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EMERGING TRENDS AND INFLUENCES IN GHANAIAN HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY EDUCATION AND EMPLOYABILITY

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ABSTRACT

Whilst the scale of the employability needs of hospitality graduates is well known in developed countries, very little is known about this with regard to Ghana. There is concern in Ghana that the educational system is failing to produce employable graduates. This problem is more acute in hospitality education, where the curriculum structures may not support the effective preparation of the graduates for employment in the hospitality industry. In order to fill this gap, this research investigated the factors that influence the education and employability of hospitality graduates in Ghana, by examining the effectiveness of hospitality education in meeting the hospitality industry skills requirements and proposing a framework that will help to equip hospitality graduates with the employability skills and competencies required by the hospitality industry. To achieve this aim, a thorough literature review was carried out, which gave rise to the following research questions: 1) What is the current understanding of the concept of employability in Ghana, what employability skills and competencies does the hospitality industry need as a prerequisite for employable hospitality graduate, and how can hospitality education in Ghana meet these requirements? 2) Taking into consideration research question 1, how can the findings elucidate the problem of hospitality graduate employability in Ghana, and subsequently develop a framework to address the essential employer skills and competency requirements?

Three of the existing employability models, USEM, DOTS and CareerEdge, were considered based on an extensive review of the literature on graduate employability. These models tend to be oriented towards developed countries and so may be not entirely suitable for studying a developing country like Ghana. However, the models informed the development of a Ghanaian Hospitality Employability Enhancement Framework (GHEEF) based on the findings of this research. The study provides evidence from the Ghanaian context of a lack of research focusing on the use and application of employability models for enhancing hospitality graduate employability, especially using the GHEEF to improve hospitality education.

To answer the questions outlined above (and refine the GHEEF), the research was carried out using a mixed-methods approach to the data analysis which combines qualitative insights from the lived experiences of students, lecturers and employers regarding Ghanaian hospitality graduates' employability, with a questionnaire-based empirical measurement of the extent of the employability problem. An initial discussion with supervisors to achieve content validity in designing the research instruments was conducted. This was reinforced by a focus group study of hospitality lecturers, questionnaire surveys of lecturers and graduates, and a semi-structured interview of employers. The data analysis triangulated the research findings across these stakeholder groups. The main findings of the research include an acute lack of understanding of the concept of employability among lecturers, graduates and employers, the need for curriculum innovations, a disenabling environment for hospitality education, which fails to equip students with industry-based employability skills, and the ranking of the relative potential of different hospitality courses to support the development of specific employability skills, using Pareto analysis and course-employability skills affinity matrices. The latter is a new result, unknown in the employability literature prior to this research.

The key contribution to knowledge of the findings includes an elucidation of the key gaps in hospitality graduate employability education in Ghana; the mapping of the range of employability skills that graduates should possess in order to be successfully employed within the hospitality industry; the theoretical development of a conceptual framework for researching and improving employability education in Ghana; and the

creation of a Ghanaian Hospitality Employability Enhancement Framework (GHEEF), which will offer practical guidance on how to address these challenges.

DECLARATION

The objective of this research was to investigate the factors that affect the employability of hospitality graduates in Ghana. I Adiza Sadik certify that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the rules and regulations of Sheffield Hallam University (Sheffield Business School). It is an individual contribution with the support of my supervisors: Dr Kevin Nield and Dr Alisha Ali and has not been submitted for any other degree or published at any other educational institution in the United Kingdom or Overseas. I certify that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the sources and references used are acknowledged and cited in the thesis.

Signed……..

Date……..

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my husband; Alhaji Imoro Alhassan who has encouraged me and made sure that I give it all it takes to complete this academic journey. My children Pharida and Ameena (Moda), who have to endure my absence and in no way were affected by this quest for academic knowledge, Also my big sister Mrs. Hawa Yakubu (Yaya) for her encouragement. I love you all.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AGCAS	Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Service
BTech	Bachelor of Technology
BTech HTM	Bachelor of Technology Hotel and Tourism Management
CBI	Confederation of British Industries
COTVET	Council of Technical and Vocational Training
CSU	UK Career Service Unit
CTK	Contribution to Knowledge
CV	Curriculum Vitae
DK	Domain Knowledge
DOTS	Decision learning, Opportunity awareness, Transition and Self-awareness
EDP	Employability Development Profile
ESAR	Education Sector Annual Review
ESECT	Enhancing Students Employability Co-Ordination Team
GHEEF	Ghanaian Hospitality Employability Enhancement Framework
GEEFTRACs	Ghanaian Hospitality Employability Enhancement Framework Training Centres
GES	Ghana education Service
GHE	Ghana Higher Education
GIMPA	Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration
GIPC	Ghana Investment Promotion Centre

GLASS	Ghana Living Standard Survey
GPRS	Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy
HCIM	Hotel Catering and Institutional Management
HE	Hospitality Education
HHCIM	Hospitality Hotel Catering Institutional Management
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council of England
HEI	Higher Education Institutions
HM	Her Majesty
HND	Higher National Diploma
HOTCATT	Hotel Catering and Tourism Training Centre
HT	Hospitality and Tourism
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ILO	International Labour Organisation
ISSER	Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research
IT	Information Technology
TLA	Teaching Learning and Assessment
NAB	National Accreditation Board
NABPTEX	National Board for Professional and Technician Examination
NCIHE	UK National Committee on Inquiry for Higher Education
NCTE	National Council for Tertiary Education
OECD	The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PDP	Personal Development Plan

QAA	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
RO	Research Objective
RQ	Research Question
SSD	Supply side demand
RETLAC	Research, Teaching Learning, and Consultancy
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
SHUCEC	Sheffield Hallam University Careers and Employability Centre
TEI	Tertiary Education Institutions
TVET	Technical Vocational Education Training
UKCES	United Kingdom Commission for Employment and Skills
GEM	Graduate Employability Monitor
USEM	Understanding, Skilful practices, Efficacy beliefs and Metacognition
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council

1 CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

The International Labour Organisation (ILO's) World Employment and Social Outlook for Youth (2014) Report states that the quality of the skills that a country possesses is a critical factor in determining the ability of that country to exploit the competitive advantage of the new opportunities that are arising amidst the current globalisation and technological changes. Unemployment worldwide was estimated to rise to about 12.6 per cent in 2013 and as many as 73 million young people are likely to be unemployed by 2020 (ILO 2014). ILO (2016) made another prediction that unemployment would rise by about 2.3 million by the end of 2016, to 199.4 million. This prediction rose modestly in 2017, to 5.8 per cent. (From 5.7 per cent in 2016) – representing 3.4 million more unemployed people globally (bringing total unemployment to just over 201 million in 2017). This according to ILO (2017) the increase in unemployment levels and rates in 2017 is driven by failing labour market conditions in emerging countries. This is a worrying revelation that is scaring many emerging economies (ILO 2017). This exposure furthermore aggravate the overwhelming unemployment rate among young people in many developed as well as developing economies (e.g., see British Council 2014; Archer and Chetty 2013; Pitan 2016; Ajiboye et al. 2013). Several recent studies provide strong empirical support for this contention (Garwe 2013; Adesina 2013; Page 2013; Baah-Boateng 2013, 2015; Rudhumbu et al. 2016; Edinyang et al. 2015). This situation puts pressure on tertiary education providers to equip graduates with not only academic knowledge, but also the skills that will make them versatile in the workplace (British council 2015; Pitan 2016).

The rapid growth of higher education and the competitive labour markets globally makes the concept of employability important (Yang et al. 2015; Owusu et al. 2014; Bawakyillenuo et al. 2013; British Council 2014; Edinyang et al. 2015). The European Commission has prioritised employability education as an employment strategy aimed at resolving the challenges linked to global graduate unemployment. It has also been at the forefront of policy and theoretical debate at the local, regional, national and international levels (Owusu et al. 2014; Green et al. 2013; ILO 2014). In line with this, higher education (HE) underpins the development of nations by producing human

resources with the right kind of capacities, skill and knowledge to embrace the challenges of unemployment in the 21st century (UNESCO 2013; ILO 2012).

UNESCO (2013) reported that, approximately 97 million students would be enrolled in higher education worldwide. Half of this figure would be in the developing world. This means that a competitive environment exists for graduates and young people aged 15-24 years who are yet to find their way into the job market. Almost 74 million young people within this age group were looking for work in 2014 (ILO 2014). These young people need to be armed with the right skills that today's world of business and knowledge-based economy require (World Bank, 2015).

The ‘knowledge-based economy’ is an expression coined to describe the trends in advanced economies towards a greater dependence on knowledge and high skill levels (OECD 2006). The graduate market is changing, so graduates and workers need to possess the right skills to participate in the knowledge-based economy, which is important for confronting the challenges of underemployment, unemployment, job insecurity, redundancy, and redeployment (Green et al. 2013). Higher education is therefore challenged to re-think and re-orient education and training to promote employability (European Commission 2010; Palmer 2009; Page 2013; Pitan 2016; Baah-Boateng 2015).

Similarly, Rufai et al. (2015) take a similar view of how HE in Africa is criticised for its irrelevant mode of training, compared with the socioeconomic needs of countries, and its consequent production of graduates who are ill-equipped for the world of work. Studies by Pitan (2015) and Emeh et al. (2012) and Owusu et al. (2014) supported this claim.

Ghanaian HE institutions are also exposed to this global challenge (Baah-Boateng 2015). Ghana requires skilled manpower to meet the demands of global competition (Owusu et al. 2014; Baah-Boateng 2015). The re-orientation of tertiary education should involve a curriculum review, as suggested by Boateng and Ofori-Sarpong (2002), to meet the demands of the technology, globalisation and competitiveness trend in Ghana today.

According to the Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER), Ghana (2014), there are over 200,000 unemployed graduates in Ghana. This figure is estimated to increase by about 71,000 per year when students from various tertiary

institutions enter the job market. This means that Ghanaian HE needs to offer learning that goes beyond educational attainment, by focusing more on skills development and innovation (Ghana Ministry of Education 2015; Council of Technical and Vocational Training (COTVET) 2013).

Graduate employability has become an issue in HE in Ghana (Owusu et al. 2014; Baah-Boateng 2013). Many Sub-Saharan African countries are experiencing similar problems of graduate unemployment because employers are stating that the graduates of many HEIs lack the requisite skills (Ajiboye et al. 2013; Adebakin et al. 2015; Baah-Boateng and Baffour-Awuah 2015. O'leary 2016). In Sub-Saharan Africa, the poor employability skills, attitudes, and competencies of graduates are normally blamed on curricula that are considered outdated and irrelevant to today's contemporary job market (Pitan 2016). Related to this problem are the poor training provided to students and graduates, outdated teaching strategies, poor career guidance, and dependence on traditional teaching methods, which over-emphasises rote learning and examination-based assessment (Pitan 2016; Dasmani 2011).

Education and labour market researchers in Ghana are suggesting courses that place a definitive focus on the job market readiness, skills and competencies that Ghanaian graduates require to become work-ready and relevant (Ministry of Education Ghana 2015; Baah-Boateng and Baffour-Awuah 2015). In view of this, there is an indication that Ghana's education and training are failing to meet the needs of the labour market in terms of both relevance and the skills that graduates possess (Owusu et al 2014; Gondwe and Walenkamp 2011; Bawakyillenuo et al. 2013; British Council 2014; Baah-Boateng and Baffour-Awuah 2015). The Ghana National Employment Policy (2014) and Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare affirm this. This predicament, as indicated by the employment policy, calls for a careful consideration of the kind of policy interventions that would ease the plight of Ghanaian graduates (Gondwe and Walenkamp 2011). The graduate employability problem is significant among university and polytechnic graduates aged 15-24 years (Ghana Living Standard Survey (GLASS) 2014). Consequently, the government of Ghana has been blamed for failing to create a sufficient number of jobs.

A study by the British Council (2015) on *Universities, Employability and Inclusive Development*, which focuses largely on four Sub-Saharan Africa countries: Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya and South Africa (2015), indicates that one of the major challenges that

Sub-Saharan Africa is facing is robust research evidence on which to base effective policy making and reforms. The study further indicates that all four countries studied face graduate employment issues. However, Nigeria and South Africa have higher unemployment figures compared to Ghana and Kenya. The Nigerian rate is as high as 23.1 per cent for those with undergraduate degrees. South Africa has a far lower rate for university graduates (5.9 per cent); it is high for those with diploma or certificate level qualifications.

It is interesting to note that the British council Report found a lack of unemployment figures specifically for HE graduates for Ghana and Kenya. However, the Report estimates that, for the 25-29 age group, which encompasses recent graduates, the unemployment rate is 41.6 per cent in Ghana, and 15.7 per cent in Kenya. This same study confirmed that

for many countries, there is a lack of basic statistical information relating to HE enrolment, quality and outcomes, and a lack of background data from censuses or household surveys. In relation to graduate employability, lack of evidence is in fact a global phenomenon with only a small number of high-income countries (e.g. USA, UK and Australia) have developed data sets in this area.

Therefore, it is difficult in this research to find adequate statistical evidence to measure the rate of graduate unemployment, especially in Ghana. Many labour market researchers used anecdotal evidence regarding the problem of graduate employment (Gondwe and Walenkamp 2011; Asafu-Adjaye 2012).

Unemployment is a major political and socio-economic problem facing policymakers in Ghana (British council 2015). Several figures have been quoted over the years; however, the Ghana statistical Service (GSS) figures put the general unemployment figures at an average rate of 8.82% from 2001 to 2013, growing at a rate of 12.9% in 2005 (GSS 2013). The majority of the labour force is in the informal sector, which employed about 20% of the total workforce two decades ago (Ghana National Employment Policy 2013). This figure has reduced to only 10% of the labour force in active employment, leaving 90% in the informal sector.

Most Ghanaian graduates from the HEIs were employed in the public sector. However, this situation has changed; according to the British Council (2015) study, over 40,000 HEIs graduates are estimated to enter the labour market annually. However, only two

percent of these graduates are employed in the formal sector, with the majority being forced to look for jobs in the informal sector, making it extremely challenging to track labour market trends, as most of these groups in the informal sector are unregistered (Twerefou et al. 2007). With regards to Ghanaian HEIs and the labour market, the fact remains that Ghana's population is becoming more educated. The skills requirement supplied by HEIs to industry is inadequate (British Council 2015; Country Operations Department 2012). Asafu-Adjaye (2012:123) postulates that human capital theory relates level of education to productivity and therefore growth and the economic development of economies. Hence, manpower development through education and training is proven to be an efficient way of enhancing productivity. In view of this assertion, countries with low levels of education are trapped in what he termed 'technological stagnation and low growth'. Therefore, HE in Africa meant a low risk of unemployment (Kuepie et al. 2006) before the thriving and structural adjustments took place in Africa. However, the opposite is now the case as, according to Asafu-Adjaye (2012), by the end of the 1980s, economic crises and cuts in public spending had truncated the labour market outcomes of the educated youth, thereby creating high levels of unemployment among the educated youth in Africa which, in recent times, has reinforced the uncertainty about the private returns on education in terms of employability.

HE in Ghana is critical for the individual as well as for national development (Bawakyillenuo et al. 2013; Asafu-Adjaye 2012). Several reforms have been implemented to promote and achieve the benefits of attaining this level of education in Ghana. These reforms were aimed at making education relevant for economic and social development (Otoo and Asafu-Adjaye 2009). In Ghana, the expectation of households and the public authorities from investing in education is to improve the progress of the individual and the realisation of the envisaged economic development (Asafu-Adjaye 2012).

There is a growing awareness in Ghana and several other Sub-Saharan countries of the importance of HE for their economic development (Yizengaw 2008). Anecdotal evidence in Ghana suggests that education is still widely believed to be critical for the economy as well as for the individual (Asafu-Adjaye 2012). Ghanaian HE institutions are increasingly required to produce highly employable graduates who can respond to the ever-changing needs of the contemporary workplace. This has resulted in questions being raised about the quality of graduates for the labour market and the

ability of graduates to meet the needs of employers. In view of these points, Ghana's HE is failing to meet the needs of the labour market (Owusu et al. 2014; Gondwe and Walenkamp 2011; Bawakyillenuo et al. 2013; British Council 2014; Baah-Boateng and Baffour-Awuah 2015) for economic development.

The Ghana National Employment Policy (2014) and Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare confirm this position by indicating that the courses provided in HE are irrelevant to the needs of the economy. This difficulty, as indicated by the employment policy (2014), calls for a careful consideration of the kind of policy interventions that would ease the plight of Ghanaian graduates (Gondwe and Walenkamp 2011). It is argued that this mismatch in HE is producing unemployable graduates for the labour market rather than employable ones with the requisite skills that the labour market needs (Bawakyillenuo et al. 2013; Dasmani 2011; Gondwe and Walenkamp 2011; Ministry of Trade and Industry 2010; Ghana employers Association Report 2010).

Similarly, the above observation is corroborated by Ayogyam et al. (2012), who conclude that the graduate unemployment situation being witnessed currently in Ghana is due to a lack of the skills that are highly needed by industry. This reality motivated this research. However, despite these references to inadequate human resource development and education, policy documents contain very few references to the role of HE in development, or how the HE system should respond to the needs of the economy (Education Sector Annual Review (ESAR) 2010). This adds to the unemployment situation of the graduate. This view is reinforced by Twerefou et al. (2012). who argue that the failure of HE in Ghana to produce graduates with employable skills is due to the nature of the education provided, which is described as too theoretical in the approach to curriculum development, with graduates not being trained to be innovative and entrepreneurial.

In 2007, Ghana's education system underwent a major reform to link education with the labour market by developing programmes that are geared towards job market readiness; however, this initiative suffered from implementation issues (Akyeampong 2009). Linking HE with employability, the British Council report (2015) further argues that stakeholders have no clue of the magnitude of the problem of employability, because there are no tracer studies or rigorous data on graduate unemployment and destination. Asafu-Adjaye (2012) confirms this and asserted lack of data and absence of literature on the estimation of the outcome of education on employability and

graduates' destination, which are also acknowledged by several labour market analysts in Sub-Saharan African countries, even though education has a positive influence on employability.

The difficulty of adequate statistical data has prompted the use of the Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS 5 2008) to assess the effects of education on employability in Ghana (Asafu-Adjaye 2012). Available data from the Ghana labour market statistics is based on youth unemployment figures rather than graduate destination, as is the case in developed countries (Asafu-Adjaye 2012). The British Council (2015:82) similarly confirms this, with a quote from an interview with policymakers to the effect that that no specific national policy exists regarding graduate employability

'we do not have a coherent policy on HE and employability and we don't have benchmark or a competency framework because of a policy conflict between National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) and National Accreditation Board (NAB)'.

This can also be confirmed by the researcher, as she found the same problem of getting statistical data to back her evidence base for the research when visiting Ghana for the pilot research in 2013, from these bodies (NCTE, NAB and the National Board for Professional and Technician Examinations of Ghana **(**NABPTEX). These bodies are responsible for HE in Ghana. During the pilot study, frantic efforts were made by the researcher to obtain data from the Employment Ministry of Ghana, but all proved futile.

It is, therefore, difficult to address graduate employability based on concrete figures, due to the lack of organised information (British Council 2015). Twerefou et al. (2007) postulate that the Ghanaian economy currently lacks a systematic monitoring or evaluative mechanism for some of the programmes being implemented. Therefore, it is difficult to accept data from the Ghana Statistical Service on trends in the labour market. The current set of monitoring indicators that is identified by the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) pays very little attention to employment programmes (Heintz: 2004). This indicates that the problem of the lack of statistical data to back research is widespread, as is the case with this research.

The mismatch between the programmes offered by the HEIs and their impact on policy is a concern on graduate employability (British Council 2015). This also has an impact on the requirements of the labour market. Drawing on the above shortcomings, this research adapted similar anecdotal evidence concerning graduate unemployment in

Ghana by investigating the factors that impact the employability of hospitality graduates. Especially as there is little existing literature on graduate employability as ascertained by several authors including the study of the British Council (2015) and Asafu-Adjaye (2012).

Anecdotal evidence indicates that Ghanaian graduates face the difficulty of finding employment due to employer dissatisfaction with graduates' competencies and skills (British Council (2015). Ghanaian graduates are described as 'half-baked' due to their lack of preparedness to enter the workplace. This makes the problem of graduate employability common knowledge in society.

This research on hospitality graduates was motivated based on the anecdotal evidence which suggests that the majority of Ghanaian hospitality graduates are seen as unemployable; many fail to secure a job many years after graduation (Sarkodie and Adom 2015; Avornyo 2013; Asirifi et al. 2013), conceivably due to the many factors and influences associated with how these graduates were educated and trained and the nature of the curriculum used to train them, in terms of both the subject matter knowledge and how they use that knowledge(Education Sector Performance Report 2013). Hospitality graduates' employability needs are well-known in developed countries (Maher 2005; Andrew and Higson 2008; Nield 2005; Ali et al 2014). However, very little is known about employability regarding Ghanaian graduates in general and hospitality graduates in particular (British Council 2015). Specific to this research, hospitality graduates from Ghana's tertiary institutions are caught up in this wider unemployment debate that the nation's graduates face.

Visible employment avenues in the hospitality industry have increased with the emergence and expansion of both multinational and Ghana-based hospitality businesses in the country in 2011. As a result, hospitality education in Ghana is patronised earnestly. This creates an increasing demand for hospitality employees at the managerial level (Sarkodie and Adom 2015; Asirifi et al. 2013; Mensah-Ansah 2014). This is interpreted as a growing demand for hospitality courses to prepare that workforce professionally for both local and international consumers. HE programs need to provide an education that not only improves the employability of hospitality graduates but also ensures their success in the industry. With this reality, the effectiveness of the Ghanaian HE hospitality curriculum has been questioned by

several authors regarding its relevance and whether it is producing quality skilled manpower for the industry (Asirifi et al. 2013).

Regardless of the growing attention being paid to hospitality education, which offers a wide diversity of courses throughout the world (WTTC 2009), there is lack of reviews on whether the current hospitality education curriculum in Ghana conforms with the industry expectations (Owusu et al 2014; Sarkodie and Adom 2014; Asirifi et al. 2013; Ansah 2012). Hospitality education, therefore, underpins the expansion of the hospitality industry in Ghana, since the two are compatible. As such, there has been a massive increase in the public and private sector hospitality education programmes, to fill the gap between the hospitality education and industry needs, amidst the growth of the hospitality industry in Ghana in recent times (Ghana Tourism Authority 2014). The Hospitality and Tourism industry in Ghana has become the fourth largest contributor to Ghana's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Mensah-Ansah 2015, 2014; Ghana Tourism Authority 2014). Sarkodie and Adom (2015) and Mensah-Ansah (2014) maintain that hospitality and tourism are considered key in the service sector in Ghana. Thus, the hospitality curriculum needs to prioritise subject areas according to their perceived importance to industry; this prioritisation needs to be an up-to-date reflection of the ever-changing needs of the industry (Sarkodie and Adom 2015; Mensah-Ansah 2014). In effect, an innovative hospitality curriculum framework for hospitality education in Ghana will ameliorate hospitality education and enhance Ghanaian hospitality graduate employability.

In conclusion, therefore, this research intends to conduct a more detailed study of hospitality graduate employability in Ghana from the perspective of hospitality graduates, in a way that contextualises existing employability models to Ghana as a developing country, and creates a Ghanaian Hospitality Employability Enhancement Framework (GHEEF). The research will also provide a more detailed evidence base for further developing a theoretical framework which other researchers can apply to other disciplines and other Sub-Saharan developing countries. It is envisaged that the research findings and framework will enable hospitality students in Ghana to develop their employability skills.

The lecturers themselves will be able to use the strategies suggested in the model to improve the curriculum along the three key dimensions of learning, teaching and assessment, and the research on employability, which they need to improve their

curriculum practices. Policymakers in the HEI sector will learn from the research how their policies inhibit the employability prospects of graduates, and how these can be improved.

The rest of the chapter is organised as follows. Section 1.2 states the research aim, 1.3 research objectives and 1.4 key research question. Section 1.5 discusses rationale of the research this is reinforced by Section 1.6 which states the research problem regarding the gap between knowledge and employability, while Section 1.7 explicates the contributions of the research to knowledge. Section 1.8 concludes by outlining the structure of the thesis. Section 1.9 concludes the chapter.

1.2 Research Aim

The concept of employability has been widely studied and used to enhance the employability of graduates. Anecdotal evidence in Ghana indicates that hospitality graduates are poorly equipped with employable skills to take up graduate positions in the hospitality industry which is expanding exponentially in recent time (Sarkodie and Adom 2015; Asirifi et al. 2013). There has been inadequate research on identifying the problem of the unemployment of hospitality graduates in Ghana. Hospitality education does not equip graduates with adequate employable skills to meet the needs of the hospitality industry. This is evident from the background information of the research regarding the overwhelming graduate unemployment in Ghana, also stated in the problem statement and rationale above. This assertion has implications for HE stakeholders on how to solve this problem of lack of skills. Although the problem of graduate unemployment is manifest, there is, however, a dearth of statistical data in Ghana on graduates in general and hospitality graduates in particular, that could be used to measure the magnitude of the phenomena. It is also difficult to quantify and base these arguments on statistical figures (Asafu-Adjaye 2012; British Council 2015). To address these problems, this research aims:

1. To investigate the factors which affect Ghanaian hospitality graduates employability by examining the meaning of the concept of employability, the effectiveness of the hospitality curriculum in meeting industry needs.

2. To develop an integrative framework for improving hospitality graduates employability in Ghana.

1.3 Research objectives

To meet the aim of the research, the following four objectives have been set:

1. To review critically the *current knowledge* on employability and its applications to hospitality education and graduates in Ghana, including an *understanding* of how employability and hospitality education are perceived in the Ghanaian context.

2. To examine the *trends* in the Hospitality and Tourism Industry in Ghana, the corresponding *skills requirements* and the extent to which hospitality education in Ghana meets these requirements.

3. To investigate the effectiveness of hospitality education in meeting the industry needs.

4. To develop a framework for enhancing the employability of Ghanaian hospitality graduates.

1.4 Key research questions

The following two research questions were formulated to fulfil the research aim and objectives detailed above. These research questions are listed below and expanded upon in the discussions that follow:

RQ.1 What is the current understanding of the concept of employability in Ghana, what employability skills and competencies does the hospitality industry need as a prerequisite for employable hospitality graduate in the hospitality industry, and how can hospitality education in Ghana meet these requirements?

For this Research Question (RQ), the researcher used a critical literature review to understand employability concepts, the emerging trends in the hospitality industry in Ghana which were previously unknown, the hospitality skills and competencies required currently in the Ghana hospitality industry, and the nature of curriculum innovations which hospitality HEIs will need to develop to meet these requirements. The hospitality industry employers' opinions on the trends and influences of the

hospitality industry were obtained through conducting in-depth semi-structured interviews. The researcher also conducted a focus group with hospitality lecturers on issues concerning hospitality education. The focus group discussions enabled the researcher to gain a baseline understanding of the current experiences of lecturers regarding the development of employability skills in hospitality education in Ghana. This understanding clarified issues related to their teaching of hospitality courses.

Using these different approaches enabled the researcher to triangulate the research findings across the evidence base. This perspective could bridge the present knowledge gap and add to the employability literature. Subsequently, questionnaires were developed and administered to lecturers and graduates about the teaching, learning, and assessment (TLA) experiences that prepare graduates for work in the hospitality industry. The main reason for surveying lecturers and graduates was to increase the evidence base and make it sufficiently robust for model building.

RQ. 2. Taking into consideration research question 1 above, how can the findings elucidate the problem of hospitality graduate employability in Ghana, and subsequently develop a framework to address the essential employer skills and competency requirements?

For this research question, the researcher used the findings from question 1 to develop an enabling framework that will be used to enhance hospitality graduate employability in Ghana. Specifically, the framework will be a case study of hospitality graduates, which will make it more widely applicable to other graduates in Ghana, and similar developing countries that face similar issues. The perspectives of the different groups of respondents will be used to triangulate the results from lecturers and graduates to foster a better understanding of hospitality graduate employability in Ghana. Similarly, the industry and policy perspectives which were obtained from the interviews with the employers and review of Ghanaian HE will make the framework applicable to wider Ghanaian contexts; for example, other disciplines and industry sectors. It is expected that, by addressing these two research questions, and the overall research aim, an important contribution to the current knowledge in the field of hospitality education and employability in Ghana, the concept of employability and curriculum development will be delivered.

1.5 Rationale of the research

Several studies in the Ghanaian literature reveal that the education and training offered by the HEIs are failing to address the skills needed for the transition of graduates to the labour market (Baah-Boateng and Baffour-Awuah 2015; British Council 2014; Bawakyillenuo et al. 2013; Education Sector Performance Report 2013; National Employment Policy 2014). HE in Ghana needs to improve the curriculum by innovating the teaching, learning and assessment (TLA) strategies to produce graduates with the skills necessary to enter the job market (Baah-Boateng and Baffour-Awuah 2015; Education Sector Performance Report 2013).

Despite several interventions by stakeholders to correct this anomaly, several authors Bawakyillenuo et al. (2013), Dasmani (2011), Gondwe and Walenkamp (2011), Government of Ghana (2010), Ministry of Trade and Industry (2010), Palmer (2005), and Boateng and Ofori-Sarpong (2002) and the British Council (2014) acknowledges that there remains a mismatch with what HE is producing for the labour market and what the labour market actually requires. As observe by Ayogyam et al. (2012) the unemployment currently in Ghana amongst graduates is due to a lack of employable skills highly desirable by industry.

According to the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy policy document (GPRS II (2010) report), human resource development aims mainly to ensure the development of a knowledgeable, well-trained, educated and disciplined labour force, with the capacity to drive and sustain economic growth. In this vein, the Ghanaian economy requires HE to provide graduates with job-relevant skills to meet the demands of industry (Bawakyillenuo et al. 2013; Gondwe and Walenkamp 2011; Akyeampong 2010; Baffour-Awuah and Thomson 2011; Boateng and Ofori-Sarpong 2002). As observed by the British Council (2014), this disparity has also been identified by several authors concerned with education and labour market policy issues in Ghana, given the gaps between what HE is producing for the labour market and what the labour market really requires (Gondwe and Walenkamp 2011).

This reality puts intense pressure on the tertiary education providers to reengineer their processes to equip graduates with employable skills (British Council 2014; Bawakyillenuo et al. 2013; Gondwe and Walenkamp 2011). Similarly, Boateng and Ofori-Sarpong (2002) maintain that the perceived incidence of graduate unemployment

in Ghana is compounded by irrelevant curricula, teaching, learning and assessments. The lack of suitable skills is preventing the transition of graduates to the job market (Kutsanedzie et al. 2013; Education sector performance report 2010). Certainly, this situation is always blamed on the central government's failure to create sufficient job opportunities to absorb the teeming number of graduates supplied to the job market (Gondwe and Walenkamp 2011).

Some of these studies attribute the situation to the inheritance of historical education sector deficits, the diminishing role of the public sector as the main employer, and increasing population (Baah-Boateng 2015; Boateng and Ofori-Sarpong 2002). These assertions have a weak evidence and solutions bases (British Council 2014), as no empirical research has yet investigated how to close these gaps (Aryeetey and Baah-Boateng 2015).

The British Council (2014) report indicates that one of the major challenges facing Sub-Saharan Africa is the unavailability of empirical and detailed research on which to base policy, inadequate research and the ineffective policy reforms, especially regarding intervention. Several recommendations about the issue of the skills mismatch look towards improving and promoting technical skills. Even though it is important to have the subject knowledge relevant to seeking a job, no concrete efforts have been made to obtain baseline data on the demand and supply situation of the labour market, leading to the production of graduates with archaic skills that are not needed by the labour market (Akyeampong 2010; Boateng and Ofori-Sarpong 2002).

Interestingly, some employers take the view that this disparity is not exclusively due to poor technical or subject skills, but also to a lack of good personal attributes and interpersonal skills among graduates. For example, Boateng and Ofori-Sarpong (2002) argue that the changing nature of the labour market requires different types of skills, attributes and competencies. In other words, employers are interested in individuals not only with HE qualifications, but also additional skills that are appropriate for job fulfilment. For example, a sample job advertisement in one of Ghana's most popular newspapers reads as follows:

'*Flexibility and adaptable mind-set; Creative and results-oriented; Able to work within schedule, with little or no supervision; Strategic thinker; Assertive and tolerant; Imaginative and willing to try new things; Able to make decisions; Able to work long*

hours without notice; Able to learn new techniques quickly and apply them to the current environment and interpersonal skills' (Daily Graphic January-June 2012).

Graduates need to be up-to-date with new trends such as globalisation and technology to promote access and retention in the market place. Therefore, what Ghanaian HE needs to provide to promote graduate transition to the job market is academic knowledge and what Boateng and Ofori-Sarpong (2002) termed 'non-academic skills'. This notion, however, has implications for the relevance of tertiary education in Ghana.

These revelations motivated this research by providing a solid theoretical basis for investigating the factors that impact on hospitality graduates' employability and devise strategies that can enhance it. The concept of employability and the employability models used in advanced economies such as the UK, Australia, USA, Canada and Europe for enhancing hospitality graduate employability are adapted as key ideas in the development of a framework to suit the Ghanaian context.

1.6 Statement of the research problem

The research was motivated by the fact that most Ghanaian hospitality graduates are regarded as unemployable; many of them fail to secure a job many years after graduation (Sarkodie and Adom 2015; Avornyo 2013; Asirifi et al. 2013). This problem is conceivably due to the many factors and influences associated with how these graduates were educated and trained and the nature of the curriculum used to train them, in terms of both the subject matter knowledge and how they use that knowledge (Education Sector Performance Report 2013). There is a consensus that Ghanaian HE and, in fact, that of all Sub-Saharan African countries facing similar problems, is not critical enough (Pitan 2016), so hospitality graduates and graduates of similar disciplines appear to lack several skills and competencies, which involve also their self-concept, motivation, and professionalism (Baah-Boateng 2015; Adesina 2013; Amankwah 2011; Education Sector Performance Report 2010).

This research, therefore, investigates the opinions of the key stakeholders in hospitality education in Ghanaian HEIs to understand this problem from their perspectives, and how it may be addressed using curriculum innovation (Egwuatu 2013). Past researchers in this area have not studied this problem in a way that produces an employability enhancement framework (Sarkodie and Adom 2015; Asirifi et al. 2013; Bawakyillenuo et al. 2013) that could be meaningfully applied by different stakeholders

in dealing with hospitality graduate employability. These stakeholders are students, lecturers, HE policy makers and employers. With respect to employers, it is felt that the arrival of multinational hotel chains in Ghana creates an additional demand for skills that are more modern and require more professionalism (Ghana Tourist Board 2009). When the managers of these multinational chain hotels and hospitality-related businesses feel that Ghanaian hospitality graduates lack the required skills, they are less likely to employ them than if the graduates are appropriately skilled. Indeed, some of the multinational hotels are bringing their home-grown staff with them (Baffour-Awuah and Thompson 2012; Ajiboye et al. 2013). According to Aryeetey et al. (2015), the implications of the shortage of skills required by the economy vary. The non-availability of the skills demanded by the economy compels the country to rely on skills from other countries, which cost more, sometimes in foreign currencies (Aryeetey and Baah-Boateng 2015).

Also, there has been no study of this nature in Ghana that connects the different aspects of the hospitality graduate employability problem, including the Ghanaian context and influences, industry trends and new skills, students and lecturers' experiences, socio-cultural factors, and a consideration of curriculum support (teaching, learning and assessment strategies) for enhancing graduate employability (Education Sector Performance Report 2010; Amedome et al. 2012).

Regarding the literature base on employability education, there is a problem; for instance, most employability models in the literature are based on experiences in developed economies, such as the UK, Europe, Australia, Canada and the USA (Pitan 2016; British Council 2014; Adesina 2013). Some of these employability models, therefore, may not work effectively in a developing country like Ghana, where there are recognisable differences in people's cultural behaviour and the resource bases of HE institutions that would provide the facilities for training students (Egwuatu 2013; Ghana Country Report 2013; Ajiboye et al. 2013). Hence, the contemporary research on employability that has been applied to developed countries fails to address the reality of developing countries, based on the researcher's 20 years of experience of teaching in Ghanaian HE.

In this research, there is an emphasis on going beyond the theory, to use the insights from the study to develop an enabling framework to resolve the problems of hospitality graduate employability, especially in the field of hospitality education. Methodologically,

the research that has been conducted in this area previously has been geared towards identifying the gaps in knowledge on employability issues, without using comprehensive stakeholder opinions to build an enabling framework for enhancing graduate employability. This requires a suitable mixed research method that combines qualitative insights into the stakeholders' experiences and numerical measurement of the extent of the identified problems.

In summary, this research intends to conduct a more detailed study of hospitality graduate employability in Ghana from the perspective of hospitality graduates, in a way that contextualises the existing employability models in Ghana as a developing country, and creates a Ghanaian Hospitality Employability Enhancement Framework (GHEEF). This research will also provide a more detailed evidence base for further developing a theoretical framework which other researchers can apply in other disciplines and other Sub-Saharan developing countries.

It is envisaged that the research findings and framework will enable hospitality students in Ghana to develop their employability skills. The lecturers themselves will be able to use the model to improve the curriculum along the three key dimensions of learning, teaching and assessment, related to the research on employability, which they need to improve their curriculum practices. Policy makers in the HEI sector will learn from the research how their policies inhibit the employability prospects of graduates, and how these can be improved.

1.7 Contributions of the research to knowledge

The results of this research will contribute new knowledge to the understanding of employability within HE circles in Ghana and its implications for TLA and curriculum improvement.

This is the first research project to take an in-depth look at the relationship between the domain knowledge about employability and the hospitality sector, with a focus on the Ghanaian hospitality industry and education. An important contribution of the research will be the development of the integrative model for enhancing hospitality graduates' employability in Ghanaian HE, with strategies for embedding employability in the curriculum. The model is entitled the Ghanaian Hospitality Employability Enhancement Framework (GHEEF). To the knowledge of the researcher, this model development has not been attempted before in Ghana.

Another contribution to knowledge is made by hospitality labour market employers' viewpoints on skills, attributes and competency requirements, which employers value the most in the hospitality industry, especially some vital employability elements suggested for adoption for hospitality management education in Ghana. In summary, therefore, the research provides an original contribution to knowledge in three ways:

1. A deeper understanding of the concept of employability and hospitality industry skills and competency requirements which was previously not known in Ghana by employers, lecturers, graduates, policymakers interested in the hospitality industry's skills requirements. This perspective could bridge the present knowledge gap and add to the literature.
2. The development of an integrative framework for enhancing hospitality graduate employability in Ghana, the GHEEF. The research explored the usefulness of the GHEEF as a theoretical and practical addition to the knowledge of employability, particularly as it affects Ghana and similar developing countries, for example sub-Sahara African countries.
3. The research will elucidate the problem of hospitality graduate employability issues and subsequently enhance their employability and address essential employer requirements to support the skills lists that are now in use. This evidence may add to the employability literature regarding what stakeholders regard as the most relevant features of an employable graduate. Finally, a contribution to knowledge about the hospitality industry is made by researching stakeholder viewpoints, regarding education, employability and the hospitality industry. This is based on the new constructs that emanated from the viewpoints (see Table 5.6). Within this study, the research also examines the effectiveness of the Ghanaian education system in producing graduates with employable skills, as viewed from the TLA perspectives. The detailed contributions to knowledge are presented in Chapters 6 and 7 of the thesis.

The contribution to knowledge of this research is extremely significant and will have the potential to improving HEIs' hospitality curriculum, given that the current TLA issues that are not helping graduate education and training to redress the lack of graduate employability skills in Ghana. It is also a timely piece of research for policymakers and HEI management, given the fact that lecturers do not design the curricula, unlike the situation in developed countries.

Eventually, the thesis will make empirical and theoretical contributions to knowledge. This empirical contribution will be the model for planning structured interventions regarding the graduate employability problem and policy in Ghana and, more generally, what is discussed in appropriate chapters of the thesis, mainly as recommendations for practice. The emphasis, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, will be on explaining how students, lecturers, policymakers and other stakeholders will benefit from GHEEF-based interventions for enhancing employability across HEIs, government, and industry, without 'clouding the issue in complexity' (Pool and Sewell, 2007:287).

The GHEEF can be adapted by other developing countries like Ghana which face similar problems of graduate employability and by groups other than students and new graduates. Also, the model, with suitable modifications, can be applied internally within Ghana to other industry sectors which manifest a growing graduate employability problem, and to any stage of a person's life, for example mid-life career changes or users facing redundancy.

1.8 Structure of the thesis

The thesis is presented in seven chapters.

Chapters 2 and 3 review the relevant literature related to the main issues of employability, including employability models, curriculum development in hospitality and employability, graduate skills and competences in hospitality, the research context, overview of HE and hospitality education in Ghana. An overarching research framework is presented as support for contextualising the employability models to Ghana, based on the objectives and revealed gaps in the knowledge outlined.

Chapter 4 presents the research methodology and design, the philosophical underpinning of the research showing how the fieldwork progressed, and the strategies used to answer the research objectives and questions. It discusses and justifies the research methodology. The chapter explains the overall approach to the qualitative data analysis and criteria for interpreting the findings. In addition, consideration is paid to validity, reliability, ethical conduct and the researcher's role in the research.

Chapter 5 details all of the data analyses and finding conducted on the field data that were gathered from the focus group, questionnaires and interviews.

Chapter 6 interprets and discusses the results. This discussion chapter interprets the findings from the preceding chapter and relates these to the literature and research questions. The chapter further uses insights from the foregoing chapters (the critical literature review and the data analysis results from Chapter 5) to develop the Ghanaian Hospitality Employability Enhancement Framework (GHEEF), which is a key outcome of this research.

The discussion interprets the research evidence in light of (a) current knowledge obtained from the literature review, b) its implications for investigating the research questions, c) importantly, therefore, how it relates to the research framework and the GHEEF, and d) how the results contribute to the knowledge of hospitality graduate employability in Ghana.

The GHEEF specifically elaborates the research framework presented at the end of Chapter 4 with the said research results. It is presented in two formats, namely a pre-GHEEF generic version which shows how employability models and practices that exist in developed countries, as explored in the literature review, support the adaption to developing country contexts which Ghana represents, and a Ghana-focused version. Finally, the research acknowledges the research limitations.

Chapter 7 concludes the thesis by summarising the main results and provides an overview of the contribution to knowledge, limitations of research and the future research.

1.9 Conclusion to the introduction chapter

Chapter 1, which is the introductory chapter of the research, outlines the background, aims and objectives, key research questions, rationale, statement of the research problem, contribution of the research to knowledge, and the structure of the chapters that make up of the thesis. The next chapter presents a critical literature review of the research concepts.

2 CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter critically reviews the employability literature and introduces the themes that form the foundation for this study. It examines employability concepts and meanings, together with the historical evolution of the concept of employability. The chapter further investigates relevant models of employability, graduate employability in HE, especially as it concerns hospitality education, the hospitality industry, strategies for embedding employability in the curriculum and conceptual frameworks.

The main part of the literature review for this research consists of accounts of key research carried out in relation to the main themes which are reflected in the research objectives and research questions. The focus of the literature is on clarifying the basic concepts, approaches and models used by previous researchers. Secondly, additional literature specific to skills development and curriculum constructs is presented in this chapter.

The rest of the chapter is organised as follows: Section 2.2 investigates the concept and meanings of employability whilst section 2.3 focuses on the historical development of employability. Section 2.4 examines employability and HE, which is the focus of this study, whilst Section 2.5 discusses employability and the labour market.

Section 2.6 examines employability and the HE context. Section 2.7 explores the roles of different employability models in theory and practice. Section 2.8 explores the literature on curriculum constructs**.** Section 2.9 presents strategies for embedding employability into the curriculum. Section 2.10 further discusses the semantics of skills, attributes and competencies while sections 2.11 and 2.12 discuss the rationale for using conceptual frameworks in research and related methodological notes, which inform the conceptual framework chosen for this study. Section 2.13 concludes the chapter.

2.2 The concepts, definitions and meanings of employability

This section is concerned with the conceptual and definitional issues of employability. It begins by outlining how employability is a complex concept, how it has evolved over time historically, and what it actually means. It also considers frameworks for operationalising, analysing and evaluating the idea of employability, including the broader labour market context incorporating household circumstances, individual attributes, characteristics and skills, and HE, regarding graduates.

The concept of employability has long been established and extensively discussed in the extant literature, yet it is a contested concept (Wilton 2011; Gazier 2006; Cai 2012; Tomlinson 2012; Hinchcliffe and Jolly 2011; Clark and Zukas 2012; Yorke and Knight 2006; Daly 2013). A wide range of meanings are used to explain the concept and still its true meaning remains debated (Pitan 2016; Oliver 2015; Mason et al. 2009; Rae 2007). A considerable amount of literature has been published during the last five decades on this concept and it has been widely studied (Wickramasinghe and Perera 2010). The reviewed literature in this study shows that the concept is not new, being originally formulated in the 1950s, but its impact was not realised until the late 1990s (El Mansour and Dean 2016; Sumanasiri et al. 2015; Finch et al. 2013; Pool and Sewell 2007; Cuyper et al. 2008; Wickramasighe and Perera 2010; Smith et al. 2015; McQuaid and Lindsay 2005; Knight and Yorke 2004). The few quantitative and empirical studies on employability have failed to provide conclusive evidence, adding to the complexity of establishing a universal definition of this phenomenon (Pool and Sewell 2007).

Interestingly, the concept of employability has been broadened by the integration of other components, such as company policy, the labour market situation and knowledge of the labour market (Wilton 2011). Hinchliffe and Adrienne (2011) suggest the need to link the concept of employability to a broader framework of ideas, to make it relevant to the modern labour market. This broad framework, according to McQuaid and Lindsay (2005), is based on the notion of interactivity between the factors and circumstances of the individual and the external environment. Wilton (2011) stresses the holistic concept of employability, with dimensions such as an individual's attempt to be effective in a desired job, and the structural conditions of the job market.

More recently, the concept has been used to describe the individual's employable skills and attributes that can equip graduates to enter the job market (El Mansour and Dean 2016; Pitan 2015). This view supports this research in the sense that Ghanaian hospitality graduates require employable skills that will allow them to access the labour market. McQuaid and Lindsay (2005:196) agree with the holistic idea by maintaining that the concept should be all-inclusive with the narrow which is the individual attributes and broader meanings, which is made up of the individual's skills and attributes, the circumstances of the individual and the external environment. The exclusion of the individual's circumstances and the conditions of the external environment could lead to a situation where the main factors that constitute the concept holistically are left out, which progressively worsens the difficulty of developing a consensus around the meaning of employability. They acknowledge the importance of both supply- and demand-side factors, based on a broader framework of employability built around individual factors, personal circumstances and external factors. They further maintain that the concept of employability transcends explanations of employment and unemployment which focus solely on either supply-side (training institution) or demand-side factors (employers).

However, they agreed that, in recent times, policymakers use the term to mean individuals' employability skills and attributes, but posit that the concept of employability should encompass employability built around individual factors, personal circumstances, and external factors, as indicated earlier.

Rothwell and Arnold (2007) propose an approach for understanding employability that is based on interrelated components that encompass wider contextual factors such as: students' academic performance; engagement; confidence, skills and abilities; ambition; and the perception of their university's brand.

Fugate et al.'s (2004:18) 'psycho-social construct of employability has three dimensions: adaptability, career identity and human and social capital', which suggests that employable people tend to demonstrate higher job satisfaction and enhanced well-being. In other words, this definition refers to the flexibility of the individual to alter his/her position and be redeployed within an organisation and between businesses, with adaptability entailing three elements: career identity, social and human capital and personal adaptability. They argue that employability is 'a form of work-specific active adaptability that enables workers to identify and realise career opportunities' (Fugate et

al. 2004:19). They justify their focus on narrow, individual-centred factors, by acknowledging the lack of input that employers employ. This approach, in a way, offers some advantages, since it is independent of whether a person is employed or not, placing employability in a specific context. In other words, it also suggests that one can be employable without necessarily working or being in employment. To clarify the meaning, Fugate et al. (2008:504) introduce a new perspective on employability, namely *dispositional employability*, which they define as 'a constellation of individual differences that predispose employees to proactively adapt to their work and career environments'. This means that employability is moderated by the features of a person, allowing adaptive actions and constructive outcomes in employment.

In addition, Pool and Sewell (2007:280) also developed the CareerEdge model further to explain the meaning of employability. They defined employability as 'a set of skills, knowledge, understanding and personal attributes that make a person more likely to choose, secure and retain occupation in which they can be satisfied and successful'. This is appropriate, considering that the concept is concerned with the employability of young people and students in HEIs (Green et al. 2013).

A more comprehensive definition by Hillage and Pollard (1998:2) states that 'employability is the capability to move self-sufficiently within the labour market to realise potential through sustainable employment'; therefore, employability is about being capable of obtaining and being fulfilled in work. They add that employability is about the ability to secure not merely a job, but one that is fulfilling and that makes use of graduate skills and abilities. However, they opine that the various definitions of the concept mean that the term ‘employability’ lacks clarity and accuracy. They thus developed a framework for the policy analysis of employability. The complexity of the concept of employability allows it to be used in different contexts (Pitan 2016). A working definition of employability that inspired this research is based on the Enhancing Students Employability Co-ordination Team (ESECT) (2006:8) definition, which perceives employability as:

'a set of achievements skills, understandings and personal attributes that makes graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits them, the workforce, the community and the economy'.

This definition requires curricula that promote effective learning (Yorke and Knight 2004). According to Harvey (2001) employability is associated with the academic valuing of effective learning. He states that employability is not a product but a process of learning; it is not a set of skills but a range of experiences and attributes developed through higher-level learning and entails continuous learning which, once the graduate is employed, continues to develop. Thus, employability empowers learners as critical reflective citizens (Harvey 2001). This approach is similar to Hillage and Pollard (1998)'s view of employability as reflecting the possession of assets, deployment and presentation skills, and a context of work opportunities.

Similarly, Yorke and Knight (2004) maintain that it is important to distinguish the factors that are relevant to obtaining a job and having the capabilities and readiness to take up a job. They proposed the USEM model further to explain employability and how it can be used to enhance graduate employability. Employability as a multi-faceted concept goes beyond the acquisition of core, key and transferable skills to represent a set of achievements that demonstrate a graduate's potential to gain and succeed in employment. This therefore means that employability requires good curricula to support effective learning. They argue, however, that these achievements are necessary but not sufficient for gaining employment, which in itself depends on other influences, such as the state of the economy and how policymakers value learning, by providing the requisite resources. The USEM model is explained in detail later in this chapter.

Yorke (2006) argues that the meaning of employability is far more complex than the comparatively limiting key skills agenda which has masked a greater understanding of it. It transcends the idea of key skills and takes account of a range of qualities, beliefs understanding, practices and the ability to reflect on experience. Yorke and Knight (2004) see employability as an influence on the self-efficacy beliefs, self-theories and personal qualities of students'. It stems from complex learning, a concept that has a wider meaning than that of core and key skills, which suggests a collection of capabilities and achievements that are necessary for gaining employment.

Employability is perceived as obtaining employment and is used as a foundation for the European Employment Strategy (ILO 2014). However, Maher and Graves (2008) explain that employability involves more than simply obtaining employment to encompass having the potential to get a job, which depends on one's learning and ability. They therefore argue that a distinction should be made between employment

and employability to clarify the meaning of the latter. Hence, they interpret employability as having the potential to contribute towards obtaining a job and developing appropriate skills, attributes and achievements. These views support this research in the sense that employability in Ghana should combine the disciplinary and work-related perspectives.

This is not effectively implemented within Ghanaian HE, including hospitality education; hence, the need for this research. Moreover, given that one's sets of achievements and skills are typically set out on a CV, the above notion of employability supports the need for graduates to develop effective and compelling CVs when seeking a job. It will, therefore, be interesting to ascertain from this research how Ghanaian hospitality graduates cope with developing and demonstrating these skills.

Further to the above viewpoints, Berntson (2008) identifies situational, dispositional and individual factors as the determinants of employability. They maintain that employability can best be understood by probing these determinates and refers to an individual's perception of the chance of gaining new or better employment. He distinguishes two categories of employability: actual employability (objective employability) and perceived employability (subjective employability). This definition is important as it emphasises the employability of graduates, providing insights into how to measure this and the differences between graduates and experienced individuals in the labour market. It stresses the need to educate hospitality graduates who have both subject matter knowledge and relevant practical experience to promote their career, following their formal education. Although the concept of 'employability' does not necessarily represent actual employment, it enhances an individual's likelihood of gaining employment. These factors encompass the labour market structure, labour market opportunities and organisational factors. Similarly, McQuaid and Lindsay (2005) note that employability connotes interactivity between individual initiative and the opportunities, institutions and rules that govern the labour market.

Further to clarify the meaning of the term 'employability', Weligamage (2009) presents several other terms that are used elsewhere in the world as synonymous with it. This is important for this research because the term 'employability' is used and understood differently in certain circles in Ghana as simply meaning 'employment' (Asafu-Adjaye 2012). For this reason, the researcher examines the different meanings ascribed to the concept by the study respondents - students, academics, and hospitality employers, for

example - since these stakeholders can take steps to enhance the employability of Ghanaian hospitality graduates only insofar as they understand its meaning and influences.

Table 2.1 Terms used in various countries to describe employability skills

Country	Term used
United Kingdom	Core skills, key and common skills
New Zealand	Essential skills
Australia	Key competencies, employability skills generic skills
Canada	Employability skills
United States	Basic skills, necessary skills work-place-know how
Singapore	Critical enabling skill
France	Transferable skills
Germany	Key qualifications
Switzerland	Trans-disciplinary goals
Denmark	Process independent qualifications

Source: Weligamage 2009

Table 2.1 indicates Western and developed countries' conceptualisations of employability which are vital for understanding the concept. Whilst most of these terms suggest the need for generic higher-order and transferable skills among graduates, the term used in Switzerland to describe employability in the above table, *Trans-disciplinary goals*, particularly emphasises the need for graduates and employees to be able to combine knowledge from different fields.

Authors such as Clarke and Patrickson (2008), Clark and Zukas (2012), Daly (2013), Rae (2007) and Holmes (2013) have equally described employability as complex, elusive and very difficult to define. Holmes (2013) and Hinchliffe and Adrienne (2009) indicate that employability has no clear conceptual model that can be used as a reference point for policy analysis. This is supported by Brown et al. (2013), who add that employability lacks a theoretically informed exposition, which increases the problems for researchers interested in this field. Green et al. (2013) describe the

concept as being surrounded by a fog of ambiguity which makes it difficult to apply. The lack of precision surrounding the concept of employability and the controversy over its development lead to demands for a consensus based on an understanding of the real meaning of the concept (Graves and Maher 2011). Surprisingly, to date, there has not little agreement on what employability actually means (Green et al. 2013; Clarke and Patrickson 2008). Despite the diversity between its definitions, employability had, by the end of the twentieth century, been debated on human resource developments globally, and used as a foundation for, and mainstay of, the European Employment Strategy (ILO 2014).

Despite the various definitions used in different contexts, the agenda for their use are similar in enhancing skills development (Lowden et al. 2011; O'Leary 2013). While the literature on the concept of employability is so diverse, one position is obvious: enhancing the market transition of the graduate is the key aim. This argument is similar to the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) Report (2009), which states that the definitions of employability overlap and, regardless of how employability skills are defined, the challenges in helping people to develop such skills remain identical. Lowden et al. (2011) argue that the key issue is the development of an effective approach towards nurturing and enhancing individuals' employability skills.

The diversity of the definitions of the concept makes it vital in this study to understand and clarify its meaning, as some authors see it as being context-dependent and multifaceted (Sung et al. 2013). Therefore, insights from these arguments will be used to adapt the concept to the Ghanaian context in order to equip Ghanaian graduates with the necessary skills to enter the job market successfully.

Table 2.2 Definitions of Employability

Author	Definition	Key Elements
Yorke and Knight (2006:567)	'A set of achievements, understandings and personal attributes that make individuals more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupation'.	Achievements, skills, knowledge, and personal attributes.
Hillage and Pollard (1998 :2)	'Employability is the capability to move self-sufficiently within the labour market to realise potential through sustainable employment'	Capability

Forrier and Sels (2004:106)	'An individual's chance of getting a job in the internal and/or external labour market'	Ability to obtain, retain, adapt to career opportunities
Harvey (2001: 100)	'Employability as the ability of graduate to get a satisfying job'	Job satisfaction
Fugate, Kinicki, and Ashforth (2004:32)	'A form of work specific active adaptability that enables workers to identity and realise career opportunity'.	Facilitates movements within and between organisations and realisation of jobs
Berntson (2008 :37)	'Employability refers to an individual's perception of his or her possibilities of getting a new, equal or better employment'	Perception of opportunities
Sanders and De Grip (2004: 76)	'The capacity and the willingness to be and to remain attractive in the labour market, by anticipating changes in the task and work environment and reaching to these changes in a proactive way'.	Multiskilling
Van der Heijde and Van der Heijden (2006:.453)	'The continuously fulfilling, acquiring or creating of work through the optimal use of competencies'.	Competencies
Canada, the Conference Board of Canada released Employability Skills 2000+	'The skills you need to enter, stay in, and progress in the world of work'.	Development of skills
The Confederation of British Industry 2009 (CBI)	'A set of attributes, skills and knowledge that all labour market participants should process'	Possession of skills and attributes
Gazier (2006:11)	'Employability relates to both unemployed people seeking work and those in employment seeking better jobs with their current or a different employer'	The individual's ability to find and keep a stable job

Source: Own idea

A selection of the definitions is presented in Table 2.2., together with their various interpretations, which Hillage and Pollard (1998) indicate should be examined as they

may lack clarity as operational concepts. The lack of a common definition opens up an opportunity for scholars to use this term as they deem fit. Employability, when used as a framework for policy analysis, restricts the discussion on employability to the domain of the individual, where the skills and attributes that make a person attract work tend to be focused (McQuiad and Lindsay 2005).

According to Knight and Yorke (2013), the term 'employability' may be originally British, but the issues regarding HE's contributions to the graduate labour market are global. This research therefore explores how Ghanaian hospitality education, which is the focus of this research, might contribute towards making graduates more employable. In effect, although the concept of employability has existed for some time in Europe, it is now relevant in HE circles in Ghana especially, given the high rate of graduate unemployment in many developing countries such as Ghana (Pitan 2016; Oliver 2015; Education Sector Performance Report 2010; Edingang 2015; Ajiboye et al. 2013).

This research is motivated by the notion of employability to investigate the Ghanaian HE and graduate unemployment situation, which is believed to be in crisis and hampering national economic development (Baffour-Awuah and Thomson 2011; Education Sector Performance Report 2013; Gondwe and Walenkamp 2011; Bawakyillenuo et al. 2013). The current HE curriculum in Ghana fails effectively to address practice-based learning (Education Sector Performance Report 2013). Hence, there is a need for research that develops approaches to enhancing employability through a curriculum that provides students with opportunities to perform tasks which are similar to their future expected roles in employment.

These interpretations guide this research as they have demand and supply implications about how effectively graduates are being produced by Ghanaian HEIs, and which factors contribute to the success or failure of hospitality graduates in terms of gaining employment. In a sense, the above views suggest that employability should be understood to be a result of the interaction between the influences from within an individual, their education, the wider labour market condition, and the roles of the government and firms in shaping the available job opportunities. This view informs this research, thereby motivating the researcher to consider these influences in understanding the employability of Ghanaian hospitality graduates. Therefore, the meaning of employability requires various elements to be considered when describing and evaluating it.

2.2.1 Definition of employability for the study

The present study defines employability as the individual's readiness to work, by developing and possessing the competencies and skills expected by the labour market. This understanding is reinforced by different elements of the various definitions of employability, as summarised above in column 3 of Table 2.2.

2.3 Historical development of the concept of employability

It is important to understand the historical evolution of the concept in order to clarify its meaning for this study. Highlighting the evolution of employability in this research helps us to identify and understand the factors that were emphasised at each stage of the concept, thereby assisting in identifying which factors to focus on in the research. This will guide the conceptual framework and the selection of the appropriate research tools. As mentioned above, the term ‘employability’ has a long history (Gazier 2006; McQuaid and Lindsay 2005; Leggatt-Cook 2007). Reference has been made over the years to a variety of versions of the concept, as outlined by McQuaid and Lindsay (2005). Sanders and de Grip (2004) place its origin around the 1950s, as do Leggatt-Cook (2007), McQuaid and Lindsay (2005), and Van der Heijde and Van der Heijden (2006).

In this review, a conscious effort is made to differentiate between the stages of development of employability for clarification. The evolution of the employability concept, as explained by Gazier (2001), assigns employability between three generations with several working forms. In a sense, these perspectives trace the historical development of the concept of employability, beginning in the early 20th century in the UK, USA and Australia with socio-medical and manpower policy employability, and culminating in the 1990s with outcome-based labour market performance employability, as well as initiative and interactive employability.

McQuaid and Lindsay (2005) unearthed issues such as access, retention, supply and demand, which have been present at each stage of the development of the employability concept. What is different is the level of emphasis placed on these concepts at each stage (see Table 2.3). For example, it is obvious that the demand side issues were dominant in the early development of employability, as the needs of industry were central to the discourse in the literature (McQuaid and Lindsey 2005).

This does not mean an absence of supply side issues, although emphasis was not placed on these in the discourse. As a result, it is important to differentiate between what are considered the models for capturing the evolution of the employability concept, and the factors constituting the main emphasis of the term.

Table 2.3 Different stages of and points of emphasis regarding the concept of employability

Type and stages of employability	Points of emphasis	Measure/element
Dichotomy employability (prior to the 1950s)	A person is either employable or unemployable. 'Employable' people are able and willing to work; unemployable people are unable to work.	Demand from employers; people are persuaded to work more, and used as an 'emergency' distinction rather than labour market policy tool. Mainly for welfare
Socio-medical employability (1960s)	Related to 'manpower policy employability' Focused on identifying and measuring the distance between individuals' work abilities and the demand for work by socially, physically or mentally disadvantaged people	Demand from employers; supporting people to overcome the barriers to regular employment
Manpower policy employability (1970s and early 1980s)	Socially disadvantaged group, a gap between employment needs and employees' characteristics, particularly with reference to the distance between the existing work and the circumstances of the individual	Demand/supply both employers and suppliers; assisting people with job search and placements
Flow employability (late 1960s and early 1970s)	Focused on the demand side of the labour market, and the accessibility of employment within local and international economies, with employability defined as an 'objective expectation'	Supply; availability and accessibility of jobs
Labour market performance	Labour market outcomes by policy interventions	New training programmes and comparing their effects

employability (early 1980s)		
Initiative employability (late 1980s and 1990s)	Human capital development of skills frameworks to gain access to the labour market.	Labour market becoming flexible for individual development and retention
Interactive employability (1990s)	Competition, new employment opportunities and structural factors. Focused on individual adaptation, collective interactive priority and the responsibility of different stakeholders	Individual development, conditions in the labour market, and educational policy. Access, demand, supply and retention

Source: Adapted from McQuaid and Lindsay (2005)

Table 2.3 depicts the historic evolution of employability. It was used in different contexts, as mentioned earlier, such as *dichotomy of employability* which, according to McQuaid and Lindsay (2005), focuses on whether one is employable or unemployable. Being employable simply refers to individuals who were considered to be eligible to work, of a suitable age, without any form of physical impairment, family or childcare responsibilities. On the other hand, being unemployable means that individuals are deemed not to be eligible to work (Gazier 2006; McQuaid and Lindsay 2005; Leggatt-Cook 2007). This dichotomous view of employability differentiates the employable from the unemployable individual when there exists mass unemployment. According to Leggatt-Cook (2007), dichotomy employability was an emergency deliberate labour market policy.

Subsequently, three different stages of the concept emerged: s*ocio-medical employability*, which focused on providing job opportunities for the disadvantaged and also sought to institute the work requirement needed by employment by examining the distance and work capabilities of the physically and mentally disadvantaged. This aspect of employability focused on the bodily medical qualities and abilities of the individual, which Leggatt-Cook (2007) described as the physical strength and ocular abilities that can overcome the barriers to getting a job. *Manpower policy employability*, which relates to general opportunities and work requirements for all, surfaced in the USA in the 1960s, similarly to socio-medical employability, with an emphasis on distance and capabilities.

Flow employability basically adopted a broader approach to employability (Gazier 2006; Leggatt-Cook 2007; McQuaid and Lindsay 2005); it focused on the collective element that impacts positively or negatively on a group of unemployed individuals. Flow employability was referred to as the demand side component of employability, which depends on macro-economic factors in a period of economic expansion; consequently, all of the above employability definitions were abandoned (Leggatt-Cook 2007). Flow employability was discarded due to its focus on demand side considerations. *Labour market performance employability,* which considers how well employment policies enable people to access work, gained international usage in labour market interventions and employability-enhancing courses (Gazier 2006; McQuaid and Lindsay 2005; Leggatt-Cook 2007). *Initiative employability* emphasises the link between career success, and transferable and social mobility skills (McQuaid and Lindsay 2005).

The notion of *interactive employability*, which is of interest to this research, seeks to combine the factors and circumstances that impact on the individual who wishes to seek and maintain work with the factors and circumstances of others in the labour market. It intersects individual qualities and characteristics and the dynamics of the labour market. The state of demand locally and nationally is also considered, as are the rules and institutions that govern the labour market, reflecting the rise of institutional economics during this period (McQuaid and Lindsay 2005). This account implicates employers and policymakers in the employability challenge, alongside individuals (McGrath 2009). Interactive employability prevails now within the present-day labour market policy (Gazier 2006). McQuaid et al. (2005) maintain, however, that in spite of the conscious efforts to explain the stages of the development of employability and its meanings, it remains a contested concept in terms of its use in both theory and policy.

Thijssen et al. (2008) describe the evolutionary perspective on the employability concept at the societal, company and individual levels. They thus explain that the concept was used in the 1970s predominantly for solving problems with school leavers and underprivileged people, in line with the societal need to attain full employment; in the 1980s, to restructure companies with the corporate goal of achieving efficient human resource management; and culminating in the 1990s, for individuals as the motive for developing successful career opportunities in segmented and more flexible labour markets.

These conflicting accounts of the development of employability can make it difficult when attempting to chart its historical development. Nevertheless, Gazier (2001) provides a comprehensive overview of the concept's development that has influenced the currently accepted definitions over the past century (McQuaid and Lindsay 2005; Leggatt-Cook 2007).

2.4 Employability and HE

Employability issues have been associated with HE for a long time in developed countries (Pool and Sewell 2007). According to Robbins' report on employability, in one of the earliest studies commissioned by the UK government, employability was identified as one of the four main objectives of HE (Robbins 1963). Many stakeholders, including governments and employers, have provided many propositions for increasing graduate employability. Despite these extensive developments and evidence of improvements to enhance employability within HEIs, employability remains a complex and problematic area, without much clarity or direction (Rae 2007).

Employability is a key performance indicator for HE and government policy (Brennan 2004). The idea of employability became prevalent in the early 2000s in the UK and parts of Europe within HE. Tomlinson (2012) investigates the context of HE and labour market policy regarding graduate employability. The study draws from research on graduates and students' construct of their employability and transition from HE to the labour market. He argues for a broader understanding of employability, concluding that it is an issue that manifests widely in the field of HE. HE aims to harmonise, regulate and manage graduate employment through life-long learning. These view-points justify the combined focus in this study on both individual graduate skills and the surrounding influences from HE, the hospitality industry and labour market policies.

The Pedagogy for Employability Group (2004) conceptualises employability as complementing subject-specific learning in HE. Although it is acknowledged in HE arenas, Lees (2002) contends that the notion of employability challenges the traditional concepts of HE. He argues that it is an agenda driven by government policy and employers, rather than academia, and so can be misunderstood by academics. However, there is concern worldwide that HEIs' courses are failing to produce

graduates with the lifelong learning skills and professional skills needed for them to succeed in their career (Rufai et al. 2015; Pitan 2016; Oliver 2015: Green et al 2013).

In view of the contention put forward that the main function of HE is defeated by the notion of employability (Boden and Neveda 2010; Lees 2002), Finch et al. (2013) stated that the relationship between education and employability is mutual in nature. Employability is aligned with academic values; therefore, promoting employability in HE means highlighting the goals that have hitherto been neglected. According to Knight and Yorke (2004), enhancing graduate employability is an established HE aim. The best option for HE to develop students' employability is based on the concept of 'subsidiarity', a principle of taking political decisions at the lowest practical level to demarcate between the central and national powers, as HE is not wholly autonomous with elements such as rules, 'expectations and shared values' (Knight and Yorke 2004:45). The value of subsidiarity promotes freedom of learners' engagement. HE contributes to positive claims to employability because it promotes processes and outcomes that researchers globally have found to be valued in the graduate labour market (Maher 2004; Knight and Yorke 2004), a point that is inadequately addressed by Ghanaian HEIs, as noted earlier in the review.

Similarly, the development of students' employability in HEIs is important in enabling employers to value the assets that have been developed and for students to identify job opportunities, and present themselves to their best advantage. Knight and Yorke (2004) describe the development of employability as significant for HE practices across the world. They add that the absence of a common definition obstructs the level of engagement. Decisions by HE to adopt employability should be appropriate and faithful to the local circumstances and legislation; hence this study looks at HE policy in Ghana. Knight and Yorke (2004) maintain that employability covers complex outcomes of learning and needs to be seen as an achievement at the course level, with inputs into the teaching, learning and assessment (TLA) through components of the curriculum. However, the development of employability in HE should not compromise realistic learning, creativity and academic freedom.

A recent study by Brown et al. (2011) maintains that HE increases graduates' capabilities for gaining work. Butterwick and Benjamin (2006) argue that an employability discourse has become established in education policy, especially in developed countries. Yorke and Knight (2006) suggest that new methods of teaching

and the provision of work-related experience should be made explicit in the HE curriculum. Given that this is not yet happening successfully in Ghana, this research aims to fill this gap in learning from the standpoint of hospitality graduates.

The emphasis on employability within HE is important, as QAA (2006) suggest that the university should be a place where graduates are prepared to engage with the world of work. Similarly, the labour market emphasises the importance of students possessing the necessary employability skills to stand out in a competitive job market environment (Leitch, 2006). In the same vein, the job market environment also needs HE graduates to be sufficiently flexible to cope with the changing conditions and to be dynamic in the maintenance of continuous learning (Wharton and Horrocks 2015).

Harvey (2000) argues that the main role of HE is to ensure that students are prepared to become lifelong critical and reflective learners who possess knowledge, attitudes and skills. Thapar (2014) suggests that universities play a major part in exhibiting how they prepare graduates for employment. In order to fulfil this role, HEIs have seen increasing emphasis being placed on employability within the curriculum (Bower-Brown and Harvey 2004; Harvey 2005). The motivation of students to pursue HE is to gain employment (Wharton et al. 2014). Boden and Nevada (2010) indicate that the investment made by students to acquire HE should show what they are equipped with in return after leaving HE and entering the competitive labour market environment.

Similarly, Maher and Graves (2011) supported the notion of the essence of HE, arguing that economic requirements versus liberal education values create disunity among stakeholders in taking up the concept of employability, although it is accepted and promoted by HEIs in most European Union countries and other developed and developing countries. These competing ideas are exemplified by the notion of squeezing the curriculum and on subject content by the development of softer skills, which should fall outside the remit of HE (Boden and Neveda 2010; Lees 2002). In contrast, Harvey (2001) argues that employability complements subject-specific learning in HEIs. Harvey (2010) states that HE provides a variety of employability development prospects for students, such as life-long learning, self-presentation and many others.

Sumanasiri et al. (2015) see some developments in HE courses as implicit and that these should be embedded in degree courses, while others should be add-on modules made clearly visible in the curriculum. They argue that embedding employability in any

subject curriculum is possible without compromising academic freedom or the expectations of HEIs, employers and others regarding the current academic values. Globally, HEIs consider graduate attributes and competencies prominent within degree courses (Becket and Brookes 2012). For HE to promote growth and economic development, it needs to encourage learning-by-doing (Yorke 2006).

The main weakness of the current HE curriculum in Ghana is that it fails effectively to address practice-based learning (Boateng and Ofori-Sarpong 2002; Dasmani 2011; Gondwe and Walenkamp 2011). Hence, there is a need for research that develops approaches to enhancing employability through a curriculum that provides students with opportunities to perform tasks which are similar to their expected roles in future employment. Governments, employers and other stakeholders expect HE to contribute to the development of a variety of complex skills, and at the same time deliver an advanced command of worthwhile subjects, to enhance the stock of human capital for national economic well-being and development (Knight and Yorke 2004).

Regarding the expectations of stakeholders, Lowden et al. (2011) argue that there has been progress among stakeholders; however, there remain significant issues in terms of the mind-sets and expectations of those responsible for the skills development of graduates. Good practice seems to be patchy, indicating that a major problem facing the employability agenda is the inconsistency between the aim of HE among academics and others, such as the government. There is a notion among some stakeholders that employability is better developed outside the formal curriculum, via employment-based training and experience (Tymon 2010; Rae 2007). Employers are apathetic about providing this training due to the costs and the possible lack of commitment on the part of employees, suggesting that HEIs fill the gap through the curriculum (Jackson 2010).

Interestingly, UK industry and HEIs agree on the quest to promote the employability of their graduates, and other forms of collaboration worthy of emulation (Lowden et al. 2011). A lot is, however, expected of HEIs and industry with regard to fostering these collaboration strategies and nurturing an understanding between stakeholders, employers and graduates on how to promote employability (Lowden et al. 2011). Boden and Nedeva (2010) criticise the employability focus in HE, arguing that it creates two types of graduate and university; those who have the requisite employability skills

and those who do not. Employability is used as a performative function of HEIs in the UK, which adversely affects the pedagogies and curricula.

Bawakyillenuo et al. (2013), in their study on tertiary education and economic development in Ghana, with its main drive to disentangle the elements of the mismatch underpinning tertiary education and the needs of industry, call for the development of effective and strong linkages between HE and industry. The UK experience of HE and employability can be replicated in the present study to foster a common understanding between industry and HE in the Ghanaian context.

In spite of the above contention regarding the functions of HE, the emerging trends and new skills required by the labour market demand graduates with the requisite skills to contribute to wealth creation and the expectations of their employers. Managing transition has always been an issue for HE (Knight and Yorke 2004); however, to prepare graduates adequately for the changes in the economy, curriculum intervention is necessary (Maher and Graves 2008). Competition in the labour market and the high tuition and living costs call for concerted efforts by HE and employers to prepare students adequately for employability related to the subjects studied (Maher and Graves 2008). Employers expect graduates to possess the right skills to contribute positively to the organisation's intended goals and this can only be achieved through HE because many of these businesses are small and cannot afford to train graduates in the skills needed. Therefore, it is the responsibility of HE to facilitate this move by instilling in graduates the necessary work skills to ensure that they are ready for employment. This connects employability with HE (Knight and Yorke 2004; Maher and Graves 2008; Khare 2014).

The study by Khare (2014) indicates that the growth of the economy, coupled with a strong demand for qualified graduates, has led to the need for a different educational system, and that these changes bring challenges regarding how graduates may be prepared by HE differently from the traditional way, in order to the meet the emerging skills needs related to graduates and make them more employable. Consonant with this view, Khare (2014) understands employability as a function of two basic factors: the academic qualification of an individual and the learning environment that helps the individual to build certain generic skills. This notion is supported by Brown et al. (2011), who maintain that employability should exist in two domains - the absolute and the relative - with the former being the attributes of individuals and the latter being the

context in which they deploy these attributes. Rae (2007) argues that a person needs more than a degree to be employable; graduates therefore need to acquire other attributes to make them employable.

Yorke (2006) identifies three components of employability: employment outcome; a learning process; and a set of credentials. These multiple constructs of employability explain it as the possession of important characteristics and the potential to obtain and retain employment, which Wilton (2011:47) describes as 'realised employability'. It is apposite, therefore, to consider the extent to which this 'realised employability' manifests in the Ghanaian context, which is the aim of this study.

This research considers these perspectives on employability in light of the trends in the hospitality industry and hospitality graduates from Ghanaian HEIs. Employability, according to this study, is understood in two ways. The first relates to individual-centred characteristics, which include skills, attitudes and competencies. The second concerns the factors that are external to the individual that create barriers and/or opportunities to gaining, retaining and moving between jobs in the labour market. The focus of this research is on the individual's characteristics and readiness to work, the factors influencing access to work, maintaining a job and moving between jobs and the labour market, and the relationship among hospitality education, graduate skills, the changes taking place in the hospitality industry in Ghana (e.g. the arrival of multinational hotel chains), hospitality education, and the enhancement of hospitality graduates' employability through the hospitality curriculum.

2.5 Employability and the labour market

Several studies on employability have identified individuals, labour market policies and the volatile nature of the labour market as major issues. Fugate et al. (2004) and Hillage and Pollard (1998) emphasise individual capabilities as vital in the labour market. This means that individual capabilities, such as skills and competencies, must be developed to suit the needs of the labour market. In support of this point, Green et al. (2013) argue that labour market policy and developments determine the skills needed by students in order to be sufficiently robust and flexible to suit the labour market. Also, Brown et al. (2011) suggest that employability is a loaded ideology, determined by labour market conditions. However, Maher and Nield (2005) maintain that the volatility of the labour market is unpredictable in nature because new skills and

competencies may arise at any time to define the existing conditions. This study supports the fact that students need to possess versatile skills in order to prevail in the labour market.

De Grip et al. (2004) examined the demand side of employability and saw it as a construct of five elements that impact on one's chances of becoming and/or remaining active in the labour market; namely, individual qualities (relational, motivational); occupation specific skills; the labour market situation; and government and employer training policies. Thus, graduate employability is a shared responsibility of the government, employers and individual employees. Gazier (1999) calls this the "interactive" version of employability, where labour market actors and institutions are involved. Other researchers emphasise individual initiative, while acknowledging the fact that the employability of the individual is relative to the employability of others and the opportunities, institutions and rules that govern the labour market (McQuaid and Lindsey 2005). Gazier (2010) states that the most important consideration is labour market potential and occupational skills. Similarly, Leggatt-Cook (2007) focuses on the employers' view of employability, which encompasses the skills, knowledge, competencies and attributes that are considered desirable in the employee.

Again, employability is vital to policy making and interventions. McQuaid and Lindsay (2005) acknowledge the importance of employability in labour market policy in the UK, the European Union and beyond. Interestingly, the idea arose in UK politics as a central tenet of the so-called 'Third Way' policies of the New Labour party approach to economic and social policy (Haughton et al. 2000:671), and remained vital for the revised European Employment Strategy, a precondition for achieving an employment strategy in the past decade, which is expected to play a role in the educational and social targets of the Europe 2020 strategy (Green et al. 2013). Forrier and Sels (2003) relate its purpose to achieving full employment in times of economic prosperity and also when the labour market is constricted. In line with this notion, it was used to encourage the unemployed and underprivileged to take part in the labour process (McGrath 2009). Interventions were aimed at stimulating entry into the labour market, with strategies for promoting economic labour market policies by important global institutions at the national, regional and local levels (McQuaid and Lindsay 2005; Bernston 2008; McGrath 2009). Given its importance in the labour market discourse by employers policymakers and other elements of civil society, the idea of employability remains prominent among HEIs (Wharton and Horrocks 2015).

Sumanasiri et al. (2015) indicate that a clear relationship exists between the employability of HEI graduates and the actual learning activities that they engage in while undertaking their university degree courses. McQuaid and Lindsay (2005) presented a broader framework of employability to include individual factors, personal circumstances and external factors which acknowledge the vitality of the supply and demand factors, as indicated earlier.

Again, this study will attempt to understand the factors and influences that affect the employability of Ghanaian hospitality graduates when seeking jobs. In a nutshell, all of the definitions of employability refer to the individual's ability to make a transition to the labour market. It is important for Ghanaian hospitality graduates to have the capability to handle graduate jobs which use relevant higher order skills acquired from HEIs, rather than entry level jobs (Lee 2002), that less qualified employees can do.

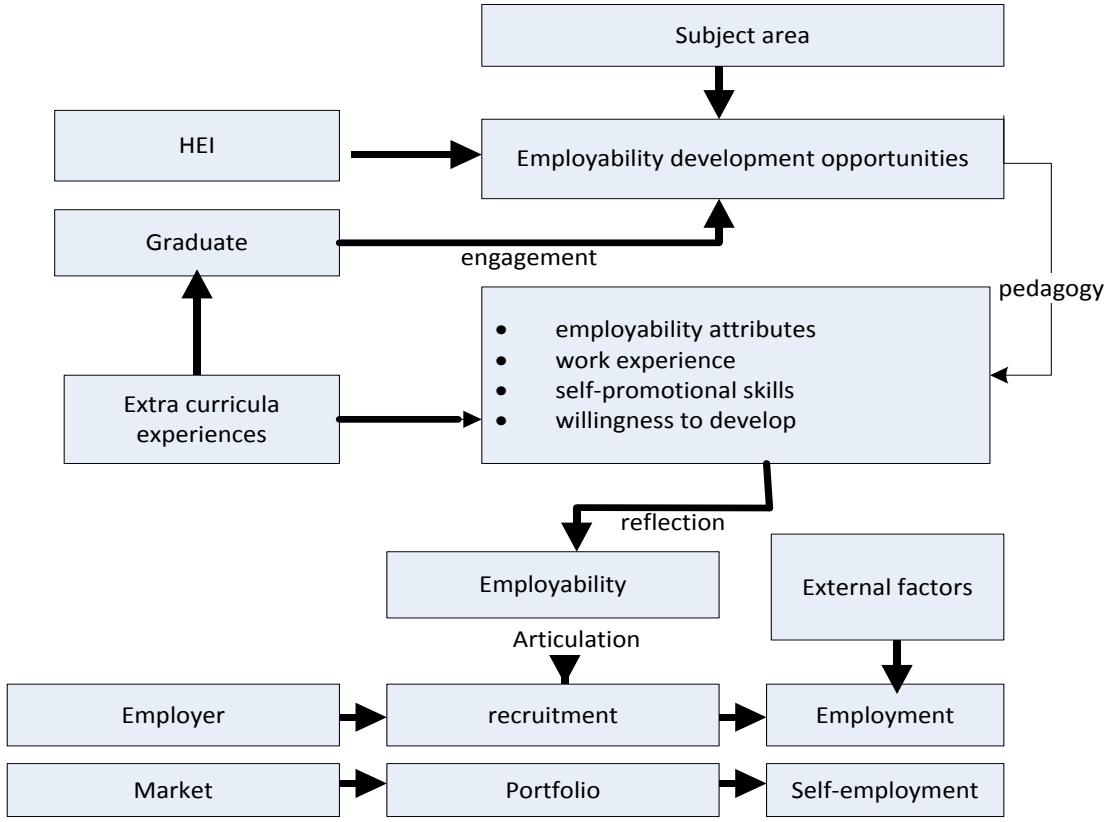
2.6 Graduate employability

One of the research objectives of this study is to investigate the concept of employability and the strategies for embedding employability within the curriculum, and to develop an integrative model for enhancing hospitality graduate employability in Ghana. Therefore, a clear understanding of graduate employability is vital for operationalising the research as well as allowing lecturers to implement the agenda, and students and policymakers (stakeholders) in general to appreciate the outcome of the employability-related activities (Graves and Maher 2011). The employability of a graduate is related to his/her tendency to exhibit attributes that employers require for the effective functioning of their business. Graduates therefore need to be flexible because of the growth in the number of short-term contracts and part-time work (Yusof et al. 2013; Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) 2011). The perspective of HE on employability is producing capable graduates with the ability to learn (O'Regan 2010; Weert 2011; Harvey 2000).

Importantly, Yorke (2006) notes that, while employers' dissatisfaction with the quality of graduates is longstanding, there has been insufficient research on the extent to which the graduates are themselves dissatisfied with how effectively their education prepares them for the world of work. For example, a UK HE Funding Council for England (HEFCE) survey of new graduates reveals that they experience difficulty with verbal communication, time-management and task-juggling. This research fills this gap in

Ghana by focusing on hospitality students' perceptions on how their hospitality education enables them to develop similar generic skills. Also, there is a need to develop transferable (generic) skills which can be used in different contexts, and transfer (higher-order) skills which enable graduates to apply their generic skills more effectively in different contexts. These higher order skills are related to the self-efficacy, self-esteem and self-confidence elements of the CareerEdge employability model of Pool and Sewell (2007).

Figure 2.1 A model of graduate employability development



A model of graduate employability development

Source; Maher and Graves 2008

Figure 2.1 depicts the many facets of employability development. A closer look at the model, at least from the perspective of this research, suggests the following:

- the need to engage learners in opportunities to develop their employability skills through relevant curriculum innovation, which enhances all aspects of their employability skills; for example, individual attributes, work-related skills, awareness of job opportunities, how to match their requirements, and proactive and personal development planning (PDP).

- the importance of teaching, learning, and assessment (TLA) curriculum practices that enhance learners' capacity to reflect on their learning in light of how they could apply their learning to recruitment issues, understand employers' requirements and how their learning matches them, appreciate the changing labour market dynamics (including how continual learning and personal development will enable them to keep abreast of these), and build a portfolio of skills and competencies which will give them a competitive advantage in the labour market or in self-employment - in other words, make them inherently entrepreneurial (Bell 2016; Sewell and Pool 2010).

It would be worthwhile for the researcher to examine any gaps in the provision of these innovative TLA documents in hospitality education in Ghana, to enhance hospitality graduate employability. Maher and Graves (2008) argue that employability is a curriculum process in education. Graduate employability has become very important due to the changing nature of the graduate labour market and greater participation in HE (Leong and Kavanagh 2013; Tomlinson 2012).

Most studies in the field of employability have focussed on the unpredictable and competitive nature of the graduate market. Maher and Nield (2005) argue that equipping graduates with the necessary skills will enable them to maximise their potential to pursue a successful career, due to the competition, volatile employment market and huge supply of graduates to the job market. Advanced economies have attached great importance to enhancing the employability of their graduates due to the unpredictable and competitive nature of the graduate market (HEFCE 2011; BIS 2011). In support, the UK Department for Innovations University and Skills (DIUS) (2008) and Yorke and Knight (2007) demonstrate the importance of enhancing the development of graduate employability as a contribution to human capital and economic growth. Jackson (2014) argues that enhancing graduates' competencies enables them to attain employment outcomes and supports employers who wish to employ graduates who can self-manage their career pathways effectively, amid flatter organisational structures and greater employee mobility.

Some studies have explained employability as generic skills, such as Clark and Zukas (2012). They support generic skills acquired, irrespective of background or career intention; and argue for a relational approach which dictates the individual's position, disposition and abilities, and that their values, lifestyle and disposition make it easy for

them to adapt. Therefore, employability should be seen as having a 'good fit' between the individual's values, lifestyle and work. Emphasis is placed upon whether a graduate succeeds in obtaining a graduate job (HEFCE 2011). In contrast, employability in HEIs and related courses provide graduates with generic or transferable skills, such as communication skills and team work (BIS 2009; Lowden et al. 2011).

Studies on enhancing graduate employability globally, for example in the UK, Canada, USA, Australia and elsewhere, have been discussed (see Supporting Graduate Employability: HES Practice in Other Countries BIS research paper 2011). These studies are based in developed economies and there is variation between the uses of similar terms in these environments related to the idea of employability (see Table 2.1 Weligamage 2009).

The thesis of this research is that insufficient studies investigate in detail the phenomenon of hospitality graduate employability in developing countries (British Council 2014). Hence, this study attempts to fill the gap in knowledge regarding the problem of hospitality graduate employability in Ghana, which is linked to graduates' transition to the labour market (Bawakyillenuo et al. 2013; Gondwe and Walenkamp 2011). The focus on hospitality graduates will enable them more objectively to relate the problems associated with employability to the influences that shape those problems in the Ghanaian context. An example of such influences is the nature of the curriculum that purportedly educates and trains students to be able to access jobs when they graduate, but which does not seem to be achieving this objective currently.

