

**THE IMPACT OF INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME ON SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN  
SELECTED GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE**

**By**

**SELAELO JOHN MABEBA**



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**DECLARATION**

I, Selaelo John Mabeba, declare that this dissertation, titled: **THE IMPACT OF INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME ON SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN SELECTED GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE**, is hereby submitted for the fulfillment of the requirements of the degree Master of Administration in Public Administration at the University of Limpopo, Turfloop Campus, School of Economics and Management, has not been previously submitted at this or any other institution. It is my own work in design and all reference material contained therein has been acknowledged to the fullest.

.....

**Mabeba, SJ (Mr)**

.....

**Date**

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## **ABSTRACT**

In developing countries like South Africa, a skills shortage is already one of the most important problems of the twenty-first century. Consequently, South African public institutions have adopted an internship programme to enhance skills development, knowledge and experience, concentrating on a particular population. An internship, as established by the South African Cabinet in December 2002, is a graduate work experience programme aimed at unemployed graduates aged 18 to 35. Therefore, the study assessed the impact of the internship programme on skills development in selected government departments in Limpopo Province. Secondary to the aim, the study explored the nature of internship programme and skills development in public institutions. It also evaluated the link between an internship programme and skills development and concluded by highlighting challenges and opportunities for an internship programme. The researcher used a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods, with semi-structured questionnaires for current and previous interns, to achieve the study's goals. Face to face interviewing method was used to collect data from public officials in the three selected government departments in Limpopo Province - Department of Education (DOE), Provincial Treasury, and Department of Sport, Arts and Culture. Although public institutions are regarded as hosts of internship programme, pitfalls associated with the internship programme in the South African public institutions persist. The study found, to a large extent, a huge impact of internship programme on skills development in the three selected government departments in Limpopo Province. The study further established that not all participants were clear with the job description of the internship programme. The imprecise job description could confuse interns as they would not know their expected daily performance in government departments. The study argues that such may result in displacement and a lack of sense of belonging among interns within their respective government departments.

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## **CHAPTER 1: GENERAL ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

Since the early 90s, there has been a proliferation, the global financial predicament of 2008-2009, which came prior to the Eurobloc crisis, increased understanding of the lack of jobs as a global issue, not just a South African one (Koen, 2006). Several researches analysing the pattern and output of institutions of higher learning in South and differences in centers for job opportunities confronted by people that have completed university studies has increased dramatically since the early 1990s. (Bhorat, 2004; Koen, 2006; Pauw, Oosthuizen & Westhuizen, 2008; Kraak, 2010). In order to address South Africa's graduate unemployment problem, many factors must be considered. Age, colour, area of research, and higher education institute are among them. (Van der Berg & van Broekhuizen, 2012).

Skills growth and education are critical at a global level to ensure sustainability in any changing market climate. (International Labour Office, 2010). The nation's reconstruction and development efforts rely heavily on the active population community, which is normally the youth (National Youth Development Policy Framework, 2002). In South Africa the education and training system is set up in a manner that graduates leave this institution unprepared to join the workforce. Employers search for graduates with realistic job experience and generic skills. As a result, their chances of finding work after finishing university education are slim. Unfortunately, graduates do not stand a chance of being recruited for employment (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2010).

Skills development initiatives programmes were planned and delivered in all sectors of the economy to capacitate the youth with competency attributes that will improve possibilities of finding work. Learnership programmes are usually considered as form of skills learning programme for people who do not have tertiary education. These are seen as some of the important means of empowering those that have grade 12 certificates only to look for jobs, while graduates are given internships as a means of gaining experience and developing specific skills (Babb & Meyer, 2005; Chonco & Folscher, 2006; Department of Higher Education and Training, 2010).

The internship programme is regarded as a popular form of skills transfer, within the government space, for students who have completed or are about to complete their post-school qualifications at universities and Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges. It equips graduates with the needed information and skills that allow them to conduct different tasks in future (Department of Public Service and Administration, 2006).

All professional development learning programmes can, in theory, take a holistic approach. In order to provide interns with the requisite skills, such a curriculum must be objective. They should concentrate on both technological, occupation-specific skills and generic, transferable human behavioral competencies that are necessary for success in the workplace (Department of Labour, 2005; Department of Higher Education and Training, 2010). Regardless of the field of work, human behavioral competencies serve as the cornerstone upon which all other technological skills are developed (Department of Labour, 2005; Nyathi, Stewart & Janisch, 2008). The Skills Development Amendment Act 97 of 1998 provided a list of characteristics, such as the dilemma of scarcity of job opportunities compounded because of limited skills and structured work experience, that are considered by those who have the means to create jobs and must be groomed through skills development initiatives, such as internship programmes. These strengths include problem-solving abilities, organizational skills, teamwork, good communication, and self-development (self-awareness, self-management, and self-knowledge) in the workplace, including a variety of awareness and management (Department of Labour, 2005; Chonco & Folscher, 2006; Nyathi, 2008). The research, on the other hand, looks at the impact of internship programme on skills development in four government departments in Limpopo Province.

## **1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

One of the measures used by the South African government to combat unemployment is an internship programme. More importantly, to provide graduates from various institutions of higher learning with the necessary experience, skills and knowledge in the work environment. Arguably, the internship programme is not being implemented as it should be. The aim of the internship programme is miscued as skills and work experience are

not transferred to the intended beneficiaries. Some of the graduates who are granted the opportunity to work as interns complain about the nature of tasks they are performing. Interns argue that some of the tasks they perform do not enhance any of their skills. For example, interns said they spent time making copies and print outs for their superiors in the work environment. Additionally, some complained about making tea for their colleagues instead of being exposed to various tasks that would contribute to their abilities. On the other side, some interns claimed that they performed the same task daily and it limited their skills development. In essence, interns should be given a variety of tasks to acquire various skills. The irrelevance of the skills conferred led to others quitting the internship programme. Having this in mind, the study assesses the impact of the internship programme on skills development in selected government departments in Limpopo Province. Skills shortage are inevitable in the South African labour market. Because of a skills shortage and a lack of experience, a lot of graduates are not easily accepted into the workforce. Hence, interns in the South African public institutions should develop a variety of skills during their 24-month programme. Skills are central to their abilities and competency levels.

### **1.3 AIM AND OBJECTIVES**

The study has a single aim and five objectives as detailed below. Amongst others, one of the goals of this study is to assess the nature of the internship programme and skills development in public institutions.

#### **1.3.1 Aim**

The study assesses the impact of internship programme on skills development or skills empowerment with specific reference to the Department of Cooperative Governance, Human Settlement and Traditional Affairs (COGHSTA), Office of the Premier, Department of Education (DOE), and Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism (LEDET) located in Polokwane, Limpopo Province. In pursuit of all this, the study is rooted on the following objectives and research questions.

### **1.3.2 Objectives**

- To investigate the nature of internship programme and skills development in public institutions,
- To evaluate the relationship between internship programme and skills development in the selected government departments,
- To evaluate the impact of internships on skills development,
- To identify challenges and opportunities for internship programme, and
- To propose possible and practical recommendations in addressing the challenges of skills development through internship programme in South Africa.

### **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS:**

- What is the nature of internship programme and skills development in public institutions?
- What is the relationship between internship programme and skills development in the selected government departments?
- What is the impact of internships on skills development?
- What are the challenges and opportunities for this internship programme?
- What are the possible and practical recommendations in addressing the challenges of skills development through internship programme in South Africa?

## **1.5 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS**

### **1.5.1 Internship Programme**

An internship programme is designed by the government and private companies to recruit into the work environment graduates that have completed at tertiary (Department of Public Service and Administration, 2006). Section 16 of the Skills Development Amendment Act of 2008, an internship is a programme designed to assist graduates in gaining first-hand experience, skills and knowledge in the work environment, based on their field of study to increase their employment opportunities, and this programme takes place for a certain duration (one year) (Pop, 2009:8).

### **1.5.2 Skills Development**

Skills development refers to a process of equipping graduates from various institutions of higher learning with skills that will help them to be more competitive in the near future (International Labour Force, 2010). Furthermore, it is a process of equipping graduates with skills as a way of better preparing them for the workplace. It also refer to the situation where a graduate or intern is nurtured for employment in future, using capacity building and mentorship programme (Hirschsohn, 2008:82).

### **1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Human capital theory refers to a graduate's stock of skills or attributes that will help him or her achieve higher levels of productivity (Dennison, 1998). Human capital theory allows a graduate to consider not just the years spent in school but also a number of other factors when making human capital investments. School, training, and attitudes toward the workplace are among them. Human Capital Theory, a theoretical basis for the universal implementation of education and skills development initiatives, was built on the work of individuals in the workplace (Becker, 1964). Human Capital Theory tries to show that formal education, especially for graduates from higher education institutions, is very important in improving a population's productive potential. To put it another way, a trained workforce is a valuable asset to a nation, which is why it is critical for graduates to learn specific skills and expertise through skills development programmes to ensure success in the employment territory (Barnard & Nel, 2009).

According to Becker (1964), it implies that there is a need to invest in graduates through schooling, training, and job experience in order to maximize productivity. To put it another way, schooling, training, and work experience can all assist graduates and interns in enhancing their job results. According to the theory, education or training increases intern productivity by imparting valuable knowledge and skills, thus increasing interns' potential earnings by increasing their lifetime earnings (Barnard & Nel, 2009). According to other researches, formal education is a key factor in explaining differences in work practices and productivity levels (Dennison, 1998).

In some less developed countries, comparative studies have been performed, focusing on investment in structured training programmes and skills growth (Psacharopoulos,

1998). Although formal education has developed at an alarming rate in several countries, such as South Africa, a large portion of human capital accumulation takes place both within and outside the workplace in the form of on-the-job training and other ways for working adults (Almlund, Duckworth, Heckman, Kautz & Mathilde, 2011). In recent years, the emphasis of adult education growth in developing countries has been seeking to improve training to match the skills development needs revolving around all occupational strata in the worldwide economy. A combination of education and training is required for skill acquisition in some developing countries, according to studies, and there are several pathways to skills development depending on particular occupation (Benhabib & Spiegel, 1994).

## **1.7 LITERATURE REVIEW**

A literature review is vital in every research study. The literature review in this study was guided by the objectives highlighted above. This section only discusses five themes as part of the literature review.

### **1.7.1 The nature of internship programme and skills development in public institutions**

According to Griesel and Parker (2009), one of the career training opportunities is a graduate internship programme, which is optional. Interns (as they are commonly known) are paid a stipend by the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETA) rather than a wage. Graduate interns, unlike student interns who are placed, must apply for advertised internship positions and follow the usual attracting and selection procedures, including interviews. (Gryn, 2010). It is all about providing them with chances to turn theoretical knowledge absorbed from higher education level to realistic experience gained in the competitive workplace. Interns sign a contract and follow a formal competency learning curriculum in all forms of internships (Harms & Credé, 2010). Mentors are assigned to interns to observe and make evaluations regarding their competency levels and output efficiency, and provide proof of their success on a regular basis (Department of Labour, 2005).

An internship's aim is to overcome a lack of realistic work experience and exposure to the realities of the workplace, as well as to minimise the unemployment faced by young

people youth unemployment, but on a temporary condition (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2012). Internships are used in a variety of fields, including medicine, nursing, social services (teaching, public policy, psychology, law, and engineering), and finance. Students may use an internship or placement programme to mix theory and experience in a subject, apply theoretical principles at work, and learn new ways of doing things through practical activities (Garcia, 2008).

### **1.7.2 The relationship between internship programme and skills development in public institutions**

Individuals and groups will be able to become fully and productively active in the labour market as a result of the internship programme, and will be able to adapt their capacities to meet changing demands and opportunities (Statistics South Africa, 2012). Many people see gaining a higher (tertiary) qualification as a ladder to finding or enhancing work opportunities (Lowden, Hall, Elliot & Lewin, 2011). Many people pursue tertiary education as a way to gain an edge in the job market in today's highly competitive world. Employers, alumni, and representatives from Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have described work-based learning (placements and internships) as especially successful ways to promoting graduates' job security (Lowden et al., 2011). Placements and internships tend to provide not only an important applied method for instilling sufficient knowledge, skills, and abilities in graduates, but they also have the ability to strengthen relationships and cooperation between HEIs and employers (Lowden *et al*, 2011: 10).

### **1.7.3 The impact of internships on skills development**

Internships play a significant role in skills development. Internships were created to provide graduates from various institutions of higher learning with the necessary skills and experience to gain certain skills and experience that would help them to be competent in the near future across the world. The impact of internships on skills development is discussed below.

#### *1.7.3.1 A connection between tertiary and the job market*

One of the key goals of establishing an internship programme is to enable new graduates from various fields of study to obtain work experience. According to O'Neill (2013), the

internship programme's underlying concept is to provide preparation and capacity building for recent graduates. Since there were few practitioners in different fields of research, the national government tried to expose young people to the field of work. Arguably, twelve months of field work experience given to graduates would ease their transition into the workforce. Employing candidates between the ages of 18 and 35 is one of the programme's recruiting requirements (Badenhorst & Smith, 2007).

#### *1.7.3.2 Develop future personnel*

The major reason behind the development of the internship programme was the need to develop a huge number of qualified practitioners in various fields or careers. According to Buirski (2013), the programme's long-term goal is to promote environmental and related careers while also consolidating sustainable development in the public and private owned institutions, and institutions representing the voiceless. Adams (2013) states that the internship programme has not only contributed effectively on the Environmental Resource Management department but also other departments at regional and national government as well as in privately owned institutions. The majority of previous internship programmes have succeeded in providing jobs all over the country (Badenhorst & Smith, 2007).

#### **1.7.4 The challenges and opportunities of internship programme**

Internship programme was introduced to provide interns with the necessary knowledge and work experience. However, there are a number of challenges and opportunities for internship programme. Therefore, such challenges and opportunities will be discussed below.

##### *1.7.4.1 The challenges of internship programme*

According to Amoako (2011), the lack of experience of interns, as well as weak English writing skills, was cited by professional development and human resources managers as a major obstacle for the programme. Steps have been taken, as described in the interviews with the program coordinators, to resolve the aforementioned challenges. The internship programme was designated as a corporate programme by corporate human

resources, with a specific budget to support it each year. Also, to determine whether interns were making progress, informal job reports and conversations with them were introduced. (Boyatzis & Goleman, 2007).

According to Bradley (2014), interns further indicated that there were several challenges, including low salaries and a lack of guarantee on permanent employment. As such, interns resign when better opportunities arise. A certain group of interns lamented that they didn't know who their mentor was because they were being coordinated by multiple mentors. In other cases, the intern mentors were scarcely available to advise the interns on what was expected of them. As a result, interns must search out other ways to learn (Chonco & Folscher, 2006).

Furthermore, the interns face difficulties due to the absence of coordination in specific departments and insufficient experience in various forms of management. These are some of the factors that contribute to employee discontent. (Amoako, 2011:2).

#### *1.7.4.2 The opportunities of internship programme*

According to Bradley (2014), graduates have been granted opportunities as a result of the internship programme. This gives the feeling that the curriculum has been a resounding success over time. The vast majority of these recipients have secured permanent roles within agencies. The bulk of the remaining interns have found permanent employment with provincial and national governments, private businesses, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) (Tygerburger, 2013). Along with their enthusiasm for environmental protection and sustainability, these interns are highly inspired, competent, and dedicated to public service (Tygerburger, 2013). As a result, some public agencies have greatly benefited from interns' talents and experience.

According to Adams (2013), interns could network with all other departments, according to one of the internship programme coordinators, and thereby open doors of opportunity in addition to being given permanent employment. Working and being introduced to the organisation's partners often create opportunity for interns, while the same people will apply for the organisation's External Bursary Scheme and research more if they do not receive an everlasting job that year. These interns are often exposed to opportunities for

professional growth and training that they would not have had at university (Cleary, Flynn & Thomasson, 2006).

O'Neill (2013) interns also learn how to write minutes, papers, and presentations, as well as how to solve problems, time management, group work, how to plan for and handle themselves in an interview, how to write a successful curriculum vitae, and go on several site visits, meet a variety of professionals, and get involved in exciting and even high-level ventures.

### **1.7.5 The policy framework pertaining to internship programme in South Africa**

According to Horwitz (2013), the increasing rate of unemployment of more than twenty three percent and insufficient skills is a significant issue in South Africa's change especially to a post-apartheid political economy. In the 1990s and 2000s, the post-apartheid state implemented some of the most progressive reforms to address what happened back then and warp in skills development, access to training, and equality of opportunity. It involves the Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995, Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998, Skills Development Act 97 of 1998, Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act 53 of 2003 and Promotion of Equality Act 4 of 2000 (Horwitz, 2013).

#### *1.7.5.1 The Skills Development Act (No 97 of 1998)*

The act seeks to ensure that workplace skills are built and strengthened (Skills Development Act, 1998). The Act dwells much on particular areas like providing a structure for skill development and employee development at work, as well as the unemployed. Skills Development Act (1998), one of the Act's aims is to enable workers to take advantage of the work environment and utilise the place as a platform to acquire more knowledge, a privilege to learn new skills, and an opportunity for those who had just joined the organisation to gain experience, as well as to recruit people who are hard to find jobs, such as graduates. (Skills Development Act, 1998).

#### *1.7.5.2 White Paper on National Youth Service (NYS)*

The central government of South Africa adopted the youth service in 2005 as part of its efforts to engage youth in the country's reconstruction and growth efforts. The policy's

goals are to make it easier for young people to gain work experience in order to gain jobs, to enable participants to build a sense of duty and service to the nation, as well as self-esteem and respect for authority, and to foster values of discipline, democracy, citizenship, and business among participants (National Youth Service Act, 1998). In order for the activities to be successfully perpetuated, a board has been created to carry out functions. Develop and track participant orientation, preparation, approved selection, and job programmes; provide participants with placement and job opportunities and help with the creation of recognised job employment projects; look after and review the National Youth Service's plans and programmes, and make any recommendations to the Minister (National Youth Service Act, 1998).

#### *1.7.5.3 National Skills Development Strategy III (NSDS)*

The leadership willingly elected by South African citizens has acknowledged the necessity to boost the economy since 1994. The growth of its people's skills is one of the opportunities found (Orgill, 2007). The National Strategic Development Strategy (NSDS) was developed in 2001 in the month of March with the goal of revolutionizing education and training in the United States (Covey, 1999). Though the NSDS focuses on preparing unskilled workers to enter the workforce and earn a living, it also aims to promote theoretical learning, make it easier for school leavers to move from basic education to institutions of higher learning, or even from stages of not working, to find work and advance in their careers (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2011).

According to Covey (1999), this policy tackles some of the problems that hinder the South African economy's ability to grow and create more job opportunities. One of these issues is that most of the youth leaving high school and tertiary education and joining the workforce for the first time have insufficient skills and are unprepared for jobs. This is aggravated by a lack of correspondence between institutional and workplace learning, lowering the employability and job readiness of successful graduates from FET and HET schools, without mentioning those who join the workforce without a tertiary degree (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2011).

## **1.8 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

There are several research design and methodologies. It is the prerogative of the researcher to select the type of research design that will appropriately achieve the aim and objectives of the study. Such a choice for this study is discussed in detail below.

### **1.8.1 Research design**

A research design focuses on the researcher's methodology, techniques, and data collection tools used to gather information on the investigated matter. There are several research designs that one can use to reach the objective of the study - this study adopts a mixed-method, and the researcher combines qualitative and quantitative data collection instruments. The qualitative research approach is subjective, deals with the experiential lifeworld of human beings (Ramchander, 2004; Jarbandhan & Schutte, 2006). A qualitative interview guide will be used to collect data from public officials in human resources and managers in skills development units within the three selected government departments. The advantage of using a qualitative research interview is that it does not limit the respondents from expressing their opinions about the investigated matter.

Furthermore, a qualitative research interview allows the respondents to express themselves based on their previous experiences about the impact of the internship programme on skills development in the selected government departments. Also, with a qualitative research approach, the researcher will use words to analyse, discuss and interpret the findings of the study instead of using numbers. Nevertheless, the study also adopts a quantitative research approach to gather relevant data. The quantitative research approach is characterised by collecting and analysing data statistically to justify the problem under investigation (Nkwi, Nyamongo, Ryan, 2001; Marshal, 2003; Ramchader, 2004). Further, a quantitative research questionnaire will be distributed to current and previous interns within the selected government departments. With this type of questionnaire, the respondents (current and previous interns) express their opinions on the investigated matter using ticks to fill in the questionnaire. The aim is to check whether the internship programme is helping or has helped the respondents to acquire the required skills that would help them be competitive in the near future. The study will employ a quantitative research approach to complement the findings of the qualitative

research approach. Furthermore, a quantitative research design will be purposefully used to arrive at unbiased findings. Also, a quantitative research approach will be used to summarise numerical values and report the results or findings of the study. Interviews with officials will be used as follow-ups to complement the findings of quantitative research questionnaires. Therefore, such interviews will be directed at public officials within human resources and skills development units at the selected government departments.

### **1.8.2 Description of study area**

The study proposes four government departments, namely the Department of Cooperative Governance, Human Settlement and Traditional Affairs (COGHSTA), Office of the Premier, Department of Education (DOE), and Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism (LEDET) located in Polokwane, Limpopo Province. About the province, Limpopo (formerly Northern Province) is the starting point for exploring the rest of Africa. It has three international borders: Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique, as well as the provinces of Mpumalanga, Gauteng, and North West. The province is mostly made up of agricultural communities, with many ethnic groups with distinct cultures. Northern Sotho (Bapedi) are the largest ethnic group in Limpopo, which is about more than half of the population. They are followed by VaTsonga and VhaVenda (Integrated Development Plan Review, 2016). The Afrikaans community only accounts for a small percentage. Furthermore, the province has several publicly governed primary and secondary schools and tertiary institutions such as the University of Limpopo, the University of South Africa, the University of Venda, and the Tshwane University of Technology (Integrated Development Plan Review, 2016). This study will become the first research of this kind (topic) to be conducted in Polokwane. Due to limited research on the investigated matter, the study is conducted exclusively in selected government departments in Polokwane.

### **1.8.3 Target population**

A target population is a populace in which a specific number of people are chosen (Bless, Higson-Smith & Sithole, 2013). The target population for this research will be public officials in the skills development and human resources units, current and previous interns

who had already undergone the internship programme in the Department of Education (DOE), Department of Local Economic Development Environment and Tourism, Office of the Premier and Department of Cooperative Governance Human Settlement and Traditional Affairs.

#### **1.8.4 Sampling**

The components of the population that are used in the actual sample in order to explain the population as a whole are referred to as sampling (Strydom, 2005). The collection of a part of people or items within a wider population, usually regarded as a sampling frame, is also referred to as sampling (Scott & Morrison, 2007) which represents a certain group (Gall, 2007; Neuman, 2011). Therefore, the study will combine both purposive and random sampling strategies. The purposive sampling strategy is a type of judgmental sampling strategy where the researcher purposively uses their judgmental knowledge to identify a group of participants who can assist with the required data. Therefore, purposive sampling in this study will be used to gather relevant information from public officials within the skills development unit. In principle, a random sampling strategy is a technique where all current interns in the four selected government departments stand a chance to participate in the study to provide specific information. Furthermore, the researcher will request database information (emails and contacts) of the previous interns from the selected government departments to grant them an opportunity to participate in the study. The previous interns will be those who worked in the financial year 2018/2019. The researcher will use the email addresses to distribute questionnaires and require the participants (previous interns) to fill in the questionnaires and return through emails rather than meeting face to face. A random sampling technique will be applied to reach previous interns (Hendricks, Blanken & Adriaans, 1992). The sample size of the study comprises of 140 participants made up of 10 previous interns per department, 15 current interns from the four selected government departments, 05 managers within the skills development unit from each department as well as 05 officials within the human resources from each department.

## **1.9 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS**

From several forms of data collection instruments, the study will employ interviews, questionnaires and documentation as discussed below.

### **1.9.1 Interviews**

Interviews encourage respondents to ask any questions they like and, hopefully, make them feel at ease, allowing them to share their opinions based on their own experiences and perceptions. It may take the form of an unstructured or organized questionnaire that is filled out by the interviewer after the interviewee has been questioned (Wisker, 2001). The interviews for this research will focus on the impact of internship programme on skills development in the four selected government departments, to assess whether such an internship programme is effective on skills development or not. Semi-structured interviews will be directed at managers within the skills development and human resources units and officials within the four selected government departments in Limpopo Province. Therefore, interviews will be used to complement the findings of the study.

### **1.9.2 Questionnaires**

Semi-structured questionnaires will be distributed to current and previous interns in the four selected government departments. The purpose is to assess the impact of the internship programme on skills development in public institutions. The questionnaires will assist the researcher to analyse the data collected based on the response from respondents.

### **1.9.3 Documentation**

According to Creswell (2003), a compilation of records that can be used to obtain specific information for the study is referred to as documentation. Published records related to the thesis will be used as sources of knowledge, including academic books, government gazettes and laws, journals, journal articles, and dissertations.

## **1.10 DATA ANALYSIS**

This term normally entails two stages: (a) minimizing the amount of data collected to manageable sizes, and (b) pointing out trends in the data (Mouton, 1996). The data obtained will be evaluated using a descriptive and interpretive research method. For descriptive analysis, graphs and pie charts will be used, while words and quotations will also be used to present the data around the interpretive analysis. As mixed-method research, the study will also use numbers and percentages to analyse and present the findings. For that purpose, Microsoft Excel and the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) will be employed to illustrate with pie charts and graphs. The SPSS is software for editing and analysing all sorts of data. Therefore, the data will then be reduced to manageable proportions to identify and evaluate patterns of the impact of the internship programme on skills development.

## **1.11 QUALITY CRITERIA**

**Trustworthiness:** The researcher engages with the study as a faithful witness to the accounts in the data in grounded theory. Although as the researcher immerses himself in the data, he or she must be truthful and careful about his or her experience, pre-existing thoughts and beliefs, and theories that are being created (Gearing, 2004). Researcher in the Grounded theory engage in the self-reflective process of bracketing, in which they recognise and set aside without neglecting their previous knowledge and expectations with the analytic aim of confronting the participants' accounts with an honest approach (Gearing, 2004). For this study, trustworthiness will be achieved through the above-explained reflective practices.

**Credibility:** Refers to the study findings' trustworthiness, truth and quality (Tracy, 2010). According to Guba (1981) credibility is associated with whether there are faithful descriptions or interpretations of human experiences in the study. Amis and Silk (2008) pointed out that credibility in the qualitative study can be achieved using longer interactions with the participants, member confirming, and triangulation. To achieve credibility for the present study, the researcher will allocate enough period collecting data to have an in-depth understanding of the impact of the internship programme on skills development to avoid misinformation and distortions. Longer interactions is crucial for

guaranteeing trust with participants and, this will help the researcher to obtain accurate and rich information.

**Confirmability:** Confirmability is a qualitative researcher's concern that is equivalent to objectivity (Shenton, 2004). Confirmability can be improved by including a self-critical, reflexive account that reveals implicit prejudices in the work, as well as triangulation. (Amis & Silk, 2008). In this study, the researcher will rely solely on the raw data provided by the participants and will be objective in achieving confirmability.

### **1.12 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY**

Each and every study has to be valid and reliable. The study is expected to serve as a source of information for public administration practitioners, academics, students and researchers. Therefore, there is a need for a pilot test to be considered before the study could take place as a way of ensuring that the data collected would be valid and reliable. A pilot test refers to the process of testing a research instrument prior commencement with the actual data collection. This strategy also ensures that the structure of questionnaires and interview questions are corresponding with the research questions, aim and objectives, to avoid a situation where the information would be bias, misleading and inaccurate.

### **1.13 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

For research ethics, the study will receive an official clearance letter from the University of Limpopo's Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) prior commencing with the actual research. The participants will be guaranteed anonymity. The researcher plans to disclose the importance of conducting the research, and participants will be well informed that their participation is not compulsory. They will also be informed that they are free to withdraw from participating in this study without penalty. Respondents will be guaranteed of the confidentiality of their information and that their identification details would not form part of the data collection tool. Furthermore, the researcher will maintain respect and dignity towards respondents by politely engaging them, treating them with courtesy as well as being patient with the respondents while expressing their views. The study would be helpful to institutions such as government departments, municipalities, the private sector and agencies in making improvements on the skills development programme. It

is for interns to get the necessary experience, knowledge as well as to be employable in the future. The risk anticipated will be associated with respondents becoming emotional because of remembering how they were once treated in their workplace. If this is the case, the researcher would allow the respondent to first calm down or even refer them to counselling if there is a need. Further, the anonymity, honesty and privacy of the respondents will highly maintained. The researcher has an ethical obligation to engage respondents in an environment in which they would be comfortable such as in a workplace or an open space.

#### **1.14 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The study is significant for academic purpose and can also add value to the practice of the discipline of Public Administration. Furthermore, the study will serve as a source of information for public administration practitioners, academics, students and researchers. Again, the study will be helpful to institutions such as government departments, municipalities, the private sector and agencies in making improvements on the skills development programme, so that interns can get the necessary experience and knowledge as well as be employable in the future.

#### **1.15 CONCLUSION**

The chapter outlined all the important aspects that are essential in research. In essence, the chapter summarised the overall research study. It focused on the problem statement, the aim and objectives of the study, and the research design and methodology adopted. Also, the section explained the target population as well as the data collection instruments that will be utilised to reach the objectives of the research.

## **CHAPTER 2: HUMAN CAPITAL THEORY AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The vitality and development of a field of practice, as well as its recognition and prestige, are all based on theoretical inquiry. A field's theoretical foundation explains and advises practice, as well as providing the primary means for guiding future progress. It also has an effect on procedures and analysis by disclosing new information and proposing alternatives. Theory and reality have a skewed partnership. Theory lags behind practice, particularly at the ground level, and practice lags behind theory (Garrison, 2000). This chapter focuses on conceptualising and discussing the theoretical framework (Human Capital Theory) of scholars and professionals, particularly on skills development and capacity building programmes.

Human capital is linked to economic science development. Kucharcikova (2011), economists are more concerned in placing their attention to the ability of employees to use technological facilities and design some to allow personnel to act along with activities that require much effort in the workplace. Given this submission, it is necessary for a person to enrich their knowledge, skills and abilities for the progress and development of the changing environment. The effort to describe the meaning of human capital has an intrinsic flaw; in simple terms, there is currently no agreed-upon meaning of the phrase. Kucharcikova (2011), the scientific understanding of the origin, status, and function of human capital remains an issue. Regardless, there are two fundamental approaches to comprehending the essence and purpose of human resources. This section makes an effort to unpack the term human capital as many scholars have already attempted to provide clarification on the term itself. The methods they used in their work will be illustrated, and they will then be applied to organisational management dynamics. This is possible because human capital can be applied to almost any endeavour.

In short, the chapter conceptualises and understands how other scholars perceive skills development and capacity building as a process of equipping interns with the necessary skills in public institutions, so that such interns could be competitive in their near future. The chapter further provides possible ways that public institutions can consider in

developing interns. The word capacity building is used in this chapter to refer to the creation of interns in public institutions in its broadest sense. It refers to the growth or enhancement of South African interns' abilities to prepare, execute, and maintain policies and programs aimed at achieving long-term changes in their workplace (Berg, 1993). Therefore, the chapter specifically focuses on a theoretical framework concerning skills development and capacity building.

## **2.2 THEORY UNDERPINNING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING**

Pieterse (2010) argues that a theory is a criticism, reconstruction, and synthesis of previous knowledge in the form of general propositions, as well as the convergence of various viewpoints and partial knowledge in the context of interpretation. This section discusses the relationship between the theory of skills development initiatives through a critical evaluation of the philosophies underpinning the concept of training and capacity building. The focus is on Human Capital Theory, which emphasises investment in Human Resources Development.

### **2.2.1 Definitions of Human Capital**

The concept can be discovered in the contribution of economists like Schultz and Becker at the Chicago School of Economics in the 1960s. Despite some early skepticism, academics gradually came to understand the idea of human capital. The word is constantly being recognised at both the corporate and individual levels around the world. According to Schultz (1979), increased investment in education, training, and advancement of people, staff, or interns is referred to as human capital. Individual abilities can be improved through education and training that results in significant improvements in job performance. Marshal (1998) postulate that Human capital is described as an investment in education and training that can be made by a single employee or a group of employees in any institution or organisation. Becker (1993) conceives investment in education, training, professional growth, health, and other principles that cannot be segregated from the person in an organisation is referred to as human capital. Human capital is a crystalline characteristic in a person that cannot be deleted or withdrawn from a workplace employee. According to Okojie (1995), Human capital refers to a country's human resources' knowledge and skills. In the words of Marimuthu (2009), education,

capacity building, education, and other technical programs are also used to improve an employee's experience, talents, abilities, values, and social properties. In the near future, it will help in the employee's job satisfaction and efficiency. Schultz (1981: 54) maintained that we have to “take into account the innate and acquired skills. Those are important and may invest to expand and will form human capital.”

However, Marimuthu (2009) says Becker of the Chicago School of Economics in the United States of America is the most well-known proponent of the Human Capital Theory today. Becker's classic novel, 'Economic Growth with an Unlimited Supply of Labour,' published in 1964, emphasises the importance of investing in schooling, training, skills development, health, and other human values. Becker emphasizes education, medical costs, and lectures on the values of punctuality and integrity in his book "The Concise Encyclopedia of Economics Human Capital. Since they increase earnings, enhance health, or prolong a person's lifespan. Therefore, economists are of the opinion that spendings on formal education, capacity building and investment cannot be separated from in human capital (Becker, 2011).

Employers can view human capital from a variety of viewpoints, as Becker's eloquent submissions have shown. Becker's attention has changed from simply paying a paycheck to the organisation's participation in the personal advancement of the individual employee's skills. As a result, investing in workers' schooling, skills, and values increases work satisfaction and efficiency while lowering turnover. All medical services provided to workers in the organisation consequently promotes not only the employee's health but also the organization's well-being or good health. If an entity is said to be ill, it is referring to the workers' lack of results rather than the setup itself. To thrive, all companies depend on their workers. Interest and dedication to duty are improved as a result of human resource growth, placing a greater focus on workplace education and training. Davenport (1998) claims that people's natural talents, attitudes, and personal energy add to the human capital that they bring at work. Human capital refers to the expertise and skills that people acquire, retain, and use (Armstrong, 2006). OECD (2001) human Capital is described as the expertise, skills, competencies, abilities, and other characteristics embodied in people that help them achieve individual and socio-economic well-being.

As stated by Kucharcikova (2011), human capital is described by modern economic growth theories as the amount of an individual's congenital and acquired abilities, expertise, and experiences. Scholars and academics often ignore dedication when listing human resource characteristics such as abilities, skills, and experience, which might seem to them to be indispensable. However, regardless of one's expertise, abilities, or experience, unless the person has mentality of dedication to perform, unless the effort to perform is commensurate with the task or function, the person will not perform as anticipated. In their different meanings, some of the literature reviews on the topic of human capital suggest the same thing: that more investment in education, skills growth, and training is needed for companies and public institutions to thrive in today's competitive world. An organisation that undervalues or ignores the preparation and growth of its human capital or labor force will inevitably fail. Simply stated, it is on the verge of collapsing.

### **2.2.2 Human Capital Theory**

Human capital is seen as an asset that can be sold in terms of acquisition and selling, according to Classical Economic Theory. This classic theory focuses primarily on capital's exploitation of labor. Human capital, on the other hand, refers to the knowledge, experience, and skills gained through schooling, jobs, and training, rather than the conventional sense of the word labor. Human capital theory's social and economic significance is emphasized, Becker (1993) notes the most valuable of all capital as an investment in human being.

Becker (1993) distinguishes between firm-specific and general-purpose human resources. Expertise gained through schooling, jobs, and training in management information systems, accounting practices, administration processes, or other expertise unique to a particular public institution are examples of firm-specific human resources. Information obtained from workshops and school in fields of importance to a number of businesses, such as generic skills in human resource growth, is known as general-purpose human resources (Agarwala, 2003).

Human Capital Theory has been used as the main tool to analyse skills development initiatives in both developing and developed countries and focuses on learning capacity

and the significance of skills creation. Young-Sun Ra & Woo Shim (2009) define Human Capital Theory as a theory that believes there is no market weakness in the economy and considers that all employment should be categorised as general or specialised training, with training investment benefits for both the individual intern and the public sector. It also notes that government-provided direct instruction is undesirable, and that, as a result, optimum capacity creation performance can be achieved using the principles of an open, competitive market. Furthermore, as stipulated by the human capital theory, government interference in skills development is unnecessary and possibly detrimental, assuming that a free, competitive market will generate adequate investment in skills development.

Livingstone (1997) adds that Human Capital Theory focuses on the effectiveness of human learning capacities concerning the available resources for production to achieve cost-effective results which benefit both business and society at large. Furthermore, Human Capital Theory emphasises that learning capacity should be constantly enhanced through the use of techniques that will allow interns to be effective in the worldwide enterprise environment. However, Livingstone (1997) observes that the application of Human Capital Theory has been questioned by many analysts, who have posited that its limitations outweigh its positive outcomes. Three crucial factors have been identified to enhance Human Capital Theory's effectiveness. First, the importance of providing relevant and specialised information to revitalise human capital creation and economic growth. Second, the need to focus on alternative methods to improve the standard and quality of knowledge. Third, the need to broaden the definition of human capacity.

### **2.3 APPROACHES TO HUMAN CAPITAL**

As defined by economists, two methods should be taken into account when dealing with human capital: (1) macro and (2) micro economic approach (Kucharcikova, 2011). In line with business economics, these techniques are further broken down into various subthemes. In this work, economists and other scholars' approaches to understanding human capital are applied. The human capital approach, as imparted by Ndinguri, Prieto and Machtes (2012), aims to enhance individual employee beliefs, teamwork, and consciousness, as well as overall collective efficiency.

According to Kucharcikova (2011), there are two approaches to the microeconomic aspect, both of which are known as Business Economics. According to Kucharcikova (2011), human capital has long been regarded as a development factor in business economics. Kucharcikova (2011) adds that Human capital is regarded as an important business aspect that contributes to the company's market value from a managerial perspective, while it is perceived as one of the drivers of productivity and sources of economic growth from a macroeconomic perspective (Kucharcikova, 2011).

### **2.3.1 Microeconomic Approach**

Approaching human capital is dependent on business economics and administrative perceptions. Therefore, the discussion in the following section mainly focuses on the four views of the microeconomic approach.

#### *2.3.1.1 Business Economics View*

Given the foregoing, human capital is regarded as one of the factors of production alongside material, land, and human labour in the Business Economics approach. Compensating the company or firm for its production costs, the qualitative feature of human capital is that it does not function on its own, but rather with the effort of human labour (Kucharcikova, 2011).

#### *2.3.1.2 Managerial View*

In line with Kucharcikova (2011), human capital as a business asset presents a valuable market position and features prominently in strategic planning and management approaches. Although the scholars do not agree on everything around what human capital is, the common belief is that it brings value to business and develop and tie leading thoughts (Pieterse, 2010).

#### *2.3.1.3 Resource View*

Business resources can be regarded as material, according to Koubek (2007), which include vitality, equipment and other apparatus as well as budgeting, knowledge and people. Koubek critically values human resources, saying public institutions cannot be without them and the same goes for the economy. On the other hand, Rosak-Szyrocka and Borkowski (2007) agree to the above adding that regardless of the nature of roles played, every employee is valuable. Succinctly, the authors perceive human resources

as the fountain of human capital that is natively not transferable. Kucharcikova (2011) corroborates, saying considerably human capital and human potential are seen as equals. Kucharcikova sets out that human resource sums the workforce and the output in terms of final products (Vodak and Kucharcikova, 2011).

Perpetually, it is perceived by Kucharcikova (2011) and Blaskova and Hitka (2011) that in public institutions, the foremost qualified subject in overseeing and motivating workers is the proper division of human potential advancement (human resource management administrations, staff administrations). Kucharcikova (2011), human capital speaks to the figure that gives a particular shape to each organisation. Therefore, individuals shape a component in an association to gain new knowledge, invent, stimulate and make vital changes as well as think inventively. Thus, individuals ought to apply the education they have within the labour market. Vodak (2010) believes that such is vital for the long-term fruitful operation of an institution.

#### *2.3.1.4 Intellectual Capital View*

A blend of human and structural capital. It comprises experience, organisational technology, customer relationships and professional skills (Kucharcikova, 2011). A sum of organisational capacity, inventiveness, know-how in achieving tasks, human capital is the centre of it all. The strategies that activate productivity and management pattern, databanks, hardware and software are regarded as structural capital. To put it short, the stationary business structure that employees use. "Structural capital also provides customer capital with the relationships developed with key customers," (Bontis, 2001) and "Organisational capital is the institutionalised knowledge possessed by an organisation that is stored in databases and manuals. It is often called structural capital," (Edvinson & Malone, 1997). But Kucharcikova (2011) says organisational capital gained traction above other concepts. In the input of Davenport and Prusak (1998) in Kucharcikova (2011), "an organisation is said to use different approaches for accumulating and utilising their knowledge and these approaches present themselves as different aspects of intellectual capital, human organisational and social capital."

Kucharcikova (2011) adds that intellectual capital banks not only on physical resources as the main tools of building competitive edge but chiefly on employee intellects. “But he buttresses the point further when he quoted Edvinsson and Malone (1997) who had used the word intellectual capital for the first time in their work instead of the common accounting terms such as intangible assets,” who are corroborated by Armstrong (2006) and Kucharcikova that “it is the individuals that generate, retain and use knowledge and skill (human capital) to create intellectual capital in that their knowledge is enhanced by the interactions between them (social capital) and generate the institutionalised knowledge possessed by the organisation (organisational capital).” Knowledge Management View according to Kucharcikova (2011) in Drucker (1993), is the primary factor to improve administration by modern kind of capital known as a knowledge capital. According to the forecast of Drucker, whereas money capital dies down, knowledge capital remains sustainable.

Predominantly, the most esteemed capital in companies is human or knowledge capital. Like people have different talents and capacities, so it knowledge capital – it is diverse. Drucker (1999) further notes, “the world is fast moving away from a production-based economy to a knowledge-based one within the best practices.” Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) could not agree more, saying that “knowledge management requires a commitment to creating new, task-related knowledge, disseminate it throughout the organisation and embody it in products, services and systems.”

Kucharcikova (2011) views knowledge generation as an internal job or relations with the public. Hence, Davenport and Prusak (1998) explain knowledge as “the sum of experience, values, contextual information and expert insight that provides a framework for evaluating and incorporating new experiences and information. Therefore, knowledge management accordingly deals with the creation, acquisition, integration, distribution, and application of knowledge to improve the operational effectiveness and competitive advantage of an organisation.” Therefore, human capital and knowledge management better work together when human capital is considered as individual knowledge that manifests as innovation, aptitudes and flairs (Kucharcikova, 2011). The author subscribes

to this view since skills, talent and inventiveness are the first tools organisations look for in an employee, and work towards developing such.

### **2.3.2 Macroeconomic Approach**

Economic growth is all around a central point for the financial approaches of any government. Production is the determiner. Economic development is only accomplished through seriously and broad adoption of production factor which is ordinarily implanted within the gross domestic products (GDP) of a country. According to Kucharcikova (2011), “intensive and extensive economic growth is notable. The author describes extensive economic growth as the result of increasing the number of used production factors, basically, land, labour and capital.” These are well known essential variables of generation in financial matters. Land as a calculation of production encompassing its characteristic environment. Kucharcikova (2011) has contended that this source is regularly utilised to check natural resources but in any case, a few economists have associated the factor with capital. He said that it is the conclusive factor of production to attain development, within the period sometime recently before prior to the technological changes.

It is argued that majority of the labour has secured jobs in the agricultural sector with specific reference to emerging countries. The writer argued as much as the economy keeps on growing this will imply that there too much consumption of natural resources. Meanwhile the debate on sustainable growth that will not cause total exhaustion. Personnel is another factor of production Kucharcikova (2011) considered economic growth achieved through an increase in the labour force. In the authors' view, this is as a result of demographic trends, size of labour force, the level of scientific and technological development, the social division of labour, and labour output in various sectors. The advanced machines of today require people that are well equipped to operate them. Therefore, it is crucial to capacitate the human resources through training, skills development, capacity building and retraining (Kucharcikova, 2011). Human Capital is a scarce resource. The word capital is broad in economics, and capital in economic growth refers to items like structures, machinery, equipment, and technologies that are used to

achieve the desired result. In accounting terms, capital accumulation is achieved by the accumulation of investments (Pieterse, 2010). The ratio of output factors changes as capital accumulates. Education and study are becoming increasingly important sources of capital accumulation (Roddy, 2004). Economists have seen it relevant to demerge capital on physical and human capital many years ago (Kucharcikova, 2011). This is one of the reasons why UNICEF, a United Nations agency, has urged all governments around the world to devote twenty six percent of their budgets to education growth.

According to Beach (2009), natural abilities, inherent and acquired skills, intelligence, experience, creativity, and inventiveness are all important components of human resources. The idea is to spend funds by increasing the value and effectiveness of human capital. Expenditures geared toward science, professional growth, and education are examples of ways to increase the value of human resources (Kucharcikova, 2011). Kucharcikova (2011) natural capacity, inherent and acquired abilities, intelligence, experience, creativity, and inventiveness are all characteristics of human capital.

