Social and cultural capital and its influence on graduate employability: An exploratory study of student experiences at a higher education institution in Botswana

by
Priya Iyer

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the
University of Liverpool for the degree of Doctor of Education

October 2021

Abstract

As economies look to develop themselves, providing higher education to their citizenry is seen as a means of diversification and becoming knowledge-based societies. Increased access to education has resulted in many students migrating from rural areas to urban centres, especially in middle-income countries such as Botswana, South Africa and others both within and outside Africa. Given this broader access to education and increased graduate numbers, employability has become a focal point for higher education institutions (HEIs). This study explores students' and graduates' experiences in a HEI to understand the influence of social and cultural capital on their employability.

A part-biographical qualitative study was undertaken among students in one university in Botswana to understand the social and cultural dimension of employability. Data collection was based on semi-structured interviews of students and graduates who had participated in some of the university's employability initiatives. Bourdieu's theories of field, habitus and capital provided a framework for this study to help understand the students' experiences, coming as they do from different backgrounds.

From this study it was apparent that the socio-cultural backgrounds of students' parents, families, and the schools attended played a critical role in developing graduates' social and cultural capital and their employability. It was also clear that students who come from families with limited or no exposure to education and the urban labour market require a lot more support and facilitation from schools and HEIs to enhance their employability as compared to a given student an educated or well-employed family. This finding makes it critical to understand how HEIs can provide an environment to allow these students from fields with relatively low levels of social and cultural capital to enhance their capital as well as their employability. Existing research on employability in middle-income countries does not emphasise the impact of this critical element and therefore HEIs do not seem to have considered this when formulating their student-focussed interventions. This current study thus extends applications of Bourdieu's theories into making sense of the difference between those from varied backgrounds in relation to employability in middle income countries. The importance of enhancing one's social and cultural capital in order to become more employable was evident from the research. The thesis also underlines a need for HEIs in middle-income countries to assess their students' distinctive socio-economic backgrounds while ensuring that the opportunities provided will help them to enhance their social and cultural capital, thereby strengthening their employability.

It is hoped that the recommendations of this thesis will inform the strategic initiatives that HEIs in middle-income countries can implement to enhance graduate employability. The argument proposed here is that students with low social and cultural capital levels need to be motivated to engage with employability schemes especially since the students have differing social fields. Therefore, HEIs need to find ways of developing inclusive ways of educating students to contribute to society, in the process enhancing their employability while identifying the opportunities available in middle-income countries.

Keywords: graduate employability, socio-economic factors, habitus, social and cultural capital

Acknowledgements

This work would not have been possible if it was not for the support of the people around me – some who taught and guided me, some who bore the brunt of my frustrations, and others who supported and motivated me to get to the end.

I would like to first extend my gratitude to Dr Peter Kahn, my primary supervisor, for his discerning advice during the thesis journey, which has helped me immensely with my research. His consistent comments were very insightful and not only did it teach me a lot, it also motivated me in my thesis journey. I would also like to thank Dr Anne Qualter, my second supervisor, for her critical comments and support, which has helped extend my work. I would also like to acknowledge and thank Dr Michael Watts, my first primary supervisor, who encouraged me to stay on this journey and also guided me during the start of the research.

I also need to express my appreciation to family and friends who have supported me throughout this journey and a special mention again goes to my colleagues at work, without whose support this would have been impossible. I would like to specially thank Tadgh O'Sullivan for his invaluable copy-editing services.

Finally, I would like to especially thank my husband and my children for all the support and encouragement they have given me in completing the journey and also putting up with all my frustrations during this period. A special word of thanks to my daughter for tirelessly reading through my drafts and for suggesting edits. I would also like to thank my parents and family for their encouragement and keeping me motivated.

Table of Contents

Abstract ..... *i*

Acknowledgements ..... *ii*

Table of Contents ..... *iii*

List of Tables and Figures *6*

List of Abbreviations *7*

Chapter 1. Introduction *8*

1.1 Introduction **8**

1.2 Context of the research **9**

1.3 Initiatives by HEIs to enhance graduate employability **14**

1.4 Researcher Positionality **16**

1.5 Research Justification **18**

1.6 Theoretical Framework **21**

1.7 Research Aims **22**

1.8 Thesis Outline **23**

Chapter 2. Literature Review *24*

2.1 Introduction **24**

2.2 Chapter structure **24**

2.3 Context and overview **25**

2.4 Exploring available Literature **28**

2.5 Employability: An overview **29**

2.6 HEIs' response to enhancing graduate employability **31**

2.7 Bourdieu's theories and their applications in understanding employability **33**

2.7.1 Forms of Capital and Employability 33

2.7.2 Socio-cultural background as an influence on social and cultural capital 36

2.8 Critiques of Bourdieu's theories and why this framework is suited to this study **40**

2.9 Employability models: The basis of employability in HEIs **44**

2.10 Current HEI interventions that attempt to enhance employability **47**

2.10.1 Curricular interventions 47

2.10.2 Extracurricular activities as a means of enhancing employability 48

2.10.3 Workplace attachment and industry links: Enhancing employability 50

2.11 Bourdieu's theories and employability as adopted by HEIs **51**

2.12 Conclusion **53**

Chapter 3. Methodology *55*

3.1 Introduction and research rationale **55**

3.2 Research Questions 56
3.3 Research Paradigm 57
3.4 Research Design 59
3.5 Operationalising capital for this study 61
3.6 Research Methods 64
3.7 Research sample 65
3.8 The Preparatory Survey 68
3.9 Semi-structured interviews 70
3.10 Data Analysis 79
3.11 Insider status of the researcher 81
3.12 Ethical considerations 82
3.13 Chapter Summary 84
Chapter 4. Findings and Discussion 85
4.1 Introduction 85
4.2 Survey: Demographics and Background 85
4.3 Understanding factors that influenced participants' behaviour 89
4.4 Socio-cultural background and the influence on capital 94
4.4.1 Parental Influence 95
4.4.2 Influence of the Extended Family 105
4.4.3 Influence of changing surroundings 106
4.4.4 Influence of schools attended 107
4.4.5 Influence of circumstances on motivation 112
4.4.6 Summary of the impact of socio-cultural backgrounds on graduates' personal attributes 113
4.5 Social capital and employability 115
4.5.1 Influence of city life vs. rural backgrounds on an individual's social capital 115
4.5.2 Family influence: A contributor to social capital 118
4.5.3 Influence of creating and maintaining networks 119
4.5.4 University engagement with industry and community 120
4.5.5 Summary of social capital and graduates' personal attributes 121
4.6 Cultural Capital and Employability 122
4.6.1 Cultural capital and its impact on academic capability and programme choice 123
4.6.2 Enhancing students' experiences at HEIs and hence their cultural capital 127
4.6.3 Cultural capital and influence on future aspirations 129
4.6.4 Impact of personal development activities on cultural capital 132
4.6.5 Work experience and other activities' impact on cultural capital 136
4.6.6 Summary of cultural capital and graduates' personal attributes 140
4.7 Links between Bourdieu's theories of capital and field, and employability 140
4.8 Experience of Graduates vs Students in the Study 145
4.9 Chapter Summary 146
Chapter 5. Conclusions and Recommendations 148
5.1 Introduction 148

5.2 How do social and cultural capital affect the employability of graduates in Botswana? 148

5.3 Universities in middle-income countries enhancing the employability of their students: Research implications and recommendations 150

5.4 Contribution to Knowledge 155

5.5 Research limitations 157

5.6 Personal transformation through the professional doctorate 158

5.7 Future research 159

5.8 Conclusion 161

References 163

Appendix 1 – Ethics approval from University of Liverpool 174

Appendix 2 – Letter from University 176

..... 176

Appendix 3 – Research Permit from Ministry of Education 177

Appendix 4 – Participant Information Sheet 178

Appendix 5 – Participant Consent Form 183

List of Tables and Figures

Figure 4.1 **Composition of survey participants……..……..……..…..86**

Figure 4.2 **Demographic information of survey participants……..…..87**

Figure 4.3 **Skills derived from employability schemes…..……..…..…..88**

Figure 4.4 **Representation of analysis of data into themes……..……..……90**

Table 3.1 **Survey questions ……..……..……..…..69**

Table 3.2 **Semi-structured interview questions ……..……..73**

Table 3.3 **Interview participants ……..……..……..76**

List of Abbreviations

CareerEDGE – Career Experience, Degree, Generic skills, Emotional Intelligence

ECAs – Extra-curricular activities

EDOs – Employability Development Opportunities

GSAS – Graduates Skills and Attributes Scale

HEI – Higher education institution

USEM – Understanding, Skills, Efficacy beliefs and Metacognition

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Graduate employability has taken centre stage in higher education institutions (HEIs) across the world from developed to developing countries. Many countries are looking to become knowledge-driven economies and thus have enhanced their education policies to allow their citizens increased access to higher education. While access to education has increased, the challenge with graduate employability is also increasing, requiring a possible change in approach to employability on the part of HEIs. Studies indicate that while there is an increase of educated youth in Africa, the challenges in relation to their employment is also growing since economies are not experiencing similar development; in addition, they are unable to meet the demands of the labour market (British Council, 2014). Economies across the world are feeling the pressure of increased youth unemployment, and this pressure has been transferred to HEIs. This burden on governments has resulted in their insistence that institutions should take responsibility for graduate employability and should develop interventions which offer students the opportunity to improve their attributes, in line with the requirements of the labour market. Thus, universities are becoming increasingly focussed on producing employable graduates who meet both the needs of the economy and the demands of the labour market, thereby making 'graduateness' the central theme in higher education institutions (Archer & Chetty, 2013).

According to a World Bank report (2020), countries with a Gross National Income (GNI) of between US$ 1,036 to US$ 12,535 are classified as middle-income countries and account for 75% of the world's population. Certain African countries, such as Ghana, South

Africa and others, and other states, such as China and India, are experiencing internal urban migration (de Brauw, Mueller, & Lee, 2014; Mlambo, 2018; Sier, 2021). Like many of these countries striving to become knowledge economies, the Government of Botswana has developed a policy called, Tertiary Education Policy (MOESD, 2008), with the theme "Towards a Knowledgeable Economy", to expand its citizens' access to tertiary education. This widening of access to education has seen HEIs enrolling a multitude of students from diverse backgrounds. This diversity means that students enter HEIs with different experiences, backgrounds, and expectations of their life at university and beyond. Their backgrounds also seem to play a role in shaping their experiences during their period of education.

This thesis seeks to understand the background of students which will provide an insight into their social and cultural capital and its influence on graduate employability, especially in countries where there is a migration of students from rural to urban areas for pursuing higher education and there is a vast difference in culture between the upbringing and exposure. Cultural capital refers to the norms and behaviours an individual adopts by forming part of a social group while social capital refers to resources that an individual acquires through their social group's relationships and network (Bourdieu, 1986). These are dealt with in greater detail in Chapter 2, Literature Review under Bourdieu's theories. Students' experiences during their time in university will provide the necessary feedback for HEIs to improve their initiatives intended to enhance the majority of their graduates' employability.

1.2 Context of the research

In developed countries like the UK, graduate employability has taken prominence in higher education with the Times Higher Education league table considering graduate employability

as one of its criteria for ranking universities (Harvey, 2001). The Bologna Process on Education has also introduced the concept of employability as one of its significant cornerstones and stressed the importance of academic programmes being linked to professional practice (Leoni, 2014). As a result, in global terms graduate employability has gained significant importance in HEIs and has therefore become an interesting area of research. Researchers have developed diverse definitions of graduate employability, which vary from Hillage and Pollard's (1998) "ability to gain" while fulfilling work requirements (p.2), to Harvey's (2001) and Barrie's (2012) graduate attributes that employers are interested in. Researchers like Knight and Yorke (2003), Coetzee (2014), and Pool and Sewell (2007) have all alluded to the generic skills or attributes that enhance graduate employability.

As can be seen in the literature mentioned here, much of the scholarship on graduate employability has taken place in countries such as the UK and Australia, which are classified as developed economies whose demographic conditions vary from those that prevail in middle income countries, such as those in Africa. Research on graduate employability in Africa is not abundant, and the limited number of studies performed have focussed predominantly on the northern parts of the continent (McCowan et al., 2016; Ngoma & Ntale, 2016; Vaaland & Ishengoma, 2016), or South Africa in particular. Studies in Southern Africa, outside of South Africa, in this field have been very minimal, and even fewer in Botswana on factors affecting graduate employability (Bulawa, Seeco, Kgosidialwa, & Losike-Sedimo, 2017; Faimau, Maunganidze, & Tapera, 2016; Griesel & Parker, 2009; Harry, Chinyamurindi, & Mjoli, 2018). As will be discussed in the following sections, the site of this research is a university, based in Botswana, and where I, as the researcher, play a lead role in driving graduate employability. The studies on graduate employability conducted thus far in Botswana have looked at the mismatches between graduates produced by local HEIs and marketplace requirements (Nthebolang, 2013; Moalosi, Molokwane, & Mothibedi, 2017);

they have also examined the perceptions of graduates in terms of their preparedness for the world of employment (Bulawa et al., 2017). These studies have not highlighted or considered the varying needs of students from diverse backgrounds who have entered HEIs, and this is a critical factor, especially in middle-income countries where there is an increase in access to education. More of the literature available in this area will be reviewed and detailed in the following chapter.

Botswana is a country the size of France yet has a small population of only 2.5 million people. With diamond mining as the economy's backbone, Botswana has a GDP of about 18.6 billion USD (Statistics Botswana, Q1, 2018), and has been ranked among the top five African nations in terms of GDP per capita. The country was a British protectorate before gaining its independence in 1966, and is landlocked between South Africa, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Zambia and Angola. Having South Africa, one of the largest economies in Africa, as a neighbour has proved beneficial to Botswana. However, this has also caused dependence on South Africa for many of its supplies and services, including education. Botswana's post-independence development saw large numbers of the country's workforce migrate from its rural areas, initially to mines in South Africa, then internally to rapidly growing cities (Stephens, Macliver, & Weimer-Stutze, 1977a). The revenue Botswana generated from diamond mining was used by the Government to implement many citizen-centred developmental programmes and projects. Since the economy has been predominantly reliant on diamond mining as a single source of revenue, the Government came forth with economic diversification strategies during 1995. A diversification strategy was formulated, and one of the development areas identified was to make Botswana an education hub for the region, as outlined in the Government's Business Excellence strategy (National Strategy Office, 1995).

In line with this strategy, policies were implemented whereby the private sector was to play a critical role in orchestrating the much-needed skills development in the country.

Many private institutions took advantage of this opportunity and positioned themselves to bridge these gaps by providing higher education to those who could not be accommodated by public institutions and offering qualifications that could fill niche areas identified as essential to national economic diversification (Molutsi, 2009). With the vision of becoming a knowledge-based society, the Government has been providing opportunities to citizens by funding their education in HEIs, including accredited private universities and colleges (MOESD, 2008). This broadening of higher education policy provided more openings to citizens across the nation in terms of accessing universities and colleges and saw a remarkable increase in enrolment into tertiary institutions.

The site of the research is a private university which started off as an institution offering computer training in 1997. The inception of the institution was in response to the Botswana Government's call to enhance its citizens' computing skills and the absence of adequate providers in this area. The institution aligned itself with the Government's policies and diversified into offering programmes in other disciplines such as accountancy, allied health, and engineering. By enhancing its offerings and structures in line with the quality norms and standards of the regulatory authorities, the institution became the first private university in the country in 2013. At the university, where I work as the Pro Vice-Chancellor in charge of employability of its graduates, the mission is to "… produce well-rounded, entrepreneurial, and globally employable graduates with the attitude, knowledge, skills and competencies to create value and drive productivity" (University Strategy, 2018, n.p.). Hence, we have launched many initiatives, such as personal and career development programmes, clubs and societies, and internships, all of which are intended to enhance the employability of our graduates.

The university today has a student population of about 3,500 and a main campus which is situated in Gaborone, the capital of Botswana, and another campus in Francistown,

the second biggest city in the country. Gaborone is also home to most businesses and Botswana's HEIs. As mentioned previously, with the country's development, there was substantial migration from rural to urban areas in order for people to access better standards of living. Silitshena (1984) attributes the reason for this migration to the desire to alleviate themselves from the poverty prevalent in rural areas, the latter mainly the result of low yield agricultural production. Therefore, many students leave their homes in rural villages to come to the city to complete their tertiary education, which exposes them to a completely new lifestyle that they were not accustomed to during their childhood and adolescence (Pheko & Molefe, 2017). In addition to this change of environment, many of the students entering HEIs also tend to be first generation graduates and hence can lack a clear understanding of employability while expecting HEI institutions to help them in this regard (Pheko & Molefe, 2017). Though there is a marked increase in the number of graduates produced, employers in Botswana still maintain that HEI graduates do not meet workplace requirements. The unemployment rate in Botswana has been averaging between 17% and 20% as per reports published by various national bodies and the Government from 2015 to 2018 (Statistics Botswana, 2018).

Statistics in Botswana have also shown that 16.6% of the unemployed population is made up of graduates (Gaetsewe, 2019). These figures have prompted conversations on the part of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning in 2010 concerning the skills mismatch between the graduates produced and the market's requirements (Pheko & Molefe, 2017). This growing youth unemployment in Botswana, which reached 25.6% in 2016, has placed tertiary education institutions under pressure to produce graduates who will meet the economy's skills demand through the introduction of various initiatives to enhance graduate employability (Bulawa et al., 2017). As per a report by the World Bank (2008), many African countries are rebuilding their post-colonial and post-conflict economies, and this requires the

development of their human resources. A UNICEF report (2017) has also indicated a rapid growth in the number of working age youths in Africa in the near future, which further necessitates the need to address their employability. In a 2008 World Bank report, it was highlighted that African countries have to view education and skills development as a critical step in diversifying and growing their economies. This would also mean that these countries will have to invest in developing their citizens' skills while providing adequate education in order to become self-sufficient and not rely on external skills to develop their economies.

1.3 Initiatives by HEIs to enhance graduate employability

In line with the employment sector's demands, HEIs around the world have adopted several strategies to enhance graduate employability. Many of them have started adapting their curricula to align with industry requirements (Maclean & Pavlova, 2011; Nthebolang, 2013) as a way of addressing the skills mismatch between the graduates produced and the market's needs. Study courses have incorporated more hands-on-training, internships, and other work experience programmes to enhance graduates' employability profiles (Nthebolang, 2013). Many employability schemes and interventions introduced by HEIs in Botswana have taken their cue from the developed world where employability has been in focus for many years. Institutions have used the employability models developed elsewhere to both understand graduate employability and create interventions to address the needs of its students and graduates. Models such as Pool and Sewell's (2007) employability model and Knight and Yorke's (2003) USEM model (Understanding, Skills, Efficacy beliefs, and Metacognition) have provided a framework for an institution to define the attributes required of an employable graduate, thereby allowing it to develop schemes to assist students acquire these.

Pool and Sewell (2007) developed their employability model based on the integration of generic skills, emotional intelligence, experience and career planning into a given

graduate's qualification, thereby generating both self-confidence and self-efficacy while making them more employable. Knight and Yorke (2003, p.8) have also suggested many interventions that could enhance graduate employability via the USEM model, suggesting that employability is based on Understanding, Skills, Efficacy beliefs, and Metacognition, however this model is not the focus of this thesis. Closer to home, in South Africa, Coetzee (2014) has developed a framework to help academics incorporate eight attributes of graduate employability into the curriculum with a view to changing students' mindsets while preparing them to meet industry demands. These eight attributes include: problem solving; analytical thinking skills; enterprising skills; ethics and responsibility; presentation and application of information skills; interactive skills; goal-oriented behaviour; and continuous learning orientation. Based on these studies, HEIs have implemented various initiatives to enhance graduate employability, such as curricular interventions, extracurricular activities, workplace attachments, and community engagement among others. However, one of the critical elements that these studies have not considered is the impact of an individual's social and cultural capital on graduate employability while the aim of this study is to understand this impact.

As mentioned earlier, the university, like many HEIs, aims to produce market-facing and employable graduates, and with this in mind, the university has developed a graduate profile that considers employers' perspectives on the ideal candidate that they would like to hire. Taking cognisance of the various models developed by researchers including Pool and Sewell (2007), Knight and Yorke (2003), Coetzee (2014), and the Graduate Profile, the University has embarked on several programmes to help enhance graduate employability. These programmes are a combination of the curricular, such as internships, and extracurricular, such as career development workshops, community engagement initiatives, as well as sporting and non-sporting clubs.

These initiatives are intended to provide opportunities to students to enhance their attributes while they earn their academic degree qualification, thereby making them more employable. However, student engagement in these schemes has always been much lower than expected, hence it was important to understand how their backgrounds impacted their participation in employability initiatives as stressed by Costa et al. (2019). HEIs therefore need to understand the influence of student backgrounds on their experience and perception of employability.

1.4 Researcher Positionality

As mentioned earlier, I am Pro Vice-Chancellor for Employability and Finance at the university, and hence responsible for spearheading the institution's employability initiatives. My experience prior to joining higher education included training and mentoring graduate trainees to become professional accountants, therefore I had a good chance to observe graduates coming into industry from tertiary institutions. In that role, I observed the differentiators between characteristics displayed by graduates and how some of them were more employable than others. I was intrigued by the variations in the attributes of graduates coming out of the same programme and from the same higher education institutions. In addition, being on the recruiting side also gave me an insight into what most employers look for in their graduate recruits. Therefore, my job responsibility pushed me to focus on the employability initiatives implemented at the university leading to graduates who meet industry demands, thus enhancing their employability.

With the above intention, the university has introduced numerous initiatives, such as sports and cultural clubs, to assist students gain the much needed exposure that could help develop their socialisation network and thereby enhance their employability. One of the biggest challenges faced by its career services team is the lack of student engagement with

the extracurricular activities which were planned to assist students enhance their attributes. It is only a few select students who tend to participate in these activities, while the broader student population stayed away and therefore do not benefit from these schemes. Despite the awareness campaigns on campus outlining the benefits of attending activities, there seems to be general apathy among students and events attract only a small number of students. Therefore, I was interested in finding out why students keep away from these activities and what could be done to motivate more of them to participate in such schemes. It was also important to understand the impact of these employability initiatives, both in terms of enhancing graduates' personal attributes as well as establishing ways of improving these initiatives, thereby reaching more students. As a practitioner researcher, I decided to conduct a qualitative study of the experiences of students who participated in the various employability initiatives to understand the impact of these on them, all while establishing the links between their backgrounds and the ability to engage and develop their attributes.

Being an insider researcher in a position of power, I had to be very careful in handling matters related to ethics as well as data management. These issues are explained in detail in Chapter 3 on Methodology. As Brannick and Coghlan (2007) state, being an insider-researcher meant that I had, through reflexivity-related procedures, to be conscious of the strengths and limitations of my pre-understanding while using my experience and theoretical knowledge to understand situations and contexts independent of any prejudices. It was also important as per Brannick and Coghlan (2007) to maintain a neutral position and thereby maintain my credibility. Further, I had to also be aware of the power of my position and balance this by negotiating the research process as discussed by Merriam et al. (2010).

This research considered the influence of students' backgrounds in shaping their career and employability. The study also considers the experiences of students who have participated in various employability initiatives to understand their perceptions of these

schemes and look at what can be done by HEIs to widen the student population's awareness and understanding of employability. Further, as an insider researcher I am aware that a vast majority of students do not engage with the employability schemes. Hence this research will consider the impact of students' background, upbringing and schooling to understand if there is a relationship between these factors and their employability and also understand the influence of these factors on their engagement with employability schemes.

1.5 Research Justification

As mentioned earlier, many of the existing studies in Africa have been restricted to the north and in the south, the most relevant studies have been in universities in South Africa, Botswana's neighbour (Coetzee, Botha, Eccles, Nienaber, & Holtzhausen, 2012; Griesel & Parker, 2009; Nel & Neale-Shutte, 2013). Though both Botswana and South Africa are middle-income countries, there are substantial differences in the context of the two countries – South Africa has a well-established HEI system which goes back many years before institutions were set up in Botswana. The institutions are also very well resourced and have been able to provide worthwhile research into areas such as graduate employability. Further, Botswana does not have the complexities experienced by South Africa in terms of the latter's varied ethnicities, a history of colonisation and apartheid, and the changes generated by the previously disadvantaged coming to the fore (British Council, 2016). In Botswana, higher education has developed much later than in South Africa and, being a young economy, focus on areas like graduate employability is still emerging.

Botswana, like many other middle-income countries, has a huge rural-urban divide and students migrate to urban centres to further their education, especially to access higher education. Students who move from rural to urban centres need to adjust to the varying lifestyles in urban centres (Lagakos, 2020; Mlambo, 2018; Sier, 2021). Further, in the

Botswanan context, rural villages tend to see people engaged in non-career roles such as farming, whereas the country's urban milieu has a more educated population and formal employment (Stephen, et al., 1977). There appear to be no studies on the impact of these changes in terms of graduate employability. Besides, there are only a limited number of studies conducted in Botswana on graduate employability (Bulawa et al., 2017; Pheko et al., 2014; Moalosi, Molokwane, & Mothibedi, 2017; Nthebolang, 2013), and these have not considered the background of students entering higher education, thereby widening the scope to address their diverse needs. These earlier studies have also not brought to the fore issues regarding the differences of students from urban and rural contexts as mentioned above as well as the consequent influence on both their capital and labour market structures. From the literature searches conducted, it does not seem that a study has been conducted in Botswana on how social background plays a role in graduates' employability. The only study conducted in Botswana to date that has looked at culture and its impact on employability was by Ndung'u (2014), which considered the impact of culture on the work ethic of the citizens of Botswana (known collectively as Batswana) and its relationship to employability. The conclusions of the detailed study are not available, but the preparatory study reflected that their culture negatively impacts the work ethics of Batswana while tertiary education can enhance its graduates' work culture and thereby their employability. Pheko et al. (2014), in a study of students at the University of Botswana, discuss the acculturative stress that students undergo when they move away from rural settings to urban centres. This stress is derived from a variety of factors, including language issues, lack of family support, the need to manage their finances, and even ways of dressing.

In addition, in middle-income countries, such as Botswana, there are many first-generation university students, which makes them less aware of HE life and the complexities that come with it. Students from these backgrounds find it challenging to engage with the

academic curriculum and their new city life, leaving them less time to focus on employability initiatives. Anecdotal evidence from a study conducted at the University of Botswana by Pheko et al. (2014) indicates that a lack of exposure and understanding of urban norms during their schooling and upbringing disadvantages those students from rural backgrounds and rural government schools. As such, they are less aware of the benefits that extracurricular activities offer in terms of enhancing their future employability. Bourdieu's (1977) theories of social capital and habitus point out that culture and an individual's values and dispositions can influence the personal attributes of an individual while this study intends to explore how this impacts graduates in Botswana.

From the above-mentioned study conducted by Pheko et al. (2014) in Botswana, the move from rural life to urban surroundings led to students experiencing shock and the stress of adjustment during the first two years of their university life. However, their study did not consider the backgrounds of students in terms of parental influence, the schools they have attended and the impact of this on their employability, or their ability to interact with the student body and community and benefit from their university experiences. Hence this thesis aims to contribute towards the understanding of the influence of students' social and cultural capital in enhancing their personal attributes and making them more employable.

Studies from various researchers including research by Kinash, Crane, Judd and Knight (2016) in Australia and by Vaaland and Isehengoma (2016) in Tanzania note that graduates believe that extracurricular activities and mentoring enhance their employability. Based on these studies, HEIs in these countries have introduced many initiatives, both curricular and extracurricular, to enhance graduate employability. While this thesis looks at some of the schemes implemented at the university to understand their impact on developing graduates' attributes, it will also provide an insight into the interventions that help enhance

graduates' employability attributes while catering to the diverse needs of the student population.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

As explained in the section above, the focus of the research is on factors such as parental and family influence, upbringing, and schools attended, and their influence on students' perception of employability and how their understanding shapes their experience of HEIs. Bourdieu, through his theories on field, habitus and capital emphasise how these are important factors which can influence students and graduates' personal attributes. Therefore, these theories provide a critical framework for analysing employability models and interventions suggested by numerous research studies by focussing on socio-economic factors and their influence on students' engagement with employability schemes as well as their impact on their personal attributes. The aim of this research is also to emphasise the influence that the social and cultural capital gifted by their background has on the motivation of students to engage with the schemes. Therefore, Bourdieu's theoretical framework will be used to critically examine employability schemes, the associated literature, and the experience of students and graduates. By engaging with Bourdieu, this research will also elucidate whether there is a relation between social capital, a graduate's self-efficacy and, by extension, their employability. Bourdieu's concepts of social and cultural capital and habitus are explained in detail in the literature review (Chapter 2). Tomlinson (2017) in his research on the influence of the different forms of capital on the employability of graduates highlights the importance of the presence of human, social, cultural, identity and psychological capital in making up the totality of 'graduate capital'. Further, researchers like Burke et al. (2009) also emphasise the links between social capital and self-efficacy wherein increased social capital individually or in a group increases the self-efficacy of individuals and it will be

interesting to examine whether connections between these can be established in relation to graduate employability. This study uses Bourdieu's theories of capital, field and habitus to explore whether those students with higher capital benefit more from the schemes available. It will also consider the impact of social and cultural capital on enhancing the graduates' the 'field of possibles' as per Bourdieu (1984).

1.7 Research Aims

A World Bank report (2020) has shown that middle-income countries experience more rural urban migration and as mentioned above, there has been no specific research conducted on understanding the links between students' backgrounds, the influence of this on their attributes, and their engagement with employability schemes in these same middle-income countries. The findings from this research will be valuable for HEIs in Botswana and other middle-income countries in terms of providing insights into how capital, field and habitus impact the employability of graduates while examining how HEI initiatives can be reformed with a view to engaging more students and helping them acquire the attributes required to make them employable. In order to do this, it is important to understand the experiences of students who participate in the schemes and understand what improvements are needed to increase student engagement. In addressing the research, the primary research question that will be considered will be:

1. How does the social and cultural capital of students affect the employability of graduates in Botswana?

The following supplementary research question will provide an insight into what HEIs can implement in terms of enhancing the experience of its students:

2. How can universities in middle income countries enhance the employability of their students?

1.8 Thesis Outline

The thesis will consist of five main chapters: Chapter 1 being this introductory chapter, summarises the entire research project and provides the rationale for the study, the justification for the research, and outlines the framework that will be used. Chapter 2, the literature review, will provide deeper insight into the theories of Bourdieu, on social and cultural capital and habitus, in understanding the students who come from diverse backgrounds. This chapter will also consider the critiques of Bourdieu's theories and how the theory can be applied to the context of this research. These theories will also be used to examine employability models such as CareerEDGE (Pool & Sewell, 2007) and USEM (Knight & Yorke, 2003) in order to establish if they have factored in social and cultural capital when coming up with the models, as well as interventions such as extracurricular activities and community engagement activities (Thompson, Clark, Walker, & Whyatt, 2013; Kinash, Crane, Judd, & Knight, 2016). Chapter 3 outlines the study's methodology and theoretical framework, while discussing the justification behind the use of a qualitative research design as well as the data collection and data analysis methods used. Chapter 4 examines the thesis's findings and results based on the data analysis. This chapter also discusses in detail the influence of various forms of capital, social and cultural and habitus on graduates' employability. Chapter 5 outlines the study's conclusions and recommendations while reviewing existing employability schemes in light of the impact of capital on student engagement with various schemes and graduates' personal attributes. The conclusion will also discuss those areas with further research potential.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

A detailed review of the existing literature on employability and measures taken by higher education institutions to enhance employability, both locally and internationally, was undertaken with a specific focus on understanding the impact of employability on students from a variety of backgrounds entering HEIs. The gaps identified in the literature assisted with formulating the research questions that this thesis aims to address.

2.2 Chapter structure

After providing a brief background on the context as well as an overview of the research, the next section of this chapter will discuss both what is understood by employability and the expectations of employers and graduates in relation to employability. Section 2.7 will examine the theories of Bourdieu and their applicability to employability while discussing the concepts of field and habitus as well as the influence of the different forms of capital on graduate employability. While Bourdieu's work has been critiqued extensively, his theories on the influence of capital on an individual still fits the needs of this research, hence it is used to understand students' experiences of and ability to engage with and benefit from the employability schemes.

HEIs have been implementing various initiatives to enhance the employability of their graduates, efforts that have been based on studies conducted by various researchers in different parts of the world, including the consideration of employability models by Pool and Sewell (2007) and Knight and Yorke (2003). These models offer a comprehensive insight into the components required to enhance graduate employability and have shaped the

implementation of different initiatives. Sections 2.9-2.10 engage with employability models and the initiatives undertaken by HEIs in order to enhance graduate employability with a view to analysing their applicability and influence on HEIs' diverse student populations. Bourdieu's theories regarding capital, field and habitus will assist in understanding of the impact social context has on shaping student employability. Section 2.11 examines the gaps identified in the literature reviewed while formulating the basis of the research questions that will be framed for this thesis.

2.3 Context and overview

Graduate employability has become a key agenda item for both regulatory authorities and employers who expect HEIs to prepare students for the world of work (Pheko & Molefhe, 2017). The concept of graduate employability has been researched and debated in various countries, including both the developed and developing worlds, and encompasses various measures that have been implemented by HEIs to improve graduates' employability. However, HEIs still face criticism from prospective employers of their graduates not meeting industry expectations (Nthebolang, 2013).