Even though the focus of the research is on the hospitality discipline, the researcher expects the results to be adaptable to a wider context, such as other disciplines in Ghana and other Sub-Saharan developing countries like Nigeria, Cameroon, Gambia, Sierra Leone, Liberia and others with similar problems. The contributions of the research to knowledge consist of the development of an envisaged Ghanaian Employability Enhancement Framework (GHEEF), as mentioned earlier. This will use insights from other employability frameworks, like those explored below. It will also draw on the current best practices in employability education in developed countries.

2.6.1 Factors affecting graduate employability

Graduate employability is affected by five high-order skills, according to Finch et al. (2013); these factors include Soft-skills, Problem-solving skills, Job-specific functional

skills and Pre-graduate experience. They investigated 17 factors that influence graduate employability through the subjective perspectives of employers when they consider engaging new graduates. The five main factors mentioned are: *written communication skills, verbal communication skills, listening skills, professionalism interpersonal skills* under Soft skills; Problem-solving skills which has four sub factors: *critical thinking skills, creativity, leadership skills, and adaptability;* Job-specific functional skills, including: *job-specific competencies, technical skills, and knowledge of software*; Pre-graduate experience, which encompasses *pre-graduate work experience* which they indicate may include in-programme experiential learning opportunities (e.g. part-time or summer employment) and *professional confidence*; and last but not least the higher-order skills which include: *institutional-level reputation, programme-level and academic performance.*

Finch et al. (2013) used a pragmatic mixed method approach in interviewing 30 employers and undertook a further empirical examination of 115 employers. They linked learning outcomes to the development of soft-skills, which indicates the importance of learning outcomes that increase the employability of new graduates. Subsequently, employers have made soft-skills a priority when hiring graduates but attribute less importance to academic reputation. This indicates that possessing the necessary skills, attitudes and behaviour determines an individual's chance of getting, keeping and progressing in a job, while the context in which the individual seeks employment also plays a significant role in the transition, and work culture affects how employability is enhanced (Green et al. 2013).

McQuaid and Lindsay (2005) took a different dimension by studying the individual circumstances that compel and at the same time facilitate employability; these include the household and local area context, spatial mobility and social networks. Similarly, Pitan (2016) investigated graduate employability in Nigeria, a developing Sub-Saharan country, to propose a model for enhancing this. She identifies eight factors which include: a poor curriculum system; a poor learning environment; the inadequate funding of tertiary education; graduates and employers having divergent views on employability; poor guidance and counselling and career services; a lack of collaboration between HE stakeholders, graduates and employers; and inadequate industry work experience.

It is worth noting that the divergent views of graduates and employers, as stated by Pitan (2016), brought forward the factors that employers value, such as good communication skills, a good attitude, critical and analytical thinking skills, and a strong CV, as vital requirements for employment, while graduates mainly considered their academic achievements as essential. Furthermore, Green et al. (2013) identify work culture as a factor that affects the employability of the individual in an organisation. Based on these studies, it is suggested that soft skills, the environmental context, the work culture, a poor learning environment and inadequate funding may be affecting graduate employability in a developing country like Ghana compared to the situation in developed countries.

The learning outcomes of a course of study are defined as the 'knowledge, skills and attitudes that students are expected to internalise and be capable of performing when they complete a course', according to Reich et al. (2016:23). They agree that learning outcomes logically focus on the knowledge, skills and attitudes taught on all courses but, for hospitality students, there is a need to know and be able to demonstrate general skills by the time they finish their course. The learning outcomes of hospitality courses include the mastery of skills in leadership, communication, quantitative reasoning, critical thinking, ethical reasoning, information literacy, technology, world-class service, teambuilding, diversity, career and life skills and sustainability (Reich et al. 2016).

Chamorro-Premuzic et al. (2010) investigated soft skills in HE, together with their importance and improvement ratings, as a function of individual differences and academic performance, and found that soft-skills are not academic skills. However, there is evidence that soft-skills are imperative for employability. Similarly, professionalism has been identified as contributing towards employability (Aston 2011). Wellman (2010) investigated interpersonal skills, Reid and Anderson (2012) problem-solving skills, and Rosenberg et al. (2012), job-specific functional skills and work-life experience (Hopkins et al. 2011; Smith et al. 2008). Work experience has been identified by employers as one of the major factors that impact on graduate employability (Hopkins et al. 2011).

El Mansour and Dean (2016) argue that the job market has become more complex in recent times, emphasising that extensive generational differences exist among graduates and that their view of careers and learning limit their job offers as they target

more specific skill sets. They suggested collaboration between HEIs and industry to ensure that graduates understand the job market conditions. In furtherance of their suggestion, it appears that creativity, good communication skills, information technology, and information management skills are considered by employers as essential in employees, including strategic planning and managing customers. These, however, affect graduates' transition to the world of work. A similar result regarding a dearth of skills that employers are seeking was found in an investigation of graduate employability in Nigeria (Emeh et al. 2012; Pitan 2016). Baciu and Lazar (2011) emphasise technical and professional skills based on the dynamic nature of the job market for graduates.

The gender of graduates also influences graduate employability (Wickramasinghe and Perera 2010; El Mansour and Dean 2016). Wickramasinghe and Perera (2010) state that little research has been done on gender, but there is evidence to show that this plays a role in the employability of graduates. Finch et al. (2013) state that, in order to enhance new graduates' employability, university courses should focus on learning outcomes which are linked to the development of soft-skills.

Yusof et al. (2013) argue that industrial training is an effective tool for enhancing graduate employability. They investigated employers' views on how to improve students' performance so that they are work-ready when they graduate. Qenani et al. (2014) state that the university plays an important role in developing and enhancing graduates' employability. Similarly, Garwe (2014) supported the notion that a relevant curriculum has the greatest impact on enhancing employability. However, Sumanasiri et al. (2015) argue that the focus of employability on external factors, such as career development courses, internships, work experience courses, soft-skills development courses, and even university admission criteria that influence employability, divert attention from the core function of HE, 'learning'.

Maher (2006) states that, to make graduates more employable, new employability skills may be required in the evolving graduate employment market. This explains the need in this study to consider the changing skills requirements which hospitality graduates must meet because of the arrival of big, multinational hotel chains in Ghana. These revelations should encourage the faculty to refine their focus on the skills needed to strengthen graduate employability, for example, in Ghana.

2.7 Models of employability

This section examines many of the employability models which provide the corpus of constructs on which this research depends. This will enable the researcher to explore fully the development of the models of employability that underpin graduate employability, in order to draw insights from them for the study of hospitality graduate employability in the Ghanaian context.

A number of models and frameworks for examining employability have been put forward in the extant literature. As noted earlier, this research focuses specifically on the factors impacting on the employability of Ghanaian hospitality graduates in HEIs, by adopting a holistic viewpoint. Based on the complexity and arguments regarding the meaning of the concept of employability, it is necessary to develop an integrated conceptual model that will increase the understanding of employability, especially in Ghanaian HE circles. This understanding is important, as several studies carried out in Ghana acknowledge the presence of a gap between what HE is producing for the labour market and the skills that the labour market requires from graduates seeking work (Bawakyillenuo et al. 2013; Gondwe and Walenkamp 2011; Baffour-Awuah and Thomson 2011). The Ghana Education Sector Performance Report (2011) maintains that graduates possess insufficient skills that are highly needed by industry, which increases the unemployment rate among this group; hence, the need to develop an integrated employability model for Ghanaian hospitality graduates.

2.7.1 Relevant models of employability for this study

Among the many models of graduate employability suggested in the literature and discussed in this research, consideration is given to the three relevant theoretical models of graduate employability: the Understanding subject knowledge; Skills and skilful practice; Efficacy beliefs; Metacognition (USEM) (Knight and Yorke 2004); Decision learning Opportunity awareness, Transition learning and Self-awareness (DOTS) (Watts 2006) and the key to employability model (CareerEdge) (Pool and Sewell 2007). These three models are considered because they are not specific to a particular context and form the basis of the present research framework. Insights from these models inform the development of an integrative model that is developed and recommended for use in Ghana.

To critically evaluate these three models the researcher presents the individual models below for the reader to understand the bases on which they were developed and the reason for their adaptation and relevance to this research. However, in spite of the fact that these three models were preferred, the CareerEdge combines the elements of the DOTS and USEM. This makes the CareerEdge model most preferred model that eventually informed the constructs used for the field data collection and development of the conceptual model of this research (The GHEEF).

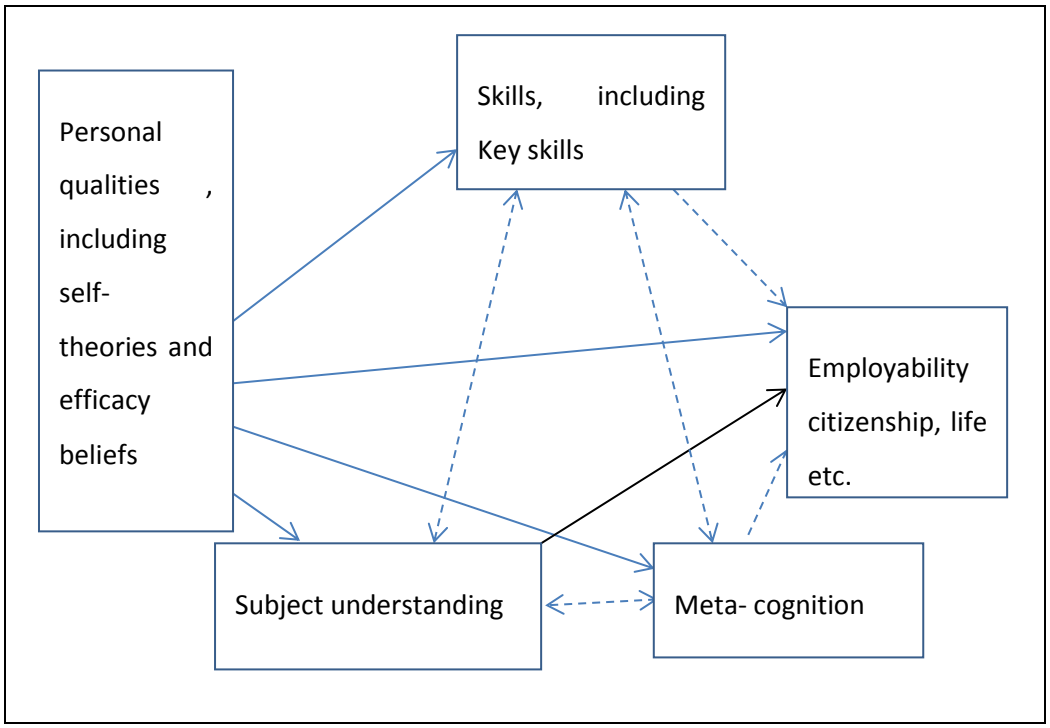
2.7.2 The USEM model

USEM is an acronym of the components of the model: **U-** (understanding subject knowledge); **S-** (skills and skilful practice); **E-** (efficacy beliefs); **M-** (metacognition).

It is the first relevant model reviewed in this research, commonly referred to as the USEM account and described as *'a ground-breaking model that can easily be implemented in institutions to make low-cost, high-gain improvements to students' employability'* (Knight and Yorke 2004:8). This model was developed to give a theoretical perspective on employability by explaining the four broad elements of employability skills and the relevance of embedding employability in the curriculum. USEM is accredited by HE in the UK and used as a key tool in supporting work on employability in HE (Knight and Yorke 2004; Maher and Graves 2008). Its features explain what a graduate should obtain from a degree course in order to enter the world of work. Knight and Yorke (2004) believe that these elements are interrelated and therefore suitable for enhancing graduate employability.

The USEM model enhances the undergraduate curricula by using 'low pain/high gain' strategies (Knight and Yorke 2004). 'Low-pain high gain' is a term used to describe the sophisticated mapping of the goodness of fit between the curriculum and the USEM model, to improve the focus of employability and put more emphasis on the importance of adjusting to change, than reconstruction in relation to embedding employability in the traditional curriculum. To discuss the elements of the model, the efficacy belief and metacognition parts of the model combined allow the integrated development of practical skills through the curriculum, when developing knowledge, understanding and skills. The USEM encourages individuals to develop a range of successes, ensures fitness for practice (competence) regarding the higher-order cognitive skills required in academia, is user-friendly and enables HE providers and their partners to fine tune their curriculum, compared with other models, which are silent on the curriculum.

Figure 2.2 The USEM Model



Source: Yorke and Knight (2006)

Figure 2.2 demonstrates the relationship between the elements of the USEM. The **U** stands for the understanding of the subject matter; **S** is the skilful practice related to generic skills as well as subject specific skills; **E** stands for efficacy beliefs, which are beliefs that can impact on situations and events, be pervasive, as depicted above, and reflect the willingness to act, which is sometimes described as self-theories, where people respond to difficulties in new situations (Dweck 1999). Yorke and Knight (2004) believe that it is an element that can be interpreted when referring to aspects of personality; **M** is the awareness of what one knows and can do to learn more. Furthermore, all four elements support the development of employability, making it a combination of several aspects, including subject knowledge. The model provides an overview of the influences on employability (Yorke and Knight 2004), making employability appeal to academics.

2.7.3 The DOTS (Career Development Learning) model

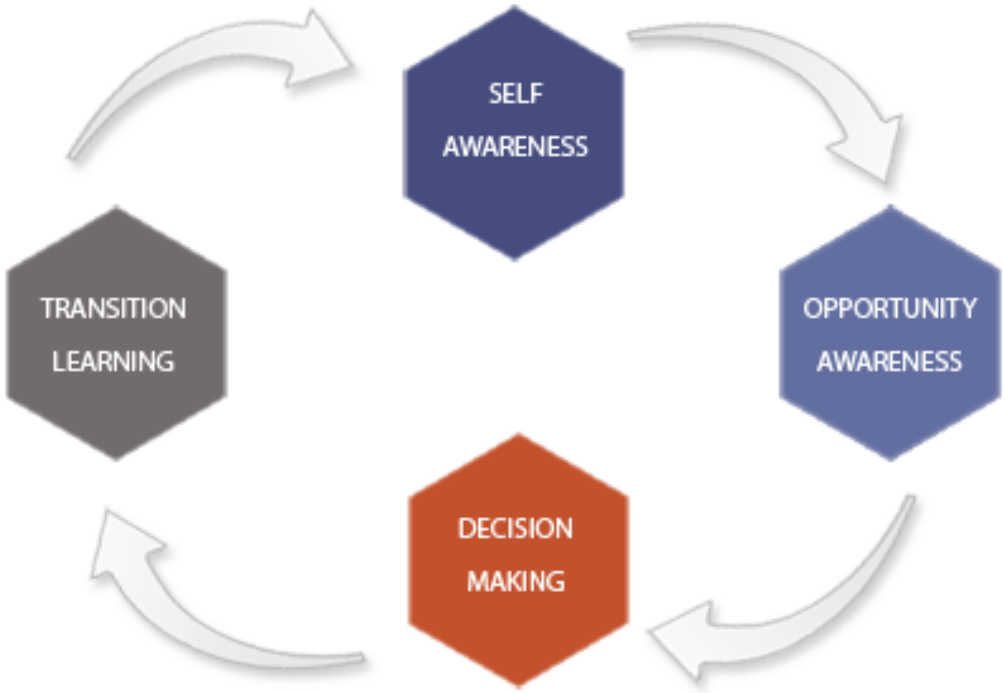
The second model of relevance is the Decision learning, Opportunity awareness, Transition and Self-awareness (DOTS) model, which evolved from career development learning, according to Watts (2006) Law and Watts (1977), and Pool and Sewell (2007). DOTS consists of: '**Self-awareness** – in terms of interests, abilities, and

values, for example; **Opportunity awareness** – knowing what work opportunities exist and what their requirements are; **Decision learning** – decision-making skills; and **Transition learning** – including job-search and self-presentation skills (Watts 2006:10).

The DOTS framework represents Careers Development Learning outcomes. This framework has sustained decades of implementation in the HE sector, particularly in the UK (Teaching Employability - RMIT University 2017). AGCAS (2005) indicates that the role of career education in the HE curriculum is essential in preparing students for success in a multifaceted graduate labour market. AGCAS (2005) furthermore agrees that there are varied theories and developmental approaches to careers education. Self, Opportunities, Decisions and Transitions is the most widely used framework in the UK. This is therefore relevant to the present study, as it explores best practices for enhancing graduate employability in Ghana.

This model emphasises the employability skills that students should learn to identify a market in which to sell themselves (Watts 2006). DOTS was fundamentally used in secondary schools, which reduced its value in the HE arena (AGCAS 2005; QAA 2001), but it was reframed in order to be blended with theoretical models for consistency in careers education (Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Service (AGCAS) 2005). The fact that the career development learning component is critical in the context of graduate employability, combined with their ability to identify job and career opportunities, network and sell their skills successfully to employers, makes DOTS relevant to this study.

Figure 2.3 The DOTS Framework



Source: Developed by Career Development and Employment RMIT University 2008 (Law and Watts 1977)

Self-awareness

Self-awareness is central to reflexivity in career development learning and includes the ability to identify: 'knowledge, abilities and transferable skills developed by one's degree; personal skills and how these can be deployed; one's interests, values and personality in the context of vocational and life planning; strengths and weaknesses, and areas requiring further development; develop a self-reflective stance to academic work and other activities; and synthesise one's key strengths, goals and motivations into a rounded personal profile' (Watts 2006:10-11).

The self-awareness component reinforces the students' ambitions in selecting their course of study and their understanding of HE. It impacts on students' development by enabling them to choose what to lay emphasis on during their work-integrated learning programme. In other words, it encourages self-assessment, reflective writing and Personal Development Planning (PDP).

Opportunity Awareness

Students must be aware of the worlds-of-work in order to select a suitable professional path. Opportunity awareness needs students to demonstrate: 'knowledge of general trends in graduate employment and opportunities for graduates in one's discipline; understand the requirements of graduate recruiters; and research-based knowledge of typical degree-related career options in which one is interested' (Watts 2006:10-11).

Decision-making

The DOTS model requires that students can: Identify the key elements of career decision-making, in the context of life planning; 'relate self-awareness to knowledge of different opportunities; evaluate how personal priorities may impact upon future career options; devise a short/medium-term career development action plan; identify tactics for addressing the role of chance in career development; and review changing plans and ideas on an ongoing basis' (Watts 2006:10-11).

Transition Learning

The transition to the job market by the student is the eventual goal. The final DOTS model element requires students to: demonstrate an understanding of effective opportunity-search strategies; apply an understanding of the recruitment/selection methods to applications; demonstrate an ability to use relevant vacancy information, including ways to access unadvertised vacancies; identify the challenges and obstacles to success in order to obtain suitable opportunities and strategies for addressing them; demonstrate a capacity to vary one's self-presentation to meet the requirements of specific opportunities; and demonstrate an ability to present effectively during selection interviews and other selection processes (Watts 2006:10-11).

2.7.4 The CareerEdge model

The third relevant model to this study is Pool and Sewell's CareerEdge, which builds on the USEM model of Yorke and Knight (2004) and DOTS. CareerEdge is an aggregation of the DOTS and USEM, making it highly relevant and preferred model amongst the chosen three, for inclusion in the selected model for this research. This model was developed to explain the concept of employability which is described as elusive, difficult to understand and too elaborate to be practically useable by those new to the subject, particularly students and their parents (Pool and Sewell 2007).

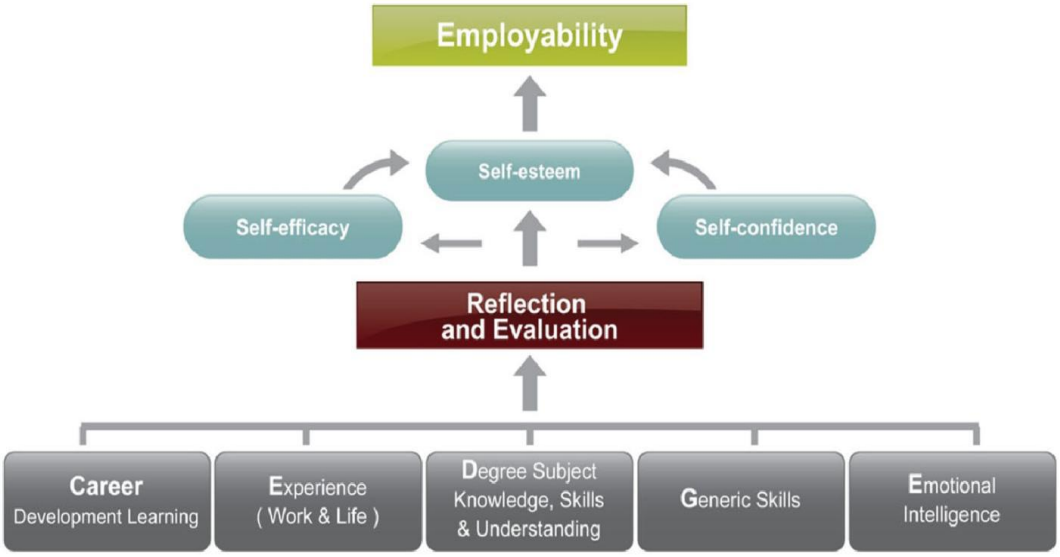
CareerEdge is a practical model for employability that easily explains the concept, and also allows students to develop their employability (Pool and Sewell 2007).

The name ‘CareerEDGE’ emanated from the lower tier of the model for easy recall, suggesting that, to be employable, all five components need to be developed and accessed by the student. This, according to Pool and Sewell (2007), will result in the development of a higher level of self-efficacy, self-confidence and self-esteem, which are important for employability.

The model is built on the definition that: '*Employability is having the set of skills, knowledge, understanding and personal attributes that makes a person more likely to choose and secure occupations in which they can be satisfied and successful*' (Pool and Sewell 2007:280).

Pool et al. (2014) argue that CareerEdge attempts to bring together earlier works by researchers in the field of employability, such as Knight and Yorke (2004), Hillage and Pollard (1998), and Harvey (2002), into a more comprehensive and coherent model, that draws together essential conceptual issues that support the understanding of the concept of employability. The visual schema answer the question of what employability is, expressing the concept of employability in a theoretical way, and making it assessable to both practitioners and students.

Figure 2.4 The CareerEdge Model

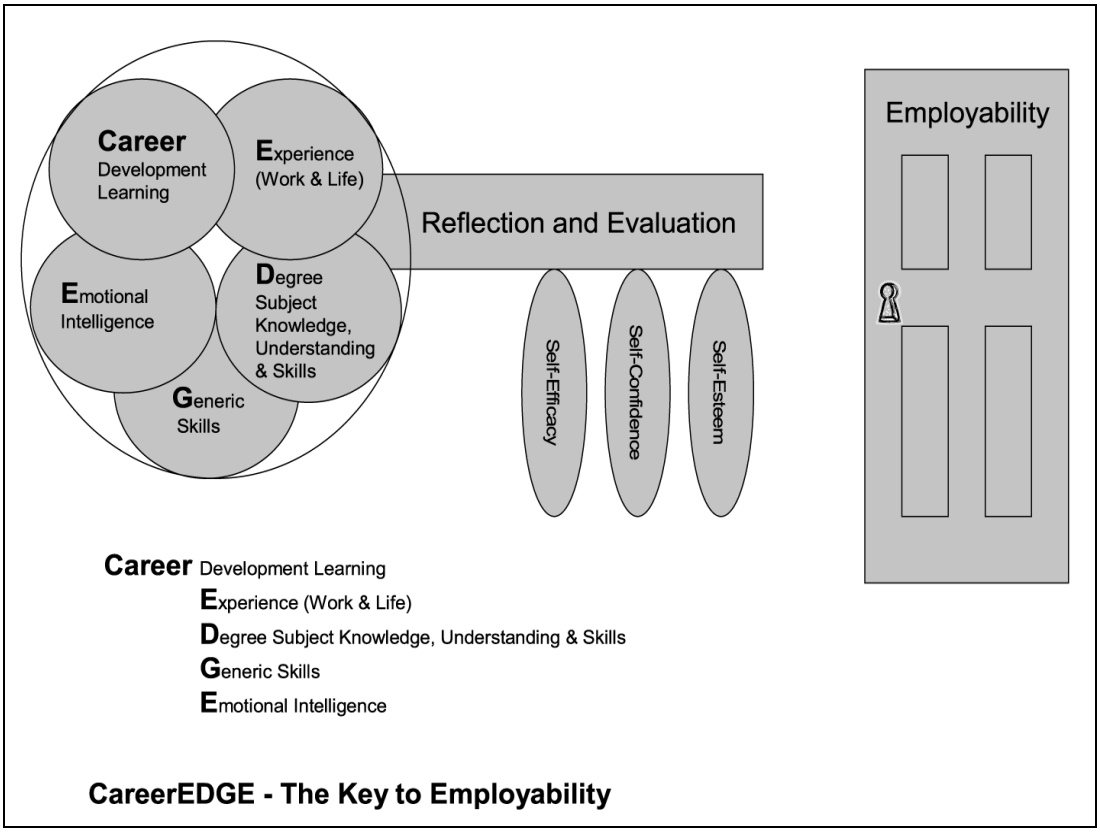


Source; Pool and Sewell (2007)

The incorporation of several elements of the USEM into the framework reflects an assertion of the importance of the model, as depicted in Figure 2.4. According to Pool and Sewell (2007), the framework is sufficiently flexible to open up new opportunities for the development of assessment tools and research on the impact of employability interventions (Pool and Sewell 2007). Smith et al. (2014) agree that the incorporation of the definition makes it assessable and builds the reflective skills of students in constructing their careers. This makes it relevant to the present study, as it combines various components of employability into a single holistic model.

To clarify the CareerEdge framework for students, parents and non-experts, a symbol of a key as depicted below was used by the authors (Pool and Sewell 2007). An image of a key literally shows that an individual who is equipped with all of the components of the model has a key that will open the door to employability. This is depicted in Figure 2.4 below.

Figure 2.5 The key to employability



Source: Pool and Sewell (2007)

The mnemonic symbol of a key to success regarding the model elements' promotion of employability is, in the researcher's opinion, easier to understand by non-experts, and hence more suitable for adaptation to the Ghanaian context, for the above reasons. Whilst it may be argued that the model would be more suitable for the developed countries in which it originated, the CareerEdge model, complemented by insights from other employability models, will underpin the proposed Ghanaian employability enhancement framework, since the skills and attributes required to be employable transcend geographical boundaries. The researcher have therefore critically combine insights from the research results and these models in developing the framework for the present research.

2.7.5 A critical evaluation of the selected models

This section critically evaluates the three theoretical employability models that underpin the development of the GHEEF in order to develop an in-depth understanding of graduate employability. The purpose of critically reviewing these models is to examine their relevance to this research and consider how the model elements could be adapted to the Ghanaian context, particularly as regards curriculum development for the employability of hospitality graduates from Ghanaian HEIs. The framework which this research produced synthesises the seminal contributions of Knight and Yorke's (2004) USEM, Pool and Sewell's (2007) CareerEdge and Watts' (2006) DOTS models, for instance, in a manner that highlights the key points of interest, as the three relevant models have merits that surpass their demerits.

The models are legitimate and accepted by HE in the UK as examples of good practice when developing and enhancing student and graduate employability (Pond and Harrington 2011; Jackson 2013). These selected models provide varied perspectives on the aspects of graduate employability considered by the researcher. The three models (USEM, DOTS and CareerEdge) contain elements that are applicable to enhancing graduate employability, such as career development learning, work and life experience, degree subject knowledge, skills and understanding, generic skills and emotional intelligence, that are vital to enhancing graduate employability, according to Pool and Sewel (2007). These models can be adapted to the outcomes linked with professional practice and HE (Knight and Yorke 2004) and therefore provide a sufficiently comprehensive focus on graduate employability, considered in terms of the changing career contexts of the new world of work in which today's graduates find themselves (Rae 2007).

Jollands (2015) argue that there is no consensus on the best framework due to the definition of employability being contested and most frameworks have become outdated as the definition of employability keeps evolving. Anderson et al. (2014), quoted in Jollands (2015), states that 'When a phenomenon can be characterised by multiple descriptors, a framework may be built to organise the descriptors into categories. A framework is useful to teachers if it can help them organise learning objectives and make them more precise. Learning objectives are 'intended student learning outcomes' or what we want our students to learn'. Bridgestock (2009) argues that, to enhance graduate outcomes in the immediate term and on a sustained basis, universities should promote broader career management competence in students, by recognising the importance of a wider skill set than the narrow generic skill lists. The three selected models of employability are individually evaluated critically to unearth their merits for consideration as models for underpinning the development of the GHEEF.

As noted earlier, in the interest of this research, the model ideas will be made relevant to the key stakeholders in employability education; namely, lecturers, students, career advisors, industry trainers, employers, and government, educational and labour market policymakers (Maher and Graves 2008). This research therefore examines the Ghanaian HE hospitality curriculum in order to assess its effectiveness in instilling these skills and competences in hospitality graduates, through an improved curriculum design and delivery, which encompass the Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA) perspectives.

It is argued that research into the employability models should manifest broad theoretical and practical contributions to knowledge, by generally fitting different contexts and providing flexible tools which will enable stakeholders to understand the specific contexts of employability (Pool and Sewell 2007; Cai 2013; Yorke and Knight 2004). Hence, the Ghanaian Hospitality Employability Enhancement Framework aims to make similar contributions to knowledge.

A critical look at the chosen models (USEM, CareerEdge, and DOTS) shows that they all have distinct merits, and emphasise a number of key skills and conditioning factors that would inform the development of the Ghana framework. However, the CareerEdge model seems to accommodate key elements that are useful for wider and contextual studies of employability. Some of these elements include the CareerEdge perspectives,

the 3S elements (Self-efficacy, Self-confidence and Self-esteem), and PDP, which enables the personal attributes of learners to be blended with their generic skills, and so make them more employable. For graduates to stand the best chance of securing an occupation that will satisfy them and enable them to succeed, it is vital for them to access career development learning (Pool and Sewell 2007).

The DOTS model emphasises career development learning and has been used extensively within career-planning and education, thereby drawing a clear connection between career planning and employability. Interestingly, the key to employability and the USEM models theoretically underpin the DOTS (Watts 2006) which is simpler and more user-friendly for practitioners and stakeholders, such as lecturers and HEIs. For example, the USEM model is relevant to this study because, according to Knight and Yorke (2004), it is consistent with academic values, and endorses good learning and teaching practices. It is also proven in the HE arena to be useful and robust for educators and students seeking to assess employability (Knight and Yorke 2004). This model places great emphasis on continuous learning, which has been identified as a requirement of the new world of work.

In support of this claim Pool and Sewell (2007), confirm that the USEM model is one of the most widely recognised and effective models in the employability literature, adjudged to be probably one of the best employability models and critical for an understanding of graduate employability. It also acts as a guide for educationists in embedding employability into the curriculum; hence, its adoption in the present research.

Smith et al. (2014) argue that employability should begin with conceptualisation, as constructs grow by accretion. Employability has been subjected to various studies during the last five decades and yet still appears difficult to define and lacks generalisability (Sumanasiri et al. 2015; Wickramasinghe and Perera, 2010). The politicisation of the concept by policymakers, HE and industry makes it even more difficult to reach a consensus, thereby allowing stakeholders to define the concept in their own context (Sumanasiri et al. 2015; Smith et al. 2014). A serious weakness of this argument, however, is that, in spite of the positive acknowledgement, the USEM model is described as largely theoretical and descriptive, it lacks research evidence (Pool and Sewell, 2007) and its complexity does not allow its practical use to explain the concept to students, parents and non-academics in order to enable them to

comprehend fully what employability is all about (Pool and Sewell, 2007). Despite these limitations, many studies have been based on the USEM framework, highlighting the significance of this theoretical framework.

However, this weakness could be easily overcome in this study by exploring the respondents' understanding of employability vis-à-vis the various meanings identified in the literature, and clarifying those that apply to the Ghanaian model. Hence, the USEM model's theoretical foundations will fruitfully support the research.

Arguably, the USEM model is believed to have a substantial face validity that can be linked with the empirical research evidence and is consistent with academic values which improve the analytical work on the curricula (Maher and Graves 2006; Yorke and Knight 2004). This attracted the interest of the researcher, since the focus of the study is on HE, with an emphasis on the employability of hospitality students and the hospitality curriculum in Ghanaian HE. It can be argued further that having face validity alone is contentious and can be disputed for content validity, because face validity is subjectively viewed as covering the concept that it purports to measure. Pool and Sewell (2007) argue that there is no real evidence to show that it can be measured by empirical research evidence, and hence object to the USEM account as not being based on sustained research, as mentioned above. This remark suggests that the present research, insofar as it is not based on the USEM model alone, may provide some evidence of the usefulness of the model constructs in developing country contexts, using the Ghanaian context as a case study. Also, the fact that the model constructs are combined with insights from other models for this particular context implies that a perceived weakness in any single model, say, the USEM, will not strongly influence the research results.

Furthermore, Pool and Sewell (2007) and McCash (2003) note its weaknesses such as distorting the curriculum and established practices in HEIs and failing to explain to departments how to render the achievements which employers' value. Knight and Yorke (2004) object to this notion put forward by Pool and Sewell by indicating that the USEM is broadly neutral in terms of subject understanding as it endorses good learning and teaching practices. These authors further argue that Metacognition is waffle and that there is no guarantee that HE can influence self-systems (interconnected networks of beliefs that help a person to make sense of the world and decide which goals and tasks to pursue). What is known about the development of skilful practice, efficacy

beliefs and metacognition suggests that a need exists to think in terms of whole courses rather than the individual modules or units of courses. This notion is, however, a challenge to practice, values and systems (Pool and Sewell 2007).

Interestingly, the USEM cuts across the priorities of the Quality Assurance Agency's subject benchmarking for general business and management (2015), which is highly valued in the UK. Another objection of the USEM by McCash (2006) and Pool and Sewell (2007) is that it is silent on the mechanism of reflection which is important for the development of employability, while efficacy belief and metacognition resist assessment and grading, which might not be taken seriously by HE stakeholders However, the USEM possesses merits that will be useful to the present study.

The researcher thinks that the semantic debate about understanding versus knowledge does not limit the creative use of the USEM model in this research. This is because the model ideas are combined with perspectives from other models to provide a more robust working model for the research, known as the Ghanaian Employability Enhancement Framework (GHEEF). In the researcher's opinion, the mere choice of names in a model does not constitute a significant drawback since, as in the case of the USEM model, it connects curriculum elements with targeted employability development goals. For example, in the Ghanaian context, the researcher can re-label the E and M with a Ghanaian vernacular term for easy understanding. The fact that the developers of the USEM model advanced 39 skill sets to consider under the various labels is of immense practical value in contextualising and applying the model ideas in Ghana.

In spite of the criticism of it, Knight and Yorke (2004) are confident that the USEM model effectively addresses issues immediately at the local level, thus making it possible to place departments and universities under the four headings which are believed to be the best elements to examine in curriculum work. They maintain that the USEM model accommodates employers' views and connects with research into learning by extension and performance, which is appreciated by teachers. It is worth stating that one important advantage of the USEM, as claimed by its authors and relevant for this research, is that it is generally sufficient for use outside England. Hence, the model looks promising for employability research within Ghanaian HE.

Knight and Yorke (2004) hold the view that the USEM model is an all-inclusive employability model for embedding employability throughout the curricula and is consistent with the understanding of HE. Furthermore, they maintain that embracing employability as an educational aim necessitates a re-examination of the curriculum design and implementation which improves traditional Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA) strategies, such as lectures, seminars and tutorials. Hence, a reconsideration of the Ghanaian hospitality curriculum design for subsequent implementation is important in this study.

Knight and Yorke (2004) indicate that the desired student development might not be achieved fully at the university, but will occur during employment based on aspects of employability in the curriculum. The researcher argues that involving hospitality industry professionals in the co-design and delivery of the hospitality curricula, as appropriate, through guest lecturers and industrial attachments, mitigates this drawback of employability education.

A good curriculum design helps learners to build an understanding of the subject matter and maintain their interest and develop skilful practices, or 'skills'. Therefore, the relationship between USEM and curriculum design is mutual. The development and embedding of employability in the curriculum reinforces good learning (Harvey 2000). Hence, the relevance of this model lies in the fact that it has implications for curriculum design, since a good curriculum will help learners to develop a more effective understanding of the subject matter and a number of skilful practices, efficacy beliefs and metacognition skills that employers value (Yorke and Knight 2006).

Some further advantages of the USEM model include the fact that it is economical and hence practicable for interventions aimed at enhancing employability; permissive by allowing departments and universities to put under those four headings the skilful practices that they consider to be important given their specific TLA contexts; and a plausible representation of employers' views that also connect with research into learning and, by extension, into performance as well, which is consistent with broad academic values (Knight and Yorke 2004).

The 39 employability traits were developed as prompts which help departments to examine their curricula from an employability enhancement perspective (Yorke and Knight 2006). These traits were categorised under the headings of personal qualities, core skills, and process skills, as depicted in Figure 2.3. Contrary to what critics have

argued, Yorke and Knight (2007) indicate that the list is important even if not every aspect applies to a particular curriculum; it guides academic staff on how they might address issues of what to do and how to encourage students' learning. This is critical for the present research as a guide for the development of the Ghanaian framework.

Furthermore, to make it more explicit, the USEM account is consistent with the model of adaptable learning, (a method which uses computers as interactive teaching devices) suggested by Boekaerts and Niemivirta (2000). This model of adaptable learning is defined by Zimmerman and Schunk (1989, cited in Knight and Yorke 2004:40) as self-regulated learning (SRL), whereby students' self-generated thoughts, feelings and actions are systematically oriented towards the attainment of their goals. They maintain that, in any situation, *'declarative [U] understanding and procedural knowledge [S] skillful, cognitive strategies that have been successful in that domain, and metacognitive knowledge [M] relevant to the learning situation'* quoted in (Yorke 2004:411), *happens with the students' self-esteem, with their hierarchy of values, and motivational beliefs*'.

Boekaerts and Niemivirta (2000) suggest a connection with USEM's [E] efficacy in discussing 'motivational beliefs'. A meta-analysis of educational interventions points to the importance of addressing the E and M of the USEM (Marzano's 1998 in Yorke 2004). In the Ghanaian context, for example, the E and M components of the model can be used as prompts to explain the motivation and mind-set of hospitality graduates regarding how they learn both the subject matter and other skills.

With respect to the USEM model, the researcher maintains that it makes useful connections with the broad view of the employability TLA, whereby graduates are equipped with both technical subject matter knowledge and sets of complementary skills needed to succeed in competitive work environments, with enhanced self-belief and higher-order skills, which relate to the metacognition dimension. Hence, the model is potentially useful in this research as a framework for organising the anticipated research results obtained from the Ghanaian context into an employability enhancing model that is suitable for that context, namely the GHEEF.

The DOTS model is valued for its simplicity because it admits a great deal of complex career development constructs within the framework (Watts 2006; Patton and McMahon 1999; Law 1996). It is valued for emphasising learning objectives and being simple for developing decision- making skills and an awareness of the availability of

work requirements, including job searches, presentation skills and self-awareness, thereby making it popular in HE circles (Watts 1999; Patton and McMahon 1999), including this study.

In support of the above view, Yang Jia Lin et al. (2015) agree that student employability is not determined solely by academic qualifications, but graduate generic attributes and the ability to package and present their credentials and capabilities and talents. The Career Development Learning (CDL) skill is closely related to the DOTS model, it enhances emerging learning technologies and the global interest in professional development, and changes in the student population, and the faculty population make career development a necessity (Yang Jia Lin et al. 2015). Reddan and Rauchle's (2012) findings suggest that university students should be exposed to courses that provide a combination of career education and work-integrated learning as part of their formal studies to maximise their employment potential for optimal economic and social outcomes.

The National Association of Graduate Careers Advisory services UK (NAGCAs, 2008) indicates that some form of career development is essential for preparing undergraduate students for the competitive employment market. The career management skill, which is closely related to the DOTS model, is popular in HE because students can use it as a self-assessment tool (AGCAS 2005) and to identify trends in employment opportunities in their areas of specialisation. The decision-making process of the model raises the students' self-awareness of their abilities, interests, values and motivation. They can then search for information that is consistent with what has been found about job opportunities, which then allows them to select from the possible options that emerge (Law and Watts 2003).

It is however, argued that DOTS does not allow individuals to organise complex career development learning into a practicable framework (Pool and Sewell 2007), contrary to the above views. They, however, acknowledge that the DOTS model is flexible and can overcome the above-mentioned limitation, by reverting to the original principle based on workplace experience. Work-integrated learning has become a significant feature of HEIs in promoting the employability of graduates over the past decade; its original principle was developed for the design and delivery of career development learning and work-integrated learning (Reddan and Rauchle 2012; NAGCAs 2008). According

to Smith et al. (2015), these principles provide vital practice- and resource-related themes that outline the actual delivery of career learning.

It is argued that the DOTS model hinders the adoption of innovative theories and creative frameworks which underplays other critical issues such as social and political contexts, attributing the failure to secure a suitable self-fulfilling job to the individual (McCash 2006; Pool and Sewell 2007). Watts (2008) asserts that career development learning complements graduate employability by addressing fundamental issues of direction and sustainable graduate employability, and assists students to expound their career aspirations and manage their progress.

Career development courses are obvious in activities that transfer employability skills, such as mentorship (Gannon and Maher 2012: Mcllveen et al. 2011). Gannon and Maher (2012) explore mentoring as a mechanism for engaging industry, and specifically alumni in HE to enhance the student experience in hospitality and tourism management, in the face of the changing and challenging nature of HE provision and issues of management education in hospitality and tourism. They argue that changes in the pedagogical delivery of knowledge and skills, technology and the growth of vocational programmes and widening access have resulted in new ways of delivery, including personalised learning.

In the Ghanaian context, for example, the researcher needs to account for how hospitality education should be blended with other influences (labour market conditions and educational policy, for instance) to enhance the employability of hospitality graduates. Therefore, the argument put forward by Pool and Sewell (2007) and McCash (2006) above will not influence the decision to adapt certain elements of the DOTS that the researcher deems vital for making Ghanaian hospitality graduates employable. In other words, the model is contextually useful depending on how it is operationalised, using evidence from that context, as in the study.

The decision-making (D) aspect of the DOTS model includes self-marketing, a process of having to decide the right strategies for finding work (Watts 2006). For example, ‘self-marketing’ includes the ability to have a suitable CV, write compelling job applications and enact a positive self-presentation during interviews (Miller 2012; Abraham and Karns 2009; Sternberg 2013). Cheramie (2014), in his study on improving career development learning in students, indicates that a lack of communication skills in many graduates who are seeking employment in the job market

has been criticised by many researchers (Abraham and Karns 2009; Bennis and O'Toole 2005; Rubin and Dierdorff 2009). This makes it imperative for students to be taught through a practical orientation such as mentoring (Gannon and Maher 2012). Their work describes the experiential exercise designed to help students to complete the process of job analysis used for hiring and other Human Resource functions. Students also discover external resources that can help them to develop more effective resumes and interview skills. Results from a student satisfaction survey of this exercise and pre-test/post-test data are provided to indicate learning in the job analysis process.

Students lack work experience and need to know how to obtain and promote their skills and achievements more clearly, to become employed after graduation. This aspect of the DOTS is relevant to this present study, since skills in developing CVs and job applications, and personal presentation skills at interviews are lacking and/or sometimes do not feature prominently in hospitality curricula designed for use in Ghanaian HE, based on the experience of the researcher as a lecturer for many years.

AGCAS (2005) indicates that a career development model contains four elements that enable students to plan their career well. The elements of the DOTS model influence the development of career learning in HE (Abraham and Karns 2009; Johnson 2011; Sternberg 2013). This allows students to become conscious of issues such as self-awareness, self-promotion, exploring and creating opportunities, action planning, networking, decision-making, negotiating, political awareness, and coping with uncertainty, and therefore focuses on the development and transfer of skills (McIlveen 2011; Watts 2006). The DOTS model supports cross-curricular learning (which involves curricula in more than one educational subject).

It is noted that the DOTS model integrates four modular approaches, such as the generic *approach*, where the same module is designed for all courses, and modified to suit the needs of particular departments (Knight and Yorke 2006; Pool and Sewell 2007; Hartung and Subich 2011). This delivery strategy is consistent with the Ghanaian context, as the research aims to embed the concept of employability into the curriculum in a way that can be used in other disciplines. It promotes extra-curricular activities which constitute a major component of the USEM model (Hustler et al. 1998). It is linked to personal development planning (PDP) which is emphasised in the extant literature as useful for adoption by all HEIs, especially in the UK, as an essential component of graduate employability (Knight and Yorke 2004; Watts 2006). Career

development learning requires the personal engagement and active participation of students, which is facilitated by interactive teaching and learning methods. The experiential learning aspect of DOTS meets this objective and makes the world of work seem more real (AGCAS 2005; Pedagogy for employability Group 2004; Watts 2006 McIlveen et al. 2011). The teaching and learning methods for DOTS, according to the Pedagogy for Employability Group (2004:20), include the following:

'*Facilitative teaching styles that encourages and models an open and honest exploration of the career planning process, group discussions within lecture group sessions, self-audit, role play, peer review, card-sort exercises, snowballing activities, problem-based methods, supplementary lectures with on-line peer discussion group or tutor-managed discussion forums and self-directed learning'.*

These are innovative methods of teaching that will enhance the skills of the student. These methods are consistent with the DOTS model and graduate employability skills. The fact that these are not, in the experience of the researcher, sufficiently implemented in Ghana, emphasises the importance of the current study.

The DOTS model has the potential to engage students in the design and delivery of courses (Watts 2006; Hustler et al.1998) through such interactive sessions with students as surveys and focus group discussions in designing courses, feedback for reviewing courses, and the use of alumni in developing courses (Gannon and Maher 2012). This, according to Watts (2006), gives students a sense of ownership, and involves employers in the design and delivery of courses. As noted earlier, the Ghanaian HE context has had little engagement with industry regarding the design of educational courses, teaching and learning (Gondwe and Walenkamp 2011). Hence, the DOTS components will be suitable for adoption in this research to accommodate the interests of employers and eliminate the mismatch between curriculum delivery and industry requirements (Gondwe and Walenkamp 2011; Bawakyillenuo et al. 2013).

Watts (2006) argues that the involvement of employers in educational activities adds significance to the relevance of these activities and makes it credible to students. Employers will also be motivated to exhibit their company's positive image and pave the way for access by prospective applicants, by fulfilling their corporate responsibility to their community. The UK National Committee of Inquiry for HE (NCIHE) (1997) states that students are conversant with work, thereby reflecting their experiences with the DOTS model. Organised work experience as part of a course of study, organised

work experiences external to a course of study, ad hoc work experience external to a course of study, and stimulated work within the HE setting are the main categories of work experience emphasised in the concept of employability (Little 2002, Little and ESECT 2004; Harvey et al. 1998; Watts 2006). The adoption of the DOTS framework in this study is based on three main reasons: it has sustained decades of implementation in the HE sector, particularly in the UK as indicated in the introduction earlier; it may be represented in a succinct format; and it allows easy understanding and can be applied by individuals with little schooling in the theory of career development.

McIlveen et al. (2011) claim that work-integrated learning placements, which is an aspect of DOTS, should be related to the students' goals and learning needs, to enable them to judge the significance and success of work-integrated learning experience. They suggest learning activities that require students to research the employment market in their subject area or profession, such as conducting interviews with industry recruiters, reading professional newsletters, writing job-related reports and findings, and using online search engines and newspapers.

Additionally, McIlveen et al. (2011:6) maintain that '*Decision-making builds upon self-awareness and opportunity awareness and pertains directly to actions*'. Students' learning activities should therefore include case studies and decision-critical analyses. To complement the evaluation of DOTS, it supports assessment and evaluation compared to the USEM (Hustler et al. 1998:49-53 cited in Watts 2003:22), by listing six areas, namely: reflective essay and reports; learning logs and portfolios; individual and group projects; individual presentations; and direct assessment of CVs, applications, interviews and written examinations. Consequently, the DOTS model elements ensure that the graduate achieves an ideal level of employability (Pond and Harrington 2013).

The CareerEdge is among the many studies that emerged as a theoretical model for employability and its underlying factors (Pool and Sewell 2007). Smith et al. (2014) indicated that, unlike most previous studies, which were either qualitative or case-studies, the CareerEdge model signifies an attempt to operationalise the concept of employability, since for the very first time in employability research, this model appears ready for quantitative testing which will allow the generalisation of the findings. Similarly, (Jollands 2015) holds the view that the CareerEdge framework is a well-known model. It is systematic, comprehensive and detailed, facilitating the identification

of specific learning objectives and has categories and sub-categories that are the five categories which reflect the common organisational structures in HE institutions. It also allows the pragmatic implementation of incremental changes; hence it is fit for current practice. Like the other frameworks, it has a number of gaps. Despite these limitations, the CareerEdge model is a widely-accepted model of employability (Smith et al. 2014; Pool and Sewell 2007). Smith et al. (2014) argue that the CareerEdge model suffers from the limitation of being categorised as a snap-shot view of employability, thereby limiting its applications.

Pool and Sewell (2007) praise the model as flawless and a useable framework that simplifies the elements which address secured occupations for graduates, in which they will be satisfied and successful. This assertion is questioned by Smith et al. (2014), who argue that, in attempting to simplify and clarify the framework for easy understanding, its usefulness is reduced. Although the framework appears to be a comprehensive representation of employability, the snap-shot approach adopted reduces its usefulness (Smith et al. 2014). Similarly, Sumanasiri et al. (2015) argue that the CareerEdge model lacks operational clarity.

The identification of the five employability skills categories at the base of the model justifies the researcher's application of the CareerEdge model in the conceptual framework for this study. The model shows the essential components of employability, and proposes how the components interact. The five interlinked attributes complement each other; excluding any one renders the other elements incomplete and limits the employability of the graduate (Pool and Sewell 2007). The framework is readily adaptable by addition of new sub-categories (Jollands 2015), in this case hospitality skills.

Career development learning, experience (work and life), and degree subject knowledge, which are central to the model, suggest that the main aim in entering HE is to study a specific subject discipline, gain a degree and get a good job, so understanding and skills are also essential. Generic skills and emotional intelligence combine with the higher-order elements of reflection and evaluation, self-efficacy, self-confidence and self-esteem to influence an individual's employability. These skills indicate qualities that are linked to an individual's character and soft skills, which are important for customer-facing roles in the service industry (Pool and Sewell 2007). The development of emotional intelligence competencies is the prerogative of students in

order to realise their employability potential, because individuals with enhanced emotional intelligence are believed to succeed in their career, relationships and life in general (Pool and Sewell 2007; Goleman 2008). This point further justifies the use of these insights in this research into hospitality graduates' employability, as hospitality is a service industry.

The model contains elements that have been identified in the literature as important to employability. Reflection and evaluation enable individuals to have added self-confidence in their capabilities and develop self-efficacy and self-esteem which, in turn, enhance their employability. Individuals who are able to reflect can identify their own inadequacies and proactively take action to gain the necessary competencies to adapt to the changing work environment and make a success of their career. The elements of the CareerEdge employability model allow students to adapt to the demands of the new world of work, and improve their chances of career success and satisfaction. These five elements have also been established as key employability skills by other unrelated studies on employability (Smith et al. 2014; Finch et al. 2013; Sumanasiri et al. 2015). Specifically, the CareerEdge model stresses self-confidence and self-esteem, and its career satisfaction application (Pool and Sewell 2007).

It is interesting to note that the CareerEdge model is related to students' employability and that, for students to realise and develop their employability, access to certain opportunities in relation to the five elements on the base of the model (career development learning, experience (work and life), degree subject knowledge skills and understanding, generic skill, and emotional intelligence) is imperative (Pool et al. 2014).

The development of the Employability Development Profile (EDP) measurement tool counters the argument of Smith et al. (2014), Finch et al. (2013) and Sumanasiri et al. (2015), that the CareerEdge model lacks research support (Pool et al. 2014). The EDP was designed specifically for HEIs as a developmental measurement tool for use in designing, implementing and evaluating employability interventions. It is multi-dimensional and maps clearly onto the CareerEdge model of graduate employability. Hence, its role in this research is that, being part of the CareerEdge model, it facilitates the research use of the GEEF by stakeholders (lecturers and policy makers) in effectively improving the hospitality curricula for employability. That is, the combination of models and evaluation tools is achieved in such interventions in Ghana.

Pool et al. (2014) indicate that EDP is a self-report questionnaire that enables students to rate themselves on key aspects of employability in the CareerEdge. They claim that very little empirical research assesses the theoretical models. Similarly, although employability has received much attention within the field of HE, a few studies have tested the existing theoretical models (Tomlinson's 2012; Rothwell et al. 2009). The EDP is timely and appropriate as a measuring tool for the CareerEdge model. However, critics maintain that these measurement tools are unsuitable to use by undergraduates (Rothwell and Arnold 2007); this argument is supported by Berntson and Marklung (2007). However, the researcher argues that this will not affect the outcome of the GHEEF as the researcher recognises the need to explore how the EDP tool can be adapted to suit the peculiarities of the Ghanaian hospitality education system. This should form part of the post-research deployment of the GHEEF.

Combining such insights with a working model which also draws on the USEM, CareerEdge and DOTS models (discussed above) in the study will provide some useful new knowledge for employability research. This is the role of the GHEEF in this research. The evaluation is based on output and outcomes. Hence, in the interest of this research, the Ghanaian Employability Enhancement Framework will make the employability concept clearer to stakeholders, such as lecturers, parents, students and HEIs, so that it may prove more successful in promoting the employability of hospitality graduates.

As indicated earlier, the most useful articulation of employability covers three elements (access to work, career success and satisfaction). This definition is used in this research, as it shows the best quality of graduate employment which the GHEEF model aims to facilitate in the hospitality industry in Ghana. A list of transferrable skills from the Pedagogy for Employability Group in the UK (2004:5 quoted in Pool and Sewell 2007:282) encompasses the following:

'Imagination/creativity; adaptability/flexibility; willingness to learn; independent working/autonomy; working in a team; ability to manage others; ability to work under pressure; good oral communication; communication in writing for varied purposes/audiences; numeracy; attention to detail; time management; assumption of responsibility and for making decisions; planning, coordinating and organising ability; and ability to use new technologies'.

2.7.6 Other relevant models that were considered but not chosen

Presented below are other employability models which were not chosen as foundational for this study. However, they are similar in some respects to the USEM, DOTS and CareerEdge models which informed the development of the conceptual framework.

2.7.6.1 Employability framework

This employability framework put forward by McQuaid and Lindsay (2005) takes account not only of individual factors, but also personal circumstances and external factors. The important premises of these factors are the interactions between each of the components. These perspectives are not mutually exclusive, as suggested, but provide ways in which the 'broad' and the 'narrow' can be combined. For the broad view, on the one hand, they argue that the context refers not only to the labour market conditions but also a range of other external factors which influence individuals' employability, labour demand conditions and employment-related public services support, as well as a set of factors that influence a person's employability (McQuaid and Lindsay 2005). They further explained that the employability skills that an employer may require depend on the changing environment in which they operate; for example, customer preferences, the actions of competitors and the state of the labour market (McQuaid and Lindsey 2005). An employer may employ someone whom, under normal circumstances, they might not consider.

On the other hand, the narrow view focuses on the individual's skills and attributes, overlooks other vital aspects such as family care e.g. a lack of appropriate childcare provision and family-friendly policies, easy access to suitable transport, and the remoteness of the location, which may thwart the efforts of someone with transferable skills to obtain a job, thereby limiting their employability (McQuaid and Lindsey 2005). Hence, this research argues that employability is an interaction between the individual and other factors. The researcher earlier argued that this model is a useful interpretational framework for explaining the different influences on employability, but it is less relevant to this study than the three chosen models.

Figure 2.6 An employability framework

Individual factors	Personal circumstances	External factors (Labour market)
Employability skills and attributes Essential attributes; Personal competencies Key transferable skills High level transferable skills Qualifications Work knowledge base Labour market attachment	**Household circumstances** Direct caring responsibilities caring for children, elderly relatives, etc. Other family and caring responsibilities Other household circumstances	**Demand factors** Labour market factors Macro-economic factors Vacancy characteristics Recruitment factors
Demographic characteristics Age, gender, etc.	**Work culture** The existence of a culture in which work is encouraged and supported within the family, among peers or other personal relationships and the wider community	**Enabling support factors** Employment policy factors Other enabling policy factors
Health and well-being Health Disability	**Access to resources** Transport, financial capital, social capital	
Job seeking Effective use of formal search services/information, network; ability to complete CVs/application		
Adaptability and mobility Geographical mobility Occupational mobility		

Source: McQuaid and Lindsay (2005)

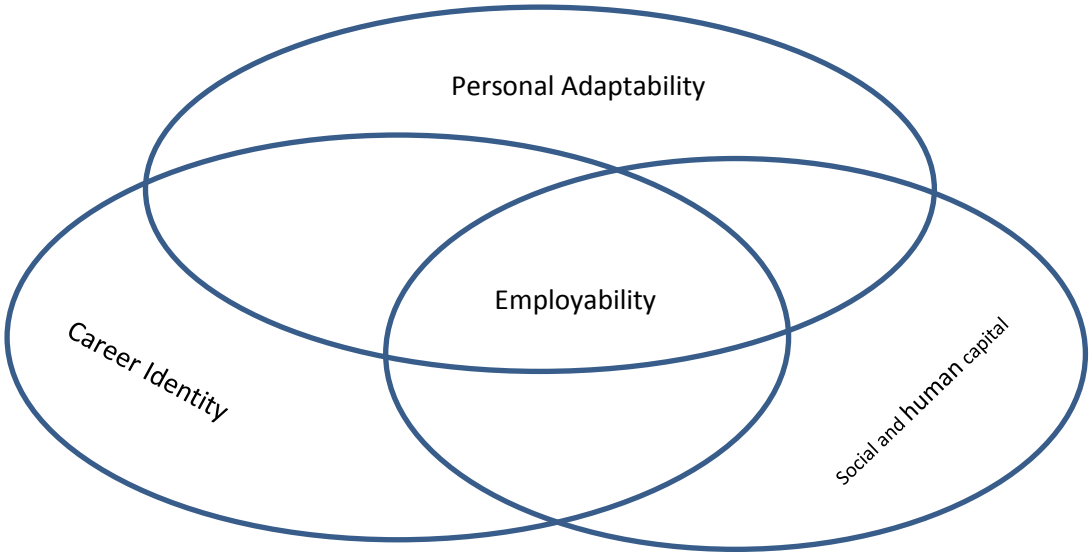
Figure 2.6 illustrates all-inclusive framework of employability by McQuaid and Lindsay (2005). This framework has three interconnected sets of factors that impact a person's employability: individual factors; personal circumstances; and external factors. Of key importance are the interactions between each of the components. For instance, employers may be willing to accept someone under a certain set of circumstances, for example during a labour shortage, but may not consider the same person when there

is an abundant supply of labour. McQuaid and Lindsey (2005) describe this employability framework as the most comprehensive. For example, the model, depicted above, offers an understanding of the wider influences on employability.

2.7.6.2 A Heuristic Model of Employability

Fugate et al. (2004) proposed a framework, with the responsibility on the employee to acquire the knowledge, skills and other characteristics that employers need. This is based on the fact that employability has the combined power of a collection of individual characteristics which enables employees to adapt to different situations. They developed a heuristic model, based on their definition of employability as '*a psycho-social construct that embodies individual characteristics that foster adaptive cognition, behaviour, and effect, and enhance the individual-work interface'* (Fugate et al. 2004:15). This model is based on the concept of individual employability by embracing several person-centred constructs that are vital for career-related changes to the new world of work. This model originates from human resources and employer viewpoints and is aimed at different audiences who are in employment. It can therefore be classified as a human resources model which is not directly useful in discussing the graduate curriculum. However, the elements of the model could be used within each of the employability models adopted for this research. Additionally, as agreed by Fugate et al. (2004), three dimensions of the model (personal adaptability, career identity and human capital) are important. These three dimensions are the willingness, capacity, and competence to change, which form the foundation for employability. They argue that employability is a form of work-specific trait that enables employees to identify career opportunities. Personal traits, such as self-efficacy, a tendency to learn, self-confidence, openness and inherent control, combine with the cognitive and affective stages of the individual, enhancing their ability to find and secure a job (Fugate et al. 2004). In explaining further, Fugate et al. (2004) maintain that proactively engaging in one's workplace reduces the uncertainty and anxiety and improves adaptation and outcomes through performance and satisfaction. The psycho-social construct of employability, with an emphasis on the importance of personal characteristics, is related to personal adaptation.

Figure 2.7 The Heuristic model of employability



Source: Fugate et al. (2004)

Figure 2.7 depicts the related constructs, such as occupational identity and organisational identity that describe the career identity dimension. It further labels the individual characteristics and personal attributes. 'Career identity provides a *compass* of the motivational component of employability' that is not inconsistent with organisational progress' (Fugate et al. 2004:20). Career identity is therefore based on the work context and not directly relevant to this study, since the individual needs to be in active employment in order to relate to the model. Similarly, Symington (2012) supports this argument that the heuristic model is not specific to students/graduates but important for understanding the vitality and interaction between the stated ideas.

Fugate et al. (2008) furthermore introduced the dispositional model of employability which may be useful in understanding the interaction between the above-mentioned constructs. The dispositional model is perceived as nurturing individual characteristics, adaptive behaviour and positive employment outcomes. In other words, the dispositional measure of employability justifies the individual characteristics that influence the tendency to identify career opportunities. The elements of the framework include: changes at work, career flexibility, being proactive at work, motivation and work identity. Meanwhile, Siow Wen et al. (2011) argue that the element of building human capital, which is essential for students, is lacking in this model. Symington (2013) argues that the model emphasises worker adaptation and was not developed

for graduates. It enhances employees in their transition at work, as well as in situations of redeployment, redundancy and retrenchment. It is theoretically useful for a study that explores employers' views of employability. Although these models contribute significantly to the knowledge base of employability, the current study focuses on graduates rather than employees who are already in employment and so have some work experience.

2.7.6.3 Conceptual model of graduate attributes for employability

Bridgestock's (2009)'s Conceptual model of graduate attributes highlights the skills that are vital for enhancing graduate employability with career management skills as an integral aspect. Although highly relevant to the present study, it shares similar elements to the USEM and DOTS models considered. As emphasised by Bridgestock (2009), collaboration between faculties, career services and employers to develop and implement courses addresses the issues of career competence, career building and self-management skills. She indicates that enhancing graduate employability should encompass important skills, such as self-management, career-building, generic, employability and discipline-specific skills which have positive effects on graduate learning outcomes and employability, and also on a broader economic level.

The model suggests that generic skill development is an insufficient solution to graduate employability and that, to enhance graduate outcomes in the immediate term and on a sustained basis, HE should promote broader career management competence in students, by recognising the importance of a wider skill set than the narrow generic skill lists. To improve the economic and social outcomes, graduates must proactively navigate the world of work and self-manage their career-building process. For universities to engage effectively with the graduate employability agenda, a wider skill set than the narrow generic skill lists is needed, which should consider lifelong career development.

2.7.6.4 Aspects of employability Knight and Yorke (2004:27-28)

Figure 2.8 lists and explains further the key dimensions of employability which flow from the above literature on the USEM model. These dimensions are relevant in this study as pointers to the employability attributes which the researcher wishes to explore among Ghanaian hospitality students/graduates.

Figure 2.8 Aspects of employability

A. Personal qualities

1. Malleable self-theory: belief that attributes [e.g. intelligence] is not fixed and can be developed.
2. Self-awareness: awareness of own strengths and weaknesses, aims and values.
3. Self-confidence: confidence in dealing with the challenges that employment and life throw up.
4. Independence: ability to work without supervision.
5. Emotional intelligence: sensitivity to others' emotions and the effects that they can have.
6. Adaptability: ability to respond positively to changing circumstances and new challenges.
7. Stress tolerance: ability to retain effectiveness under pressure.
8. Initiative: ability to take action unprompted.
9. Willingness to learn: commitment to on-going learning to meet the needs of employment and life.
10. Reflectiveness: the disposition to reflect evaluative on the performance of oneself and others.

B. Core skills

1. Reading effectiveness: the recognition and retention of key points.
2. Numeracy: ability to use numbers at an appropriate level of accuracy.
3. Information retrieval: ability to access different sources.
4. Language skills: possession of more than a single language.
5. Self-management: ability to work in an efficient and structured manner.
6. Critical analysis: ability to 'deconstruct' a problem or situation.
7. Creativity: ability to be original or inventive and to apply lateral thinking.
8. Listening: focused attention in which key points are recognised.
9. Written communication: clear reports, letters etc. written specifically for the reader.
10. Oral presentations: clear and confident presentation of information to a group [also 21, 35].
11. Explaining: orally and in writing [see also 20, 35].
12. Local awareness: in terms of both cultures and economics.

C. Process skills

1. Computer literacy: ability to use a range of software.
2. Commercial awareness: operating with an understanding of business issues and priorities.
3. Political sensitivity: appreciates how organisations actually work and acts accordingly.
4. Ability to work cross-culturally: both within and beyond the UK.
5. Ethical sensitivity: appreciates ethical aspects of employment and acts accordingly.
6. Prioritising: ability to rank tasks according to importance.
7. Planning: setting of achievable goals and structuring action.
8. Applying subject understanding: use of disciplinary understanding from the HE programme.
9. Acting morally: has a moral code and acts accordingly.
10. Coping with complexity: ability to handle ambiguous and complex situations.
11. Problem solving: selection and use of appropriate methods to find solutions.
12. Influencing: convincing others of the validity of one's point of view

13. Arguing for and/or justifying a point of view or a course of action [see also 20, 21].
14. Resolving conflict: both intra-personally and in relationships with others.
15. Decision-making: choice of the best option from a range of alternatives.
16. Negotiating: discussion to achieve mutually satisfactory resolution of contentious issues.
17. Team work: can work constructively with others on a common task.

Source: Knight and Yorke (2004:27-28)

The present research will use these insights to investigate the strengths, weaknesses and usefulness of these models, by assessing the merits and demerits for subsequent consideration. The researcher hopes to develop an employability model that would be suitable for use by hospitality students in Ghana. This section will clearly articulate how some of the existing model components studied are related to the current literature on model development. Finally, the external factors consider labour market influences, such as that explored through hospitality employers' surveys in this study, and policymaker perspectives, whereby this study recognises the need to involve Ghanaian HE policymakers in the post-research use of the Ghanaian Hospitality Employability Enhancement Framework (GHEEF) for innovating employability education in Ghana.

In other words, the above framework provides a broad interpretational canvas for effectively applying research results from employability studies within a given context, such as Ghana. Other employability models contribute additional insights into the nature of employability skills to focus on within personal factors. Hence, a critical use of the combined insights from different employability models is the focus of this study.

In conclusion, the researcher notes that all of the models in the literature could be used in different ways to enhance graduate employability, such as within HEI education and training and beyond, when graduates are already looking for work. That is, the model constructs facilitate on-the-job training as well as access to graduates' first job, but to different degrees. Hence, the model elements will be carefully considered to make the GHEEF meaningful to the key stakeholders in the research. Therefore, it is important for the researcher to bear in mind these models and skills when developing the framework for the Ghanaian context in light of the research results. Furthermore, other existing models, including those mentioned in the literature, were reviewed and used as the baseline that aided the gathering of data for the development of the Ghanaian model.

2.8 Curriculum Development in Hospitality

This section explains the models of curriculum development in the hospitality sector and how they contribute to the research framework of the study. It explicates the importance of the theoretical underpinnings that further inform the research design. A curriculum is defined 'as an intentional design for learning negotiated by faculty in light of their specialised knowledge and in the context of social expectations and student's needs' (Toombs and Williams 1993:183). The development of hospitality management curricula is inevitable due to the complexity of the industry. The development of hospitality programme models is influenced by many factors; these include the institutional culture, departmental culture, disciplinary culture, leadership, faculty background and their educational beliefs (Scotland 2006). The goal of curriculum development is to facilitate learning (Dopson and Richard 2004). Gagnes (1985) focuses on learning outcomes and calls for instructional designers to use inellectual skills, verbal information, cognitive strategies, motor skills and attitudes when analysing curriculum content.

Curriculum development is important in hospitality programmes in order to remain current with industry and educational trends (Dopson and Richard 2004). Globalisation and technological developments in terms of size and complexity, environmental changes, competition, demanding sophisticated customers, and the expectations of investors, have impacted on education and training in relation to the hospitality industry (ILO 2012). These are major changes taking place in the hospitality industry, leading to an upsurge in the number and types of hospitality courses (Scotland 2006). This therefore has led to the course curricula coming under intense scrutiny by the key stakeholders' educators, students and industry professionals (Scotland 2006). This increased attention is possibly due the need to satisfy the institutional and industry demands.

Curriculum revisions in the hospitality industry and reviews are imperative and ideally continuous in order to keep abreast with the rate at which the industry is moving. Stark et al. (1997) state that curriculum planning serves various purposes and can target the teaching of specific units of content, the teaching of particular courses, devising sequences of courses within a programme or department, or developing curriculum plans for entire schools. The responsibility of hospitality management education is to

combine industry priorities with the needs of students and make significant contributions to research into socially responsive programmes of study (Stutts 1995).

2.8.1 Models of curriculum development in hospitality

There are several models of curriculum development in hospitality education, amongst which were identified; *Chen and Groves' Model (1999); Reigel and Dallas' Approaches (1999); Ritchie's Hybrid Model of Tourism/Hospitality Education* (1995); Koh's Model (Scotland (2006) and Tyler's model (Dopson and Richard 2004).

According to Scotland (2006), Chen and Groves' model (1999) suggests a consideration of the philosophical differences which they argue provide a philosophical foundation on which educational goals can be based (Scotland 2006). Reigel and Dallas' approaches *(1999)* identified four main areas in hospitality programmes: the major, general education and advanced learning skills, electives, and workplace experience using approaches to group programmes with similar features. Five such approaches are used to design courses in hospitality and tourism: these include: Craft/skill approaches, Tourism approaches, Food Systems/home economics approaches, Business Administration approaches and Combined approaches (Scotland 2006).

Similarly, *Ritchie's Hybrid Model of Tourism/Hospitality Education* (1995) stresses the need to be sensitive to the needs of industry; the Cornell University model is a *hotel school model* which focuses fully on preparing individuals for management roles in hotel and resort properties. It consists of two main courses related to various parts of the hotel property, and courses related to various aspects of management related to the successful running of a hotel. This allows students to specialise in the operation and management of a hotel or resort property.

Tyler's model is described as the best for hospitality curriculum development (Dopson and Richard 2004), because it answers questions about developing educational purposes and objectives, and selecting, organising, and evaluating the effectiveness of learning experiences. This model is systematic and orderly, as it provides direction for design. This model answers questions that enhance the development of the curriculum, by outlining four basic principles that must be considered by educators when planning the curriculum. These principles include:

- Purposes of the instruction
- Educational experiences related to the purposes
- Organisation of these experiences and
- Evaluation of the purposes (Dopson and Tas 2004:39).

They suggested four questions on which appropriate curriculum development should be based, which are:

1. What is the objective of education?
2. Which activities will allow the accomplishment of the objective?
3. How will the activities be organised?
4. How will one tell that the activities have been achieved?

Hospitality education needs to answer these questions. The first question looks at the vital competencies and value of students. To explain the importance of a critical understanding of the concepts studied on a course for effective curriculum design, in relation to this present study the researcher should critically review the literature on employability concepts, skills and models. The research design emphasises the identification of gaps in the learning of these skills which exist in Ghanaian hospitality education. It also emphasises the identification of new approaches for enhancing the employability of hospitality graduates, including new skills and competences required by multinational hotel chains, which is the focus of this study.

Dopson and Tas (2004) argue that a designed curriculum should be more productive if it uses a model to give it direction. The model should be systematically planned to avoid accidental educational experiences. Kumar et al. (2014:6) indicate that 'the success of any course lies in its course curriculum and contents'. The growth of the hospitality industry and the rapid changes within it demand that the curriculum should move at the same pace to be in accordance with the needs of the industry. They suggest that industry representatives need to be involved in developing the syllabus. Frequently updating the hospitality curriculum is vital for hospitality graduates to be relevant in industry. Education and training are interrelated and therefore play an important role in human resource development in the hospitality and tourism sector (Kumar et al. 2014).

The research design accommodates these perspectives through a detailed examination of the Ghanaian context, including the opinions of different stakeholders (lecturers, students and employers) regarding the need for regular curriculum updates and collaboration with industry practitioners in curriculum development.

Biedenweg et al. (2013) maintain that, in developing a curriculum, one element that is critical is the knowledge that students are expected to learn, known as the Learning Outcomes. Dopson and Richard (2004:40) define a curriculum as *'an organised set of experiences to which learners are subjected so that their behaviour will be modified in a desired and predetermined manner'.* These modifications are the learning outcomes. To them, a curriculum is an instrument, which is designed to change those to whom it applies. Dopson and Richard (2004:40) further explain that 'a curriculum provides students with organised experiences of the classroom that lead to change in a constructive way'. In addition, the curriculum should be based on a planned strategy which cultivates an environment for course development, implementation, and evaluation. They acknowledged the importance of a model being productive as it provided a direction for design.

Therefore, based on this notion, the researcher evaluated the models and based the design of the curriculum on the one that is suitable for the adoption for the Ghanaian context. These models have not actually been reflected in the Ghanaian hospitality curriculum; hence, the need to review them for use in Ghana.

Dopson and Tas (2004) study on the practical approach to curriculum development suggests developing a hospitality curriculum to include three major components: substantive knowledge, skills, and values. Kay and Russette (2000) also suggested the importance of operational issues, such as a working knowledge of hospitality services. Similarly, Okeiyi et al. (1994) argue that behavioural issues, such as managerial skills, are often considered essential. However, Gursoy and Swanger (2004) maintain that effective hospitality curriculum needs to teach students the crucial operational skills, along with the skills necessary to be successful managers. Therefore, to accomplish this, it is necessary to incorporate the perspectives of the industry professionals into the hospitality curriculum.

Hence, the use of industry professional perspectives in this studies is a major contribution that will underpin the development of the GHEEF. Gursoy (2012) indicates that there are several ways in which industry perspectives can be obtained. These

include visits by industry professionals as guest lecturers or to take part in executive education programs, as part of the curriculum review process. Competency models can be developed from industry practitioners ranking the skills and content areas that are most important in the workplace. Educators can then incorporate them into the curriculum (Gursoy and Swanger 2005). Again, these ideas informed the survey of hospitality employer in the research.

In developing a curriculum for hospitality management, Buergermeister (1983) found that human-relation skills and attitudes are very important for hospitality graduates. To decide on a hospitality curriculum for hospitality graduates, consideration should be paid to skills/competencies that graduates need to possess (Tas 1988). It is important to incorporate the perspectives of educators along with those of industry practitioners and some student perspectives (Gursoy et al. 2012), instead of just focusing on the perceptions of the hospitality industry practitioners as practised by most authors of competency-based studies in hospitality management.

Gursoy and Swanger (2005) argue that identifying the skills and competencies that graduates need to possess is not enough and does not complete the process of curriculum development. They acknowledge that skills and competencies need to be added and embedded into the curriculum. Therefore, important subject areas must be effectively incorporated into the curriculum to facilitate learning and preparation for future careers. They maintain that an industry- and faculty-led process of curriculum development needs to incorporate the changing needs of the industry to nurture innovation.

The many studies on curriculum development in the hospitality industry focused on either the hotel industry or the overall hospitality industry, with a few focusing solely on sectors such as food services (Gursoy et al. 2012). Chung-Herrera et al. (2003) developed a competency-based model an approach which included the presentation of an industry specific and future-based leadership competency based on their study of key hospitality work-related competencies.

Nelson and Dopson (2001) suggest that hospitality educators need to identify clear goals and objectives for curriculum development, by always incorporating the changing needs of the industry, so that the gap between what the students are taught and what the industry expects of graduates can be narrowed.

Raybould and Wilkins (2005) incorporated a generic skill framework for ranking the important skill areas of hospitality graduates from both the employers and students' perspectives. They confirmed that the nature of the hospitality workplace requires ability and mastery regarding both generic and hospitality-specific skill sets. In this sense, taking into account hospitality subject areas and course content areas provides an extensive representation of the skills and knowledge that graduates will require in the workplace.

These ideas require the opinions of lecturers, students and employers, as appropriate, on the effectiveness of the teaching, learning and assessment of different hospitality courses in Ghana. Specific questionnaire and interview items will be developed to cover these aspects in the research, with some of the questions on student learning of hospitality skills posed to lecturers and students to triangulate their responses.

As stated, it is obvious that context and philosophical underpinnings are vital in programme curriculum development and should not be overlooked when developing course curricula. Essentially, those involved in programme curriculum development should be aware of the role that philosophical beliefs play in swaying programme decisions.

2.9 Curriculum development and employability

The employability literature suggests a number of different models for the development of employability skills, namely the embedding of employability throughout the whole curriculum, the embedding of employability through only the core curriculum, work-based learning as part of the curriculum, an employability-related module in the curriculum and work-based learning parallel to the curriculum (Yorke and Knight 2006: 14).

O'Neill (2010) describes curriculum development as an approach that includes models for teaching, learning and assessment. The basis for its development is to help designers clearly to draw up teaching and assessment approaches to achieve learning outcomes. Curriculum development, according to Ornstein and Hunkins (2009), encompasses planning, implementation and evaluation, as well the involvement of people, processes and procedures. They argue that the human aspect, such as

personal attitudes, feelings, and values, are rarely considered but essential components when developing curricula (Ornstein and Hunkins 2009). A curriculum model requires planning skills, which elude many untrained HE lecturers, despite their subject knowledge. It is not to be substituted by professional and personal judgement when enhancing student learning (Knight and Yorke 2004).

Mckimm (2003) argues that curriculum development should not be carried out in isolation of other teaching, learning and assessment (TLA) activities; it forms part of the planning, development, implementation and review, as suggested by Ornstein and Hunkins (2009). Context is vital in the development of a curriculum which is, in this study, mainly the hospitality industry (Mckimm 2003); hence, a curriculum must fit the overall course in terms of approach, level and content. The needs of stakeholders must be addressed in the process of curriculum development, such as hospitality graduates, in this study. Similarly, Yorke and Knight (2006) state that the complexity of employability requires the context to be considered when embedding employability in the curriculum, and that no single, ideal, prescription for embedding employability can be provided. **These points make this research fundamental to Ghanaian HEIs, as a foundation for understanding curriculum development issues that are vital to successful employability education and hospitality education.**

Knight and Yorke (2003:5) indicate that there is a close relationship between employability and good learning and stressed that employability results from a blend of achievements in four broad areas, in this case referring to the theoretical underpinning theory of this present research represented in the USEM model of employability, one of the best known and respected in the area of employability.

This section reviews the literature on the elements of teaching, learning and assessment (TLA) that define an ideal curriculum in general, the skill-sets or graduate outcomes which inform employability education, and the nature of the learning outcomes. TLA practices help students to appreciate those skills. Their definition, which is widely quoted and used in this study as a working definition, is ‘A set of achievements - skills, understandings and personal attributes - that make individuals more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy’. This understanding will facilitate a critical evaluation of employability skills against an ideal

curriculum to gain insights into the kind of relationship between graduates' skills and activities that will help the learning of those skills.

Vocational education and training, according to Knight and Yorke (2004), is a mixture of knowledge, skills and attitudes that enables students to produce and apply their learning to challenging situations as lifelong learners, acquiring and utilising skills and attitudes such as study skills and self-motivation throughout their working life. Students must constantly adapt their knowledge to meet the expectations of a range of people, as the work environment is constantly changing (Knight 2001). The UK Higher Education Academy (2012) argues that the successful development of employability through the curriculum needs institutional support. Similarly, Bridgstock (2009) suggests that learning how to manage a career needs to begin during the student's HE experience, and that it should be both mandatory and credit-bearing in academic programmes.

Yorke and Knight 2006:14) describe a range of ways in which the curriculum can be developed to support student employability, as stated above, including 'Employability through the whole curriculum; Employability in the core curriculum; Work-based or work-related learning incorporated as one or more components within the curriculum; Employability-related module(s) within the curriculum and; Work-based or work-related learning in parallel with the curriculum'. The USEM model, which is discussed extensively under relevant models for the present research, certainly serves as a useful starting point from a curriculum design perspective.

Mckimm (2007:32) differentiates between curricula and delivery, and suggests that a curriculum is what is taught while delivery is how the teaching is done. She defines a curriculum as:

'all the experiences provided by an institution or agency which are designed to foster students' learning'.

This definition is central to the curriculum and the work of a faculty member in a classroom. This view also considers opportunities for learning around formal sessions. It is important that all lecturers should understand how to design and deliver appropriate curricula for their subjects; hence, this research, with its focus on the hospitality discipline.

Curriculum development and design are viewed by two main schools of thought: the objective model (Product model) and the process model. These models represent two philosophical approaches which are not mutually exclusive (Mckimm 2007). O'Neill (2010) explains that the major premise of the objective model defines what students should be able to do after studying a course, in terms of learning outcomes or learning objectives. It allows the building of assessments which can be designed against learning objectives such as the use of subject benchmarking and course provisions. Hence, it is important that learning outcomes be considered when designing the assessment methods that will be used to measure the performance of the students. Assessments check the achievements of learning outcomes, and these elements are worthy of consideration in developing employability-enhancement curricula.

Teaching and learning methods are strategies that underpin assessment (Knight and Yorke 2004; Hussey and Smith 2002). Assessment is central to students' experience of HE; therefore, the designed learning outcomes should encourage creativity within assessment tasks (Maher 2004). Maher (2004:52) states further that current HE students are motivated by earning marks and grades, which are considered as 'campus currency', whereby students place more value on what is measured. She cautions against the danger of students' learning being driven by those outcomes which focus on educational experience, 'squeezing out' enriching learning outcomes. Maher (2004) argues that not all learning outcomes can be assessed and that a degree of academic judgement is inherent in teaching and assessment. This empowers academics to introduce innovative teaching and assessment activities into the curriculum.

Prideaux (2000:34) indicates that: *'educators should think about the desirable outcomes of their courses and state them in clear and precise terms. They should then work backwards or 'design down' in the jargon of outcome-based education (OBE), to determine the appropriate learning experiences which will lead to the stated outcomes. By using an outcome approach, educators are forced to give primacy to what learners will do and to organise their curricula accordingly'.* This offers a promising approach which Ghanaian HEIs should use for incorporating employability skills into hospitality curricula.

As stated earlier, O'Neill (2010) identifies the product model (objective model) and the process model, as the two commonly used curriculum models that are often described

as opposites. Mckimm (2003) argues that the process model translates the behavioural objectives and core value, which connect content with learning activities, and are not simply a means of achieving learning objectives. Stenhouse (1975) maintains the existence of four fundamental processes of education: *Training* (skills acquisition), *Instruction* (information acquisition), *Initiation* (socialisation and familiarisation with social norms and values), and *Induction* (thinking and problem-solving).

The objective model is criticised for over-emphasising learning objectives and being so technical, but is valued for developing and communicating outcomes more clearly (O'Neill 2010). The objective model emphasises plans and intentions while the process model emphasises activities and effects (Neary 2003). The process model includes the intellectual approach that examines the subject matter as approaches to course design, knowledge and skills. It is, however, argued that the best approach to curriculum design is to combine the best of the objective and process model approaches, according to the needs of the students, the teachers' experience, the organisational structure and the resources available (Prideaux 2000; Delagaty 2009; Mckimm 2003; Fry et al. 1999).

Creative or experiential approaches involve learning by experiencing and through group dynamics. Outcomes are defined in the existential moment of learning (Maher 2004; Hussay and Smith 2003; Robertson 2001). Hence, to have ownership of the course, detailed planning and design should include the teachers who will be delivering the course. Knight (2001) compares the advantages of a process model of curriculum planning to the objective model. He maintains that planning a curriculum in an intuitive way makes sense, and argues that what is essential is getting the processes, messages and conditions right for a worthy outcome. This suggests that, when working under a more objective model of learning outcomes, the first consideration is what you are trying to achieve in TLA activities, in order to create suitable course and/or module learning outcomes for doing so.

In a nutshell, the above debate on curriculum constructs shows the need for the researcher to explore TLA strategies that will support hospitality employability skills development using both the objective and process model viewpoints.

Understanding the issue of curriculum innovation will make employability education more effective and increase the value of hospitality graduates in Ghana. The research literature indicates that the development of employability skills and attributes in HEIs

should be incorporated within the curriculum (Knight and York 2002; de la Harpe et al 2000). They further maintain that students' experiences of HEI should develop their understanding, skills, self-theories and reflection, and that good learning and education improve employability. Therefore, curricula designed to enhance employability should be beneficial in academic terms. However, it is suggested in the literature that academics are sometimes sceptical about incorporating employability skills into their teaching, as they see it as an attack on academic freedom in terms of content (Lowden et al 2011; Broden and Nevada 2010). This notion can be addressed by exploring how academics can teach their subject to promote employability skills and attributes rather than diminishing the academic content (Gunn et al. 2010; Harvey 2000).

In this research, the opinions of lecturers on how they feel that different hospitality courses could support the learning of specific employability skills is obtained. This aspect of the study is covered in the research design under the broad themes of Model Development and LTA perspectives.

The emphasis on employability in HEIs on ensuring maximum benefit and impact on graduates, makes it important to embed employability skills in the curriculum. Several approaches are discussed in the extant literature on embedding employability in the curriculum. Knight and Yorke (2006:14) emphasise the fact that 'context, student-recruitment patterns, envisaged labour market and traditions' are four variables which influence the embedding of employability in the curriculum. As mentioned earlier, 'there is a spectrum of ways in which employability can be developed through the curriculum' (Yorke and Knight 2006:4). Maher and Graves (2008) note that in deciding to choose any of the approaches, it is important that a curriculum audit is carried out to understand the context of the development; moreover, learning, teaching and assessment approaches should support the embedding of employability. Yorke and Knight (2006:11) note that 'an intention to enhance students' employability, like an intention to accustom a student to practice that characterise a subject area, rests upon the teaching, learning and assessment methods embedded in a wider curriculum structure'.

Knight and Yorke (2004) argue that enhancing employability is taking long-established goals of HE and devising arrangements for students to make stronger, convincing claims to achievement which involves curriculum enhancement (Knight and Yorke

2004). They further indicate that engagement with HE values with employability might be low due to the age-old issue of a lack of a common definition of employability. Higher education lecturers interpret it as an intrusion on the proper concerns of academic life. However, in a real sense employability is concerned with academic values and the promotion of good learning. Therefore, promoting employability is highlighting what has been neglected in HE, especially in Ghana and similar developing countries.

These strategies, such as embedding through the whole curriculum, are described by Maher and Graves (2008) as probably the best, purest and most ambitious. They relate it to a similar approach which operates in the US, whereby students are supposed to show evidence of their achievements. Similarities can be drawn from UK examples, such as Personal Development Plans (PDPs), which integrate generic skills and competencies across courses. The PDP system used in UK HEIs requires less formal evidence and, according to Maher and Graves (2008), have a positive effect on students' performance. Embedding employability through the core curriculum involves identifying modules to address a set of transferable skills, which is described as a 'fuzzy proxy' for employability (Yorke and Knight 2006:16). This approach is also described by Maher and Graves (2008) as easy to implement, especially hospitality, having identified the skills of reflection and reflective writing to help students to understand their placement experiences.

The employability-related module is the third approach proposed for embedding employability within the curriculum (Yorke and Knight 2006). This approach involves developing modules specifically to promote employability, which are described as freestanding modules that begin in the first year of study. This approach involves the integration of personal transferrable skills within pedagogy based on active learning with no lectures, as mentioned above, as a freestanding approach that supports career planning and job search strategies. This approach appears popular in the HE sector, has a greater impact on students and does not require any curriculum changes (Maher and Graves 2008).