There is one very important factor Kucharcikova failed to integrate without which the characteristics listed above will not be effectively utilised in any organisation. That has to do with the factor of commitment. It takes commitment as has already been emphasised above that it takes commitment to perform and to effectively utilise natural ability, innate or acquired skills, knowledge, experience, talent and inventiveness. This is why at present the commitment of all employees in an organisation is stressed for organisation management to succeed (Roddy, 2004). However, this critique is intended to complement Kucharcikova's erudite submissions on human capital characteristics, not to detract from them. The next economic growth as stated by Kucharcikova (2011) is that of intensive economic growth. He emphasised that this growth is caused by an increase in production per unit of input. Kucharcikova (2011), the quality, productivity, and method of combining production factors all affect this form of economic growth. Intensive growth factors, in this view, include technological advancements and increases in productivity factors. The following are the determinants of aggregate productivity factors: The level of work organisation, technology, technological support, education, and employee motivation to improve performance are all factors to consider (Kucharcikova, 2011). In an era or period

characterised by the rapid and extensive introduction of technical innovations, education and skills development are the most important factors. These factors contribute to technological advancement, increased efficiency, increased human capital value, and overall economic development. New skills and expertise must be adapted to the existing needs and capabilities of concrete businesses, as well as innovation (Blaskova & Hitka, 2011).

Economists like Becker (1993) and Denison (1962) emphasised the importance of making time for education to contribute to the growth of the economy and its rise (Kucharcikova, 2011). Becker stresses that one cannot explain economic growth in the context of physical capital and advancement in technology. Becker emphasises why human capital is pivotal and, according to Volejnikova (2005), an individual is an example of human capital. Therefore, putting effort on people (human capital) is the beginning of assembling a successful economy (Schultz, 1981).

### **2.3.3 Knowledge Based Approach**

In agreement with the preceding discourse of Human Capital Development (HCD), there's one important approach that's dynamics and jointure to the current discourse. This should do with the knowledge-based approach to human capital development as enunciated by Ndinguri (2012) in a very study conducted. Though the knowledge-based approach to human capital development is sort of new, it's but gaining quality with authors and students within the discourse of human capital. The knowledge-based approach to human capital development is dynamic. It synchronises the thought of the various varieties of data vital to the organisation per knowledge-based theory within the postulate of Grant (1996). Public establishments or management hold dear data mutually of its resources and sought-after to shield it in such some way that it considers the way to organise it, with efficiency generate it with capability (Nickerson and Zenger, 2004). The manner it's generated and therefore the manner its imparted Associate in Nursing integrated into an organisation influences the power of the organisation to require half within the competition within the market with the positive results of its use (Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000). For Grant, the advocate of the knowledge-based approach to human

capital, data may be a strategic formulator that reinforces the most parts like the staff. Within the proposal of Grant, staff square measure the carriers of and agents of public establishments, personal sector and business (Sveiby, 2001), produce organisational structures that allow interaction also as style (Weick, 1983; Sveiby, 2001; Ndinguri, 2012). Human capital development has the capability and skill to form data price needed in any organisation.

### **2.3.3 Complex Approach to Human Capital Bureaucracy**

Idahosa (1997; Aghemelo and Osumah, 2008), the officialdom approach to Human Capital paperwork may be a system of a structure having the capability to coordinate activities of staff within the work. Paperwork tho' typically brought up as government official, will coordinate professional data, experience, skills, commitment to publicize human capital to people who sought-after it. The criticism of paperwork has typically been that people who state to being professional of information, skills, expertise and commitment are typically found to be several and therefore the data is supposed to be disseminated as a guide. It will but be used as a personality's Capital approach within the sense that paperwork has one thing to supply each to the final public Associate in Nursingd an organisation once properly coordinated.

According to Idahosa (1997) and Aghemelo and Osumah (2008), paperwork might are a sensible approach to human capital as a result of it had been brindled once liquid ecstasy Weber's Theory of paperwork, that was meant for economical data management however has typically been criticised for the bottleneck it's delivered to the organisation.

Idahosa (1997) argues, however, that even supposing paperwork is deviled with pathologies, the answer doesn't be the abolishment of the paperwork or the availability of a lot of rules, rules and impartial procedures. Rather, the answer lies in a very positive modification within the use of human capital (knowledge, skills, expertise and commitment) to effectively use their professional cognitive content within the organisation, since potency and effectiveness is that the essence of the human capital characteristics needed of the official.

### **2.3.4 Scientific Management Approach**

Frederick is attributable because of coming up with scientific management theory (Aghemelo & Osumah, 2008). Frederick's scientific management approach is used on the Human Capital development. The aim of the scientific management approach to human capital sought-after too, among different things, capacitate management to supply a happier home for the employees, offer most opportunities for the very best development of individuals' capability through the methodology of labour assignment, selection, training, skills development programme, transfer and promotion, impart coaching to the employees so that they'll develop newer capabilities and become eligible for promotion (Tonwel & Imhabekhai 2009; Aghemelo & Osumah, 2008).

Furthermore, this approach aims to bring on the event of self-assurance and self-regard among employees (the human capital of the organisation) moreover on producing an environment of analysis wherever employees might develop the capability to specific and perceive the aims and objectives of the organisation. Taylor's scientific management approach fits into the wants of human capital development in Associate in Nursing organisation in eliminating dunderheads, promoting coaching and education for the manpower (human capital) of the organisation, produce Associate in Nursing avenue for advancement in financial gain earned because the advantage of human capital, improved health for the manpower and earning respect for the human capital possessed by the those that add the organisation. The scientific management approach to human capital could be a sound approach to the study of human capital in Associate in Nursing organisation (Tonwe et al., 2009; Aghemelo & Osumah, 2008).

## **2.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF HUMAN CAPITAL THEORY**

Approaches to Human Capital Theory as presented in the preceding section paves a way for the study to deliberate on the characteristics of the theory to cast some light on the development of human capital. The following section discusses the identified three characteristics of the Human Capital Theory.

### **2.4.1 Natural traits**

Crawford (1991), compared to physical labour, human capital as broad that means includes expandable, self-generating, transferable, and shareable characteristic. To start

with, the expandable and self-generating characteristics of human capital square measure closely connected to the likelihood that the stock data} will increase individuals' human capital. Moreover, the rise of human capital is distended by either endogenous or exogenous factors like coaching, capability building and skills development programme. Original data is incessantly elaborated and built by linking external data, information, skills, experiences, and different knowledge-based factors moreover. From the economic perspective, the characteristic of human capital specialising in data is a core part to unravel the matter of inadequacy that very few materials is equivalently distributed to economic agents. Throughout increasing and self-generating the human capital, it's sufficiently attainable that the portion of that capital as AN economic agent is extended.

Secondly, the transferable and shareable characteristics of human capital mean that the first holder {of data|of data|of information} will distribute his or her knowledge to others. On the circumstances that the first data holders' exclusive possession is slightly acceptable, the equivalent distribution between the holders and therefore the takers is actualised. Consequently, the previous 2 characteristics extend the amount of human capital, and therefore the latter 2 expand the variety of human capital (Crawford, 1991).

#### **2.4.2 Influence of Human Capital**

The effect of human capital is essentially classified into 3 parts: individual, organisation, and society. From the attitude of the individual within the internal labour market, most researchers sit down with the likelihood of skyrocketing individual financial gain, ensuing from individual productivity (Denison, 1962; Schultz, 1979; Schultz, 1981; Becker, 1993; Sidorkin, 2007). Owing to the increment of AN individual's productivity on human capital, to maximise organisational profits, most employers like better to encourage high productive people. Moreover, it's thought that individual quality will increase due to the advance of productivity within the internal labour market. By the rise of productivity within the work, the high-productive individual is recognized because the employee with several potentialities to manoeuvre to the next level within the internal market (Galor, 1990; Sicherman, 1991). From the attitude of a private within the external market, AN out of work individual's human capital affects his or her job-seeking and employable opportunities (Greider, Denise-Neinhaus & Statham, 1992; Vinokur, 2000). On the

internalised human capital, a private simply holds the likelihood to access job-related data with a high level of human capital (skills), and thenceforth he or she will simply acquire the activity possibilities compared to otherwise. Regarding the organisation, Lepak and Snell (1999) recommend that the potential of human capital is closely connected to core competencies and aggressiveness of the organisation.

Lastly, the social point of view of human capital is that the synthesis of each individual and organisational perspective. McMahon (1999) delineated the likelihood of human capital for democracy, human rights, and political stability on the common consciousness of social constituents in line with Beach (2009), human capital will increase the social consciousness of people among a community. Consequently, the link between human capital and social consciousness relies on an in-depth inter-relationship leading to sociopolitical development (Alexander, 1996; Sen, 1999; Grubb & Lazerson, 2004).

### **2.4.3 Categories of Human Capital**

Generally, some researchers gift 3 distinguished types of human capital like general, firm-specific and task-specific human capital (Gibbons & Waldman, 2004; Hatch & trained worker, 2004). Otherwise, Becker (1964) delineates that human capital is classified into general and specific. Generally human capital is generic data and skills that aren't specific to a task or an organization, typically accumulated through operating experiences and education (Alan et al., 2008). The overall human capital holds transferable characteristics across jobs, companies and business. It's comparatively straightforward that the overall human capital, embedded in a private, is transferred to completely different industries. In distinction, firm-specific or task-specific human capital is typically accumulated through education, training, operating expertise on data specific to a firm or task (Alan, Altman & Roussel, 2008). Becker (1976) says the particular human capital is never transferable to different jobs, firm and business. Thus, it's not possible to transfer loads of financial gain into the labour market. Moreover, human capital is particularly if it will increase a worker's productivity solely at the firm during a public establishment or any organisation (Becker, 1964). Consequently, it's tough to transfer into completely different industries a selected human capital embedded in a private.

#### **2.4.4 The connection of Human Capital and Firm Productivity**

Human Capital focuses on 2 main elements - people (interns and public servants) and organisations. The idea was additionally delineated by Garavan, Morley, Gunnigle and Collins (2001), World Health Organization same that human capitals had four key attributes. The attributes square measure (1) flexibility and adaptableness, (2) improvement of individual competencies, (3) the event of organisational competencies, and (4) individual employability. It potrays that these attributes successively add worth to individual and organisational outcomes. Varied findings incorporate human capital with higher performance and property competitive advantage (Noudhaug, 1998), higher organisational commitment (Iles, Mabey & Oscar Palmer Robertson, 1990) and increased organisational retention (Robertson et al., 1991). Hence, these debates essentially concentrate on individual and organisational performance.

At the individual level, Collis and Montgomery (1995) noted that the importance of human capital depends on the degree to that it contributes to the creation of competitive advantage. From AN economic purpose of reading, transaction-costs indicate that companies gain a competitive advantage once they own firm-specific resources that can't be derived by rivals. Thus, because the singularity of human capital will increase, companies have incentives to take position resources into their management and therefore the aim to cut back risks and capitalise on productive potentials. Hence, people (interns) ought to enhance their ability skills to be competitive in their organisations. The Human Capital Theory has undergone speedy development. Among its development, bigger attention has been paid to training-related aspects. This can be additionally associated with the individual perspective.

Human capital investment is any activity that improves the standard (productivity) of the employee. Therefore, coaching is a crucial part of human capital investment. It refers to the data and coaching needed and undergone by an intern that will increase his or her capabilities in performing arts activities of economic values. In any case, it's fitting to entails that the workforce's lack of coaching is expounded to low aggressiveness (Green, 1993). In turn, bigger human capital stock is related to bigger productivity and better salaries (Mincer, 1997). Likewise, coaching is connected to the longevity of corporations

(Bates, 1990) and a bigger tendency to business and economic process (Goetz and Hu, 1996). Also, Doucouliagos (1997) notes human capital as a supply not solely to encourage employees and accelerate their commitment however additionally to form expenditure and eventually pave the way for the generation of recent data for the economy and society. Also, for public establishments, it's a valuable quality related to institutional performance.

Finally, investment in coaching and skills development is fascinating to create each interns' and social perspective. From the organisational level, human capital plays a crucial role in strategic designing on the way to produce competitive blessings. Snell, Lepak and Yound, (1999) state that a firm's human capital has 2 dimensions - worth and singularity. A firm indicates that resources square measure valuable once they permit up effectiveness, capitalising on opportunities and neutralising threats. Within the context of effective management, worth focuses on increasing services compared with the associated prices. During this sense, a firm's human capital will add worth if it contributes to lower prices and supply inflated performances.

According to Seleim, Ashour and Bontis (2007), human capital indicators had a positive association with organisational performances. These indicators, like coaching, attended and cooperation practices, end in adept performers wherever additional productivity might be translated into organisational performances. This was additionally supported by Dooley (2000) World Health Organization found a major direct correlation between the standard of developers and volume of market shares. Supported the on top of arguments it is ended that human capital indicators increased the firm performance directly or indirectly.

## **2.5 SOURCES OF HUMAN CAPITAL DIFFERENCES**

One of the foremost necessary ideas in labour social science is to think about the set of marketable skills of employees and interns as a kind of capital during which employees create a spread of investments. It's helpful to think about the potential sources of human capital differences before discussing the incentives to take a position in human capital.

### **2.5.1 Innate ability**

According to Blanchard, Nick and James (2006), staff will have different amounts of skills thanks to however they were trained and capacitated. Analysis in biology or social biology has documented that there's some part of IQ that is genetic in origin and there's a heated discussion regarding the precise importance of this part, and a few economists have conjointly taken half during this. The relevancy of this observation for labour social science is twofold. There's possible to be heterogeneousness in human capital even once people have access to equivalent investment opportunities and therefore the same economic constraints; in empirical applications, we have the way of managing this supply of differences in human capital, particularly once it's possible to be related to with different variables of interest.

Nevertheless, even if there was some initial resistance to idea} at the first stage of development of the concept, students before long return to terms with the idea of human capital. Human capital by day is receiving a lot and a lot of attention everywhere on the planet each at the organisational and individual levels per Schultz (1979) human capital involves enlarged investment within the education and coaching of people. Individual's skills are often increased through education and coaching that evoke effective amendment within the organisation.

### **2.5.2 Schooling**

It has been the main focus of a lot of analysis since it's the foremost simply evident part of human capital investments. Therefore, there's a lot of to human capital than schooling. However, the analysis of schooling is probably going to be informative if we tend to presume that an equivalent force that affect schooling investments are likely to affect non-schooling investments. Therefore, we will infer from the patterns of schooling investments what could also be happening to non-schooling investments, that square measure a lot of to watch (Leigh, Watkins, Plat & Kaufmann, 2000).

### **2.5.3 School quality and non-schooling investments**

A pair of identical twins who grew up within the same surroundings until the age of six, so completed an equivalent year of schooling could yet have different amounts of skills. This might be as a result of they attended different colleges with varied qualities, however, it

may even be the case notwithstanding they visited an equivalent college. During this latter case, for one reason or another, they could have chosen to create in different elements of their human capital (one may have worked more durable or studied particularly for a few subjects, or attributable to a range of decisions or circumstances, one could become a lot of assertive, higher at communicating). Several economists believe that skills are vital in understanding the character of duties AN intern is needed to perform within the geographical point (Analoui, 1999).

#### **2.5.4 Training and skills development**

It is the element of human capital that interns acquire once schooling, usually related to some set of skills helpful for a specific trade or set of technologies. At some level, training is extremely kind of schooling therein the employee, to some point, controls what quantity to invest in. However, it is conjointly a lot of complicated since its employees create training investments by themselves. Public establishments conjointly got to invest in training of the employees and interns. So, training is commonly a joint investment by public offices and employees (Mullins & Christy, 2010).

#### **2.5.5 Pre-labour market influences**

An increasing recognition among economists that graduates are exposed to totally different skills before joining the labour market might may also human capital significantly. At some level, the analysis of those pre-labour market influences is also a social science. However, it additionally has a part of the investment. For instance, a selfless parent deciding wherever to measure is additionally deciding whether or not her offspring are going to be exposed to sensible or less sensible pre-labour market influences. Therefore, several identical problems that arise in puzzling over the idea of schooling, skills development and training can apply during this context too (Keegan & Hartog, 2004).

### **2.6 APPROACHES TO CAPACITY BUILDING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**

Not astonishingly, the classical principles of management concentrate on principles for enhancing productivity and increasing potency by coming up with a coherent organisation structure (Mullins & Christy, 2010). Stress is placed on the division of labour, and the designation of responsibilities and duties for promoting the purposeful principle (Mullins & Christy, 2010).

Personnel management is one among the numerous principles incorporated in ancient organisations, whereby coaching and capability building development programmes, welfare programmes, pay incentive programmes, and upgraded operating conditions area unit enforced (Analoui, 1999; Pindur, Rogers & Kim, 1995). Higher work output and above-average performance is measurable and awarded with higher wage rates as a psychological feature incentive since it's assumed that the employee's sole purpose is to extend employee's financial gain (Pindur et al., 1995; Kakabadse, Ludlow & Vinnicombe, 1988).

Coordination between management and employees is taken into account crucial for up their innovation and skills for productivity in terms of quality and amount (Mullins & Christy, 2010). The role of culture may be a dominant feature in classical organisations whereby the stress is principally targeting the tasks allotted by senior management and also the activities area unit well-coordinated and planned (Handy, 1999). From this attitude, the organisational structure may be a formal hierarchy defined by an authoritarian leadership vogue wherever the first focus is on the organisation and its needs; the interaction is barely vertical and information exists at the highest management level (Pindur et al., 1995; Mullins & Christy, 2010). Organisational skills development is supported through these classical management processes since they concentrate on up organisational operations, skills, innovation and promote division of tasks.

These processes don't advocate organisational learning, development of worker and intern skills, job satisfaction, social interactions and effective communication among all hierarchy levels that area unit essential for human capacity building. The management method in trendy organisations is defined by their open systems (Analoui, 1999, 2007) thought of a circular continuous cycle consisting of individuals operating in teams going to reach specific objectives and specializing in human relations or behaviours and social desires (Pindur et al., 1995; Mullins & Christy, 2010). Workers perform higher and area unit additional glad once they area unit treated by senior managers as individuals, and once their innovative ideas area unit taken into consideration and inspired by the senior managers (Kakabadse et al., 1988). The open system is an additional rife (Analoui, 1999) in trendy organisations, and it involves a casual structure wherever tasks area unit non-

monotonous, information exists in the least levels of the organisation, and interaction among workers is dominant (Pindur et al., 1995). Communication may be formal and informal. Therefore, informal communication encourages completely different departments and hierarchy levels to move additional simply and share information, and it's particularly helpful for team building (Analouei, 1999). Organisations may be informal and versatile, therefore defined by additional economical communication and somewhat indeterminate relationships (Mullins & Christy, 2010). Human capability building is principally increased by encouraging the participation of workers in deciding and by maintaining close relationships with the staff (Pindur et al., 1995).

Senior managers in trendy organisations advocate human capacity building through the event of employees' skilled skills and promotion of cooperation (Pindur et al., 1995). This can be increased through the applied leadership style that is taken into account democratic and hence the facility is additionally widespread (Mullins & Christy, 2010). The task culture is generally incorporated in trendy management organisations that sponsor modification and adaptation; defined by a team culture wherever a worker will exercise additional management over his work and acquire additional information, skills and skill (Handy, 1999). Expertness, respect and smart relationships thrive during this style of culture (Handy, 1999). Effective communication and training from the senior managers to their subordinates will promote information sharing, organisational learning, and effective leadership capability building (Roddy, 2004).

Continuous feedback and performance appraisal by senior managers are necessary for the employees' performance sweetening and motivation (Keegan & Hartog, 2004).

Whilst the above characterises the intense position for the organisations and their effort and contribution to capability development, nonetheless, they'll give a classification for higher understanding of the International practice Organisation position and philosophy to worker management and its capacity building as a whole, so a worker might be competent within the near future.

## **2.7 TYPES OF CAPACITY**

In the field of public administration, modification sometimes involves developing four sorts of capacity: human, organisational, structural, and material. Human capability includes

both the understanding (knowledge, skills and experience) and the will (interest, patience, and persistence) to implement required changes.

### **2.7.1 Types of capacity building or skills development**

Based on the literature review, Harsh and her colleagues at the Appalachian Regional Comprehensive Center (ARCC) identified four stages of capability building: exploration, rising implementation, full implementation and sustainability. These are mentioned below.

#### *2.7.1.1 Search*

In this stage, key actors determine the necessity for amendment, confirm the required capability, and determine the data, skills, structures and processes that require to be in situ to attain the required capability. A crucial task throughout this stage is to gauge the present capability of the organisation, presumably together with employees' skills, variety of employees, computer and alternative systems, infrastructure, and alternative resources. The capability gap is that the distinction between existing capability and required capability (McKinsey & Company, 2001).

#### *2.7.1.2 Emerging execution*

This stage may be summarised in three steps: (1) organisation's workers participate in activities; (2) the staff build new data, update technological or physical infrastructure, increase resources or learn to use obtainable resources additional efficiently; and (3) the staff apply their new data and apply new systems (Milèn, 2001).

#### *2.7.1.3 Complete implementation*

The stage includes the mixing of the new data and skills and therefore the refinement of practices based on the analysis of the changes. At this stage, evaluations of the capability building activities will facilitate interns to tell key actors on the innovation's impact and consequences. Also, there may be a requirement to switch the approach or changes may have to be created to the main focus of capability building activities to completely result in desired changes (Wing, 2004).

#### *2.7.1.4 Maintenance*

The last stage is about the dependable use of advanced skills and practices. Also, the organisation exhibits the capability and skill to analyse and modify practices for incessant expansion and any required refinement of the innovation (Hall & Hord, 2005).

### **2.8 CONCLUSION**

The chapter provided a theoretical framework in line with skills development, capacity building and human resources development. Therefore, for relevant purposes, the chapter adopted a Human Capital Theory that focuses more on human resources development and how organisations can develop and capacitate their employees to be competent in the near future. The next chapter focuses on the nature of internship programme and skills development in public institutions, using the information obtained from distinguished readily available material like journals, academic books and other government reports dealing with the nature of internship programme and skills development in public institutions.

## **CHAPTER 3: THE NATURE OF INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The chapter conceptualises the literature of different scholars, academics and professionals on skills development and capability building. The conceptualisation permits for the analysis to remove the character of place programme and skills development in public institutions, the link between place programme and skills development in South Africa, and therefore the impact of internships on skills development. Further, the chapter highlights the challenges and opportunities of an internship programme and, lastly, discusses legislation and policy framework concerning an internship programme in South Africa. To this end, varied scholars and academics have different perceptions about the character of an internship programme and skills development in public establishments. Public institutions are underpinned by an analogous legislative framework and therefore the distinction may be how such legislations are executed.

### **3.2 THE NATURE OF INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS**

As explained by the cabinet of South Africa nineteen years ago, an internship could be a government graduate work expertise programme mainly meant for graduates without job experience. The internship provides students work experience or a chance to follow the work skills that they have studied and can follow in future. Internships of various sorts are common in fields including public administration, medicine, social work, media and communication, Law and engineering. Internship within the public service could be an organised, structured, and coordinated programme that gives work expertise for a selected period from twelve to twenty-four months. A chosen mentor could support an intern within the government space. In South Africa, an internship could be a sensible programme to help with the continual development of individuals for a future appointment within the labour market. It is directed at youngsters who are finishing their studies or have finished tertiary programmes and are job hunting (Snell, 1996).

According to Olson (1993), an internship also can profit the leader who has a chance to induce to grasp the intern and to ascertain whether or not the intern can find a job in the organisation. Through fastidiously elite sensible work assignments, internships enable the intern to return to a much better understanding of the general public service, its values and work ethic, and also the opportunities it offers. This internship incorporates a guideline document that is meant to strengthen the advancement of graduate internships. Therefore, an internship could be a programme initiated and facilitated by all government departments for unemployed graduates.

The guideline does not necessarily cover student internships. This can be as a result of student interns are still enrolled with education establishments and can't be outlined as unemployed job searchers. Student internships revolves around agreements between departments, education establishments and also the student interns in question. These agreements can take issue counting on the work experience nominative by the higher education establishment for a student to fulfil the requirements of their programme. South Africa is confronted with a significant downside of unemployment particularly among females and the people between 18-35 years. Whereas jobs aren't being availed as fast as possible, the matter of unemployment is exacerbated by an absence of skills and formal work expertise. Also, education establishments don't seem to prepare students adequately for the world of labour. So the government have to be compelled to reduce the increasing unemployment among young graduates and grant them with opportunities like internships to realise sensible work expertise (Driscoll, 2006).

In 2002 cabinet of the Republic of South Africa recommended the Human Resource Development (HRD) Strategy for the general public Service, including an internship Framework and a Scarce Skills Strategy. The framework seeks to ascertain an {efficient|a good} and efficient internship programme geared toward bridging the gap between educational study and competent performance within the workplace by providing structured internship opportunities to graduates and unemployed youths which will modify them to realise sensible work expertise over a minimum of twelve months. The National Human Resource Development Strategy and the National Skills Development Strategy inform the HRD Strategy for the general public Service. These ways introduce internships

as a mechanism to deal with the skills shortage and unemployment in South African public institutions. However, the cabinet set that over five years, the number of young people concerned in internship and learnership programme ought to reach 5-hitter of the establishment of government departments (Driscoll, 2006).

As the biggest sole leader within the country, the general public service stands to realize directly by raising the standard of the skills pool from that it will draw future staff. Positive internship experiences also will facilitate forming a cadre of driven, service-orientated potential public sector staff. An internship programme isn't a learnership. It doesn't result in a proper qualification. It's a work-based mostly based programme and culminates in an exceeding confirmation in writing indicating the work areas to that the intern was exposed. However, a number of the goals of the internship programme are to get rid of the general shortage of qualified and delicate individuals within the workforce by stressing graduates to equip themselves through mandatory sensible expertise. To help in meeting the strategic staffing desires of the general public service by giving sensible and accelerated work expertise programme that familiarise interns to specific occupations (Kensinger & Muller, 2006).

Furthermore, the internship programme aims to supply job hunting graduates with valuable work expertise and skills to reinforce their employability. Whereas on the opposite aspect internships are designed to deal with the matter of youth unemployment, particularly tertiary (university and technikons) graduates by providing them with work expertise opportunities within the public service (Petkewich, 2005). Also, internships offer opportunities to realize some sensible expertise for college students who are needed to try and do practical work experience to earn credits towards a qualification. Such students are from numerous fields like engineering, agriculture and Human Resources, particularly at Technikons. Internships also are enforced to make meaningful contribution to accelerated service delivery by the government through the improved introduction of delicate personnel within the public service, additionally as to improve equitable access to public sector employment for poor and marginalised groups like females and people living with disability (Zondo, 2004).

Amongst alternative reasons, internships also are introduced to extend exposure among students of job and career opportunities in government (World Bank, 2002). User's Guide to poorness and Social Impact Analysis. The targeted groups are unemployed South African graduates (between 18-35 years) from education establishments who have finished their tertiary courses. Unemployed graduates who haven't been exposed to work experience associated with the realm of study that they have completed. The above two groups are the most meant target of the programme and should be noted as graduate interns. They need to be distinguished from student interns who are presently learning at a higher education establishment and are required to complete a period of internship to satisfy the requirements of the qualification that they're learning (Woolard, 1999). Post completing the internship, it's acceptable to produce the intern with a testimonial letter emphasising that the intern has completed the internship programme and additionally indicating the talents and sections that the beneficiary was exposed to. A certificate mustn't be provided since the internship isn't a properly accredited and recognised qualification. The internship aims to add value to the qualifications of interns so they will more simply get employment. Interns might not be given more than one internship in a department. To forestall this they need to be registered on PERSAL. In theory, an intern could also be accepted to another completely different internship in a different department if the structure and the experiential opportunities are not the same. Usually, departments don't guarantee interns vacancies on completion of the programme. All contracts with interns should spell out that it is not compulsory that an intern is appointed to a post within the department within which they're hosted as an intern. In cases wherever there are vacant posts, interns ought to be invited to apply. Their applications ought to receive identical treatment just like others and the best person ought to be recommended for the post (World Bank, 2002).

Internships are a part of a model that incorporates a distinctive vision of academic success within which standardised tests, subject-based courses and textbook learning are avoided and replaced with authentic, competence and performance-based components and measures of their education (Hendrie, 2004; Toch, 2003). Throughout the internship, interns are paired with a mentoring adult or onsite supervisor within the organisation or public establishments wherever they're interning.

The mentor or supervisor collaborates with interns on their internships, fastidiously monitors their work, coaches, counsels, guides and evaluates them on an ongoing basis. Mentors and supervisors are a part of a network in situ to help and nurture interns.

Interns ought to achieve success in their internship experiences and their mentors or supervisors work diligently to make sure their success (Toch, 2003).

Internship directors, career-education coordinators, or mentors have the responsibility to conduct website} visitations at the internship site wherever an intern is placed. To watch and supply current progress reports of their work (Marczely, 1982). Students maintain a log within which they record internship activities. A mid-internship analysis is commonly created to assess the intern's progress. The internship includes a spread of sensible, sound and authentic academic experiences that emphasise real work and independent activities (Hendrie, 2004; Littke, 2004).

Internships are often used as an education tool. Graduates are utilized as interns and receive on-the-job, one-on-one, sensible coaching in active learning experiences. They work with and learn from delicate professionals in an exceedingly work setting, which provides them opportunities to go together with the individuals and the resources which will build work real (Littke, 2004). Job-site professionals offer interns assignments and responsibilities to serve as assistants. Students are exposed to work environments, norms of the work, work expectations and obligations (Wynn, 2003). Students participate in conferences and acquire a condole with what workdays are like in their field of interest. Internships are a kind of academic programme which will be accustomed to wean graduates away from ancient lecture rooms (D'Andrea, 2005), and connect graduates with learning environments off school-campus grounds, away from lecture rooms and textbooks. They supply different structured environments locations, sites or settings.

### **3.2.1 The traits of internship programme in public institutions**

Scholars who write about internships put attention on specific elements of the programme that are examined on their own merits or concerning outcomes such as employability or career satisfaction. This section outlines the characteristics of internships.

### *3.2.1.1 Compensation*

In the context of South African public institutions, paid internships are unremarkably offered to graduates in several fields across the country, and therefore the issue of compensation has long been disputable within the field. Issues of graduates' economic standing are crucial regarding internship pay since low-income graduates are unlikely to be ready to afford the time far from paid labour to interact in unpaid internships, or the extra expenses of required travel and accommodation (Divine, Linrud, Miller & Wilson, 2007). In terms of previous studies, students have discovered the vital edges of internships like career development and student satisfaction. Therefore, interns publically in public also are driven by the regular payment. On that note, the author supports the notion that interns should still be paid. What is more, graduates wouldn't have any interest to participate in the programme if there was no monthly stipend.

### *3.2.1.2 Mentor character and responsibilities*

What is significant in perceived internship quality and effectualness is that the behaviour of job-site supervisors. High-quality mentoring as measured by factors like careful screening, project definition, and matching interns to applicable work, is completely related to whether or not interns got interested in permanent employment. Also, supervisor support completely impacts students' satisfaction with the office expertise, and it was completely related to job pursuit, satisfaction and career development. McHugh (2016) highlights that organisations and also the supervisors who settle for internship placements have to be compelled to be cognizant that interns need, and sure expect, the next level of supervisory engagement. Thus, if a corporation wishes to retain interns as full-time workers or intends to supply satisfying learning expertise for graduates, it's urged that they ought to make sure that interns' supervisor are well-capacitated and supply a purposeful expertise.

### *3.2.1.3 self-governing of interns*

Another side of internship style that researchers have examined is that the degree of authority and autonomy graduates have within the work. One of the key aspects of student satisfaction in an internship is autonomy, and larger freedom to style and perform tasks

is related to magnified work learning and career crystallisation. What is more, intern autonomy foreseen job satisfaction and interest in accepting a regular position in a retail setting? However, it's discovered that there's no relationship between autonomy and job satisfaction, resulting in speculation that an excessive amount of autonomy could be a risk as several graduate interns are unaccustomed to skilled work tasks and expectations (Murphy, Merritt & Gibbons, 2013).

### **3.3 PRINCIPLES OF THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME**

Amongst other things, for the internship programme to be a success and cost-effective it should prioritise the following elements.

#### **3.3.1 Be objective**

According to Chinomona and Surujlal (2012), the programme ought to give applicable and relevant work expertise proportionate with the intern's qualification. The programme should be aligned with human resource designing. Posts known for the internship programme should contribute to the strategic staffing needs of the department involved. Interns shouldn't be recruited to exchange permanent staff. The internship programme ought to be formed and managed to mirror the actual situations of the host department (White, 2004).

#### **3.3.2 Promotion of equity**

White (2004) states that the programme ought to build inclusivity by broadening admittance and chance for individuals from various backgrounds (poor and rich). Interns should be chosen based on the requirement for demographic illustration and regarding equity legislation. Clear enlisting and selection policy procedures and systems should be adhered to. Internships ought to be structured, work-based programme.

#### **3.3.3 Be in the right state**

The internship programme ought to take beneath thought the department's capability to suit interns in terms of the budget, mentorship capabilities and physical assets along with working environment space and working equipment like computers. There got to be tutors to bolster the interns and a sustaining climate. Departments ought to make sensible endeavours to suit and include interns into the culture of the division. There ought to be appraisal forms to bolster the internship programme. The department's Human Resource

(HR) structures and resources ought to accommodate internships. Especially, the coaching or learnership committees ought to help within the internship programme. Successful and adjuvant administration is vital for the programme to function. A framework for observation, assessing and supporting the programme ought to be put in place (Verma, 2012).

### **3.3.4 Unity**

The programme should encourage the idea of working together with other higher education departments and institutions to increase understanding of public service internship programmes. The plan should allow trainees to better understand the civil service system, its values, professional ethics and opportunities. Therefore, the internship program should be able to benefit from it, because in the end, both parties (Trainees and government agencies) need to achieve its goals. For example, interns should be able to point out the skills and knowledge they acquired during the internship, while the department should be able to know the impact of the interns on the department. (Varma, 2000).

### **3.3.5 Prerequisites for any internship programme**

A well-designed internship program should include observable, planned, chosen, organized, and controlled realistic job assignments (Valler & Wood, 2010). The internship program should be designed to include an orientation for interns as well as straightforward substantive work that includes work assignments that can be done on schedule so that the intern can obtain the most experience possible. Other obligations that interns may have during the internship time should be considered. A well-defined timetable (for example 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018). Also, any internship should provide seminars for interns to allow for in-depth learning on specific topics (UNESCAP, 2010).

Furthermore, internships must have interactions with interns and mentors (both as a collective and individually with mentors) so that the mentor can review the intern's success with that intern. The software must be designed to take into account the characteristics of the interns who will be enrolled. It should consider the number, level of study, and occupations of the interns, as well as any other important factors. Normal monitoring should be established (a) between the intern and the boss, and (b) between

the supervisor and the training committee. Create performance and appraisal requirements for (a) the curriculum, (b) the managers, (c) the advisors, and (d) the interns. Create a policy for recognizing internship completion. It must have a letter of recommendation (UNESCAP, 2010).

However, each national or regional agency is responsible for hiring interns on its own, under the Department of Public Service and Administration's best practices guidance. The DPSA is in charge of coordinating internships in national offices. The Premier's Office oversees policy in the provinces. In theory, recruiting may be done in collaboration with NGOs, management firms, and the Graduates Development Association (SAGDA) in South Africa (Turok, 1999).

### **3.4 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA**

Any graduate is and has been, faced with the challenge of translating theoretical expertise learned in the classroom into the practical skills needed in a job at some point during their academic careers (Jaschinski & De Villiers, 2008). Most academic programs at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have a mandatory work-integrated learning (WIL) aspect to help students achieve this goal. Experiential learning in the context of internships is one of the aspects in which WIL is applied. The popularity of using internships at work as part of experiential learning has skyrocketed in the last decade. In both the public and private sectors, the importance of graduate experiential learning by internship has been generally recognized and embraced (Surujlal & Singh, 2010).

Scholars laud internships as a way for apprentices and undergraduates to obtain real-world job experience (Jaschinski & De Villiers, 2008), as a practical teaching opportunity for graduates (Hanson, 1984), and as a way for students and graduates to explore long-term desires and ambitions (Jaschinski & De Villiers, 2008). (Watson, 1992). Internships are regarded as a valuable teaching opportunity and a sound pedagogical tool (Cook, Parker & Pettijohn, 2004; Downs, Harper & Hunt, 1976). Internships were used by students and graduates to put what they had learned into practice and to develop new skills, according to Basow and Byrne (1993). Jaschinski and De Villiers (2008), these internships would support the profession while also providing interns with a sense of self-

worth and achievement. Internships have also been used as a stepping stone to higher education (Harvey & Bowers-Brown, 2003). Businesses and research institutions have been under pressure in the past to include internships in their programs as a result of previous events (Bourland-Davis, Graham & Fulmer, 1997).

In light of the growing importance of internships, research on experiential learning and fieldwork training in management-related disciplines has exploded (Surujlal & Mji, 2011). Internships in the travel and tourism industry, for example, provide graduates with the ability to adapt what they've learned in the classroom to a real-world setting, according to analysis (Downey & DeVeau, 1988). Internship study in sports administration has previously been on the rise. (Parks, 1991; Cuneen & Sidwell, 1994; Somerick, 2001; Stratta, 2004; Surujlal & Singh, 2009; Surujlal & Singh, 2010, Surujlal & Mji, 2011). Despite the increasing body of study on sport management internships, there is a gap in knowledge on how graduate internship experience in sport management affects self-improvement and the degree to which internship experience affects professionalism. Indeed, this form of information is needed by both internship advisors and interns to better understand whether internship experience leads to desired outcomes such as student self-improvement and potential job professionalism.

The fact that previous research on sports management internship has largely been subjective is perhaps the most convincing reason for exploring the effect of internship job experience on graduate self-improvement and professionalism in this literature. To the best of the authors' understanding, there has been no research that has looked at the causal association between student internship experience and self-improvement and professionalism. To that point, little is known about the direct impact of graduate internship experience on potential professionalism, as well as the mediating role of self-improvement in this relationship in sport management, particularly in the sense of a developing economy like South Africa. Given how highly regarded the sport is in South Africa, this is both shocking and unfortunate. As a result, in the case of an overlooked background of developing economy sports administration, this gap merits methodological investigation (Chinomona & Surujlal, 2012: 885).

### **3.4.1 Internship work experience**

Internship job experience is gradually being used as a key vehicle for students to make connections between their academic studies and the workplace, as well as to familiarize themselves with the skills needed to be effective in the workplace (Harvey & Bowers-Brown, 2003). Employers prefer candidates with job experience, and there is an increasing pattern in hiring graduates and interns who have completed work placements with businesses (Bennett, Dunne & Carré, 2000). Employers from both big and small businesses believe that job experience helps graduates acquire attractive characteristics, according to studies (Fallows & Steven, 2000). It is projected that about a quarter of graduates who are hired have completed some kind of internship or job experience (Harvey & Bowers-Brown, 2003). The explanation given is that graduates with internship job experience interview best because they have something to speak about and can allude to a perspective on working life that other graduates are unable to do (Cook et al., 2004). Practical job experience is also increasingly becoming an integral characteristic for both staff and future employers. It is argued that a job-based role aims to achieve basic working skills, provides a forgotten overview of workplace culture, supports the efficiency of graduates easily, and offers a wider viewpoint on career growth and management (Chinomona & Surujlal, 2012).

Job experience gained through an internship is valuable or important to a student's potential career growth (Harvey, 2003). As a learning instrument, it continues to be more useful and efficient in assisting professional growth planning and improving job opportunities. Furthermore, it is easier for interns to focus on and identify what has been taught if the learning from internship job experience is organized and intentional from the start (Harvey, Locke & Morey, 2002). This can be accomplished by the use of learning contracts that specify particular objectives. Employers, researchers, and students must all be committed to and thoroughly mindful of the ramifications of work experience to ensure that it is of high quality (Fallows & Steven, 2000). Planning and accountability for results must be shared, which necessitates providing adequate, well-trained, and compassionate oversight (Cook et al., 2004). Prior recruitment and briefing, as well as

the intern's ongoing reflection, debriefing, and recognition of results, all improve the consistency of the job environment (Jaschinski & De Villiers, 2008).

One of the most important goals of an internship is to facilitate a seamless transition from college to the job (Coco, 2000). An internship programme allows participants to put their skills, values, and behaviours about particular job activities or career paths to the test (Howery, 1983). They permit students to bridge the space between abstract classroom theory and real-world application (Zopiatis, 2007). Graduates are allowed to adapt what they have learned in conventional classroom environments to the working world, gaining a pragmatic perspective on job issues. Also, an internship program will strengthen professional abilities, develop analytical skills, and, most notably, promote an understanding of the ongoing need for adaptability and innovation in a changing environment (Chen, Wang & Chen, 2011).

According to Nse (2012), all hands must be on deck for students to be properly prepared with the skills and expertise needed for productivity in the workplace. Most graduates in different fields of study are always hesitant to face the reality of the workplace until they have completed some kind of internship or training. Fresh graduates in any technical discipline are not prepared to work productively until they have completed an internship program (Rahman, Kahtun & Mezbah-ul-Islam, 2008). In their research of library education, Rahman, Kahtun, and Mezbah-ul-Islam (2008) emphasized the importance of tertiary institutions ensuring that their graduates had realistic experience before accepting professional roles. They also believe that public and private institutions of all types should hire and educate recent graduates as interns for their benefit as well as the advancement of different careers.

It is impossible to overstate the importance of practical experience for graduates of different fields. It offers graduates more insight into the real world of their occupation, allowing them to make more career decisions, as well as providing potential employers with information about the various fields of graduate interest within public and private institutions. Internships, according to Chambers (2015), encourage graduates from various careers and degree programs to serve in real-world environments while being supervised by professional mentors. This allows them to explore job opportunities while

also providing prospective employers with useful insight into the intern's desires. Furthermore, the need for graduate internships in public institutions stems from the fact that most graduates have not been introduced to fundamental practical values instilled in workplaces in service delivery. Educators around the world are often chastised for sending graduates to work that are unable to succeed on the job right away (Okello-Obura & Kigongo-Bukenya, 2011). On that note, graduates must complete an internship program to gain job experience in various institutions in South Africa.

According to Ugwuanyi and Ezeama (2010), the implementation of internship programs into public institutions has made it necessary for future professionals in public institutions to have the skills necessary to perform efficiently in the workplace. This can be accomplished by gaining industrial teaching skills. Graduates may familiarize themselves with and gain experience operating equipment and machinery that are often not present in their tertiary institutions via this program (Nse, 2012). Supervisors play an important part in the development of functional knowledge of graduates (Chambers, 2015). According to the same author, the supervisor is required to assist in determining the suitability of the graduate's academic and competence experience for the internship. As a result, the boss cannot succeed without the help of other administrators and subordinates who are involved in a professional learning curriculum that fills the gaps between theory and experience.

### **3.4.2 Graduate self-Improvement**

Internships have been found in studies to help students develop trust in their ability to pursue work after graduation (Cook et al., 2004). Students who complete an internship may feel more secure in their job search. Furthermore, internships benefit graduates because they gain realistic business exposure in addition to their college qualifications and can share their newly acquired talents with interview committees.

Industry practitioners believe that graduates who enrol in an internship program become more marketable than their peers who have not participated in an internship program, according to Petrillose and Montgomery (1998). Internships will also help you develop individuality and ambition (Ju, 1997). Interns rated themselves higher in self-efficacy and ability growth as their internships progressed, but they ranked themselves lower in fear,

according to Herrick (1987). Internships are successful in promoting and inspiring learners in their career growth, according to these results. As a result, graduates must gain real-world exposure in different careers and fields of study while still in school to provide reasonable views of their potential career prospects.

Working part-time and gaining exposure improves graduates' job preparation and trains them for more flexible and diverse employment. Internship participants are required to become experts, generalists, self-sufficient, and professionals. An internship helps graduates to test job options in a practical and real-world environment, as well as see if they are a good match for a specific department (Kapoor, 2000; Waryszak, 1999). It's a great way to learn transferable skills as well as the basic detailed experience needed in today's workplace (Busby, 2003). The internship is a chance to get hands-on experience with a wide variety of activities within an organization (Crossley, Jamieson & Brayley, 2007). Internships also provide graduates with experience under the guidance of both academics and practitioners. This supervision helps students to develop interpersonal skills with public institutions and staff while still having the opportunity to earn income (Thiel & Hartley, 1997). Interns are always required to have a lot of commitments during their internship (Beggs, Ross & Knapp, 2006; Stratta, 2004).

### **3.5 THE IMPACT OF INTERNSHIPS ON SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**

Internships offer invaluable experience and have the potential to transform interns' lives. Internships will help learners become more mature and develop their self-confidence and self-concept. They benefit both interns and the organizations that have them.

Internships should be focused on places where graduates may do volunteer or social-action work. They also help graduates improve their academic resumes for college applications, give them a head start on internships they could do after graduation, and help them choose a post-graduate major subject, especially for those who still want to pursue their studies. D'Andrea, 2005; Greifner, 2007; Littke, 2004) state that this lets interns prepare for their careers and transition to the future workforce.

Almost every graduate will find an internship program that will excite and inspire them. Internships increase intern engagement, allowing them to take the lead in their career growth. For certain graduates, internships are a way to improve their career performance.

