project, and the HR practitioner, Sally, accommodated him. as she believed that he "needed to do it to be able to graduate".

Sally believed that the internship provided Robert with an opportunity to engage with a corporate work environment: "I suppose I thought maybe for him just to be in the environment, you know, just to interact with people in the work place." Although she understood his deliverable to TSiBA, she pointed out that "if he were a paid employee I would have kept him to my expectation, but in this situation I felt that he did what he could do."

She continued to mention that although she "liked him" her expectation of the intern was that he would have an ability to conduct "abstract way[s] [of] exploring new information pulling things together, critiquing it, [and] integrating information." She did mention, however, that "he has quite an adaptable intelligence and he is very bright and he has good interpersonal skills". She found that he had matured and showed commitment to the TSiBA project. Robert was not employed within this division, but was successful in his application to the graduate development program within this company.

In the following section I will discuss themes as they emerged from further analysis. The high level themes discuss employable skills, academic skills and personal management skills, thereafter additional themes emerge which include: the interviewees definition of

employability; the ability to apply knowledge; factors that motivated students to participate fully in the internship; the ability to acquire industry knowledge, displaying a level of professionalism and shifting from acquiring theory to applying knowledge.

5.6 Skills

5.6.1 Employable Skills

According to the literature on employability skills, these "skills are grouped into three categories: academic, personal management and teamwork. Academic skills are subdivided into communication, thinking and learning skills; and personal management skills are subdivided into positive attitudes, behaviours, responsibility and adaptability" (Taylor, 1998: 148).

Without attempting to categorise the skills strictly into academic, personal management and teamwork, my interview data did highlight two sets of employability skills, one seemingly fitting well with the academic and other seemingly fitting well with personal management. I will add group teamwork as part of personal management in this instance, as the interviews with the internship companies grouped teamwork in this way.

5.6.2 Academic Skills

I have clustered these skills in this manner, as it appears that interns were leaning on their academic learning in order to complete tasks related to their internship projects.

Employability skills linked to the intern's academic curriculum and listed by the company interviewees included: interviewing skills; presentation skills; report writing; designing a questionnaire; conducting industry research; facilitation skills (a skill that is taught during the degree at TSiBA); attention to detail; planning and organising; an ability to multi-task; administration skills; logistics and coordination; analysing information.

A common theme amongst the various company interviews was that they were impressed by the "academic" skills of the students and their level of competence. According to Company 1, the first intern made an "excellent presentation" after having "complete(d) a macro and micro research of industry."

By demonstrating these skills, the interns were able to make an immediate contribution to the department in which they worked during their internship. For instance, interns completed the "administrative co-ordination of interviews and (the) logistics of (the) graduate recruitment program" at Company 4. Also within Company 4, the interns were required to

effectively and efficiently set up a facilitation process by planning and organising, co-ordinating the logistics and co-facilitating a change management workshop with the HR team in which they worked.

The interns were also able to conduct lower level research where this was required by the project. They were able to analyse data, write up their findings in a report format and present their findings to the company. Furthermore, interns were able to participate in activities that would normally have been offered to employees of the company who had worked in the environment for a period of time (Company 5, interviewee 1). Here In this case, the intern was required to work with a group of five staff members and assist them "from beginning to end" to "introduce efficiencies into the workflow process (Company 5, interviewee 1).

The successful completion of this process resulted in one of the interns being offered a permanent contract of employment. His role now is to work in a project that will implement his findings to reduce the cost of renting pallets and so "get better utilisation of the pallets which we need to hire" (Company 1, interviewee 2).

5.6.3 Personal Management Skills

As mentioned earlier, "personal management skills are subdivided into positive attitudes, behaviours, responsibility and adaptability" (Taylor, 1998: 148). This section draws on this definition, although it must also be remembered that the personal management skills can also be acquired through academic activities and so the two areas of skills are not mutually exclusive.

The employability skills listed here are further skills, which emerged from the data analysed. These skills were: getting along with colleagues and bosses; being ready to learn; giving insights or point of view; understanding the brand and the product; building trust; skills of persuasion and influencing others; prioritizing (learning to tackle important things first); focusing (learning to focus on what is important and what is peripheral); being a team player; being able to apply knowledge; self-awareness (know what you enjoy doing and what you do not enjoy doing); having a work ethic (willingness to work, do things and learn and follow through); being able to deal with frustrations; using initiative; being assertive and integrating theoretical knowledge by practicing it.

In relation to these employability skills, another layer emerged from the data, which is the ability to apply the knowledge.

5.7 Themes identified through Further Analysis

In the following section, I will discuss the key themes identified as they surfaced after completing an analysis of the interviews. These themes are: the companies' understanding and definition of *employability*; the factors that act as *motivators* for students to participate fully in the internship; and the importance placed on gaining industry *knowledge* of the business and how this relates to understanding the function of the department in the greater business. Additional themes that I identified are: an understanding of the *skills* required and gained, and the existing or inherent *attributes* versus the developed attributes and how closely these attributes mentioned are aligned to the TSiBA Profile of Graduateness.