Work-based or work-related learning (WBL or WRL), in parallel with the curriculum approach, is experiential and highly relevant to enhancing employability. It has a positive impact on students, as a period of work while studying equips them with many new skills that they could not have acquired in the classroom (Little and Harvey 2006).

It enables students to make a transition from education to the workplace (Maher and Graves 2008). WBL is defined as 'learning outcomes achieved through activities which are based in, or derived from, the context of work or workplace'. According to Brennan and Little (2006), work-based learning has progressively been used by HEIs to develop the employability of graduates and support their personal and professional development, skills, abilities and competences that are work-related.

Mentoring is also considered an approach for enhancing student employability. As much as it is accepted that work experience has some validity in promoting student employability, these strategies must be infused in HEIs to make it relevant. However, the debate continues regarding which of these strategies will provide the best way to embed employability within the curriculum (Lees 2002). The Higher Education Funding Council of England (HEFCE, 2011) prioritises embedding throughout the curriculum as this raises the prominence of employability, as supported by Daly (2013), de la Harpe et al. (2000) and Knight and Yorke (2006).

Embedding employability within the existing modules has the advantage of not divorcing it from the subject content (Canning 2004). This research will evaluate all of the advantages and shortcomings of these approaches in order to make a decision that will be appropriate for Ghanaian graduates. Pegg et al. (2012) see the role of academics in the development of the employability curriculum as key, because this can be an obstacle to its implementation. Stakeholders need to lead the effective implementation (The Pedagogy for Employability Group 2006). Lowden et al. (2010) argue that HE providers should take into account students' employment needs, including the basic skills and abilities needed in the workplace, and reflect them in the curriculum and course design. Tensions remain because of academics' concerns that engaging with the employability agenda will lead to a reduction of academic standards and objectives (Gunn et al. 2010).

The above ideas are central to the proposed research framework. Hence, the research framework includes a critical review of many of the employability models; for example USEM, DOTS and CareerEDGE models. It notes that the CareerEDGE model links most of the ideas in the models and is useful for developing relevant aspects of employability education.

2.9.1 Underpinnings of the conceptual framework

The employability literature shows strong empirical support for curriculum development and graduate employability skills (Knight and Yorke 2004; Tomlinson 2012; Pool and Sewell 2007). It is argued that research into employability models should manifest broad theoretical and practical contributions to knowledge, by generally fitting different contexts and providing flexible tools which will enable stakeholders to understand the specific contexts of employability (Pool and Sewell 2007; Cai 2013; Yorke and Knight 2004). Taken together, the current policy on HE in Ghana of making graduates more employable to reduce the graduate unemployment problem (Garwe 2013; Adesina 2013; Page 2013; Baah-Boateng 2013, 2015; Rudhumbu et al. 2016; Edinyang et al. 2015), places the notion of graduate employability more firmly at the heart of HE than ever before.

Subsequently, HEIs in Ghana have been placed under progressively growing pressure to contribute to the employability of the graduate labour supply (Baah-Boateng 2015; Baffour-Awuah 2015). As a result, research into the inclusion of explicit employability skills education and training within undergraduate degrees continues to thrive, partly driven by the policy requirements for increased collaboration with employer involvement in HE curriculum development.

Pool and Sewell (2007)'s model serves as the basic conceptual framework. The reason is that the CareerEdge model combines key elements of the USEM and DOTS models. The rationale for choosing the model is threefold. Firstly, in terms of scope, the model comprises the whole concept of employability processes, as it captures the following features: Degree subject knowledge, Understanding and skills, Generic skills, Emotional intelligence Career development, Learning, Experience – work and life, Reflection and evaluation, and Self-efficacy/self-confidence/self-esteem. The three closely-linked concepts of self-efficacy, self-confidence and self-esteem provide a vital link between knowledge, understanding, skills, experience and personal attributes and employability.

The second reason is that the model can be used to explain the concept of employability to those new to the subject, and particularly to students and their parents. It will provide a useful tool for lecturers, personal tutors, careers advisors and any other

practitioners involved in employability activities. It will also be used to develop a measurement tool for employability.

The third reason is the model's predominance in the employability literature; it has been adopted, critiqued and modified by (Rothwell et al. 2009; Berntson and Marlung 2007; Pitan 2016; Pegg et al. 2012). This lends robustness to the framework. Pool and Sewell (2007) further justified the model robustness by indicating that the components of the model and the justification for their inclusion are important practical additions to the literature already available about employability. The CareerEdge model of employability informs the planning of programmes and structured interventions (Pool and Sewell 2007). This model provides clarity and can be explained with ease to students and possibly their parents, as well as academics, regarding what to consider and included in a curriculum. Pool and Sewell (2007) indicate that this model allows lecturers, personal tutors, careers advisors and anybody else involved with the promotion of employability within HE to do so without difficulty.

The model is a valuable tool for knowledge transfer activities and can be used to demonstrate to employers how HEIs and businesses can contribute to graduate employability in order for the parties involved to benefits.

Finally, it is adaptable by groups other than students and at any life stage, for example mid-life career and people dealing with redundancy. The merits of the model under the critical evaluation of the chosen models in this study have been widely discussed. Highlighting ends

2.10 Classifications of Skills

This section introduces the terms that form the basis for this research, which include: skills, employability skills and other categories and classifications of skills that are important for the world of work.

Ruhs and Anderson (2011:2) argue that; 'skill is a very vague term'. The complex nature of what skills actually are makes it inconclusive when employability skills are sometimes defined as transferable skills. Some skills are frequently mentioned and are identified in employability studies; these include generic skills or core skills, essential skills, key skills, soft skills and transferable skills. The above-mentioned skills have

been used synonymously to define the employability skills that are needed most by employers. While semantic differences regarding the meaning of the term *skills* exist, there is no doubt that there is a need for such skills in the workplace. These skills are beyond academic knowledge and are appropriate for use in a variety of contexts (Pitan 2015; Luk et al. 2014).

Knight and Yorke (2004) classified skills under three broad headings: personal attributes, core skills and process skills (see Table 2.4). Maripaz et al. (2016) maintain that the unpredictable labour market makes it imperative for HEIs to respond to the demands of the world of work. To keep pace with the accelerating changes, HEIs need to provide graduates with an opportunity to gain the skills and qualities that will prepare them for the real demands of the world of work.

Tomlinson (2012) and Holmes (2013) indicate that ambiguity exists surrounding the term 'skills', with different connotations for different stakeholders. Similarly, Hodges and Burchell (2003) opined that the terms 'capabilities' and 'competencies' are used interchangeably. These are commonly used in rating employability skills; however, employers and graduates do not regard them as the same thing (Tomlinson 2012). Added to that, 'skills' are often referred to as capabilities, competencies or attributes, levels or learning outcomes, thus compounding the confusion (Lees 2002).

With a variety of terms being used, many authors have attempted to group employability skills into categories for simplification and clarity (Business Group Australia 2012). For example, Lees (2002:3) categorised employability skills into four main skill areas:

- traditional intellectual skills – e.g. critical evaluation, logical argument;
- key skills – communication, IT
- personal attributes – motivation, self-reliance and
- organisational processes (knowledge of organisations and how they work).

Knight and Yorke (2004:27-28) categorised skills into three broad headings: Personal skills, Core skills and Process skills (see Table 2.5). Taking these categories as a basis, a thorough review of the literature was undertaken to determine the specific skills, knowledge, experience and behaviour that employers allegedly value.

Abas-Mastura et al. (2013:151) maintain that 'HEIs should demonstrate a greater commitment to develop the generalised expertise that graduates can transfer to whatever working environment they find themselves in and after graduation'. Consequently, HE needs to develop all-round professionals and experts, not only focusing on subject-specific skills but also employability skills. Teaching and learning these generic skills is consistent with the emerging needs of a high-performance workplace within a world economy.

2.10.1 Employability skills

Employability is improved by strong personal and communications skills. Students are challenged by employers to acquire employability skills. The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Business Council of Australia define employability skills as:

the skills required to gain employment or establish an enterprise, but also to progress within an enterprise or expand employment capability, so as to achieve one's potential and contribute successfully to enterprise strategic directions.

Sung et al. (2013) state that the lack of a common agreement about the definition of employability, its meaning and nature, makes it difficult to reach a common agreement on the meaning and nature of employability skills, which appear to differ depending on the audience concerned. Green et al. (2013: 27) define 'employability skills as basic skills that the individual requires in order to function in the adult world' and include listening reading, writing and mathematics.

Employability skills are capacities that are solidly relevant to graduates' obtaining, maintaining and continuing in the work (McQuaid and Lindsay 2005). Employability skills encompass generic transferable skills, discipline-specific skills and job search and acquisition skills or career management skills, such as the ability to locate jobs and use networks to promote one's career (Bridgstock 2009). Consistently identified employability skills are written and oral communication skills, ICT skills, and problem-solving skills, with elements of self-management (time management, the ability to speak a foreign language) and interpersonal skills, work culture, leadership, professional qualities, team work conceptual and analytical skills planning and organisation (Finch et al. 2013).

Pitan (2016) states that employers want graduates who are competent technically and equipped with relevant generic skills because of the technological changes and globalisation. She identified communication and analytical skills as being commonly demanded. Maripaz et al. (2016) describe employability skills as the attributes of employees, with varied classifications, like basic academic skills, higher-order thinking skills and personal qualities with more detailed skill sets, besides technical competence. They further categorised employability skills into three areas: fundamental, personal management and teamwork skills. These generic employability skills cut across all levels of position, from job entrants to managers. They asserted that many employers require applicants to possess these skills in order to be considered seriously for employment. These skills are crucial for employment and workplace success, and aid the foundation of lifelong learning that is necessary for graduates who are seeking work (Clarke 2008).

Business Group Australia (BGA) (2012:3) defined employability skills from the point of view of the employer *'as those skills that are required to secure and maintain employment, to assist with career advancement and to support the productivity, viability and competitiveness of the enterprise'*. Employability skills, according to the BGA (2012), support both the individual and the enterprise.

The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) and the Business Council of Australia (BCA) (2012), representing a broad constituency of employer bodies and industry associations, provided leadership for researching, defining and documenting the key employability skills. They undertook a comprehensive survey of small, medium and large employers across Australia, who provided detailed information on the type of generic skills required in the workplace. This was to increase competitiveness, innovation, flexibility and client focus, in order to support employees and individual enterprises. The report presented an Employability Skills Framework that identified eight employability skills, as listed below:

- initiative and enterprise
- learning
- self-management
- communication
- teamwork
- problem solving
- planning and organising
- technology.

They further described the framework for particular occupational and industry contexts in facets. These facets are the aspects of the employability skills which employers identified as being important contributors to work skills.

Table 2-4 Employability Skills

SKILL	FEATURES
Communication	• listening and understanding • speaking clearly and directly • writing to the needs of the audience • negotiating responsively • reading independently • empathising • using numeracy effectively • understanding the needs of internal and external customers • persuading effectively • establishing and • using networks • being assertive • sharing information speaking and writing in languages other than English
Teamwork	• working across different ages irrespective of gender, race, • religion or political persuasion • working as an individual and as a member of a team • knowing how to define a role as part of the team • applying teamwork to a range of situations e.g. futures planning and crisis problem solving • identifying the strengths of team members • coaching and mentoring skills, including giving feedback
Problem solving	• developing creative, innovative and practical solutions • showing independence and initiative in identifying and solving problems • solving problems in teams • applying a range of strategies to problem solving • using mathematics, including budgeting and financial management to solve problems • applying problem-solving strategies across a range of areas • testing assumptions, taking into account the context of data and circumstances

	• resolving customer concerns in relation to complex project issues
Initiatives and enterprise	• adapting to new situations • developing a strategic, creative and long-term vision • being creative • identifying opportunities not obvious to others • translating ideas into action • generating a range of options • initiating innovative solutions
Planning and organising	• managing time and priorities - setting time lines, coordinating tasks for self and with others • being resourceful • taking initiative and making decisions • adapting resource allocations to cope with contingencies • establishing clear project goals and deliverables • allocating people and other resources to tasks • planning the use of resources, including time management • participating in continuous improvement and planning processes • developing a vision and a proactive plan to accompany it • predicting - weighing up risk, evaluating alternatives and applying evaluation criteria • collecting, analysing and organising information • understanding basic business systems and their relationships
Self-management	• having a personal vision and goals • evaluating and monitoring own performance • having knowledge and confidence in own ideas and visions • articulating own ideas and visions • taking responsibility

Learning	• managing own learning • contributing to the learning community at the workplace • using a range of mediums to learn - mentoring, peer support and networking, IT and courses • applying learning to technical issues (e.g. learning about products) and people issues (e.g. interpersonal and cultural aspects of work) • having enthusiasm for ongoing learning • being willing to learn in any setting - on and off the job • being open to new ideas and techniques • being prepared to invest time and effort in learning new skills • acknowledging the need to learn in order to accommodate change

Adopted from Business Group Australia (2012), Commonwealth of Australia (2006).

The report indicates that the above facets are critical in the sense that they unpack key employability skills into competencies or activities recognised as achievements, especially in interventions that aim to enhance employability. For example, instead of listening skills remaining too general and vague as a facet, there are now specific outcomes that will help to measure the extent to which someone is listening effectively.

The researcher thinks that this is an important insight for this study, since the GHEEF intends to innovate hospitality curricula and enhance graduates' employability, employability monitoring instruments should be developed for evaluating the success of such innovations. Hence, there is a recommendation in Chapter 10 of this thesis that such monitors should be developed as part of the future deployment of the GHEEF. This is naturally an interesting direction for future research which builds on this study.

Jackson (2013) reviewed sources on employability skills which feature in the wide-ranging employer literature to classify a graduate as being employable, put together a comprehensive table of employability skills that employers value and classified these under four broad headings. This checklist has similar significance to the 39 employability skills mentioned earlier (Yorke and Knight 2004). Categorising the skills into four main themes simplified their potential use in designing and evaluating innovative GEEF-type employability frameworks.

Table 2-5 Employability skills valued by employers

Traditional and academic knowledge skills	Soft transferable key skills	Personal Behaviours and characteristics	Knowledge of organisations and extra-curricular activities
Cognitive skills – e.g. critical evaluation, logical argument. Literacy and numeracy. ICT knowledge and Skills. Technical knowledge Subject Understanding Knowledge of principle theories and frameworks Intellectual ability and ability to learn	Team working and co-operation Analytical and Problem solving Self-management Leadership skills Research skills Time management and Organisational skills IT skills Written and oral communication skills	Interpersonal Skills Communication skills Motivation and drive Adaptability, flexibility and responsiveness to change Confidence Positive attitude A willingness to learn Entrepreneurial spirit	Relevant placements/ Internships Joining clubs and societies Involvement in volunteering Being a student representative Cultural awareness Commercial awareness Knowledge of the business

Source: Jackson (2013)

In general, while skills are extrinsic features, attitudes are the internal qualities and dispositions of an individual. The Confederation of British Industry (CBI) 2012) indicates that a graduate with a positive attitude is inherently more employable. They question the perspectives and adopt an innovative approach to job roles, through creative thinking, which challenges every-day assumptions (CBI 2012).

Yorke and Knight (2006:3) describe transferable or generic skills as a ‘wish-list’ developed by interested parties, drawing attention to two approaches which try to draw connections between employability and the theories of learning. Similarly, Lowden et al. (2011) enumerate the skills and attributes that are desirable for promoting graduate

achievement in employment to include core skills, key skills, common skills, and transferable skills, essential skills, and functional skills, skills for life, generic skills, and enterprise skills.

Blade et al. (2012:3) defines employability skills as those focusing on 'personal, social and transferable seen as relevant to all jobs, as opposed to job-specific technical skills or qualification'. These however are seen to complement technical subject skills.

Interestingly, Archer and Davison (2008) note the contrast between what some HEIs are promoting and the skills required by industry. They note that soft skills are perceived as more important than technical or hard skills, and that employers see soft skills as most important regardless of the size of the business. Contrary to Archer and Davison (2008), Glass et al. (2008) maintain that some employers prefer graduates with subject/technical skills that they will bring to their organisation. Lowden et al. (2011) maintain that, irrespective of the type of work involved, subject qualification proves the achievement of a certain level of competency as the minimum standard that employers are seeking in new job seekers. These arguments justify the choice of employability models that emphasise these facets of employability skills as conceptual frameworks for the study, such as the USEM, DOTS and CareerEDGE models. Hence, any attempt to enhance graduate employability, including that of hospitality graduates as in this study, should strike a balance between the hard and soft skills required in particular industry sectors.

However, it must be noted that there has been a major shift, with virtually every UK University promoting employability and skills. Lamentably, this practice has not caught on in Ghanaian HE and similar developing countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, such as Nigeria, Zimbabwe, and Tanzania, to the researcher's knowledge. Hence, this research will facilitate this practice, not only in Ghana, but also Nigeria, and other African Sub-Saharan African countries for example.

Employability skills are not only needed to gain employment, but equally to progress within an enterprise, achieve one's potential and contribute successfully to the enterprise's strategic directions (Pool and Sewell 2007). Shil and Paramnik, (2011) note that formal education and work experience are considered basic employability experiences that can develop the skills of the individual. The authors further identified eight employability skills: communication, teamwork, problem solving, self-management, planning and organising, technology, life-long learning, and initiative and

enterprise and associated attributes. They maintain that graduate attributes are the qualities, skills and understanding that students develop during their studies at university, and thus shape the input they make to their profession. This is closely related to the notion put forward by CBI (2012) above.

Tymon (2010) argues that the terms *transferable skills*, *generic skills*, *attributes*, *characteristics*, *competencies*, *qualities* and *professional skills*, are all used to explain employability. These attributes help organisations to deal with change, and include an understanding of the world of work, commercial awareness, an appreciation of work culture, subject knowledge and the understanding of specific technical skills (Harvey 2010). Teijeiro et al. (2013) agree that generic competencies relate to the social domain with the above-mentioned characteristics. They further note that employability graduates are measured in terms of their professional competencies. The important competencies of graduate employability should focus on customers, emotional intelligence, communication skills and leadership (Teijeiro et al. 2013).

Green et al. (2013:27) identify new skills to include ICT skills, the knowledge of a foreign language, social, organisational and communication skills, an appreciation of technological culture and entrepreneurship. They argue that, in economies with strong knowledge-based sectors, basic skills are necessary but not sufficient for finding and sustaining employment, meanwhile agreeing that, in some labour markets, what are defined as basic skills may only be acceptable for certain types of work. They further showed evidence of a country that requires low skills and a low education as contributing to employability. These basic skills matter in the context where there is increased competition, which is a 'developmental process based on exploitation of a pattern of competitive advantage gained through low labour cost'. However, the venture is not yielding a profit, and so needs to be coupled with other skills and attributes to make it sustainable.

According to Weligamage (2009), the dynamic nature of the job market means that frequent employer surveys are essential in order to be well-informed about the industry requirements. Consequently, the lack of adequate funding for Ghanaian HEIs does not allow this kind of frequent survey to take place, and sometimes they are non-existent. The acknowledgement by several Ghanaian authors of a mismatch between the tertiary education provision and the skills needs of firms is due mainly to the inadequate funding available for effective research into tertiary education, the

ineffectiveness of the institutions mandated with the responsibility for ensuring quality in Ghanaian tertiary institutions, the poor integration of the relevant stakeholders, and the absence of a national development plan linked to tertiary education, which applies in many Sub-Saharan African countries also (Bawakyillenuo et al. 2013). This point reinforces the importance of this study, earlier alluded to in the literature review. It is clear from the review of the literature that employability skills are variously defined depending on the context in which the term is used.

2.10.1.1 Communication skills

The literature review shows that communication skills appear to be the most frequently identified skills by employers' of HEIs. Communication is possibly the most prevalent of all employability skills. Kleeman (2011) describes it as the most important skill. Communication is defined as the act of transferring information from one place to another. There are various categories of communication and more than one may occur simultaneously. The different categories of communication include: spoken or verbal, non-verbal, written and visualisation, all of which occur in the form of face-to-face, telephone, memos, letters, reports, team assignments with colleagues, meetings, guiding, directing, selling and telling guests about organisations (Kleeman 2011).

According to Lehman and Dufrene (2008), communication skills are vital for all graduates in transiting to the job market. Workplace communication flow is essential for graduates; they have to feel secure that they are receiving up-to-date and truthful information from their workplace superiors. They should also have the ability to share ideas, thoughts and concerns within the work environment. In addition, graduates and employees feel empowered by upwards and downwards communication, which is usually a form of feedback which leads to increased employee job satisfaction.

Boateng and Ofori Sarpong (2002) state that an increasing proportion of jobs in Ghana requiring graduates demand technical and managerial, computer, analytical, verbal and written communication skills (particularly English proficiency) and personal attributes. However, the emphasis is more on communication skills which have been identified as lacking in graduates, due largely to the global technological changes and increasing competition. Archer and Davison (2008) highlight good communication skills as part of 'soft' skills, including team-working abilities, professional work experience, networking, creativity, self-confidence, self-management, time-management, willingness to learn and the acceptance of responsibility, while hard business skills include business

qualifications and expertise, the ability to present arguments, analytical and problem-solving skills, coping with complexity, and working alone and in teams.

2.10.1.2 Teamwork

Teamwork is defined as working well with other people from different disciplines, backgrounds, and expertise to accomplish a task or goal (UKCES 2009; Lowden et al 2011). Lehman and Dufrene (2008) claim that the benefits of teamwork in the workplace are greater than those from individual efforts. In recent times, teamwork has contributed to the fundamental success of any business (Dunne and Rawlins 2000). It is important for graduates preparing to enter the job market to be conscious of, ready for and skilled in teamwork, as has been advocated internationally (Dunne and Rawlins 2000). In addition, the ability of students to work together efficiently is important as it trains them to value teamwork in the workplace. Grouping students to work together during the course of their degree studies, for example in seminar groups or laboratory classes, prepares them well for this skill.

Teamwork is skills development (Lees 2001). It also enhances the learning process, and improves knowledge. It is suggested that softer skills, cooperation and compromise ability can be improved by working in teams, as an important quality in the workplace. According to Yorke and Knight (2000), training students in teamwork skills has a broader impact.

2.10.1.3 Analytical skills

The analytical skills of the employee are among the most valued by employers (Yorke and Knight 2000). The ability to visualise, collect data, articulate, analyse, make decisions and solve complex problems are critical skills that are essential in the workplace to ensure that the necessary problem-solving occurs to maintain productivity and keep other areas of the workforce functioning smoothly.

Generally, analytical skills entail the dissection of a problem and then finding a solution to it. Problem-solving, critical thinking and decision-making are analytical in nature. This involves the provision of assessment by reflecting on factors and developing alternatives to solving a problem. Kleeman (2011) argues that the analytical process encompasses an appreciation of a unique aspect of human, interpersonal and functional elements. Analytical skill is the ability to visualise, articulate, conceptualise or

solve complicated problems by making decisions that are sensible. Employers need reliable, responsible workers who can solve problems and who have the required social skills and attitudes to work together with other workers (Ching-Yi Tsai 2013).

2.10.1.4 Graduate attributes

Graduate attributes include the qualities, skills and understanding that students develop during their time in academia (Pool et al. 2014). Attributes surpass disciplinary expertise or technical knowledge, which have traditionally formed the core of most university courses (Browden et al. 2000). Leggart-Cook (2007) describes attributes as a set of skill-based behaviour and attitudes that employers consider vital for employability and other technical or job-specific skills. Employers want employees to exhibit appropriate personal attributes that are acceptable to their work colleagues and customers, as well as behaviour that is in alignment with the company's approach.

The literature review revealed that employability skills are new skills that are acquired by an individual to gain entry into the field of work and the freedom to shape one's working life (Leggatt-Cook 2007). Lowden et al. (2011) note that formal education and a range of generic skills, together with labour market experience, give individuals a better chance of getting a new job. Employability skills also include self-sufficiency in managing one's own career; this perspective puts emphasis on the individual's responsibility to develop skills and competencies that will sustain their productivity in the labour market (Lowden et al. 2011).

HEIs have defined attributes in a variety of ways for integration into graduates' training and life-worlds; for example, their work lives. Shil and Pramanik (2011:152.) provide a framework of the generic attributes that every graduate should possess, and these include:

'T*he capacity for critical, conceptual and reflective thinking in all aspects of intellectual and practical activity; technical competence and an understanding of the broad conceptual and theoretical elements of fields of specialisation; intellectual openness and curiosity, and an appreciation of the interconnectedness, and areas of uncertainty in current human knowledge; effective communication skills in all domains (reading, writing, speaking and listening); research, discovery, and information retrieval skills and a general capacity to use information; multifaceted problem solving skills and the*

capacity for team work and high ethical standards in personal and professional life, underpinned by a capacity for self-directed activity'.

Additionally, graduate attributes and skills with broader social commitments include:

Social justice; global perspective; ethical practice and social responsibility; cultural and rational diversity, ability to function in a multicultural or global environment, and finally academic excellence (Shil and Pramanik 2011).

As noted earlier, Harvey (2003:3) writes that 'employability is more than about developing attributes, techniques or experience to enable a student to get a job, or to progress within a career'. Employability is about learning, which develops critical, reflective abilities that will harmonise and augment traditional subject-matter learning. Employment is a by-product of this enabling process (Yorke and Knight 2007; Harvey 2003).

Success in the economic environment (workplace) and the confidence to survive depend on the employability skills of the graduate (McNair, 2003; Maher and Nield 2005). Hence, this study investigates possible ways that will enhance the employability of Ghanaian hospitality graduates, who are finding it extremely difficult to penetrate the hospitality job market in Ghana (Asirifi et al. 2013; Sarkodie and Adom 2015).

Several authors who are interested in the issues of employability admit that employers attach greater importance to graduate attributes than to their ‘paper qualifications’ in the degree subjects studied (Lowden et al. 2011). The HE Career Service unit (CSU) (2002) UK reports reveal a consistent set of desirable skills, often independent of the degree subject, and an organisation’s specific subject skills requirement. The report identifies interactive attributes which include communication skills, interpersonal skills, teamwork and personal attributes.

Lees (2002) highlights in a review of the literature that a number of studies suggest that limited understanding exists between HEIs and employers regarding the concept of relevant skills and therefore a consensus needs to be reached. It is noteworthy that such an understanding has not yet been convened amongst Ghanaian HEIs and the industry sector, which are the career destination of HE graduates; hence this study. In other words, this research, by exploring relevant perspectives on graduate

employability among students, lecturers and employers, is among the first to connect these perspectives, and formulate the understanding under reference.

Personal attributes include intellect and problem-solving, analytical, critical and reflective ability, willingness to learn and continue learning, flexibility, adaptability and risk-taking as core skills. These attributes help organisations to deal with change, and encompass an understanding of the world of work, commercial awareness, the appreciation of work culture, subject knowledge and the understanding of specific technical skills (Harvey 2002).

Weligamage (2009) notes that definitions of skills requirements differ in different contexts and countries, suggesting that HEIs should identify and develop skills that best serve the job market within learning courses, in order to enhance graduate employability and support courses to meet those needs. McQuaid and Lindsay (2005) also identify transferable skills as being important for employability. They distinguish between basic, key and high-level transferable skills, referring to literacy and numeracy as basic skills, for instance.

The changing nature of the job market promotes education for employability as vital to the development of skills and should include practical experience, in addition to subject specific knowledge. The development of employability skills will bring a competitive advantage to graduates when seeking employment. Incorporating these requirements into the existing HEIs' curriculum is vital. Ghanaian HEIs and the labour market need to identify strategies that will promote the employability of graduates, considering the competitive nature of the labour market. Again, organisations and HEIs need to collaborate to achieve a common goal. This collaboration is lacking in Ghana and has created a situation whereby the labour market's required needs are concealed from HEIs, in the experience of the researcher and based on her fact-finding visit to Ghana in 2013. It is envisaged that the proposed Ghanaian Employability Enhancement Framework will facilitate such collaboration, by providing a common framework for employability interventions.

2.10.2 Conclusion

This chapter presented a detailed literature review of the employability constructs, models and skills sets. The review focused particularly on aspects such as employability in HE, labour market influences on employability, the historical

development of the concept, and a critical evaluation of the relevant models used for the study. The chapter also clarified when it is appropriate to use particular employability models or combine their features in the critical evaluation of the chosen models, as applied in this study. A major area is the critical evaluation of the models that underpinned the theoretical framework of the study and how this informed the development of the research framework.

The chapter further outlined some other models of employability that, although considered, were not chosen, as well as issues related to curriculum development and hospitality management, and the explanation of models of curriculum and employability. The key ideas behind curriculum development which support the education emphasis of this study. These are all discussed in this chapter as major components that underpinned the research. The chapter concludes by reviewing the employability skills that employers value the most.

3 CHAPTER 3 THE GHANAIAN CONTEXT OF HOSPITALITY EDUCATION: GLOBAL AND AFRICA PERSPECTIVES

3.1 Introduction

The chapter begins by presenting an overview of the Ghanaian HE system and the policies that guide higher education. Hospitality management education and practice in Ghanaian HEIs is the primary focus of the chapter. It identifies the skills, competencies and graduate outcomes which influence effective hospitality education, considering the accepted and specified standards by policymakers. It thus explains the gaps in learning skills and competencies within Ghanaian hospitality education. The chapter also reviews the literature on global hospitality HE issues compared to the situation in Ghana.

The remainder of this chapter is organised as follows. Section 3.1.1 presents an overview of Ghanaian HE, while section 3.1.2 examines the growth of the hospitality industry in Ghana. Section 3.1.3 examines hospitality education in Ghana, whilst sections 3.1.4 explores the comparative gaps in learning, skills and competencies among Ghanaian graduates regarding the global context, while sections 3.2 and 3.3 consider the global and African perspectives, respectively. Section 3.4 concludes the chapter.

3.1.1 Overview of Ghana's HE system

Tertiary education in Ghana encompasses all public and private post-secondary institutions. These include Universities, Polytechnics, Colleges of Education, as well as other specialised professional institutions, such as the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA). The private tertiary education institutions are similarly classified into Universities, University colleges and Colleges of Education. The National Council for Tertiary Education Act of 1993, the National Accreditation Board (NAB) and the National Board for Professional and Technician Examinations (NABPTEX) are responsible for accrediting institutions offering degree level courses as well as professional and technician examinations (Ministry of Education Ghana 2015). The Ghanaian government's policy on tertiary education is designed to facilitate access and foster the development of human resources with the aim of accelerating national

development (Ministry of Education 2012). The overall strategic goal for tertiary education is to *'increase equitable access to high quality tertiary education that provides relevant courses to young adults within Colleges of Education, Polytechnics and Universities, and for research and intellect stimulus'* (Education Strategic Plan 2010:20).

These three regulatory bodies were established as part of the reforms in the early 1990s and are responsible for the accreditation of both public and private institutions regarding the content and standards of their courses and ensuring high standards within HE in Ghana. NABPTEX is the sole body responsible for formulating and administering examinations, evaluation, assessment and certification for professional bodies, non-university tertiary institutions and private tertiary education institutions within Ghana.

Tertiary education in recent years in Ghana has expanded and this rapid growth has produced an excess of graduates compared to the demand. This problem has generated graduate unemployment (Education sector performance report 2014). According to the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE 2015), enrolment in public tertiary education institutions increased from 52,712 in the 1999/2000 academic year to 283,506 in the 2012/2013 academic year.

According to the World Economic Forum, Ghana's gross tertiary education enrolment rate was 12.1% in 2011/14 and this remained unchanged by 2013/15. Enrolment in public Universities and Polytechnics in the 2007/2008 academic year was 93,973 and 34,448 respectively. In addition, about 20,000 students were enrolled in private universities between the 2001/2002 and 2007/2008 academic years, and enrolment in the public institutions doubled. This is highly relevant to this research, as it includes hospitality graduates. Despite this growth, little is being done to equip the vast number of unemployed graduates with the skills that will prepare them for the job market; in other words, these graduates lack the employable skills required by industry, which is compounding the issue of joblessness among graduates (Ayogyam et al. 2012).

Priority policy interventions to ease the problem include the development of human resources by HE with the skills that industry needs (Ministry of Education 2015). According to the Ministry of Education (2015), students need relevant education and skills that will enable them to acquire the skills needed by industry, but several authors in Ghana claim that the curriculum used to train these graduates is outdated and

irrelevant regarding contemporary industry requirements. Hence this research will investigate this area and make recommendations.

3.1.2 Growth of Hospitality and Tourism in Ghana

Hospitality and Tourism have become a major industry in Ghana. It is said to be the fastest growing sector in the Ghanaian economy and the fourth major contributor, injecting over 6 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Ministry of Tourism 2012; Mensah-Ansah et al. 2011; Mensah 2011; Sarkodie and Adom 2015). Mensah-Ansah (2014) indicated that the hospitality and tourism industry increased the number of direct and indirect jobs from 234,679 to 330,514, especially with international tourist arrivals increasing from 698,069 in 2008 to 1,080,220 in 2011, with a corresponding increase from US$1.4 Billion to US$2.1 Billion.

It is further noted that the hospitality and tourism sector in Ghana can curb the unemployment situation in the country, as it was projected to grow by at least 13.5 per cent (Mensah-Ansah 2014). This positive growth rate is partly due to the tourism development plan initiated by the Ghanaian government, UNDP and WTO to promote the development and standardisation of the hospitality and tourism sector in the country. The project included inspecting and monitoring facilities, service delivery and conditions of service in workplaces, with the main aim of ensuring that they meet the right standard of operation (Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER) 2009; Ghana Tourism Authority 2014; Appaw-Agbola and Afenyo Dehlor 2011).

Despite the increasing demand for Ghanaian hospitality and tourism products and services, more needs to be done in terms of manpower development to meet the labour demand as well as the customer and industry requirements regarding service delivery (Ghana Tourism Authority 2014; Sarkodie and Adom 2015). This means, amongst other things, reviewing and upgrading the current curriculum related to hospitality and tourism education in order to meet the international standards and good practice.

In the Ghanaian context, evidence of globalisation in the hospitality and tourism industry consists of the arrival of the big multinational hotel chains (for example, Novotel, Kempinski, Golden Tulip, Movenpic Ambassador, African Regent, Best Western Premier and Holiday Inn, among others) which require higher level skills than

what pertains and is accepted by the local hospitality businesses, which could be described typically as catering services. This study considers this influence on employability worthy of further investigation, aimed at understanding what changes in the skill set of hospitality students have been engendered thereby.

The growth of the Ghanaian hospitality industry has been prompted by the arrival of multinational chain hotels. There are, however, issues regarding the influences and new skills requirements which some graduates fail to meet, the articulation of HE policy and documents, which sometimes look promising but are poorly implemented within the HE environment, and the obvious lack of employability skills among students (Council of Technical and Vocational Training (COTVET) 2012).

3.1.3 Hospitality education in Ghana

This section introduces Ghanaian hospitality education. The importance of hospitality management education has been acknowledged worldwide (Kumar 2014; Stierand and Zizka 2015; Ozgit and Caglar 2015; Brotherton and Wood 2008; Vineet Taing 2014). Johnson et al. (2010) indicated that the volatile competitive environment of the hospitality industry and the need for qualified managers require serious transformation. Ideally, the hospitality curriculum and courses must offer practical skills and 'soft' people management skills (Sheriff 2013). Therefore, the growth and the need for qualified human resources in the hospitality industry in Ghana paved the way for the institution of higher learning, the University of Cape Coast (the only public university), some private universities and polytechnics to launch hospitality management education.

In spite of the growing focus on hospitality courses, there has been a lack of review of whether the current hospitality education curriculum actually complies with the industry expectations. According to Johanson et al. (2010), curriculum reform in hospitality management is necessary because of the significant changes that have occurred within the business environment and education, including the macro-environment, changes which determine the relevant competencies and skills set required.

The development of hospitality management in HE in Ghana aims to satisfy the needs of the hospitality and tourism industry, which is expanding quickly. Hospitality and tourism education is regarded as impacting on tourism and hospitality development (Bagri and Babu 2009). According to Almeida and Choudhury (2015), developing the

right kind of manpower for the hospitality and tourism industry requires formal education, in order to introduce professionalism to the industry. This calls for a formal development of hospitality education globally to educate and train people with a professional touch for the management of the hospitality industry.

Hospitality management education in Ghana is of recent origin and has been evolutionary (Ministry of Tourism 2013). It was basically domestic science, then changed to home economics then to catering for the catering industry at the craft level. This metamorphosed into the present-day Hotel Catering and Institutional Management education (HCIM) (Ministry of Education Sector Report 2010; Sarkodie and Adom 2015; Asirifi et al. 2013; Frimpong-Bonsu 2015; Mensah-Ansah 2014; Alhassan and Sakara 2014). Despite the upgrade of the course HCIM to tertiary status, the curriculum did not change; it was still catering/kitchen skills with a small amount of management (Alhassan and Sakara 2014; Asirifi et al. 2013).

The government's realisation of the potential of the tourism industry as the fourth foreign exchange earner for the economy gave credence to the expansion of the hospitality and tourism industry, therefore creating the need for qualified human resources with the new skills required to service the hospitality industry at both the local and international levels (Ghana Tourism Authority 2013; Mensah-Ansah 2014). The over 6% GDP increase from the hospitality and tourism industry in Ghana qualifies it as a driving force for economic development and makes it imperative as a vehicle for the envisaged development and growth in the service sector, which encouraged the expansion of hospitality education at the tertiary level.

The existing diploma level technical courses in Hotel, Catering and Institutional Management (HCIM) subsequently were upgraded in the universities and polytechnics. Empirical research to identify the needs of industry was absent; hence the production of graduates with skills was not widely needed by the industry (Sarkodie and Adom 2015; Asirifi et al. 2013; Alhassan and Sakara 2014; Appaw-Agbola and Afenyo-Dehlor 2011; Frimpong-Bonsu 2015).

According to the Ministry of Tourism (2014), before the promulgation of the Polytechnic law, training in hospitality was undertaken by the State Hotels Corporation in the 1960s. This was basically on-the-job training. People with very little educational background were trained on-the-job to work in the hotel industry. This trend continued until the Hotel Catering and Tourism Training Centre (HOCATT) was established,

which then took the sole responsibility as a training institute that offered courses for school leavers as apprentices in hotels and restaurants.

The implementation of the 1992 educational reforms upgraded all domestic science training in technical/vocational institutions to catering for the catering industry under one 'umbrella', and later to Hotel Catering and Institutional Management (HCIM) (Ministry of Education 2008; Ministry of Education Sector Report 2010). It, however, continued with the teaching of kitchen techniques, basic food and nutrition, hygiene and sanitation, soft furnishing, housewifery, cooking and waiting.

There were also similar courses for adults offered via certain private initiatives, and the technical examination unit (TEU) was responsible for designing the course content with less industry input (Ministry of Education Sector Report 2010). The City and Guilds of London also propagated the training of hotel and catering students in the early 1960s (Ministry of education Sector Report 2010; Ghana Tourism Authority 2013). This continued until the late 1970s when technical institutes established under the Ghana Education Service (GES) introduced formal training for students in catering at the craft level to fulfil the human resource needs of the hotel industry.

The Polytechnics were the sole institutions with the mandate to train students formally in Hotel Catering and Institutional Management professionally. In 2007, the emphasis on science, mathematics, technology, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) increased the power of the Polytechnics to equip graduates with employable skills to reduce the high unemployment in the country (Kutsanedzie and Mensah 2013; Amankwah 2011). This reform was repealed by the new polytechnic law 745(2007), which granted autonomy to the polytechnics, mandating them to run Higher National Diploma (HND) and Bachelor of Technology (B Tech) courses (Ansah 2012; Asirifi et al. 2013; Alhassan and Sakara 2014; Appaw-Agbola and Afenyo-Dehlor 2011; Frimpong-Bonsu 2015). Polytechnics generally under the HE system in Ghana became primarily responsible for technical/vocational training (TVET) courses at tertiary level (Akomaning et al. 2011). Their mandate was to train the career-focused personnel required for national development, and to enhance the socio-economic development (Honyenuga 2013; Ansah 2012; Alhassan and Sakara 2014).

Under the auspices of TVET, hotel catering and institutional management was recognised and reorganised as a discipline to accelerate the human resource needs of the hospitality industry in Ghana which is expanding exponentially (Ghana Tourism development plan 2010), and was mainly fragmented. HCIM, in line with the Polytechnic Law 745 (2007), was upgraded to tertiary level (Ministry of Education Sector Report 2010), hence the rise in the development of hospitality management in tertiary institutions as higher vocational education in Ghana (Ministry of Education Sector Report 2010; Ministry of Education 2008).

The University of Cape Coast, in October 2008, carved out hospitality management from the Geography and Tourism department to offer courses that reflected the trends in the hospitality industry at both the national and international levels alongside the polytechnics (University of Cape Coast Hospitality Management 2008). The University of Cape Coast, among the public universities, was the only one offering hospitality management.

The technical vocational system continued to undergo reform, designed to build on the inherent strength of the Ministry of Education; however, these reforms did not change the hospitality management curricula content extensively, as mentioned earlier (Ansah 2012; Education Sector Performance Report 2010; Ministry of Education 2008). Faced with poor funding, the inadequate tertiary education provision and ineffectiveness of the institutions charged with overseeing and ensuring quality, compounded the problem and defeated the essence of the reform (Bawakyillenuo et al. 2013: Education Sector Performance Report 2010).

This brief overview of the history of hospitality education in Ghana helps to contextualise this research. Over the years, the polytechnics and technical vocational schools have been providing students with an invaluable educational experience due to the combination of theoretical education and practical training. Hospitality education, although underdeveloped compared to developed countries such as the USA, UK, Switzerland and Australia, is contributing to the human resource and economic development of Ghana.

According to Mensah-Ansah (2011), the hospitality and tourism industry comprises the pillar of Ghana's economy by being the third highest employer of labour. Interestingly, in Ghana, there is no demarcation between hospitality and tourism, and it is assumed that hospitality skills exist to service the tourism industry generally (Asabre and Doku

2013; Adam 2013; Ghana Tourist Authority 2013; Ministry of Tourism 2014). Therefore, in this study, the researcher combines the hospitality and tourism aspects as the focus of the study, without demarcating between them, as may be the case in the UK, for example. Local educational institutions in Ghana offering hospitality courses contribute to the sustainability of the national economy as well as the tourism sector by educating the manpower who will control the industry as hospitality leaders. Most of the courses were adopted directly from the English educational system, and no research was carried out to identify the socio-economic and cultural differences between the two countries, thereby compounding the problems faced by hospitality graduates in Ghana today.

Again, hospitality education in Ghana is perceived differently and described as vocational training which can be acquired through apprenticeships. Some institutions develop an academic approach to it while the rest combine both academic and vocational elements to it, therefore confusing the system (Ghana Tourism Authority 2014). As noted by Mensah-Ansah (2014), the hospitality industry sector in Ghana can curb the unemployment situation, as it is projected to grow at 13.5%, which needs harmonisation to maintain competitiveness in the services, for both national and international arena. The hospitality and tourism industry is so important to the economy of Ghana and hospitality education seems to be a focal point for development by the government of Ghana, since it can provide limitless opportunities for the teeming youth (Mensah-Ansah 2014).

Also, Ghana stands to benefit from the increasing arrival of the affluence of the international hotel chains. This has placed a greater demand for modern graduate skills and standards upon the Ghanaian hospitality and tourism sector (Ghana Tourism Authority 2014). This has led to a need for professionalism within the Ghanaian hospitality industry. It is therefore imperative to have an improved and effective hospitality management education system in Ghana, which is perceived as becoming more important and more widely recognised. To achieve this ambition with effective results, this study aims to identify educational and training strategies that will require staff knowledge and skills that have previously been given little consideration by stakeholders, employers, educational institutions and policymakers.

Interestingly, the hospitality industry in Ghana, with the arrival of the multinational hospitality businesses, is characterised by a rapidly changing business environment.

According to Sarkodie and Adom (2015), hospitality and tourism in Ghana is growing at an exponential rate as many young people are studying hospitality and tourism management at tertiary level. However, this all-important industry is fragmented, including hospitality management education in Ghana, making it inconsistent with international standards (Ghana Tourism Authority 2014). Hence, the study took into consideration these perceived fragments, such as the skills and competences needed in the hospitality industry and education system in Ghana.

The expectations of hospitality management education students on entering the industry fail to match the reality. Consequently, many of them drop out of the industry altogether (Raybould and Wilkins 2005). By contrast, in Ghana's HE system, where the universities' main mission is still limited to producing an educated manpower for industry, the traditional teaching and learning methods and lack of connections between the university, polytechnics, research institutions and industry all hinder the efforts of the whole system to equip students with the necessary skills and knowledge required by the contemporary labour market. Consequently, it is imperative to highlight the challenges and the need for a paradigm shift in hospitality and tourism course curricula design within HEIs in order to produce well-accepted and competent human resources.

3.1.4 Gaps in learning, skills and competencies in Ghana

The reform of the educational systems in Ghana suggests a complete re-design and delivery of the curriculum in polytechnics and universities in general in order to bridge the gaps in learning, skills and competencies (Ansah, 2012). This is due to the fact that some of the curricula being used are regarded as out-of-date and unresponsive to the needs of trainees and demands of industry and the labour market. The disparity between institutional training and the needs of industry has implications for graduate employability (Asirifi et al. 2013; Afeti, Baffour-Awuah and Budu-Smith 2003), since graduates are underprepared for the world of work. The skill gaps, as reported in the literature on hospitality education, include leadership and managerial competencies which are important for senior level managers, relationship management skills, and change management in hospitality (Chung-Herrera et al. 2003; Suh et al. 2012).

Sisson and Adams (2012), in their study on the gaps in curriculum on identifying Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSA) important to hospitality and tourism management graduates, indicate that, due to the wide range of positions open to hospitality students upon graduation, it is difficult to determine those which are important to all or most graduates, and how these differ from the KSA taught on traditional business courses. They further state that there is a problem with teaching core areas such as information technology due to the fast developments in the field, the non-standardisation of the technology, workforce, hospitality and tourism products, and the high cost of software. This assertion is supported by Miller et al. (2008), who state that the technology is constantly changing and, as a result, competencies also evolve.

This view reinforces the aim of the current research, as gaps have been identified in Ghana, in terms of the education of hospitality graduates and industry professionals (Asabre and Doku 2013). From the experience of the researcher as a lecturer in hospitality in Ghana, the emerging trend in the hospitality industry will not benefit graduates, unless the curriculum is redeveloped to include the required skills and competencies.

Hospitality graduates in Ghana have very little access to practical Information Technology (IT) skills, and the few who do use outdated software (Asirifi et al. 2013; Asabre and Doku 2013). Recommendations from this and related studies will contribute towards rectifying this situation in Ghana. A lack of teamwork, the right qualification for specific jobs, locations, and perceptions of the industry sector are among the deficiencies found among new graduate recruits (Williams 2007). Elias and Purcell (2004) found a shortage of numeracy skills, as did Mason (2002).

3.2 Global perspectives Hospitality Education

This section examines the global perspectives in hospitality education, to enable the researcher to identify potential comparative gaps in provision between practice and the Ghanaian experience.

Globalisation has brought competitiveness to the hospitality and tourism industry, which calls for quality human resources (Te-Yi Chang and Jui-Man Hsu, 2009). The development of human resources with the necessary knowledge, such as technical and human skills, has been a challenge for HE (Kim Lian Chan 2011). Today, the study of hospitality management education is considered important in the face of the global

expansion of the hospitality industry (Hsuan-Fu Ho, 2013; Hopson, 2010; Scotland, 2006).

One of the major functions of education is to make individuals employable (Shil and Pramanik, 2011). According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (2010), the hospitality industry was estimated to offer a total of 284 million jobs by 2017 and is one of the most robust industries in the world (WTTC 2016).

Sisson and Adams (2013) acknowledge the rapid changes in the hospitality industry and suggest that, to meet the needs of this industry, educators must review and revise the curriculum regularly and identify which competencies are essential for graduates. According to Ruetzler et al. (2014:157-164), 'The expansion of hospitality programs worldwide has resulted in wide modifications in program structures, curricular offerings, and course content, all of which have prompted researchers to examine essential competencies and industry needs to inform programmatic restructuring'.

Johanson et al. (2010) also indicate that the changes and competitive environment of business and education due to micro-environment changes point to the need for curriculum reform in hospitality management. This line of research will help to identify and prioritise the needs of the hospitality curriculum.

The development and standardisation of the hospitality management courses curriculum is important in enabling graduates to possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities demanded by industry, but this poses a challenge (Sission and Adams 2013). Several factors affect the ability of hospitality courses to standardise these expectations. The continuing growth of the field of hospitality through the addition of a broad range of functional areas is a factor affecting curriculum development (Sission and Adams 2013). Today, hospitality education teaches not only the known, traditional areas, such as accommodation/lodging, food and beverages, but also includes courses on topics such as meetings, events, conventions, festivals, recreation, gaming, and cruise management. Whitelaw et al. (2009) indicated that the globalisation of the market, growth in technology in recent times and cultural diversity affect industry's requirements of hospitality graduates.

Baum (2007) indicated that a lack of experience, technical, practical or job-specific skills, experience of the world of work, and oral communication remain commonly cited issues with regard to hospitality graduates. Human labour is critical for successful

hospitality service delivery, so it is imperative to emphasise the development of students' ability to work in teams with people from diverse cultures and with different levels of communication skills (Yang and Hu 2015). Skill gaps may vary according to the region, size of business, and type of market orientation (Khare 2014). For example, in this study, skill gaps may exist between big and small hotel chains.

Although HE inculcates transferable, critical thinking skills in the transfer of knowledge within hospitality students, these students are unable to exhibit this knowledge in the field of work, a gap that needs to be researched and embedded in curriculum development to ensure that the students are clear on how they can transfer the acquired skills from HE to work (Maher and Nield 2005). A lack of teamwork, the right qualification for specific jobs, and perceptions of the industry sector are among the deficiencies found in new graduate recruits (Williams 2007).

The idea of collaboration in curriculum development between the stakeholders is supported by both professionals and educators, to comprehend better the development of a curriculum that suits the industry needs (Assante et al. 2007; Solnet et al. 2007). Tesone and Ricci (2005) emphasise the relationship between hospitality education and industry expectations in order for educational institutions to become realistic in providing good quality hospitality education which fulfills industry needs. Several studies have focused on the importance of the hospitality education curriculum in enhancing employability skills (Hein and Riegel 2012; Johnson et al. 2010; Mahachi 2012; Yao-Fen and Chen-Tsang 2014; Orphanidus and Nachmias 2011).

Professional management skills were found to be lower than expected, especially in human resource management, administrative management, team building, persuasion and influence, and cost and finance management in the field of hospitality. According to a model developed by the Centre for Employability in the UK, the key factors of employability include self-efficacy, self-confidence, and self-esteem (Pool and Sewell 2007). Confidence building is important in customer-facing industries like hospitality education. For example, a study by Yao-Fen and Chen-Tsang (2014) on employability, education and industry perspectives found a lack of confidence in most graduates regarding both their core and specific employability and their career planning and development skills.

Hospitality education should prepare graduates to assume management roles. It is argued that hospitality students are inadequately prepared in some of the managerial

skills that are needed in order to succeed in the hospitality industry (Yao-Fen and Chen-Tsang 2014; Orphanidus and Nachmias 2011; Spowart 2011). In response, the hospitality education curriculum should be designed to cater for the needs of the industry (Solnet et al. 2010; Hein and Reigel 2012; William 2005; Yao-Fen and Chen-Tsang 2014; Orphanidus and Nachmias 2011).

A growing demand for hospitality products and services is translated into a growing need for hospitality educational courses, in order sufficiently to prepare the personnel to meet the present and future demands of this vast industry; hence the increasing need for hospitality education to provide sufficient manpower to cater for the ever-changing and demanding industry (Hsuan-Fu Ho, 2013; Shariff, 2013). As indicated earlier, the hospitality industry, as a major contributor to the world economy, continues to grow in terms of its complexity and sophistication (Hein and Riegel 2012), demanding the improvement of the existing skills, abilities and knowledge that match success of hospitality graduates in the line of duty (Hein and Riegel 2012).

Hospitality education needs periodical reviews and an evaluation of the hospitality curriculum for relevance, to update and prepare graduates for the increasing complexity of the industry (Maher and Nield 2005). The evaluation of the curriculum, however, should not be carried out in isolation, but in conjunction with insights from professionals working in industry (Shariff 2013). These remarks are highly relevant to Ghanaian hospitality education and justify this research further. Changes in the hospitality industry globally have transformed the HE processes in hospitality education, including the educational curricula, learning materials, instructional practices and education stakeholders.

Wang (2009) therefore proposes a restructuring of the learning process to reflect the use of information in the real world, changing the role of the educator from a presenter of pre-packaged facts to a facilitator of active learning and transformation. This remark connects well with the LTA innovations that are experiential, student-centered, and focused on enabling graduates successfully to use ICT tools in learning and at work (Ali et al 2014). New technology, globalisation and the cultural diversity of the hospitality market have become critical factors affecting the needs of hospitality graduates (Ryan et al. 2013). These issues, therefore, call for concerted efforts by educators to update the competencies that are deemed essential by industry (Whitelaw et al. 2009; Johnson et al. 2010).

The complex market which exists in the hospitality arena requires hospitality graduates to have a solid background in hospitality management education as a requisite for success (Ratzburg et al. 2014). Many countries recognise education as a significant export industry (Hobson 2010). For example, the Australian government estimated that education is its largest export industry, with an annual revenue of about A$15.5 billion (approximately US$13 billion).

Perceptions regarding hospitality education courses in fulfilling industry requirements and expectations have become vital in recent years (Sharif 2013). Hospitality management, according to Wilks and Hemsworth (2011), is a segment of the hospitality industry but has its own place. Hospitality education is a specialised area of study, developing the skills of students for careers in the industry which has united vocational and academic education and developing apprenticeship courses in HEIs since the 19th century (Wilks and Hemsworth 2011; Barrows and Johan 2008). In spite of its rapid growth, it is faced with the difficulty of establishing itself as a separate field within academia (Wilks and Hemsworth 2011).

The broad range of functional areas in the hospitality industry and the continuous expansion of the field of hospitality are major factors affecting curriculum development regarding hospitality management (Sisson and Adams 2013). Curriculum review should be an ongoing process to augment the needs and trends of industry (Shariff 2013). This is well-acknowledged in the literature. For example, Spowart (2011) argues that, when the trends change, the curriculum should also be reviewed. This is vital for hospitality education in the Ghanaian context. Nelson and Dopson (2001) add that a tactical concern in hospitality education is the relevance of the curriculum to the industry needs. The curricula should be revised in order to utilise technology to equip students to succeed (Shariff 2013; Yao-Fen and Chen-Tsang 2014; Orphanidus and Nachmias 2011). This is important for this study because the curriculum in Ghana is not reviewed regularly (Dasmani 2011; Asabre and Doku 2011).

Wilks and Hemsworth (2011) mention a paradigm shift in terms of the competencies required for hospitality management, as the emphasis is now on leadership and emotional intelligence, for example. These elements are currently not emphasised in Ghana, in the researcher's experience. Curriculum design should be modulated to meet the industry needs (Yao-Fen and Chen-Tsang 2014). Hospitality education, therefore, should not simply focus on technical skills but also reinforce competency

development, professional management skills and self-efficacy (Yao-Fen and Chen-Tsang 2014; Mahachi 2012). The hospitality industry requires work attitudes and personal attributes as basic competencies, according to Yao-Fen and Chen-Tsang (2014); these two are similar in some respects. They suggest that hospitality education should emphasise the correct work attitude rather than learning skills to pass examinations. They add that both on- and off-campus internships should be provided. Part-time jobs are important aspects of hospitality education.

In the opinion of the researcher, these gaps in the curriculum have always been noted by authors. What is usually lacking, including in Ghana, is a conscious effort to reform the curriculum, at the individual module levels (years) of study, and across an entire course. It is expected that the research results here will facilitate such an effort.

According to Wilks and Hemsworth (2011), hospitality is an old profession but has had a short life within HE, which prepares students for careers in the industry. They acknowledge further that hospitality education is a specialised area of study that unites vocational training and academic education. Barrows and Johan (2008) indicate that hospitality education faced some difficulties in establishing itself as an academic discipline. Hospitality management has unique attributes that require technical-vocational instruction. Hospitality degree courses have increased rapidly due to the growth of the industry (Wilks and Hemsworth 2011). Barrows and Walsh (2002) emphasise the strong relationship between a professional career in the hospitality industry and hospitality education courses. Therefore, as noted earlier, in order to respond to the needs of the hospitality industry, it is important to have a clear understanding of the industry and employer expectations regarding hospitality degree courses, and the competencies that graduates should possess. Incorporating education and practical training has been a preoccupation within HE (Wilks and Hemsworth 2011). Breakey and Craig-Smith (2007) argue that hospitality education should move away from subjects such as cooking and hotel operation and focus on quality management and technological applications instead; hence, the need for Ghanaian hospitality education to innovate the existing curriculum by providing the management and technological skills required by the expanding hospitality market in Ghana.

Nelson and Dopson (2001) indicate that the need to supply competent managers brought about hospitality education. Curriculum issues have been widely discussed

and debated in the hospitality education literature, mainly because of the relative newness of the field within academia. Furthermore, it is argued that the growing focus on hospitality courses lacks a review of whether the current hospitality education curriculum complies with the industry expectations (Gamble et al. 2010; Spowart 2011; Yao-Fen and Chen-Tsang 2014; Orphanidus and Nachmias 2011).

The importance of hospitality education ultimately moved into line with the expansion of the hospitality industry (Shariff 2013; Yao-Fen and Chen-Tsang 2014). This is supported by Babushko (2013), who maintains that the challenge of globalisation emphasises the creation of new approaches to hospitality education, the industry and its staff. The upgrading of human resources aims not only to achieve investment in human capital, but also to improve training and hospitality staff's competitiveness. The researcher notes again that these statements support the case for a study such as this to examine the changing skills requirements within the Ghanaian hospitality industry following the emergence of multinational hotel chains in the country.

Globally, HEIs are considering graduate attributes and competencies (Becket and Brookes 2012). The standardisation of hospitality education has been an issue for industry professionals and educators. Sisson and Adams (2013) stress the need for the development of a standardised hospitality curriculum to ensure that graduates have the knowledge, skills and abilities that are required by industry. However, they argue that, in order to meet this requirement, several variables need to be identified which impact on the ability of hospitality courses to meet these expectations. The *location* of the course within the college/university is a challenge that militates against the standardisation of the hospitality course. The location of the course within certain schools and faculties, such as business schools, reduces the flexibility of the hospitality courses that can be offered (Sisson and Adams 2013).

Another factor observed by these authors as affecting the standardisation of the hospitality course is the *expansion* of the course, encompassing wide functional areas, such as meetings, events, conventions, festivals, recreation, gaming and cruise management, rather than the known traditional areas of lodging, food and beverages. They argue, therefore, that this expansion demands an added area of study and a broader array of offerings within the curriculum. The development of managers is important for the growth of hospitality and tourism, sectors that are increasingly affected by trends in globalisation and the pressure for competitiveness (Chang and

Hsu 2010). More recently, the *globalisation* of the market, growth in technology, and *cultural diversity* have become critical factors in affecting the needs of hospitality graduates (Whitelaw et al. 2009).

The focus of the hospitality education curriculum is significant; several studies concentrate attention on the importance of the hospitality education curriculum (Solnet et al. 2010; Hein and Reigel 2012; Rodriguez-Anton et al. 2013; Yao-Fen and Chen-Tsang 2014; Orphanidus and Nachmias 2011; Johnson 2010 Ryan et al. 2013; Dopson 2005; Morrison and O'Gorman 2008). Sisson and Adams (2013) suggest that a combination of methods that introduce, explore, and develop soft competencies in the classroom, with an opportunity to apply and practice these skills during supervised work experience, may be the most successful approach to mastering soft competencies. Interestingly, Wang (2009) identifies sustainable development and cites green hospitality, labour costs, multicultural issues and HE as the top issues that will influence the global hospitality industry. The hospitality industry will face *challenges*, such as operating issues, marketing issues, technological issues and economic issues (Sisson and Adams2013; Hobson 2010; Hotel Business Review 2013).

Ten key trends that will shape the hospitality sector include 'rapid growth in vacation ownership, integration and globalisation and new management' (Hotel Business Review 2013). This will be challenging in an industry that is perceived as having low-skilled, low-paid personnel and a high degree of diversity among its employees, both cultural and behavioural. The management of multicultural talent and the political landscape are amongst the new trends and issues affecting hospitality industry development. One of the main functions of large, international hospitality chains is to bring diverse world cultures together, which is central to their success (Hobson 2010; Hotel Business Review 2013; Wang 2009).

3.3 Hospitality education: the African perspective

HE in Sub-Saharan Africa is a vital and core development agenda for policy and sustainable development, scholars and international development partners (Yizengaw 2008). In Sub-Saharan Africa, with its diverse socio-economic situations, it is usually the government that has the required social and political capacity and legitimacy to bring together and co-ordinate the groups involved in hospitality and tourism activities (Akama 2000). In this regard, governments over the years have played a crucial role in

the development of the hospitality and tourism industry and so, subsequently, the development of hospitality education. It is the state that take the lead in the development of infrastructure for hospitality development, however, poor feasibility study and improper preparation brings about poor performance both in the development of the hospitality industry and in HE (Akama 2000).

Nicolaides (2008) identifies inadequate training facilities and a lack of human resources for delivering marked quality services to the international leisure industry as Africa's major setbacks regarding hospitality and tourism. To move hospitality education and industry forward, there is a need for co-ordinated efforts comprising education and the private sector. Similarly, as Yizengaw (2008) maintains, African countries face many challenges within HE, such as: quality faculty; limited capacity governance leadership and management, inadequate financial support, funding facilities and infrastructure; problems of quality and relevance of teaching and research; and inadequate knowledge generation, prioritising certain sectors over others. This has been the situation for hospitality education in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Mahachi (2012) observes the existence of skill gaps in managerial competencies among hospitality and tourism students in Botswana; this is common in many Sub-Saharan African countries. He indicates that a major skill gap in the Botswanan hospitality and tourism industry is a lack of business and managerial capabilities. Four areas of gaps include management, leadership, personal skills and attributes. He attributes this to in-house training which is unstructured, a lack of confidence and sociocultural issues. He is of the view that it is worth investigating undergraduates' perceptions of the competencies needed to become effective leaders and managers. However, he noted that there exists limited literature on the extent to which the developed curricular emphasise managerial competency skills for hospitality and tourism students. The author furthermore indicates that most hospitality and tourism courses are silent regarding the skills with which they aim to equip students.

This is relevant to the Ghanaian context, as Botswana is a developing country like Ghana, and faces similar issues concerning hospitality and tourism education and graduate employability, the focus of this research. The author, however, cautions that operational competencies should not be stressed considerably more than other competencies that can prevent hospitality and tourism graduates from developing the

required managerial competencies, referring to a study by Jauhari (2006) on the curriculum, which is mainly operations-oriented.

Kenya has been identified as having one of the best-developed hospitality and tourism industries in Sub-Saharan Africa. However, Mayaka and Akama (2007) acknowledge that common deficiencies exist in training and education in hospitality and tourism across many African countries and other emerging hospitality and tourism destinations. They indicate that most developing countries, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, lack well-coordinated hospitality and tourism training strategies and educational institutions capable of providing the much-needed human resource training, especially at the supervisory and managerial level.

Similarly, on issues concerning leadership and management, Raybould and Wilkins (2006) argue that the competition and complexity within the hospitality industry necessitates these skills. This is supported by Walo (2001), who emphasises the need for leadership skills. According to the Ghana Tourism Authority (2013), the hospitality and tourism industry is highly dynamic and competitive due to the emergence of international hotel chains in the country, which therefore requires graduates with employable skills to take advantage of the emerging markets and job opportunities.

3.3.1 Conclusion

The chapter presents an overview of the Ghanaian HE system and an analysis of the key documents (Government of Ghana Education Strategic Plan 2010-2020) that guide HE, including hospitality management education and practice in Ghanaian HEIs. It identifies the skills, competencies and graduate outcomes which influence effective hospitality education, considering the standards that are accepted and specified by the policymakers. It thus explains the gaps in learning skills and competencies within hospitality education Ghana. The chapter also reviews the literature on global and African hospitality HE issues compared to the situation in Ghana, particularly the Ghanaian HE system, and gaps in the learning, skills and competencies of Ghanaian graduates. These gaps motivated this research.

4 CHAPTER 4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the research methodology and the nature of the data used to investigate the research objectives and research questions, as stated in chapter one. The aim of the research is twofold: 1) to investigate the factors which affect Ghanaian hospitality graduates' employability, by examining the meaning of the concept of employability, the effectiveness of hospitality education and curriculum in meeting the industry requirements 2) to develop an integrative framework for improving hospitality graduate employability in Ghana. The research insights enabled the researcher to propose strategies that will equip hospitality graduates with skills and competencies which will enhance their employability.

Adam et al. (2007:24) state that 'Research methodology and research method are not the same'. Research methodology is the science and philosophy behind all research. It is generally understood to be an orderly approach taken by a researcher to answer a research problem (Saunders 2011; Quinlan 2011; Adam et al. 2007). Methodology basically involves the overall techniques of describing, elucidating and envisaging a phenomenon, a plan of work through which knowledge is gained (Rajasekar 2006).

Method refers to the specific techniques for exploring particular research questions. Hallebone and Priest (2009) stated that methodology operationalises the particular approach that has been chosen for a study. Methodology in research is based on a philosophical framework which explains the nature of reality being investigated (ontology) and the way in which knowledge is developed about that reality (epistemology). Similarly, Saunders et al. (2012:126) indicate that research methodology is 'influenced by the researcher's philosophical approach', and includes the overall research strategy and choice of data collection, techniques and analysis procedures. These aspects are then linked to other elements, such as the research design, sampling, data collection methods of analysis, evaluation, trustworthiness, validity and reliability of the data, and possible ethical considerations related to the research (Hallebone and Priest 2009).

Gill and Johnson (2010) argue that management research methodology is not neutral and, considering the techniques suitable for a particular task, the nature of the research questions and the phenomenon under investigation, there is no one best methodological approach; only one that is most appropriate for investigating specific research questions. They further note that research methodology is a compromise between different options and tacit philosophical assumptions, depending on the availability of resources and access to information. Similarly, Clotty (2003) describes methodology as a plan of action, a design that shapes our choice of a particular method that links the data collection to a desired outcome. It also offers an account of the rationale behind the choice of methods. A set of data will normally have a predetermined methodological option which in turn is developed from the philosophical position of the researcher.

According to Dobson (2002), a researcher's theoretical lense plays an important role in the choice of methods. This is because the underlying epistemological assumptions of the research largely define the choice of method; thus, the increasing debates on, for example quantitative-qualitative divides as research tools suitable for certain philosophical positions of a research. However, there are other research methods and each of them may use a variety of different types of research approaches and techniques. Richard and Morse (2013) maintain that the best method of a research comes from the purpose for which it is being conducted; the choice, however, is constrained by the familiarity of the researcher's resources and sometimes the data. The researcher presents these aspects of the research methodology below.

The chapter summarised the techniques for analysing the data and analysis procedure for the research. It is essential that 'a good research methodology should specify the primary philosophical assumptions supporting the investigation; appropriate approach to the gathering of data; the relevant information to the research question and the approach to be used in analysing the research results in line with research convention' (Emory, 1976:78). The relationship of the methodology to the philosophy of the research is identified. This linkage allows the easy understanding of the research.

The rest of the chapter is organised as follows. Section 4.2 recaps the research problem. Section 4.3 describes the research philosophy, including the ontology and epistemology of the research and the methodological approach. Section 4.4 presents the research design and methods, including the lecturers' focus group and employers

managers' interviews, together with the lecturers and graduates' questionnaires. Section 4.5 describes the sampling of the respondents while Section 4.6 summarises the data analysis steps. Section 4.7 discusses the quality of the research design with a focus on validity and reliability. Section 4.8 presents the ethical considerations, reflections and observations of the researcher, and Section 4.9 concludes the chapter.

4.1.1 Problem Definition

To make the methodology easier to follow, the researcher recalls the research problem, questions and objectives that were stated earlier in Chapter 1. This also helps to link the methodology to the objectives and questions.

As noted in Chapter 1, graduate unemployment is a growing phenomenon in Ghana (Dai et al. 2008; Boateng and Ofori-Sarpong 2002; Oppong and Sacks 2015). However, a review of the Ghanaian HE and labour market literature on graduate employability indicates that less emphasis has been placed on enhancing the employability of Ghanaian graduates in general and hospitality graduates in particular. The employability of Ghanaian hospitality graduates remains relatively under-researched (Asirif et al. 2013; Sarkodie and Adom 2015), a fact which motivated this research. The high rate of joblessness among Ghanaian graduates is blamed on the historical legacy of the past inadequacies of the educational system. While some researchers attribute it to institutionally-based issues, others see it as structural, a mismatch between the skills supplied and those demanded by the labour market (Akyeampong 2010; Gondwe and Walenkamp 2011). Boateng and Ofori-Sarpong (2002) blame the joblessness of Ghanaian graduates on the irrelevant and outdated curriculum, teaching and learning in HE, claiming that many Ghanaian graduates enter the job market with inadequate skills. Similarly, Pitan (2016), Ajiboye et al. (2013) and Adebakin et al. (2015) note that, in Nigeria, a Sub-Saharan developing country like Ghana with similar graduate unemployment issues, many graduates are unemployed because they lack the skills necessary to fill the existing vacant positions in businesses and are, therefore, unemployable.

In the Ghanaian literature, considerable emphasis is placed on the development of functional and technical skills and competencies as opposed to employability skills, as seen in the extant literature (Akyeampong 2010; Gondwe and Walenkamp 2011). Boateng and Ofori-Sarpong (2002) maintain that the skills mismatch in Ghana is not all

about functional and technical/subject skills but competencies that they term tacit ability, assertiveness and 'quick minds'.

This study, therefore, uses Ghanaian hospitality graduates as a focal point for exploring how well the tertiary education curriculum develops technical and generic employability skills among graduates. The key outcome is to develop a Ghanaian Hospitality Employability Enhancement Framework (GHEEF) which will enable the key stakeholders in graduate education to work together to improve graduate employability in the country. These stakeholders include HE graduates, academics, policymakers, and hospitality industry employers.

Moreover, the research is important for Ghana because, even though the above-mentioned gaps in employability education in Ghana are widely acknowledged and reported, the Education Sector Performance Report (2010) maintains that education policy is not based on empirical evidence about meeting the education and training needs of Ghanaian graduates. Hence, the Ghanaian government has devised numerous strategies for curbing unemployment among graduates of higher learning; however, this is without an adequate empirical understanding of the root causes of unemployment among this group (Akyeampong 2010; Baffour-Awuah and Thomson 2011; Boateng and Ofori- Sarpong 2002). Ghanaian hospitality graduates, who form the focus of this study, are equally affected, despite the growth of the hospitality industry in recent times (Mensah-Ansah 2014); hence, this research.

4.1.2 Overview of the research objectives, questions and methods

The researcher recalls the research objectives and questions as stated in chapter 1 and summarises the appropriate research methods for exploring them.

4.1.2.1 Objectives of the research

1. To review critically the *current knowledge* on employability and its applications to hospitality education and graduates in Ghana, including an *understanding* of how employability and hospitality education are perceived in the Ghanaian context

2. To examine the *trends* in the Hospitality and Tourism Industry in Ghana, the corresponding *skills requirements* and the extent to which hospitality education in Ghana meets these requirements.

3. To investigate the effectiveness of hospitality education in meeting the industry needs.
4. To develop a framework for enhancing the employability of Ghanaian hospitality graduates.

4.1.2.2 Research Question 1

RQ.1. What is the current understanding of the concept of employability in Ghana, what employability skills and competencies does the hospitality industry need as a prerequisite for employable hospitality graduate in the hospitality industry and how can hospitality education in Ghana meet these requirements? (Objectives 1 and 2 mainly)

For this Research Question (RQ), as indicated in chapter 1, the researcher a): used a critical literature review to understand the issues related to the emerging trends in the hospitality industry, the skills requirements of multinational hospitality-related businesses and the hospitality industry, and the nature of curriculum innovations which will meet these requirements; b) interviewed hotel and hospitality employers about the trends, the required skills and the influences of the hospitality industry; and c) conducted a focus group discussion with hospitality lecturers, and administered questionnaires to lecturers and graduates, about how the teaching, learning, and assessment (TLA) experiences prepare graduates to work in the hospitality industry. Using these different approaches will enable the researcher to triangulate the research findings across the evidence base.

4.1.2.3 Research Question 2

RQ. 2. Taking into consideration research question 1 above, how can the research findings elucidate the problem of hospitality graduate employability in Ghana and subsequently, develop a framework to address the essential employer skills and competency requirements through education and training?

For this question, the researcher used the results from question 1 to develop an enabling framework that will enhance hospitality graduates' employability in Ghana, Specifically, the framework will be a case study of hospitality graduates, which will make it more widely applicable to other graduates in Ghana, and similar developing countries. The perspectives of the different groups of respondents were used to

triangulate the results obtained from the lecturers and graduates on fostering a better understanding of hospitality graduate employability in Ghana. Similarly, the industry and policy perspectives which were obtained from the interviews with the employers and review of Ghanaian HE will make the framework applicable to wider Ghanaian contexts; for example, other disciplines and industry sectors.

4.1.3 Research Philosophy

This section explains the research philosophy, ontology and epistemology and then proceeds with the methodological approach.

4.1.3.1 Overview of the research philosophy

Philosophy is a guide that provides standards where practical guidance fails to address a specific issue (Ryan 2006). Basic philosophical assumptions underpin any good research project (Johnson and Duberley 2000; Gill and Johnson 2010). A research philosophy explains the ontological (nature of reality studied) and epistemological bases of a research which inform a suitable methodology for the research (Saunders et al. 2012, Healy and Perry 2000; Burrell and Morgan 1979; Blaikie 2007). Thus, Lee and Lings (2008:24) explain that a research philosophy is '*concerned with exactly how we can link theoretical ideas to the reality of our world, but also the nature of reality, and how much we can ever know about it'*. Therefore, the philosophy is presumed to be the relationship between the theory, the data collected and the real world (Lee and Lings 2008; Blumberg et al. 2014).

There are certain assumptions that recount how the world and learning are understood; for example, how reality can be measured and acquired and, in so doing, which methods can be employed (Creswell and Clarke 2007; Johnson and Duberley 2000; Saunders et al. 2012; Hallebone and Priest 2009). The researcher briefly reviews the four main research philosophies (positivism, interpretivism, realism and pragmatism) in order to justify the choice made for the study.

Johnson and Duberley (2000) take the view that management research cannot be isolated from philosophical commitment, the diversity of which leads to different possible ways of approaching and engaging with any substantive research area. Morgan and Smircich (1980), note that the philosophical and methodological assumptions underpinning research must be context-based. To explain this point, they employ the age-old argument about qualitative and quantitative research methods,

highlighting the philosophical positions of subjectivism and objectivism that underpin research methods, with the need for the researcher to think about why particular approaches or their combination may be preferred in a specific research study. They further note that social science research was dominated by quantitative enquiry and the objectivist paradigm in the 1960s and 1970s; the trend, however, then changed towards qualitative methods and subjectivism. By subjectivism, Morgan and Smircich (1980) mean the understanding of the nature and scope of knowledge and meaning of the social world according to one's own perspective, whereas objectivism is the opposite: understanding the nature and scope of knowledge and the meanings of the social world independently of one's own perspective. Therefore, it is important for this research to identify and use an appropriate philosophy to investigate the issues surrounding the employability of Ghanaian hospitality graduates.

4.1.3.2 Ontology and Epistemology

Burrell and Morgan (1979) suggest that approaches to social sciences are based on interrelated sets of assumptions regarding ontology and epistemology. More recent arguments have been summarised by Creswell and Clark (2007) as suggesting that the core of research philosophy is assumptions that relate to how the world is viewed, how reality can be measured, the acquisition of knowledge and by what method this knowledge is obtained. Ontology answers the question: what is reality? In other words, one's view of reality is ontology.

Blaikie (2007:13) defines ontology as the study of 'claims and assumptions that are made about the nature of social reality, claims about what exists, what it looks like, what units make it up and how these units interact with each other'. He further stated that the field of ontology is considered as the science of existence and governed by such notions as what is perceived, how it is formed, and how the various aspects coordinate.

Crotty (1998) argues that researchers can choose which to start from: ontological, epistemological or methodological issues. Grix (2004:68) points out that it is advisable to start by setting out clearly the relationship between what the researcher thinks is researchable (ontology), linking it to what can be known about it (epistemology) and how to go about acquiring it (Methodological approach). This study covers these grounds by using rational thinking to make ontological sense of the real issues in graduate employability in Ghana, based on the fundamental research questions

framed, followed by conversations about how best to explore the questions and their contributing research objectives (epistemology and methodology aspects).

The study of ontology and epistemology lies between these two contexts. These are the objectivist and subjectivist approaches. These approaches are thus viewed as the foundations of knowledge (Easterby-Smith et al. 2008; Crotty 1998; Burrell and Morgan 1979). The first context of interest is the objective ontology, with an objectivist epistemology, as indicated earlier. Two schools of thought fall under this category, namely positivism and post-positivism. These schools stipulate that the notion of 'truth' is independent of the external reality and, as such, reality can therefore be expressed by the researcher as an inert term, making it possible to see truth as unbiased. This is where the researcher assumes a passive role (Denzin and Linclon 2011; Punch 2014).

4.1.3.3 Positivism

Bryman and Bell 2007:16) define Positivism as 'an epistemological position that advocates the application of the methods of the natural science to the study of social reality and beyond'. The fundamentals of positivism, according to Denzin and Linclon (2011), are rationalism and empiricism which are positivist concepts of epistemology. Easterby-Smith et al. (2008:28) define positivism as comprised of a social world that 'exists externally, and that its properties should be measured through objective methods'. They furthermore indicate that there is an epistemological assumption 'that knowledge is only of significance if it is based on the observations of this external reality'; it is therefore unsurprising that quantitative research often has positivistic underpinnings. Blaikie (2007) is of the view that the knowledge of reality that is acceptable is that which is derived from experience determined by observations that are pure by theoretical notions. According to McAuley et al. (2007), positivism tends to be the dominant philosophy in most theories of organisational study. This tends to provide empirical evidence in the form of 'truths' that can be used as a control for the particular study.

4.1.3.4 Why a positivist perspective is inappropriate for this study

A positivist approach, often known as the natural sciences model of research, holds that science is the only way to know the truth and understand the world in order to predict and control it. Therefore, a positivist researcher conducts research similarly to a physicist, chemist or psychologist (May 2007). The positivist furthermore believes that

we come to know what we know through observing the phenomena under investigation. The researcher is detached from the phenomenon of enquiry; just as a person working in a laboratory with chemicals observes the reaction of substances and the results obtained without influencing those reactions. Hence, the results would be identical, independent of the researcher's concept that there exists a fixed independent reality which the experiment explores.

Thus, what is perceived as knowledge by the positivist is a set of facts that are discovered and verified through direct observation of the phenomenon. According to Healy and Perry (2000), positivists measure facts independently, using preconceived hypotheses or theories about how these facts relate to each other and the nature of the results to which they lead. In other words, to discover the truth about graduate unemployment in Ghana in a positivist way will involve describing the cause and effect relationships of unemployment issues, which is impossible, given the fact that unemployment is understood by people subjectively, according to their situations and experiences, and is not a completely independent reality which can be studied through a pre-specified hypothesis (Saunders et al. 2012; Kaplan and Duchon 1988).

4.1.3.5 An interpretivist perspective

Interpretivism is a contrasting epistemology to positivism, which concludes that knowledge is established by the meanings attached to the phenomenon studied and that researchers interact with the subject of study to obtain data (Coll and Chapman 2000; Cousins 2002). In contrast to the views of positivists, interpretivists assume that knowledge is 'soft' and can be studied through the involvement of the researcher in the phenomenon, believing essentially that the world is created according to the viewer's own previous experience and understanding, subjective biases and value system (Hallebone and Priest 2009). Saunders et al. (2012) argue that interpretivists see humans as 'social actors' whose subjective experiences form part of the reality studied.

The interpretivist's central tenet states that there is a fundamental difference between natural and social sciences (Blaikie 2007). The interpretivist social phenomenon requires an understanding of the social world that is created by people. However, Blaikie (2007:124) points out that 'social phenomena constructed by people are reproduced by continuing activities of interpreting and reinterpreting their world, social situations, other people's actions, and their own actions and humanly created objects by developing meanings for their activities together'. Denzin and Lincoln (1998) argue

that what separates the findings of an investigation from subjective human experience brings about interpretivism. The interpretivists, according to Bryman and Bell (2011), are concerned with the 'empathic' understanding of human actions, instead of the forces that are deemed to act on it. Explicitly, it is difficult to affirm what the 'truth' is in a value-laden framework of a researcher's belief system. Nevertheless, this is a limitation that social science tries to overcome through various means, including 'error-elimination' by Kirk and Miller (1986), LeCompte and Preissle (1993); 'the middle ground' by Smith (2006), and Hamersley's (1992) synthesis between social realism and constructivism. Arguably, Bryman and Bell (2011) state that there is a fundamental difference between the subject matter of the natural sciences and that of the social sciences and that an epistemology is required that will reflect and capitalise upon that difference. They further explain that the central difference resides in the fact that social reality has a meaning for human beings and, therefore, human actions are meaningful.

In sum, this research is broadly interpretivist to the extent that insights from the mainly qualitative analysis of the research results will be interpreted as signals of the social reality and understanding of the problem of hospitality graduate unemployment in Ghana, according to the views of the different stakeholders examined in the study − lecturers, graduates, hospitality employers and policymakers. It is not strictly interpretivist, however, in the sense that the graduate employability problem exists only as different respondents interpret or experience it – the problem exists outside the minds of the respondents but affects different people differently, depending on their situation.

As explained further below, this research basically falls within the post-positivist school of thought, whereby a mixed research method which combines qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis techniques is used to explore more effectively the research questions, whilst that the ensuring the results are interpreted through a post-positivist lenses.

4.1.3.6 Post-Positivist Perspective

The post-positivist paradigm's ontology asserts that there is one reality; it accepts the ontology of the positivists, but rejects their epistemology. For this reason, post-positivist researchers are seen as realists, since they support the position that phenomena exist independently of the perceptions and theories about them (Phillips 1987). Post-positivists believe that the theories, background, knowledge, and values of the

researcher may influence what is observed, and that human knowledge is based, not on absolute, but rather on human assumptions. An unproven proposition that appears correct, this stance is similar to that of the realist. The post-positivist also believes that all observations are theory-laden and that scientists are inherently biased by their cultural experiences, world view, and so on. Post-positivists reject the idea that any individual can see the world perfectly as it really is. We are all biased and all our observations are affected (theory-laden). Our best hope for achieving objectivity is to triangulate multiple fallible perspectives.

Broadly speaking, this research can be described as post-positivist because graduate employability is a multiple reality which is experienced differently by lecturers and graduates in different fields of study. Researching these realities requires knowledge of the employability models and skill sets examined in the literature review chapters, but in a way that combines insights from different groups of respondents studied. However, given that the models provide frameworks for understanding employability which are not rigorous scientific theories, the research is more appropriately a pragmatic study (Hussey and Hussey 1997; Easterby-Smith et al. 2008; Bisman, 2002; Healy and Perry, 2000; Denzin and Lincoln, 2000).

Post-positivists believe that there is a world of events out there that is observable and independent of human consciousness (Denzin and Lincoln, 2013), and that knowledge about the world is socially constructed. Society is made up of feeling, thinking human beings and their interpretation of the world must be studied. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2013), post-positivists reject the correspondence theory of truth, whereby the truth-status of an assertion depends on how the definition of the underpinning concepts and premises corresponds with the real-world schema, for those concepts and beliefs for which there exist several levels of reality. One can argue that there are several levels of reality of graduate unemployment which different respondents in this study manifest, and the aim of the research is to explore these levels critically, with a focus on the high unemployment rate among hospitality graduates. Hence, as stated above, this study falls within the post-positivist philosophy.

The post-positivist recognises that all observation is fallible and contains errors, and that all theory is revisable. Where the positivist believes that the goal of science is to uncover the truth, the post-positivist believes that it is to adhere persistently to the goal of making better sense of the reality, even though we can never completely understand

the truth. This is because all measurement is imperfect so that the post-positivist emphasises the importance of multiple measures and observations, each of which may possess different types of error, and the need to use *triangulation* to try to achieve a more robust understanding of the reality of the phenomenon under study. The post-positivists are realists who believe that there is a reality independent of our thinking about it that science can study. This is in contrast with the interpretivists, who hold that there is no external reality.

According to the literature, post-positivist approaches appreciate people's interpretations and of their environment, and how they socially construct it (Saunders et al. 2012). However, Clark and Creswell (2008) hold that transformative-emancipatory ontological assumptions have diverse viewpoints with regard to several social realities and have to be placed within political, historical, cultural and economic value systems to understand the bases for their differences. Issues related to hospitality service delivery and graduate employability skills delivery can be understood in different ways by the different stakeholders (for example, lecturers, graduates and employers) involved in giving and receiving the services, (supply and demand), according to how these aspects of the study affect them. Hence, whilst graduate unemployment is generally a problem in Ghana, particularly among hospitality graduates (Asirifi et al. 2013), different stakeholders may have different subjective understandings of the extent of the problem and the influencing factors. This supports a post-positivist philosophy for this research, which is qualitative in nature overall, since it explores the subjective views of the respondents who are also stakeholders.

In this study, even though the researcher interprets the meaning of the data on the respondents' understanding of employability, the main focus of the study is not the researcher's own meanings and belief system, but the insights that the research data provide regarding how graduate unemployment can be objectively understood to manifest itself in Ghana. In other words, the research does not rest on a purely interpretivist ontology, but a post-positivist exploration of graduate unemployment in Ghana, as revealed by the research results, independently of the researcher's own views. Also, trends in the hospitality industry and education, which are independent of graduates, lecturers and the employers, may affect how they perceive the employment problem.

This research shares some philosophical aspects of positivism which relate to the objective existence of graduate unemployment in Ghana, and recognises that people perceive the problem to different degrees, depending on their circumstances. Importantly, it recognises that people are not inanimate objects to be studied purely in the style of natural science (Johnson and Duberley 2000; Gill and Johnson 2010; Saunders et al. 2012). In effect, the post-positivist school of thought is appropriate for this study because it recognises the importance of people's socially constructed interpretations and meanings, and their subjective reality within the context of seeking to understand the social forces, structures and processes that influence and constrain the nature of human views and behaviour (Johnson and Duberley 2000; Saunders et al. 2012).

Research approaches are valid in relation to the nature of the reality studied and thus the nature of the research questions explored. Business and management studies, according to Saunders et al. (2012), can use a mixture of positivist and interpretivist approaches, perhaps reflecting the stance of the neo-empiricist. They believe that all observation is fallible and prone to errors, and so all theory is revisable. The post-positivist emphasises the importance of multiple measures and observations, each of which may contain a different type of error and need triangulation to understand the reality. Hence, in this study, related questions are used, although with different framings, to explore the views of the different groups of respondents regarding the aspects of graduate unemployment of which they may have experience. This helps to triangulate the research results and provide a stronger evidence base for understanding the problem more clearly.

Graduate unemployment is a known reality in Ghana (Bafour-Awuah and Thomson 2011; Baah-Boateng 2015), so one can only understand it if the social structures that created this problem are explored. In this study, the researcher thinks of the Ghanaian contexts which engender graduate unemployment, including the trends in industry and HE, which create a mismatch between graduate skills and the skills required at work, as examples of the social structures and influences. Hence, there are political, cultural, economic and social factors that affect these graduates' employability, so understanding such factors based on the experiences of different stakeholders will suggest ways to address the problem.