They're a great way to pique interns' curiosity in the workplace and make studying more meaningful (Cavanaugh, 2004; Littke, 2004; Toch, 2003).

Internships allow graduates to investigate different job options, areas of interest, and potential career opportunities. Internships help interns form partnerships with specialists in areas that are of particular importance to them. Internships enable students to try out particular occupations or styles of roles, as well as orientate and test occupational fields of interest and possible future careers. Internships help graduates discover, explain, build, and affirm career ambitions and professional expectations, as well as validate career path opportunities. Female graduates, in particular, benefit from internships because they enable them to pursue non-traditional career areas.

Internships will help interns develop their career preparation skills, as well as their potential work opportunities and starting salaries.

Internships offer useful learning opportunities and related workplace knowledge to interns (Haimson & Bellotti, 2001).

Internships will be a part of a nontraditional high school curriculum that helps students who struggle in regular classes (Vladero, 2006).

To provide internships for economically vulnerable graduates, several internship programs have been established and created. Internships for inner-city career seekers are beneficial for modelling adult workplace achievement and attracting young people to long-term, advancement-oriented work (Committee for Economic Development, 1997; Petkewich, 2005). Internships help men find work after they graduate from college and reduce their times of unemployment (Neumark & Rothstein, 2005). Internships also have a positive impact on women's wages (Neumark & Rothstein, 2005). Internships, career shadowing, and mentoring are the most beneficial to-work programs, according to interns (Larson & Vandergrift, 2000).

Internships, according to Furco (1996), have been regarded by various scholars as providing a variety of opportunities to graduate interns. They involve the intern in-service events mainly to give them hands-on training that can help them learn or appreciate topics related to a specific field of research, such as public administration. They support the

intern in bridging the difference between formal learning and realistic use (Furco, 1996; Lam & Ching, 2007). Internships, according to McMahon and Quinn (1995), are supervised job environments in which interns are tightly supervised. While research has been conducted to emphasize the relevance of appropriate clinical experience for students (Mounce, Mauldin, & Braun, 2004), the impact of these internships on the intern's ability to translate field practice into real job interaction requires further investigation (Beard & Morton, 1999).

The internship programme makes a major and meaningful contribution to graduates' knowledge base and motivational degree (Beard, 1998). An internship connection is one of the easiest ways to practice outside of the classroom (Burnett, 2003). Several reports have documented the advantages of internship programs in traditional colleges and universities on the basis for providing attachments as part of the academic curriculum to the traditional student who is at most graduating from high school. Improved job path, professional knowledge (Lubbers, 2001), graduate marketability (Swift & Kent, 1999; Hyman-Parker, 1998), leadership abilities (Beard and Morton, 1999), and comprehension of classroom learning theories are all additional advantages (Cook et al., 2004; Hyman-Parker, 1998). Unlike traditional student interns, however, the ODL intern is often a seasoned employee who has already made up his or her mind on a career path. Scott (1992) goes on to say that an internship is a perfect place for graduates to learn about the suitability of a given career.

Interns proposed in the work of Nevett (1985) that attachments bridged the divide between classroom theory and the real world. Internships, moreover, are viewed as a beneficial way to gain diverse competencies, as the practical experience gained reinforces and complements the academic studies taught in the classes (Mihail, 2006). Internship attachments have been shown to improve academic success in a variety of disciplines, according to Knechel and Snowball (1987).

Various scholars, on the other hand, give other interesting advantages to interns in general. Internships are effective in socializing interns through job preparation and teamwork assignments (Lubbers, 2008). Interns have successfully improved their abilities in areas such as information technology, time management, leadership skills,

coordination, expert experience, and the capacity to delegate assignments, according to Mihail (2006). An internship, according to Cannon and Arnold (1998), will lead to permanent jobs as well as provide an in-depth view of the actual market activity. Students expect to be compensated financially and handled as normal workers (Hall et al., 1995). Knechel and Snowball (1987) found, however, that the internship improved the interns' comprehension of material in their fields of study.

### **3.5.1 Professionalism**

According to Harvey et al. (2002), rather than the job experience itself, it is the learning that comes from it that is essential and valuable. In this respect, it is more important for interns to understand and adapt what they learn in their internship job experience in the future than it is for them to simply participate. As a result, an internship provides graduates with the ability and learning environment to participate in clinical practice events that are closely related to the implementation of expertise (Beggs, Ross & Goodwin, 2008). Similarly, Jaschinski and De Villiers (2008) argue that internships provide graduates with more opportunities to pursue potential jobs, develop a better understanding of specifics, and begin dreaming about their future careers based on their internship experiences.

To put it another way, an internship offers interns a professional basis for fulfilling workplace roles and obligations (Scannel & Simpson, 1996; Harvey et al., 2002). To this degree, graduates are given the chance to consult with experts in their professions and see firsthand the procedures of the fields they are considering for prospective careers (Cook et al., 2004), all while gaining professional knowledge of how things are handled in the workplace (Cook et al., 2004). In general, according to Cook et al. (2004), internship job encounters enhance many students' professional ability to get along with several various individuals in work settings and how to handle appropriately deferent difficulties encountered on a day-to-day basis at the workplace.

### **3.5.2 Graduate internship work experience and professionalism**

The graduate internship allows the intern to learn by practising and be mentored by a seasoned practitioner (Clark & Whitelegg, 1998). The graduate knows firsthand about clinical practice practices that are closely related to the development of expertise when being mentored (Beggs et al., 2008). The intern knows not only how to address the day-

to-day duties of a career in their chosen sector, but also how to deal with unpleasant circumstances that can happen at almost any job. As a result, the intern gains a technical aptitude for carrying out roles and tasks at work, which can prove useful in potential permanent jobs. The more internship job experience an intern has, the more likely it is that the intern can learn to perform roles and tasks at a workplace properly in the future. As a result, internship job experience has a major positive impact on interns' potential professionalism in a variety of fields (Chinomona & Surujlal, 2012).

### **3.5.3 Student work experience through internship and self-improvement**

Since internship job experience is increasingly used as a significant vehicle for students to make connections between their academic studies and the world of work, they should expect to progress as they get more familiar with the skills needed to be effective in the workplace (Harvey & Bowers-Brown, 2003). Internship job experience becomes a more valuable and fruitful learning opportunity in this respect, assisting a student's personal and professional progress (Harvey, 2003). Because of their realistic practice, graduates with internship job experience are more self-assured, have higher levels of self-efficacy, and capacity growth (Harvey et al., 2002; Ju, 1997; Petrillose & Montgomery, 1998; Cook et al., 2004).

As a result, it is anticipated that as a graduate completing an internship in a specific area of study (public administration), the intern will gain work experience that will help him acquire realistic professional skills and thereby increase individual success at work. Ideally, the more internship job experience a student obtains, the more self-improvement the student can achieve. As a result of the theoretical rationale, the report concludes that internship job experience has a substantial positive impact on interns' professional self-improvement (Chinomona & Surujlal, 2012).

### **3.5.4 Self-improvement and professionalism**

An intern's self-improvement gained during an internship is likely to lead to the intern taking an active role in the implementation of his or her associated responsibilities (Scannel & Simpson, 1996; Crossley et al., 2007). Furthermore, an intern's self-improvement can demonstrate a deeper understanding of information relevant to the

performance of his or her job duties, or vice versa. A greater understanding of facts may also indicate that an intern respects the discipline required for the work (Beggs et al., 2006; Stratta, 2004). As a result, it is assumed that as an intern improves himself or herself when doing an internship in either field, he or she can also develop a positive professional attitude and behaviour at work that can be replicated in potential permanent jobs. Supposedly, the more self-improvement a student gains through an internship, the higher the potential possible professionalism at work. As a result of the psychological rationale, research suggests that an intern's self-improvement has a direct positive impact on their technical professionalism.

### **3.5.5 Willingness to work**

The principle of job readiness is derived from the marketing literature's philosophical structure of customer readiness (Bowen, 1986; Meuter, Bitner, Ostrom, & Brown, 2005), and has theoretical roots of organizational philosophy (Vroom, 1964). The thesis incorporates the consumer preparation principle (Bowen, 1986; Meuter et al., 2005) into the internship sense to achieve this goal. Job readiness is described in the analysis as a situation or state in which an intern is prepared and likely to find work. Role clarity, inspiration, and ability are the three foundations of work preparation. This study aimed to provide a unified understanding of the influences that affected interns' employability opportunities as a result of their internship. It decided to do so by introducing the idea of job preparation. Graduates may obtain job experience when developing their generic and specialized skills through the internship program. The author points to skills such as basic academic skills (listening and speaking), higher-order thinking skills (reasoning and creativity), leadership and teamwork skills, and personal traits and behaviours when discussing job skills or employability skills (self-esteem, motivation and responsibility).

Graduates gain a new appreciation of their health in a particular industry field or career profile as a result of their experience in an internship program. As a consequence, their desire to serve in a particular form of organization or sector might be reinforced or strengthened (Varghese, Parker, Adedokun, Shively, Burgess, Childres & Bessenbacher, 2012). As a result, a student's sincere interest in business practice or domain can be seen as an inherent incentive that drives their success and enhances their overall job

experience. Good emotions of pleasure towards colleagues, managers, and the job itself, according to existing literature (Cho, 2006; Knouse and Fontenot, 2008), are incentives that greatly inspire interns to make the best of their time throughout the internship program. When clear expectations of intern assignments, roles, and outcomes are established (Knouse and Fontenot, 2008; Rothman, 2007), as well as clear expectations of employers' tacit and explicit obligations (Hurst, Well, & Gardner, 2012), internships are likely to be more successful. According to the same researchers, an intern's progress is linked to their supervisors' and mentors' encouragement, support, and input.

Major internship outcomes, for example, are investigated in terms of interns' social and personality development, as Franks and Oliver (2012) noted in their analysis that internships offer multiple opportunities for interns to improve their personal and professional development. The benefits of an internship on personal growth, according to Hurst, Thye, and Wise (2014), include job range, professional contacts, business insight, teamwork, and exposure to real-world challenges.

### **3.5.6 Career selection during internships**

Graduates learn the diverse domains of technical job settings when performing in a practical context. They would be able to locate a field of specialization. They will choose between marketing, which includes advertisement, branding, and sales-related activities, and human resources management, which includes training and growth, hiring, and pay management. Similarly, by choosing Finance as their main discipline, they will be able to pursue careers in auditing, accounting, taxation, and other similar fields. Internships help students learn and choose a career path.

Internships have become the most common tool among universities and the public sector, according to Levine and Guy (2007). Internships as activity-based learning project, according to Gault, Leach, and Duey (2010), are effectively an open door that employers provide to students who are interested in gaining job experience in particular industries. An intern is a person who works for a company for a certain amount of time, usually one or two years. A few interns may get a low-maintenance internship, where they only work at the company for a few days or hours per week. Internships, according to Gault et al. (2010), provide students with a unique opportunity to serve in fields of their choice. They

point out how their field of study relates to real-world problems, and this realistic knowledge makes them more attractive candidates for post-graduation job openings.

### **3.5.7 Teamwork Skills**

According to the teamwork principle, teamwork in a skilled work environment improves organizational success while also benefiting workers by information sharing and strong relationships among team members (Betty & Brian, 1997). Because of the advantages, Reeves, Lewin, Espin, and Zwarenstein (2010) suggest a coordination model further our understanding of this capability. The model was tweaked and optimized to suit the needs of this study. There are four major domains in this model: hierarchical, processual, operational, and contextual, all of which are interrelated.

On that note, the first relational domain includes variables such as professional strength, hierarchy, socialization, team dynamics, team responsibilities, and team processes that influence team member relationships (interns and employees). Interns, as young employees, should establish confidence and reverence for their supervisors and coworkers because they have authority and, most importantly, valuable experience. The second processual domain dealt with the effects of time and space on coordination. Time and space, schedules and habits, computer technologies, unpredictability, urgency, difficulty, and role shifting are all considerations in this domain. When a mission is approaching the deadline, team members are more likely to put in more time and effort.

When interns work in groups, they develop a variety of skills that cannot be learned in a traditional classroom setting. They learn to adapt, negotiate, and work along with others. They learn how to create ideas, exchange thoughts, and work as a team during the internship, which will serve as the basis for their potential jobs. Teamwork will help interns improve their presentation abilities, listening skills, strategic thinking skills, and problem-solving skills. Teamwork will also improve self-esteem and confidence.

### **3.5.8 Goal orientation and time management**

Throughout the internship, interns are expected to be goal-oriented. They must schedule tasks in activity-based learning sessions and manage their time accordingly. They won't be able to practice if they can't control their time. Completing projects, writing speeches, maintaining records, and making discoveries are all possible internship activities. Interns

must set different priorities and prepare accordingly to complete these assignments. Much of this is possible if time is well handled. They strategise how to allocate time and calculate how much time is needed to complete a task. Time management is necessary not only for personal growth but also for professional survival.

### **3.5.9 Motivation, confidence and responsibility**

Interns are inspired to serve in organizations by watching mentors and other administrators in action. When advisors or seniors respect them, they become energised and begin to work more consistently and effectively. Interns, on the other hand, gain the courage to accomplish their goals in an organizational environment. Confidence empowers them to complete tasks and apply their abilities. Interns develop a sense of obligation as a result of their motivation and trust. As a result, through an internship, they become aware of their commitments and aspire to do well to fulfil them.

Internship as task-based learning has proved to be a logical way of learning because interns perform better while they are involved in an activity that is divided into exercises. Internships, according to Ranganath (2012), stand out among other methods for learning and instructing, especially in public institutions, when used as an activity-based learning technique. Internships are great ways for learners and interns to groom and grow their personalities since they enable them to become goal-oriented, raise their overall morale level, inspire them, make them punctual and regular, and finally, teach them how to handle their time. Similarly, internship programs, when used as experiential learning, will help graduates improve their skills and progress as individuals (Johari & Bradshaw, 2008; Khalil, 2015; Rothman & Sisman, 2016).

Internships help interns understand how to work in groups, mentor them through job choices, give them hands-on workplace exposure that they wouldn't get in a classroom setting, and offer financial resources so they can meet other goals. Furthermore, Ruggiero and Boehm (2017), Thomas (2016), and Velez and Giner (2015) found similar internship project outcomes. In terms of the effects of an internship, public universities should hold appropriate programs and workshops to help students comprehend the importance of internships. Universities and the public sector must recognize that classroom session are insufficient, and graduates must be exposed to real-world

scenarios to improve problem-solving, crisis management, and accurate decision-making skills. Finally, in their research reports, Weible and McClure (2011) and Ruggiero and Boehm (2017) backed up much of the above-mentioned conclusions.

### **3.5.10 Intern's exposure to communication skills after their internship programme**

The morale of an intern would be boosted by industrial experience. Relational, functional, participatory, excuse-making, and sycophancy are five factors that motivate interns to engage with their teachers, according to previous research (Martin, Myers & Mottet, 1999). Interns attempt to establish a friendship with their supervisor when learning the role assigned for the practical reason for their contact with the supervisor in relational reason. The third explanation is participatory, which refers to an intern's ability to engage in providing their boss with suggestions and opinions. This gesture demonstrates that they are aware of the subject at hand. Meanwhile, interns would be motivated to engage with their boss should they need to offer a reason for unfinished work. The final explanation is sycophancy, which is associated with interns who only interact with their superiors to obtain obedience and attention. A boss with excellent communication skills, on the other hand, may inspire the intern to communicate effectively (Guerrero & Floyd, 2006).

### **3.5.11 Impact on moral and professional ethics**

Since internships are often done in organizations, the model of ethical decision making in organisations is important to the context of this study. As a result, rather than interns, experts in organizations, such as administrators or bosses, are supposed to make decisions. Since the interns are inexperienced learners, they typically depend on their boss to make decisions about them. They will observe the principles and actions that are being applied in the organization even though they are not actively interested in making a decision. Student A, for example, studies the staff's dress code and punctuality to determine the organization's degree of ethical awareness. Furthermore, as Trevino (1986) suggested in her model, organizational cultures play a significant role in influencing an individual's ethical or immoral decision-making. The idea is also supported by research by Nill and Schibrowsky (2005), who find that organizational atmosphere, incentive systems, and perceived moral strength all affect interns' ethical decision-

making. Simultaneously, the reward system functions as a symbol of inspiration in rational decision-making.

### **3.5.12 The nexus between inspiration and student's conduct**

Smith and Hume (2005) have discussed society and ethics, which had become a hot subject in the workplace. To perceive ethical values in the accounting industry, the two writers focus their research on individualism versus collectivism and power distance. They discovered that, in a group society, accountants strive to uphold their subordinates' interests and principles to support the organization, even though it means acting unethically.

### **3.5.13 The connection between organisational culture and student's moral and professional ethics**

The student's spiritual and ethical ethics growth seems to be influenced by the job variety and work climate. Since they are young graduates and supervised, the interns in this study are most likely to behave ethically. Interns' moral and ethical ethics skills would be influenced by an industry that implements job ethics, such as eliminating wrongdoing and having faith and reverence for one another. Both of these issues are connected to the industry's and university's roles in helping interns improve this talent. Before completing industrial school at their respective colleges, interns can take an ethics course (Baker & Comer, 2012). Then, during the internship, they'll be able to distinguish between what's right and what's wrong when it comes to completing assignments. The job experiential program is expected to prepare alumni and interns to become potential public servants with strong spiritual and ethical ethics skills (Varma, 2000).

### **3.5.14 The correlation between job scope and work environment with the intern's critical thinking and problem solving skill**

Critical reasoning and problem-solving abilities are essential decision-making abilities. The consequences of making the wrong decision would affect the organization's success and prestige. If a choice is ethical or immoral is dictated by an individual's thought. In this regard, interns study different appropriate standards for how they can act and treat themselves during their internship program. Any organization, however, has its code of

conduct. On that note, graduates must be subject to ethical requirements to behave responsibly if they are hired anywhere in the immediate future. Interns must be familiarized with rules of ethics by managers and advisors.

### **3.5.15 The relationship between motivation and student's critical thinking and problem solving**

According to the Critical Thinking and Problem Solving Theory, an individual with critical thinking skills can produce exceptional results depending on their mental abilities and prior knowledge experiences. Graduates and interns in all professions need to cultivate this expertise in higher educational settings and public institutions to differentiate themselves from others and to deal with the dramatic changes in today's world (Young, 1992). They can also effectively solve a problem because critical thinking and problem-solving skills are intertwined (Alan & Mohamed, 1997). As a result, during the internship phase, an internship program may be used to inspire graduates from diverse careers to think critically. The boss, for example, would serve as an instructor, instructing interns on how to complete tasks in an organization. The interns will then use what they've heard so far from their boss and coach to figure out how the jobs are handled (Katajavuori, Lindblom-Ylänne, & Hirvonen, 2006). Since objectively focusing on the prior learning experience, the task or challenge may be solved. Students can also be assigned several assignments or roles during their preparation to help them improve their clear thinking skills (Eraut, 2000).

According to Leonard and Kenneth, critical thought and problem-solving abilities are often influenced by human characteristics (1999). They show in their research that adult learning is influenced by psychology to achieve a higher degree of thought. The psychological impact is linked to an intern's enthusiasm, or whether they are excited about learning during their internship. Organisations that inspire their employees to effectively engage in strategic thinking and problem-solving can maximize team success (Sam & Frederick, 2006) and boost employee motivation.

## **3.6 THE POLICY FRAMEWORK PERTAINING TO INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME IN SOUTH AFRICA**

The regulatory framework underpinning the internship programme and skills development in South Africa is discussed below. It is essential to discern that the regulatory framework should always be the prime focus on understanding the significance of implementing a cost-effective internship programme.

### **3.6.1 Public Service Regulation of 2001**

Jobs practices must promote employment equality, justice, quality, and the accomplishment of a democratic public sector, according to the Department of Public Service and Administration (2004). Affirmative action can be used to accelerate the development of a representative and inclusive public sector, as well as to provide direct assistance to those who have historically been marginalized by unfair inequality, allowing them to reach their full potential. Employing policies can maximize versatility, reduce logistical pressures for both the supervisor and the interns, and avoid duplication and inefficiency in general. After the internship period has ended, an executing authority can select interns on a permanent or temporary basis. Furthermore, no one under the age of 18 may be hired by the employer. For procedural purposes, an employer can permit an intern to undergo security clearance only if the duties of the position require it, and the employer must ensure that each intern is presented with a signed contract of employment, which includes the terms and conditions of her or his work, upon appointment.

### **3.6.2 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996**

Strong resource management and workforce growth activities must be cultivated to maximize human capacity, according to Section 195, subsection (h) of the above act. Internships are also one of the workforce growth activities that will assist graduates in acquiring expertise, experience, and preparation that can make them more successful and employable in the future. Furthermore, any public agency must invest in human capital to be more competitive and efficient to achieve the government's day-to-day objectives. Managers in charge of professional acquisition, on the other hand, can still

track and tutor interns so that they can learn new skills through their internship (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996).

### **3.6.3 Internship Policy of 2008 for Office of the Premier in Limpopo Provincial Government**

The program seeks to provide interns with the ability to use the Office of the Premier's workplace mechanism for hiring interns as an engaging learning atmosphere. The policy offers training for newcomers who want to learn skills that can help them find work. Many that have already been harmed by prejudice are now protected. The internship scheme aims to provide them with the opportunity to gain expertise in an internship program. As a result, the policy's other goal is to address the complexities of capacity building in the public sector while also attempting to encourage the transition of workplaces into learning environments. The proposal also lays down the procedures for hiring interns. As a result, intern training should be aligned to the policies of the department of human resources development. The recruiting process must also be by the company's official recruitment and hiring strategy, as well as the Affirmative Action Policy, Employment Equity Agenda, and workplace skills plan. As a result, the office would hire interns at a rate of at least 5% of the total workforce (Internship Policy 2008 for Office of the Premier, 2008).

### **3.6.4 White Paper on Affirmative Action in the Public Service of 1998**

The transformation of the public sector into an integrated and reliable instrument capable of providing equal services to all people and guiding the country's economic and social growth has been one of the most important tasks facing the post-1994 administration. The nation, on the other hand, inherited a public sector that was segregated along racial and gender lines and effectively excluding people with disabilities. In the minds of the majority of South Africans, the public sector lacked authority and prestige. Restoration of authenticity and reputation by the creation of a broadly representative public sector has been seen as critical to the transition process from the start. Affirmative action programs were launched in 1995 to put women from vulnerable and actively discriminated against communities into the administrative centre of government (DPSA, 1997).

Affirmative action is a critical mechanism for meeting the organization's strategic and organizational objectives. It is not something that is done in parallel to other managerial activities. It is stipulated that affirmative action is an integral part of any facet of the organization's organizational activities, not a separate role performed solely by specially assigned employees. To be sure that affirmative action is deeply rooted in departmental management processes and policies, a well-prepared and well-managed policy would be expected (DPSA, 1997).

The affirmative action programmes of national governments and regional governments should be formed and controlled to represent their unique circumstances. However, some common components must be included in the scheme to ensure that the government's affirmative action programs are applied uniformly in the Public Service and that they meet the legislative provisions of the Employment Equity Act. The paragraphs that follow layout the minimum legal standards and provide instructions on how to implement and administer an affirmative action policy (DPSA, 1997).

Since 1995, a regulatory structure has been in effect - through the Constitution and labour laws including the Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995, the Basic Conditions of Jobs Act 75 of 1997, and the Employment Equity Act - that would institutionalize new, democratic, and fair employment policies in both the public and private sectors. Under this regulatory structure, the restructuring of the public sector is taking place. All facets of management, including financial management and budgeting, service delivery, and human resource management and growth, are being comprehensively assessed and revamped, based on the overall vision for a new and democratic Public Service set out in the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service (DPSA, 1997).

The White Paper on Public Service Training and Education, released in July 1997, as well as the White Paper on Managing People in a Transformed Public Service, provide a new structure for human resource growth and management that can ensure an inclusive, representative, and well-skilled public service in the medium and long term. However, it will take time for these steps to produce the desired effects. In the meantime, further steps, such as affirmative action, are required to speed up the transition by offering realistic means of redressing the marginalized status of those communities, such as

indigenous people, women, people with disabilities, and people who have faced the most injustice in the past. As a result, affirmative action is described as the extra measures that must be taken to ensure that those who have traditionally been marginalised will fully benefit from an inclusive work opportunity through internships (DPSA, 1997).

#### *3.6.4.1 Redressing disadvantage*

DPSA (1997) claims that, despite the removal of statutory and other formal barriers to entry and advancement in the public sector since 1994, and the creation of a more equitable employment environment through improved human resource management practices, some people have become so severely disadvantaged that they would need additional assistance to benefit from the system. For example, widespread educational discrimination against black people and barriers to economic mobility have prevented many from obtaining the formal educational credentials and work experience required for entry into and advancement within certain categories of professions, especially technological and managerial positions. The majority of black workers in the federal government services in low-level positions (DPSA, 1997).

Similarly, gender stereotyping has made majority of women working in historically feminine fields like education and health care, with only a few in decision-making roles. The predominance of males at the managerial level has resulted in a society in which male behaviour habits are viewed as the standard, and women frequently find it difficult to be considered as peers by their male counterparts, even though they are well educated and experienced. These issues are exacerbated by a job climate that provides little exceptions to domestic duties, such as child-rearing, which are also largely a female concern. This is why affirmative action is critical in providing opportunities for formerly marginalized communities to work as interns and gain the expertise they need (DPSA, 1997). Prejudice, stereotyping, and a lack of understanding of how to handle disabilities in the workplace appear to limit the hiring of disabled graduates. Most government organizations offer few accommodations for graduates with disabilities. Negative views, inaccessible and hostile workplace conditions, and a lack of preparation and learning resources all make it difficult, if not impossible, for individuals with disabilities to find jobs and succeed in the public sector (DPSA, 1997).

### **3.6.5 South African Qualifications Authority Act 58 of 1995**

The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act establishes a modern structure for education and training in South Africa by establishing a single, comprehensive mechanism for the country's education and training qualifications, as well as the agencies that will ensure that these qualifications are of a high standard. The SAQA Act established mechanisms for ensuring high quality and training in South Africa, as well as a variety of entry, exit, and re-entry points. The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) was created to accomplish this. The NQF establishes a context through which all learning can be quality assured, whether it occurs at school, at work or home, and by whomever, whether young or adult learners. Education and preparation are recognized as separate but equal modes of learning. All education must also be validated by national standards and qualifications. Recognising previous learning (RPL) acknowledges that skills learned outside of the framework of a formal course are similarly deserving of acknowledgement, which goes some way toward redressing the historical disdain for informal learning (Tongco, 2007). The SAQA Act envisions a world in which a person's skills growth continues throughout his or her working life, and it supports the idea of life-long learning for all people. All skills must be regarded as learning outcomes, according to the SAQA Act. These abilities can be learned through the student work experience program. National criteria and qualifications can be used to validate these results. Qualification is made up of criteria, each of which has several smaller components known as credits. Graduates who can demonstrate that they already possess the expertise and experience needed by the requirements and credentials can receive credits without taking a structured course (RPL). Examining the regulatory mechanisms for capability growth (Tom Liou, 2009).

The National Skills Development Plan, Tom Liou's first strategy, outlines skills development goals and contributes to an evolving national human resources development strategy. Within the Current Certification Framework, the National Skills Development Strategy calls for a new method of learning that incorporates formal learning and work experience, resulting in globally recognized credentials that indicate career readiness (NQF). The Human Resource Growth Plan for South Africa, the second

strategy, guarantees that the state's different elements work together to provide opportunities for human development. The aim of South Africa's Human Resource Development Strategy is to ensure that applicable constitutional laws are implemented gradually. The Public Service Human Resource Development Strategy is one of the cornerstones for putting the National Skills Development Strategy and the Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa into action (Tom Liou, 2009).

### **3.6.6 The Human Resource Development Strategy in the Public Service of 2007**

The HRD Strategy in the public sector has a strong goal of ensuring faster service delivery through successful employee and intern management and growth. The National Skills Development Strategy and the Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa, among other things, advise the HRD Strategy for the Public Service. The policy will ensure that the public sector develops a culture of high-quality lifelong learning, in which public servants and interns will gain the expertise, talents, personal qualities, and values that will allow them to deliver results on government policies (Thomas & Harden, 2008). Interns will also be given the training and encouragement they need to grow themselves and others to their full potential, by the demands of the public sector as well as their interests and skills. Employees are often trained and made eligible for assignment to more responsible positions when they become available. Employees and interns at the departmental level would need solid basic skills as well as higher skill levels to promote workplace adaptability. Improved interpersonal, people management, and company management skills would be required of management, as well as the implementation of well-structured Public Service entry-level training programs (internships) and annual skill upgrades for staff and management (Thomas & Harden, 2008).

### **3.7 CONCLUSION**

The chapter addressed a literature review that helped to conceptualize and define the effect of an internship program on capacity acquisition in South African government institutions. The partnership between an internship program and ability growth was also explored in this chapter. The nature of an internship program in public institutions in South Africa was also explored. Finally, the legislation governing the internship program was thoroughly discussed. It is evident from the preceding discussion that an internship

program and capacity creation in South African public institutions are related. As a result, the next chapter continues the literature review, which discusses obstacles and opportunities for internship programs in South African government agencies. The study's final goal is also discussed in the following sections.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The chapter expands on the literature review presented in the preceding sections but principally conceptualises and probes the challenges and opportunities associated with an internship programme. Permitting tertiary graduates to gain experience in a real-world working environment would enable them to apply theoretical knowledge gained during their undergraduate years to relevant, real-world situations (Hughes, 1998). A number of engineering and technology courses at tertiary level have industrial internship courses where undergraduates undergo industrial internship as part of their undergraduate programme practicum. It usually runs in their third or fourth level, if not both (Auburn and Ley, 1993; Foster and Stephenson, 1998). The internship programme is designed to complement their degree programme by providing additional realistic learning opportunities in the workplace. As a result, learning is viewed as a two-way mechanism in which practical experience acquired through internships complements earlier university studies (Little, 2004).

### **4.2 OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME**

Based on the literature discoursed in the next sections, internships offer a comprehensive experience, be it presented as wide-ranging opportunities or daring challenges that are replete with lessons – what one may call experience. These are discussed below, with the opportunities setting the precedence.

#### **4.2.1 Opportunities and benefits of internship programme for graduates**

Public institutions pursue qualified and flexible graduates in an ever-changing complex and highly competitive market climate. Both academic and specialised tertiary institutions must consider the internship programme in this context. Most researchers and professional organisations use the graduate internship programme to combine graduates' theoretical skills with real-world job experiences. Scholars have looked at how internships impact student career growth and progression in recent years. Literature shows very clear

evidence that a number of researchers have established the impact of internship programme (Training, 2011).

Using the internship programme, graduates are allowed to discover how classroom knowledge is applied in the work environment. Since it seems that government institutions tend to hire graduates who have training experience, the internship programme assists students in finding employment earlier. Most academic institutions, in recognition of the importance of internships, have an internship aspect in their academic curricular. Although it has been a mandatory requirement for some university programmes like engineering and education offered by some of the universities in South Africa, for some degrees it has become compulsory (Training, 2011).

The internship programme provides not only crucial benefits to tertiary graduates in terms of career preparation and income (stipend), but also consolidate their self-confidence and self-satisfaction in the long-run. A number of interns of educational administration programme have alluded that the programme is the most important exposure in the process of preparing for educational administration (Fry, Bottoms & O'Neill, 2005; Hess & Kelly, 2005; Milstein & Kruger, 1997). At the same time, interns stated that there is a need to strengthen the internship experience (Fry et al., 2005; Morrison, 2005). Some even suggest that an administrative programme provides graduates with more managerial exposure. Interns should be invited into the pits, given matters to solve, and given the opportunity to learn firsthand what the support staff do on a daily basis.

Internships are referred to by a variety of words in the secondary data. As a result, the terminology used to explain the relationship between learning and work is crucial. To address and define an internship programme, terms like work-related learning, workplace learning, and work-based learning (WBL) have been used. The similarities and differences between these words, however, are not entirely clear (Streumer & Kho, 2006). The industrial internship programme mentioned in the paper of students' views of the internship programme (Renganathan, Karim & Chong Su Li, 2012) is initiated for the graduates to acquire corporate experience, experience acquired in the work environment as opposed to the one the students benefit from at tertiary level. As a result, the term WBL will be used widely to encompass these interactions, and WBL literature will be

included to investigate the value of internship programmes for graduates. In general, an internship programme seeks to combine graduates' lecture hall learning with real-world job experience.

WBL entails a concerted attempt to create a system in which students learn in real-world settings, encouraging them to learn by doing. WBL is based on the idea that reading something will make you forget it, seeing something will make you remember it, and doing something will make you learn it. WBL promotes a more participative, graduate-centered approach that emphasises direct participation, rich learning experiences, and graduate-led sense building (Lee et al., 2000:225).

Allowing graduates to work in the public and private sector will provide an opportunity for the graduates to use the theory they have acquired during their tertiary years (Hughes, 1998). Most engineering and technology courses in the tertiary sector have industrial internship degrees where undergraduates do their practicals industrial attachment in either their third or fourth year (Auburn & Ley, 1993; Foster & Stephenson, 1998). This will complement their courses, as the corporate location will offer more hands-on learning opportunities. As a result, learning is viewed as a two-way process in which practical experience acquired during internships will complement studies completed sooner in tertiary environment (Little, 2004).

Classroom knowledge and experience vary from that acquired through industrial internships. Workplace experience encourages informal or accidental learning, while universities offer formal organised instruction that is also directed by teaching personnel. (Brennan & Little, 1996; Hughes, 1998; Johnson, 2000). Additionally, contributions made in classes are in most cases homogenous for every students whereas, during practice, the experiential setup varies for each tertiary qualification holder (Agarwal & Gupta, 2008). According to Trotskovy and Sabag (2010:5), graduates would also be able to recognise the variations between the conventional learning process in the classroom and the real-design process in the workplace. As a result, when students return to their respective universities in their final year, WBL can lead to a stronger academic understanding (Jackson, 1995).

Participating in internships is thought to improve the marketability of graduates after they have completed their internships, in addition to improving academic comprehension. Graduates with a high degree of academic experience are no longer the only ones in demand on the job market; graduates who can show pivotal abilities necessary for success in the workplace are also in demand (Binks, 1996; Johnson, 2000; Okay & Sahin, 2010). Any of these skills, such as teamwork, oral presentation, and problem-solving abilities, will help graduates find jobs (Mason et al., 2006). Subsequently, when pursuing their academic qualifications at universities, students will acquire these critical skills through internship placements (Semedo, Newman-Ford, Lloyd, & Thomas, 2010; Young, 1995).

Internships will help students build a core of international industrial skills that are now considered necessities, such as communication and time management skills, improved self-confidence, and improved self-motivation, while they are still in university (Gill & Lashine, 2003; Dennis, 1996). Job experience gained through a cooperative programme is a valid way of easing the reality shock of moving from academia to the workforce. (Garavan & Murphy, 2001; Collin & Tynjalla, 2003). Internships help graduates find jobs because they allow them to sharpen their work skills and attributes, concentrate on their career choices, access job sources directly, and even impress potential employers. Consequently, graduates who have completed internships have an advantage of job opportunities than graduates who have not completed internships (Knouse, Tanner & Harris, 1999).

Internships should be seen as a time for educational experimentation, as young people are not supposed to know anything but to continue to learn. Employers should encourage interns to ask questions, receive guidance and encouragement, and absorb input. During an internship, you can make the most of the opportunity for reflection, which is an essential part of professional development. However, the internship experience is more than just a way to learn about different careers.

Throughout the internship, the intern gains faith in their ability to maneuver within and outside of the workplace, as well as skills that they utilise in the long-run. There are also chances to pick up soft skills and have constructive relationships with coworkers. Interns learn to be accountable to others, their jobs, and the organization as a whole in this way. Many interns learn the value of being on time, ensuring good work, meeting deadlines, paying attention to information, and having appropriate supervisor experiences, depending on maturity and experience, all of which are useful skills for securing a position and for advancement in that position. However, the advantages outlined here are of paramount importance for all interns, including those with disabilities. Secondary data indicates that for people aged 18-35, with and without disabilities, job exposure is the important factor of making it in the job market after tertiary education (Benz, Yovanoff & Doren, 1997). Work experiences for young adults with disabilities help them gain work after an internship at a better salary than former classmates who do not have opportunities of such nature. The internship programme seeks to assist the youth make better decisions regarding their career path. Job providers aiming to understand inclusive internship programme should take into account the pros of distinguished group of interns, without excluding interns with disabilities (Colley & Jamison, 1998).

Furthermore, Beth (2014) accentuated that both interns and employers profit from a well assembled internship programme. Interns enhance their work experience, sharpen essential work skills, build their career goals, and create connections that can prove useful during their careers by engaging in these valuable on-the-job learning opportunities. Internships provide employers with a pool of motivated individuals who bring new ideas and innovative thinking to their workplaces. Internships may also be seen as a low-risk way to satisfy an institutions attracting needs. Allowing employers to test potential applicants before making a lifetime hiring decision enhances the decision-making process' effectiveness and increases the chances of a good match.

Internships also offer superior development opportunities for the company's current employees who supervise the internship programme and its interns. In summary, there are many significant benefits of hosting an internship programme in any institution (Office of Disability Employment Policy, 2014).

#### *4.2.1.1 Leadership capacity building pros for personnel*

Internship programmes may also provide current employees who guide or mentor interns with privileges for leadership and management growth. Employers may inspire current employees to broaden their responsibilities and expertise by undertaking new tasks with the help of interns. Pardini (2006), outlined a number of advantages that can arise through coaching interns:

- Personal development by mentoring others
- Being given credit by the employers and colleagues for effort put
- Chances to gain interpersonal skills by sharpening the existing skills
- Chances to concentrate effort outside of interns
- Comprehensive knowledge about other employees
- Foundation and development for managerial positions

#### *4.2.1.2 Creativity and uniqueness*

Diverse experiences in the workplace are valued by employers in today's labour force because they promote creativity and new ideas. Forging a workplace that attracts top talent requires attracting, creating, and retaining workers with a diverse range of experiences and characteristics. On the outside, diversity on the inside means that programme products and policies are open and culturally relevant for a wider range of viewers. Having an inclusive workplace is also an effective strategy for organisational success in the global economy because integrating all facets of diversity, including disabilities, will improve a company's overall market share. Employers can take advantage of these advantages by internships (Office of disability employment policy, 2014).

Young adult interns, for example, are often highly motivated individuals who want to both impact and benefit from their work environments. They can also bring experiences to the table that the company might be missing. Young adult interns, for example, will bring the expertise and skills needed to assist employers in managing these online environments as social networking techniques become more and more relevant to operations and

outreach. Young adults are also at ease using social media sites such as Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube to support the business, organisation, government department, or agency where they operate.

#### 4.2.1.3 Job opportunities

Looking at the advantages of the internship programme in public institutions, Knouse and Fontenot (2008) stated several advantages and opportunities for graduates provided they choose to participate in the programme. Nevertheless, the internship programme helps graduates advance their chances to secure work elsewhere across the country. Again, interns may be given permanent job positions by the institutions that have hired interns, while on the other side internships will help them acquire experiences that may assist to make informed choices regarding various career trajectory that was not known to them before the internship programme. Furthermore, through internships interns get a practical scenario of their job requirements and become well informed in terms of what career to pursue. However, Sanahuja and Giner (2015) mentioned three pros for graduates who participate in the internship programme. Amongst other things, these authors claim that the first benefit is related to the enhancement of employment opportunities. The second benefit has to do with enhancement of skills and abilities of interns. The last benefit is linked to the choice interns make after exploring various career path. In consistent with that, a number of research confirm that graduates are increasingly perceiving internships as a work exposure that will provide them with employment picture (Cannon & Arnold, 1998). Those who were once interns stand a good chance to be absorbed by their host institutions (Zhao & Liden, 2011). Nevertheless, tertiary graduates who have benefited from an internship programme before the interview stand a better chance for jobs compared with graduates who have never worked as interns (Divine, Linrud, Miller & Wilson, 2007).

Generally, interns that have participated in the work experiential learning while studying have better chances of securing employment. For instance, research highlighted that graduates who participated in an internship are likely to get employed within a short space while this has positive impact on their work satisfaction (Jung & Lee, 2017). Researchers discovered that internships improved work prospects for business students in a broadly

acknowledged report, which poses the issue of participation. Furthermore, research on business students showed that those who completed an internship were recruited earlier by top companies and paid more than students who did not engage in internships (Weible & McClure, 2011).

A few studies stood out for their scientific rigor and inventiveness. Internships increased the call-back rate for interviews by 14%, indicating that internships made candidates to stand a better chance to find jobs compared to do not have the experience of the programme, according to a creative resume audit study in which fictional resumes were submitted to employers with internships as the main variable separating experimental classes. (Nunley, Pugh, Romero & Seals, 2016). Studies on internships indicate that graduates with internships had unemployment rates that were lower than the national average. Internships improve job readiness by giving modern skills, expertise, and attributes that aid the transition from tertiary to working life. However, there is some conflicting evidence on this topic of employability, especially whether the programme guarantee immediate and future employment.

#### *4.2.1.4 Graduates' plans for the future and their hopes*

Tertiary qualification holders sometimes use internships to explore better career opportunities, which in some cases can lead to put graduates in a situation called crystallisation of career opportunities. A practical example, some scholars have discovered that students who had already undergone an internship were satisfied with their jobs, where they stated that this is due to working on a daily basis after university. Internships also assist in terms of networking (Murphy, Merritt & Gibbons, 2013) and their enhanced knowledge on different occupations. The primary advantage of the training for supervisors of criminal justice interns (and interns themselves) was a better understanding of the positions and work involved in policing. Furthermore, the students believed that the ability to make professional connections was beneficial to them. Farmer (1978) at first it was believed that students who participated in the internship were more likely to obtain jobs upon completion, studies later noticed that inconsistency as student did not show confidence as compared to those who did not work as interns before (Callanan & Benzing, 2004).

#### *4.2.1.5 Employers are able to identify talent*

Employers can also benefit from internships because they can be used as an expanded on-the-job screening tool for permanent jobs, in other words it is a win-win situation (Zhao & Liden, 2011). Few researchers argue that internships have limited risks in terms of accessing potential employees. Murphy (2002), therefore this saves money for organisations (Gault, Leach & Duey, 2010; Callanan & Benzing, 2004). Additionally, employers can access part time employees if needs be; especially in the fields of tourism or administration. Knemeyer and Murphy (2002) therefore this minimise costs for always recruiting and training new personnel.

Interns benefit from increased employment opportunities (Divine et al., 2007; Swift & Kent, 1999) and huge offers (Coco, 2000; Gault, Redington & Schlager, 2000). Graduates who considered internships for work experience indicated being granted with various employment packages in just two months and salaries that were 10% better than those who did not work as interns (Gault et al., 2000). Internships further advances interns level of thinking (Gault et al., 2000; Maskooki, Rama & Raghunandan, 1998) relating the knowledge they gained at university to the practical environment (D'Abate, Youndt & Wenzel, 2009; Divine et al., 2007; Hymon-Parker & Smith, 1998; Maskooki et al., 1998; Weible, 2010), while closing the gap between what graduates look for in various careers and reality of the labour market (Gault et al, 2010).

The internship has also assisted interns to manage time, communicate effectively. To large extent, the internship teaches interns on how to professionally conduct themselves in the workplace (Wesley & Bickle, 2005) and higher job satisfaction (Divine et al., 2007; Gault et al., 2000). Cook et al. (2004) mentioned that some graduates claimed that their internship helped them do develop the ability to work with different people in various employment setups. This assisted them to cooperate well with their colleagues, to become mature, and to align with the knowledge gained at school. The same interns had increased confidence in obtaining a job post the internship and had impact on their career path. In this case, source of income was not a priority, graduates took the internship. Over and above, social skills were acquired during the process (Cook et al., 2004).

According to Divine et al. (2007), an internship grant graduates an opportunity to build profile and it enriches their mind in terms of how the cooperate world looks like. Interns work under supervision of their colleagues and line managers.

Working as an intern is an opportunity to link theory with practice. Interns can sharpen their work skills, improve leadership skills, and establish career goals. They are readily nurtured for employment when the internship lapses, which increases their chances of attracting prospective employers compared to those who do not have work experience. Divine et al. (2007) also stated that employers gain from internships because they can find skilled, affordable hardworking labour force. Employers may also use internships to assess future long-term workers without committing to a long-term position. When it comes to recruiting for a full-time, permanent job, internship experience assists to establish best recruiting criterias and identifying the talent (Coco, 2000; Gault et al., 2000; Weible, 2010).

The advantage of considering an intern for a permanent post is that there is no need for employers to orientate the intern about the work methods and procedures in the organisation (Maskooki et al., 1998). Interns will also help job providers save money by minimising labour costs during peak times. Internships improve relationships with tertiary institutions, making it easier to hire the best candidates for internships and full-time jobs. (Coco, 2000). It is through internships that employers can identify suitable employment candidates.