5.7.1 Interviewee definitions of employability

Each company defined employability differently, as follows:

- Company 1 - Fishing Industry (Joslyn): "*Employability is to me then a combination of Ability and Skill".*
- Company 1 – Fishing Industry (Andile): *"I will always employ the one that has the passion, the energy and want to excel and is prepared to learn, because they will have to learn, it doesn't matter whether you have a PhD, you still need to learn the practical side*". Andile believes that employability is more than having academic knowledge; instead, that the candidate needs to learn to integrate the knowledge acquired at university with the practical application of doing and learning to do something.
- Company 2 – Financial Services, Investment Management (Anne): *"Well employability to me is basically, do you have the skills to do the job".*
- Company 3 – Fast Moving Consumable Goods (Tom): *"high potential individuals who are self-aware and aware of the impact they have on others."*
- Company 4 – Pharmaceutical Industry (Alice): *"Employability is having the right experiences, skills, commitment, to have an impact"*.
- Company 5 – Financial Services, Wealth Management and Insurance (Tracy): *"That says that the skills that you have is what the market is looking for so, maybe that is it".*

- Company 5 – Financial Services, Wealth Management and Insurance (Sally): *"I suppose there is a connotation to it that says that the skill that you have is what the market is looking for".*

In these definitions, only Joslyn in Company 1 spoke of employability resulting from a combination of attributes and skills. Andile (Company 1) was the only interviewee who spoke of passion and energy, as attributes that were equally important as the willingness to learn. In the remaining cases, graduates were regarded as employable if they had the skill to do the job. Although the remaining cases do not speak of attributes as being important factors in being considered employable, they do refer to a level of maturity and self-awareness of the impact that the intern had on others. Included in this was an ability to engage with others in the work environment, namely their peers and managers (Company 3). Other definitions indicated that employability is a direct result of combining skills and attributes (Company 1, interview 1). Company 1, interviewee 2, regarded "working [as giving] the intern the opportunity to learn how to apply the academic / theoretical knowledge which they've acquired at varsity". Company 5, interview 2, linked the skill to market demands, i.e. "what the market is looking for."

Each company thus focussed on a different aspect of the definition, resulting in a very broad description of the term. They ranged from being introspectively aware of one's work environment to being able to perform activities through a display of skills. There was also consideration of what the market place required, and emphasis was placed on being able to meet the demands and requirements of the market place.

It is important to note that, although no question was directed at understanding the difference between soft and hard skills, company interviewees nonetheless provided examples of both of these.

According to Andile (Company 1, interviewee 2) , the use of soft skills such as interpersonal skills, teamwork, collaboration, delivering on the projects handed to Xavier, was critical to the success of the project for the company as well as for Xavier's successful placement into the company upon graduating. An additional success factor was raised by Andile, namely, the successful completion of the internship project, as these determined whether the company would consider it a viable task or project to complete and whether it would appoint Xavier into that position. As Andile explained, "So if he did not deliver the way that he did, firstly we might not have gone on with the project and secondly we would not have appointed him"(Company 1, Interviewee 2).

5.7.2 Skills: The Ability to apply Knowledge

A common thread in the companies' definitions of skills was the ability to apply knowledge, particularly applying theoretical knowledge into practice, being able to fulfil a particular function, role or task, and having the right competencies, the right experience to fulfil that task. Here are quotes by the companies of their definition of skills in reply to the question.

- Company 1 - Fishing Industry (Joslyn): *"Your skill is the ability to apply the knowledge."*
- Company 1 – Fishing Industry (Andile): *"You need to have a skills set, which is part of your theoretical skills that you will get through your studies and then you need to apply it to your practical environment."* In other words, graduates must be able to apply the theory they have learned to practical situations at work.
- Company 2 – Financial Services, Investment Management (Anne): "*So an ability to do something for a particular function."*
- Company 3 – Fast Moving Consumable Goods (Tom): No specific definition was provided.
- Company 4 – Pharmaceutical Industry (Alice): *"Skills, the right competence, the right experience, a combination of skills and experience with experience due to an internship, due to training, due to the work you've done before, technical expertise, you were trained in."*
- Company 5 – Financial Services, Wealth Management and Insurance (Tracy): *Skills, I suppose it's the things that you have learned to do that enables you to do something, so it enables you to complete or fulfil a task or role or to do a job. It's an activity of sorts."*
- Company 5 – Financial Services, Wealth Management and Insurance (Sally): "*Skills are things that you can learn. I might not have the skill to cook but I could learn, you know*."

5.7.3 Application of Personal Management Skills

Central to getting the job done, was the requirement that interns understood how to "build trust", use their "persuasive skills", "influence others", "deal with frustrations", focus on the task at hand, and prioritize their work (Company 1, interviewees 1 and 2). For instance: "He learnt that he needed to focus on what is important and what (was) peripheral" (Company 1, interviewee 2).

Like Company 1, Company 5 also indicated the importance of the application of personal management skills, to meet an objective. "He was polite and very clear on what he wanted; he is not a pushy kind of person. If you approach them with a pushy kind of personality you probably will get, you know I think you make it a little bit harder for yourself. I think who he is, helped him do what he needed to do." (Company 5, interviewee 1)

According to Company 2, the intern Kevin took the initiative to set up meetings in order to extract information from staff members around requirements related to his project. As interviewee Anne explained, "He basically ran with it".

According to Company 4, interviewee Alice, the intern Luvuyo was engaged, motivated and committed: "He was engaged, this is the kind of person we want. Being able to perform, the commitment he brings to the engagement, and a combination of having the impact with those senior managers, really is the key success factor." Alice frequently mentioned the intern's ability to "get in touch with very senior people, without being afraid". She elaborate on this: "He gained a lot of knowledge and insight in TSiBA too and so he was very keen to study what were the requirements, to get along with people, to address the requirements very smoothly, to be open to learn, to be ready to learn, to give us his insight, and to be really engaging." (Company 4) In this way, the intern networked successfully amongst senior members and made a positive impression upon them. This was one of the key reasons for him being offered a contract of employment. By acknowledging the insight Luvuyo gained at TSiBA, it appears that the company recognises that he had been given the necessary tools to operate within the work environment, in other words, that he had been taught the necessary skills by TSiBA to be included in the world of work.

It appeared that competence was not the only factor considered here, but an ability to get along with one's superiors was important as well: "I would say the boss you work for need(s) to have chemistry for this needs to work. It's nothing that critical but this is something that really counts" (Company 4).