Finally, epistemologically, the post-positivist believes that our knowledge of reality is a result of social conditioning which cannot be understood independently of the social actors involved in the course of knowledge (Dobson 2002; Saunders et al. 2012; Ritchie and Lewis 2003; Johnson and Duberley 2000). The different forms of realism reviewed agree that there is no possibility of obtaining a single-truth understanding of the world. However, the post-positivist asserts that real objects are subject to value-laden observation, but reality and the value-laden observation of reality operate in two different dimensions; one is relatively enduring, and the other transitory and changing (Saunders et al. 2012). The reality of graduate unemployment is long-standing in Ghana but its experience by different graduates, for example, changes with their relative success with regard to gaining employment.

4.1.3.7 Pragmatism

Ritchie and Lewis (2003) argue that the ontological and epistemological perspectives within the pragmatist tradition, and the adoption of positivist ideals amongst qualitative researchers, indicate that qualitative and quantitative methods should not necessarily be seen as antithetical approaches to research. It is important to appreciate that qualitative and quantitative research methods are the toolkits of social researchers. They further indicate that social researchers are encouraged to accept pragmatism in choosing appropriate methods to address specific research questions, rather than focusing on the underlying philosophical debates and being inclined to choose one philosophical perspective, either for its simplicity regarding data collection or analysis, or the researcher's convenience. Therefore, these two distinctive approaches should be seen as complementing, rather than opposing, each other.

Pragmatism is believed to be more aligned to a mixed methods approach and the practical reality should be examined closely (Ritchie and Lewis 2003). According to Zachariadis et al. (2010), pragmatism is not limited to a specific type of research but allows a variety of methods to be chosen based on the nature of the research questions under study. Mingers (2011) argues that realism is highly appropriate for management research as it authenticates the realist stance which many management researchers adopt. Post-positivism supports a mixed method approach such as used in this research, whereby qualitative insights from the focus group, interviews and open-ended questionnaire items are combined with a statistical analysis of the close-ended questionnaire items to strengthen the research results, as explained further below.

4.1.3.8 Methodological approach

The research adopts a primarily qualitative approach within a mixed methodology that combines qualitative and quantitative evidence from the research instruments mentioned below. The qualitative nature of the study derives from the use of focus group discussions, employers' interviews, and questionnaire surveys, to elicit the stakeholders' understanding of employability in the wider Ghanaian context and the hospitality sector. Whilst the research methodology is qualitative and informed by a post-positivist approach, the analysis of the data uses a mixed methodology which analyses open-ended responses qualitatively, and the frequency scores of the responses to close-ended questionnaire items quantitatively, as appropriate. Hence, using a mixed methodology for the data analysis helps the researcher to collect, analyse and integrate both quantitative and qualitative data within the study, as appropriate, in investigating different objectives (Creswell, 2003). This approach facilitates the triangulation of the data (Ritchie and Lewis 2003; Clark and Creswell 2008; Saunders et al. 2012) and allows the investigation of the employability phenomenon from different perspectives (Easterby-Smith et al. 1991; Bisman, 2002; Healy and Perry, 2000; Denzin and Lincoln, 2000).

4.1.3.9 Methodological notes

The purpose of this section is to highlight the methods used in various studies on hospitality graduate employability. It sought to gain insights into the different approaches to graduates' employability, in order to justify the methodology used in this present study and the relative importance of each of these methods in the present research. From the review of the literature, various methods were identified as follows: qualitative, quantitative as well as mixed methods, as shown in the table below.

Table 4-1 Methodologies used in researching employability, HE and hospitality education.

AUTHOR	TITTLE	METHODOLOGY/METHOD	SAMPLE OF PARTICIPANTS
Abomeh (2012)	Hospitality and Tourism training in Nigeria	Focus group	12 participants
Lee et al. 2016	Investigating quality dimensions of hospitality HE: From students perspectives	Quantitative	314 participants

Rotich et al (2012)	Assessing quality of Hospitality education in Kenya	Quantitative	126 students and 7 heads of departments
Cheung et al. 2010	Essential Hotel management Competencies for the graduate student.	Mixed Method	38 hotel professional and 105 graduates
Miller et al (2008)	Hospitality management educators versus the industry: a competency assessment	Qualitative	12 participants
Shariff (2013)	Reforming hospitality education to fulfil the industry expectations	Qualitative	7 experts
Yang and Partlow 2014	Assessing the competencies needed by hospitality management graduates in India.	Quantitative	314 participants
Yao-Fen Wang and Yao-Fen and Chen-Tsang (2014)	Employability of hospitality graduates: students and industry perspective	Quantitative	105 managers 193 graduates
Carpenter et al. (2016)	Curriculum assessment through a capstone course: a case study of hospitality and tourism programmes	Focus group	19 participants
Norailis and Rozaini (2015)	Critical success factors of graduate employability programs	Focus group and survey	145
Ching-Yi Tsai 92013)	A study of employability between high Technical and vocational education and employer in Tourism and hospitality : Stakeholder perspective	Qualitative Focus group	45 employers 60 students
Edinyang et al. (2015)	Academic factors and quantitative graduate employability in Nigeria	Quantitative	150
Bell et al. (2003)	Educating Australian Leisure graduates: Context for developing generic skills	Mixed methods	Not stated
Ali et al. (2016)	Hospitality employers' perception of Technology for sustainable development: The implications for graduate employability	Qualitative	15 participants
Seymour (2003)	University Hospitality Education for International Management: A Case of Wasted Opportunities?	qualitative	150 students

	University Hospitality Education for International Management: A Case of Wasted Opportunities?		
Beaumont et al. (2016)	Am I employable?: Understanding students' employability confidence and their perceived barriers to gaining employment	Mixed Methods	57 participants
Pheko and Kaelo Molefhe (2016)	Addressing challenges: a framework for improving the employability of graduates in Botswana	Qualitative	83 participant
Barraclough et al. (2009)	Graduates' perspective on the influence of HE on their employability	Mixed methods	168
Ruth (2012)	Evaluating the impact of placement on employability	Mixed method	24
Stansbi and Chang.(2016)	Linking internships and classroom learning: A case study examination of hospitality and tourism management students.	Mixed Methods	339
Jackson (2013)	Students perception of the importance of employability skill provision in in business undergraduates	Quantitative	1019

Source: Author's idea

Table 4.1 shows the methods that have been used in researching hospitality graduates and employability in the review of the literature, in order to authenticate the mixed methods of this research. The notes below further justify the use of mixed methods in this research. The table further shows that the sample size in previous studies in the extant literature which were reviewed ranges from seven to infinity. In this study a focus group of 23 lecturers was used to explore their level of awareness of employability issues, and provide guidance on a more detailed questionnaire design for further examination of the employability issue among all of the stakeholders; namely, lecturers, graduates, and employers. The table justifies the mixed approach used in this study, and determines what it adds to knowledge methodologically or, in other words, how it differs from and/or enhances the current approaches.

4.1.4 Further justification of the use of mixed methodology in this research

The approach in this research begins from the premise that it is often unnecessary to choose between the two traditional strategies (quantitative and qualitative), because it may be more productive to reflect on how the strengths of each can be jointly exploited within a mixed approach. Hence, the use of mixed methods may play an important role in research, since the outcomes attained thereby may augment and improve the understanding of the issues being researched (Clark and Creswell 2008 ;Hennink et al. 2011). Clark and Creswell (2008:5) note that:

> *'Mixed methods research is a research design with philosophical assumptions as well as methods of inquiry. As a methodology, it involves philosophical assumptions that guide the direction of the collection and analysis of data and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone*'.

The mixed method approach in this research helped to answer the research questions by enabling the researcher to obtain a richer set of information, triangulated across three main stakeholders; namely, graduates, hospitality lecturers and hospitality industry managers. Schwartz and Ogilvy (1979) state that a pure objectivity (hence quantitative) posture, which is admitted in the positivist paradigm, is a misconception, as those perspectives may be more appropriate in social science research, and any one phenomenon can be viewed from multiple perspectives. The researcher shares a similar perception, recognising that the phenomenon of graduate unemployment in Ghana is highly complex. Therefore, if a holistic understanding is to be obtained, then a pragmatic approach is imperative; hence the use of mixed methods of the data collection and analysis (focus group, questionnaire survey, and in-depth semi-structured interview) to achieve a better understanding of the influences of the hospitality industry and education on the employability of hospitality graduates in Ghana.

To develop a broad understanding of a subject being studied, social science researchers acknowledge the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods as necessary for a comprehensive understanding of the subject under review (Tashakkori

and Creswell 2007; Johnson et al. 2007). The justification for combining quantitative and qualitative approaches is that the collected data will provide a better understanding of the research rather than depending on just one kind of data (Creswell and Clark 2007). It has been argued that using combined methodologies enhances the quality of the research results and provides better guidance to others about the policy applications of the results than does single method research (Creswell et al. 2003, Bryman 2006).

Sammons et al. (2005:221) justify the use of mixed methods in situations where a 'complex and pluralistic social context demands analysis that is informed by multiple diverse perspectives', suggesting that the interpretation of their study on school effectiveness by the use of mixed methods. Hence, the use of mixed methods in understanding hospitality graduates' employability in Ghana will similarly integrate the diverse perspectives of graduates, lecturers, and employers. We may recall that this study is primarily focused on understanding the views of graduates, lecturers, hospitality/hotel managers and policymakers regarding the problem of graduate unemployment in general, and particularly among hospitality graduates from Ghanaian HEIs.

4.2 Research design and methods

Research design may be defined as the specification of methods and procedures for acquiring the information needed. It is largely the operational pattern or framework of the research that stipulates what information is to be collected from which source and by what procedures. A good design will ensure that the information obtained is relevant to the research questions and that it was collected using objective and economical procedures (Green and Tull, 1976). This section further explains the rationale for these methods.

As mentioned earlier with regard to the problem definition, the study uses a selection of methods, namely:

- Lecturers' focus group discussions (Chapter 5),
- Lecturers and graduates' questionnaire surveys, and
- Interviews with hospitality industry managers (Chapter 7).

4.2.1 The research instruments

In addition to secondary evidence obtained from the literature review, the empirical study is mainly based on primary data which were obtained through the above research instruments and respondents.

4.2.1.1 Focus Group

A focus group is defined as 'a group of individuals selected and assembled by researchers to discuss and comment on, from personal experience, the topic that is the subject of the research' (Powell et al. 1996:499). It is a form of group discussion or interaction. The researcher provides the topic for the discussion (Morgan 1997:12). A major characteristic of a focus group is the insight and data produced by the interaction between the participants. Focus group parameters are set to ensure that the participants have a specific experience of or opinion about the topic under investigation; that an explicit interview guide is used; and that the subjective experiences of participants are explored in relation to predetermined research questions.

The benefit of conducting focus group research is the capability to access an extensive collection of perspectives within a relatively short period of time (Morgan 1997). According to Morgan (1998:29), a focus group is 'a research method for collecting qualitative data, they are focused efforts at data gathering, and they generate data through group discussion'.

The researcher conducted a total of three focus groups. This was organised with the HEIs in Ghana that offer hospitality management at degree level. The focus group meetings were held between April and June 2015. A total of 36 lecturers were invited and 23 participated, giving a response rate of 64%. The ideal size for a focus group should be 6-12 individuals (Maruyama and Ryan 2014; Morgan 1997; Ritchie and Lewis 2003). Each group involved a few lecturers in order to promote a productive discussion. The data were obtained through a group discussion which is qualitative in nature (Silverman 2010; Morgan 1997). The discussion was conducted using an informal conversation method and designed to gather information from a relatively small number of participants at a time (Maruyama and Ryan 2014). The lecturers were from two Universities and five Polytechnics out of the ten public Polytechnics and 46 Universities. The reason for choosing five polytechnics was because they have been

teaching hospitality/hotel and catering management for more than two decades, so the richer perspectives of the lecturers would enhance the research findings. Hence, the lecturers chosen for the focus group session consisted of individuals who were either affected by or will use the outcome of the research (Wright 1990).

Only the two selected universities were identified as offering hospitality management. Each group consisted of six or more hospitality lecturers, three from each university. A selection of lecturers was identified to represent Ghanaian lecturers with relevant experience, in order to explore the research questions effectively. They were invited through the Heads of Department of the various institutions attending a Hospitality conference. Attention was paid to developing a relationship with the participants to encourage good communication and so improve the research quality (Ritchie and Lewis 2003; Silverman 2010; Morgan 1997). The selected form of discussion was that of free response; this meant that the group members did not have to wait to be invited before stepping in, giving them a great deal of freedom to discuss their views and experiences and answer any questions that arose from the general discussion (Ritchie and Lewis 2003).

4.2.1.1.1 Focus group structures and guides

The three focus groups consist of seven lecturers from Polytechnic one (P1), 11 of the lecturers who attended a hospitality conference in Accra (P2), and five lecturers from University one (U1) and University two (U2). These latter two are grouped into one category as they are from Universities, whilst most of the lecturers from the other two groups are Polytechnic lecturers. Maruyama and Ryan (2014:371) note that a typical focus group should consist of 6-10 individuals, with fewer than six being less likely to provide the needed diversity of views and more than ten likely to make it more difficult for each individual to express their views fully. Given that lecturers are mature respondents who are used to expressing their views regularly while teaching and at staff meetings, the group size is broadly in line with this recommendation and all of the lecturers expressed their views adequately.

Also, it is felt that a lack of familiarity among the members of a focus group results in more balanced and candid views, since the members are again freer to disagree when necessary without constraint due to past interactions with each other. The researcher was satisfied that the lecturers were mainly connected by a common interest in the topic and its effect on the future of hospitality graduate education in Ghana. Their

familiarity with the employability issues means that they were more likely to provide authentic insights into the research problem. The researcher acted as the moderator during the sessions since, apart from saving costs associated with hiring moderators, this enabled the researcher's experience of the topic to guide the discussions flexibly, while maintaining an overall focus on the key questions and issues. The lecturers' interview guide is presented in (appendix 4.2). The questions were critically evaluated by the researcher and subject matter experts to avoid any bias in the responses and to test the validity (Denzin and Lincoln 2005). The conversation with all of the groups resulted in identifying and better understanding the problems and issues that are making the learning, teaching and assessment (TLA) of this subject area difficult, which in turn affects the imparting of knowledge and its subsequent assimilation by students.

These questions and sub-issues are critical for eliciting responses that will relate to the objectives, research questions and key employability constructs in the research, without leading the lecturers to these constructs. Question 1 probes the challenges and trends in employability, focusing particularly on the wider solutions to employability problems in Ghana. Sub-issue 1 explores the lecturers' views on curriculum-based solutions. Question 2 is a foothold question for probing generic skills and other skills that the literature suggests enhance graduate employability. Sub-issue 2 is a "cooling down" question that further explores the important question of how Ghanaian lecturers actually understand employability. The interview guides aimed to elicit the lecturers' responses to the following specific questions, as potential solutions to the hospitality graduate employability problem in Ghana (Oppong and Sacks 2015; Unemployed Graduate Association of Ghana 2012).

It is felt that, if lecturers demonstrate an inadequate understanding of the meaning and dimensions of employability, for example the three aspects of employment potential (self or within an organisation), securing a job, being fulfilled in it or changing jobs successfully, then they would be unable to develop appropriate learning, teaching and assessment strategies for enhancing the same in hospitality graduates. By veiling a direct mention of such skills in the framing of these questions, the researcher hopes to elicit the participants' genuine understanding, which will inform the effective development of the envisaged framework. This is also why the researcher refrained from asking them 'why' questions; to avoid statements that may be biased towards what they feel the researcher expected to hear (Maruyama and Ryan 2014).

4.2.1.1.2 Format of the sessions

Before the questions were posed, the moderator described the purpose and format of the research, explaining that each group member was free to express their opinion, and assuring them of confidentiality, whereby their information would be anonymised in the analysis. With the consent of the lecturers, the researcher audiotaped the discussions which were later transcribed for qualitative analysis. In keeping with good practice in the field of qualitative research, the sessions lasted 60-90 minutes, within which the researcher ensured that, whilst emerging perspectives are probed when necessary, the number of digressions was minimised (Maruyama and Ryan 2014; Kvale 2007). All the participants were, at the time of the discussion, affiliated with hospitality management in their institutions and understood the research topic. The research topic was discussed thoroughly by exchanging ideas.

4.2.1.1.3 The procedure

The first focus group discussion was conducted at the office of the Head of Department of Hotel Catering and Institutional management of P1, which is the researcher's institution, while the other two were held during a hospitality conference in Accra. A room provided for a panel discussion was used, after the day's conference proceedings had ended. Before the discussion began, the researcher outlined the ground rules and offered an overview of the topic. All of the participants signed a consent form (see Appendix 4.1) agreeing to participate, and the confidentiality of the responses was emphasised (Ritchie and Lewis 2003). The focus group discussions were recorded. At the end of the 1 hour 45 minute session, as indicated earlier, the researcher thanked all of the participants and debriefed them. Detailed analyses of the focus group transcripts are presented in Chapter 5 of this thesis.

4.2.1.2 Questionnaires

Questionnaires are tools for collecting data (Tymms 2012). They are essential for exploratory work, and for describing a population, outcomes and control in studies and feedback, each representing a reason for use. According to Tymms (2012), it is important to use a questionnaire during the exploratory stage for quality assurance. Oppenheim (2000) indicates that designing a questionnaire requires more than common sense and an ability to write; it requires discipline in the selection of the questions, in question writing, and in the design, piloting, distributing and return of the

questionnaires. Several attempts at designing and wording are needed to remove any ambiguities. Bell (2005) indicates that questionnaires might be used to introduce a follow-up interview, or in a pilot interview where it is important to know which aspects of the research are most important to the respondents. The researcher used a questionnaire to obtain information from the graduates and lecturers principally because there was a large number of respondents, and this speeded up the data collection process in a reliable and statistically valid way. We know from the field of statistical science that, when a large collection of data or respondents are involved, it is feasible to undertake a more reliable statistical analysis. Therefore, the researcher decided to use a questionnaire to assess the opinions and understanding of graduates and lecturers in HEIs regarding the issue of hospitality graduate employability. Of course, the intention is that these research results will be used by graduates from other disciplines in Ghana.

Whilst this questionnaire approach is being used in order to facilitate the data collection amongst a large number of students and lecturers, it should be noted that the researcher uses a mixture of close-ended and open-ended questions. The idea is to enable deeper qualitative insights to emerge from the responses so that the analysis of the data from these questionnaires will be literally mixed, in the sense that the focus group discussions, interview questions and open-ended questionnaire items can be analysed thematically by using manual coding, while the close-ended questions are analysed statistically.

Saldana (2009:3) defines a code in qualitative enquiry as 'most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data'. Particular data collection methods may be chosen because they may facilitate better cooperation with the research informants. For example, with respect to the employers, the researcher intends to use a semi-structured in-depth interview, because these managers occupy influential positions that make their perspectives unique within their organisation. The justification for this choice is that there will be a relatively few employers involved, say 10-15, so their responses will be insufficient in number to make the analysis statistically reliable (Bryman 2012). For this reason, therefore, the researcher intends to use similar questions to those posed on the questionnaires that will be administered to students and lecturers as guides when interactively interviewing these hotel managers, so that opinions which are along fairly similar lines, but contextualised within the hotel

management experience, will be achieved. In other words, certain methods are considered to have a better ‘fit’ than others because they are more sensitive to complex social phenomenon (Brennen and Collard 1984; Bryman 2012).

The researcher also notes that another approach that could have been used when interactively interviewing the hotel managers was to give them questionnaires with relatively more open-ended questions, in order to draw out context-rich information from their industry experiences. The slight disadvantage of this approach compared to interactive face-to-face interviews is that the responses would lose the character of spontaneity which would enable the researcher to elicit the facts as they are. Hence, the researcher used face-to-face interviews, even if the tenor of the questions asked is fairly similar to those on the questionnaire for the lecturers and students.

With respect to the policymakers, the researcher feels that a critical review of the policy statements by the Ministry of HE, senior management and lecturers in HEIs institutions, and HE policymakers such as the National Council of Tertiary Education (NCTE) and National Accreditation Board (NAB), is adequate for the study.

In this study, questionnaires were used to survey the many hospitality graduates and lecturers who fall into the study sample, since there was insufficient time to interview them all. The quality assurance work involved in designing the questionnaire started with a discussion with the researcher's supervisory team which determined the nature of the questions to include in the focus group interviews and on the main questionnaire. Following the discussions, the researcher developed a pilot questionnaire which was administered to some lecturers from 'P1' during the field trip, to ensure that there was a common understanding about the items among the respondents.

The main observation and comments from the pilot were focused on the number of research instrument items. It was considered to be lengthy, prompting the need to re-scope. The necessary adjustments were made ahead of the main field work by the researcher since it was impossible to hold a face-to-face discussion with the supervisory team. As a seminal research work, it was important to cover comprehensive perspectives to provide a robust background on which subsequent research can be based. The changes were made without having any adverse impact on the objectives and purpose of the research. Feedback from the pilot survey was combined with insights from the lecturers’ focus group to produce a final draft of the questionnaires, which triangulated the evidence base for the research across the

instruments. This ensures that aspects of the research which the previous responses showed required further probing were explored appropriately through the questionnaires, with similar questions being posed to the lecturers and graduates, albeit from the employability, teaching and learning perspectives. More details on the questionnaires and analysis of the responses are outlined in the analysis chapters of the thesis.

4.2.1.3 Interviews

Basically, interviews are conversations. Kvale (2008:55) defines qualitative research interviews as ‘attempts to understand the world from the subjects' point of view, to unfold the meaning of people's experiences, to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations’. Similarly, Punch (2014) describes interviews as the most prominent data collection tool in qualitative research, a good way to access people’s perceptions, meanings and definitions of situations and constructions of reality, and a better method for understanding others.

Patton (2002) separates interviews into three types; namely, the formal conversational interview, general interview, and standardised open-ended interview. Researchers have used several terms to describe interviews depending on the structure involved (Punch 2014), with each being suitable for different research methods. In this study, a semi-structured in-depth interview, with open-ended questions, was used as appropriate to the qualitative study of the employers.

Interviews may be conducted face to face or by telephone, email and voice-conferencing. Miller and Brewer (2003) refer to a structured interview as a list of written questions that could be completed by verbally responding to the questions in the presence of the researcher, which is commonly known as an interview schedule. Structured interviews seek to extract data from the respondents, and function to guide interviewers to pose the same questions in the same way to different respondents (Collins and Hussey 2003). Interviews may be carried out on a one-to-one or group basis (Saunders et al., 2012; Punch 2014). Punch (2014) furthermore indicated that interviews can be classified as structured, semi-structured and unstructured. All of the interviews in this study were conducted on a one-to-one basis and in a face-to-face situation. However, the important dimensions of these variations are the degree of the structure of the interview and how deeply it goes. Interviews for research or evaluation purposes differ in several important ways from other familiar kinds of interviews or

conversations. This study looks at interviews for evaluation purposes to endorse, understand and change the emphasis on intellectual understanding, rather than on producing personal change (Kvale 2007).

As a combined method of both structured and unstructured techniques, semi-structured interviews permit flexibility, for example changing the ordering of the questions, modifying existing ones, and addressing new questions that were hitherto not included. The approach also permits the use of 'probes and invitations' (May, 1997:109), so that the interviewees could expand on the issues raised. The semi-structured interview technique allowed the respondents to say more about the issues in their own terms than would have been the case had the structured interview technique been used. Although the researcher had a list of specified questions and themes as a guide, this varied depending on the context of the interview. For example, the list of questions asked was varied and some questions were modified.

Semi-structured in-depth interviews

Semi-structured in-depth interviews are most appropriate when the researcher has an inadequate opportunity to interview a participant, as some respondents are busy and so it was difficult to interview them more than once (Bernard 1988). The researcher used this method of interview, as her aim was to collect a detailed, in-depth picture of the perceptions of the interviewee and an understanding about the issues at hand. As Silverman (1997) stresses, qualitative interviews provide a means of exploring the points of view of the research subjects. This point is relevant in this current research as hospitality industry managers are busy people. In-depth interviews offer a path towards greater understanding (Arthur et al. 2012) and, according to Seidman (2006), enable the understanding of the experiences of others and the meaning that they attach to it.

Employers' interviews

Interviews bring out the best from respondents, as they are naturally based on human conversation and allow the interviewer to adjust the pace and style of the questions (Kvale 2007). Interviews enhance the gathering of important and reliable data to answer the research questions and objectives. A semi-structured in-depth interview, with open-ended questions, was considered appropriate for the employers managers. A set of pre-determined questions guided the interview. However, the researcher has

an opportunity to delve further by facilitating a discussion to promote clarification and enrich the data (Yin 2003).

In this research, employers were asked similar questions to those outlined in the lecturers' focus group guide, but with an emphasis on hospitality industry requirements. Hence, the key question asked was:

Associated with the emergence of multinational hospitality businesses/hotel chains in Ghana, the trends and influences bring certain benefits and challenges. What is your candid view on how hospitality graduates can be made employable?

The particular questions posed to the managers are listed in the interview guide in Appendix 5.1d. Unlike the appendix on the lecturers' focus group transcripts, the researcher does not provide a separate appendix containing the managers' transcripts, since the key quotes related to this question are contained in Chapter 5 section C of this thesis.

4.3 Data collection and Sampling

4.3.1 Data collection

The researcher focuses on the units of analysis of the research and the areas that will produce the evidence needed to answer the research questions and objectives. A unit of analysis is defined by Hussey and Hussey (1997) as a case to which the variables or phenomena under study and the research problem refer, and about which data are collected and analysed. The research, therefore, investigates the hospitality labour market (hotels, restaurants, events, travel and tourism) and hospitality education (Teaching Learning and Assessment (TLA). As such, the researcher decided that all of the HEIs that offer hospitality and tourism management courses were sampled to provide the context and diversity necessary to carry out the analysis.

Also, the research topic investigates which new skills the hospitality industry in Ghana requires compared with the existing skills provided by the educational institutions' curriculum and multinational hospitality-related businesses; for example, chains hotels as well as Ghanaian chain hotels. These were sampled in order to explore the skills required by the hospitality industry (See Table 4.5). This was the basis for including the multinational and Ghanaian chain hotels in the sample.

4.3.2 Sampling

A sample is a predetermined part of a population, who are studied to gain information about the whole (Etikan et al. 2016; Webster, 1985). When dealing with people, it can be defined as a set of respondents (people) selected from a larger population for the purpose of a survey. Sampling in any type of research is expected, as it is a compromise between the desired coverage and practical considerations (Collins and Hussay 2003). According Merriam (2002), qualitative research's main premise is to understand the meanings attached to a phenomenon from the perspectives of the participants. As noted by Verma and Mallick (1999), there are several methods for selecting samples for a research project. Purposive sampling was adopted in this research to gather in-depth data from respondents with expertise in the field of hospitality management. The purposive sampling adapted in this research started with the research purpose in mind, so the sample was selected to include people of interest and exclude those who do not suit the purpose.

4.3.2.1 Purposive sampling

Purposive sampling represents a group of different non-probability sampling techniques (Etikan et al. 2016), known as judgmental, selective or subjective sampling. Here, the judgment of the researcher is paramount when it comes to selecting the participants. The purposive sampling technique, also called judgment sampling, is the deliberate choice of a participant due to the qualities that he/she possesses. It is a non-random technique that does not require underlying theories (Etikan et al. 2016) or a set number of participants. With purposive sampling, a researcher has something in mind and participants who suit the purpose of the study are included. The method of using non-probability when selecting a sample from a population of interest for inclusion depends on the subjective reasoning of the researcher. It is essential for a researcher to determine which non-probability sampling technique is applicable to the study. The technique to be used depends on the type, nature and purpose of the study. When subjects are chosen because of their close proximity to a researcher (that is, those who are easiest for the researcher to access), the researcher is engaging in convenience sampling.

Therefore, the researcher decides what needs to be known and sets out to find people who can and are willing to provide the information by virtue of their knowledge and experience (Bernard 2012). It is typically used in qualitative research to identify and

select the information-rich cases for the most proper exploitation of the available resources (Patton 2002). Similarly, this involves the identification and selection of individuals or groups of individuals who are proficient and well-informed regarding a phenomenon of interest (Creswell and Clark 2011). In addition to knowledge and experience, being willing and ready to participate, combined with an ability to communicate experiences and opinions in an articulate, expressive, and reflective manner, are vital (Bernard and Bernard 2012). This, however, introduces some aspect of bias (Etikan et al. 2016). However, although purposeful sampling was adopted for the research, an aspect of convenience sampling (also known as availability sampling) was introduced under purposive sampling. The reasoning was based on members who are conveniently available to participate in a study. This happened especially with hospitality industry employers. Accessibility was a challenge and the researcher had to resort to the sample available. In this case, the sample group members have to be selected on the basis of accessibility and the personal judgment of the researcher.

Inadequate sampling influences the quality and accuracy of research (Sampson 2012). The goal of every research project is to collect data that are representative of the population. This sampling section describes the method for selecting the participants who were involved in the research, the purpose being to evaluate whether the sampling method appropriately identifies one or more individuals who are representative of the population identified in the research question.

4.3.2.2 Justification for the combined use of purposive and random sampling at different stages of the research

One of the essential elements or components of a study that uses multi-methods is sampling (Tashakkori and Teddlie 2010; Maxwell 2005). The literature recommends that the sampling should be guided by doctrines such as the sampling strategy. It should consider the research questions, conceptual framework and a database on the phenomena. It should be clear and the sample strategy should consider a plan that is achievable (Miles and Huberman 1994; Curtis et al. 2000).

As much as the qualitative and quantitative approaches have different paradigms, the sampling for qualitative research differs from quantitative sampling. There are several types of sampling approaches and these depend on the purpose of the sampling. With the quantitative approach, the rationale is to select a number that will be sufficiently representative of the population or group which will reflect the research topic, so that

the results can be generalised as a true reflection of the entire population (Marshall 1996; Creswell and Clark 2011).

In this study the two approaches were used, the quantitative approach was used for the graduates and some lecturers' for quantitative data. The researcher decided to employ quantitative methods because this makes it possible to sample large numbers that will generate a considerable amount of data from the graduates and lecturers who were not part of the focus group, and to understand whether the graduates and lecturers responses will have some similarities or are similar or differences, since the questions were somewhat similar, another reason was to examine the frequencies of answering the questions. This approach also minimises a number of sampling errors (Yin 2003). The sample was taken from HEIs that teach hospitality management. On the other hand the qualitative sampling approach was to provide an understanding and clarification of complex psychological issues and also answer 'why' and 'how' questions (Yin 2003; Marshall 1996; Ritchie and Lewis 2003).

4.3.3 Rationale for the convenience sampling

The use of convenience sampling in this research, was based on the research question(s) and meeting the research objectives (Saunders et al. 2012), and the fact that members of the target group are affiliated with the hospitality industry and hospitality education. According to Saunders et al. (2012), despite the limited credibility associated with convenience sampling due to it being prone to bias and influences, samples truly chosen for 'convenience' often meet purposive sample criteria which are relevant to the aim of the research. In this study, for example, hospitality graduates, employers and lecturers meet practical criteria such as easy accessibility, proximity, available at a given time and/or a willingness to participate (Saunders et al. 2012; Dornyei, 2007; Etikan et al. 2016).

Similarly, convenience sampling is again referred to the subjects of the target population that are easily accessible to the researcher as in this research (Given 2008). The convenience sampling in this research is not based on 'accidental samples' as the name implies a term used sometimes in place of convenience sampling (for example subject were not selected as they happen, such as collecting data at random, along roads, trails or shopping centre) (Etikan et al. 2016). The main objective in the use of

convenience sampling was to collect information from people who were easily reachable by the researcher and are familiar with the subject matter that the research believes can answer the research objectives. The main premise and assumption associated with the convenience sampling method used in this research was that the members of the target population are homogeneous. For example, in homogeneous sampling, units are selected based on sharing similar characteristics because such characteristics are of particular interest to the researcher. With this sampling method, the advantage is that the researcher can achieve the purpose or research objective at the cost of relatively little time and resources. The selected graduates in this study are different from other graduates because they are hospitality graduates. Hence, the researcher cannot make generalisations from the sample to the population to reflect all graduates in Ghana, but could take a broad view of hospitality graduates, since all public HEIs use a similar curriculum.

Another reason for the use of convenience sampling in this research was the fact that the researcher needed to understand the perspectives of hospitality graduates education to really stakeholder perspective. The researcher even though had access to sample as the researcher works in the sector access was challenging because in Ghana, based on the cultural context, people are not receptive to research, therefore, to get wider view of respondents in this study, the researcher needed to use convenience sampling. The researcher was concerned that the research might not get enough participants. Although access to the population was not difficult, getting the population to respond was a challenge and therefore convenience sampling was used to ensure the researcher had enough data to fulfil the research objectives.

4.3.4 Sampling for the Focus Group

For the focus group study, a purposive sampling procedure was employed to select HEIs that offer the relevant hospitality education courses. This method of sampling is based on selecting appropriate HEIs and lecturers within them who teach hospitality courses. Probability sampling of the HEIs was inappropriate as it was likely to lead the researcher to sample people who may not have the information needed to answer the research questions (Egwuatu 2013; Veal 2011; Given 2008; Marshall 1996).

Table 4-2 Anonymised descriptions of the focus group

Focus groups	Gender		Number of participants	Institution	Location of discussion
	Female	Male			
Group 1	5	2	7 lecturers	P1	Office of the head of department
Group 2	3	8	11 lecturers	P2	Room for panel discussion
Group 3	1	4	5 lecturers	U1 & U2	U1 Center for hospitality Mgt.

Source: Field data 2014

As explained earlier, three focus group discussions were conducted with 23 hospitality lecturers (nine females and 14 males) from five Polytechnics and two Universities. For anonymity, P1 is used for the first Polytechnic focus group and P2 for the combined members of the five Polytechnics' hospitality lecturers who attended the hospitality conference in Accra. The University groups one and two were combined for focus group three; however, for anonymity, U1 is used for University 1 and U2 for University 2. These two universities were the only ones sampled for the study, and the researcher was aware that they both offer hospitality management at undergraduate degree level.

4.3.5 The graduate sample

The HEIs' hospitality graduate respondents were located through the alumni societies of the sampled institutions central to the research. Following the focus groups, at the questionnaire stage, statistically valid numbers of respondents were studied, based on the nature of the information required from the different stakeholders. To enable the research results to take a broad view within the confines of hospitality management education within Ghanaian HEIs, particularly for the closed-ended Likert-scaled questionnaire, some of which items required mean scores and their p-values, the researcher randomly selected graduates from the total number available within the selected HEIs on their alumni lists.

A sample of 500 hospitality graduates from the five polytechnics and two universities' alumni list respondents was randomly selected, based on those for whom an email

address was stated on the alumni list. The researcher emailed them to invite them to participate in the research. Three hundred of the graduates emailed back, expressing an interest to take part in the study. It was decided, therefore, to include a sample of graduates who were best placed to judge their experience of hospitality education and were about to enter or had recently entered the competitive job market. The questionnaires were emailed to them. Of the 300 who agreed, however, only 283 useable questionnaires were emailed back, giving a response rate of 94% (please see Table 4.3). The sample included graduates who had graduated between 2010 and 2012. It was important that the participants were all recent graduates, to ensure that they had a fresh memory of the curriculum which they had followed, and care was taken to avoid confounding the results. Gaining access to the graduate populations did not pose any major difficulties, as the researcher had links with all of the HEIs sampled.

The research intended to establish what the graduates thought about their hospitality education during their undergraduate degree and their understanding of the employability concept, skills and competencies that they developed during their degree, including the extent to which they agree that hospitality education had prepared them to work in the industry, their experiences with TLA, their satisfaction with the teaching methods, and whether their hospitality degree had prepared them to enter the job market.

Table 4-3 Graduates' sample population and response rate

Institution	Sample Population	Agreed to participate	Actual response	Response rate in %
P1	60	43	41	14
P2	75	69	62	21
P3	63	55	52	17
P4	70	64	62	21
P5	79	37	34	11
U1	45	23	23	8
U2	45	9	9	3
TOTAL	500	300	283	94%

The survey research approach aims to understand the process of employability and students' learning of employability skills within the field of hospitality education. The measurement procedure involved in the analysis combines a collation of frequency scores for different levels of Likert-scaled questionnaire items with qualitative insights from the open-ended questions. The types of validity that apply to the research design

and results are internal and construct validity, due to the framing of the questionnaire items, but not statistical validity, because the analysis is qualitative-dominant.

4.3.6 The sample of lecturers for the quantitative survey

The sample chosen for the survey study included 50 hospitality lecturers. The researcher had links with each of the HEIs that was sampled, so identifying and accessing these lecturers posed no major problems. For this, the quantitative approach was used for the lecturers due to their large number and to understand whether their responses are similar or different to the response of the graduates, since the questions are somewhat similar, as well as the frequencies with which they chose to answer the questions.

Also, quantitative methods were employed here, because these made it possible to sample large numbers that generated a considerable amount of data from the lecturers who could not attend the focus group discussion. The remit for the lecturers was similar to that for the graduates, mentioned above. The researcher aimed to understand the lecturers' viewpoints, so a questionnaire was used to measure the strength of these, as this was the most feasible and practicable method for measuring the data (Maruyama and Ryan, 2014).

Table 4-4 Sample of lecturers for the quantitative survey

Institution	Sample population size	Actual response	Response rate in %
Polytechnic	**34**	**34**	**68**
University	**16**	**16**	**32**
Total	**50**	**50**	**100**

Source: Field Data 2014

Table 4.4 indicates the response rate for the lecturers' questionnaire survey. The lecturers were targeted based on the fact that they teach hospitality management. Similarly as with the graduates and HEIs, the non-probability sampling technique (or

judgment sampling) was employed with the institutions but the course lecturers were randomly sampled due to their homogeneity.

Maruyama and Ryan (2014) and Blumberg et al. (2008) describe non-probability/judgment sampling as involving the selection of sample members because they fall under a particular condition. For example, the participating HEIs were not randomly selected, but instead the sample was restricted to HEIs that taught hospitality management. Bryman and Bell (2007) indicate that the non-probability sampling technique has some degree of bias in the sample selection because a researcher makes a judgment about whom to include in the research and who, to exclude. Hence, the researcher combined purposive sampling with probability sampling in this study to achieve the stated objectives.

4.3.7 The sampling of the employers

The purposive sampling in this study was administered to hospitality managers to identify what they consider to be the relevant industry and generic skill requirements of HE graduates in Ghana. Gaining access to the employers was the most difficult across the three groups of participants (managers/employers, graduates and lecturers), probably because the researcher had existing links with the latter two groups. A study by Jackson (2013) described the sampling of employers as very difficult. The researcher encountered problems with the employer group mainly due to their schedule. The researcher sampled 35 employers (hotels, restaurants, conference centre and clubs as well as hospitality-associated businesses) using the Ghana Tourism Authority database (2014). Contact was made through email and phone calls, and 25 agreed to participate. The initial aim was to interview 35 managers but the researcher had access to only five hotel managers and one restaurant manager. Therefore, the researcher had to resort to the snowballing technique to generate the rest of the sample. Maruyama and Ryan (2014) describe snowball sampling as a multistage sampling procedure whereby a small initial sample of the target population enlists other members of the population to participate in the study. A snowball sampling design relies on referrals and the participants suggesting other employers, networks or further avenues for exploration (Maruyama and Ryan 2014; Blumberg et al. 2008; Jackson 2013). It is therefore challenging to determine the size of the sample (Bryman and Bell, 2007). The employer sample in this research was created 'as a snowball' gathers other members as it rolls along (Blumberg et al. 2008:255).

The limitations of this sampling technique largely concern generalisability, as it is impossible to assess whether or not the sample is representative of the total population (Jackson 2013; Bryman and Bell, 2007). However, the concern is not to achieve generalisation, as this research focuses on obtaining a deeper understanding of individual's social world (Clark 2008). Therefore, generalisation was not a limiting factor as the goal was to obtain deeper insights into the employers, graduates and lecturers' perspectives of graduate employability.

Finally, 11 employers were interviewed. This was insufficiently representative, so the researcher reviewed the literature in addition on the main skills and competencies required by the hospitality industry (see Chapter 2 for the literature review on the classification of skills).

Table 4-5 List of Employers Interviewed

Interviewee	Gender	Qualification	Hospitality Institution	Position/Rank	Label Description used
1	Male	1st Degree	Hotels and hospitality businesses association	President	M1
2	Male	NVTI	Hotel	General Manager	M2
3	Male	1st degree	Hotel	General Manager	M3
4	Male	City and Guilds of London	Motel	General Manager	M4
5	Female	HND IM	Restaurant	General Manager	M5
6	Male	HND	Restaurant	General Manager	M6
7	Male	HND	Hotel	Assistant General	M7
8	Male	HND	Hotel	Manager	M8
9	Male	HND	Hotel	Manager	M9
10	Female	1st Degree	Hotel	General Manager	M10
11	Male	1ST Degree	Hotel	HR Manager	M11

Source: Field Data 2014

Table 4.5 shows the demographic profile of the managers interviewed. Other sources of secondary data were education policy documents from the National Board for Professional and Technician Examination (NABPTEX), who provide the standard

benchmark curriculum for the HEIs' hospitality courses in Ghana, and relevant document reviews that provided background information and vital insights were used to discuss concerns pertaining to the analysis of the research.

For richer information, policy documents from relevant bodies such as the Ghana Tourist Board were reviewed, as hospitality and tourism are classified together in the Ghanaian context. The rest of the secondary data were gathered from relevant literature and policy documents comprising academic journals, government statements and policy papers obtained mainly by searching online databases. Nine male and two females were sampled..

4.4 Data analysis

The approaches to data analysis vary based on the epistemological assumptions of the nature of the qualitative enquiry and the position of the researchers' account (Ritchie and Lewis 2003). Data analysis also differs between traditions based on the central focus and goal of the analytical process. Ritchie and Lewis (2003) and Saunders et al. (2008) assert that there are no agreed rules or procedures for qualitative data analysis. As mentioned earlier, this research is primarily qualitative in nature. As such, the analysis was basically qualitative. However, with a mixed methods approach, the data analysis involves both qualitative and quantitative data that, therefore, need to be analysed differently (Creswell and Clark 2007) and so the data obtained from each sample will be discussed in turn regarding how they were analysed.

4.4.1 Strategy for the data analysis

Strategies generally used for qualitative data analysis include; *ethnographic accounts, life histories, narrative analysis, content analysis, conversational analysis discourse analysis, analytical induction grounded theory and policy* and *evaluation analysis* (Ritchie and Lewis (2003). Kvale (2008) acknowledged three different settings of interpretations for the analysis of qualitative data, which include: self-understanding, critical common sense, and theoretical understanding. Within this research, all of these strategies are adopted. Self-understanding is where the researcher attempts to express and summarise what the participants themselves mean and understand. The use of critical common sense, according to Kvale (2008), is the general knowledge used by researchers to place the understanding and meaning in a wider ground; theoretical understanding is where the interpretation is placed in a broader theoretical perspective.

The focus group analysis identified terms that are then classified into categories (Nield 2011; Saunders et al. 2008) that are then used as the themes (Nield 2011). The focus group findings were coded, grouped and categorised under the headings identified as the issues most important regarding the key themes within the research framework (see Figure 4.1). The themes that emerged from the focus group discussions were similar for each group.

The following were the major themes: Theme 1 Employability: Concept and Meanings; Theme 2 Hospitality Education and curriculum development in Ghana; Theme 3 Gaps in Learning, skills and Competences; and Theme 4 Enhancing Ghanaian hospitality Graduate Employability. The outcome is developing the Ghanaian Employability Enhancement Framework.

In this qualitative analysis, new knowledge is created through the process of pattern matching between theoretically meaningful employability constructs obtained from the literature and Ghanaian hospitality lecturers' opinions about hospitality graduate employability. The goal of the analysis is to measure how the employability constructs are supported by the lecturers' accounts, and seek emerging themes in the analysis which were not covered initially by the constructs, particularly any intriguing differences between the lecturers' experiences and the meanings and associated HE strategies embodied within them. In effect, the researcher seeks to accumulate knowledge by accretion, using each insight from the analysis as a form of building block that adds to or builds knowledge (Lincoln and Guba, 1998). This is facilitated by the fact that many lecturers from different HE institutions are involved, such that there is a potentially rich vein of insights available to support the knowledge creation process, not only with regards to the validation of the received ideas on how the employability constructs inform the employability models explored in the literature, but also how Ghanaian hospitality lecturers feel that employability skills should be enhanced in the hospitality curricula.

The statistical data from the questionnaires were converted into response frequencies and analysed using appropriate quantitative techniques, including summary and test statistics, correlations, comparative tests of the significance differences between the opinions of different groups of respondents where appropriate (e.g. male and female students), and rankings of the studied factors according to their relative importance, as revealed by the respondents (Wickramasinghe and Perera, 2010).

Being based on a judgemental sample of lecturers from three groups of hospitality lecturers from five institutions, the findings are not expected to be statistically generalisable beyond the specific Ghanaian contexts studied (the hospitality discipline, lecturers, graduates, and employers). However, the number of lecturers used as a source of evidence and the fact that three groups of lecturers are involved provide a sufficient basis for ensuring a high level of external validity in the findings. This means that the propositions that will form the new knowledge arising from this analysis are highly likely to apply to hospitality lecturers in similar Ghanaian HEIs. Moreover, the fact that hospitality lecturers are fairly homogeneous, since all of the Polytechnics in Ghana are public institutions with a similar resource base and are regulated by a national body National Council on Tertiary Education (NCTE 2014), means that their experiences in the same environment are fairly similar; for example, how they see government policies and the resourcing of HE courses. This enhances the external validity of the findings even with regard to other disciplines, especially where the pattern matching is against a core set of theoretically meaningful employability constructs, which other researchers can use to replicate the research (Maruyama and Ryan, 2014).

4.4.1.1 Approach to the qualitative analysis in this study

The approach to the qualitative analysis, as mentioned earlier, is to: anonymise the respondents using only the first letters of their first and surname and run respondent identity (ID) numbers from the first name on the first list to the last name on the last list (for example John Anderson 1 will become JA1); code the respondents' statements using both the list of labels in Table 5.1 and additional categories that differ from the list; to cross-compare the results across all of the lists; and then to interpret the findings.

Whilst there are different approaches to conducting focus group analysis, including coding against the research constructs, narrative analysis, and expert ratings (Maruyama and Ryan 2014), the researcher adopts a form of coding that treats each response from a lecturer as a separate, albeit small, interview script. In this way, if there are five different responses from lecturer X, say, all of these will be treated as different scripts since they are more likely to differ in some respects depending on the question to which they relate, or the particular aspect of a question they probe. In order

to treat each response as a separate script, even if it is another response from a particular lecturer, the same initials are used but a different ID number is used to locate the position of the script in the combined transcript presented in Appendix 5.1b. For example, a third statement by JA will be denoted as JA3. This approach is adopted for all three of the combined scripts used in the analysis and presented respectively in Appendices 5.1-5.3 of chapter 5. When all of the scripts in an Appendix are exhausted, the researcher continues the numbering on the next combined script.

Importantly, even though the responses are organised under the two questions, the same constructs can emerge from the responses to both questions. The idea is to generate a collective understanding of the lecturers' views regarding each question and all aspects of the research constructs that the lecturers' responses cover.

The main advantage of this more atomistic approach is that, in addition to the usual qualitative insights which the responses generate, it is possible to identify the number of times across all of the scripts that a construct was referred to in the responses. This will produce a sense of order regarding the relative force with which the constructs manifest in the collective experience of the lecturers. These relative frequencies replace the more subjective scoring that could have been realised through expert rating of the lecturers' narratives, and is more objective. The researcher notes that this is a methodological improvement on the standard qualitative analysis, which yields a Pareto chart of the relative frequencies, thereby clearly showing which constructs are so predominant that they must be considered in the subsequent design of the GHEEF.

In effect, this approach is more detailed, whilst containing the different responses for each focus group. The researcher extracted for each group the responses involved, and analysed them before cross-comparing them, as mentioned earlier. It was possible to do this because the researcher knew the script numbers that belonged to the groups. Also, the researcher made the qualitative analysis more succinct by filing away the full script as a related research archive, but condensing the insights revealed under each construct in the analysis chapter. The archived script is not incorporated in this report because of its size. To demonstrate the character of this combined script, the researcher shows an excerpt (in Appendix 5. 2) of the first two scripts which belong to this first focus group (P1). These are two of the total number of 57 scripts, from which the Pareto scoring was obtained later in the chapter. The response scripts that correspond to the P1 lecturers are script numbers 1-35. Response scripts 36-45 relate

to lecturers who attended the hospitality conference in Accra (P2), while 46-57 are those of the university lecturers (U1&2). Hence, the researcher presents an analysis of the combined scripts 1-35 in Chapter 5 first.

4.4.1.2 Strategy for the qualitative analysis

As noted earlier, this research leans towards the post-positivist school of thought. This means that knowledge consists of non-falsified hypotheses that are regarded as probably true. In the post-positivist approach adopted in this research, the particular context of hospitality graduate employability in Ghanaian hospitality education is investigated. To this extent, the researcher does not seek to falsify any hypotheses, similarly to what obtains in deductive research based on established theoretical frameworks, but rather to use evidence generated from the studied context inductively to generate new knowledge about hospitality employability from the experiences of the respondents.

This section explains the strategy for qualitatively analysing the research data obtained through the lecturers' focus group, the open-ended questions on the questionnaire and the managers' interviews. It discusses the rationale for the analysis, the strategy for the analysis, the criteria for interpreting the findings, and the overall structure of the report. The focus group was conducted with hospitality lecturers from HEIs in Ghana, made up of five polytechnics and two universities, namely Polytechnic one (P1) as mentioned earlier, hospitality lecturers attending a conference from five Polytechnics (P2), and University one (U1) and two (U2), which as mentioned earlier, are described as group three.

The key approaches to conducting the analysis include: a) obtaining a consensus of and possible disagreements between the lecturers' views in each institution; b) matching the views to the employability constructs which were explored in the literature review; c) comparing the views and their links to the constructs across different institutions, in order to elicit the overall prevalence of the emerging constructs; and d) discussing how the findings are linked to the research questions, as well as their implications for the subsequent analysis and following chapters of the thesis. These subsequent aspects of the thesis relate to the questionnaire survey of lecturers and graduates, interviews with hotel managers, and the design of the Ghana Hospitality Employability Enhancement Framework (GHEEF).

In this qualitative analysis, such new knowledge is created through the above-mentioned process of pattern-matching between the theoretically meaningful employability constructs obtained from the literature and Ghanaian hospitality lecturers' opinions about hospitality graduate employability (see steps a)-d) in the introduction to the analysis process above). The goal of the analysis is to measure how the employability constructs are supported by the lecturers' accounts, and seek emerging themes in the analysis which are not covered initially by the constructs, particularly any intriguing differences between the lecturers' experiences and the meanings and associated HE strategies embodied in the constructs. In effect, the researcher seeks to accumulate knowledge by accretion, using each insight from the analysis as a form of building block that adds to or builds knowledge (Lincoln and Guba, 1998). This is facilitated by the fact that many lecturers from different HEIs are involved, so a potentially rich disposition of insights might emerge to support the knowledge creation process, with regards to not only the validation of received ideas on how the employability constructs inform the employability models investigated in the literature, but also how Ghanaian hospitality lecturers feel that employability skills should be enhanced in the hospitality curricula.

4.4.1.3 Rationale for the combined responses of the three focus groups

The researcher notes that the opinions gathered from the responses from two groups of Polytechnic lecturers were similar because all of the Polytechnics in Ghana are public institutions, with a similar resource base, and regulated by a national body. Hence, their opinions are combined in the analyses. Also, the opinions of the Polytechnic and University lecturers were compared and found to be similar. The only difference between the responses is that hospitality courses in universities are relatively new and so there exist more resource constraints with regard to the teaching of the core hospitality courses, such as Food and Beverage management (F&B), Front desk, Housekeeping operations management, and Food production, compared to the Polytechnics which typically offer hospitality education. In light of these remarks, the researcher does not separate the analysis of the responses from the two groups. Rather, all of the responses are combined in the analysis. Indeed, as noted earlier, the researcher transcribed all of the responses and numbered them FS1-57, where FS are the respondents' initials (first name = F and surname = S) and 57 is the total number of scripts transcribed.

Insights from the analysis were combined with the initial constructs from the literature review in designing the research instruments used in the main study. These instruments are the questionnaire for the lecturers and graduates and the interview schedules for employers. In support of these views, Maruyama and Ryan (2014) note that, compared to questionnaires, qualitative analysis, which tells the story of the lived experiences of respondents regarding a phenomenon (in this case, hospitality graduates' employability in Ghana), is more suitable for 'eliciting their innermost thoughts, hopes and feelings', and revealing perspectives that the researcher may not have considered or encountered in the literature. For this reason, the qualitative analysis helps the researcher to identify particular ways in which Ghanaian hospitality lecturers perceive hospitality graduate employability, in order to better contextualise the research in Ghana, and make the GHEEF more realistic for use in that context.

By using the said combined perspectives to inform the instrument designs, the researcher achieves construct validity and reliability, whereby the narrative excerpts from the lecturers' statements more clearly communicate the meaning of the employability constructs alluded to in the statements (Maruyama and Ryan, 2014:368), and the questionnaire items probe the meanings further in a way that can be replicated by other researchers. Reliability is particularly ensured by using the theoretically researched list of employability constructs as referents against which the lecturers' views can be matched or differentiated, as appropriate. Hence, another researcher might use similar constructs to replicate the research (Maruyama and Ryan, 2014:369). Moreover, as noted above, the insights from the focus group analysis triangulates the subsequent results from the main study. This is because the questionnaire surveys were constructed to add more depth to the focus group findings by: a) using Likert-scaled items to measure the extent different aspects of the hospitality curriculum relate to the findings; and b) additional open-ended questions to obtain further views on particular questionnaire items. With respect to the interviews with hospitality/hotel managers, the focus group analysis was compared to the findings to obtain additional insights that will enrich the industry requirements for designing the GHEEF. In this way, the overall qualitative-dominant mixed research methodology, consisting of the focus groups, questionnaire and interviews, will not only provide valuable evidence of the convergent validity (Maruyama and Ryan, 2014:370) across the different methods and respondents (lecturers, graduates and managers), but also a more robust evidence base for the expected main contributions of the research to the knowledge embodied in the GHEEF.

4.4.2 Criteria for interpreting the findings

As noted above, the use of purposive sampling for the focus group emphasises knowledge generation rather than theory confirmation alone. Hence, the researcher interprets the focus group results by matching them against the employability constructs revealed in the literature as well as the key terms in the research objectives and research questions. Yin (2003) notes that a crucial question is how close the patterns have to be in order to establish a match and suggests that the researcher may find patterns that are sufficiently contrasting to enable comparisons with rival propositions to be drawn. In this study, the researcher is interested in propositions that confirm the relevance of the employability models and constructs in Ghana, albeit with contextual differences that reflect the variations in HE practices and resource endowments between Ghana as a developing country and developed countries, where some of the employability models have gained a foothold. This will facilitate the development of a meaningful GHEEF that will underpin more effective hospitality employability education in Ghana. In further answer to Yin (2003), Maruyama and Ryan (2014:366-378) note that: a) with regards to the narrative analysis involving concept matching, which applies to focus group analysis, researchers can generate their own 'dictionary' of constructs; b) a tendency to analyse the evidence across too many constructs should be avoided so that more meaningful interpretations may be obtained; and c) it is good practice to use a focus group interview guide.

The researcher implemented these suggestions by condensing the received literature on employability into a few constructs with labels for ease of reference in the analysis, based on the research framework developed in the literature review (see figure 4.1). The researcher ensured that the key terms used in the research questions (which already capture those in the research objectives by mapping the questions to the objectives in the literature review also) are embodied in the constructs. This enabled the matching of the focus group responses against the constructs to make them more useful for investigating the research questions meaningfully, in addition to developing the GHEEF, which is the subject of the second research question. By way of an interview guide, the researcher poses several questions which explore the lecturers' understanding of graduate employability, the related impact of multinational hotel chains on the employability of hospitality graduates, and how the employability of graduates can be enhanced to make them more employable, among other related questions (see Appendix 4.2 on the focus group guide).

4.5 Overview of validity, reliability and triangulation

This section briefly reiterates how the researcher ensures validity, reliability (credibility and trustworthiness) and triangulation in the study. The direct contact at the point in the interview means that the data can be checked for accuracy and relevance as they are collected. The term ‘validity' refers to the issue of whether or not an indicator (or set of indicators), that is devised to gauge a concept, really measures that ‘concept' (Bryman and Bell 2007:165). Similarly, Symon, et al. (2000) indicate that validity is concerned with providing evidence that the analytical techniques used in the research can actually answer the research question(s). Bryman and Bell (2007) assert that there are several issues that a researcher needs to bear in mind when addressing the worth of the data collection and research methods used for a particular research; some of these are validity and reliability.

According to Clark and Creswell (2008), research must be defensible in a community of researchers. They argue that quality or validity can have subjective, inter-subjective and objective components and influences. They give an example that analysis carried out in a laboratory setting might be reliable, as it can be repeated, but may not have high validity because the results or findings do not reflect natural behaviour or settings. They therefore suggest the following three ways for estimating the reliability of the responses to questionnaire or interview questions:

Test re-test method: this requires asking the same people the same questions on different occasions, where the responses are collated and the coefficients of the two sets are computed. This provides an index of reliability, but there are disadvantages associated with this method, as the respondents may feel reluctant to answer the same questions again, and may provide different answers. For this research, it was impossible to retest the lecturers and students.

Split halves method: this is where questionnaires or interviews record sheets are divided into two equal sizes. The two sides are correlated and the coefficients of the correlations are compared. Since this study is qualitative in nature, this method was not used in this research.

Internal consistency method: reliability should produce trustworthy results, but the results will be worthless if the question fails to measure the intended outcome, and so the validity is low. Since this research is qualitative, reliability and validity were ensured

through the internal consistency of the items on the research instruments and the extent of agreement among the lecturers and students regarding similar items. Creswell and Miller (2000) indicate that validity is affected by the choice of paradigm and the perceptions of the researcher. Golafshani (2003) mentioned the trustworthiness of qualitative research; this means that researchers must be honest in their dealings.

Validity, therefore, involves the appropriateness and meaningfulness of the approaches and enquiries, and should offer useful inferences for researchers at the time of the data collection (Clark and Creswell 2008). Brennan (2006) and Kane (2013) believe that valid interpretation and defence are difficult when the reliability is inadequate. In other words, if the scores are unreliable, it is difficult to make or support validity and accurate inferences. Fundamentally, reliability depends on the repeatability of the same research and obtaining the same results, while validity is the degree to which the findings of any research project accurately represent the true situation (Bryman and Bell 2007; Hussey and Hussey 1997). Reliability is usually higher in quantitative than in qualitative research, where the criterion of reliability may be neglected (Hussey and Hussey 1997), and it may be unimportant in a positivist view, according to Hussey and Hussey (1997), whether or not the qualitative measures are reliable, but rather whether the same observations and interpretations can be made on a different occasion by different observers. In qualitative study, however, a number of procedures are followed to ensure the reliability and authenticity of the findings (Hussey and Hussey 1997).

The pilot study conducted in 2013 that preceded the main data collection authenticated the testing of the validity of the methods employed. The participants judged the question and methods used. If they did not understand the question, it was changed, so the methods did answer what was intended to be measured. Face validity using the right measurement, and construct validity, which is common in business research relating to a phenomenon that is not directly observable, such as motivation, satisfaction, ambition, and anxiety, are known as hypothetical constructs (Wilson 2001). In this research, however, there was an issue concerning the employers' small sample size. Generally, while validity is related to the data collection tools, it also embraces the accurate representation of the population (Jackson 2013). However, this did not pose any threat to the validity of the study in spite of the fact that it cannot be certain that the samples' responses actually reflect the total population of employers.

As indicated earlier, the focus of the research was not to generalise, as supported by a post-positivist philosophy.

Secondly, reliability is the extent to which a research procedure can produce the same or similar results whenever that approach is used (Ritchie and Lewis 2003; Yin 2003); in other words, it means that research results should essentially be repeatable. To incorporate the aforementioned instances into this research, reliability was maintained by ensuring that the respondents understand the questions correctly so that all of the respondents provide consistent responses based on the same questions or items on the questionnaire and in the interview guides. Moreover, the issues under investigation by means of the interviews and questionnaires were underpinned by the theoretical framework and conceptual models established in the literature review. The validation of the research findings through a conceptual and theoretical model is supported by Gunasegaram and Ngai (2005).

However, Cohen et al. (2007) indicate that reliability can prove difficult in qualitative research data. Adopting the triangulation method helped to improve both the validity and reliability of the data gathered for this research. Care was taken to promote as much as possible the validity and reliability of the tools employed in this research, although, according to Jackson (2013), qualitative data can be biased towards the viewpoints of the interviewees.

4.5.1 Triangulation

Triangulation is broadly defined as the ‘combination of methodologies in a study of the same phenomenon’ (Denzin 1978:291), when two or more distinct methods are found to agree and yield comparable data. Triangulation may be used to enrich our understanding by allowing new and deeper dimensions to emerge (Denzin and Giardina 2013). The effectiveness of triangulation rests on the premise that the weakness of each single method will be compensated for by the counterbalancing effect of the strength of the other methods (Creswell 2003). As noted earlier, the movement of social scientists from a positivist stance towards an interpretivist paradigm in the nineteenth century (Grummesson 2000) is evident from the business research; however, in recent years, there has been a move towards developing a method for combining both philosophical stances. This approach facilitates the triangulation of the data (Creswell and Clark 2008; Saunders et al. 2012; Ritchie and Lewis 2003), and allows the phenomenon to be investigated from different angles

(Neuman and Krueger 2003). Similarly, Hussey and Hussey (1997) state that triangulation involves the use of different research techniques, approaches and methods within a single research project.

The logic behind triangulation, according to Webb et al. (1966), is that social scientists are likely to exhibit a certain level of confidence in their findings when these are derived from more than one method of investigation. The initial focus was for more than one research instrument to be used to measure the main variables in the study. This was referred to as a 'triangulation of measurement'. However, over time, the triangulation strategy was stretched across other aspects of the research process, including data collection methods, sources of data, theoretical perspectives and methodologies (Seale, 1999). Triangulation later became known to researchers as 'the idea of the need to employ more than one method of investigation and hence more than one type of data collection' (Bryman, 2005:131). The opportunity that triangulation offers is the ability to use different research tools (quantitative and qualitative methods, for example), to investigate the same research problems, to arrive at findings that are mutually confirmative (Bryman, 2001) of the issues under investigation. As a result, a researcher's claims regarding the validity of his or her conclusions are enhanced (Bryman, 2001; Seale 1999). The typical categories of triangulation include the following.

4.5.1.1 Types of Triangulation

***Data triangulation*:** information is collected at different times or from different sources; for example, students, lecturers, hotel managers, and policy documents in this research.

***Investigator triangulation*:** independent investigators collect the data; this is not applicable in our current research.

***Theory triangulation*: a** theory is taken from one discipline and used to explain a phenomenon in another. The closest the researcher came to this type of triangulation here is by combining related ideas from employability, entrepreneurship and enterprise education to produce a wider list of generic skills which informed the study.

***Methodological triangulation*:** both qualitative and quantitative techniques are employed. This has been noted to be a strong feature of this study (Denzin 1978; Easterby-Smith et al. 1991).

This study therefore applies both data triangulation, by collecting data from different groups of respondents (hospitality graduates, lecturers and managers), and methodological triangulation, which analyses the data using quantitative and qualitative methods.

4.5.2 Achieving validity, reliability and triangulation in this research

Again, an important set of steps, taken to ensure the validity of the items of the various research instruments for exploring the research objectives and questions, included: (1) the use of an initial discussion with the supervisors to elicit the nature of relevant questions; (2) the use of a focus group with lecturers further to map the current baseline for understanding the employability concepts, and teaching, learning and assessment (TLA) strategies in Ghana; (3) a similar survey of hospitality industry managers; and (4) the further triangulation of these ideas through conducting questionnaire surveys of lecturers and graduates. The qualitative analysis enabled the researcher to gain a baseline understanding of the current experiences of the lecturers regarding the development of employability skills in hospitality education in Ghana. This understanding will clarify issues related to their teaching of hospitality courses to the students. Also, insights from the analysis were combined with the initial constructs from the literature review in order to design the research instruments for the main study. These instruments are the questionnaires for the lecturers and graduates and the interview schedules for the employers.

In support of these views, Maruyama and Ryan (2014) note that, compared to questionnaires, qualitative analysis, which tells the story of the lived experiences of the respondents regarding a phenomenon (in this case, hospitality graduates' employability in Ghana) is more suitable for 'eliciting their innermost thoughts, hopes and feelings', and for revealing perspectives that the researcher may not have considered or encountered in the literature. For this reason, the qualitative analysis helps the researcher to identify particular ways in which Ghanaian hospitality lecturers perceive hospitality graduate employability, in order better to contextualise the research in Ghana, and make the GHEEF more realistic for use in that context. By using the said combined perspectives to inform the instrument designs, the researcher achieved

construct validity and reliability, whereby the narrative excerpts from the lecturers' statements more clearly communicated the meaning of the employability constructs alluded to in the statements (Maruyama and Ryan 2014:368), and the questionnaire items probed the meanings further in a way that can be replicated by other researchers.

Reliability is particularly ensured by using the theoretically researched list of employability constructs as referents against which the lecturers' views are matched or differentiated, as appropriate. Hence, another researcher can use similar constructs to replicate the research (Maruyama and Ryan 2014:369).

Moreover, as noted above, insights from the focus group analysis triangulated the subsequent results of the main study. This is because the questionnaire surveys were constructed to add greater depth to the focus group findings by: a) using Likert-scale items to measure the extent to which different aspects of the hospitality management curriculum are related to the findings; and b) additional open-ended questions to obtain further views on particular questionnaire items.

With respect to the interviews with the employers, the focus group analysis compared to the findings elicited additional insights that enriched the industry requirements regarding designing the GHEEF. In this way, the overall qualitative-dominant mixed research methodology, consisting of the focus groups, questionnaires, and interviews, not only provided valuable evidence of convergent validity (Maruyama and Ryan 2014:370) across the different methods and respondents (lecturers, graduates and managers), but also a more robust evidence base for the expected main contributions of the research to the knowledge embodied in the GHEEF.

4.6 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are important in every research project that involves elements such as how the research is conducted, the handling of the participants and how the collected data are to be used (Bryman and Bell 2007). Rossman and Rallis (1998) indicated that professional groups and social science disciplines have established formal codes of ethics to guide their field of research activity. These codes serve as standards for the ethical practice of research and are based on moral principles, such as utilitarianism, theories of individual rights and theories of justice. Ethical codes are to serve as guidelines for researchers, ensuring that the participants are protected from

harm and are not deceived. They further argue that researchers as individuals must devise and develop their own standards for practice when they are confronted by a new situation. In relation to interviews, the ethical issues are related to privacy, confidentiality and the secrecy of the respondents' information. The principle of informed consent is related to the individual's right to decide whether or not to take part in the research (Ruane 2005). Specifically, informed consent is the right of the participant to be comprehensively informed about the research in order to make a decision regarding participation. The informed consent offers freedom of choice and self-determination (Ruane 2005). No one should be misinformed about a research project; the consent form is a reminder that a participant can withdraw from the study at any point (Ruane 2005). Ruane (2005) acknowledges that informed consent is frequently violated.

Ethical issues were addressed at each phase of the research. Prior to the data collection, ethical approval was sought and granted by the ethics committee of Sheffield Hallam University, in compliance with the regulations of the university ethics board. An information sheet was provided, that every respondent was asked to read prior to the interview. An informed consent form was developed (see Appendix 4.1) and given to each interviewee, who was assured of the data protection, confidentiality and their right to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason. To protect the identity of the respondents, the names of the institutions and individuals were concealed.

Bryman and Bell (2011) and Saunders et al. (2012) establish the following ethical principles for conducting research:

- The research should ensure the safety of the participants
- The participants should give their consent
- Respect for privacy should be observed
- The researcher's integrity, objectivity and honesty are essential
- There exists a right to withdraw
- Confidentiality must be observed
- Responsibility should be exercised when analysing the data and reporting the findings

The study abided by these principles to ensure that the research meets the required standards.

4.6.1 Researcher's Role

This section is a reflection of my own experiences in this research hence written in the first person.

Holliday (2007:120) indicates that 'a powerful, personal authorship' and narratives confirm the real life context of the research interest. A personal narrative can be defined as any form of narrative which recalls past experience. In a research setting, this experience can often lead to greater insights into and a fresh perspective on the data. To explain my position and role in this research further, I will first and foremost elucidate an aspect of my background.

Hertz (1997) postulates that researchers are acknowledged as active participants in a research process and so it is worth understanding the researcher's location. She stated further that researchers, through personal accounting, must be aware of how their own positions and interest are imposed at all stages of the research process.

There are various reasons in the social sciences that reduce the validity of a research project. It is usual to see all social research meeting the criteria of representability, rigour and reflexibility, most of the time. The limitations forced upon a study, such as the time, money and even the strength of the researcher, ensure that the validity of a research project cannot always be guaranteed. Nevertheless, there are ways in which researchers can ensure that fairness, reliability and robustness exist in the research findings, producing results that are rigorous and likely to be found by other researchers working in the same field. Rigour and triangulation are important in the collection of data and analysis in order to produce reliable social science research (Miles and Huberman 1994; Lincoln and Guba 1985).

The narrative of my research journey presents some fascinating perspectives. It began with some personal experiences in the field of academia. While teaching hospitality students at a polytechnic, I encountered the inadequacies of the academic environment in Ghana. I always wanted to use my research findings to add to existing knowledge, and this how I see my relevance to society as an academic. I came to understand the problems associated with the teaching, learning and assessment of the hospitality discipline based on my experience as a lecturer. I grew up in a society that upholds the

value of fairness to all, and I have honoured this value throughout my life. In my role as a lecturer, I have a responsibility to reform the hospitality curriculum; hence, my deep involvement in curriculum-related issues. This responsibility informed my choice of this research topic, since graduate employability is a major problem in both Ghana and similar developing countries. This experience enabled me to understand the problems associated with the TLA of Hotel Catering and Institutional Management (HCIM). As noted earlier, this research addresses the employability aspects of the hospitality curriculum.

According to Holliday (2007), the desire to remove the researcher's presence persists into post-positivist, naturalistic qualitative research, where the aim is to see the research setting as though the researcher were not there, untouched by the his/her fly-on-the-wall presence. Within a postmodern qualitative research paradigm, however, there exists a very different attitude. Here, it is recognised that the presence and influence of the researcher are unavoidable, and indeed can be capitalised upon.

This said, my personal interest in the research inspired the need to understand why Ghanaian hospitality graduates appear to be less employable than those who have been trained overseas, for example, and how their employability skills could be enhanced. This interest was neutrally focused on eliciting this understanding of employability issues and influences from lecturers, graduates and employers (who are the main employers of hospitality graduates), and interpreting the resulting research evidence without being prejudiced by my own opinions. In qualitative research, the identity of the researcher does impact on the research process. This is especially true if he/she is dealing with a subject or problem of practice drawn from his/her own experience (Gibbs 1988), such as is the case with this study. It is therefore important to recognise bias and work out how to approach this research objectively. Blumer (1966:535-544) indicates that the validity of the data is higher, if the actor sees and reports on the world from his/her own standpoint, rather than from that of an external, so-called objective observer, whose perspective lies outside the setting and so whose experience of it can only be 'second-hand'.

I adopted a post-positivist with a realist ontology, an objective epistemology, and a subjective ontological stance towards human action and behaviour. Thus, I positioned myself and my views as an 'objectively present' researcher, assigning subjectivity to the respondents (Johnson and Clark, 2006). This approach allowed me to use

qualitative methods to accomplish the main aim and objectives of the study, by unwrapping the respondents' subjective opinions (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). From this philosophical stance, the role of the researcher in a qualitative inquiry is critical as 'data do not speak for themselves, they are interpreted through complex cognitive process' (Rossman and Rallis 2003:36). The researcher makes meaning of (interprets) and learns as he/she goes along.

To get closer to understanding people's experiences, I asked them to explain in their own words the nature of their experiences related to graduate employability in hospitality education and industry, followed a systematic process including developing an appropriate sampling design and research instruments that addressed the research questions, collected and analysed the data, and finally wrote the thesis, without influencing the results.

There is a high level of objectivity in scientific inquiry which suggests the autonomy of the external observer while the more participative style of a qualitative researcher is generally associated with a subjective interpretation of the data (Holliday 2007). I tried to be independent in the research by analysing the respondents' opinions. I also enhanced the internal validity of the data by triangulating the research results on key aspects of the study across the different respondents (Burgess 1985). Silverman (2006) argues that it is impossible to disregard the researcher's ontological assumptions, prejudices and preferences with regard to conducting the research.

The ontological and epistemological positions of the researcher significantly impact on the choice of research method (Crotty 1998), while Kvale (1989) questioned the rationality of assuming the existence of value-free research. Anderson and Arsenault (1998) state that, no matter how well designed a research project is, we constantly adhere to our own beliefs, assumptions, preferences and procedures about reality, which suggests that, even though researchers adopt philosophical and theoretical stances, human nature can, to some extent, impact negatively on the research process. It asserts that 'all research starts from a person's view of the world, which is shaped by the experiences one brings to the research process' (Grix 2002:170). However, in spite of all the above-mentioned instances, the researcher, as indicated, approached this research objectively by sourcing the opinions of the respondents objectively.

In conclusion, the research journey produced a mixture of feelings in the researcher. Upon reflection, it was worth the effort as, no matter how challenging, this research project proved a highly enjoyable experience. Although challenging, my social and professional experience were useful throughout, resulting in an objective position that did not allow me to be influenced, which was my biggest challenge. Completing this expedition is, therefore, the beginning of a journey.

4.7 Research framework

This section sets out the research framework used to guide this research, and further explicates the rationale for the use of the research frameworks and their components in this research. Whereas the previous section presented a broad range of conceptual and theoretical frameworks pertaining to the study of employability and upgrading, this section draws out the most relevant concepts that are perceived as useful in guiding the analysis and explanation of employability.

Maxwell (2005: 33) defines a conceptual framework as a 'system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and theories that supports and informs your research'. Miles and Huberman (1994:18) define a conceptual framework as 'a visual or written product, one that explains, either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied the key factors, concepts, or variables and the presumed relationships among them'. Miles and Huberman (1994) further indicate that one of the main reasons for using a conceptual framework is to provide a map for the empirical work to be undertaken. Lesham and Trafford (2007) describe a conceptual framework as the researcher's open decision about what is being studied, since it finds the important features and the connections that are likely to be significant which, in turn, influence the kind of data that are to be collected and analysed.

A conceptual framework is constructed based on the researcher's decision and perception of the phenomenon, which factors to include in the framework and how these influence the phenomenon, therefore making the conceptualisation subjective (Andersen et al. 1997)**.** Theoretical and conceptual frameworks are sometimes used interchangeably in the literature (Berman 2013). Multiple uses of theoretical frameworks in many studies reflect the growing focus on a conceptual framework that creates new knowledge, and the process of personal conceptualisation which has

grown out of the traditional theoretical framework that is taken as already existing and may be used to underpin a doctoral study (Berman 2013).

The three main theoretical employability models reviewed in the literature, USEM (Knight and Yorke 2004), DOTS (Watt 2006) and CareerEdge (Pool and Sewel 2007) were developed to enhance employability; the question arises as to which is most appropriate for examining and explicating findings, or whether a combined approach is preferable, where the concepts drawn from the employability models are employed. Using a one theory approach to guide this study meant either applying insights resulting from employability graduates' perspectives, or employing insights from the perspectives of the labour market (Fugate et al. 2004) or a generic concept and perceptions from a hospitality employability curriculum perspective. By employing one of these conceptual frameworks to the exclusion of the other, this thesis risks replicating the deficiencies and gaps associated with the existing research. For example, most studies have assumed a generic employability-centred approach in examining graduate employability in Sub-Saharan Africa, and enhanced from developed economies. Furthermore, judging from the weaknesses of each of the theoretical approaches stated in the review of the models of employability (see chapter 2 item 2.9), using any one approach exclusively would prove inadequate for exposing the complexities and intricacies of the contributing, underlying factors.

The current research framework represents the researcher's understanding of hospitality graduate employability in Ghana, the relevant factors involved and the interactions between the relationships within the concept. The research framework has phenomenological underpinnings, since it reflects the subjective experience of the stakeholders in Ghana. The most important thing to understand about a research framework is that it is primarily a conception or model of what is out there that one plans to study, and of what is going on with these things, which is mainly a tentative theory about the phenomenon that one is investigating. The use of existing theories or models informs the design by helping to assess and refine the researcher's goals, develop realistic and relevant research questions, select appropriate methods, and identify potential validity threats to the conclusions (Berman 2013). A conceptual framework enables the researcher to justify the research.

4.7.1 Underpinnings of the Research Framework

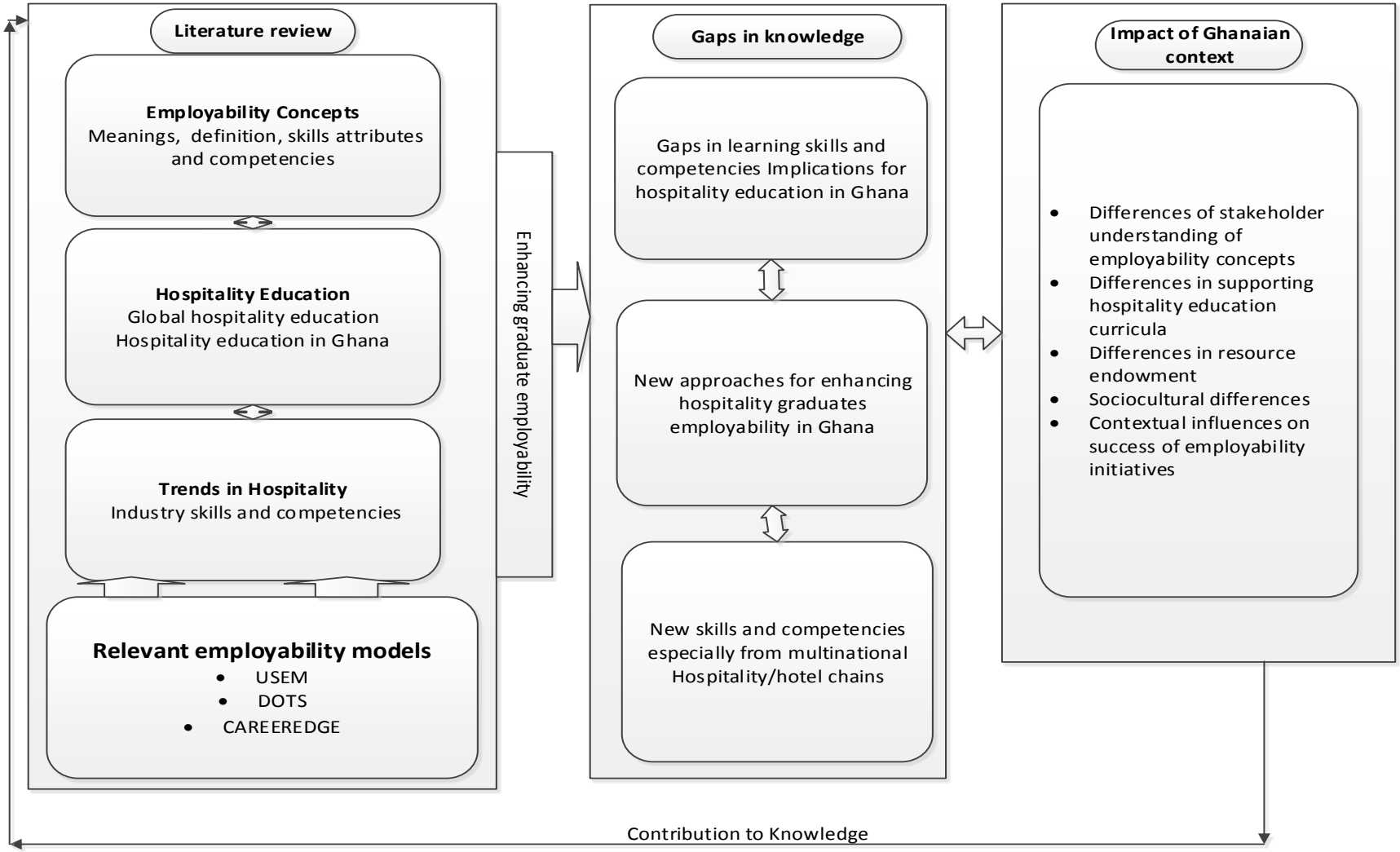
The employability literature shows that there is an empirical link between employability and hospitality management education (Maher and Graves 2008, Maher and Neild 2005, Kamari 2004). As mentioned earlier, Pool and Sewell's (2007) CareerEdge model, Knight and Yorke's (2006) USEM, and Watts' (2006) DOTS models serve as the basic foundation for the researcher's research framework. The reason why these models were chosen is threefold. Firstly, in terms of scope, they cover the graduate employability skills development process, as they capture the following features: they are legitimate and accepted by the UK HE academy, as examples of good practice when developing and enhancing student and graduate employability (Pond and Harrington 2011; Jackson 2013). They also provide varied perspectives on the factors that enhance graduate employability, including Career development learning, Work and life experience, Degree subject knowledge, Skills and understanding, Generic skill and Emotional intelligence, which can easily be adapted and applied to develop the research framework. The models are adaptable to the outcomes linked to professional practice and HE (Knight and Yorke 2004). Qenani et al. (2014) state that the university plays an important role in developing and enhancing graduates' employability. Similarly, Garwe (2014) supported the notion that a relevant curriculum has the greatest impact on enhancing employability.

The selected models, therefore, provide a more comprehensive focus on graduate employability and has been considered in terms of the changing career contexts in which today's graduates find themselves, following an in-depth analysis of the new world of work, as mentioned earlier. Watts (2006) maintains that career development learning is vital and should feature in HE employability strategies, as it is essential in enhancing graduate employability.

The purpose of critically reviewing these models is to examine their relevance to this research and consider how the model elements could be adapted to the Ghanaian context, particularly as regards curriculum development for the employability of hospitality graduates from Ghanaian HEIs. As mentioned earlier in section 2.7.5 under literature review of the selected employability models it is interesting to note that these models are described as legitimate and accepted by HE in the UK as examples of good practice when developing and enhancing student and graduate employability (Pond and Harrington 2011; Jackson 2013). As they offer varied perspectives on the aspects of graduate employability. The three models USEM, DOTS and CareerEDGE

encompass elements that are applicable to enhancing graduate employability, such as career development learning, work and life experience, degree subject knowledge, skills and understanding, generic skills and emotional intelligence, that are vital to enhancing graduate employability, according to Pool and Sewel (2007). These models underpinned the conceptual framework of the research and therefore provide a sufficiently comprehensive focus on graduate employability.

Figure 4.1 Research Framework



Source: Author's Field Data 2014

4.7.2 The elements of the Research framework

The schema shown above describe the research framework. The research discusses the high-level elements (the blocked themes, such as the Employability Concept and Hospitality Education) of the above framework. The first theme is focused on the Employability Concept, which denotes access to jobs, getting a job, then retaining it, excelling and transiting to higher positions. The second theme is Hospitality Education, regarding which the literature showed the best practice in hospitality education globally and the gaps in Ghanaian hospitality education. Those gaps are summarised in the first two blocks in Column 2 of the research. Similarly, any weaknesses within Ghanaian hospitality education, compared to the global standards and employability models, will produce research findings related to New Approaches for enhancing hospitality graduate employability in Ghana, which is the second element in Column 2 of the research framework. Those new approaches will therefore be directly implemented as part of the GHEEF intervention. The third element of Column 1 of the research framework, namely 'New Trends in hospitality industry skills and competencies', will accommodate additional gaps in terms of New Skills and competences, as highlighted by the multinational hospitality and hotel chains, which is the third element in Column 2. These skills must be thoroughly reflected in the new hospitality curricula which the research framework informs.

The relevant employability models for this study (the fourth element of Column 1) remind the researcher of the need for all of the key skills and practices emphasised by the models (USEM, DOTS, and CareerEdge) to be developed within the hospitality graduate curricula in Ghana.

The third column, the impact of the Ghanaian context, indicates further elements to consider when implementing the GHEEF with regard to employability education in Ghana. For the first element of the column, the GHEEF interventions should use capacity-building workshops, conferences and seminars to clarify the key employability concepts to all stakeholders. This will facilitate common expectations of the new hospitality curricula. All of the other contextual differences indicated in the column should inform the GHEEF activities. The curriculum differences across HEIs and their resource endowments should be considered. This also applies to socio-cultural differences which should be considered in order to avoid them impeding job

performance. For example, some students' attitudes may make them unwilling to perform certain tasks which they consider culturally unacceptable roles for men/women, which need not apply in the workplace, especially the field of hospitality.

4.7.3 Conclusion

The research investigates the emerging trends and influences within the Ghanaian hospitality industry, education and employability. The chapter provided an overview of the research philosophy and methodology which support the overall study. The qualitative nature of the study derives from the use of a focus group, quantitative surveys and interviews, that elicit stakeholder understanding of and the problems encountered with employability in the wider Ghanaian context and the hospitality sector. The philosophical stance of the research was described as post-positivist in nature.

The methodology described the research approach as primarily qualitative in nature within a mixed data analysis method that addresses specific objectives and research questions according to the nature of the evidence gathered in the study. The data collection methods include initial boundary-mapping discussions with supervisors, focus group discussions with lecturers, a questionnaire survey of lecturers and graduates, and interviews with hotel managers (employers). The chapter discussed the rationale for combining these approaches, the data analysis procedures, and how the mixed method approach improves the research design by achieving validity, reliability and meaningful triangulation within the study. The chapter further reflected on the researcher's context.

5 CHAPTER 5 FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This Chapter presents the findings of the primary research. To achieve the stated objectives and answer the research questions a critical empirical investigation was completed during the fieldwork with hospitality lecturers in a focus group discussions, a questionnaire for lecturers and graduates and interview with employers. This was completed and presented in the methodology chapter. Qualitative data were acquired mainly from lecturers and employers. The graduates' data were obtained from a questionnaire with several open-ended questions that were thematically analysed. The findings of the open-ended questions for the graduates are presented together with the thematic analysis of the lecturers and employers for ease of comparison.

The findings of the lecturers focus group is presented first followed by the results of the graduates and finally the findings of the employers. The detailed findings are presented below as stated:

Findings from Lecturers
Findings from Graduates and
Findings from hospitality employers.

The lecturers' findings presented focused on Teaching Learning and Assessment (TLA) and devising strategies for developing an innovative framework for enhancing hospitality graduate employability in Ghana.

The major themes for the study are as follows:
Theme 1: Employability concept and meanings
Theme 2: Hospitality education curriculum development in Ghana
Theme 3: Gaps in learning, hospitality skills and competences
Theme 4: Enhancing Ghanaian hospitality graduate employability

5.1.1 Thematic Analysis: how the data were analysed

The findings from the above four themes inform the conceptual framework of the research (the GHEEF). For easy understanding the researcher briefly presents how the thematic data analysis was done.

5.1.1.1 Theoretical employability constructs

Seventeen labels were taken from the literature review of employability models, mainly the CareerEdge model of Pool and Sewell (2007) which draws from the other models the USEM and the DOTS. For example, it was explained in chapter 2 why the CareerEdge model was best suited for this research, as the constructs in the model capture the extra-curricular experiences; constructs in the USEM model capture the *Experience (work and life),* Reflection and Evaluation, and personal development plan (PDP). Self-Esteem, Self-Confidence, and Self-Efficacy constructs in the model imply the Personal Skills, Core Skills, and Process Skills constructs in the USEM model. The labels shown in Table 5.1 below summarise items in the initial conceptualisation of the research framework (see figure 4.1) and the CareerEdge model constructs used as lenses through which to reflect on the meanings which the respondents' responses bring to the qualitative analysis.