#### **4.3 CHALLENGES FOR INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS**

Training (2010) stated that generally South Africa lacks skills. Therefore, this threatens the economic and social development of the country. While the study acknowledges that the overall competitiveness has grown, it is worth noting that South Africa is situated at the lowest out of 47 countries in terms of economic literacy, lack of jobs, skilled labour, and the availability of technological skills. The needs of a complicated and flexible economy are characterised by increased use of information, complex technologies and a general increase in the skill requirement of jobs that need certain abilities. The ability, inspiration and adaptability of the labour force will serve as an indicator of the economic performance of the country worldwide. South Africa should strive to be on the same level

compete with other countries and to cope in a global market. Using the words of Mdladlana (Minister of Labour), the skills available do not align with the ones currently needed in the workplace.

Although undergoing restructuring and change, the government, as the country's largest employer, faces challenges in providing services to the general public. There are many difficulties to overcome. The need to develop a new cadre of public officials with the necessary skills to deal with the government twin challenges of reform and service delivery is inevitable. Based on the baseline research commissioned by the Department of Public Service and Administration (1999-2000) it is believed that there is a slow improvement of public service education and training after seven years democracy (Trah, 2004). Consequently, some of the issues found in the Training Reports of 1996/97 persist today, including: ad hoc, scattered, and uncoordinated training in public offices; opportunities are afforded to senior managers but not to lower ranks; and, in many cases, training is not integrated with departmental business strategies. Among other things, the report indicates that there is lack of policy framework, disorganised human resource centers that cannot provide training needs, managers who do not support their subordinates, lack of knowledge in relation to technology and lack of financial resources. Arguable, there is a need to execute the skill strategy (Trah, 2004).

Job experiential learning programmes have associated costs for their nature, delivery or even for graduate involvement. These are costs related to paying interns on monthly basis and sometimes public institutions end up reducing the number of interns who should be working in their departments and municipalities. For example, the Provincial office of the Public Service Commission in Limpopo has cancelled internships reason being that internships require money to pay interns and as a result, the Commission does not have money to do that. The number of hours interns are involved in internships sometimes becomes a challenge because some interns take time to adapt to the work environment (Stasz & Brewer, 1998). In principle, Some programmes are introduced for boys and girls, but female students will in most cases consider work-based internships than male graduates, due to the way in which the programme is structured. On that note, work-

based internships are characterised by activities and setups that appeal to male students need to be groomed (Haimson & Bellotti, 2001).

Interns continue to apply for other internships even after they have once worked as interns in public institutions. Because some of the interns have highlighted that one year is not quite enough for them to acquire more skills (Garnerman, 2006). Furthermore, some interns just do internships for the sake of working and earning money for that particular period, rather than working to get the necessary skills and knowledge by applying whatever they have been taught at university and colleges (Garnerman, 2006).

#### **4.4 CONCLUSION**

There are challenges and opportunities for internship programme. As such the study has successfully unpacked them. The chapter discussed the literature review as guided by the objectives of the study. It provided different views of different scholars and academics in an attempt to forge the relationship between internship programme and skills development in South African public institutions. The forthcoming chapter focuses on the research population, sampling size, data collection procedures and the research design.

## **CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The chapter outlines the research design and methodology followed in the study and describes the study area, target population, sample size, data collection methods and procedures. Also, the chapter describes the methodological approach and the relevance of the approach to the context. The study adopted both qualitative and quantitative research methods to systematically present the findings of the study. Furthermore, to interpret and analyse the findings as provided by the respondents. Also, the chapter provides a detailed account of the criteria followed and considerations made in determining the actual respondents that participated in the study through various data collection tools. The study used semi-structured questionnaires for current and previous interns and face to face interviews for officials in the selected government departments in Limpopo Province. The goal was to forge a link between the internship programme and skills development using current interns, previous interns and officials under human resources and skills development units as the target population. The basis for selecting respondents was crucial to the research design as it permitted identifications of the relevant sources of data. Moreover, the challenges encountered during the execution of some of the planned approaches will be noted. Generally, a mixed-method approach was used to answer the research questions of the study. Primary data was collected between October and December 2019.

### **5.2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

Research design and methodology comprises several research designs. The researcher has a prerequisite to select a type of research design that will best help achieve the aim and objectives of the study. The following section discusses the choice of the research design for this study and how it helped the researcher gather relevant data.

#### **5.2.1 Research design**

A research design premises on the methods, procedures and data collections instruments that the researcher uses to gather information on the investigated matter. There are several research designs that one can use to achieve the objective of the study. For this

study, a mixed-method was used to gather data. The researcher used a combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection instruments for this study. The qualitative research approach is subjective, deals with the experiential lifeworld of human beings (Ramchander, 2004; Jarbandhan & Schutte, 2006). A qualitative interview guide was used to collect data from public officials under the human resources and managers under the skills development units within the three government departments. Therefore, some of these public officials are mentors of the interns. The qualitative research interview does not limit the respondents from expressing their opinions about the phenomenon under study.

Furthermore, a qualitative research interview helped the respondents to express themselves based on their previous experiences about the impact of the internship programme on skills development in the three selected government departments. Also, with the qualitative research approach, the researcher used words to analyse, discuss and interpret the findings of the study instead of using numbers. Nevertheless, the researcher also used the quantitative research approach to get the relevant data in line with the topic of the study. The quantitative research approach is characterised by collecting data and analysing it statistically to justify the problem under investigation (Nkwi, Nyamongo & Ryan, 2001; Marshal, 2003; Ramchader, 2004). The quantitative research questionnaire was distributed to current and previous interns within the three government departments. With this type of questionnaire, the respondents (current and previous interns) were expected to express their own opinions on the investigated matter by using ticks and crosses to fill in the questionnaire. The aim was to check whether the internship programme is helping or has helped the respondents to acquire the required skills that will help them to be competent in the near future. The researcher used a quantitative research approach to complement the findings of the qualitative research approach. Furthermore, a quantitative research design was purposefully used so that the findings would not be biased. Also, a quantitative research approach was used so that numerical values could then be summarised and reported as the results or findings of the study. However, interviews with officials were used as follow-ups to complement the findings of quantitative research questionnaires. Therefore, such interviews were

directed to public officials under human resources and skills development within the three government departments.

### **5.2.2 Description of study area**

Initially, the study aimed to focus on four government departments. However, the study focused on three government departments, namely Department of Education (DOE), Provincial Treasury, and Department of Sport, Arts and Culture that had replaced the initially proposed government departments based in the capital of Limpopo Province - Polokwane. Limpopo Province (former Northern Province) is the gateway to the rest of Africa. A special trait of the province is that it shares international borders with three countries: Botswana, Zimbabwe and Mozambique, as well as the provinces of Mpumalanga, Gauteng and North West. The province consists of mainly less developed communities, comprising several ethnic groups that are distinct in their cultures. The largest group are Northern Sotho (Bapedi) accounting for more than half the population in Limpopo. They are followed by VaTsonga and VhaVenda (Integrated Development Plan Review, 2016). The Afrikaans community only accounts for a small percentage. Furthermore, the province has several public schools and tertiary institutions such as the University of Limpopo, University of Venda, University of South Africa, and Tshwane University of Technology (Integrated Development Plan Review, 2016). However, this is the first research study to be conducted in Polokwane on the above-mentioned topic. Due to limited research on the investigated matter, the study was only confined to the selected government departments in Polokwane, Limpopo Province.

### **5.2.3 Target population**

A target population is a community made up of a certain number of people (Bless, Higson-Smith & Sithole, 2013). The target population chosen for this research was managers in the skills development and human resources unit, current and previous interns who had already undergone the internship programme in the Department of Education (DOE), Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, and Provincial Treasury. Furthermore, public officials (mentors) who work closely with interns were also allowed to participate in the interviews. Initially, the study included the Department of Cooperative Governance, Human Settlement and Traditional Affairs (COGHSTA) then the department was replaced

with the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture during the stage of data collection because the department did not have current interns for the financial year 2019/2020. Furthermore, the Department of Provincial Treasury was also included because the Office of the Premier and the Department of Economic, Development, Environment and Tourism failed to provide the researcher with approval or permission to research their institutions. Therefore, the study only focused on three government departments - Department of Education, Provincial Treasury, and Department of Sport, Arts and Culture.

#### **5.2.4 Sampling**

In order to understand the population as a whole, sampling is the characteristics of a certain population that has to be part of the study (Strydom, 2005). Sampling is a list of a subset of people or items from a wider population (Scott & Morrison, 2007), to represent the particular population (Gall, 2007; Neuman, 2011). Therefore, the study has adopted both purposive and random sampling strategy. The purposive sampling strategy is a type of judgmental sampling strategy in which the researcher purposively uses own judgmental knowledge to select a group of people best positioned to provide the required information. Therefore, purposive sampling was used to get relevant information from managers within the skills development unit. Also, the mentors of interns and public officials under HRD were purposively sampled. In principle, a random sampling strategy is a technique where all current interns in the three selected government departments stood a chance to participate in the study to provide the researcher with specific information. Furthermore, the researcher had requested database information (email and contacts) of the previous interns from the three selected government departments, so that they can be granted an opportunity to participate in the study. Unfortunately, only two departments (Sport, Arts and Culture, and Education) managed to provide the researcher with the database for previous interns. The previous interns were those who worked in the financial year 2018/2019. Therefore, the researcher used email addresses to distribute questionnaires for participants (previous interns) to fill in and return via emails rather than making a physical submission. However, a random sampling technique was applied to reach previous interns (Hendricks, Blanken & Adriaans, 1992). The initial sample size of the study was 140 participants (10 previous interns per department, 15 current interns per four selected government departments, 05 managers under skills development unit from

each department and 05 officials under human resources unit from each department. Unfortunately, the sample size was not reached because COGHSTA did not have current interns for the financial year 2019/2020. Therefore, it was replaced by the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture. The department hires a few interns every year. As a result, it only had 07 current interns, 05 previous interns and 03 public officials (in the skills development directorate) that participated in the study. Meanwhile, the Department of Provincial Treasury had 24 current interns participating and none of their public officials was willing to participate in the study. Therefore, Provincial Treasury failed to provide the researcher with the database of previous interns; as a result, the department did not have a representation of previous interns in the study. Furthermore, current and previous interns were randomly sampled from the Department of Education, 33 current interns participated and 16 previous interns (but only 02 previous interns managed to return their questionnaires) and other participants were 05 public officials from the Department of Education. However, the study only consisted of 79 participants (public officials, previous and currents interns) from the three government departments that were willing to participate.

### **5.3 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS**

There are several forms of data collection instruments. The study adopted three, namely interviews, questionnaires and documentation.

#### **5.3.1 Interviews**

Interviews allow the respondents to ask any questions. They get to feel comfortable when expressing their experiences and perceptions. It can be in the form of an unstructured or structured questionnaire, which is completed by the interviewer after questioning the interviewee (Wisker, 2001). The interviews uncovered the impact of an internship programme on skills development in the three selected government departments, to assess whether such an internship programme was effective on skills development or not. However, semi-structured face to face interviews was conducted. The interviews were directed to three (03) public officials under skills development and human resources units, inclusive of mentors of the interns from Sport, Arts and Culture while the department of Education had a representation of five (05) public officials, inclusive of mentors. The

public officials from the Provincial Treasury did not show interest to participate in the study. As a result, the department did not have representation for public officials. Therefore, the study had a total of eight (08) face to face interviews in the two remaining government departments.

### **5.3.2 Questionnaires**

Semi-structured questionnaires were distributed to current and previous interns in the three selected government departments. The purpose was to assess the impact of the internship programme on skills development in public institutions. Therefore, 24 questionnaires for current interns from the Provincial Treasury, 33 from current interns from the Department of Education and 07 from the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture were returned. The study had a total of 64 current interns from the three government departments. Nevertheless, previous interns were also given questionnaires. On that note, two government departments (Department of Education and the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture) had a representation of previous interns. Sixteen (16) previous interns were randomly sampled in the Department of Education but only two (02) returned their questionnaires while the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture had a representation of five (05) previous interns. Furthermore, the Department of Provincial Treasury did not have previous interns that participated in the study, because the department failed to provide the researcher with the database of previous interns to be involved in the study. In essence, the study had a total of seven (07) previous interns from the selected government departments. Nevertheless, the researcher analysed the data collected based on responses provided by the respondents (previous and current interns).

### **5.3.3 Documentation**

Creswell (2003), documentation is a collection of formal pieces of writings that can be used to obtain particular information for the research. Therefore, the study used academic books, government gazette, policy framework, newspapers, journal publications and dissertations in line with the study as point of reference.

## **5.4 DATA ANALYSIS**

Data analysis has two crucial steps in its nature, namely (a) changing the raw data to manageable proportions (b) establishing sequences in the available data (Mouton, 1996).

Therefore, the researcher used a descriptive and interpretive analysis approach to analyse the data that was collected. Graphs and pie charts were used for descriptive analysis, while on interpretive analysis the researcher used words and quotations to present the data. Since the study was a mixed-method, the researcher used numbers and percentages to analyse and present the findings. Microsoft Excel was employed to draw pie charts and graphs while Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to capture the data and, at a later stage, the data was then exported to Microsoft Excel to draw graphs and pie charts. SPSS is software for editing and analysing all sorts of data. Therefore, the data was then reduced to manageable proportions to identify and evaluate patterns of the impact of internship programme on skills development.

## **5.5 QUALITY CRITERIA**

**Trustworthiness:** Using the grounded theory, the researcher uses data analysis with honesty to the accounts in the data. Although as the researcher immerses him/herself in the data, the researcher must be honest and vigilant about his/her perspective, pre-existing thoughts and beliefs, and developing hypotheses (Gearing, 2004). Grounded theory researchers engage in the self-reflective process of “bracketing,” whereby they recognise and set aside (but do not abandon) their prior knowledge and assumptions, with the analytic goal of attending to the participants’ accounts with an open mind (Gearing, 2004). For this study, trustworthiness was achieved through the above-explained reflective practices.

**Credibility** refers to the quality of the research findings being reliable and trusted (Tracy, 2010). According to Guba (1981), credibility is associated with whether there are faithful descriptions or interpretations of human experiences in the study. Amis and Silk (2008) point out that credibility in the qualitative study can be achieved through prolonged engagement with the participants, member checking, and triangulation. To achieve credibility for the present study, the researcher made sufficient time collecting data to establish a clear picture of the impact of the internship programme on skills development to avoid misinformation and distortions. The prolonged engagement was essential for

building trust with participants and, that helped the researcher to obtain accurate and rich information.

**Confirmability:** Confirmability is a qualitative researcher's concern that is equivalent to objectivity (Shenton, 2004). The term can be improved by presenting a self-critical, reflexive account that reveals the work's implicit prejudices, as well as triangulation (Amis & Silk, 2008). For the present study, the researcher relied solely on the raw data provided by the participants and was as objective as possible to achieve confirmability.

## **5.6 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY**

Validity and reliability are important in research. The study will serve as a source of information for public administration practitioners, academics, students and researchers in the near future. Therefore, there was a need for a pilot test to be considered before the study could take place as a way of ensuring that the data that was collected would be valid and reliable. A pilot test refers to the process of pre-testing a particular research instrument such as a questionnaire or interview schedule. The pilot test was used to ensure that the structure of questionnaires and interview questions are in line with the research questions and aim and objectives of the study, to avoid a situation where the information would be bias, misleading and inaccurate. Furthermore, the researcher recorded officials while they were answering questions asked by the researcher using the interview guide.

## **5.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

For compliance purposes, the researcher was granted a clearance certificate from the University of Limpopo's Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) prior to participation in the study. The respondents were assured of their anonymity and informed in relation to the reason of working on the study. Also, participants were well informed that they were not forced to participate in the form of interviews and filling of questionnaires. They were advised to withdraw from participating in this research at any time with no penalty. Further, respondents have been assured confidentiality of their information and their names were not on their questionnaires. The researcher managed to professionally maintain respect

and dignity towards respondents by politely engaging them, treating them with courtesy as well as being patient with the respondents while expressing their views. The study will be helpful to institutions such as (government departments, municipalities, the private sector and agencies) in making improvements on the skills development programme so that interns can get the necessary experience, knowledge and be employable in the future. The researcher was also aware of the risk associated that could make respondents emotional because of remembering how they were once treated in their workplace. Therefore, in such cases the researcher allowed the respondent to first calm down. However, the anonymity, honesty and privacy of the respondents were highly maintained. The researcher had an ethical obligation to engage respondents in an environment in which they are comfortable with such as in a workplace or an open space.

#### **5.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The research is for academic purpose, it can also be used to contribute to the practice of the discipline of Public Administration. Furthermore, the study will be used to serve as a source of information for public administration practitioners, academics, students and researchers. Again, the study will be helpful to institutions such as (government departments, municipalities, the private sector and agencies) in making improvements on the skills development programme, so that interns can get the necessary experience, knowledge and be employable in the future.

#### **5.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The study was conducted in three government departments in Limpopo Province with participants being previous interns, current interns and public officials. The participants provided different views about the impact of the internship programme on skills development in selected government departments in Limpopo Province. The data was collected from 79 participants using a mixed-method approach. The study used questionnaires and face to face interviews to collect data. The researcher did not manage to reach the initial sampling size of 140 as some of the participants were not interested to participate in the study. The study was further limited by one of the initially targeted

government departments (COGHSTA), which did not have current interns in 2019 due to reasons unknown to the researcher.

## **5.10 CONCLUSION**

The chapter outlined the research design and methodology that was adopted to achieve the objectives of the study. The research was limited to three government departments in Limpopo Province. Semi-structured questionnaires and face to face interviews were used to collect the required data from the participants. It can, however, be concluded that the objectives of the study were achieved through the use of a mixed-method approach. The next chapter presents the research findings, analysis and interpretation of data.

## **CHAPTER 6: RESEARCH FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA**

### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

The chapter presents, analyses and interprets the data collected using face to face interviews and semi-structured questionnaires. The data were collected to assess the impact of the internship programme on skills development in selected government departments in Limpopo Province. The findings that are analysed are based on data collected from previous interns, current interns and officials in the human resources and skills development sections.

The researcher was interested in knowing the views and perceptions of the respondents on the impact of the internship programme on skills development. The study intended to assess whether the internship programme has impacted or equipped interns with a variety of skills and to know the extent to which the internship programme assisted interns to secure employment elsewhere in the near future.

The research was therefore limited to three government departments in Limpopo Province: Department of Education, Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, and Provincial Treasury. The choice of the departments was influenced by their huge target population. The data was collected using a mixed-method approach. Section A below presents the findings for current interns, section B for previous interns while section C deals with qualitative research findings for public officials in the three selected government departments. In some sections, the data is presented through graphs, words and pie charts.

### **6.2 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS**

The findings were obtained in two ways from the respondents: i.e. data collected through questionnaires from current and previous interns and data obtained through interviews from public officials. The presentation of the findings will therefore follow a format of data presented through questionnaires and data collected through interviews.

### **6.2.1 SECTION A: DATA COLLECTED FROM CURRENT INTERNS**

Data collected through questionnaires were obtained from current interns in the three selected Limpopo Provincial departments: i.e. the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, Department of Education, and Department of Provincial Treasury. The questionnaire probed demographic information of the respondents, education and training, employment status, the impact of the internship programme on skills development, reasons for working as an intern and opportunities that came with the internship programme. The questionnaire further probed perceptions about the nature of the internship programme and skills development opportunities in the three selected government departments. Also, the questionnaire probed a question to check if there were some of the things that current interns wished they could change about the internship programme. The section below provides responses from current interns.

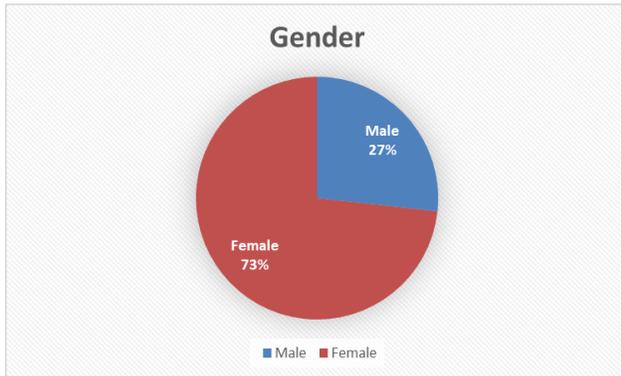
#### *6.2.1.1 Demographic information*

The presentation and analysis of this study begin by presenting the demographic information of the respondents. The demographic information of the respondents includes the gender of the respondents, ethnic group, age group, respondents' province of origin, home language, marital status, education and training, employment status and the duration current interns have been working. The information provided a clear picture of the type of respondents the researcher engaged. It also helped to determine the reasons for a variety of responses that were influenced by demographic factors. The results of the demographic information are demonstrated below.

#### *6.2.1.2 Gender*

Probing gender in this study is important because it helps the researcher to determine the male and female-dominant of current interns within the three selected government departments in Limpopo Province. The gender profile of the respondents is presented below.

**Figure 1: Gender of the respondents**

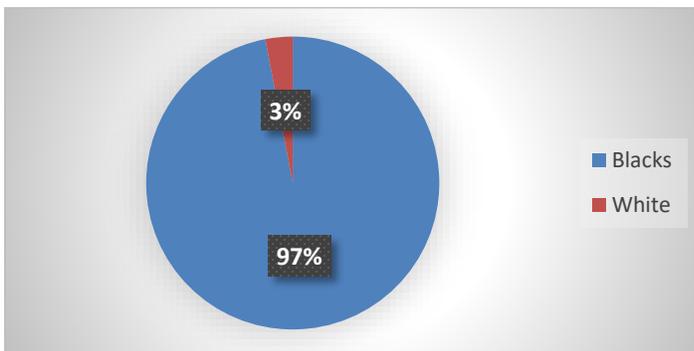


The above figure portrays the gender information of the representation of current interns in the three selected government departments in Limpopo Province. The study shows 27% of the male participants and 73% of the female participants. However, in various statistics and surveys in public institutions majority are always women who are dominating the male representation. Hence, interest in the participation of respondents could have also played a role at the time the data was collected. Therefore, it is clear that female participants were more than male participants in the study.

### 6.2.1.3 Ethnic groups/ historical racial groups

The purpose of probing this question was to check the number of representation of Blacks, Whites, Coloureds and Indians. The information was important as it assisted the researcher to have a clear picture of the ethnic or historical racial group being engaged with during the period of data collection.

**Figure 2: Ethnic groups**

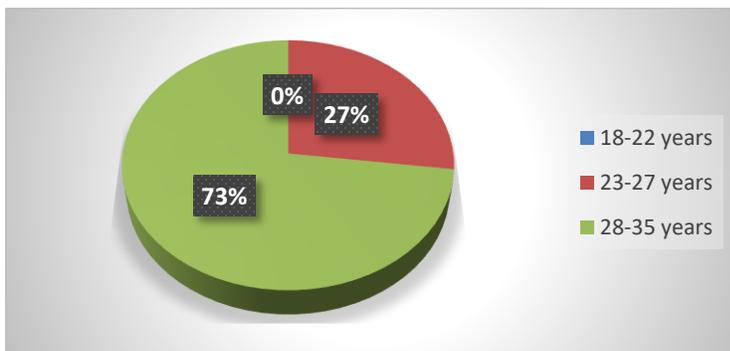


The above pie chart indicates the ethnic groups of the respondents. The purpose of probing this question was to check the number of representation under each ethnic group. Therefore, when asking a Black respondent and an Indian respondent about the impact of the internship programme on skills development, the responses or perceptions are likely to be different. From the three selected government departments, 97% of the participants were Blacks and 3% were Whites. The study did not have any coloured (0%) and Indian (0%) participants. Therefore, Blacks dominated.

#### 6.2.1.4 Age group

The age group of the respondents often determine the person's knowledge or experience in a particular field of work. Therefore, asking a 22-year-old participant about the impact of the internship programme on skills development and asking the same question to a 35-year-old participant would likely generate a different response due to the level of understanding. The age group of the respondents in this regard is as follows.

**Figure 3: Age group**

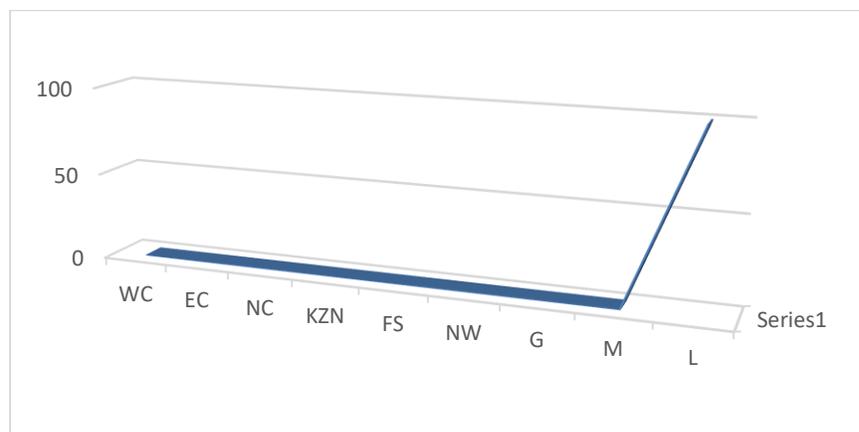


The above figure shows that participants were expected to also provide their age group. The age profile of the participants often determines the nature of responses they will provide to the researcher. The age group of the respondents is important depending on the information required by the researcher. Therefore, based on the findings, the study did not have participants between 18-22 years (0%). However, participants between 23-27 years were at 27% and 28-35 years were at 73%. Therefore, the majority of the participants were between the ages of 28-35 years.

### 6.2.1.5 Participants' provinces of origin

The researcher needed to know where the participants came from to understand their experiences. It also forms important statistics about areas that dominate. The province profile of each participant is presented below.

**Figure 4: Participants' provinces of origin**

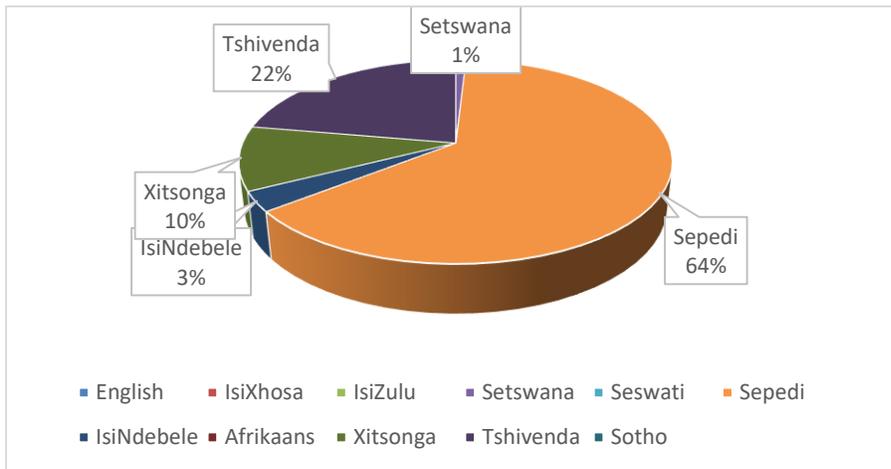


The above figure shows the province profile of the respondents as the participants in the three selected government departments are not coming from the same province. It is because graduates from different provinces usually apply for internships in various provinces depending on whether they are qualifying or not. The overall statistics show that all participants are from Limpopo Province. Meaning that 100% of the participants are originally from Limpopo Province. Therefore, out of 9 provinces, only one province (Limpopo) had a representation of the participants in the study.

### 6.2.1.6 Home language

The home language of each participant in the study was also important because it assisted the researcher to establish the tribe background of the respondents within the three selected government departments in Limpopo Province. A Sepedi speaking person may respond to questions differently as compared to those who are speaking Tshivenda, siSwati, isiXhosa, isiZulu, isiNdebele, Xitsonga, Sesotho, Setswana, Afrikaans and English. The figure below indicates the home languages of the respondents in the study.

**Figure 5: Home language**

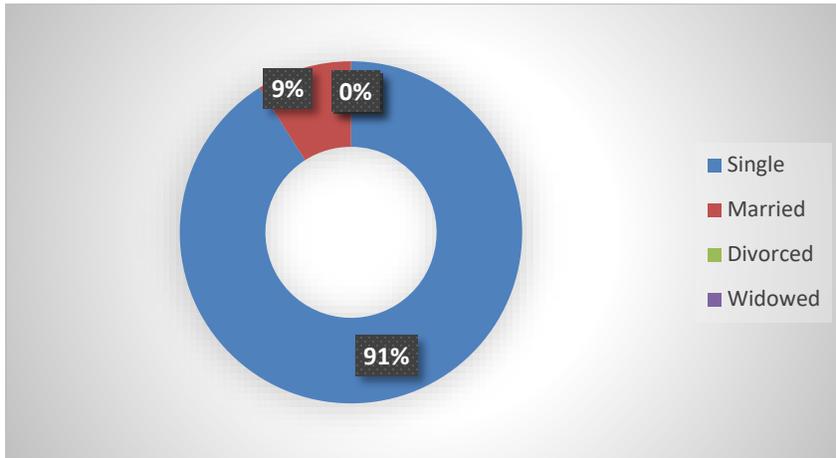


The above figure indicates that the majority (64%) of the participants are speaking Sepedi and (22%) of the participants speak Tshivenda. Furthermore, 3% are speaking isiNdebele while few (10%) speaks Xitsonga and 1% of the participants speak Setswana. In all these three selected government departments there is no even a single participant who speak English (0%), IsiXhosa (0%), isiZulu (0%), isiSwati (0%), Afrikaans (0%) and Sotho (0%). In conclusion, not all official languages were represented; however, the majority were Sepedi speaking participants.

#### *6.2.1.7 Marital status*

The responses provided by the participants in the questionnaires are often determined by their social status and standing in society. The researcher tried to establish this assertion among respondents in the study. The marital status of the respondents is presented as follows.

**Figure 6: Marital status**

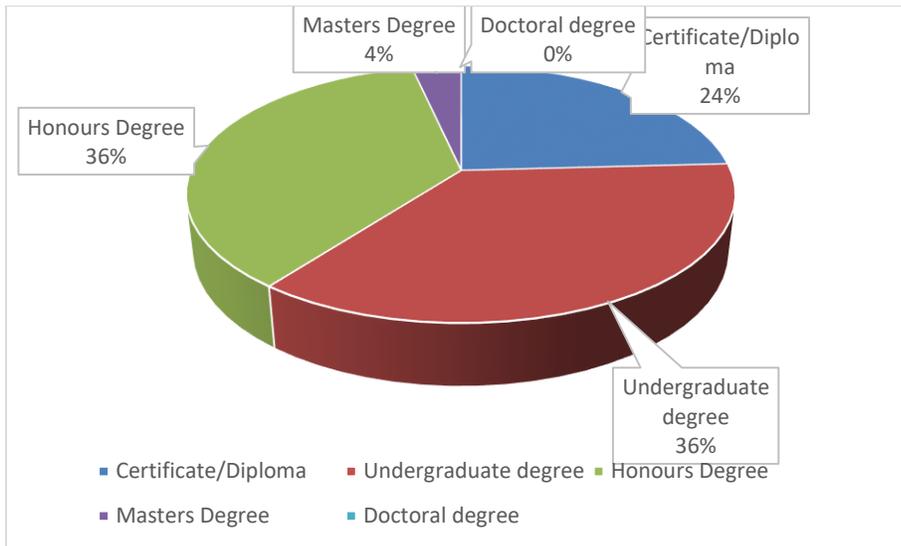


Participants were given a question on the questionnaire to tick or cross in the appropriate box, which corresponded with their marital status. The question was probed to assist the researcher to establish the marital status of the respondents in the study and to understand the participants that the researcher is interacting with during the data collection process. All respondents provided their marital status. The findings show that the majority (91%) of the participants are single while few (9%) of the participants are married. None of the participants was classified under the divorced (0%) and widowed (0%) category. The above figure indicates that the majority of the participants are single.

#### *6.2.1.8 Education and training*

Knowing about the highest academic qualification of the respondents in this study was also important to validate the data collected. The information also assisted the researcher to establish the academic background of the respondents within the three selected government departments. A current intern who completed a master's degree may respond to questions differently as compared to one whose education and training is at a diploma level. The figure below indicates the education and training information of the participants.

**Figure 7: Education and training**



According to the findings portrayed in figure 7, participants with Certificate / Diploma qualifications were at 24% and those with undergraduate qualifications were at 36%. Furthermore, another 36% of the participants have Honours degree and few (4%) of the participants have Masters Degree. However, none (0%) of the participants have a Doctoral degree. In essence, education attainment in the three selected government departments is on average as most of the participants have undergraduate and Honours degrees. This means that government departments must also target graduates with post graduate degrees in order to meet the changing needs of the public institutions.

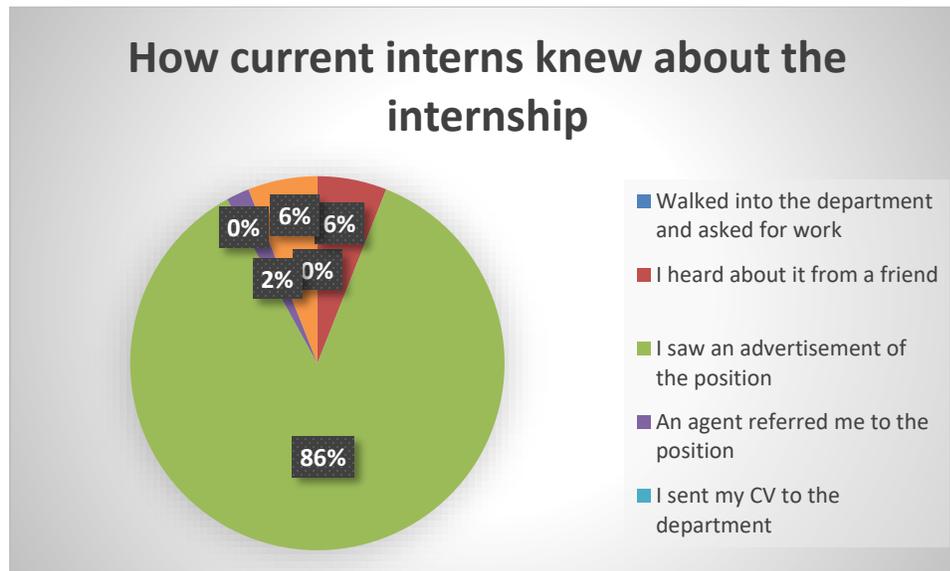
#### *6.2.1.9 Employment status*

In this section, the researcher wanted to understand the employment status of the participants from the three government departments. The demographic information of the respondents includes ways in which current interns heard about the availability of the internship programme at their host departments, the duration or period current interns have been working and the sections, unit or divisions that the current interns are working within. The employment status of the respondents is presented below.

### 6.2.1.9.1 How did current interns hear about the availability of the internship programme at their host departments?

The probing of how current interns in the study heard about the internship programme at their host departments was important because it helped the researcher know the different ways graduates used to find information about internship posts in the South African public institutions. The information also helps the researcher to establish ways in which public institutions advertise internship posts. Different ways on how interns heard about the availability of internship programme at their host departments are demonstrated below.

**Figure 8: How did current interns hear about the availability of the internship programme at their host departments?**

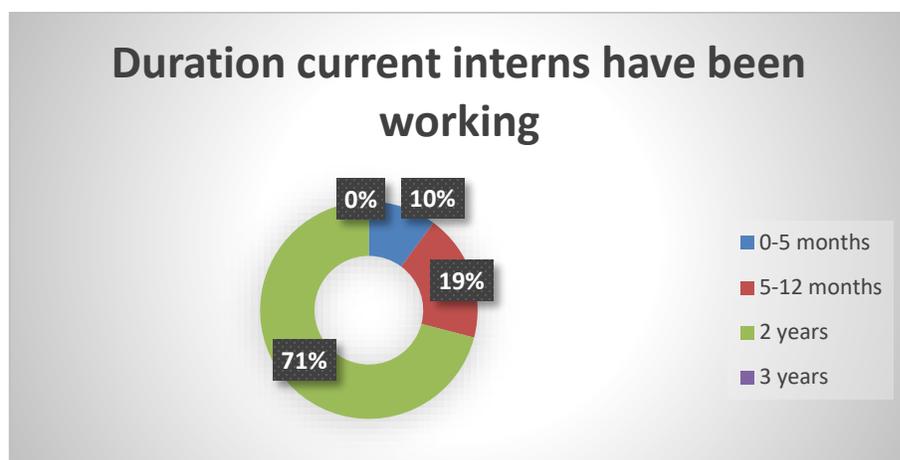


In line with the above figure, it is clear that the majority (86%) of the participants saw an advertisement for the internship programme while 6% heard about it from their friends and family members. Furthermore, another 6% heard about the internship programme from others while a few (2%) claimed that an agent referred them to the position. Also, none (0%) of the participants walked into the department and asked for work. Again, none (0%) sent their Curriculum Vitae to the department. In general, most of the public institutions operate openly and transparently as most of the participants saw an advertisement for the internship programme through the website and notice boards.

### 6.2.1.9.2 The period or duration current interns have been working

The duration or period that current interns have been working was probed because it assisted the researcher to understand the duration the respondents had in each host department and this informed their experience. Thus, a respondent who has five months in the institution may respond to questions differently from one who has been working as an intern for more than 12 months. The durations current interns have been working in their host departments are presented below.

**Figure 9: The period or duration current interns have been working**



The above figure presents the duration or period each participant worked in the three selected government departments. The question sought to understand the perception about the impact of the internship programme on the skills development of the participants, hypothesising that one with five months of experience would answer differently to one who worked for more than a year. The majority (71%) have been working for 2 years and others (19%) have been working for 5-12 months while a few (10%) have been working for 0-5 months. Therefore, the majority of the interns have been working for 2 years and, to a large extent, the findings could be reliable as most of the participants have been there for a longer period.

#### *6.2.1.9.3 The unit, section or division current interns are working within*

The question aimed to obtain information from the participants about the sections, units and divisions they worked within. It is significant because the perception about the impact of the internship programme on the skills development of a participant who is working under supply chain management will differ from the perception of a respondent who is working under employee utilisation and capacity building. Therefore, during the data analysis stage, the researcher found that participants were working in the following directorates: Supply Chain Management, Skills Development, Human Resources, Payroll, Credit Management, Budget Management, Revenue Debt and Cash, Municipal Finance, Banking, Cash and Liabilities Management, Sport and Recreation, Archives Services, Public Finance and Data Management, Office of the MEC, Labour Relations, HIV & AIDS Life Skills, Humanities Languages and Commerce Curriculum for FET Schools, Quality Promotion and Standards, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Psychological and Guidance Services, Library and Media Services, Institutional Governance, Coordination and Support, Legal Services, Risk Management, District Management, Coordination and Support. However, most of the current interns were working in Human Resources, Supply Chain Management, and Finance Directorates. In general, it can be argued that the impact of the internship programme on skills development may also be determined by the nature of the unit or section a participant is working under.

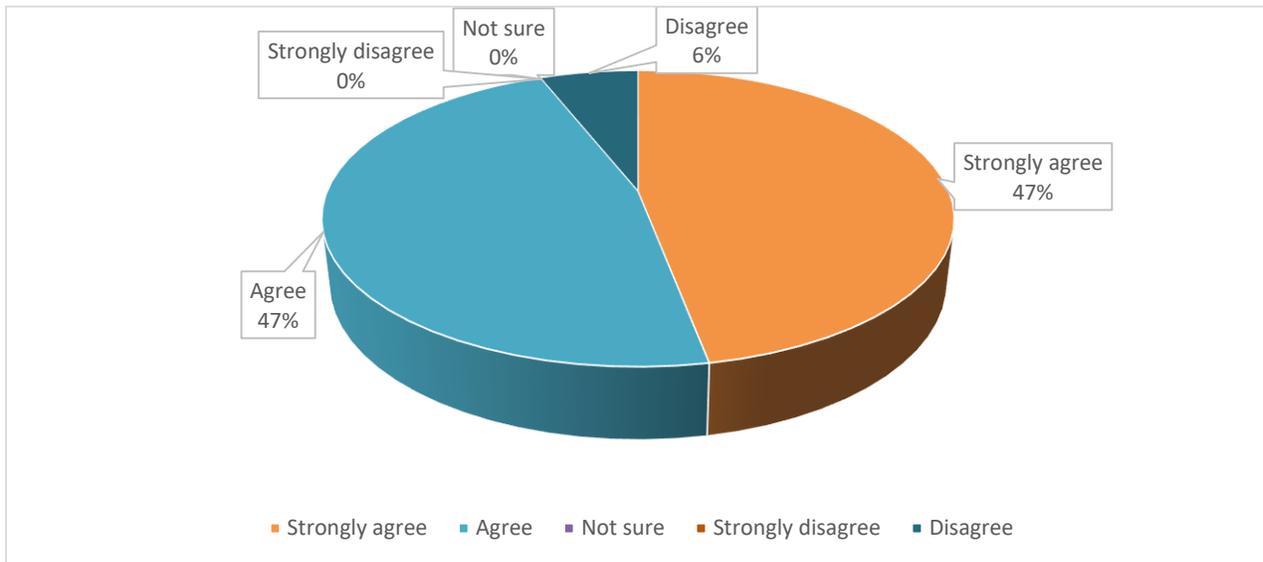
### **6.3. THE IMPACT OF INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME ON SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**

The section aimed to establish an in-depth understanding of the impact of the internship programme on skills development, particularly in the three selected government departments. The question also helped the researcher to obtain information that guided the study in terms of establishing and developing possible recommendations for future reference. The figures below show the impact of the internship programme on skills development in the three government departments.

### 6.3.1 The impact of internship programme on building interns confidence

The impact of the internship programme on building the confidence of the current interns will in one way or the other be different depending on the perceptions of the participants in the study. Therefore, the figure below portrays the responses of the participants in the form of figures.

**Figure 10: The impact of internship programme on building interns confidence**

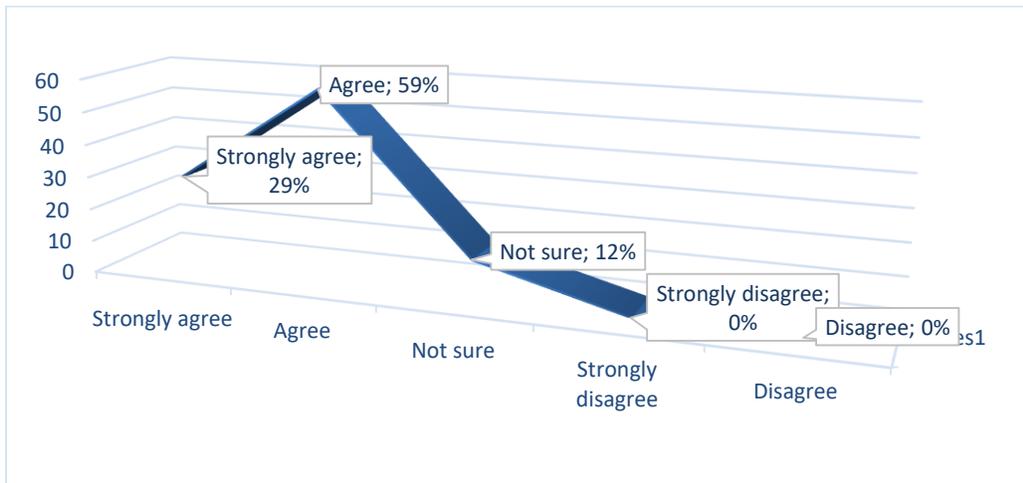


The above figure shows percentages of how the internship programme plays a role in assisting one to develop confidence. The question was necessary because it assisted the researcher to understand if an intern could join the institution with little confidence and leave with sufficient confidence. Notably, 47% of the participants strongly agreed while another 47% agreed. Furthermore, 6% of the participants disagreed. Therefore, none of the participants were unsure (0%) and strongly disagreed (0%) as to whether the internship programme has had an impact on building their confidence. The results show that the internship programme has a positive impact on building the confidence of current interns. It also depends on the nature and traits of an individual over a certain period.

### 6.3.2 The impact of internship programme on control of self-emotions

Knowing the impact of the internship programme on assisting the participants to control their self-emotions was also necessary because it helped the researcher to understand how the internship programme assisted participants in terms of self-development. The figure below presents the findings.

**Figure 11: The impact of internship programme on control of self-emotions**



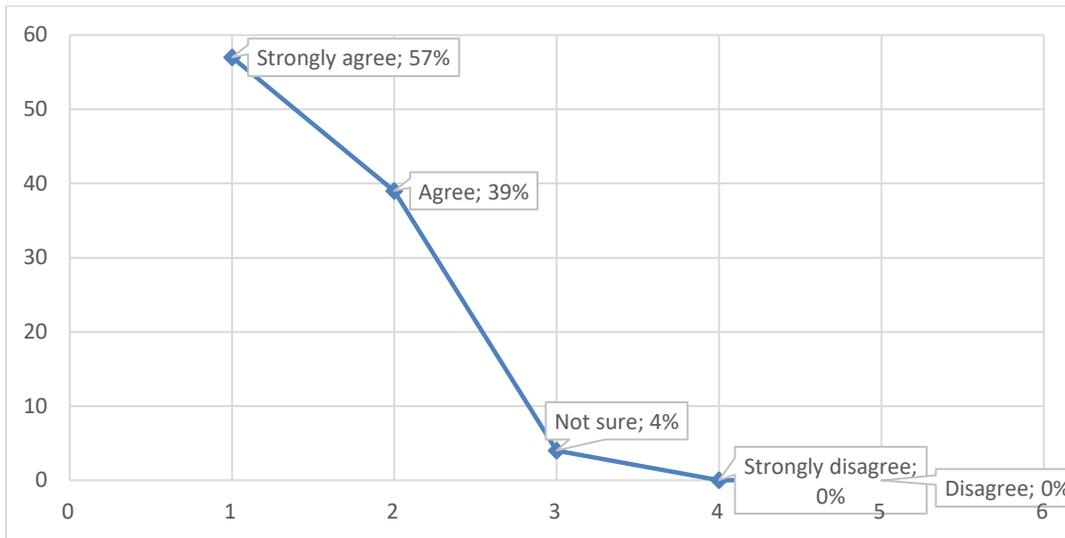
A question was asked to participants to check if the internship programme could help them have self-control over their emotion particularly in the workplace. The majority (59%) of the participants agreed while 29% of the participants strongly agreed. Furthermore, 12% of the participants were not sure and none of the participants strongly disagreed (0%) and disagreed (0%). Therefore, in general, the internship programme can help the participants to develop a sense of maturity towards controlling their daily emotions at work. It is important because participants are working with different people and some are difficult to work with.

