

STUDENT EVALUATION OF CAREER READINESS AFTER COMPLETING THE
HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT CURRICULUM AT THE INTERNATIONAL HOTEL
SCHOOL

by

RONETTE CONRADIE

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SUPERVISOR: PROF J M DREYER

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DECLARATION

I, Ronette Conradie, declare that the student evaluation of career readiness after completing the hospitality management curriculum at The International Hotel School is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

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ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this study was to determine how the current hospitality management curriculum at The International Hotel School contributes to students' preparedness from their own perspectives.

Generic and curriculum specific skills that can be used for curriculum evaluation were identified, a framework of curriculum variables to rate the level of student preparedness was developed, the effectiveness of the hospitality management curriculum from the perspectives of students' perceptions of preparedness was analysed, and the aspects that contribute most to student preparedness were identified through a literature study and an empirical investigation.

The findings were summarised and it was recommended that The International Hotel School needs to review the hotel and restaurant accounting course and the experiential learning components. Furthermore, lecturers of The International Hotel School should receive training on the implementation of more interactive course content delivery methods.

Key terms:

Curriculum evaluation; Hospitality Management; Student perceptions; Career preparedness; Generic skills; Curriculum specific skills; Concentration areas skills; Framework of curriculum variables; Experiential learning; Interactive course content delivery.

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

The purpose of this study is to analyse and assess how hospitality training programmes help students to prepare for their future careers within the hospitality sector. More specifically, taking into account that this is a dissertation of limited scope, the study aims to determine how the current hospitality curriculum at the International Hotel School contributes to students' preparedness from their own perspectives.

The Department of Trade and Industry reported that tourism in South Africa has been identified as an immediate priority sector within the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative (JIPSA). The rationale for this priority on the tourism sector is that it has been identified as one of the key economic sectors with great potential for growth (Department of Trade and Industry, 2008:22). It is estimated that for every twelve new tourists to South Africa, a new job is created and by 2010 the country planned to accommodate ten million foreign visitors annually (THETA Sector Skills Plan, 2010/2011:9).

The tourism sector of the South African economy, as it is with the rest of the world, is one of the most diverse and varied. It includes all the business and leisure activities as listed below:

- Accommodation
- Conferencing
- Conservation
- Conventions
- Entertainment
- Event hosting
- Exhibitions
- Gaming

- Guiding
- Hospitality
- Safaris
- Sightseeing
- Spas
- Tours
- Travel
- Transportation

(THETA Sector Skills Plan, 2010/11)

The economies of countries such as Egypt, Greece, Mauritius, Seychelles, Thailand, United Arab Emirates and cities such as Dubai and Las Vegas, rely heavily on the revenue generated from their tourism activities (Boyatzis, 1995:69).

Since the first democratic elections, in 1994, the South African government has realised the value of developing and harnessing the benefits and income of its tourism sector. Tourism is the only sector of the economy which has successfully increased the number of employment opportunities generated by its activities, in addition to increasing its contribution to the Gross Domestic Product of the country (Scriven, 2008:18).

However, for South Africa and its tourism sector to be able to continue to achieve this growth and realise its potential, requires skilled people to fill the newly created employment opportunities and to provide tourists and travellers with the goods and the services that they require (SA Tourism, 2008:8).

The skilling of the current and future employees within the tourism sector, fall under the mandate of the Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Education and Training Authority (THETA) (Education Sector Strategic Plan, 2004 – 2015:23). THETA was established under the Skills Department Act (No. 97 of 1998) for the tourism economic sector and its main function was, and still is, the raising of skills of those employed or wanting to be employed in this sector (THETA Sector Skills Plan, 2010/11:6). THETA underwent a name change at the beginning of 2010 and is now

referred to as CATHSSETA which stands for Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority (<http://www.theta.org.za>).

Baum (1991:3) argues that there can be several factors accountable for the increasing emphasis on the service industry such as technology enhancements, customers diverse needs, more choices available for customers, and the sky-rocketing competition amongst companies. Consequently, it has become more challenging to keep up with the changing patterns of consumers' needs and expectations (Baum, 1991:3). As one of the core segments of the service industry, the hospitality sector has experienced the same challenges as others, in maintaining a skilled and qualified work-force able to cope with the current challenges and to cater for the changing needs of today's customers (Christou, 2003:31).

As an applied discipline, hospitality education has a close and strong link with its industry, enabling hospitality students to be educated whilst keeping abreast with the current industry trends. However, the shortage of a skilled and specialised labour force has been an ongoing issue within the hospitality sector (Goodman, Sprague & Jones, 1991:66). The growing demand for hospitality workers and the shortage of skilled specialised labour may be translated into a growing demand for hospitality education programmes to adequately prepare the workforce to meet present and future demands within this enormous industry (Goeldner & Ritchie, 2009:109).

Reigel (1995:20) defines hospitality education as "a multi-disciplinary field", which brings the perspectives of many disciplines, especially those found in social sciences, to bear on particular areas of application and practice in the hospitality and tourism sectors. Riegel continues to mention that the diverse field requirements have given rise to different types of specialised programmes through which students are able to learn their multi-disciplinary skills, in order to succeed in this industry. According to Darraugh (1989:21), hospitality programmes throughout the world are able to be uniquely administered, based on where they are housed. Darraugh continues to say that the programmes are housed in business, education, human ecology, and consumer science and that they are quite different in the type of concentration areas they offer. As a result of these complications, it is very

challenging to come up with consistent curriculum evaluation and programme ranking in this field, which is very evident in the existing literature (Christou, 2003:29).

Hospitality education has been a widely studied area as is the area of hospitality curriculum evaluation (Dopson & Tas, 2004:39). Lowry and Flohr (2005:28) describe the hospitality sector to be service oriented resulting in most hospitality programmes putting more weight on industry expectations and opinions, as opposed to the providers' and students' preferences. Swanger (2007:14) supports this statement and continues by mentioning that this results in most of the relevant hospitality curriculum studies being overly focused on the employer's perspective, with very few focusing on the actual providers and recipients of the education. Often employers (i.e. industry practitioners) lack the adequate knowledge to rationally assess hospitality curricula (Cappel & Kamens, 2002:467). Students and faculty members, on the other hand, are able to rationally assess the hospitality programmes with regards to how well they contribute to students' preparedness for their anticipated future hospitality careers (Swanger & Gursay, 2007:21).

It is often stressed that some level of industry involvement is important in hospitality curriculum evaluation as hospitality education is heavily linked to the industry (Dopson & Tas, 2004:40). This issue is addressed by including industry experience as a prime requirement for jobs in the hospitality academic world (Kieser, Lawrence & Appleton, 2004:29). Knutson and Patton (1992:38) argue that in this regard, the educators are in a better position to evaluate the curriculum as they are able to interpret both sides of the coin, namely the academic side and the industry side. Swanger and Gursay (2007:17) however, mention that faculty members may, in addition, lack specific knowledge of the curriculum outside the scope of their teaching emphasis, and thus might not accurately judge the student preparedness outside of their own areas of expertise. More so, the level of the faculty members' judgement within their own area, may be highly biased, and may not be a true reflection of student preparedness, even though they are the ones who are delivering the learning to the students (Swanger & Gursay, 2007:17). Lowry and Flohr (2005:34) state that students, on the other hand, are best able to judge their own level of preparedness as they are the ones who are going through the process of learning, which is part of the curriculum. Faculty members are therefore only able to judge certain generic and

fundamental skills of the students and definitely not the specific skills and their appropriateness in career preparedness as taught in the curriculum (Lowry & Flohr, 2005:35). Thus, curriculum evaluation in hospitality education should involve both the perspectives of the students, and the knowledge of the providers, who are experts in both industry and academics (English & Kaufman, 1975:112).

1.2 PROBLEM FORMULATION

1.2.1 Problem Formulation

According to the Western Cape Provincial and Development Plan (2004 – 2014:5), the demand for skills and skills development within the tourism sector is vast. THETA explains that there are various contributing factors which have resulted in a massive demand for skills and skills development, the most obvious of which, being the legacy of South Africa's apartheid past, where the policies of separate and unequal development led to the country's population having a lop-sided spread of skills (Tourism Growth Strategy, 2008 – 2010:21). SA Tourism continues by reporting that, it will take decades for the legacy to be rectified and the issue is being addressed through the government's policies of Employment Equity (EE) and Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) (Tourism Growth Strategy, 2008 – 2010:21).

A further reason for the skills demanded in the tourism sector, according to the THETA Sector Skills Plan (2010/11:33), is the current mismatch of qualifications in South Africa. Learners and students may receive many qualifications which do not equip them with all the required relevant industry skills. As a result, employers continually address these skills gaps by placing their employees on training courses and by entering them into skills programmes in order to provide them with the necessary top-up skills (THETA Sector Skills Plan, 2010/11:33).

It is ascertained that qualifications to address the scarce and critical skills in the hospitality sector exist for all staffing levels, ranging from elementary occupational positions to senior management positions within the NTSSDF report (2009:26). The problems identified with the hospitality related qualifications were, in most cases, due

to the packaging of the training material and the course content, which resulted in skills gaps for the people who acquired these qualifications (Education Sector Strategic Plan, 2004 – 2015:34). Furthermore, the areas of learning were not packaged in a way that they were occupationally directed, that is, leading to any one particular specialised occupation/job. Instead, the learner would have to study a number of unit standards, scattered all over, in order to be competent for a specific job in management or communications (THETA Sector Skills Plan, 2010/11:35).

The International Hotel School strives to provide career-ready individuals to the hospitality sector. To date, the school has not sourced student input in curriculum evaluations. In light of the information taken from the THETA Sector Skills Plan 2010/11 and the Education Sector Strategic Plan 2004 – 2015 regarding the lack of skills “packaged” into current qualifications and the development of skills being a priority in the tourism sector, the lack of student input in terms of preparing them to be prepared for their future careers is vital and will therefore be surveyed in this study.

1.2.2 Problem Statement

The main problem to be researched may therefore be summarised as;

“How does the hospitality curriculum of the International Hotel School contribute to students’ preparedness for the industry from their perspectives?”

1.2.3 Sub-Problems

The research will further take into account a number of sub-problems concerned with this study;

1. What are the generic and curriculum specific skills which may be used in curriculum evaluation?
2. How prepared do students feel in terms of their specialisation areas?
3. How prepared do students feel regarding the skills required in the industry?
4. What are the aspects that contribute most to student preparedness?

1.3 DEMARCATION OF THE RESEARCH

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

1.3.1 Geographical Demarcation

The empirical study will be limited to the 3rd year students enrolled for the full-time Hospitality Management Programme at The International Hotel School's Cape Town campus. The reasons are that it makes the research more manageable for the researcher, who is based at this campus, and the findings shall be exclusively, though not solely, relevant and applicable to the 3rd year students based at the particular campus.

1.3.2 3rd Year Students

The 3rd year students, included in the empirical component of the study, are all the students who have just completed the Diploma programme in Hospitality Management. The reasons are, to firstly limit the scope of the study and secondly, the management programme is by far the most popular programme amongst the majority of students. The ratio of chef students to manager students, at this particular campus, is on average 1 chef student for every 15 manager students.

1.4 RESEARCH AIMS

The study aims to find how the hospitality curriculum of the International Hotel School contributes to students' preparedness from their perspectives. In order to achieve the study's purpose, research aims are:

1. To identify the generic, and curriculum specific skills able to be used for curriculum evaluation.
2. To develop a framework of curriculum variables to rate the level of student preparedness.
3. To analyse the effectiveness of the hospitality curriculum from the perspectives of students perceptions of preparedness.
4. To identify the aspects that contribute most to student preparedness.

1.5 AN OVERVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The following section shall report on the findings of what has been said, who the key writers are, what are the prevailing theories and hypotheses, what questions are being asked, and what methods and methodologies are appropriate and useful to the research topic.

1.5.1 Tourism in South Africa

International, regional and domestic tourists alike, rank South Africa as an attractive tourist destination due to the diversified range of attractions the country has to offer. For tourists, the highlights of South Africa are its (in descending order): culture, history, heritage, scenic beauty, value for money, wildlife and business opportunities (Nel & Rogerson, 2005:26). In addition, South Africa is endowed with a range of resources, classified under the following categories: natural resources, archaeological resources, ethnic and cultural resources (including arts and crafts resources), agricultural and rural tourism i.e. the Cape Wine Lands and finally, casinos, entertainment and shopping (Preliminary Assessment of the Tourism Sector, 2003:14).

Whilst the promotion of fair trade in the South African tourism industry is growing, South Africa is still prevented from fulfilling its potential to create jobs in the tourism sector by challenges such as unemployment, poverty, inadequately trained and under-qualified workers and inadequately funded promotion efforts (Ahmed, Heller and Hughes, 1998:61).

It is disconcerting that 20% of the organisations in this sector do no training at all (THETA Sector Skills Plan, 2005-2010:57). It appears that more effort is put into training, only, when new or special skills are required (Nel & Rogerson, 2005:65). Rogerson continues (2003:65) by stating that less than half the enterprises in this sector expressed a keen desire to expand training.

Most SMME's (small-, micro-, and medium-sized enterprises), in this sector, have discounted the value of training and formal qualifications (Stryker & Rajaratnam, 2004:52). There is a strong preference to hiring un-skilled staff and training them on-the-job (Stryker & Rajaratnam, 2004:52). Bhorat (2000:86) explains that SMME's thus save on labour costs and most of these employees only acquire the basic skills which are easily and quickly learnt. Moleke (2005:112) found that this preference is also due to the phenomenon of formally trained employees often returning from training institutions and not being equipped with the necessary skills.

It is imperative to convince the industry that accredited training and education programmes are worthwhile and are equally vital to ensure that formal education providers deliver work-ready employees (Moleke, 2005:113). This may be achieved by marketing accreditation to both the industry and tourists, as a mark of service quality (THETA Sector Skills Plan, 2005-2010:61). Service providers, especially in the hospitality sector may be able to utilise the accredited qualifications of their staff as a competitive advantage to indicate quality or service excellence (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2003:17).

1.5.2 Overview of the Hospitality Sector

The Hospitality sector is the largest in CATHSSETA's scope and is estimated to include 28 000 employers employing 290 000 employees (THETA Sector Skills Plan, 2010/11:10). It covers 16 categories as illustrated in TABLE 1.1. (THETA Sector Skills Plan, 2010/11:8) and was accountable for 66.93% of all the enterprises in the sector that submitted the Workplace Skills Plans in 2009 (Department of Trade and Industry, 2007/8:31).

TABLE 1.1 Organisation of the hospitality sector as per THETA Sector Skills Report 2010/11

Hotels, Motels, Boatels and Inns Registered with the SA Tourism Board	Caterers
Caravan Parks and Camping Sites	Take-Away Restaurants
Guest Houses and Guest Farms	Fast Food Establishments
Bed and Breakfast	Other Catering Services including Pubs, Taverns, Night Clubs
Management and Operation of Game Lodges	Other Catering Services
Restaurants or Tearooms with Liquor License	Time-sharing
Restaurants or Tearooms without Liquor License	Bioscope Cafes
Take-Away Counters	Take-Away Restaurants

1.5.3 Skills Gaps in the Hospitality Sector

According to Astin (1963:226), skills gaps are the areas where the skills required by the industry, in order to achieve maximum performance, are in short supply. Over the past 10 years, there has been a steady increase in the proportion of staff with a Matriculation Certificate in the hospitality sector (Christou, 2003:31). As the average level of education increases, so the required type of further training shall be more specific and less generic in nature (Bhorat, 2000:91). It should be noted that a significant proportion of service training (e.g. cleaning services) are outsourced by the larger enterprises, and thus the skills issues discussed here should also be read in conjunction with the Services Seta Sector Plan. Staff in the direct employment of enterprises in this sector, are demonstratively educationally more mature and confident than 10 years ago (Christou, 2003:31). Accordingly, they perform their duties with more independent initiative and require less direct supervision and direction as was the case in the days of Apartheid (Moleke, 2005:120).

The need for the basic levels of training (e.g. ABET) is beginning to fall away, and instead, specialised types of training are required to increase the productivity of workers, thus, IT skills, time management, administration, customer handling, and communication/language skills are emerging as training priorities (Stryker & Rajaratnam, 2004:55). Stryker and Rajaratnam (2004:55) continue by saying that this sector is relatively labour intensive, and, not surprisingly, HIV/AIDS is an important issue and HIV/AIDS management and awareness training should continue to receive priority.

According to Nel and Rogerson (2003:72), a critical problem area for hospitality enterprises, is the shortage of specialised skills needed in the management and administrative categories. The THETA Sector Skills Plan (2010/11:32) summarises the Hospitality sector's generic skills needed as follows:-

1. Managerial Skills - Targeting managers, inclusive of financial, marketing, strategic, HR and facility management.
2. Assessment - Targeting grading assessors.
3. Tourism Product Development - Targeting staff of government departments, agencies as well as entrepreneurs and communities.
4. Business Acumen - Targeting entrepreneurs, BEE companies, communities, existing SMME's and emerging SMME's.
5. Partnerships and Transformation - Targeting BEE's, executive managers.
6. Research, Access and Manage Information.
7. Product Knowledge i.e. understanding the value of one's own heritage, as a tourist destination - Targeting communities, product owners, service providers, front line staff within tourism, and non-tourism front line staff (such as police, traffic officers, people working at petrol stations, etc.)
8. Communication.
9. Information Technology.
10. System Management.