Table 5-1List of theoretical employability constructs

Label No.	Label for research constructs	Description
1	EC	Employability concept
2	HE	Hospitality education
3	GILSCs	Gaps in learning, skills and competences
4	NA	New approaches for enhancing graduate employability
5	NSCs	New skills and competences
6	DIC	Developing innovative curriculum
7	WLE	Work and life experience
8	SUK	Subject knowledge
9	GS	Generic skills
10	EI	Emotional intelligence
11	CDL	Career development learning
12	PRS	Process skills
13	SE	Self-Esteem
14	SC	Self-Confidence
15	SE	Self-Efficacy
16	RE	Reflection and Evaluation
17	PDP	Personal development planning

The 17 constructs in Table 5.1 above map onto the four main research themes presented in Table 5.2 below. Please note that, whilst this table shows generally how the texts are organised, some of the components will inevitably repeat the respondents' views, which the researcher retains for easy follow-through in the chapter.

The researcher conducted a full qualitative analysis using these 17 constructs. The analysis, together with a summary matrix, is presented in Appendix 5.1b of the thesis. This is to facilitate a detailed understanding of the specific Ghanaian perspectives they connote, and support additional use of the research findings in enhancing hospitality graduates' employability. In other words, this construct-based summary of the findings will inform the future GHEEF-informed TLA employability strategies that are specific to the constructs.

Table 5-2 Constructs organised under themes

	Constructs
1	**Employability Concepts and meanings**
2	**Hospitality education curriculum development in Ghana** Curriculum Developing Innovative Curriculum Resources Subject Knowledge
3	**Gaps in learning, hospitality skills and competences** Graduate Skills New skills and Competencies Generic skills Process skills
4	**Enhancing Ghanaian hospitality graduate employability** New Approaches New Trends Work and Life Experiences Emotional Intelligence Career Development Learning Self-Esteem, Self- Confidence and Self-efficacy Reflection and Evaluation Personal Development Plan

Source: Author's Field Data 2014)

The thematic analysis shown in Appendix 5.1a consists of three main steps:

a. locating these constructs in the transcripts in order to gauge the extent to which the lecturers' responses suggest them, even if they are not mentioned directly;
b. noting any additional constructs that the responses raise; and

c. Determining any contextual differences between Ghanaian versus international lecturers' understanding of employability concepts, curriculum practices that support or do not enhance hospitality graduates' employability, resource endowments and socio-cultural factors.

An example transcript of the interview responses is presented in (Appendix 5.1b) to enable the researcher to explain these steps.

In this sample transcript (Appendix 5.1b), the researcher notes that hospitality education, developing an innovative curriculum, gaps in learning skills and competencies, new approaches and generic skills (teamwork, for example) are emphasised in the response. This is how the responses are matched against the theoretical constructs. Following that, any new construct in the response is spotted, such as entrepreneurship, as explained below. The thematic analysis then summarises the overall opinions of the lecturers around the themes, with supporting quotes as evidence. The researcher presents all 57 transcripts used in the analysis in (Appendix 5.2) of the thesis, to provide the full evidence base for the qualitative analysis.

5.1.1.2 Understanding the findings based on the above constructs

To implement steps a) to d) of the analysis stated in the methodology chapter, a recall of the steps is made for easy follow-through as follows: (a) getting a consensus of and possible viewpoints among lecturers 'in each institution; b) matching the views to the employability constructs which were explored in the literature review; c) comparing the views and their links to the constructs across different institutions, in order to elicit the overall prevalence of the emerging constructs; and d) discussing how the findings link with the research questions, as well as their implications for the subsequent analysis and chapters of the thesis.

These subsequent aspects of the thesis relate to the graduates' questionnaire survey, the interviews with the employers, and design of the Ghana Hospitality Employability Enhancement Framework (GHEEF). The linkages between the sections are presented in this order in the thesis to enable the researcher to triangulate the research evidence in different ways, as explained in the various sections.

The researcher interprets the respondents' voices by looking at: which opinions reinforce what is in the literature; how they differ from what is in the literature; what they

imply for the research; what then are the gaps between their understanding and the accepted knowledge in the field (contestation or debates); how these link with the research objectives and questions; what new perspectives are coming through the analysis; and what support the findings lend for designing the research instruments and the subsequent analysis (See Appendix 5.1).

5.2 The Lecturers' Findings

This section combines the report on the lecturers' findings from both the focus group discussions and questionnaire survey used in the research, as stated in the methodology Chapter 4. Moreover, as noted in the methodology chapter, insights from the focus group analysis triangulate subsequent results from the main study. The questionnaire surveys were constructed to add more depth to the focus group findings by: a) using Likert-scaled items to measure the extent different aspects of the hospitality curriculum relate with the findings; b) using additional open-ended questions to obtain further views on particular questionnaire items; c) to make up for the difficulty of accessing and unavailability of lecturers for a wider focus group; and d) to measure the frequencies of constructs which will underpin the design of the Ghanaian Hospitality Employability Enhancement Framework (GHEEF) (see Table 5.4 below).

The findings of the lecturers are discussed under the major themes of the research, while the close-ended statistical analysis follows, as explained earlier. However, some results were from the two approaches were combined as these are opinions and responses of the hospitality lecturers.

5.2.1 Theme 1: Employability: Concept and Meanings (Lecturers)

The lecturers were asked to discuss their understanding of employability. They exhibited a certain degree of misperception about the concept of employability. The lecturers' views on employability emphasised an individual's ability to secure employment by having the requisite skills (MA30, BE32, HA34 and FA35). In general, lecturers have a very narrow view of employability and lack conceptual clarity and understanding. The difficulty lies in trying to define the meaning of employability. In other words, these lecturers did not fully mention a broader understanding of employability as entailing not simply the potential to secure a job, but also to derive satisfaction from it and grow one's career successfully, even if with different employers or in self-employment.

Similar to what was found from the lecturers' survey analysis of the above concept in theme 1, the lecturers individually explain particular aspects of what it means to be employable, and not every aspect concerns the ability to access a job, grow, be satisfied by it, and progress to other jobs with better prospects. The responses, however, emphasise access to jobs and the need for the skills to achieve that. The following quote illustrates this:

> *'Employability is the ability to get a job'* (HA34).

In addition to having a narrow view of the employability concept, some of the lecturers stated that employability was about not only having a job but also 'enhancing a living' and 'earning a living'. The quotes below illustrate this:

> *'It is employment, whereby employability is the act of finding yourself doing something to earn a living'* (MA30).

> *'Employability is a demonstrated skill and professionalism required for a particular job'* (AF4)

> *'Skills needed by an individual to perform at work'* (BE 32)

> *'The necessary skills and actions taken by an individual to enhance self-discipline in making money'* (HA35)

These findings from the survey corresponds the focus group findings regarding the fact that Ghanaian hospitality lectures, and possibly other lecturers, do not fully understand employability. Some lecturers linked employability to entrepreneurship which constitutes a new construct in the research that is not traditionally emphasised in the employability literature. The following quote supports this point.

> *'To be employable means to be entrepreneurial' … entrepreneurship training should be encouraged'…' 'Our students should have entrepreneurial minds'* (FA16) *(MA2). (IS5).*

Another disclosure by one of the lecturers was that employability is about the marketability of one's self. The idea of marketability is to make oneself attractive to a potential employer by possessing the marketable skills demanded in the job market that are valuable to employers, especially as the market is so unpredictable. The quote below supports this view:

'I think employability is how one can make one's self marketable' (VI38).

5.2.2 Theme 2: Hospitality education curriculum development in Ghana (Lecturers)

5.2.2.1 Curriculum development

The lecturers' responses regarding the state of hospitality education in Ghana were mainly related to curriculum development. They noted a number of problems associated with the curriculum for hospitality education in Ghana. The Ghanaian hospitality curriculum system is poor, just as the curricula of many other developing countries, it lacks content and quality and is very theoretical, overloaded, outdated and detached from the hospitality industry skills and competency requirements. It is therefore insufficient to serve the needs of both students and the industry. In addition to the above inadequacies in hospitality education in Ghana, which form part of the wider poor curriculum development and delivery, these problems include a lack of curriculum innovations and ownership of the curriculum design process by lecturers, as stated above.

One of the lecturers bemoaned the lack of lecturers' involvement in curriculum design, noting the following:

> *'Lecturers are not part of the development of the curriculum. We aren't contacted for inputs and just out of the blue they dump it on us to implement, sometimes it's difficult for the lecturer to even understand the content, we need to be part of all the decisions being taken during the designing of the hospitality management curriculum since we are the academic experts'* (MA14).

The lecturers indicated that there is a need for regular updates to the curriculum. More worryingly, Ghanaian hospitality lecturers seem to work with curricula that they do not

design. Hence, they simply use a centrally-developed course syllabus, instead of carefully designed curricula with matching learning outcomes, teaching, learning and assessment strategies. In addition, the Ghanaian hospitality curriculum was designed mainly from the academic viewpoint by educators who have no industry experience and focus attention on satisfying degree requirements and not for application. This often leads to disagreement between industry and education providers regarding the subjects to be taught and skills that students need to acquire during their scholarship.

Some of the lecturers therefore were concerned that students who are following the current curriculum lack professional knowledge and fail to satisfy the industry requirements. Success of hospitality education in Ghana rests on its course curriculum and contents. The fast changes taking place in the Ghanaian hospitality industry in recent times mean that the hospitality curriculum needs to be in line with the needs of the industry. The study unfortunately revealed that the level of collaboration between hospitality education and the hospitality industry was low.

They indicated that they recycle their old notes rather than having the opportunity to develop their ideas from intermediate to advanced level.

As respondent (BE2) stated, *'What we have been doing since '1900' is still what we're doing…*the lecturers repeated what they taught at intermediate level at the advanced level course. Added to this, the respondents also identify that the curriculum was not developed to include broader educational and professional skills, such as management and communication which are vital employability skills. (HA22) explained that:

'Our syllabuses are also more about kitchen skills'.

Some conflicting viewpoints were presented. Not all academic staff saw it as their role to design their curriculum for teaching. As one lecturer indicated,

> '*The designers from day one should look at the intermediate and advanced courses at the basic level'* (BE4).

One lecturer indicated that employers claimed that the training institutions and educational policymakers develop a curriculum that is used to train students without any input from industry, which makes the students narrow-minded, confined to what

they are taught and what they see and learn from textbooks. Students therefore have very limited industry knowledge and skills and do not necessarily fit the needs of industry. Therefore, it is important to involve industry in the development of the curriculum. Industry players should be consulted when developing the hospitality curriculum as the hospitality industry is so volatile. This quote supports this claim:

> *'Training institutions develop their own curriculum, use it to train students and send them out, so when students are out in the working environment, their knowledge and skills do not necessarily fit the needs of industry as a result of the gap between industry running parallel and institutions also running parallel. So there is the need to involve industry because the final product goes to them…, there is the need to involve industry professionals when modifying our curriculum... academia need to consult industry players about what skills and competencies the industry needs, specific skills set orientation and things they need graduates to exhibit so that it will be included in the hospitality curriculum to enrich it for the training of students, when students are exposed to industry skills, it enhances their employability because they are already aware or know the requirements of industry' … I think that industry professionals should be involved in the day to day designing of the curriculum* (IS15).

Most of the lecturers indicated that they barely have any official interaction with industry professionals to discuss the areas of concern formally. The lack of effective collaboration between the various stakeholders could partly be responsible for the seemingly wide gap between the content of the courses studied and the demands of the job market. In addition, such collaboration might even enhance an effective internship course between industry and academia, so that the products could acquire relevant experience for the job market. The following quotes support this fact:

> *' the curriculum lacks content and quality, it is too theoretical outdated and not meaningful for the hospitality industry of today, hospitality industry and students are not getting what is required to engage and be hired'* (MA4, HA23, ME37).

The lecturers emphasised the lack of frequent update of the hospitality curriculum. Reforms that were made to upgrade the institutions to tertiary level 1993, 2007 did not change the curriculum.

'*We are still using the old syllabus before the reforms. Meanwhile, a lot has changed in the hospitality industry*'

The lecturers highlight the fact that there is little practical component in the hospitality curriculum that is being used. Meanwhile, they indicated that hospitality education is vocational, which means a lot of practical experiential hands-on work, but there is little emphasis on practical skills within the curriculum and too much theory, to the extent that it does not prepare graduates for practice. A quote supporting this is as follows:

'…generally, the educational system in Ghana does too much theoretical stuff; most of the lectures have no hands-on experience. What happens is that the lecturer goes through a first degree, manages to go for an MPhil, which is research degree and then goes for a PhD, which is also research. This person has not managed an establishment before entering a class to teach a student to become a manager, so the chances are that the student is taught academic theory and will have to work out the applications himself in the job market. Which I will say is not easy, as theory and practice are completely different' (KH42).

5.2.2.2 The need to teach transferable skills

The respondents also emphasised the need for transferable skills and training in broader management disciplines, to enable hospitality graduates to compete for and excel in roles requiring such skills. The respondents offered suggestions about how students can acquire the skills that will enhance their chances of entering the job market easily. This implies a need for teaching transferable skills on the curriculum. A quote in support of this is stated below:

I don't think just the subject area knowledge is enough? We need to add work skills' …students of hospitality management need business management skills. What we teach these students are culinary skills' (HA23).

5.2.2.3 Experiential learning

The need to enforce professional standards in the curriculum was emphasised. The findings also revealed that the curriculum does not emphasise experiential learning, which impedes the students' awareness of the dynamic changes in the industry.

Although the existing curriculum has an aspect of practical training in industry as a necessary component during the period of study at tertiary level, it is only a small part of the study period and only happens once in the three years of study.

The discussions with the lecturers did highlight many issues attributed to student placements; most notably, the lack of availability of such placements and the effect of the highly competitive market. Hospitality students on placements are consigned to peeling onions, one respondent commented, who has fundamental industry experience. The responses emphasised the need continually to update the curriculum, in order to follow the industry trends and do so appropriately according to the level of study.

They emphasised a lack of trust between industry and academia. The lack of trust and collaboration in the industry is identified as a factor hindering internship and networking prospects with hospitality industry professionals, as illustrated by the comments reported below. What is interesting to note is that there are various opinions as to why this lack of trust exists, worries about trade secrets, sources of cheap labour for industry, students not regarded as contributing meaningfully, lecturers' poor motivation by institutions and national policy on industry attachment, lack of stakeholder interest, government, higher education and employers, negative and uncooperative mind-sets, lack of a culture of building relationships, which leads to mutual benefits, and a lack of in-depth industrial experience, whereby the owners of hotels relegate the students to routine tasks, for example:

> *'practically, these students aren't strong enough, if we send them on industrial training, the employers don't also treat them well, so for instance if you send somebody for 8 weeks of industrial training, that person can be put in the kitchen for 8 weeks peeling onions or potatoes* (ME51)

> *'…industry sees them as cheap labour and does not teach them the right stuff. This is one of the reasons why the policy makers need to regulate, lay down rules and regulations that will encourage industry professionals to do their best in giving hands-on-training to these students* (AU45, FA 27)..

5.2.2.4 Industry experience for lecturers

In working collaboratively with industry professionals, some responses focus on collaborative aspects of curriculum design, as seen with the respondents from Polytechnic 1. In further support of these ideas, another respondent mentioned the need for HEI-industry collaboration over curriculum development and delivery, and to maintain available resources appropriately. The inadequate exposure of lecturers and students to enabling industry experiences is worrying. The lecturers noted that, even with the arrival of big hospitality businesses and big multinational hotel chains demanding international service experience, the lecturers are unaware of these needs. Hence, there is a need for industry collaboration, practical courses linked to the modern tools used in hotel chains, and the adaptation of experience to the curriculum. Institutions are disconnected from industry, where students would have the opportunity to gain practical experience. Using invited guest lecturers, facilitators and demonstration labs to make the learning experience deeply experiential is important for addressing the gap in practical experience: The following comments support these views:

> *'Again, there is no course designed to take me as a lecturer to go to, for instance, Golden Tulip Hotel or Novotel for experiential training and also to see what is going on in industry. If a course of this nature were to be instituted, then when, as a lecturer gain this experience and I come back to lecture, I will definitely disseminate this knowledge to the students and after their training they wouldn't be found wanting when they go back to the hotels to work'… there should be refresher courses for us to update our skills once in a while*, *but we keep to the lecture halls, recycling our lecture notes which I think is not helpful'* (MA4).

> *'issues such as industrial visits and accepting students on industrial attachment. Supervising students on attachment is poorly done sometimes and students are left to do their own thing'* (KH44).

> *'since the opportunity to take students to visit industry is lacking industry professional could be invited, we could invite people from industry to talk and share the new trends happening in industry' (HA25).*

5.2.2.5 Poor quality assurance

The financing, monitoring and evaluation of higher education in Ghana has always been a serious issue for governments (policy makers) and other stakeholders (Effah 2003; NCTE 2010). The institutions mandated to regulate and ensure quality of higher education institutions have a handicap, they are not resourced enough to be able to execute their mandate. This is indicated in the Ghanaian context chapter of the thesis. The institutions also lack resources to train these students.

The quote below highlights issues with poor quality assurance when lecturers sell poorly-produced hand-outs to students instead of textbooks, and use teaching, learning and assessment (TLA) strategies that do not encourage student-lead learning. The National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE), National Accreditation Board (NAB), and National Board for Professional and Technician Examination (NABPTEX), parts of the Ministry of Education (MOE), are the key institutions in Ghana that have been mandated in different forms with overseeing the establishment of quality in various tertiary institutions in Ghana, Consequently, these national bodies have been ineffective in discharging their mandates comprehensively. Their ineffectiveness stems from the countless challenges confronting them. NCTE, for instance, is not empowered by the law establishing it with the adequate authority to sanction certain tertiary institutions; it is merely an advisory body (Bawakyillenuo et al. 2013; Agobzo 2007). Quality tertiary education needs adequate funding in order to be relevant and this is a fundamental factor underpinning quality hospitality education and training

> *'The accreditations board and those in charge should be given the power to regulate the affairs of hospitality courses. And make it more viable* (FA29)

> *…'selling to students' hand-outs, this practice is not helping. These methods do not teach them anything that will enhance their employability. We need measures to regulate activities in our institutions'* (HA20, KH42).

The findings under theme 2 reveal that there are many conflicting issues facing hospitality education and training provision. The responses highlighted many shortcomings and weaknesses in the delivery of hospitality education and curriculum development: difficulties encountered by the lecturers, students, and employers that the curriculum did not emphasise. Placements were also problematic, as these could

not be guaranteed to students despite the increasing demand in recent years for professionalism through industry.

5.2.3 Theme 3: Gaps in learning hospitality skills and competences (Lecturers)

Most of the skills specifically related to hospitality are developed within the core subject knowledge, which are explored in detail in responses based on the questionnaire surveys of lecturers and students, respectively. This section presents the views of the lecturers on how these hospitality skills and competencies should be developed alongside wider employability skills. Hospitality higher education in Ghana unquestionably faces severe challenges. The respondents lament the lack of innovation in Ghanaian hospitality education, as shown in the following statements. There is a need to reflect the basic, intermediate and advanced levels of the subjects studied through curriculum innovation. Instead of developing ideas from the intermediate to advanced levels of study, lecturers repeat the same instructional material and curriculum:

> *'What we've been doing since time immemorial is still what we're still doing. We know that, when we are with intermediates they need to know the basics, when they advance, the curriculum should also advance, but we repeat what they did on the intermediate course'* (BE2; HA23).

This abject lack of curriculum innovation implies a range of gaps in learning, skills and competences mentioned by the respondents, as follows. Developing students' communication and CV writing skills is missing from the development of hospitality students.

> *'I don't think our students can confidently write a good CV so inviting an expert in to teach them a skill that we lecturers don't teach or have the necessary knowledge for is a way of making them acquire those skills '*(HA27).

5.2.3.1 Imbalance in the assessment of and for learning

Some reasons for the lack of student engagement with the real learning of these skills are provided in the responses stated below; for example, exam-dominated

assessments *of* but not *for* learning, which reinforces the need for balanced assessment using a mixture of coursework, exams, and presentations, for example.

> *'…in our teaching, the emphasis is on learning for examination…all that the students are interested in is asking the lecturer whether what he/she is teaching is likely to be examined or asked in their examination'* (FA29).

5.2.3.2 Poor teaching skills

Lecturers lack the experience and skills to teach in a way that enhances employability. One respondent described such gaps as a lack of experience and skills on the part of lecturers, the use of overly didactic teaching styles earlier noted in previous responses, and rote learning.

> *'Academia needs relevant pedagogical methods to teaching and learning. The traditional methods of teaching should give way to student-centred learning approaches as well as innovative teaching techniques'* (AM 56).

> *'Lecturers are out of touch with modern industry needs, especially hotels, and the use of information technology is lacking* (IS10, KH42).

> *'I think we need to adopt other ways of teaching, like making students do more presentations, group work, role play mini projects and activities that lead them to interacting with others* (BE21).

5.2.3.3 Teaching methods used by the lecturers (item 7)

Similarly, in the survey of lecturers the respondents were asked to respond to the question 'Which of the following teaching methods do you use in your teaching'? The results are presented below.

Figure 5.1 Teaching methods used by the lecturers

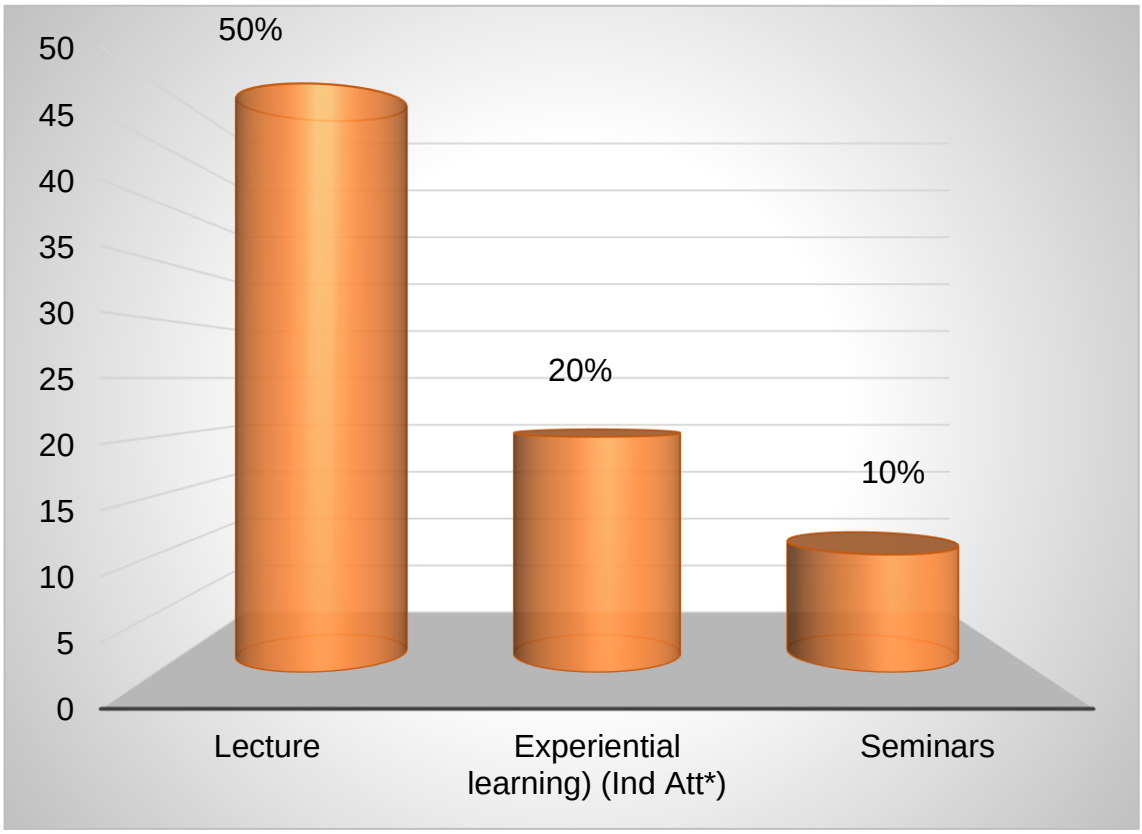


Figure 5.2 shows that the most common method is lectures. Other methods included projects and seminars. The other methods are not used which provide the extra-curricular dimensions of learning which the lecturers indicated as important for preparing the students to work in the industry (see appendix 5.1c item 6). Again, the dominance of lectures as the form of teaching with examination-based assessment was highlighted in the focus group findings as limiting in terms of developing graduate employability because of the rote learning, and lack of critical independent learning on the part of the students.

5.2.3.4 Group dynamics

A finding from the focus group indicates that group dynamics are a key learning point in hospitality education. It builds confidence in applying new learning. The process of working collaboratively with colleagues to achieve a goal is a crucial part of hospitality; as the saying goes, 'two heads are better than one'. With a team, even more solutions to problems and fresh ideas are generated by the brainstorming that teamwork fosters. The respondents indicated that teams allow skills, knowledge, opinions and

experiences to be pooled together for the benefit of the group as a whole. This leads to better productivity by every member of the team, and every task completed by each team member leads to a noticeable outcome of which the team can be proud. By understanding group dynamics and doing some team building, a group can increase how much it accomplishes. However, this vital element is lacking in hospitality education in Ghana. The following quote supports these points.

> *'… students need to learn and work in teams, in teams they learn what is in industry the content of our syllabus is more of individual work than teamwork and if this goes on and there is no change, they will surely have problems, industry is about teamwork, customer care, other skills that are within the individual (personal attributes) that will make the customers and co-workers feel at ease with him or her* (BE2).

5.2.3.5 Lack of resources and equipment, including computers

A lack of resources to repair some of the above-mentioned inadequacies was revealed as a challenge facing hospitality education in Ghana. Inadequate funding and tight budget for developing hospitality teaching facilities such as training laboratories and other training facilities especially capital expenditure was also highlighted by respondents. Some lecturers stated that there is a severe lack of learning resources, and the staff and students are not adequately trained to do their work competently with the requisite equipment, such as ICT resources. The lack of up-to-date equipment for teaching compared to that in new hotels means that graduates find it difficult to cope with the expected tasks in hotels. For example, a lecturer lamented as follows:

> *'… but come to our institutions, we do not have the equipment to teach our students so, when they are sent to the industry where they are supposed to work with the equipment, they find it difficult'* (AF3).

> *We, the lecturers handling hospitality courses, are constrained by materials and supplies; I mean the resources for teaching are not there. We complain but no one listens and when you persist you are told there is no money, secondly we are not motivated to do our best, and for instance, we are supposed to supervise students on attachment. We don't do it because we are not paid for that extra work; there is always no money* (ER40).

5.2.3.6 Subject knowledge out of balance with employability skills

There are limited direct mentions of subject knowledge in the scripts, but the entire argument about designing the teaching, learning and assessments (TLA) aspects of a module to enhance graduate employability, is about mixing up subject matter learning outcomes (which are the module concepts typically assessed) with employability learning outcomes (which are assessed for learning). Another focus group produced the following comments:

> *'Lecturers don't have professional hospitality background; it's always difficult with giving students good hospitality examples when teaching; this affects the students' knowledge acquisition* (HA23)'.

5.2.3.7 Poorly-managed industrial attachments

The lecturers bemoaned the fact that the industrial attachments, which are an integral part of hospitality education, are not well managed. Students are not supervised but left to do their own thing during the attachment. This leads to industry players finding it difficult to expose hospitality lecturers/students to certain key areas. These attitudes affect students while on attachment to industry. The hospitality industry and educational institutions need to come together to standardise this important aspect of training of hospitality graduates, as the importance of an industrial attachment to students is vital for an easy transition into the job market.

'*Strengthening the linkage between industry and the training institutions for example, issues of industry not opening up to teach students on attachment if there is that deep involvement of stakeholders, it will be clear to industry players that the students are not coming to steal their trade secrets...they are coming to industry to enhance their learning skills and to have hands-on training in what they have been taught partially or theoretically in the classroom, so that they will have a real life experience of what they are being taught'* (IS10).

> *'If we are doing hospitality education, I always tell people, hospitality is not like economics, so instead of doing a five-day classroom job, do a two-day classroom and three days field work…You finish hospitality management courses with good grades but you can't even register a guest because you haven't done guest registration before'* (ME51).

5.2.4 Theme 4: Enhancing Ghanaian Graduate Employability (Lecturers)

This section discusses Ghanaian hospitality lecturers' views on how graduate employability could be enhanced.

5.2.4.1 Trends in the hospitality industry, skills and competences

Lecturers reiterated the need for them and students to be abreast with industry trends and new skills. The respondents noted that *'globalisation and technology is the order today* (HA5)', and that the hospitality business is underpinned by technology, for example checking-in, and reservations and sourcing for information. This requires lectures and students to be aware of international services and new industry requirements and tools for working in hotel chains, for which they are unprepared. The quote below supports this assertion:

> *'visit these new hotels you appreciate that many of the equipment they use are modern, but come to our institutions we do not have the equipment, we use obsolete, outdated equipment'* (AF3).

A lecturer suggested that they should be given the opportunity to also go for industrial attachment

> *'hospitality lecturers should be given the chance to go on 3-6 months industrial attachment to just go and observe and see what are the new things that are going on in industry, equipment and gargets industry is using. It is a way of enriching your knowledge or enhancing our skills we can modify the way you teach' (IS10).*

A respondent stated that the Ghanaian hospitality education system is ill-prepared for the new skills requirements imposed on graduates by the arrival of the multinational hospitality businesses into Ghana which have the capacity to employ the graduates. Some of these hotels have huge job opportunities. They indicated that it is high time hospitality education followed and taught new developments in the hotel and hospitality industry, for example, the importance of branding to students to boost customer loyalty using branded items. Employees need to know this for customers to remember the next time they need to make a reservation. They believe knowledge in branding ensure that customers return, and recommend the business to others, so it is important that employees fully understand activities in the industry especially hotel branding.

Hospitality education should prioritise the trends in industry to enhance the employees' understanding of what is out there in the job market. Businesses train their employees but the extension of the knowledge gained at university is essential.

> *'the hotel chains coming to Ghana will require hospitality education graduates to provide an international service, for which I still think that we educators in Ghana have not prepared ourselves, in that direction* (ME48).

5.2.4.2 New approaches for enhancing hospitality education in Ghana

Related to the points mentioned above on the gaps in learning, skills and competencies, the respondents mentioned the new approaches that should be tried in Ghana as part of the GHEEF-supported interventions to enhance graduate employability in hospitality education, and higher education in general. For example, the need to balance lecture and examination-based strategies with other assessments for/of learning was noted. The responses also suggested a de-emphasis on examinations by giving other assessment approaches a sufficient allocation for the total scores in a module, for example coursework, presentations, mini-projects, and ICT, and report writing. Involving industry experts in the curriculum design and thereby covering the emerging industry needs was noted as well

5.2.4.3 Innovation and creativity among lecturers

Lecturers should be more hardworking and creative, and facilitate high-quality student-centred learning. A lack of proper supervision, orientation and insistence on the activities of lecturers and the resistance to change creates a situation whereby lecturers lecture without any formal procedure.

> *Lecturers resist and frown at change so we keep doing things without trying new ones* (BE20).

Regular curriculum innovations and training lecturers in curriculum design and delivery

Lecturers should take ownership of the curriculum design and delivery. They should also improve the curriculum regularly. The following quotes support these points:

> *'I think that we, the lecturers, should also write reports after teaching about what should be added and what should be removed. Our input is very important. In the report, we make recommendations about what is relevant*

to the training of the students to fit in with the industry requirements' (BE20).

5.2.4.4 Lecturers' industry experience

It is important to give lectures training on the job in order for them to be up-to-date on the happenings in industry; for instance, linking lecturers to hotel chains for industry experience. This will increase their awareness of the trends in the hospitality industry. Industrial visits add to the awareness of the need to simply go and observe, since HEIs do not offer practical training facilities for either students or lecturers.

5.2.4.5 Provision of new equipment by hospitality institutions

The higher education institutions should provide the same up-to-date equipment for teaching that is being used in the hospitality business to enhance the teaching of hospitality students. The use of real objects is fundamental for teaching, where the students will have the opportunity to see, handle and even use these real objects:

5.2.4.6 Entrepreneurship education with critical thinking skills

The lecturers suggested the need to include entrepreneurial learning as a tool for improving graduates' access to the job market or for self-employment. It seeks to develop awareness regarding careers and provides skills such as business creation and development, while self-employment creates work and boosts the economy. We also know that an entrepreneurial attitude is necessary, not only for entrepreneurs but also for employees. While public funding is in many countries, decreasing there is increasing pressure on institutions to produce successful students. This means that these institutions need to be able to tap into the critical skills of entrepreneurship to tackle and resolve issues related to graduates' job market prospects. Thus, getting a job has become a big challenge that graduates are facing today. It is exactly the reason why hospitality education in Ghana must teach students of hospitality to become entrepreneurs. To enhance student engagement and success, hospitality students need to be equipped with an entrepreneurial mindset.

Entrepreneurship education produces graduates who are capable of identifying wealth creation opportunities. According to Egwuatu (2013), enterprise skills include skills such as initiating action, intuitive decision making, networking, identifying opportunities, problem-solving, innovative and strategic thinking and personal effectiveness.

Entrepreneurship education is a lifelong process for developing individuals' skills, attitudes and behaviour, and so is important for developing enterprising graduates.

If hospitality education equips students with an entrepreneurial mindset at the outset of their career, they will be more engaged and take ownership of their own success. Moreover, students who were involved in entrepreneurial learning will be able to create rather than seek jobs. Entrepreneurial skills can be learnt; it is not a matter of being a born entrepreneur. Skills like critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, risk-bearing; teamwork and self-reliance are all employability skills. How this can be achieved differs enormously and there are many ways to do so, but it is certainly more comprehensive than simply adding the subject 'entrepreneurship' to the timetable. It requires vision and a thoughtful strategy of staff recruitment and training:

> *'I think that our graduates can be employable by creating their own businesses. We need to intensify the teaching of entrepreneurship as an aspect of hospitality courses so that, when these students complete the course and do not get formal jobs in hospitality-related institutions, they'll still be employable through creating their own jobs. Hospitality students should be job creators and not job seekers' (VI37).*

> *'We also have to find out how students can form cooperative groups to form businesses…identifying a product with a very high market potential…Our students should have an entrepreneurial mind too. They need to identify opportunities to establish a business on their own' (IS13).*

5.2.4.7 Need for teacher development training for lecturers

Lecturers advocated the need for a new staff development course that will enhance experiences in subjects like critical thinking and independent learning, as well as refresher courses for lecturers.

> *'Lecturers, when hired, are not given any additional training. There is no orientation and they keep doing what they are taught when they were students'* (IS13).

5.2.4.8 Need for new approaches

There is a need for new approaches to enhancing graduate employability, including generic skills, presentation skills, and independent learning skills (personal development planning PDP), career development learning and student-led learning (didactic TLA approach, not student-led):

> *'I think we need to adopt other ways of teaching'* (BE20).

5.2.4.9 Use of competency-based training (CBT) methods

Competency-based learning empowers students to focus on mastering valuable skills and knowledge and learning at their own pace. Its value for developing practical or vocational skills or competencies is more obvious, but increasingly competency-based learning is being used for education requiring more abstract or academic skills development. This is what lecturers commented on under the above sub heading.

Defining competencies that meet the needs of students and employers in ways that are progressive (i.e. one competency builds on earlier competencies and leads to more advanced competencies) and coherent (in that the sum of all the competencies produces a graduate with all the knowledge and skills required by a business or profession) is perhaps the most important and difficult aspect of competency-based learning. Lecturers have identified a number of strengths in the competency-based learning approach because it meets the immediate needs of business and the professions; students are either already working, and advance within the industry or, if unemployed, are more likely to become employed once qualified; and increasingly, competency-based education is being recognised as eligible for hospitality graduates by lecturers:

> *'now all of the Polytechnics are adopting competency-based training or learning (CBT) so that a student is taught exactly what they will need to do in industry*' (FA16).

5.2.4.10 Well-structured industrial attachments

A well-structured industrial attachment that actually develops students' skills in different departments of the host organisations that has accepted students for internships is

needed: stakeholders need to make a concerted effort to promote this agenda to benefit graduates:

> *'There are also significant roles that the administrative structures, if enhanced, would help; for example, the poor supervision of industrial attachments by lecturers hampers the chances of graduates, so these should be examinable and graded'* (IS23).

5.2.4.11 Information Communication Technology (ICT)

The ability to use ICT skills for basic tasks such as check-ins and reservations is an advantage for graduates of hospitality education. Due to globalisation, change, and competition, employers prefer to have graduates with ICT skills as a fundamental. If graduates are to benefit from job opportunities, the use of technology has become fundamental to industry in order to operate effectively and competitively. With the arrival of ICT, hospitality businesses have modified their products and communicate directly with their guests. ICT is now recognised as a marketing tool especially in hospitality businesses. It is used for information, communication and operational purposes:

> *'You see we are now in the technological era, day in day out…especially in the hospitality industry. Menus are planned and created by electronic means by computers; checking-in at a hotel is done through electronic media. These simple things are strange to lecturers, how much more so to our students'* (MA6).

5.2.4.12 The need for longer internships

The use of longer, for example up to a year, industrial attachments (internships) that afford students the opportunity for deeper learning of the core tasks they will face in future is also necessary. A typical quote to support this is as follows:

> *'Doing an industrial attachment, what is expected of you is that you're going to learn what it is like in industry…'the industrial attachment part of the curriculum should be strengthened, regulated and assessed as a*

requirement for graduating. By so doing, students will take it seriously' (FA18).

5.2.4.13 Need for experiential learning

The responses generally support the need to develop innovative curricula through experiential learning, based on practical work that reflects what the students will face in the workplace, and a balanced pedagogy. Also, there is a need to build HEI Guest Houses where these experiences will be gained *in situ* in addition to the industry experience, and to develop students' use of technology in their work:

'We need have exchange courses with international hospitality institutions, or professionals in the field who will be invited as trainers of trainees' (VI38).

5.2.4.14 Comparative experiences

One respondent emphasised the need for comparative experiences with overseas-based hospitality education:

'I'd say we're not actually teaching hospitality management education. So we have to look outside, learn the best practice and use that to train our graduates. Many people go to the Kenya School of Hotels: what are they doing that we're not doing - let's find out' (MA39).

5.2.4.15 Industry-academia collaboration regarding curriculum development

Another new approach suggested by some of the respondents was the need for industry-academia collaboration regarding curriculum development and training students in industry, since the hospitality institutions lack the latest equipment:

'I think we need to work with industry, there is a disconnection. The hospitality industry should be part of the curriculum and the government should institute this. Our universities don't have the resources and equipment to teach, therefore the HEIs can align themselves with industry to train or educate the students' (AH40).

5.2.4.16 Teaching small classes and developing better techniques for coping with larger classes

One respondent lamented the absence of an enabling learning environment in Ghanaian hospitality education, including the problem of large classes, and the low expectations of hospitality students:

> *'A class shouldn't be too large but we now have one class that has more than 50 students. This large number will not promote effective teaching as hospitality is hands-on. The perception that hospitality is for students who are not academically bright should be removed from the minds of people*'(AH40).

Hence, there is need to improve the academic and professional esteem of the discipline, by innovating its curriculum, employability and entrepreneurship credentials. Also, there is a need for a more enabling learning environment to enhance the learning experience, for example, using seminars or tutorial groups of no more than 25 students. Moreover, opportunities for using ICT-enhanced learning to teach and assess larger classes should be encouraged.

5.2.4.17 Resources

As noted several times in the foregoing, the respondents lamented the lack of modern equipment in the departments compared to those in new hotels, such as demonstration laboratories and guest-houses, computers for teaching, training workshops, and staff with practical knowledge of the field. The results show that there exists a severe lack of modern equipment in hospitality departments:

> *'We don't have the equipment to teach our students so, when they go to industry, where they're supposed to work with this equipment, they find it difficult'* (AF3).

> *'There is a need for students to learn to 'be on their own', look at the product development aspect of their training, and entrepreneurship training should be encouraged'* (MA9).

One respondent emphasised the *'issue of technological advancement on the part of staff'*, and the need for staff to *'go on a 3-6 month industrial attachment to just go and*

observe and see and learn what new things are going on in industry…modify the way you teach because you already know what industry is using so students with the right education…have these skills' (IS10).

5.2.4.18 New skills and competences

For this construct, additional points made by the respondents include:

1. Teamwork that leads to better learning outcomes (see BE2's quotes on teamwork above)
2. Learning broader management and marketing skills

The respondents also emphasised transferable skills and training in broader hospitality specific management disciplines to enable hospitality graduates to compete for and excel in roles requiring such skills. One respondent indicated that the hospitality education syllabus concentrates more on culinary skills compared to management and other transferable skills such as communication skills, as well as ICT, numeracy and communication skills, problem-solving, organising, working to deadlines, management and leadership, negotiating, motivating people, making decisions, and research skills.

> *'Our syllabuses are also more about culinary/kitchen skills than management skills. Communication skills are considered unimportant. Learning on the job is not encouraged. Those who go on attachments do it on their own and no supervisor goes to check and supervise them due to lack of funds… they then manage to get a certificate to indicate that they have done the attachment'* (HA23).

Some responses focus on the collaborative aspects of curriculum design, as seen with the respondents from Polytechnic 1:

> *'I think industry professionals should be involved in the day-to-day designing of the curriculum…agree on issues such as taking students on industrial attachments. Students are left to do their own thing'* (KH42).

5.2.4.19 Taking initiatives

Self-confidence, as evidenced by good CVs, excellent customer service, and the ability to close deals and make money for an organisation, were noted by some respondents. It is clear that the students who market themselves better through possessing these

skills will secure job opportunities quicker than more intelligent students who lack such skills:

> *'I don't think our students can confidently write a good CV so if we bring in someone to teach them a skill that we lectures don't teach or have, this is a way of enabling them to acquire those skills. Now hospitality is one of the biggest industries in the world, although many hospitality professionals would tell you that having a food and beverage background is important, now it's all about transacting business, retaining customers, and using your skills conjures a guest return' (HA23).*

5.2.4.20 Developing unique skills and competences

Some of the lecturers argued that mere certification by acquiring a degree is not enough to compete in the world of work. They feel that it is more correct to assert that there are more job seekers than jobs, but a lack of preparation by the job seekers is a problem, because they have to compete for those fewer opportunities. This implies honing their skills, attitudes and competences beyond what they learnt at school. This is especially the case for first degrees, which are almost becoming the first entry point where graduates are deemed not to have acquired enough professional skills. This reinforces the need the graduates to be better prepared to develop themselves through continuing professional training, internships, volunteering and other opportunities to acquire the experiences that will set them apart from the rest. These views are supported by the following quote:

> *'I agree that there are no jobs, but instead of focusing your attention on certificates, try and prepare yourselves for the few jobs available. 'Toughen' (develop) yourself in order to be the one who gets the few jobs available. Irrespective of the course, the onus lies with the student to acquire skills outside academia. A first degree is almost becoming like basic education and, when you complete your first degree, you're not really a professional; you need to be exposed to real life issues and to learn on the job in addition to classroom skills'* (KH42).

5.2.4.21 Problem-solving, critical thinking and leadership skills

The lecturers indicate that the teaching of hospitality courses in Ghana does not develop students' critical thinking skills, which will enable them to add more value to their employer organisations, compared to other potential employees without such skills. To emphasise the importance of problem-solving and leadership skills, for example, one respondent explained that it is better for a student to have an upper second class degree and such skills than a first class degree without them. It was indicated that students should be proactive in seeking opportunities to develop such skills through, for example, participating in social and extra-curricular activities. Other beneficial skills emphasised by the respondents include presentation and communication skills. The following quote supports these views:

> '…*the ability to negotiate, engage in critical thinking and solve problems, so as much as I say that a first degree is important, I'll always say that an upper second class degree with leadership skills will always outweigh a first class degree without leadership. Clubs and societies on campus, such as PENSA (The Pentecostal Students Association) and other religious bodies, SRC, some clubs, lion clubs and all of that on campus teach organisational skills, the ability to talk to fellow student is a skill that enhances their skills they are acquiring what we call organisational skills. The ability to give presentations, communicate and make sense, they are getting or acquiring all of these things in addition'* (CH2).

5.2.4.22 Career Development Learning (CDL)

The key points mentioned above which come under this construct include:

> students' knowledge of the trends and opportunities available around them; the ability to team up and form businesses based on the skills learnt on the courses; work-enhancing skills such as group work, presentations, role play, mini projects, interview skills, and self-confidence; writing good CVs; proven competence in performing set tasks satisfactorily; skills that make them self-confident, innovative and self-reliant graduates for management careers in the Hospitality and Tourism industry; and Personal Development Plans (PDPs):

*'…sees employability as an 'individually based concept', with students needing to 'have confidence in themselves' (Self-Confidence) and 'students' knowledge of the trends and opportunities available around them…they lack confidence due to the 'rote learning approach, rote as opposed to experiential learning' (*IS12*).*

5.2.4.23 The need for self-employment (see entrepreneurship)

The lecturers indicated the need for students to develop entrepreneurial skills which will enable them to become self-employed instead of relying mainly on industry jobs. They therefore suggested the need to reinforce entrepreneurship training in hospitality education. Teaching students how to collaborate in forming businesses that sell their skills by identifying products and services with high market potential will require practical entrepreneurship, enterprise development and marketing skills:

'*I think that our graduates can be employable by creating their own businesses. We need to intensify the teaching of entrepreneurship, as an aspect of the hospitality course so that, when these students complete the course and do not get formal jobs in hospitality-related institutions, they'll still be employable through creating their own jobs. Students should be job creators and not job seekers'* (V37).

Due to the unregulated and poor supervision, HE in Ghana runs a system of learning teaching and assessment where the intelligence of the students is measured by who agrees with the teacher and rote learning; if a student writes something different from what the teacher teaches, the teacher will say: that is not what I taught you and I was not expecting that. Critical thinking is discouraged:

'For example, if you teach students and define what inflation is to them, and in an examination, if you ask what inflation is and they repeat what you've told them, that student gets an A in the exam. By the way, there's no relationship between an 'A' in an examination and an 'A' manager in the job market. You can be an 'A' manager in the classroom and a 'D' manager in industry '(KH42).

5.2.4.24 Emotional Intelligence (EI)

The respondents did not mention this construct explicitly, which is understandable since it implies a combination of other skill sets like critical thinking and decision-making, strategic intelligence and wider soft skills that make a person more engaging and generally successful in life. The researcher is of the view that the construct is therefore accommodated in these other skills. The following responses allude indirectly to emotional intelligence:

> '*now it's all about business, how your skills can make a guest come back…customer service excellence, how you can bring money to the business as an employee, is what matters'* (HA23).

However, similarly to the above arguments on lecturers' lack of full knowledge of employability, they cannot meaningfully teach EI as part of the hospitality curricula if they do not understand it technically (Goleman, 1998). In other words, the lecturers need an awareness of the ramifications of EI to teach it successfully to the students as part of employability skills development. Thus, the GHEEF will provide a smarter framework if it facilitates the teaching of EI and similar constructs which underpin employability, but are currently not seen to be fully grasped by hospitality lecturers.

5.2.4.25 Self-Esteem, Self-Confidence, and Self-Efficacy

Under these constructs fall the following learning points which were mentioned above:

The need to develop students' learning and skills such that an A-grade academic performance confidently produces an A-grade work performance; wider knowledge gathered from workshops and more independent learning; and good career attributes and behaviour.

One respondent stated that it is important to use teaching strategies that encourage students to look for information and present their work confidently. Examples include problem-based learning, the use of case studies, and field trips. Another respondent mentioned also the need to develop their critical thinking and independent learning skills, including personal development planning:

'*the use of semi-projects or research which forces them to 'look for information, write their findings and report and then present to the whole class…the use of real-life case studies, field trips or industry visits…Critical thinking should make the student work independently'* (IS13).

One respondent sees employability as an *'individually based concept'*, with students needing to *'have confidence in themselves'* and '*students' knowledge of trends and opportunities available around them…they lack confidence due to rote learning approach to learning*' (IS12).

5.2.5 Results of the lecturers' open-ended questions

Lecturers were asked to indicate the employability skills they think are developed within the hospitality subjects they teach. The results suggest that the lecturers are generally able to associate different employability skills to the different skills. There is evidence also that communication, technical, problem-solving and teamwork are prevalent in the list. The results also support previous findings from the quantitative analysis which associates employability skills with particular hospitality courses (see Table 8 Appendix 5.1c).

The lecturers were asked to indicate in which year in the curriculum employability training would be more usefully located. Twenty-three lecturers out of the 50 indicated that, 'Throughout the curriculum, 12 of lecturers indicated year two, whilst five lecturers indicated the final year of the course. Hence, the lecturers collectively feel that employability skills could be developed from any year across the curriculum, but mostly in the senior years, perhaps when the students have become more familiar with the course.

The following responses to question 12 provide additional reasons for the responses; **'**to provide longer period of training and learning employability skills in order to enhance their knowledge on employability skills before they complete their studies. Those who advocated for employability to be embedded in the curriculum from year one further explained that it will help them in easy transition to the job market.

Some indicative quote is: '*I think it's important because it a lifelong skill' (MA12).*

Lecturers were asked how frequently hospitality curriculum is updated. The responses were: 43% of the lecturers were 'Not sure' This shows possibly that the hospitality

curriculum in Ghana is too infrequently updated to be suitable for developing employability skills in the students that are in line with the changing industry trends. This fact supports the views of the focus group lecturers earlier in section (A) the first part of the analysis.

When asked why there is a lack of regular curriculum updates, the lecturers responded as follows: They suggested that hospitality management is not 'taken seriously', there may be implementation problems, and that lecturers are not abreast with industry trends. They also suggested that policy makers do not consult the lecturers on such matters, which is rather worrying since the lecturers have the responsibility for delivering an innovative curriculum. The following quotes support these points:

> *'Hospitality management is not taken seriously'; 'Implementation might be a problem'; 'education policy makers are not inclined to hospitality education in Ghana*
>
> *'Lecturers are not abreast with happenings in the hospitality industry'.*
>
> *'poor funding and lack of collaboration between stakeholders'.*
>
> *'lack of platform for consultation with both lecturers and industry' (FA20).*

5.2.5.1 Curriculum design

Similar to the views of the focus group, the lecturers suggested a range of TLA employability-enhancing strategies, summarised as follows. The curriculum should be designed in collaboration with industry professionals. It should be made more practical and hands-on as opposed to the current emphasis on theory. Importantly, lecturers should design the curriculum and not to be imposed on them by policy makers. The following statements support this summary.

> *'The curriculum should be designed in liaison with industry experts to reflect what skills they need in graduates'…'more practical work should be included on the curriculum'.*
>
> *'Lecturers should design the curriculum and industry should edit it'(KH42).*

5.2.5.2 Teaching learning and assessment

The following further TLA strategies were suggested by the lecturers for enhancing the employability of hospitality graduates. These suggestions triangulate earlier findings from the focus group analyses.

- 'Work related learning should be encouraged and assessed
- Industrial attachments should be a part or key component of the assessment throughout the years of study
- Adequate facilities for learning teaching and assessment
- Supervised industrial attachments and awarding marks
- Lecturers should be motivated to assess the students
- Refresher courses for lecturers
- 'Continuous assessment, summative assessment'

5.2.5.3 Government policy

With respect to government policy, the lecturers reiterated the focus group findings. They indicated the need for frequent curriculum reviews based on research that identifies best practices. An example is this study, which explores the key influences and industry requirements for the effective employability education of hospitality students. The lecturers further mentioned adequate funding for curriculum development, and industry collaboration facilitated by policy makers. Moreover, they identified the mismatch between industry and training curricula as a key problem. The following quotes support these views:

'Frequent review of the curriculum to meet industry trends'
'Research for best practice'
'Adequate funding for hospitality education and curriculum development'
'Empower lecturers to develop the curriculum'
'Industry collaboration facilitated by policy makers'
'Equipping training institutions with up to-date equipment'
'The government should make it a policy and encourage hotels to take a number of students on attachments'.
'The government should revisit its policy on education and prevent the mismatch between industry and training institutions'

5.2.5.4 Job market requirements

The lecturers reiterated the need to involve industry in the training of students, as part of the corporate social responsibility of the hospitality firms. For this, industry professionals should teach practical aspects of the course with lecturers and provide the institutions with the modern equipment that they currently lack. They recommended that final year hospitality students should complete their final year in industry placements. The following statements support these views:

'*Industry should be part of the training of students'*

'The hospitality industry should provide information to the libraries of hospitality institutions on new developments'

'As part of the social responsibility of the hospitality industry, they should offer to teach and equip the institutions with some modern equipment'

'Final years should finish in industry'

'The hospitality industry should accept students and lecturers for industry training'

'Professionals in industry should be motivated to lecture'

In response to the question on how hospitality education should address the current development in the hospitality industry for graduate transition to the market, the lecturers repeated most of the points noted above. They additionally identified the need for hospitality education to develop the students' ability to recognise career opportunities, in ways that mere technical training in the subject matter will not achieve. For this, there is need for industry input to enable students to become aware of the changing industry requirements and develop the requisite skills to meet these requirements. They also identify the need for supporting research in the industry. The following statements support these views:

'Hospitality education should emphasis the skills training of students to meet the industry expectations'

'The curriculum should have industry input'

'Education should prepare students adequately on career development and be able to identify the opportunities around them'

'Modern equipment should be used in teaching to encourage effectiveness and efficiency in productivity'

'A lot of research in the hospitality industry'

'Students' project work should be problems from industry'

The nature of training and resourcing required by lecturers to more effectively inculcate employability skills in hospitality students was posed to the lecturers, to elicit their key needs for training which will make them better able to facilitate employability-focused learning. The needs identified are listed below as the anchors for staff development related to the GHEEF.

'expanded infrastructure', 'equipment for training workshops', 'adequate funding of hospitality education', 'on-the job training and mentoring, 'Industry experience in four-five star hotels', 'build training hotels in selected hospitality institutions', 'refresher courses for lecturers' 'pay lecturers well to motivate them to teach', 'Create hospitality libraries for institutions with the latest books and electronic gadgets' '*Hospitality departments should be connected to the internet for students*'

5.2.6 Cross-group analysis of findings and research constructs

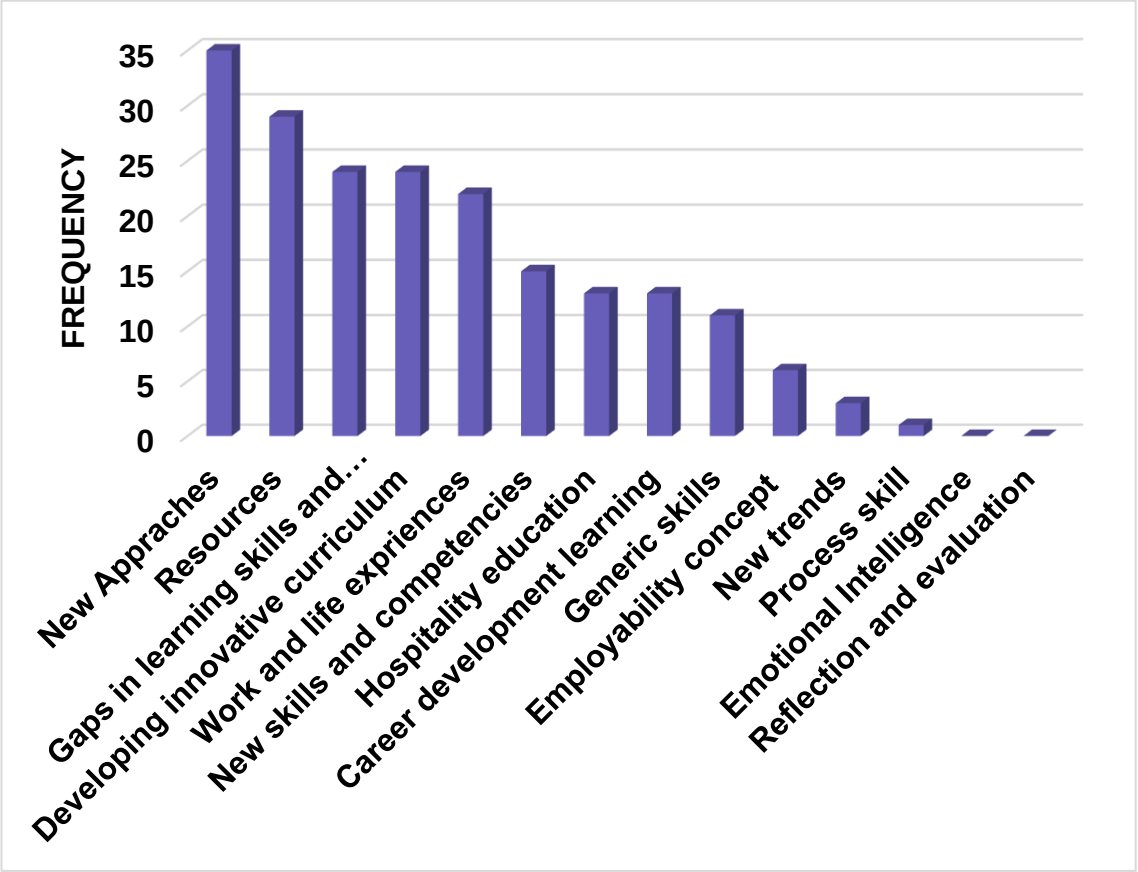
For this subsection, given the similarity of the responses across the three groups of lecturers, the researcher summarises all the opinions of the respondents which relate to the theoretical constructs (see Appendix 5.1b table 5.3) a summary matrix. A summary of the findings for each section are presented under each construct. The researcher interprets the findings in the context of Ghanaian Hospitality higher education. This means that, in designing the GHEEF subsequently in the research, it is easier to use this as a summative matrix which captures key insights from the entire lecturers' analysis. In the matrix, related concepts are discussed together; for example, Self-Esteem, Self-Confidence, and Self-Efficacy.

Finally, for each subsection, the researcher makes a frequency count of the relative number of times that each construct appears in the qualitative analysis in Table 5.4 below. This measures to some extent the importance of that construct in hospitality education as perceived by Ghanaian hospitality lecturers. The frequency count is graphically summarised as a Pareto chart by displaying constructs with more mentions in a layered manner.

Table 5-3 Relative frequency counts of the constructs and Pareto analysis

	Constructs	**Number of Times**	**%**
1	**Employability Concepts**	6	3%
2	**Hospitality Education**		
	2.1 Developing Innovative Curriculum	13	7%
	2.2 Gaps in Learning Skills and Competencies	24	13%
	2.3 Resources	29	16%
	2.4 Subject Knowledge	2	1%
3	**Graduate Skills**		
	3.1 New skills and Competencies	15	8%
	3.2 Generic skills	11	6%
	3.3 Process skills	1	0.5%
4	**Trends**		
	4.1New Approaches	35	19%
	4.2 New Trends	3	2%
5	**Work and Life Experiences**	22	12%
6	**Emotional Intelligence**	0	0%
7	**Career Development Learning**	13	7%
8	**Self-Esteem, Self- Confidence and Self-efficacy**	11	6%
9	**Reflection and Evaluation**	0	0
10	**Personal Development Plan**	1	0.54%
		186	100%

Figure 5.2 Pareto Charts of the Constructs



Pareto scoring ranking constructs

The Pareto chart in Figure 5.2 shows that:

a. The most prevalent sets of theoretical constructs emerging from the lecturers' responses, in order, are: New approaches, Resources, Gaps in learning skills and competencies, Developing an Innovative curriculum, Work and life experiences and New skills and competencies;

b. The least prevalent are employability concepts, New trends, Subject Knowledge, Process skills, Personal Development Plans, Emotional intelligence and Reflection and evaluation. (See above).

The chart further shows the force effect of the various constructs which will inform their relative importance in designing the GHEEF.

A Pareto analysis generally refers to a phenomenon whereby a small number of factors in a study account for a disproportionate size of the observed facts of that

phenomenon. For example, in the Activity Based Costing of a project, 20% of the items may account for 80% of the total costs. These proportions may be 10:90% or 30:70%. The idea is that to improve the performance of such a system; in this case, to reduce the total cost, so attention is best focused on those important (10-20%) items. A look at the chart above shows that, out of the 17 employability themes or constructs used in the qualitative analysis, six (32%), namely new approaches (NA), gaps in learning skills and competencies (GILSC), developing innovative curriculum (DIC), work and life experience (WLE), new skills and competencies (NSCs) and career development learning (CDL), account for about 72% of the overall mentions of the constructs by the lecturers.

Hence, designing an intervention scheme such as GHEEF to enhance graduate employability in Ghana needs a careful focus on all the skills sets which are insufficiently developed in Ghana. These skills sets are related to other important elements such as generic skills (GS) and self-esteem, self-efficacy and self-confidence (3SCs). That said, some factors that were not directly mentioned by the lecturers need to be reinforced in the interventions because the lecturers lack experience of these and so require proactive development. Examples are emotional intelligence, subject knowledge, new trends and reflection and evaluation, and process skills. Hence, when designing the GHEEF, the researcher will consider broad categories of these elements as: a) the main elements (the six driving ones); b) elements needing more proactive development (the above four); and wider influences (resources, new trends, PDPs, and reflection and evaluation), for example. Other considerations will emerge from an updated critical literature review on the approaches to enhancing employability internationally, for example in the UK.

5.2.6.1 Outcome: Developing the GHEEF

The outcome focuses on how the above findings help to develop the GHEEF in such a way that it may be successfully implemented in the Ghanaian context. Columns 1-3 of research framework (Chapter 4 figure 4.1) show that the first two columns refer to how the above constructs support the GHEEF in two senses, as depicted by an arrow labelled Enhancing graduate employability. The third column requires the research to generate crucial contextual differences regarding how employability is perceived and developed in the curriculum by Ghanaian lecturers, compared to what obtains in developed countries. These differences include resource endowments and socio-

cultural differences regarding how lecturers and graduates apply themselves to their work (attitudes). These research findings are then used to develop the GHEEF. This requires the researcher to ensure that the findings are used to develop the GHEEF and for further theory, research and practice.

The focus of this study is on producing an evidence base regarding how the concerned Ghanaian stakeholders understand employability and the gaps in employability education which need to be overcome to enhance hospitality graduates' employability in Ghana. That is, the study emphasises the research aspects of employability skills development. The practical aspects of developing and implementing employability enhancement strategies in Ghana can then be combined with the research insights. These are not the focus of the study. Hence, for the analysis chapter to support the GHEEF, the researcher needs to clarify how the findings achieve these conceptual principles displayed in the research framework for developing the GHEEF (Figure 4.1).

The key findings for lecturers are contained in the above thematic analyses. They are linked to the column 3 (Impact of the Ghanaian context) in the research framework. To effectively apply the new findings, the researcher needs both their summaries and how they help to score the relative importance of the different employability constructs as viewed by the lecturers. This is presented below, following which all of the 'new findings' are summarised before the chapter concludes.

5.2.6.2 New findings from focus group which will support the development of the GHEEF

Whilst most of the responses reinforce the constructs generated from the literature review, as discussed above, a number of new perspectives were obtained. These include:

- There was a misunderstanding of the concept of employability amongst lecturers. Different interpretations existed as demonstrated in section 5.3.4.24 of the lecturers' findings.
- Lecturers' lack of involvement in curriculum design. This is a startling discovery which warrants the complete retraining of the lecturers and a radical change to the higher education policies in this regard;

- An emphasis on the need to teach key management courses as part of the curriculum;
- Knowledge of new trends in the industry should be explored in the curriculum through innovative TLA strategies;
- Hospitality education should be made more entrepreneurial;
- Lecturers should be incentivised and motivated to update themselves generally;
- There should be comparative experiences with international hospitality courses which will facilitate similar standards in Ghanaian hospitality education.

5.2.6.3 The role of additional constructs and viewpoints

New constructs revealed by the lecturers' responses in alphabetical order (see appendix 5.1cTable 5.3 in this research). These constructs reflect the above listed TLA strategies and will be used as an additional checklist of the influences on employability by stakeholders working on the GHEEF post-research completion.

The researcher notes that this research, being predominantly qualitative, uses a mixed methodology based on the responses of the lecturers to the focus group interview questions, complemented by the quantitative scoring in the form of a Pareto chart. The original constructs *deductively* map the theoretical boundaries of the research on graduate employability. The 43 elicited lecturers' constructs complete these initial constructs *inductively* by summarising the lecturers' experiences of employability in their own voices. This brings the power of the Ghanaian context to the research. Secondly, it is very important to surface the Ghanaian context in the research because the researcher further explains; having such contextual insights will enable the GHEEF-informed employability TLA strategies to be related more directly to these lecturers' views.

Indeed, it is feasible to design 43 TLA employability enhancement strategies from the GHEEF, which will implement the insights from the additional constructs as practical interventions in Ghanaian higher education institutions.

Moreover, (Table 5.3 appendix 5.1b) summarises the detailed views of the lecturers across the 17 theoretical constructs, with two new constructs generated by the views, namely Resources and New Trends. These detailed findings will help to operationalise

the GHEEF more effectively to develop good employability education practices related to each construct.

5.2.6.4 Lectures quantitative findings

As was detailed in the chapter four and in the introduction to this chapter, these results were obtained via a questionnaire. The sample chosen for the survey study included: 50 hospitality lecturers with a 100% response. This questionnaire elicited both qualitative and quantitative data which provides findings as shown below:

Explaining Detailed data analysis steps

The following examples clarify the analysis of close-ended items further. From the lecturers' questionnaire in Appendix 5.1c, Question 1 and the associated item frequencies are presented below.

Since the detailed data analysis calculations for close-ended items involve a few steps that are repeated across questionnaire items, the researcher explains these steps here, in order not to repeat them item by item in the presentation of the analysis and results.

For this, the researcher uses two questions as illustrative examples. These are items 1 and 7 which are nominal- and ordinal-scaled, respectively. Later in the chapter the full analyses of all the items including these ones are presented, also with relevant charts. The frequency scores for item 1 are as follows.

Frequencies and popularity of different hospitality management curricula

B TECH HMgt	B TECH HTM 400	HHCIM (HND)	BSc Hospitality Mgt	Other
8 (17%)	16 (33%)	20 (42%)	4 (8%)	0

These frequencies are analysed as percentages to demonstrate the popularity of different hospitality management curricula. Hence, only 8% of the surveyed lecturers award university-based BSc degrees in hospitality. The rest are polytechnic awards, confirming the earlier focus group finding that universities are new to hospitality

education in Ghana. Of the Polytechnic awards, about 42% are at higher national diploma (HND) level and 50% are at Bachelor of Technology (BTECH) level, which is equivalent to a BSc degree. This suggests that there exists a healthy mix of hospitality higher education qualifications, none of which are fulfilling the promise to produce employable Ghanaian graduates. In effect, similar nominal analyses and insights will be applied to other items on the questionnaire that simply categorise but do not order the responses. To analyse the ordinal items, consider Question 7 and its responses as follows.

Item 7- To what extent do you agree that the following career skills listed below are important for enhancing hospitality graduates employability? (see Appendix 5.1c)

Strongly disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly agree**	**Total**
5	3	15	10	17	50
10%	6%	30%	20%	34%	100%

On a Likert scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), these responses are ordinal. The analysis proceeds in three steps:

a) Using the percentage frequencies to discuss the overall strength of agreement between the lecturers' opinions about the item (whether the hospitality education received by students prepares them to work in the industry; and b) Probing the opinions further using an average score across all the responses, and c) testing how significantly different from the middle rank of 3 the score is, as a confirmatory test of the observed strength.

The analysis is implemented using Excel software, as appropriate. The calculations are presented below for example; following this, the results for all the items are presented in Appendix 5.1c and summarised in explanatory tables in the body of the chapter.

It is seen that a total of 54% of the lecturers agree that hospitality education prepares students to work in the industry, which offers rather weak support for the effectiveness of the current hospitality management curriculum practices in making hospitality

graduates employable. It could be argued that, of the 30% who are 'neutral', some, say half (15%) may actually be in agreement, so the strength of the lecturers' agreement about the effectiveness of hospitality education in producing employable students would increase to 69%. However, this is an arbitrary way to interpret the neutral score.

To overcome this, the researcher simply takes the Likert scores (from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) as a naturally increasing scale of agreement, with a neutral score of 3 as a mid-point. Hence, using a mean score provides an overall average strength of agreement, whereby the more the score is above (below) 3, the stronger (weaker) the agreement. Given the statistically large sample size of n = 50 respondents (greater than a benchmark size of 30 used in the z-score tests of difference in the means), this test is used to confirm the significance or otherwise of the observed z- score. This test is specified as follows, where the ***f's*** are the observed frequencies of 5, 3, 15, 10, and 17 for the scores 1, 2 …, 5 (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree).

Observed mean score

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{5} f_i x_i}{\sum_{i=1}^{5} f_i}; \; i = 1, 2, \ldots, 5 \qquad (1)$$

This gives a mean score of $\bar{x} = 3.62$, which is greater than 3, as expected. The z-score statistic for this result is given by:

$$z = \frac{\bar{x} - 3}{s/\sqrt{n}} = 1.7 \qquad (2)$$

where *s* is the standard deviation of the frequency distribution and is given by:

$$s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum f(x - \bar{x})^2}{n - 1}} = 2.6466 \qquad (3)$$

These calculations are detailed in Table 5 of the Appendix 5.1 to this chapter. Using the normal tables, the p-value for the observed z-score is p = 0.0446 < 0.05 and therefore significant at the 5% level of error. As expected, the result is only marginally significant at this level, thereby confirming the weakness of the agreement.

The reader should note that, even though the analysis in this chapter is qualitatively-leaning, and so it could be argued that confirmatory significance tests may not be needed, especially when no further statistical analyses are intended, the use of such tests is to differentiate between findings that are random and those that are relatively strong. This is important in order to determine which findings should be more strongly considered in the design and implementation of the GHEEF, theoretically within the thesis, and practically post-PhD research.

The researcher notes that two approaches are usually used in the analysis of such mixed-methods research involving text-based open-ended items and further measurements using quantitative scales. One is to conduct a detailed statistical analysis including factor effects and multivariate principal components, for example. The other is to perform a simpler statistical analysis as presented above, with a focus on the insights that the results convey regarding the phenomena under investigation. This latter approach is more suitable when the research is qualitative-dominant and what is important is not to model the effects of selected factors or independent variables on certain dependent variables. The former approach would be more suitable for this latter objective.

The researcher noted in the findings that the primary focus of the Likert-scaled items in the survey questionnaires for lecturers and students is to add further measurement depth to the extent of the graduate employability problem in Ghana, which is impossible by using pure thematic analyses of the kinds carried out in the focus group analysis and the employers' interviews. This triangulation of the evidence base will provide more useful insights for designing the GHEEF, since a problem is more clearly understood when it is more properly measured.

Background items (Lecturers)

Institutions in which the lecturers teach (item 1)

Forty-two (86%) of the lecturers surveyed teach in polytechnics and eight (16%) teach at universities.

Table 5-4 Benchmark curriculum used

Degree	Frequency	%
Bachelor of Technology Hospitality Management (B Tech HMgt)	8	17
Bachelor of Technology Hospitality and Tourism management (HTM)	16	33
Hospitality Hotel Catering and Institutional Management (HHCIM (Higher National Diploma(HND))	20	42
Bachelor of Science (BSc HTMgt)	4	8
Total	48	100

Similar to the dominance of Polytechnics in hospitality and tourism education, shown above, only 8% of the degrees awarded are university-based (BSc Hospitality Mgt.). The rest are Polytechnic degrees (50% BTech degrees and 42% HND).

Hospitality operations management courses taught by the lecturers

The courses taught by lectures in Ghanaian hospitality institutions included the following:

Front office operations management, Housekeeping and Accommodation, Hygiene, Sanitation and Safety, Communication in hospitality, Bar operations management, hospitality and tourism management, HRM in hospitality, Hospitality and Catering Law, Food and Beverage management, Cost control, Hospitality Accounting/Book-keeping, Food Science and Nutrition, Hospitality French and Hospitality Marketing, as depicted below.

The findings indicate that majority of the taught courses are core technical skills of hospitality operation management.

Figure 5.3 Hospitality management courses taught by the lecturers

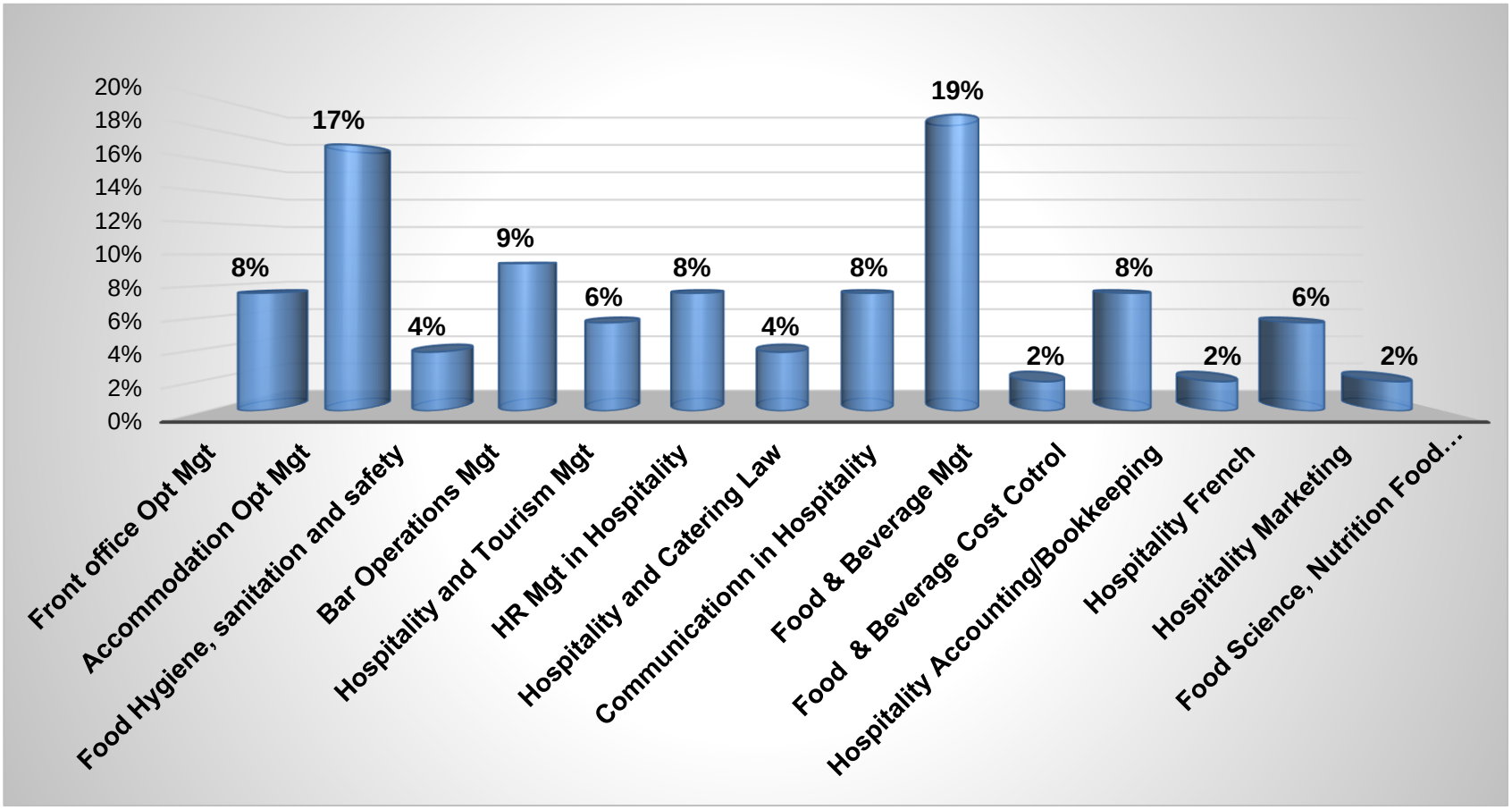
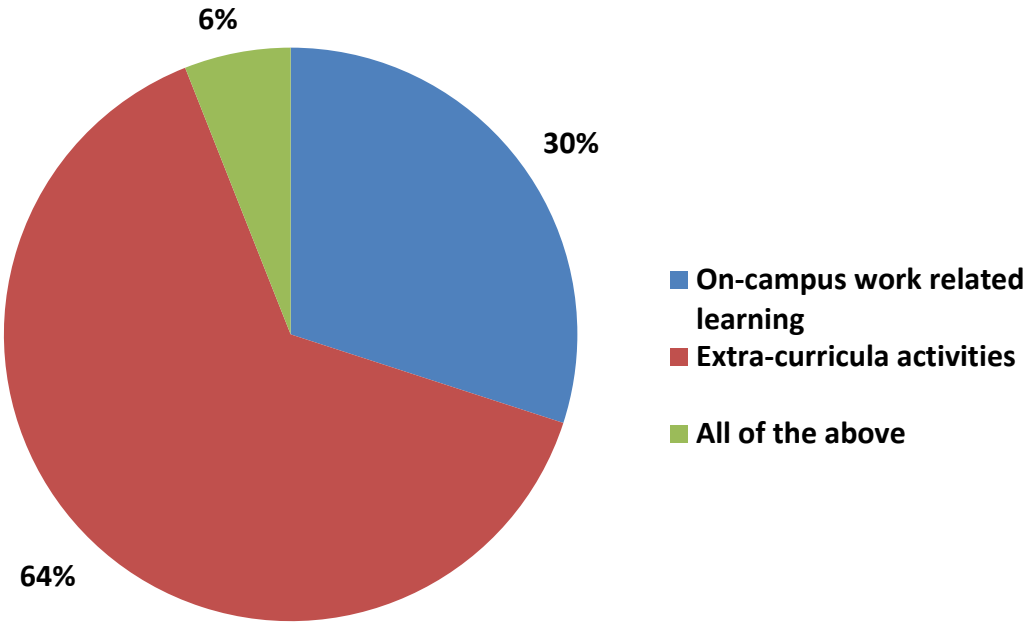


Figure 5.3 shows all the hospitality courses taught by the lecturers and the percentages of their mentions by the lecturers. The three most popular courses are Food and Beverage Management, Accommodation Operations Management, and Bar Operations Management. These are core traditional hospitality courses, and only 8% of the pure management such as human resource management (HR) was mentioned.

Activities enabling graduates to gain experiences for the job market

The lecturers were asked to state their opinions about which activities will enable hospitality students to gain experience that will prove useful in the job market. The majority (64%) mentioned off-campus (activities outside the university campus) and extra-curricular activities, while only 36% indicated on-campus work-related learning and all of the above was 6% activities. ('On-campus' are activities that take place within the university premises such as volunteering, students' representative council activities). In triangulating this finding with the focus group result, it is important to recall that a key off-campus activity in the focus group is industrial attachments, which were considered by the lecturers to be poorly organised and hence of minimal impact in enhancing hospitality graduates' employability.

Figure 5.4 Activities likely to improve graduates' work-related experience



5.2.6.5 Extent of lecturers' agreement

The lecturers were asked about the extent to which they agree that hospitality education in Ghana prepares graduates to work in the hospitality industry (questionnaire item 5). Table 5.5 shows the detailed analysis of their response.

Table 5-5 Detail analysis of how hospitality education prepares graduates to work in industry

Level	Score(x)	Frequency	fx	f(x-xbar)^2
Strongly Disagree	1	5	5	34.3
Disagree	2	3	6	20.6
Neutral	3	15	45	102.10
Agree	4	10	40	68.6
Strongly Agree	5	17	85	116.7
Totals		50	181	343.2
Average			3.62	

The average response score of 3.62 corresponds with 27 (54%) of the lecturers agreeing that hospitality education in Ghana prepares students to work in the industry. The corresponding z-score of 1.70 is marginally significant at the 5% level ($p = 0.0446 < 0.05$). Thus, the results show that there is weak evidence of the effectiveness of hospitality education in preparing the students to work in the industry.

5.2.6.6 Relevance of different career skills for employability

The lecturers were asked to what extent they agree that the different career skills are important in enhancing hospitality graduates' employability. The z-score test of difference in the proportions of lecturers that generally agree or disagree (discussed in the illustrative example above) shows that, in their opinion, all the skills are important, except for the two highlighted ones; namely, flexibility and foreign languages. These

results triangulate the earlier findings from the focus group on the overall importance of generic skills in enhancing graduate employability. It again shows why the hospitality curriculum should reinforce such skills through appropriate TLA strategies.

Some of the skills were rated as highly significant; for example,

Willingness to learn, Interpersonal skills, Team work, Communication, ICT, Entrepreneurial skills and Business Acumen.

Others were rated as significant, including: Presentation skills, Planning, Academic excellence, and Proactivity.

The results confirm the overall importance of these skills in the lecturers' opinions, similar to the evidence presented in the focus group. They additionally motivate the need not only for this study but also for using the study results to develop the GHEEF.

Table 5-6 Importance of selected career skills for employability

	CATEGORIES OF RESPONSES								
SKILLS	**Strongly disagree (SD)**	**Disagree (D)**	**Neutral (N)**	**Agree (A)**	**Strongly agree (SA)**	**% A/SA**	**xbar**	**p-value**	**Conclusion**
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**				
Willingness to learn	0	0	5	30	15	90.00	4.20	< 0.01	Highly significant
Team work	0	0	0	0	12	100.00	5.00	< 0.01	Highly significant
Interpersonal skills	0	0	0	0	15	100.00	5.00	< 0.01	Highly significant
Flexibility	0	0	20	0	0	0.00	3.00	> 0.05	**Not significant**
Oral communication	0	0	0	25	25	100.00	4.50	< 0.01	Highly significant
Numeracy	0	0	0	35	15	100.00	4.30	< 0.01	Highly significant
ICT Technology literacy	0	0	7	0	43	86.00	4.70	< 0.01	Highly significant
Presentation skills	0	0	0	40	10	100.00	4.20	< 0.01	Significant

Entrepreneurial skills	0	0	5	25	20	90.00	4.50	< 0.01	Highly significant
Networking	0	5	45	0	0	0.00	3.00	< 0.01	Not significant
Planning	0	0	15	15	20	70.00	4.10	< 0.05	Significant
Business acumen	0	0	5	15	30	90.00	4.50	< 0.01	Highly significant
Customer orientation	0	0	33	5	12	34.00	4.10	< 0.05	Significant
Enterprising	0	0	0	10	40	100.00	4.80	< 0.01	**Very highly significant**
Academic excellence	0	0	0	42	18	100.00	4.30	< 0.05	Significant
Written communication	0	0	0	32	28	100.00	4.47	< 0.05	Highly significant
Foreign language	0	0	44	6	0	12.00	3.12	> 0.05	**Not significant**
Proactive	0	0	0	46	4	100.00	4.08	< 0.05	Significant

The results show that lecturers agree that most of the listed skills enhance employability, except for the two highlighted skills

5.2.6.7 Links between the key employability skills and hospitality courses

The lecturers were asked to use the matrix in item 9 of the questionnaire (see appendix 5.1c) to indicate the extent to which they think that employability skills and hospitality modules are related, at the overall and individual levels of the skills and courses. By using the row totals and the percentages of the total number of ticks within the cells of the matrix, the relative ability of the different courses to support employability skills in hospitality was obtained, as presented below. For clarity in understanding the results here, the researcher recalls fully item nine in the questionnaire to which the results relate.

Item 9: Please use the following matrix to indicate which of the skills in your opinion are associated with the courses below. Please tick as many skills as applicable. For example , if the item one 'front office' management is associated with 'communication skills', 'initiative and enterprise skill' then tick these two for that item (please tick all cases that apply to you).

The detailed analyses of the responses to this question are presented in Table 8 of Appendix 5.1c. The component results are presented in separate figures as follows.

Figure 5.5 Relative employability-potential of different courses

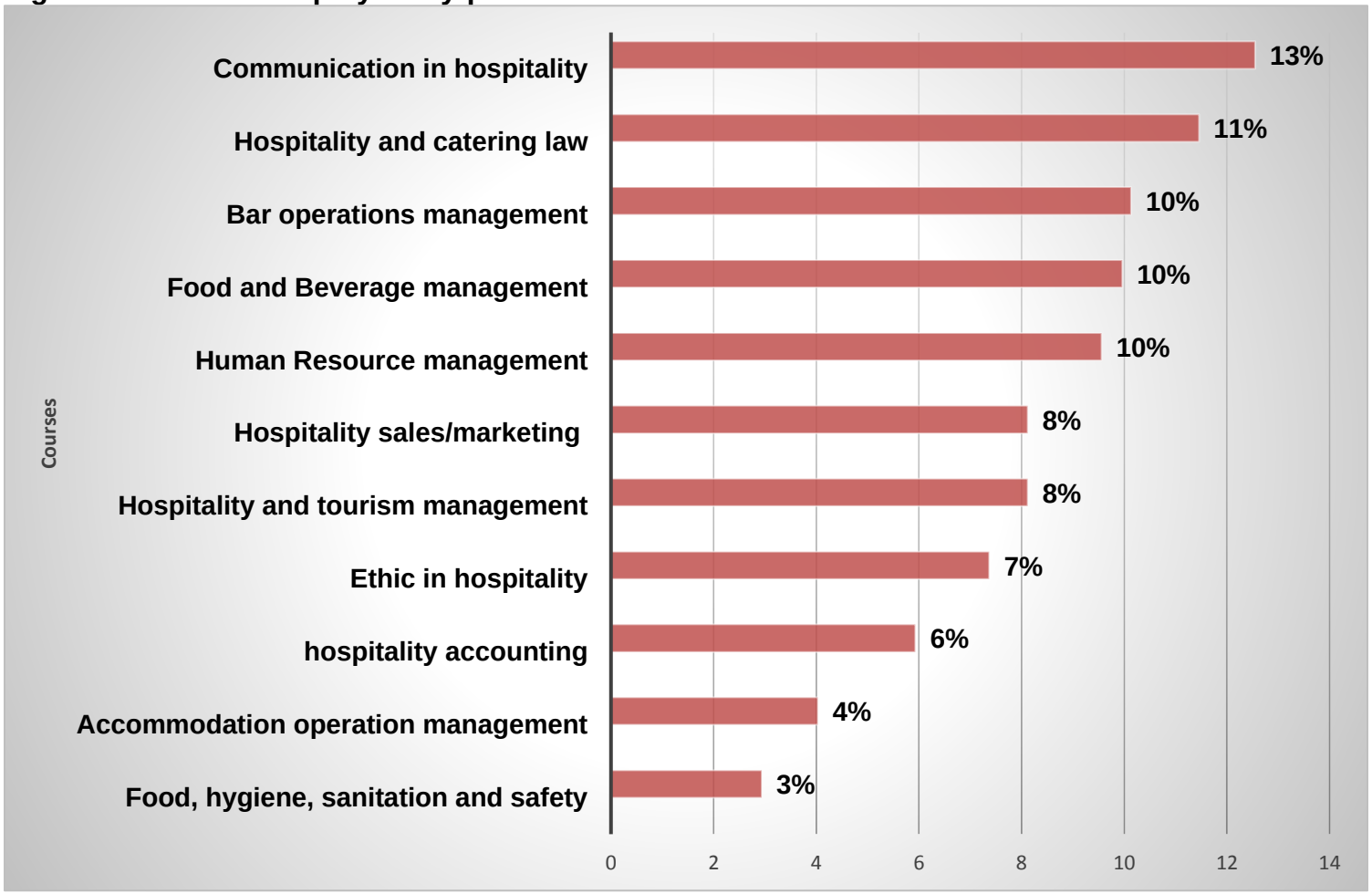
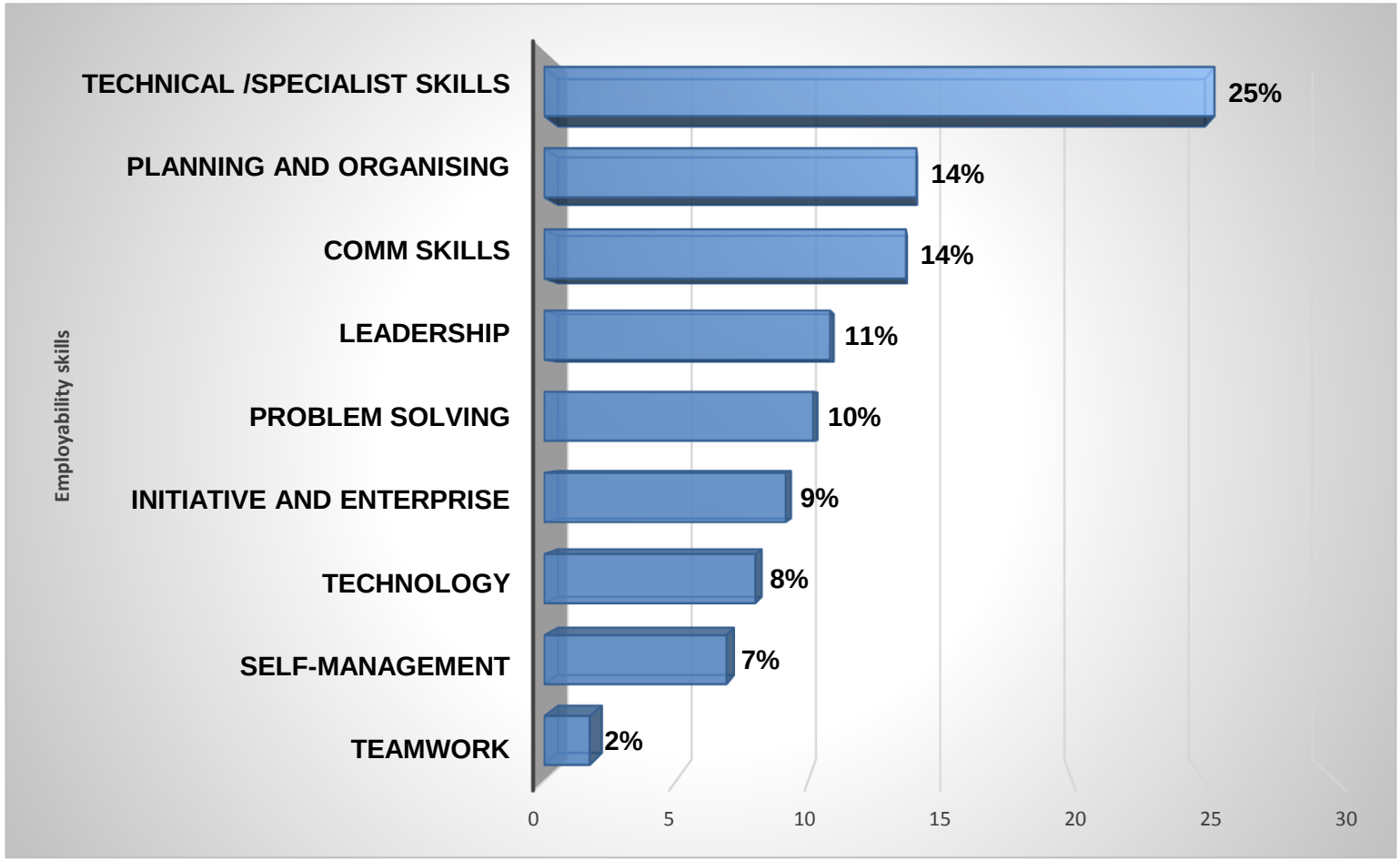


Figure 5.5 shows the relative percentages of the importance of different hospitality courses in supporting the teaching of employability skills to graduates, across all the skills. That is, the percentage of times that the lecturers indicated that it is possible to teach students employability skills within each course, for all, as opposed to individual employability skills. In a sense, the results depict the perceived order of importance of the *'employability-potential'* of the hospitality courses. This measures how plausible it is to embed employability skills in hospitality courses, in the opinion of the lecturers. Again, the results are obtained from the overall percentage row totals of (Table 8 Appendix 5.1c). Similarly, using the overall percentage column totals of (Table 8 in Appendix 5.1c) orders the relative importance of different employability skills in hospitality education, in the lecturers' opinions, as follows.