### 6.3.3 The impact of internship programme on helping interns to be organised

The impact of the internship programme on assisting interns to be organised in their work environment was necessary to be asked. The question helped the researcher to understand whether the internship programme could assist participants to be organised, meet their deadlines or do proper filing of their work as well as keep record of all the

necessary information they work with daily. The responses of participants are presented below.

**Figure 12: The impact of internship programme on helping interns to be organised**

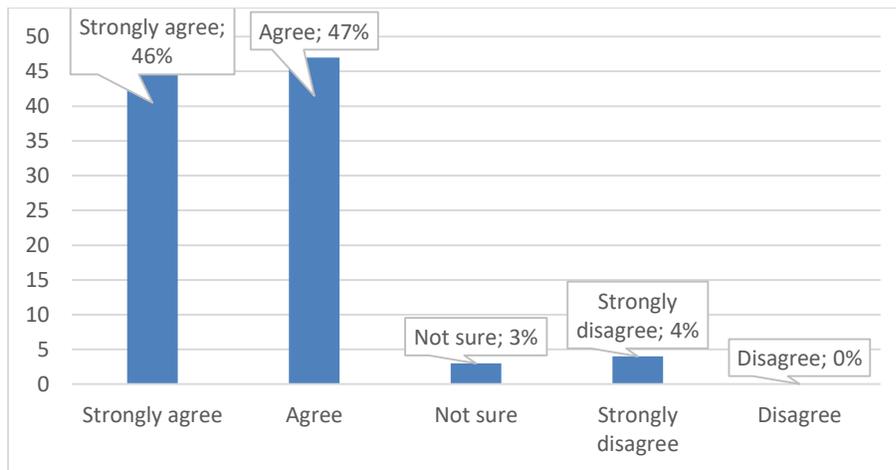


The above figure shows the responses of the participants in the form of percentages. Participants were asked whether the internship programme assisted them to be well organised in their respective departments. The majority (57%) of the participants strongly agreed and 39% of them agreed while 4% of the participants were not sure. Furthermore, none of the participants strongly disagreed (0%) and disagreed (0%) as to whether the internship programme helped them to be organised public servants.

#### **6.3.4 The internship programme helps me to have a good memory**

The researcher must have a clear understanding of whether the internship programme can assist participants to develop a good memory during the period of their internship. The question was probed because sometimes individuals tend to forget about some of the activities and functions they should perform on a daily basis. The figure below presents the findings.

**Figure 13: The internship programme helps me to have a good memory**

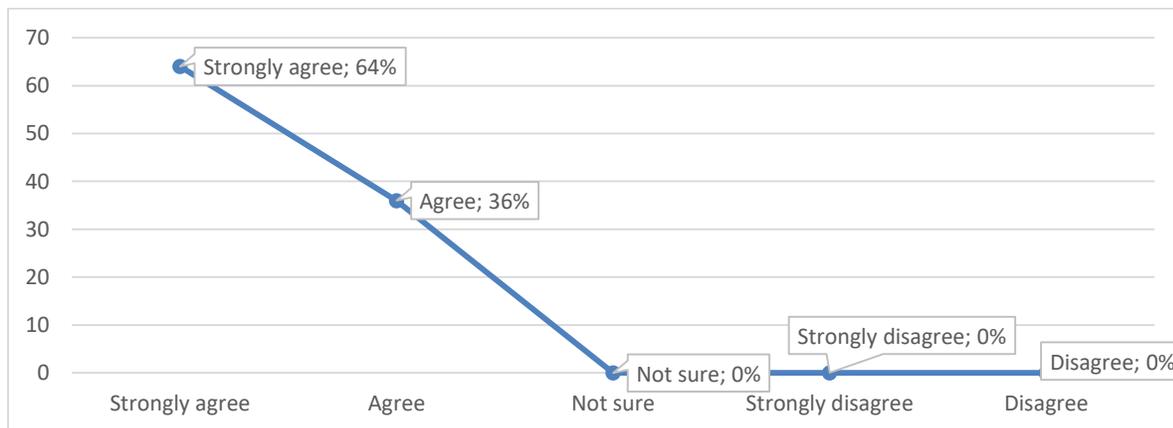


Participants were asked whether the internship programme helped them to have a good memory. Notably, 46% of them strongly agreed and 47% agreed. Meanwhile, 3% of the participants are not sure. Also, 4% strongly disagreed and none of them disagreed (0%). Therefore, the majority of participants agreed that the internship programme assisted them with having a good memory.

### 6.3.5 The impact of internship programme on developing team work skills

Not all staff members can work collegially on a daily basis. Therefore, one has to develop some ability to work with different people daily. Therefore, the researcher checked if the internship programme participants could develop teamwork skill. The findings are presented below.

**Figure 14: The impact of internship programme on developing team work skills**

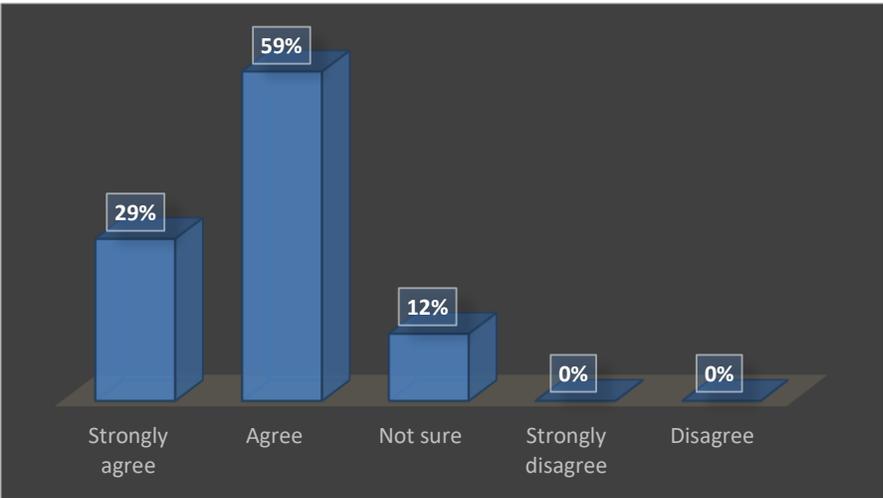


Participants were asked whether the internship programme could assist them to develop teamwork skills. The majority (64%) of the participants strongly agreed while the minority (36%) agreed. Furthermore, none of the participants was not sure (0%), strongly disagreed (0%) and even agreed (0%) that the internship programme could assist them to develop the ability and skills to work with other colleagues. In conclusion, the internship programme plays an important role in developing team work skills among current interns.

### 6.3.6 The impact of internship programme on developing leadership skills

The question aimed to help the researcher establish an understanding of the impact of the internship programme on developing the leadership skills of current interns in the three selected government departments. Respondents demonstrated their different opinions as presented below.

**Figure 15: The impact of internship programme on developing leadership skills**

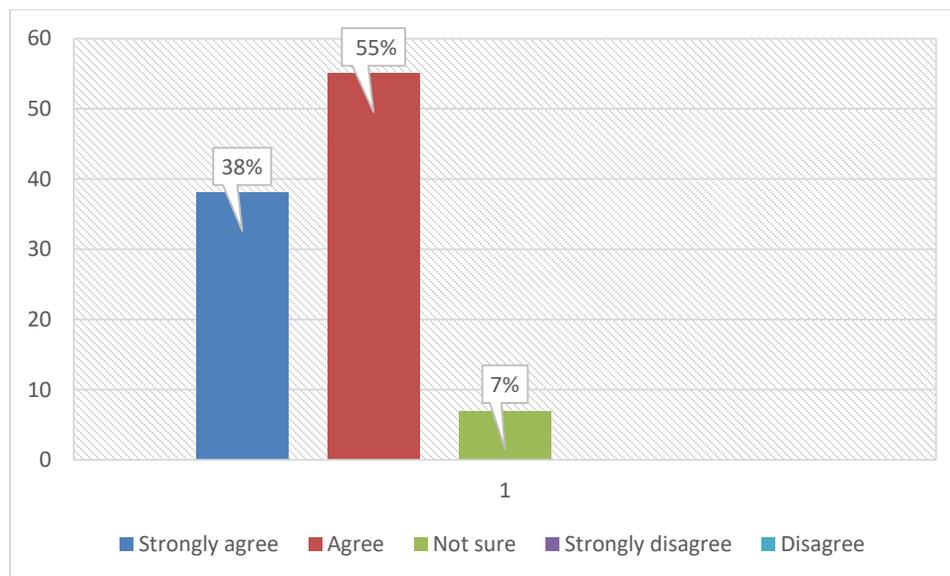


It can be noted that 59% of the participants agreed and 29% of them strongly agreed. On the other hand, 12% of the participants were not sure while none of the participants strongly disagreed (0%) and disagreed (0%). It can however be concluded that interns can develop leadership skills through the internship programme.

### 6.3.7 The impact of internship programme on developing problem solving skills

Current interns come across different challenging tasks daily in their work environment. Some of the challenges need one to think critically to resolve them effectively. Therefore, the researcher needed to pose a question to the participants to check whether they could develop problem-solving skills through the internship programme. The results are illustrated in the figure below.

**Figure 16: The impact of internship programme on developing problem-solving skills**



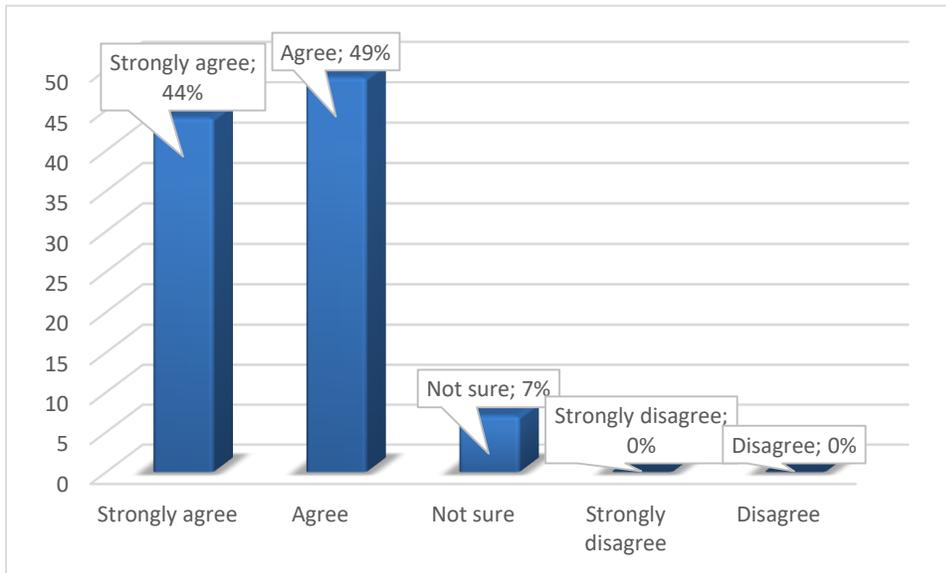
The figure above figure presents the responses of the participants about whether the internship programme could assist them to develop problem-solving skills. Findings were that 55% agreed and 38% of the participants strongly agreed. Meanwhile, 7% of the participants were not sure and for unknown reasons, none of them strongly disagreed (0%) and disagreed (0%). Therefore, the internship programme can assist interns to develop problem-solving skills.

### 6.3.8 The impact of internship programme towards building interns' ability to work under pressure

The question aimed to understand whether the impact of the internship programme can build or develop current interns towards acquiring the ability to work under pressure. Given the dynamics of the workplace, the researcher wanted to establish if interns could

go the extra mile in discharging their duties and at the desired speed. The findings are indicated below.

**Figure 17: The impact of internship programme towards building interns' ability to work under pressure**

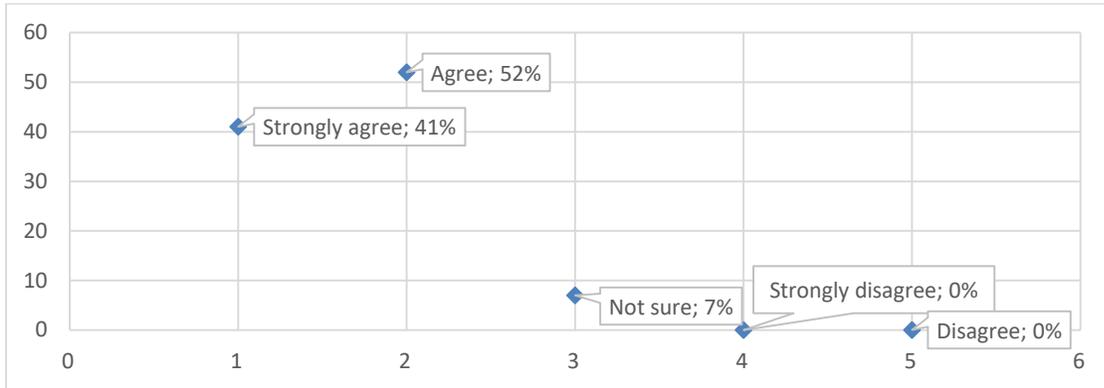


The above figure shows the responses of the participants in terms of percentages about the internship programme developing their ability to work under pressure. Evidently, 49% of the participants agreed and 44% strongly agreed, while 7% claimed not to be sure. None of the participants strongly disagreed (0%) and disagreed (0%). In conclusion, participants perceive the programme as contributing to their ability to work under pressure. Therefore, developing an ability to work under pressure may assist the participants to adapt to the changing needs in the work environment.

### **6.3.9 The impact of internship programme on developing time management skills**

The researcher checked whether the current interns could develop time management skills during their internship programme. The question was important to understand deadline challenges and late coming among interns. The findings are discussed below.

**Figure 18: The impact of internship programme on developing time management skills**

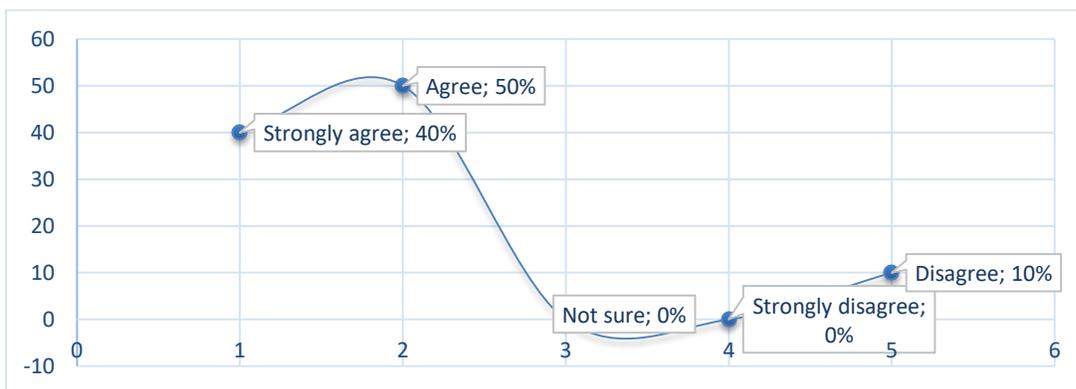


The above figure shows the results of the possibility to develop time management skills through the internship programme. Not only interns start their internship programme with good time management skills but as time goes by, some manage to develop such skills. However, the majority (52%) of the participants agreed and 41% strongly agreed, while 7% were not sure and none strongly disagreed (0%) and disagreed (0%). In conclusion, through internship programme interns can develop time management skills.

### 6.3.10 The impact of internship programme on developing interns to be flexible in the workplace

The study checked whether the internship programme helped develop the interns' flexibility in the work environment. The researcher wanted to know if the participants coped with the dynamics of the job or changing needs of the workplace.

**Figure 19: The impact of internship programme on developing interns to be flexible in the workplace**

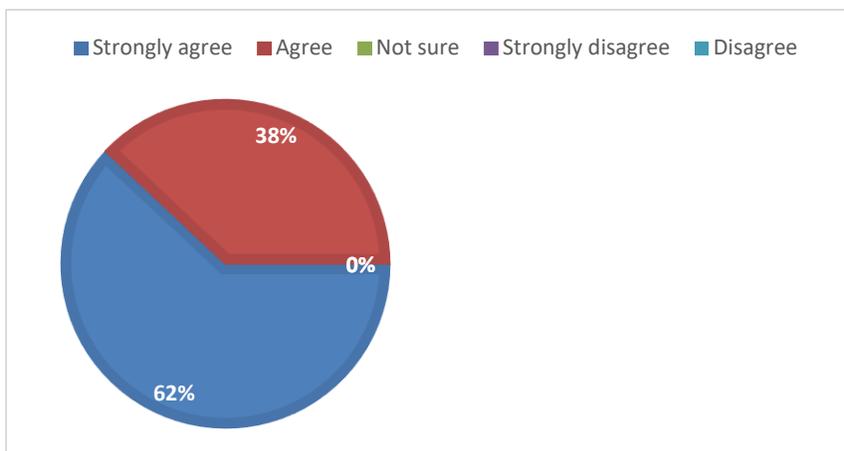


Participants were asked whether the internship programme could help them be flexible in the workplace. The above figure outlines the results and it can be deduced that the majority (50%) of the participants agreed and 40% strongly agreed, while none of the participants were not sure (0%) and strongly disagreeing (0%). However, 10% of the participants disagreed that the internship has an impact on developing interns to be flexible in the workplace. Generally, the internship programme is helpful by making interns flexible by adapting to changes in the workplace.

### 6.3.11 The impact of internship programme on interns' development of passion for work

The impact of the internship programme on making interns develop a passion for work can never be overlooked. On that note, it was necessary to ask participants whether the internship programme could assist them to develop a passion for work and the work environment. The results are portrayed below.

**Figure 20: The impact of internship programme on making interns to develop the passion for work**

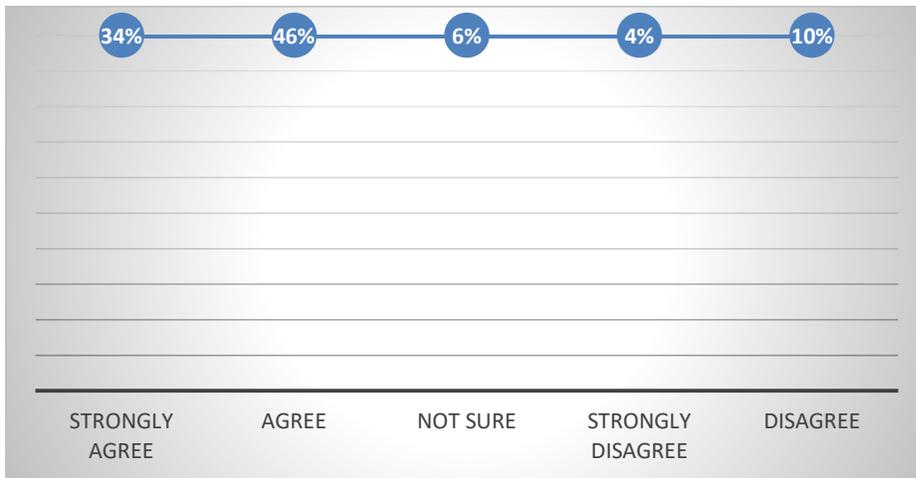


Participants were asked whether the internship programme had the potential for developing their passion for work. The majority (62%) of the participants strongly agreed and 38% agreed, while none of the participants was not sure (0%), strongly disagreed (0%) and disagreed (0%). In conclusion, interns can develop a passion for work because of the internship programme.

### 6.3.12 The impact of internship programme on improving interns' computer skills

Interns can learn or acquire different skills during the internship programme. Amongst other skills interns can learn different ways of using a computer programme such as Microsoft applications - Word, Excel and PowerPoint. The findings are presented below.

**Figure 21: The impact of internship programme on improving interns computer skills**

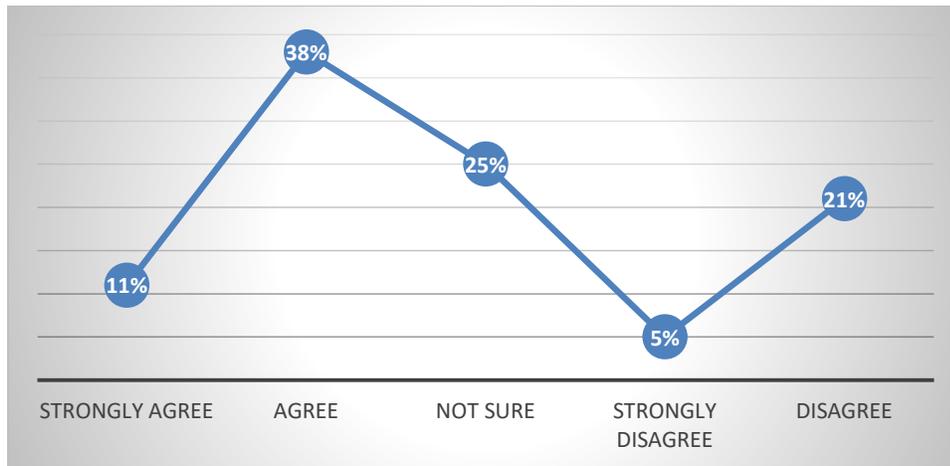


There is a solid consensus that through internship programme interns can acquire or improve some of their computer skills depending on the nature of duties they are carrying out daily. On that note, participants were asked whether the internship programme had the potential to improve their computer skills based on the duties they are performing on a daily basis. Some participants (46%) agreed and others (34%) strongly agreed that they could improve their computers skills, while 6% were not sure. Furthermore, 10% disagreed and another 4% strongly disagreed. In essence, the internship is helpful towards improving an intern's basic computer skills.

### 6.3.13 The internship programme gives me strength for the work

Each work environment is demanding. There is a need for current interns to have the strength for any task that may arise during work hours. The researcher sought to establish whether interns could be physically strong to discharge their responsibilities. The responses are presented below.

**Figure 22: The internship programme gives me strength for the work**

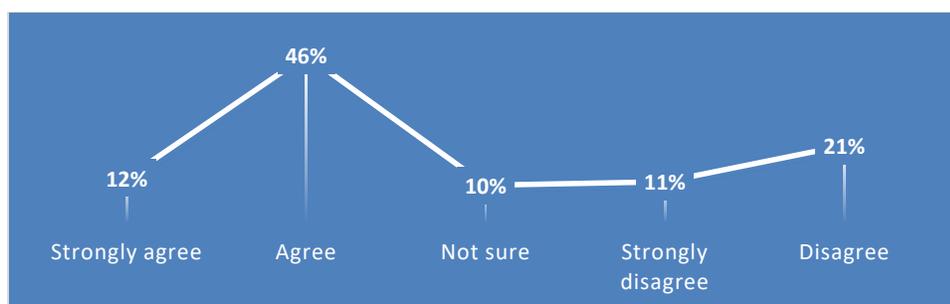


At times, current interns perform duties that require physical strength. Therefore, the researcher wanted to establish whether the internship programme could help strengthen interns in the workplace. It shows that 38% agreed and 11% strongly agreed, while 25% were not sure. Also, 5% strongly disagreed and another 21% disagreed. Therefore, the majority of the participants believe that the internship programme has no potential to make them physically strong.

#### **6.3.14 The internship programme helps me to improve my basic mathematics**

In establishing whether respondents can be able to improve their basic mathematics, the researcher checked if some of the activities interns perform on a daily basis had an impact. The results are demonstrated below.

**Figure 23: The internship programme helps me to improve my basic mathematics**



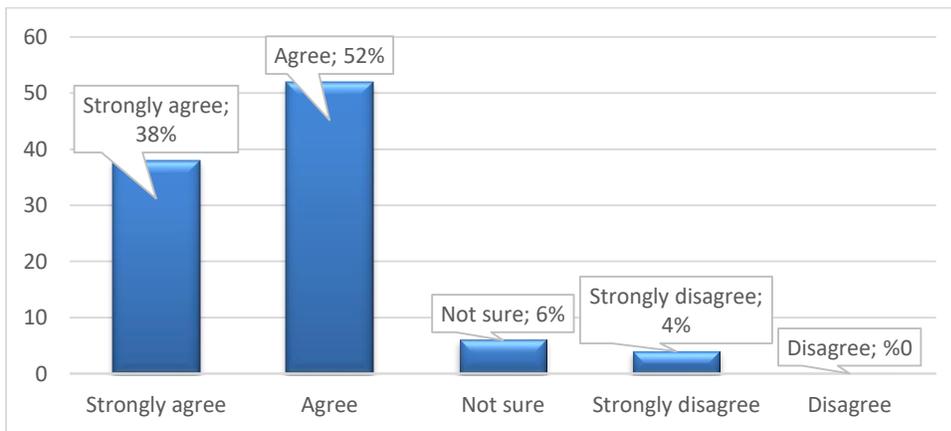
In terms of improving on basic mathematics, the researcher wanted to check whether interns could improve as and when they carried out certain duties daily. Some of the

participants work in sections such as asset management and procurement processes. Therefore, some of their daily activities can assist them to improve because of working with numbers. The results indicate that 46% of the participants agreed and 12% strongly agreed. However, 10% of the participants were not sure while 11% strongly disagreed. Also, 21% of the participants disagreed. Generally, participants believe that through their daily duties they can improve their basic mathematics skills.

### 6.3.15 The internship programme helps me be punctual

Time management is crucial in the workplace. There are deadlines that interns have to meet on a daily basis. If participants cannot use their time properly, they will appear incompetent. The researcher checked whether the internship programme assisted interns with being punctual both when working on deadlines and arriving at work. The results are presented below.

**Figure 24: The internship programme helps me be punctual**

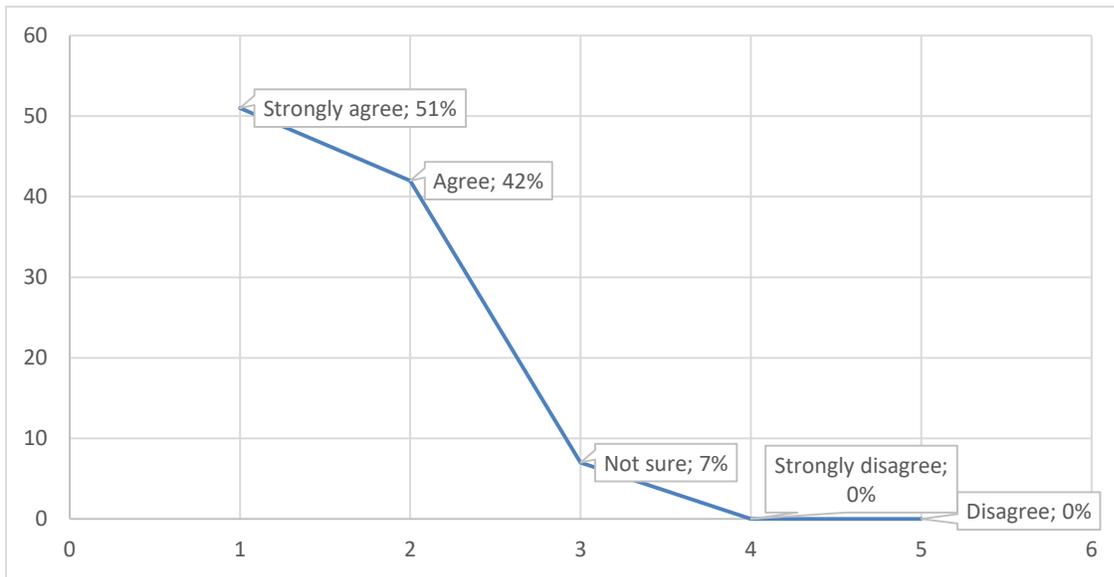


Participants were asked whether the internship programme can help them to be punctual when they come to work daily. The results indicate that majority (52%) of the participants agreed and 38% of them strongly agreed. While others (6%) were not sure and the other 4% of participants strongly disagreed. Furthermore, none of the participants disagreed (0%), In conclusion, an internship programme has the potential to develop interns to be punctual public servants.

### 6.3.16 The internship programme helps me gain knowledge about the work environment

The results of the study showed that the internship programme helped interns gain more knowledge about the work environment. The researcher sought perceptions from different participants as presented below.

**Figure 25: The internship programme helps me to have knowledge about the work environment**

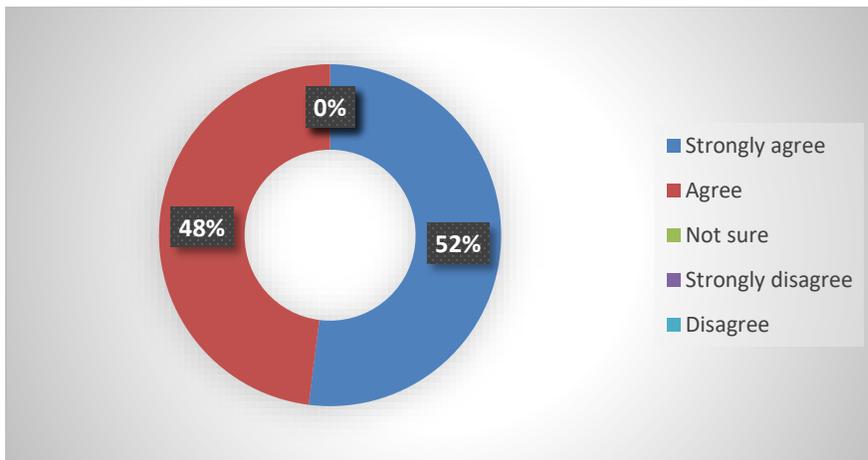


Generally, it can be argued that most of the interns join their host institutions with or without little knowledge of how public institutions operate. Once they start working, they develop certain knowledge that cannot be attained from the classroom. Participants were asked if the internship programme served as the opportunity to gain knowledge about the work environment. The majority (51%) of the participants strongly agreed and 42% agreed, while 7% were not sure. However, none (0%) of them strongly disagreed and disagreed. Generally, the internship programme is seen as the platform to get knowledge about the work environment.

### 6.3.17 The impact of internship programme on developing interns' communication skills

The impact of the internship programme on developing communication skills is important. The researcher needed to understand the impact of internship on such. The results are presented as follows.

**Figure 26: The impact of internship programme on developing interns' communication skills**

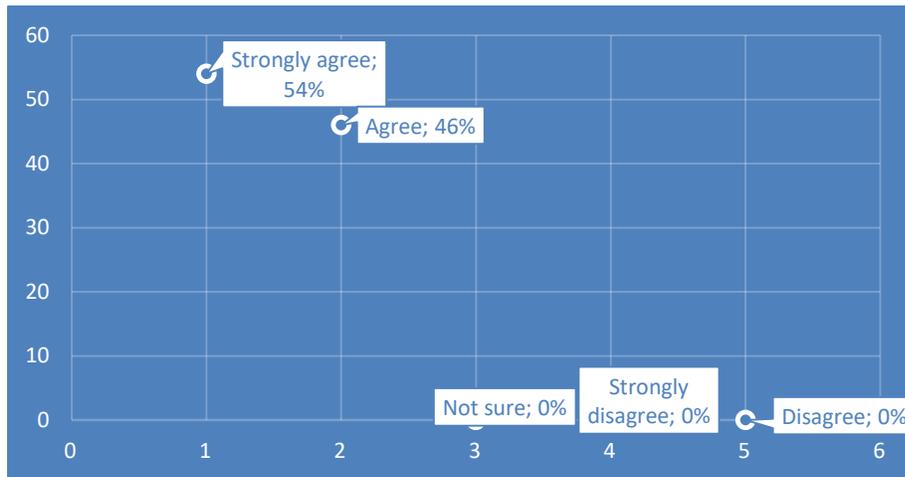


Having professional communication skills in the workplace is one of the important elements that each intern must develop. How interns communicate outside the workplace will differ from how they communicate in the workplace. Therefore, participants were asked whether the internship programme could assist them to develop communication (read, speak and write) in their respective departments. In that vein, 52% strongly agreed and 48% agreed. Furthermore, none (0%) of the participants were not sure, strongly disagreed and disagreed. Therefore, the internship programme can help interns to develop communication skills.

### 6.3.18 The internship programme helps me prioritise my work duties

How interns conduct themselves in the workplace may be different from how they conduct themselves outside the workplace. Therefore, interns need to understand that they must always prioritise their work particularly when they are on duty. The researcher needed to probe such a question and the results are as follows.

**Figure 27: The internship programme helps me prioritise my work duties**

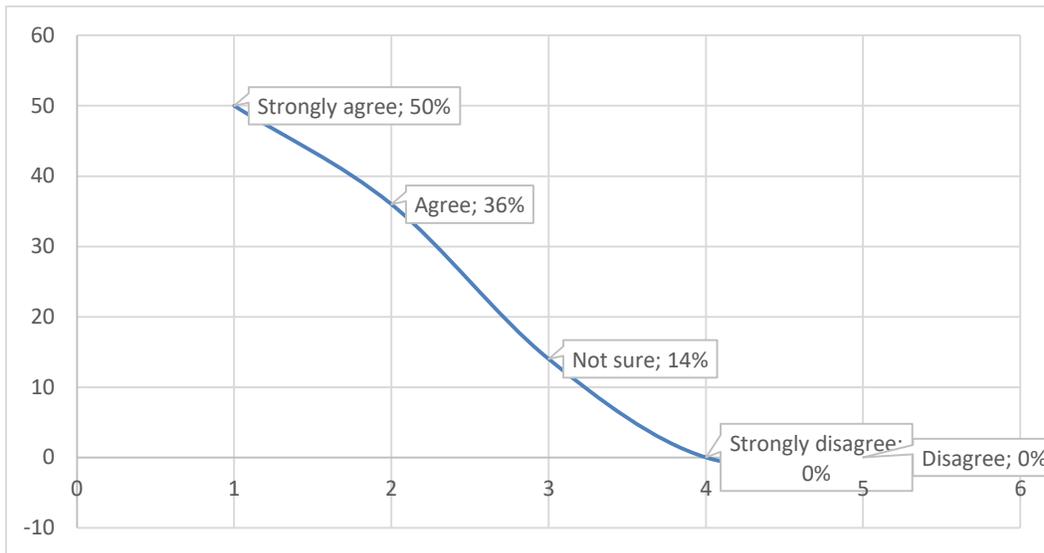


Interns must understand that in the workplace their daily duties must be a priority before they can do any other activity that is out of the scope of their work. For example, interns cannot socialise while there is a pending task that needs their attention. Therefore, participants were asked whether the internship programme could help them prioritise their work. The majority (54%) of the participants strongly agreed and 46% agreed, while none of the participants was not sure (0%), strongly disagreed (0%) and disagreed (0%). Therefore, the internship programme can make interns prioritise their work.

### **6.3.19 The internship programme can help me develop some reporting skills**

The researcher sought to establish whether the internship programme could assist interns to develop reporting skills. Participants demonstrated their perceptions in the questionnaire and their responses are indicated below.

**Figure 28: The internship programme can help me to develop some reporting skills**



Sometimes interns join their respective departments without knowing formal ways of reporting certain things to their line managers and other colleagues. Therefore, the researcher needed to understand whether the internship programme had the potential to develop reporting skills among interns. The majority (50%) strongly agreed and 36% agreed. However, 14% were not sure, while none (0%) strongly disagreed and disagreed. In conclusion, through internship programme interns can develop reporting skills.

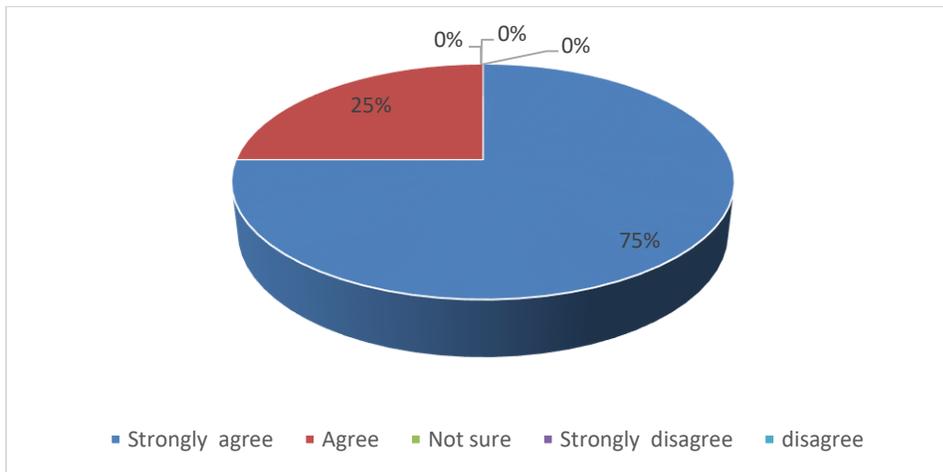
#### **6.4 REASONS FOR WORKING AS INTERN AND OPPORTUNITIES THEREIN**

The section provides an in-depth understanding of the factors that influenced the participants to consider working as interns and the opportunities associated with the internship programme, particularly in the three selected government departments. The study obtained information from participants in line with the objectives and aim. The information came in handy for developing possible recommendations for future reference. The figures below represent the different perceptions studied.

#### 6.4.1 I work as an intern to gain experience, knowledge and skills

The study established reasons for participants working as interns, and among them were prospects of gaining experience, knowledge and skills. The figure below makes a representation.

**Figure 29: I work as an intern to gain experience, knowledge and skills**

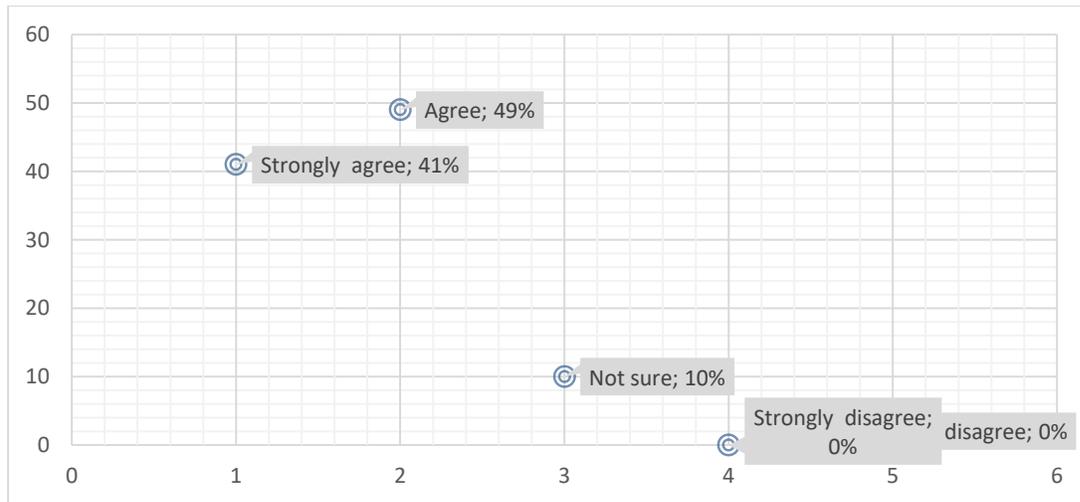


Some of the interns graduate from university without any knowledge, experience and skills. Therefore, they work as interns to gain such. The majority (75%) strongly agreed and 25% agreed. However, none (0%) were not sure, strongly disagreed and disagreed. Generally, all participants work as interns to gain experience, knowledge and skills.

#### 6.4.2 I work as an intern as passion for serving the public

The study established whether the participants worked as interns because of their passion for serving the public, and participants responded as follows.

**Figure 30: I work as an intern as passion for serving the public**

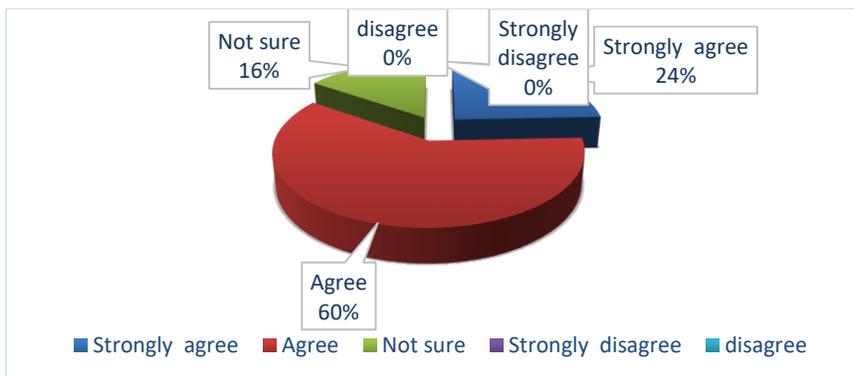


From the three selected government departments, participants were asked if they worked because of the passion to serve the public. Notably, 41% strongly agreed and 49% agreed. Furthermore, 10% were not sure, while none (0%) strongly disagreed and disagreed. Therefore, most interns work because of the passion they have to serve the public.

#### **6.4.3 I work as an intern to meet diverse people and create network**

Respondents were asked whether they were working as interns because they saw it as an opportunity to meet diverse people and create a network.

**Figure 31: I work as an intern to meet diverse people and create network**

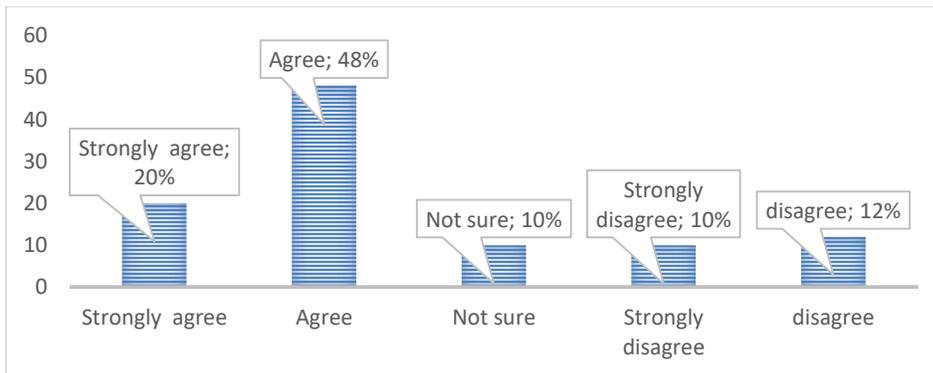


The results show that 19% strongly agreed and 47% agreed, while 12% were not sure. Also, 10% strongly disagreed and 12% disagreed. Generally, the majority of the participants create a network and meet diverse people during internship programme.

#### 6.4.4 I work as intern to prepare myself for the corporate world

The researcher asked whether participants had decided to work as interns with the hope that the internship programme could prepare them for the corporate world.

**Figure 32: I work as intern to prepare myself for the corporate world**

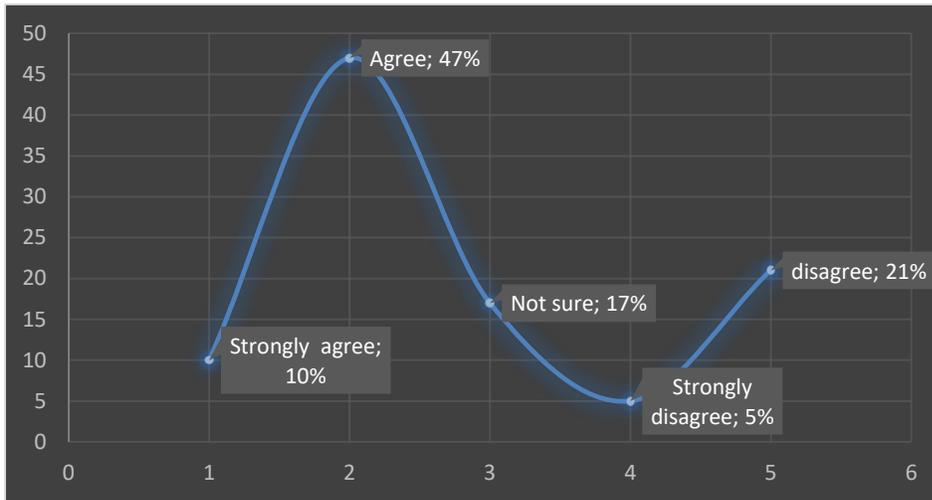


The above figure demonstrates the perceptions of the respondents about preparing themselves for the corporate world. The results indicate that 20% strongly agreed and 48% agreed, while 10 % were not sure and the other participants (10%) strongly disagreed and 12% disagreed. It shows that the majority of the participants are preparing themselves for the corporate world through the internship programme.