From the various literature reviewed, enhancing the employability of a given graduate has been linked predominantly to the skills they develop, which can include a combination of competence achieved through the curriculum offered as well as the 'soft skills' (or 'transferable skills') attained by the graduate through various interventions (Knight & Yorke, 2007). This has been reiterated in the work of Barrie (2012), where he states that employability refers to the abilities and skills of a graduate which they are expected to develop during their period of study at HEIs. Based on these and similar studies, HEIs across various countries have come up with measures and initiatives that can augment the provision of education while helping to enhance their graduates' employability skills (Pool, & Sewell,

2007; Jackson, 2014; Kinash, Crane, Schulz, Dowling, & Knight, 2014; Moalosi, Molokwane, & Mothibedi, 2017; Nel & Neale-Shutte, 2013). HEIs across the world have been implementing a variety of initiatives through curricular, extra-curricular and other schemes in order to enhance and improve graduate employability (Artess et al., 2016); however, low levels of student engagement in these initiatives (Clegg, Stevenson, & Willott, 2010; Greenbank, 2015) have resulted in the benefits of these schemes not having significant wider reach.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, developing countries such as Botswana, South Africa and others have seen an increase in number of students entering higher education due to national polices (MoESD, 2008) which provides access to many students who previously would not have been able to enter higher education. This widening of access to education has seen students coming from different backgrounds, thus HEIs need to be able to cater to a range of needs.

Tripney et al. (2012) have detailed similar migration from rural to urban centres on the part of the youth population in many middle-income countries. This report further points out that the youth bulge and the increasing rural urban migration has resulted in increased youth unemployment creating a need to enhance the employability of graduates. In Botswana also, students move from rural villages to urban settings when they enter HEIs and this has resulted in them having to undergo significant acculturation (Pheko et al., 2014), thereby resulting in a divided student body, namely between those who come from villages and those who have grown up in cities and therefore having varied capitals. However, the impact of students moving to urban areas and therefore the impact on their employability is an area that does not seem to have previously been researched in the context of middle-income countries as can be seen below in the literature reviewed.

Bourdieu has done extensive work on the social contexts of students and his theories can be extrapolated to appreciate the impact of students' backgrounds on their employability (Burke, 2015; Kalfa & Taksa, 2015). His theories on habitus, field and different forms of capital have provided a supporting framework for many research studies, such as the ones mentioned above, when analysing and understanding widening participation and the influence on employability of graduates. Holmes (2013) and Kalfa and Taksa (2015) have also argued that cultural capital can influence the employability of graduates, therefore understanding this phenomenon in middle-income countries, such as Botswana, will provide HEIs with better insights regarding their efforts to improve graduates' employability. The above argument could also tie in with a study by Artess, Hooley and Mellors-Bourne (2016), where they point out the importance of developing students' self-belief, which in turn can enhance their active engagement with employability activities. If HEIs are to help students enhance their employability during their period of study, it is imperative for them to understand the experiences of different students, and in addition obtain clarity on the latter's expectations of HEIs regarding employability.

As mentioned above, students entering higher education in Botswana come from a variety of backgrounds, which creates a disparity in their social and cultural capital when they start with their HE life, therefore institutions need to understand the influence of students' social contexts on their capital(s) if they are to enhance their employability. Pheko et al. (2014) have also highlighted the cultural and social behaviours of students coming from rural backgrounds and the difficulty they have experienced in adapting to a changed lifestyle, including the use of the English language. Hence, it is necessary to understand whether HEIs have considered these factors when trying to enhance the employability of a diverse student body.

In order to explore the experiences of the students coming from different backgrounds, Bourdieu's theories provide a supporting framework to address the social contexts of students. Therefore, this chapter will discuss Bourdieu's theories of field, habitus and social and cultural capital while also critically reviewing employability-related models and interventions that have shaped HEIs efforts in enhancing graduates' employability.

2.4 Exploring available Literature

A detailed review of literature available on graduate employability with a particular focus on measures taken by HEIs in enhancing the employability of a graduate was undertaken to understand the work conducted in this area while identifying the gaps that exist. The literature review was done predominantly using databases available in the University of Liverpool library and the institutional library, and included journal articles, monograph, reports, and ERIC to mention a few. In addition, some African research sources, such as African Education Research Database, were also explored to identify the relevant regional literature. Many studies have been conducted in this area worldwide, but only a few in developed countries have considered the influence of social contexts and capitals on graduate employability (Costa et al., 2019; Kalfa & Taksa, 2015). Studies conducted in middle-income countries, such as those in Africa, were specifically considered to understand how the influence of social contexts was impacting graduate employability. In Botswana, studies on graduate employability have focussed on graduates' perceptions and employers' requirements (Bulawa et al., 2017; Moalosi et al., 2017; Nthebolang, 2013; Pheko & Molefhe, 2017), however, none of these studies seem to have considered students' backgrounds and their impact on employability. With more students migrating from rural areas to urban centres, the diversity of students in HEIs is becoming more evident, hence making it important to understand the influence backgrounds have on graduate employability and what can be done

by institutions to enhance their students' employability. This thesis will therefore consider the impact of students' backgrounds and socio-economic factors which impact their capitals and therefore the development of their employability.

2.5 Employability: An overview

As mentioned in Chapter 1, there has been substantial discussion and debate about 'graduateness' and 'employability' in the various parts of the world including Africa. There are diverse views on how employability is influenced by factors other than an individual's attributes, and these have been evident in definitions of employability across the world. The definition provided by Knight and Yorke (2003) seems to encompass the various discussions and defines employability as "a set of achievements, understandings and personal attributes that make individuals more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations" (p.5). This definition emphasises the importance of employability skills, not just in terms of entering the world of employment, but also bearing in mind the need to improve oneself through lifelong learning in order to be successful. Coetzee (2012) also brings out the different elements of graduateness, such as 'scholars', 'global citizens' and 'lifelong learners' (p.125), which indicates that graduates – in addition to creating new knowledge – need to take responsibility for their roles as members of the global community and contribute to both local and global society while also upgrading their knowledge through constant learning.

The generic skills or attributes that employers expect graduates to possess – in addition to their knowledge of their respective disciplines – when they leave HEIs are referred to as 'employability skills' in the literature. This is where scholars differ in terms of what is known as graduateness and employability. Academics, such as Knight and Yorke (2003), Bridgstock (2009) and Hillage and Pollard (1998), have referred to employability skills as the skills that that are required by graduates in order to move into employment; they

further list these as including communication, technology, numeracy, critical thinking and analytical skills respectively; whereas Chetty (2012) refers to graduateness as the skills, traits, and knowledge that graduates attain while at HEIs, while employability is the ability of graduates to use these attributes to enter the world of employment. These definitions of employability and graduateness do not give any consideration to the diversity of students currently entering HEIs which, according to Makhanya (2012), is critical, because when students enter institutions from diverse backgrounds their experiences and expectations of employability differ. As mentioned above, in many middle-income countries youth from rural areas move to urban cities, either in search of employment or, in countries like Botswana, in search of higher education. Therefore, it is very important for HEIs to understand the needs and requirements of different students while augmenting their initiatives to improve their graduates' employability.

The link between one's background and employability has been explored by Tomlinson (2017) who while defining employability in the context of skills in the workplace, links it to Bourdieu's theories of habitus and capital:

> At a micro level, the focus is more on how employability is constructed at a personal level and its relationship with a range of subjective, biographical, and psychosocial dynamics, and which are also informed by individuals' cultural profiles and backgrounds (p.11).

The above definition points out the need to explore the influence of individuals' social and cultural contexts when trying to understand the experiences of various students, leading to exploring ways of enhancing their employability. In middle-income countries where the HEI population is marked by a rural-urban divide as mentioned above, the need to understand the influence of socialisation and background on employability becomes important as HEIs are looking to enhance their graduates' employability.

2.6 HEIs' response to enhancing graduate employability

The development of the concept of knowledge-economy has helped to underline that employers expect graduates to have certain generic skills along with disciplinary knowledge in order for them to be employable and be effective at work from their first year of joining (Hinchliffe & Jolly, 2011). In addition to employers' expectations, students entering HEIs also expect that when they complete their education they will be more employable than before (Pheko & Molefhe, 2017), and therefore they require HEIs to provide them with opportunities to obtain practical skills and work experience (Nel & Neale-Shutte, 2013), extracurricular activities and mentoring schemes (Vaaland & Ishengoma, 2016) in addition to disciplinary knowledge.

Therefore, HEIs across various countries have come up with measures and initiatives that can augment the provision of education while enhancing graduates' employability skills. Some HEIs have introduced models that can guide students regarding the skills they require in order to be employable (Coetzee, 2014; Pool & Qualter, 2013) while others have introduced alternative initiatives – both curricular and extracurricular –to enhance such skills. In a study in Australia to understand the strategies that best worked to improve graduate employability, Kinash et al. (2014) found it was important for HEIs to provide opportunities for graduates to build their portfolios and support them in enhancing their employability. This was seconded by the study by Thompson et al. (2013) in the UK where they state that student experience in HEIs is not confined to academic education but also involved extracurricular activities. These two studies have been based in Australia and the UK and have not delved into the details of the diversity of students that could form part of HEIs. Further, the study was conducted based on a few students and did not extrapolate the views of the sample to a larger student population.

Based on these studies, HEIs have introduced many activities. However, they are concerned with the low level of student engagement with these activities and cannot understand the impact of these in enhancing graduate employability. Bennett (2019) argues that the low levels of engagement with initiatives could be because, in instances of students who come from rural or disadvantaged backgrounds, they could lack the metacognition required to conceptualise life in higher education and beyond, thereby forming a disconnect between what they should expect from higher education learning. Coetzee (2012) goes on to emphasise that students who are eager to enhance their employability will want to engage in the learning and assessment and other activities that they perceive as beneficial to them while it is the responsibility of HEIs to improve the awareness among graduates of the need to enhance their employability.

Developing economies, such as many countries in Africa, have seen migration of people from rural to urban locations, both to find employment and also to acquire the skills required to enable them to fit into the modern changing labour landscape (Byer, 1972; Lucas, 2004). In the Bourdieusian concept of capital, these different socialisations influence the capitals and habitus of an agent**,** thus creating different perceptions of employability in students, perceptions that need to be addressed by HEIs. In order to achieve this, an understanding of students' social background and subsequent HE experience becomes important. In Botswana, where this study is based, there has been an increase in the number of students entering HEIs from non-traditional backgrounds which means they come with more varied capitals and socialisation. The lack of social and cultural capital could therefore limit students' knowledge of the importance of employability and the programmes that can help enhance these as mentioned by Bulawa et al. (2017). The influence of student backgrounds on individuals has been studied by theorists such as Bourdieu and his theories influencing employability are detailed in Section 2.7.

2.7 Bourdieu's theories and their applications in understanding employability

Pierre Bourdieu, the French sociologist, has had a significant impact on various dimensions of education and employability through his extensive work in the area of sociology and this has extended to aspects of culture, politics, and education. This study will focus on the experiences of students entering HEIs from a variety of socio-cultural contexts as well as discussing the influence of the different forms of capital on their employability. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the increasing diversity of students entering higher education highlights the importance of understanding how differences in their backgrounds impact their employability while amplifying the need for universities to understand the influence of this on students. The link between one's background and employability has been explored by Tomlinson (2017) who defines employability using the theory of capital, as stated earlier in this chapter. This definition demonstrates that, despite generic expectations regarding what makes graduates employable, their social and cultural capital, as detailed in the following sections, can play an important role in shaping and enhancing their employability throughout their journey at HEIs. Sections 2.7.1, 2.7.2 and 2.8 will cover both the key concepts of Bourdieu's theories and some of the critiques of his theoretical framework.

2.7.1 Forms of Capital and Employability

Bourdieu (1986) presents three forms of capital in his work, *The Forms of Capital,* namely economic, cultural and social. According to Bourdieu, "capital is accumulated labour (in its materialised form or its 'incorporated,' embodied form) which, when appropriated on a private, i.e., exclusive, basis by agents or groups of agents, enables them to appropriate social energy in the form of reified or living labour" (p. 15). He goes on to elaborate that these forms of capital are accumulated over time and that the structure and distribution of these

capitals depict the structure and functioning of the social world. In this manner capital, according to him, is not restricted to what is defined by economic theories while economic capital refers to the creation or existence of wealth through economic activity. Grenfell (2012) states that capital is the energy that drives the field while "the inequalities associated with cultural capital reflect inequalities in capacities to acquire capital which themselves reflect prior inequalities in the possession of cultural capital" (p. 106). The inequalities that exist between individuals in respect of capitals because of their varied social status can determine why a student who comes from an educated and gainfully employed family background could be in a better position to comprehend employability and use subsequent opportunities to deepen that employability. From a Bourdieusian perspective, although economic capital forms the basis of all types of capital, social and cultural capital can also be transformed into economic capital (Bourdieu, 1986).

According to Bourdieu (1986), cultural capital can be further divided into three forms, namely, embodied, objectified and institutionalised states respectively: Embodied state – cultural capital that is consciously acquired and passively inherited by socialisation to culture and tradition; Objectified state – cultural capital comprised of the material possessions of the individual; and the Institutionalised state – cultural capital formally recognised by an institution through an academic credential or professional qualification. The embodied capital or wealth which forms part of one's habitus cannot be transmitted easily from one agent to another, but Bourdieu adds that the accumulation of cultural capital by an individual is also limited by their own capacity despite being passed on through generations. Bourdieu further introduced the concept of two dimensions for habitus and cultural capital, namely "accomplishment and transposability" (Grenfell, 2012, p. 111). This concept implies that an agent can have high levels of cultural capital due to their accomplishments in a specific field and not necessarily due to their socio-economic status. This cultural capital can be inculcated

in an agent and expressed as their habitus in relation to that field where this accomplishment is obtained. However, this 'well-formed' capital or habitus cannot be expected to give the agent the same achievement in another field. The cultural capital of students coming from socio-economic backgrounds where their parents are not educated or they are engaged in informal employment or business contrasts with the capital of those students who come from families where their parents are educated and in formal urban employment. Cultural capital passed through generations contributes to the success of an individual by their ability to enhance their material possessions and educational attainments (Bourdieu, 1977; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990).

Bourdieu (1986) defines social capital as

> … the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition. In other words, to obtain membership in a group which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively- owned capital, a 'credential' which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word (p.21).

The forms of capital that exist and function within a given field define social fields while the extent of the capital that people possess defines where they are placed within the field. Field can refer to structured spaces which, as Grenfell (2012) states, was a concept developed by Bourdieu to investigate human activity. A field is organised around specific types of capitals and can contain an accumulation of various capitals. According to Grenfell (2012), an agent in a field who comes in with certain levels of capital will be able to leverage these capitals and enhance them by taking advantage of the capitals provided by the field. Each field has its own set of rules known as 'doxa' and the position of an individual with the field is determined by the symbolic capital one possesses. As per Bourdieu, doxa refers to something that is natural and taken for granted. However, positions are transferrable across fields and can be altered to reduce social inequalities through the transformation of contexts

via various external interventions. Holmes (2013) and Tomlinson (2017) have argued that the educational capital an individual obtains can be made more tangible in terms of employability with social positioning, which can be termed as social capital. This reiterates the importance of one's social capital in enhancing their employability.

In his theory of social capital, Bourdieu (1986) emphasises the influence of class differences on an individual's level of social capital. Individuals belonging to the same social class tend to share many common features in terms of their taste, their families, and their academic capital; this in turn gives them the advantage of stronger inherited cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984). Possessing these strong forms of capital gives individuals the self-assurance that can enhance their opportunities for success once they obtain a good qualification as well (Bourdieu, 1984). Bourdieu goes further elaborate that the 'field of possibles' (p.111) for a given agent within a certain space or trajectory is influenced by the events that happen within that space and Burke (2015) expands on this to state that this creates a 'classed level of confidence' in individuals within a specific social space.

2.7.2 Socio-cultural background as an influence on social and cultural capital

Cultural capital is a means by which to understand the role that educational inequalities play in attaching success or failure to inherent factors (such as higher intelligence). The concept also pays attention to differences between agents' schooling and family backgrounds. In addition, the embodied cultural capital of an agent is "identical to the formation of the habitus" (Grenfell, 2012 p. 110). Bourdieu introduces habitus as a tool to explain the interrelationship between agency and the field around it, whereby agency is the capacity of the individual to act independently and exercise freewill. Here one can see that habitus, field and capital are related to one another and Bourdieu (1984) elaborates on this using the

formula (habitus X capital) + Field = Practice (p. 101). Reay (2004) explores this relationship, arguing that habitus underlies one's cultural capital and thus creates an intrinsic link between the two concepts, thus making it important to understand the influence of background on a given graduate's perception of employability.

'Fields' are what Bourdieu envisioned to be the distinct divisions of the social world – e.g. art, law, literature education etc., each with its own sets of rules and practices. Following Bourdieu's theory of field, a social field is formed by set practices that are guided by certain roles and rules where each agent occupies a certain social position. A field of work can involve varying levels of cultural, social and economic capital (Iellatchitch & Mayrhofer, 2001) and in this context the field of work in Botswana's rural villages is mostly informal and agriculture-based, and there is a major change in people's field when they move to the urban employment field where most of individuals are educated and in formal employment (Stephens et al., 1977).

Bourdieu's concept of habitus has been extremely influential and referenced by a multitude of studies. Habitus refers to "systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures" (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 72). In addition, habitus acts as a form of social logic (a set of structured principles) which links the person to a particular position in a given context through their experiences in the social world that they inhabit. Grenfell (2012) states that habitus can be better understood in relation to the field of the agent since any changes to the relational field can influence habitus. He clarifies that, according to Bourdieu, a field provides potentialities while an agent who has adapted to a specific field will be able to take advantage of these opportunities. According to Bourdieu, an agent's experiences during school are shaped by his family's habitus while experiences in the school shape all subsequent experiences (Bourdieu, 1977).

Though habitus is very closely linked to cultural capital and works in relation to a field, authors like Davey (2009) and Reay (1995) have pointed out the difficulties in operationalising habitus since it is a relational concept unlike capital. Grenfell (2012) states that "the formation of habitus takes place initially within the family, the domestic habitus, but, for Bourdieu, the most important agency is education where capital assumes an institutionalised form" (p.103). This statement reiterates that, though an agent comes into a field with a habitus that is created by one's past history, this habitus tends to undergo changes if there are changes within the field because habitus exists in relation to the field. According to Bourdieu, habitus also creates in people a homogeneous set of habits, attitudes, and practices, leading to an autonomous sense of self-identity (Bourdieu, 1990). These customs and rituals create a mindset within the community whereby individuals imitate the actions of each other, thus creating a habitus, which makes it very difficult to measure because it is defined by an individual's disposition.

Though the two major influences on an individual are family and education, exposure to certain social conditions can influence and create changes in an agent in line with the external environment (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Thus, an individual's behaviour and attributes are moulded by their social background, which include parental influences on their life, the surroundings they grew up in, the influence of extended family members, and the schools that they attend. Bourdieu's sociology of education explains how social discipline and cultural mechanisms tend to create social inequalities that are reproduced by education (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992); this is also the case in the context of Botswana where most of the educated population move to the cities, creating a different social field between the rural and urban settings.

The concept of habitus is closely linked with the field, which "may be defined as a network, or a configuration, of objective relations between positions" (Bourdieu &

Wacquant, 1992, p. 97) and, as per Reay (2004), the workings of habitus link capital and field, thereby shaping the agent's practice. However, habitus is embodied within an individual and thus can differ within a social group (Quaye, 2014). Hence, in a field, different capitals are identifiable because an individual occupies a distinct position within a given field, thereby helping to underline the role specific forms of capital play in their practice and agency. Grenfell (2012) reiterates this relationship between field, capital and habitus by stating that an agent coming into a field with a certain capital can leverage that capital to take advantage of what the field has to offer, thereby enhancing their existing capital.

When students move from their family backgrounds into the field of higher education, there can be dissonance between the field they come from and the one that they enter (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990). Students coming into higher education from different backgrounds can experience a variety of pressures in their new environment and some may have to scale themselves up to the increasing demand of performing to the levels of everyone else in the system (Bourdieu, 1990). Grenfell (2012) argues that fields are not level for everyone, and that children from wealthier and educated families can end up succeeding during their education because they can articulate themselves better and this can also translate into their being successful in the job market; "the formation of habitus takes place initially within the family, the domestic habitus, but, for Bourdieu, the most important agency is education where capital assumes an institutionalized form" (p.103). This also shows the importance of family background in shaping an individual's capital. According to Burke (2015), a student's background can determine how they adapt to their schooling and the experiences they have during their studies. He adds that institutions offer different experiences to students, which brings about transformations in individuals. Therefore, it is imperative for HEIs to have an understanding of students' experiences regardless of their

backgrounds, thereby helping them to implement measures that can be beneficial to students despite their significant variations in capital and habitus.

The variations in the social positions when they enter higher education can also be a factor in determining their engagement with extracurricular activities on campus (Stevenson & Clegg, 2011), which is seen as a way of enhancing one's employability. Authors such as Costa et al. (2019) and Burke (2009) also argue that an individual's habitus is influenced by their social journey and personal experiences, thus making it important for HEIs to provide an environment that will help the students expand and adapt to the requirements of different labour landscapes. An individual's emotions and responses to happenings around them can be influenced to a great extent by the social background (Matthaus, 2017) they come from and the influence of this field can shape how they look at life and their life plans (Pimlott-Wilson, 2011). When considering the theories of Bourdieu, it is important to engage with the concept of capital which along with habitus and field determines their practice. However, though habitus has been used alongside capital and field, it is a very relational concept and, unlike capital that can be scrutinised in relation to a field (Davey, 2009), habitus cannot be operationalised or measured.

2.8 Critiques of Bourdieu's theories and why this framework is suited to this study

Bourdieu's theories have been critiqued by many authors in relation to the interpretation and structuring of habitus and the manner in which this affects an individual or an agent's reflexivity. Jenkins (2002) argues that using the concept of habitus is like a bridgebuilding exercise between subjectivism and objectivism (p.45) and does not agree with Bourdieu's notion of an individual's social life as a reflection of the aggregation of one's individual behaviour. According to Jenkins (2002) habitus takes away the influence of an agent over

structures but instead is embodied within the agent and is a "mediating link between individuals' subjective worlds and the cultural world into which they are born and which they share with others" (p. 46). Jenkins (2002) further adds that habitus is derived unconsciously from constantly being in a field and is not influenced by the rules and principles that are present in a social field. However, in clarifying Bourdieu's concepts, Grenfell (2012) states that habitus defines how one brings one's history into present day circumstances while acting as a link between the social field and the individual. Grenfell (2012) adds that habitus is a form of capital and its existence is depicted through attitudes and dispositions. Indeed, in this interpretation capital can be understood as the energy that drives the development of a field. Thus, in the context of this study, the practice of an agent based on the social and cultural capital they possess in relation to the field they occupy as well as the changes caused by virtue of changes in the field could explain the differences in a given student becoming employable in the labour market.

Meanwhile, Archer (2003) argues that structure can be subjective while agency is objective and states that the social outcome for an agent is dependent on the interplay between agency and the structures and cultures in the field. According to Archer (2003), an agent is not impacted by social and cultural structures and individuals from similar backgrounds can act in different ways. This is in contrast to Bourdieu (1990) who mentions that one's capital and habitus are influenced by one's environment. Jenkins (2002) also argues that is not possible to change one's habitus unless through some external interventions in relation to the social group concerned. Bourdieu's (1984) analytic tool kit – including the concepts of field, capital and habitus – offers a means of linking structures to processes by interrogating the realities of social phenomena, thereby causing changes in the agent. Reay (2004) has mentioned that habitus being permeable which is reiterated by Burke (2015) who

observes that habitus needs to be malleable if it is to provide a bridge between structure and agency.

Jenkins (2002) goes on to elaborate that the field constitutes a "structured system of social positions" (p.53) while the stakes in the field are referred to as 'capital' which, according to Jenkins, is not clarified by Bourdieu in his theories. Social capital, as per Bourdieu (1986), is not just defined by the vast networks that emerge but by the social position held within the network and this in turn impacts the cultural and economic capital of the individual. While Jenkins (2002) has criticised Bourdieu's concept of habitus by stating that the habitus of an agent is not influenced by the social field, Archer (2003) focuses on the individual as opposed to the dynamics of the social and cultural field around them. However, Bourdieu's concept of the relationship between habitus, social positioning and field provides a framework for understanding the influence of capital and field on an agent and how changes to a field can impact the capital and habitus. Further, as per Bourdieu, the formation of habitus is not just in the initial years but is constantly transformed throughout the trajectory of their life (Burke, 2015). As mentioned above, habitus as a concept cannot be operationalised, hence in this research we are looking at how social and cultural capital can influence graduate employability. For this Bourdieu's conceptual tools provide a suitable framework to understand the influence of field on the cultural and social capital of an individual. Bourdieu's concept of field is also very useful when trying to understand the changes in capitals that will result from the changes to students' fields by moving from, say, a field of informal employment to urban employment.

In African culture, 'Ubuntu' is a strongly embedded concept, an idea that means that a person is defined by the community of persons around him or her (Karsten & Illa, 2005). Karsten and Illa go on to state that Ubuntu can shape a habitus even though people within the group hold different positions. Therefore, the use of Bourdieu's tools of habitus, field and

capital in this study offer the prospect of understanding the impact of these factors on graduate employability within an African context. In his work on graduate employability, Holmes (2017) has reiterated the importance of understanding the influence of structure and agency on employability and the relationship between these factors in various contexts. Harry, Chinyamurunndi and Mjoli (2018) in a study conducted in a university in South Africa state that factors such as socio-economic status, poor education systems and social networks influenced student employability to a great extent. In Botswana the difference between the various social classes is due mainly to the urban and rural experiences of the population as can be seen below.

Botswana has had a high rate of urbanisation post-independence (Stephen et al., 1977; Marr, 2019), which has also resulted in the migration of many people to urban areas, resulting in a class difference in terms of comparatively richer people being able to move to urban areas and the relatively poor being left in the villages (Wikan, 2004). Therefore, this move creates a major change in families' social capital and habitus by providing them with access to many amenities that the cities offer (Stephens, Macliver, & Weimer-Stutze, 1977b; Wikan, 2004). Wider access to HE now compared to in the past provides an opportunity to those from a variety of fields to enhance their cultural capital by experiencing HE, thereby improving their economic and eventually social capital.

Holmes (2013) brings out the three perspectives on employability: possessive, based on the skills and attributes possessed by graduates; positional, shaped by the social positioning of an individual and related to Bourdieu's theory of the influence of social and cultural capital on an individual; and processual perspective, where the focus is on graduate identity, rather than skills. HEIs have been looking at employability from the possessive approach of graduates and hence have been trying to enhance graduate employability through skills enhancement using various initiatives, as informed by numerous research studies on

employability models by Pool and Sewell (2007), Coetzee (2014), and Knight and Yorke (2003). Section 2.9 will explore some of the initiatives and models that are currently implemented in HEIs and review these to determine if they cater for the diversified student population, while in the process identifying the gaps as a response to the second research question, which looks at the ways in which HEIs can enhance employability.

2.9 Employability models: The basis of employability in HEIs

As mentioned by Holmes (2013), HEIs have mostly considered employability from a possessive perspective and hence considered a variety of employability models, such as the CareerEDGE model (Pool & Sewell, 2007), the Understanding, Skills, Efficacy beliefs and Metacognition (USEM) model (Knight & Yorke, 2003), and the Graduate Skills and Attributes Scale (GSAS) (Coetzee, 2014) as the basis to measure the skills acquired by graduates during their studies at their respective institutions. In the CareerEDGE model, Pool and Sewell (2007) state that students require a combination of: a degree, denoting subject knowledge and understanding of a particular discipline; generic skills, supporting the discipline knowledge of the student; emotional intelligence, giving added motivation to students to achieve more; career development learning, consisting of development workshops and similar initiatives that can help enhance self-awareness in students while also helping them to better project themselves to prospective employers; and, finally, work experience, relating to the experience of employment that students obtain during their education. When considering this model, Pool and Sewell (2007) have not distinguished between the varying needs of students and have assumed that students entering HEIs are homogeneous, therefore they will have similar experiences of employability initiatives. According to Hillage and Pollard (1998), even if a person possesses all the necessary employability skills, the ability to exploit them to the maximum varies based on an individual's personal circumstances and

well as on other external factors, which reiterates the importance of understanding the experiences of students in HEIs.

Another model that has influenced HEIs in their attempts to improve graduate employability is the USEM model. Knight and Yorke's (2003) USEM model, expanded to include Understanding, Skills, Efficacy and Metacognition, elaborates the argument that employability is not just about having subject specific knowledge (understanding) but is a convergence of knowledge, skills (also known as general social practices), reflective thinking (metacognition), and incremental self-theories (providing individuals with the attributes of efficacy) (p.8). This model brings out the importance of efficacy and metacognition in developing people's personal attributes and thus their capability to apply their knowledge, thereby helping them to become more employable. Clark (2018) and Holmes (2013) in their discussions of various employability models highlight the importance of social positioning in graduate employability, which needs to be factored into these models (Section 2.11 reviews the various employability models based on Bourdieu's theory). This study also examines critically the impact of one's capital on these models and the dangers of adopting these models without considering the impact different forms of capital have on them.

Closer to home in South Africa, Coetzee (2014) developed the Graduate Skills and Attributes Scale (GSAS) which focusses on an eight-dimensional framework of generic skills that enhance graduate employability. This model was intended to assist curriculum developers with assessors bringing these into the pedagogical practices of teaching and learning. Though the tool is valuable and provided reliable results in terms of measuring the graduateness of students, this was developed from a study of a particular target audience belonging to one homogeneous race, one gender, and a particular discipline. Therefore, there is a need to vary the curriculum to suit the skill levels of various categories of students, which has not been previously considered.

These models have been discussed at length in the paragraphs above, and based on these and similar models and studies, have proved very influential in terms of HEIs' pursuit of interventions both within and outside the curriculum in an attempt to enhance graduate employability and skills. However, one of the key elements that does not seem to have been considered by these models is the need for adaptability to suit a diverse set of students from different socio-cultural backgrounds. Tholen (2015) highlights the interplay between social structures and the labour market and the influence of agency and structure on employability. With more and more students coming to HEIs from diverse backgrounds, it is important for HEIs to understand the perception of employability among students, which might be achieved by understanding their experiences of the various initiatives already in place in HEIs.

Clarke (2018) states that with students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds entering HEIs, there is an onus on universities to create an awareness of attributes within these graduates, which in turn can help their self-confidence and thus their employability. Clarke further states that social capital created by virtue of attending universities with higher rankings is also a factor contributing to graduate employability, a view which is also echoed by Holmes (2013) using his positional approach to employability. In this study, Holmes dispenses the notion that employability attributes can be possessed and argues that employability can be positional based on the social positioning of individuals, and these are elements ignored by the models such as USEM (Holmes, 2013). This underlines why it is important to understand the influence of social standing on employability. Changes in an individual's environment could affect their habitus in terms of increased confidence which is their "field of possibles", thereby better preparing them to meet the challenges of the labour market (Costa et al., 2019). Clarke and Zukas (2013) also echo the sentiments that a graduate's transition into employment is greatly affected by their background consisting of their family, schooling and participation in various social activities. The models above have

not considered the influence of social positioning on an individual and hence their social and cultural capital, and this becomes important when diversity in HEIs is increasing.

HEIs have been informed by the above models and other existing research on the impact of curricular and extracurricular activities in assisting graduates enhance their employability. By understanding existing research, we can analyse if these interventions are adapted to the needs of students from a variety of backgrounds, thereby highlighting the gaps that need to be addressed by HEIs.

2.10 Current HEI interventions that attempt to enhance employability

Based on the employability models detailed above as other research studies, HEIs implemented various interventions with a view to enhancing graduate employability. These were curricular, extra-curricular and work based interventions, while Sections 2.10.1-2.10.3 look at whether these have addressed the needs of the diversity of students entering HEIs.

2.10.1 Curricular interventions

As mentioned above, Coetzee (2014) came up with interventions that could be adopted by curriculum designers to incorporate learning and assessment activities into the curriculum with a view to cultivating necessary mindsets and attributes in students that will make them employable. In the upper middle income countries, employers have raised concerns that the curricula offered by HEIs do not meet market requirements and, in response to this, institutions have implemented different strategies, such as 'vocationalising' the curriculum (Nthebolang, 2013), introducing the use of project-based learning which was seen as enhancing the attributes of critical thinking, communication, leadership, and problem-solving (Moalosi et al., 2017), and work-integrated learning (Taylor & Govender, 2017). In UK

universities, Rae (2007) found a resistance from academic staff in terms of adapting to these changes.

While changes are being made to HEIs' curricula, there is a perception among employers, as alluded to by Greenbank (2015), that participation in extra-curricular activities (ECAs) enhances graduate employability. Similarly, students at many universities are also looking at ECAs as a way of improving their employability (Thompson et al., 2013). Studies conducted by researchers such as Kinash, Crane, Judd and Knight (2016) in Australia and Thompson, Clark, Walker and Whyatt (2013) in the UK have shown the importance of extracurricular activities in enhancing graduate employability. The importance of extracurricular activities is seen differently by students, academics and industry, as evidenced by the various studies discussed below.