The results show that the three most plausible modules in which to attempt to teach employability skills are communications in hospitality and bar operations management, which are clearly client-facing hospitality service areas. The results also show that some courses have very low potential to support employability skills. These courses are Accommodation operation management, Food hygiene sanitation and safety, and foreign languages. The Foreign language result corroborates the above notes on foreign languages not being a skill that the lecturers regard as important for employability.

Similarly, reversing the roles of hospitality courses and employability skills, using the overall percentage column totals of Table 8 Appendix 5.1c, orders the relative importance of different employability skills in hospitality education, in the lecturers' opinions, as follows. In other words, Figure 5.6 below rates the different employability skills according to the importance attached to them in hospitality education by the surveyed hospitality lecturers.

Figure 5.6 Relative importance of different employability skills

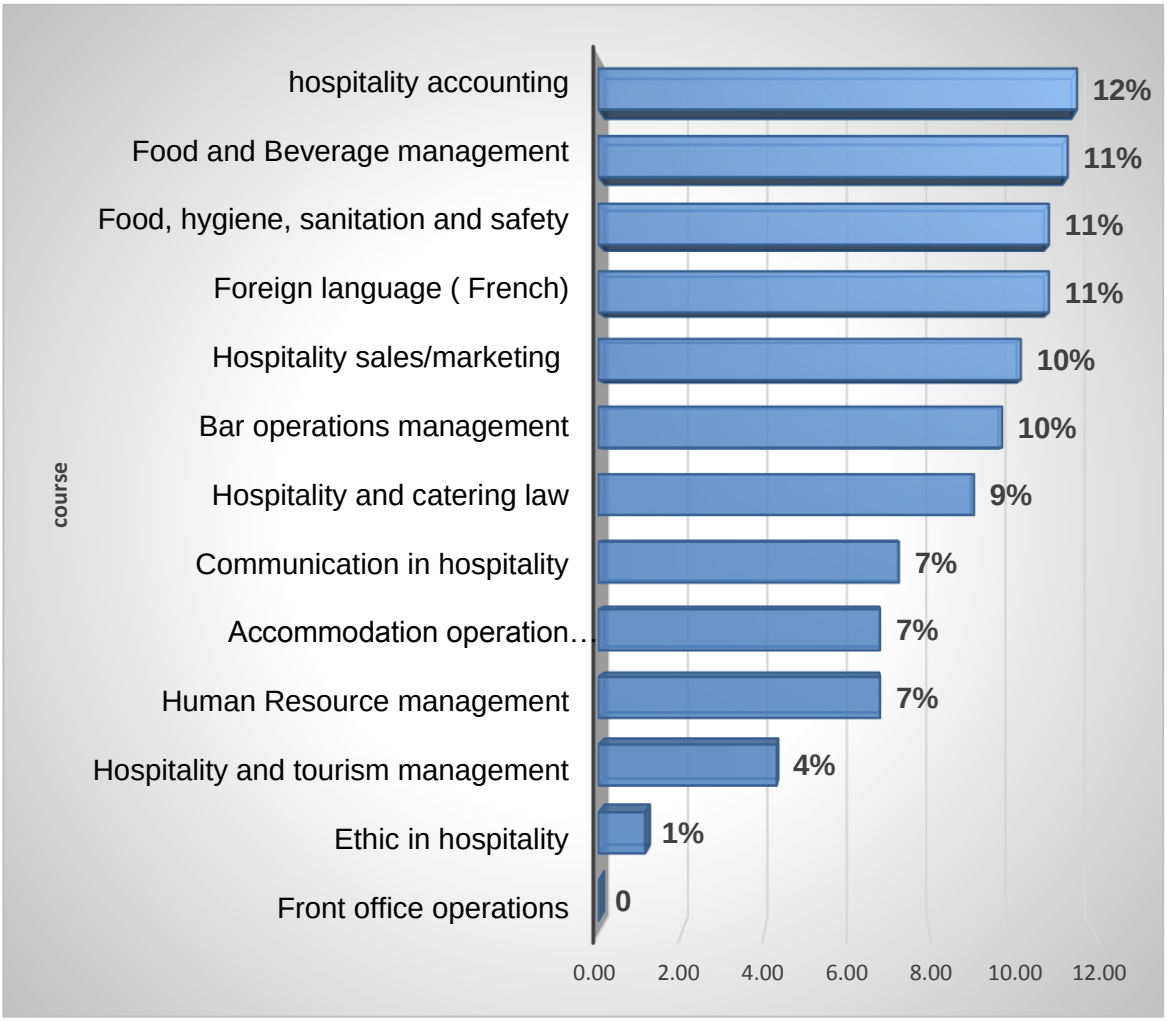


Hence, compared to figure 5.5 and 5.6 presents the results on the percentage of times that the lecturers noted that employability skills are associated with the teaching of all hospitality modules, which measures the overall perceived prevalence or importance of each skill on the curriculum (for all modules, not distinct modules).

Using the within-matrix column totals (in percentages) for each skill in Table 8 of Appendix 5.1c yields the following Pareto charts of relative importance of different courses to support the teaching of the individual employability skills, a replication of Figure 5.5 across the nine skills. The researcher therefore labels the charts 5.5.1 to 5.5.9. For easy follow-through, the researcher titles the charts as 'Teachability of technical/specialist skills', and so on.

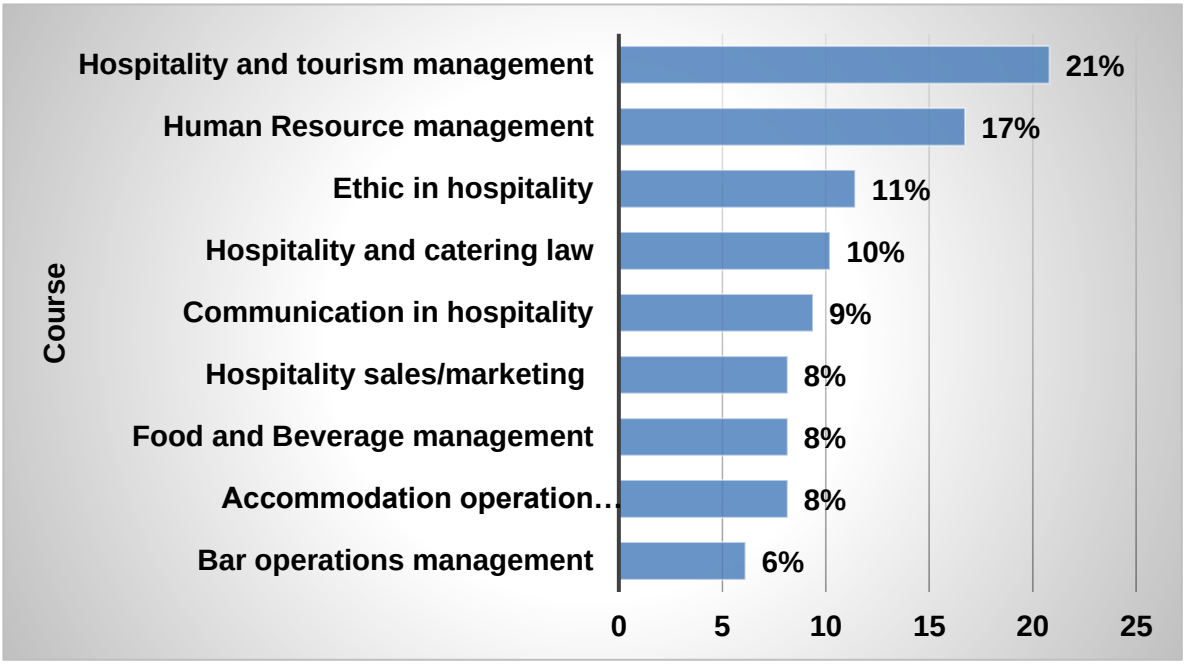
The results show that the three employability skills which are perceived as most important or associated with hospitality teaching and learning are technical skills (25%), planning and organising (14%) and communication skills (14%). The next three skills in order of importance are leadership, problem-solving, and imitative and enterprise skills. Taken together, these inferences will enable employability skills to be suitably embedded within the hospitality curricula, firstly in the more employability-laden modules (Figure 5.5), and for the most important skills (Figure 5.6).

Figure 5.5.1: Teachability of technical/specialist employability skills across courses



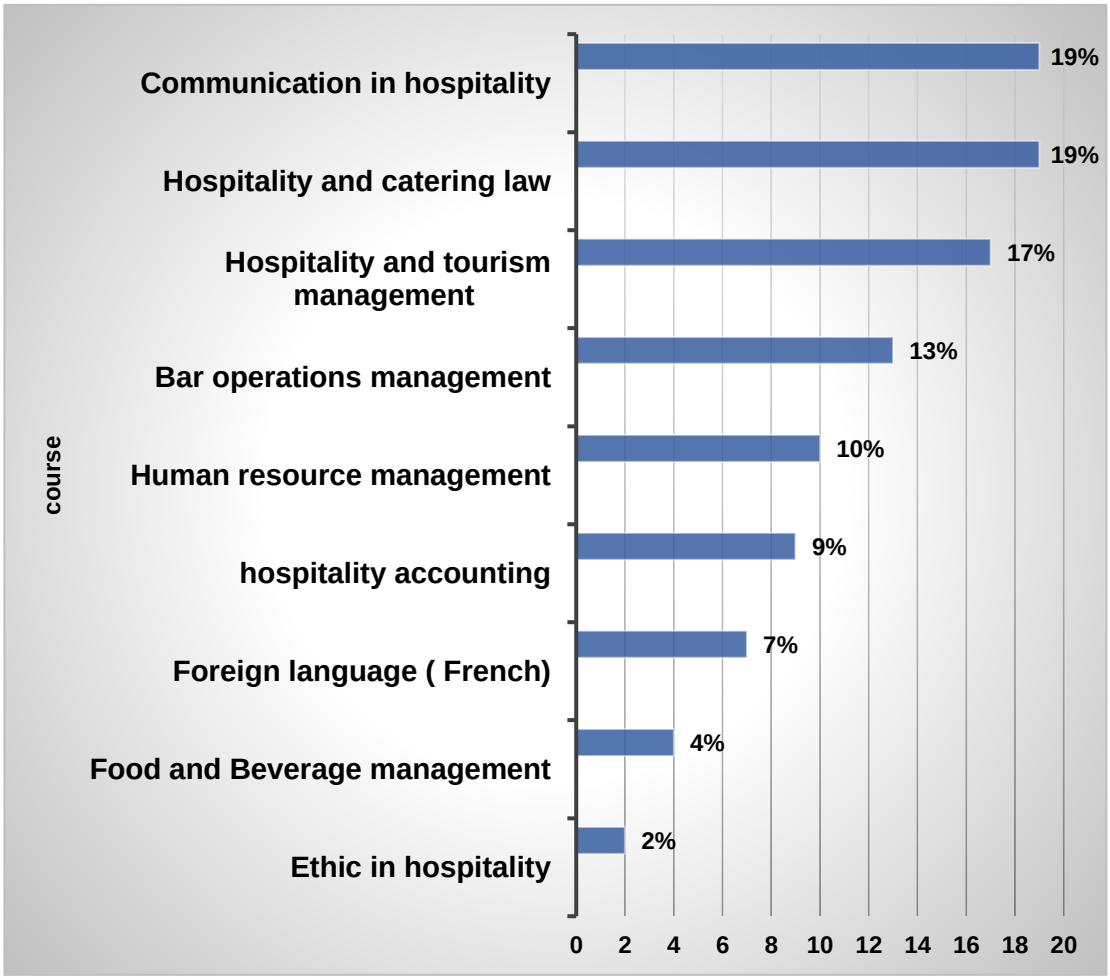
Hence, to teach technical skills, the three most important courses to consider are hospitality accounting (12%), Food and Beverage (F&B) Management (11%), and Food Hygiene and Sanitation (11%).

Figure 5.5.2: Teachability of planning and organising skills employability skills across courses



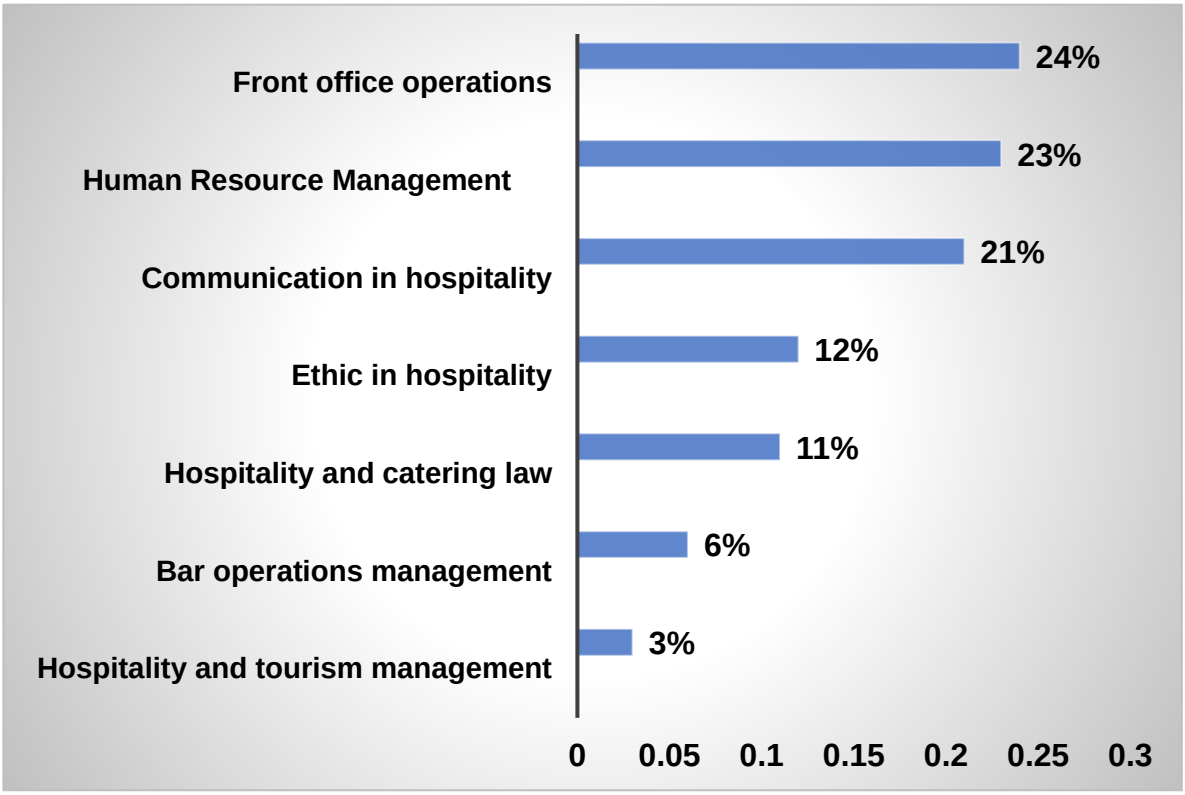
Hence, to teach planning and organising skills, the three most important courses to consider are hospitality and tourism (21%), HRM (17%), and Ethics in hospitality (11%).

Figure 5.5.3: Teachability of communication employability skills across courses



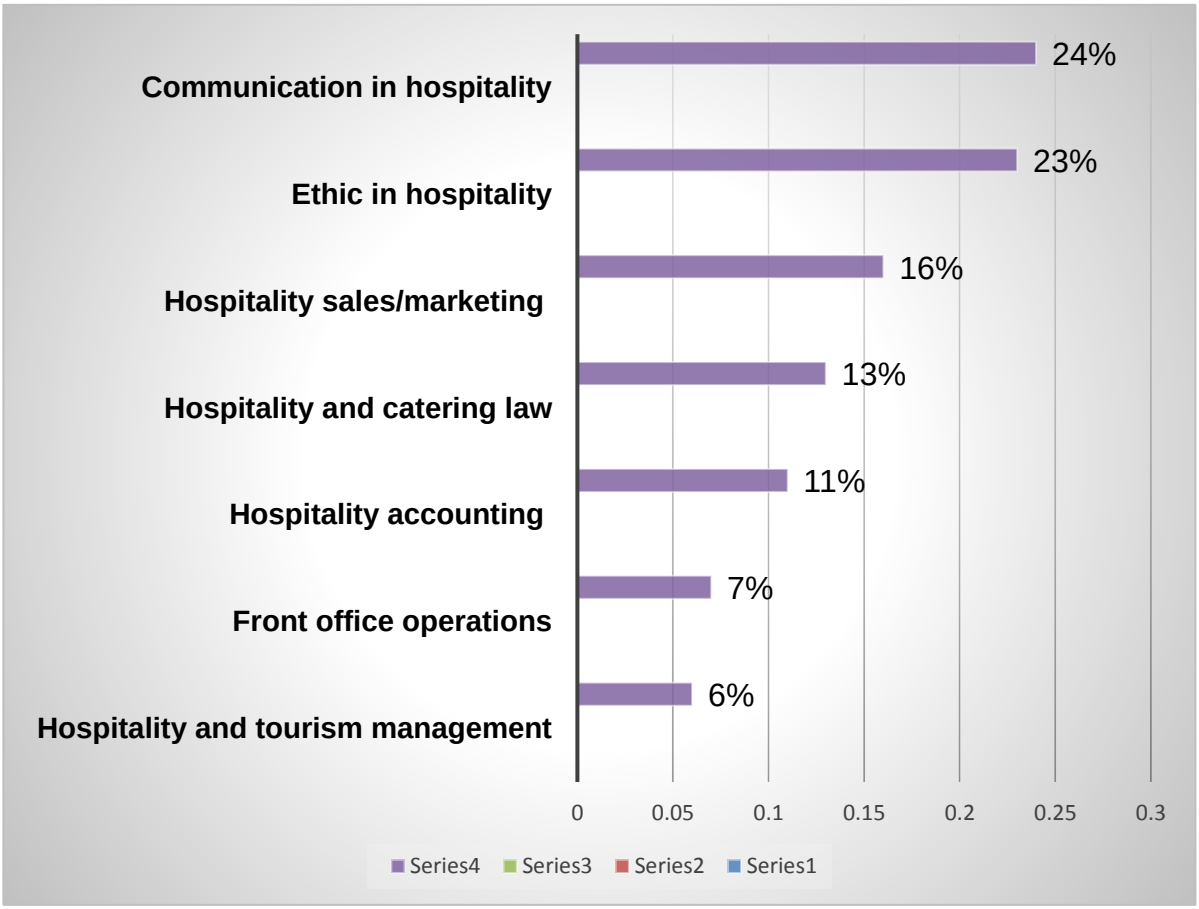
Thus, to teach communication skills, the three most important courses to consider are communication (19%), Hospitality and catering law (19%), and Hospitality and tourism management (17%). Following these, such skills should be developed in Ethics, Law and Bar operations courses.

Figure 5.5.4: Teachability of leadership employability skills across courses



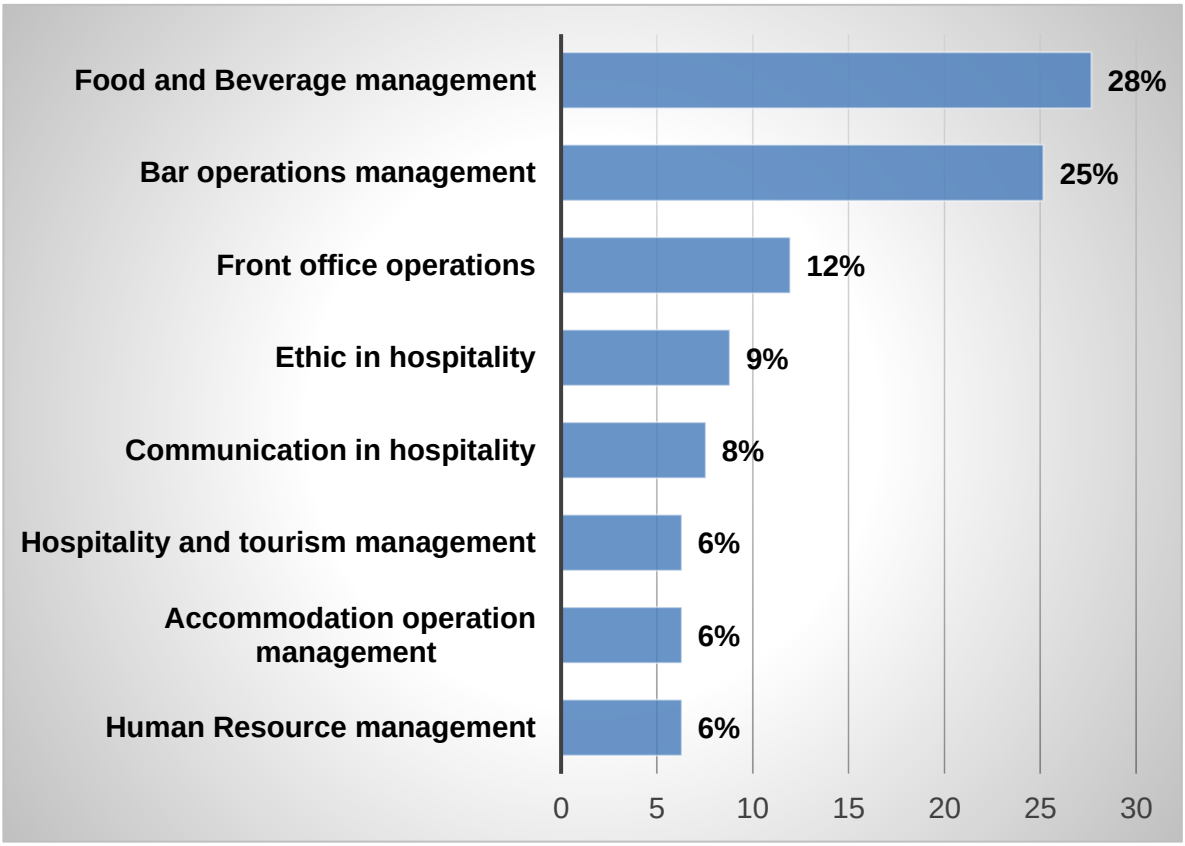
Hence, to teach leadership skills, the three most important courses to consider are Front office operations (24%), HRM (23%), and Communication in hospitality (21%), in that order, including Bar operations management.

Figure 5.5.5: Teachability of problem-solving employability skills across courses



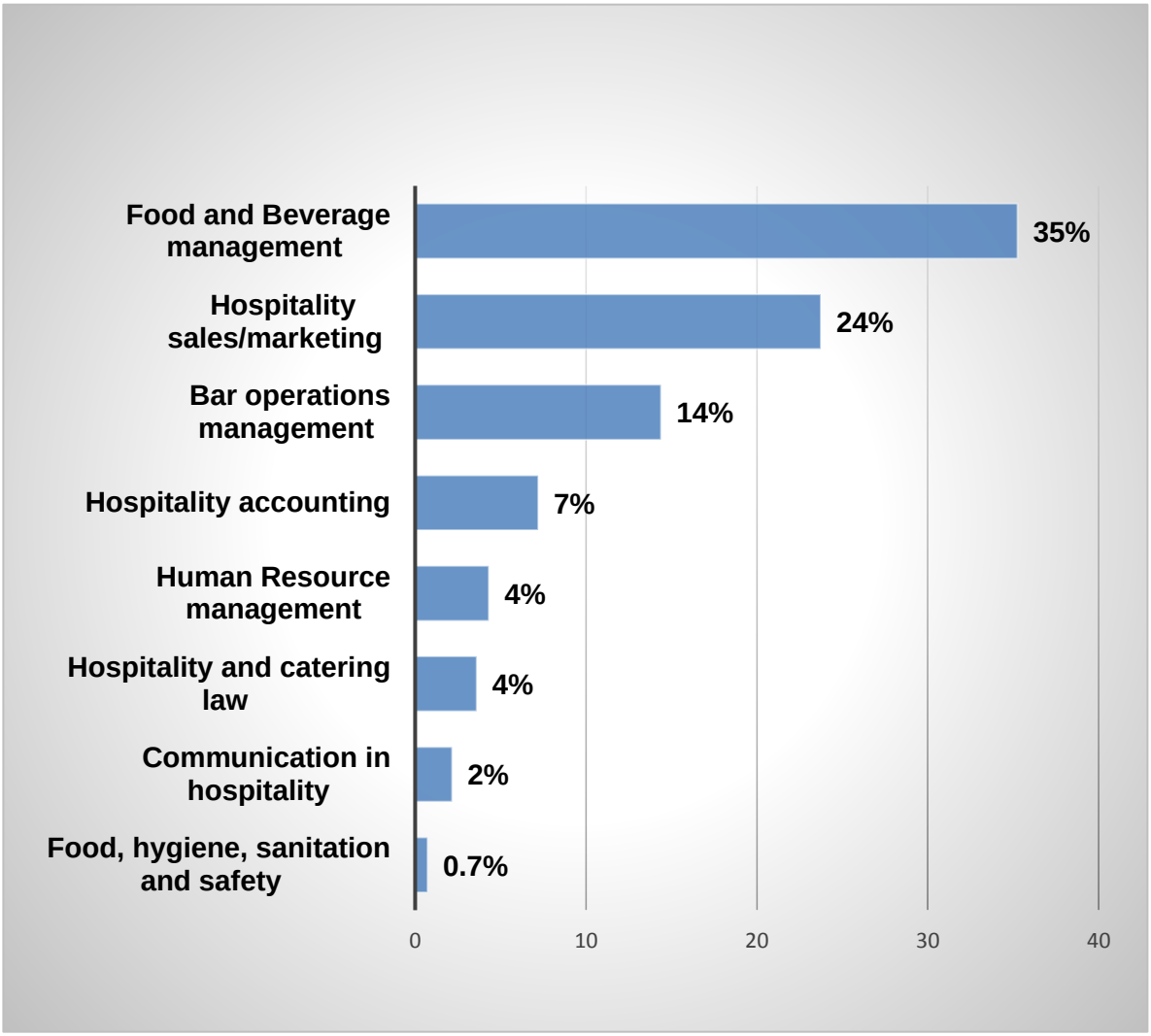
To teach problem-solving skills, the three most important courses to consider are Communication in hospitality (24%), Ethics in hospitality (23%), and Hospitality sales and marketing (16%).

Figure 5.5.6: Teachability of initiative and enterprise employability skills across courses



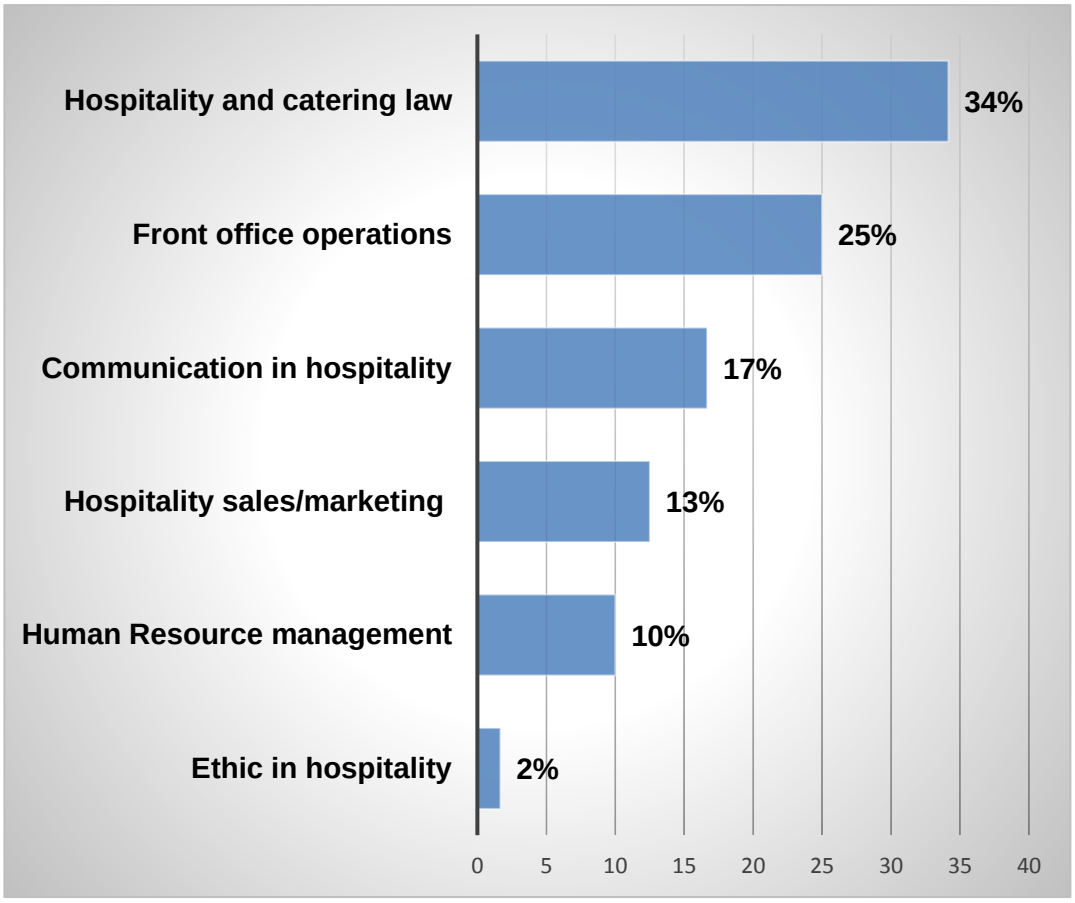
To teach initiative and enterprise skills, the three most important courses to consider are Food and Beverage Management (28%), Bar Operations Management (25%), and Front office operations (12%).

Figure 5.5.7: Teachability of technology skills across skills across courses



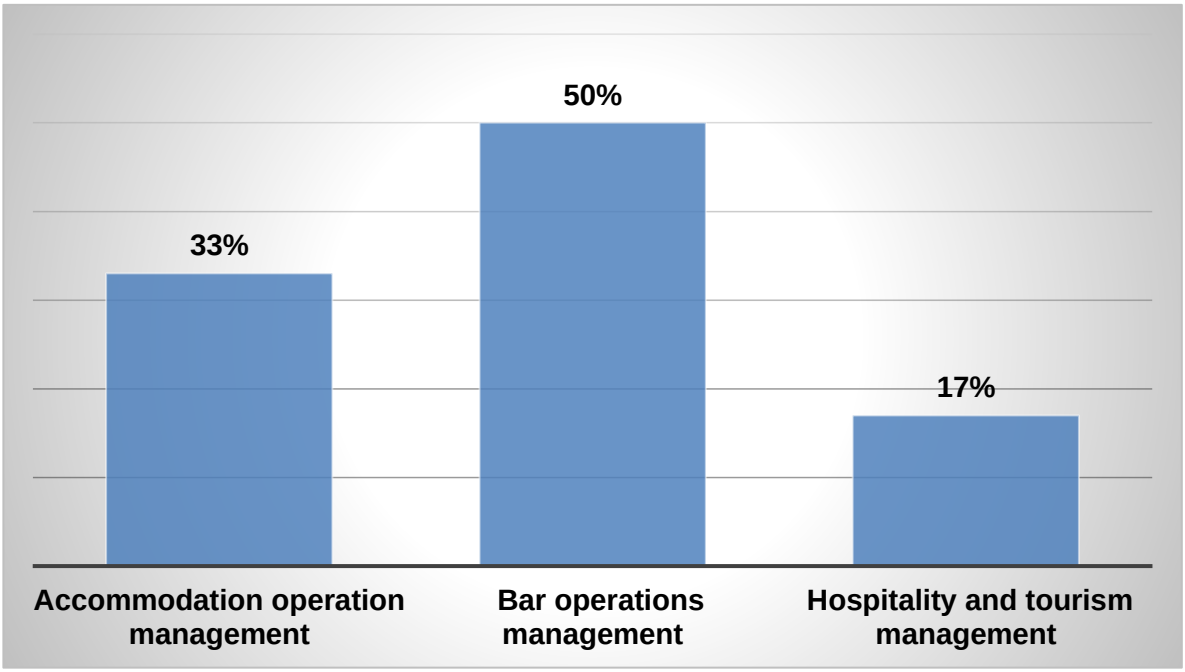
The results show that, in order to teach technical skills, the three most important courses to consider are Food and Beverage Management (35%), Hospitality sales and marketing (24%), and Bar Operations Management (14%).

Figure 5.5.8 Teachability of self-management employability skills across courses



The results show that, in order to teach self-management skills, the three most important courses to consider are Hospitality and catering law (34%), Front office operations (25%), and Communication in hospitality (17%).

Figure 5.5.9: Teachability of team working employability skills across different courses



The results show that, in order to teach team working skills, the three most important courses to consider are bar operations management (50%), accommodation operation (33%), and hospitality and tourism management.

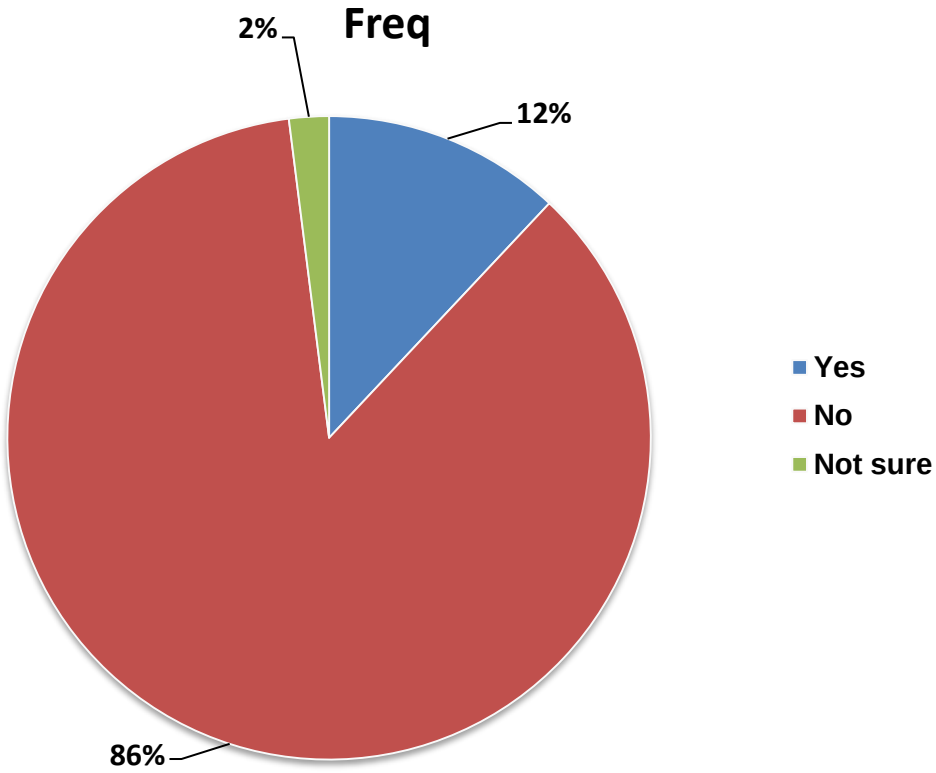
Table 5-7 Percentage and mean agreement with students' learning of different skills

Score	%	x-bar	p-value	Conclusion
1.Leadership and people management	14	2.14	> 0.05	Insignificant
2. Communication	33	2.30	> 0.05	Insignificant
3. Financial skills	71	3.63	< 0.05	**Significant**
lf-management	40	3.29	> 0.05	Insignificant
5. Business management	59	3.53	< 0.05	**Significant**
6. Enterprising	30	2.69	> 0.05	Insignificant
7. Project management	54	3.29	> 0.05	Insignificant
8. ICT	54	3.49	> 0.05	Insignificant
9. Academic writing	52	3.33	> 0.05	Insignificant
10.Foreign language	75	4.12	<0.01	**Highly significant**
11. Numeracy (basic maths)	48	3.78	< 0.05	Significant
12. Willingness to learn	34	2.94	> 0.05	Insignificant
13. Being proactive	55	3.33	> 0.05	Insignificant
14. Time management	33	3.04	> 0.05	Insignificant
15. Entrepreneurship	43	3.24	> 0.05	Insignificant
16.Presentation	17	1.98	0.05	**Highly insignificant**

The Table 5.7 shows that the lecturers identify that students have learnt only three of the 16 employability skills listed above – financial skills, business management, and foreign languages. In other words, there is robust (subject group-triangulated) evidence that employability skills are virtually absent among Ghanaian hospitality graduates, lecturers and students. This fact 'measures' the extent of the hospitality graduates' employability in Ghana, for which reason this research is important as a baseline contribution to the knowledge about this problem at the theoretical, research, and practical levels.

As found in the focus group, the lecturers confirmed overall that the hospitality curriculum is significantly outdated. This is exacerbated by the fact that the same curriculum virtually does not teach the students employability skills. See also the following additional measurement of this curriculum deficit.

Figure 5.7 Extent to which hospitality education provides students employability skills required for jobs in the industry



As shown in Figure 5.7, a very high percentage of the lecturers (86%) disagree that hospitality education provides students with employability skills.

5.2.6.8 Summary of the findings from the lecturers

The results triangulated the related results of the three focus group in key respects which include the lecturers' poor understanding of the concept of employability. Using similar themes as in the focus group, the researcher notes below the additional points that will inform the GHEEF and which emerged from the questionnaire survey, compared to those summarised in the equivalent of the focus group. The main difference between the results obtained in the qualitative and quantitative data analysis of the lecturers is the analytical depth afforded to the research by the more probing nature of certain questionnaire items in this chapter. Hence, the results:

- Identified the extent of the conformity between the Ghanaian hospitality lecturers' viewpoints and the key employability skills which exist in the literature.

- Developed affinity relationships which provide Pareto charts that show the potential to teach employability skills across different hospitality courses, and vice versa; that is, the relative potential of each course to support employability skills development. (see section figure 5.2)

Even though these relationships do not suggest that one should not attempt to teach as many skills as possible on particular hospitality courses, they help to rank the three or six most likely courses or skills for achieving the set purpose of effectively enhancing hospitality graduate employability in Ghana. This is important for the GHEEF, which will be a conceptual map of what to emphasise in the actual design and delivery of employability-focused hospitality curricula following this research. This is applicable to other disciplines, once their own affinity matrices are obtained through follow-on research. Therefore, these results have strong implications for the theory, research, and practice of hospitality graduate employability in Ghana, which can be applied to other disciplines and developing country contexts.

Again, the results will consequently inform the design and deployment of the GHEEF theoretically within the thesis and practically by way of post-PhD follow-on work, **to** help

the stakeholders in hospitality education to enhance graduate employability more effectively, the researcher explains further below how these findings complement those of the focus group in developing the GHEEF. The theoretical, research and practical implications of the findings will be developed in more detail in the discussion and conclusion chapters of the thesis.

5.2.7 Key findings lecturers

Theme 1 Employability: concept and meaning

The findings from the lecturers' focus group and open-ended questions under theme 1 showed a poor understanding of the employability concept among the lecturers. They exhibited a certain degree of misunderstanding over the concept of employability. The lecturers' views on employability were varied. Some emphasised an individual's ability to secure employment as their understanding of employability. In general, they had a very narrow view of employability and lacked conceptual clarity and understanding. The difficulty lies in trying to define the meaning of employability. In other words, these lecturers did not fully mention a broader understanding of employability as involving not simply the potential to secure a job, but also to derive satisfaction from it and grow one's career successfully (Pool and Sewell 2007). Individually, the lecturers explain particular aspects of what it means to be employable, and not every aspect concerns the ability to access a job, grow, be satisfied by it, and progress to other jobs with better prospects. The responses, however, emphasise access to jobs and the need for the skills to achieve that.

Theme 2 Hospitality education curriculum development in Ghana

The general perception regarding the lecturers' responses on the state of hospitality education in Ghana were mainly related to curriculum development. Several problems associated with the curriculum for hospitality education in Ghana were revealed by lecturers as a major issue that exacerbates the teaching of hospitality. The Ghanaian hospitality curriculum system is poor, just as the curricula of many other developing countries. It lacks content and quality, is very theoretical, overloaded, outdated and detached from the hospitality industry skills and competency requirements. It is therefore inadequate to serve the needs of both students and the industry. In addition to the above inadequacies in hospitality education in Ghana, which form part of the wider poor

curriculum development and delivery, these problems include a lack of curriculum innovations and ownership of the curriculum design process by lecturers as mentioned earlier.

The respondents also identify that the curriculum was not developed to include broader educational and professional skills, such as management and communication which are vital employability skills. Therefore, there is a need for regular updates to the curriculum. Added to this, hospitality education in Ghana, according to the findings, is more of craft culinary skills. The students are not exposed to proper hospitality business management compared to what pertains in other parts of the world, for example UK, USA, Canada and Australia, where hospitality education is situated in the business school mostly. Ghana hospitality management education is situated in the school of applied sciences.

Additionally, and more disturbingly, it was discovered that Ghanaian hospitality lecturers seem to work with curricula that are developed by an external national authority, NABPTEX. Hence, they simply use a centrally-developed course syllabus, instead of carefully designed curricula with matching learning outcomes, teaching, and learning and assessment strategies by themselves. In addition, the Ghanaian hospitality curriculum was designed mainly from the academic viewpoint by educators who have no industry experience and focus attention on satisfying degree requirements, not for application (Sarkodie and Adom 2015; Asirifi et al. 2013). This often leads to disparities between education providers and hospitality industry vis-à-vis the subjects to be taught and skills that students need to acquire during their scholarship. Based on this argument it is believed that students who were taught with the current curriculum lack professional knowledge and fail to satisfy industry requirements. Success of hospitality education in Ghana rests on its course curriculum and contents. The fast changes taking place in the Ghanaian hospitality industry in recent times mean that the hospitality curriculum needs to be in line with the needs of the industry. The study unfortunately revealed that the level of collaboration between hospitality education and the hospitality industry was low.

A startling revelation was the reusing of old notes rather than having the opportunity to develop their ideas from intermediate to advanced level. Lack of practical and experiential learning and lack of resources and enabling environment to rectify these inadequacies.

Theme3 Gaps in learning, skills and competencies

A lack of innovation in Ghanaian hospitality education and inadequacies of the skills specifically related to hospitality are evident in the core subject knowledge. However, as mentioned under theme 2, Ghanaian hospitality students are handicapped with skills needed by the hospitality industry. Some of these learning gaps and skills identified include:

A lack of group/team dynamics in learning, lack of resources and equipment, including computers; inadequate emphasis on practical skills within a curriculum that is too theoretical; insufficiently exposed to industry experience; subject knowledge not balanced with employability skills; lecturers/graduates' lack of in-depth industrial experience whereby hotel managers give them routine tasks; and poorly-managed industrial attachments

Theme 4 Enhancing Ghanaian hospitality graduates' employability:

As stated earlier, the theme 4 results on enhancing Ghanaian hospitality graduates' employability indicated that lecturers and graduates are not abreast with industry trends and skills. There is mismatch in the hospitality curriculum with the skills needed in hospitality industry especially the hotels. The hospitality curriculum at present has not included these new skills in the hospitality curricula due to irregular curriculum innovations and lack of training of lecturers on curriculum development and delivery. Lecturers indicated the need to balance lecture- and examination-based strategies with other assessments for/of learning.

Interestingly, a suggestion was made that lecturers should be more hardworking and creative, to facilitate high-quality, student-centred learning. There is a need for teacher development for lecturers, linked to hotel chains for industry experience. Several suggestions were made that when adhered to could enhance graduate employability some of these include new equipment for teaching, need to teach entrepreneurship and critical thinking skills.

The following findings, which have implications for the GHEEF, were obtained.

Findings linked to the GHEEF

- Lack of teamwork that leads to better learning outcomes
- Need to teach management and communication skills
- Unique skills and competences e.g. self-confidence, good CVs, excellent customer service, and making money for an organisation
- Need for career development learning (CDL)
- Teaching students how to collaborate in forming businesses
- Using TLA strategies that force students to apply their wider knowledge from workshops and wider reading
- Learning broad management and marketing skills
- Lack of emotional intelligence strategies in hospitality education
- There is weak evidence that the curriculum effectively prepares students for work in industry. Only 54% of the lecturers agree that hospitality education generally prepares students for work in industry. Eighty six percent disagree that the education equips the students with employability skills.
- Lack of practical and experimental learning: 64% of the lecturers suggested that off-campus extra-curricular activities should dominate the TLA work with 30% mentioning on-campus learning. Lecturers predominantly teach through lectures, projects and seminars, but not supported by field trips, case studies, videos, and e-learning, for example Lecturers agree with graduates that the graduates learnt only 3 of the 16 key employability skills explored. The affinity matrix results in the chapter measure the potentials to teach different employability skills in different hospitality courses and curriculum: should be creatively used by curriculum designers in embedding employability learning activities across course and years of the study.

All of these results were reinforced by the questionnaire findings, especially lecturers' specific suggestions of employability enabling TLA strategies contained in the qualitative

analysis section of the chapter and are summarised below in the section on enhancing hospitality graduate employability. The additional elements to consider in the GHEEF relate to the course-employability affinity matrices are thus:

- The affinity matrix results add a new perspective to construct development linked to curriculum enhancement, by further measuring the employability-proneness of different courses and the teachability of specific employability skills in different hospitality courses.

Conclusion

This chapter reviewed a thematic analysis and the results of the lecturers' responses to the focus group interview questions and the questionnaire survey (Appendix 5.2 and 5.3, respectively). It presented the analysis based on a more ramified set of about 17 employability constructs compared to the broad themes used in Section 5.2.1. This helped the researcher to discuss the findings in light of the theoretical constructs on employability and hospitality education, especially ranking the constructs by how prevalent these are, in the lecturers' experience.

The findings, however, revealed that there are many conflicting issues facing hospitality education provision in Ghana which will be discussed in the discussion chapter. The chapter summarised key findings and new constructs which provide specific knowledge about the Ghanaian context that makes the GHEEF relevant to Ghana (see appendix 5.5)

The key contribution of this chapter to knowledge is that it identifies the above findings on the hospitality lecturers' understanding of employability across all key theoretical constructs, which will inform the design of the GHEEF.

Theoretically, the approach used in the chapter can be applied to other disciplines in order to obtain similar results and discipline-specific ways to enhance graduate employability in Ghanaian HEIs. The approach may also be applied to other developing countries. In addition, findings of the questionnaire survey of lectures generally complements that of the focus group which are all presented in this chapter measuring how Ghanaian lecturers understand employability issues and improving the checklists of the influences and TLA strategies which will support the development of the GHEEF.

5.3 Findings graduates

This section presents the findings from the survey of the hospitality graduates. The analysis follows similar strategies adopted for the previous section on the lecturers' questionnaire data. As noted earlier, the quantitative analysis of the Likert-scale and close-ended items on the graduates' questionnaire is still qualitative-leaning, since the Likert scores primarily measure their perceptions of the items. The open-ended items were analysed in the same way as the pure qualitative analysis undertaken for the lecturers' data. The students' questionnaire is presented in Appendix 5.3 of the thesis. The quantitative analysis consists of basic descriptions of the frequency data for the items and the use of test statistics to confirm the significance or otherwise of the graduates' opinions across the questionnaire items and categories.

The analysis enables the researcher to gain an additional understanding of the graduates' knowledge and achievement of employability skills in hospitality education in Ghana. The results show how insights drawn from the whole analysis were combined with the initial constructs from the literature review, in order to design the Ghanaian Employability Enhancement Framework (GHEEF).

5.3.1 Gender counts of graduate respondents

The gender counts of the graduates were obtained from the graduate sample, which included year of completion. As indicated in chapter 4, graduates who completed their degree between 2010 and 2012 were included. Seventy five percent and 25% of the respondents are female and male respectively, a result that coheres with the traditional cultural norms in Ghana, whereby females are more used to fulfilling catering duties even within the family.

Table 5-8 Demographic profile of the hospitality graduate respondents

Demographic Variables		Year completed	Frequency	%
Gender	Female	2010-2012	225	75%
	Male	2011-2012	58	25%

The graduates were asked to indicate to what extent they agree that the hospitality education they received prepared them to work in the hospitality industry.

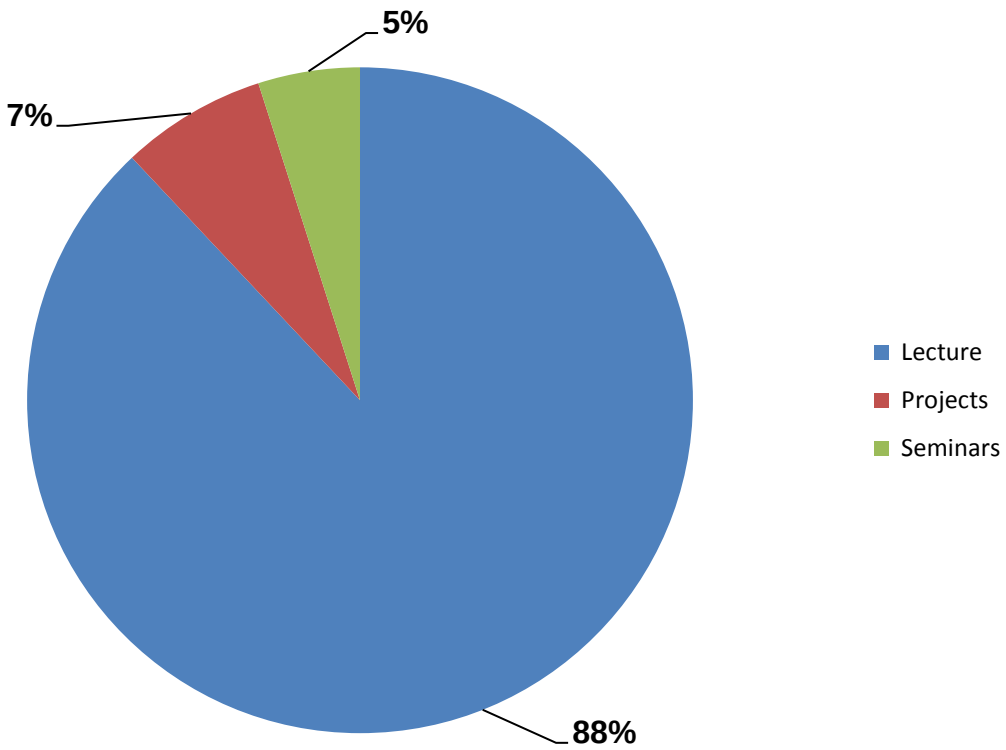
Table 5-9 Graduates' responses to the item

Response	Score (x)	frequency (f)	%	fx	x-bar	p-value	Conclusion
Strongly Disagree	1	0	0	0	3.24	> 0.05	Insignificant
Disagree	2	97	36	194			
Neutral	3	12	4	36			
Agree	4	162	60	648			
Strongly Agree	5	0	0	0			
		271		878			

Sixty percent (60%) of the graduates agree that the hospitality education they received prepared them for the world of work. Remarkably, only about 4% of them are neutral and about 36% clearly disagree, as shown in Table 5.9.

The overall mean score, which is a summative measure of their agreement, is therefore low, at 3.24, which is a non-significant p-value at the 5% level of error ($p > 0.05$). Hence, despite a seemingly high percentage of overall agreement that hospitality education prepares the students for the world of work, the summative Likert-scaled measurement reveals a weak impact of the education, which is line with previous evidence obtained from the lecturers' focus group.

Figure 5.8 Teaching methods experienced by the graduates



The results show that about 88% of the graduates declare that they were taught through lectures, while only 7% and 5% respectively experience learning through projects and seminars. The graduates indicate a lack of learning through the other more employability-enhancing methods, which corroborate similar views of the lecturers regarding the lack of work-related training off- or on-campus (outside the academic environment or within the campus), extra-curricular and TLA activities. This lack of work-related learning limits graduate employability in Ghana's hospitality education, as found with the lecturers. This is another form of triangulation of the research evidence by subject group studied.

Table 5-10 Graduates' satisfaction with the teaching methods

Method	% satisfied	x-bar	p-value
Score			
1. Lecture	29	3.14	> 0.05
2. Projects	30	3.00	> 0.05
3. Field trips	0	0.00	> 0.05
4. Seminars	2	2.47	> 0.05
5. Experiential learning	0	0.00	> 0.05
6.Videos	0	0.00	> 0.05
7. Case study	0	0.00	> 0.05
8. e Learning	0	0.00	> 0.05
9. Guest speaker	0	0.00	> 0.05
10. Examination	21	2.31	> 0.05
11.Assessed presentation	0	0.00	> 0.05
12. Assessed industrial report	8	2.03	> 0.05

The few items which the graduates indicate they had experienced during their hospitality education all attracted below 30% satisfaction rates, with the most common methods (lectures, projects and examinations) particularly having very poor satisfaction rates. This evidence triangulates rather awkwardly previous findings in the sense that: a) lecturers were not effectively enhancing hospitality graduates' employability; and b) these methods are now seen to be the least satisfactory approach for graduates. There is again the need to improve the teaching of employability within Ghanaian hospitality education.

This section explores in more detail the graduates' perceptions of their learning of the same 17 employability skills which the lecturers had used to rate graduates' learning.

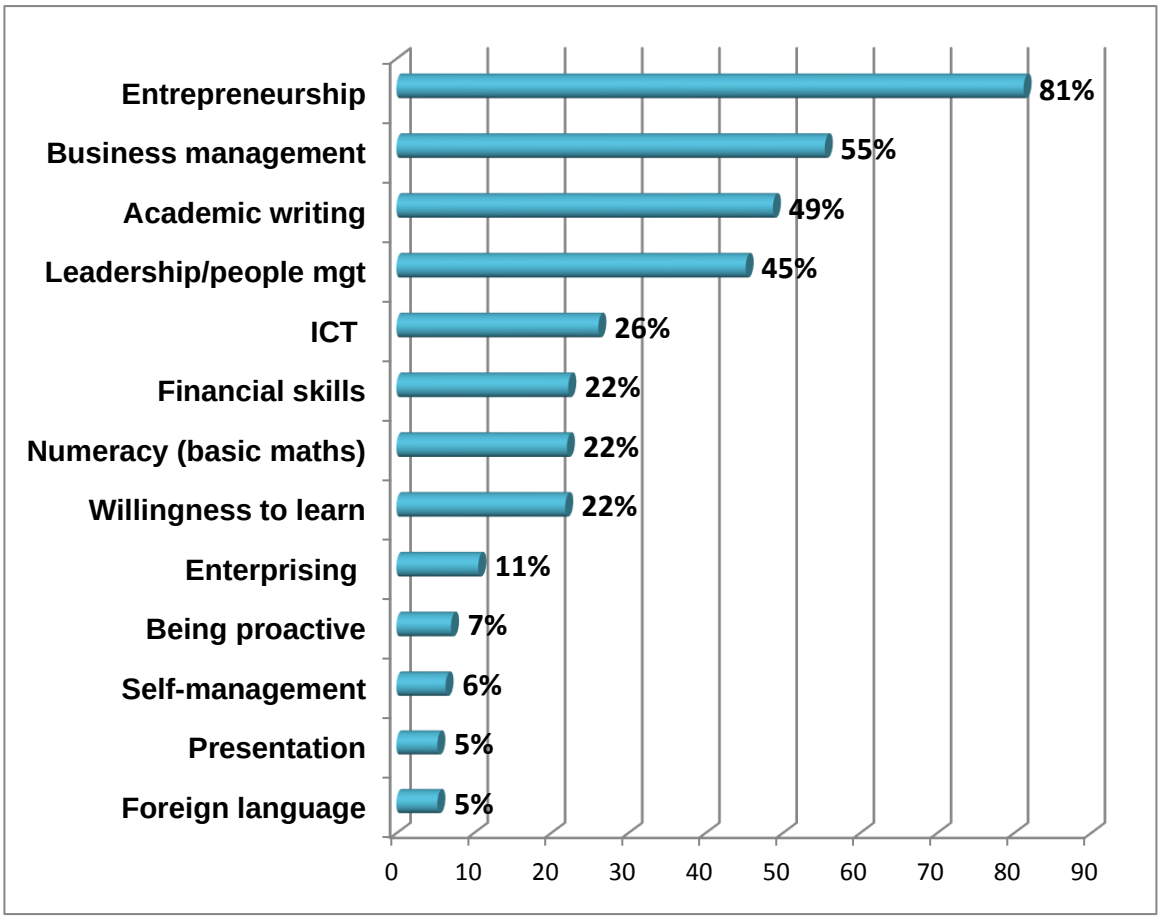
Table 5-11 Graduates' perceptions of their learning of employability skills

Skill	%	x-bar	p-value
Score			
1. Leadership/people management	45	3.20	> 0.05
2. Communication	0	1.33	> 0.05
3. Financial skills	22	2.47	> 0.05
4.Self-magement	6	1.66	> 0.05
5. Business management	5	3.22	> 0.05
6. Enterprising	11	2.23	> 0.05
7. Project management	0	2.01	> 0.05
8. ICT	26	2.42	> 0.05
9.Academic writing	49	2.94	> 0.05
10. Foreign language	5	1.90	> 0.05
11. Numeracy (basic mathematics)	22	2.52	> 0.05
12. Willingness to learn	22	2.50	> 0.05
13. Being proactive	7	2.80	> 0.05
14. Time management	0	2.70	> 0.05
15. Entrepreneurship	81	4.02	< 0.01
16. Presentation	5	2.03	> 0.05

The graduates report no meaningful learning about virtually any employability skill, except for entrepreneurship skills ($p < 0.05$). However, they see entrepreneurship as employability, about which there is significant learning, due perhaps to the strong vocational nature of hospitality work generally, regarding which the graduates can be entrepreneurial.

The results continue to triangulate the cumulative evidence on the very poor teaching and learning of employability skills within the hospitality curricula, as gathered from the foregoing analyses in this chapter. A Pareto-style chart of the students' percentage of propensity to learn the various skills is presented below in Figure 5.9

Figure 5.9 Order of graduates' perceived learning of the different employability skills



The results confirm the same views as the lecturers, who noted that graduates effectively learnt only the four topmost skills above. This shows clearly that employability education should focus more intensely on the other skills, from ICT down to Project Management.

5.3.2 Graduates' understanding of the employability concept

Overall, and similar to the lecturers' opinions discussed above, the graduates narrowly conceive employability as merely gaining employment, instead of also succeeding in and outgrowing a job to achieve higher prospects. The following quotes typify the graduates' understanding of the concept of employability:

'It is the act of gaining employment';

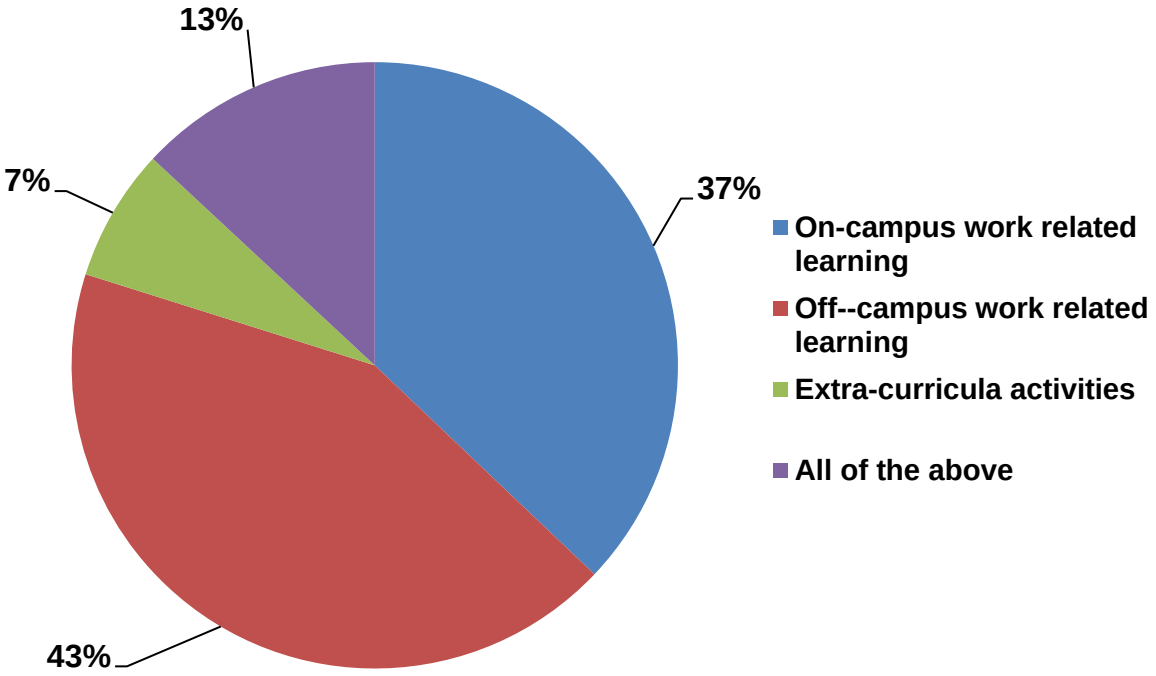
'My understanding of employability is the readiness to work and your ability to fit in rather than employment';

'Employability is what the graduate has on his curriculum vitae (CV) for employment'.

'Employability is a set of achievements - skills understandings and personal attributes that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupation which benefits themselves, the work force, the community and the economy'.

Only the last quote comes close to the more comprehensive meaning of employability seen in the literature and reiterated above. Possibly, the graduate searched for the meaning of employability in the dictionary.

Figure 5.10 Graduates' rating of potential employability-enhancing activities



Here, graduates rate on-campus and off-campus activities, and their combinations as important in providing them with job-related experience. This again corroborates the similar views of the lecturers. This suggests that all of the previous notes regarding the fact that this more promising activity is not properly structured (as in their industrial attachment) apply here.

5.3.3 Key findings Graduates

Four key findings that emerged from the graduates' findings included

1. Their poor understanding of the concept of employability
2. They were not equipped to work in industry, due to the use of outdated teaching methods that are not employability-enhancing.
3. The curriculum content Knowledge
4. They had poor commercial knowledge of the hospitality industry

The main findings of the graduates include new knowledge about the gaps in learning and the skills and competencies in hospitality education in Ghana. Also, as noted above, the students narrowly understand employability as merely gaining employment. These include the extent of understanding the meaning of employability in the country, and how these findings feed into the design of the GHEEF as an intervention mechanism for improving graduate employability in Ghana. Only one graduate explained the concept of employability in line with what pertains in the literature.

Also, there is a lack of modern teaching methods and poor satisfaction with the most popular teaching methods; namely, lectures, seminars and projects. Overall, the students' opinions triangulated the evidence on the very poor teaching and learning of employability skills within the hospitality curricula that was obtained earlier from the lecturer's responses. The graduates noted that there is a lack of work-related off-campus and on-campus extra-curricular TLA activities which should enhance their employability skills. This supports the lecturers' views, outlined above.

Conclusion on the graduate findings

The analysis and findings of the graduates have shown how hospitality graduates understand the concept of employability, which is similar to how the lecturers perceive it. The findings have brought forth the graduates' experience of their hospitality education, and whether this has contributed towards enhancing their prospects of experiencing an easy transition to the job market in Ghana. The main findings are enumerated above and their detailed interpretation is presented in the next chapter.

5.4 Findings employers

This section discusses the rationale and strategy for the analysis, and the overall structure of the findings. The analyses broadly follow the same strategies used in the lecturers above when analysing the lecturers' opinions from the focus groups. Since there was relatively fewer employers involved compared to lecturers, the two sets of analyses will differ in some respects. This will be clarified where appropriate during the chapter.

The researcher expects that the additional insights from the employers will triangulate the findings from the focus group and subsequent analyses of the lecturers and graduates' questionnaires and provide rich data from which much in-depth understanding of the perspectives of the managers on graduate employability and industry skills requirements can be drawn. The combined results of these strands of analysis will therefore strengthen the information base for designing the GHEEF. This is also analysed under the main themes.

Eleven key respondents were interviewed; one is President of the association of hospitality businesses in Ghana, and the remaining ten are mainly General Managers, and Deputy and Assistant General Managers human resource managers within the multinational and local hospitality chains. These sources cover the spectrum of professional as well as technical hospitality management skills in which the researcher is interested. For example, the President's views provide in-depth comments on hospitality management skills as well as the relevant government policy, which complement the views of the senior managers from the hospitality industry.

5.4.1 Thematic analysis of the interview questions employers

As indicated in Chapter 4, the hospitality employers' interviews were a semi-structured in-depth interview, with open-ended questions, which was considered appropriate for this group. The managers' qualitative analysis was thematic, similar to that of the lecturers. The question posed to the managers is:

Associated with the emergence of multinational hotel chains in Ghana, the trends and influences offer some benefits and challenges to our graduates. What is your candid view on the factors that affects the employability of these graduates and how can we enhance their employability?

This question was framed to encapsulate the core research themes that were drawn earlier from the research questions; namely, the trends in the Hospitality and Tourism Industry in Ghana; skills requirements; and employable hospitality graduates. An example transcript of the employers' responses on which this analysis is based is presented in Appendix 5.3 to this chapter.

5.4.2 Findings under major themes

Theme 1 Employability concept (EC) and meaning

The employers' did not directly set out to define employability per se, but there is a veiled allusion to its meaning when they discuss the lack of job opportunities in the industry for new entrants. One of the employers stated that a lack of promotion within the system limits employment opportunities, implying that new entrants would have to be even more employable to compete for these few places. In this case, employability is being likened to the ability to spot and seize job opportunities, which is part of its meaning, apart from enjoying the opportunities, growing one's career in them, and outgrowing them successfully, if need be:

> *'… in the large-scale operations and international branded hotels, staff movement is very small, so everybody get stuck in their job, with promotion very slow, so new entrants to the system find it hard to get in'* (M2).

'I think hospitality is about common sense, human relations, a positive attitude, passion and hard work. These qualities in a person can make him or her employable' (M1).

Theme 2 Hospitality education and gaps in learning, skills and competences

The employers noted that the increasing inability of hospitality industry, which is the main employer of hospitality graduates in Ghana, to hire locals and hospitality graduates, is due to the obvious gaps in learning, skills and competences (GILSCs) which the latter manifest. This means a lack of potential on the part of hospitality graduates to succeed in these roles as the multinational hospitality businesses and hotels would expect. These ideas will be expanded upon in the appropriate sections on skills and competences.

'… and one of the reasons why it's very difficult to hire people from local institutions is that, they have not acquired enough practical orientation to understand the basis of hospitality and as a result will come out probably with their certificates but cannot answer any basic question in any area of work in hospitality or hotel institutions. These multinational chain hotels are large companies and some have huge opportunities for jobs; what does that mean? More jobs but because the graduates don't meet the requirements, the multinational chain hotels don't recruit them in large numbers' (M10).

The employers further indicate that graduates lack awareness of the commercial size of hospitality, for which reason they may not have been exposed to areas such as conference centres, for example.

'… When they have had hospitality education, there isn't a clear passion for the commercial size of hospitality so they still see it as something foreign which is a challenge that we have to deal with. Now, most young people may never have had opportunities in hotels, restaurants, conference centres; don't know of these, they don't know of the prospects of having a career in this kind of growing industry' (M9).

A respondent emphasised the need for not only a very practical focus on the training of hospitality graduates, but also collaboration among HEIs and the hospitality industry to deepen the curriculum and provide graduates the required skills in hospitality work. They particularly stressed the unduly theoretical approach in Universities compared to Polytechnics. Also, the problem of inadequate resources and very large classes was deplored:

> *' It is vital to work collaboratively with industry in designing items for teaching these graduates but to the best of my knowledge this is not happening. For the polytechnics I'd say they're doing a great job, because they have a bit of practical but with the universities I would say a big no. I mean, take universities of, let me not say a name but you know, some universities, it's impossible with some courses to have practical. One class is so large, over hundreds, and you have one lecturer'*(M7).

Other perspectives on Hospitality Education

Some employers mentioned the need to introduce more effective year-long proper industry attachment in 4-5 star hotels, or for the Ghana Tourism Authority to own HEI training hotels and upgrade the existing hotels to give practical training alongside theory:

> *'To make our Ghanaian hospitality education relevant, I think Ghana needs to introduce proper industry attachments to the educational system and make it mandatory for all hospitality students to do at least one year practical attachment in a 4-5 star hotel before graduating. If we don't have these in Ghana, then the educational institutions will have to establish a mock hotel environment for their students in order to gain experience'* (M3).

It was noted that graduates/students should not bring unhelpful socio-cultural attitudes to their roles in the industry:

> '*…in Ghana, our culture is such that there are certain happenings in hotels that people think is not the duty of a man or a woman to do, so when these graduates are hired they bring their beliefs to the workplace…However, we shouldn't forget culture as one of the basic requirements of the hotel*

business. Because of its importance, the Ministry of Hospitality and Tourism has added culture as an aspect of the hospitality and tourism industry' (M10).

Need for HEI-industry collaboration

The employers emphasised this need, as did the lecturers in Chapter 5. They feel that the affiliation of HEIs to international examination bodies denies the courses an adequate local context and content, which would help to meet the national socio-economic development goals:

'*Universities and the polytechnic institutions and the hospitality industry have to come together if the institutions can't build the infrastructures for them to do the practical, the industry must accept that and also possibly do some kind of training simulation…a number of Hospitality and Tourism Training Institutions in Ghana offer training courses and are affiliated to external examination bodies such as City and Guilds International, however, graduates from these institutions take external examinations and are awarded international certificates. The challenge is that the institutions offering such courses do not provide the needed local context and content that meet the national aspirations and needs'* (M2).

Vocational training required in the industry

Some employers described in some detail the depth of the practical training expected of hospitality students in the industry and HEIs:

'*We schedule them to go through every department so: you're a graduate fine, we know that maybe a management person, and we know that maybe after one year you're going to be HR manager or Assistant Manager. But your understanding of what you supervise is very important. So we draw up a schedule for you, so you go down to the floor and do all these things so, at the end of the day, you go back to your office, so you can understand, you can check and control the people you're managing…Tourism and hospitality training or education should have about 70% practical and 30%*

theory. About 70% practical in any service industry learning practically is more beneficial as some of the things that we experience in the field cannot be taught theoretically' (M4).

Indeed, the above quotes suggest that what is going on with Ghanaian hospitality education, which could be the case for other so-called vocational courses, is 'vacuous vocationalism' (the author's expression), whereby the skills learnt are not practically useful to the targeted employers. The above notes show that hospitality departments should try as hard as possible to educate students in the same intensive way as they are expected to work when employed in the industry.

National Policy on hospitality education and industry

Another interesting perspective which one employer noted is the need for a clear national policy in this area, in which the employer was almost saying, albeit not explicitly, that the industry has such a huge potential for enhancing the economy that policy-informed formal and informal education in the industry is needed in Ghana. This is the essence of this research as it looks to develop the GHEEF in such a way that most of these concerns will be addressed by all of the stakeholders; namely, lecturers, graduates/students, hospitality employers and government policymakers:

'There is a poor understanding of the hospitality and tourism sector by other government institutions in Ghana. Issues such as the absence of a clear national policy framework on hospitality education, training and development for the public, private institutions as well as the large informal sectors of the industry and poor quality hospitality and tourism training institutions and lack of national standards and certification of hospitality and tourism programmes' (M1).

Required graduate skills

A manager finally linked the misalignment of hospitality graduate skills in the industry with a negative impact on Ghana's socio-economic development which was noted in the literature review and reiterated above:

> *'There is a misalignment between the demand for quality human resources in the industry and the expectations of the existing hospitality and tourism training institutions and industry practitioners regarding the skills requirements of the industry. As a result, the industry has been experiencing poor quality service delivery which is detrimental to achieving the full economic and social potential of the hospitality industry*' (M1).

Related to the above notes, an employer emphasised the range of soft skills required of graduates in the hospitality industry. While the employers indicated the importance of experience, majority thought it is very important with soft skills and competencies. These soft skills include similar generic skills which were reviewed in the literature and included in the list of employability constructs in this Chapter. Examples are given below with illustrative quotes. The employer feels that these skills are best learnt over a longer period of industrial attachment.

> *'Introduce 1 Year of practical placement as part of a degree course, and where possible outside Ghana. Candidates will need to show evidence of the following*: *a friendly personality and genuine desire to help and please others; ability to think clearly and make quick decisions; numeracy and logistical planning skills; a professional manner and calm, rational approach in hectic situations; ability to balance customer and business priorities;*
>
> *flexibility and a 'can do' mentality; energy and patience; excellent communication and interpersonal skills, especially when dealing with speakers of other languages'* (M2).

New approaches for enhancing graduate employability

Many employers described their experience of a skills deficit in hospitality education in Ghana such as: the need continually to research the fit between the hospitality curricula and changing industry requirements; and b) effective on-the-job training (industrial attachments). The following quotes from some of the employers almost say it all:

> *'When our students graduate without the practical experience, in terms of customer service, they do not have any idea because, practically, they've never spoken to a customer before, they do not know what the customer likes or even how they behave but, practically when they train on the job they might be able to understand all of these challenges'* (M1).

> *'I think we need to specifically establish a national hospitality and tourism training school to train and educate students with the necessary skills and competencies that industry needs'* (M1).

> *'The School should offer relevant hospitality courses at the competency/skill, supervisory and management levels. In the long term, campuses of the National Hospitality and Tourism School can be established in other regions with the objective of bringing quality, accessible and affordable hospitality and training to the doorstep of industry stakeholders. This will increase access to training and skills development and ensure an adequately trained hospitality workforce'* (M1).

The researcher feels that the above suggestions are important, as HEIs are already considering them in training the students. What is needed rather is the enhancement of the quality of education to give students the needed skills and therefore make them employable.

> *'I'd say our educational system is irrelevant to the needs of industry like the hospitality industry because day in day out the hospitality industry keeps changing, but our curriculum is stagnant. The curriculum for hospitality needs to change from the old skills training to modern trends in the hospitality business*. *Invite us, the industry players, to share our*

experience and to contribute to the designing of the syllabus. When educators are designing the syllabus, let's have an input into it so, when they leave school, they can the meet industry demands and they can be employable' (M7).

The employers made suggestions towards hospitality education to the fact that government should institute some sort of platform for stakeholders to collaborate in the designing of hospitality curriculum to make hospitality education relevant to industry.

'I think our government can also set up a platform through legislation and so on to ensure that industry and academia work together on the design and implementation of the hospitality curriculum for the various hospitality institutions and also practicalise it in the process' (M1).

Although the employers suggested collaboration between academia and industry, they emphasised more on practical experience featuring in the hospitality curriculum to foster capacity-building.

'The curriculum should be based more on practice and experience related to building capacity. In the process, the institutions are able to build capacity regarding the kinds of courses they can run in the various institutions that would be suitable for industry' (M11).

As suggested with the lecturers' focus group, the employers saw the need for lecturers to have industry experience, and build their capacity to be able to teach using relevant industry examples. They further indicated that the system of teaching and hospitality education needs overhauling; lecturers should have access to hospitality-related business upon identifying themselves. This will however, become possible through stakeholder collaboration.

'The mode of training ought to change. The teachers must have the freedom to get into hotels by showing an identity card, they can go to any area and see how the operations are going and enrich themselves to be able to apply it in the classroom this will ensure the employability of graduates' (M10).

Work and life experience (WLE)

The employers discussed in-depth aspects of their work and life experience that flow from their experience. The researcher endeavoured to capture these in some detail, since the employability of hospitality graduates rests strongly on the deep learning that work and life experience engender. One of the respondents painted a picture of how different classroom learning could be from the practical experiences that accompany real work:

> *'When a student studies in the classroom he has to complement it with the practical aspect, then after the schooling be attached to a unit that does the same job as the education that he has had'* (M1)

An employer noted that far longer industrial attachments are needed than the 3-month box-ticking currently going in Ghana, as reported by the lecturers. A vital work experience stated by employers is length of the experience. They thought that extending the period of work experience was essential and should be a condition for graduations. This triangulates with the views of the lecturers.

> *'As a country manager of Ghana Airways, I spent six years in Germany, from 1998-2004. I had the opportunity to visit some hotels and most of the time you find students were working in these hotels as part of their practical attachment and they'll tell you they do one year or more just working which was a condition for them graduating from university. If we don't do this in Ghana, then the educational institutions will have to establish a mock hotel environment for their students in other to give them experience. I suggest that practical experience should outweigh the theory. Let our hospitality graduates learn on-the-job'* (M3).

An interesting reason why work and life experiences is vital in hospitality, according to one employer, is the need for students to learn about the process skills encompassed in the standard operating procedures (SOPs), which enable hotels and service organisations to run their services in line with a well-known checklist of rules and behaviour of the particular organisation. This knowledge of SOPs was not emphasised by the lecturers,

which means that they will be unable to adequately teach these procedures to their students, hence the need for industry collaboration:

> *'I have worked a lot with international chains and so realise that basically they work with what is called S.O.P's (standard operating procedures) and not until you've worked with a particular chain for a certain number of years will you become conversant with their mode of operations, so if you take Golden Tulip, they have a S.O.P which is not taught at any university and you have to enter the system to know it, even if, as a graduate, you have basic administrative managerial skills theoretically you need to really climb the rope from the basics practically'* (M4)

An employer reported his experience with a multinational chain hotel on the efforts that they have put in place to give employees the needed industry experience, by having a university that trains their new trainee managers/employees. They believe that, when one experiences it, one will definitely know.

> *'I know of ACCOR, they have a university in France, anytime they take people especially managers they take them to the school or they bring lecturers from there to come and train, and they come with solid materials, videos and you'll see people doing it and they tell you we've just seen it can we demonstrate it. So you play the guest and I play this, and even handling the telephone, after listening and all that, let's do it practically. They believe in training on-the-job.… You experience it and you know it '*(M4).

Subject knowledge

The employers' responses with respect to subject knowledge emphasised: a) the need to understand the subtle differences between catering management and wider hospitality management, and reflect that in the curriculum design and delivery; b) the need for both deep theory and practice in hospitality education; c) sufficient attention should be paid to ICT and wider technological skills; and d) a more rounded curriculum that includes

language studies to broaden the students' repertoire of competences, in addition to business and management skills, and experience in related hospitality areas such as travel and leisure. The following quotes support these views;

> *'In Ghana, as we stand now, we don't really have the academic knowledge of hospitality, we have more of catering management which is just an aspect of hospitality, we don't have hospitality management'* (M6).

The respondents emphasised the need for graduates to be knowledgeable about the theory of hospitality subject in order to perform their duties well. The vocational nature of the hospitality business was emphasised by the respondents as vital even when the theory is limited. The following quotes attest to this notion:

> *'It is possible to enter hotel management without a degree, HND or foundation degree, since employers place a lot of emphasis on relevant experience. A general standard of education is sought and many people then work their way up to management through on-the-job training and external qualifications*(M2)….*A degree in the following subjects may increase your chances: hotel and hospitality management; business or management; business with languages; travel, tourism or leisure studies'* (M3).

In a nutshell, the employers' were recommending what they would like to see a more innovative hospitality curriculum than is currently the case in hospitality education in Ghana.

Generic skills, new skills and competences

For these skill sets, the employers' responses pointed to the following: a) new competences in technology e.g. ICT, proper customer care, and professionalism which the multinational hotel chains have brought to the industry; b) effective CVs that sell the graduates' skills better in line with specific job requirements; c) how focused the internship was on the core hospitality skills and job specifications; d) personality traits (skills, knowledge, attitudes); e) communication skills, including the command of English

language as a first or national as well as international language; and f) subject knowledge, which was explored above:

> *'In Ghana, there's something that's missing in the hospitality industry and these multinationals have brought it to the industry, these are high level technology, proper customer care, and professionalism. Also, the multinationals have almost all of their top management understanding and able to speak at least three international languages so they expect to recruit graduates with this skill'* (M1).

An employer explained that hospitality management goes well beyond people sleeping and eating in a hotel, and requires a holistic training that covers the different skills areas:

> *'A lot is changing, professionalism is vital as international people and businesses are trooping into the country. People need more than just to sleep and eat in a hotel. A hotel, being a service industry, deals with human beings and therefore skills, I'd say human skills, to make the customer comfortable are needed apart from technical skills which is a must that one should have to be able to work in the industry, skills such as communication skills, problem-solving skills teamwork, quick minds that will help a manger act to quickly are needed'* (M3).

Another employer spelt out some of the specific skills required, which are similar to the wide range of generic skills suggested to by the lecturers. These could be classified under emotional intelligence construct from literature, although it was not directly mentioned. Potential employees will need to show evidence of the following:

> *'a friendly personality and genuine desire to help and please others; an ability to think clearly and make quick decisions and excellent communication and interpersonal skills, especially when dealing with speakers of other languages'* (M3).

The same employer reiterated the importance of language skills for multinational chains which have franchises in Ghana and therefore expect their staff to be able to work internationally or serve a broad mix of customers from different countries:

'Best Western is a chain hotel with a franchise in Ghana and, for us; language skills may also be an advantage, especially for hotels which are part of an international chain…Send them to industry for practical experience that'll help them acquire skills that are not thought of in the' … (M3).

Other responses reiterated earlier notions such as:

collaborative curriculum design among HEIs, industry, and policy makers; international exchange programmes for students, especially to countries that speak certain languages as their mother tongue, for example France and French-speaking countries; personal skills such as confidence, assertiveness, eloquence in communicating in English, an analytical mind-set, self-presentation; one-year hotel experience; and the need for an initial broad-based training in hospitality and tourism before students specialise in either from their third year of study:

'The missing link is the curriculum which is being used by our educational system; it does not make it mandatory for students to undertake practical training. To make the curriculum relevant, much needs to be done. Policy-makers, industry players and academia should all have input into the curriculum. The development of the curriculum should be a concerted effort by stakeholders. Education needs to move along with industry. For now, the curriculum for hospitality students is no longer relevant to industry needs. Industry is moving at a faster rate and academia need to move along with it' (M3).

A response from one of the employers emphasised the need to form partnership with some foreign hospitality businesses for an exchange programme, for trainee managers to be abreast with the international world.

'Now, Ghana is trying to be part of the global world, and also enter into partnership with hotels and hospitality facilities outside Ghana, so if it means sending students outside for practical training for some sort of exchange programme, like French courses do where they send students to

France for a year just to interact with people in a French-speaking country to be able to acquire the practical experience' (M3 M6)).

One employer emphasised the new trends that lecturers and students should be aware of generally; for example, green environment issues which the industry will try to accommodate in their services. This augments earlier notes on the use of spas and health clubs in the hotel and leisure industry:

'A lot of technology…latest technology and technological ways of doing things, decor, and expert knowledge the new hotels are branded so their operations are exactly the same as the mother companies…Now, we're seeing something like going green, environmental issues a whole lot' (M6).

In general, the managers acknowledge the growing importance of graduates having a good understanding of hospitality industry trends and skills and competencies in order to be employable.

Process skills

The employers emphasised the need for knowledge on systematic procedures and standard processes in the hospitality management education, to be gained by working for hotels and fast food chains like McDonalds will show students how to work to such standards:

'We use the standard operating procedures (SOP) however, with the specific jobs we the person should have knowledge of the technical skills; for instance, if it is the front office, some idea of the front office so on and so on' (M6).

Self-Esteem, Self-Confidence, and Self-Efficacy

The employers stated the need for graduates to possess these skills in the form of assertiveness, passion and confidence, for example. This is reiterated below:

'I want a confident, positive and an enthusiastic graduate. The rest I'll provide to suit the purpose for which I hired them' (M4).

Also, it is plausible that the training checklists for new staff will include a list of the skills required. These skills were reviewed in the literature as part of the wider generic skills.

Resources, ICT

Some of the employers lamented the lack of adequate learning resources and enabling environment for teaching and learning at the HEIs:

> *'A study on these institutions to show exactly what kind of facilities they offer, what kind of curriculum they have…in the end, we found that 90% of these so-called hospitality institutions did not even have the required facilities to offer hospitality education; that is one…They did not have the relevant laboratories/workshops to be able to offer any kind of hospitality education and nor did have any form of accreditation'* (M9).

> *'Yes, in some of our universities, about 5-7 students per computer, they don't even know how to boot up a computer. Things are changing. The industry is so dynamic, technology usage has taken over most of the activities in the hotel industry so you need to be computer literate as essential'* (M4).