#### 6.4.5 I work as an intern because of the source of income

The study probed if the interns' motive was about generating income to maintain their standard of living. It is because some interns may work not necessarily to gain income as a priority but get exposure and experience.

**Figure 33: I work as an intern because of the source of income**

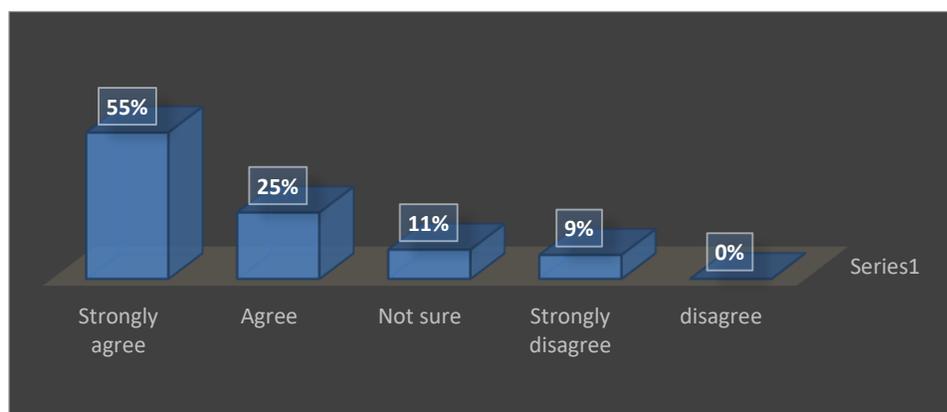


The study probed the perceptions of different respondents in terms of their motive for taking up an internship programme - whether as a source of income or not. The findings show that 10% strongly agreed and 47% agreed, while 17% were not sure. Furthermore, 5% strongly disagreed and 21% disagreed. Therefore, the majority of the participants take internship programmes to gain an income.

#### **6.4.6 I work as an intern because it is not easy to get a job without work experience**

A common assumption is that it is not easy to get a job in the South African public and private sectors without experience. The study sought to check whether the same perception was held by the participants (interns).

**Figure 34: I work as an intern because it is not easy to get a job without work experience**

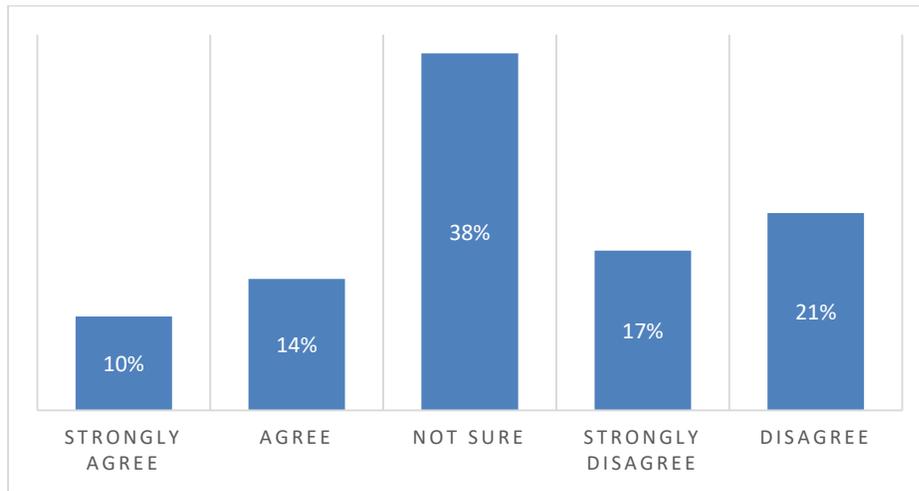


Participants were asked whether they took up an internship because it was not easy to get a job without work experience. The findings showed that 55% strongly agreed and 25% agreed, while 11% were not sure and 9% strongly disagreed. Furthermore, none of the participants disagreed (0%). Therefore, the majority of the participants use internships to gain experience because they believe that it is not easy to get a job without work experience.

#### **6.4.7 I work because some previous interns were offered employment at the host department after completing the internship programme**

There is a trend of interns being absorbed into the same departments they served. The study wanted to find out whether the participants decided to take up an internship because some of the previous interns were offered work at their host departments after completing the internship programme. The findings are presented below.

**Figure 35: I work because some of the previous interns were offered employment at the host department after completing the internship programme**



The results indicated that 10% of the participants strongly agreed that they took up internship because previous interns were offered employment at their host departments after completing the programme and 14% agreed, while 38% were not sure. Also, 17% of the participants strongly disagreed and others (21%) disagreed. Therefore, the majority of the interns are interning not because they were encouraged by previous interns who secured permanent posts after the internship programme.

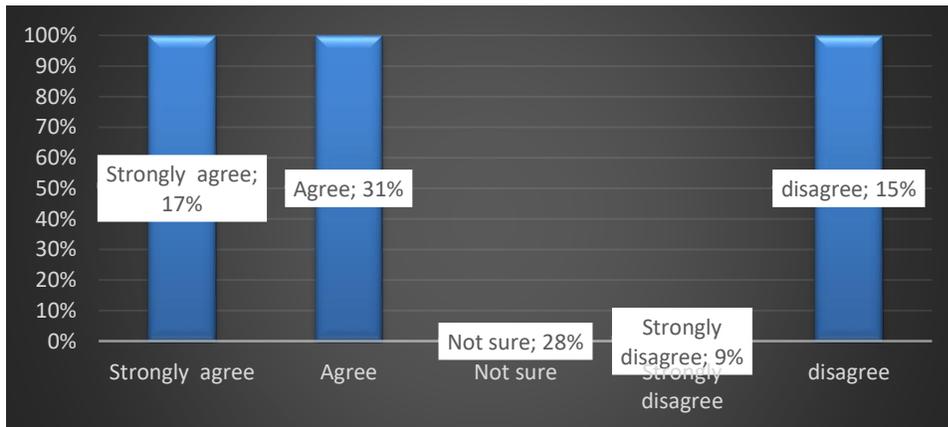
## **6.5 PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE NATURE OF INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE DEPARTMENT**

The study obtained information from the participants in all the three selected government departments to understand how participants perceived the nature of the internship programme and skills development opportunities in their respective departments.

### **6.5.1 The stipend of the internship programme is not enough**

The study probed the perceptions of the respondents about the sufficiency of stipend they were receiving every month. Secondly, the study checked whether participants were more interested in the amount of stipend or gaining work experience.

**Figure 36: The stipend of the internship programme is not enough**

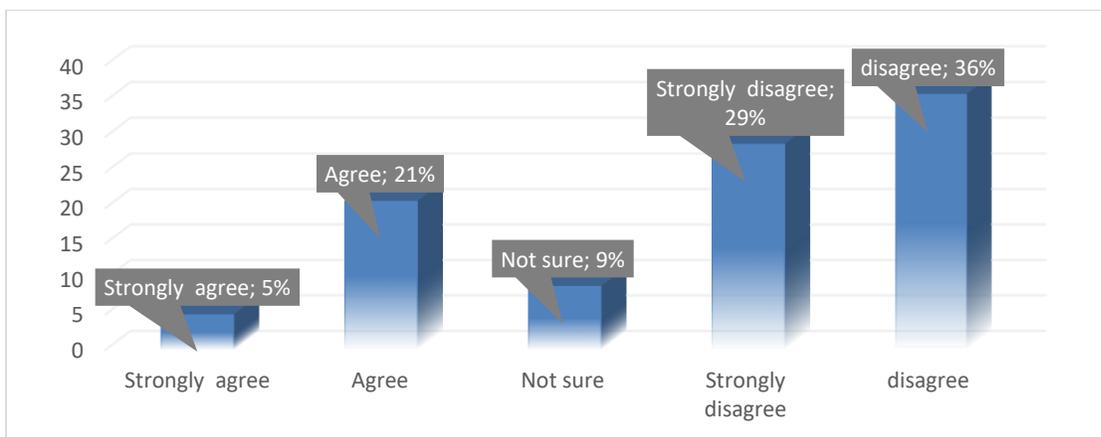


Probing whether the stipend is sufficient or not, 17% of the participants strongly agreed and 31% agreed, while 28% were not sure and 9% strongly disagreed, 15% disagreed. It can be concluded that the majority of the participants are not satisfied with the amount of stipend in their respective departments.

### 6.5.2 The amount of stipend sometimes demotivates me to perform my duties

The study sought to establish whether the amount of stipend demotivated participants to perform better in the workplace.

**Figure 37: The amount of stipend sometimes demotivates me to perform my duties**



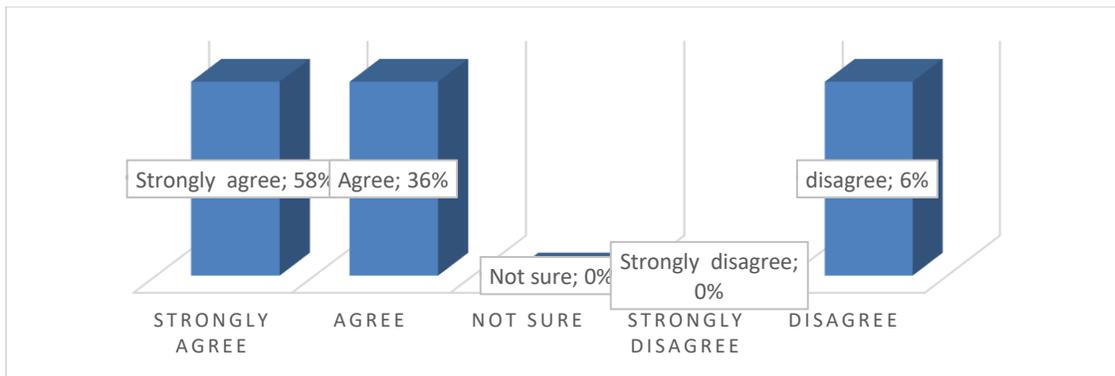
Sometimes interns in the South African public institutions complain about the amount of stipend that they are receiving every month. To a large extent, some claim that the cost of living is too high. On that note, participants were asked whether the amount of stipend

could potentially demotivate them. In essence, 21% of the participants agreed and 5% strongly agreed, while 9% were not sure. Furthermore, 29% strongly disagreed and 36% disagreed. In conclusion, the amount of stipend does not have much influence on demotivating interns in the workplace.

### 6.5.3 The internship programme can make me to be more competent in the near future

To understand whether the internship programme can enhance the respondents' competence in the near future, the study probed participants' perspectives.

**Figure 38: The internship programme can make me to be more competent in the near future**

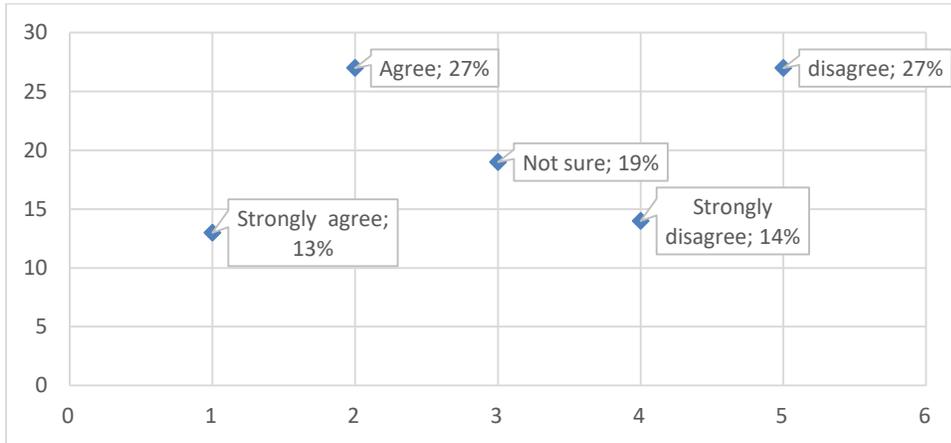


The above figure indicates the responses to the question about whether the internship programme can develop participants' competencies in the near future. The majority (58%) strongly agreed and 36% agreed, while 6% disagreed. However, none of the participants were not sure (0%) and strongly disagreed (0%). In conclusion, interns work to be competent in the near future.

### 6.5.4 The department provides interns with enough support in terms of training and workshops

The study established whether the three selected government departments provided enough support to their interns in terms of training and workshops. The findings are presented below.

**Figure 39: The department provides interns with enough support in terms of training and workshops**

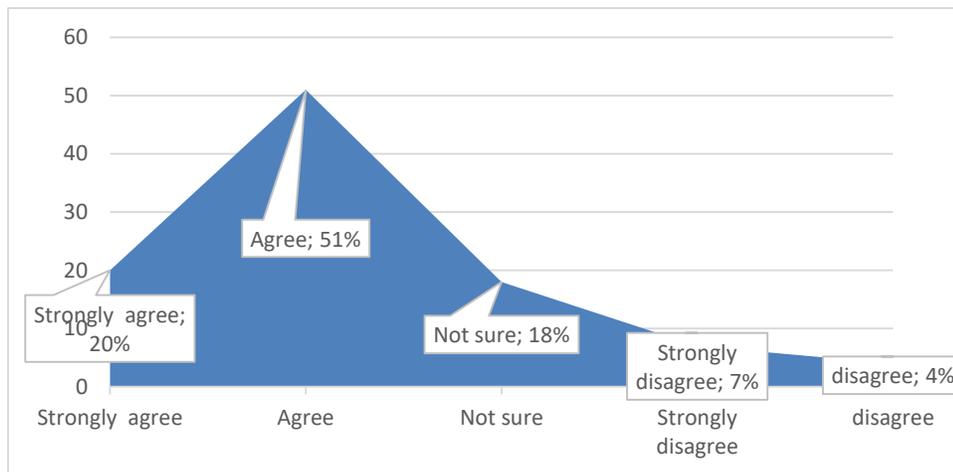


Attempting to establish whether the departments provided enough support to their interns in terms of training and workshops to gain more knowledge and skills, the study found that 13% of the participants strongly agreed and 27% agreed. Also, 19% were not sure and 14% strongly disagreed while 27% disagreed. In conclusion, the departments are not giving interns enough support in terms of training and workshops. It is worth noting that development training and workshop could boost interns' performance.

#### **6.5.5 The interns' satisfaction about the nature of duties they are performing during work hours as per the job description**

It is always necessary to understand and check whether interns are really satisfied with the nature of duties that they are carrying out during work hours as per the job description.

**Figure 40: The intern's satisfaction about the nature of duties they are performing during work hours as per the job description**

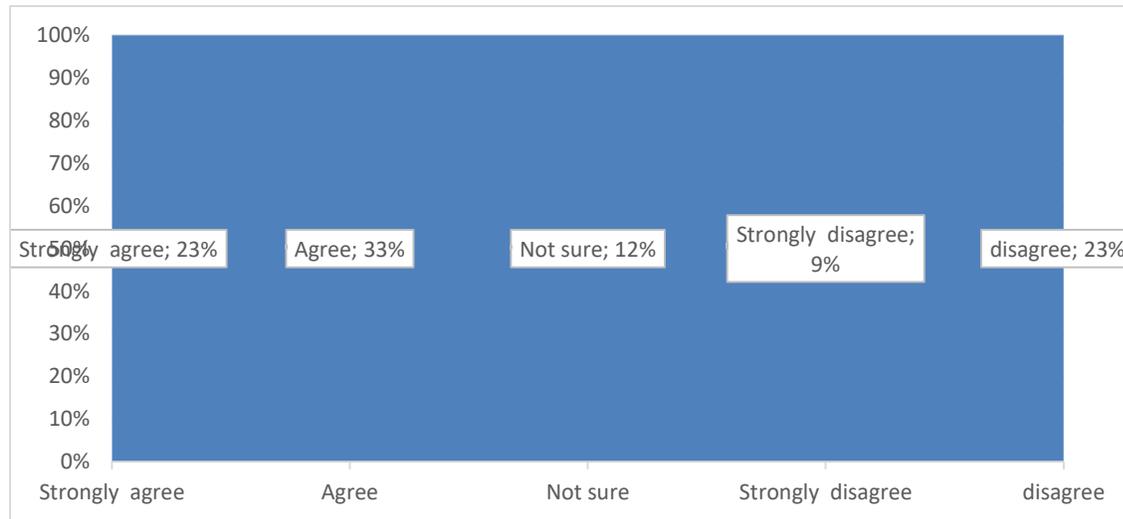


At times interns may express some dissatisfactions about the nature of duties they are performing on a daily basis, particularly when they are given tasks that are not in line with their job description. Therefore, the study needed to check whether interns were satisfied with being given tasks out of their scope. The findings show that 20% of the participants strongly agreed and 51% agreed that they were satisfied with the nature of duties they performed during work hours. Furthermore, 18% were not sure, while 7% strongly disagreed. However, 4% disagreed that they were not satisfied with being given tasks out of their scope. In conclusion, the majority are satisfied with the nature of duties they are performing in their respective departments.

### **6.5.6 The duration of the internship programme is sufficient for one to acquire knowledge and experience**

The study also probed whether participants were satisfied with the duration of their internship programme for their development. The results are presented below.

**Figure 41: The duration of the internship programme is sufficient for one to acquire knowledge and experience**

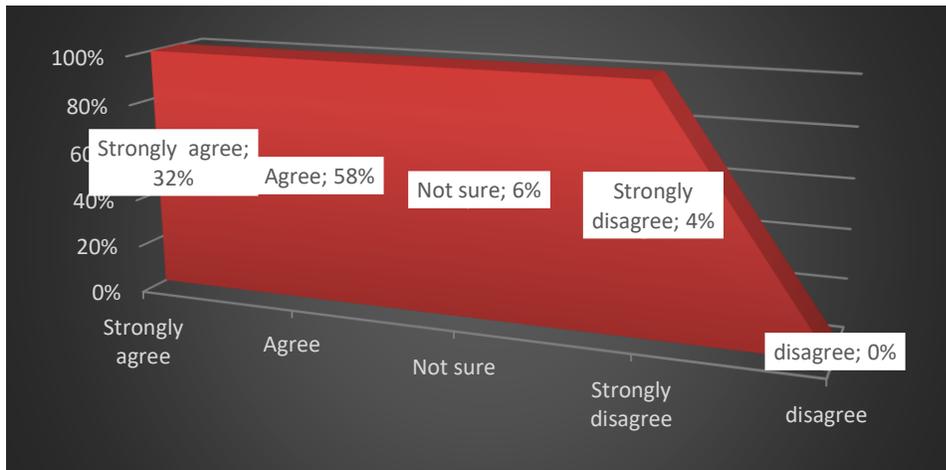


The findings show that 23% of the participants strongly agreed and 33% agreed. Arguably, 12% of the participants were not sure and 9% strongly disagreed, while 23% disagreed. The study needed to ascertain the assumption by some interns who said a year was not enough for their professional development. The study ratifies, from the findings, that the internship duration is now sufficient in the three selected government departments since it has been extended to two years since 2019.

**6.5.7 I have learnt a lot ever since I started working as an intern**

The study measured whether interns have learnt diverse activities ever since they have started working. The aim was to establish if all interns in the same situation could work for two years and learn a lot of activities. The findings are presented below.

**Figure 42: I have learnt a lot ever since I started working as an intern**



The majority of 58% agreed and 32% strongly agreed. Furthermore, 6% was not sure and 4% strongly disagreed. None of the participants disagreed (0%) that they have learnt a lot ever since started working as an intern. The study sought to check the rate at which participants learnt some of the work activities that could assist them to gain more knowledge and experience about how public institutions function. In essence, the findings show that the majority of the participants have learnt a lot. Therefore, the study proved it to be true as some interns highlighted that they rotated in different sections after every three months and when there was a need.

### **6.5.8 Something that current interns wish could be changed**

The question aimed at establishing the perceptions of the interns about the experiences and challenges of their workplaces and what they assumed could work for the better of their development. Notably, some of the participants claimed that after the internship programme they ought to be given permanent posts because some of the directorates in their host departments were understaffed. Furthermore, participants highlighted that the internship programme should be extended to three years. Again, others wanted to be allowed to perform all duties. Also, participants wanted to be given first preference when their departments advertise posts, particularly after they shall have completed the internship. Moreover, some participants claimed that their mentors used them for petty roles such as preparing tea for visitors. A lack of regular monitoring of interns' performance was also a concern.

Participants also highlighted that their working stations (offices) were too small to be occupied by all the interns. Therefore, they needed more offices to work conductively. In the same breath, other participants indicated that they needed more training programmes and workshops, particularly those in procurement and PERSAL services. Furthermore, participants said senior managers should intervene as some of the daily duties were not developing them in any way. Again, some of the participants were not satisfied with how their line managers and mentors delegated their duties to them.

Amongst other things, participants indicated that the stipend was not sufficient and for various reasons, it should be increased. However, others claimed that interns should be registered with the Unemployment Insurance Fund while others highlighted that their job description was not clearly outlined. Furthermore, some of the interns claimed that they did not normally receive certificates of competency, particularly after attending training on Basic Accounting System (BAS). Therefore, it is a disadvantage as they did not have any proof of such competencies.

Also, participants indicated that their colleagues sometimes did not welcome them with courtesy and, therefore, felt not belonging. On the other hand, participants claimed that mentors and senior managers should improve their communication skills and particularly learn to communicate tasks on time to avoid exerting unnecessary pressure on interns. Since rotation was not consistent, some of the participants indicated that they wanted to be rotated to other sections to be exposed to different job activities and learn new skills.

However, the findings also showed that some of their mentors were always emotional and, to a large extent, interns could not tolerate such a tendency. It was also noted that mentors tended to shift responsibility to interns when some of the work activities were not performed properly.

In conclusion, some of the participants were not satisfied with the structure of the internship, highlighting important aspects that they wished could be changed in their internship programme. In contrast, some participants were satisfied with how the internship programme was structured.

## **6.6 SECTION B: DATA COLLECTED FROM PREVIOUS INTERNS**

Data collected through questionnaires were obtained from current interns in the three selected Limpopo Provincial departments: i.e. the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, Department of Education, and Department of Provincial Treasury. The questionnaire probed demographic information of the respondents, education and training, employment status, the impact of the internship programme on skills development, reasons for working as an intern and opportunities that came with the internship programme. The questionnaire further probed perceptions about the nature of the internship programme and skills development opportunities in the two government departments that had a representation of previous interns. Also, the questionnaire probed a question to check if there were some of the things that current interns wished they could change about the internship programme. The section below provides responses from previous interns.

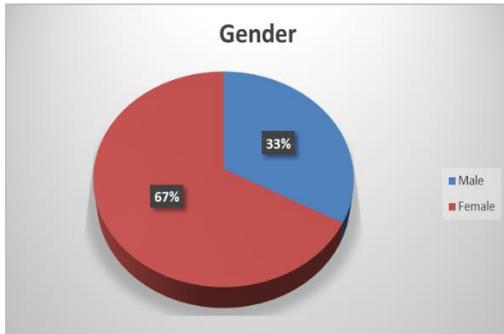
### **6.6.1 Demographic Information**

The presentation and analysis of this study begin by presenting the demographic information of the respondents. The demographic information of the respondents includes the gender of the respondents, ethnic group, age group, respondents' province of origin, home language, marital status, education and training, employment status and the duration current interns have been working. The information provided a clear picture of the type of respondents the researcher engaged. It also helped to determine the reasons for a variety of responses that were influenced by demographic factors. The results of the demographic information are demonstrated below.

#### *6.6.1.1 Gender*

Probing gender in this study is important because it helps the researcher to determine the male and female-dominant of previous interns within the selected government departments in Limpopo Province. The gender profile of the respondents is presented below.

**Figure 43: Gender of the respondents**

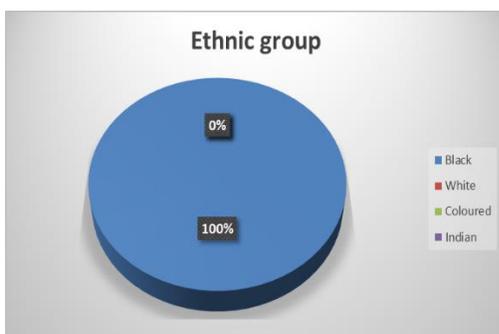


The data collected from previous interns shows that female participants were more than male participants. However, 67% of the female participants managed to share their views about the impact of the internship programme on skills development and 33% of the respondents were males. It can be acknowledged that with previous interns, female participants dominated the study with specific reference to the selected government departments.

#### *6.6.1.2 Ethnic/ historical racial groups*

The study also checked the number of representation in terms of each ethnic group within the selected government departments and the findings are as follows.

**Figure 44: Ethnic/ historical racial groups**

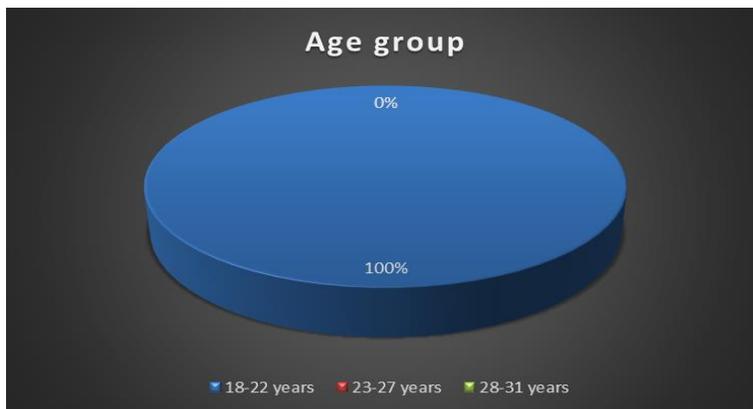


Previous interns from the two selected government departments shared their views about the impact of internship programme on skills development in their former host departments and 100% were Black while White, Coloured and Indians were represented at 0%.

### 6.6.1.3 Age group

The age of the respondents often determines the person's knowledge or experience in a particular field of work. Participants from a different age group are more likely to respond differently to the same question in a similar context. The age group of the respondents in this regard is as follows.

**Figure 45: Age group**

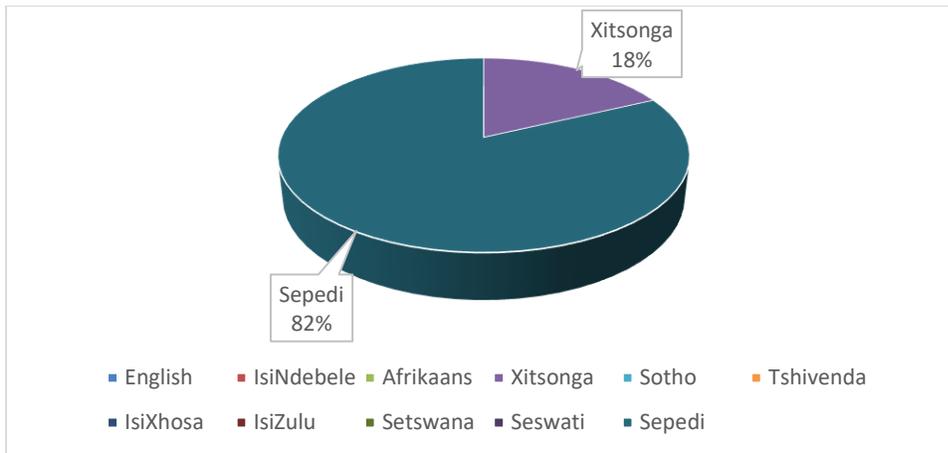


Based on the findings of the study, 100% of the participants were between the ages of 18 and 22 while those between 23 and 27, and 28-35 were at 0%. Only one age group participated in the study.

### 6.6.1.4 Respondents' provinces of origin

It was necessary for the researcher to probe a question about the provinces were the participants are coming from. The aim is to have a clear picture of the participants that the researcher is dealing with. This is also significant for the study to find out the statistics of where the participants are coming from in terms of province of origin. The results are presented below.

**Figure 46: Respondents' provinces of origin**

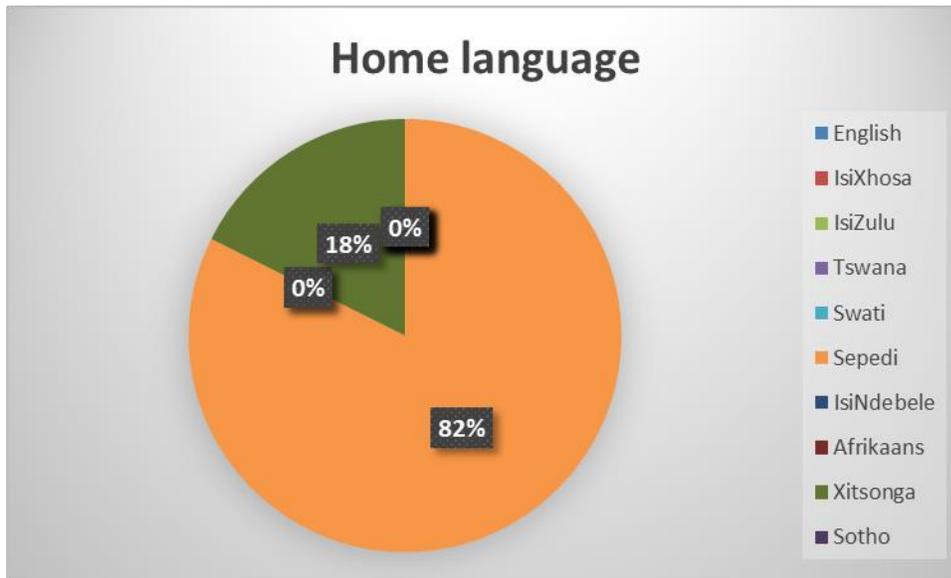


According to the findings, not all provinces were represented in the study, with specific reference to previous interns. Out of nine provinces, only three were represented with the Western Cape at 1%, Mpumalanga at 13% and Limpopo dominating at 86%. Therefore, it can be concluded that most of the previous interns in the selected three government departments are from Limpopo Province.

#### *6.6.1.5 Home language*

Knowing the home language of any person sets precedence about their culture and overall background. A Sepedi speaking person may respond differently to the same question compared to other speakers and vice versa such as Tshivenda, siSwati, IsiXhosa, IsiZulu, IsiNdebele, Xitsonga, Sesotho, Setswana, Afrikaans and English. The figure below details the languages of the respondents in this study.

**Figure 47: Home language**

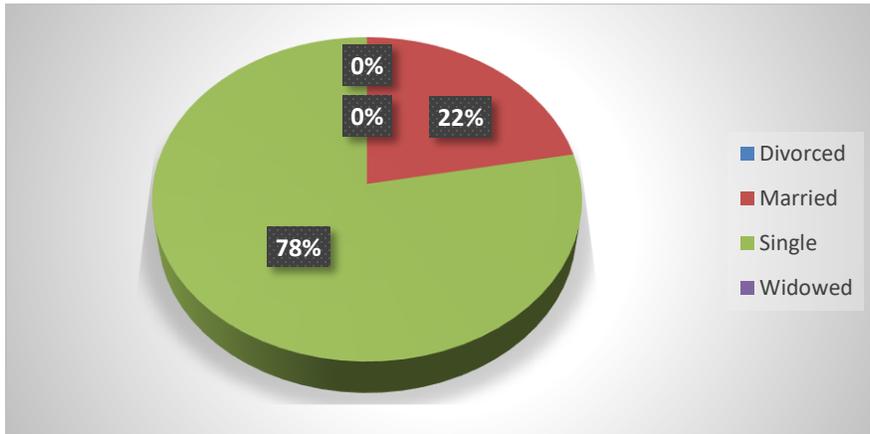


The data collection instrument comprised 11 official languages spoken in South Africa and the study probed previous interns, who were expected to tick their respective home languages in the questionnaire provided. In line with the findings, participants who took part in the study spoke only two official languages. The majority at 82% Sepedi speakers and the minority at 18% were Xitsonga speakers as their home languages. Therefore, the rest of the other official languages in South Africa were not represented.

#### *6.6.1.6 Marital status*

The responses provided by the participants in the questionnaires are often determined by their social status and standing in society. The study established this assertion among the respondents in the study. The marital status of the respondents is presented as follows.

**Figure 48: Marital status**

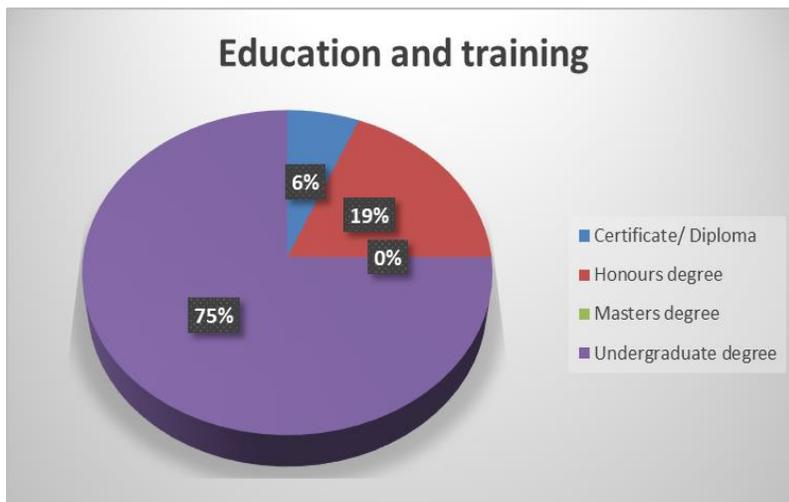


In this study, eight (8) previous interns participated and the majority (78%) were single while 22% are married. Furthermore, none of the participants was a widow (0%) or divorcee (0%). Therefore, single participants dominated the study.

*6.6.1.7 Education and training / highest qualification*

The level of formal education helps validate data collected and the study established the academic background of the respondents within the selected government departments by asking about their highest education and training to understand various perspectives on the same issue.

**Figure 49: Education and training / highest qualification**



Participants were asked to indicate their education and training/ highest qualification in the questionnaire. As such, the findings showed that participants with a diploma and certificate were at 6%, honours degrees at 19% while those with undergraduate qualifications were at 75%. None of the participants had master’s (0%) or doctoral (0%) qualifications. It can be deduced that the majority of the participants held undergraduate qualifications.

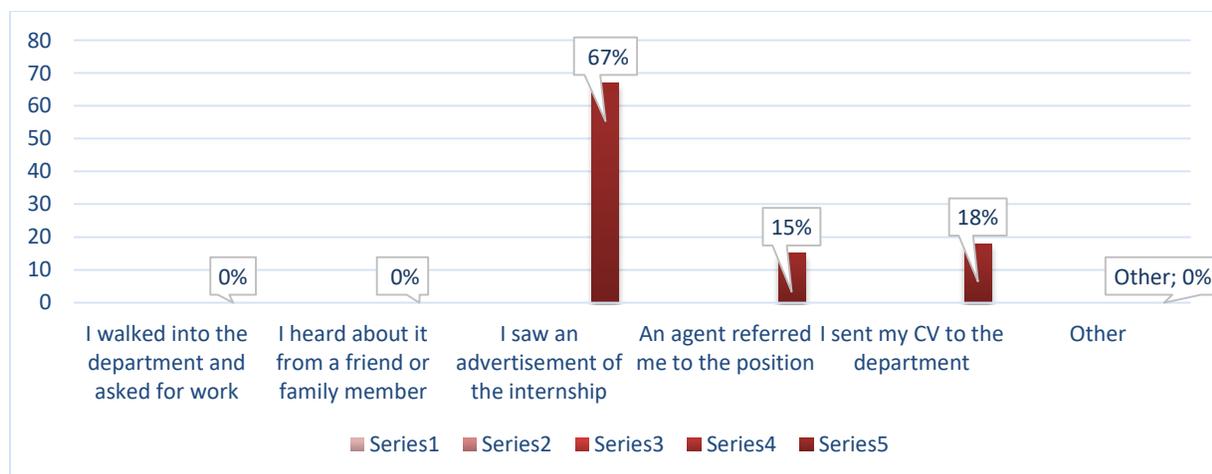
#### 6.6.1.8 Employment status

The demographic information of the respondents includes the ways in which the previous interns heard about the availability of the internship programme at their former host departments, the duration previous interns have worked and the sections, units or divisions they worked in. The employment status of the respondents is presented below:

#### 6.6.1.9 How did previous interns hear about the availability of the internship programme at the departments they once worked at?

The study sought to establish ways in which graduates find out about internship posts in public institutions. The information also helps in establishing how public institutions advertise internship posts. The figure below shows how participants heard about the availability of internship programmes in the three selected government departments being studied.

**Figure 50: How did previous interns hear about the availability of the internship programme at the departments they once worked at?**

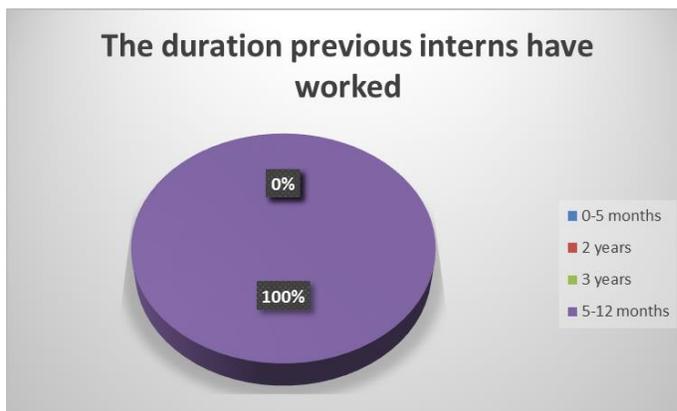


Internship posts are advertised every year by various government departments in Limpopo Province using various platforms. The findings indicate that 67% of the participants applied after seeing the internship advertisement while 18% sent curriculum vitae directly to their former host departments and 15% got the internship through an agent who referred them to the position in the three government departments. Generally, it can be concluded that the majority (67%) of the participants saw the advertisement of the internship through different platforms such as notice boards, website and newspapers.

#### 6.6.1.10 The period previous interns have worked

Work experience is determined by the duration one spends on the job. Often, the longer one works, the more they get exposed and gain multiple skills and new knowledge in the job, and generally. For instance, a respondent who has worked for five months in an institution may respond to questions differently compared to one who has worked for 12 months. Therefore, establishing the duration of interns being interviewed was important for this study. The findings are presented below.

**Figure 51: The period previous interns have worked**



The impact of the internship programme on skills development is determined by the period an intern worked in that particular department. In essence, all (100%) participants have worked for 12 months in their respective departments. Therefore, none of them worked for 0-5 months (0%), 2 years (0%) or 3 years (0%).

#### *6.6.1.11 The unit, section or division previous interns worked under*

Each division in an institution develops the interns' skills and knowledge differently. Since the participants in this study worked in different units at the three selected government departments, their exposure and experiences were bound to differ. Therefore, their perception of the impact of the internship programme on skills development was different. Hence, a participant in supply chain management had a different experience from one in finance as well as the other in employee utilisation and capacity building. Therefore, during the data analysis stage, the researcher found that participants were working in the following directorates: Human Resources Development, Sport and Recreation, Governance and Legal Services, Library and Archives Services, Museum and Heritage, and School Sport Section. In essence, most of the previous interns worked under the Human Resources Development section.

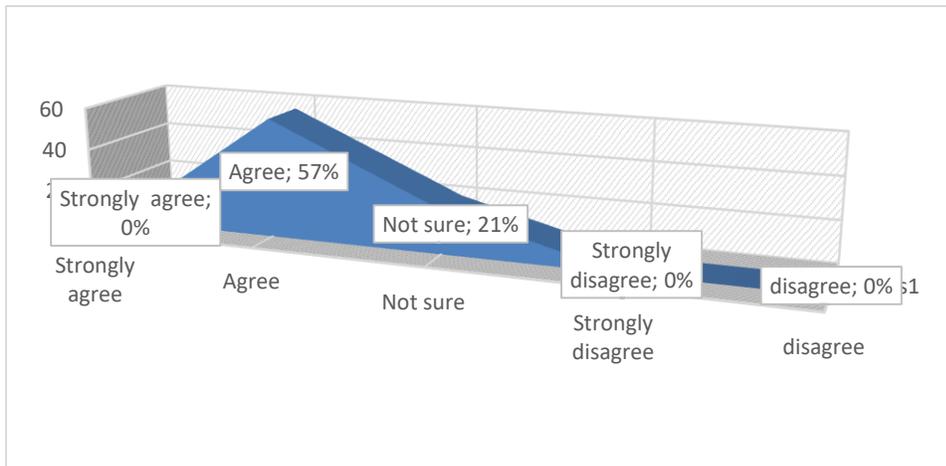
### **6.7 THE IMPACT OF INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME ON SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**

The section aimed to establish an in-depth understanding of the impact of the internship programme on skills development, particularly in the three selected government departments. The question also helped the researcher to obtain information that guided the study in terms of establishing and developing possible recommendations for future reference. The figures below show the impact of the internship programme on skills development in the three government departments.

#### **6.7.1 My previous work as an intern helped me to develop oral and presentation skills**

The importance of probing a question in this section was to establish the impact of internship programme towards developing the oral and presentation skills of the previous interns.

**Figure 52: My previous work as an intern helped me to develop oral and presentation skills**

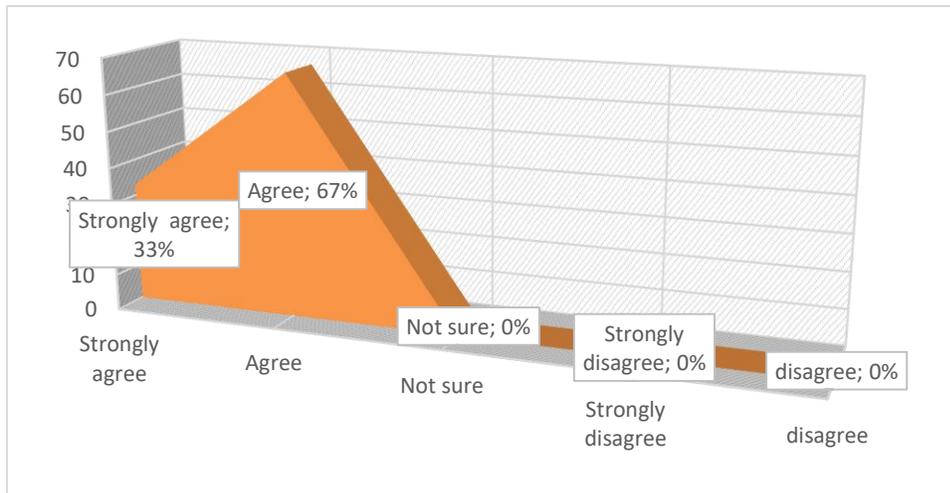


Generally, some interns lack presentation and oral skills. Therefore, during the internship programme interns present and speak in front of their colleagues during workshops and conferences where some could be able to improve such skills. Therefore, this question necessitates the researcher to probe a question about the impact of internship programme developing oral and presentation skills. Nevertheless, 22% of them strongly agreed that the internship programme helped them to develop oral and presentation skills, 57% agreed that the internship programme helped them to develop oral and presentation skills and only 21% claim that they are not sure. None of the participants strongly disagreed (0%) and disagreed (0%) that the internship programme helped them to develop oral and presentation skills. In conclusion, it is clear that majority agree that the internship programme helped them develop such skills. Therefore, internship programme have impact on developing interns oral and presentation skills.

### **6.7.2 The impact of internship programme on enhancing interns creativity skills**

The impact of internship programme on enhancing intern's creativity skills was necessary to be probed in this study. Simply, because the internship programme is likely to add impact on the way in which the intern is thinking and dealing with the day to day activities.

**Figure 53: The impact of internship programme on enhancing intern's creativity skills**

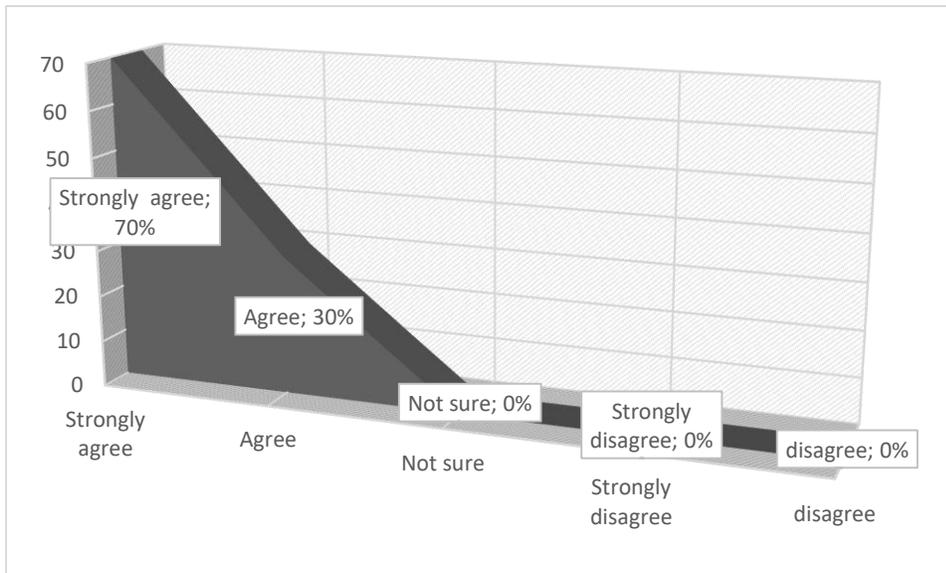


With regard to whether the internship programme in their former host departments helped participants in any way to enhance some of their creativity skills. 33% of the participants strongly agreed that the internship programme helped them to enhance some of their creativity skills while 67% agreed. Furthermore, none of the participants were not sure (0%) and 0% of the participants strongly disagreed and disagreed (0%) that the internship programme helped them to enhance creativity skills. This suggests that through the internship programme participants were able to enhance some of their creativity skills.