Stryker and Rajaratnam (2004:60) identify the lack of responsiveness and the inflexibility of programme providers as main factors influencing the mismatch of skills provided by the educational institutions and those that are required by the hospitality

sector. In addition, he mentions the array of hospitality fields requiring specialist skills as being a close second. According to a survey done by Kent in the early 1970s in the United States, there were about 27 Bachelor's programmes, 7 Master's and 2 Doctoral programmes offered in the 4-year institutions (Kent, 1993:49). However, since 1992, the number of each degree programme, has dramatically changed to 142 Bachelor's programmes, 26 Master's programmes, and 12 Doctoral programmes (Chrie, 1991:91). Although no research study of this nature could be located for South Africa, one may safely assume that South Africa is following suit. In these programmes, various subjects are covered as part of hospitality education such as finance, management, accounting, and information systems, which ultimately help hospitality students prepare for their future careers to fit in each of the specialised fields within the hospitality sector (Kent, 1993:50). With more and more 1-year and 2-year institutions opting for hospitality education, evaluating the hospitality curriculum has become a key issue as far as preparing the student for a successful career within the hospitality sector (Slattery, 2002:16).

1.5.4 An Introduction to Curriculum Evaluation

Evaluation is the process which relates to the identification, description and appraisal of the effects and effectiveness of all aspects of teaching (Heathcote & Lloyd, 1982:132). Furthermore, Hamilton (1976:47) suggests that curriculum evaluation is the process or processes used to weigh the relative merits of those educational alternatives which, at any given time, are deemed to fall within the domain of curriculum practice. More recently, Armitage, Bryant, Dunnill, Hayes, Hudson, Kent, Lawes and Renwick (1999:194) have described it as "all about finding out if our new course is working properly. It involves generating data through a process of enquiring and then, on the basis of this, making judgements about the strengths and weaknesses and the overall effectiveness of the course, and making decisions about how to improve it further."

Evaluation is arguably the least understood and most neglected element of curriculum design and development (Neary, 2002:166). Neary (2002:166) states that teachers and lecturers often spend many hours carefully considering course aims, learning objectives, learning outcomes, competencies to be achieved, teaching,

learning and assessment strategies, but fail to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum.

According to Pratt (1980:133), there are two curriculum dimensions that should always be evaluated, namely its effectiveness and its acceptability. In its most basic form, the crucial question to gauge the effectiveness of a curriculum is “Did the learners achieve the objectives?” Pratt (1980:419) then continues by saying that a programme, which achieves all its objectives, may still be judged a failure if the people involved disliked the experience and feel unprepared for the work environment.

Astin (1991:227) states that this information is best collected by asking students directly about their college experiences, their satisfaction with their coursework and institution, and whether the curriculum succeeds in providing them with the relevant knowledge and skills required by their future employers. Student input may lead to curriculum improvement and a reduction of mismatched skills provided to the hospitality sector, one of the major problems experienced by the industry, as referred to in the THETA Sector Skills Plan (2010/11:29). Furthermore, current industry requirements are clearly an indicator of the need for change and as Broadbent wrote “the function of curriculum evaluation is not so much to chalk up marks for the learner or tutor, as to give them both the chance to set the past in a realistic light and so release themselves into the future “(THETA Sector Skills Plan 2010/11:421-57).

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The International Hotel School is able to use this study as a framework to evaluate their hospitality curriculum continuously. In addition, many other hospitality programmes in South African should be able to evaluate their hospitality programme curricula by replicating this study. As such, this study will add greatly to the existing hospitality education literature, mainly in the areas of curriculum review and development, in relation to the skills and competencies required by industry and a mismatch between this and what is currently provided by institutions. The findings of this study shall help hospitality administrators revisit the curriculum to identify the dynamics and shortcomings of their curriculum. The strengths and weaknesses of a curriculum may be analysed, making this study a framework of reference. Moreover,

the study serves as a good base for researchers willing to work more in the areas of hospitality curriculum re-development and hospitality programme rankings to some extent.

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN

1.7.1 Research Methodology

The study is quantitative in nature due to the numerical data which shall be gathered. According to Struwig and Stead (2001:4), quantitative research is a form of conclusive research involving large representative samples and/or structured data collection procedures.

1.7.2 Methods of Data-Sourcing

According to Struwig and Stead (2001:80), the research data collected in quantitative research, fall under two categories, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data is the new data collected for the research project, whilst secondary data is data available from existing sources other than the current research project.

1. Primary Data

Quantitative primary (raw) data will be sourced by means of an empirical study, which shall be attained by the distribution of a questionnaire.

2. Secondary Data

Secondary data is sourced/gained from many channels, e.g. textbooks, newspapers, internet, government departments etc. According to Struwig and Stead (2001:80), secondary data must be carefully examined to make sure that it fits the particular research needs. This study will make use of primary and secondary data.

1.7.3 Sampling

The population sampled for this research shall be the 3rd year students enrolled for the full-time Hospitality Management Programme at the Cape Town campus of The International Hotel School. This group of students have been exposed to the entire curriculum and shall therefore be able to provide helpful insights.

1.7.4 Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire shall consist of a cover page with a brief explanation of the purpose of the questionnaire and shall ask for the respondents' assistance in completing the questionnaire, followed by the questions. The questionnaire shall be distributed electronically to the 50 3rd year students, enrolled for the full-time Hospitality Management Programme at The International Hotel School's Cape Town campus.

1.7.5 Data Analysis

Data-analysis is the application of reasoning, to understand and interpret the data that has been collected. The appropriate analytical technique for data analysis shall be determined by the researcher's requirements, the characteristics of the research design and the nature of the data collected (Zikmund, 2003:73). This shall be elaborated on in the research chapter.

1.8 ORGANISATION OF THE RESEARCH REPORT

Chapter 1: Introduction and Problem Statement, providing the background and scope of the research.

Chapter 2: Present literature with the relevant definitions, curriculum evaluation designs, curriculum evaluation studies conducted in the hospitality field, and the construction of a framework to measure student preparedness, based on the full-time Hospitality Management Programme at the International Hotel School, after review of relevant skills and competencies.

Chapter 3: A detailed discussion of the research methodology, with an explanation of the sample group that was used.

Chapter 4: An analysis of findings, with a report on the major findings of the study.

Chapter 5: A summary of the study, listing conclusions based on both the literature and empirical findings, together with a list of recommendations based on these findings.

1.9 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, an introduction of this study was provided to give the reader an overview of the study. Quantitative methodology was decided upon as an appropriate method due to the nature of the study. Important concepts were introduced in this chapter, i.e. skills gaps in the hospitality chamber and an introduction to curriculum evaluation. This research will significantly affect the link between skills/competencies and students' career readiness.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE STUDY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins with a description of the concepts curriculum studies, curriculum evaluation and effectiveness, and is followed by a review of studies completed to measure curriculum effectiveness. A look at relevant curriculum evaluation designs leads to a closer look at the curriculum evaluation studies conducted in the hospitality sector. Furthermore, the skills and competencies of hospitality graduates currently found as relevant by various researchers are compared and a framework to measure student preparedness based on the full-time Hospitality Management Programme at The International Hotel School is constructed.

2.2 CURRICULUM EVALUATION

“Curriculum Studies” is a very broad area within the field of education. Curriculum theory, curriculum planning, curriculum evaluation, instructional programme planning, educational materials development, instructional strategy analysis and educational objective utilisation are all part of curriculum studies. Many prominent researchers have tried to delimit the term “curriculum” and to provide a formal definition of the term (Dewey, 1966; Johnson, 1967; Berman, 1968; Godland & Richter, 1969; Cremin, 1971; Pinar, 1975), but there seems to be no universally accepted definition.

According to Siebörger and McIntosh (2002:5), evaluation and assessment occasionally mean the same thing, but mostly evaluation is defined as determining the effectiveness of teaching while assessment measures the extent of learning which has taken place. This also seems to be the view of Miller and Stoeckel (2010:21).

“Evaluation is to determine significance or worth or judging the effectiveness or worth of educational programmes. Assessment is to determine a rate or

amount and is used as an activity to measure student learning and other human characteristics”.

Sometimes the difference made is between the student and the student’s work.

“Assessment is also usually done with the student, while evaluation is done to the students work.” (AASL & AECT, 1998:173).

“Put more simply we assess people and evaluate things or objects (Miller & Stoeckel, 2010:22)”.

One way of looking at the difference is illustrated in the following table.

EVALUATION

A **value** judgement

How good?

How well?

ASSESSMENT

A judgement of **performance**

Measured against criteria (outcomes)

Has it been achieved?

Source: Dreyer, 2008:4-5

Historically, a plethora of studies have been conducted to effectively measure curriculum effectiveness. Menne (1967:26) categorised these measures of educational experience into 3 basic approaches:

1. The Objective Approach, readily measured institutional characteristics such as number of students, percentage of mails and tuition.
2. The Student Perceptions Approach, and
3. The Observable Behaviours Approach.

Astin and Holland (1961:464) appear to be the first to use the objective approach, called the Environment Assessment Technique (EAT) and its development has been reported in a series of studies by Astin (1962, 1963, and 1965).

Pace and Stern followed the student perceptions approach (1985:269). It appears that Pace and Stern have originated the student perceptions approach with the development of the College Characteristics Index (CCI) from which Pace (1963:121) developed his College University Environment Scales (CUES). Subsequently, Hutchins and his colleagues (Hutchins, 1962; Hutchins & Wolins, 1963; Hutchins & Nonneman, 1966) developed the Medical School Environment Inventory (MSEI), which specifically involves studies of curricula in medical schools. Later on, Fanslow (1966:187) developed the College Environment Inventory for Women (CEFW). The observable behaviours approach, which is less common than the first two, measures specific observable student behaviours such as time spent in study, number of social activities per week, or attendance of extra-curricular events (Menne, 1967:131).

Several curriculum evaluation techniques have become popular with different programmes such as the Hospitality Management Programme. The construction of self-efficacy has become a promising evaluation strategy for some programmes (Rishel & Majewski, 2009:366). Self-efficacy refers to the belief in one's ability to act effectively in particular situations (Rishel & Majewski, 2009:367). Several self-efficacy scales have been developed to evaluate social work programme outcomes such as The National Qualifications Framework (NQF), which was designed to guide the judgement of the quality of technical education curricular materials. It consists of sets of rubrics, which assess workplace competencies, technical accuracy, and the pedagogical soundness of technical education curricula (NQF).

Educators in social sciences have used several curriculum evaluation designs when undertaking curriculum evaluation such as The Quasi-Experimental Design, Pre-post Assessment, Portfolio Assessment, and Indirect Methods (Cappell & Kamens, 2002:470). The quasi-experimental approach involves the Input-Environment-Output process. The Input characteristics involve students' grades, courses, and other results in previous fields of study such as in high school. Output factors normally deal with students' performance in the current academic setting. The Pre-post evaluation technique measures the change from a student's benchmark level of sociological knowledge and thinking to a final level after the curriculum has been

completed (Cappell & Kamens, 2002:495). Last but not least, indirect methods of curriculum evaluation include the use of exit surveys, satisfaction surveys, and focus group interviews all of which need to include self-reports of perceived abilities (Cappell & Kamens, 2002:495). Research on student learning indicates that the pedagogical techniques influence how well students learn to apply concepts in practice (Michlitsch & Sidle, 2002:121). Such pedagogical techniques may involve many different sub-techniques but content acquisition, application, and practice are thought to be most effective (Michlitsch & Sidle, 2002:125)

Apart from standardised techniques, universities and departments devise their own methods to undertake curriculum evaluation. Course catalogues are used to analyse the sequence of courses generated by prerequisites using network, graph theory, or Event Structure Analysis (Heise, 1989:91). In addition, cluster analysis is used to consolidate the coded co-registration patterns and course sequencing paths, followed by each major from transcript data (Ratcliff & Associates, 1988:91). At classroom level, many supplementary forms of feedback may be collected from students, such as quick essays and surveys evaluating a specific teaching tool or student learning levels (Cross, 1999:229). Course catalogues, course syllabi, transcripts, grades, essays, presentations, case studies, texts, and surveys all play a role in different assessment processes.

Course grades, although extensively used, are not considered useful indicators of student performance and curriculum effectiveness. This is because students need to receive appropriate and focused feedback early in the course and early feedback may enhance the probability to improve student learning. The type of assessment most likely to improve teaching and learning, is the one conducted by faculty for answering questions which they, themselves, have formulated in response to issues or problems in their own teaching (Angelo & Cross, 1993:391). Consequently, superior course grades, some form of criterion-referenced assessment products (Astin, 1991; Jacobs, 1992; Palomba, 1999; Cappell & Kamens, 2002) are used and aggregated for more efficient curriculum evaluation.

Other notable attempts by prominent researchers in evaluating effectiveness of curricula include Ramsden and Entwistle's (1981:371) relationship between approaches to learning and the perceived characteristics of the academic environment. Their study explored the established relationship, referred to in the previous sentence, through a concurrent factor analysis of the scales of the Approaches to Studying Inventory (ASI) (Entwistle, Hanley & Hounsell, 1979:261) and the Course Perceptions Questionnaire (Entwistle & Ramsden, 1983:365). Later, their study was replicated by Meyer and Parsons (1989:137) on a large sample. In a subsequent study, Trigwell and Prosser (1991:251), in an attempt to differentiate between the types of learning outcomes derived from a course found that a deeper approach to study was more strongly related to the complexity of students understanding of the aims of a course of study than the assessment results.

Apart from these procedures described above, many programmes conduct needs assessments. Classical needs assessments (NA) generally require identifying the discrepancy between two conditions: the desired and the present states (Altschuld & Witkin, 2000:217; Kaufman, 1988:183). In other words, needs assessment is a systematic process for determining goals, finding differences between goals and the status quo, and establishing priorities for action (Briggs & Ackermann, 1977:332). Thus, needs assessment formally identifies the gaps between current results, outcomes, or products and required, desired, or expected results, prioritises these identified gaps for action usually through the implementation of a new or existing curriculum or management process (English, Kaufman, 1975:491).

Needs assessment has been a popular means by which to evaluate programmes, not only in colleges and universities, but also in organisations, training institutes, and communities. There are a wide number of proposed models (Gilbert, 1978; Burton & Merrill, 1988; Hannum & Hansen, 1989; Darraugh, 1989; Rothwell & Kazanas, 1992; Arthur, 1993; Gordon, 1994; Witkin & Altschuld, 1995; Rossett, 1987; Kaufman, 2003; Altschuld, 2010) used extensively in academia, industry and the community. Although needs assessment has become a popular method for curriculum evaluation, the method has been criticised for problems such as 'Not Applicable' ratings and missing data for one or both of the scales used in data collection leading

to highly varied item n's for calculating discrepancy scores (Lee, Altschuld, White, 2007:378).

Most of these studies seem to emphasise the overall educational experience or the educational environment with very little emphasis on the students' preparedness and the curriculum. In addition, the standardised techniques are made for specific areas such as majors, specialisations, or gender, which make them inappropriate for the use in the present study. The challenge for this study is to come up with a framework which emphasises a student's level of preparedness in terms of the effectiveness of the curriculum in Hospitality Management. In this aspect, it is important to look into relevant hospitality and tourism literature for existing relevant studies.

2.3 CURRICULUM EVALUATION RELEVANT TO HOSPITALITY LITERATURE

Many hospitality programmes have started to evaluate their curricula to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their programmes (Formica, 1996:310). Curriculum evaluations in hospitality programmes are not new. Several studies have been done by various researchers in different academic contexts related to hospitality curricula. Curriculum review now increasingly involves regular industry contact including classroom visits or participation in executive education programmes (Lefever & Withiam, 1998:70). Over the years, hospitality programmes, especially in South Africa, have undergone significant changes in the structure of their curricula as a result of curriculum evaluation (SA Teacher, 2011).

In 1996, Formica (1996:317) published a study of tourism and hospitality education in Europe and America which examined programmes and trends. Later research by Morrison and O'Mahony (2003:38) supported Formica's claim of there being an international movement which supported the liberation of hospitality education from its vocational base to an academic field of inquiry. Rappole (2000:24) stated that programmes have shifted from a home-economics focus towards a business-related one and Chathoth and Sharma (2007:27) noted this as the likely reason behind the change in curricular structure of hospitality programmes. Most programmes in the 1980s and early 1990s were geared towards developing the operational skills of the

students, but during the past decade, universities started focusing on both operational and management-related courses as part of the curriculum (Chathoth & Sharma, 2007:19).