5.7.4 Attributes

In response to the question regarding attributes, the Company interview definitions are presented below:

- Company 1 - Fishing Industry (Joslyn): *"If I think about attributes, we would be looking at a lot of personality type things, very much your disposition, your confidence levels, your communication ability probably, your ability to multi-task, those kind of things."*

- Company 1 – Fishing Industry (Andile): *"Attributes, I would say comes more towards the person itself and that's sort of the things which I mentioned now, as in attributes, maybe we can call it loyalty, integrity, we can call it energy, drive."*

- Company 2 – Financial Services, Investment Management (Anne): *"Attributes are all very closely linked, hey. I'm asking myself, is leadership a skill or is it an attribute? I think the world of work has changed. I think leadership used to be an attribute, but I think it is an acquired skill which you need to have now-a-days".* Although no clear definition is provided by Anne, it is interesting to note that she highlights that, in her view, leadership used to be an attribute but it has now become a skill. She referred to the ability of the intern Kevin to gain access to information by relying on the manner in which he engaged with the staff, but also by focusing on achieving his goals.

- Company 3 – Fast Moving Consumable Goods (Tom): *"Attributes are like the Iceberg analogy, the things that you rightfully or wrongfully see are at the tip of the iceberg. That's what we look at the tip of the iceberg. Yes, we do sometimes work on the areas that we don't see the areas of personality, the areas of emotional intelligence, but you know you look at the capabilities, look at the stuff at the top of the iceberg."*

- Company 4 – Pharmaceutical Industry (Alice): *"Attributes for me really is about the behaviour side, your commitment, your buy- in, your engagement, your motivation, it can be intrinsic, it can be extrinsic so how I approach my job, the motivation I bring intrinsically."*

- Company 5 – Financial Services, Wealth Management and Insurance (Tracy): *"Attributes are things that you really have, personality traits, character traits that you have that are quite stable."*

- Company 5 – Financial Services, Wealth Management and Insurance (Sally): *"Attributes would be similar to competencies and competencies are more on the behavioural side of your ability so it would be your, I suppose it's your behavioural skills, it's like communication, it's gaining a commitment with people, it's about imitating action."*

Attributes listed by the interviewees are: perseverance; willingness to take responsibility; open to constructive criticism; loyalty; integrity; image (business etiquette); attitude towards life; being well-mannered; mature; self-aware; curiosity; being proactive; showing enthusiasm; able to deal positively with obstacles; being inquisitive; well-groomed; self-confidence and disposition.

It appears that for the company representatives, attributes and skills can at times be interchangeable, depending on the experience of the person defining the terms. The common themes that emerged from the data focussed primarily on personality traits, disposition, confidence levels, and communication ability. Included in the definition of attributes are loyalty and integrity; behaviour such as commitment, engagement and motivation and competencies. Company 3 (Tom) also spoke of leadership, which he described in words such as "having "potential", showing "leadership behaviour" and "output and performance." In Company 2 (Anne), a different view of leadership was held, as she questioned whether leadership was an acquired skill or whether it was an inherent attribute. In Company 3 (Tom), in order to describe the importance of attributes, Tom used the analogy of an iceberg, indicating that attributes were the ice below the ocean surface, and thus implying that often the unseen was as or more important than the seen.

5.7.5 Motivators: Factors that motivated Students to participate fully in the Internship

Four of the seven interviewees believed that the interns were highly motivated to secure employment upon completing their internships. Of the interviewees who mentioned this, one was impressed by the intern's level of "maturity and (her) thorough(ness) in (wanting to) understand the business" (Company 3). Another believed that the intern arrived with "an agenda of finding employment" (Company 4). Through his "focussed" approached, he networked with senior management and identified managers who were able to "coach" him

in understanding what the "requirements of finding employment" are (Company 4). Other key factors mentioned were that the intern "want[ed] to excel" and that the intern was "prepared to learn (although he) faced challenges" (Company 1, interviewee 2). In this interview, in particular, the student displayed immense "energy and passion", which contributed to the decision to offer him a contract of employment.

In the instance of Company 5, the interviewee believed that the intern performed in the way that he did, as he was naturally drawn to a challenge. The motivating factors were his curiosity to understand concepts and issues: "he will go and investigate something and try and understand and make an effort to do that so that he can get his mind around it, what it is" (Company 5, interviewee 1).

5.7.6 Knowledge: The Ability to acquire Industry Knowledge

Three of the five interviewees believed that the interns had attained the ability to acquire the knowledge of the business quickly. According to Company 3, the intern "gained knowledge and understanding (of) the business and the brand" (Company 3). For this particular interviewee, understanding the brand in relation to the company's strategy and being able to articulate it through the work delivered by the intern by means of a final presentation, was of great importance to him.

According to Anne (Company 2), their intern had to gain an understanding of the complexities of the technology and areas of operations within the company. The process was complicated by the fact that two companies had merged their administrative functions. The intern's ability to grasp and communicate the complexities of each of the technologies used as well as the operating procedures used was important for the successful delivery of the internship project. Similarly, as indicated by Company 1, interviewee 1, the intern had "gained knowledge about the fishing industry and gained exposure to HR" (Company 1, interviewee 1) According to Alice (Company 4) the intern at the Pharmaceutical company did not have sufficient time on the project in order to gain a complete view of the industry. Their internship projects typically take place over a few months, whereas this internship took place over only a few weeks.