### **6.7.3 The impact of internship programme on developing problem solving skills**

Each and every day participants were doing specific activities. Some of the activities were a bit challenging and requiring participants to develop some problem solving skills. Therefore, the findings are presented below.

**Figure 54: The impact of internship programme on developing problem solving skills**

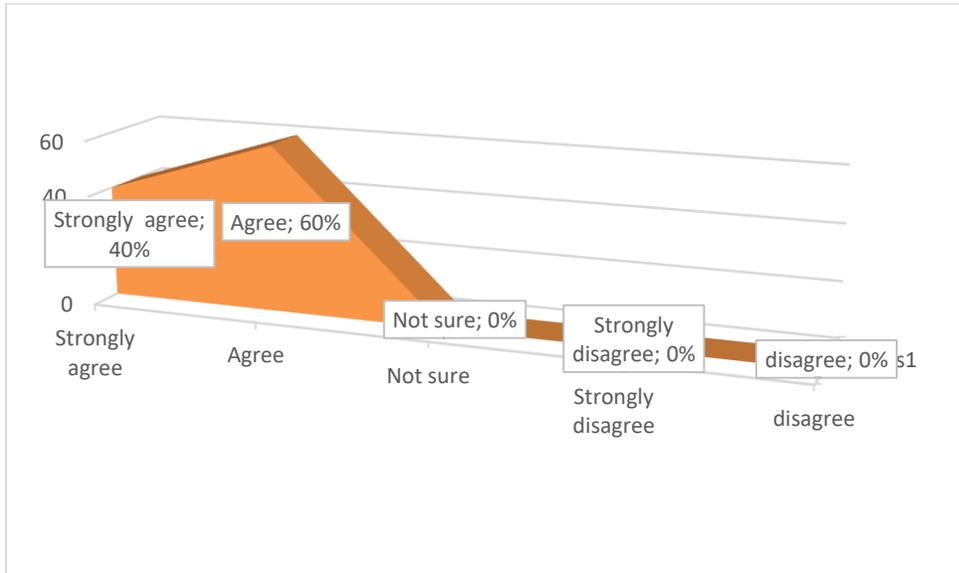


It is crucial for participants to learn how to deal with different challenges in the work environment. This will assist them to be competent in the near future. Participants were asked whether the internship programme assisted them to develop problem solving skills particularly in the working environment. Participants shared different views and it is recorded that 70% of the participants strongly agreed while 30% agreed that the internship programme helped them to develop problem solving skills. Furthermore, none of the participants were not sure (0%) and those who strongly disagreed and disagreed were also recorded at 0%. Based on the findings, it can however be acknowledged that the internship programme contributed towards making participants to develop problem solving skills.

#### **6.7.4 The impact of internship programme on developing interns self confidence**

Self-confidence is important in the workplace. It allows interns to be more innovative and develop team work skills. Therefore, the researcher probed this question in order to understand the role of internship programme towards building the confidence of previous interns in the workplace.

**Figure 55: The impact of internship programme on developing interns self confidence**

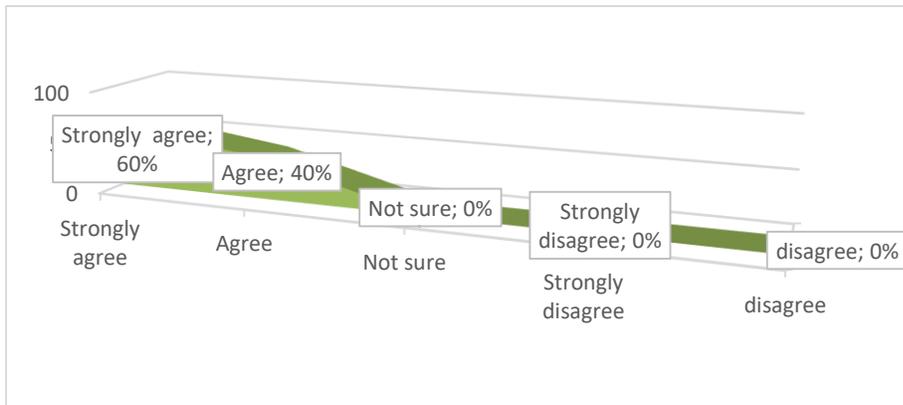


A question was probed to participants to check whether the internship programme helped them to develop self-confidence. Participants shared their own views based on their experiences as previous interns from three government departments in Limpopo province. According to the figure above, it indicates that 40% of the participants strongly agreed and 60% of the participants agreed. However, none of the participants indicated if they are not sure (0%) and for unknown reasons none of them claimed to strongly disagree (0%) and disagree (0%) on whether the internship programme helped them to develop self-confidence. In essence, the internship programme had a positive impact towards building the participants self-confidence.

### **6.7.5 The impact of internship programme on developing the culture of working independently**

The internship programme could determine the culture of working independently as an intern. The purpose of this question was to check if whether the internship programme has indeed assisted the respondents to be able to work independently rather than always seeking for help and mentorship.

**Figure 56: The impact of internship programme on developing the culture of working independently**

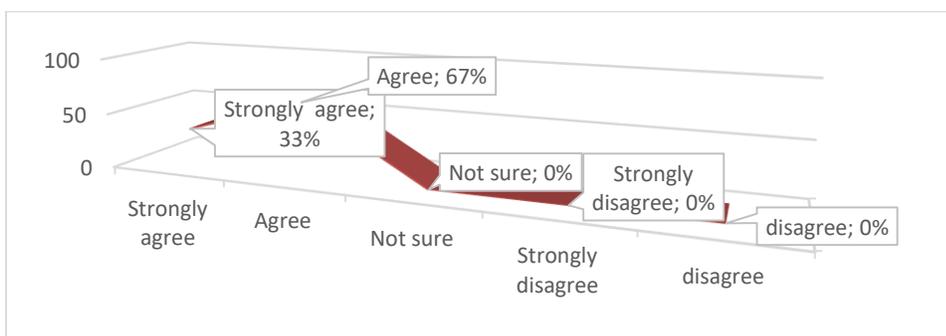


According to the findings on the figure above, majority (60%) of the participants strongly agreed while minority (40%) of them agreed that the internship programme helped them to develop a culture of working independently as an intern. Furthermore, 0% of the participants are not sure and those who strongly disagree and disagree were also recorded at 0%. In conclusion, the internship programme assisted participants to develop a culture of working independently.

### 6.7.6 The impact of internship programme on developing social interacting skills amongst previous interns

Amongst other things, during the internship programme interns are expected to develop social interacting skills that will assist them to interact and liase with their colleagues. The purpose of this question was to check the impact of internship programme on such skills.

**Figure 57: The impact of internship programme on developing social interacting skills amongst previous interns**

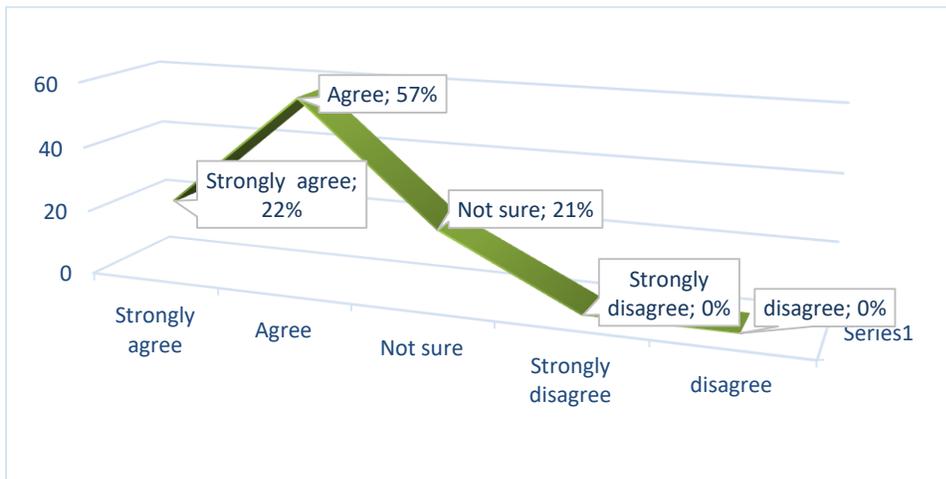


Looking at the impact of internship on assisting the respondents to develop social interacting skills, participants were then asked whether the internship programme helped them to develop social interaction skills. Based on the findings, 33% strongly agreed and 67% of the participants agreed. In addition, none of the participants indicated that they are not including those who strongly disagree (0%) and disagree (0%). It can however be acknowledged that the internship programme helped participants to gain social interaction skills.

### 6.7.7 The impact of internship programme on helping interns to deal effectively with conflict

The work environment has diverse culture and sometimes there will be conflict among colleagues. A question was then probed to check if whether participants may be able to learn on how to deal with conflict in the workplace.

**Figure 58: The impact of internship programme on helping interns to deal effectively with conflict**



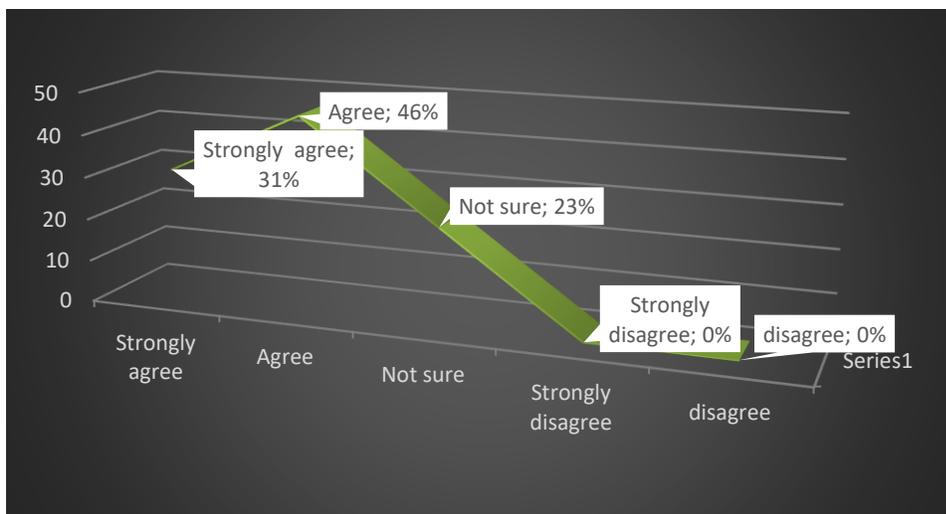
Dealing with conflict require one to have good problem solving skills. It is also important because some of the respondents may be line managers in the near future. The participants were asked whether the internship programme helped them to deal effectively with conflict in the work place. According to the findings, 22% of the participants strongly agreed and 57% agreed while 21% are not sure whether the internship programme had impact. Again, 0% of the participants strongly disagree and disagree.

Therefore, internship programme plays an important role in developing intern's ability to deal effectively with conflict in the work environment.

### 6.7.8 The impact of internship programme on developing team work skills

Not all staff members can work collegially on a daily basis. Therefore, one has to develop some ability to work with different people daily. Therefore, the researcher checked if the internship programme participants could develop teamwork skill. The findings are presented below.

**Figure 59: The impact of internship programme on developing team work skills**

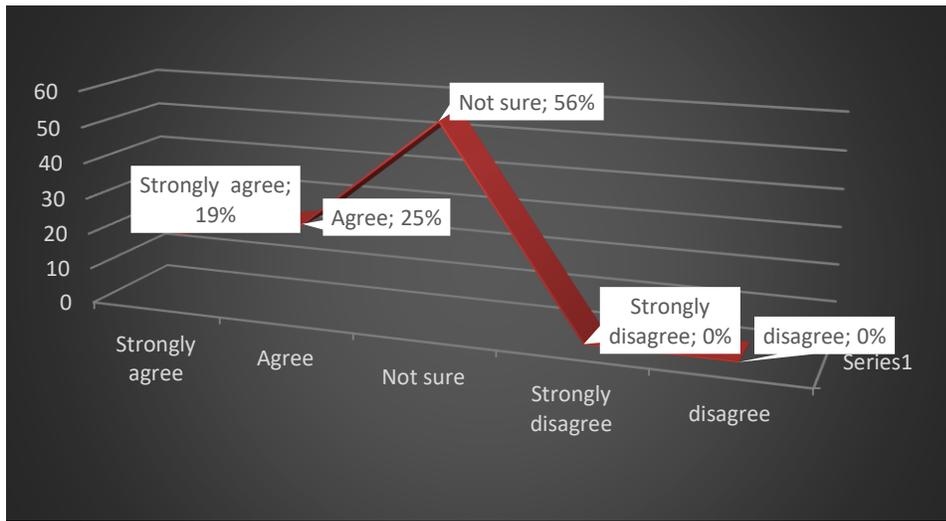


Participants were asked whether the internship programme could assist them to develop teamwork skills. As presented, 31% of the participants strongly agree, 46 % agree while 23% claimed that they were not sure if the internship programme helped them to develop team work skills. Furthermore, 0% strongly disagreed and disagreed. Therefore, the internship programme played an important role in developing team work skills among previous interns.

### 6.7.9 The impact of internship programme on developing managerial skills

The internship programme is supposed to prepare interns for the job market in future. Some of these interns may become managers and leaders in different institutions and it is important for them to develop managerial skills. The purpose of probing this question was to establish the impact of internship programme on building future leaders and managers who will demonstrate managerial skills.

**Figure 60: The impact of internship programme on developing managerial skills**

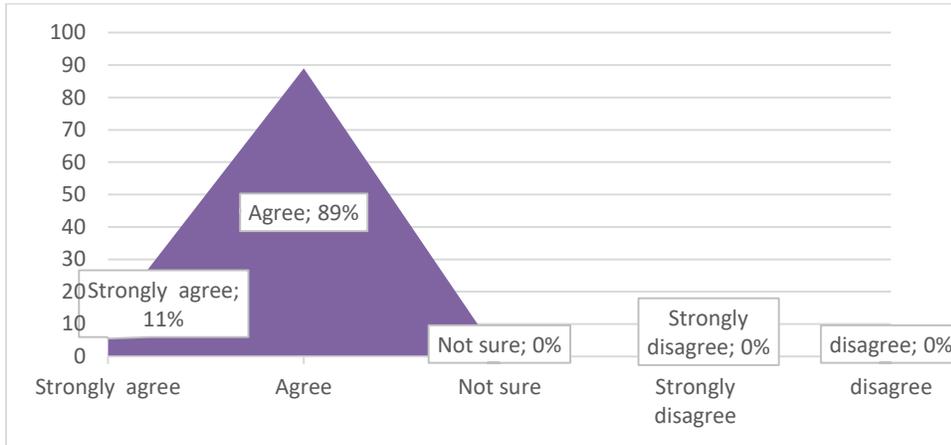


Participants were asked as to whether the internship programme had assisted them to develop managerial skills. The question was relevant because some of the participants could be managers and leaders in the near future. Therefore, 19% strongly agreed, 25% of them agreed while majority (56%) of the participants are not sure if the internship programme helped them to develop managerial skills. None (0%) of the participants strongly disagreed and disagreed. In conclusion, majority (56%) of the participants are not sure about the impact of the internship programme on developing managerial skills.

#### **6.7.10 The impact of internship programme on allowing previous interns to be flexible**

The study checked whether the internship programme helped develop the interns' flexibility in the work environment. The researcher wanted to know if the participants coped with the dynamics of the job or changing needs of the workplace.

**Figure 61: The impact of internship programme on allowing previous interns to be flexible**

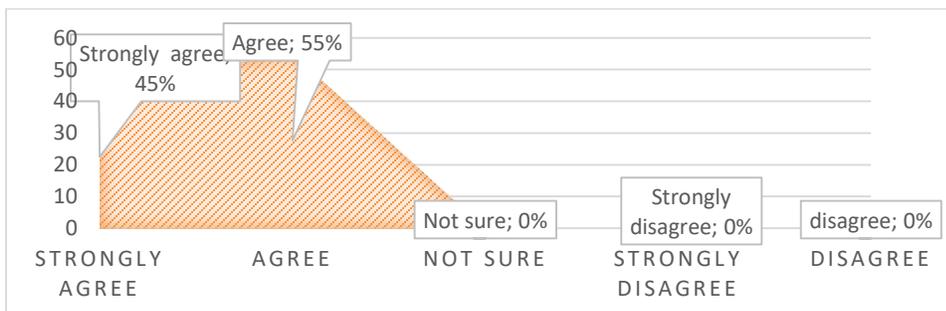


Participants were asked whether the internship programme helped them be flexible in the workplace. The above figure outlines the results and it can be deduced that the minority (11%) strongly agreed while the majority (89%) agreed that the internship programme helped them to be flexible in the work fraternity. However, 0% of the participants disagreed that the internship had an impact on developing interns to be flexible in the workplace. Generally, the internship programme was helpful in making interns flexible by adapting to changes in the workplace.

### 6.7.11 The impact of internship programme on developing reporting skills

The researcher sought to establish whether the internship programme could assist interns to develop reporting skills. Participants demonstrated their perceptions in the questionnaire and their responses are indicated below.

**Figure 62: The impact of internship programme on developing reporting skills**

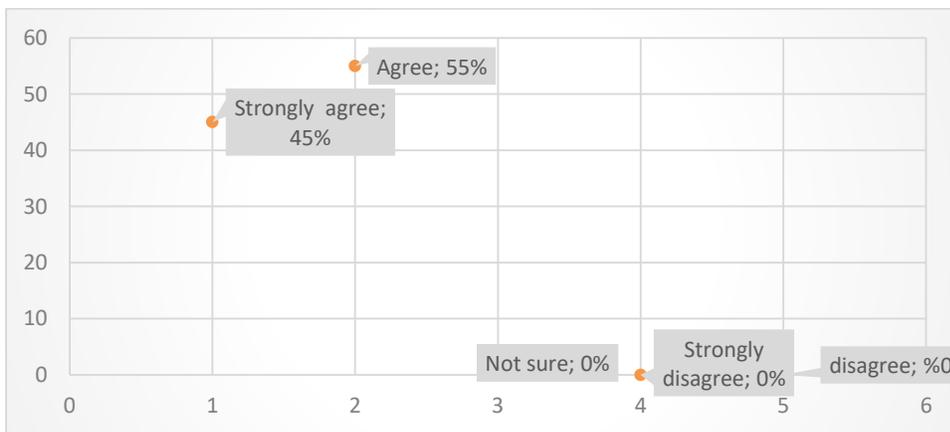


Sometimes interns join their respective departments without knowing formal ways of reporting certain things to their line managers and other colleagues. Therefore, the researcher needed to understand whether the internship programme developed reporting skills among previous interns. The minority (45%) strongly agreed and the majority (55%) agreed while those who are not sure, those who strongly disagreed and disagreed were recorded at 0%. Reporting skills are important in the work environment and one has to know formal ways of presenting and reporting information either through documents or communication channels. It can however be concluded that the internship programme had developed the participant's reporting skills.

### 6.7.12 The impact of internship programme on improving interns' computer skills

Interns can learn or acquire different skills during the internship programme. Amongst other skills interns can learn different ways of using a computer programme such as Microsoft applications - Word, Excel and PowerPoint. The findings are presented below.

**Figure 63: The impact of internship programme on improving intern's computer skills**

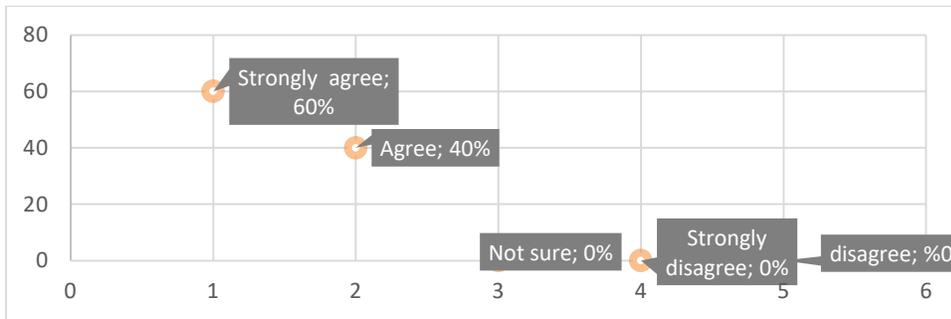


There is a solid consensus that through internship programme interns can acquire or improve some of their computer skills depending on the nature of duties they are carrying out daily. On that note, participants were asked whether the internship programme had the potential to improve their computer skills based on the duties they are performing on a daily basis. The minority (45%) strongly agreed and the majority (55%) agreed. Participants who are not sure, strongly disagreed and disagreed were recorded at 0%. In essence, the internship helped in improving previous interns' basic computer skills.

### 6.7.13 The impact of internship programme on developing time management skills

The researcher checked whether the previous interns developed time management skills during their internship programme. The question was important to understand deadline challenges and late coming among interns. The findings are discussed below.

**Figure 64: The impact of internship programme on developing time management skills**

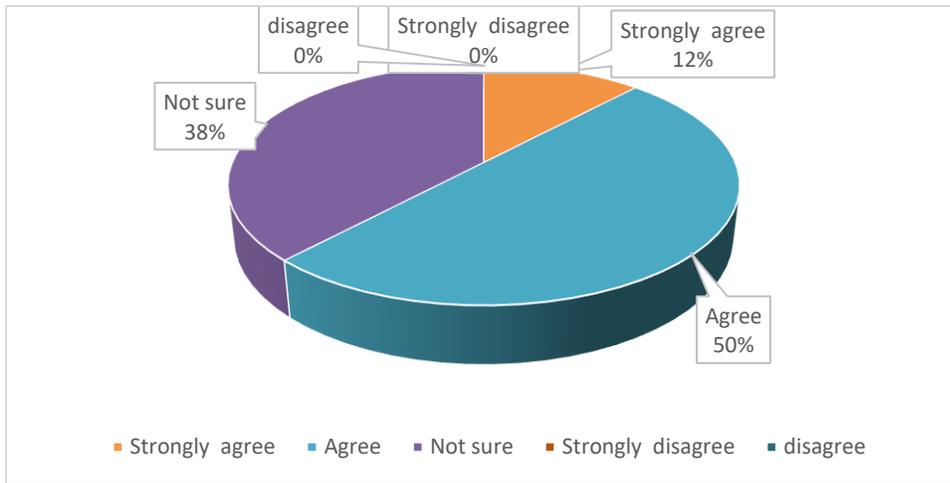


The above figure shows the results of how interns developed time management skills through the internship programme. Not only interns start their internship programme with good time management skills but as time goes by, some manage to develop such skills. According to the data collected, the majority (60%) strongly agreed while the minority (40%) agreed. Furthermore, none of the participants were not sure (0%) and for unknown reasons none of the participants strongly disagreed (0%) and disagreed (0%). Therefore, it is clear that the internship programme had a positive impact in terms assisting participants acquire time management skills.

### 6.7.14 The impact of internship programme on assisting interns to breakdown complex tasks into manageable task

The studu wanted to establishe whether an internship programme could help interns break down complex tasks into small manageable components.

**Figure 65: The impact of internship programme on assisting interns to breakdown complex tasks into manageable task**

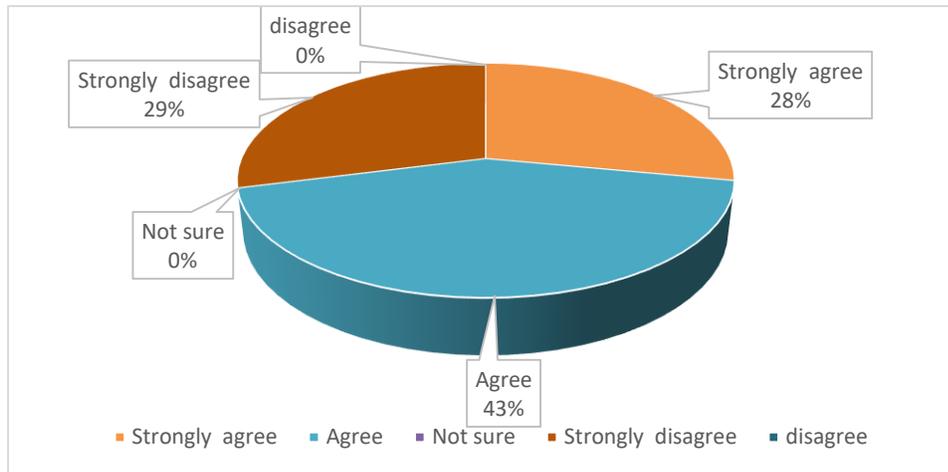


As shown above, the minority (12%) strongly agreed and the majority (50%) agreed, while 38% were not sure. Additionally, none of the participants strongly disagreed (0%) and disagreed (0%). In conclusion, most of the participants developed the ability to break down complex tasks into manageable tasks.

#### **6.7.15 The impact of internship programme on developing interns listening skills**

The work environment needs people who can listen attentively and follow the correct procedures. An internship can develop the incumbent's listening skills as they are given duties to perform daily.

**Figure 66: The impact of internship programme on developing interns listening skills**



The minority (28%) strongly agreed and the majority (43%) agreed, while 29% strongly disagreed. Again, none of the participants was not sure (0%) and none disagreed (0%). Most of the participants developed listening skills in the workplace through the internship programme.

## **6.8 REASONS FOR WORKING AS INTERN AND OPPORTUNITIES THEREIN**

The section provides an in-depth understanding of the factors that influenced the participants to consider working as interns and the opportunities associated with the internship programme, particularly in the three selected government departments. The study obtained information from participants in line with the objectives and aim. The information came in handy for developing possible recommendations for future reference. The figures below represent the different perceptions studied.

### **6.8.1 I worked as an intern in order to gain experience, knowledge and skills**

The study established reasons for participants working as interns, and among them were prospects of gaining experience, knowledge and skills. The figure below makes a representation.

**Figure 67: I worked as an intern to gain experience, knowledge and skills**

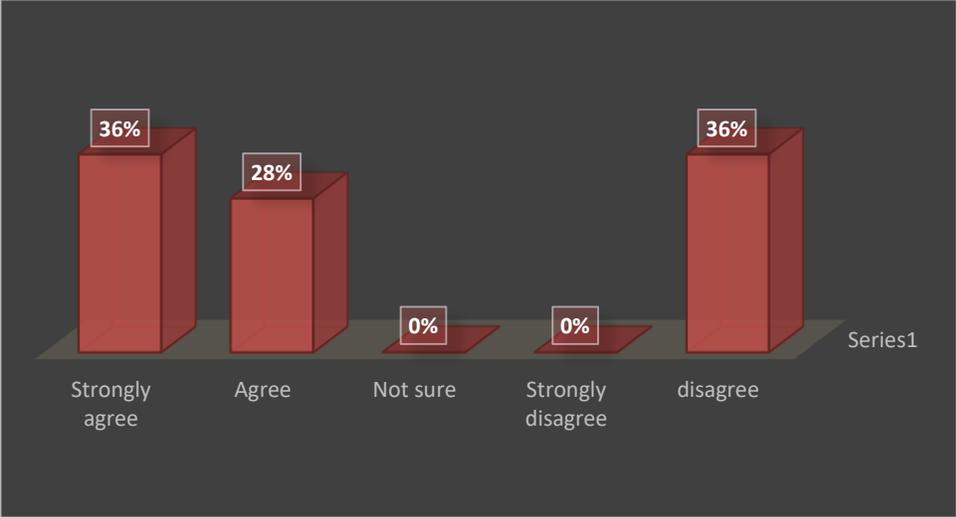


Some of the interns graduate from university without any knowledge, experience and skills. Therefore, they work as interns to gain such. According to the results, the minority (45%) strongly agreed and the majority (55%) agreed that they worked as interns to gain experience, knowledge and skills. None of the participants was not sure (0%) and none did not show that they strongly disagreed (0%) and disagreed (0%). It is clear that participants worked in order to gain knowledge, skills and experience. All participants worked as interns to gain experience, knowledge and skills.

### **6.8.2 I worked as an intern because the internship programme provided graduates with the opportunity to link theory with practice**

One of the main purposes of the internship programme is to assist interns to link theory with practice. The exposure that interns would get during the internship duration is more crucial because they can transfer knowledge to the workplace.

**Figure 68: I worked as an intern because the internship programme provided graduates with the opportunity to link theory with practice**

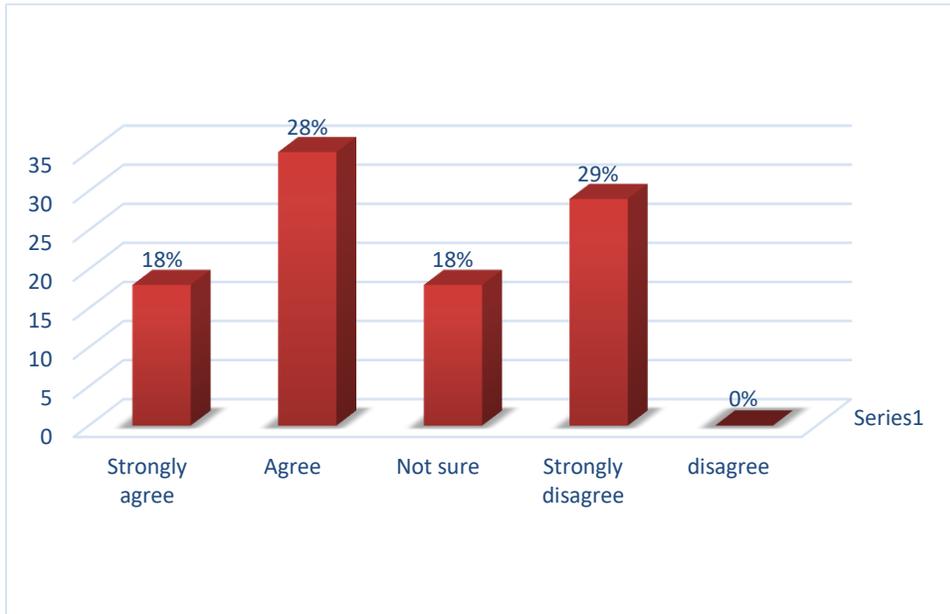


The results show that 36% strongly agreed and 36% disagreed. Again, 28% agreed, while none was not sure (0%) and none strongly disagreed (0%). Therefore, the majority of the participants worked as interns to link theory with practice.

**6.8.3 I worked as an intern to meet different people and create network**

Respondents were asked whether they worked as interns because they saw it as an opportunity to meet diverse people and create a network.

**Figure 69: I worked as an intern to meet different people and create network**

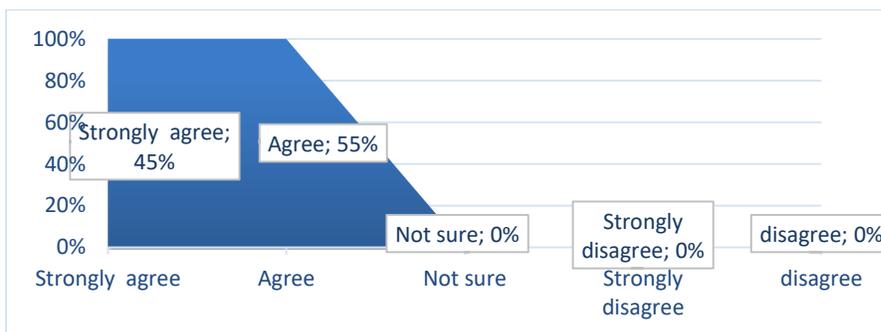


The results show that 18% strongly agreed and 18% was not sure. Furthermore, 35% agreed and 29% strongly disagreed. Therefore, none (0%) of the participants disagreed. In conclusion, most of the participants took the internship programme to create network and meet people.

**6.8.4 I worked as an interns because I wanted to prepare myself for the work environment in the future**

The researcher asked whether participants had decided to work as interns with the hope that the internship programme could prepare them for the corporate world.

**Figure 70: I worked as an interns because I wanted to prepare myself for the work environment in the future**

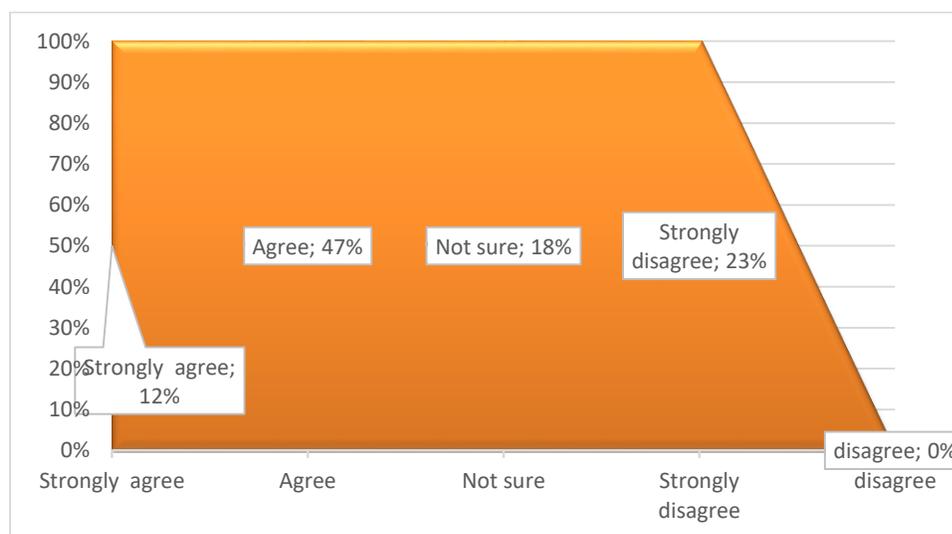


The minority (45%) strongly agreed and the majority (55%) agreed. Nevertheless, none of the participants was not sure (0%) and those who strongly disagreed and disagreed were also recorded at 0%. Therefore, it can be concluded that participants took the internship programme to prepare themselves for the work environment in the future.

### 6.8.5 I worked as an intern because of the source of income

The study probed if the interns' motive was about generating income to maintain their standard of living. It is because some interns may work not necessarily to gain income as a priority but get exposure and experience.

**Figure 71: I worked as an intern because of the source of income**

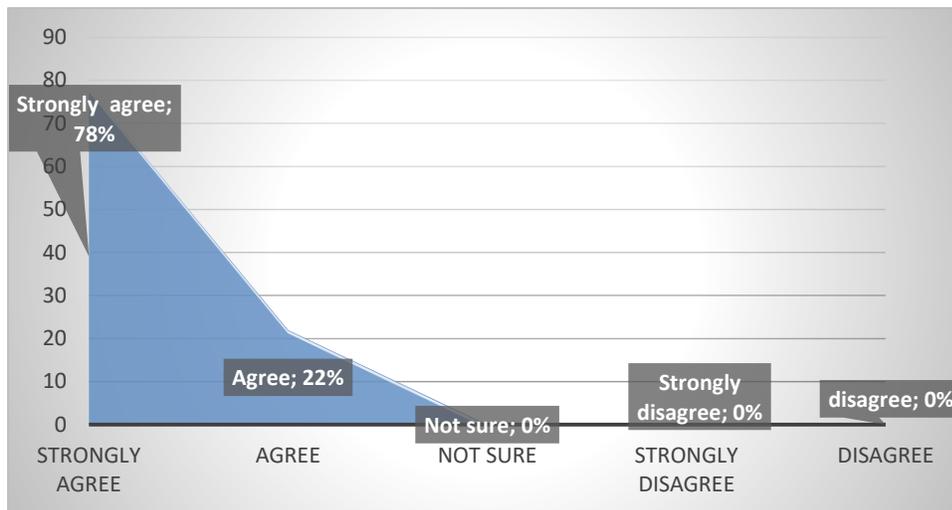


The study probed the perceptions of different respondents in terms of their motive for taking up an internship programme - whether as a source of income or not. The majority (47%) agreed and a few (12%) strongly agreed. However, 18% was not sure, while 23% strongly disagreed and none disagreed (0%). Therefore, the majority of the participants took internship programmes to gain an income and maintain their standard of living.

### 6.8.6 I worked as intern because it is not easy to get a job without work experience

A common assumption is that it is not easy to get a job in the South African public and private sectors without experience. The study sought to check whether the same perception was held by the participants (previous interns).

**Figure 72: I worked as intern because it is not easy to get a job without work experience**



Participants were asked whether they took up an internship because it was not easy to get a job without work experience. The above figure shows that the majority (78%) strongly agreed and the minority (22%) agreed. However, those who were not sure were recorded at 0% and those that strongly disagreed and disagreed were also recorded at 0%. Therefore, the majority of the participants used internships to gain experience because they believed that it was not easy to get a job without work experience.

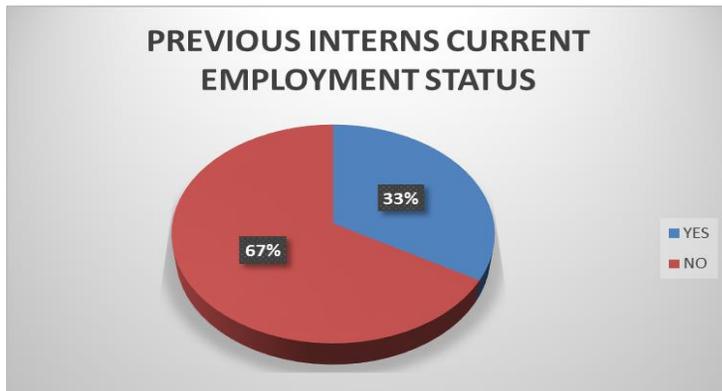
### **6.8.7 Previous interns are currently working ever since they finished their internship programme**

There is a trend of interns being absorbed into the same departments they served. The study wanted to find out whether the participants were offered work at their host departments after completing the internship programme. The findings are presented below.

### **6.8.8 Current employment status of previous interns**

The study aimed to establish whether previous interns found jobs upon completion of the internship programme. Secondly, the study probed whether the internship programme guarantees previous interns jobs in the near future. The results are presented below.

**Figure 73: Current employment status of previous interns**



Participants were asked whether they were currently working ever since they completed their internship programme with their former respective government departments. The majority (67%) were currently unemployed and a few (33%) found jobs. Therefore, having served as an intern does not guarantee success in finding a job in the near future.

#### **6.8.9 Current employers**

The study aimed to link or delink internship programme and future employment prospects. Secondly, the study sought to understand whether an internship programme could assist previous interns to secure better posts. To achieve this, the researcher asked about the current employers and to check whether the employees were working in institutions they once served as interns. Also, the question helped the researcher to determine whether the internship programme helped interns secure jobs after completing their internship programme. On that note, out of all those that were working at the moment, one participant was at Richfield College as a Librarian. Meanwhile, another was at a law firm as an attorney. None of the previous interns were currently working for their previous host departments. Therefore, it can be deduced that obtaining an internship has little to no chances of receiving a permanent post in most public institutions.

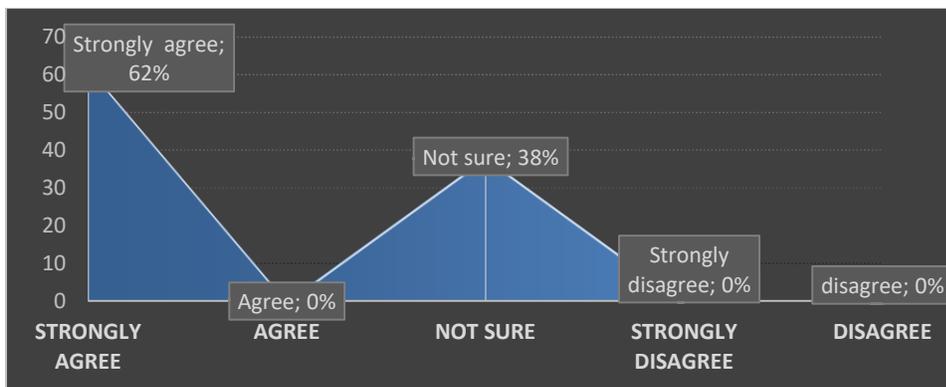
#### **6.9 PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE NATURE OF INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS**

The section reports about the nature of internship programme and skills development in public institutions. The data is categorised into subthemes within the three government departments. Therefore, the findings are presented below.

### 6.9.1 Possible career opportunities

The study assessed whether participants examined and explored possible career opportunities through the internship programme. In most cases, people graduate with or without knowledge about possible career opportunities concerning their field of study. Therefore, the study further sought to establish whether participants were still interested in pursuing career opportunities in the same field in line with their main university qualifications.

**Figure 74: The internship programme gave me the opportunity to examine and explore possible career opportunities**

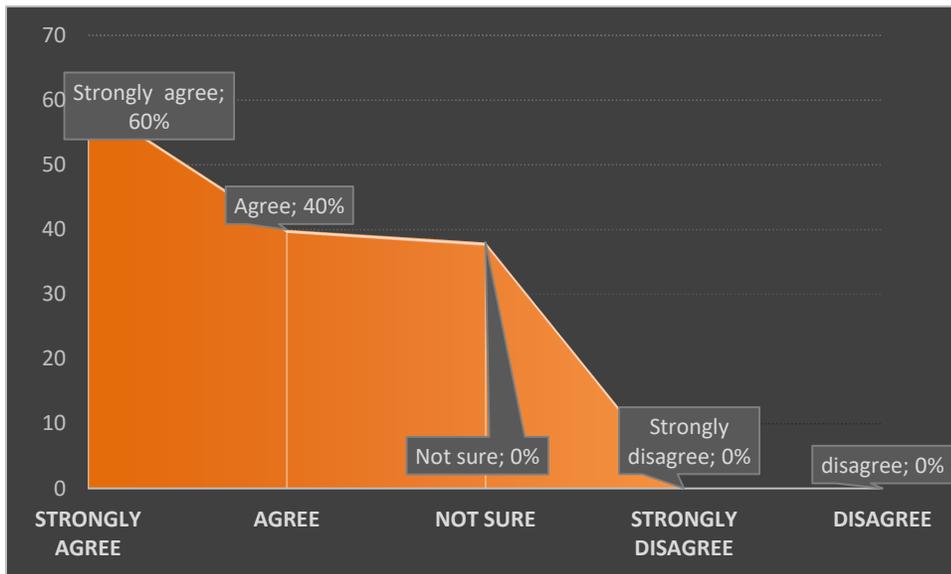


The majority (62%) strongly agreed and a few (38%) were not sure whether the internship programme provided them with the opportunity to examine and explore possible career opportunities. None of the participants agreed (0%), strongly disagreed (0%) and disagreed (0%). Therefore, the majority acknowledged that the internship programme provided the opportunity to explore and examine possible career opportunities.

### 6.9.2 Work experience

The study aimed to understand the perceptions of previous interns about the internship programme's role in providing work experience needed to secure jobs in the future.

**Figure 75: The internship programme is important for work experience**

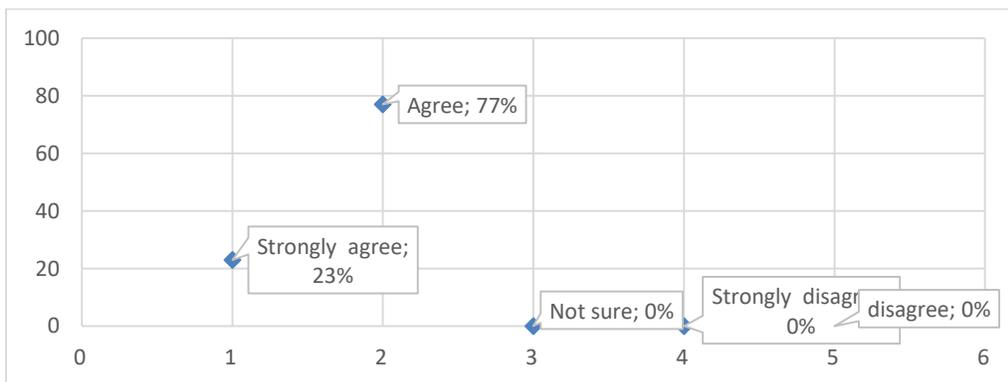


Participants were asked whether the internship programme was important for gaining work experience. The majority (60%) strongly agreed and a few (40%) agreed. Furthermore, none of the participants was not sure (0%), strongly disagreed (0%) and disagreed (0%). All participants perceived the internship programme as important for gaining work experience.

### 6.9.3 Acquiring variety of skills

The study determined whether participants would agree or disagree about the internship programme had helped them acquire different skills such as communication skills, report writing skills and problem-solving skills.