2.10.2 Extracurricular activities as a means of enhancing employability

Extracurricular activities (henceforth ECAs) refer to those activities outside of classroom and one of the definitions ECAs is "… activities and events that students engage in, which are not part of their formal degree classification such as hobbies, social groups, sporting, cultural or religious activities and voluntary or paid work; these things are part of the wider 'student experience'" (Thompson, Clark, Walker, & Whyatt, 2013, p.136). Thompson et al. (2013) in the UK and Kinash et al. (2016) in Australia point out that many students consider extracurricular activities to enhance their employability, thereby improving their self-confidence and social, planning and organising skills respectively. However, there are some students who believe that participating in activities distracts them from their academic work and this is also endorsed by some academic staff (Thompson et al., 2013; Clegg et al., 2010). In the UK it was seen that students who come to universities from less privileged settings

tend to disengage with ECAs because of the pressure of wanting to work harder academically, thus they have very little time to spare for other activities (Clegg, 2011) and tend to end up performing well academically. As Bourdieu (1990) points out, the capital of an individual can be influenced by factors in the social field they occupy and, with students from less privileged or first time graduates, the lack of awareness of the benefits of ECAs in enhancing their employability could play a major part in their apathy to participate in these activities.

Employers also favour student participation in activities since they believe that this enhances skills such as teamwork, communication, and confidence (Allen, Bullough, Cole, Shibli, & Wilson, 2013). Closer to home in Africa, in a study from Nigeria (Pitan, 2016), a middle-income country, it has been shown that the introduction of specific employability development opportunities (EDOs) by universities has had a positive impact on student employability as it provides them with exposure to real-life experiences. By exposing them to real-life experiences, there can be a change in the cultural and social capital of students, especially for those who have grown up in environments which are completely different to those present in HEIs and their surroundings. This exposure to a different social context could impact the students' self-confidence, thereby elevating their aspirations (Burke, 2015) and the 'field of possibles' as mentioned by Bourdieu (1977).

Bridgstock (2009) also adds that knowledge about the work environment is critical for graduates alongside their disciplinary knowledge, since the latter will help them traverse the world of work through better career management processes.

2.10.3 Workplace attachment and industry links: Enhancing employability

In addition to the curricular and extracurricular activities provided by HEIs, workplace attachment and industry links are seen as very important in enhancing graduate employability (Jackson, 2014). One of the factors that has improved the employability of graduates is the relationship HEIs develop with industry and the latter's perception of the qualifications delivered by a given institution and the performance of its graduates (Cai, 2013). Establishing these industry links could help the students to enhance their social and cultural capital. However, it should also be noted that if employers prefer certain institutions over others, this could also affect different classes of students and graduates who are not able to make it to those institutions and instead study at other HEIs (Egbetokun, 2015; Oyebisi, Ilori, & Nassar, 1996; Vaaland & Ishengoma, 2016).

Besides internships and work experience, collaboration between industry and universities can take the form of site visits, guest lectures, and closer working and collaboration between industry and academic faculties (Nel & Neale-Shutte, 2013). In a study conducted in Australia, it emerged that the some of the strategies that worked well in terms of enhancing graduate employability included building graduate portfolios, engaging in social networks, establishing mentoring networks, and providing career advice (Kinash et al., 2014). By following these strategies, students from different backgrounds can have the opportunity to be exposed to different experiences which can also improve their skills and self-confidence while enhancing their social connections, thereby upgrading their social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977, 1990).

Researchers including Holmes (2013) and Hillage and Pollard (1998) have argued that factors such as family background and social class have a bearing on a given individual's employability assets, either directly or indirectly. Little or no importance is ascribed to the

backgrounds and heterogeneous cultural and social capital of students when implementing employability initiatives while a study by Costa et al. (2019) has considered the aspect of habitus and its influence of graduate employment strategies.

In many middles-income countries, governments have come up with initiatives to increase access to education and therefore students entering HEIs come from diverse backgrounds and social strata, unlike in the past. Therefore, it becomes crucial for HEIs to ensure that the schemes implemented are inclusive and able to meet the needs of all students, not just a select few.

2.11 Bourdieu's theories and employability as adopted by HEIs

HEIs have introduced many initiatives to enhance graduate employability based on several studies conducted and as detailed in section 2.10. This section will critique some of these initiatives using the Bourdieusian lens to understand if these have considered students' backgrounds. Kalfa and Taksa (2015) have analysed Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital in terms of graduate employability and argue that obtaining transferable skills, which are critical for graduate employability along with a university degree, enhances graduates' embodied cultural capital. While the USEM model discussed above considers the characteristics of the individual, including their family background, Clark and Zukas (2013) point out that an individual's employability can be affected by the schools they attended and the activities they participate in during their HE. The authors also argue that employability means the ability to display the knowledge gained during an individual's period of study which is the cultural capital of an individual. Thus, it becomes critical to understand the influence of an individual's field, cultural and social capital, and habitus on their practice and thereby their impact on graduate employability.

The other models mentioned above – the CareerEDGE and GSAS models – do not consider the impact of Bourdieusian concepts and presume that the interventions suggested will benefit all students equally. One of the studies conducted in South Africa at a rural university has shown that a significant contributor to employability can be the exposure to opportunities provided in schools. Harry, Chinyamurindi and Mjoli (2018) have found that language skills played a key role in employability since students coming into HEIs had not used English, which is the linguistic medium used most often in higher education. This lack of linguistic knowledge affects students' academic achievement and could impact on their self-confidence and thus their field of possibles. The above study also found that students from rural backgrounds were disadvantaged in understanding the labour market due to lack of career guidance in schools as well as their limited social networks (Harry et al., 2018).

As has been argued, "Employability is a psychosocial construct" (Creed & Gagliardi, 2015, p.22). Several external and internal factors mould students and graduates and thus affect their employability such as career development skills, social networks and self-efficacy. According to Bourdieusian theory, "employability depends upon habitus" (Clark & Zukas, 2013, p.210). Thus, according to Clark and Zukas, graduate employability is influenced by factors such as upbringing location, class, gender, and ethnicity, and it is imperative to understand the given graduate's school experiences and capacity or willingness to participate in social activities, which would enable a successful transition to the world of employment. This also reiterates the influence of one's background on forming social and cultural capital due to a given graduate's position within the field. In this context, "socio-cultural dimensions, particularly social class, have a considerable influence in shaping individual's formative experiences, which in turn shape subsequent educational experiences and beyond" (Tomlinson & Holmes, 2017, p.8).

Where universities attract students from rural backgrounds – which is the case in most middle-income countries – their lack of exposure to the labour market and the world of work as well as the social networks they belong to play an important role in graduate employability (Harry et al., 2018). In addition, the lack of English language proficiency and computer literacy (Griesel & Parker, 2009) affects the employability of graduates. Studies in Uganda conducted by Ngoma and Ntale (2016) attempting to understand the correlation between career identity, psychological capital and social capital on graduate employability emphasise that social capital is an important factor in this relationship. The psychological capital referred to in this study concerns the confidence of graduates and is mentioned here only to show the impact of social capital on one's level of confidence. Creed and Gagliardi (2015) point out that when students have to make career compromises when entering HE because of either their academic capability or other reasons (such as lack of finances), they feel that they are lowering their well-being, resulting in them having low self-esteem. A study by Burke et al. (2009) suggests that an individual's confidence is enhanced by the contacts and connections one is able to make and how the enhancement of social capital provides power and translates into self-efficacy for individuals. Hence, social, cultural and economic considerations contribute to the 'field of possibles' of individuals (Burke et al., 2009), thereby becoming a significant contributor to graduate employability.

2.12 Conclusion

As seen above, the concept of employability and how this can be enhanced in graduates has been driven predominantly by studies that have focussed on enhancing skills and attributes, while it has been assumed that HEI students are largely homogeneous. Factors such as students' backgrounds as well as their social and cultural capital which influence the agents in a particular field (Bourdieu, 1977), have not been considered by HEIs in the development

of initiatives to enhance graduate employability. It is important for HEIs to understand the experience of students from a variety of backgrounds so that they can work to enhance their employability.

Studies have reiterated the importance of skills in enhancing employability and the measures that can be implemented to achieve this. In many middle-income countries, HEIs are challenged by having students from dichotomous locations – rural and urban and varied in terms of their culture, economic status, race, and gender. However, there does not seem to be much research conducted in middle income countries focussed on understanding the different expectations of students about employability using Bourdieu's theory of social capital and habitus.

This literature review has identified the gaps that exist in understanding how personal factors such as habitus and capital influence graduate employability. In order to understand the influence of a variety of backgrounds on the employability of graduates in Botswana, it was necessary to understand the experiences of students who have been part of HEIs while participating in many of the latter's initiatives. Therefore, it was decided to undertake micro-level research studying the experiences of students at a university in Botswana. Once the relationship between the influence of social and cultural capital shaped by students' socio-economic background and engagement with employability schemes is established, the research might be able to be applied to a wider national context to the benefit of the entire sector and also, potentially, to other low- to middle-income countries.

Chapter 3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction and research rationale

The purpose of this study is to understand the influence of socio-economic factors on student employability in a middle-income country and recommend ways in which HEIs in similar settings can help students from diverse backgrounds to enhance their employability. As mentioned in Chapter 2, this study uses Bourdieu's concepts as the basis of its theoretical framework to identify the influence of background on the experiences of students regarding employability. HEIs in Botswana, like those in other middle-income countries, have implemented initiatives to enhance the employability of their graduates based on various studies, as elaborated in the literature review.

The literature review considered different employability schemes and initiatives, both curricular and non-curricular, implemented in many HEIs across the world. Some of these studies have considered employers' perspectives on employability and the skills they expect in graduates and summarised these into a range of models that can be used by HEIs to implement interventions. The literature review also identified the gaps in the known literature relating to the influence of socio-economic factors on students' comprehension of the importance and benefits of these HEI employability initiatives. With a view to understanding the influence of social and cultural capital on graduate employability, it was decided to conduct an exploratory study on the experiences of students who have participated in the employability initiatives at a university in Botswana.

Given the increase of students from rural backgrounds entering HEIs in middle income countries, such as Botswana, this study attempts a deeper understanding of the impact

of the varied socio-economic factors on employability of graduates. A study of this nature has not been conducted in Botswana, the results of which could be useful to understand the impact in other middle-income countries. When reviewing studies on employability, it was found that the literature on graduate employability based in Botswana was very minimal as compared to that dealing with developed countries. Thus, this study could contribute to the literature on employability. Employability studies in Botswana have looked mainly at students' perceptions of employability alongside employers' expectations of graduate skills and has never considered the socio-economic factors affecting employability. The knowledge gained from this research will help HEIs to understand the impact of background and capital on graduate employability while assisting such institutions in developing initiatives that can help an increasingly diverse set of students.

3.2 Research Questions

Based on the gaps identified in the literature review, the study focussed on the following questions which could provide some insights into the experiences of students from diverse backgrounds in HEIs. The primary question was based on an exploration of the influence of an individual's social and cultural capital on employability and the secondary question was concerned with, from a practitioner's point of view, providing insights into what HEIs might implement in order to develop more inclusive employability initiatives:

3.2.1 How does the social and cultural capital of students affect the employability of graduates in Botswana?

3.2.2 How can universities in middle income countries enhance the employability of their students?

In this chapter, the research paradigm, research design, operationalisation of Bourdieu's key concepts, data collection methods, data analysis procedures, researcher positionality and ethical stance will be covered under their respective sections.

3.3 Research Paradigm

A research paradigm has been defined as a "basic set of beliefs that guide action" (Guba, 1990, cited by Creswell, 2013, p.18). Thus, the paradigm reflects the worldview of the research and guides the researcher on how to conduct the research and interpret the results (Bryman, 2012). This chapter sets out the research paradigm and covers the research's ontology, epistemology, axiology and methodology based on the work of Creswell (2013), Bryman (2012) and Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011). Bourdieu's theoretical tools of habitus and cultural and social capital will provide the tools through which to analyse the experiences of the participants and establish the influence of factors caused by the student backgrounds on graduate employability.

The university which is the site of this research has students from a variety of backgrounds and has implemented many employability initiatives for their benefit. The research was approached from a constructivist perspective because the researcher had an in-depth knowledge of the employability schemes introduced and was also aware of the apathy of students in terms of their participation in these programmes. Furthermore, the use of constructivism is justified by the researcher having foreknowledge of the organisation as stated by Brannick and Coghlan (2007). As mentioned in Bourdieu's (1990) *The Logic of Practice*, social science research is "set up between subjectivism and objectivism" (p.25). The students and graduates in the study are located within objective social structures and when they reflect on and narrate their experiences before entering HEIs and their time in university, these reflections are also understandably subjective. Thus, as a researcher, it is

also important to understand an agent's experiences within a specific field as well as the impact of changes to that same field, thereby helping one to make deductive conclusions.

The mindsets of students and graduates are shaped by their perceptions of the world, their backgrounds, the prevailing social structures, and their experiences within these structures. The research questions detailed above will explore the perspectives of students and graduates regarding the benefits of engaging with various initiatives while also weaving in my experiences as a researcher, particularly given my current professional role. The research questions are indirectly focussed on students' experiences in terms of engaging with various activities. Hence, in order to understand their experiences, the epistemology is based on the researcher's knowledge of the participants (Creswell, 2013). A researcher also needs to gather evidence from the participants' subjective experiences while using their own experience to interpret this evidence. When following the constructivist approach, researchers do not start with a theory but develop one by using inductive and interpretive approaches as well as by drawing on personal experience (Creswell, 2013; Pouillot, 2007). As part of this research approach, the interview questions are broad-based so as to allow participants to open up and share experiences, thus helping the researcher to gather adequate information regarding a given individual's background and social context. The researcher then uses their own interpretation of the given circumstances to derive findings; the latter are also influenced by their own background and experiences (Creswell, 2013).

Axiology relates to the values and ethics followed by a researcher in their study. In a qualitative study carried out by a practitioner, the researcher understands that there are various elements of bias present, hence they must bring their own interpretation to supplement the information gathered from the field. The researcher needs to acknowledge clearly where their own interpretations are introduced (Creswell, 2013). In order for the researcher to understand the influence of capital, it was necessary to interpret the details

provided by the participants regarding both their backgrounds and experiences of employability schemes. When responding to the questions, the participants could also bring to bear their perceptions and bias, which could skew the interpretations.

Finally, a methodology also relates to the philosophies that guide the data gathering and analysis. In qualitative research, the methodology followed will be inductive and change as per the experiences of the researcher through the course of the study. The researcher also has the freedom to vary the research questions formulated according to the evidence and responses that emerge from the interviews and then identify the data answering the revised questions (Creswell, 2013). Therefore, asking semi-structured interview questions that could be varied based on the response of the participants assisted in obtaining information necessary to make conclusions.

3.4 Research Design

Based on the epistemology and ontology outlined in the paradigm above, this research will adopt a constructivist framework. The thesis will be based on participants' experiences and understanding of employability while elaborating on their backgrounds and social and cultural standing. Additionally, my in-depth knowledge of the schemes will help to interpret these experiences and arrive at the findings. Since there was a need to understand the participants' different experiences, which can help with an interpretivist approach**,** it is understandable that the research is qualitative (Bryman, 2012). As mentioned in Chapter 1, the study attempts to understand the details of students' backgrounds, gain insights into their levels of social and cultural capital, in addition to appreciating their experiences and perceptions of employability. Therefore, it was critical to explore the participants' stories concerning their upbringing, including their families, schooling, and their higher education experiences. As the research is exploratory, it was also essential to observe how the responses

and discussions influence a given participant's behaviour (Maxwell, 2014). A qualitative approach allows researchers to take greater interest in the participants' points while also reflecting on their experience of their upbringing and education.

As mentioned above, this study is exploratory in nature and seeks to appreciate students and graduates' experiences. Interviewing is an effective method of acquiring knowledge regarding one's history, experiences and other significant social issues (Creswell, 2013; Seidman, 2006). Burke (2011) points out that in order to comprehend habitus, which is a very complicated phenomenon, it is essential to understand a participant's story while casting light on their lived experiences. Bourdieu did not support biographical studies, therefore one way of comprehending habitus, according to him, is to be alive to the repetitions in a person's story. Burke (2011) discusses various views on biographical research and how this can be modified to address agency and structure in a social context. Burke adds that, in a modified biographical approach, one should consider the life history of the participant in relation to the structure of their society and not on its own. Therefore, in the case of this research, it was seen as appropriate to explore details of the life of the participants, especially with regard to their upbringing, family life and school experiences so that the linkages between agency and structure could be established using a part-biographical approach through detailed interviews (Burke, Costa, & Murphy, 2019; Tholen, 2015). Further, in a biographical interview, the researcher might have to ask for more information or clarification concerning the information supplied, hence questions might have to be varied slightly based on the participants' responses and experiences. Using a qualitative approach offers the flexibility required since it encourages some deviations from the structured questions in order to obtain relevant information (Maxwell, 2014). Deriving a clearer idea of participants' backgrounds meant allowing them to talk at length, thereby giving the researcher the leeway to probe further; semi-structured interviews were used for this reason.

During the interviews, details regarding the participants' backgrounds and the influence of their family and school on their life will be considered to understand the correlation between their backgrounds and their experience and expectation of employability as offered by HEIs. By following a qualitative approach, the research findings will illuminate the varied experiences of students who enter HEIs from a range of different backgrounds and their expectations of HEIs regarding their employability. The interviews will also assist in clarifying the effectiveness of employability schemes implemented by HEIs to enhance graduate employability, thereby helping in making recommendation for their improvement (Bryman, 2012). The interviews will focus on the experiences of students and graduates who participated in some of the employability schemes at the university, because it was important to study the participants in depth, which would be difficult in the case of a broader population (Seidman, 2006). The sample selected was from those students and graduates who had participated in the university's employability initiatives, while Section 3.7 dealing with the research sample, outlines the reasons for this selection. The participants' experiences of these schemes will be considered in the context of the university and this in-depth study into each of the schemes will consider issues that are beneficial and enhance graduate employability.

Since the study engages with Bourdieu's concept of different forms of capital, it was important to operationalise these concepts in order to help theorise the findings.

3.5 Operationalising capital for this study

As mentioned earlier in the thesis, this study is based on Bourdieu's conceptual tools of habitus, capital and field. In defining habitus, Bourdieu (1990) states that habitus acts as a set of structured principles which links the person to a particular position in a given context due to their experiences in the social world that they inhabit. Costa, Burke and Murphy (2019), in

operationalising habitus, states that habitus is an archive of lived experiences of an individual and the dispositions relate to moods and attitudes towards life around an individual.

Habitus can understood as meaning deeply entrenched habits, skills, and dispositions that individuals possess due to their life experiences and, according to Bourdieu (1990), habitus works in relation to a field and any changes to such fields can cause changes in the habitus. Cultural capital, as per Bourdieu, also refers to the tastes, skills, behaviour and other credentials that an individual has by virtue of being part of a specific social class. Capital also exists and functions in relation to a field, therefore one can see that habitus, capital and one's field are interrelated in many different aspects and, as per Grenfell (2012), "one's practice results from relations between one's disposition (habitus)and one's position in a field (capital) within the current state of play of that arena (field)" (p. 50)

Bourdieu (1990) reiterated the importance of the relationship of field to habitus and Reay (2004) has also reiterated that when habitus meeting a different field, it can undergo transformation, thus making habitus very dynamic. Field can refer to a structured arena that encompasses certain types of capital (Grenfell, 2012) while families can be considered as small fields wherein social and cultural capital can be generated (Atkinson, 2014). This research will consider urban employment social divisions as one field and the other one will be the informal agricultural work prevalent in rural villages. According to Costa et al. (2019), "habitus denotes a way of being" (p. 20) and, as mentioned in the literature review, because of the relational nature of habitus, it becomes very difficult to operationalise habitus itself (Reay, 1995; Davey, 2009). Since operationalising habitus was not straightforward (Costa et al., 2019), it was decided that habitus would not be considered as part of this thesis. In this study, various factors such as family background, schools attended, and influence of extended family members were considered in addition to the impact of students' socio-economic backgrounds in order to understand a given student's level of social and cultural capital. The

above-mentioned factors help recreate an individual's structure of capitals which in turn can shape their outlook towards the fields around them and, in this case, their employability.

In terms of operationalising cultural capital, the factors considered were the students' backgrounds in terms of parental cultural capital, family influence, schools attended, and their field of possibles. The cultural capital of an individual's parents by virtue of the latter's social class or their education can play a major role in shaping the individuals' own education and future (Vryonides, 2007). In this study, the parents and families' own education and employment status are the capitals considered to influence students' ability to choose a programme of study while shaping their future aspirations. According to Vryonides (2007), cultural capital has been measured in terms of cultural practices, knowledge, attitudes, parents' education, and the influence of these factors on an individual's upbringing. These different forms of capital also create the habitus of an individual in a specific field since, according to Grenfell (2012).

Social capital represents the accumulation of resources an individual or group can accrue through mutually beneficial networks (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). There is a strong relationship between the social and cultural capital possessed by parents and the influence this has on their children's education and planning the future (Vryonides, 2007). This study also showcases how people who do not have the necessary social capital make efforts to create their networks, which can help them and their children. In this study, one of the important factors that is seen to be contributing to social capital is city living vs rural living whereby parents of students who are educated and employed move to the city since in Botswana the cities are the centre of economic opportunities, thus creating a divide between the urban employment market and informal employment in the rural villages. This move from one field to another can improve students' social standing, thereby assisting them to develop social networks. The other factors that have been considered as contributors to social

capital have been family influence and ability to build and maintain networks either through family connections or through university engagement with industry and community.

As per Bourdieu, the events that happen within a space affects the 'field of possibles' for an individual (Bourdieu, 1984) and therefore enhances their cultural capital and creates in the individual a high level of confidence (Burke, 2015). This study will consider the influence of social and cultural capital and the impact on their field of possibles, which will limit their thoughts regarding their aspirations (Caetano, 2019). Thus, these factors played a role in the research methods and the interview questions that is described in the sections below.

3.6 Research Methods

As explained in Section 3.4 on the research design, this thesis is qualitative research based on a part-biographical study using semi-structured interviews. However, an initial preparatory survey was undertaken to establish a sample of students to be interviewed in depth. The survey was to help understand the diversity of student and graduate population who participated in the employability schemes. Further, the results of the survey determined the selection of participants for the interview as it provided a first peek into their ability to articulate their experiences about their background and also talk about their perceptions of employability. The selection of the sample for the survey is discussed in detail in Section 3.7.

An initial survey was sent to the group of students and alumni who have engaged with the three employability schemes and drawn from the attendance registers of events and activities maintained by the Careers Office. The survey included questions on generic data that helped to obtain an indication of the background of participants, such as where they were brought up, the schools they attended, and of course their personal particulars like gender. The survey also required information about whether they were first generation graduates and

then about their participation in the various employability schemes. There were also questions which could provide information regarding their expectations and experiences of the employability schemes, including the perceived and actual benefits they have derived from their participation which could provide an insight into their depth of understanding on what it takes to be employable.

However, the bulk of the data collected was gathered through semi-structured interviews conducted with a select group of students and graduates. These interviews provided the opportunity to explore the critical issues addressed in the questionnaire in detail. The questions focussed on details of the students and graduates' experiences from participating in the various employability schemes. The questions also helped to explore the socio-economic backgrounds of the individuals interviewed, their motivation for participation in the various activities, which would help with understanding their embodied capital and social positioning. In terms of alumni, there were questions about progression into employment and how their experience in the University helped them in their life beyond studies.

3.7 Research sample

This study's primary aim was to understand the influence of socio-cultural backgrounds and the resulting capital on graduates, while its secondary purpose was to review the initiatives implemented by HEIs to help enhance the experience of students and improve their employability. Therefore, it was essential to have a clear view of students' backgrounds before they enrolled in the University as well as their expectations of life in HEI and beyond, whilst simultaneously understanding whether and how their experiences of the HEI environment enhanced their employability.

The initial plan for selecting the sample for the study was to choose from the wider student population by administering the questionnaire to all students, since this would eliminate any biases. However, the EdD programme required the research to be a focussed investigation, hence the decision to choose participants who have engaged in two or more employability schemes.

It was critical for the study's success that the participants articulate themselves well and answer questions about their parents and family, their upbringing, as well as their experience at the university with minimal inhibitions. To get useful quality data for a study of this nature, it is also important to have participants who are knowledgeable in the area and, as stated by Moser and Korstjens (2018), can articulate and reflect on their experience. Interviewee participation in employability schemes could be expected to tie in with both an interest in employability and the capacity to speak articulately on this subject. Authors including Moser and Korstjens (2018) and Palinkas et al. (2015) have reiterated the importance of having participants who are both willing to provide the relevant information and motivated to provide rich insights into their experiences relating to employability. Hence, Palinkas et al. (2015) have suggested the purposeful sampling of participants in order to help ensure that rich information is collected as part of the research. Therefore, in this study, it was decided to select from those who had participated in employability schemes since these individuals would have rich information to share regarding their experiences.

Further, the secondary research question focussed on enhancing existing employability initiatives in HEIs, while recommending ways of improving these in light of the findings derived from the first research question. This question highlighted the importance of the participants' ability to elaborate on their university experiences during the interviews. As suggested by Drew and Wallis (2014), an appreciative inquiry focusing on the positive aspects of institutional life was undertaken since this would hopefully enable the

researcher to draw rich information from the participants in terms of their perceptions about employability. Since one of the intentions was to improve the employability schemes at the University, this aspect of an appreciative inquiry technique was adopted as an effective method in order to understand the effectiveness of programmes provided.

As pointed out by Michael (2005), taking a positive approach to interviewing participants is a worthwhile approach to getting them to speak openly about their experiences, thereby producing positive and quality results. Drew and Wallis (2014) have mentioned that when developing enhancements to existing initiatives, it is advantageous to understand the strengths of what is in place and, in order to achieve this, the participants selected had to have experienced the benefits of the employability schemes in place at the University. Therefore, the sample chosen drew from those students and graduates who had participated in the various employability initiatives.

It is accepted that the research study could have been strengthened by having students who did not participate in the schemes. However, the decision to go with a study focused on those who were engaged reflected the importance of including participants who were able to articulate their experiences adequately. Therefore, purposive sampling was used and surveys were distributed among those who had participated in the schemes so that their experiences could help in drawing conclusions in relation to the research questions.

The interview sample was selected from the survey respondents to provide contrasting experiences from the different backgrounds and hence consisted of those who had varied backgrounds, such as public/private schooling; urban/rural environment; first generation in tertiary education/graduate. The rationale behind these criteria was to ensure that the sample was representative of students from various socio-economic strata, thereby reflecting the diversity of participant experiences and backgrounds.

3.8 The Preparatory Survey

A survey was therefore administered to participants in the various employability schemes in order to obtain details such as personal information, schools attended, and the skills they believed they had obtained by engaging in employability schemes and also to gauge their interest in participating in the research. Conducting a survey helped to select suitable candidates for interview, which would otherwise have become a cumbersome task involving interviewing all the candidates in the database. Further, choosing from a population as wide as the whole student body would have also resulted in poor response rates while not providing representative responses, a dynamic which has also been found in other studies (Bryman, 2012).

The survey was administered through Google forms, which ensured the security of the survey, to all students and graduates who had participated in two or more of the university's employability initiatives. The survey questions are provided in Table 4.1. The questionnaire had three sections, the first one being a short introduction of the research being conducted, the second section consisting of 17 questions based on the kind of activities potential participants had engaged in and the perceived benefits they had derived. The third section was about their interest in participating in interviews should they be selected. The first seven questions explored the given respondent's details, including their age, the school they went to, and whether they were a first-generation graduate. The next ten questions referred to the employability schemes. The questionnaire used open-ended questions and a five-point Likert scale with the purpose of getting an insight into the schemes along with a self-assessment of the skills they believed they had derived from participating in these activities. A Likert scale was used in the survey as this helps to measure the "intensity of feelings about an area in question" (Bryman, 2012, p. 166). Having a Likert scale was also useful since the questions

were open ended and this gave the respondent the opportunity to rate their experiences on a graded scale. These responses could also be used in the data analysis in terms of participants' experiences with the employability schemes.

Table 3.1. Survey Questions

Personal information

1. Are you a student/graduate?
2. Gender:
3. Age:
4. Was your high school completed in a private school or a government school?
5. If you studied in a government school, was it based in a city or a village?
6. Did you live in a city or village during your high school?
7. Are you the first generation in your family to receive tertiary education?

Survey on Employability Schemes

1. I am aware of the employability schemes offered at Botho University
2. I have participated in more than two of the initiatives offered?
3. Indicate the activities you participated in:
    a. Internship/Attachment
    b. Community engagement
    c. Sporting clubs
    d. Personal development clubs
    e. Other (Please specify)
4. I believe that the schemes met the objectives
5. The schemes helped me secure employment (alumni only)
6. I was highly motivated to attend the programmes
7. What skills do you believe you obtained by attending these programmes?
    a. Better communication skills
    b. Critical thinking
    c. Problem-solving
    d. Presentation
    e. Working in teams
    f. Adaptability
    g. Others (specify)
8. If you are a student, do you think you are ready for the employer when you are recruited?

For Working graduates (Alumni)

9. If you are an alumnus, do you think the schemes helped develop the skills that you required at the workplace?
10. I had many colleagues who did not believe the programmes benefitted them

From a database of about 191 students and graduates who participated in activities like sports and other enterprises such as community outreach and internships, questionnaires were sent to 161 students and graduates. Only a few responded immediately. At least two reminders had to be sent to get sufficient responses to the questionnaires. After three reminders, 42 responses came in, which constituted a 26% response rate to the survey.

According to Cohen et al. (2011) and Bryman (2012), a high response rate to surveys provides better data credibility and reliability. The primary purpose of the questionnaire was to identify students and alumni who could be selected for their participation in the interviews over and above the secondary purpose of using the data collected to augment the findings, hence I decided to proceed even though the response rate was lower than what was expected when I started the research. Another justification in proceeding with the responses obtained was because many of the respondents had indicated that they would be willing to participate in interviews and share their experiences, which was the main purpose behind administering the survey.

3.9 Semi-structured interviews

As a part-biographical qualitative research project, the use of semi-structured interviews was intended to form the main data for the study since this would provide an exploratory insight into the participants' backgrounds and employability expectations when enrolling in HEIs. The survey data, which was used to shortlist interview participants, also provided brief responses regarding their experiences of partaking in employability schemes. The flexibility of the semi-structured interviews was important for me as the researcher to understand the students and graduates' experiences while also giving them an opportunity to share their perceptions of various factors including the reasons for students' disengagement from employability initiatives. Further, semi-structured interviews made it easier to give participants a comfortable context in which to respond because by being flexible an interviewer could give them time to settle and be at ease with sharing their experiences (Bryman, 2012). For example, the opening question allowed them an opportunity to introduce themselves and go into details such as their family background, childhood, schooling etc., meaning that they were more comfortable to speak without inhibitions. It also allowed me, as

the researcher, to pick up on certain issues and to ask follow on exploratory questions should the necessary information not be complete.

In order to understand the details of students' backgrounds and those aspects of their lives that defined their social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977), it was important to have semi-structured interviews which allow the researcher the freedom to vary the order of questions based on participant responses, probing further where the responses required clarification while making detailed observations (Bryman, 2012). The study also attempted to explore the students' experiences of participating in the various employability initiatives in order to understand the impact this had on their habitus and capital.

As Pouillot (2007) emphasises, personal interactions also help the researcher to observe and reflect on the differences between the interviewees in the manner in which they respond to questions, thereby resulting in a subjective interpretation of their field of possibles, particularly relating to their self-motivation, self-confidence and the influence of structured backgrounds and schools, thereby correlating their cultural capital. The interviews explored details of the participants' backgrounds, university life, and experiences of engaging with employability schemes. Also, their reasons and motivations for engaging with various schemes were discussed in order to establish the links between their social and cultural capital. During the interviews, the respondents were asked to articulate their anticipated and actual benefits from engaging in the various schemes. The alumni were asked to provide details of how the benefits they obtained from these schemes helped them on their journey to employment. The questions also explored their future ambitions or dreams to understand the impact of habitus on their self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation levels, which define their field of possibles. These are covered in detail in Chapter 4.

The interviews questions (see Table 3.2) followed a structure whereby the initial questions asked the participants about their background, which included details ranging from

where they were born and raised, to their schooling and family background. The questions then went on to ask about the reasons for their enrolling for university education and the influences on this decision, the programme choice, their dreams for the future, and how they believed this programme would help them in their journey.

The study intended to consider only those students and graduates who had participated in employability initiatives such as sports and non-sports clubs and personal development workshops. Since internships were a mandatory part of their programme of study, students and graduates who participated in internships only were not considered for the study. As mentioned above, these initial questions regarding details of their backgrounds helped to ease the participants into the interview and allowed them to get comfortable before answering the remaining questions. While exploring the details of their family life, their responses provided insights into family backgrounds, social connections and the issue of cultural capital. The interview questions then explored their motivation to engage with the employability schemes and the benefits and skills they perceived to have obtained from participating in these schemes. It also sought their views on the reasons for the lack of student engagement with these initiatives, despite the apparent skills that these schemes helped students to attain through engagement. The interview also enquired after the respondents' opinions about what the university could do in order to improve the schemes, thereby helping students achieve the personal attributes which would enhance their employability.