According to Company 3, the Fast Moving Consumable Goods company, their interns had quickly gained knowledge of the industry, as "they presented accurately (what the company was) and especially the 4 pillars in the strategy and they also integrated their theoretical background into what they learnt (during the internship)." This interviewee constantly

referred to the fact that the internship projects could not be completed in isolation of the company strategy. He constantly spoke of the need to understand the strategy of the company and the importance of the intern seeing how the company strategy is actioned in the everyday activity of the company. It appears that their interns had gained industry knowledge as well as a better understanding of how the department functioned in which they completed their internship. It was only in one instance, Company 5, interviewee 2, where the intern was not able to gain an understanding of the internship department and where he focussed most of his attention on the TSiBA project instead. In this instance, the internship co-ordinator, and Robert's mentor, did not hold him responsible for completing the department project, but instead appointed a permanent staff member to complete the task.

5.7.8 Displaying a Level of Professionalism

The interns had to display a certain level of professionalism. As Company 2 said, if "I compare him to the others (referring to internships from others institutions), his leadership skills I think was far better than theirs. His whole approach is also more professional, that's also because he was on his own." This interviewee felt that it was important for the intern to display a level of professional, as it meant that he was favourably viewed by the rest of the staff at the company.

5.7.9 Shifting from acquiring Theory to applying Knowledge

Company 1, interview 2 continuously spoke about his intern's ability to interpret information, although this only developed after the intern had learnt to prioritise his work, and was able to identify the areas that were most important for the outcome of the project.

> "In the first 2 weeks he got a bit of a shock and saw that it was a bit bigger than he thought. He needed to go out and chat to people and see what was happening and what was going on. This is a normal process, where anyone going into new environment, specifically to go in with a theoretical background in a business, but what he did do, was adapted well. He took the challenge up and the more he learnt, at one point you get a bit overwhelmed with all the information and everything that it entails, but he attacked it and faced the challenges very well. After three months he got a whole different view of business and what is involved in the environment." (Company 1, interview 2)

5.8 Summary

In conclusion, in this chapter, I have examined the experiences of companies who participated in the final year internship program (i) I have identified their definitions and employability; and (ii) identified the themes that emerged from an analysis of the data generated by the interviews. These are summarised in the diagram, figure 2 below:

Figure 2

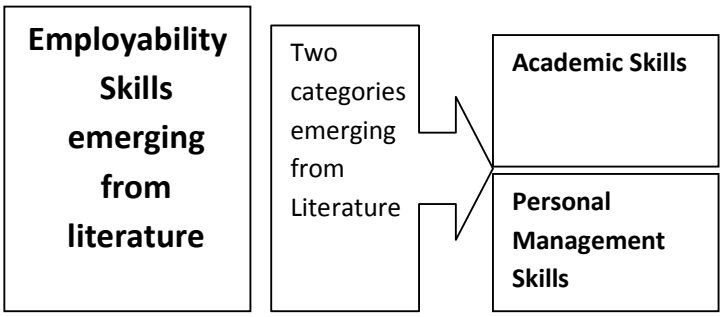

Figure2(a): Employability Skills as it emerges from data literature

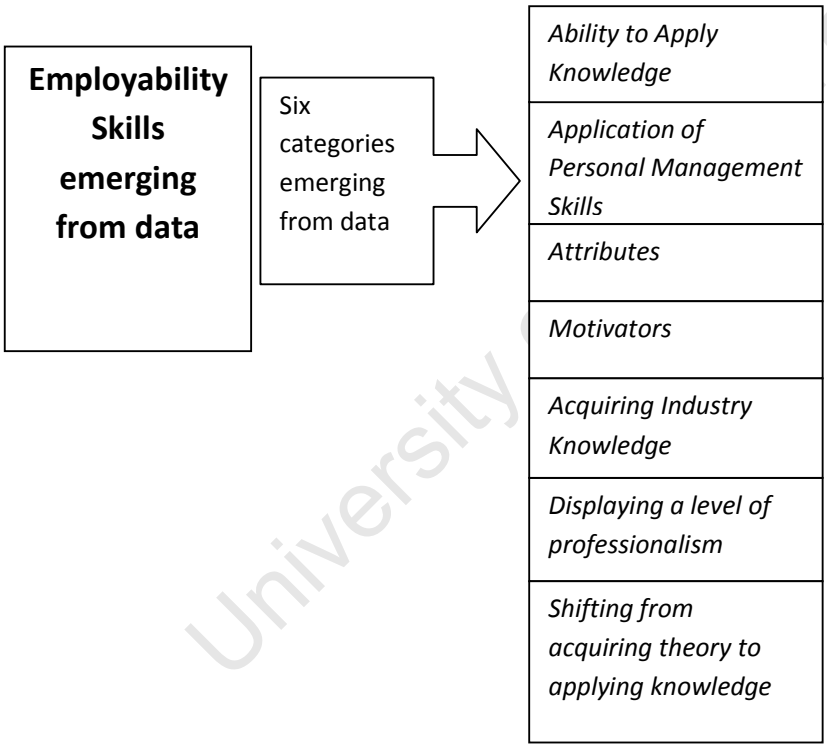

Figure 2(b): Employability Skills as it emerges from data analysed

In the next chapter, a final examination of the data asks specifically whether the final year internship provided the TSiBA interns with the opportunity to be included or excluded from the world of work.

Chapter 6: Inclusion into Workplace Practice

This study investigated employers' definitions of employability and whether, in the view of the employers, the internship that forms part of TSiBA's curriculum teaches graduates skills and attributes that make them employable. In this chapter, closer attention will be paid to aspects of the internship that presented themselves as an overlap between what TSiBA intended and what companies experienced. It emerged in the course of the research that the attributes and skills, which companies viewed as employable qualities, and their definition of these, were similar to the underlying goals of TSiBA, as encapsulated in the academic and experiential learning in the curriculum according to their Profile of Graduateness.