Curriculum evaluation in the hospitality sector is performed by using different methods and techniques. “Needs assessment” which has been a common form of evaluation used in the hospitality sector, is now increasingly being used in hospitality academia as well. Keeping the hospitality curricula rigorous, relevant, and current to the industry trends seems to be a clear concern of the hospitality practitioners. Ashley *et al.*, (1995:74) undertook a curriculum review process at the University of Central Florida in the United States, based on the concept “the customer defines product attributes”. Their findings indicate that by establishing the appropriate balance between industry specific knowledge and technical skills and topic is the real challenge for the faculty of the hospitality programme.

As indicated in Section 2.2, hospitality curricula have been examined and analysed from the perspectives of educators, industry professionals, and students. As hospitality education is closely related to the hospitality sector often a competency needs approach is used when evaluating the curriculum. However, research in graduate skills has focused on management expectations and has been criticised for adopting a one-sided perspective which ignores graduate perceptions (Christou, 2000:30). Several studies have been undertaken with the predominant aim of bridging the gap between curriculum content and industry perceptions of the curriculum. Tas (1988:41) puts forward a hospitality curriculum by identifying 36 skills which college graduates are expected to possess from the perception of 75 general managers from different hotels. Gursoy and Swanger (2004:8) ranked hospitality subject areas according to the perceptions of hospitality professionals, identified gaps between the perceptions and the current curriculum and suggested a model of curriculum for hospitality programmes in accredited colleges of Business. Lefever and Withiam (1998:72) undertook a curriculum review to see how the industry views hospitality education. Their findings indicate that whilst hospitality practitioners think that graduates are motivated and have a solid, broad view of the industry, they often do not have realistic expectations. In addition, Horng and Lu

(2006:24) explored possible correlations between the perceived level of requirement and the self-assessed level of preparedness in Food and Beverage Management professional competencies of students. Li and Kivela (1998:75) went a step further and found several gaps between the perceptions of hotel managers and those of students regarding the importance of skills necessary for a successful hospitality career.

A generic skills framework has also been incorporated in the curriculum evaluation processes in hospitality education. Raybould and Wilkins (2005:175) used a generic skills framework to show that there are significant gaps between industry expectations and student perceptions of the skills which are most valuable to graduates entering the industry. Their results suggest that students and academics are investing time and effort in developing conceptual and analytical skills which shall not, at least immediately, be valued by employers of hospitality graduates.

Discrepancy of opinions between participants in the hospitality sector is not rare as part of the needs assessment process. Purcell and Quinn (1996:53) suggested that students have been criticised for having unrealistic expectations of the types of responsibilities they may be given and consequently the types of skills they will be expected to exercise on entering the industry. At the same time, the industry tends to discount a student's formal qualification on the grounds of lack of experience and frequently we hear the complaint that students are "overqualified but under experienced" for even entry-level management positions (Raybould & Wilkins, 2005:188).

Several needs assessment studies were also undertaken to identify discrepancies between student expectations and preparedness. An example would be Knutson and Patton's (1992:38) survey of 251 juniors and seniors of Michigan State University in the United States about their expectations and career preparedness. Their findings show that students felt positive about the different abilities and skills they required for a successful hospitality career but only 1 in 5 students believed that they were prepared for the future. This study was replicated later on by Burbidge (1994) in Europe, which showed similar findings.

Most studies involving needs assessment in the hospitality sector are conducted mainly to analyse the industry expectations and the students perceived level of preparedness with little focus on the expectations of hospitality educators (Christou, 2000:41). Hospitality sector experience has been an important job requirement for hospitality educators across the world (THETA, 2010/11). Thus, having been part of both the industry and the academics, hospitality educators' viewpoints about perceived students' preparedness may be of more significance than that of industry practitioners. In addition, the diverse and specialised nature of the hospitality sector may prevent industry practitioners to have adequate knowledge of hospitality skills and competencies in all aspects of the industry for example a restaurant manager may not identify the skills required for the housekeeping department.

Besides needs assessment, quasi-experimental design, pre-post assessment, portfolio assessment, and indirect methods for example exit surveys and satisfaction surveys, are prevalent in hospitality curriculum evaluation, however a standardised curriculum evaluation practice seems to be lacking. In this aspect, we often see a "needs assessment" curriculum evaluation technique, which deals with perceptions. The basic step for this is to identify the required skills and competencies. Thus, identification of skills and competencies has been an important aspect of curriculum evaluation in the hospitality sector and the further development of a framework of core and specialised competencies and skills will prove invaluable in evaluating curriculum effectiveness.

2.4 IDENTIFICATION OF SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

Competence is defined as the ability to use skills and knowledge effectively to achieve a purpose (Borthwick, 1993:264). Many studies have identified key competencies and skills required within the hospitality sector. O'Neil and Onion (1994:319) put forward five general competencies of high quality education: communication, problem-solving, interpersonal relationships, planning and strategic thinking, visioning and evaluating. The American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), as part of initiating outcomes assessment, measure outcomes

across 22 abilities, which were grouped into goal and action management abilities, people management abilities, and analytical reasoning abilities (Boyatzis, 1995:441). Chung-Herrera, Enz, and Lankau (2010:118) presented an industry specific and future based leadership competency model. In the process, they have identified and ranked 99 key hospitality work-related competencies. Nelson and Dopson (2001:58) compared hotel managers', human resource specialists', and hospitality alumni's' perceptions of competencies necessary for success in the hospitality sector. Chung (2000:474) laid out an effective plan for reforming the hotel management curriculum of Korean universities based on required competencies of hotel employees and career success in the hotel industry.

While most studies have taken into account the management competency model of Sandwith (1993:46), little has been done about integrating generic skills in identifying hospitality sector competencies (Raybould & Wilkins, 2005:27). The generic skills, also referred to as "core skills", "key competencies", and "employability skills" by the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, (2002), are described as 'those transferable skills which are essential for employability at some level' (Keams, 2001:332). Employers, who generally do not want narrowly trained graduates, recognise the importance of a generic skills framework to rank important skills areas of hospitality graduates. Their study adopted a model with nine generic skills groups similar to the employability skills framework proposed in a study by Australian industry representative groups (Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 2002):

1. Oral Communication
2. Written Communication
3. Problem-Solving
4. Conceptual and Analytical skills
5. Information Management
6. Teamwork and Leadership
7. Interpersonal skills
8. Adaptability and Learning
9. Self-Management

The Mayer Committee (1992) identified 7 key competencies as necessary for the successful assimilation of individuals into the workforce (Mayer, 1992:41):

1. Collecting, Analysing and Organising Information;
2. Communicating Ideas and Information;
3. Planning and Organising Activities;
4. Working with Others and In Teams;
5. Using Numerical Ideas and Techniques;
6. Problem-Solving;
7. Using Technology.

Warn and Trantar (2001:192), added leadership and critical reflective thinking as two other important generic outcomes of higher education to the Mayer framework in their attempt to measure education quality. Critical reflective thinking is the capacity to learn from others and from experience since it deals with 'alternative ways of acting, creating, and speaking' (Weinstein, 1991:12). Critical reflective thinking, an important indicator of quality in higher education, refers to an ability to transcend preconceptions, prejudices and frames of reference (Corder, Horsburgh & Melrose, 1999:104; Paul, 1987:319). Employers value critical reflective thinking because it is required for innovation and change (Harvey, Geall & Moon, 1997:290). On the other hand, the inclusion of leadership as a dimension was evident as higher education is about producing people who are able to lead, produce knowledge, see new problems, and imagine new ways of approaching old problems (Harvey & Knight, 1996:26).

The reasons the generic skills framework is integrated into the survey instrument are:

- It focuses on broad learning outcomes for students rather than on the narrower management activities or competencies (Raybould & Wilkins, 2005:30).
- Its broad focus enables employees to hold and continually upgrade sets of generic skills which are able to be transferred across different dynamic employment settings in the new millennium (Curtis & McKenzie, 2001:86).

- It acknowledges the role of higher education in preparing students for life and life-long learning rather than simply for employment (Raybould & Witkins, 2006:30).

Most competency related studies in hospitality have focused on examining specific components of hospitality and tourism management careers. Mayo (2003:79) identified and ranked relevant competencies needed by graduates of hospitality and tourism programmes. Her identification and ranking of the skills is as follows:

- Demonstrate techniques to manage and improve revenue.
- Exercise listening and communication skills, which include oral and written skills.
- Demonstrate how to manage subordinates by developing training programmes utilising performance appraisals.
- Know how to manage change.
- Know and demonstrate how to motivate people.
- Demonstrate financial accounting processes.
- Exemplify a passion for service to the industry.
- Be able to plan and conduct team meetings so all are treated equally.
- Demonstrate food and beverage operations, for example principles of food preparation, production, and supervision of employees.
- Demonstrate marketing skills.
- Know and follow the legal issues related to all aspects of operation.

Mayo's findings are in accord with the six major content areas developed by Umbeit (1992:73) which are leadership, human resource management, marketing, financial analysis, total quality management, and communication skills. Additionally, Wood (2003:116) undertook several comprehensive studies to compare hospitality management skills, which are learned in educational and work-place settings. While most studies have identified competencies and skills of hospitality graduates, few have been done to portray where these skills are best learned and rank them accordingly. Wood has identified the importance of the skills relevant to the learning environment. In addition, his study proposed a model of course evaluation for industry-required skills. Breiter and Clements (1996:59) identified the typical post-graduate students' skills sets demanded by the industry, which were then ranked by Wood (2003:120). The skills identified in order of importance for an educational setting are as follows:

1. Research Skills
2. Hospitality Law
3. Tourism Promotion
4. Computer Applications
5. Strategic Planning
6. Development Planning
7. Marketing
8. Forecasting and Budgeting
9. Operational Controls
10. Rooms Division Management
11. Sales Techniques
12. Food and Beverage Management
13. Employee Training
14. Managerial Communication
15. Leadership
16. Employee Relationships
17. Guest Services
18. Staffing

2.5 SKILLS FRAMEWORKS DEVELOPED TO EVALUATE THE HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT CURRICULUM

The skills framework used in this study, consists of skills or competencies developed from the Hospitality Management programmes and a few generic competencies taken from past research as the study focuses on the evaluation of a specific curriculum, that of The International Hotel School. The framework therefore uses both generic skills/competencies and hospitality specific ones which are contained in the Hospitality Management curriculum.

The broad categories of skill sets consist of generic skills and hospitality related skills such as fundamental skills, functional skills, and students' concentration area skills. In order to develop these skill sets (except the generic skills), the courses in the Hospitality Management Programme at The International Hotel School have been analysed thoroughly by looking at the course descriptions. These courses were then grouped according to the functional areas and concentration areas. Functional areas, broadly categorised from the curriculum, consist of marketing, human resources, finance, facilities systems, and information technology. The concentration areas are categorised by those offered by the Hospitality Management undergraduate programme such as food and beverage, clubs, lodging, casino, events, tourism and travel. The courses offered under these categories were developed as curriculum variables. Some general learning techniques from the curriculum such as experiential learning and application, experience based learning and application, understanding current issues, and practices in the hospitality sector are categorised under fundamental curriculum related skills. Table 2.1. indicates a detailed overview of the categories, courses, variables, and descriptions of the proposed skills framework:

TABLE 2.1 Curriculum Variables, Skills Areas, Courses, and Descriptions

Factor Dimension	Courses	Variables	Descriptions
Generic Skill Sets			
Communication Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Communications • Tertiary Orientation • Conversational French • Personal Career Preparation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Listening Skills ▪ Speaking Skills ▪ Writing Skills ▪ Presentation Skills 	<p>This course is designed to equip students with skills in communication which shall assist both in written business communication and oral communication.</p> <p>Communication Theory:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Oral Communication ▪ Intercultural Communication ▪ Small-group Communication ▪ Listening ▪ Audience and Purpose ▪ Writing Style <p>Application of Writing Skills:</p> <p>Correspondence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Application of Writing Skills: Short Messages ▪ Article Writing Report Writing ▪ Meetings

Factor Dimension	Courses	Variables	Descriptions
Generic Skill Sets			
Conceptual Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occupational Health & Safety Legal Requirements for the Hospitality sector Sales and Marketing New Business Development Hospitality Today Current Trends in the Hospitality sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate knowledge of law and safety and sanitation regulations Knowledge of sales techniques and concepts Demonstrate a clear understanding of the Hospitality sector 	<p>Law as applied to hotel, food service establishments, and the travel industry; bailment, contracts, torts, regulations, insurance, and sanitation.</p> <p>The use of personal selling in the hospitality and tourism context. Understanding operational and marketing concepts and enhancing interpersonal communication and sales skills.</p> <p>Scope, components, development and future of the hospitality sector.</p> <p>Background on industry structure; overview of specialised areas relating to the management of food service, lodging, and travel operations.</p>

Factor Dimension	Courses	Variables	Descriptions
Generic Skill Sets			
Analytical Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Planning and Controls ▪ Hotel and Restaurant Accounting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Using numerical ideas and techniques ▪ Forecasting & budgeting ▪ Problem-solving skills ▪ Critical Reflective thinking 	
Team Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training & Development for the Hospitality sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Working with others ▪ Employee relations & training ▪ Providing feed-back and motivating people 	
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leadership & Management for the Hospitality sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staffing ▪ Planning skills ▪ Managerial skills 	
Interpersonal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tertiary Orientation ▪ Personal Career Preparation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Self-Management ▪ Adaptability and learning ▪ Exemplify a passion for service to the industry ▪ Ethical behaviour 	

<i>Hospitality Specific Skills</i>			
Fundamental Curriculum Related Skills			
Fundamental Curriculum related skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case studies, lab work, research, field trips, feasibility studies, site inspections, economic impact studies, environmental impact statements, portfolio assessments. ▪ Internships, Practicum, Work Experience, Seminar-industry experience ▪ Guest lectures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Experimental learning & application ▪ Experience based learning & application ▪ Understand current issues and practices in the hospitality sector 	
Functional Area Skills			
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sales and Marketing in the Hospitality sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understanding marketing concepts & apply hospitality marketing fundamentals. ▪ Understand and apply hospitality promotion, sales, and advertising techniques. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Using the marketing mix, communication principles and objectives, selling and merchandising, advertising and promotion, analysing the communication process, developing an integrated marketing communications programme.

Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leadership and Management in the Hospitality sector ▪ Supervision in the Hospitality sector ▪ Training & Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand and apply Human Resources functions and policies. ▪ Understand employment potential of identified supported populations in the South African labour relations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Functions of leadership, motivation, job design, recruitment, wage and salary administration, performance appraisal, and training in health and safety. ▪ Marketing employment opportunities to older workers, individuals with developmental disabilities, disadvantage youth, minorities, individuals with physical disabilities, and people from previously disadvantage ethnic groups.
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hotel and Restaurant Accounting ▪ Planning and Controls for Food and Beverages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand and apply accounting data. ▪ Understand Hospitality Financial Management fundamentals including real estate and apply them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use of accounting data for decision-making in hospitality industries, including ratio analysis, costing, profit analysis, and seasonal forecasting. ▪ Use of computers as a tool for analysing

			various financial aspect of hospitality organisation.
Information Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hospitality Computer Applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demonstrate skilful use of IT for processing and communicating information in the hospitality sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Basics of hardware and software technology, computer networks and the Internet, and learn how to use Microsoft office suite applications.
Hospitality Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hospitality Facilities Management and Design ▪ Managing Food and Beverage Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop and apply analytical skills related to the hospitality sector. ▪ Demonstrate knowledge of lodging and food service systems including PMS, POS, and Revenue Management & Reservation systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Forecasting, service mapping, measuring, monitoring, and improving service quality, service delivery, standards and work measurement, location selection methods and facility layouts. ▪ Systematic control of hospitality spaces, engineering systems, managing operations, maximize physical value, develop knowledge of Property Management, Revenue

			Management and Point of Sales Systems.
Concentration Area Skills			
Food & Restaurants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introductory Food Production Principles ▪ Food Services Management ▪ Management of Beverage Operations ▪ Food and Beverage Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demonstrate a clear understanding of the principles of food fabrication, production, nutrition, safety, quality services, purchasing, cost controls, and critical issues. ▪ Identify types of beverages and demonstrate knowledge of beverage management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Problem procedures, maintenance, safety training, regulatory requirements, food service sanitation certification, food quality, service, food products, commercial equipment, operation of food marketing, selection of foods to meet the food service needs, knowledge of food service nutrition relating to customer and operator needs and requirements in food service operations, and knowledge of commercial & contract food service. ▪ Identification, origin, production, and availability of beverages.