Table 3.2: Semi-Structured interview questions

Questions:

1. Before I start, I would like you to let me know what pseudonym you would like to go by in this interview.
2. Tell me about yourself with specific reference to
    a. Where is your home village?
    b. Details about your family with whom you lived
    c. Your schooling – primary and secondary
    d. Are you the first graduate in the family?

3. Tell me about your University life
    a. What programme are you doing at the University?
    b. What made you choose that programme?
    c. Who/ What influenced you to join University?
    d. What are your dreams about the future?
    e. How do you think this programme is going to help you achieve you dreams?
    f. Other than studies, what do you do in your leisure time?
    g. Factors that influenced you to join Botho other than the programme

4. Once you have gotten your qualification, do you think you will be ready for the industry either as an employee or in starting an enterprise?
5. Do you believe that having a qualification alone makes you employable? What attributes do you consider important that will increase your employability?
6. You have indicated that you have participated in the employability initiatives at university. Please tell me about these:
    a. Which activities did you participate in?
    b. What benefits did you get from participating in these activities?
    c. How did these help with developing your personality?
7. Please suggest what more the University can do in enhancing the employability initiatives that are in place
8. How can we get more students' engagement with the various initiatives that are in place?

To alumni: - added questions

1. Tell me about your work
    a. How did you find the job?
    b. Why do you think the employer recruited you over your other mates?
    c. Are you able to meet the requirements of the employer in your perspective?
2. If you are to recruit someone in your company what would you look for?
3. Do you think the employability schemes at university helped you enhance your personal attributes?

In relation to the alumni respondents, the questions explored both their HE and post-HE work experiences. During the interview, further questions relevant to the research were

asked as a follow-up to the participants' responses. These questions helped in understanding the experiences better while also clarifying what the interviewees had related earlier.

Since the interviews needed to be transcribed for analysis, all the interviews were audio-recorded. The interviewees were informed about the intention to audio record the interviews and their permission was obtained in line with ethical requirements. This enabled ease of transcription and complemented the notes that were also taken during the interview.

Out of the 42 questionnaire respondents, and as mentioned earlier, only two indicated that they would not be interested in participating in the interviews. However, when contacted for scheduling interviews, responses were slow, mainly because many participants were not checking their emails on a regular basis. Attempts at contacting them through mobile phone text messages posed challenges because of connectivity in some parts of the country. Therefore, instead of interviewing the planned 20 respondents, only 12 were eventually interviewed. A few of the respondents who had accepted to be interviewed responded promptly to the emails requesting for interviews, while others had to be contacted via mobile phone before they responded. Two or three of those contacted declined the invitations, and some others did not respond either way; the lack of responses made it difficult getting to the planned number of interviews. I was aware of the position I occupy in the university in relation to the students and graduates, and hence did not want to do more than two or three reminder emails and phone call follow-ups, lest they considered that I was using undue influence.

Though only twelve participants were interviewed, the data collected was quite substantial and provided detailed accounts of their backgrounds, including growing up, schooling, family and parental influence, and engagement with the university's schemes. By the end of the interviews, it was also noteworthy that there was no new information emerging and there was adequate data to address the theoretical categories of social and cultural capital

which were under study in this research (Bryman, 2012). In addition, and as reflected in Table 3.3, the survey respondents' demographics reflected that most of them had been to schools in the city or been in urban settings most of their lives. Having been in schools around the city, the interviewees expressed very similar sentiments and experiences, though some of them contrasted rural versus urban experiences. This also indicated that the data had reached a saturation point; as explained by Guest, Bunce and Johnson (1995), "Theoretical saturation occurs when all of the main variations of the phenomenon have been identified and incorporated into the emerging theory" (p.65). As mentioned above, the interviews provided what appeared to be adequate information to analyse the data under the various categories of Bourdieu's theoretical framework, hence the number of participants was considered to be adequate.

The names used in the table below are pseudonyms, keeping in line with ethical requirements and the commitment made to participants that I would not use their names. From the brief profiles, we can pick up a few shared participant characteristics. The composition of the sample was divided 50:50 between students and alumni. This composition provided the right balance of insights into the schemes' effectiveness since the responses reflected the experiences of graduates who had taken up employment and how they engaged with the various initiatives that had helped them change their outlook regarding employability, thereby enhancing their capital. Additionally, some of the participants who had moved from rural villages to the cities also shared their range of experiences and related their perceptions regarding their peers who entered HEIs from rural villages as opposed to those in cities.

Table 3.3. Profile of Interview Participants

No.	Name	Status	Age	Gender	Location during school	Programme of study	Nature of work, if employed or exposure to work and other activities	School	Family background	First Generation graduate?	Leisure activities
1	Thato	Alumni - unemployed	33	Female	City and then Village for senior secondary school	BSc Computing - top up programme from Open University	Not employed. Experience of working as intern in IT company in India for a period of 12 months	Public school	Brought up by extended family	First Generation graduate in immediate family. Extended family has some graduates	Played sports, nothing now
2	Modise	Student	21	Male	City and suburbs	BSc (Hons) Network security & Computer Forensics	6 months internship in the field. Interested in entrepreneurship and always looking for ideas that can be expanded.	Public school	Grew up with both parents who were working in nuclear family	First generation on maternal side but not on paternal side.	Thinking of businesses to be involved with
3	Brutus	Alumni - employed	24	Male	City and suburbs	BSc (Hons) Business Management	Operations Manager at a Retail shop. While a student internship for 6 months at a wholesaler, went on an exchange programme to US for leadership training	Private school	Grew up with mom and siblings.	Graduate mother	Volunteered for various activities in university. Attended almost all the workshops offered.
4	Karabo	Alumni - employed	28	Male	City and suburbs	BSc in Computing, Teesside University top-up	Graduate trainee at an IT company providing networking for almost 18 months. Worked for another IT company on internship.	Public school	Grew up in an extended family since mom passed away and was not in good terms with dad. And was the only graduate	First generation graduate	Participated in sports and personal development workshops. Spent time working
5	James	Student	25	Male	Second city	BSc (Hons) Network security & Computer Forensics	Worked for 6 months in an IT company. Has experience of doing part time jobs in various places - bar, within university an also volunteering for various events and activities	Public school	Was brought up by mother who had a qualification though not a degree	First graduate though mother has done a nursing course	Did part time work at various opportunities to supplement income and also create networks, attended all workshops

6	Teresa	Student	22	Female	City and suburbs	BSc (Hons) Health Information Management	Not worked anywhere. Interested in community activities. Wants to be a model and also start an NGO for supporting orphaned children obtain necessary healthcare.	Public school	Brought up by grandmother and moved in with parents at a later stage	First female to graduate but not the first graduate	Passion to help the underprivileged especially children and so involved in many community engagements
7	Jane	Student	22	Female	City initially and then villages	BSc (Hons) Health Information Management	No work experience yet. Looking to be employed after education. Would like to go abroad for employment or higher studies.	Public school	Initial stay with aunt who is a graduate and then moved to village to stayed with grandparents since mother was not working	Aunt is a graduate but mother is not a graduate	Involved in leadership roles and focussed on activities to build up a strong CV
8	Hope	Alumni - employed	24	Male	City and villages	BSc (Hons) Software Engineering	A year of working with a company in their IT Departments. Wants to start a business and for now freelancing as an IT consultant. Wants to go into website and software development.	Public school	Stayed with parents and siblings and mother a graduate	Graduate parents	Volunteering and participating in many activities for self-development, focussed on starting business and enjoys meeting people
9	Bontle	Student	21	Female	Village and then city	BSc (Hons) Health Information Management	Not yet done any internship. Very passionate about art and health. Wants to combine these two in future. Wants to publish books and venture into film making as well. Also wants to volunteer at refugee camps, working mainly in the area of health.	Public school	Stayed with both parents and siblings before going to boarding school. Mom had just graduated by doing part time studies	Mother a graduate	Interested in arts, writing and helping people

10	Success	Alumni - employed	28	Female	City and suburbs	BSc (Hons) Software Engineering	Working for 8 months with the current company as software developer. Interned at the same company. Interested in moving into entrepreneurship and also civic engagement since it is the core of building a nation.	Private school	Grew up with both parents and mother was also working. Moved around the country since the parents had a transferable job and studied outside country for secondary education	Mother and siblings are all graduates and some even are post graduates. Father not a graduate but went into business.	Enjoyed working with younger people and mentoring them. Volunteered in activities including being brand promoter
11	Beautiful	Student	23	Female	City and suburbs	BSc (Hons) Finance	Student - Did an internship for 6 months. Other than that enjoys working with communities, aspires to start an NGO for helping disadvantaged people	Public school	Grown up with both parents who are self-employed with small businesses. First graduate in the family in spite of being youngest in a big family of 6 siblings	First graduate - parents not graduates and siblings dropped out of university.	Involved in a few business ventures and apart from that volunteers in helping people and other activities
12	Fawn	Alumni - employed	23	Female	City and suburbs	BSc (Hons) in Multimedia Systems	Woking for 2 years in government department. Aspires to become an entrepreneur in future on IT.	Public school	Grew up with mother who is self-employed and siblings. Father not part of growing up	Mother not graduate but older sister and aunt are graduates.	Attended motivational sessions and was also part of JCI and community initiatives.

3.10 Data Analysis

While conducting and transcribing the interviews, some initial thoughts and patterns were detected in the data and, depending on the nature of their repetition, become classified as codes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The transcripts were then coded for the various topics identified in terms of how they related to the questions that were under consideration, for instance, the place of growing up, school attended, etc., which then formed individual codes. These codes were grouped together into themes and sub-themes based on the underlying codes that started to form specific patterns within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). A theme as defined by Bryman (2012) relates to "a category identified by the researcher that relates to the research focus and builds on the codes identified and that provides the researcher with the basis for a theoretical understanding of his or her data that can make a theoretical contribution to the literature relating to the research focus" (p.580). Thus, categories and themes are used interchangeably in this thesis and share the same meaning.

Since this thesis was based on Bourdieu's theoretical framework, the sub-themes and themes were aligned factors that influence one's social and cultural capital. In many of his writings Bourdieu (1977, 1986, 1990) identified links between factors such as habitus, social and cultural capital in relation to education and employability. He has also made links between social structures and the above factors in exploring the experiences of students in higher education. In the data analysis and discussion, students' backgrounds and social and cultural capital were taken into account when attempting to understand their connections to their personal attributes which define their employability (Holmes, 2013; Kalfa & Taksa, 2015; Williams et al., 2016; Clark & Zukas, 2013). In Bryman's (2012) characterisation of thematic analysis, themes and sub themes are shaped into a matrix format and data is sorted into these matrices using a framework approach. Thematic analysis provides the researcher

with a powerful tool due to its flexibility while also allowing the theoretical freedom to generate detailed and powerful data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The data analysis was conducted based on Bourdieu's theoretical framework, thereby social and cultural capital formed the basis of the research. One of the key factors considered was students and graduates' background. These included details relating to their upbringing, parents and family influences, and the schools they attended. Parental and family influence as well the networks created by the university formed the basis for the social capital theme, while cultural capital was made up of many sub-themes based on skills, future aspirations, and personal development.

Transcript coding was conducted by following the main characteristics that were present in the data. The codes were grouped into categories and subcategories based on the regularity of their occurrence. Nowadays, technology has gained inroads into qualitative analysis, thus making data handling – including the collation and retrieval of information – much easier for the researcher. The software programme used provided ease of upload of the interview transcripts while coding is made much easier with visual effects. Technology also aids in easier search functions, which helps to see patterns in the data. Further, it also provides greater data reliability and validity (Cohen et al., 2011; Bryman, 2012) due to the various inbuilt search queries, where the results cannot be manipulated by human intervention. Though there are a number of critics of the use of technology in qualitative analysis (Hesse-Biber, 1995, as cited by Bryman, 2012), it is gaining popularity because of the ease of data analysis and retrieval of data stated above. There are a number of different kinds of software available in the market. However, this thesis used NVivo software since this was available for University of Liverpool students and because I had gained some insight and training regarding use of the software from peers. All transcripts created from the interview audio recordings were imported into the software. The transcripts were read

thoroughly and coded for each of the topics that emerged. The initial code list produced over thirty to forty nodes. These were then categorised based on the frequency with which they appeared in the various transcripts, which were then formed into sub themes and then grouped further to form the main themes as shown in Figure 4.4 (Representation of analysis of data in themes).

3.11 Insider status of the researcher

One of the main factors in this research relate to my positionality regarding my role within the university from where the sample was selected. As an insider, I did have insights concerning the development of the various employability schemes and the benefits that students and graduates were expected to derive from participating in these activities. However, in my role I did not work directly with students and so did not have a direct relationship with the participants. My position had also given me the advantage of observing some of the students who had transformed themselves over their years in higher education and their subsequent success, while there were others who were not as successful or even remained unemployed after their studies. I was also aware and concerned about the low student uptake of these various schemes and had been constantly using opportunities within work to identify reasons for students not engaging with these schemes. Being an insider gave me the advantage of understanding their experiences, which helped me to ask much more meaningful questions and thereby understand the context under study. As has been noted, "The insider's strengths become the outsider's weakness and vice versa" (Merriam et al., 2010, p. 411), For instance; even gaining access to some of the databases would not have been easily possible for external researchers (Merriam et al., 2010; Brannick & Coghlan, 2007) which could become available to me, as an insider.

During the interviews I ensured that participants were comfortable and made it very clear to them that I was doing conducting study as part of my doctoral research. I made it clear that though I am part of the senior management of the university, during this study my role was that of a student like them trying to finish my doctoral studies. In many of the interviews I tried to meet with the participants in neutral places like coffee shops and I met others in their offices, although three of the participants preferred to have the interviews in my office. I always left the choice of the venue up to the participant so that they could choose where they would feel the most comfortable. Even though all these measures were undertaken to make the participants feel relaxed, my perception is that they could have responded to the questions keeping in mind my position, thereby potentially telling me what they felt I wanted to hear. With a view to countering any prejudices, I allowed them to talk without any interruption or prompting. I also ensured that the transcripts were thorough without including any of my own views. While analysing the data, I also stepped back completely from my role and attempted to look at it very dispassionately since one of the reasons for doing this research was to improve the employability initiatives at the University and make it more inclusive and beneficial to a wider population of students. It was also important not to bring any prejudices and prejudgements into the research because of my involvement with developing and improving the university's employability schemes.

3.12 Ethical considerations

As mentioned above, I am the Pro-Vice Chancellor in charge of employability at the university where the study was conducted and hence, I was very cautious in terms of how the pre-interview students and graduates were approached. Ethics approval from both my university and the University of Liverpool's research ethics committees were obtained. The application for ethics approval consisted of outlining a brief research proposal and the

methodology that was intended to be followed. These two approvals had to be submitted to the Ministry of Education for them to approve the permit to carry out the research. This is a requirement under Botswana's research laws in since the persons being studied are in the country. Once all these approvals were obtained, the survey was sent out detailing the purpose and nature of the study. All these approvals are attached as Appendices 1-3. Once responses from the graduates and students were obtained and they had indicated their willingness to participate in the research, a detailed Participant Information Sheet (Appendix 4) was emailed to them with details of where and when the interview could be scheduled. It should be noted that the interviews were conducted at times and venues chosen by the participants themselves, as mentioned in Section 3.11.

During the interviews, the participants were reminded about my role in the interview as a doctoral research student and clarifying that the study done was part of my thesis. Their rights and obligations were also made clear to them and their consent was obtained via the Participant Consent Form (Appendix 5). The participants were also informed about the anonymity of the data they would share with me and it was reaffirmed that their names will not be used anywhere in the thesis. They were also asked to provide pseudonyms of their choice to hide their identity. The participants were also informed that they had the right to refrain from answering any questions should they be uncomfortable with them and were also reminded of their option to walk away from the interview should they feel they did not want to share any more information. All interviews were transcribed and then sent to the participants for them to verify that the contents were indeed a correct record of what they had said during the interviews. The names of the participants were also removed from the transcriptions while their pseudonyms ensure that the data is entirely anonymous.

3.13 Chapter Summary

This chapter has detailed the rationale and relevance of this research and outlined the biographical qualitative methodology used in this thesis while also examining the study's research design and the data collection and methods used in the research. The chapter also detailed the operationalisation of capitals in order to understand their influence on the students' graduate employability. In addition, it provided an insight into the data analysis carried out to arrive at the findings. The chapter also discussed my positionality as a researcher and relevant ethical considerations. Chapter 4 will present the data collected from the survey and interviews while also discussing the findings in depth.

Chapter 4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the research design of the thesis, which is based on a biographical qualitative approach. This chapter examines the data collected through the survey and semi-structured interviews and outlines the findings that emerged from the data analysis. As mentioned in Chapter 3, this research used a preparatory survey to select a participant sample for the semi-structured interviews. The survey provided an insight into the participants' demographics and a list of skills they believed they had obtained by participating in employability schemes, in addition to seeking their interest in engaging in interviews. The data gathered will be detailed below in two different sections – one, dealing with the findings from the survey, and then the main part of the findings based on the semi-structured interviews. The chapter will conclude with a summary of the findings and the links established between Bourdieu's theories and the impact capitals – cultural and social and the habitus have on the personal attributes of graduates and thereby their employability.

4.2 Survey: Demographics and Background

The preparatory survey obtained information on the students and graduates who participated in employability schemes at the University and gathered basic details of their background, their upbringing, and provided some initial insights into their higher education experiences in terms of employability. As mentioned in Chapter 3, out of the 161 surveys sent out, only 42 responses were received back, constituting a response rate of 26%. Of the responses received, 57% were from graduates and the remaining 43% from current students, as can be seen in

Figure 4.1. This composition helped to generate a detailed insight into the experiences of both students, who had experienced the schemes and their expectations of the benefits to be derived from attending these schemes, and graduates, who could provide feedback from the real world of work. Having a large proportion of graduates in the interviews helped to generate a deeper understanding of their perception of employability when entering university and about their experience in university and its impact on their subsequent life in the world of work.

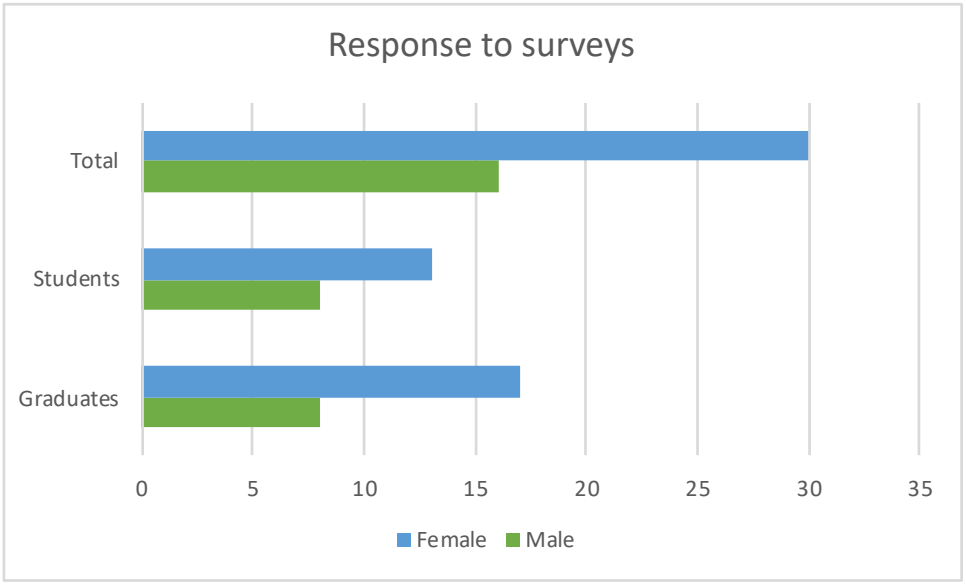


Fig. 4.1. Composition of the survey respondents

In the survey responses, 27 of the total respondents were female, constituting the majority at 64% (see Fig. 4.1). A similar pattern was replicated in the interviews, with 7 out of the 12 candidates interviewed being female. The participant information was taken from records at the Career Office which did not provide information on the gender of attendees at various events, and hence it was not possible to establish if attendance at activities was dominated by one gender as opposed to the other. However, the responses showed higher participation from female students in the employability initiatives, and they were also more enthusiastic about coming forth for interviews. In addition to the survey results, which

showed a greater response from female students and graduates, during the interviews it became apparent that the participants did not consider being female a disadvantage. Vaaland and Ishengoma (2016) have indicated the influence of gender on a student and graduate's perception of employability and self-efficacy based on their studies in northern Africa. However, it is not clear whether this is an issue in Botswana. In a study conducted in Botswana in 2015 by Moalosi and Forchech (2015) studying the relationship between gender and teacher trainees' levels of self-efficacy, it was observed that there was a higher survey response rate from female teachers as opposed to their male counterparts. The study further indicated that being female did not affect the self-efficacy of individuals and, in some instances, females even outperformed their male counterparts in certain age brackets. Hence this study did not consider the impact of gender on employability.

The demographics of the survey respondents (Fig. 4.2) show that a significant number of students (90%) went to Government-run schools (Public) as opposed to private schools. This is common among the population of Botswana since Government schools offer free education to all. Another striking feature was that the majority of respondents indicated that they were brought up in villages (60%). However, I noticed during interviews that most of the participants who came forth grew up in the city and suburbs where their families had migrated for work, though they were born in villages.

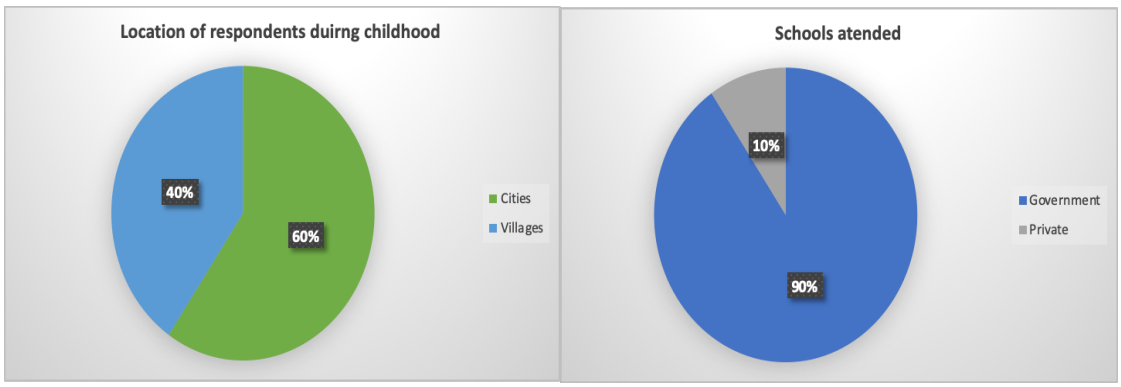


Fig. 4.2 Survey respondents' demographics: 4.2a Location; 4.2b Schools attended

HEIs have been using relevant schemes to enhance the employability of their graduates, as discussed in Chapter 2. The secondary research question looks at how HEIs in middle-income countries can enhance their graduates' employability. As is traditional for HEIs, this university also introduced many initiatives as a way to enhance graduate employability. The sample for the study was drawn from a population who engaged with these initiatives and gave them the opportunity to share their experiences and expectations of employability during their tertiary education. The survey showed that 31% of the respondents indicated that they had participated in three or more activities which included mandatory internships. The other activities that many of them participated in included community engagement clubs and personal development workshops in addition to sports and other clubs. A total of 50% of the graduate respondents indicated that these schemes helped them to enhance their personal attributes and had assisted them with securing employment, thereby underlining the role of HEIs in enhancing graduate employability. Figure 4.3 illustrates the feedback on skills derived from attending schemes, which also highlights the participants' understanding of what it takes for them to be employable.

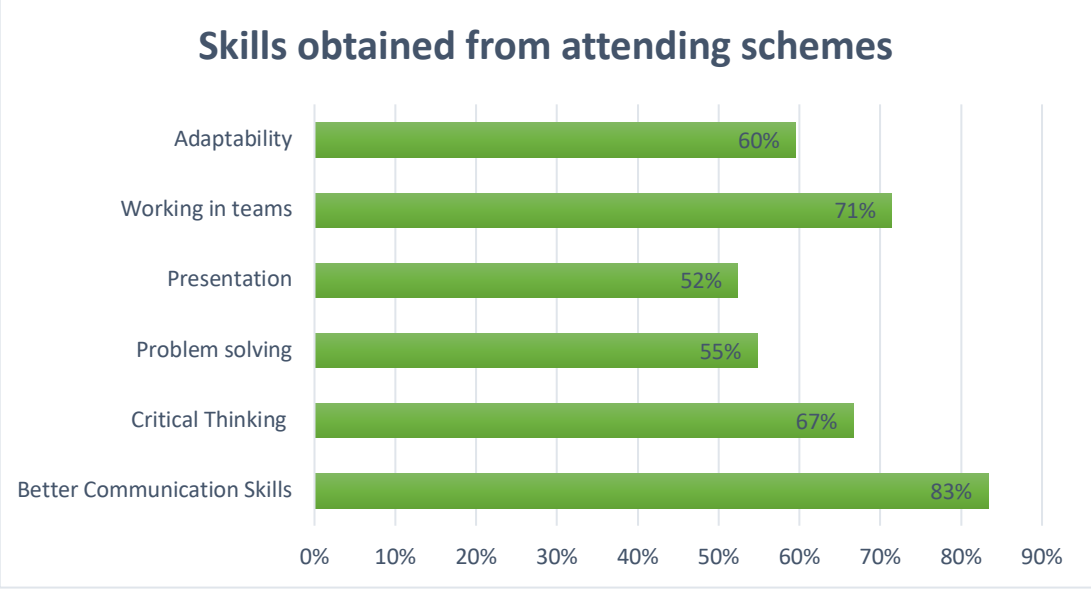


Fig. 4.3 Skills obtained from attending employability schemes

The skills identified were based on various employers' perspectives as cited in the literature, including communication skills, critical thinking, problem solving, presentation skills, adaptability, and teamwork. As mentioned earlier, HEIs' practices relating to employability have focussed on developing different schemes, hence students also expect to enhance these skills in university which, according to them, they obtain by participation in various activities. This is evident from the survey where 83% of the respondents indicated that engaging in schemes had helped them improve their communication skills while 71% agreed that the schemes helped them to work better within teams. The other skills that the respondents indicated they had benefitted from were critical thinking and problem solving. In the following sections, in which interview data is analysed, interviewees allude to gaining these skills and how the various activities that they engaged with in the university helped them to achieve and enhance these skills, showcasing the role of HEIs in shaping their graduates' employability.

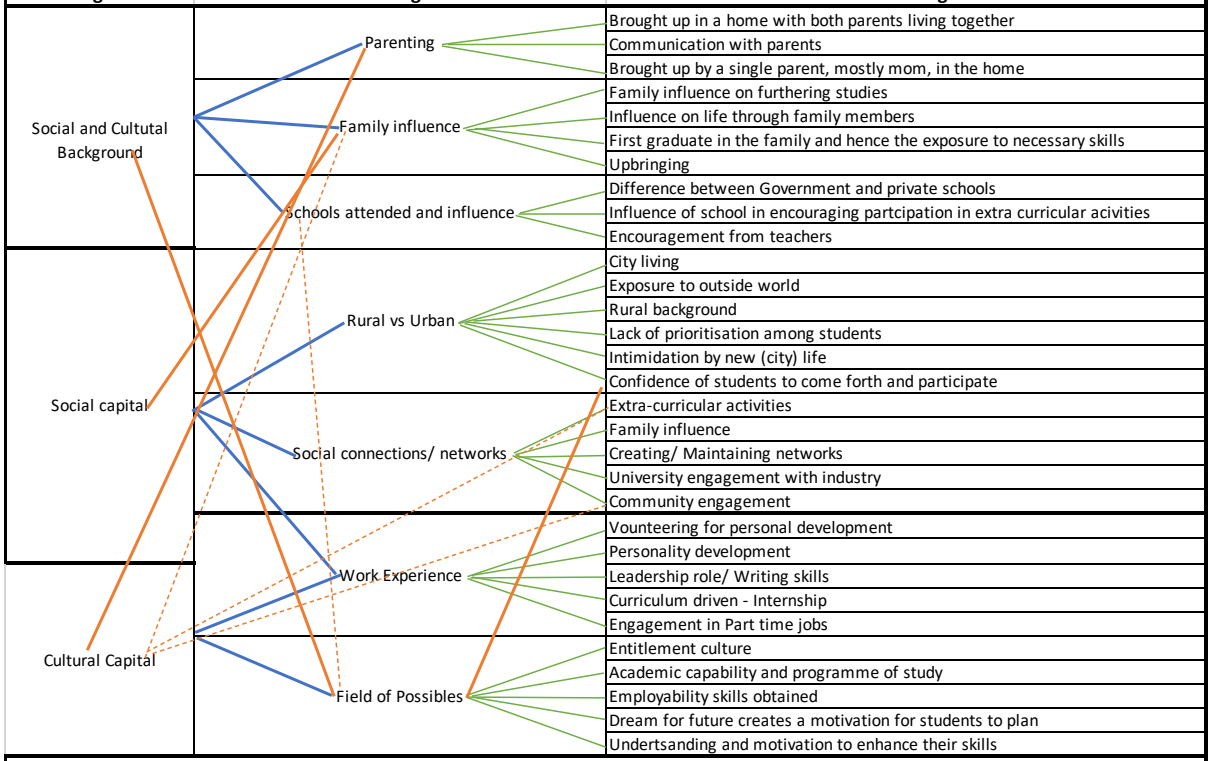
In addition to the skills mentioned above, the respondents indicated that by attending the schemes they obtained other skills such as leadership and time management as well as organisational and entrepreneurial skills. Three of the respondents indicated that these schemes helped increase their confidence while five of them noted that these schemes also helped increase their motivation to achieve their goals. The increase in confidence and thereby motivation levels leads to an increase in the embodied cultural capital of individuals, thereby helping them to project their skills and attributes (D'almeida, 2016).

4.3 Understanding factors that influenced participants' behaviour

Figure 4.4 is a schematic representation of the category and subcategory coding that emerged when analysing the transcripts. Transcript coding was conducted by following the main

characteristics present in the data. The codes were grouped into categories and subcategories based on the regularity of their occurrence. Since the focus of the study was to understand the influence of individuals' social and cultural capital on their employability, the main themes considered were social and cultural backgrounds and capital. The sub-subcategories in Figure 4.4 indicate the main pointers derived from the interview transcripts. These categories were then grouped together to form the sub-categories, which were then grouped to link to the main themes.

Figure 4.4 – Representation of analysis of data into themes



Notes
The blue lines indicate the links from the sub themes to the main concepts. The thick orange line inidcates themes which contribute to another concept as well. The thin green lines indicate the sub-categories that formulate the sub-theme. The thin orange lines show instances where the subcategory or the sub-subcategory contributes to more than one concept.

As mentioned above, the main categories and subcategories were based on understanding on factors that emerged from the interviews and could provide an insight into the influence of the social and cultural capital on their employability. The social and cultural background of students showcased the backgrounds of parents, family, and the schools attended which provided a picture of the fields that have shaped the students before they entered HE. In addition to their background, an individual's cultural capital is also impacted by work experience and the field of possibles. Here one can see the influence of background on the field of possibles, which in turn creates a stronger cultural capital in the agent. The social capital which was impacted by rural vs urban settings, by social connections and networks, and students' work exposure. When all the transcripts were coded as per the categorisation detailed in Fig. 4.4, there emerged a general pattern showing the impact of various factors relating to graduate employability. It emerged that the students' socio-cultural backgrounds, which also contributed to their cultural capital and field of possibles, were two significant factors that impacted their behaviour and appeared to have a strong correlation to their expectations and experience of life at university.

The three sub-categories that contributed to the habitus of a participant were:

i) Parental influence, which comprised of subcategories such as upbringing by both parents, upbringing by a single mother, and communication (indicating relationship with the parents);

ii) Family influence, which considered the influence of the extended family during upbringing and on students' life decisions and the impact of being the family's first graduate;

iii) Schools attended and influence, which considered the kind of school attended during secondary school education, highlighting the differences between

public and private schools, influence of school in terms of participating in extracurricular activities, and encouragement from teachers.

When looking at Bourdieu's theories of field and capital, students' backgrounds and the social spaces they occupy during their upbringing impacts their levels and types of capital, thereby influencing their personal capital and employability.

In addition to their background which had a major influence in defining the cultural capital of a student, the cultural capital of a graduate was also influenced by the field of possibles and the work experience that they obtained during their HEI experience. These were expanded to factor in the following:

i) Field of possibles – The programmes of study chosen by the participants were based mainly on the qualifications available to them through the Government bursary scheme. Parents and schools' influence also helped them gain confidence in their abilities to plan for the future by creating a conducive environment and exposure to opportunities. This confidence also helped them obtain the qualifications of their choice or turn their programme of study to their advantage, and can thus be categorised as 'institutionalised cultural capital'. Reay (2004) highlights how parental influence and their positions in the social structure as well as cultural capital impacts their children, thereby shaping the latter's academic progress, confidence, and the ability to take advantage of the various opportunities presented to them.

ii) Work experience – one of the common threads in the interviews was the importance the participants ascribe to work experience. In their opinion this enhanced their exposure and employability, which again contributes to cultural capital in addition to cultivating a given individual's social connections.