6.1 Employer definitions of employability

The definitions of employability provided in Chapter 2 compare well with the definitions of employability as provided by the internship companies. The definitions in the literature which compare well with those provided by the internship companies are mainly those held by higher education, the corporate sector and as mentioned earlier, the 'USEM Account'. Higher education speaks of the acquisition of skills including basic social skills, diligence, motivation, confidence, communication and problem solving skills. In addition to this high level skills, such as self management are also mentioned (McQuaid and Lindsay, 2005). To sum up the higher education perspective within the context of South Africa, Kruss (2004) says that "students must have tacit knowledge, skills and dispositions that positively contribute to the work environment" (Kruss, 2004:680).

The corporate definition of employability highlights the importance of being flexible, responsive, and adaptive and being able to work with ever changing technology. Personal attributes and competencies are considered essential criteria, over and above the qualification. According to Moreau and Leathwood (2006), the corporate sector also identifies personal attributes and cultural and social capital as contributors to being employable and successful in the world of work.

The 'USEM Account' (that is understanding, skilful practice, efficacy beliefs and metacognition) best fits when compared with the definitions provided by the internship companies. With understanding comes a requirement of graduates to become 'work savvy'

that understands the rules of the world of work. Developing skilful practice requires the graduate to translate academic knowledge by applying that knowledge in a practical work setting. Efficacy beliefs ask for graduates to be mindful of their personal qualities and attributes so that students effectively manage the relationships with their colleagues. Finally, metacognition requires the graduate to show a willingness to learn and show a positive attitude. In addition to this, emphasis is placed on reflection and personal mastery.

The response by companies interviewed defined employability as they have experienced it through the internship as: the ability to translate academic knowledge into practice with a willingness to accept the learning that goes with combining academic knowledge with practice. The companies also acknowledged the importance of the students being self aware in relation to how they respond to their environment and to others. One company interviewee summed up employability as being the sum of skills plus attributes.

Employers generally found that interns had very good employable skills. The question is now posed: did the internships educate the students for employability? In the following section I will address this question.

6.2 Inclusion: Fitting into the World of Work

The TSiBA interns seem to have met the companies' definitions of employability. However, the relative success of imparting employable skills cannot only be contributed to the internships. It is argued here that the TSiBA Profile of Graduateness, created the appropriate setting for learning the skills as defined by employers and some of the literature in Chapter 2. As indicated by Yorke and Knight (2003), employability skills need to be threaded through the various programmes of the degree; as noted in Chapter 2, they argue that "students learning that makes for strong claims to employability comes from years, not semesters; through programmes, not modules; and in environments, not classes" (Yorke and Knight, 2003:4).

It is necessary to examine closely the experiential learning component of the TSiBA curriculum. The Profile of Graduateness sets out to provide TSiBA students with life experiences to enable them to interpret various 'codes' or 'ways of being' within the work environment.

According to the TSiBA interviewees, the premise is that certain traits and behaviours are common practice and expected within the daily running of companies. To become part of

this community, interns need an understanding of what is required of them, but they also need to be able to interpret and translate this into appropriate action, and moreover, they need to be comfortable doing so.

Through the Profile of Graduateness, TSiBA have integrated the work experience by making internships compulsory in the certificate year and three year degree program. Entrepreneurship is one of the major subjects and is an integral part of the degree program. Career management holds the internship program and is part of the curriculum. The reflective practice activity is embedded within the Profile of Graduateness and its successful completion is a requirement to passing in each academic year.

According to employers, in this study, TSiBA has indeed provided their students with a set of tools to familiarise them with what is considered acceptable behaviour in the work place, by exposing them to various academic and experiential learning activities. The inclusion of students into these communities has worked positively in the interns' favour, resulting in more than half of the first intake being offered employment with the company in which they had completed their internship.

In achieving this, I would argue that TSiBA has enabled students to become employable as set out by the USEM Account (in McQuaid and Lindsay 2005). It seems that TSiBA has created the environment for students to "develop a practical intelligence" of academic subject matter, and to be able to apply it through participating in a community of practice. (Yorke and Harvey 2005:51). Based on the data from the companies interviewed, it could be argued that the TSiBA interns had developed a set of personal attributes which allowed them to "monitor and manage their own learning needs, to contribute to and maintain their own work and to collaborate with others in high performance teams" (Williams 2005:38).

To conclude, it appears to be very important for interns to be able to interpret and fit into the corporate culture, by demonstrating a level of professionalism and employable skills and attributes, as mentioned earlier. It moreover appears that TSiBA does indeed successfully impart the ability to 'decipher' the 'code' used in the individual companies, through the many different experiential learning activities. In addition to this, requiring students to decipher the code in different industries requires them to apply different interpretations. However, in the one instance where the intern was unable to interpret the code and fit into the culture, or alternatively where the company did not provide adequate guidance, and or did not buy into the internship, the result was not favourable.

6.3 Exclusion? What happens if the intern is not able to interpret the code?

Bauder's (2005) concluding point in his paper on the job search strategies of Yugoslavian and South East Asian immigrants into the Canadian market, was that he "found evidence that the unfamiliarity with the rules of the Canadian labour market is an important employment barrier for newcomers" (Bauder, 2005: 93). Clearly, if job seekers are unable to interpret the rules of the workplace or if they are not familiar with these rules, their job search is often not successful. The question is whether, if the intern is unable to interpret or understand the system, they are naturally excluded from the community. As mentioned by Company 1, interview 2, their intern took a while to understand his role and to learn how he needed to perform in the environment in order to be successful, but with appropriate guidance from the mentor assigned by the company, he was able to deliver his project on time.