			Emphasis on the buying, pricing, control, storage, promotion, and selling of beverages in the hospitality sector.
Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Management of Food and Beverage Services ▪ Food production for banquets and events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop event, meetings, and convention & conference management skills. ▪ Learn and demonstrate catering and banqueting functions and skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project scheduling and planning and programming an actual event including its inception, site selection, contract negotiations, selecting suppliers, obtaining sponsorships, and budgeting, developing goals, objectives, and evaluation techniques related to these events. ▪ Analysis and evaluation of food and beverage systems in catering operations. Emphasis on planning, coordinating and improving

			operations. Plan and organise large on-and-off campus activities.
Lodging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Front Office Management ▪ Housekeeping Management ▪ Supervision in the Hospitality sector ▪ Leadership and Management in the Hospitality sector ▪ Guest Care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand the different functional areas of hotels, and resorts such as front desk, housekeeping, rooms division, guest services and develop managerial and supervisory skills. 	Developing skills in employee selection, rooms sales forecasting, labour production, employee staffing, employee scheduling, and departmental budgeting and diagnosing, analysing and providing resolution of complex hotel business situations, emphasising practical problem solving skills and strategic management.
Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hospitality Today ▪ Hospitality Facilities Management and Design ▪ Leadership and Management in the Hospitality sector ▪ Legal Requirements for the Hospitality sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demonstrate in-depth club knowledge, understanding the fundamental of club management and applying those skills. 	Club types, organising, committee relationships, career planning, leadership and management, recreation management and programming, special event planning and management, club by-laws and rules, legal

			issues, ethical issues, facility design, special enterprises within the clubs, break even and financial analysis, club feasibility and marketing, research in clubs, membership services, and certification and promotion/public relations.
Casino	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hospitality Today ▪ Hospitality Facilities Management and Design ▪ Leadership and Management in the Hospitality sector ▪ Legal Requirements for the Hospitality sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand the internal and the external casino environment and casino management, casino products, protection and probability. ▪ Develop and demonstrate casino management competencies. 	History and development of gaming and casino operations, the social psychology, cultural, legal, and economic issues of gaming, marketing strategies, products, controls, probability of cheating.
Tourism & Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hospitality Today ▪ Current Trends in the Hospitality sector ▪ Leadership and Management in the Hospitality sector ▪ Front Office Management ▪ Guest Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand the overall tourism phenomenon and develop management competencies in travel and tourism. 	Social, economic, and environmental dimensions of tourism, trends, operation and management practices of travel agencies and tour operators, and knowledge of

			computerised reservation systems and tour development, geography of tourist demand, supply and transportation, and destinations.
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Based on these identified skills sets and variables, the following conceptual framework has been developed:

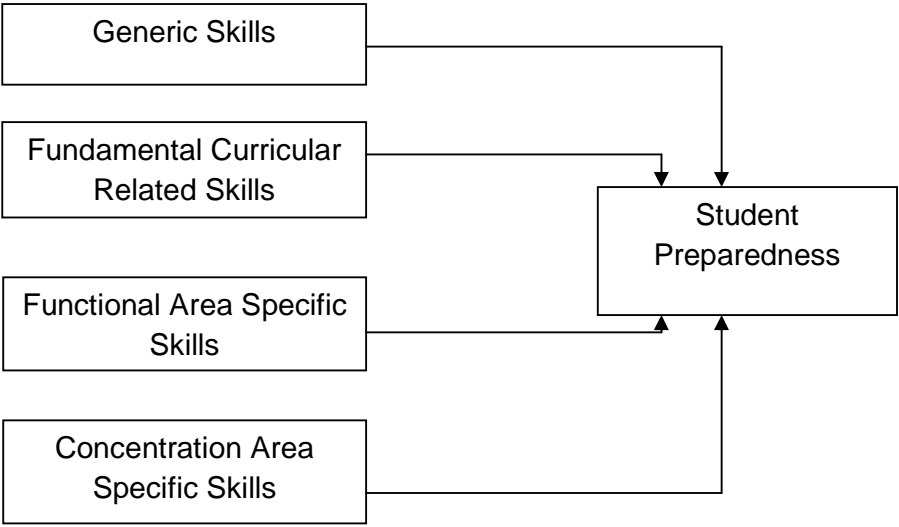


FIGURE 2.1 A framework for measuring students’ preparedness

Generic skills in the study’s framework consist mainly of the skill sets recognised by past research as part of the literature review. The breakdown of the generic skills is shown in Figure 2.2. Please refer to Table 2.1 for the generic skill variables.

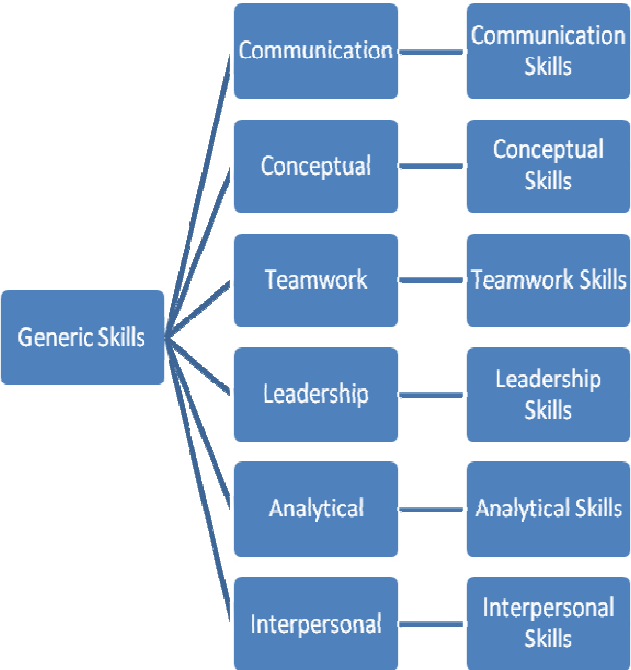


FIGURE 2.2 Key elements which belong to generic skills

Fundamental curriculum related skills have been divided into three variables based on the analysis of the courses offered in the curriculum. They are shown in Figure 2.3.

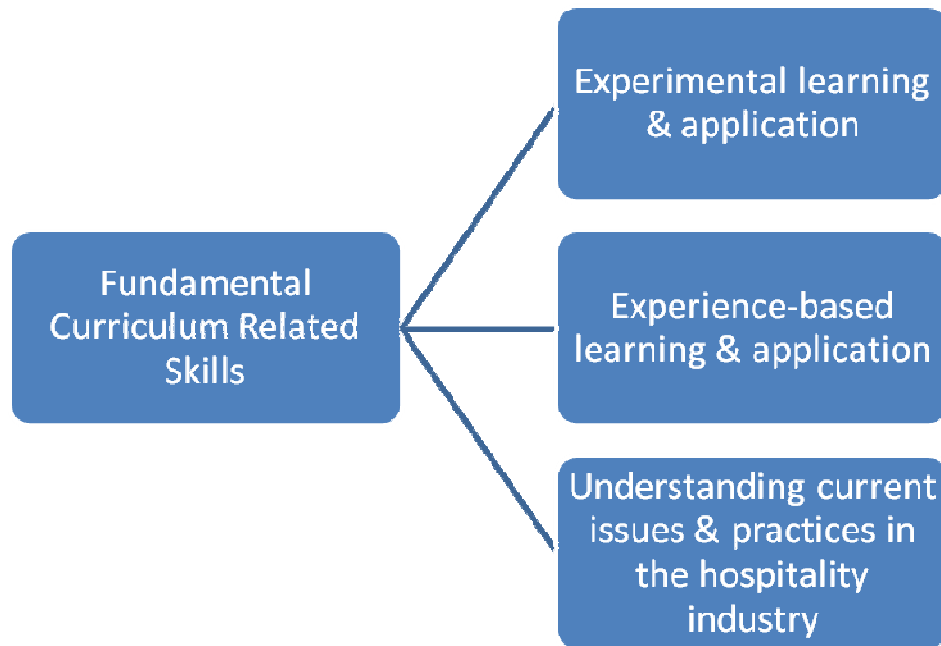


FIGURE 2.3 Key elements which belong to fundamental curriculum related skills

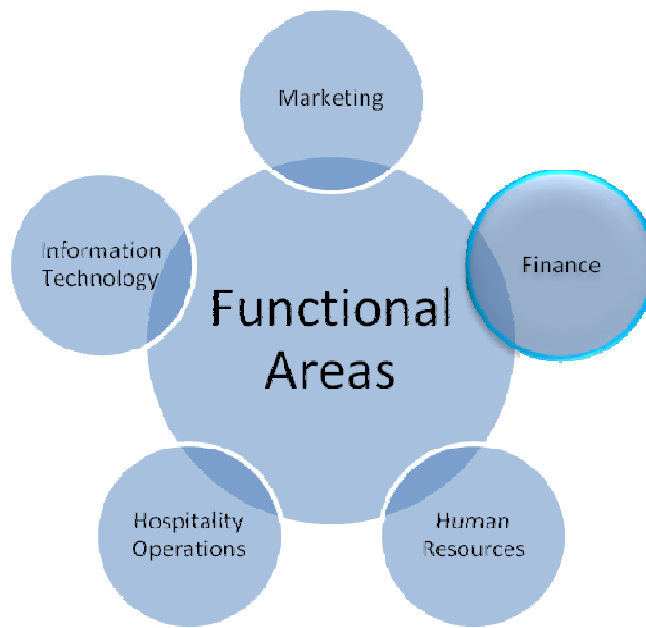


FIGURE 2.4 Breakdown of functional areas

Figure 2.4 illustrates a breakdown of the functional areas. The functional areas are broken down into five broad areas based on the courses offered in the Hospitality Management curriculum.

Similarly, the specific skills pertinent to concentration areas are broken down into five broad areas from the analysis of the courses offered in the curriculum. These five areas are further broken down into a number of curriculum variables based on the analysis of the courses offered in the curriculum. Their breakdown is illustrated in Figure 2.5. Please refer to Table 2.1. for concentration area variables.

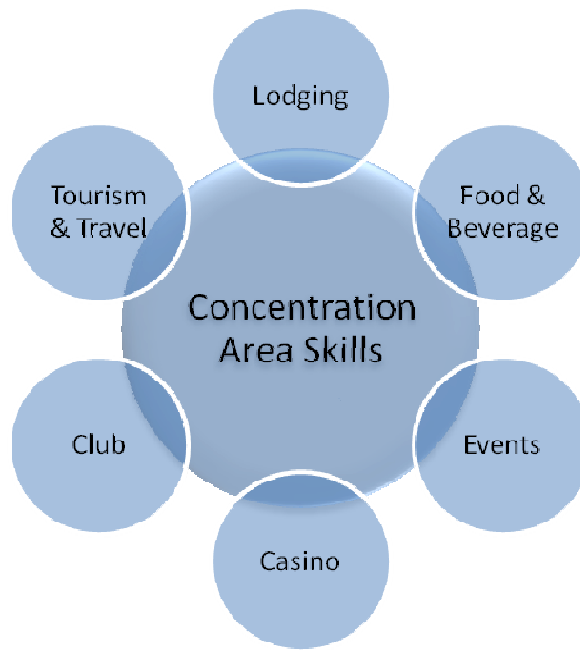


FIGURE 2.5 Breakdown of concentration areas

These frameworks were utilised in the evaluation of the Hospitality Management curriculum of The International Hotel School.

2.6 CONCLUSION

Through curriculum evaluation one may potentially indicate curriculum effectiveness and to an extent, student learning and career preparedness. An array of standardised and even custom-made techniques exists, but most seem to have very little emphasis on student learning (Angelo & Cross, 1993:206). As indicated in the literature above, competency needs assessment is commonly used in hospitality education. This involves an identification of the skills and competencies required by a hospitality graduate. This may prove to be an effective approach providing it considers the input of the hospitality sector, the student, and hospitality educators collectively.

Many studies have found and ranked management competencies, generic skills, and hospitality specific skills acquired in the industry through experiential learning or in the actual educational setting. A framework for curriculum evaluation including both

generic skills/competencies and hospitality specific ones categorised as fundamental skills, functional skills and concentration area skills was formulated for use in this study.

The following frameworks were constructed:

- Skills required for student preparedness.
- The elements of generic skills and fundamental skills.
- A breakdown of the functional areas and concentration areas.

The next chapter shall describe the research methodology and instruments which were used to measure curriculum effectiveness in career preparation from the students' perspective.

CHAPTER 3

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 2 reviewed the literature on curriculum assessment in general and further summarised the current findings on the topic related to hospitality literature. Frameworks for curriculum evaluation were posed to aid the process of gathering research data. The aim of the study is to analyse the effectiveness of the hospitality curriculum from the perspectives of students' perceptions of career preparedness. The purpose of Chapter 3 is to describe in more detail the methodology used to achieve the research objectives of this study. The chapter commences with a brief description of the concept of research and addresses the research design of the entire study. This is followed by a detailed discussion of the research methodology, including a comparison of quantitative and qualitative research, data collection methods and techniques, questionnaire design and sample selection. Finally, data analysis is discussed.

3.2 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

The next section will discuss the empirical research design and how exploratory research was employed to investigate students' perceptions of the curriculum.

3.2.1 Research Design

Leedy and Ormrod (2005:5) define research as, "the systematic process of collecting and analysing data to give a thorough understanding of the subject in which there is interest". The research design forms a key element of the empirical study and the total success of the study. The design process may be seen as the planning of the research, the visualisation of the data, and the problems experienced with the use of such data in achieving the final outcome of the research project (Leedy & Ormrod,

2005:91). According to Chisnall (2001:34), the research design impacts on the total success of the study and may be classified into three categories:

1. Exploratory
2. Descriptive
3. Causal

An exploratory approach was selected for the study and will be explained underneath.

According to Zikmund (2003:54), exploratory research is conducted to clarify ambiguous problems. Management may have discovered general problems, but research is needed to gain better understanding of the dimensions of the problems. Exploratory studies provide information to use in analysing a situation, but uncovering conclusive evidence to determine a particular course of action, is not the purpose of exploratory research. Usually, exploratory research is conducted with the expectation that subsequent research will be required to provide conclusive evidence. It is a serious mistake to rush into detailed surveys before less expensive and more readily available sources of information have been exhausted.

The main characteristics of this type of research are as follows (Malhotra & Birks, 2006:63):

- Information needed may be loosely defined.
- The research process is flexible, unstructured and may evolve.
- Samples are small.
- Data analysis can be qualitative or quantitative.

Reasons for selecting exploratory research in the current study include:

- The topic is new and data is difficult to collect.
- The research approach is flexible, addressing research questions of all types (what, why, how).

- The results of the research will not be used for decision-making by themselves, but, are able to provide significant insight into the given situation.
- The study seeks to identify the opinions and concerns of the sample population.
- The research will not be used to generalise to the population at large.
- The study is for a dissertation of limited scope (Babbie, 1989:271).

Therefore, in the current study, exploratory research was employed to investigate students' perceptions of the curriculum.

3.3 QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

Once the research problem has been defined and clearly specified, the research effort logically turns to data collection. During data collection, there are two research methods often used, namely, quantitative research and qualitative research.

Quantitative research, according to Grix (2004:117), is characterised by three basic phases: finding variables for concepts, operationalizing them in the study and measuring them. In general, quantitative research is used to answer questions about links among measured variables with the purpose of explaining, predicting and controlling (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:94). A quantitative study usually ends with the confirmation or disconfirmation of the hypotheses tested.

Qualitative research involves a phenomenological perspective whereby researchers aim to understand, -report and evaluate the meaning of events for people in particular situations, that is, how their social world is structured by the participants in it. The focus of qualitative methodologies is on the way in which participants (rather than the researcher) interpret their experiences and contrast reality (Grix, 2004:119; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:95; Rudestam & Newton, 2001:91).

The question now arises into which category the research in question should be classified. The fact that the primary data on students' perceptions shall be of a

quantitative nature, leads to the conclusion that this research should be classified as quantitative. The quantitative approach is a more appropriate choice for a study with this type of objective (see table 3.1 and 3.2).

TABLE 3.1 The key features of the two main research method approaches

Quantitative Research	Qualitative Research
Epistemological roots in positivism	Epistemological roots in phenomenology
Purpose is to test predictive and cause-and-effect hypotheses about social reality	Purpose is to construct detailed descriptions of social reality
Concerned with hypotheses testing	Concerned with generating hypotheses
Reasoning process utilises deductive logic	Reasoning process utilises inductive logic
Suitable for a study of phenomena that are conceptually and theoretically well developed; seeks to control phenomena	Suitable for a study of a relatively unknown terrain; seeks to understand phenomena
Concepts are converted into operational definitions; results appear in numeric form and are eventually reported in statistical language	Participants' natural language is used in order to come to a genuine understanding of their world
The research design is standardised according to a fixed procedure and can be replicated	The research design is flexible and unique and evolves throughout the research process; there are no fixed steps that should be followed and the design cannot be exactly replicated
Data are obtained systematically and in a standardised manner	Data sources are determined by the information richness of settings; types of observations are modified to enrich understanding

TABLE 3.2 Summary of the key features of the two main research method approaches

Quantitative research	Qualitative research
Tends to produce quantitative data	Tends to produce qualitative data
Uses large samples	Uses small samples
Data is highly specific and precise	Data is rich and subjective
Location is artificial	Location is natural
Reliability is high	Reliability is low
Validity is low	Validity is high
Generalises from sample to population	Generalises from one setting to another
The unit of analysis is variables that are atomistic (i.e. elements that form the whole)	The unit of analysis is holistic, concentrating on the relationship between elements, contexts.; the whole is always more than the sum

Sources: Adapted from Collis & Hussey (2003:55) and De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2002:81).

Table 3.2 represents final, convincing arguments in favour of the quantitative method as the appropriate research approach for this study. Questions are posed in the 1st column of Table 3.2 and answered in terms of the positivistic approach. These questions must also be linked to the research problem, research objectives, and research questions of this study. It is evident that the responses given in terms of the quantitative approach (1st column) mirrors the best when testing the modified conceptual model pertaining to students of The International Hotel School.