Possible solutions

The employers went on to suggest possible solutions to the situation, mainly in the form of HEI-industry collaboration:

> *'Institutions should collaborate with industry because there is so much happening in the hospitality industry that can only be learnt in industry, it is not documented for it to be taught in the classroom. Some of these things are common sense within the person. Another way is that, the institutions should attach themselves to hotels so that their students can do their practical training with them or the institutions should have training hotels and restaurants where these students will have real life training and not training in the abstract'* (M5).

Importantly, it was emphasised that the lecturers need to keep updating themselves on the new trends and technologies used in the industry by visiting and also do industry attachment:

> *'Lecturers also need to keep updating their skills. Skills development should be tie joint responsibility of not only the graduates but the lecturers as well. We also have a challenge with our graduate having cultural awareness. It is very important to at least know how to speak and write in two international languages'* (M5).

Government policy (new perspective)

A new perspective on government policy which emerged from the employers' responses relates to the role of the government in establishing a nationally-accredited hospitality programme, which will address most of the gaps identified in the curriculum. This is now recalled from earlier notes mentioned in the foregoing:

> *'Legally establish the school by Act of Parliament and prepare a nationally-accredited curriculum to reflect the needs of the industry.*
>
> *In the long term, the development of the National Hospitality and Tourism Training Schools, established potentially through private sector investment or public-private partnership. This would improve the availability and accessibility to industry-specific training programmes for Ghanaians to work and deliver quality service in the formal and informal sectors of the hospitality and tourism industry. The selected training institutions should be those that offer courses that have been appropriately accredited by the National Accreditation Board. The institutions offering hospitality at a higher level, I mean tertiary; in the country now are all public institutions that the government should initiate. We need to prepare our graduates, and how do we do that? By enhancing their skills with what industry requires. Industry practitioners and the schools should be backed by government legislation'* (M10).

It can be argued that these roles should be delivered by innovative HEI curricula, with the National Tourism Board providing professional accreditation oversight and compliance with agreed standards.

HEI-government-industry collaboration

Whilst this topic has been mentioned many times above, the following additional perspectives are worthy of note:

> *'We need to come together, as a general manager (GM) I will advocate collaboration between three groups if not four; the hospitality and tourism industry, government and academia specifically hotels and restaurants who are the people who take the graduates'* (M6).

Lack of collaboration about internships among the stakeholders

> *'Maybe you've never heard of the school, Cassava Catering School, they just sent the students into industry without first of all negotiating and laying down the rules for internships. No one came and discussed internship; they just gave a photocopied paper to the students and told them to go on an internship. How do you take such a student, not even having heard from any academic board member of the institution? Will you take that person and put them on reception? No, you won't do it. You'll put the person in areas that don't matter but, where the proper negotiations are done and you've been visited by someone from the school and there has been a clear discussion, then you know that the institution cares a lot about people'* (M9).

These notes emphasised the need for a well-structured industrial attachment which is lacking currently in the system, as also testified to by the lecturers in Chapter 6 of this thesis.

5.4.3 Key findings Employers

The findings from the hospitality employers' interviews are detailed in this section. The managers did not directly set out to define employability per se, but there is a veiled allusion to its meaning when they discuss the lack of job opportunities in the industry for new entrants. Employability was likened to the ability to spot and seize job opportunities, which is part of its meaning, apart from enjoying the opportunities, growing one's career in them, and outgrowing them successfully, if need be:

It was discovered that hospitality employers do appreciate certain skills, competencies and attributes. All of the employers interviewed expressed a desire for collaboration amongst the stakeholders, a positive attitude, and work-related experience. Their views reinforced most of the lecturers and students' views. The employers placed considerable emphasis on the acute lack of employable and technical skills within hospitality graduates in Ghana, even when the industry has the capacity to absorb them. They bemoaned the fact that policymakers under-appreciate the huge potential in the hospitality industry for national socio-economic development.

The employers suggested the need for hospitality education that clearly exposes students to all aspects of the industry and the range of skills required to work effectively within it, such as conference organisation, and health and leisure clubs.

One startling disclosure by the employers was that a lack of promotion within the sector limits opportunities for easy entrance to the hospitality industry. One employer indicated that employability is about common sense, human relations, a positive attitude and hard work; this can be achieved through a practical orientation to understand the hospitality industry and make graduates commercially aware of the industry. This skill is seriously deficient in current graduates. Generally, graduates lack management skills and a customer orientation.

The standardisation of the hospitality education curriculum, with input from the hospitality industry, was recommended to make the current hospitality education more relevant to the needs of the hospitality industry. Finally, as observed by the lecturers, which triangulates the results of the research, Ghanaian hospitality education emphasises craft and culinary skills rather than business management knowledge. Lecturers lack adequate academic

knowledge of hospitality and are therefore unable to teach graduates hospitality management skills. They stressed the need for collaboration among stakeholders to structure internships (industrial attachments) that would benefit all, especially graduates.

The researcher notes that combining these findings with those of the lecturers and students will provide a robust evidence base for designing the GHEEF that will more effectively help stakeholders in hospitality education to enhance graduate employability. It was emphasised that the deeper contextual understanding of hospitality graduates' employability will enhance the development of the GHEEF (columns 3 of Figure 4.1).

5.5 Conclusion: Integration of the overall Key findings of the research under major themes

This section presents the combined key findings of the research as obtained from the empirical data outlined in Chapter 5. In order to make it more meaningful for the reader, these key findings are presented under the major themes in a narrative form.

5.5.1 Theme 1 Employability concepts and meanings

5.5.1.1 Narrow understanding of the employability concept

The general focus under this theme indicates a narrow understanding of the concept of employability among lecturers, graduates and hospitality employers. A certain degree of misunderstanding of the concept was exhibited. The lecturers' views on employability varied: some emphasised an individual's ability to secure employment as their understanding of employability. Similar to the lecturers' opinions, the graduates narrowly conceive employability as merely gaining employment, instead of also succeeding in and outgrowing a job to achieve higher prospects. The employers did not directly set out to define employability per se, but there was a veiled allusion to its meaning when they discussed the lack of job opportunities in the industry for new entrants.

Employability is being likened to the ability to spot and seize job opportunities, which is part of its meaning, apart from enjoying the opportunities, growing one's career in them,

and outgrowing them successfully. In general, all of the respondents had a very narrow view of employability and lacked conceptual clarity and understanding.

The difficulty lies in trying to define the meaning of employability. In other words, these respondents did not mention in detail a broader understanding of employability as involving the potential not simply to secure a job, but also to derive satisfaction from it and grow one's career successfully (Pool and Sewell 2007). Individually they explain particular aspects of what it means to be employable, but not every aspect concerning the ability to access a job, grow, be satisfied by it, and progress to other jobs with better prospects.

5.5.2 Theme 2: Hospitality education and curriculum development in Ghana

5.5.2.1 Curriculum development

The general perceptions regarding the responses about the state of hospitality education in Ghana were mainly related to curriculum development. A number of problems associated with the curriculum for hospitality education in Ghana were revealed by the lecturers to be a major issue that exacerbates the teaching of hospitality. The Ghanaian hospitality curriculum system is poor, as are the curricula of many other developing countries. It lacks content and quality and is very theoretical, overloaded and outdated. It is therefore insufficient to serve the needs of both students and industry. In addition to the above inadequacies of hospitality education in Ghana, which form part of the wider poor curriculum development and delivery, these problems include a lack of curriculum innovation and ownership of the curriculum design process by lecturers, as mentioned earlier.

There is weak evidence to suggest that the curriculum effectively prepares students to work in the industry. Additionally, and more disturbingly, it was discovered that Ghanaian hospitality lecturers seem to work with curricula that are developed by an external body. Hence, the lecturers simply use a centrally-developed course syllabus, instead of carefully designing curricula with matching learning outcomes, teaching, and learning and assessment strategies.

In addition, the Ghanaian hospitality curriculum was designed mainly from the academic viewpoint by educators who have no industry experience and focus attention on satisfying

the degree requirements rather than the application of skills in the real world. This often leads to disparity between the education providers and hospitality industry vis-à-vis the subjects to be taught and the skills that students need to acquire during their studies. Based on this argument, it is believed that students who are taught with the current curriculum lack professional knowledge and fail to satisfy the industry requirements. This was confirmed by the employers when they noted an acute lack of practical skills among the hospitality graduates whom they hired. The employers further noted that, in line with this lack of practical orientation, there exist a poor understanding of the hospitality industry and low commercial awareness. This calls for innovative TLA strategies.

5.5.2.2 Lack of broad management and communication skills

The respondents also identify that the curriculum was not developed to include broader educational and professional skills, such as management and communication, which are vital employability skills. Therefore, the curriculum requires regular updates. Added to this, hospitality education in Ghana tends to focus more on craft culinary skills; graduates are not exposed to proper hospitality business management compared to what pertains in other parts of the world, such as the UK, USA, Canada and Australia, where hospitality education tends to be situated in business schools. Ghanaian hospitality management education is situated in the School of Applied Sciences.

5.5.2.3 A disenabling environment for innovation in teaching methods

One key finding was the lack of resources to repair the inadequacies. The study unfortunately revealed that the level of collaboration between hospitality education and the hospitality industry was low. A startling revelation was that the lecturers were reusing old lecture notes rather than having an opportunity to develop their ideas from the intermediate to the advanced level. There was also a lack of practical and experimental learning and the absence of resources and an enabling environment to rectify these inadequacies. The lecturers predominately teach through lectures that are not supported by modern methods, such as case studies, field trips, the use of video and e-learning. There exists a need for Career development learning by developing students' communication and CV writing skills.

Some of the learning gaps and skills identified include: a lack of group/team dynamics in learning, and an absence of resources and equipment, including computers; inadequate emphasis on practical skills within a curriculum that is too theoretical; insufficient exposure to industry experience; subject knowledge not balanced with employability skills; lecturers and students' lack of in-depth industrial experience, whereby hotel managers give them routine tasks; and poorly-managed industrial attachments.

5.5.3 Theme3 Gaps in learning, skills and competencies

5.5.3.1 Lack of group-dynamics

The respondents indicate the importance of team work group dynamics are a key learning point in hospitality education. This builds confidence in applying new learning. The process of working collaboratively with colleagues in order to achieve a goal is a crucial part of hospitality. With a team, even more solutions to problems and fresh ideas are generated by the brainstorming that the teamwork fosters. The respondents indicated that teams allow skills, knowledge, opinions and experiences to be pooled together for the benefit of the group as a whole. This leads to better productivity by every member of the team.

5.5.4 Theme 4 Enhancing Ghanaian hospitality graduate employability:

Lecturers and graduates are not abreast with what is happening in the industry, and so lack knowledge about the industry trends and skills. The new skills needed by industry are not being developed in the hospitality curricula.

There exists a mismatch between the hospitality education curriculum and the skills needed in the hospitality industry, especially hotels. The hospitality curriculum at present does not include these new skills in the hospitality curricula due to irregular curriculum innovation and the lack of training for lecturers on curriculum development and delivery. The lecturers indicated the need to balance lecture- and examination-based strategies with other assessments of learning.

The graduates noted that there exists a lack of work-related off-campus and on-campus extra-curricular TLA activities which should enhance their employability skills. This supports the lecturers' views. Also, there is a lack of modern teaching methods and poor

satisfaction with the most popular ones; namely, lectures, seminars and projects. Overall, the graduates' opinions triangulated the evidence on the very poor teaching and learning of employability skills within the hospitality curricula, which concords with the lecturers' responses obtained earlier.

6 CHAPTER 6 INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter interprets and discusses the research findings outlined in Chapters 5. It examines the findings from the initial focus group study of the lecturers and the lecturers' questionnaire survey, the graduates' questionnaire survey and the hospitality employers' interviews. The discussion: a) interprets the research evidence in light of our current knowledge from the literature review, b) relates the evidence to the research questions, c) discusses how it relates to the conceptual framework and the Ghanaian Hospitality Employability Enhancement Framework (GHEEF), and d) examines how the results contribute to the knowledge of graduate employability in Ghana.

The discussion is presented under the five broad themes stated as follows: 1) Employability Concepts and Meanings; 2) Hospitality Education and Curriculum Development in Ghana; 3) Gaps in Learning, Skills and Competences; 4) Enhancing Ghanaian Hospitality Graduates' Employability; and finally developing the GHEEF, which will be more fully discussed in section 6.3.

The rest of the chapter is organised as follows. Section 6.2 recalls the research questions and related study themes for easy follow-through in the discussion. Section 6.3 discusses the results on Theme 1. Section 6.4 discusses the results on Theme 2, while Sections 6.5, 6.6 and 6.7 discuss the results on Themes 3, 4 and the outcome respectively. Section 6.8 recalls the pre-GHEEF research framework of the research. Section 6.9 presents the GHEEF and Section 6.10 concludes the chapter.

Research questions (RQs) and related study themes

The researcher recalls the research questions below for easy follow-through of the discussion by the readers. Since the research questions were mapped to the objectives in previous chapters, they are adequate for the discussion in this chapter.

RQ.1 What is the current understanding of the concept of employability in Ghana, what employability skills and competencies does the hospitality industry need as a prerequisite for employable hospitality graduate in the hospitality industry, and how can hospitality education in Ghana meet these requirements?

RQ. 2. Taking into consideration the research question 1 above, how can the findings elucidate the problem of hospitality graduate employability in Ghana, and subsequently help to develop a framework to address the essential employer skills and competency requirements through education and training?

Sub-themes used in the analysis chapter include the following:

Staff development; experiences (work and Life); Process skill (PRS); Reflection and Evaluation; and Personal Development Planning (PDP), Emotional intelligence (EI).

The discussion of the responses by the lecturers, graduates and hospitality employers under the main themes will, where appropriate, refer to these sub-themes. These sub-themes were identified in the literature on employability models, for example USEM (Understanding, skilful practice, efficacy beliefs and meta-cognition), the CareerEdge, and DOTS (Decision learning, Opportunity-awareness, Transition skills and Self-awareness (Law and Watts 1977; Watts 2006; Pool and Sewell, 2007). Pool and Sewell (2007) thus note that the development of higher levels of self-efficacy, self-confidence and self-esteem, are important for employability. Career development learning, experience (work and life), and degree subject knowledge, which are central to the model, explain that, first and foremost, the main aims in entering HE are to study a specific subject discipline, gain a degree and get a good job, so understanding and skills are also essential. Generic skills and emotional intelligence combine with the higher-order elements of reflection and evaluation, self-efficacy, self-confidence and self-esteem, to influence an individual's employability (Pool and Sewell 2007). Therefore, the researcher uses these sub-themes to confirm or dispute the information found in the literature and field data.

6.1.1 Theme 1 Results: Employability concepts and meanings

Under this theme, the general consensus amongst lecturers and students was that the lecturers and students had a limited view of the full requirements of employability, which

include not only the ability to secure a job, but also the potential to be satisfied in the job, and achieve career progression to higher ranks within and beyond particular jobs. For example, the lecturers' questionnaire responses regarding their understanding of employability included: *'Employability is a demonstrated skill and professionalism required for a particular job'; 'It is to be employed'; and 'Employment skills exhibited at recruitment'*. The surveyed lecturers therefore generally associate employability with access to employment and the skills that make that possible. The response that employability is '*The ability to do work*' shows that, beyond the initial access to a job, having the skills to do the job satisfactorily is important, which is more clearly expressed in the quote '*Skills needed by an individual to perform at work*'. This lack of understanding will limit their ability to teach employability skills effectively.

To reiterate this point, the lecturers' responses collectively hint at the elements of employability (Pool and Sewell 2007, Yorke and Knight 2004) which involve finding a job, and enhancing one's living and the skills that underpin these elements, but they do not individually cover all of these elements (CareerEdge model; Pool and Sewell 2007:280).

In other words, it was noted in the literature that employability is a multi-faceted concept which goes beyond the acquisition of core, key, and transferable skills, representing a set of achievements, skills, knowledge, understanding, and personal attributes that demonstrate a graduate's potential to gain and succeed in employment (Pool and Sewell 2007; Yorke and Knight 2006). If the lecturers do not understand these dimensions of the employability concept, then they will be unable to develop teaching, learning and assessment (TLA) strategies that will effectively embed such dimensions in the hospitality education curricula. As stated by Knight and Yorke (2004:1), employability can be enhanced by good mainstream curricula and vigorous work-related curricula.

The lecturers' understanding of the full entailments of employability will enable them to embed employability skills in the curriculum, especially if they are aware that the curricula should be designed by them, not by independent higher education policymakers. However, in relation to the curricula, the findings of the focus group responses' qualitative analysis show that, alarmingly, most Ghanaian hospitality lecturers do not understand the difference between the nationally agreed syllabi for the modules and a designed curriculum for delivering the learning outcomes, learning, teaching and assessment

elements of the syllabi. They do not design the curricula as is the case with UK lecturers, for example. Therefore, this research is particularly important for innovating Ghanaian higher education generally, with the proposed GHEEF demonstrating how this might be achieved within the hospitality discipline. Simply put, to use the GHEEF, hospitality lecturers should be able to add an employability learning outcome to the subject-matter learning outcomes on their curricula. This requires them to understand all the dimensions of employability explored in this research and to design and revise the curricula accordingly.

The elements of the USEM model (understanding, skills, efficacy and metacognition (Yorke and Knight 2006) suggested that a well-designed curriculum will promote employability, good learning, subject knowledge and skills, and the development of robust self-efficacy beliefs on the part of the students' learning. These will boost students' confidence in their ability to continually learn and progress in their careers (CBI and Universities UK 2009; Pool and Sewell 2007; Yorke and Knight 2006).

Lee (2002) stated that one of the purposes of higher education is to help students to improve their higher-level competencies and skills to enhance their long-term employability. The findings in Chapter 5 showed that Ghanaian hospitality students do not achieve these competencies, a fact that is supported by the views of lecturers, graduates, and hospitality employers. Knight and Yorke (2001) argue that employability skills can be embedded in any academic subject in higher education without compromising core academic freedoms. It is essential that any changes to the curriculum are owned by the staff delivering the modules, if they are to be successfully implemented.

However, de la Harpe et al. (2000:34) conclude that 'in the anarchy of individualism that is academia, the responses of staff vary, and very little can be achieved without staff commitment accompanied by an agreed change process'. The curriculum should develop employability skills by linking learning outcomes with employability-enhancing students' understanding of the value of higher education study within their immediate subject area is vital (Yorke 2010). Similarly, The Open University (2007) indicated that enhancing employability is about identifying and making explicit what is done and known in higher education courses by drawing students' attention to the employability skills and outcomes they are developing as part of their study.

It is imperative, therefore, that lecturers design, develop and deliver the learning outcomes that is expected of the graduate, and that students explicitly understand these skills and markers of their attainment in their learning in the Ghanaian context.

Interestingly, understanding the employability concept has not been easy, as several authors such as Lowden et al. (2011) and Rae (2007) have indicated its complexity. Authors such as Clarke and Patrickson (2008), Clark and Zukas (2012), Daly (2013), Pool and Sewell (2007), and Holmes (2013) have equally described employability as complex, elusive and very difficult to define. Holmes (2013) and Hinchliffe and Adrienne (2009) argue that employability has no clear conceptual model that can be used as a reference point for policy analysis. This is supported by Brown et al. (2013), who add that employability lacks a theoretically informed exposition, which increases the problems for researchers interested in this field. Green et al. (2013) describes the concept as surrounded by a fog of ambiguity which makes it difficult to apply. Lowden et al. (2011) give a detailed overview of the difficulties of defining employability.

A wide range of meanings are used to explain the concept and still the true meaning remains debated (Pitan 2016; Oliver 2015; Mason et al. 2009; Rae 2007). It is evident that the concept has been subjected to numerous studies during the last five decades. Wickramasinghe and Perera (2010) indicate that during the last 50 years, this concept has existed and been widely studied, yet it remains a difficult concept. The few quantitative and empirical studies on employability have failed to provide conclusive evidence, however, and have simply added to the complexity (Pool and Sewell 2007). Hinchliffe and Jolly (2011) suggested a useful method of characterising the various definitions between those that take a narrow approach (skills and attributes based) with those that take a broader and inclusive approach to employability based on values, intellectual rigour and engagement. They suggest further the need to link the concept of employability to a broader framework of ideas, to make it relevant to the modern labour market. This broad framework, according to McQuaid and Lindsay (2005), is based on the notion of interactivity between the factors and circumstances of the individual and the external environment.

Hence, the poor understanding of employability in Ghana suggests that a more eclectic view of the concept which combines all the different perspectives and revises the curricula

to develop related skills is appropriate for the country. This will inform an integral curriculum that emphasises the relevance of deep subject matter knowledge and its real-life applications, reinforced by the generic and employability skills explored in this study (Pool and Sewell 2007).

Importantly, enhancing employability within the curriculum is about adding value (Knight and Yorke 2004). The close relationship between employability skills is for learning outcomes to be linked to employability and lecturers need to be aware of how the study at each level contributes to the development of employability skills. Higher education programmes should therefore adopt a coherent approach to developing skills across the curriculum, providing rich opportunities for skills development in both teaching activities and assessments, and helping students to recognise, reflect on, and articulate the skills and qualities acquired through the curriculum. The challenge for lecturers is to understand the institutional context within which they work, and in working with what is likely to be a changing institutional picture.

On a practical level, any immediate institutional context for lecturers is likely to be shaped by an institutional curriculum and/or learning and teaching strategy (Lowden et al. 2011; Pegg et al. 2012), which informs how employability is assessed and supported within the disciplinary curriculum. The findings show that, in addition to a poor understanding of employability concepts, the Ghanaian hospitality curricula do not manifest this requisite level-differentiated embedding of employability skills within different hospitality courses.

It is in this light that a main finding of this study becomes very important – the results from the Pareto charts and affinity matrices which explicate the relative extents to which different hospitality courses can support the development of employability skills among students, and vice versa. These findings will help Ghanaian hospitality lecturers to understand which sets of employability skills to embed more successfully in which hospitality courses. Previous studies have not investigated these aspects of employability education.

6.1.1.1 Emphasis on entrepreneurship

One of the lecturers suggested a link between employability and wealth creation in the quote *'necessary skills and actions taken by an individual to enhance self-discipline in making money'*. A response captures the meaning of employability in the expression: '*Employability is the attributes of a graduate that makes him/her gain employment*'. Whilst this view confounds lecturers' understanding of employability and entrepreneurship, the researcher notes that it is important to embed entrepreneurship, enterprise and employability education skills in Ghanaian higher education. This is because when graduates possess these capacities, they can depend less on formal jobs in the industry and public services, and can become gainfully self-employed. Indeed, Sewell and Pool (2010:1) note that these notions are 'often used carelessly and interchangeably', and argue that developing them together achieves a fuller repertoire of meanings and skills.

They argue further that entrepreneurship emphasises possession of a set of skills that support business development, which may be used within an employer organisation; enterprise connotes actual use of such skills in starting new businesses, again in formal or self-employment, and employability skills encompass these strands of skills as well as other generic skills, as analysed in this study.

Furthermore, Pitan (2016) reinforces the set of employability skills investigated in this study with a review of their meanings, including such constructs as generic skills, career education skills, work experience, participation in extracurricular activities, reflection and assessment, emotional intelligence, self-awareness, self-belief, and the need for an enabling environment for employability education, similar to the present research. The above notes have shown that also in Ghana there is a very poor environment, hence the focus on developing an employability enhancement framework for the country in the later parts of this chapter.

The researcher finally notes in this respect that Pitan (2016)'s University Graduates Employability Model is essentially similar to the CareerEdge model, but usefully emphasises the role of the government, universities, and firms, similar to hospitality employers in this study. However, more attention should now be focused on implementing adequate interventions based on these models, a focus that is developed in some detail in

this study, by way of a Ghanaian Employability Enhancement Framework (GHEEF), which is both theoretically structured and reflected upon as to how it could in future potentially underpin such interventions beyond the study.

As argued earlier, whilst these meanings taken together would seem to cover two key perspectives of employability discussed in the literature review, namely access to work and satisfactory progress in the role and life-long progression to more rewarding careers (Hillage and Pollard 1998; Pool and Sewell 2007; York and Knight 2004; UKCES 2009), most of the lecturers individually understood employability to be mainly about getting a job. That is, individually, the lecturers fail to understand the main purpose of employability, which is important if they are expected to teach employability skills successfully within the hospitality curriculum and on different hospitality courses. The fact that the fuller dimensions of employability are not understood by the lecturers surveyed triangulates the result obtained from the focus group lecturers. To reinforce the need for lecturers to understand these fuller dimensions in order successfully to teach employability skills to hospitality students, the 2009 UKCES report, states that, regardless of how employability skills are defined, the challenges in helping people develop these skills are the same or very similar. Whilst Lowden et al. (2011) maintains that the key issue is the development of an effective approach to nurturing and enhancing individuals' employability skills.

It was noted that the students understand employability similarly narrowly to the lecturers, as meaning the ability to secure a job. Hence, the students also need to be educated about the full meaning of employability in order for them to understand that the requisite skills require life-long learning (Knight and Yorke 2004). In other words, the students do not understand the main purports of employability, which are important if they are expected to learn the employability skills successfully within the curriculum and particular hospitality courses. Again, these purports include access to jobs, satisfaction in jobs, and life-long progression to more rewarding careers. Higher education should provide value for money by contributing highly-employable graduates to their economies.

According to Knight and Yorke (2004), strategies for widening participation in higher education need to be complemented by strategies for enhancing employability, in order not to make higher education a disincentive (Pool and Sewell 2007; Knight and Yorke 2004; Watts 2006; AGCAS 2005).

6.1.2 Theme 2 Results: Hospitality education and curriculum development in Ghana

6.1.2.1 Curriculum and staff development

The summary of all the key findings from the analysis as stated in Chapter 5, under theme 2 revealed several weaknesses in staff training and the resourcing of hospitality education such as the 'lecturers recycling old notes'; 'lack of broad management and communication skills'; 'poor curriculum practices'; 'lack of practical and experiential learning', the absence of curriculum innovation and ownership of the curriculum design process by lecturers and to work collaboratively with industry professionals in order to enforce professional standards by using guest lecturers and demonstration labs. Knight and Yorke (2004:17) argue that 'the implication of designing of curriculum and its learning arrangement are quite important, mainly because they suggest that when it comes to developing something as complex and 'fuzzy' as employability, we work with complexity'. Again, as stated earlier, Yorke and Knight (2006) suggest that a well-designed curriculum will promote employability as well as good learning, promote subject knowledge and skills, show care for the development of robust self-efficacy beliefs, and the understanding of how students learn. A curriculum which allows students to understand what they are learning and why, with regular and effective feedback, will boost students' confidence in their ability to learn and progress.

6.1.2.2 Hospitality education

Hospitality education is an ever-emerging field in higher education in terms of both the increase in number of programs and in student enrollment (Green and Erdem 2016). The importance of hospitality management education has been acknowledged worldwide (Kumar 2014; Stierand and Zizka 2015; Ozgit and Caglar 2015; Brotherton and Wood 2008; Vineet Taing 2014). Numerous studies in hospitality education explore and provide suggestions for effective teaching using a variety of instructional methods in the classroom (Green and Erdem 2016). The findings in this study show that the instructional strategies are insufficiently varied enough to achieve this aim, and are based mainly on lectures and examinations which encourage rote learning. Johnson et al. (2010) indicated that the volatile competitive environment of the hospitality industry and the need for qualified

managers requires serious transformation. Ideally, hospitality curriculum and courses must offer practical skills and 'soft' people management skills (Sheriff 2013).

As stated in chapter the 5 summaries of the major findings under theme 2, hospitality education in Ghana is dominated by polytechnic (84%) as opposed to university instruction (16%). This is in line with the vocational nature of the course (Sarkodie and Adom 2015). There is a healthy mix of degree-level training (50% Bachelor of Technology (BTech) and 8% Bachelor of Science BSc) and Higher National Diploma (HND) (42%). It was found that hospitality education emphasises the core hospitality operation management courses more, so that any perceived gaps in teaching employability skills within the curriculum may be more related to the inadequate teaching of the skills across the courses, than improper course selection. In other words, inadequate curriculum design and instruction seem to be the primary reason why hospitality graduates are inadequately prepared for work; that is, less employable. A finding that supports this point is the fact that some of the focus group lecturers, (under Theme 2 findings) mentioned the need for curriculum '*innovations that demarcate basic, intermediate and advanced levels of study*'.

These findings are contrary to the views expressed in the summaries of the key findings in Chapter 5 that training in higher-order management skills is lacking within hospitality education. Ofobruku (2012) also found that there are an insufficient number of qualified hospitality-specific educators with adequate industrial experiences; this has also been made worse as most hospitality institutions fail to make provision for grants for research or further training, which challenges hospitality manpower training and development in Sub-Saharan Africa, specifically Nigeria which is developing country like Ghana with similar issues.

Hence, a GHEEF-informed intervention into the teaching of hospitality courses will probably be required to enhance the capacity of the courses to enhance the employability skills of hospitality graduates in Ghana.

Similarly, Mahachi (2012) in his study of students' perceptions of managerial competencies in Botswana's tourism and hospitality industry found that major skill gaps exist in business and management capabilities, and that management and leadership skills were lacking, after personal skills and attributes. The lack of business and

managerial capabilities among staff has also been identified as one of the major hindrances of individuals in Botswana's progression into managerial positions. This is similar to Ghanaian hospitality education.

The consensus on hospitality education from the students' perspectives indicated that hospitality education makes little positive impact on graduate employability in Ghana (Sarkodie and Adom 2015). It is noteworthy that the industrial attachment was stressed by the lecturers' focus group and hospitality employers' interview results as a key but minimally effective and highly problematic pillar of hospitality employability education.

In this study, the students report no meaningful learning for almost every employability skill, except for entrepreneurship skills ($p < 0.05$) in which there is significant learning, due perhaps to the strong vocational nature of hospitality work generally; the students can be entrepreneurial in their work place or start their own businesses, for example. The results continue to triangulate the cumulative evidence on the very poor teaching and learning of employability skills within hospitality education curricula, as gathered from Chapter 5 lecturers' survey. A similar study by Pitan (2016) on graduate employability in Nigeria, a similar Sub-Saharan African country, indicates that, currently, the undergraduate curriculum, designed to produce graduates with professionalism and lifelong learning skills that will enable them to enjoy success in seeking work, is failing to do so. Therefore, there is increasing pressure on higher education to enhance the employability of graduates, by ensuring higher education learning experiences translate into a fulfilling transition to the labour market.

Students rate on-campus and off-campus activities and their combinations as important in providing them with job-related experience. This again corroborates similar views among the lecturers'. The results, similar to those of the lecturers, show that a GHEEF-informed intervention in the teaching of hospitality courses is required in order to enhance the capacity of the courses and actually enhance the employability skills of hospitality graduates in Ghana, through placing a balanced emphasis on these activities in the hospitality curriculum. Finally, the graduates' views on the quality of hospitality education and related curriculum innovations (summarised under Theme 2 notes) show strong agreement with the lecturers' focus group and questionnaire responses, which makes GHEEF-based interventions in the curriculum critically urgent.

6.1.3 Theme 3: Gaps in learning, hospitality skills and competences

The researcher first discusses the lecturers' focus group and questionnaire analysis-based views on this theme, since these coincide. This is followed by the graduates and hotel managers' views, both on the within-chapter sub-themes and the summative findings in Theme 3 of summary of findings. It should be noted that most of the respondents' views on this theme are similar to the views expressed in Theme 2.

6.1.3.1 Process Skills

The lecturers emphasised the need to teach students the core subjects in the field, such as food and beverage management, housekeeping and accommodation, which require facilities such as simulation learning, guest-houses with modern equipment, as well as complementary training in teaching hotels. As evidenced by Myong et al. (2016), because hospitality programmes need to motivate their students to experience situations that are similar to those in the real industry, there is a strong need for hospitality education to utilise simulation learning. Simulation learning offers huge benefits to students in many ways, such as decision-making skills, as it gives them a certain level of reality by which they can experience the industry without being afraid of not performing properly (Fawcett 2002; Myong et al. 2016). Simulation learning allows students an opportunity to comprehend how the hospitality business works, by practising job-related tasks before the transition to the real job market (Myong et al.2016). Fawcett (2002) argues that job-related tasks cannot be learnt through lecturing, which this research found to be the major teaching method used. Similarly, Fawcett and Lockwood (2000) enumerated the advantages of simulation learning to hospitality education as building confidence in students, teamwork which goes on to improve communication skills, the building of relationships and the understanding of how the hospitality business is organised.

However, the process skills which underpin these subjects are not being properly taught on the curriculum, since there is relatively little emphasis on them (Knight and Yorke 2004). Process skills are literally ways of implementing set tasks more efficiently in the form of guidelines and frameworks. These skills should be developed within the curricula as smart routines that are used to carry out hospitality tasks more professionally and up to industry standards (Knight and Yorke, 2004). A good example of process skills in the

curriculum which lecturers should be familiar with, but do not fully understand, consists of the four elements of the curriculum design process; namely, Learning Outcomes, Learning, Teaching, and Assessment. Hence, the GHEEF must fundamentally be used to re-educate hospitality lecturers on the curriculum process and other process skills associated with the hospitality modules, in order for them to produce employable graduates (Yorke 2004), who understand such process skills. Therefore, to meet the growing demand for qualified employees, hospitality education must give students the most up-to-date hospitality workforce-ready curriculum that addresses the industry needs and underpinning process skills (Hawkins et al. 2012).

6.1.3.2 Gaps in learning, skills and competencies in the Ghanaian context

The lack of frequent updates in the hospitality curriculum in Ghana is evident from the lecturers' responses to item 12 of the questionnaire on curriculum. It clearly portends a curriculum that is unlikely to be consistent with hospitality graduate requirements generally, particularly for hospitality courses and their potential for making hospitality graduates employable. Ansah (2012) suggests a complete re-design and delivery of the curriculum in the polytechnics and universities to bridge the gaps in learning skills and competencies. As stated in Chapter 3, the curriculum being used is regarded as out dated and unresponsive to the needs of trainees and industry demands. The disparity between the institutional training and the needs of industry has implications for graduate employability (Asirifi et al 2013) because with an outdated curriculum, students will be underprepared for the job market. These implications for Ghana include the poor transition of graduates to the job markets due to the disparity between their skills and skills needed in the industry, which affects the Ghanaian economy adversely (Sarkodie and Adom 2015; Avornyo 2013; Asirifi 2013; Afeti et al 2003).

Again, similar to the lecturers, the students reveal a curriculum that fails to provide them with employability skills. This is exacerbated by the fact that the necessary off-campus activities and other pedagogical strategies are being ineffectively implemented by the lecturers. The above-mentioned gaps in learning, skills and competences on the part of Ghanaian students and lecturers are summarised in the notes on Theme 3, summary of key findings. They include a lack of group dynamics in learning, inadequate resources and equipment, lecturers not exposed to industry, and subject matter knowledge that is not

balanced with employability skills. Sisson and Adams (2013) indicated that, due to the wide range of the positions open to hospitality students upon graduation, it is difficult to determine skills, knowledge and abilities.

As argued by Myong et al. (2016), the hospitality curriculum must broaden students' knowledge, so exploring through learning by doing, and knowledge of industry trends must be reflected in the curriculum. They further noted that the hospitality management curriculum needs to cover various aspects of the hospitality industry so students can have an opportunity to experience diverse hospitality sectors and eventually determine the areas that most interest them. It is therefore important that hospitality educators revamp their curriculum to meet the changing trends of the hospitality industry (Myong et al. 2016). The curriculum must broaden students' knowledge and reflect industry trends (Myong et al. 2016). Hence, using an improved curriculum to give students an opportunity to experience the various hospitality sectors is key to delivering students' expectations (Rahman 2010).

To add to this insight, all the key employability skills listed are important for higher education employability. These notes reinforce the need for the GHEEF-informed training of hospitality lecturers in Ghana (and possibly other lecturers generally) on the requirements of employability education, with a focus on all of the employability skills noted under lecturers' survey in Chapter 5.

6.1.4 Theme 4: Enhancing Ghanaian hospitality graduates' employability

The summary of findings under Theme 4, constitutes a rich list of issues to bear in mind when intervening to enhance graduate employability within Ghanaian hospitality education from the perspectives of employers. The researcher therefore focuses the discussion on several detailed findings about the employability constructs within the analysis chapter, and the implications of these issues for successful interventions, including suggestions regarding staff training:

6.1.4.1 Work and life experiences,

Under this construct, the following additional perspectives were gleaned from the responses: the need to increase the period of industrial attachment to at least half the

three-year duration of a hospitality degree; avoiding the current 'theory of practice' approach and really inculcating deep practice into the curriculum delivery; and engaging in exchange programmes with international hospitality institutions:

'Doing industrial attachments, what's expected of you is that you're going to learn what is in industry as a matter of fact that is what is needed to work so I think that, as academic institutions, we need to emphasise more and monitor seriously our students while on industrial attachment' (FA18).

Dewey (2011:9) argues that, without a relevant connection to the experiences of learners, 'there is the standing danger that the material of formal instruction will be merely the subject matter of the schools, isolated from the matter of life-experiences'. As noted earlier, this quote repeats the need for reflexive learning (Harvey 2001) from industrial experience to be appropriately assessed within the learning outcomes and the learning, teaching and assessment aspects of the hospitality curriculum, for which reason the assessment must be *of* (as with concepts) and *for* (as with practice) learning. For example, lecturers should expect their students to produce reflexive reports of the new learning gained from their industrial attachment, using standardised forms that have been vetted by industry supervisors. The exchange programme concept (including lecturers taking industry-based sabbaticals) could mean collaboration and linkages with international hotel chains in Ghana and its neighbouring countries, which will expose students and lecturers to such experiences. Given the chance to acquire knowledge both from and in the workplace, can impact greatly on students' employability. Hawkins et al. (2012) emphasise students' practical experiences and capabilities required when working in the real field which helps students to be creative and flexible in a dynamic working environment. According to Deale (2013), practical teaching must be demonstrated in hospitality education while delivering the core values. Similarly, Ladkin and Weber (2008) indicated that students need to be prepared through various types of hands-on training. This enables students to improve hospitality-related skills, such as promptness in service and operational performance while also learning in-depth socialising skills (Barron et al. 2007). Internship or industry work experience in hospitality programmes are an important part of the curriculum, and it is imperative that students are required to work a minimum number of hours in industry before graduating.

These findings support previous research that advocated the extension of work placements by nine to 12 months between the second and third year and final year of the programme, which is key to graduate employment (Lowden et al 2011). The literature suggests that graduates entering the job market with a combination of sustained periods of work placements are held in high esteem (Wilton 2014).

In advanced economies, higher education hospitality management is linked to teaching hotels, for example HTMI Switzerland hotel school, Utalii hotel school in Kenya, and William Angliss Institute in Sydney, Australia. Therefore, stronger links with hotel chains in the form of 'teaching hotels' would be helpful in Ghana. This will facilitate a two-way collaboration, whereby the hotels benefit from taking hospitality students whose curriculum and training already reflect their requirements, and lecturers and students would also feel more certain about where to gain such new experiences. To the researcher, this will amount to immersive employability learning and experiences for the students. In support of this point, employability is about the kind of good learning that empowers learners as critical reflective citizens (Harvey 2001). Watts (2006) supports this assertion that the involvement of employers in educational activities will add significance to the relevance of the activities and make it credible for students; employers will also be motivated to exhibit their company's positive image and pave the way for access by prospective applicants by fulfilling their corporate responsibility.

Green and Erdem (2016) argue that the use of such instructional approaches will bridge the existing gap between hospitality education and the competencies that employers expect from graduates of hospitality programmes. Stansbie et al. (2016) suggested that work-based experience as a teaching tool is superior to traditional learning methods. Moreover, the hotel chains will gain greater added value from the industrial placements. Their experienced staff will serve as invited speakers, guest lecturers and industry supervisors of projects that develop solutions to the emerging problems in the hospitality industry, by pooling together the experiences and best-practices from different 'teaching hotels', hospitality departments will reform their curricula in order to meet the top-quality standards. These inputs into the TLA process will also form the basis for leading the thinking at seminars and conferences which will inform the theory and practice of hospitality.

Yao-Fen Wang and Chen-Tsang Tsai (2014) suggest that hospitality education should emphasise fostering a correct work attitude rather than focusing only on learning the skills needed to pass examinations. The right work attitude and personal attributes must be internalized by students as early as possible so that they are incorporated into the personal value system. In college, on-campus and off-campus internship opportunities should be provided so that students can learn comprehensively and adjust their behaviour and values based on what they learn and observe in the workplace.

These ideas will inform the design of the GHEEF, including such elements as its form and functions (its frameworks and related situations, tasks, actions, and results), and how it should be used by the different stakeholders (operating mechanisms), in order effectively to enhance graduate employability in hospitality education (Sisson and Adams 2013; Sonet et al. 2010; Hein and Reigel 2012). Sisson and Adams (2013) suggest that a combination of methods that develop soft competencies in the classroom, with an opportunity to apply and practise these skills during supervised work experience may be the most successful approach to mastering soft competencies.

6.1.4.2 Reflection and Evaluation and Personal Development Planning (PDP)

Graduates, in the opinion of the respondents, should reflect on and think critically about their learning, and maintain a PDP portfolio that evidences such skills (Maher and Graves 2008). They should be able to critique ideas in their learning, and understand the debates on the merits and demerits of different approaches in their studies. The respondents did not mention the PDP concept directly. For example, the references to critical thinking, ability to form cooperative businesses around niche offerings, have an entrepreneurial mind-set and presentation skills, and writing good CVs require effective reflection and evaluation skills (Watt 2006). These skills need to be more properly evidenced in PDP files, which enable the students to match them against known career requirements, continually reflect on them, and show them on their CVs (Cottrell 2003; Rose and Nicholl 1997).

Again, they were unaware of the technical requirement apart from their general understanding of the related constructs of continuous personal development (CPD), which they are expected to maintain, but which is not properly appraised. Thus, Knight and

Yorke (2004:200) state that 'PDP is a set of processes that are valuable in their own right and a product-portfolio of achievements that can help in securing employment. PDP is likely to require an institutional approach that brings together academic department and student support services'. A fully coherent PDP scheme will ensure guidance that addresses generic learning and study needs, for subject-specific learning needs, career planning and job seeking (Knight and Yorke 2004; University of Worcester 2012). The primary objective of PDP, according to Lee (2002), is to improve the capacity of individuals to understand what and how they are learning, and to review, plan and take responsibility for their own learning. Students need to be able to reflect on their achievements and present evidence for them and to be aware of how their own employability is being developed through both the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. PDPs are important for the development of an individual's employability. Employers are primarily interested in the process of PDP rather than the outcomes. At the recruitment stage, the value of PDPs lies in helping applicants to explain and demonstrate what they know, what they can do and what they have done (University of Worcester 2012).

6.1.4.3 New approaches to enhancing graduate employability and new skills and competencies

The finding related to the use of the course-skills affinity matrices (see Table 8 Appendix 5.1c) in locating the teaching of employability skills more appropriately through the curriculum is clearly a new approach that is informed by this research. The other new approaches will be outlined in light of the remaining findings below. (Table 10 Appendix 5.1c) shows that the lecturers agree with the students that they learn only three out of the 16 skills sets indicated in the table. These skills are financial skills, business management, and foreign languages. In the lecturer's opinion, therefore, students fail to learn the remaining 13 skills, which is in line with the overall 86% failure of hospitality education to equip hospitality students with employability skills. Hence, a good start for innovative employability teaching would be to focus on these 13 skills and all the other skills in a cohesive curriculum-wide manner suggested in the affinity matrices above. Lecturers should bundle the 13 skills with those skills listed in the affinity matrices, according to

which are most closely related, in order to teach them in tandem with the 9 skills explored in the matrices.

To reiterate earlier comments, there should be regular curriculum updates to see how the TLA interventions are succeeding in embedding employability skills in hospitality education, and how continually to improve the results and the GHEEF as an intervention guide. Sisson and Adams (2013) maintain that the hospitality industry is changing rapidly and so, to meet the needs of this industry, educators must review and revise the curriculum and know which competencies are essential for graduates. Moreover, all of the employability skills considered in these findings (see for example Tables 8 and10 Appendix 5.1c) should be taught, irrespective of how the lecturers rate their importance in hospitality education. This is because lecturers need re-educating regarding how to teach employability skills, in the first instance.

6.1.4.4 Enhancing Ghanaian graduate employability

Figure 5.7, related to the lecturers' questionnaire analysis, shows that employability skills are teachable across all hospitality courses, with the top five employability-laden courses being communication in hospitality, hospitality and catering law, bar operations management, food and beverage management, and HRM. It is therefore surprising that such teaching is not happening in Ghana, as revealed by the previous findings. Similarly, almost all of the employability skills are important in hospitality education. The top five skills by importance include technical/specialist skills, planning and organising, communication, leadership and problem-solving (Knight and Yorke 2004; Finch et al. 2013). These skills are naturally needed for managing diverse hospitality operations effectively (Te-Yi Chang and Jui-Man Hus 2009).

The findings establish the importance and teachability of employability skills in hospitality education, but are still needed to guide hospitality lecturers regarding which courses may successfully institute which skills. The researcher teases this information out from the lecturers' responses as presented in the supplementary affinity matrices. These figures show how different employability skills are linked to the different hospitality courses. Hence, for any skill, it is easier to locate learning, teaching and assessment strategies which will promote the skill in the first three courses of the findings of lecturers. To explain

this further, consider the chart in Figure 5.7.1 for technical/specialist skills. This shows that the top three courses in which to teach such skills are hospitality accounting, food and beverage management, and food, hygiene, sanitation and safety. It would be interesting for the lecturers to consider all the other technical skills that may be needed by hospitality graduates and design appropriate TLA strategies for delivering these skills, in addition to those included in the selected courses where most of the course-linked technical skills are located. These remarks apply to the other skills noted in Figures 5.7.1-5.7.9

The researcher notes that this is the first time that this kind of mixed research methods-based employability study has been conducted in Ghana, with the above insights on hospitality course-employability skills affinities obtained. This adds, therefore, to the methodological novelty of the research and will facilitate the more effective use of the GHEEF in enhancing hospitality graduate employability in Ghana, following the completion of this study.

The views of the hospitality employers complement the findings of the above discussion of the hospitality lecturers and graduates' views. The employers discussed in-depth the industry perspectives on hospitality graduates' employability which covers the key theoretical constructs, especially work-based skills, gaps in learning, skills and competences, and the structure of industrial attachments required to facilitate deep practical skills among graduates, in addition to the need for well-coordinated stakeholder collaboration among HEIs, industry, and government. For example, they emphasised a full one-year industrial attachment which will see a student working in different departments.

There were interesting suggestions by hospitality employers that HEIs should have their own teaching hotels or be formally linked with existing ones. These are similar to the views expressed by the lecturers, but with greater professional depth than expressed by some of the lecturers. Moreover, the employers discussed the role of the government policy-makers in more detail. Shariff (2013) supports the above views by indicating that hospitality education should periodically review and evaluate the hospitality curriculum for relevance, to update and prepare graduates for the increasingly complex needs of the industry. The evaluation of the curriculum, however, should not be carried out in isolation, but with the insight of professionals working in the industry.

A closer look at the employers' responses shows that they did not particularly use academic language to describe their experiences in the same way as the lecturers did. For example, they did not discuss career development learning (CDL), reflection, or personal development planning (PDP) in the way explored with lecturers', although their ideas generally implied some of these skills and tool-kits. This justifies the triangulation of the evidence from the different stakeholder groups in the qualitatively dominant mixed-methods design of this study. This triangulation, as discussed in detail in the methodology and analysis chapters, provides a strong evidence base for the anticipated use of the GHEEF as an intervention mechanism for improving the employability of Ghanaian hospitality graduates. The reason is that insights that may fail to emerge from any group – lecturers, graduates', and hospitality employers – will be obtained and/or strengthened by the other groups. The policy-makers' perspective also adds to the evidence base through a critical literature review of the relevant policy documents, in addition to the ideas obtained from the main fieldwork.

The key insights from the employers on ways of enhancing graduate employability under the theme 4 include: an acute lack of skills on the part of hospitality graduates even when some of the big multinational hotel chains could offer them jobs, which implies that potential jobs exist for graduates; an under-appreciation by the policy-makers of the huge potential within the hospitality and tourism industry (HTI) for national socio-economic development; and the need for hospitality education that clearly exposes students to all aspects of the industry, and the range of skills required to work effectively within it; for example, conference organisations, health and leisure clubs.

Jackson (2015) indicates that an area of agreement between employers of all sizes and categories concerns work and life experience to enhance graduate employability. Work experience exposure during scholarships enables students to establish a solid relationship between theory and practice. It gives them a better grasp and understanding of the role and expectations of their occupation and confidence with professionals (Pitan 2016; Lowden et. al. 2011; Jackson 2015).

This section discussed the implications of the findings for designing a GHEEF that will more effectively help stakeholders within hospitality education to enhance graduate employability. The results were thus linked to the two key research questions of interest in

the study. It was emphasised that the deeper contextual understanding of hospitality graduates' employability which the results provide, not only makes additional contributions to the development of the GHEEF, but also enhances the conceptual framework used in the study. This is based on the new perspectives that were obtained and the implications they have for employability research and practice.

6.2 Summary and implications for developing the GHEEF

6.2.1 Implications of the findings for developing the GHEEF

The research findings discussed in this chapter have additional implications for how the GHEEF will be designed in order more effectively to impact on employability education in Ghana. These implications include: a) mechanisms for training hospitality lecturers in Ghana (also in related disciplines) on how to teach employability skills, starting with the key meanings and dimensions of employability as a concept; b) the need to include all employability skills in the design of TLA strategies; c) use of the revealed course-skills affinity matrices to locate appropriate employability-focused TLA strategies within suitable courses which will support their development; and d) the need for continual curriculum reviews to assess the success of the strategies over time, that might be, initially, say, every end of year, and then every four years, following the initial development of suitable curricula.

6.2.2 How the findings relate to the research questions (RQ1 and RQ2)

The main responses to RQ1 were obtained from the hotel managers' interviews which were analysed in Chapter 5 Section C. For RQ2, the primary focus is on how the GHEEF should be structured to use all of the findings from the analysis chapter, including insights from the critical literature review, to achieve the required curriculum enhancements.

6.2.3 Wider Implications for theory research and practice

The above discussions show that the theory of employability offers far more scope for further work in developing country contexts such as Ghana than developed countries. It is not enough to understand the key employability models which are used in developed

countries; it is far more important to design intervention mechanisms that will truly improve graduate employability in Ghana, beyond the theory building and academic publications which have so far been the focus of most employability studies in Ghana (Ayogyam et al. 2012; Asirifi et al. 2013; British Council 2014). Hence, the GHEEF will restart the contextual theory building in the employability research which fits developing countries' needs better than the existing work. The conceptual framework which informs the GHEEF provides a good starting point for follow-on theoretical research in these directions.

Researchers can build on the results in their development of more effective TLA strategies for employability within individual hospitality courses that they teach, as well as related fields of study. Attempts should be made by disciplinary experts to adapt the conceptual framework and GHEEF discussed in this thesis and chapter to suit other subject areas, including even mathematical sciences.

Practically, it will be useful to continue to evaluate and improve the success of GHEEF in further studies based on actual before-and-after assessments of students' improvement in employability skills which intervention will be motivated by GHEEF-informed strategies. A good way to do this is to run surveys that systematically record the improvements across different hospitality courses and employability skills, and comparatively across different choices of TLA strategies and resources.

6.3 Contextual differences in the Ghanaian context compared to developed countries

Effectively, to adapt existing employability education strategies in Ghana requires an understanding of the differences between the Ghanaian and developed country contexts in which the models were originally developed. A number of facts stand out in the Ghanaian context.

First, the fact that lecturers are uninvolved in curriculum design is a startling discovery which warrants a complete retraining of the lecturers and a radical change in higher education policies in this regard. There is, therefore, the need to reorient the mind-sets of

lecturers and train them in curriculum design principles, including detailed Learning Outcome, Learning, Teaching and Assessment specifications around outcomes-based curricula (Prideaux 2000), currently lacking in Ghana. This requires lecturers to develop pedagogical research based on their use of GHEEF-inspired TLA strategies within hospitality education. Such research should aim to develop their employability teaching skills. As noted in the literature review, Prideaux (2000:34) indicates that educators should think about the desirable outcomes of their programmes and state them in clear and precise terms. They should then work backwards or 'design down' in the jargon of outcome-based education (OBE), to determine the appropriate learning experience which will lead to the stated outcomes. By using an outcome approach, educators are forced to give primacy to what learners will do and to organise their curricula accordingly.

Second, there is inadequate emphasis on teaching key management courses in the curriculum. The knowledge of new trends in the industry should be explored in the curriculum through innovative TLA strategies (Egwuatu 2013). Hospitality education should be made intensely entrepreneurial. Lecturers should be incentivised and motivated to update themselves generally. There should be comparative experiences with international hospitality courses which will facilitate similar standards within Ghanaian higher education. The researcher will reiterate these insights in designing the GHEEF and corresponding curriculum innovations.

Also, as noted by the lecturers, a lack of management training (Mahachi 2012) is a gap in the students' learning which means they are inadequately prepared for higher job roles, especially in the big hotel chains. Moreover, it impoverishes their capacity to set up and successfully manage their own business, in addition to being unable to demonstrate those skills in other job roles which require the competences of a hospitality graduate. This presupposes the need for a model that embeds the *how* of all these in the curriculum. In other words, the GHEEF should be positioned to facilitate employability, entrepreneurial and experiential learning. This point is supported by Nicolaides (2008), who identifies inadequate training facilities and a lack of human resources that are competitive and able to deliver quality service to international leisure industry as Africa's major disadvantages regarding hospitality and tourism.

Similarly, as Yizengaw (2008), Pitan (2016) maintains, African countries face many challenges in higher education such as: quality faculty; poor governance leadership and management, inadequate financial support, funding facilities and infrastructure; problems related to the quality and relevance of teaching and research; and inadequate knowledge generation, prioritising certain sectors over others. Mayaka and Akama (2007) acknowledge common deficiencies which exist in training and education in hospitality and tourism across many African countries and other emerging hospitality and tourism destinations. They indicate that most developing countries, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, lack well-coordinated hospitality and tourism training strategies and educational institutions capable of providing the much-needed human resource training, especially at the supervisory and managerial level.

There is a need for a balanced assessment *for* and *of* learning, involving a mixture of research- and project-based coursework, presentations, and examinations, say, with examinations accounting for no more than 60% of the total marks earned per module. There is also a need to explore in the proposed GHEEF the crucial role of HE policy makers and regulators in quality assurance in hospitality and other disciplines (Sisson and Adams 2013).

Again, there is a need for a formalised approach to the continuing professional development of lecturers that is possibly similar to the way in which HEIs in the UK students produce portfolios of evidence of up-to-datedness, to be revalidated for practice. This revalidation is based on Good teaching, which can be adapted to Ghanaian hospitality education and other client-facing disciplines in Ghana.

In effect, whilst individual Ghanaian hospitality lecturers should typically know how to design module or course curricula across different levels of learning, and in line with carefully structured learning outcomes, they still need to understand how to make these curricula employability-enhancing. That is, the learning outcomes and teaching, learning and assessment aspects of a higher education module or course curriculum can still be improved to enhance the employability of the graduates.

6.4 Summary of the pre-GHEEF findings

Links amongst the findings and research questions

For RQ1, the above results discuss a number of new trends – globalisation, the increasing use of ICT, new requirements and international service culture and excellence in the big multinational hospitality businesses – which should be considered in relevant innovations within hospitality education in Ghana.

For RQ2, the summative findings in Chapter 5 show the need to use all the different insights, including those that reinforce or differ from the literature-based constructs, by designing the GHEEF in such a way that makes it more contextually powerful for enhancing hospitality graduate employability in Ghana. The ultimate design work will be carried out using combinations of similar insights from the research findings and interpretations. This is achieved in Chapter 7 by combining the key findings.

The research results suggest a need for curricula that are assessed *for* and *of* learning, by not relying mainly on examinations but using other approaches which are more suitable for the learning outcomes. The assessment *of* learning refers to checking that learners understand the technical subject matter of a module, while assessment *for* learning refers to checking whether they can use that learning effectively in real-life problem-solving and decision-making. These points are useful ingredients for a thorough redesign of the hospitality curriculum using the GHEEF.

6.4.1 Enhancing Ghanaian hospitality graduate employability

6.4.1.1 New approaches

To emphasise earlier comments, there should be regular curriculum updates to see how the TLA interventions are faring in terms of successfully embedding employability skills within hospitality education, and how continually to improve the results and the GHEEF as an intervention guide. Moreover, all of the employability skills considered in the analysis chapters should be taught, irrespective of how the lecturers rate their importance within hospitality education.

6.4.2 Wider implications for theory research and practice

The findings show that the theory of employability offers far more scope for development in developing country contexts such as Ghana, especially from the student perspectives. Hence, the GHEEF restarts contextual theory building in employability research which fits developing countries' needs better than the existing work, in a way that continually assesses students' development of employability skills, preferably using Professional Development Portfolios (PDPs), which the students should compile as they learn various skills associated with the TLA strategies that their lecturers devise.

The research framework which informs the GHEEF is a good starting point for follow-on theoretical research in these directions.

Attempts should be made by disciplinary experts to adapt the conceptual framework and GHEEF discussed in this thesis and chapter to other subject areas, including even mathematical sciences'. Practically, it will be useful to continue to evaluate and improve the success of GHEEF in further studies based on actual before-and-after assessments of students' improvement in employability skills, which the intervention by GHEEF-informed strategies motivate. A good way to achieve this is to run surveys that systematically record the improvements across different hospitality courses and employability skills, and comparatively across different choices of TLA strategies and resources.

The qualitative analysis of the lecturers' focus group responses reveals a broad consensus amongst Polytechnic and University lecturers on the employability themes reviewed in the literature. They show a gap between the knowledge of these concepts on the part of Ghanaian lecturers compared with internationally-based lecturers, as noted in the literature review. The construct-based consensus views are summarised in Table 5.2 in chapter 5. Lecturers do not generally understand the full scope of employability as a characteristic or potential that manifests across a graduate's entire career; for example, securing jobs, satisfactorily growing in jobs, and moving on to other jobs, while continually updating their skills. Hence, the curriculum should prepare them for successful life-long learning instead of mere certification at the end of the initial higher education degree training.

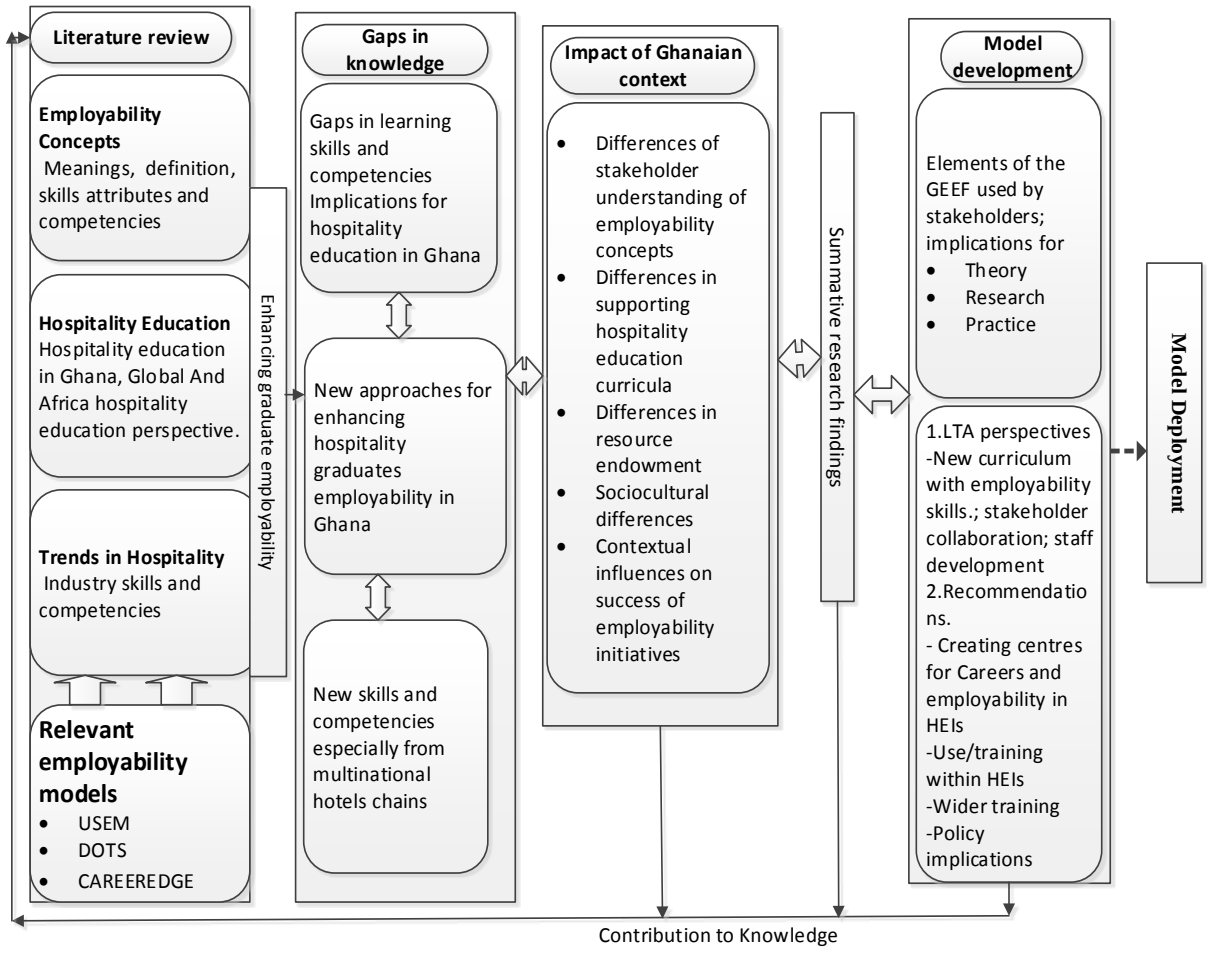
The focus group responses were analysed under relevant themes which explore the research questions, including employability concepts, hospitality education, gaps in learning, skills and competences, and the new skills required to close the gaps. The hospitality employers added more detailed insights on the nature of the new skills and requirements which will enable Ghanaian hospitality graduates to become employable and ultimately successful in their job.

The main results from the students' questionnaire survey include new knowledge about the gaps in learning, skills and competencies within hospitality education which obtain in Ghana, with particular regard to the students' views. These include the extent of understanding of the meanings and requirements of employability in the country, and how these findings feed into the design of the GHEEF as an intervention mechanism for improving graduate employability in Ghana.

6.4.3 Recalling the pre-GHEEF conceptual framework for the research

At the end of Chapter 4, the researcher accommodated the key insights from the employability models reviewed in the literature in a working conceptual framework which will be more suitable for the Ghanaian context. In this section, the researcher recalls the research framework which is then developed into the GHEEF. The key aim of this section, therefore, is to show how this research framework has been updated by the research findings into a theoretical model for the GHEEF.

Figure 6.1 Pre-GHEEF Conceptual Framework



The researcher discusses how the research findings from Chapters 5 and its summary contribute a new understanding to the high-level elements (the blocked themes, for example Employability Concept and Hospitality Education) of this pre-GHEEF model. Hence, starting with the first column, the researcher summarises the key lessons for each pre-GHEEF element as follows.

For the Employability Concept, it was found that the lecturers and graduates do not fully understand that it connotes three perspectives, including access to jobs, getting a job, and retaining, excelling and transiting to higher positions. The implication is that the lecturers would be unable to teach these perspectives, as evident from the results. Hence, the GHEEF will be implemented in a way that overcomes this contextual weakness, through the retraining of lecturers and students about these meanings, and the requirement for

fulfilling them. For example, the interventions that the GHEEF should facilitate must consider how the students should acquire all the generic and subject matter skills which will support the three perspectives, beyond good CVs and interview skills that may secure the jobs in the first place.

For Hospitality Education, the literature showed the best practice in employability education globally and the gaps within Ghanaian hospitality education. Those gaps are summarised in the first two blocks in Column 2 of the research framework as indicated in chapter 4 figure 4.1. For example, the gaps in learning, skills and competences were documented in the findings. Whilst implementing the GHEEF in Ghana, those gaps will be taken into consideration. For this, the curriculum design for the modules should deploy the effective teaching, learning, and assessment (TLA) strategies summarised in the findings. These findings will be enhanced by the suggestions made in this chapter on how lecturers and students could be helped to develop the requisite employability teaching and learning skills. In this way, the GHEEF-based interventions effectively build the research findings into appropriate TLA strategies which they connote.

Green and Erdem (2016) suggest that the key to successful instruction is to recognise the varying learning styles of students and offer experiential learning techniques to enhance the learning environment for them. For example, lecturers should be trained in curriculum design and delivery, which covers the TLA domains (Carpenter et al. 2016). According to Feinstein et al. (2005:34), **'**hospitality educators have become aware of the limitations of assessing the benefits and shortcomings of the various methods used to provide instruction and training to hospitality students and practitioners'. They should also be encouraged to lead this process. Leadership here is used because the research findings show that Ghanaian lectures work with course contents (minimum standards) which they generally fail to develop into integrated curricula with purposeful learning outcomes.

Similarly, the weaknesses within Ghanaian hospitality education (Sarkodie and Adom 2015; Asirifi et al. 2013; Frimpong-Bonsu 2015; Mensah-Ansah 2014) compared to the global standards and employability models produced research findings related to New Approaches for enhancing hospitality graduate employability in Ghana, which is the second element in Column 2 of the research framework. Those new approaches were elicited from the findings and should inform the GHEEF. The third element of Column 1 of

the research framework, namely 'New Trends in hospitality Industry skills and competencies', generated additional gaps in terms of New Skills and Competences from multinational hospitality related businesses and chains which is the fourth element in Column 2. These skills must be thoroughly reflected in the new hospitality curricula which the GHEEF informs.

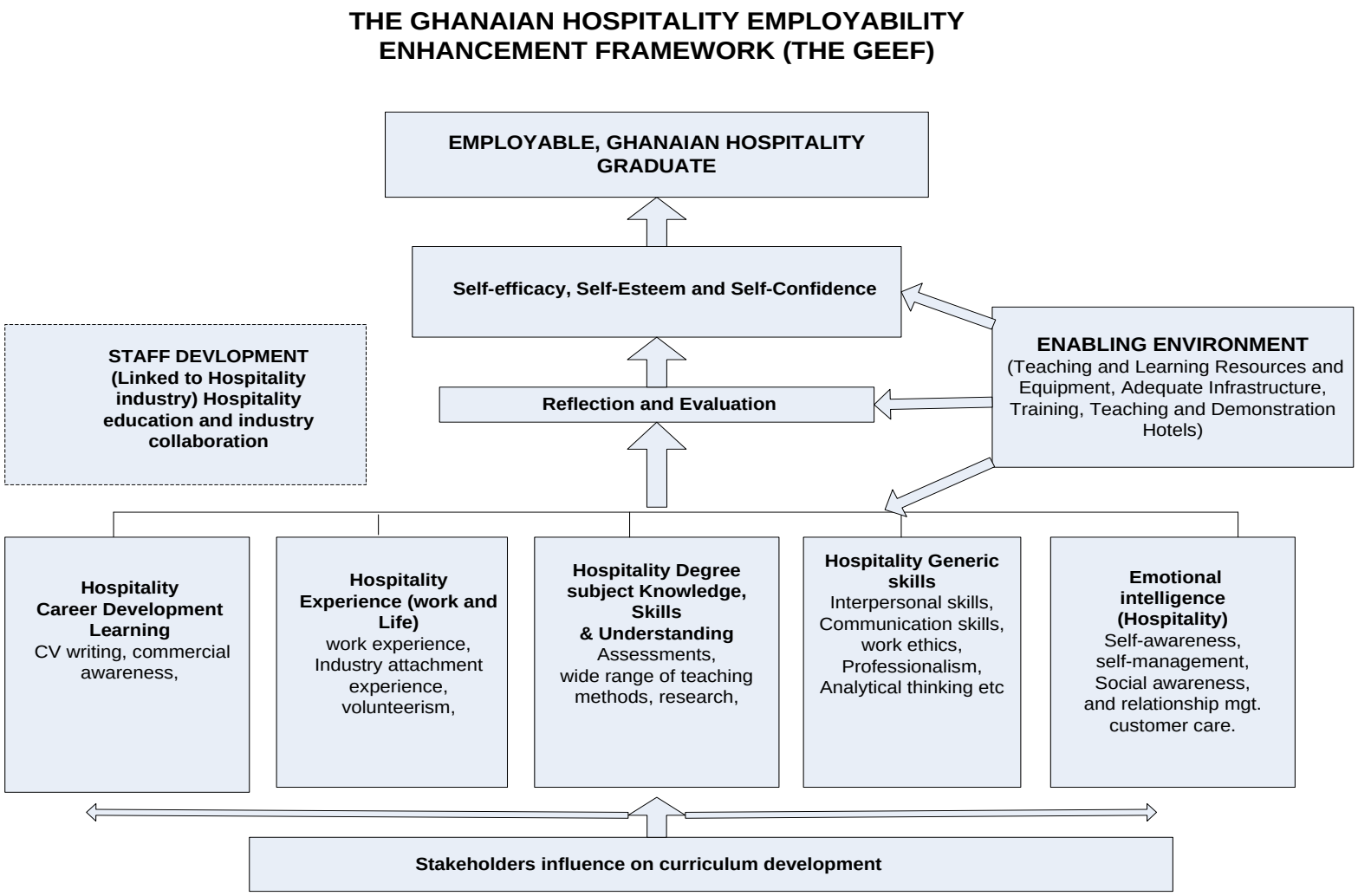
The Relevant Employability models for the study (fourth element of Column 1) remind the researcher and future researchers who may use the research results of the need for the key skills and practices emphasised by the models (USEM, DOTS, and CareerEdge models) to be developed within the hospitality curricula in Ghana. This is because the findings show that these enabling models are not currently being used in Ghana, for which reason the lecturers do not fully understand the meanings of employability.

The third column, the impact of the Ghanaian context, indicates further elements to consider regarding how the GHEEF will be used in employability education in Ghana. For the first element of the column, the GHEEF interventions should use capacity building workshops, conferences and seminars to clarify the key employability concepts to all stakeholders. This will facilitate common expectations from the new hospitality curricula. All the other contextual differences indicated in the column should inform the GHEEF activities. The curriculum differences across HEIs and their resource endowments should be considered. This also applies to socio-cultural differences which should be considered so that they do not impede job performance. For example, some students' attitudes may make them unwilling to perform certain tasks which they perceive as culturally unacceptable roles for men/women, which need not apply at work.

Column 4 of the research framework which is now added to the framework to explain the development of the conceptual model indicates the key elements involved in developing the Ghanaian hospitality employability enhancement framework; namely, the high-level schematisation of the GHEEF (the elements), how it will be used by the stakeholders, its implication for theory, research and practice, and the full TLA perspectives, including specialist training centres, which this framework should help to create within Ghanaian higher education. Finally, Column 5 indicates again the need to deploy GHEEF-informed employability skills in future through training centres.

The above notes discussed how the research findings inform the pre-GHEEF research framework explored in Chapter 4 and recalled above in Figure 6.1. The following notes further develop these ideas into the GHEEF in a way that accommodates Figure 6.1 as a starting point for continuing to use the GHEEF as a custom-built framework for embedding employability skills within Ghanaian hospitality education. The above notes highlighted the implications of the key research findings for the GHEEF. The theoretical elements of the GHEEF which incorporate the gist of those research findings are now presented below.

Figure 6.2 Conceptual Model of Ghanaian Hospitality Enhancement Framework



The proposed model of the Ghanaian hospitality employability enhancement framework depicted in Figure 6.2 above is adapted from the CareerEdge model of Pool and Sewell (2007). It illustrates the essential components of employability and suggests the direction of interaction between the various elements. Despite the application and support of existing models in the literature, the proposed model is based on the empirical results of the research. Engagement with each of the elements is envisaged as facilitating Ghanaian hospitality graduate employability. The CareerEdge model is generic in nature, built for the enhancement of graduate employability. However, with the specific hospitality graduate skills needed in Ghana, this model used the research findings as inputs into an innovative design for the hospitality curriculum. As indicated in Chapter 5, the elements will enhance the employability of Ghanaian hospitality students and graduates based on the findings from the empirical research. The arrows explain the relationships between the different components.

This is a generic model that identifies the key employability skills for subject specialist or stakeholders to cover in the curriculum to meet the requirements of specific hospitality education philosophy. For example, the enabling environment on the right-hand side of the model includes interventions that will address the gaps between current employability TLA strategies in Ghana and what obtain in developed countries. These strategies will be informed by the research findings explored in this chapter. In an enabling environment, students will be better able to reflect on and evaluate their skills, resources will be provided for the effective learning of employability skills, staff will be appropriately motivated and developed, and all of the key suggestions for curriculum improvement made in light of the findings can be implemented.

6.4.4 Discussion of the elements of the model

Career development learning

The key points mentioned under this construct in chapter 5 include: students' knowledge of the trends and opportunities available around them; the ability to team up and form businesses based on the skills learnt on the courses; work-enhancing skills such as group work, presentations, role-play, mini projects, interview skills, and self-confidence; writing good CVs; proven competence in performing set tasks satisfactorily; skills that make them self-confident, innovative and self-reliant graduates to enter management careers in the Hospitality and Tourism industry; and Personal Development Plans (PDPs). It is important that students should acquire knowledge of

the hospitality industry to identify available opportunities, learn how to write employable-enhancing CVs and make career decisions. From the findings, communication and CV writing skills development is missing from the development of hospitality students.

Experience (work and Life)

Work experience during a degree course is essential, as found with the hospitality employers, lecturers and graduates. Employers value graduates with work experience over those without it.

The findings generally support the need to develop innovative curricula through experiential learning, based on practical work that reflects what the graduates will face in the workplace, since the existing the curriculum does not emphasise experiential learning, which impedes the students' awareness of the dynamic changes in the industry therefore, there is the need to enforce professional standards in the curriculum. Hence, the adaptation of work and life experience to the curriculum.

Lecturers also indicated the importance to give them training on the job in order for them to be up-to-date on the happenings in industry since lecturers are unaware of these needs for instance by linking lecturers to hotel chains for industry experience. This will increase their awareness of the trends in the hospitality industry. They suggested use of longer period, for example up to a year, industrial attachments (internships) that afford students the opportunity for deeper learning of the core tasks they will face in future. Furthermore, 64% of lecturers believe that work experience will enable graduates to gain experience that will prove useful in the job market by suggesting off-campus extra-curricular activities.

The findings from the graduates indicate a lack of learning through the other more employability-enhancing methods. This corroborate similar views of the lecturers regarding the lack of work-related training off- or on-campus (outside the academic environment or within the campus), extra-curricular and TLA activities graduates rate experiential learning and their combinations to on-campus activities as important in providing them with job-related experience. Therefore necessary for the GHEEF.

The employers discussed in-depth aspects of their work and life experience that flow from their experience. This quote below emphasis the need for work experience;

'When a student studies in the classroom he has to complement it with the practical aspect, then after the schooling be attached to a unit that does the same job as the education that he has had' (M1).

Need for longer internship

An employer noted that a longer industrial attachment is needed. A vital work experience stated by employers is length of the experience. They thought that extending the period of work experience was essential and should be a condition for graduations. An interesting reason why work and life experiences is vital in hospitality, according to one employer, is the need for students to learn about the process skills encompassed in the standard operating procedures (SOPs), which enable hotels and service organisations to run their services in line with a well-known checklist of rules and behaviour of the particular organisation. This knowledge of SOPs can only be gained through experience hence the need for industry collaboration:

Degree subject knowledge, understanding and skills

This element is a dominant concept in the model. Employers will evaluate graduates on the basis of how successfully they have completed their degree course. From the findings, especially the gaps in learning skills and competencies, most of the skills specifically related to hospitality are developed within the core subject matter knowledge, which are explored based on the survey findings of the lecturers and graduates. The views of the lecturers on how these hospitality skills and competencies should be developed alongside wider employability skills fall under this element. Hospitality higher education in Ghana unquestionably faces severe challenges. The respondents lament the lack of innovation in Ghanaian hospitality education, as indicated in the findings chapter. This makes it imperative to teach students the basic, intermediate and advanced levels of the subjects studied through curriculum innovation.

This abject lack of curriculum innovation implies a range of gaps in the learning, skills and competences mentioned by the respondents. Hospitality lecturers should be able to add an employability learning outcome to the subject-matter learning outcomes on their curricula. This requires them to understand all of the dimensions of employability explored in this research and to design and revise the curricula accordingly.

Generic skills

From the conceptual model derived from research, the findings in chapter 5 shows that in Ghana, there is the need for graduates to possess generic skills, which they currently lack. The lecturers also indicated the need for graduates to have transferable skills in broader management disciplines, to enable the latter to compete for jobs and also excel in roles requiring such skills. According to Pool and Sewell (2007), although employers want graduates with relevant subject knowledge, understanding and skills, as mentioned above, more importantly, hospitality graduates with well-developed generic skills are preferred. As hospitality is a client-facing industry, graduates need to develop skills and attributes as shown in the diagram. This research explicates the skills needed and the skills deficit existing in Ghana.

Staff Development

The lecturers' findings advocated the need for a new staff development course that will enhance experience in subjects like critical thinking and independent learning, as well as refresher courses for lecturers.

Process skills are literally ways of implementing set tasks more efficiently in the form of guidelines and frameworks. These skills should be developed within the curricula as smart routines that are used to carry out hospitality tasks more professionally and up to industry standards. A good example of process skills in the curriculum which lecturers should be familiar with, but do not fully understand, consists of the four elements of the curriculum design process; namely, Learning Outcomes, Learning, Teaching, and Assessment. Hence, the GHEEF must fundamentally be used to re-educate hospitality lecturers on the curriculum process and other process skills associated with the hospitality modules. This will enable them to produce employable graduates, who understand such process skills. Therefore, to meet the growing demand for qualified employees, hospitality education must give students the most up-to-date hospitality workforce-ready curriculum that addresses the industry needs and underpinning process skills (Hawkins et al. 2012).

Emotional intelligence (EL)

As evidenced in the findings chapter (see section 5.3.4.24) Emotional intelligence in hospitality is about self-awareness recognising and understanding one's own emotions

and using it to guide one's behaviour, and accepting one's strength, weaknesses and competencies. The graduates need to develop some empathy, self-awareness and also recognise their own emotions and impact that on customers. This should be developed through appropriate curriculum tasks and professional standards in the industry. This is a vital construct in customer facing service industry such as hospitality, however, a combination of other skill sets like critical thinking and decision-making, strategic intelligence and wider soft skills that make a person more engaging and generally successful in life were mentioned by the respondents. The researcher is of the view that the construct is therefore accommodated in these other skills, these are liken to emotional intelligence which is in the model.

6.4.5 Contributions of the research results to knowledge

For completeness of this chapter, the researcher summarises in this section the contributions of the research to knowledge, which is developed in more detail in the Conclusion and Recommendations chapter (Chapter 7).

The key contribution of the research results to knowledge is that they identify the broad understanding of employability concepts and challenges among Ghanaian hospitality lecturers, hospitality employers, and hospitality graduates. For example, the employers provided insights into industry practices, work-based learning and new requirements. Their responses reinforced similar resources and the human capital challenges facing effective hospitality education in the country, as earlier discovered from the lecturers. This therefore adds Ghanaian developing country perspectives to the employability literature.

Using a mixed methodology, the findings combine key stakeholder perspectives on employability which make the GHEEF theoretically and practically robust than is possible with, say, using only lecturers' opinions. For example in the development of the GHEEF, the mixed methods analysis provided the most robust evidence based on a combined data from the review of literature and the primary research findings from Chapter 5

The main lecturers and graduates' results include new knowledge about the gaps in learning, skills and competencies within hospitality education in Ghana, the poor understanding of the meanings and entailments of employability in the country, the power of the course-affinity matrices more effectively to locate pedagogical strategies

for different employability skills on suitable courses, and how these findings feed into the design of the GHEEF, as an intervention mechanism for improving graduate employability in Ghana.

In a nutshell, the GHEEF provides researchers with a research-informed conceptual framework for further research aimed at institutionalising hospitality graduate employability education in Ghana and different disciplinary clusters. These research efforts can be adapted to different developing country contexts. The main theoretical contribution of the chapter is theory building in the form of the GHEEF and the customisation of employability research for the Ghanaian context which it embodies. This GHEEF has immense pedagogical merit due to the way in which it will facilitate future research, teaching, learning and application of employability skills within and outside the HEI curricular, and the opportunities that it offers lecturers to understand the fuller meanings of employability, and become equipped with research and generic employability skills across higher educational institutions and the hospitality industry.

The following notes emphasise further the main contributions of the research to knowledge, revealed within the research findings as stated under the various themes thus. For theme 1, the key contribution is the narrow understanding of employability by lecturers and graduates' Theme 2's insights include: graduates' lack of broad management and communication skills; their lack of employability skills; and the development of affinity matrices which add a new perspective to construct development linked to curriculum enhancement, by further measuring the employability-proneness of different courses and the teachability of specific employability skills in different hospitality courses.

Theme 3's contributions mainly include poor curriculum design skills among lecturers. Theme 4's contributions include poor industry experience among lecturers and related ineffective industrial attachment experience for graduates; the need to emphasise employability, entrepreneurship and enterprise education in employability-enhancing TLA strategies; and the need for teachers' continual staff development and an enabling environment that is conducive to achieving these objectives. The researcher presented these contributions below which portray more clearly how these contributions compare with the previous knowledge in the literature. These understandings are the main findings that inform how the GHEEF will be used in enhancing hospitality graduates' employability in Ghana.

Conclusion

To reiterate earlier remarks, this research evaluates the factors that affect hospitality graduates' employability, identifies the broad understanding of the employability concept by Ghanaian hospitality lecturers, and the curriculum practices, resources, and challenges facing effective hospitality education in the country, in such a way that adds to the literature on employability in the particular context of such a developing country.

The underpinning mixed methods approach in this foundational research on the key influences on employability skills development among Ghanaian hospitality students triangulated crucial qualitative and quantitative evidence to produce the matrix of thematic research findings. This approach is in the researcher's view novel and therefore constitutes a methodological contribution to knowledge, since other researchers can use it for other disciplines.

The chapter discussed the implications of the findings for designing a GHEEF that will more effectively help stakeholders in hospitality education to enhance graduate employability. These findings were explained as the key inputs to inform how the GHEEF is used in employability education. The chapter discussed the theoretical and practical contributions of the research findings to knowledge. Chapter 7 is the concluding chapter of the research with a more detailed explication of these contributions to knowledge.

7 CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

This research investigated the factors affecting Ghanaian hospitality graduates' employability and other influences in the hospitality labour market, to propose strategies that will help to equip them with the skills and competencies required by the hospitality industry, by examining the relevance of the hospitality management education curriculum in meeting hospitality industry requirements. The ultimate aim of the study was to develop a conceptual model that can be used to enhance graduate employability in Ghanaian hospitality education. The research therefore investigated emerging trends and influences in the Ghanaian hospitality industry, education and employability. This chapter provides an overview of the key research findings and their contribution to knowledge. The central research questions underpinning this thesis were:

RQ.1 What is the current understanding of the concept of employability in Ghana and what employability skills and competencies does the hospitality industry need as a prerequisite for employable hospitality graduate in the hospitality industry and how can hospitality education in Ghana meet these requirements?

RQ. 2. Taking into consideration the research question 1 above, how can the findings elucidate the problem of hospitality graduate employability in Ghana and subsequently, and help to develop a framework to address the essential employer skills and competency requirements through education and training?

To address the above research questions, a critical review of the literature on the underpinning research concepts – employability concepts, skills and models, graduate hospitality education in Ghana and globally, industry trends and requirements – was conducted. This enabled the development of an integrative research framework in chapter 4 that preceded a conceptual model for the research, by combining key insights from the employability models typically used in developed countries with contextual insights from Ghana as a developing country. The conceptual framework was then enhanced in Chapter 6 of the thesis with the research findings, that produced the conceptual model of the research namely Ghanaian Hospitality Employability

Enhancement Framework (GHEEF), using the insights from the research findings on hospitality education.

Since the research explored the qualitative understanding of employability by different stakeholders (graduates, lecturers and employers, for example) and the effectiveness of the hospitality graduate curricula in equipping graduates with the requisite employability skills, it required a mixed methodology, as discussed in Chapter 4 of the thesis. This methodology used qualitative focus group interviews with lecturers, a mixture of close-ended (Likert-scaled) and open-ended questionnaire items responded to by lecturers and students, and semi-structured interviews with hospitality employers, qualitatively to identify and numerically to score the respondents' experiences of hospitality (graduate) employability in Ghana. In other words, the qualitative nature of the study derives from the use of the respondents' opinions, which elicited their understanding of the problems encountered with employability in the wider Ghanaian context and the hospitality sector. In line with this mixed research method, the philosophical stance of the research is post-positivism.

A focus group qualitative research was conducted, as presented in Chapter 5, with the collected primary data that were analysed. The findings revealed a broad consensus amongst polytechnic and university lecturers regarding the employability themes reviewed in the literature. It showed gaps between the knowledge of these concepts on the part of Ghanaian stakeholders compared with internationally-based understanding of the concept of employability as noted in the literature review. These gaps are fully captured under the major themes at the end of the chapter, which was incrementally enhanced with additional findings in on graduates and hospitality employers, culminating in the final summary which embodies all the key findings from the study.

These findings were discussed in some detail in Chapter 6 in light of the received literature on employability concepts, and the suggestions they connoted for subsequent employability-enhancing TLA strategies. As noted above, the findings were further used to develop the GHEEF, in two formats – a theoretical GHEEF that is the main focus of the research, and a deployment post-PhD GHEEF that the researcher recommends for future practice in Appendix 7.1.

The rest of the chapter is organised as follows. Section 7.2 summarises the main results. Section 7.3 discusses the contributions to knowledge and policy implications of

the results. Section 7.4 discusses possible limitations of the research, while 7.5 recommends future work. Section 7.6 concludes the chapter.

7.2 The main overall results of the research

The findings indicated that Ghanaian hospitality lecturers do not generally understand the full scope of employability as a potential that manifests across a graduate's entire career, for example securing a job, satisfactorily growing in a job, and moving on to other jobs, while continually updating their skills. Hence, the curriculum should prepare them for successful life-long learning instead of mere certification at the end of their initial higher education (HE) degree training. The focus group responses were analysed under relevant themes which explore the research questions, including employability concepts, hospitality education, gaps in learning, skills and competences, and the new skills required to close these gaps.

The key contribution to knowledge of the research findings in Chapter 5 is an examination of the understanding of the employability concept among Ghanaian hospitality lecturers, and the curriculum practices, resources, and challenges facing effective hospitality education in the country, in such a way that adds to the literature on employability, in the context of such a developing country. The findings from the various respondents triangulated and at the same time measured the extent of the gaps in employability understanding and skills among lecturers and students, using Likert scaled questionnaire items and confirmatory statistical tests, as appropriate. The open-ended items on the questionnaires further reinforced the results from that of the lecturers'.

Moreover, the findings from the lecturers' questionnaire analysis contributed a new knowledge about the areas of gaps in learning, skills and competencies in hospitality education which obtain in Ghana, related to the power of course-affinity matrices to more effectively locate pedagogical strategies for teaching different employability skills on within specific hospitality courses. These course-employability affinity matrices particularly show how lecturers rate the relative capacities of different employability skills to be developed through the teaching of various hospitality courses.

These results have not been presented in previous studies on graduate employability. The researcher sees them as potential strong points on which future theoretical work

can be based, in not only hospitality graduate employability education, but also other disciplines.

The findings from the employers' responses from the qualitative analysis of the interview questions in the research added to the knowledge of employability in Ghana. It explored the broad understanding of the employability concept among Ghanaian hospitality and tourism employers, the industry practices, work-based learning, and the new requirements. It reinforced the similar resources and human capital challenges facing effective hospitality education in the country, which were mentioned earlier by the lecturers. This therefore adds Ghanaian hospitality industry perspectives to the employability literature in Ghana.