However, in Company 5, interview 2, a different response was found. The work delivered in relation to the company project did not meet the standards required, and as a result, another staff member in the department had to be assigned to complete the task. The reason given for the student not delivering on the company project was that the internship coordinator felt that the TSiBA project was more important and most of the intern's time at the company was thus spent on completing the TSiBA project. Although the purpose of the internship was to familiarise the intern with the corporate culture, the scope or area in which this intern worked was fairly narrow. The assumption seems to have been that the intern was unable to cope with two main projects and so was not given an opportunity to learn to manage multiple tasks. According to Company 5, interview 2, the intern was unable to deliver the level of work that the department required of him, which suggests that he had an inability to interpret what the environment required from him. The interviewee also argued that the intern's work "lacked depth and complexity", and that the intern was slower because of a language barrier. Although all the interviewees of the various companies expected the interns to adapt and fit into the company culture, in this instance it would appear this company did not give adequate and appropriate guidance as to what they expected of the intern.

It must be asked how the *habitus* of the intern would affect their ability to understand the rules of the game. In this case the student's habitus did not seem to 'fit into' habitus that the company required of him. The question then is can habitus be changed? The response would be yes, as it requires understanding, support and scaffolding from the mentor in the company (something that other interns seems to have been given but not this one). From a

different perspective, it might also be asked whether companies should not try and accommodate more 'diverse ways' of operating in the world of work.

6.4 Wider significance of the findings, limitations and possible areas for future research

Key lessons learnt through this study show that if we are to tackle the problem of graduate unemployment, the TSiBA curriculum and model of internship might be a possible way of doing this. As highlighted by literature in Chapter 1, South Africa, although faced with a skills shortage, finds itself in the predicament of not being able to absorb its graduates into the South African economy. It also appears that in some instances the higher education system is not responding to the needs of companies, and more so that not all graduates have the same opportunity of being employed upon graduation, but that graduate unemployment lies predominantly amongst Africans, as the "poor performance of tertiary qualified workers tend to be concentrated solely among African's" (Bhorat and Lundall, 2002:1). Findings also indicate that graduates who have been disadvantaged by the inadequate schooling received, face further challenges of gaining entry into the work place.

In the instance of the TSiBA Profile of Graduateness, it appears that employability skills have been threaded through the academic as well as the experiential learning components of the curriculum. As noted by Yorke and Knight (2003) in Chapter 2, "students learning that makes for strong claims to employability comes from years, not semesters; through programmes, not modules; and in environments, not classes" (Yorke and Knight, 2003:4). Stand alone modules addressing employability skills, can therefore not be considered adequate in preparing graduates to become employable.

In addition, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, the Profile of Graduateness sets out to provide TSiBA students with life experiences and experiential learning practices, enabling students to interpret various 'codes' or 'ways of being' within the work environment. Once students have acquired these traits and behaviours, and learnt to act upon these within the context of the specific work environments, they are then able to interpret and translate their understanding into appropriate action which is common practice and expected within the

work place. By integrating the work experience through each academic year, and through creating opportunities for students to be embedded in various communities of practice connected to the world of work, TSiBA has provided their students with a set of tools to familiarise themselves with acceptable work place behaviour.

Students have also "developed a practical intelligence" of academic matter as well as demonstrate the ability to exhibit traits and behaviours which shows strong personal management skills (Yorke and Harvey 2005:51). TSiBA students appear to have developed personal attributes, allowing them through reflective practice to monitor and manage their own learning needs, work independently and also collaborate with others within a team.

In conclusion, it appears that knowing the 'code', being able to understand and interpret the 'code' as well as apply their understanding of the different interpretations across various industries, should secure employability for graduates. As highlighted through the data, if the graduate is unable to interpret the rules of the workplace or if they are not familiar with these rules, their job search is often not successful.

A limitation to the study was the limited number of companies which could be studied at this time and so a further future area of study, would be to in a few years time, conduct a similar case study of employer experiences of the TSiBA internship model. The aim would be to use a larger pool of employers and so to explore whether these employers have a similar experience and whether TSiBA is still be able to convey learning through the Profile of Graduateness, allowing their graduates to be included in the work place. It would also have been beneficial to the study and possibly presents a future area of research, to explore students' experiences and views of the internship model.

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Appendix 1: Company Interview Schedule

Interview date	Industry	Interviewee(Pseudonym)	Position	Intern
06 July 2009	Fishing	Joslyn	HR Director	Dino
21 July	Fishing	Andile	Supply Chain Manager	Xavier
06 November 2009	Financial Services – Investment Management	Anne	Project Manager	Kevin
24 & 27 July	Fast Moving Consumable Goods	Tom	HR Manager	Candice and Hannah
09 July	Pharmaceutical	Alice	HR Manager	Luvuyo
09 April 2010	Financial Services – Wealth Management	Tracy	HR Manager	Sandile
30 March 2010	Financial Services – Wealth Manager	Sally	HR Manager	Robert

Appendix 2: Employer Schedule

Question 1:

1.1 Can you describe your involvement with the internship?

1.2 Did you approach TSiBA for an intern or did TSiBA approach your company?

1.3 What was the duration of the internship?

Question 2:

2.1. How many interns have you hosted?

Question 3:

3.1. Can you describe the key areas of your business?
3.2. In which area did the intern work?
3.3 Did the intern work on a specific project?
3.4 Did your organisation or TSiBA decide on the project?
3.5. What was the nature of their project?
3.6 What was the intern required to do?
3.7. Did they meet the requirements of the project?

Question 4:

4.1. Was the internship successful?
4.2 Can you describe what the success factors were?
4.2.1 Of these success factors, which would you rate as the most important?
4.3 Would you say that these success factors would contribute to the intern becoming employable?
4.4. If not, how differently could the internship be delivered?