TABLE 3.3 Motivation for the decision on quantitative research

Question	Positivistic (Quantitative)	Phenomenological (Qualitative)
What is the purpose of the research?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To explain and predict • To confirm and validate • To test theory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To describe and explain • To explore and interpret • To build theory
What is the nature of the research process?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focused • Known variables • Established guidelines • Predetermined methods • Somewhat context-free • Detached view 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holistic • Unknown variables • Flexible guidelines • Emergent methods • Context-bound • Personal view
What is the data like, and how is it collected?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numerical data • Representative, large sample • Standardised instruments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textual and/or image-based data • Informative, small sample • Loosely structured or non-structured observations and interviews
How is data analysed to determine its meaning?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statistical analysis • Stress on objectivity • Deductive reasoning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search for themes and categories • Acknowledgement that analysis is subjective and potentially biased • Inductive reasoning
How are the findings communicated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers • Statistics, aggregated data • Formal voice, scientific styles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words • Narratives, individual quotes • Personal voice, literary style

Source: Adapted from Leedy & Ormrod (2005:96).

Besides the above arguments, the questions posed in Table 3.3 may be collectively answered as, given the nature of the problem definition of the research in question, the positivistic approach seemed most appropriate to gauge the opinions (perceptions) of the respondents on students' perceptions of their career preparedness as a result of the completion of the curriculum of The International Hotel School.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION METHOD

The empirical study is quantitative in nature. Schiffman and Kanuk (2002:211) suggest three data collection methods for quantitative research, namely:

1. Observation
2. Experimentation and
3. The use of a survey.

A survey was chosen for its appropriateness to the research topic. Observation would not have allowed the researcher to determine the respondents' attitudes and feelings regarding certain issues. Experimentation was also inappropriate since there were no variables that had to be tested or manipulated in order to obtain the necessary information. The survey as method of data collection was therefore chosen for this study.

The major advantages of using the survey method are as follows (Hair, Bush & Ortinau, 2000:99):

- The method is able to accommodate a large sample.
- It allows for making "generalised inferences" about the target population.
- Standardised common data can be collected which allows for "direct comparisons between responses".
- By means of statistical analysis, patterns and trends within the data can be determined.

Taking into consideration all the advantages and disadvantages of the various survey methods and instruments, the researcher decided to make use of a structured questionnaire, containing mostly Likert-scale type questions (refer to Annexure A). The main reasons for this choice was that such a questionnaire required limited time to administer and was thus low in cost which is ideal in a study of limited scope.

3.5 DATA GATHERING TECHNIQUES

According to Zikmund (2003:189), there are four types of survey methods:

1. Personal Interviews.
2. Door-To-Door Interviews.
3. Telephone Interviews.
4. Self-Administered Surveys.

3.5.1 Self-Administered Survey

A self-administered questionnaire was chosen as the most appropriate data-collection technique. According to Hair *et al.* (2000:261), a self-administered questionnaire is a data-collection technique in which the respondent reads the questions and records his or her own response without the presence of trained interviewers.

A self-administered questionnaire is similar to a drop-off questionnaire. The advantages of drop-off questionnaires pertinent to this study included the availability of a person to screen respondents and spur interest in completing the questionnaire and to answer general questions. The questionnaire will be sent electronically to save time and costs and the respondents will be required to complete the questionnaire in their own time.

3.6 QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

Jonker and Pennink (2010:66) define a questionnaire as a list of structured questions with a view to elicit reliable responses from a chosen sample with the aim of finding out what a selected group of participants do, think or feel.

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005:185), questionnaires have two main advantages. Firstly, they are relatively inexpensive, as they reduce the researcher's travel costs and telephone expenses, and secondly, questionnaires offer respondents anonymity – assuring, therefore, greater confidence in the accuracy of the results.

Leedy and Ormrod (2005:185), however point to two disadvantages of questionnaires, the main one being the low return rate owing to the general apathy of respondents to take the time to answer a questionnaire. The second disadvantage is that the respondents' answers might be flawed because of a misinterpretation of the questionnaire.

To minimize the extent of the disadvantages, Leedy and Ormrod (2005:190) propose 12 guidelines for the development of a questionnaire:

1. Keep it short – the questionnaire should be brief so as to extract only that information pertaining to the particular research project.
2. Use simple, clear, unambiguous language. The questions should be designed in such a way that they communicate exactly what the researcher wants to know.
3. Check for unwarranted assumptions in the questions. Assumptions must be carefully considered when designing a question.
4. Questions should be worded in such a manner that clues are not disclosed about preferred or desirable responses.
5. Check for consistency. When a question being asked is such that some respondents may give answers that are socially acceptable rather than true, a “countercheck” question should be incorporated further down the list.

6. Determine in advance how responses will be coded.
7. Keep the respondent's task simple – the questionnaire must be simple to read and answer.
8. Provide clear instructions. The researcher must communicate exactly how he/she wants people to respond.
9. Give a rationale for any items whose purpose may be unclear. The purpose of each question should be made clear to the respondent.
10. The questionnaire should look attractive and professional.
11. Conduct a pilot test – the questionnaire should be given to friends or colleagues to see whether they have difficulty in understanding any items.
12. Scrutinize the almost final product carefully to make sure that it addresses the needs of the researcher, item by item. A questionnaire should be quality tested several times for precision of expression, objectivity, relevance and probability of favourable reception and return. It is important that each question addresses the research problem as well as sub-problems.

Hence, in this study, a self-administered questionnaire was used to collect primary data from students at The International Hotel School.

The next section explains the questionnaire structure, question format and pre-testing.

3.6.1 Question Structure

The questionnaire proceeded from an introductory paragraph and greeting that briefly introduced the respondent to the research project and the researcher, assuring the respondent of anonymity and communicating the instructions.

Based on the study's research objectives, the questionnaire comprises of two sections. The first section consists of three multiple choice questions, two dichotomous questions and one specific question; this section aims to identify the demographic information of the respondents. The second section consists of 33 Likert-type closed-ended questions and two scale questions aimed at measuring the

students' perceptions of how career-ready they are as a result of The International Hotel School's current curriculum.

Respondents had to indicate their responses by selecting from the options provided which ranged from "excellent" to "poor" and the allowance to select "not applicable", had that been the case. The questionnaire concluded with two open-ended questions with no options or pre-defined categories suggested. The respondent then had the opportunity to supply their own answer without being constrained by a fixed set of possible responses.

3.6.2 Question Format

Dependent on the type of information that is required, the content of the questions may vary. Five types of questions may form part of a questionnaire (Struwig & Stead, 2001:92):

1. Open-ended questions, which give the respondents the opportunity to respond in their own words. This format is useful when the researcher requires further clarification.
2. Multiple-choice questions, which offer specific alternatives from which the respondent must choose one or more. The respondent is requested to select the one solution that best suits his/her particular situation.
3. Dichotomous questions, which allow for respondents to indicate an unmistakable division, such as yes or no.
4. Likert-scale questions, which allow the researcher to gauge the format of a statement. This type has a scale that allows the respondent to indicate the degree to which he/she agrees or disagrees with the statement.
5. Ranking questions, which supply the respondent with a list of items that relate to the question. The respondent is then asked to rank these items from the highest to lowest priority.

The questionnaire contained 33 Likert-type questions, each consisting of a short structured statement and varying preferences to choose from depending on the

responses required by the researcher. These ranged from “poor” to “excellent”, “very dissatisfied” to “very satisfied”, and “very unlikely” to “very likely”. Likert-type questions were selected because they are simple to construct, they produce highly reliable scales, and they are easy to read and complete (Jonker & Pennink, 2010:72). The simplicity and ease of use being their real strength in this study as these qualities appeal to students.

3.6.3 Question Content

The questions used in the questionnaire were formulated to firstly obtain the respondents’ demographic information and secondly to assess the level of preparedness in terms of generic skill/competencies and hospitality specific ones as mentioned in the literature review. The basic step in formulating the questions was the identification of the required skills and competencies. Chapter 2 includes the framework used in this study that consists of skills or competencies developed from the courses and a few generic competencies taken from past research. Each question focused on a different curriculum dimension which was broken down into smaller components when possible.

3.6.4 Pre-Testing

After drafting and developing the questionnaire, it has to be tested. A small group of people, who are representative of the group that is being targeted, are used for the pre-test (Struwig & Stead, 2001:9). According to Jackson (1995:383), pre-testing has many functions. One objective of doing a pre-test is to identify and eliminate variation in the respondents’ understanding and interpretation of the questionnaire. Pre-testing also indicates how well the respondents understand the questions and which questions may be ambiguous and unclear. This feedback is used to eliminate ambiguity in the working and design of the questionnaire (Jackson, 1995:383). Pre-testing further assists the researcher in assessing the time involved in completing the questionnaire. This is an important issue which impacts on the response rate. Finally, pre-testing assists the researcher in identifying and rectifying any errors in

the sequencing of questions and the instructions to the respondent on the method of completing the questionnaire.

Ten respondents, who are representative of the population of this study, were asked to participate in the pilot study. Their feedback was considered in compiling the final questionnaire for printing and distribution.

3.7 SAMPLE SELECTION

Bradley (2007:519) defines sampling as “the process of selecting parts from a defined population in order to examine these parts, usually with the aim of making judgements about the parts of the population that have not been investigated”. The major advantage of this approach is that it involves less costs and time than looking at every member of the population (Bradley, 2007:158).

3.7.1 Target Population

A target population is “the entire group under study as specified by the research objectives” (Bradley, 2007:170). The target population of this study consisted of third year students based at the Cape Town campus who have completed the current hospitality management curriculum at The International Hotel School.

3.7.2 Sampling Method

According to Struwig and Stead (2001:111), there are several alternative types of sampling and these may be grouped into probability and non-probability sampling techniques.

Probability sampling is a sampling technique in which every member of the population has known non-zero probability of selection (Zikmund, 2003:379). Non-probability sampling is a sampling technique in which units of the sampling are selected based on personal judgement or convenience (Zikmund, 2003:380).

The following are techniques of non-probability sampling:

- Convenience - also called haphazard, or accidental, sampling. The sampling procedure of obtaining the people or units that is most conveniently available.
- Judgemental - also called purposive sampling. An experienced individual selects the sample based on his or her judgement about some appropriate characteristics required of the sample members.
- Quota sampling ensures that the various subgroups in a population are represented on pertinent sample characteristics, to the exact extent that the investigators desire. It should not be confused with stratified sampling.
- Snowball is a variety of procedures; initial respondents are selected by non-probability methods. Additional respondents are obtained from information provided by initial respondents.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher made use of non-probability sampling. The sample units were specifically selected by the evaluator for the reasons of convenience and available time. The benefits of using non-probability sampling are that they are less resource intensive and are generally more accessible and expedient to work with (Jonker and Pennink, 2010:134). Convenience and judgemental (purposive) sampling techniques were employed. Convenience sampling was selected as the researcher has access to a certain group namely students at the Cape Town campus of The International Hotel School. Purposive sampling was selected due to the researcher's opinion that the third year students are in the best position to give their opinions on the entire curriculum. The researcher distributed 50 questionnaires (the entire group of 3rd year students at the Cape Town campus) in order to achieve quality research.

A sample must be representative of the population. A population or universe represents any complete group or body of people or any collection of items under consideration for the research purpose (Collis & Hussey, 2003:155). For this research, the population refers to the entire group of 3rd year students at the Cape Town campus of The International Hotel School.

3.7.3 Sampling Size

Bradley (2007:185) suggests that the ideal sample size depends on the following factors:

- Required precision of the study (the purpose);
- Size and nature of the people under study (the population);
- Time, budget and resources available (the procedural aspects); and
- Importance of the results (publishing aspects).

In this research the sample size was 50 students.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is the application of reasoning to understand and interpret the data which has been collected. The appropriate analytical technique for data analysis shall be determined by the researcher's information requirements, the characteristics of the research design and the nature of the data collected (Zikmund, 2003:73). The data analysis technique shall be further explained in the next section.

3.8.1 Data Preparation

The data preparation process is guided by the preliminary plan of data analysis which was formulated in the research design phase (Malhotra & Birks, 2006:422). In analysing quantitative data, the major preparation techniques include data editing, data coding, and data input (Bradley, 2007:328).

Editing is the review of the data with the objective of increasing accuracy and precision (Malhotra & Birks, 2006:423). Editing ensures the answers are complete, accurate and suitable for further processing (Bradley, 2007:329). Editing consists of screening the questionnaire to identify illegible, incomplete, inconsistent or ambiguous responses. Unsatisfactory responses are commonly handled by

returning to the field to achieve improved data, assign missing values, and discarding unsatisfactory responses (Malhotra & Birks, 2006:423).

Coding is “the process of assigning a code or symbol, preferably a number, to each possible answer to a particular question” (Cant, 2003:153). The purpose of coding is to transform respondents’ answers to survey questions into codes or symbols that can easily be entered into and read by a statistical analysis software package (Cant, 2003:153). In this study, a code of 1 for most prepared and 5 for least prepared was used. The study made use of the S.P.S.S (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) version 17, Microsoft Excel and Qualtrics to analyse the collected data. A descriptive analysis was then used to obtain overall mean values and standard deviations of all variables in the study. A multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine which skills sets were more influential to students’ overall preparedness. Reliability tests were carried out to check consistency of all skills sets measurement items within each pre-determined skill set. t-Tests were conducted in an attempt to identify whether there were any differences in skills sets and the perceptions of respondents’ demographic characteristics.

3.8.2 Reliability and Validity

Validity and reliability are terms encountered repeatedly throughout research and are discussed in more detail below. The validity and reliability of the questionnaire were tested prior to distribution, as explained earlier under pre-testing.

3.8.2.1 Reliability

According to Struwig and Stead (2001:130), reliability is the “extent to which test scores are accurate, consistent or stable”. Leedy and Ormrod (2010:31) define reliability as the “consistency with which a measuring instrument yields a certain result when the entity being measured has not changed”. From the above definitions, it follows that apart from delivering accurate results, the measuring instrument should deliver similar results consistently. Reliability may be assessed by conducting a pre-test with a small sample of people similar in characteristics to the

target group. As mentioned earlier, ten respondents, who are representative of the population of this study, were asked to participate in the pilot study. Their feedback was considered to compile the final questionnaire for printing and distribution.

3.8.2.2 Validity

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2010:31), the validity of a measurement instrument is the extent to which the instrument measures what it is supposed to measure. Struwig and Stead (2001:136) define validity as the extent to which a research design (pre-experimental, quasi-experimental or experimental) is scientifically sound or appropriately conducted. Validity therefore looks at the result of measurement.

There are 5 types of validity assessment methods (Zikmund, 2003:302):

1. Face Validity, which is the extent to which, on the surface, an instrument appears to be measuring a particular characteristic. An example would be when subjective agreement exists among professionals that a scale logically appears to reflect accurately what it intends to measure (Zikmund, 2003:302).
2. Content Validity, which is the extent to which a research instrument is able to reflect the findings in respect of a respective sample of the content area (domain) being measured.
3. Criterion Validity, which reflects the success of the measure used for prediction or estimation.
4. Construct Validity, which, according to Zikmund (2003:303), is established by the degree to which a measure confirms a network of related hypotheses generated from a theory based on the concepts. Construct validity implies that the empirical evidence generated by a measure is consistent with the theoretical logic about the concepts. When researchers ask questions (or make statements) as a way of assessing an underlying construct, they should have obtained some kind of evidence that their approach does, in fact, measure the construct in question (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:92).
5. Convergent and discriminant Validity, which relates to other tests that are considered to measure the same or similar constructs.

Content validity was used to determine the appropriateness of the interpretations the researcher wished to make with the scores.

3.8.3 Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive statistics are used when “the major purpose of data analysis is to present and summarise the main features of the information which has been collected” (Barnes, 1991:422). Descriptive analysis includes three major properties:

1. Central Tendency – consists of three measures, namely the mean, the median and the mode.
2. Dispersion (Barnes, 1991:422) - describes a sample of data and refers to “the extent to which the data is spread out” (Barnes, 1991:424). There are many measures of dispersion available, of which the mean and the standard deviation are most commonly reported.
3. Position - includes quartiles, deciles and percentiles.

A descriptive analysis was undertaken to obtain overall mean values and standard deviations of all variables used in the study.

3.8.4 Inferential Analysis

Inferential statistics is the second of two major categories of statistical procedures. Inferential statistics may be used to draw a conclusion about the population from which the sample was taken. Inferential analysis covers the estimation of population values based on sample values and statistical hypothesis testing (Cant, 2003:170). Sample statistics can be divided into two categories (Ferreira, 2005:111):

1. Uni-variate analysis, where only one question will be analysed at a time e.g. measures of central tendency; measures of dispersion.
2. Multi-variate analysis, where two or more questions are analysed at a time e.g. cross tabulation, coefficient of variation and correlation, and regression analysis.