The impact of social capital is derived from the participants' stories about their backgrounds and their upbringing. It was also observed that there were very common elements across the social capital and one's cultural capital. The categories which defines social capital were:

i) Rural vs urban was a major theme that differentiated the students and which, according to some participants, determined their experience in HE as detailed below. Bring brought in a rural or urban environment, and exposure to the world outside to their domicile seemed to impact their social connections. The difference between the rural and urban social spaces is evident from the field of employment that exists in each context. In Botswana, the rural villages are generally agriculture-based and feature informal employment unlike the urban setting which is driven by formal corporate employment.

ii) Family influence – This refers to the social position of the parents or family that can help built relationships and thus enhance social connections.

iii) Social connections & Networks – It was seen some of the participants also used the various HEI initiatives, such as extracurricular activities and community outreach, to build their social connection and enhance their social capital.

iv) University-industry linkages and work experience - these help students build useful networks thereby their social capital.

However, as can be seen from the categorisation and the details that follow in the interviews there is an overlap between all of these themes. For instance, work experience, although categorised under cultural capital, provides the social connections which can enhance one's social capital. Similarly, the field of possibles, despite being linked to cultural capital, can also be linked to the students' socio-cultural backgrounds. During this research it also

became evident that one cannot clearly distinguish between habitus and cultural capital because "habitus does not have a material existence unlike objectified and embodied capital" (Grenfell, 2002 p. 103)

Section 4.4 will discuss each of the categories and subcategories in detail, thereby bringing out each area's findings. Each category and sub-category will be analysed and discussed to examine the findings emerging from the data while identifying the inter-linkages between various categories.

4.4 Socio-cultural background and the influence on capital

The first category considered was the socio-cultural background of the students and graduates who participated in the research. The social positioning of parents and family plays a role in forming the cultural capital of an agent and one will see in this section that their capital can adapt to changes in their fields. The influence of factors like parenting, family influence and schools attended has been taken into consideration in order to understand the influence of these factors on the cultural and social capitals of the participants and, in turn, its impact on their engagement with employability schemes and their personal attributes.

Bourdieu (1990) refers to how continuous practices of action and behaviour in a particular manner influence social structures, not only within the broader context but also within each individual. Bourdieu (1990) states that an individual's dispositions are a reflection of their life experiences and justify their approaches to practice. The internalisation of these personal experiences creates a habitus arising out of the unique socialisations of the individual. Grenfell (2002) clarifies the relationship between habitus, field and capital in that an agent's practice is influenced by habitus that is caused by one's position within a field. This position within a field refers to the individual's capital. Bourdieu's theory refers to the context and practices that create perceptions in individuals, thereby determining their beliefs,

defining their attitudes, and motivating them to act or react in specific ways. In the context of the study, the students' varying fields are based on the change from a field of informal employment prevalent in rural villages to the urban employment field wherein agents enjoy multi-level cultural and social capital. Thus, parental influence, family life, schools and the practices followed could play a rather significant role in individuals' creating plans and ambitions, thereby shaping their embodied cultural capital and field of possibles, which they can then use as a springboard for developing themselves. As mentioned in the literature review, Reay (2004) has also identified a strong relationship between an individual's behaviour and the factors mentioned above, all of which could be linked to one's cultural capital. It is in this context that the influence of parenting, extended family background, and school life are studied and discussed in detail below.

4.4.1 Parental Influence

The influence of parenting was one of the first subcategories considered because parental socialisation and influence are believed to strongly shape an individual's motivation and personal attributes. The data was analysed to see if there was any relationship between parental influence of students and their understanding of employability and engagement with employability schemes as well as their motivation levels to be more employable. In the case of the interviewees, a substantial percentage of the sample (42%) lived with both parents while 25% were brought up by a single parent, with the remaining candidates brought up by their extended family. In some cases, the mother was the dominant force in their upbringing, while others stated that both parents played essential roles. Sections 4.4.1.1 and 4.4.1.2 will discuss the influence of single- and dual-parent upbringing in order to bring out the impact of

the influence of different kinds of parenting on a given participant's social and cultural capital.

As mentioned in Section 4.3, where field of possibles has been discussed, Reay (2004) highlights the impact of parents' social standing on their children's self-confidence and motivation. The support rendered at home is seen to be equally (if not more) important than that provided by teachers, especially during early childhood (Reay, 2004). In Botswana, there are many instances of children growing up either in single-parent, predominantly female households, or with extended families, which could consist of a grandmother or aunts, while the parents are living and working elsewhere (Dintwat, 2010; Letamo & Rakgoasi, 2000). As mentioned by Dintwat as well as Letamo and Rakgoasi, various circumstances in Botswana have led to the prevalence of single-parent homes and, more predominantly, single mothers raising children. I will therefore analyse parental influence from the vantage point of single parent and dual parent households and compare the two before moving on to the influence of extended families. The difference between the single and dual parent households provide different social positions and fields and could have different influences on one's capital.

4.4.1.1 Influence of the mother during a student's upbringing

The strong influence their mothers had is very evident in many of the participants' motivation to achieve their dreams and ambitions. The mother is singled out here because of the predominance of households in Botswana with single mothers. Among the sample interviewed, four of the participants – Thato, Brutus, James and Fawn – were brought up by single parents, namely their mothers, while the others had the influence of both parents during their upbringing. Bourdieu (1977) suggests that the habitus acquired in one's family forms the basis of school experiences as well as influencing one's later life. In addition, this

could be the result of the embodied cultural capital of the agent as shaped by the social positioning of the family. This is evident in that the strength of the influence of the mother differed in each of the interviewees' accounts. Thato was the only unemployed graduate among the participants interviewed:

> "*My mother was not working, and I was supported by my aunts. My mom passed away in 2002 and then my dad who was taking care of me though they were not married also passed away in 2003. … These circumstances forced me to choose IT as a qualification though I did not like it. Thought it will help me find a job and get me out of the situation that I was in… Sometimes I regret not having gone back to studies and redoing my grades and gone for a programme that I wanted to do.*"

As indicated by Thato in the quote above, the circumstances surrounding her family life had forced her to settle for a qualification that she was not interested in but which, according to her, was a sought-after skill in the labour market. The low social capital of her family had impacted on her own cultural and social capital and field of possibles, which have potentially influenced her employability as per Burke et al. (2009), who argue that environments can influence an individual's behaviour.

In contrast to Thato, Brutus, while he was brought up by a single mother, was emphatic about her influence on his growth and achievements:

> "*My mom is not a graduate but both my sisters are graduates. She put herself through school because back in the days the grandparents did not believe in sending her to school. She has a few certificates in accounting and she worked in a bank for about 18 years before leaving to start her own businesses. Growing up all I knew is that she is a business lady did a few government projects here and there. That is background grew up knowing that she is a business lady and she is self-driven… it is my mother. Her influence runs across my entire life. … She had to put herself through school and make a lot of sacrifices to get through school. So, she made it a point that we stay in school and become the best that we can be.*"

Brutus's mother, as can be seen from the above quote, had achieved success in her life by being self-driven and pushing herself forward despite not being educated by her parents. She,

in turn, has created for her children a higher level of capital by providing them with better education. In this example, one can see how the mother's desire to be educated has influenced her to provide good education to her children, thereby shaping their future (Bourdieu, 1977) by providing a field with higher capital than the one she was given by her parents and higher field of possibles. Brutus narrated with pride, how his mother was a strong influence and became the agent of change in his life, as evidenced in the quote above. From his words, we can see that his mother's self-driven attitude had created a strong embodied capital within him, thereby increasing his field of possibles. In his interview, he showcased great enthusiasm when he talked about an innovative project during his high school days and his plan to become an entrepreneur in his later years. One can also detect his interest in business from seeing his mother in business. In this case, the capital generated by his mother's position has positively impacted his capital and field of possibles, thus making him very confident and driven by a desire to achieve even more.

Another critical factor that has helped Brutus was the active communication between him and his mother. The belief and the confidence he gained by knowing that he could relate his problems to his mother and resolve them is an example of this link, which helps individuals deal with the problems at hand instead of bearing with them and reaping the consequences thereof. During the interview, Brutus revealed instances when he had issues, such as not fitting into his school, which he was able to discuss with his mother, and they tried to find a solution together:

> "*I remember that just before I left school I sat with my mum and told her that I don't think I'm going to make it past Form 3 because it had gotten to a point where I knew I was in class with students who did not care about school – all they cared was having some fun and going back home.*"

From the above quotation it is clear that having the ability to have healthy communication about one's issues while identifying solutions can help build the individual's confidence

because of the cultural capital created within the family. The confidence thus gained can also help motivate individuals to aspire and achieve even more. This reiterates Bourdieu's theory that social life's underlying structure creates a capital and habitus within a field and reflects how behaviour changes because of the socialisations ingrained in oneself. This ability to confidently speak at an early age also helps one in the later stages of their life to be able to effectively communicate with peers and teams, thus enabling collaboration which is a critical generic skill as shown in various models such as CareerEDGE (Pool & Sewell, 2007) and USEM (Knight & Yorke, 2003).

Fawn and James, who were also brought up by their mothers, indicated that it was their mothers who had encouraged them to study further:

> "*My mother was playing the role of the father and mother in the family. She was doing her nursing and was supporting me, and my brother and she was the one who encouraged me to get this far. I am the first one in our nuclear family to get this far in studies.*" (James)

James even mentioned that his mother's work-ethic and hardworking nature (she was studying as well as working), motivated him to work hard and even earn extra money to sustain himself during his studies. He said that the student allowance provided by the Government was not adequate to meet all the needs of his rent and transport, therefore he made sure that he supplemented his income by taking up part time jobs. In this instance, the cultural capital that James has developed based on the hard work required to sustain oneself as he has seen from his mother.

In Fawn's case, she was brought up by a single mother who had only completed her secondary schooling and was running a small business to support the family. Fawn also had a sister who had graduated and a brother who was studying at university:

> "*My mother studied only up to BGCSE after which she did her Tirelo Sechaba (national service). She was self-employed … I want to join the business sector though I am not sure what business this will be.*"

She also added that her mother was self-employed, and this had instilled in her the ambition to be in business in future, again reiterating how the context in which one grows up creates an individual's field of possibles.

In the three instances cited above, the mother has influenced the individual's actions by her hard work and ability thus creating in them the cultural capital required to achieve more in their lives. Whereas with Thato, the fact that she had limited support from her parents negatively impacted her confidence and ability to set high goals, thereby underlining how family context and socialisations play vital roles in shaping an individual's vision (Bourdieu, 1977). Pimlott-Wilson (2011) also argue that it is essential to consider the circumstances and context of children's upbringing while determining how this might affect the way they look at their own life, creative ambitions, and life plans.

4.4.1.2 Influence of having both parents involved in a participant's upbringing

We have seen in the above four instances that these participants were brought up by a single parent, the mother, which is quite common in Botswana as per previous studies such as Dintwat (2010), Kossoudji and Mueller (1983), and Letamo and Rakgoasi (2000). However, in 50% of the interviewees, both parents had been involved in their upbringing. In the case of Teresa, though she had both her parents, she grew up with her grandmother. The five participants who grew up with both parents had them both either working or had some business of their own. Because of this, Modise, Hope, Bontle, Success and Beautiful were in the city and suburbs during a good part of their childhood and thus did not experience major changes to their field compared to their parents, i.e. they have both experienced the world and space of urban employment.

One of these graduates who grew up with both her parents, Success, indicated that her mother was a big influence in her life and helped her focus on achieving her goals:

> "*I lived with both my parents and we travelled around Botswana quite a lot during my childhood, due to my mother's job with the Council. My mother raised us to be independent and kept telling us that her savings are for her and her husband, and that we must be capable of earning our own way. Her investment in us was in our education, giving us the tools to provide for ourselves.*"

From the above quote, one can see that Success's family has a high social position and has been able to inculcate the sense of accomplishment through their practices which then forms her embodied cultural capital. This has helped Success to be accomplished in her job and, because of the exposure that she received from a young age, she has enjoyed very high cultural capital and a strong field of possibles.

Modise, Hope, Bontle, and Beautiful, along with Success, were the participants brought up by both parents. However, apart from being brought up by both parents, their upbringing seemed to be very different. Success, whose brief account is provided above, grew up with both parents, who were working in reasonably good positions and were from reasonably well-off families. Modise and Hope had some similarities in terms of their parents' employment. Modise's mother was a teacher, and her father worked in government, while Hope's mother was also a teacher and her father worked in another government department. Both Modise and Hope indicated that their parents influenced their enrolling at university and wanted them to be in employment rather than in business. In these three instances the circumstances created by educated parents created the right embodied cultural capital in the individuals to take advantage of the additional capitals provided by a social field (Grenfell, 2002). On the other hand, Beautiful came from a blended family with both parents and had a large family of six siblings. Both her parents were uneducated and ran a small tuck-shop business:

> "*Both my parents are self-employed. My mother sells breakfast items, such as* magwinya *[a kind of fried doughnut], and my father was a driver but is now retired. They are both looking forward to me becoming the first graduate in the family, which is quite a lot of pressure on me… Having grown up in a traditional homestead where*

we did not have much, I wanted to become educated in order to give my parents the life they dreamed of having."

Beautiful pointed out that her parents were both in small business and had worked hard to support the family. In this instance, the struggle that she went through during her growing up inculcated in Beautiful the culture of wanting to succeed in education and access gainful employment which can relieve her and her family from financial hardship. This example again reiterates how cultural capital is formed by the field around an individual and can influence their aspirations and goals in accordance with the social positions they occupy or aspire to occupy.

The above instances showcase how parental and family contexts can be different for every individual and this results in varied capitals within individuals. Success's parents could afford to send her to a private school outside of the country, which exposed her to life in a boarding school and led her to harnessed new skills such as mentoring her peers. This example also shows how Success could leverage the capital created by her family's socialisation and her exposure to life outside of Botswana improved her capital and enhanced her employability skills. In contrast to Success, Beautiful's motivation to achieve came from her desire to help her parents whom she saw had struggled hard to keep their family educated and supported. Her parents, though not educated, created an environment where education was assigned a certain importance and they motivated her to study. This background has generated her embodied cultural capital, namely wanting to enhance her standard of living, thus creating the motivation to achieve. From these two examples we can see that an individual's disposition reflects their personal experiences (Bourdieu, 1990), whereby a person's experiences during their upbringing determines their ambitions and future aspirations, in turn defining their field of possibles.

It can also be seen in the above examples that exposure to new surroundings (field) like higher education can shape an individual's aspirations (capital) even though they had different mindsets while growing up. For instance, Modise wants to go into business although he had always seen his parents in employment and they also want him to be in employment. However, having been exposed to the world of business as he progressed through higher education, Modise set his ambitions to enter the world of business. These cases also underline how habitus permeates an individual and shapes their thinking and vision for the future (Reay, 2004) based on the social and cultural capital that is present within the field. This example also shows that HEIs can expose students to environments and experiences that can help their vision and expand their field of possibles.

4.4.1.3 Turning a negative into a positive influence

While there are direct positive or negative parental influences on individuals, in some instances a conflict situation could also result in a positive reaction, which can create benefits in the long run. Karabo, another participant, stated that his motivation was based on the fact that he did not get along with his stepfather:

> "… *I was not on good terms with my stepfather and had to move in with the extended family. This was a blessing and motivated me to study since I had to prove a point after going through the rejection.*"

In this instance, Karabo had to move in with this maternal family since his stepfather rejected him. Though initially he had not taken his studies seriously, the school he enrolled in shaped his education and motivated him to study. He then realised that education could be one way of proving himself and countering his stepfather's rejection. This reaction is in line with Bourdieu's theory of habitus, which sometimes creates unpredictable behaviour and can also positively influence since it involves objectively adjusting to create a change. Bourdieu (1977) suggests that the habitus formed in one's family helps shape an individual's

experiences at school and beyond and, in this instance, the cultural capital created in Karabo drawn from his family setting could be low, thereby not providing him with any field of possibles. However, his move to his extended family who had a better social position has helped enhance his capital and provided him with the motivation to further himself. In Karabo's case, one can see the school's influence in shaping his aspirations by following strict rules with students regarding their education and guiding them in relation to their future. The situation that Karabo found himself in could have affected him in a manner in that it could have demoralised him entirely and made him completely worthless. However, the rejection by his stepfather created in him the motivation to achieve mainly because of his move to his extended family where the influence of capital was higher than in his home. Reay (1995), in her work on habitus, brings up Bourdieu's argument that dispositions caused by external factors in individuals can enable them to take courses of action that can create a transformation in the subject to the constraints faced. In the case of Karabo, the extended family' cultural capital inculcated in him a higher level of capital which the school has been able to enhance by positively guiding him, thereby making up for the gaps resulting from the lack of parental influence.

4.4.1.4 Parental influence commonalities

One of the common issues mentioned by most of the participants was their mothers' influence in their upbringing, which was instrumental in getting them into tertiary education, showcasing the strong impact of women in bringing up families. The need for women to be strong and support their children is seen in studies conducted by Dintwat (2010) and Kossoudji and Mueller (1983) in that the history of Botswana reflects a tradition of males migrating and moving away from households to seek work, leaving the women to take care of their children. It was also relayed in various interviews that mothers were without paid

employment and supported the family by being self-employed, resulting in their children, seeing that as a motivation to achieve more.

This discussion about how both parents or a single parent being employed or self-employed can influence graduates and students' upbringing leads deftly onto the discussion of social and cultural capital. These connections will be discussed below in the social capital category since parents' employment and influence create links to networks adding to a graduate's benefit.

4.4.2 Influence of the Extended Family

Botswana has a system of extended families, which is common in African culture. These extended families take care of children in instances where the immediate parents have passed away or where single mothers are left to look after their children and have no means of supporting their children (Letamo & Rakgoasi, 2000). Out of the interview sample, Thato and Jane were in situations where their mothers were without paid employment and hence were taken care of by their aunts or other family members, who were in employment. In contrast, and as mentioned above, Karabo was taken care of by his extended family since his stepfather had rejected him. In these cases, the primary influence on the individual is the person with whom they are living and who gives them care since they spend their time with them and also look upon them as examples of what they want to emulate:

> "*The aunty that I stayed with during my primary [education] was a retired teacher and then when I moved to Gaborone. I have been staying with my aunt, who is working at [redacted] and is a doctor (i.e. holds a PhD). I have always been staying with her, and she has been a great influence on me. I have many teachers in my family – my uncle, aunty, etc. and that is also why I have thought of going into teaching.*" (Thato)

Similarly, Jane stated:

> "*My mother was not working at the time, so I was being supported by her sister… my aunt has a qualification in accounting, so I will be the second graduate.*"

Jane's mother was not educated or employed but staying with her educated aunt influenced Jane and helped motivate her to study and enter tertiary education. She also mentioned that other family members had chosen other employment routes, such as becoming mine workers and not accessing tertiary education. In the above two instances, it can be seen that though the parent's social position was low, the field created by the extended family who could provide better social capital enhanced individuals' capitals and encouraged their aspirations to access education. Another instance where the influence of the extended family enhanced the life of an individual was exemplified in the case of Karabo (mentioned above), where the support of the extended family motivated him to study further.

4.4.3 Influence of changing surroundings

Another noticeable factor about Thato, Jane and Karabo are that when they moved in with their extended family, they had the opportunity to move to the city from their rural surroundings. This move to the city would have caused a change in their social context since living in cities can mean a better standard of living (Stephens et al., 1977b) and better employment opportunities (Gaetsewe, 2019). Further, this move to urban centres offers them additional exposure to the labour market and other opportunities and elevates their social status by their attending better equipped schools in the cities, thereby enhancing their habitus and understanding of employability. According to Bourdieu (1990), an individual's personal experiences create a habitus which can be compared to the acquisition of embodied cultural capital (Grenfell, 2012). Hence, a change in surroundings and context can alter an individual's attitudes and approach to life, thereby developing dreams for their future. This change in their environment can increase these students' cultural and social capital based on

their benefitting from their HEI experiences since a change in socialisations can help one form different visions of their lives (Bourdieu, 1977). This increased awareness also helped the participants to develop lucid dreams and plans for their futures, which often seemed to be the driving force behind their interest and initiative in participating in various activities, thereby helping them to derive a wide breadth of experience from their time at university. In addition, the move to the city living exposes one to endless opportunities, thereby preparing students for the urban area's employment market.

In Botswana, most socio-economic developments have taken place around the city, making it the hub of economic activity in the country and providing more employment and enterprise opportunities. With the migration of a considerable section of Botswana's population from villages to cities on the back of economic development, education started gaining momentum (Adekanmbi & Modise, 2000). This change has also resulted in many of the graduates interviewed being first-generation graduates in their families, which could impact their exposure to understanding the importance of employability. Since education is relatively new, and many parents may not have undergone formal education, schools and teachers play a significant role in shaping the students and adapting them to the world of higher education.

4.4.4 Influence of schools attended

In this research, all the interview participants attended schools in the city or suburbs for at least a part of their primary or secondary school studies (see Table 4.2). Stephens et al. (1977) pointed out that Batswana families will move into the cities due to the increased pay and better employment opportunities, thereby causing an increase in their standard of living. Stephens et al. (1977) further added that much of village-based education and employment

was informal in Botswana. In contrast, the urban migration after 1975, which brought many families into the cities (Dintwat, 2010) has changed the educational profile of families with more of them entering formal education and employment. The impact of being in the city is explored in detail in Section 4.5.1 under 'social capital'.

Table 4.2 also illustrates that 90% of the interviewees went to public schools and only two of the participants attended private schools during their senior secondary education. This would be the norm in Botswana since the majority of children go to public schools for their schooling. Public and private schools in Botswana provide entirely different experiences to students, from the resources availed to the attention teachers can pay to the pupils' development. Brutus, who had attended both public and private schools could clearly articulate the difference between the two cultures:

> "*The difference between private schools and government schools is stark. ... Teachers are so engaged with the students ... and students are also given a lot of freedom to express themselves.*"

When students can express themselves freely, it is bound to enhance their confidence, thereby impacting the field of possibles positively while improving their ability to reflect on their abilities, thereby helping them to identify enhancement areas. Brutus also cited an example to emphasise the differences between public and private schools' cultures, wherein a project idea of his was encouraged by teachers in the private school but ridiculed by public school teachers. This attention provided by teachers to their pupils and the encouragement given can raise their field of possibles and help them achieve better on both academic and other fronts. Adedoyin (2010), in his study of the relationship between a student's academic performance and self-efficacy improvement, points out that a teacher's efficacy was a critical factor in determining how children are educated. An increase in a student's academic

performance can increase their self-confidence and motivate them to achieve more, as can be seen in Brutus's case. He also stated the following based on his experience of public school:

> "*When I got to [redacted], the class sizes, the location of the school also attracted students from various places around Gaborone, and so it was a mixed bag of students with different characters with very minimal to no supervision at all from the teachers that you know the workload was you can imagine. We had some really shady characters in class. It got to a point where the culture that I was used to was very different – many times the teacher would come and deliver to the class and leave everything to the students. Sometimes they get so overwhelmed that they decide that they are not coming to class… I knew I was in class with students who did not care about school – all they cared was having some fun and going back home.*"

The above statement is very revealing regarding the varying cultural capital that students bring into classrooms which could be the result of their social backgrounds. It also reveals a culture of students not taking education seriously and not being guided by their teachers appropriately. As Brutus relays, in a public school where education is free, one will tend to get students from various socio-economic backgrounds and in many instances from society's very lowest socio-economic strata. Each individual came with a different level of capital because of the different social positions of their families and their resultant cultural capital. There are also instances where students go to school for the meals served to them each day. This motive then creates a sense of apathy in students and takes away their focus from education's primary function. When students come from a range of backgrounds, like in this example, it does become challenging for teachers to create a competitive culture while also shaping a holistic experience for the student. As Brutus points out, the bigger class sizes in these schools can also prevent teachers from being able to give students the necessary attention and guidance, thereby creating a sense of non-accountability and lack of responsibility:

> "*I spent two years there, culture was totally different from the behaviour of students to the teaching style. I was not used to being in a class of 50 or 60. When I finished*

> *my standard seven there was only 17 of us which also was quite a lot by the standards since normal class sizes were around 12.*"

The above statement also shows the contrast between public and private schools. In Botswana, public schools have become limited in terms of being able to access the resources necessary for both students and teachers (Maimela, 2016). Having larger numbers of students could also be restricting teachers from having room for creativity and innovation. Further, students coming from heterogeneous backgrounds also create challenges for teachers in imparting knowledge, as it is difficult to get these students to the same level of understanding in a given classroom.

In general, public schools in Botswana do not encourage participation in extracurricular activities, though there are some schools which do so, albeit only a few. As Karabo mentioned,

> "*Going to the school especially [redacted] senior secondary school taught the value of sports. Most of our good sports personnel are from this school. They influenced me to be engaged in activities like sports.*"

For a person like Karabo who had not taken his studies seriously due to his circumstances, the underlying ambition to prove his stepfather wrong meant that he needed to enhance his attributes through a variety of activities. Sporting activities help to enhance an individual in a number of different ways and by participating in sports, one tends to become better at dealing with people while also motivating oneself to achieve goals (Allen et al., 2013). Drawing on this example, one can again see how the field created by a school where one gets to meet students from a range of social positions, which can change the social capital of an individual and encourage them to enhance their cultural capital by providing them with an opportunity to set their field of possibles.

In contrast, private schools encourage participation in a wide range of activities such as sports, volunteer, and cultural which enrich the students and creates awareness of the

benefits of participating in them. Even among private schools, there are variations from one school to another regarding what the student experiences in terms of participating in activities outside of the classroom. Success, who was educated at a private school outside of Botswana, make the following general remarks about schools in Botswana:

> "*I think that some schools are quite robotic, and students are not receiving an updated form of education. I do not believe this develops the student, nor encourages them to develop themselves. The schools may not place enough emphasis on extracurricular programs they offer.*"

Success made the above point about schools not encouraging competitive sports in Botswana, hence, in her opinion, the country's schools, including private institutions, are not doing enough to provide students with an overall experience. The main reason for her comment was because schools in South Africa (where she studied) provide ample opportunities for competitive sports unlike in Botswana. Success went on to say that extracurricular activities like sports are not ascribed importance in Botswana by either parents or schools. Besides, living outside the country in a boarding school gave her opportunities to sharpen her other skills as she mentions citing her experiences:

> "*Even in high school I was a part of a mentorship group which helped new boarders in the school settle in. I also worked at the school tuck-shop in order to cut the queue, but quite enjoyed this job. In addition, I worked as a waiter within the Travel and Tourism programme which built my personality and marketing skills.*"

Her experiences at a young age will go towards enhancing her attributes of being able to work with people, communicate effectively, understand others, and help Success to develop her social and cultural capital, which in turn can help to enhance her employability.

From the above findings, one can see the influence of schools attended by students in terms of developing them as per Bourdieu's theory that contexts and practices shape individuals' perceptions, which are then reflected in their attributes. Having a broad exposure to different environments during one's younger days can, in addition to developing skills,

also enhance the confidence of individuals and hence improve their motivation. This is also reiterated by studies conducted by Adedoyin (2010) and Maimela (2016), where they have observed a strong correlation between student performance and the resourcing of schools and teachers.

Apart from parental and family influence, the schools attended during an individual's earlier years also play a pivotal role in inculcating the importance of enhancing various attributes such as communication, ability to work with other people, through participation in various activities as can be seen in the cases of Brutus and Success. Studies conducted by Wiederkehr, Darnon, Chazal, Guimond and Martinot (2015) among high school students show a clear relationship between the social status of pupils and their self-efficacy. From this, it might be inferred that the students who go to public and private schools with different teaching and learning resources will have different levels of self-confidence and motivation, which will then have an impact on their institutionalised cultural capital and their field of possibles.

4.4.5 Influence of circumstances on motivation

Thato was the only unemployed graduate among those interviewed. When looking at her circumstances, it is apparent that the low social capital of her family due to her unemployed mother and the lack of a father figure, affected her embodied capital. Further, Thato went to a boarding school for her senior secondary education, meaning she was away from home and her family. She mentioned that she had dropped her grades and did not do as well as she had expected. which could have affected her self-efficacy (Wiederkehr et al., 2015). In addition, after school she could not enrol in a programme of her choice due to her low results and had to settle for an available course which was not something she liked. Her example underlines

how a low level of capital can reduce an agent's field of possibles and thereby influence their success in later life. This also affects their self-confidence and motivation. Thato talks about her regrets regarding past decisions that have lowered her field of possibles:

> "*…looking back I feel that I should have gone back to private school, improved my grades in school and then taken another programme.*"

Her low self-esteem could have further depressed her confidence as well as her capitals, both cultural and social to the extent that it affected Thato's ability to apply her knowledge and present herself confidently to prospective employers. Her lack of self-confidence and low morale is reflected in her statement:

> "*Some days I feel I don't want to go out and want to just lock myself in and not to go and see anyone… When I graduated, I was confident about being market ready and I knew I could do a job well but now feel obsolete since I have not been able to keep myself updated with the latest technologies and not working is also making me forget what we learnt.*"

According to Creed and Gagliardi (2015), young people are affected adversely by career compromises, wherein their self-esteem becomes lower as compared to those who can follow their interests. They tend to feel highly demotivated and have low self-esteem, which may thereby affect their personal attributes, meaning that they tend not to engage in other activities.

4.4.6 Summary of the impact of socio-cultural backgrounds on graduates' personal attributes

As is evident in Sections 4.4.1-4.4.5, the societal structures which surround students during their upbringing influence their behaviour in later years. Matthäus (2017), while explaining Bourdieu's theories explains that an individual's feelings and emotions are a manifestation of their evaluations of primary socialisation, and this is dependent on their social background. Based on this argument, we can see that the socialisation provided by parents and extended

family play a critical role in determining the attitude and confidence of students. This socialisation thereby influences the students' actions in terms of their planning for the future. It is also evident that an alteration in field can create a transformation in individuals' capital. Since formal education is a relatively new phenomenon among many families in Botswana, their understanding of what constitutes graduate employability could be limited and hence schoolteachers have played an essential role in facilitating the development of students' attitudes and attributes. Graduates who grew up with strong parental influence emerged more confident and motivated in their attitude to want to achieve the vision that they had set for themselves. They were also guided well along the way when they had to overcome obstacles. When explaining this phenomenon in line with Bourdieu's theories, one can see that the cultural capital of those students from families with higher social and cultural capital tend to exhibit high cultural capital and have high fields of possibles.

The need for parental/family involvement during a child's developmental years is vital, and with schools being the facilitating agents, students will be more likely to realise the importance of enhancing themselves to meet the requirements of being an employable graduate. With the changing family structures in Botswana and more people becoming educated, the impact of parental influence on the participants can be seen by their focussed approach to studies and their plans for the future. This has given them the self-confidence that can enhance their employability.

The schools attended by an individual could influence their social capital by the networks created within the students and alumni. Section 4.5 will explore and discuss these factors in detail within the context of social capital and its subcategories while also identifying the connections between these forms of capital and graduate employability.

4.5 Social capital and employability

Social capital, according to Bourdieu, represents the accumulation of all the resources that an individual or group can accrue through relationships that can create mutually beneficial networks (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). By defining social capital in this manner, Bourdieu highlights the social inequalities that exist within society and the impact of these on the networks which can be created, which are unequal due to these variations in social stature. From the participants interviewed during this research, the variations in levels of social capital are evident and this is heavily influenced by where participants grew up, the influence of their parents and family, as well as the networks they have and can create. Therefore, in this section, I will draw attention to and discuss the impact of the surroundings in which participants grew up and the networks they created, and which benefitted their employability skills.

4.5.1 Influence of city life vs. rural backgrounds on an individual's social capital

One factor that distinguished the interview participants was that they were all from the city or suburbs or had spent quite a substantial period of their school life within the city, especially during senior secondary school education. From the demographics and profile of the interview participants (Table 3.3), we can see that eleven out of twelve had studied in the city or suburbs, while one participant was from the second city, which is less than 70 kilometres from the capital and so could be considered to have an urban influence. The demographic profile of Botswana in 2019 shows that 70% of the population lives in cities. Although the country's economy is based on mining and tourism and these are located away from urban centres, most companies have their corporate offices in the capital city. Therefore, Gaborone is the commercial hub of all activities in the country, including Government offices, and most

people in employment and those with enterprises base themselves there. Studies by Bell (1981) and Stephens et al. (1977) discuss the urban migration of the educated Batswana population out of their rural villages in search of employment and better opportunities, and hence people in urban centres are less poor than those in rural areas (Wikan, 2004). However, the employed support their families living in the villages economically, thus maintaining their home village links. These studies show that in the rural villages, the population consists of mostly unemployed people and the elderly, who are dependent on minimal incomes that they make in the villages through informal employment and agricultural activities or the financial support from their employed urban family members. This could result in a weak socialisation structure, thereby not yielding enough networks providing economic benefits. Further, the small population in rural villages might mean that the limited resources available are sufficient for all the people living there. This availability of adequate resources could create a lackadaisical attitude among those residing in villages which shapes the cultural capital of those growing up in these surroundings.

Since the participants themselves had lived in the city for a substantial period during their schooling, they did not bring with them the challenges of coming from a rural setting. Of the students interviewed, Jane and Modise talked about the difference in experiences comparing rural areas with urban life:

> "*Coming from a rural village is definitely more challenging due to the sudden exposure to the level of technology available in the university. This becomes better once they are given the chance to adapt to the different websites, portals, forums etc.*" (Jane)

Jane had moved back to the village to do her senior secondary schooling and pointed out that the lack of adequate technology equipment in the village schools made using technology in higher education a challenge. One effect of this could be the lack of access to social media and websites for those growing up in the villages, which could also limit their exposure to the

outside world and the social structures outside their domicile. This could also affect a student's self-confidence and thereby their cultural capital.