Question 5:

5.1. How would you define the terms “employability”, “skills” and “attributes?”
5.2. Which activities in the internship enhanced these skills and attributes?
5.3. In your experience, which aspects of the projects imparted these employable skills?

Question 6:

6.1. Can you describe your best intern?
6.2. What was it about them that made them your best?
6.3. Would you employ this intern? If so why? If not, why not?

Appendix 3: Individual Practical Industry Project Course Outline

IPJ-3 COURSE OUTLINE 2nd SEMESTER 2008		
WEEKS	**OUTLINE**	**DELIVERABLES**
Week 1 21-25 July		
Week 2 28 Jul - 01 Aug		
Week 3 04 – 08 Aug [Nat. Women's Day 9th]	Collection of Course Outline Group meeting to discuss arrival and expectations at companies	**PMG tool and training: to be confirmed (Leigh & Bev)**
Week 4 11 – 15 Aug	Preamble: Please read the covering letter accompanying this course outline carefully.	**Please take note of DP requirements** → Full attendance at industry → Submission of every week's requirements → 80% attendance for on-campus Fridays Failing to meet any of the above requirements will preclude you from attending the final

		assessment week of 24 November, which will result in an automatic fail grade for this course.

WEEKS	OUTLINE	DELIVERABLES
Week 5 18 – 22 Aug	**Monday to Thursday** Full time presence in industry: You will form part of your department and be involved in their activities. During this time you need to: 1) Identify, with your manager, a few possible projects that you might be able to work on. The project should ideally be strategic to the business, allow you to use the knowledge and skills acquired to date, utilise your research capabilities and project management skills. Part of the scope of the project has to include dealing with numbers – whether that is budgetary, costing or financial analysis. 2) You need to research the industry; your first task is to thoroughly research the MACRO environment in which this industry operates. 3) Clear with your company whether you will be allowed to have a week's vacation from 22-26 September. You will have to honour their decision and plan your semester accordingly. **Friday** Full presence on campus: 1) Revise and prepare for Knowledge Exam. 2) Preparation for PoL. 3) Industry Report: Complete research of the MACRO environment of your industry. Prepare an outline and first draft of this section which will form part of your final report. It should comprise about 700 words. Start a Table of Content and decide on format and fonts of headings, sub headings, etc.	**HAND IN** → Table of Content framework and details of report structure → Outline and first

		draft of macro environment section

WEEKS	OUTLINE	DELIVERABLES
Week 6 25 – 29 Aug	**Monday to Thursday** Full time presence in industry: You will form part of your department and be involved in their activities. During this time you need to: 1) Shortlist, with your manager, one or two possible projects that you might be able to work on. 2) Continue researching the industry; your task is to thoroughly research the MARKET environment in which this industry operates. **Friday** Full presence on campus: 1) Revise and prepare for Knowledge Exam. 2) Preparation for PoL. 3) Industry Report: Complete research of MARKET environment of your industry. Prepare an outline and first draft of this section which will form part of your final report. It should comprise about 700 words.	**HAND IN** → Table of Content to date → Outline and first draft of market environment
Week 7 01 – 05 Sep	**Monday to Thursday** Full time presence in industry: You will form part of your department and be involved in their activities. During this time you need to: 1) Identify and define, with your manager, the project that you will work on. 2) Continue researching the industry; your task is to thoroughly research the MICRO environment in which this industry operates. **Friday** Full presence on campus: 1) Revise and prepare for Knowledge Exam. 2) Preparation for PoL. 3) Industry Report: Complete research of MICRO environment of your industry. Prepare an outline and first draft of this section which will form part of your final report. It should comprise about 700 words.	**HAND IN** → Table of Content to date. → Outline and first draft of micro environment → Definition of Project

WEEKS	OUTLINE	DELIVERABLES
Week 8 08 – 12 Sep	**Monday to Thursday** Full time presence in industry: You will form part of your department and be involved in their activities. During this time you need to: 1) Develop the scope of your project. 2) Continue researching the industry; your task is to find your company's latest FINANCIAL statement / annual report. You are required to do a basic analysis of the stock and to comment on the value of considering this stock as an investment. Consider the questions in the next column to guide you. **Friday** Full presence on campus: 1) Revise and prepare for Knowledge Exam. 2) Preparation for PoL. 3) Industry Report: Complete research of the FINANCIAL statement of your industry. Prepare an outline and first draft of this section which will form part of your final report. It should comprise about 700 words.	**Questions** → Headline eps (HEPS): What is the absolute number (in cps) and how does this compare to the prior year (i.e. what is the % growth compared to last year? Calculate based on the presented HEPS figures). Understand and explain the reasons for the annual change. → Based on the above latest HEPS, use the current share price to calculate the current PE ratio, i.e. take price and divide by HEPS. → Calculate ROE ratio and compare to last year's. Understand and explain the reasons for any difference. → Calculate NAV per share and compare to last year's. Understand and explain the reasons for any difference. → Based on the above latest NAV, use the current share price to calculate the current P/NAV ratio, i.e. take price and divide by NAV. → Calculate cash generated from operations/EBIT ratio and compare to last year's. Understand and explain the reasons for any difference. → Calculate EBIT/turnover ratio (i.e. EBIT margin %) and compare to last year's. Understand and explain the reasons for any difference.