Multiple regression analysis was done to identify the skills that significantly contribute to student preparedness.

3.9 DESIGN OF THIS RESEARCH STUDY

As an exploratory study, this study developed a questionnaire and, as earlier mentioned, conducted convenience and judgemental sampling (3rd year students at the Cape Town campus of The International Hotel School), to identify their preparedness in terms of effectiveness of the curriculum. The curriculum variables (independent) were reviewed to identify the level of student preparedness (dependent variable). This study developed one set of questionnaire instrument that evaluated the perceived level of student preparedness. Students were asked to rate their perceived level of preparedness for generic and fundamental curriculum related skills, functional area skills, and concentration area skills. Students evaluated their perceived level of preparedness based on a 5-point scale (1 being poor and 5 being excellent). The first section of the questionnaire consisted of demographic questions. The demographic variables are questions such as gender, age, work experience, and so forth. Other questions were measured with a 5-point Likert scale from 1: strongly disagree to 5: strongly agree.

The questionnaire was prepared on Microsoft Excel. The survey, together with the consent letter, was e-mailed to the students with a return address to send the completed questionnaire and a signed letter of consent for the anonymous use of information gathered in the research. The total timeline for this study was three weeks. A reminder was sent to the participants after one week. Two weeks were allotted between e-mailing the questionnaire and the beginning of the data analysis.

3.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter gives details about the research methods followed in this study. According to the exploratory and descriptive nature of the study, a survey shall be conducted by using a self-administered questionnaire to address the research

problem. Structured questions, including multiple-choice, dichotomous, open ended, and Likert-scale questions shall be used in self-administered questionnaires.

For the purpose of the study, the target population is the 3rd year students who have completed their studies under the three year full-time programme at the Cape Town campus of The International Hotel School. The realised sample consisted of 42 questionnaires which were received back from the 50 distributed to the entire 3rd year group based at the Cape Town campus. The findings shall be reported in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The chapter presents the findings of the empirical study. It begins with a brief description of the demographic information collected from the third year respondents, followed by a descriptive analysis of the ranked generic and hospitality specific skills, students' overall evaluations of the Hospitality Management programme and results from the regression and t-tests. This is then followed by a summary of students' responses to the two open-ended questions on the questionnaire and interpretation of results.

4.2 DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

The questionnaire was e-mailed to 50 target respondents. Over a span of two weeks, 42 completed responses were returned and then analysed, resulting in a response rate of 84% (the realised sample) which is a very high response rate even for such a small target group. At a confidence level of 95% the results are within 6.1% of the population parameter.

Out of the 42 respondents, 40% are males and 60% are females. All of the respondents have some level of industry work experience. In relation to age, 83% of the respondents' fall in the age category 22 – 25 years and 17% of them are older than 25. Data revealed that 64% of the respondents are currently employed in the hospitality industry. About 47% of the respondents are working as managerial trainees or in junior managerial positions ranging from front desk, housekeeping, sales departments, and in restaurants. The remainder of the respondents were mostly holding entry-level part-time or full-time jobs in hotels, restaurants, bars, or seasonally operated clubs. Of the 42 respondents, 36% are not currently working in the hospitality industry, but all students had by this time completed 18 months of practical work in the industry. All students are therefore in a position to give their impressions of the effectiveness of the curriculum regarding their career readiness.

A detailed summary of the respondents' demographic profile is presented in Table 4.1.

TABLE 4.1 Respondents' demographic profile

	Frequency	Total (n = 42)
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	17	40%
Female	25	60%
<i>Age</i>		
19 - 21	0	0
22 - 25	35	83%
Above 25	7	17%
<i>Concentration area</i>		
Casino Management	0	0
Club Management	2	5%
Food & Beverage Management	17	42%
Lodging Management	10	24%
Tourism, Convention, & Event Management	12	29%
<i>Work experience</i>		
none		
0 - 1 year	13	31%
1 - 2 years	15	36%
2 - 3 years	10	24%
3 - 4 years	2	5%
4 - 5 years	1	2%
more than 5 years	1	2%
<i>Current work status</i>		
Working	27	64%
Not working	15	36%

4.3 DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF FUNCTIONAL AND CONCENTRATION AREAS

Respondents were asked to rank the functional areas of the hospitality management programme. A total of 41 respondents have been recorded for this question. The five different functional areas are ranked in order of the level of student preparedness (1 = most prepared and 5 = least prepared). The results are summarised in Table 4.2. As seen in the table, hospitality operations were considered the most prepared area followed by human resources, information technology, marketing, and finance and accounting. Rank 1 is equivalent to 1 point and rank 5 is equivalent to 5 points. Thus, the area with the least score is rated the highest in the ranking.

TABLE 4.2 Ranking of hospitality functional areas

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Functional Area</i>	<i>Score*</i>
1	Hospitality Operations	2.05
2	Human Resources	2.59
3	Information Technology	2.61
4	Marketing	2.68
5	Finance & Accounting	3.27

*1 = most prepared and 5 = least prepared

A total of 42 responses ranked the concentration areas of the hospitality management programme. The five different concentration areas were ranked in order of the level of student preparedness (1 = most prepared and 5 = least prepared). The results are summarised in Table 4.3. Food and beverage management was rated the most prepared area followed by club management, lodging management, tourism, convention and event management and casino management. Also, evident in Table 4.3 is the percentage of respondents concentrating in the area. Food and beverage management had the highest number of respondents, and Casino Management had the lowest.

TABLE 4.3 Ranking of hospitality concentration / emphasis areas

Rank	Concentration Area	Score*	Concentration of Respondents
1	Food & Beverage Management	2.07	42%
2	Club Management	2.78	5%
3	Lodging Management	2.86	24%
4	Tourism, Convention, & Event Management	2.95	29%
5	Casino Management	3.35	0%

*1 = most prepared and 5 = least prepared

Respondents were asked to rate their overall preparedness to work in the industry, satisfaction with the curriculum, quality of the teaching, and satisfaction with the hospitality programme as a whole. With regard to students' preparedness for their future career, a mean score of students' preparedness was 3.07, which indicates that most of the students were relatively well prepared for their future career. When asked about their level of satisfaction with learning in the programme, 45% were somewhat satisfied, 38% being very satisfied, and 10% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. The respondents were then asked to rate their overall quality of education in the hospitality management programme: 43% of the respondents rated their quality of education as above average, 31% as excellent, 24% as average, and 2% of the ratings were below average. When asked about the value of the programme, 29% strongly agreed that the programme was valuable, 33% agreed that the programme was somewhat valuable, 14% somewhat disagreed and 24% were indifferent. Respondents were also asked whether they were willing to recommend the programme to others. Forty three percent of the respondents were somewhat likely to recommend, 33% were very likely to recommend, 10% were somewhat unlikely, and none of the students were recorded to be very unlikely, with 12% being indifferent. Results are presented in Tables 4.4. – 4.9.

TABLE 4.4 Level of preparedness to work in the Industry

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Readiness to work in the hospitality industry	42	1	4	3.07	0.745
Valid N (listwise)	42				

TABLE 4.5 Level of satisfaction with the curriculum of the hospitality programme

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Somewhat dissatisfied	3	7.1	7.1	7.1
	Neutral	4	9.5	9.5	16.7
	Somewhat satisfied	19	45.2	45.2	61.9
	Very satisfied	16	38.1	38.1	100.0
	Total	42	100.0	100.0	

TABLE 4.6 Quality of education / teaching in current programme

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Below average	1	2.4	2.4	2.4
	Average	10	23.8	23.8	26.2
	Above average	18	42.9	42.9	69.0
	Excellent	13	31.0	31.0	100.0
	Total	42	100.0	100.0	

TABLE 4.7 Value of current programme

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Somewhat disagree	6	14.3	14.3	14.3
	Neutral	10	23.8	23.8	38.1
	Somewhat agree	14	33.3	33.3	71.4
	Strongly agree	12	28.6	28.6	100.0
	Total	42	100.0	100.0	

TABLE 4.8 Likelihood of recommending this hospitality programme

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Somewhat unlikely	4	9.5	9.5	9.5
	Neutral	5	11.9	11.9	21.4
	Somewhat likely	18	42.9	42.9	64.3
	Very likely	15	35.7	35.7	100
	Total	42	100	100	

TABLE 4.9 Students' overall evaluations of the hospitality management programme

Students' overall evaluations	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Preparedness	42	3.07	±.745
Satisfaction	42	3.14	±.872
Quality	42	3.02	±.811
Value	42	2.76	±1.031
Recommendation	42	3.07	±.973

From the analysis of the data it can be concluded that students in the hospitality management programme of The International Hotel School are of the opinion that the curriculum and education they have experienced were of a high quality. They also thought their programme was valuable and most of them would recommend the programme to potential students. Taking into account all of the above, it seems that students felt they were adequately prepared for their future careers.

4.4 RESULTS OF REGRESSION ANALYSIS FOR GENERIC AND HOSPITALITY SPECIFIC SKILLS

Multiple regression analyses were done to identify the skills that could potentially have contributed to student preparedness. Although the sample was relatively small (n=42) the Levene's test showed significance levels and therefore the results can be accepted as representative of skills contributing to students preparedness. Reliability tests were performed and Cronbach's alpha values ranged from .694 to .860 for generic skills and .467 to .885 for hospitality specific skills. The next step was to carry out a multiple regression analysis for the generic skills to identify key skills that affected students' preparedness (see Table 4.5).

The raw data score had been added for each generic skill set. The six categories of generic skills were taken as independent variables and preparedness was set as the dependent variable as shown in Table 4.5.

TABLE 4.10 Results of multiple regression analysis for generic skills

<i>Independent variables</i>	(Dependent variable: Students' preparedness)				
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t-ratio	a
Constant	1.832	.469		3.91	
Communication Skills	.065	.033	.251	1.98*	.809
Conceptual Skills	-.034	.042	-.108	.42	.694
Analytical Skills	-.007	.035	-.027	.84	.817
Teamwork	.033	.042	.102	.44	.841
Leadership Skills	.016	.049	.049	.75	.844
Interpersonal Skills	.059	.035	.232	.94	.86
	$R^2 = .21$ F = (p<.001)				

*p<.05

Levene's test was used to assess the equality of variances in the different samples. Some common statistical procedures assume that variances of the populations from

which different samples are drawn are equal. Levene's test assesses this assumption. It tests the null hypothesis that the population variances are equal (called homogeneity of variance). If the resulting p-value of Levene's test is less than some critical value (typically 0.05), the obtained differences in sample variances are unlikely to have occurred based on random sampling. Thus, the null hypothesis of equal variances is rejected and it is concluded that there is a difference between the variances in the population. Results show that only communication skills are significant at a significance level of .05. R^2 , which is a measure of how much variability in the outcome is accounted for by the predictors, was .212. This means these factors accounted for 21.2% of variation in students' preparedness. Thus, if students are more prepared in communication skills, they are likely to be more ready for their future careers. Communication skills is one of the four main components described by David Conley in his paper *Redefining College Readiness* (2009:76) and may therefore very well be a significant predictor of career readiness. Cronbach's alpha values ranged from .694 to .860 which means the level of reliability or internal consistency varied from being questionable to acceptable to being good.

The same procedure has been applied to the hospitality specific skills. A multiple regression analysis was performed with students' preparedness as the dependent variable, and 12 skill sets as the independent variables. The 12 skill sets included fundamental curriculum related skills, five functional area skills and six concentration area skills. The regression model is presented in Figure 4.1. and the results of regression of the hospitality specific skills are shown in Table 4.11.

FIGURE 4.1 Model for regression analysis of hospitality specific skills

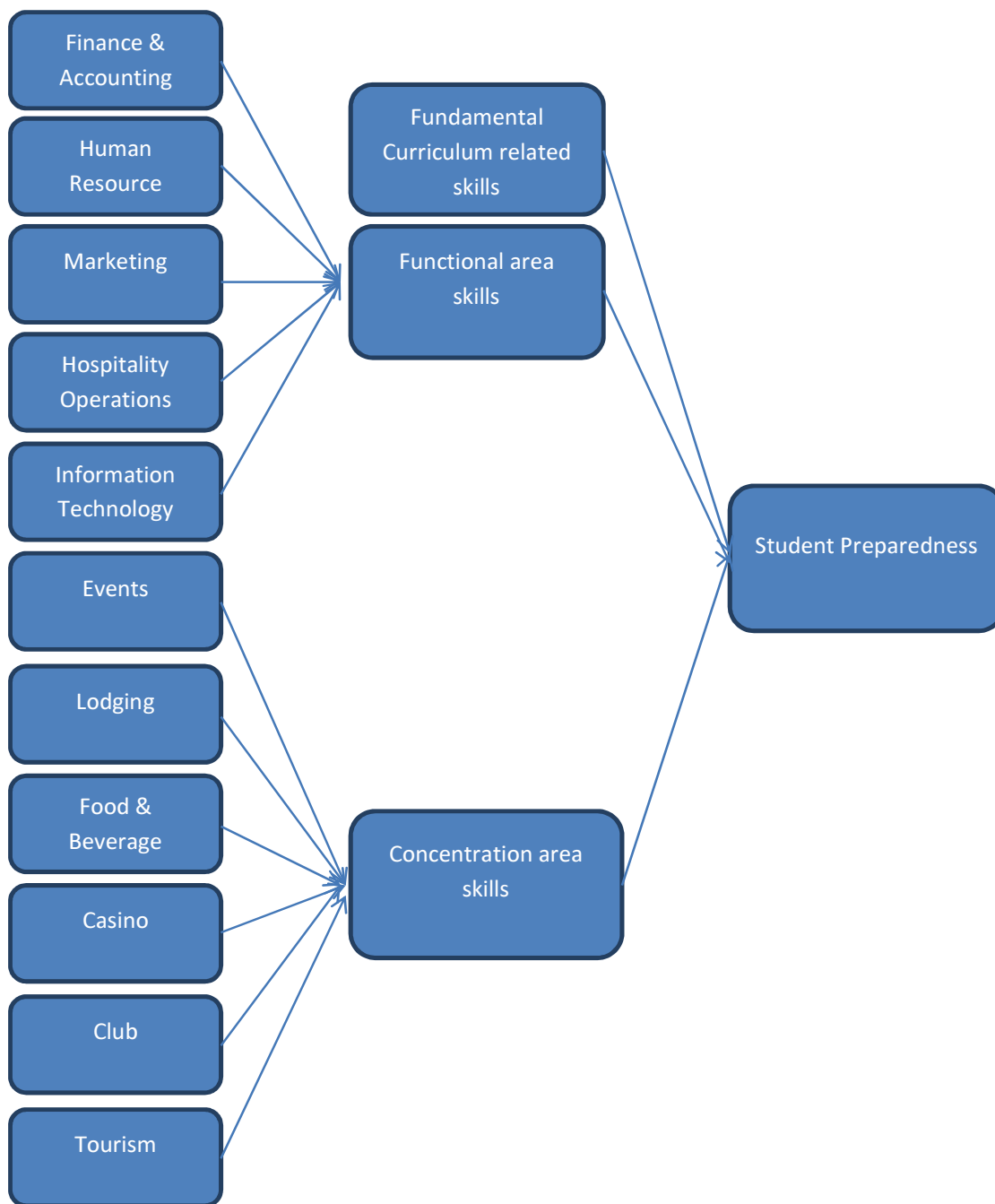


TABLE 4.11 Results of multiple regression analysis for hospitality specific skills

<i>Independent Variables</i>	(Dependent variable: Students' preparedness)				
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t-ratio	a
Constant	.97	.561		1.729	
Fundamental Curriculum Related	.060	.046	.161	1.303	.774
Marketing	-.064	.063	-.123	-1.011	.704
Human Resource	.211	.068	.439	3.104**	.592
Finance & Accounting	-.151	.053	-.364	-2.828**	.703
Information Technology	.153	.104	.163	1.469	
Operations Management	.035	.067	.068	.529	.467
Food & Beverage	.205	.064	.415	3.205**	.551
Events	.039	.045	.131	.885	.813
Lodging	.237	.119	.232	1.989*	
Club	-.184	.111	-.264	-1.651	
Casino	-.050	.053	-.146	-.948	.885
Tourism	-.156	.108	-.181	-1.446	
	$R^2 = .41$ F = (p<.000)				

*p<.05; **p<.01

Results show that human resource, finance & accounting, food and beverage, and lodging are statistically significant at a significance level of .05. R^2 for the analysis was .41, which means these skills accounted for 41% of variation in students' preparedness. The positive beta value of human resource, food and beverage, and lodging, show that the variables are positively related. Thus, if students are more prepared in human resource, food and beverage, and lodging skills, they are likely to be more prepared for their future career. However, finance and accounting has a negative relationship with students' preparedness, indicating that, as students are more prepared in this subject, their readiness level for their future careers goes down. The majority of reports written on students' perceptions of finance and

accounting indicate that this negative perception predominantly prevailed from negative experiences with numerical subjects during secondary education and this may possibly impact the finding amongst the respondents of this programme as well. Reliability tests have been performed on some skill sets, and Cronbach's alpha values ranged from .467 to .885 or in other words, reliability ranged from being poor to good. Skill sets such as IT, Lodging, Club, and Tourism have only one variable associated with each of them and were therefore not feasible to perform a reliability test.