In Botswana a sizeable part of the population lives in villages and come to the cities for higher education and subsequent employment because of the concentration of development in urban centres. Therefore, when students enter higher education, in many cases, it will be their first time in a city away from their villages and homes. The move from rural to urban also exposes the to the urban formal employment field which they are not used to as compared to the rural villages where the employment field is predominantly informal (Stephens et al., 1977). In some instances, this causes fear since they are intimidated by urban life. The interviewees also echoed this:

> "*We are students who came to the city to study at university coming from far away villages. Moreover, they are all alone without any family members in the big city. They are intimidated when they are meeting new faces, and people who can express themselves, classes are conducted in English, and foreigners conduct some of them. The reason for their apprehension is that they have never had an interaction with a person of different skin colour. Furthermore, these are factors that would play a role in one's confidence.*" (Brutus)

Brutus's comment is a very critical one since it showcases the differences between the dichotomous population, namely from urban or rural backgrounds. According to him, HEI students from rural areas are exposed to a different way of life in terms of people's diversity and even the language of teaching. As Brutus remarks, in primary schools, students are not used to being taught by foreigners since most of their teachers are local citizens. Further, even if they are taught in English, most of the communication will be in the local language and, when they enter HEIs, they have to converse in English, which can be challenging to many of the students. This comment highlights how the capital derived from an individual's field can impact their reaction to the changes that take place in their contexts.

Modise's comment on the difference between living in urban and rural settings was focussed on the distractions that students coming to the cities face and how these impact on their priorities, hence they can lose their focus on developing themselves:

> "*I think students who come from rural areas into the city are not as adaptable and are lured into frivolous aspects of city life that they have not previously experienced, which takes time away from developing themselves and their employability.*"

This statement was rather interesting since he is referring to students from rural settings engaging in activities like clubbing that is not available in rural villages while not giving priority to engaging in activities that can develop themselves.

These examples provide an insight into differences in the experiences of students from rural schools and those from cities. Those studying in the city found it beneficial to enhance their employability by participating in schemes and thus came forward to participate in the research. Living and growing up in the city could also have been advantageous in helping them build networks within industry, which might help them to improve their employability in the future. Having parents and other family members employed in various companies could help graduates develop networks because of the socialisation that could give inroads thus enhancing their social capital. In turn, this development of networks could help them to find suitable employment or support for their enterprises.

4.5.2 Family influence: A contributor to social capital

From the statements made by the interviewees regarding their backgrounds and the move to the city from rural settings, one could infer that this gave them a better opportunity to create social networks leading to improved social capital. Her aunts supported Thato because her mother was unemployed, so she moved from the village to the city. Being with her aunt, who was highly qualified and was working in the education sector, she had managed to socialise

with her aunt's friends, which motivated her to further her studies. However, for Thato, these social connections had not helped secure a job and lowered her self-esteem because of her inability to reach her dreams. On the other hand, Success is from a higher socio-economic class, and many of her siblings and family members are in well-positioned employment. Coming from a family with perfect social connections was advantageous to her and gave her additional confidence, thus making her more employable. Brutus's mother was in business, and since he spent time at her business during his leisure time, this helped build his confidence to meet people and create useful networks. The above examples also showcase the impact of social connections on one's field of possibles.

Though parental social structures do not guarantee employment, the relationships created within social networks can provide an insight into opportunities that exist while also enhancing one's confidence in terms of being privy to inside information (Tomlinson, 2017). Here, Tomlinson says that a graduate who has parents who enjoy influential social standing can help them to take advantage of the opportunities, thereby underlining the impact of higher social capital.

4.5.3 Influence of creating and maintaining networks

Referring to social capital, Bourdieu (1986) mentions that an agent's social capital could be determined by who a person knows more than what they know. One of the interview participants echoed a similar sentiment:

> "*I believe a big part of becoming employed is networking and whom you know within the field. Even finding an attachment is challenging as companies will not accept you unless you know somebody on the inside*." (Beautiful)

This statement by Beautiful relates to social connections benefitting one in terms of obtaining employment. Referring back to Section 4.5.2 where I mentioned that Tomlinson (2017)

reiterates the importance of social connections in enabling opportunities for graduates, having a social network can also enhance one's confidence and thereby shape one's field of possibles. By networking and knowing people within a given industry, students and graduates can understand what is expected of them when they are employed, thereby allowing them to work on enhancing these skills and attributes. This also confers the advantage of having people who know the world of work to act as their mentors, thereby helping them bridge the gap between their studies and employment (Batistic & Tymon, 2017). Thus, the social capital that is within the field that the individual belongs to can help to enhance their cultural capital and also provide opportunities by leveraging these forms of capital.

4.5.4 University engagement with industry and community

The University engages in several initiatives to facilitate the interaction of students and graduates with industry and the community in order to enhance their networks and social capital. The participants interviewed also seem to understand the importance of creating networks and said that participating in various schemes like community engagement, sports and other clubs allowed them to network with people from industry and the community, thus creating relationships which could prove helpful in the future:

> "*I also took part in other volunteering opportunities around the university, and I enjoyed networking with different types of people*." (Hope)

> "*... adapting to the work place environment is different from being in school. ... I was prepared to volunteer for opportunities, and this gave me the opportunity to learn and adapt very well*." (Karabo)

The above quotes by Hope and James show that they have made use of the opportunity provided by the university to enhance their social network and understand what employers look for in their employees. These social connections also help enhance the social

capital of the graduates. These examples underline the importance of universities engaging with industries and providing opportunities for students to be exposed to them. In addition to creating networks, exposing students to industries through various initiatives also provides them with an opportunity to have a clearer view of employability through these interactions with the community and industry. As James states, workplace attachments have helped him build the skills required for the workplace:

> "*I have learned a lot during my attachment, and I do feel as though I am patient, humble, and a team-player. I believe these attributes will make me a good employee along with time-management*."

The interviewees mentioned that it was important for universities to create links with industry since these will have a significant influence in enhancing graduates' employability. The various initiatives HEIs have adopted to bridge the gap between academia and industry include internships and community engagement. These are seen to be beneficial to graduates in terms of building their social capital, as per Tomlinson's (2017) analysis of the role of various forms of capital in the context of graduate employability. According to him, of the various capitals that can shape the employability of a graduate, social and cultural capital are obtained by an individual through their lived experiences, thereby reinforcing the relationship between the conceptual tools of habitus, capital and field while shaping how their interaction creates the practice of an agent (Bourdieu 1990).

4.5.5 Summary of social capital and graduates' personal attributes

In his theory of social capital Bourdieu (1986) emphasises that class differences between the various strata of society influence the individual's social capital level. However, in Botswana, pre-defined class variations are not stark. The main variation between individuals comes from their networks and relationships with people who can help them achieve their goals, for

example, employment. Studies in Botswana have shown that educated migrate to cities for employment (Stephens et al., 1977; Wikan, 2004), and this can cause a difference in families' social capital. Hence, the links created by parents, family and university with industry, community, and the world of work, play a significant role in enhancing their employability. Having this exposure to industry creates a sense of confidence within students and graduates and enhances their attributes.

In a study conducted in Tanzania, Vaaland and Ishengoma (2016) have argued that improved university-industry connections enhance students' innovation. Thus parents, family networks, and the school also play an essential role in an individual's social capital level. These findings underline the connection between habitus and social capital and interlinkages of many of these factors in an individual's life, as discussed in Section 4.7. According to Bourdieu (1986), "the social capital of any given agent is determined by the volume of network connections one can mobilise, and the volume of capital one possesses" (p.22).

4.6 Cultural Capital and Employability

Like social capital, wherein Bourdieu links the existence of capital (resources) to an individual's social class, he believes than an individual can also possess cultural capital, which he defines as symbolic elements such as knowledge, skills, belonging, posture, and mannerisms. Based on the key elements that emerged from the interview data, I have categorised these as constituted by academic capability, programme choice, dreams for the future, skills obtained, and personality development (the latter including volunteering and leadership roles). These factors are also critical in determining the employability of graduates, the main focus of this research. Along with the factors mentioned above, Reay (2004) states that "levels of confidence and entitlement are also components of cultural capital across social fields" (p. 75). It was observed from the interviews that when a person is

confident, they perform better academically and can make clear choices that can help their future. In this way, their cultural capital is enhanced by having higher levels of confidence.

All the interview participants had either an undergraduate degree or were in the process of obtaining their degrees. However, variations of cultural capital were evident concerning academic performance, choice of the programme, and the skills each participant possessed, which varied between individuals. The participants' social class also varied; two of the participants, Bruce and Success, were clearly from a higher social class since their parents had been able to afford their private schooling as opposed to the others. This advantage may have increased their embodied and objectified states of cultural capital. Besides, Success also had the opportunity to study outside the country and travel overseas, which could have further enhanced her cultural capital.

In its institutionalised state, cultural capital can be the level of qualifications possessed by an individual. Since all the participants are from the same university and possess the same qualification, they are all considered to have a higher institutional cultural capital than others without degrees. Hence, in this thesis, academic qualification is not considered a differentiator in enhancing one's cultural capital.

4.6.1 Cultural capital and its impact on academic capability and programme choice

As per Bourdieu's theory, graduates' institutionalised cultural capital changes when they obtain a qualification. Based on this, all the participants have created or will create a change in their capital, bringing about a change in their economic and social capital. Studies have shown that psychosocial factors and social needs influence students' programme and college choices (Nora, 2004). These decisions can also be attributed to the field of possibles students have when they complete their schooling. Parents' understanding of education and

comprehension can shape one's choice of programme since they can influence their children and boost their confidence (Reay, 2004). Being able to enrol on a programme and college in line with one's interests and abilities will enhance the experience of a university student and increase their ability to internalise the knowledge acquired. The embodied cultural capital fostered by parental influence and the schools attended play a significant role in determining students' academic ability and urge to learn. Educated parents and teachers can guide and facilitate their children's development of interest in disciplines suited to their capabilities and aptitudes and thus assist their career development planning because of their social field.

Out of the twelve interviewees, five were first-generation graduates in terms of their immediate families, and hence could be categorised as having lower cultural capital in terms of academic programmes. As Thato mentioned,

> "*… I never liked IT, but I applied to do or teaching, and since I did not get admitted into these schools I opted to do computing because at that time it was considered an essential skill and everyone wanted to do IT not knowing that by the time I finish in four years it will become saturated. So I thought I could complete this and then take care of the family since I will find a job at the end of the studies… Honestly, looking back, I feel that I should have gone back to private school, improved my grades in school and then taken another programme.*"

From the above quote it is evident that Thato needed some guidance concerning her career choice. Her poor academic performance at school limited her options regarding programme choice while the need to gain employment to become self-sufficient forced her into a course that she did not like. Thato, however, moved in with an educated aunt who influenced her to consider furthering her studies. This scenario reiterates Bourdieu's hypothesis that cultural capital passed through generations contributes to the success of an individual (Bourdieu, 1977; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990) while also emphasising that the capital within a given field can influence one's actions.

In contrast to Thato, Success had higher cultural capital due to her parents being wealthier and guiding her towards making an informed choice about her programme of study. Studying in private schools with better exposure to the various career fields, she could make better decisions:

> "*Initially, I chose this program because I had an interest in the gaming industry. However, during my studies, I felt the desire to pursue cyber forensics in the future*." (Success)

The statement above displays the informed manner in which Success made her decision. Brutus, another participant, who was guided well by his mother, also displayed a thoughtful and informed way of making his programme choices:

> "*Business management is only one that stood out for me because even though I wanted to go into engineering I still had ambitions of venturing into business in the future and I thought that there are more ways of skinning a cat*." (Brutus)

From the above examples, one can see the influence of field in enhancing the cultural and social capital of an individual and how the various forms of capital are interconnected in practice. This could also be clearly seen in the case of Beautiful, whose parents were both self-employed and siblings were also involved in businesses. She said this about her programme of study:

> "*It has always been my dream to end up as a finance manager as I have loved maths from a young age, and I knew I wanted to study finance. I had received admission into the Accounting Technician programme offered by [redacted], but I turned this offer down as I wanted to study finance*."

From the above statement by Beautiful, it is clear that having a family who has been in business gave her some insight into the world of business and provided her with information for choosing a course that would interest and benefit her in future. Most interesting here is her resolve to go into the programme of study that she wanted and not settling for anything on offer. Compared to Thato's scenario, one can infer that Thato settled into a programme

that she did not like just because of the dire need created by not having support at home, both financially and emotionally. In contrast, Beautiful had support at home and could be selective in terms of her programme of study.

With the examples provided above, we can see that students have different social and cultural capital levels when they enter HEIs. Some of them enrol on programmes that they had always hoped to study. In contrast, some of them adapt to the situation and begin a given programme of study, while others who regret not having done well before starting at HEIs are quite unhappy about their enrolled programmes. Hope and Modise are also examples of instances where students have to study a programme that was not their first choice due to their low school grades. However, they then learnt from their experiences and decided to make the most of what their potential qualification will help them to achieve, such as allowing them to start their enterprise. This could be a product of their resilience and willingness to make the most of their circumstances, as pointed out by Clegg (2011) in a study conducted in a UK university where it was noted that, in some instances, students coming from less privileged backgrounds tend to outperform others due to their urge to succeed having been given the opportunity to study at university.

Thus, it is individuals' self-motivation that will encourage them to make the most of their studies and self-actualise their career plans, despite the compromises they have had to make. Creed and Gargliardi (2015) point out that in circumstances where students have to compromise their goals, they find themselves in situations that lower their self-esteem and motivation, which may even affect their learning in HEIs. This situation can impact their confidence and thereby limit their achievements and personal attributes. However, and as mentioned above, confidence and entitlement are also essential elements of cultural capital, and these can help shape an individual's choice of studies and future aspirations.

From the above examples and studies, we can see the importance of cultural capital in enhancing graduate attributes as well as the role of parents and schools in increasing graduates' self-confidence. Further, these examples also showcase how HEIs need to consider the social and cultural capital of students entering HE from a variety of social positions, which are critical components when implementing initiatives to enhance employability based on models such as CareerEDGE and USEM. HEIs need to pay attention to provide students with the experience that can help build some of these components missing from their lives.

4.6.2 Enhancing students' experiences at HEIs and hence their cultural capital

Cultural capital also plays a significant role in enhancing skills that are considered essential by employers, in addition to influencing academic performance as discussed above. In Batswana culture, like in many African societies, family hierarchies are followed strictly, and in many households, younger people are not allowed to voice their opinions about anything spoken by their elders openly. This practice deprives them of the advantage of learning to be good communicators and also becoming able to convey their points effectively, as mentioned by Success in her interview:

> "*This is an especially important skill given the culture in Botswana, where children are taught not to be outspoken or voice their thoughts to elders, as this would be considered disrespectful. Nowadays, this is changing, and I see that my nieces and nephews are given the platform to voice how they feel*."

While making the above statement, Success referred to the importance of improving one's ability to communicate clearly and confidently. Having been exposed to different societies in different countries, she was in a position of strength to compare Botswana's traditions with other cultures. Students do not develop the skills to communicate effectively, and this practice of not voicing their opinions also restricts individuals' critical thinking skills. Critical

thinking skills and effective communication are two of the traits lacking in many of the graduates, according to employers' statements at forums that seek their feedback on graduate employability in Botswana. As evidenced in her statements above, Success mentioned the change in practice whereby youngsters now dare to voice their opinions to their elders, which could result from a change of socialisation as more families move into the city and suburbs and become more educated. Success stated that by participating in workshops and working on projects, she managed to improve her communication and public speaking skills:

> "*Some people would also be reluctant to voice their ideas, and needed a lot of coaxing to share their thoughts… This once again helped me relate to people with different beliefs, cultures and backgrounds, which built my communication skills. I also volunteered in many of the workshops… This allowed me to learn about public speaking by both listening to and mimicking the expert speakers who spoke at this workshop*."

Here Success clearly states the challenges she faced when she took over a leadership role in a university club and how she could turn it into an opportunity to enhance her skills and thereby her cultural capital. She also describes how participating in volunteer activities also helped her sharpen her skills, which improved her self-confidence. According to Jane, participating in activities in university helped her shed her introverted nature and gain confidence:

> "*In my first year I was very unconfident and shy, and did not feel like joining the activities. Taking part in these activities has grown my confidence through the years… I have taken part in several extra-curricular activities and I have taken the role of minister now, which boost my CV so I believe this will make me more employable. These activities have improved my confidence, presentation skills and communication ability*."

In Jane's case, she had initially not done well in school but had improved her scores by rewriting. This early setback changed her attitude, and with the support from her family, she challenged herself to achieve her goals. By participating in all activities, as she mentioned

and taking on roles, she enhanced her cultural capital and now showcases a sense of self-confidence.

From the survey and the interviews conducted, the majority of participants in employability initiatives on campus were students and graduates who were brought up in the city and its surroundings compared to villages. One or two of the participants indicated that students coming to study in the city are awed by the change from their rural surroundings. This sudden change of environment resulted in them lacking the confidence to engage in many activities, as Brutus and Modise mentioned in their interviews. As per Bourdieu's theory, this factor showcases a difference in their cultural capital compared to their peers. HEIs need to devote a great deal of attention to this factor in order to ensure that they can provide their students with a holistic learning experience which can help enhance their capital during their period of study.

4.6.3 Cultural capital and influence on future aspirations

Possession of skills that enhance one's employability is classified as embodied cultural capital according to Bourdieu's theory. By participating in various activities and obtaining experience and thereby more confidence, an individual will be able to change their level of cultural capital and thus make gains in their social and economic capital. This also enhances the individual's field of possibles and thereby helps them have high aspirations and clear goals. During the interviews one of the areas considered was the graduates and students' dreams and goals, since having high aspirations encourage students to enhance their academic performance (Khattab, 2015).

In most cases, the participants' dreams were closely linked to the society they grew up in, the influence of the people around them, and their circumstances. One of the participants,

Teresa, grew up with her grandmother who was taking caring of many grandchildren, in spite of having both her parents. Her ambition was:

> "*I would like to join an NGO which helps orphans get a better quality of healthcare, as I do not believe they receive the same level of care as those children that come into the hospital with their parents. I think my focus on children's quality of life stems from growing up with my grandmother, surrounded by my other cousins*."

Teresa talks about her younger days in the village, where she found that access to healthcare for orphaned children was below standard and that these children were not getting adequate care and attention. Therefore, her dream was to start an NGO that would take care of the medical needs of orphaned children. This dream prompted her to get involved in community projects during her time at university and helped her acquire many other skills, thereby enhancing her personal attributes as well as her cultural capital:

> "*Within the community projects, I usually assume a leadership role and have to manage the team that I am working in. This improved my team working skills and made me fulfilled as I was able to improve the confidence the children had in themselves. It helped me realise that I had the potential to change somebody's life and encouraged me to take risks*." (Teresa)

In instances like these, one could see that students and graduates pursue activities that will take them closer to their goals. Bontle had a talent for art and writing; however, she was doing her studies in Health Information Management:

> "*I want to balance both art and health in my career path. On the art side, I want to venture into filmmaking and publish books. In health, I want to go into volunteering – especially in refugee camps – as this has been a long-term passion of mine*."

She planned to use her health management knowledge to volunteer in camps while also using her passion for art and writing to produce films and publish books. She involved herself in clubs, and she said, "*I was part of several clubs in the university including netball and a new club called HYPE [Helping Young People Excel] club through which I have been tutoring kids*". Her passion is to help people, and by forming this club to help youngsters, she will

enhance her skills and improve her attributes such as communication and people skills. In this case, one can see how embodied cultural capital can be used to gain economic capital.

Along with Bontle, seven of the others interviewed wanted to become entrepreneurs, some immediately. In contrast, other interviewees wanted to work for some time to gain experience before starting a business. Entering into business is an exciting phenomenon since many of the older generations of Batswana did not start businesses, as revealed by studies conducted by Stephens et al. (1977) and Bell (1981), which showed that the majority of the population in Botswana who went into employment moved into urban areas and very few started enterprises of their own. As Modise remarked,

> "*My family believe that I should look for a job instead of starting a business, as that was the norm for a university graduate. They are also worried about the risk factor in a business venture, but I believe they will come around. I have always been interested in business and was selling sweets even back in primary school. There are unfortunately no businesspeople in my family, so my influences to join business are all entrepreneurs in Gaborone*."

Modise indicated his passion for entrepreneurship and said that he had been attending all related workshops. He also confirmed during the interview that he would be one of the first to choose the entrepreneurship route in his family and hence faced quite a bit of resistance from his parents. Given the growing unemployment problem in Botswana, the Government has made conscious efforts to encourage entrepreneurship with the help of other stakeholders, including civil society organisations and the private sector. In response to this, many institutions have also introduced entrepreneurship training, which has led to positive student reactions (Rudhumbu, Svotwa, Munyanyiwa, & Mutsau, 2016). Thus, we can see that the change of environment has caused a shift in graduates' cultural capital by developing their entrepreneurship skills. For example, Modise took advantage of the entrepreneurship initiatives offered by the University, which got him thinking about going into business, which

he had not given a thought to until he entered higher education since his family influenced him to take up employment.

Tomlinson (2017) highlights the importance of enhancing the capital possessed by individuals to improve their employability. Also stated in Bourdieu's theories is that enhancing each of these forms of capital can result in economic gain. Having goals and setting out to achieve them could help individuals enhance their personal skills. This also shows how a field can influence future aspirations and how this can be the motivation to enhance their cultural capital and field of possibles.

4.6.4 Impact of personal development activities on cultural capital

As mentioned in Section 4.5.2, many interviewees were first-generation graduates, which could mean that they lacked exposure and clarity regarding the skills expected of graduates (Hirudayaraj, 2011) and so come into HEI with low levels of capital. This lack of exposure could result in negligence or ignorance of students and graduates, resulting in them not engaging and participating in university schemes and activities, thereby neglecting to take advantage of the opportunity to enhance their capital. There was evidence of the benefits of participating in events as specified during the interview:

> "*I have attended one of the career development workshops and this focussed on the hardships we might face when entering industry and the importance of skills other than the ones we gain from our course*." (Bontle)

Though Bontle says that she is not the first graduate from her family, from the conversation, it emerged that her mother had also just graduated, studying part-time while being self-employed. The above statement shows how the career development workshops helped with her understanding of graduate employability skills and how she could obtain these skills,

thereby improving her institutionalised cultural capital. She had participated in a few activities and clubs and remarked how this helped with improving her skills:

> "*Through the activities, I have appreciated how fulfilling giving can be and the importance of being humble. I have also improved my interpersonal and communication skills as well as my self-confidence*."

Several of the other interviewees also echoed the sentiments expressed by Bontle. Jane (whose statement is quoted in Section 4.7.2) reiterates how she was a timid person when she joined university and did not want to participate in activities. However, once she had participated, she became confident with all the skills that she had obtained and even took on leadership roles and thinks that these have helped boost her CV. According to Modise,

> "*I was quite shy coming into university as I did not have any friends in [redacted], and I attended the activities as I did not have other commitments. I appreciated the opportunity to interact with other students and it helped me make friends and improved my confidence*."

Modise talks about how he did not have many friends when he came to university and participated in activities to while away his time. He says that he found that they were beneficial and helped him improve his confidence levels and widened his friends' network. These statements also reiterate the enhancement of a graduate's cultural capital by engaging in various activities and gaining more exposure during university life.

Another activity that many of these interviewees participated in related to community engagement. By involving themselves in such events, students can enhance their technical skills and gain 'soft' skills such as communication, team building, and critical thinking. In addition, they can also enhance their social connections through these community engagements. Many interviewees have been actively involved in university-community initiatives. They believe that the experience gained through these events will help their employability as they can obtain skills sought after by employers. Fawn says:

> "*I joined JCI because the club members were active, and I wanted to do something outside of academics. My friends were part of the outreach club and roped me into the club, and I enjoyed coming up with projects and participating alongside my friends. Participating in these activities benefitted me because I used to be an introvert, and they have helped me grow and become more confident. I have also learnt how to work with people, write proposals and gained fulfilment from helping others*."

One can see from Fawn's statement that she lacked the confidence to engage in university activities due to her shy nature. It was only because of pressure from fellow students that she had ended up doing so. This shows how social capital can influence individuals to their benefit, thereby enhancing their cultural capital. Success had been a vital member of the university community outreach club. She assumed a leadership role with the club in its initial stages of growth. She said that her time as President helped her hone her interpersonal skills and improved her ability to get her team to work together. In contrast, Success was very forthcoming in joining activities and taking leadership roles, probably because of her background, as discussed above:

> "*I was the president of the community outreach club for two years, and it was an equally fun and challenging experience, mainly due to personality clashes within the people in the group. My travels equipped me for this by making me adaptable to different situations and groups of people*."

These examples showcase how an individual can enhance their cultural capital by participating in community engagement initiatives. The community becomes the workplace in which they can express themselves. Since these projects involve teams of people working together, individuals can learn the dynamics of working with diverse people. The ability to work with a diverse set of people is an essential attribute that employers seek in recruits, and Teresa mentioned this as one of her most significant benefits from participating in community activities:

> "*I often find myself working with community projects such as providing financial and emotional support to teenage mothers, community cleaning, and mentoring children*."

Another critical skill derived from working in communities is communication. In these initiatives, students will need to interact with diverse people who can vary in their community positions, thus improving their communication skills. In many instances, the students and graduates have been working with communities, providing care and other necessary support. It is the exposure to the village and rural lifestyle during their upbringing that has encouraged many of them to give back to communities.

In Botswana, though most people in employment have moved to urban areas, which is concentrated around the capital city, they all go back to their villages regularly because of their families and the need to engage in social functions (Bell, 1981). Bell states that this connection to the villages tends to give Batswana an understanding of some of the hardships of people from lower socio-economic backgrounds. This connection tends to motivate them to help uplift people in disadvantaged areas while also building personal attributes. Besides Success, Teresa and Jane have worked in communities and conducted training for villagers relating to computing, mentoring and tutoring younger children, including some psycho-social mentoring, and taken on projects with clear timelines and deliverables. All these activities will enhance their attributes and cultural capital. The experience that students have of involvement in such community activities enhances their confidence and their employability by increasing their cultural capital. As mentioned in the literature review, employers and students expect HEIs to provide them with opportunities to obtain real-time work experience through internships or part-time activities. Section 4.6.5 will discuss in detail what the participants had to say about gaining experience in real-time workplaces or similar scenarios.

4.6.5 Work experience and other activities' impact on cultural capital

As mentioned above, the interviewees discussed their perceptions of their experiences of real-time work or similar activities and how these had enhanced their capacity to work with people, communicate effectively, and think critically about solving problems. The results showed the reason why researchers, such as Pool and Sewell (2007) in their CareerEDGE employability model as well as Kinash et al. (2016) and Jackson (2014), have reiterated the importance of work experience as a measure of enhancing graduate employability. Employers prefer students who have work experience since these students, having been exposed to the real world of work, obtain hands-on experience and develop their confidence, a component of cultural capital which employers look for in their recruits. The participants' work experience took the form of part-time jobs, volunteer activities, curriculum-driven internships, community engagement, and some extracurricular pursuits. This section's focus will be on determining how obtaining work experience can enhance the cultural and social capital of an individual.

All the interviewees considered work experience to be an essential factor in enhancing their employability. Except for Thato, all other participants had a mandatory internship as part of their programme, and they appreciated the exposure and benefits of working in the real world. As Beautiful observed,

> "*I definitely feel more prepared for the workplace following my attachment as I now know what to expect from my first job, and it bridges the gap between employment and education*."

This statement reiterates the importance of work experience in enhancing graduate employability. With some students, the internships they undertook did directly link to their programme of study. However, the critical element here is working in a real-life scenario and learning to cope with a changing environment, thereby building their confidence. One of the

students, James, completed his internship in a field that was not directly in line with his programme:

> "*I did my internship last year, but in a completely different field. I worked with [redacted], in their warranty centre where they fixed laptops and printers on warranty, and within the software centre where they assisted in software installation. I worked under the warranty centre and learnt how to fix this hardware, and I enjoyed gaining new skills that I did not gain while at school*."

James was studying a cybersecurity programme, but he had to work on computer hardware during his internship. He has seen this as an opportunity to learn a new skill, which would enhance his cultural capital and give him an added advantage over his peers while looking for employment or even when starting his enterprise. The internship was seen as a good opportunity for the students to enhance their networks and broaden their social capital while improving their employability skills and thus their cultural capital. As Success mentioned,

> "*I had interned with the company, and they were impressed with how I worked, which helped me get a job with them*."

Apart from the structured internship, which was part of their programme, students engaged in part-time jobs and also volunteered for many activities to enhance their experience. The confidence of students who had taken part-time jobs was very evident. James lived on his student allowance, which he found was not adequate to meet all his needs. To supplement this, he took on part-time jobs, which helped him gain additional skills and earn him the extra money he needed. However, the jobs he engaged in were not necessarily in line with his programme of study, but he was able to benefit because he ensured that he connected with his customers while working at the food store, thereby enhancing his social connections, which could be useful to him in future:

> "*This allows me to network with customers, and I have met computer engineers and other prominent members of the industry*."

For James, this part-time job helped him in that it gave him skills whereby his cultural capital was enriched and expanded his networks, thereby increasing his social capital. From this experience, one can see that gaining these skills and networks has the potential to move James away from his previously lower social capital to higher capital. This change could also impact his confidence and, thus, realign his cultural capital. James's case is an example of how one can use opportunities and circumstances to enhance one's social status by working hard. James did his part-time job at the food store and volunteered for several activities within the university whenever there was an opening. He believed in diversifying one's income sources, and this entrepreneurial spirit motivated him to participate in many initiatives, thereby enhancing his experience and employability by raising his capital.

On the other hand, Teresa has an inherently compassionate nature and by involving herself in activities that matched her passions, she enhanced her cultural capital by working in her areas of passion, thereby deriving fulfilment from working towards her dreams:

> "*Within the community projects, I usually assume a leadership role and have to manage the team that I am working in. This improved my team working skills and made me fulfilled as I was able to improve the confidence the children had in themselves. It helped me realise that I had the potential to change somebody's life and encouraged me to take risks*."

It can also be seen from these statements that each student or graduate has a different perception of the benefits of participating in activities. Hence, involving oneself in activities that can enhance these skills can count towards work experience. In the study conducted by Bourner and Millican (2011), some employers considered potential employees engaging in community activities more beneficial than partaking in part-time jobs. Hope and Teresa also mentioned that involving themselves in many activities also exposed them to different people and this could build their social capital.

The interviewees also shared some suggestions for enhancing the employability initiatives to make them more inclusive. According to Fawn,

> "*I believe the initiatives offered are very good for students, but students do not check blackboard or their emails to become aware of them. Maybe another way of communicating these initiatives might be more effective for improving engagement… Students might not be participating as the activities run in the evenings during the week, which makes timings a challenge. Maybe letting these initiatives run on weekends would allow people to participate*."

This suggestion meant that the University needs to make a greater effort to reach out to more students by aggressive marketing, better planning and also changing the timing of events. This was also echoed by Jane and Modise, the latter adding that more interactive activities could interest more students to benefit from these initiatives. Another suggestion was to give out certificates to those who participated in activities.

> "*I believe giving out certificates of appreciation to the students who helped with the volunteering projects would allow students to engage better as they receive something to attach with their CV when applying for jobs etc*." (Beautiful)

As mentioned by Beautiful, some of the participants felt that a formal recognition of their participation in activities would motivate students since they could display them alongside their CVs, and she believed that this would make them noticed by employers.

From the above discussions on work experience and extracurricular activities, one can see how these innumerable interventions have impacted the various forms of capital. There is also evidence to show that the social and cultural capital of an individual developed by the influence of their backgrounds plays a role in participants' engagement with the activities and helps them to take advantage of the capital offered by the various fields. It thus becomes advisable that HEIs consider all these factors concerning the habitus and capital of their students while looking to provide them with a holistic experience.

4.6.6 Summary of cultural capital and graduates' personal attributes

From the above sections, one can see that the amount of cultural capital possessed by a graduate determines and influences various factors, such as an individual's ability to perform well academically. They also benefit from what schools can offer and reiterate how the dominant social class can benefit from middle-class institutions' offerings, thus enhancing their cultural capital (Burke, 2015). It is evident that where a student's parents are educated and well placed in employment or business, they can focus better on their future plans because of the capital created by a higher social position within a field. They are also able to interact well with activities, thereby benefitting more from the skills gained. Some of the interviewees had talked about being shy and introverted when they entered higher education (Modise, Jane, Bontle). However, they grew more confident after having participated in university activities. It is clear from these discussions that students who enter the field of HE with higher capital are able to benefit from the activities offered, thereby enhancing their capital and field of possibles. It will be discussed in detail in Section 4.7, together with the connections between the various forms of capital and the field. The key finding here is that various initiatives can enhance the cultural and social capital of a graduate, provided they enter HE with a certain level of capital derived from their background.

4.7 Links between Bourdieu's theories of capital and field, and employability

The above sections discussed the findings under the various data categories developed during the research. When discussing these findings in detail, one can identify the links between the various concepts of field, habitus and capital and their impact on an individual's experience of employability. In this concluding section, I summarise some of the key findings of this thesis and examine the connections between the forms of capital and the fields, thereby

exploring the ways in which HEIs can work towards enhancing the experience and employability of students from diverse backgrounds.