		HAND IN → Table of Content to date → Outline and first draft of financial analysis → Scope of Project (1 page)
Week 9 15 – 20 Sep	**Monday to Thursday** Full time presence in industry. You will form part of your department and be involved in their activities. During this time you need to: 1) Develop a detailed 7-week Project Plan. Be clear on your actions and take care not to be too ambitious with your deadlines or deliverables. 2) Continue researching the industry; your task is to look at the CHALLENGES facing the industry. **Friday** Full presence on campus: 1) Revise and prepare for Knowledge Exam. 2) Preparation for PoL. 3) Industry Report: Complete the detailed Project Plan outline of your final report, preferably utilising MS Project. In addition, prepare an outline and first draft of the industry CHALLENGES which will form part of your final report (+/- 700 words).	**HAND IN** → Table of Content to date → 7-week Project Plan → Outline and first draft of industry challenges
WEEKS	**OUTLINE**	**DELIVERABLES**
22 – 26 Sep [Heritage Day 24th TSiBA Holiday Week]	**Monday to Thursday** You may request your company to allow you to take leave this week. This is their prerogative, and you may be required to work this week. Please clear this with them during your first week. **Friday** No presence required on campus	**HAND IN** → None
Week 10 29 Sep – 03 Oct	**Monday to Thursday** Full time presence in industry:	**HAND IN** → Table of Content to

	You will form part of your department and be involved in their activities. During this time you need to: 1) Execute week 1 of the Project Plan. 2) Continue researching the industry; your task is to identify and discuss the LEADERS in the industry. **Friday** Full presence on campus: 1) Revise and prepare for Knowledge Exam. 2) Preparation for PoL. 3) Industry Report: Update Project Plan. Prepare an outline and first draft of the industry LEADERS which will form part of your final report. It should comprise about 700 words.	date → Project Plan – Week 1 → Outline and first draft of industry leaders
Week 11 06 – 10 Oct	**Monday to Thursday** Full time presence in industry: You will form part of your department and be involved in their activities. During this time you need to: 1) Execute week 2 of the Project Plan. 2) Continue researching the industry; your task is to identify and discuss the TRENDS in the industry. **Friday** Full presence on campus: 1) Revise and prepare for Knowledge Exam. 2) Preparation for PoL. 3) Industry Report: Update Project Plan. Prepare an outline and first draft of the industry TRENDS which will form part of your final report. It should comprise about 700 words.	**HAND IN** → Table of Content to date → Project Plan – Week 2 → Outline and first draft of industry trends

WEEKS	OUTLINE	DELIVERABLES
Week 12 13 – 17 Oct	**Monday to Thursday** Full time presence in industry: You will form part of your department and be involved in their activities. During this time you need to execute week 3 of the Project Plan. **Friday:** Full presence on campus: 1) Revise and prepare for Knowledge Exam. 2) Preparation for PoL. 3) Industry Report: Update Project Plan. 4) Participate in council session.	**HAND IN** → Table of Content to date → Improved draft of research documented → Project Plan – Week 3

Week 13 20 – 24 Oct	**Monday to Thursday:** Full time presence in industry: You will form part of your department and be involved in their activities. During this time you need to execute week 4 of the Project Plan. **Friday** Full presence on campus: 1) Revise and prepare for Knowledge Exam. 2) Preparation for PoL. 3) Industry Report: Update Project Plan. 4) Participate in council session (optional).	**HAND IN** → Table of Content to date → Project Plan – Week 4
Week 14 27 – 31 Oct	**Monday to Thursday** Full time presence in industry: You will form part of your department and be involved in their activities. During this time you need to execute week 5 of the Project Plan. **Friday** Full presence on campus: 1) Revise and prepare for Knowledge Exam. 2) Preparation for PoL. 3) Industry Report: Update Project Plan.	**HAND IN** → Table of Content to date → Project Plan – Week 5 → Draft of combined project to date (research + project = +/- 6000 words)
Week 15 03 – 07 Nov	**Monday to Thursday** Full time presence in industry: You will form part of your department and be involved in their activities. During this time you need to execute week 6 of the Project Plan. During this week, contact a person with whom you can practise a mock presentation next Friday. **Friday** Full presence on campus: 1) Revise and prepare for Knowledge Exam. 2) Preparation for PoL. 3) Industry Report: Update Project Plan.	**HAND IN** → Table of Content to date → Project Plan – Week 6
WEEKS	**OUTLINE**	**DELIVERABLES**

Week 16 10 – 14 Nov	**Monday to Thursday** Full time presence in industry: You will form part of your department and be involved in their activities. During this time you need to execute week 7 of the Project Plan. Confirm your commitment to the person helping you prepare your presentation. Design your PowerPoint presentation. **Friday** Full presence on campus: 1) Revise and prepare for Knowledge Exam. 2) Preparation for PoL. 3) Industry Report: Update Project Plan.	**HAND IN** → Table of Content to date → Project Plan – Week 7 → Draft of PowerPoint presentation → Mock presentation to peers
Week 17 17 – 21 Nov	**Monday to Thursday** Full time presence in industry: You will form part of your department and be involved in their activities. During this time you need to execute any outstanding or back logged actions in your Project Plan. **Friday** Full presence on campus: 1) Revise and prepare for Knowledge Exam. 2) Preparation for PoL. 3) Industry Report: Finalise Project.	**HAND IN no later than 12h30** → Final Industry Report [It is imperative to meet this deadline as these documents need to forwarded to the external examination panel.] → Mock presentation to coach
Week 18 **2**4 – 28 Nov		**MONDAY** → KNOWLEDGE EXAMINATION (open book) 09h00 - 13h00 (Library) **WEDNESDAY** → PORTFOLIO of LEARNING 09h00 - 13h00

		FRIDAY → INDIVIDUAL INDUSTRY PRACTICAL PROJECT PANEL PRESENTATION 09h00 - 13h00
Week 19 1 – 5 Dec	**3rd YEAR STUDENTS: WILDERNESS EXPERIENCE**	
Week 20 8 – 12 Dec [TSiBA Vacation]	**FINAL REPORTS AVAILABLE FROM FRIDAY 12 DECEMBER 12h00**	