4.5 RESULTS FROM T-TESTS ON GENDER AND WORK EXPERIENCE

The independent t-test compares the means between two unrelated groups on the same continuous dependent variable. The independent samples t-tests were conducted to identify differences in students' preparedness in relation to each factor by their gender and industry experience. Determining the significance of industry experience in contributing to students' perceptions of career readiness may highlight the need and importance of focusing on continuous structured experiential learning during the learning programme. The first step involved performing Levene's test to see if the variances are different enough to assume if they are equal or not. If Levene's test is significant at $p < 0.05$, then we can conclude that the variances are significantly different and thus the assumption of homogeneity of variances has been violated in the analysis and if Levene's test is insignificant (i.e. $p > 0.05$), then the difference between the variances is zero and so the variances must be roughly equal. Thus, variances for individual skills in the t-tests had been considered equal or not equal according to Levene's test criteria and accordingly the significance levels of those skills were found.

As a result of t-test, students had different perceptions of preparedness in the identified skill sets by gender and industry experience. No significant differences were found in any of the skills between males and females.

The last t-test was conducted to compare group means between students who are currently working in the industry and those who are not. As shown in Table 4.12, results of t-test indicate that students who are currently working in the industry are

significantly better prepared in the generic skills such as listening, writing, speaking, ethical behaviour, and adaptability and learning than those who are not currently working in the industry. A probable reason for this may be their familiarity and regular contact with the concepts being rated. On the other hand, those who are not currently working in the industry are significantly better prepared in human resource, hospitality information technology, and hospitality law than those who are currently working in the industry. This may be a biased perception as this group of respondents are not exposed to the complexity of problem-solving in the real world and may have an inaccurate perception of what these skills entail. In addition to these skills, a significant difference was also found regarding overall satisfaction with learning between those who are currently working in the industry ($M=3.95$, $std.=\pm.842$) and those who are not currently working in the industry ($M=3.05$, $std.=\pm.1.030$); $t(98)=2.189$, $p=.031$. Moreover, there was significant difference regarding the likelihood of recommending the hospitality programme to others between those who are currently working in the industry ($M=4.12$, $std.=\pm.875$) and those who are not currently working in the industry ($M=3.42$, $std.=\pm.1.027$); $t(98)=3.345$, $p=.001$. Thus, those who are currently working in the industry are significantly more satisfied with learning than those who are not currently working in the industry are also more likely to recommend this hospitality programme to others.

TABLE 4.12 Results of t-test between students who are currently working in the industry and students who are not currently working in the industry

Skill	Group	Mean (std.)	t	p
Listening	Currently working	4.05 (±.87)	2.77	.007
	Currently not working	3.50 (±.91)		
Writing	Currently working	3.81 (±.83)	2.49	.014
	Currently not working	3.35 (±.80)		
Speaking	Currently working	3.84 (±.87)	2.14	.035
	Currently not working	3.42 (±.81)		
Hospitality law	Currently working	3.56 (±1.19)	-2.58	.011
	Currently not working	4.23 (±.99)		
Adaptability and learning	Currently working	4.24 (±.77)	2.28	.025
	Currently not working	3.85 (±.73)		
Ethical behaviour	Currently working	4.32 (±.79)	2.084	.006
	Currently not working	3.81 (±.80)		
Understand and apply human resource functions & policies	Currently working	3.61 (±.84)	-2.24	.027
	Currently not working	4.04 (±.82)		
Understand employment potential of identified supported populations and labour relations in South Africa	Currently working	3.32 (±.98)	-2.26	.026
	Currently not working	3.81 (±.80)		
Demonstrate skilful use of IT for processing and communicating information in the hospitality industry	Currently working	3.55 (±.84)	-2.47	.015
	Currently not working	4.04 (±.96)		

4.6 ANALYSIS OF OPEN-ENDED QUESTION RESPONSES

The respondents were asked to answer two open-ended questions and the results were categorised and coded in order to detect patterns. Only 20 (less than half) of the respondents answered the open-ended questions and only 18 of the responses were usable data. The first open-ended question was 'Which aspects of your training did you find most useful in preparing you for your career? Please explain why' and the second question was 'What would you change about the curriculum in order to prepare you better for your career?' The categories, codes and actual respondent responses can be found in Annexure C.

All answers were coded and the following categories were discovered for the first question: experiential learning, staff, content, course work, and mentoring.

Category 1: Experiential learning

Responses indicate that the respondents felt that the experiential learning aspect of their curriculum better prepared them for their careers than other curriculum components: "I feel that I have gained most of the value from my practical placements and not the theory learnt at college due to the fact that the exam (sic) are based on parrot-fashion-learning and I feel that this knowledge is not easily applied." Twelve out of the 18, or 67% of respondents were of this opinion.

Category 2: Content delivery

Two respondents expressed the helpfulness of course work activities like group work and case studies in making them feel more prepared for their careers: "Group work activities in college forced me to learn about teamwork and its benefits. I am now using this experience in the workplace to become an effective leader."

Category 3: Content

Two respondents reported that the content covered in subjects were very relevant which in their opinions contributed most to their career preparedness: "The AHLEI subjects' content is very detailed and I often feel this gives me the edge in industry."

Category 4: Staff

One respondent reported that lecturers are very good and that this has been helpful in preparing him/her for his/her future career: "The lecturers are very knowledgeable and the guidance and advice that they have provided me with throughout my studies have really helped me become more ready for being a manager. Also the contacts that they have put me in touch with (sic)."

Category 5: Mentoring

Another respondent reported that lecturers act in a mentoring capacity and that this aided in feeling more career ready: "The fact that we were very few students in a class made it much more personal and lecturers always assisted us with the problems that we were experiencing, both personal and with our studies."

Two additional categories were discovered upon analysis of the second open-ended question: pass mark, and structure. Three of the categories were the same as in question one: experiential learning, content delivery, and content.

Category 1: Experiential learning

One of the respondents was of the opinion that the improved coordination of the experiential learning components will better prepare students for their future careers: "The practical work is not structured and coordinated enough and we end up doing all the dirty work and not learning what we are supposed to be learning."

Category 2: Content delivery

The data responses revealed that the respondents perceived the need to change the way in which content is delivered in order to better prepare them for their careers as necessary: "I would change the way in which the curriculum is taught. Instead of predominantly lecturing, I feel a more interactive environment needs to be created. The exams should be based on application and students should not be able to pass an exam by only having learnt the past papers." The finding was that 11 (61%) of the respondents recommended changes to content delivery as a means of better preparing them for their careers.

Category 3: Content

It was found that three (17%) of the respondents were of the opinion that course content was irrelevant: “The textbooks are international and the content is not always relevant to South Africa, especially legal requirements.”

Category 4: Pass marks

Only one respondent was of the opinion that the pass mark is too high for the type of student that enters the hospitality industry: “The pass mark should be dropped as we are not academics.”

Category 5: Structure

One respondent commented on the structure of the programme and was of the opinion that longer practical and shorter academic periods would lead to better prepared students: “Add more practical weeks to the calendar.”

Even though research indicates that hospitality curricula have shifted focus from developing the operational skills to emphasising both operational and management-related skills (Chathoth & Sharma, 2007:19) students have different opinions regarding curriculum aspects and its effectiveness. Students seem to have a strong tendency to prefer learning-by-doing with a lesser focus on the theoretical side of subjects. Their responses prioritised experiential learning as an aspect that contributed highly to their career readiness

Respondents have also indicated that content delivery needs to be more interactive and participative with a focus on real world problems and current industry issues. According to the researcher’s experience, students are adult learners who need to be part of the learning process in order for learning to take place. Lecturers are therefore responsible for providing a stimulated learning environment by making use of a number and variety of different learning methods to ensure that students achieve the learning outcomes. In support of this, research showed that student learning is significantly influenced by pedagogical techniques of which acquisition, application, and practice are the most effective (*cf.* 2.2).

4.7 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter was to highlight the outcomes of the research and to interpret the findings. Comments were also made on how the results related to the literature study in chapter 2.

Chapter 5 will conclude the study by emphasising the value of the research and presenting the recommendations based on the findings.

CHAPTER 5

SYNOPSIS, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 4 reported on the findings of the empirical study. Chapter 5 presents a summary, findings and recommendations regarding the research aim and objectives.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The next section provides a brief overview of the entire study. The purpose, research questions, relating literature, research methods and procedures are summarised.

5.2.1 Purpose of the Research Study

The purpose of the study was to determine how the current hospitality curriculum at The International Hotel School contributes to students' preparedness from their own perspectives. In reference to Chapter 1, the Department of Trade and Industry reported that tourism in South Africa has been identified as an immediate priority sector within the Accelerated & Shared Growth Initiative with great potential for growth. However, for South Africa and its Tourism sector, of which the hospitality industry forms part, to be able to achieve this growth, requires skilled people. The hospitality industry has experienced challenges in maintaining a skilled and qualified workforce. As a result of this, hospitality education providers need to evaluate their curricula continuously. Effective curricula evaluation cannot be done from one perspective. Research (*cf.* 1.1) indicates that industry and lecturer perspectives are not sufficient and although student perspectives are usually neglected, these are actually much needed which indicates the need for and purpose of this research study.

The main research question can be summarised as:

How does the hospitality curriculum at The International Hotel School contribute to students' preparedness for the industry from their perspectives?

The sub-questions that were further taken into account are:

1. What are the generic and curriculum specific skills that could be used in curriculum evaluation?
2. How prepared do students feel in terms of their specialisation areas?
3. How prepared do students feel regarding the skills required in the industry?
4. What are the aspects that contribute most to student preparedness?

In order to achieve the study's purpose, the study intended to achieve the following research objectives:

- To identify the generic, and curriculum specific skills that can be used for curriculum evaluation.
- To develop a framework of curriculum variables to rate the level of student preparedness.
- To analyse the effectiveness of the hospitality curriculum from the perspectives of students' perceptions of preparedness.
- To identify the aspects that contributes most to student preparedness.

5.2.2 An Overview of the Literature Study

In reference to the literature study in Chapter 2, the following main points indicate what the literature relates about the problem under investigation:

- Curriculum evaluation is to determine the effectiveness of an educational programme whereas curriculum assessment is to determine a rate or amount of student learning.
- Many different curriculum evaluation approaches have been reported including the student perceptions approach, the observable behaviours

approach, the relationship between approaches to learning and perceived characteristics of the academic environment, and the needs assessment approach which is the most common approach in the hospitality industry.

- Curriculum evaluation techniques included the standardised self-efficacy technique as well as course catalogues to analyse the sequence of courses generated by prerequisites using network, graph theory or Event Structure Analysis. Course syllabi, student grades, transcripts, essays, presentations and case studies are also often used in curriculum evaluation.
- Curriculum evaluation designs included the Quasi-Experimental Design, the Pre-post Assessment Design, the Portfolio Assessment Design, and many other indirect methods such as exit interviews and student surveys.
- Research showed that student learning is significantly influenced by pedagogical techniques of which acquisition, application and practice were the most effective.
- Most studies on curriculum evaluation emphasise the overall educational experience with little emphasis on the students' preparedness and the curriculum.
- As hospitality education is very closely related to the hospitality industry competency needs assessment approaches are often used in curriculum evaluation in the hospitality industry.
- Several needs assessment studies were undertaken in the hospitality industry to identify discrepancies between student expectations and preparedness and produced similar results with regards to students' perceptions of their career readiness as a result of completing the hospitality curriculum. The majority of students felt confident about their abilities but not well prepared for their futures.
- Many studies have been conducted to identify the competencies and skills needed in the hospitality industry and included management competencies and generic skills.
- The skills framework developed for this study included both generic competencies and hospitality specific ones contained in the Hospitality Management curriculum.

- A conceptual framework for measuring student preparedness was developed consisting of generic skills, fundamental curricular related skills, functional areas specific skills, and concentration areas specific skills. This framework was utilised in the evaluation of the Hospitality Management curriculum of The International Hotel School.

The next section shall summarise the research methodology and instruments which were used to measure curriculum effectiveness in career preparation from the students' perspective.

5.2.3 Research Methodology and Procedures

In reference to Chapter 3 on research design and methods, the study was conducted using exploratory research as this was the most effective research method based on the requirements. The primary data collected on students' perceptions was of a quantitative nature and the research is therefore classified as quantitative. Given the nature of the problem definition of the research in question, the positivistic approach seemed most appropriate to gauge the opinions (perceptions) of the respondents on students' perceptions of their career preparedness as a result of the completion of the curriculum of The International Hotel School.

A survey was chosen as the most appropriate data collection method. Structured questions, including multiple-choice, dichotomous, open-ended, and Likert-scale questions were used to develop a self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire was sent out electronically to the target population of 50 3rd year students. The realised sample of this study consisted of 42 questionnaires received back from 3rd year students based at the Cape Town campus who have completed the current Hospitality Management curriculum of The International Hotel School.

Pre-testing was conducted with 10 students, representative of the target population, to limit variations in students' interpretation and understanding of the questionnaire and to increase its reliability. Content validity was used to determine the appropriateness of the interpretations the researcher wished to make with the questionnaire scores.

The study made use of the S.P.S.S (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) version 17, Microsoft Excel and Qualtrics to analyse the collected data. A descriptive analysis was undertaken to obtain overall mean values and standard deviations of all variables used in the study. Multiple regression analysis was done to identify the skills that significantly contribute to student preparedness and independent sample t-tests were conducted to identify differences in students' preparedness in relation to each factor by their gender and industry experience.

Responses to the two open-ended questions were categorised and coded in order to detect patterns.

The next section shall summarise the findings emerging from analysis of the data.

5.3 FINDINGS

The aim of the research was to determine how the current hospitality management curriculum at The International Hotel School contributes to students' preparedness from their own perspectives. This aim was further operationalized into the objectives which follow.

5.3.1 Findings Related to the First Objective of the Research

First Objective: To identify the generic, and curriculum specific skills that can be used for curriculum evaluation.

- **Finding 1:** Hospitality skills education is very closely related to the hospitality industry (*cf.* 2.3).
- **Finding 2:** A competency needs approach is often used during hospitality curriculum evaluation (*cf.* 2.3).
- **Finding 3:** A competency needs approach has been tested and found to be an effective approach for curriculum evaluation (*cf.* 2.3).

5.3.2 Findings Related to the Second Objective of the Research

Second Objective: To develop a framework of curriculum variables to rate the level of student preparedness.

- **Finding 4:** Researchers can review the curriculum to come up with variables through which students can measure their perceived level of preparedness (*cf.* 2.5).
- **Finding 5:** Course descriptions can be analysed to identify the skills that students learn from each course (*cf.* 2.5).
- **Finding 6:** Generic skills variables can be developed from past research and course offerings in the hospitality curriculum (*cf.* 2.5).
- **Finding 7:** Fundamental curriculum related skills can be developed based on course offerings and course descriptions (*cf.* 2.5).

5.3.3 Findings Related to the Third Objective of the Research

Third Objective: To analyse the effectiveness of the hospitality curriculum from the perspectives of students' perceptions of preparedness.

- **Finding 8:** Generic skills such as teamwork, interpersonal, critical reflective thinking, problem-solving, planning, listening, and clear understanding of the industry were rated quite highly by the respondents (*cf.* 2.4 & 4.4).
- **Finding 9:** Hospitality specific skills, events, sales, promotion, overall food related skills, and lodging management were rated very highly by the respondents (*cf.* 2.4 & 4.4).
- **Finding 10:** The skills in which students were least prepared involved casino management, club management, financial management, employment potential of identified supported population, forecasting and budgeting, and using numbers (*cf.* 2.4 & 4.4).
- **Finding 11:** Very few respondents are concentrating in casino management and club management (*cf.* 2.4 & 4.4).

- **Finding 12:** The general trend is that respondents are well prepared in the skills that involve key management qualities i.e. interpersonal skills and people skills (*cf.* 2.4 & 4.4).
- **Finding 13:** Skills which require dealing with numbers and analysis tend to be those in which respondents were less prepared (*cf.* 2.4 & 4.4).
- **Finding 14:** Students perceived the curriculum to be effective in terms of the competencies which they have acquired (*cf.* 2.4 & 4.3).

5.3.4 Findings Related to the Fourth Objective of the Research

Fourth objective: To identify the aspects that contributes most to student preparedness.

- **Finding 15:** Four skill areas were found to be key predictors of students' readiness or preparedness including three hospitality specific skills areas and one generic skills area (*cf.* 2.4 & 4.4).
- **Finding 16:** The skills areas positively related to student preparedness are communication skills under the generic skills category and human resource, food and beverage, and lodging under the hospitality specific skills areas (*cf.* 2.4 & 4.4).
- **Finding 17:** Finance and accounting is found to be negatively related to students' preparedness (*cf.* 2.4 & 4.4).
- **Finding 18:** Students perceived the experiential learning components of the hospitality curriculum to contribute significantly to their career readiness (*cf.* 2.4, 4.5 & 4.6).
- **Finding 19:** Students perceived the method in which course content is delivered to have a negative contribution to their career readiness and are of the opinion that a change to more interactive course content delivery methods will improve how ready they feel for their future careers (*cf.* 2.4 & 4.6).