The findings revealed a clear relationship between factors such as parental influence and involvement, the influence of the extended family, the contribution of schools and teachers, and the impact of being brought up in rural versus urban surroundings. In *The Logic of Practice*, Bourdieu (1990) explains how a particular class and structure's conditions and contexts create a habitus while those living under similar conditions display comparable characteristics. When exposed to new situations, these habits and characteristics change. He also adds that the working world can act as a motivating structure to change individuals' behaviour, thereby resulting in a change in their cultural capital. The sample discussed in this thesis reflects Bourdieu's understanding of how class and structure can work in that exposure to the urban local market means that students were able to enhance their cultural capital and thereby their field of possibles.

The change of life, from villages to the city, could have different impacts on a student – they could be intimidated by the fast pace of city life; they could be drawn into the undesirable activities associated with city life. All these could affect their self-confidence and hence keep them away from attending activities. Also, living in the city away from their family and having money for the first time from their allowances can distract them from their studies and focus on experiencing what HEIs have to offer. This type of student behaviour was also pointed out by Modise during his interview. Thus, it becomes essential for every student to prioritise their studies and development in HEIs to attain a qualification and the attributes necessary to enable them to be employable when they graduate. Research in many countries and contexts has shown that it is important to have generic skills along with a degree in order to be an employable graduate or even a holistic individual. This chapter has

highlighted how changes to one's field together with social and cultural capital can impact students and graduates and their employability.

The research's main purpose was to understand the impact of social and cultural capital on a graduate's employability. In addition, the research attempts to come up with recommendations on what HEIs in middle-income countries could do to enhance their graduates' employability. Bourdieusian theory takes economic capital as the base for developing other forms of capital including social and cultural. Tomlinson (2017) has brought out the importance of the role played by HEIs in terms of enhancing a graduate's cultural and social capital using the various offerings and support available, thereby creating a conducive field that will inculcate a higher cultural capital in students. When correlating the data collected with the respondents' backgrounds and the motivation to engage in schemes, as well as understanding the impact on their attributes, there seemed to be adequate data to reach substantial findings.

From the sample of students and graduates interviewed, it can be seen that the students who entered HEIs come from contrasting backgrounds, namely rural or urban, and differed in terms of parental involvement and family influence, schools attended, and even levels of economic capital. Out of the sample, two students came from families who could afford to enrol them in private schools, one of whom even managed to go outside of the country for some of her studies. It is clear that these two graduates entered the field of higher education with higher capital because of their social positions which has created in them a greater field of possibles, meaning that they have the additional confidence to come forth and participate in activities, thus helping them to make the most of their tertiary education. The exposure gained by these graduates from having studied at private schools also enhanced their field of possibles, which was reflected in their confident communication and achievements. Their exposure helped them compare cultural differences between public and private schools and

schools in Botswana with those outside the country. The findings above revealed that schools have a great influence in terms of facilitating students' career growth and developing their cultural capital through enhanced fields of possibles.

Only one of the graduates interviewed had been in a situation in which a single parent was unemployed. In contrast, others had parents or a parent with some revenue source, either through employment or by being self-employed. Thato, a graduate, was still unemployed at the interview time and displayed a shallow level of self-esteem, as shown by her statements cited above. Here we can see that lower social capital can affect an individual even when there is increased institutionalised cultural capital by having obtained a qualification. One of the reasons for her low self-esteem was the absence of both her parents, who could have offered her support when looking for employment. Although she had other family members, Thato could seek support from and hold up as role models, the absence of parents can sometimes create trauma and a lack of direction in the individual's life, leading to a low embodied capital, thereby affecting the ability to achieve goals.

The influence of parents or extended family – which is vital in Botswana – has been instrumental in enhancing students and graduates' confidence levels while also providing them with guidance in their lives. Maimela (2016), in a study of primary school children in Botswana, had brought out the importance of parental involvement in children's academic capability and how a lack of it reflected in school results. It was seen in this research that graduates whose parents or even parent was involved in their upbringing displayed better self-confidence and an interest in enhancing their attributes.

Another common factor among the interviewees was that most of them had gone to city schools and had urban-based parents or extended family who were employed or in business. Living around the city has given them the advantage of having higher social capital levels because of the ability to create networks through socialisation, either through employed

parents or via the networks they developed in school. These graduates could leverage this social capital to gain both insights into the world of work and access to specific opportunities.

Students and graduates emphasised the importance of work experience, which they considered crucial in enhancing their employability. Students had obtained work experience through various ways, including part-time jobs, the internship integrated within the curriculum, voluntary internships, community initiatives and extracurricular activities, which included volunteering. The interviewees communicated that obtaining work experience made them feel that their skills have been enhanced, making them more employable, while this shows an enhancement of their cultural capital. The students and graduates were also utilising these opportunities to meet people and broaden their networks. Thus, there is a link between work experience and enhancing both forms of capital – social and cultural – with a possibility to increase their economic capital as well.

It was noticeable that the lack of exposure during their school days and upbringing resulted in low cultural capital in students. Also, coming from a rural setting would make students more likely to have lower social capital than those who have grown up in the city. These depressed levels of capital affect their ability to engage with schemes, which could also be due to lower self-esteem arising from their lower levels of social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977). From the sample considered and the interviews conducted, it seems that family background and schools play an essential part in defining individuals' field of possibles. Students who have better capital are confident and forthcoming and can take advantage of the opportunities available to them in the various fields.

The interviews also reflected the perceived need to be self-driven and self-motivated to engage with schemes and make the most of the opportunities presented to an individual enrolled at a HEI. Even in employment, one needs to be self-driven and self-motivated, which can help one find employment and grow in line with each opportunity. It has also

appeared that a student with higher cultural and social capital will tend to engage more with and benefit from the schemes. Therefore, institutions in middle-income countries must consider how institutional offerings and employability schemes can be tailored and expanded to meet a diverse student population's need. It is also essential that institutions in these countries focus on enhancing the graduates' different forms of capital, which will subsequently help them improve their employability (Tomlinson, 2017).

These findings have clearly shown the links between Bourdieu's theory of habitus, different forms of capital, the field of possibles and graduate employability. The findings have demonstrated that the capital associated with parents' involvement and the influence of schools provide an embodied cultural capital based on confidence and motivation, thereby helping students enhance their attributes. The analysis further highlighted a weakness in many existing employability models. They ignore how a person's attributes articulate their social placing in society, a placing that depends closely upon exposure – or the lack of – to a field of higher capital. There is also evidence to show that varied circumstances can change individuals' natural capital within a given field. Therefore, HEIs could play a role in identifying the factors that can stimulate the students. The next chapter, therefore, will take these findings and formulate recommendations to assist HEIs in helping students to enhance their attributes, thereby hopefully leading to employability.

4.8 Experience of Graduates vs Students in the Study

It is interesting to note that the participants interviewed were made up of an equal number of students and graduates. It was evident from the study that individuals who entered HE with a higher level of capital either because of their family background or the schools attended took advantage of the opportunities provided by HEIs and further enhanced their capital and field of possibles. These graduates confirm how the conducive environment created in the

university helped them to hone themselves to meet the needs of the labour market. Thato, the only unemployed graduate in the interview, felt she had been disadvantaged since she had graduated at a time when the university was still working on improving the employability schemes, thereby felt that she had not benefitted fully from them. This shows the importance of HEIs providing a conducive environment to enhance the students' capital and field of possibles.

The interviewees who were current students, had participated in various activities with a view to enhancing their employability. Most of them seemed to have benefited from the enhancement of their cultural and social capital created during their engagement with HE. Some of the students also expressed views on how they lacked confidence when they entered university which had impacted on their ability to interact with others and participate in the various activities. They also remarked on the importance of more and more students taking advantage of these opportunities and thus become more employable.

4.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter has looked at the key findings from the interviews and the survey and has discussed the results in-depth by engaging with Bourdieu's theoretical concepts. The discussions showcased a clear distinction between students' experiences and expectations depending on their respective backgrounds, namely which side of the rural-urban divide they came from. In middle-income countries like Botswana, there is a tendency for the educated to move to the cities, leaving those who are less educated and, in many instances, more impoverished, in the villages. This phenomenon causes a clear divide in socialisation between those living in the towns and those in rural villages especially in relation to exposure to the field of urban formal employment.

It is clear from the discussions above that the societal structures surrounding an individual during their upbringing influence their behaviour and attitudes, thereby their parents' social and cultural capital as well as the capital created by schools and extended family has a bearing on their perceptions of employability and shapes their HEI experiences. In addition, the socialisation provided by parents and family play a critical role in the attitude of graduates and hence influence their field of possibles. The individual's field also defines the boundaries affecting their potential benefit from the opportunities they encounter, be it in the fields of HE or employment. HEIs have been implementing initiatives to help students improve their employability. However, it is important for them to re-examine their offerings to create an experience that can help transform students' understanding and outlook in relation to employability especially in students who come from backgrounds where they are not exposed to the field of urban formal employment.

Chapter 5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This final chapter of the thesis will summarise the thesis findings discussed in the previous chapter and answer the research questions posed at the beginning of the study. The chapter will then look at the implications of this research both in terms of contributions to knowledge and practical implications for HEIs. This chapter will also examine the limitations of this study and provide insights into areas of possible future research.

This part-biographical qualitative study has considered the experiences of students from diverse backgrounds who enter HEIs in order to understand the influence of their backgrounds and thereby their capital on their employability. The knowledge gained from this study will provide insight into how HEIs in middle-income countries can develop inclusive employability initiatives for their students. The main research question focussed on understanding the impact of capital and field of possibles on graduates' employability, which the findings and discussions in Chapter 4 have answered. The implications and recommendations section of this chapter will address the second question dealing with the critical elements that need to be considered by HEIs in middle-income countries when dealing with graduate employability.

5.2 How do social and cultural capital affect the employability of graduates in Botswana?

This study's key finding is that students' capital – both social and cultural capital and the resultant field of possibles – have a strong influence on their employability. The study

observed that the social positions of their origin to schooling influence the students and thereby impact their employability. The study also found that one's capital is not permanent, and intense interventions can alter this, implying that HEIs can play a crucial role in enhancing its graduates' social and cultural capital, thereby expanding their field of possibles. In addition, this study's findings indicate an apparent distinction between the experiences of students from rural and urban areas respectively, including the influence of family and schools on their outlook and employability. The difference was mainly due to family background and the schools they had attended as well as the social positioning that created an embodied capital within an individual. It was also evident that one's cultural capital is not static, and the experiences during one's higher education can potentially reshape this and enhance their capital, thereby expanding their field of possibles.

In Botswana, rapid economic development has resulted in the migration of most employed people to the capital, leaving behind unemployed people looking after children and older people in the rural villages (Stephens et al., 1977). Given the country's changing demographic profile, there has been a considerable increase in the urban population's size, a growth from 45% urbanisation in 1990 to 73% in 2020, as per demographic statistics for Botswana (Worldometer, 2020). This growing urbanisation is due to the movement of students and youth to the cities where most HEIs and employers are located. The newer generation is exposed to a different environment, thereby causing a change in their capital and habitus, thereby expanding their field of the possibles as per Bourdieu's theory. During the course study I observed that HEIs can enhance students' social and cultural capital, by ensuring that they provide interventions which will address the varying capitals of its students, especially for those coming from rural areas.

5.3 Universities in middle-income countries enhancing the employability of their students: Research implications and recommendations

With HEIs becoming more accessible to a broader cross-section of the population, higher education students are becoming increasingly diverse and are now drawn from diverse fields with varying levels of social and cultural capital. It is clear from the findings of this study that HEIs can play a critical role in providing opportunities to reshape students' social and cultural capital, thereby expanding their field of possibles. This implies that HEIs need to bridge the gap between students' different socio economic backgrounds, a dynamic which influences their upbringing and their entry into the labour market.

According to Burke et al. (2017), graduate employability and access to certain employment positions is not just the result of their degree but is also due to their knowledge of how to deploy that same degree. This deployment is linked to their habitus, which is formed by their norms, values and dispositions. However, Burke et al. (2017) discuss Bourdieu's capitals and point out that an individual's position within a social space is influenced by their social and cultural capitals, which will further impact their subsequent position within a social space and increase their field of possibles. Hence to deploy the degree of knowledge earned, the graduate needs to also possess the correct level of cultural and social capital. From my experience of working in the higher education sector and industry before that, it is clear that not all graduates with the same qualification find jobs, rather it is how they present themselves that gets them positions. Using models such as CareerEDGE and USEM as guidelines, the university has developed initiatives to enhance all students' employability experience. It is imperative that HEIs factor in the background of students when reorientating these models and their initiatives in a manner that helps students to expand both their field of possibles and cultural and social capital.

According to employers, students who enter HEIs seem to lack many of the skills required by employers, such as communication, teamwork, adaptability, and critical thinking abilities respectively (Hinchliffe & Jolly, 2011; Nthebolang, 2013; Pheko & Molefhe, 2017). Participating in employability schemes can help students to gain these skills while enhancing their confidence thus making them more employable, as evidenced by the statements made by some of the research participants. According to Bourdieu (1990), exposure to different environments can influence the capital over a period of time. Hence when students engage in employability schemes, their attributes are enhanced, thereby causing a change in their cultural capital by elevating their self-confidence and self-esteem, field of possibles. This change, in turn, makes them more employable.

Both employers and graduates consider work experience through participation in various activities as critical to enhancing one's employability (Nthebolang, 2013). This is because exposure to the workplace environment increases graduates' skills, thereby enhancing their cultural capital. Furthermore, exposure to a different world changes the pre-dispositions and norms that most of the graduates initially possess, giving them the confidence to meet the challenges of a new environment, thus making them more employable. Initiatives such as these can enhance their social connections while reshaping their cultural capital.

By participating in activities such as community engagements and work-based activities, including internships and part-time jobs, students allow themselves to enhance their social capital (Burke et al., 2017). As seen in the literature review, there have been many studies in the developed world and some parts of Africa about the importance of university-industry linkages and their importance in enabling graduate employability (Cai, 2013; Jackson, 2014; Vaaland & Ishengoma, 2016). From the findings of this thesis, it can be argued that in Botswana that there is room for universities to engage and foster relationships

with industry to assist their students to enhance their network connections and thereby improve their social capital. The need for university-industry links was also echoed by some participants, especially those from rural areas who could not create social networks unless assisted in doing so by HEIs. A recent study conducted by Faimau et al. (2016) in two Botswanan institutions also revealed that graduates considered university-industry linkages to be critical in enhancing their employability. In that study, graduates held a strong view that the lack of communication between HEIs and industries is an important factor that contributes to their skills gap in relation to the employment market. Similar sentiments were expressed by the participants in this study as well. All participants appreciated the internship connections with employers which the university offers to develop opportunities for students and staff to work closely with industry. A couple of participants, namely Fawn and Teresa, suggested that industry-university connections could be strengthened by introducing job shadowing for students as well as having industry experts coming in regularly to provide talks regarding their expectations of graduates.

Studies conducted in various parts of the world such as Australia, the UK, and Nigeria by researchers including Thompson et al. (2013), Stevenson and Clegg (2012), Pitan (2016) and Kinash et al. (2016) have emphasised the importance of extracurricular activities in enhancing graduate employability as discussed in the literature review. It was evident from the findings that graduates and students who participated in the university's career development schemes believed that they had attained the requisite employability skills and attributes by participating in these initiatives. The research participants also believed that participating in these activities helped them break away from their shy and introverted nature and elevated their confidence by improving their communication skills, teamwork capacity, and ability to adapt to the workplace, reflecting an enhancement to their field of possibles. These findings are not novel and appear to confirm different aspects of the literature dealing

with various parts of the world (Allen et al., 2013; Kinash et al., 2014; Pheko & Molefe, 2017) although, and as mentioned previously, there is limited literature on the impact of employability schemes in Botswana. Some of the existing studies on graduate employability in Botswana have looked at curriculum-based approaches like project-based learning (Moalosi et al., 2017) or investigated graduates' perceptions of their market readiness after graduating from university (Bulawa et al., 2017).

Based on discussions during the interviews held with students and graduates, it was evident that one way of getting students to engage with schemes is to recognise their participation by awards or certificates and explicitly advocate the benefits of attending these activities (see Section 4.6.5). Another strategic measure to be implemented to increase engagement among students could be to use peer mentoring by successful alumni who have attended these schemes and benefitted from them. This interaction with successful alumni is a worthwhile intervention on the part of HEIs and showcases how one's confidence and field of opportunities can be expanded by participation in various university-facilitated activities.

Since the secondary research question was about improvements that HEIs could make to enhance graduates' employability, the study considered the employability schemes at the university in terms of operational shortcomings and the need to cultivate mindset changes in students. As mentioned in Chapter 4, some of the suggestions made by the participants were based on enhanced marketing and awareness among students about the benefits of these schemes, better planning and resourcing of activities, and the timing of various events. Each activity should also have information to students of the skills they can attain or improve if they attend these activities, much like learner outcome information. A reflective report from students during their final year on the benefits of engaging with various employability schemes is something to be considered.

It was clear from the interview data (in Section 4.6.5) that more effort is necessary to reach out to all students so that those who are not self-driven or self-motivated may also be reached and encouraged to participate in and benefit from the schemes. Data had also shown that students coming from rural backgrounds to urban settings have, in most instances, not understood the benefits of participation in activities and feel that having a degree is sufficient to ensure their employability. Thereby, there is a substantial need for more campus-based advocacy and awareness campaigns to enlighten students about the benefits of participation in activities. One of the ways of addressing this could be through peer mentoring using alumni who have been through the system and are currently employed or in business to inform students about the potential of the employability schemes available to them and their related benefits.

Once the clubs and employability schemes are structured and widespread awareness created among the students, the university could come up with a formal award recognising the participation in the activities. This award could also help in motivating the student body to participate in the schemes in larger numbers. This award for attending and achieving such skills could then appear in their academic transcript. Alongside this, a widely disseminated awareness campaign should be initiated among employers and the community highlighting the importance of this award, which could then make it attractive to students and motivate them to engage more.

Another way of making activities more inclusive will be to mainstream some of the employability initiatives into the curriculum, as suggested by Holmes (2013). Classroom delivery could be adapted, whereby students can develop some of the skills to enhance their employability. Further, there could be linkages created between some of the activities inside the classroom and external activities. Mainstreaming some of these activities into the

classroom could create better awareness on the part of students regarding the former's benefits in enhancing their employability, thus increasing their interest in participation.

Many students are involved in community initiatives, perhaps because of the African philosophy of Ubuntu that inculcates within people the culture of helping those around them. With students who are uncomfortable in their new urban surroundings, getting them working on projects that can take them back into communities by solving problems could help them build their social and cultural capital and thereby enhance their employability. In this way, the community also becomes involved to a greater extent in education, which can be beneficial to both students as well as educational institutions (Högfeldt et al., 2019). Introducing modules which can help students work on real life challenges within the community in their discipline of study could be a way of opening up and enhancing their field of possibles.

Another recommendation of this thesis is to introduce sessions whereby students from HEIs could mentor schoolchildren while guiding them in their choice of career and programme of study. In middle-income countries where education is just reaching first-generation attendees, this could help students in rural areas to learn about what they can expect when they finish their secondary schooling and look forward to progressing to higher education. This initiative would constitute the bridge between secondary schools and HEIs while helping to change students' capital from its original state in the field of upbringing, through university and on to the labour market.

5.4 Contribution to Knowledge

Although there has been extensive research conducted on graduate employability, many of these studies are from the developed world and hence is not tailored to the conditions that prevail in middle-income countries. There is a limited literature regarding the impact of

socio-economic factors on graduate employability in middle-income countries, particularly in Africa in general and Botswana in particular. Further, many of the existing studies have looked at employability from the perceptions of the three major stakeholders, namely the graduate, HEIs, and employers (Archer & Chetty, 2013; Pheko & Molefe, 2017). This study focussed on understanding the impact of capital on graduate employability. The study also found that students from rural settings experienced challenges in adapting to HEI experiences, a finding which Bourdieu's work helped to illuminate. The students' diverse backgrounds and their different levels of capital necessitate a variety of interventions which help reshape their habitus and expand their field of possibles. Therefore, this thesis has provided insights into the influence of capital on employability in middle-income countries which have a diverse population entering HEIs, an area that does not seem previously to have been explored in depth.

Bourdieu's work has focussed on the impact of individuals' habitus and capital based on their socialisation and class variations. In African countries, because of the history of colonialism, many studies have focussed predominantly on racism since the population divide was based on race and ethnicity (Eze, 1997). Given the transformation of postcolonial societies, the latter are in the process of developing and this can affect the new generation of graduates. In addition, the ethos of communal belonging and individuals' flexibility within their communities evident in African philosophy can be related to Bourdieu's 'action-response model' (Masolo, 2003, p.570). Masolo states that a person can identify with multiple communities simultaneously, thus creating the ability to transform their cultures to suit those that exist within the group and thereby readjust themselves. This further reiterates the role HEIs can play in terms of reshaping an individual's cultural capital while expanding their field of possibles and with that their employability.

In middle-income countries, especially in Africa, education is an essential factor in enhancing economies and development (British Council, 2014). There is an expectation that higher education is a vehicle for employability. This increase in education has resulted in many students migrating from rural areas to urban centres where HEIs are mostly situated. In this study, it is apparent that students coming in from rural areas require a lot more support and facilitation from parents, schools and HEIs in terms of enhancing their attributes and thereby their employability. This change makes it critical to understand how HEIs can provide an environment that helps students enhance their social and cultural capital and their employability.

5.5 Research limitations

As mentioned in the methodology (Chapter 3) regarding the researcher's positionality, this thesis was carried out based on the insider knowledge that I had regarding the diversity of students at the university. I was also privy to the initiatives at the university to enhance graduate employability. However, it was critical to understand the influence of students' backgrounds on their social and cultural capital alongside their ability to meet the local labour market's demands. The research was restricted to those students and graduates who have participated in the university's employability schemes as evidenced by the sample selection. While this implies that that the views expressed by the participants could be one-sided or that their perceptions might not be representative of the wider student body, it was essential for me as the researcher to gain insight into the experiences derived from participation in the schemes. Also, the representation of students in the study consisted of those from both rural and urban backgrounds, which helped to generate a perspective on both the impact of these schemes on students and the varying approaches to employability.

Some of this research study's interesting insights concern the composition of the participants. Although many of the participants lived in and around the city, they still had strong connections to their rural roots. Many of them had moved into the cities from rural areas for various reasons, such as schooling or to live with family. Their school and family background and the guidance obtained during their childhood was seen as positively impacting them in relation to engaging with employability schemes and reap the benefits of these schemes. This finding further underlines that HEIs need to appreciate the difference in their students' social positioning and resulting capital while developing interventions to further reshape this capital and helping them to expand their field of possibles.

5.6 Personal transformation through the professional doctorate

This journey of the professional doctorate, for me personally, has been a transformational learning experience, which recalls the observations of Brockbank and McGill (2007). I moved into the higher education sector from auditing and accounting, and so the learning process has been demanding and rewarding. Entering into the academic world has given me a very different outlook regarding how one makes critical judgments of research while providing insights into research practices and methodologies and an appreciation of the literature that forms our everyday practice's intellectual basis.

When starting my doctoral studies, learning about research and how to critically process articles and monographs was an eye-opener. The learning continued as I experienced the research journey, providing me with many insights into the academic world. It also allowed me to gain in-depth insight into Botswana's family structures and parenting culture, which is very different from the social structures where I was brought up in India. Having come from a completely different background in terms of my culture and upbringing, I came to understand the beautiful support system offered by Botswana's extended family system.

Hearing stories about students' backgrounds and upbringing also made me reflect on how I bring up my children and the communication that I have with them regarding their plans and the attributes they should develop. It made me aware of how behaviours, such as parenting advice and structured guidance on academic and career issues, are prevalent and not so common among all cultures. Delving into the background and experiences of the interviewees was also a very emotional experience. So, it was imperative to have an open mind, thereby allowing one to 'think straight' while helping one take an objective view of the findings (Moon, 2004).

In concluding, I would like to refer to Moon's (2004) argument regarding bringing out the interplay between reflection and the learning material. According to her, reflection occurs most effectively when the learner is challenged and moves away from their comfort zone, either through using complicated material content or by being exposed to a different perspective to one's own. This justifies my remark that my learning was transformational since the experiences showed me an entirely new world and taught me how lifelong learning can help keep both oneself and the surrounding community educated. It has also given me good indicators regarding those areas that I could work with alongside local communities, which I intend to do after my active professional life.

5.7 Future research

This research only considered students and graduates who had participated in employability-related activities. While the thesis is exploratory and not generalizable as outlined in Chapter 3, I believe it is useful in establishing the basis for future research into the links between students' social background and employability. It also investigates the role parents and schools can play in shaping student and graduate attributes. Dissemination of the findings of this research on the impact of student backgrounds on graduate employability could also help

academics adapt their teaching and to develop other initiatives to meet the student population's diverse needs. Future research could also concentrate on interventions that HEIs can focus on in order to reshape capital and habitus and thereby enhancing graduate employability.

Thus far, studies in Botswana on graduate employability have suggested frameworks and strategies for HEIs to improve graduate employability (Moalosi et al., 2017; Pheko & Molefhe, 2017). Further studies have also considered employers' perspectives on graduate employability regarding the attributes that they expect in HEI students (Bulawa et al., 2017; Nthebolang, 2013). The frameworks suggested by authors including Moalosi et al. (2007) and Pheko and Molefe (2017) need to be adapted to factor in terms of the varying social and cultural capital of students and realigned in such a manner that can benefit the students whereby their capitals can be enhanced in a way that impacts them in terms of their employability.

This research will also form the basis of a planned research project intended to be piloted in the University on developing 21st-century skills, starting with the introduction of initiatives such as a student-centric pedagogy. This project will look at ways of changing the university's teaching pedagogy by considering the skills and attributes that graduates need to develop. Delivery of classes and assessments will incorporate tools and techniques to enhance students' specific identified skills, such as articulation, collaboration, and critical thinking. These will also tie into the extracurricular initiatives that will be in place to complement the curricular delivery, thereby inculcating added awareness among students of the benefits of participating in these activities.

5.8 Conclusion

This thesis has identified strong relationships between the disparities in students and graduates' backgrounds, parental and family influence on them, and the schools they attended, thereby shaping their personal attributes and hence their employability. The importance of enhancing the level of one's social and cultural capital to match urban labour market structures was very evident from the research and needs to be considered by HEIs. The thesis also underlines that there is a need for HEIs in middle-income countries to consider their students' distinctive socio-economic backgrounds while ensuring that the opportunities provided help them to enhance their social and cultural capital, thereby strengthening their personal attributes. Another important element that has come out of this research is the influence of parents and family on developing the personal attributes of a given graduate, in addition to the influence of the schools they attend. From the sample interviewed, it was observed that students who have been guided by either parents or teachers at schools are more focussed and driven to participate in activities and get the best experience during their life in the university.

HEIs have been using models like CareerEDGE (Pool & Sewell, 2007) and USEM model (Knight & Yorke, 2003) as some of the basis on which they develop and implement their employability initiatives. Researchers in Botswana have also come out with frameworks to enhance graduate employability and suggested interventions that HEIs could introduce to enhance graduate employability (Moalosi et al., 2017; Nthebolang, 2013; Pheko & Molefhe, 2017). However, the employability models and interventions developed thus far have not factored in students' social and cultural capital. It is clear from this research that HEIs have an opportunity in shaping students' capital and thereby enhancing their employability. To achieve this, HEIs could investigate reorienting these models to factor in the socio-cultural

backgrounds and heterogeneous levels of capitals, while developing mechanisms that can be more inclusive in terms of helping the entire range of students, whatever their backgrounds.

It is evident from this study that a graduate's cultural capital impacts their field of possibles and thereby their employability. It is clear from this study that a person entering a given field with a certain level of capital can benefit up to the level of their capital while the latter needs to be shaped by interventions from the outside environment in order to enhance it further. Students come into HEIs with certain capitals that they have acquired from their origin and which they have carried through school; this often requires reshaping prior to entering the labour market. This study highlights the need for HEIs to intervene using mechanisms that factor in a diverse student population's variable capital, thus underlining the need to be more inclusive.

Word Count 48,419

References

Adedoyin, O. (2010). Factor-analytic study of teachers' perceptions on self-efficacy in Botswana junior secondary schools: Implications for educational quality. *European Journal of Educational Studies, 2*(2), 139-155.

Adekanmbi, G., & Modise, O. (2000). The state of adult education and continuing education in Botswana. In S. A. Indabawa, T. Oduaran, T. Afrik, & S. Walters (Eds.), *The state of adult and continuing education in Africa* (pp. 65–78). Windhoek: Department of Adult and Nonformal Education.

Allen, K., Bullough, S., Cole, D., Shibli, S., & Wilson, J. (2013). *The impact of student engagement in sport on employability*. Sheffield Hallam University: Sport Industry Research Centre.

Archer, M. (2003). *Structure, agency and the internal conversation*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Archer, E., & Chetty, Y. (2013). Graduate Employability: Conceptualisation and findings from the University of South Africa. *Progressio, 35*(1), 134–165.

Artess, J., Hooley, T., & Mellors-Bourne, R. (2016). *Employability: A review of the literature 2012-2016*. York: Higher Education Academy. Retrieved from https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/employability-review-literature-2012-2016.

Atkinson, W. (2014). A sketch of "family" as a field: From realized category to space of struggle. *Acta Sociologica (United Kingdom)*, *57*(3), 223–235. https://doi.org/10.1177/0001699313511470

Barrie, S. C. (2012). A research-based approach to generic graduate attributes policy. *Higher Education Research and Development*, *31*(1), 79–92. https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2012.642842

Batistic, S., & Tymon, A. (2017). Networking behaviour, graduate employability: A social capital perspective. *Education and Training*, *59*(4), 374–388. https://doi.org/10.1108/ET-06-2016-0100

Bennett, D. (2019). Graduate employability and higher education: Past, present and future. *HERDSA Review of Higher Education, 5*(April), 31–61.

Bell, M. (1981). Modern sector employment and urban social change: A case study from Gaborone. *Source: Canadian Journal of African Studies / Revue Canadienne Des Études Africaines*, *15*(2), 259–276.

Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Outline of a theory of practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511812507

Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* (pp 241-258). Westport: Greenwood.

Bourdieu, P. (1990). *The logic of practice*. Cambridge: Polity Press in association with Blackwell Publishers.

Bourdieu, P., & Passeron, J.-C. (1990) *Reproduction in education, society and culture* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.

Bourdieu, P., & Wacquant, L.J.O., (1992). *An invitation to reflexive sociology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Bourner, T., & Millican, J. (2011). *Student-community engagement and graduate employability*. Great Britain: Open University.

Brannick, T., & Coghlan, D. (2007). In defense of being "native": The case for insider academic research. *Organizational Research Methods*, *10*(1), 59–74. https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428106289253

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063o

Bridgstock, R. (2009). The graduate attributes we've overlooked: Enhancing graduate employability through career management skills. *Higher Education Research & Development*, *28*(1), 31-44. https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360802444347

British Council. (2014). Can higher education solve Africa's job crisis? Understanding graduate employability in Sub-Saharan Africa. British Council.

Brockbank, A., & McGill, I. (2007). *Facilitating reflective learning in higher education*. Maidenhead: McGraw Hill/Society for Research into Higher Education and Open University Press.

Bryman, A. (2012). *Social research methods* (4th ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bulawa, P. Seeco, E. Kgosidialwa, K. & Losike-Sedimo, N. (2017). Investigating implementation of the University of Botswana's graduate employability strategy: Perspectives of students in the Faculty of Education. *Mosenodi*, *20*(2), 29–47.

Burke, N. J., Joseph, G., Pasick, R. J., & Barker, J. C. (2009). Theorizing social context: Rethinking behavioral theory. *Health Education and Behavior*, *36*(5_suppl), 55S-70S. https://doi.org/10.1177/1090198109335338

Burke, N. J., Bird, J. A., Clark, M. A., Rakowski, W., Guerra, C., Barker, J. C., & Pasick, R. J. (2009). Social and cultural meanings of self-efficacy. Health Education & Behavior, 36(5_suppl), 111S-128S. https://doi.org/10.1177/1090198109338916

Burke, C. T. (2011). The biographical illumination: A Bourdieusian analysis of the role of

theory in educational research. *Sociological Research Online, 16*(2), 1-9. https://doi.org/10.5153/sro.2325

Burke, C. (2015). *Culture, capitals and graduate futures: Degrees of class*. New York, NY: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315732817

Burke, C., Scurry, T., Blenkinsopp, J., & Graley, K. (2017). Critical perspectives on graduate employability. In M. Tomlinson & L. Holmes (Eds.), *Graduate employability in context* (pp. 87–107). London: Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-57168-7_4

Byer, D. (1972). Research on migration in Africa: Past, present and future. Washington, D.C.: Agency for International Development (Dept. of State).

Caetano, A. (2019). Designing social action: The impact of reflexivity on practice. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour, 49*(2), 146–160.

Cai, Y. (2013). Graduate employability: A conceptual framework for understanding employers' perceptions. *Higher Education*, *65*(4), 457-469. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-012-9556-x

Chetty, Y. (2012). Graduateness and employability within the higher education environment: A focused review of the literature. In Coetzee et al. (Eds.), *Developing student graduateness and employability: Issues, provocations, theory and practical guidelines* (pp. 5-24). Randburg, SA: Knowres Publishing.