It was emphasised that the deeper contextual understanding of hospitality graduates' employability which the results provide makes an additional contribution not only to the development of the GHEEF but also generally enhances the research framework used in the study. That is, through the new skills requirements engendered by the emergence of the multinational hospitality related businesses and hotel chains in Ghana, a perspective has emerged that has not been studied in this way previously in Ghana, and therefore has strong implications for hospitality graduate employability research and practice. This is important since this is the first major study of this nature to be conducted in Ghana. It therefore required a sound mixed-methods approach for the findings and the GHEEF to provide sufficiently strong theoretical and practical foundations for further work in the topic area based on the theoretical and deployment faces of the GHEEF.

Following the presentation of the research findings in Chapter 5, Chapter 6 discussed these and developed the Ghanaian Hospitality Employability Enhancement Framework (GHEEF and post-GHEEF) models as major contributions of the research to employability theory and practice, respectively.

The main findings of the research again showed that hospitality lecturers and hotel managers fail to understand the concept of employability fully. The survey of related literature revealed that, to date, no study has been conducted that employed this type of triangulated model building in the Ghanaian context. The main results from the lecturers and graduates' results include new knowledge about the gaps in learning, skills and competencies within hospitality education which obtain in Ghana, the extent of the understanding of the meaning and influences on employability in the country, the

power of course-affinity matrices more effectively to locate pedagogical strategies for different employability skills on suitable courses, and how these findings feed into the design of the GHEEF as an intervention mechanism for improving graduate employability in Ghana.

The key insights from the analysis include: a) an acute lack of skills on the part of hospitality graduates even when some of the big hotel chains can ameliorate their unemployment situation; b) an under-appreciation on the part of policy makers of the huge potential within the hospitality industry for national socio-economic development; and c) the need for hospitality education that clearly exposes students to all aspects of the industry and the range of skills required to work effectively in them; for example, conference organisations, health and leisure clubs.

Importantly, a number of facts stand out in the Ghanaian context. The fact that the lecturers are uninvolved in the curriculum design is a startling discovery which warrants the complete retraining of the lecturers and a radical change in the higher education policies with this regard. Inadequate emphasis is placed on teaching the key management courses in the curriculum. The knowledge of the new trends in the industry is explored in the curriculum through innovative TLA strategies.

7.3 The Contributions of the research to knowledge

This section presents a summary of the contribution of the research to knowledge under the main research themes 1-4. For easy recall, the themes are restated below:

Themes: 1 Employability concepts and meanings; 2 Hospitality education and curriculum development; 3 Gaps in learning, skills and competencies; 4 Enhancing hospitality students' employability in Ghana

This thesis contributes to knowledge by investigating the knowledge developed for employability in a developing country like Ghana by adapting the CareerEdge model of employability. This combines elements of the DOTs and the USEM.. These Models has applicability to a developing country and that has been demonstrated by the data collection and the findings of the research which is presented in the GHEEF. Previous knowledge focused more on employability models, without a substantial development of the contextual elements which make them applicable in Ghanaian higher education.

The findings summarised at the end of chapter five and the above notes in this chapter developed detailed understanding of how these models apply to Ghanaian hospitality education.

This is one of the first pieces of research which has actually done in-depth critical analysis of employability for hospitality graduates in this part of the world and therefore significant through the revised framework for Ghana. The lack of understanding of the technical purports of employability by Ghanaian lecturers, graduates and employers showed them conflating it with merely getting jobs, however, with closer links to entrepreneurship. The detailed understanding of these themes, especially gaps in learning, skills and competencies were shown to be foundational to envisaged curriculum innovations in Ghana.

The outcome of the findings that developed the GHEEF indicates that the previous knowledge was mainly about different employability models and their potential use in enhancing employability mainly in developed countries. This research combined three relevant employability models (USEM, DOTS and CareerEdge) into a research framework (pre-GHEEF) that informed the conceptual model of the research. It demonstrated how the additional contextual knowledge in Ghana enhances it for further research and curriculum innovations in a way not developed previously.

Further theoretical results indicated previous knowledge compared the relative usefulness of the models in hospitality employability research and practice based on the outcome of the empirical findings. It is safe to say the cutting edge in employability research before this study rests on some 17 core constructs identified in the literature.

This research summarised the crucial arguments in this direction. More importantly, it developed deeper theoretical perspectives in the form of course-employability skill affinity matrices which measure the relative capacities of employability to be developed in different hospitality courses, and vice versa. It also developed the understanding of Ghanaian perspectives on these constructs, summarised under four key research themes.

Another major contribution of this research is that, the findings elucidate key areas which must be included in hospitality education curriculum in Ghana in order to make the graduates employable. For example in redesigning the Ghanaian hospitality education curriculum the new constructs such as Teamwork, guest lecturer

involvement, alumni relations, the use of modern methods of teaching and extra-curricular activities. The results in Chapter 5 of the thesis used Pareto charts to measure the relative prevalence of the constructs in the mind-sets of Ghanaian lecturers, graduates and employers, and elicited an additional 43 constructs (see appendix 5.5) which encompass them. These additional constructs portray the fuller contextual knowledge of employability in Ghana, and the compilation of stakeholders' respondents on them stated in Appendix 5.1b of the thesis, which will inform realistic curriculum innovations following the research.

Industry focus

No study developed particular industry foci in the way attempted in this research in Ghana, since the emphasis in the literature was on the theoretical employability models, and the pedagogy for employability. This research has deepened the pedagogy for employability within the Ghanaian higher education context, with a detailed understanding of the related gaps in knowledge, including hospitality industry perspectives. This advances the current knowledge, as summarised in this chapter, particularly situating employability models and curriculum innovations in a developing country context.

Exceptional contextual perspectives

Before the research, it was common in the literature on curriculum design and delivery for lecturers to specify the learning outcomes and design requisite enabling curricula to achieve them. This research threw up a startling insight that Ghanaian lecturers are not in control of the curriculum process, inherit a course syllabus from higher education policymakers which they simply implement, and do not generally understand how to design innovative curricula. This discovery implies an urgent need to retrain Ghanaian hospitality lecturers in curriculum design, and compelled the researcher to develop a post-GHEEF framework (see Appendix 7.1) for practically enhancing Ghanaian employability education.

Policy implications

Again, previous research suggested the need for different forms of policy interventions to enhance employability skills in different countries. This research used a mixed methodology with a triangulated evidence base to investigate how these implications

will be implemented in Ghana theoretically, practically, methodologically, and pedagogically.

As noted above, the research facilitates the practice of employability education as highlighted by the TLA insights and more directly through the GHEEF. Previous studies do not go beyond identifying the gaps in practice and recommending what can be done, to actually designing such a developing country-specific framework for training employable graduates, within HEIs and in partnership with key stakeholders.

A recap of the usefulness of the research to stakeholders in Ghana is enumerated below. Students/graduates of hospitality will benefit from quality education that addresses a perceived weakness in the way in which hospitality and similar vocational courses are taught in Ghanaian tertiary institutions. This will address the problem of graduate unemployment, as graduates transiting to the job market will be better educated and trained using the GHEEF, especially in the model GHEEF training centres which will be used by the HEIs and their partners.

With the GHEEF, graduates will be better equipped with employability skills and competencies. As persons with employable skills, they can competently seek jobs. This meets the objective of empowering graduates in the Ghanaian system through equipping them with high quality, industry-relevant skills and competencies that will enable them to compete in both the national and international job market. Also, the retraining of academics using the GHEEF model will improve the quality of their TLA skills.

Education policymakers will also benefit by using the GHEEF to update the guidelines on hospitality-based education, to make it comparable to other best practices, therefore enforcing the implementation of the required standards and frequent reviews of the curriculum alongside industry.

7.3.1 Summary of the contributions to knowledge

The aim of a doctoral thesis is to make an original contribution to knowledge, as clearly stated in Sheffield Hallam University's Research Degrees Regulations, to have 'critically investigated and evaluated an approved topic resulting in an independent and original contribution to knowledge' (SHU) 2010:3).This is the first research project to take an in-depth look at the relationship between the domain knowledge about employability and the hospitality sector, with a focus on the Ghanaian hospitality

industry and education. The research's contributions to knowledge help close the gap in the understanding of the concept of employability in Ghana HE, among lecturers, students and hospitality industry managers.

The research results identify the broad misunderstanding of employability concepts by the above listed study subjects. More surprisingly for the lecturers, students and hotel managers also could not demonstrate knowledge of the three key dimensions of employability, namely having the potential to not only secure a job, but also grow in the job roles, and be satisfied doing it. They broadly associated employability with literally being employed. The results therefore showed that without this more complete understanding, Ghanaian hospitality lecturers are ill-prepared to deliver an employability curriculum. This fact was supported by the fact the lecturers indicated that they did not design the hospitality education curriculum. This knowledge is quite disturbing in the sense that without that ability to design appropriate learning outcomes which address the lack of employability skills among Ghanaian hospitality graduates, the graduate unemployment problem in Ghana, at least for these hospitality graduates, will remain unresolved. On the part of the students, the result showed that in addition to their lack of understanding of the meanings of employability indicated above, they barely learnt employability skills. These results were corroborated by hospitality managers, who noted a disturbing hiatus between the skills demonstrated by the students and the industry requirements.

This is the first time that such a holistic research approach on this subject was carried out to integrate these diverse stakeholder understandings. It is apposite that such a robust evidence base is needed to more effectively address the lack of employability skills among Ghanaian hospitality graduates, which is expected to help ameliorate the currently challenging problem of graduate unemployment in the country.

Being the first study that takes such a holistic research approach, the research critically examined existing employability models – the USEM, DOTS, and CareerEdge models for example. In addition to these mainstream models, the researcher, for the first time known to the author, explored other models that contribute further insights on employability linked also to their potential for supporting effective employability education. This in-depth critique of a wide selection of employability models, complemented by a rigorous critique of the different semantic variations, provided a

strong theoretical basis for future research on employability in Ghana and similar developing countries.

Importantly, the critical literature review selected the most promising models and integrated them into a revised conceptual framework which is suitable for applying the received knowledge of employability, its link to employability education, and the contextual influences and challenges in Ghana which potentially affect the success of employability education. Thus, the research makes profound theoretical contribution to knowledge by surfacing this revised conceptual framework, which importantly emphasises the need to create enabling environments for successful employability education.

The revised conceptual framework clearly presents a robust theoretical starting point for future studies which can explore some aspects of hospitality employability education further, extend the current results to other disciplines, and inform related higher education policies. The research used the conceptual framework to guide the development of suitably designed and piloted research instruments for collecting data from lecturers, students and hotel managers. It advanced an innovative mixed research methodology that triangulated the evidence base from these subject groups, and explained such a methodology in detail to enable future researchers to use it as envisaged above. This way, the research is the first known to the researcher to integrate the key outcomes with the revised conceptual framework and develop a Ghanaian Employment Enhancement Framework (GHEEF), as a key research outcome. This framework is now an embodiment of all the implications of the research for theory, research and practice which were further addressed in detailed discussions of research findings and their contributions to knowledge in the thesis.

The research further developed a post-PhD framework for practically intervening to put in place curriculum innovations and practical employability enhancing activities in Ghanaian hospitality education. Even though this is not strictly within the theoretical remit of the research, it reinforces relevance of the research results to future practice, and their feedback effect on improving further research.

As further theoretical contributions of the research findings to knowledge, the findings from lecturers were used to develop for the first time in employability research globally, new concepts related to the potential to teach employability skills in different hospitality courses. Using overall, hospitality course- and employability skill-specific affinity

matrices, the research, in the opinion of hospitality lecturers, rated the various courses and skills in order of their potential to support the teaching of employability skills. These results which were facilitated by the use of quality research instruments (combining focus groups and questionnaire survey with a balance of open- and close-ended questions, supported by a mixture of qualitative and quantitative analysis), provide additional information on the choice of courses within which to develop specific employability skills, in a whole-course employability education programme. These further aspects of employability education research and practice are strongly recommended for future work. The GHEEF will be used to guide such future work.

In sum, the research makes in-depth contributions to knowledge of employability – meanings, contextual influences, employability education, and industry requirements – theoretically, methodologically and practically. More details of these contributions have been provided in the appropriate sections of this chapter and previous chapters of the thesis.

7.4 Limitations of the study

I would be irresponsible for the researcher not acknowledging some limitations of the current study. While the findings of this study are of significant value to hospitality education stakeholders in Ghana, the study suffered from certain limitations. First, the participating hotels were selected via the convenience sampling method rather than the random sampling method, which is generally taken to be a better method. This is because such a random sample may have produced a more representative set of opinions across the key hotel chains in Ghana. However, given that the industry findings are triangulated with those of lecturers and teachers, obtaining sufficient opinions from the hotel managers who agreed to be interviewed was not considered a severe limitation in the research. Future research could focus on a more detailed study of the industry context.

Second, the data were collected from 11 employers, five polytechnics and two universities in Ghana. Since the sample is not representative of the entire population of polytechnics offering hospitality management and hotels in Ghana, the results may not be generalised to the entire population. Again, using more institutions would have been preferable, but the selection criteria required using institutions that have adequate

experience of hospitality education to make the research evidence more meaningful for the objectives.

Third, the data collection method used in this research was less than ideal. Due to time and budget constraints, the researchers relied on the few respondents, especially with regard to the hotel managers, who agreed to be interviewed. If funding and time had permitted, then it would have been better for the researcher to approach the targeted respondents directly. The industry sectors were not completely representative of the region. Also, employers' perceptions are particularly important for many universities. This study was exploratory in nature.

The main challenges encountered in the study were related to the data collection process. Most of the hotel managers were busy and the researcher had to visit the hotels many times in order to obtain their responses. Future work might involve staging a mini-conference which the managers will be motivated to attend so that a focus group approach may be used, similar to that employed with the lecturers. It would be easier if the HE policy-making bodies funded such a conference, for instance.

In sum, the researcher feels that there are no significant problems related to the overall quality of the data collection and that the various triangulations employed in the research were helpful in this regard. A limitation of the study may be that the senior management (VCs/Rectors/Deans, for example) were not surveyed, but the primary focus of the study was the classroom where the actual employability TLA work obtains.

7.5 Future research

The research takes an in-depth look at graduate employability and the particular context of the Hospitality and Tourism Industry sector, with a focus on Ghanaian hospitality industry and education. Theoretically, the in-depth critical review of the literature on these research themes produced a conceptual framework which contextualises the employability models to Ghanaian and wider developing country contexts. This framework highlights the gaps between employability education in Ghana and developed countries, where the models originated. Theoretically, it is therefore recommended that the research methodology and GHEEF should be replicated across different courses in Ghana and similar developing countries. This will help to refine the GHEEF-based interventions contextually, depending on the range and relative force effects of the different influences on employability education to which

these contexts are subjected. For this, new theoretical perspectives explored in the data analysis chapters will be borne in mind by other researchers, especially regarding the teaching, learning and assessment (TLA) strategies that will enable employability skills to be embedded in all graduate disciplines.

Future researchers may wish to broaden the study's scope by examining the determinants and outcomes of employability skills requirements in the other hotels and lecturers from all ten polytechnics in Ghana, to offer a more comprehensive understanding of the role that such skills play within Ghanaian hospitality education.

In a sense, applying the GHEEF to other developing countries, especially Sub-Saharan African countries, will produce versions of the framework that are suitable for these countries. For example, a Nigerian Employability Enhancement Framework (NEEF) will be broadly similar to the GHEEF, but may differ regarding the resources available and the degree of commitment among the stakeholders to the cause.

The research used a novel mixed methodology which triangulates the findings across students, lecturers, and hotel managers, and uses suitable frequency scores to measure the extent to which employability learning gaps actually obtain in Ghanaian hospitality education. The mixed method combined a focus group, interviews and questionnaire analyses, and culminated in the GHEEF. Future researchers may employ the same approaches in extending the research to other disciplines and countries.

7.6 Summary and conclusion

This chapter explored in detail the way in which the GHEEF will support future hospitality employability research in these contexts, and mobilise wider cooperation among academia, industry and government for enhancing graduate employability in the field of hospitality and other disciplines. For this purpose, additional references to appropriate best-practices related to ‘supporting graduate employability’ and teaching excellence were used to develop the GHEEF, and so make it more robust.

This thesis concludes by summarising the findings obtained from the different chapters, and outlining the theoretical, research, practical and methodological contributions of the research to knowledge. The main contribution consisted of a new conceptual model for researching graduate employability in developing countries and related employability

enhancement frameworks and interventions in Ghana and developing countries. It was recommended that these frameworks should be applied to other disciplines both in Ghana and in other developing countries that are facing similar problems.

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APPENDICES

1. Appendix 4.1

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Tittle of Project: Emerging Trends and Influences in Ghanaian Hospitality Industry Education and Employability

Date: …….

Researcher: Adiza Sadik

Institution: Sheffield Hallam University, UK

What you have done: You have given your individual opinion regarding a research in Emerging Trends and Influences in Ghanaian Hospitality Industry Education and Employability.

Audio recording: You have given consent to the audio recording of the information during the interview.

Risks and Discomforts: We do not foresee any risks or discomfort from your participation in the research.

Voluntary Participation: Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may choose to stop participating at any time.
Withdrawal from the Study: You can stop participating in the interview at any time, for any reason, if you so decide and at no cost to you. If after the interview, you change your mind about participating, you can withdraw your data in the next two weeks. After that time, withdrawal is impossible as your data will have been anonymised and included in the analysis.
Confidentiality: All information you supply during the research will be held in confidence, and unless you specifically indicate your consent, your name will not appear in any report or publication of the research. Your data will be safely stored in a locked facility, and only research staff will have access to this information. Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law.
Questions about the Research? If you have questions about the research in general or about your role in the study, please feel free to contact. Dr Kevin Nield Sheffield Business School Sheffield Hallam University Stoddart Building SHEFFIELD| S1 1WB Tel No +44(0)1142254464
Signature of consent
By signing this consent form, I confirm that I have read and understood the rationale for the project and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that my participation is voluntary, and that I am free to withdraw my data up to two weeks after the interview without giving a reason and without cost. I agree to take part in this study; I agree to audio recording, and I agree to anonymised quotes being used in reports and publications.

Name of Participant _____

Signature and date_____

2. Appendix 4.2 Focus group guide

Major Objective: To explore hospitality graduate employability issues, trends, HE strategies, and. challenges in Ghana

Question 1: Given the challenges associated with graduate unemployment and with the emergence of multinational hospitality businesses and their possible benefits to hospitality graduates, what is your candid views about how these graduates can be made more employable?

Sub-issue 1: How can we, as lecturers, help through our teaching to enhance their employability, and what are the limiting factors?

Question 2: As lecturers, how can we give these graduates the confidence that we say they lack?

Sub-issue 2*:* Thank you so much for a very healthy conversation. Before we conclude, I would like each of you to tell me what you understand by the term 'employability'.

Within this big question the following sub-sub questions were posed:

- What is employability?
- How can hospitality graduates be made employable?
- What are the skills required by the hospitality industry?
- What are the limits influencing the effective teaching of hospitality management?
- How can hospitality education in Ghana meet the requirements of the hospitality industry?
- Which strategies can address the issue of hospitality graduates' employability in Ghana?

3. Appendix Chapter 5

Appendix 5.1a Example of transcript explaining the steps

Question 1

Associated with the emergence of multinational hospitality businesses in Ghana, the trends and influences benefits and challenges for our graduates. I want your candid view on how graduates employability can be enhanced. What are the limiting factors, and how can we as lecturers help in our teaching to enhance their employability?

Example of a transcript taken from interviewee (MA1)

The notion that multinational hospitality businesses are entering Ghana with job openings makes it imperative for educationists to investigate how graduates could fit into these businesses. The respondent agreed with the need to find out from the hospitality industry what their requirements are, since these multinational hotels are believed to be bringing foreign workers with them. Knowing these requirements will enable the curriculum to be redeveloped to suit the new industry requirements **(New skills and competencies (NSCs)**. The quote below supports this claim:

- '*Thank you; the multinational hotels are coming to Ghana with job openings, yes, but they come with their workers, we need to find out the skills that they expect our graduates to possess since the perception is that our graduates do not meet their requirements' **NSCs.***
- ' support for the research, agrees the need to find out from what the industry what their requirements are, since the multinational hotels come into the country with their workers' **New Skills and Competencies (NSCs)**
- 'need to design curriculum to suit their requirements' **Developing Innovative Curriculum (DIC)**
- *'. the multinational hotel are coming in with job openings yes but they come with their workers, we need to find out, they most at times claim our graduates do not meet their requirements …*' **Reinforce (R)**

In this transcript, the researcher italicises the response and notes that it suggests the need for New Skills and Competences, which is stated in bold, in a working narrative of the response.

Example 2 transcript taken from interviewee BE2

There is a need continually to update the curriculum to follow industry trends due to the lack of an up-to-date curriculum and the poor development of knowledge and skills The lecturers note that curriculum delivery should be enhanced through the creativity and training of/for lecturers;

- **,** need to continually update curriculum to follow industry trends; lack of up-to-date curriculum; **Hospitality Education (HE), DIC**
- need for programme development of knowledge and skills by level of study [R]
- notes that curriculum delivery should be enhanced by the creativity of the lecturers
- Innovation, Creativity and Training of/for lecturers (D, GS) R

- *'My contribution is still on the curriculum. The designers from day one should look at the intermediate and advance programmes the basic level. What we have been doing since '1900' is still what we are still doing. We know that when we are with intermediate they need to know the basics, when they move from there to advance level, they should also advance, but here they come and repeat what they did during their intermediate'* **Gaps in learning skills and Competencies***(* **GILSCs)** *programme'*.
- Emphasised the importance of team work and other soft or generic skills' **Generic skills GS**
- 'need to know and understand teamwork in hospitality. In **teams**, other people bring new ideas that you can put together to come out with something **(New Approaches (NA**) good but if you look at the students we have and the content of our syllabus there is more individual work than team work and if this goes on there is no change they will have problems when they looking for a job **(GILSCs).** Industry is about **teamwork**…although it is not on the curriculum, teamwork or what we call group work, I realise that, in putting them together, some individuals had other skills they brought from their jobs'.

- **Differences (D), G, Ds:** Talks about curriculum designers apart from lectures themselves – hence, suggests a problem whereby lecturers take a given designed curriculum as a rigid guide instead of something they should enhance. This implies the need for reorientation of the mind-sets of lecturers and training in curriculum design principles which clarify the need for detailed LTA specifications around an outcomes-based curricula, currently lacking in Ghana (**I, NA**)
- ***'…** talk to the designers to have frequent change of the curriculum ….'*

There is emphasis on the importance of teamwork and other soft or generic skills **(Generic Skills (GS)**

Table 5.3 Matrix showing a summary of analysis

Label No.	Label for research constructs	Description and summary of respondents' meanings
1	**EC**	**Employability concept:** *' an individual based concept linked to students having confidence in themselves and understanding industry trends and opportunities';* *'Being 'entrepreneurial' which may require competency-based training on tasks students will meet at work';* *'Doing something to earn a living';* *'The ability to get a job';* *'Demonstrated skills and professionalism for a specific job';* *'To have the necessary and requisite skills and motivation for employment;* *'Connotes 'being enterprising', creativity, human intuition, and confidence'.*
2	**HE**	**Hospitality education:** *'Need for curriculum updates - 'but we keep to the lecture halls recycling our lecture notes which I think is not helpful'* **Need for international best practices** *'Need for business studies, business management skills areas.*

		'too much theory will not help for hospitality education… there should be on-the job training in addition' *'I will say experiential learning in hospitality is so important'* *'Need for lecturers that are hospitality professionals'* *'Teaching hospitality education for example needs to be very experiential and practical'.* *'Need for refresher courses for lecturers to update their knowledge'* *'have exchange programmes with international hospitality institutions, or professionals in the field who will be invited as trainers of trainee'* **Lack of practical teaching** Lack of resources -'*we the lecturers teaching hospitality, are constrained, the materials and supplies we need to teach are not provided.* *'we are not actually teaching hospitality management education*, we are teaching kitchen skills'
3	**GILSCs**	**Gaps in learning, skills and competences** 'What we have been doing since '1900' is still what we are doing' 'Lack of group work …' **Need for industry visits and exchange programmes** - '*Like for instance there is no program designed to take me as a lecturer to go to for instance Golden Tulip Hotel or Novotel and see what is happening there'* **Poor ICT skills** - *'Even menus are planned by computers – checking-in in a hotel is done through electronic mediums. These simple things are strange to lecturers, how much more our students'.* **Poor teaching experience by lecturers** - *'Lecturers when hired straight to the lecture room without any orientation and they keep doing what they are taught when they were students*' **Recommendation on what is relevant** *'we need to make recommendations on what is relevant to the training of the students to fit in industry requirements'.* **Need to strengthen the industrial attachment part of the curriculum (Assessment for and of learning).**'*What we are teaching the students is outdated* *'educational system in Ghana does too much theoretical stuff'* *' I can say with all confidence that some 20-30 if not 40% of the things taught to our graduates including hospitality graduates in our institutions today are not exactly applicable to running any organisation, so if you ask me I would say there should be a massive change for that matter'* '*they are not taught what will make them suitable for employers or a specific industry'.* '*teachers keep using outdated methods in teaching , there is no refresher courses to update our knowledge'* *'students must be encouraged to have industrial attachments, internships'* '*require us to given international service, for which I still think that we educators in Ghana have not prepared ourselves for that*

		direction'. *'half baked' graduates who have very little to offer in the job market'* *'Practically they are not strong enough. - if we send them on industrial training, the owners don't also threat them well, so for instance you send somebody for industrial training the 8 weeks, that person can be put in the kitchen for 8 weeks peeling onions or potatoes. So they come back from industry without knowing anything and then industry turns round to say our graduates don't have the required skills'* *'we need updated curriculum that will have the input of industry and policy makers'* *'Lecturers are out of touch with modern industry needs especially hotels, the use of information technology is lacking. Academia needs relevant pedagogical methods to teaching and learning'*
4	**NA**	**New approaches for enhancing graduate employability** *'talk to the designers to have frequent change of the curriculum* *'We can learn a lot from industry but it is not made compulsory'.* *'Industry doesn't open up'* *'entrepreneurship training should be encouraged" …'our students should have entrepreneurial mind too. They need to identify opportunities to establish on their own'.* *'Entrepreneurship education and training does exactly that, when students are taught what to do experientially by creating mini business and know how it feels'.* *'strengthen the linkage between industry and the training institution* *'training institutions equipping the training institutions and departments with up to date equipment needs to be taken into account* *'Polytechnic are to adopt the competency based training or learning (CBT)'* *'making the student to do more of presentations, group work, role play, mini projects because they lack confidence'* *'The present hospitality curriculum that we are using is not teaching these students any skills because it's more of lecturing'* *'We 'spoon feed' our students, they should have the ability to do thing independently, be able to write reports and argue constructively'* *'technology is the order of the day'* *'Now is not about the just the certificate one has, but attitude and enthusiasm'* *' intensify the teaching of entrepreneurship'* *'Academia needs an association with industry'* *'lectures and teachers lack the skills in modern teaching methods'* *'lecturers' need refresher courses to update their knowledge'* *'We need to include modern technology, modern teaching methods'* *'we need a total overhaul of our tertiary education. We need to be abreast with the job market demands. There is a disconnection between academia and industry, we need reconciliation'.*

		'I year training or internship for hospitality I 've been advocating that hospitality should be treated differently from the other subjects' *'Hospitality is more of application than memorising. There new ways of delivery such that offered by technology, this could facilitate delivery of education'* *'Direct industry experience - guest speaker is another way'* *'Use of invited facilitators, demonstration labs or learning studios'*
5	**NSCs**	**New skills and competences** *'…students working in teams, doing presentations and some sort of mini research'* *'Even menus are planned by computers – checking-in in a hotel is done through electronic mediums'* *'Need for staff to 'go on 3-6 month industrial attachment to just go and observe and see and learn what are the new things going on in industry, for example equipment and gargets industry is using … enriching knowledge or enhancing skills'* *'Having hands-on-experience is the solution to making our graduates employable'* *'Read and attend workshops quiet frequently. At tertiary level a student is expected to read materials widely, even not related to the skills that he is studying'* *'Prepare yourselves for the few jobs available. Develop yourself enough you should be the one to select. Irrespective of the program onus lies with on the student'.* *'How to get others to convince them the difficulty involve, they are acquiring what we call organizational skills. Ability to make presentations, communicate and make sense, they are getting or acquiring all of these things in addition'* *'The traditional methods of teaching should give way to for example the didactic styles that uses lecturing to a more proactive and student-centred learning approaches as well as innovative teaching techniques'* *'We have to be innovative in our teaching methods by being flexible and creative methods such as problem-solving, brain-storming, team work and group discussions.*
6	**DIC**	**Developing innovative curriculum** *'Designers from day one should look at the intermediate and advance programmes the basic level'.* *Need to enforce professional standards 'during the development of the curriculum' by involving industry'* *'industrial attachment should be part of the curriculum should be strengthen, regulated and assessed as a requirement for graduating'* *'add management and communications skills and also experiential learning'* *'Writing good CVs should be added in designing'* *'Lecturers are not part of the development of the curriculum* *'collaborate with industry in designing the curriculum'* *ch serious business management skills'*

7	**WLE**	**Work and life experience** *' … Doing industrial attachment what is expected of you is that you are going to learn what is in industry as a matter of fact that is what is needed to work so I think that as an academic institutions we need to emphasis more and monitor seriously our students on industrial attachment'* *'Giving talks about how things are done in business like skill in entrepreneurship'* *'Increase the industrial attachment period for example if the student is to do three years at least attachment to industry should take about one and a half of the three years in doing the attachment'* *'I think we need to work with industry, there is a disconnection'* *'Practical experience is very important with professional courses. We need to create a forum where industry players and educational institutions would cave a common path, agree on issues such as taking students on industrial attachment. We in academia should strengthen our links with industry'.* *'Need to be exposed to real life issues and to learn on the jobs'*
8	**SUK**	**Subject knowledge** *You need to know way beyond what a professor who comes to stand before you to tell you and so the onus lies on the individual student who wants to develop himself'* *'Hospitality management is a practical subject you need experience alongside theory,* *'Lecturers don't have professional hospitality background; it's always difficult with giving students good hospitality examples when teaching; this affects the students' knowledge acquisition*
9	**GS**	**Generic skills** *'Also they need to know how to go about teamwork. In teams other people bring new ideas'* *'how your skills can make a guest come again Customer Service Excellence), how you can bring money to the business as an employee'* *' commercial knowledge at tertiary level a student is expected to read materials widely, even not related to the skills that he is studying'* *'Academia should put in place something to make students not think all about being in the university is to make an A and come out. Activities that will make them think outside the box'.* *'Students should be encouraged to do extra curriculum stuff' e.g. join Clubs and societies on campus that is PENSA and other religious bodies, SRC, some clubs, lion clubs and all of that on campus learn organizational skills, how to get others to convince them the difficulty involve, they are acquiring what we call organisational skills.*
10	**EI**	**Emotional intelligence**
11	**CDL**	**Career development learning** *…'students' knowledge of trends and opportunities available around them …'students can form cooperative groups to form businesses … identifying a product with a very high market*

		potential ….'Making the student to do more of presentations, group work, role play, mini projects and a whole lot. This will make the student have confidence in presenting issues and even at interviews'
12	**PRS**	**Process skills** **'***Hospitality management cannot be isolated from its core subjects such as food and beverage management, housekeeping and accommodation so it is necessary that government or educational institution provide facilities for experiential learning*'
13	**SE, SC SE**	**Self-Esteem, *Self-Confidence* Self-Efficacy** *'Sometimes it is very fascinating someone will get an A in a particular course and when it comes to applying like research methods data collection, just designing questionnaire the fellow is not abreast with it … what is appropriate to be used'.* *'the student, is responsible for making himself employable by acquiring employable* *'read and attend workshops quiet frequently. At tertiary level a student is expected to read materials widely, even not related to the skills that he is studying* *'one needs on the job experience together with the technical skills (Reinforces) (R), attitudinal change, personal attributes, the right exposure to teaching and learning methods that will add vim to the theory. Aside all that I have mentioned, I want to stress that attitudinal, leadership, behavioural and knowledge beyond technical skills to deliver the results.so yes as a nation be it government policies, be it industries responses we need to be proactive'.* *'When or if we have graduates with positive attributes in their own way they can be employable as hospitality is about creativity it is a human institution therefore confidence can let you excel (R).* *'they said we can't do any of them yet they are finishing 1st degree. Practically they are not strong enough'.* , innovative and self-reliant graduates for management careers in the hospitality and tourism industry '*the use of semi-projects or research which forces them to 'look for information, write their findings and report and then present to the whole class…the use of real-life case studies, field trips or industry visits…Critical thinking should make the student work independently'* .
14	**RE**	**Reflection and Evaluation**
15	**PDP**	**Personal development planning** *'Critical thinking should make the student work independently'* (connotes the need for PDP)
16	**R**	**Resources** '*Difficult to ask our institutions to equip our departments with these latest equipment*' *'We do not have computers to teach'* *'Ourbiggest problem is we do not have the workshops, the*

		equipment, and staff with the practical background. *'lack of funds, because lecturers cannot just go out there to monitor students without any allowance'.*
17	**NT**	**New Trends** *'Globalisation, technology is everything today* *Now hospitality is technology, checking-in, reservations, checking-out and so on require also us to provide international service, for which I still think that we educators in Ghana have not prepared ourselves for that direction'*

Source:Author Field data 2014)

Appendix 5.1c Lecturers Survey Questionnaire

Trends and Influences in Ghanaian hospitality industry education and employability

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire which investigates trends and influences in Ghanaian hospitality industry education and employability. I hope this would not to take much of your time in completing this questionnaire consisting both close and open-ended questions.

Your input will prove invaluable in developing a reliable body of knowledge on Ghanaian hospitality graduate employability.

This survey is completely anonymous and your confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

Section A: Background questions

1. What is the benchmark curriculum for hospitality programme currently used in your department? (Please tick only one)

◯ Bachelor of Technology in Hospitality Management

◯ Bachelor of Technology (B. TECH) curriculum: HTM 400

◯ Hospitality/Hotel Catering Management (HND).

◯ BSc. Hospitality Management

2. Which of the following core hospitality management course do you teach?

(Please tick all that applies

◯Front office operation management

◯Accommodation operation management

◯Food Hygiene, sanitation and Safety

◯Bar operations management

◯Hospitality and tourism Management

◯Human resource in hospitality

◯Hospitality and catering Law

◯Communication in hospitality

◯Food and Beverage management

◯Food and Beverage cost control

◯Hospitality accounting

◯Foreign Language (French or Spanish)

◯Hospitality marketing

Others (please specify)……

Section B: Meanings and understanding of employability

3. What do you understand by the term employability?

.....
.....

4. In your opinion which of the following will enable a hospitality student to gain experience for the job market? (Please tick all that applies)

◯ Work related learning on campus e.g. Food and beverage practicum, laboratory training, restaurant services/ housekeeping

◯ Work related learning in industry (workplace experience) e.g. Placement/ internship/industrial attachment, part-time work

◯ Extra-curricular activities e.g. drama group, gym, sports and hiking, volunteering

Others (please specify)

……
……
……

5. To what extent do you agree that the hospitality education in Ghanaian higher education prepares students to work in the hospitality industry?

◯Strongly disagree

◯Disagree

◯Neutral

◯Agree

◯Strongly agree

6. Which of the following teaching methods do you use in your teaching?

(Please tick all that applies)

◯ **Lecture** e.g. instructor stands in front of class present information

◯ **Projects** e.g. a Course paper/term paper (planning, research, practical activity and presenting results)

◯ **Field trips** e.g. a trip by students to gain first-hand knowledge away from the classroom)

◯ **Seminars** e.g. form of group discussions on a topic.

◯ **Guest speakers** e.g. hospitality professional

◯ **Experiential learning** e.g. learning by doing,

◯ **Case study e.g.** In-depth and detailed examination of a subject of study

◯**eLearning** (e.g. technology enhanced learning(TEL) the use of technology in learning and teaching such as digital learning through social media, personal devices , online learning, wikis, mobile learning virtual learning)

◯**Using video e.g.** YouTube videos

Others (please specify)

……
……

7. To what extent do you agree that the following career skills listed below are important for enhancing hospitality graduates employability?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Willingness to learn					
Team work					
Interpersonal skills					
Flexibility					
Oral communication					
Numeracy					
Computer Literacy					
Personal presentation skills					
Entrepreneurial					
Networking					
Planning					
Business acumen					
Customer orientation					
Enterprising					
Academic excellence					
Written communication					
Foreign language					
Networking					
Proactivity e.g. anticipatory change-oriented and self-initiated behaviour					

8. Please use the following matrix to indicate which skills in your opinion are associated with the courses below. Please tick as many skills as applicable For example, if Item one "Front office management is associated with "communication" and "initiative and enterprise" skill then tick these two for that item (Please tick all cases that apply to each course in your view)

Courses	Leadership skills	Communi -cation	Self-manage ment	Initiative/and enterprise	Technical& specialist skills	Technol ogy	Team-work	Problem-solving	Planning & organising
Front office operation management									
Accommodation operation management									
Food hygiene, sanitation and Safety									
Bar operations management									
Hospitality and tourism management									
Ethics in hospitality									
Human resource in hospitality									
Hospitality and catering Law									
Communication in hospitality									
Food and beverage management									
Hospitality sales/marketing									
Hospitality accounting									
Foreign Language (French or Spanish)									
Industrial Relations									

9. Please indicate the associated skill you think is developed within the subject you teach.. For example "Front office operation" is associated with "Communication" activity "role play or watching a movie"

……
……

10. To what extent do you agree with the following statements by students?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Leadership and people management skills such as teamwork are taught at my polytechnic/university.					
Communication skills such as how to communicate, present, assert and speak management language are taught at my polytechnic/university.					
Financial skills such as budgeting, forecasting, managing cash flow and understanding financial statements are taught at my polytechnic/university.					
Self-management such as goal setting, time-management, prioritising and personal development are taught at my polytechnic/university.					
Business management skills such as business functions, understanding strategy, decision-making and work flow are taught at my polytechnic/university.					
Enterprising skills such as creativity, problem-solving, building network and thinking strategically are taught at my polytechnic/university.					
Project management skills such as planning and managing successful projects, managing risk, time and project teams are taught at my polytechnic/university.					
How to use technology such as a computer are taught at my polytechnic/university are taught at my polytechnic/university.					
Writing skills such as report writing, note taking, essay writing and proposal writing are taught at my polytechnic/university.					
Foreign language is taught at my polytechnic/university are taught at my polytechnic/university.					

Use numbers and basic mathematics are taught at my polytechnic/university.					
Willingness to learn is encouraged at my polytechnic/university.					
Acting in advance of a future situation e.g. to be proactive is encouraged at my polytechnic/university.					
Time management such as control of time for effectiveness and efficiency is taught at my polytechnic/university.					
Entrepreneurial/enterprise skills are taught at my polytechnic/university.					
Presentation skills such as getting a message or opinion across is practised and taught at my polytechnic/university.					

11. Please indicate where in the curriculum should employability training be more usefully located? (Please tick only one)

- Year 1
- Year 2
- Year 3
- Year 4
- Throughout the curriculum within a specific course for a particular skill.

12. Any reason for your choice above?

……
……

SECTION C: Trends and skills requirements

13. When was the last update to the hospitality curriculum at your institution?

……
……

14. If there has not been any change the last five years, why is this the case?.....

15. Based on the above views, do you think that hospitality education in Ghana is providing students with the skills and competencies required for job in hospitality industry? (Please tick only one)

◯ YES

◯ NO

16. Please suggest how hospitality graduates can be made employable based on the following: Curriculum design

……
……

Learning teaching and assessment

……

Government policy

……

Job .market requirements

……
……

17. How should hospitality education address current developments in hospitality industry for graduate transition?

……
……

18. What nature of training and resourcing would you require in order to more effectively inculcate employability skills to hospitality students?

……
……

If you wish to participate in this research please leave your name and email address

Name:……

Email address……

Thank you for your participation

Detailed Analysis of Lecturers Questionnaire

Section A: Background questions

Which of the following tertiary institutions are you lecturing/teaching?

University	Polytechnic	Others
8	42	0

1. What is the benchmark curriculum for hospitality programme currently used in your department? (Please tick only one)

B TECH HMgt	B TECH HTM 400	HHCIM (HND)	BSc Hospitality Mgt	Others
8	16	20	4	0

2. What course in hospitality management do you teach?

1. Front Office Operations Management
2. Accommodation Operations Management
3. Food hygiene, sanitation and Safety

4. Bar operations management
5. Hospitality and Tourism management
6. Human resource Management in hospitality
7. Hospitality and catering law
8. Communication in hospitality
9. Food and Beverage Management
10. Food and beverage cost control
11. Hospitality Accounting/Bookkeeping
12. Hospitality French
13. Hospitality marketing
14. Food science, Nutrition food Technology

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	12	13	14
4	9	2	5	3	4	2	4	10	1	1	3	1

Section B: Meanings and understanding of employability

3.What do you understand by the term employability?

-Employability is a demonstrated skill and professionalism required for a particular job

- Able to get a job

- It is to be employed

- Employment skills exhibited at recruitment

- Getting employment

- The ability to do work

- Skills needed by an individual to perform at work

- The ability to be employed

- The necessary skills and actions taken by an individual to enhance self discipline in making money

- It's a person's capabilities of gaining and maintaining work

- Employability is the attributes of a graduate that makes him/her gain employment

- Having the knowledge, skills, time and willingness for a particular employment

- The achievement that makes graduates gain work

4. In your opinion which of the following will enable hospitality student gain experience for the job market? (Please tick all that applies)

1. Work related learning on campus(for example, through problem-solving activities, work simulations, and mock interviews)
2. Extra-curricular activities e.g. drama group, gym, sports and hiking, volunteering
3. Extra-curricular activities e.g. drama group, gym, sports and hiking, volunteering
4. All of the above

1	2	3	4
15	30	2	3

5. To what extent do you agree that the hospitality education in Ghana prepares students to work in the hospitality industry?

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
5	3	15	10	17

6. Which of the following teaching methods do you use in your teaching?

(Please tick all that applies)

1. Lecture
2. Projects
3. Field trips
4. Seminars
5. Guest speakers
6. Experiential learning
7. Case study
8. eLearning
9. Using video
10. others

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
25	10	0	5	0	10	0	0	0	0

7. To what extent do you agree that the following career skills listed below are important for enhancing hospitality graduates employability?

1. Willingness to learn
2. team work
3. interpersonal skills
4. Flexibility
5. Oral communication
6. Numeracy
7. information Technology literacy
8. Presentation skills
9. Entrepreneurial skills
10. Networking
11. Planning
12. Business acumen
13. Customer orientation
14. Enterprising
15. Academic excellence
16. Written communication
17. Foreign language
18. Proactive

	Strongly agree	agree	Neutral	strongly disagree	disagree
1	15	30	5		
2	12				
3	15				
4			20		
5	25	25			
6	15	35			
7	43		7		
8	10	40			
9	20	25	5		
10			45		5
12	30	15	5		
13	12	5	33		
14	40	10			
15	18	42			
16	28	32			
17		6	44		
18	4	46			

8. Please use the following matrix to indicate which skills in your opinion are associated with the courses below. Please tick as many skills as applicable. For example, if the item one 'Front office management is associated with 'communication skills, initiative and enterprise skill then tick these two for that item(please tick all cases that apply in your view).

1. Front office operations
2. Accommodation operation management
3. Food, hygiene, sanitation and safety
4. Bar operations management
5. Hospitality and tourism management
6. Ethic in hospitality
7. human resource management
8. Hospitality and catering law
9. Communication in hospitality
10. Food and Beverage management
11. Hospitality sales/marketing
12. hospitality accounting
13. Foreign language (French)

Leadership	Com skills	Self-management	Initiative and enterprise	Technical / specialist skills	Technology	Team work	Problem solving	Planning and organising
45		30	19				13	
			10	30		10		20
				48	1			2
11	32		40	43	20	15		15

6	40		10	19		5	10	51
22	5	2	14	5	12		40	28
44	23	12	10	30	6			41
20	45	41		40	5		23	25
40	45	20	12	32	3		43	23
	10		44	50	49			20
		15		45	33		28	20
	22			51	10		20	
	16			48				

11. To what extent do you agree with the following statements by students?

1. I learned leadership and people management skills such as teamwork at my polytechnic/university.
2. I learned communication skills such as how to communicate, present, assert and speak management language at my polytechnic/university.
3. I learned financial skills such as budgeting, forecasting, managing cash flow and understanding financial statements at my polytechnic/university.
4. I learned self-management such as goal setting, time-management, prioritising and personal development at my polytechnic/university.
5. I learned business management skills such as business functions, understanding strategy, decision-making and work flow at my polytechnic/university.
6. I learned enterprising skills such as creativity, problem-solving, building network and thinking strategically at my polytechnic/university.
7. I learned project management skills such as planning and managing successful projects, managing risk, time and project teams at my polytechnic/university.
8. I learned how to use technology such as a computer at my polytechnic/university
9. I learned writing skills such as report writing, note taking, essay writing and proposal writing at my polytechnic/university
10. I learned a foreign language at my polytechnic/university
11. I learned to use numbers and basic mathematics at my polytechnic/university
12. I was encouraged to learn (willingness to learn) at my polytechnic/university
13. I learned to be proactive e.g. acting in advance of a future situation at my polytechnic/university
14. I learned Time management such as control of time for effectiveness and efficiency at my polytechnic/university
15. I learned Entrepreneurial/enterprise skills at my polytechnic/university
16. I learned Presentation skills such as getting my message or opinion across at my polytechnic/university

12. Any reason for your choice above?

.....

.....

Section C: Trends and skills requirements

13. When was the last update to the hospitality curriculum at you institution?

- There has not been any since 5 years
- Not sure

- 2007
-15 years ago
-not sure of exact date
- can't tell
- never

14. If there has not been the any change the last 5 years, why?

.....
.....

15. Based on the views above, do you think that hospitality education is in Ghana is providing students with the skills and competencies required for jobs in the hospitality industry? (Please tick only one).

Yes No

Yes	No	Not sure
6	43	1

16. Please suggest how hospitality graduates can be made employable based on the following.

1. Curriculum
2. Learning teaching and assessment
3. Government policy
4. Job market requirements

.....
.....

17. How should hospitality education address current development in the hospitality industry for hospitality graduates transition to the industry?

18. What nature of training would you require in order to more effectively inculcate employability skills in hospitality students?

Table 1 Type of institution and Table 2. : Benchmark curriculum

Table 1: Type of institution		
Institution	Freq	Percent
University	8	16
Polytechnic	42	84
Total	50	
Table 2: Benchmark curriculum		
Degree	Freq	Percent
BTechHMgt	8	16.67
BTechHTM	16	33.33
NNCIM (HND)	20	41.67
BScHTMgt	4	8.33
Total	48	

Table 3. Subjects taught

Table 3: Subjects taught		
Subject	Freq	Percent
Front office Opt Mgt	4	7.55
Accommodation Opt Mgt	9	16.98
Food Hygiene, sanitation and safety	2	3.77
Bar Operations Mgt	5	9.43
Hospitality and Tourism Mgt	3	5.66
HR Mgt in Hospitality	4	7.55
Hospitality and Catering Law	2	3.77
Communicationn in Hospitality	4	7.55
F & B Mgt	10	18.87
F & B Cost Cotrol	1	1.89
Hospitality Accounting/Bookkeeping	4	7.55
Hospitality French	1	1.89
Hospitality Marketing	3	5.66
Food Science, Nutrition Food Technology	1	1.89
Total	53	

Table 4. Activities that provide job market experience

Table 4: Activities that provide job market experience		
Activity	Freq	Percent
On-campus work related learning	15	30
Extra-curricula activities	32	64
All of the above	3	6
	50	

Table 5. How Hospitality education prepares students to work in industry

Table 5: How Hospitality education prepares students to work in industry							
Level	Score (x)	Freq	fx	f(x-x-bar)^2		p-value	
Strongly Disagree	1	5	5	34.322			
Disagree	2	3	6	20.5932			
Neutral	3	15	45	102.966			
Agree	4	10	40	68.644			

Strongly Agree	5	17	85	116.6948			
Totals		50	181	343.22	2.65		0.0446
Average			3.62		1.7		

Table 6. Teaching methods used by the lecturers

Table 6: Teaching methods used by the lecturers		
Method	Freq	Percent
Lecture	25	50
Project	10	20
Field trips	0	0
Seminars	5	10
Guest speakers	0	0
Experiential learning (Ind Att*)	10	20
Case study	0	0
eLearning	0	0
Video	0	0
Others	0	0
	50	

Table 10. Whether hospitality education provides students with employability skills

Table 10: Whether hospitality education provides students with employability skills			
Response	Frequency	Percent	
Yes	6	12	
No	43	86	
Not sure	1	2	
	50		

Summary of the new constructs revealed by the lecturers' responses in alphabetical order. These constructs reflect the above listed TLA strategies and will be used as an additional checklist of the influences on employability by stakeholders working on the GHEEF post-research completion.

Table 5.5 List of new constructs from the lecturers' responses

No.	Construct
1	Accreditation of courses (poor quality)
2	Alumni relations
3	Assessment (for/of learning)
4	Career development learning

5	Competency-based training
6	Critical thinking
7	Curriculum development
8	Customer service excellence
9	CVs
10	Demonstration labs
11	Entrepreneurship education
12	Experiential learning
13	Extended internships or industrial attachments
14	Extra-curricular activities
15	Globalisation and technology
16	Group work
17	Guest lecturers
18	HEI-industry collaborations
19	Inadequate resources
20	Independent learning
21	Industrial attachment (lecturers and students)
22	Industrial attachments (poorly supervised)
23	Industry trends
24	Large and small classes
25	Low esteem for hospitality courses
26	Maintenance culture (poor)
27	Management and communication skills
28	Marketing skills
29	Modern Teaching methods
30	Obsolete curriculum
31	Obsolete equipment
32	Organisational skills
33	Poor job motivation and satisfaction
34	Practical skills (poor)
35	Presentation skills
36	Problem-based learning (PBL)
37	Professional standards
38	Quality assurance (poor)
39	Resources
30	Staff training and refresher courses
41	Team work
42	Trust between HEIs and industry
43	Work-based learning (Work and life experience (WLE)

Appendix 5.3 Graduate questionnaire

Emerging Trends and influences in Ghanaian hospitality industry education and employability

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire which investigates trends and influences in Ghanaian hospitality industry education and employability. I hope this survey would not take much of your time to complete which consist mostly of tick boxes.

Your input will prove invaluable in developing a reliable body of knowledge on Ghanaian hospitality graduate employability.
This survey is completely anonymous and your confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

1. To what extent do you agree that the hospitality education you received at the polytechnic/university has prepared you to work in the hospitality industry? (Please tick only one)

◯ Strongly disagree
◯ Disagree
◯ Neutral
◯ Agree
◯ Strongly agree

2. Which of the following teaching methods did you experience at your polytechnic/university? (Please tick as many as applicable)

◯ **Lecture** e.g. instructor stands in front of class present information
◯ **Projects** e.g. a Course paper/term paper (planning, research, practical activity and presenting results)
◯ **Field trips** e.g. a trip by students to gain first-hand knowledge away from the classroom)
◯ **Seminars** e.g. form of group discussions on a topic.
◯ **Guest speakers** e.g. hospitality/industry professional giving a talk.
◯ **Experiential learning** e.g. learning by doing, placement, observation, workplace visits, mentoring.
◯ **Case study e.g.** up-close, in-depth, and detailed examination of a subject of study
◯ **e Learning** e.g. the use of technology in learning and teaching such as digital learning, online learning, wikis, mobile learning virtual learning ◯ **Using video e.g.** YouTube videos

Others (please specify)_____

3. Please select which of the following learning, teaching and assessment methods you experienced during your studies at the polytechnic/university and indicate your level of satisfaction.(Please tick as many boxes as applicable)

	Very	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very

	dissatisfied				satisfied
Lecture					
Projects					
Field trips					
Seminars					
Experiential learning					
Videos					
Case study					
eLearning					
Guest speaker					
Examination					
Assessed presentation					
Assessed industrial attachment report					

4. For the items to Q3 above in which you ticked 'dissatisfied' or 'strongly dissatisfied' please explain further below

……
……

To what extent do you agree with the following statements? (Please tick as many as applicable, by ticking a box)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
I learned leadership and people management skills such as teamwork at my polytechnic/university.					
I learned communication skills such as how to communicate, present, assert and speak management language at my polytechnic/university.					
I learned financial skills such as budgeting, forecasting, managing cash flow and understanding financial statements at my polytechnic/university.					
I learned self-management such as goal setting, time-management, prioritising and personal development at my polytechnic/university.					

I learned business management skills such as business functions, understanding strategy, decision-making and work flow at my polytechnic/university.					
I learned enterprising skills such as creativity, problem-solving, building network and thinking strategically at my polytechnic/university.					
I learned project management skills such as planning and managing successful projects, managing risk, time and project teams at my polytechnic/university.					
I learned how to use technology such as a computer at my polytechnic/university					
I learned writing skills such as report writing, note taking, essay writing and proposal writing at my polytechnic/university					
I learned a foreign language at my polytechnic/university					
I learned to use numbers and basic mathematics at my polytechnic/university					
I was encouraged to learn (willingness to learn) at my polytechnic/university					
I learned to be proactive e.g. acting in advance of a future situation at my polytechnic/university					
I learned Time management such as control of time for effectiveness and efficiency at my polytechnic/university					
I learned Entrepreneurial/enterprise skills at my polytechnic/university					
I learned Presentation skills such as getting my message or opinion across at my polytechnic/university					

5. What do you understand by the term employability?

……
……
……re you working currently in hospitality related industry? Yes No

6. If no, please indicate why not below?

……
……
…….If yes please what is your current role at work?
……
……
…….Did your course prepare you for the current role at work? YES NO

Please explain your choice further

……
……
…….7. Which of the following will enable a student to gain experience for the job market? (Please tick as many as applicable)

◯ Work related learning occurring on campus as part of the curriculum e.g. Food and beverage practicum, laboratory training, restaurant services/ housekeeping

◯ Work related learning (workplace experience) occurring outside campus e.g. Placement/ internship/industrial attachment, Part-time work

◯ Extra-curricular activities e.g. drama group, gym, sports and hiking, volunteering

Other please specify_____

8. Suggest ways Ghanaian hospitality education can make graduates more employable?

……
……
……

Gender (please circle one**)** Female Male

When did you graduated? .....

If you would wish to participate further in the research please leave your name and email address.

Name:……

Email address:……

Thank you for your participation.

Detailed Analysis for Graduates questionnaire

4. For the items to Q3 above in which you ticked ‘dissatisfied’ or ‘strongly dissatisfied’ please explain further below

……
……

5. To what extent do you agree with the following statements? (Please tick as many as applicable, by ticking a box)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I learned leadership and people management skills such as teamwork at my polytechnic/university.	90	57	12	160	6
I learned communication skills such as how to communicate, present, assert and speak management language at my polytechnic/university.	0	0	10	73	200
I learned financial skills such as budgeting, forecasting, managing cash flow and understanding financial statements at my polytechnic/university.	18	45	55	98	67
I learned self-management such as goal setting, time-management, prioritising and personal development at my polytechnic/university.	10	8	34	56	175
I learned business management skills such as business functions, understanding strategy, decision-making and work flow at my polytechnic/university.	50	107	26	56	44
I learned enterprising skills such as creativity, problem-solving, building network and thinking strategically at my polytechnic/university.	20	10	19	200	34
I learned project management skills such as planning and managing successful projects, managing risk, time and project teams at my polytechnic/university.	0	0	3	280	0
I learned how to use technology such as a computer at my polytechnic/university	20	54	29	101	79
I learned writing skills such as report writing, note taking, essay writing and proposal writing at my polytechnic/university	50	88	5	76	64
I learned a foreign language at my polytechnic/university	10	5	0	200	68
I learned to use numbers and basic mathematics at my polytechnic/university	43	10	30	103	54
I was encouraged to learn (willingness to learn) at my polytechnic/university	10	30	45	55	43
I learned to be proactive e.g. acting in advance of a future situation at my	20	0	200	30	33

polytechnic/university					
I learned Time management such as control of time for effectiveness and efficiency at my polytechnic/university	0	0	110	16	13
I learned Entrepreneurial/enterprise skills at my polytechnic/university	120	110	23	0	30
I learned Presentation skills such as getting my message or opinion across at my polytechnic/university	0	15	0	247	21

6. What do you understand by the term employability?

-It is the act of gaining employment

-It is the ability to be employed

- Employability is gaining employment as a graduate

- The ability of getting employment as a graduate

- it the achievement that makes graduates gain employment

- employability is to gain employment

- My understanding of employability is once readiness to work and your ability to fit in than employment

- it is the ability to be employed

- it is being an employee and employed by an employer

- it is getting a job in your field of study

- employability is an achievement of being employed

- employability is being employed as a worker

-employability is what the graduate has in his curriculum vitae (CV) for employment
-employability is the skills and attributes that makes graduates gain employment
-Employability is the state of being employed
- Employability is the ability to be employed
- employability is a set of achievements- skills understandings and personal attributes that make graduates more likely to gain employment and to be successful in their chosen occupation which benefit themselves the work force, the community and the economy
- Employability is the state of gaining a job
- it is define as the skills that helps graduates get employment or jobs
- Employability can be describe as having the opportunity to fit at a position to work to earn a living after completion of your course
- Employability is to be able to get into the job market
- Team work
- Employability the ate ability to employ someone in your company
- meeting the ability and capabilities for employment
- The ability to get employment
- Employability is the ability to employ more qualified personnel
- the ability for a firm to employ people in their firm

- The ability for an individual to suit a current job
- the knowledge one acquires in the university/ polytechnic for a job
- employability refers to skills for employment
- Capable of holding a job
- Employability is to have the requisite skills and motivation for employment
- employability refers to a person's capability for gaining and maintaining employment
- a demonstrated skill for a job
-it is the attributes that makes individuals or persons to gain employment
- The ability to get into a job
- the skills and abilities that allows you to be employed
- It refers to the abilities and skills a person has that enables him or her to be employed
- it the ability of any organisation, government or company to employ people to work in industry

7. Are you working currently in hospitality related industry? Yes No

Yes	No
58	225

8. If no, please indicate why not below?

- Hospitality industry employers are looking for experience which I did not how at the time I went for interview

- It is difficult to get employment because the requirement hospitality industry is looking for is not taught in my university; they want interpersonal skills which I did not even understand.

- hospitality graduates are more than the jobs. where ever I go no vacancy

9. If yes please what is your current role at work?

10. Did your course prepare you for the current role at work? YES NO

Please explain your choice further

……

11. Which of the following will enable a student to gain experience for the job market? (Please tick as many as applicable)

1 Work related learning occurring on campus as part of the curriculum

2. Work related learning (workplace experience) occurring outside campus

3. Extra-curricular activities e.g. drama group, gym, sports and hiking, volunteering

4. All of the above

1	2	3	4
105	121	20	37

12. Suggest ways Ghanaian hospitality education can make graduates more employable?

……
……

Gender (please circle one**)** Female Male

Female	Male
213	70

1. To what extent do you agree that the hospitality education you received at the polytechnic/university has prepared you to work in the hospitality industry? (Please tick only one)

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
0	162	12	97	0

2. Which of the following teaching methods did you experience at your polytechnic/university? (Please tick as many as applicable)

1. Lecture
2. Projects
3. Field trips
4. Seminars
5. Guest speakers
6. Experiential learning
7. Case study
8. e Learning
9. Using video
10. Others (please specify)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
249	20	0	14	0	0	0	0	0	0

3. Please select which of the following learning, teaching and assessment methods you experienced during your studies at the polytechnic/university and indicate your level of satisfaction.(Please tick as many boxes as applicable)

*1. Lecture

very satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	very dissatisfied

2. Projects

3. Field trips

4. Seminars

5. Experiential learning

6. Videos

7. Case study

8. eLearning

9. Guest speaker

10. Examination

11. Assessed presentation

12. Assessed industrial attachment report

Appendix 5.4 employers

Appendix 5. 4d: Interview guide for employers

Emerging Trends and Influences in Ghanaian hospitality industry, education and employability

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed as part of my research. The research investigates trends and influences in Ghanaian hospitality industry education and employability. I hope not to take much of your time

Your input will prove invaluable in developing a reliable body of knowledge on the development of employability innovative curriculum for hospitality graduates employability in Ghana.

This interview is completely anonymous and your confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

Associated with the emergence of multinational hotel chains in Ghana, the trends and influences offer some benefits and challenges to our graduates. What is your candid view on the factors that affects the employability of these graduates and how can we enhance their employable?

Section A: Background information

1. Please may I know your educational background, for example your qualifications and, year of qualification.

2. How long have you been working in hospitality industry?

3. What can you tell me about developments in the hospitality industry for example what has change since you started working in the hospitality industry?

4. Do you employ graduates from Ghanaian hospitality institution? How many do you have currently employed?

5. If you do not prefer the Ghanaian graduates, what could be the main reason

Section B: Meanings and understanding of employability concept

6. Please what do you understand by the term employability?

7. How do you determine whether a graduate is employable?

Section C: Skills requirements

8. What skills do you look for in graduates when hiring them?

9. From your experience in the past years what shortcomings have you noticed in the Ghanaian hospitality graduates when they are hired?

Section D: Criteria for recruiting and perception of higher education and curriculum development

10. How do you evaluate the suitability of graduates for a job?

11. In advertising for recruitment, can you please list some of the items you look for in a candidate?

12. Please tell me your thoughts on the relevance of hospitality courses to the hospitality industry.

13. Can you please suggest ways of improving the relationship between hospitality industry and academia that can be of benefit to both industry and graduates?

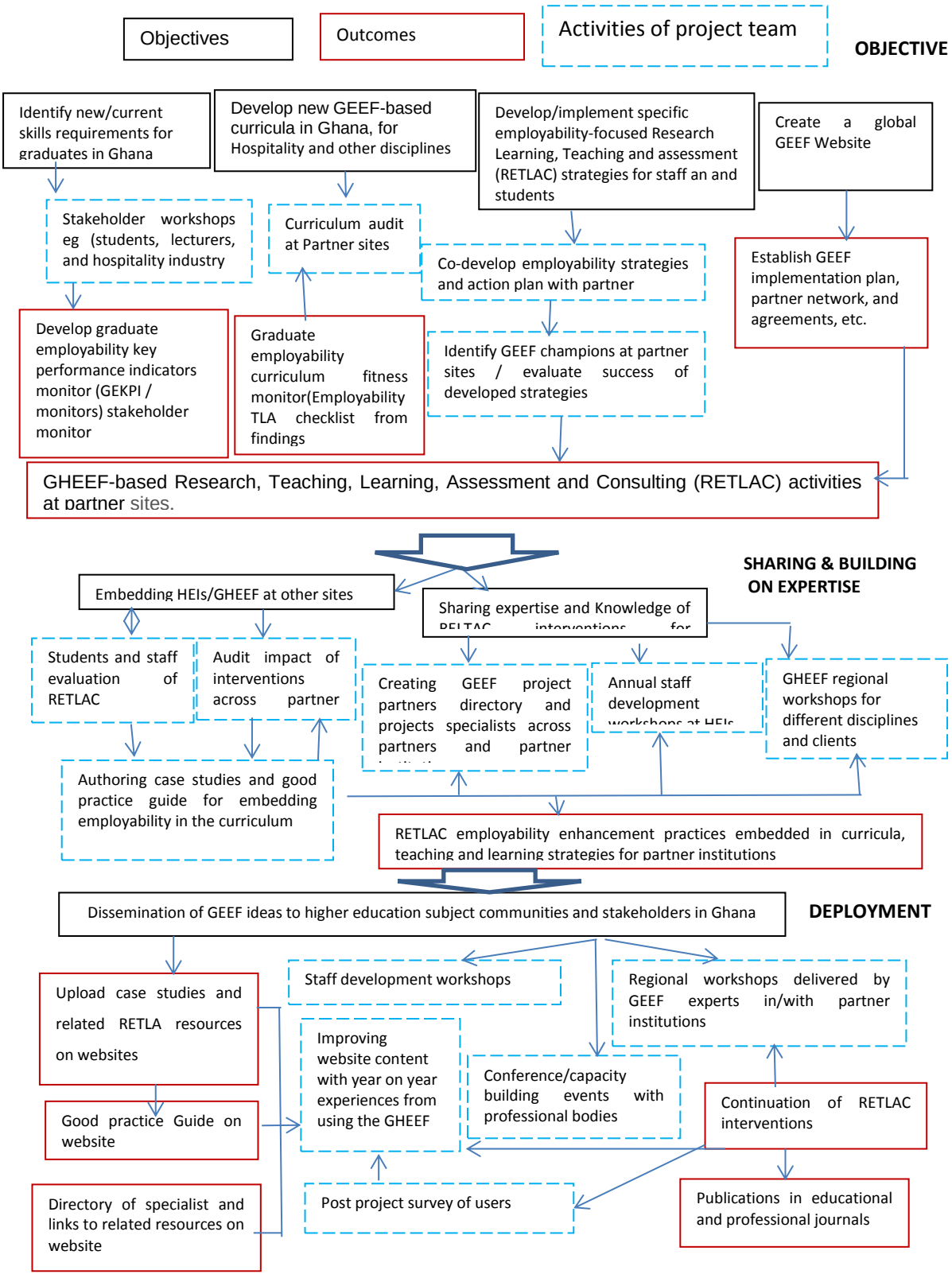
14. What are your ideas on how the hospitality and generally higher education curriculum can be improved to make graduates more employable?

Thank you very much for your time. Is there anything you would want to tell me in addition to what we have discussed? Would you also recommend I speak to anyone who could provide additional insight in to these issues either in your establishment or else where

Appendix 7.1 THE GHEEF POST-PHD INTERVENTION

The purpose of this post-PhD GHEEF is to concretise the nature of disciplinary interventions which the GHEEF will facilitate in Ghanaian hospitality education.

HIGH PROFILE GEEF



Visualising the Post PhD-GHEEF

This section presents the high-level visual schematic for the GHEEF, which expands on the above narrative of the links between the CF and the research results. This schematic is shown in Appendix 10.1 below.

The appendix has three main sections, namely objectives, developing and sharing expertise, and deployment. The objectives determined the key priorities of the interventions which the GHEEF facilitates. The objectives apply to different disciplines and countries. For example, identifying new and current skills requirements in Ghana requires a continuation of this research for different disciplines as is the case for hospitality in this research.

The activities under the objectives are shown by the broken lines in the figure. These are also colour-coded as blue across all the blocks. The outcomes from the activities are colour-coded as red and the objectives as black The figure emphasises the fact that the activities consist of research, learning, teaching, assessment, and consulting (RETLAC) work in different partner sites, because at higher education level, ongoing research is required to enhance employability skills. Also, the learned research results and skills are actively applied in client environment mainly in the form of consultancies which fund the proposed Model GHEEF Training Centres. Similar notes apply for the other two main sections of the framework.

Application to hospitality education

This section explains how the GHEEF applies to Ghana, using hospitality education as a focal point. This application requires the researcher to indicate who will be involved in GHEEF activities (stakeholders, leads and champions, for example), what the specific activities are, why they are important, when they could best be undertaken, where they will be undertaken, and how they will be implemented, in hospitality education.

Who should be involved in GHEEF-led hospitality education interventions in Ghana?

The thesis identifies the key stakeholders understudied in the research as hospitality students, hospitality lecturers, hospitality industry and employers (including big multinational hotel chains), and government HE policy-makers. Hence, for such

activities as ‘Stakeholder workshops’, all these main stakeholders must be involved. It would be good to run GHEEF interventions from well-resourced GHEEF Training Centres (GEFTRACs) which will draw expertise nationally. The reason for this is government departments have not properly funded research-based initiatives and can even be said to stifle some of the initiatives when the policy-makers think that implementing them may diminish their roles. Hence, a third way is required by which the GHEEF is implemented independently as a centre of excellence in employability education.

It is important to note that apart from the key stakeholders a wider range of GHEEF partners is envisaged across academia, industry and government. Also, different combinations of partners will be involved in different GHEEF interventions as follows.

Identifying new and current skills requirements for hospitality graduates in Ghana will be conducted through research, LTA engagements and industry collaborations by hospitality lecturers mainly, using this research as a guideline, and updating the results through ongoing reflective practice.

Developing new GHEEF-based curricula in Ghana will be led by researchers, disciplinary and professional industry experts, including particularly hospitality lecturers, and could replicated across other disciplines. As part of this curriculum development work, hospitality lecturers will agree good practice research, learning, teaching, assessment and consulting strategies for teaching generic and hospitality-focused employability skills in Ghana. These strategies should be published online in a GHEEF website. Links should be established with Centres for Entrepreneurial Studies in Ghanaian HEIs so that combined entrepreneurship and employability skills could be facilitated across the HEIs, led by the research insights from this thesis.

GHEEF teams in different HEIs and partner sites across the country will help to audit training curricula used by the partners depending on the key learning outcomes. For example, a key learning outcome is to help partners to implement co-developed GHEEF strategies that enhance their trainees’ employability prospects, based on agreed GHEEF partnership plans.

The Graduate Employability Monitor (GEM) will evolve from learning what works across different partner sites and will be in the form of a checklist with employability skills and a scorecard that categorises trainees’ employability in different classes. The skills and

Pareto charts used in this thesis should inform the construction of such a scorecard, which is an additional line of research. The scorecards will differ to some extent across partner types. Adapting a generic GEM Scorecard to different partner niches and where necessary HE courses will be part of the research focus in the overall research, learning, teaching, assessment and consulting (RELTAC) programme of GHEEF interventions. Similar approach underpins the development of the Graduate Employability Curriculum Fitness Monitors (GECUFIMs). A National GHEEF Coordinators will work with partners to appoint GHEEF Champions; for HEIs these will include hospitality lecturers and staff from the Centres for Entrepreneurships Studies. Success in GHEEF interventions may in future integrate these HEI-based centres with model GHEEF training centres into a combined Entrepreneurship and Employability Training Centre. These plans will be extended to the 'Developing and Sharing Expertise' and 'Deployment' aspects of the GHEEF interventions. Albeit with appropriate modifications.

What, why, when, where and how will GEEF-led hospitality education interventions be implemented in Ghana?

These questions are already partially answered in the above notes, since the interventions define the '*what'* focus, and the partner sites define '*where'* they will typically hold. The interventions will happen at appropriate times in the year depending on participating stakeholders. For example, activities focused on students and lecturers mainly will typically hold within partner HEIs in various formats – seminars, group projects, workshops, in-house conferences, individual learning assignments, guest lectures, role plays, complementary research and consulting engagements. When external stakeholders are involved, the interventions can be staged within or outside the HEIs, at partner sites, hotel venues, conference centres, and at the convenience of all partners.

The rationale for GHEEF interventions is the enhancement of hospitality graduate employability in Ghana generally, and specific objectives of every intervention will be agreed with the partners and surveys of stakeholder needs from time to time. Apart from typical research, learning, teaching, assessment and consulting (RELTAC) strategies and interventions listed here, each GHEEF engagement should be fully planned and project-managed; specifying how every aspect of the engagements will be

implemented, with personnel, time, resource and timelines provided. There should be an Events Management Team who will be trained to manage GHEEF events, sometimes supported by staff members from partner organisations.

These notes emphasise the importance of the Deployment aspects of GHEEF-based innovations. A key focus will be hospitality departments and their parent schools and faculties in all Ghanaian HEIs, hence 'subject communities', who will be led to understand the wider meanings of employability, its links with entrepreneurship and enterprise education, and the signature curriculum innovations and pedagogies vital to implanting the GHEEF interventions successfully in hospitality and related courses.

Train-the-trainer staff development workshops should be run to cover the range of employability skills and RELTAC approaches reported in this thesis. Staff members working on different hospitality modules and similar modules in other hospitality-related disciplines will be encouraged to develop good practice case studies on how the GHEEF ideas could be applied to their work.

Regional workshops will enable such training and resulting expertise to be cascaded to all HEIs and stakeholders in different regions in the country, thereby facilitating knowledge exchange and collaborations among them. This will enhance the funding base for the GHEEF interventions.

In order to make ongoing innovations from these interventions available for all partners in Ghana, new ideas from the interventions will be used to improve the GHEEF website, especially the knowledge-ware. Study and personal development planning skills resources such as those mentioned in the analysis and discussion chapters of the thesis will be listed in the website, including online sources for the skills.

A directory (database) of GHEEF specialists should be maintained and grown from the interventions, with brief profiles of the specialists stored in a standard format in the database for easy access and use in resourcing future events (for example as facilitators, keynote speakers, and guest lecturers), and as co-investigators in GHEEF grants and projects.

Post-project survey of users of GHEEF services will be regularly done to provide feedback comments which will be actively implemented in future events. Moreover, all learning from the RELTAC remits of the GHEEF activities will be widely disseminated in the form of publications in educational and professional journals, textbooks and research monographs, training manuals, conference and symposium proceedings, best-practice case studies, and model research and funding proposals that can be adapted by different stakeholders. Further noted on these plans are described below as part of planned activities in Model GHEEF Training Centres.

Structuring Model GHEEF Training Centres

Typical careers and employability support activities undertaken in university careers and employability centres should be implemented day-to-day in the GHEEF training centres (GHEEFTRACs), but complemented by all the capacity building activities explored above. The activities should take cognisance of the contextual profiles, skills, attitudes and competences of Ghanaian students and stakeholders which the findings represent.

For completeness of this section the researcher lists some indicative university careers and employability entre activities as follows. The activities are organised in four main themes: 1) Enhancing your employability skills; 2) Planning your career; 3) Applying for jobs; and 4) 'Where to go for more information'.

Enhancing your employability skills

Activities listed under this theme which will be appropriately contextualised in Ghana include:

Getting experience from part-time work:

This will include linking students with industry partners and (their own) HEIs where they will develop relevant employability skills; helping them to write effective CVs; arranging partner- and individual expert-based mentorships for them; and developing good alumni support networks for these activities. Successful case stories will be complied from these student experiences, with their photos, and uploaded in the GHEEF website and offices, to inspire other students.

Staff will be trained as facilitators of these experiences as time progresses and some of the work experiences the students could be as structured as research support work on staff-led projects. Particular support can be arranged for special student groups such as students with learning difficulties under the aegis of a GHEEF Learner Support Charity, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) will be encouraged to support the programme nationally through a network of GHEEF training centres located in different HEIs.

Taking part in innovation, creativity, employability and entrepreneurship activities in suitable clubs, similar to the student societies they sometimes belong to:

The focus of these clubs will be to gain innovation, creativity, and employability and entrepreneurship skills, including leadership, team working, time management, communication and presentation, and project management skills. These clubs will organise competitions that could be sponsored by the HEIs and adopting partners and charities. Membership in the clubs will be open to students who have registered with GHEEF training centres, Job Shops, which will ultimately be organised according to a common set of guidelines for all HEIs. In order to ensure that these initiatives are not delayed by institutional and bureaucratic red-tape, the researcher will in future try to launch the training centre outside of higher education institutions which will implement the ideas in the street, as an independent social enterprise and centre of excellence in Ghana. This centre will coordinate the GHEEF website as an online dissemination channel. There will be GHEEFTRAC bulletins, blogs, and webinars which will publicise the success stories of the clubs.

Getting involved in student union activities of the HEIs in which GHEEF training centre activities will be popularised and coordinated, as appropriate:

In future, training centre activities could be linked to student unions that are encouraged to play similar skills development roles as UK ones, for example. For example, (Hospitality) students can get involved in union activities that build their skills and experiences and enable their CVs to ‘stand out’. Examples of such strong CVs will be uploaded on the GHEEF website to motivate other students in participating in such

union activities. Also, a reinvigorated student union of this stature will help to coordinate and make GHEEF training centre activities student-led.

Volunteering, mentoring and internship activities:

Students should be encouraged to volunteer into partner business and community projects that add social value but at the same time enable them to acquire relevant skills. They will be advised on how to record their achievements using GHEEF work experience diaries or personal development log-books. A common structure for the diaries could be agreed with partners in focus group sessions with the partners and students facilitated by GHEEF-trained experts. In order to enable placements to be found more easily, given the current level of graduate unemployment and lack of awareness of such practices in Ghana, there will be sensitisation events which will involve all key stakeholders and potential partners – students, lecturers, parents and sponsors, HEIs, policy-makers, and employers, including hospitality employers. Students, starting with hospitality students, will be encouraged to volunteer to work in their parents' and relations' organisations for example, and to still complete the work experience diaries. This means that the volunteering programme uses formal and informal channels to provide spaces for the students. Sourcing for such work experiences with CVs they are to write in a much effective way based on their GHEEF training will hone their skills in improving the CVs for future work. Academics will be sensitised on these GHEEF initiatives as noted above and will be particularly encouraged to use the student volunteers as research interns on research and consulting projects they are involved in. The students will be required to present their learning from the programmes and write them down in concise GHEEF stories which will be uploaded in the GHEEF website.

Completing GHEEF Awards:

This will involve students writing reflexive reports of their GHEEF-based extracurricular activities. The awards can evidence their skills when mentioned in CVs and can be on different themes sponsored by different stakeholders. For example, an industry employer can support an award for leadership skills and another for application of technical hospitality skills while working for them. These awards will be announced during graduation ceremonies of the HEIs and in annual GHEEF Award Ceremonies.

Placements:

Similar to volunteering, mentoring and internship activities described above, students can do course placements (including formal industrial attachments supervised by their lecturers and industry mentors) with employers in the GHEEF partner networks. These can be done during holidays as summer internships or weekends and can eventually lead to job offers or facilitate access to jobs with other employers when the experiences are demonstrated in their CVs.

Participating in GHEEF Venture Swims:

GHEEF experts should work with partners to develop a network of real-life partner projects which students can be allocated to in order to get experienced with real-life problem solving using knowledge they acquire in their studies in addition to generic skills. This initiative will mean that employers have a ready pool of student workers who they will pay agreed stipends and train further on the key skills required to complete the projects. The initiatives will be organised for different disciplines and participating students are imagined to be taking a dive into related ‘seas’ of experience. A dynamic database of such projects will be maintained in the GHEEF website.

Developing and applying entrepreneurial skills:

Students should be led to discuss business ideas they have with GHEEF staff who will guide them further with relevant business knowledge and resources for developing the ideas. For this, lecturers in the schools of business and those who teach relevant business, marketing, finance and economics courses can act as advisors. Interactive seminars will be used to explore such student initiatives as part of GHEEF‘s training programmes. Short interactive online courses on these business development skills and resources will be placed in the research and enterprise development section of the GHEEF website, complete with plain English notes, videos, and further lists of texts and online resources. These activities will be regularly supported by events and courses in the entrepreneurship development centres of Ghanaian HEIs, and will involve experienced industry professionals as guest lecturers, seminar and workshop facilitators.

Special social enterprise schemes:

As part of the employability skills development, students will be encouraged to develop, preferably in teams with complementary skills, ideas that will be a difference in identified communities or the environment. Funding for these activities will be provided in designated starting seed-corns through GHEEF stakeholder networks, including Ghanaian Central Bank, banks, HEIs, philanthropists, related government ministries, and the private sector.

Research and Enterprise Development offices in HEIs and partner sites:

In order to facilitate these activities, GHEEF experts should liaise with the research directorates of the HEIs to run research and development offices which should mimic global best-practices. A Model GEEF Research and Enterprise Development Institute could be established independently in the GHEEF Centre which exists outside the HEIs and is run as a social enterprise. This will help to develop the best practices and avoid undue delays in agreeing collaboration pathways with the HEIs.

Planning your career

In addition to the skills support schemes mentioned above, the following interventions should be implemented in the proposed GHEEF training centres.

The Ghanaian Hospitality Employability Enhancement Training Centre (GHEEFTRAC) remits:

Trained GHEEF advisors will help students and external stakeholders to explore their career options, strategies suitable employability and career development pathways, scenarios, and action plans. Further GHEEF services under this remit are presented below.

Online Careers Information:

This service will host online career information, resources, downloadable support materials, and video clips.

Career management skills and counselling sessions:

This will run regular skills development workshops, one-on-one or group-based career counselling by trained HR staff, support for CV writing, and preparations for interviews. For example, hospitality students can have sessions on career skills and management specific to hospitality industry, based on insights from this research. To extend such workshops to other disciplines, the GHEEF staff will collaborate with disciplinary experts and industry professionals specific to different disciplinary clusters, for example social sciences, arts and humanities, science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Jobs and work-focused events databases:

This database will use market intelligence to collate on- and off-campus graduate jobs, internships, summer jobs, and part-time work across partner and stakeholder sectors. It will also catalogue available career fairs in the country which students will be advised to attend as appropriate.

Applying for jobs:

Relevant services under this remit include: writing effective CVs; practising interview techniques for different interview types; guidance and workshops on other recruitment methods using real-life case studies from partners, for example psychometric tests (measurement of skills and knowledge, abilities, attitudes, personality traits, and educational achievement.), assessment centres, and ways to access non-advertised jobs. International comparisons will be used to expose students and clients to recruitment methods used in other countries. Underpinning all these services will be a global graduate and employability skills inventory which students and clients will complete in order to gauge their level of skills and competences and thereby tailor GHEEF support and training for them. This skills inventory will bring together all the employability skills researched in this thesis augmented with industry surveys of GHEEF partner employee requirements. It forms a part of the ongoing research work in GHEEF, other than teaching, learning and wider training activities.

‘Where to go for more information’:

The GHEEFTRACs will provide full details of GHEEFTRACs in different HEIs when fully operational, and importantly the GHEEF website information, including staff contact details. Moreover, the contact details of the independent model GHEEEFTRAC which exists outside the HEIs will be provided.

The research results presented in this thesis should be regularly updated within Ghana through partner-based experiences and international employability education practices such as contained in the UK BIS (2011) report on 'Supporting Graduate Employability: HEI Practice in Other Countries'. Similar ideas from the UK House of Commons-BIS Committee (2015-16) report on 'The Teaching Excellence Framework: Assessing Quality in Higher Education' will be used to improve ongoing GHEEF-related research. These ideas will be widely disseminated across all HEIs and partners. In effect, the GHEEF will serve as an enabling mechanism for regularly scanning international research and good practices for ideas that will be adapted to Ghanaian contexts. Typically, GHEEF coordinators will lead partner-based adaptations of such research results and good practices to the specific contexts of the partners, especially HEIs.

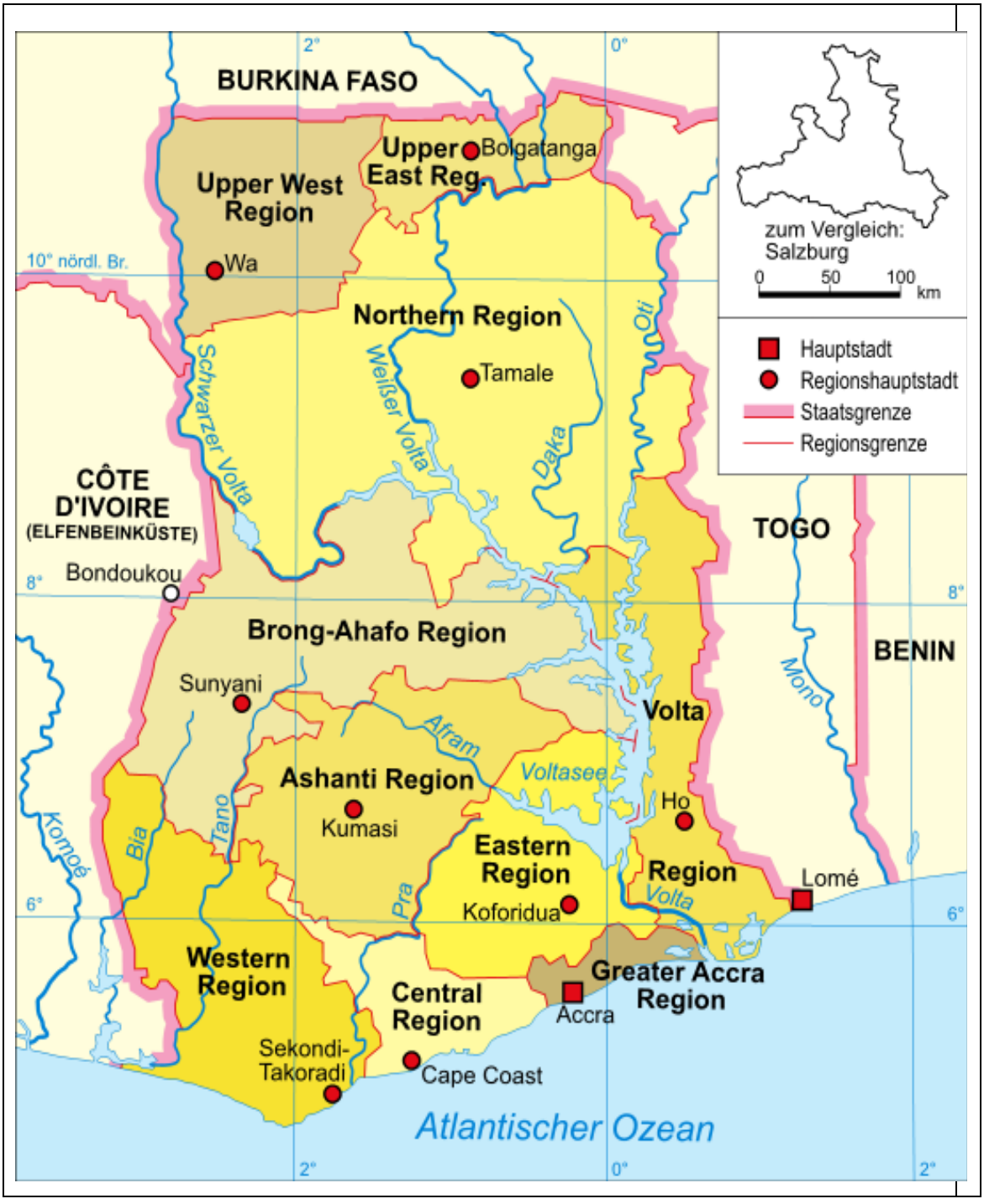
Evaluating GEEF interventions

The structure of GHEEFTRAC activities presented above should be discussed with relevant stakeholders and potential partners in focus group workshops following this PhD research. These workshops which are indicated on the high-level GHEEF plan will help to add specific partner perspectives, whilst the TLA aspects related to hospitality employability education is being implemented initially based on the results in this thesis. It has been noted that when operational GHEEF interventions will be periodically evaluated through relevant GHEEF monitors, curriculum fitness, KPIs, evaluation of RELTAC interventions, partner agreements and post-project surveys.

Appendix 7.2

GHANA MAP SHOWING ADMINISTRAIVE CAPITALS TOWNS AND LOCATIONS OF

UNIVERSITIES AND POLYTECHNICS (NOW TECHNICAL UNIVERSITIES)


BURKINA FASO
Upper West Region
Upper East Reg.
Bolgatanga
Wa
10° nördl. Br.
Northern Region
Tamale
Schwarzer Volta
Weißer Volta
Daka
Oti
CÔTE D'IVOIRE
(ELFENBEINKÜSTE)
Bondoukou
TOGO
BENIN
Brong-Ahafo Region
Sunyani
Afram
Volta
Mono
Ashanti Region
Kumasi
Voltasee
Ho
Komoé
Bia
Tano
Eastern Region
Koforidua
Pra
Volta Region
Lomé
Western Region
Central Region
Greater Accra Region
Accra
Sekondi-Takoradi
Cape Coast
Atlantischer Ozean
2°
0°
8°
6°
zum Vergleich:
Salzburg
0
50
100
km
Hauptstadt
Regionshauptstadt
Staatsgrenze
Regionsgrenze