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The aim of this research was to determine how the current hospitality management curriculum at The International Hotel School contributes to students' preparedness from their own perspectives. To realise this aim, a literature study was undertaken which served as the foundation of the empirical research. The findings of this research are incorporated with the following recommendations:

5.4.1 Recommendations for Action

- **Recommendation 1** - The International Hotel School should review the content relevance, time allocated to course delivery, and delivery and assessment methods currently in use for the hotel and restaurant accounting course.
- **Recommendation 2** - The International Hotel School should ensure that all marketing to students clarifies the areas covered by the curriculum to eliminate misconceptions and false expectations.
- **Recommendation 3** - The International Hotel School should review the experiential learning components of the curriculum in terms of practical area breakdown, time periods, competencies/skills, assessment methodology, and support provided by the practical coordinator. Experiential learning has been found to have significant impact on students' career readiness.
- **Recommendation 4** - Lecturers of The International Hotel School should receive training on interactive course facilitation techniques.

5.4.2 Recommendations for Further Study

In light of the limitations of this research, the following recommendations for further study are made:

- Hospitality education is still growing across the world. With the rise in demand for hospitality education, the need to have a proper ranking system in the hospitality field is higher than ever. Such a model can only be finalised after several phases of testing, and validation. The model used to

measure curriculum effectiveness in this study is in its elementary stage. Although the objectives are successfully met for the purpose of this study, there are still lots more to look into in the future. Keeping in mind all its limitations, the model can be developed further and improved to a completely new level. A better approach may be to consult the course instructors and to incorporate the instructors' perspectives to develop the skills the students are learning in the course. It might also be possible to rank institutions based on the improved version of the model and this is one interesting area to look into in the future.

- The sample size is acceptable for this study, but it is probably a good idea to replicate this research on the other two campuses to test the robustness of the model used in this study. More research sites can add more depth to the study and can be crucial to testing the validity of the model. This can be done easily as the course offerings are exactly the same.

5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

As an exploratory study, the sample size is acceptable. However, it might be a good idea to apply this study to a larger population. In addition, this model was being tested on one campus only.

It is not possible to single out the curriculum as the only contributing factor to student preparedness. There are many factors that contribute to student preparedness, as a result of which, it is a challenging task to isolate the other factors and find out how curriculum alone contributes to student preparedness.

The identified skills sets might not represent the whole curriculum effectively. Further testing and validation might be necessary to assess the skills sets developed from the course descriptions.

There can be several skills lumped into one curriculum variable which might not entail a specific and accurate response from the respondents. This might confuse the respondents, which in turn might cause them to rate their perceived level of preparedness incorrectly.

Students can be biased in their opinions about the curriculum. For example, even though they are adequately prepared they might not accurately rate their level of preparedness because of their dislike of the lecturer. Survey participants might also base their inputs on personal grudges and/or word of mouth.

Students can also rate a skill without even taking a course in that skill. For example, hospitality includes casinos to some extent. Therefore, students might rate casino management competencies based on their learning in the hospitality course even if they have not taken the casino management courses.

5.6 CONCLUSION

This study by means of a literature review and empirical research identified the generic, and curriculum specific skills that can be used for evaluation of the hospitality management curriculum of The International Hotel School and developed a framework of the curriculum variables to rate the level of student preparedness. In addition the study analysed the effectiveness of the hospitality management curriculum from the perspectives of students' perceptions of preparedness and further identified the aspects that contributes most to student preparedness. It was found that on the whole students feel that they are well prepared for their careers.

All the aspects discussed in the previous chapters have been summarised and findings emanating from the research project have been highlighted and recommendations were made. It is hoped that The International Hotel School will find the study valuable and will take note of the recommendations made to improve students' perceptions of career readiness.

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ANNEXURE A

RANKING OF SKILLS AREAS BY MEAN

Skills	Type of skills	Mean
Working with others	Generic - teamwork	4.22
Ethical behaviour	Generic - interpersonal	4.19
Passion for the service industry	Generic - interpersonal	4.18
Adaptability and learning	Generic - interpersonal	4.14
Critical reflective thinking	Generic - analytical	4.03
Clear understanding of hospitality industry	Generic - conceptual	4.01
Self-management	Generic - interpersonal	4.00
Providing feedback & motivating others	Generic - teamwork	4.00
Employee relations & training	Generic - teamwork	3.96
Planning skill	Generic - leadership	3.95
Listening skill	Generic - communication	3.91
Problem-solving skill	Generic - analytical	3.88
Event management skills	Concentration area skills - events	3.84
Understand the different functional areas of hotels and resorts such as front desk, housekeeping, rooms division, guest services and develop managerial and supervisory skills	Concentration area skills - lodging	3.84
Meetings and convention management skills	Concentration area skills - events	3.81
Demonstrate a clear understanding of the principles of food fabrication, production, nutrition, safety, quality, services, purchasing, cost controls, and critical issues	Concentration area skills - F&B	3.80
Understand and apply hospitality promotion, sales, and advertising techniques	Functional area skills - marketing	3.78
Developing and applying analytical skills related to the hospitality industry	Functional area skills - finance	3.77
Demonstrating catering and banqueting functions and skills	Concentration area skills - events	3.76
Managerial skill	Generic - leadership	3.75
Presentation skill	Generic - communication	3.74
Speaking skill	Generic - communication	3.73
Hospitality law	Generic - conceptual	3.73
Understanding and applying human resource functions and skills	Functional area skills - human resource	3.72
Understand marketing concepts and apply hospitality marketing fundamentals	Functional area skills - marketing	3.70
Writing skill	Generic - communication	3.69
Staffing	Generic - leadership	3.69
Experience based learning & application	Fundamental curriculum related	3.68

Demonstrating skilful use of IT for processing and communicating information in the hospitality industry	Functional area skills - information technology	3.67
Experimental learning and application	Fundamental curriculum related	3.61
Understanding current issues and practices in the hospitality industry	Fundamental curriculum related	3.61
Understand the overall tourism phenomenon and develop management competencies in travel and tourism	Concentration area skills - tourism, travel	3.58
Identifying types of beverages and demonstrating knowledge of beverage management	Concentration area skills - F&B	3.57
Demonstrating knowledge of lodging and food service systems including PMS, POS, and Revenue management and Reservation systems	Functional area skills - hospitality operations	3.57
Sales technique and concepts	Generic - conceptual	3.57
Understanding and analysing accounting data	Functional area skills - finance	3.53
Forecasting and budgeting	Generic - analytical	3.50
Using numerical ideas and techniques	Generic - analytical	3.49
Demonstrate in-depth club knowledge, understanding the fundamentals of club management and applying those skills	Concentration area skills - club	3.45
Understand employment potential of identified supported populations in South Africa and labour relations	Functional area skills - human resource	3.45
Understanding both the internal and the external casino environment	Concentration area skills - casino	3.40
Understand hospitality financial management fundamentals including real estate and apply them	Functional area skills - finance	3.20
Applying casino management competencies	Concentration area skills - casino	3.19

ANNEXURE B

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Dear students, I would really appreciate it if you spare a few minutes and fill out this survey. This study aims to determine how the hospitality curriculum contributes to students' preparedness for their future careers. Through this survey you will be able to rate your level of preparedness in various areas pertaining to the hospitality management curriculum. This survey is completely anonymous and confidential. Please complete all parts of the survey. Your time and cooperation is highly appreciated. Thank you. Sincerely yours, Ronette Conradie

1. Please specify your gender.	Male	Female
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Please indicate your age range.		
	18 - 20	<input type="checkbox"/>
	21 - 25	<input type="checkbox"/>
	26 - 30	<input type="checkbox"/>
	31 - 40	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. How many years of work experience do you have in the hospitality industry?		
	none	<input type="checkbox"/>
	0-1 year	<input type="checkbox"/>
	1-2 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
	2-3 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
	3-4 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
	4-5 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
	more than 5 years	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Are you currently working in the hospitality industry?	Yes	No
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If yes, in what position?

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5. What is your concentration/emphasis area in the hospitality program?	
Casino Management	<input type="checkbox"/>
Club Management	<input type="checkbox"/>
Food & Beverage Management	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lodging Management	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tourism, Convention, & Event Management	<input type="checkbox"/>

The following questions is about the contribution of the hospitality curriculum in developing students' generic skills.

6. To what extent do you feel prepared in each of these communication skills?	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/A
Listening Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Writing Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Speaking Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Presentation Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. To what extent do you feel prepared for each of the following conceptual skills?	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/A
Hospitality Law	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clear understanding of the hospitality industry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sales techniques and concepts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. To what extent do you feel prepared in each of the following analytical skills?	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/A
Using numerical ideas & techniques	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Forecasting & budgeting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Problem-solving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Critical reflective thinking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. To what extent do you feel prepared in each of the following teamwork related skills?	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/A
Working with others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employee relations & training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Providing feedback & motivating others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. To what extent do you feel prepared in each of the following leadership skills?	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/A
Managerial skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Planning skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staffing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. To what extent do you feel prepared in each of the following interpersonal skills?		Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/A
Self-management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adaptability & learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ethical behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Passion for service to the industry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. To what extent do you feel prepared for each of the following fundamental curriculum related skills?		Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/A
Experimental learning & application	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Experience based learning & application	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Understanding current issues and practices in the hospitality industry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The following set of questions is about the contribution of hospitality curriculum developing students' skills for hospitality functional areas. Please rate your level of preparedness in the functional areas as well as skills.

13. Please rank the following hospitality functional areas in order of your level of preparedness. (1=most prepared and 5=least prepared).	
Finance and Accounting	
Marketing	
Hospitality Operations	
Human Resources	

14. What is your level of preparedness in understanding marketing concepts and applying hospitality marketing functions?		Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/A
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

15. What is your level of preparedness in understanding and applying hospitality promotion, sales, and advertising techniques?		Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/A
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

16. What is your level of preparedness in understanding and applying human resource functions and policies?						
	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/A
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

17. What is your level of preparedness in understanding of employment potential of identified supported populations and labour relations in South Africa?						
	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/A
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

18. What is your level of preparedness in understanding and analysing accounting data?						
	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/A
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

19. What is your level of preparedness in understanding and applying hospitality financial management fundamentals?						
	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/A
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

20. What is your level of preparedness in demonstrating skilful use of IT for processing and communicating information in the hospitality industry?						
	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/A
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

21. What is your level of preparedness in applying analytical skills related to the hospitality industry?						
	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/A
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

22. What is your level of preparedness in demonstrating knowledge of lodging and food service systems including PMS, POS, and Revenue Management & Reservation systems?						
	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/A
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The following set of questions lets you rate your level of preparedness in the concentration areas of the hospitality curriculum. Please rate your level of preparedness in the hospitality concentration areas as well as skills.

23. Please rank the following hospitality concentration areas in order of your level of preparedness (1 = most prepared and 5 = least prepared).	
Casino Management	
Club Management	
Food & Beverage Management	
Tourism, Convention, & Event Management	

24. What is your level of preparedness in demonstrating a clear understanding of the principles of food fabrication, production, nutrition, safety, quality, services, purchasing, cost controls, and critical issues related to food & beverage management?						
	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/A
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

25. What is your level of preparedness in identifying types of beverages and demonstrating knowledge of beverage management?						
	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/A
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

26. What is your level of preparedness in meetings and convention management skills?						
	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/A
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

27. What is your level of preparedness in event management skills?						
	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/A
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

28. What is your level of preparedness in demonstrating catering and banqueting functions and skills?						
	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/A
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

29. What is your level of preparedness in understanding the different functional areas of hotels, and resorts such as front desk, housekeeping, rooms division, guest services, and in applying managerial and supervisory skills?						
	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/A
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

30. What is your level of preparedness in demonstrating in-depth club knowledge, understanding the fundamentals of club management and applying them?						
	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/A
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

31. What is your level of preparedness in understanding both the internal and external casino environment?						
	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/A
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

32. What is your level of preparedness in applying casino management competencies?						
	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/A
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

33. What is your level of preparedness in understanding the overall tourism phenomenon and applying management competencies in travel and tourism?						
	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/A
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The following questions are about your overall preparedness.

34. What is your level of readiness to work in the industry?						
	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	N/A
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

35. What is your level of overall satisfaction with learning in the hospitality program?	Very dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Neutral	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

36. What is your overall quality of education in the current program?	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

37. What is your likelihood of recommending this hospitality program to others?	Very unlikely	Somewhat unlikely	Neutral	Somewhat likely	Very likely
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

38. I have received a great education from this hospitality program based on what I have paid for.	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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39. I am happy I am majoring in hospitality and tourism management.	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

40. I believe that hospitality and tourism management is a good course to study.	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

41. Which aspects of your training did you find most useful in preparing you for your career? Please explain why.
42. What would you change about the curriculum in order to prepare you better for your career?

Thank you very much for your time and cooperation!

ANNEXURE C

Labelling data for open-ended questions - ‘Which aspects of your training did you find most useful in preparing you for your career? Please explain why.’

<i>Code</i>	<i>Response</i>
EL	I feel that I have gained most of the value from my practical placements and not the theory learnt at college due to the fact that the exams are based on a “parrot learning” fashion and I feel that this knowledge is not easily applied.
EL	Practical experience
EL	The practicals prepared me for the real world and I feel this has added most to my experience.
EL	Practicals. It’s more realistic to our future career.
EL	Practical experiential learning.
EL	Firstly, the experience I have gained from practicals.
EL	The practical learning.
EL	I feel the practical aspect of the curriculum best prepared me for my career.
EL	The practical experience mattered most.
EL	Doing practical.
EL	The practical.
EL	Practical experience.
S	The lecturers are very knowledgeable and the guidance and advice that they have provided me throughout my studies have really helped me become more ready for being a manager. Also the contacts that have put me in touch with.
Con	The AHLEI subjects’ content is very detailed and I often feel this gives me the edge in industry.
Con	The AHLEI theory provided a good foundation on concepts and basic functionality of a department.
CW	The case studies we have done in college helped me better understand the real problems and issues in the workplace.

CW	Group work activities in college forced me to learn about teamwork and its benefits. I am now using this experience in the workplace to become an effective leader.
M	The fact that we were very few students in a class made it much more personal and lecturers always assisted us with the problems that we were experiencing, both personal and with our studies.

Coding key:

EL – Experiential Learning

S – Staff

Con – Content

CW – Course work

M – Mentoring

Labelling data for open-ended questions - 'What would you change about the curriculum in order to prepare you better for your career?'

<i>Code</i>	<i>Response</i>
Con. Del.	I would change the way in which the curriculum is taught. Instead of predominantly lecturing, I feel a more interactive environment needs to be created. The exams should be based on application and students should not be able to pass an exam by only having learnt the past papers.
Con. Del.	The materials used to teach the theory should be more relevant.
Con. Del.	More group work activities should be incorporated in classes.
Con. Del.	Classes should include more revision and sample exam questions.
Con. Del.	Lecturers should focus more on practical examples when explaining theory in the classroom.
Con. Del.	The theory must be made more practical – most work is foreign and the link between the theory and practical is not always clear.
Con. Del.	More group work activities in class.
Con. Del.	We need to practice analysing financial statements and reports as this is something I was asked to do in practical and had no idea how too.
Con. Del.	Subjects should be explained in more detail and more practical examples should be used.
Con. Del.	Lecturers should make use of students' past experiences to fix real problems pertaining to real management issues that they have been faced with.
Con. Del.	Theory should be made more interesting and exciting. It is boring just to sit and listen in the class.
EL	We should get paid when we do our practical.
EL	The practical work is not structured and coordinated enough and we end up doing all the dirty work and not learning what we are supposed to be learning.
Con.	The internal subjects should be dropped and more time and

	attention should be given to the international subjects.
Con.	The textbooks are international and the content is not always relevant to South Africa, especially legal requirements.
Con.	We should be allowed to choose the subjects that we are interested and not have to do food related subjects as this is a management course.
PM	The pass mark should be dropped to 60% as we are not academics.
Struc.	Add more weeks to the calendar for theory classes and less to practical.

Coding key:

Con. Del. – Content delivery

EL – Experiential learning

Con. – Content

PM – Pass mark

Struc. – Structure

ANNEXURE D



03 November 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

Re: Research Survey for Master's Thesis

This letter serves to confirm that the management of The International Hotel School gives Mrs Ronette Conradie permission to distribute a questionnaire to students of the school for the purpose of collecting data to be used in compiling her Master's Thesis.

It is understood that participation in the research will be entirely voluntary and that participants will be free to withdraw from the research at any time without fear of negative or undesirable consequences to themselves. I also understand that anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained as the names of those sent questionnaires will not be revealed.

Yours sincerely

MBH

Carolyn McDougall

Manager: Academics

carolynm@hotelschool.co.za



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Directors: R.H.J. Shewen (Chairman); L.H. Kay, (Vice-Chair); J. de Nijck (Honorary Treasurer); M. de Waard, M. de Waard, M. de Waard.