Clark, M., & Zukas, M. (2013). A Bourdieusian approach to understanding employability: Becoming a "fish in water". *Journal of Vocational Education and Training*, *65*(2), 208–219. https://doi.org/10.1080/13636820.2013.782887

Clarke, M. (2018). Rethinking graduate employability: The role of capital, individual attributes and context. *Studies in Higher Education*, *43*(11), 1923–1937. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2017.1294152

Clegg, S. (2011). Cultural capital and agency: Connecting critique and curriculum in higher education. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, *32*(1), 93–108. https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2011.527723

Clegg, S., Stevenson, J., & Willott, J. (2010). Staff conceptions of curricular and extracurricular activities in higher education. *Higher Education*, *59*(5), 615–626. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-009-9269-y

Coetzee, M., Botha, J., Eccles, N., Nienaber, H., & Holtzhausen, N. (2012). *Developing student graduateness and employability*. *Issues, provocations, theory and practical guidelines.* Randburg, SA: Knowres Publishing.

Coetzee, M. (2012). A framework for developing student graduateness and employability in the economic and management sciences at the University of South Africa. In Coetzee et al. (Eds.), *Developing student graduateness and employability: Issues, provocations, theory and practical guidelines* (pp. 119-152). Randburg, SA: Knowres Publishing.

Coetzee, M. (2014). Measuring student graduateness: reliability and construct validity of the Graduate Skills and Attributes Scale. *Higher Education Research and Development*, *33*(5), 887–902. https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2014.890572

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2011). *Research methods in education* (7th ed.), Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Costa, C., Burke, C., & Murphy, M. (2019). Capturing habitus: Theory, method and reflexivity. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*, *42*(1), 19–32. https://doi.org/10.1080/1743727X.2017.1420771

Creed, P. A., & Gagliardi, R. E. (2015). Career compromise, career distress, and perceptions of employability: The moderating roles of social capital and core self-evaluations. *Journal of Career Assessment*, *23*(1), 20–34. https://doi.org/10.1177/1069072714523082

Creswell, J.W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.), Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

D'almeida, E. (2016). Cultural capital, habitus and capabilities in modern language learning. *Scottish Languages Review*, (31), 9–22.

Davey, G. (2009). Using Bourdieu's concept of habitus to explore narratives of transition. European Educational Research Journal, 8(2), 276–284. https://doi.org/10.2304/eerj.2009.8.2.276

de Brauw, A., Mueller, V., & Lee, H. L. (2014). The role of rural-urban migration in the structural transformation of Sub-Saharan Africa. *World Development, 63*, 33–42. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2013.10.013

Dintwat, K. F. (2010). Changing family structure in Botswana. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, *41*(3), 281–298. https://doi.org/10.3138/jcfs.41.3.281

Drew, S. A. W., & Wallis, J. L. (2014). The use of appreciative inquiry in the practices of large-scale organisational change: A review and critique. *Journal of General Management, 39*(4), 3-26.

Egbetokun, A. A. (2015). Interactive learning and firm-level capabilities in latecomer settings: The Nigerian manufacturing industry. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, *99*, 231–241. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2015.06.040

Eze, E.C. (1997). Toward a critical theory of postcolonial African identities. In E.C. Eze (Ed.), *Postcolonial African philosophy* (pp. 339-344). London: Blackwell Publishers.

Faimau,G., Maunganidze, L., &Tapera, R. (2016). Graduate employability in Botswana: challenges and prospects. *Mosenodi Journal,* 19(1), 14-30.

Gaetsewe, T. (2019). Youth employment in Botswana: Comparative analysis of 2009/10 and 2015/16. BIDPA Working Paper Series.

Greenbank, P. (2015). Still focusing on the "essential 2:1": Exploring student attitudes to extra-curricular activities. *Education and Training*, *57*(2), 184–203.

https://doi.org/10.1108/ET-06-2013-0087

Grenfell, M. (2012). *Pierre Bourdieu: Key concepts*. Stocksfield: Acumen Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1017/UPO9781844654031

Griesel, H., & Parker, B. (2009). *Graduate Attributes: A baseline study on South African graduates from the perspectives of employers*. Pretoria: Higher Education South Africa & the South African Qualifications Authority. Retrieved from http://www.saqa.org.za/docs/genpubs/2009/graduate_attributes.pdf

Guest, G., Bunce, A., & Johnson, L. (1995). How many interviews are enough? An experiment with data saturation and variability. *Field Methods*, *18*(1), 59–82. https://doi.org/10.1177/1525822X05279903

Harry, T., Chinyamurindi, W. T., & Mjoli, T. (2018). Perceptions of factors that affect employability amongst a sample of final-year students at a rural South African university. *SA Journal of Industrial Psycholog*y, (44), a1510. https://doi.org/10.4102/sajip.v44i0.1510

Harvey, L. (2001). Defining and measuring employability. *Quality in Higher Educatio*n, *7*(2), 97–109. https://doi.org/10.1080/13538320120059990

Hillage, J., & Pollard, E. (1998). Employability: Developing a framework for policy analysis, Department for Education and Employment. *Institute for Employment Studies*, Research Brief No. 85.

Hinchliffe, G. W., & Jolly, A. (2011). Graduate identity and employability. *British Educational Research Journal,* 37(4), 563-584. https://doi.org/10.1080/01411926.2010.482200

Hirudayaraj, M. (2011). First-generation students in higher education: Issues of employability in a knowledge based economy. *Online Journal for Workforce Education and Development*, *V*(3), 1-10.

Högfeldt, A.-K., Gumaelius, L., Rosén, A., Mwase, C. Shayo, E., Lujara, S., Mvungi, N., & Lantz, A. (2019). Mutual capacity building through north-south collaboration using challenge-driven education. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, *11*(24), 7236. https://doi-org.liverpool.idm.oclc.org/10.3390/SU11247236

Holmes, L. (2013). Competing perspectives on graduate employability: Possession, position or process? *Studies in Higher Education*, *38*(4), 538–554. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2011.587140

Holmes, L. (2017). Graduate Employability: Future directions and debate. In M. Tomlinson & L. Holmes (Eds.), *Graduate employability in context: Theory, research and debate* (pp.359-370). London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Iellatchitch, A., & Mayrhofer, W. (2001, July 5-7). The fields of career: Towards a new theoretical perspective [Paper presentation]. 17th colloquium "The Odyssey of Organising", Lyon, France.

Jackson, D. (2014). Testing a model of undergraduate competence in employability skills and its implications for stakeholders. *Journal of Education and Work*, *27*(2), 220–242. https://doi.org/10.1080/13639080.2012.718750

Jenkins, R. (2002). *Pierre Bourdieu*. London & New York: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004

Kalfa, S., & Taksa, L. (2015). Cultural capital in business higher education: Reconsidering the graduate attributes movement and the focus on employability. *Studies in Higher Education*, *40*(4), 580-595. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2013.842210

Karsten, L., & Illa, H. (2005). Ubuntu as a key African management concept: Contextual background and practical insights for knowledge application. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 20*(7), 607–620. https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940510623416.

Khattab, N. (2015). Students' aspirations, expectations and school achievement: What really matters? *British Educational Research Journal*, *41*(5), 731–748. https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3171

Kinash, S., Crane, L., Judd, M.-M., & Knight, C. (2016). Discrepant stakeholder perspectives on graduate employability strategies. *Higher Education Research & Development*, *35*(5), 951–967. https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2016.1139555

Kinash, S., Crane, L., Schulz, M., Dowling, D., & Knight, C. (2014). Improving graduate employability: Strategies from three Universities. *Ireland International Conference on Education*. Bond University.

Knight, P. T., & Yorke, M. (2003). Employability and good learning in higher education. *Teaching in Higher Education*, *8*(1), 3–16. https://doi.org/10.1080/1356251032000052294

Knight, P., & Yorke, M. (2003). *Assessment, learning and employability*. Maidenhead: Society for Research into Higher Education & Open University Press. Retrieved from https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/liverpool/detail.action?docID=290354

Knight, P. & Yorke, M. (2007). Evidence-informed pedagogy and the enhancement of student employability. *Teaching in Higher Education*, *12*(2), 157–170. https://doi.org/10.1080/13562510701191877

Kossoudji, S., & Mueller, E. (1983). The economic and demographic status of female-headed households in rural Botswana. *Economic Development & Cultural Change*, *31*(4), 831–859. https://doi.org/10.1086/451360

Lagakos, D. (2020). Urban-rural gaps in the developing world: Does internal migration offer opportunities? *Journal of Economic Perspectives, 34*(3), 174–192. https://doi.org/10.1257/jep.34.3.174

Leoni, R. (2014). Graduate employability and the development of competencies: The incomplete reform of the "Bologna Process." *International Journal of Manpower*, *35*(4), 448-469. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJM-05-2013-0097

Letamo, G. & Rakgoasi, S. D. (2000). Non-residential unmarried biological fathers and parenting: Child support and father-child contact in Botswana. *Society in Transition*, *31*(2), 175–183. https://doi.org/10.1080/21528586.2000.10419021

Lucas, R. E. (2004). Life earnings and rural-urban migration. *Journal of Political Economy, 112*(1), S29-S59. https://doi.org/10.1086/379942

Maclean, R., & Pavlova, M. (2011). Skills development for employability (TVET) in higher education: Issues and challenges. *Journal of Asian Public Policy*, *4*(3), 321–330. https://doi.org/10.1080/17516234.2011.630226

Maimela, M. (2016). Factors that influence the performance of students in Botswana primary schools. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*, *21*(9), 40–53. https://doi.org/10.9790/0837-2109054053

Makhanya, M. (2012). Student graduateness. In M. Coetzee et al. (Eds.), *Developing Student graduateness and employability: Issues, provocations, theory and practical guidelines* (pp.25-44). Randburd, SA: Knowres Publishing.

Marr, S. (2019). 'A town new and modern in conception': Non-racial dreams and racial realities in the making of Gaborone, Botswana. *Social Identities, 25*(1), 41–57. https://doi-org.liverpool.idm.oclc.org/10.1080/13504630.2017.1418602

Masolo, D.A. (2003). Rethinking communities in a global context. In P.H. Coetzee & A.P.J. Roux (Eds.), *The African philosophy reader* (pp. 558-573). London: Routledge.

Matthäus, S. (2017). Towards the role of self, worth, and feelings in (re-)producing social dominance: Explicating Pierre Bourdieu's implicit theory of affect. *Historical Social Research*, *42*(4), 75-92. https://doi.org/10.12759/hsr.42.2017.4.75-92

Maxwell, J. A. (2014). Designing a qualitative study. In L. Bickman & D. J. Roj. (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of applied social research methods* (pp. 214-253). London: SAGE. https://www.doi.org/10.4135/9781483348858

McCowan, T., Walke, M., Fongwa, S., Oanda, I., Sifuna, D., Adedeji, S., Adzahile-Mensah,V., & Tamanja, E. (2016). Universities, employability and inclusive development: Repositioning higher education in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa. British Council. Retrieved from https://www.britishcouncil.org.gh/sites/default/files/universities_employability_and_inclusive_development.pdf

Merriam, S. B., Johnson-Bailey, J., Lee, M. Y., Kee, Y., Ntseane, G., & Muhamad, M. (2010). Power and positionality: Negotiating insider/outsider status within and across cultures. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, *20*(5), 405–416. https://doi.org/10.1080/02601370120490

Michael, S. (2005). The promise of appreciative inquiry as an interview tool for field research. *Development in Practice*, *15*(2), 222-230. https://doi.org/10.1080/09614520500042094

Ministry of Education and Skills Development (MoESD). (2008). *Towards a knowledge*

society: Tertiary education policy. Gaborone: MoESD.

Ministry of Education and Skills Development (MoESD). (1999). *Tertiary Education Act no. 4 of 1999*. Gaborone: MoESD.

Mlambo, V. (2018). An overview of rural-urban migration in South Africa: Its causes and implications. *Archives of Business Research, 6*(4), 63-70. https://doi.org/10.14738/abr.64.4407

Moalosi, W. T., & Forcheh, N. (2015). Self-efficacy levels and gender differentials among teacher trainees in colleges of education in Botswana. *Journal of Education and Learning*, *4*(3), 1-13. https://doi.org/10.5539/jel.v4n3p1

Moalosi, R., Molokwane, S., & Mothibedi, G. (2017). Using a design-orientated project to attain graduate attributes. *Design and Technology Education, 17*(1), 30-43.

Molutsi, P. (2009). Tertiary education reforms in Botswana. *Commonwealth Education Partnerships*, 136–138. Available at: http://www.cedol.org/wpcontent/uploads/2012/02/136-138-2009.pdf

Moon, J. (2004). *A handbook of reflective and experiential learning: Theory and practice*. London: Routledge.

Moser, A., & Korstjens, I. (2018). Practical guidance to qualitative research. Part 3: Sampling, data collection and analysis. *European Journal of General Practice, 24*(1), 9-18. DOI: 10.1080/13814788.2017.1375091

National Strategy Office (Botswana). (1995). *Business excellence strategy of Botswana*. Gaborone: NSO.

Ndung'u, V. (2014). An investigation into the influence of culture on employability and work ethic, and the role of tertiary educators on graduates' preparedness in Botswana. In *International Conference on Social Sciences and Humanities, Gaborone* (pp. 99–107). Kocani, Macedonia. ISBN 978-608-4642-23-7

Nel, H., & Neale-Shutte, M. (2013). Examining the evidence: Graduate employability at NMMU. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, *27*(2), 437–453.

Ngoma, M., & Ntale, P.D. (2016). Psychological capital, career identity and graduate employability in Uganda: The mediating role of social capital. *International Journal of Training and Development*, *20*(2), 124-139. https://doi.org/10.1111/ijtd.12073

Nora, A. (2004). The role of habitus and cultural capital in choosing a college, transitioning from high school to higher education, and persisting in college among minority and nonminority students. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education, 3*(2), 180–208.

Nthebolang, O. E. (2013). Human resource development: Vocationalising the curriculum in Botswana. *International Journal of Scientific Research in Education*, *6*(3), 271–278.

Oyebisi, T. O., Ilori, M. O., & Nassar, M. L. (1996). Industry-academic relations: An assessment of the linkages between a university and some enterprises in Nigeria.

Technovation, *16*(4), 203–209. https://doi.org/10.1016/0166-4972(95)00049-6

Palinkas, L. A., Horwitz, S. M., Green, C. A., Wisdom, J. P., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2015). Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research, 42*(5), 533-544. https://doi-org.liverpool.idm.oclc.org/10.1007/s10488-013-0528-y

Pheko, M. M., Monteiro, N., Tlhabano, K. N., & Mphele, S. B. M. (2014). Rural-to-urban migrations: Acculturation experiences among university students in Botswana. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, *19*(3), 306–317. https://doi.org/10.1080/02673843.2014.928782

Pheko, M. M., & Molefhe, K. (2017). Addressing employability challenges: A framework for improving the employability of graduates in Botswana. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, *22*(4), 455–469. https://doi.org/10.1080/02673843.2016.1234401

Pimlott-Wilson, H. (2011). The role of familial habitus in shaping children's views of their future employment. *Children's Geographies*, *9*(1), 111–118. https://doi.org/10.1080/14733285.2011.540443

Pitan, O. S. (2016). Employability development opportunities (EDOs) as measures of students' enhanced employability. *Higher Education, Skills and Work-Based Learning*, *6*(3), 288-304. https://doi.org/10.1108/HESWBL-05-2016-0024

Pool, L.D., & Sewell, P. (2007). The key to employability: Developing a practical model of graduate employability. *Education and Training*, *49*(4), 277–289. https://doi.org/10.1108/00400910710754435

Pool, L.D., & Qualter, P. (2013). Emotional self-efficacy, graduate employability, and career satisfaction: Testing the associations. *Australian Journal of Psychology*, *65*(4), 214-223. https://doi.org/10.1111/ajpy.12023

Pouillot, V. (2007). 'Sobjectivism': Toward a constructivist methodology. *International Studies Quarterly*, *51*(2), 359–384.

Quaye, J. (2014). Exploring academic achievement in mathematics and attitudes towards mathematics: The role of Bourdieu's elusive habitus. In P. Barmby (Ed.), Proceedings of the British Society for Research into Learning Mathematics, 34, 113–118.

Rae, D. (2007). Connecting enterprise and graduate employability: Challenges to the higher education culture and curriculum? *Education and Training*, *49*(8–9), 605–619. https://doi.org/10.1108/00400910710834049

Reay, D. (1995). "They employ cleaners to do that": Habitus in the primary classroom. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 16*(3), 353–371.

Reay, D. (2004). Education and cultural capital: The implications of changing trends in education policies. *Cultural Trends*, *13*(2), 73–86.

https://doi.org/10.1080/0954896042000267161

Rudhumbu, N., Svotwa, D., Munyanyiwa, T., & Mutsau, M. (2016). Attitudes of students towards entrepreneurship education at two selected higher education institutions in Botswana: A critical analysis and reflection. *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies, 5*(2), 83-94. https://doi.org/10.5901/ajis.2016.v5n2p83

Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences* (3rd Ed.). Teachers College, Columbia University.

Sier, W. (2021). The price of aspirations: Education migrants' pursuit of higher education in Hubei Province, China. *European Journal of Development Research, 33*(1), 16–34. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41287-020-00297-6

Silitshena, R. M. K. (1984). Urbanization in Botswana. *Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift, 38*(2), 109–128. https://doi.org/10.1080/00291958408552114

Statistics Botswana. (2018). *Trade and economics report*. Gaborone: Statistics Botswana.

Statistics Botswana. (2018). *Economic report for Quarter 1*. Gaborone: Statistics Botswana.

Stephens, B., Macliver, S., & Weimer-Stutze, I. (1977). Urban migration in Botswana. *Botswana Notes and Records* (vol. 9, pp. 91–100). Gaborone: Botswana Society. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/40979511

Stevenson, J., & Clegg, S. (2011). Possible selves: Students orientating themselves towards the future through extracurricular activity. *British Educational Research Journal*, 37(2), 231–246. https://doi.org/10.1080/01411920903540672

Taylor, S., & Govender, C. M. (2017). Increasing employability by implementing a work-integrated learning partnership model in South Africa: A student perspective. *Africa Education Review*, *14*(1), 105–119. https://doi.org/10.1080/18146627.2016.1224585

Tholen, G. (2015). What can research into graduate employability tell us about agency and structure? *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 36(5), 766-784. doi: 10.1080/01425692.2013.847782

Thompson, L. J., Clark, G., Walker, M., & Whyatt, J. D. (2013). "It's just like an extra string to your bow": Exploring higher education students' perceptions and experiences of extracurricular activity and employability. *Active Learning in Higher Education*, *14*(2), 135-147. https://doi.org/10.1177/1469787413481129

Tomlinson, M. (2017). Forms of graduate capital and their relationship to graduate employability. *Education and Training*, *59*(4), 338-352. https://doi.org/10.1108/ET-05-2016-0090

Tomlinson, M., & Holmes, L. (2017). *Graduate employability in context*: *Theory, research and debate*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. Retrieved from https://link-springer-com.liverpool.idm.oclc.org/content/pdf/10.1057%2F978-1-137-57168-7.pdf

Tripney, J., Newman, M., Hovish, K., & Brown, C. (2012). Protocol: Post-basic Technical and

Vocational Education and Training (TVET) interventions to improve employability and employment of TVET Graduates in low- and middle-income countries. *Campbell Systematic Reviews, 8*(1), 1–53. https://doi.org/10.1002/cl2.93

UNICEF. (2017). *Generation 2030 Africa 2.0: Prioritizing investments in children to reap the demographic dividend*. Retrieved from www.unicef.org/publications/index_101219.html

University. (2018). *University sustainable growth strategy 2018-2022*. [Specific university redacted in order to ensure anonymity.]

Vaaland, T. I., & Ishengoma, E. (2016). University-industry linkages in developing countries: Perceived effect on innovation. *Education and Training*, *58*(9), 1014–1040. https://doi.org/10.1108/ET-07-2015-0067

Vryonides, M. (2007). Social and cultural capital in educational research: Issues of operationalisation and measurement. *British Educational Research Journal, 33*(6), 867-885. DOI: 10.1080/01411920701657009

Wiederkehr, V., Darnon, C., Chazal, S., Guimond, S., & Martinot, D. (2015). From social class to self-efficacy: Internalization of low social status pupils' school performance. *Social Psychology of Education*, *18*(4), 769–784. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11218-015-9308-8

Wikan, G. (2004). The level of living in rural Botswana re-studied. *Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift*, *58*(1), 1-10. https://doi.org/10.1080/00291950410004393

Williams S., Dodd, L.J., Steele, C., & Randall, R. (2016). A systematic review of current understandings of employability. *Journal of Education and Work*, *29*(8), 877-901. https://doi.org/10.1080/13639080.2015.1102210

World Bank. (2008). *World development report 2008/2009*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank.

World Bank. (2020). *The World Bank in middle-income countries*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank. https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/mic/overview

Worldometer. (2020). Botswana Demographics. https://www.worldometers.info/demographics/botswana-demographics/#urb

Appendix 1 – Ethics approval from University of Liverpool

Dear Ms Priya Iyer	
I am pleased to inform you that the EdD. Virtual Programme Research Ethics Committee (VPREC) has approved your application for ethical approval for your study. Details and conditions of the approval can be found below.	
Sub-Committee:	EdD. Virtual Programme Research Ethics Committee (VPREC)
Review type:	Expedited
PI:	Ms Priya Iyer
School:	HLC
Title:	Graduate employability: Impact of employability schemes on personal attributes of graduate (Effectiveness of employability schemes)
First Reviewer:	Dr. Janet Hanson
Second Reviewer:	Dr. Yota Dimitriadi
Other members of the Committee	Dr Mary Johnson, Dr Arwen Raddon, Greg Hickman
Date of Approval:	25 June 2018
The application was APPROVED subject to the following conditions:	
Conditions	
1 Mandatory	M: All serious adverse events must be reported to the VPREC within 24 hours of their occurrence, via the EdD Thesis Primary Supervisor.

This approval applies for the duration of the research. If it is proposed to extend the duration of the study as specified in the application form, the Sub-Committee should be notified. If it is proposed to make an amendment to the research, you should notify the Sub-Committee by following the Notice of Amendment procedure outlined at http://www.liv.ac.uk/media/livacuk/researchethics/notice%20of%20amendment.doc.

Where your research includes elements that are not conducted in the UK, approval to proceed is further conditional upon a thorough risk assessment of the site and local permission to carry out the research, including, where such a body exists, local research ethics committee approval. No documentation of local permission is required (a) if the researcher will simply be asking organizations to distribute research invitations on the researcher's behalf, or (b) if the researcher is using only public means to identify/contact participants. When medical, educational, or business records are analysed or used to identify potential research participants, the site needs to explicitly approve access to data for research purposes (even if the researcher normally has access to that data to perform his or her job).

Please note that the approval to proceed depends also on research proposal approval.

Appendix 2 – Letter from University

Dear Prof. Watts

Doctoral Research Proposal – Mrs. Priya Iyer

Greetings from [redacted] University.

I am the Chairperson of the [redacted] University Research Monitoring and Evaluation Committee whose functions include among others evaluating and approving Research proposals from post graduate students registered at our university.

Mrs. Priya Iyer has registered with the University of Liverpool for her EdD programme. The responsibility of the [redacted] University Research Monitoring and Evaluation Committee will now be to assist Mrs. Iyer to process her study permit with the Botswana Ministry of Education. In this regard we require the following:

a. Copy of a confirmation letter from the University of Liverpool that her proposal has been accepted for her to pursue her doctoral studies
b. Copy of the ethical clearance letter from University of Liverpool

Once we receive the above documents, the [redacted] University Research Committee will then draft a letter to the Botswana Ministry of Education requesting that she be granted a research permit. In view of the fact that Mrs. Iyer has registered with the University of Liverpool, our role will only be to facilitate her acquisition of a research permit from the Ministry of Education in Botswana.

With kind regards

[redacted]

Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor Academic and Quality
Chairperson – Research Monitoring and Evaluation Committee

Appendix 3 – Research Permit from Ministry of Education

TELEPHONE: 3655400/3655483
TELEX: 2944 THUTO BD
FAX: 3914271

REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

MINISTRY OF BASIC EDUCATION
PRIVATE BAG 005
GABORONE, BOTSWANA

REF: DPRS 7/1/5 XXXIV (30) PEO II -Research

24th July 2018

Mrs Priya Iyer
PO Box [redacted]
Gaborone

Dear Madam

RE: PERMIT TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY

This serves to grant you permission to conduct your study in the sampled areas in Botswana to address the following research objectives/questions /topic:

Graduate employability: Impact of employability schemes on personal attributes of graduates.

It is of paramount importance to seek **Assent** and **Consent** from the Chancellor-[redacted] University, current students and alumni and University Careers Office and employers and employees and where appropriate, of the sampled participants from which you are going to collect data from. We hope that you will conduct your study as stated in your proposal and that you will adhere to research ethics. Failure to comply with the above stated, will result in immediate termination of the research permit. The validity of the permit is from **24th July 2018 to 24th July 2019.**

You are requested to submit a copy of your final report of the study as stated in the Research Guidelines (para 4.5 - 4.6, 2007) to the Ministry of Basic Education, Department of Educational Planning and Research Services, Botswana.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully
Sir W Masebola
Sir Wonder Masebola
For/Permanent Secretary

Appendix 4 – Participant Information Sheet

Participant Information Sheet

Title of Study

"Graduate employability: Impact of employability schemes on personal attributes of graduates"

Dear Student/Graduate of [redacted]University

I am carrying out the above-mentioned research project as a student of a Doctoral Programme at the University of Liverpool. This document contains the aim and purpose of the study and a summary of the potential benefits and risks to you if you choose to take part in it though being interviewed. It is important that you understand the purpose of the research so please take time to read the information carefully.

Please note that participation in this study is entirely up to you and that are under no pressure to participate if you do not want to take part in it. You are welcome to discuss participation with your friends or family before you make your decision. You are also welcome to discuss it with me if you want any clarification about what is involved. If you would like to participate, please indicate by accepting this invitation.

I would like to thank you for taking time to read this.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to evaluate the employability schemes at [redacted]University with a view to understanding their impact on developing the personal attributes of graduates and so enhancing their employability. Further, I would also like to understand from the study if engagement with the employability schemes are influenced by factors such as where the students come from (e.g. rural or urban areas), the schools they attended for their secondary schooling or cultural practices. The results of the study will be used to review and enhance the schemes offered by the University.

The reason you are invited to take part in the study

The aim of the study is to understand the experiences of students and alumni who are taking part or have taken part in the various employability schemes offered by [redacted] University. Their actual experiences and views will be an important part of the

evaluation. You have been invited to take part in the research because you indicated your interest in participating in this study in the survey.

Do I have to take part?

Participation in the study is voluntary and you can decide what you want to do. Even after you agree to participate, if you change your mind and want to withdraw from the study, you are free to do so. In such an event, any information gathered from you will not be used in the study if you do not want it to be used. You are also welcome to discuss and seek clarification regarding participation in the study with me before you agree to it.

What will happen if I take part?

If you agree to participate in the study, you will be invited to an interview which will be scheduled at a time and venue convenient to you. You will be asked to provide biographical details (e.g. about your family and school background) and to describe and comment on your engagement with the employability schemes. It is expected that the interview will take about one hour. If more time is needed (e.g. if you have lots to say about your experiences of the employability schemes) we will discuss how this can be arranged to suit you.

The intention is for the interview to be recorded since this will provide an accurate record. I will ask your permission to do this.

After the interviews, you will be given a concise account of what you said so that you can check its accuracy and fairness. You will have the opportunity to comment on and add to the account. Should you wish to see the whole transcription of the interview, this will be provided on request.

This data will be used in the study and will not be shared with anyone other than my research supervisor, should it be necessary.

Please note that should you feel uncomfortable during the interview, you can always exit the interview at any point and no information gathered from you will be used in the study without your permission.

Are there any benefits in taking part?

The main benefit to you from taking part in the study is the opportunity to share your experiences and views of the employability schemes. This will give you the chance to

say what you think about them and this may help you reflect on how you can make better use of them. The wider benefit is that your experiences and views will help [redacted] University improve these schemes for future cohorts of students.

Are there any risks in taking part?

There are no immediate risks in taking part in the study since your details will be kept confidential and any data used will be anonymous. However, it is possible that you may feel uncomfortable discussing your experiences and views of the employability schemes, especially if any of them are negative. If you do feel uncomfortable, you are entitled to withdraw from the study. Please bear in mind, though, that reports of negative experiences and views of these schemes will be an important part of the evaluation. If it emerges during the interview that you could benefit from talking to a Career Counsellor, I will ensure that you are referred to them to advise you and assist you.

Should you at any time feel uncomfortable with the study and want to register your concerns, you can contact the Head of the Ethics Committee at [redacted] University or my supervisor, Dr Michael Watts using the contact details given below.

What if I am unhappy or if there is a problem?

If you are for any reason unhappy or want to lodge a complaint, you can first let me know and I might be able to resolve the problem. You may contact me on my email Priya.iyer@online.liverpool.ac.uk or my mobile (267)71307226.

However, should you feel that you need to reach out to another person, you can contact:

- the Chair of the Research Monitoring and Evaluation Committee at [redacted] University at [redacted]
- my Primary supervisor, Dr Watts at michael.watts@online.liverpool.ac.uk; and/or
- the Research Governance officer at University of Liverpool at liverpoolethics@liverpool-online.com

If you need to contact any of them, please make sure that you provide details of the study as well as my full name and then detail your concern or complaint.

Will my participation be kept confidential?

Yes. Your participation in the survey will be fully anonymous as you are not required to provide identifying details unless you want to take part in the interviews.

If you agree to be interviewed, only you and me will know about it. You will have the opportunity to review and comment on any interview data that will be used to report on this research. Any public reporting of that data – including its use in my doctoral thesis – will be anonymised. If you have any concerns about this, you are welcome to discuss them with me. You can also discuss them with Dr Michael Watts, my primary supervisor, if you want (please see above for contact details). If any concerns about the use of the information you provide cannot be resolved, then that information will not be used in the public reporting of this study.

All the survey responses will be coded, and the data collected will be summarised from the coded sheets. Further, all data collected during the interviews will also be stored under codes or pseudonyms that will be known to only to me. All interview data will be password protected. You will be sent a password protected copy of the concise summary of your interview (or the transcript if you request it) so that you can check it for accuracy and fairness. The password to access the document will be sent separately.

What will happen to information I provide?

Information gathered from the interviews will be used in my doctoral thesis that will be submitted to University of Liverpool. A summary of the thesis will be made available to [redacted] University as the research is intended to improve the university's employability schemes. However, no original data will be shared with the university and all data included in the thesis, and summaries of it, will be anonymised.

What will happen if I want to stop taking part?

As indicated before, you are free to leave the study at any time should you feel you do want to continue. At the time of leaving, your permission will be sought to use the data that has been collected until that stage. Should you not agree, the data so collected will be destroyed and not used in the study.

Who can I contact if I have further questions?

In case you have any questions or need any clarifications, the following are my contact details. I am also providing details of my Supervisor, Ethics Committee Chair at [redacted] University and the Research Governance Officer at University of Liverpool

My contact details as researcher on this project are:
Email: (student researcher email) priya.iyer@online.liverpool.ac.uk
Telephone: 7130 7226.

My supervisor's details are:
Email: michael.watts@liverpool.online.ac.uk

Research Governance officer at University of Liverpool:
Email: liverpoolethics@liverpool-online.com

Please keep a copy of this Participant Information Sheet for your reference and please do not hesitate to contact me or any of the above regarding any questions or concerns that you might have regarding the study.

Please note that none of your personal details or contact information will be publicised or shared with anyone else for any reason.

If you are willing to participate in the study, please contact me at the above mentioned e-mail address within the next 10 days.

Priya Iyer
Principal Researcher

Date: 14 September 2018

Appendix 5 – Participant Consent Form

UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL

Committee on Research Ethics

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Title of Research Project:	**Graduate employability: Impact of employability schemes on personal attributes of graduates**
Researcher(s):	**Priya Iyer, Student researcher, UoL**

		Please initial box
1.	I confirm that I have read and have understood the Participant Information Sheet dated 21 September, 2018 for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.	☐
2.	I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason, without my rights being affected. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.	☐
3.	I understand that confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained and it will not be possible to identify me in any public reporting of the research, including the researcher's doctoral thesis. I understand that any data provided by me will not be shared with anyone other than the researcher's supervisors and I understand that they are subject to the same ethical conditions as the researcher.	☐
4.	I understand and agree that my participation in the interview will be audio recorded and I am aware of and consent to your use of these recordings for the purpose of accurately recording the information I provide.	☐
5.	I understand and agree that my permission will be asked to use the data collected during the interview to inform this research.	☐
6.	I agree for the data collected from me to be used in relevant future research.	☐
7.	I agree to take part in the above study.	☐

Participant Name	Date	Signature

Priya Iyer		
Name of Person taking consent (Researcher)	Date	Signature

Student Researcher:

Name Priya Iyer

Work Address University of Liverpool

Work Telephone 71307226

Work Email Priya.iyer@online.liverpool.ac.uk

Primary Supervisor

Name: Dr Michael Watts

Work Address: University of Liverpool

Work Telephone

Work Email:Michael.watts@online.liverpool.ac.uk