**Figure 76: The internship programme helped me acquire a variety of skills**

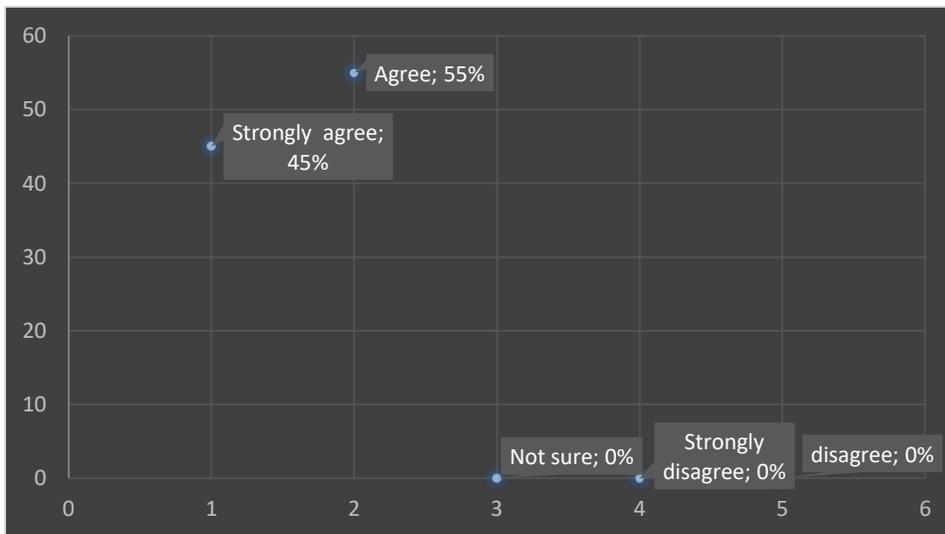


Literature shows that interns may gain a variety of skills from the internship programme. According to the data collected in this study, the majority (77%) of the participants agreed and the minority (23%) strongly disagreed. Furthermore, none of the participants was not sure (0%), strongly disagreed (0%) and disagreed (0%). Conclusively, the internship programme played a role in assisting participants to acquire a variety of skills mentioned above.

#### 6.9.4 Professionalism in the workplace

There is a need for interns to act and behave professionally in the workplace. Therefore, the study probed whether the internship had a role in providing participants with a professional foundation for performing their duties in the workplace.

**Figure 77: The internship programme provided me with professional foundation of performing duties in the workplace**

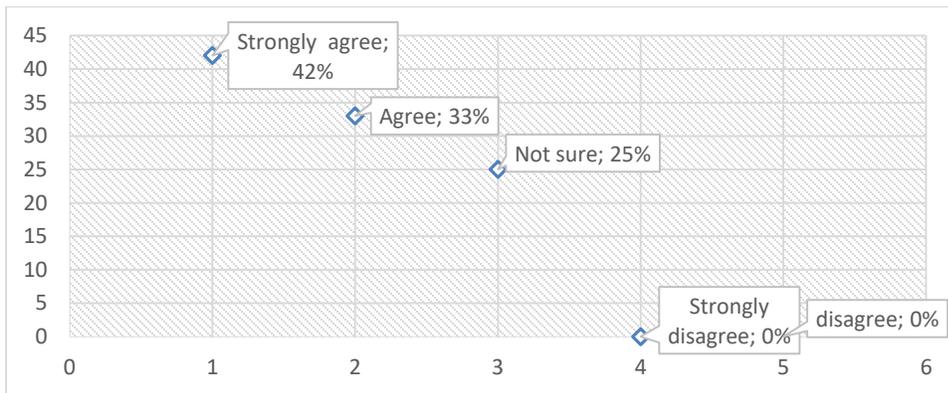


The majority (55%) of the participants agreed and the minority (45%) strongly agreed. Furthermore, none of the participants was not sure (0%), strongly disagreed (0%) and disagreed (0%). Therefore, the internship programme played a role in assisting participants to get a professional foundation to perform duties.

### 6.9.5 Independence and ambition

The study sought to determine whether the internship had an impact on making previous interns more independent and ambitious about their chosen careers paths.

**Figure 78: Internship programme made me more independent and ambitious**

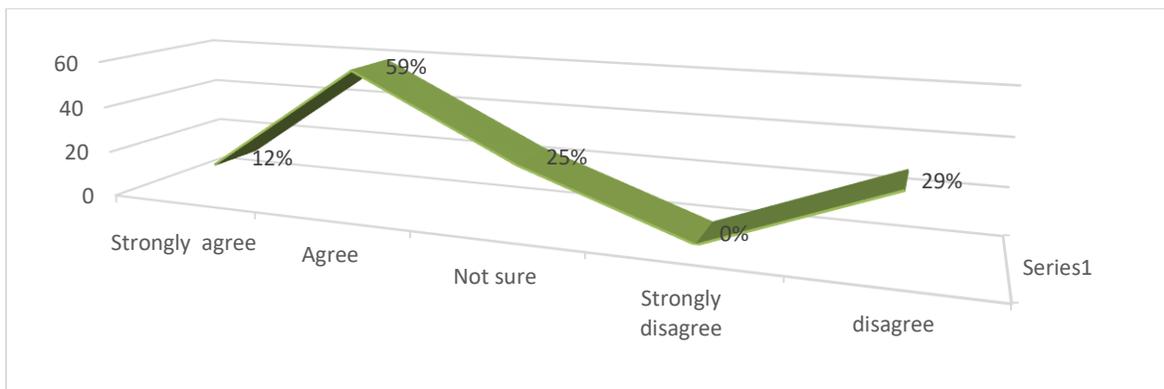


The majority (42%) of the participants strongly agreed and the minority (33%) agreed. Again, a few (25%) was not sure while none of the participants strongly disagreed (0%) and disagreed (0%). Therefore, the internship programme played a role in assisting participants to be independent and ambitious servants at the workplace.

### 6.9.6 Nexus between internship programme and skills development

One of the objectives of this study was to check whether there was a relationship between the internship programme and skills development with reference to previous interns in the three selected government department.

**Figure 79: Is there a relationship between internship programme and skills development**

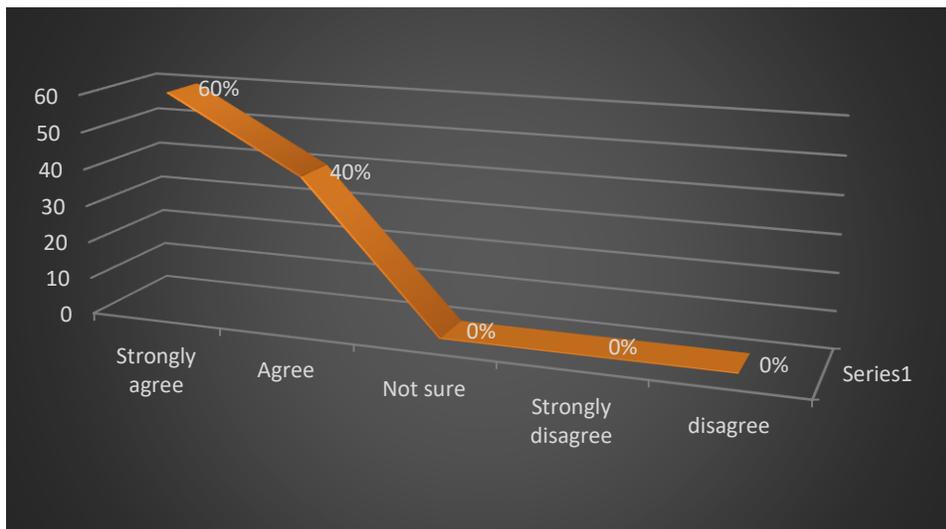


The majority (59%) of the participants agreed and 29% disagreed while a few (12%) strongly agreed. None of the participants was not sure (0%) and none strongly disagreed (0%). In conclusion, most of the participants believed that there was a relationship between the internship programme and skills development. Therefore, previous interns gained various skills through the internship programme.

### 6.9.7 The nature of duties I performed impacted me positively

The study determined how the daily duties and responsibilities that previous interns performed impacted their personal and career development. The results are presented below.

**Figure 80: The nature of duties I performed impacted me positively**

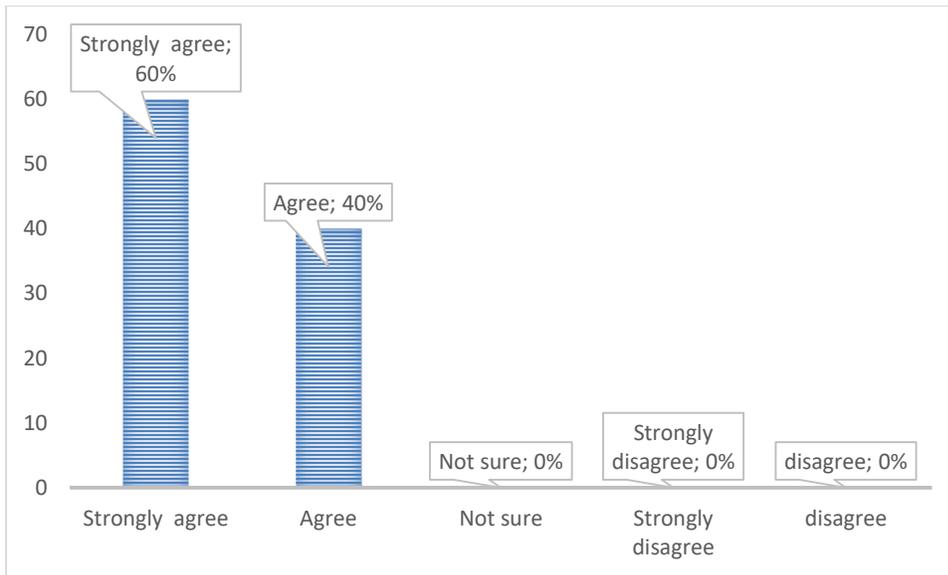


The majority (60%) of the participants strongly agreed and the minority (40%) agreed. Furthermore, none of the participants strongly disagreed (0%) and disagreed (0%). Also, none of the participants was not sure (0%). Therefore, the nature of duties performed had a positive impact on previous interns and contributed to their personal development.

### 6.9.8 Showcasing abilities

The study determined whether the previous interns had an opportunity to exhibit their abilities related to the daily roles and responsibilities of the post and whether they discovered their strengths and weaknesses in the workplace.

**Figure 81: The internship programme helped me to prove my abilities**

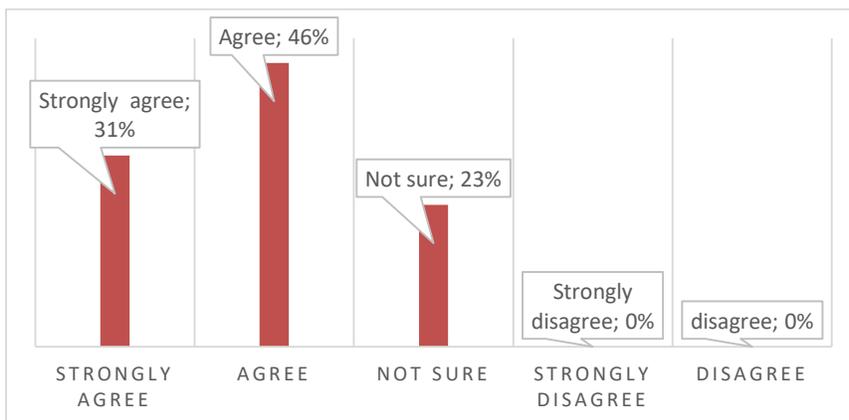


The majority (60%) of the participants strongly agreed and the minority (40%) agreed that the internship programme helped them prove their abilities. Also, none of the participants was not sure (0%) and none strongly disagreed (0%) and disagreed (0%). In conclusion, all previous interns understudy could exhibit their abilities and learn about their efficacy through the internship programme.

### 6.9.9 Sense of pride

The study probed whether previous interns valued the internship programme and worked to the best of their abilities considering that the programme was beneficial to their development. The results are presented below.

**Figure 82: I felt proud to work as an intern**

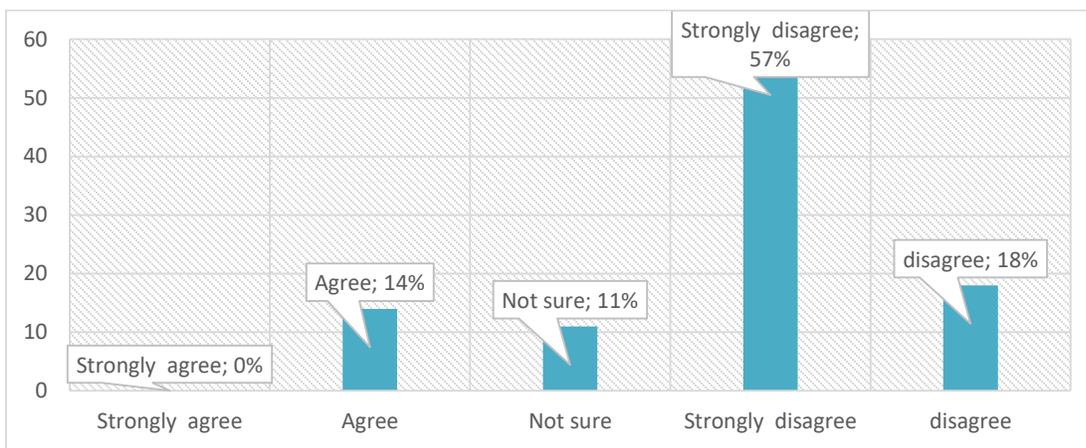


Checking if the interns were proud to work and satisfied, 31 % of the participants strongly agreed and 46% agreed, while 23% was not sure and due to unknown reasons none of the participants strongly disagreed (0%) and disagreed (0%). Therefore, the majority of the participants were proud, to some extent satisfied, to work as interns.

### 6.9.10 Repeated routine

The study established whether the interns did the same thing or were exposed to different roles for more exposure in building their work experience and personal development. The findings are presented below.

**Figure 83: My duties were the same everyday**

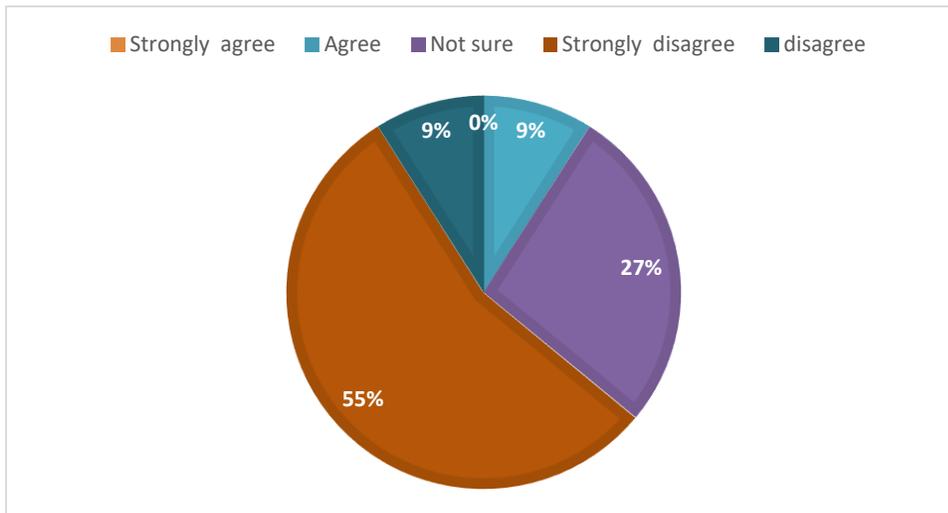


A well-implemented internship programme should provide interns with a variety of activities for interns to be exposed to various work activities. The majority (57%) of the participants strongly disagreed and 18% disagreed. Furthermore, other participants (14%) agreed that their work duties were always the same. Also, 11% was not sure while none (0%) strongly agreed. Therefore, previous interns performed different duties daily, and the internship programme was well implemented as it exposed them to various work activities.

### 6.9.11 Doing it again

To determine the level of effectiveness of the internship programme among previous interns, the study established whether interns were satisfied and could accept the same opportunity.

**Figure 84: I would still work as intern if given second chance**

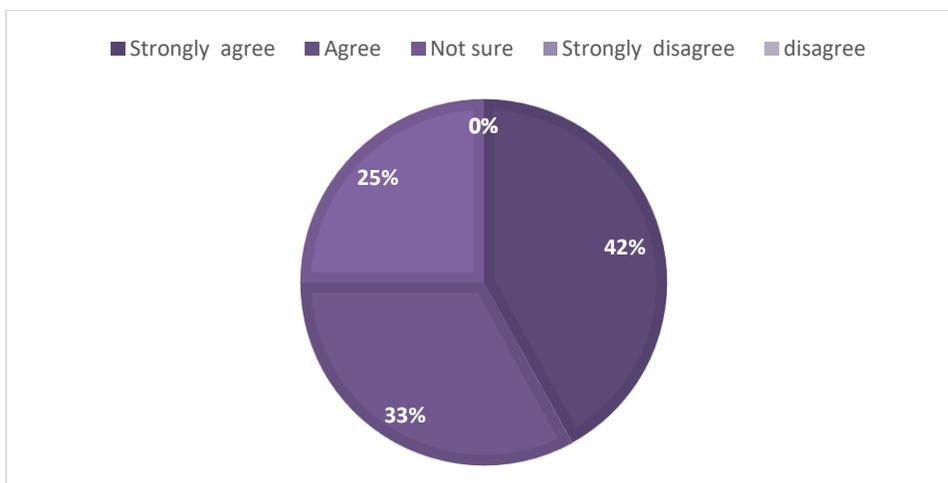


Based on the findings, the majority (55%) of the participants strongly disagreed and 27% was not sure. Furthermore, 0% strongly agreed and 9% agreed while other participants (9%) disagreed. Therefore, previous interns are likely to take up a similar internship offer in the selected government departments.

#### **6.9.12 Value**

The study determined whether the internship programme was valuable for previous interns. The results are presented below.

**Figure 85: My participation in the internship programme was worth my time and effort**

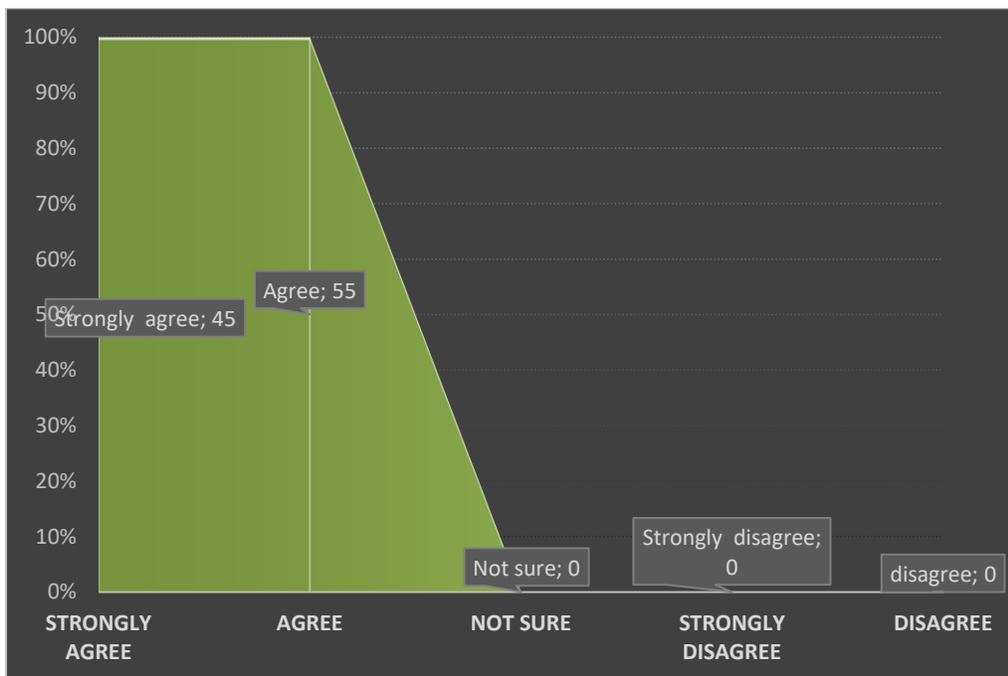


The findings show that 42% of the participants strongly agreed and 33% agreed. However, 25% was not sure and for unknown reasons, none of the participants strongly disagreed (0%) and disagreed (0%). Therefore, most participants indicated that their participation in the internship programme was worth their time and effort, meaning the programme was beneficial.

### 6.9.13 Job description

A successful internship programme in public institutions should have line managers, supervisors and mentors who clearly outline daily duties that should be carried out by interns. On that note, the study established an understanding of whether job descriptions were communicated to the participants of the study. The results are presented below.

**Figure 86: My work duties were clearly outlined by my line manager, supervisor or mentor**



The majority (55%) of the participants agreed and 45% strongly agreed. None of the participants was not sure (0%) and none strongly disagreed (0%) and disagreed (0%). From the findings, previous interns' work duties were clearly outlined in various government departments under study. Furthermore, being aware of what to do in the work environment makes participants set clear targets on a daily basis.

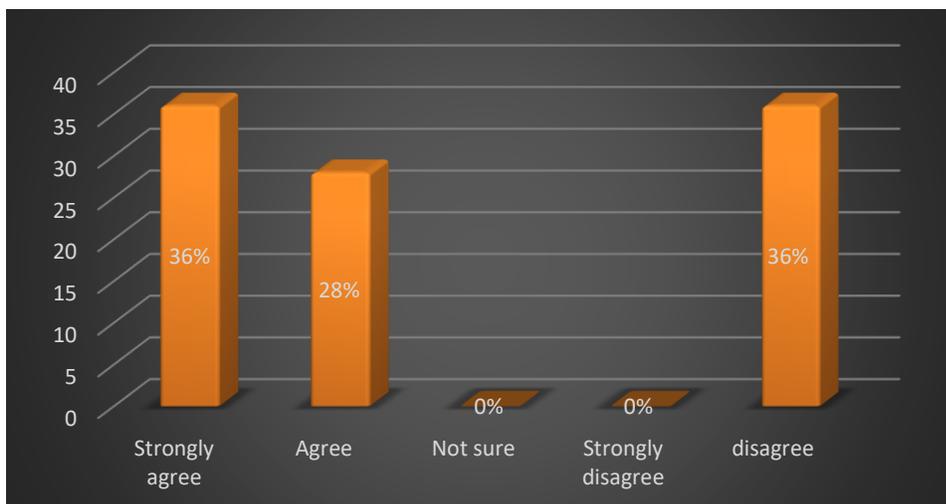
## 6.10 DEPARTMENTAL SUPPORT

The section provides the results of the respondents concerning the departmental support from the three selected government departments in Limpopo Province. The researcher posed four questions aimed to understand whether departments provided support to previous interns.

### 6.10.1 Helpful and supportive

The study whether the hosting departments provided support to previous interns in various ways. It could be through workshops, training and mentorship programme or instruction.

**Figure 87: My line manager (supervisor and mentor) was always helpful and supportive**

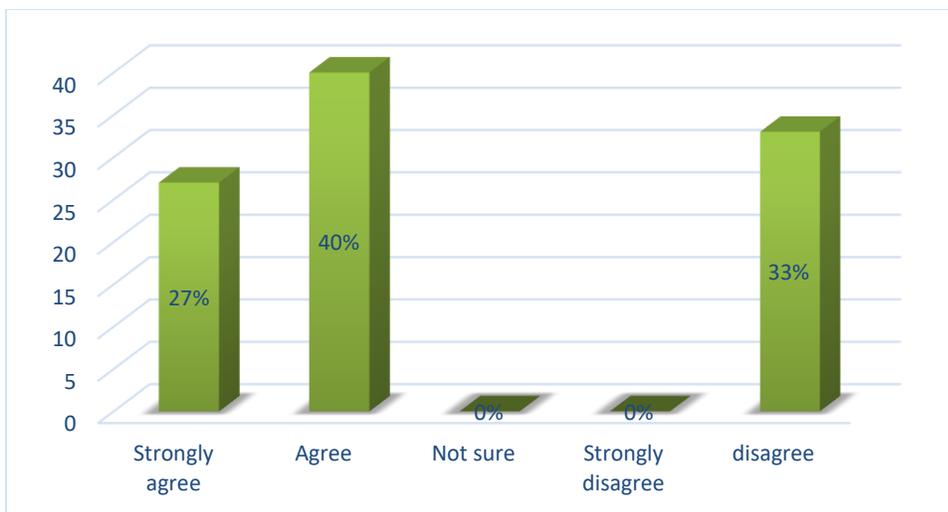


Literature shows that a well-implemented internship programme requires mentors and government departments to provide enough support to their interns. On that note, 36% of the participants strongly agreed and 36% disagreed. Furthermore, 28% agreed and none of the participants was not sure (0%) and those who strongly disagreed were also recorded at 0%. Therefore, mentors and supervisors were helpful and supportive of previous interns. Interns should always be supported and mentored to develop various skills.

### 6.10.2 Performance monitoring

The study probed whether there was performance monitoring conducted by mentors and line managers to evaluate previous interns' job performance. It is always important for the departments (mentors and line managers) to monitor and evaluate the performance of the interns to assist interns to have a clear knowledge of their performance. Secondly, performance management system assists interns to improve where necessary. The results are presented below.

**Figure 88: My performance was always monitored**

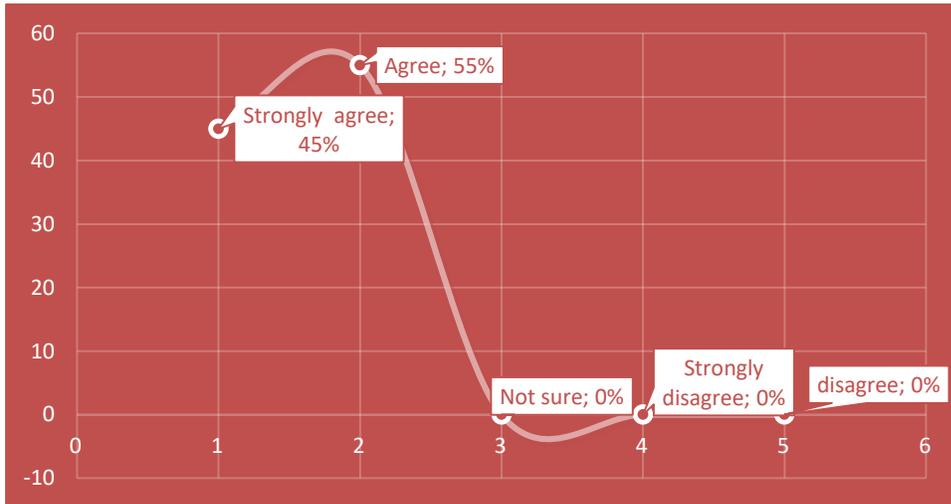


The figure above shows that 40% agreed and 33% disagreed while 27% strongly agreed. None of the participants was not sure (0%) and another 0% was recorded for those who strongly disagreed. In conclusion, most previous interns said that their performance was always monitored. Therefore, public institutions should always evaluate the performance of their interns, allowing the interns to identify their strength and weaknesses in line with their job description.

### 6.10.3 Real job experience

The study determined whether participants were satisfied with the nature of job experience they received from their former host departments. The results are presented in the figure below.

**Figure 89: The host department provided me with real job experience**

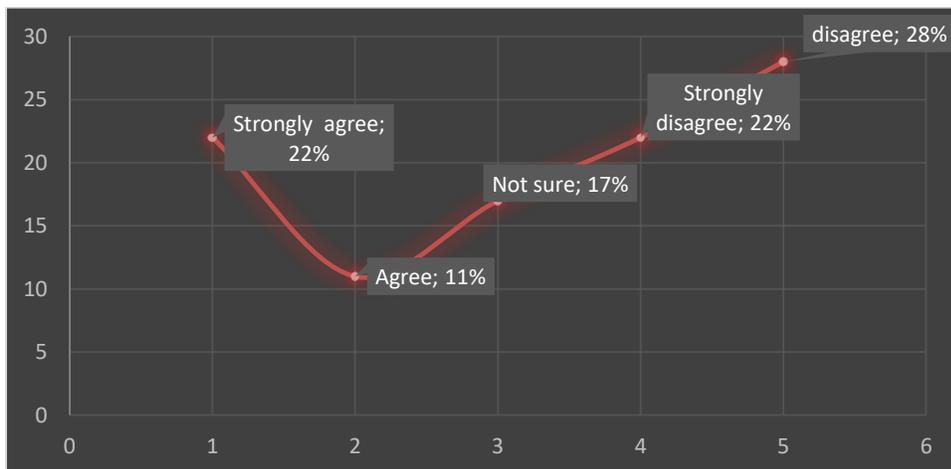


The above figure shows that the majority (55%) agreed and the minority (45%) strongly agreed. The results did not record any participants who were not sure (0%) and those who strongly disagreed and disagreed were also recorded at 0%. Therefore, the departments provided previous interns with real job experience. Work experience is important for participants to develop the capacity to work in various work environments.

#### 6.10.4 Training programme

The study checked whether the three selected government departments provided interns with training programmes to develop and capacitate them for the job market. The results are presented below.

**Figure 90: Training programmes were provided to develop me**



Based on the results, 22% of the participants strongly agreed and 11% agreed while 17% was not sure. Furthermore, 22% strongly disagreed and 28% disagreed. The departments did not provide participants with enough training programmes. Therefore, public institutions should realise that training programmes are also important to build and capacitate interns. Some of the work activities are complex and require interns to undergo specific training programme and workshops.

#### **6.10.5 Further suggestions**

The question aimed at establishing the perceptions of the interns about the experiences and challenges of their workplaces and what they assumed could have worked for the better of their development. Not all participants managed to provide their views and recommendations.

One of the participants claimed: *“They have to extend the internship duration because 24 months is not enough.”*

Another participant: *“Internship programme does not guarantee permanent position in that particular host department and the fact that I am going to be jobless in the next few months demoralise me. As interns, we start with a lot of energy but when we are left with few days to finish the internship programme we don’t do the work with the same energy we had when we were starting. The 12-month duration is not enough. Even if they say the internship programme is 24 months after completion, permanent position is not guaranteed. Therefore, internship programme seems to be more like a waste of time.”*

Generally, most of the previous interns expected to be given permanent positions after completing the internship programme. Furthermore, internship programme was seen as a waste of time because not all interns would get permanent positions.

#### **6.11 SECTION C: DATA COLLECTED THROUGH INTERVIEWS**

Data collected through interviews was obtained from public officials in two Limpopo Provincial Departments: Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, and Department of Education. The Department of Provincial Treasury did not have representation for interviews. The interview probed demographic information of the respondents, education and training, employment status, the nature of the internship programme and skills

development in public institutions and the challenges and opportunities for the internship programme. Also, the interview probed legal prescribed framework or legislation governing internship programme in the three selected government departments. Furthermore, measures that can make the internship programme to be more effective were also probed in the interview.

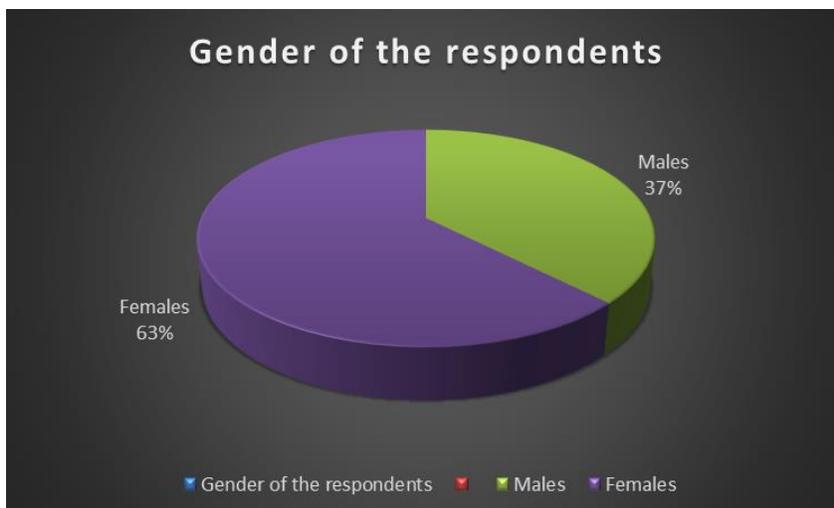
### 6.11.1 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The presentation and analysis of this study begin by presenting the demographic information of the respondents. The demographic information of the respondents includes the gender of the respondents, ethnic group, age group, respondents' province of origin, home language, marital status, education and training, employment status and the duration current interns have been working. The information provided a clear picture of the type of respondents the researcher engaged. It also helped to determine the reasons for a variety of responses that were influenced by demographic factors. The results of the demographic information are demonstrated below.

#### 6.11.1.1 Gender of the respondents

Probing gender in this study is important because it helps the researcher to determine the dominant gender with specific reference to public officials from two selected government departments in Limpopo Province. The gender profile of the respondents is presented below.

**Figure 91: Gender of the respondents**

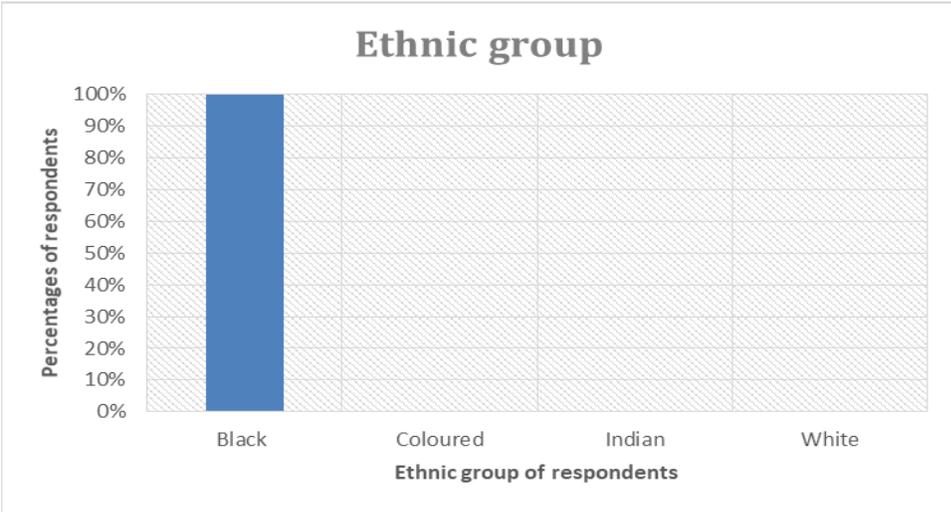


The initial sample size for officials and managers in the four selected governments was 40. Therefore, COGHSTA did not have interns for the financial years 2019/2020 due to unknown reasons and, as a result, it was then excluded from the study. However, Provincial Treasury did not have representation of officials in the study. Therefore, only eight (8) participants from the two remaining selected government departments participated in the study. These were public officials such as interns' mentors, managers and those who work in the Human Resources Development section. However, out of the 8 participants from the three government departments, the majority (63%) were females while male respondents were at 37%. In other words, female participants dominated the study.

6.11.1.2 Ethnic group

The purpose of probing this question was to check the number of representation under each ethnic group. Ethnicity is tied to culture and background and each ethnic representative may perceive the impact of the internship programme on skills development differently. Therefore, the profile of the ethnic group is presented below.

Figure 92: Ethnic group



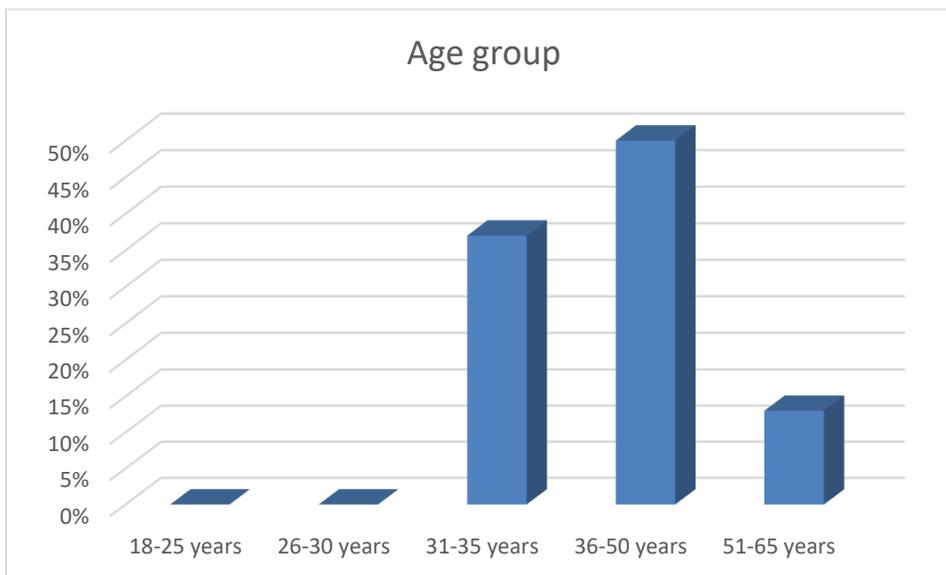
Based on the information provided by the respondents, 100% of the respondents were Blacks. Therefore, nothing was recorded for Coloureds (0%), Indians (0%) and Whites (0%). The ethnic representation could also be determined by the recruitment processes

that the departments have followed. It could also mean that other ethnic groups did not have an interest to participate in the study, even if there were some in the departments.

### 6.11.1.3 Age group

The age group of the respondents often determine the person's knowledge or experience in a particular field of work. Therefore, asking a 22-year-old participant about the impact of the internship programme on skills development and asking the same question to a 40-year-old participant would likely generate a different response due to the level of understanding. The age group of the respondents in this regard is as follows.

**Figure 93: Age group**



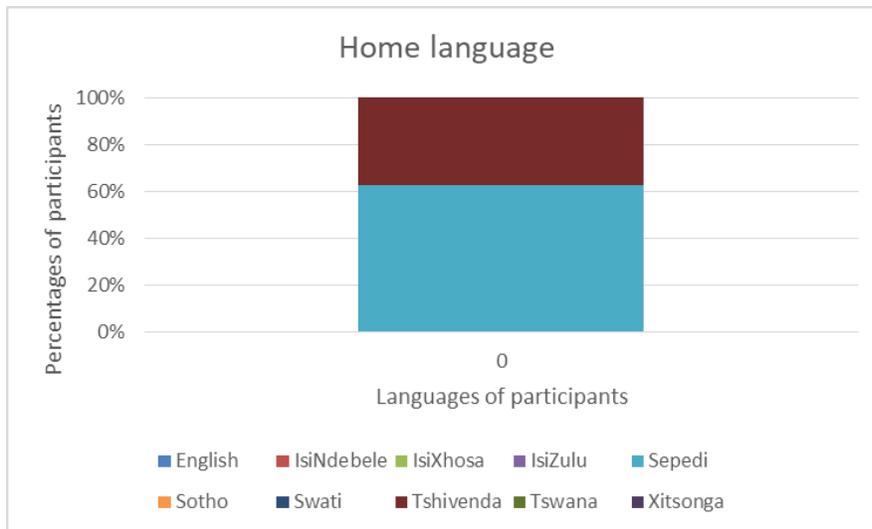
The questionnaire template adopted was a 5 Likert Scale with different age groups where public officials were expected to tick in the box that corresponded with their ages. The findings show that the majority (50%) of the participants were between 36 and 50 years. Also, 37% were between 31 and 35 years and only 13% was recorded for 51 to 65 years. However, the study did not have participants between 18 and 25 years (0%) and 26 and 30 years (0%).

### 6.11.1.4 Home language

The home language of each participant in the study was also important because it assisted the researcher to establish the tribe background of the respondents within the

selected government departments in Limpopo Province. A Sepedi speaking person may respond to questions differently as compared to those who are speaking Tshivenda, siSwati, isiXhosa, isiZulu, isiNdebele, Xitsonga, Sesotho, Setswana, Afrikaans and English. The figure below indicates the home languages of the respondents in the study.

**Figure 94: Home language**

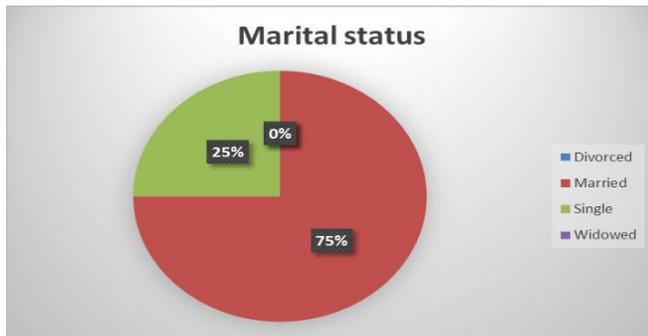


The data collected from the selected government departments in Limpopo Province indicate that out of 11 official languages, the majority (62,5%) of the respondents were Sepedi speakers and the minority (37,5%) of public officials in the skills development and Human Resource Development spoke Tshivenda. Only two official languages had participants. It could mean that languages that were not represented did not have participants who showed interest in the study.

#### 6.11.1.5 Marital status

The responses provided by the participants in the questionnaires are often determined by their social status and standing in society. The researcher tried to establish this assertion among respondents in the study. The marital status of the respondents is presented as follows.

**Figure 95: Marital status**

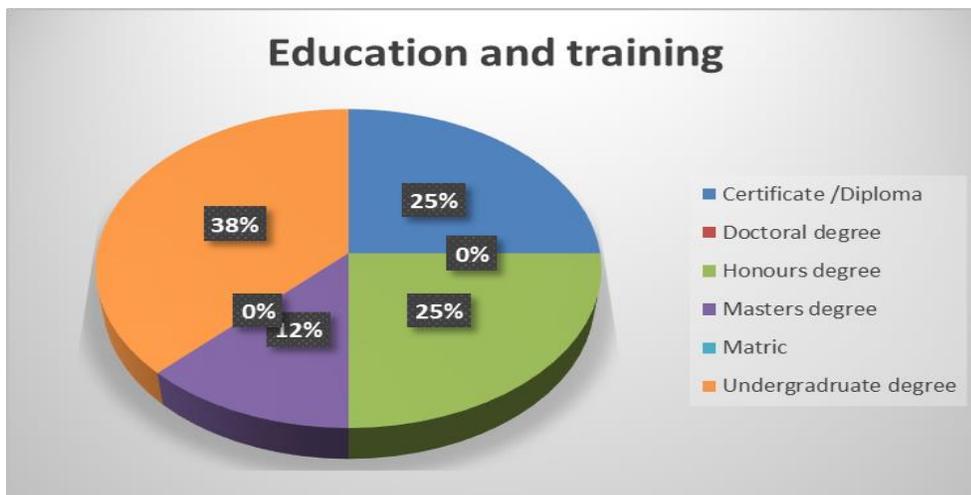


Out of eight (8) participants from the selected government departments in Limpopo Province, the majority (75%) were married and 25% were not married (single). Furthermore, the study did not have any participants that fell under widowed (0%) and divorced (0%).

#### *6.11.1.6 Education and training*

Knowing about the highest academic qualification of the respondents in this study was also important to validate the data collected. The information also assisted the researcher to establish the academic background of the respondents within the three selected government departments. An official who completed a master's degree may respond to questions differently as compared to one whose education and training is at a diploma level. The figure below indicates the education and training information of the participants.

**Figure 96: Education and training**



The interview guide had a section where participants were requested to provide their education and training or highest qualification information. All participants managed to provide the information and 38% had an undergraduate qualification and 25% had a certificate or a diploma, while another group (25%) had honours qualifications and only 12% recorded under public officials possessed master's qualifications. Furthermore, none of the public officials was in a possession of matric and doctoral qualification (0%). Therefore, public officials need to further their studies to capacitate themselves for workplace purposes. It will also assist them to be innovative in a changing work environment.

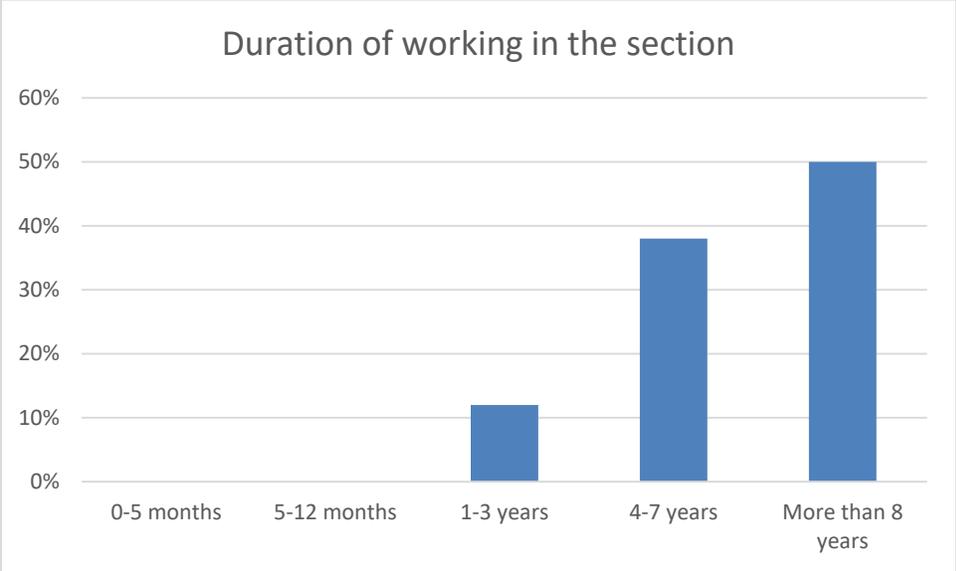
#### *6.11.1.7 Employment status*

The study probed the section, unit or directorate that officials worked within and all the information provided by eight (8) participants from the departments showed that some worked in Skills Development and Human Resources Development, Finance, Financial Management Accounting, Finance and Expenditure, and Labour Relations. However, officials from the finance and labour relations sections were the mentors of interns within the government departments.

#### *6.11.1.8 The duration officials have been working in their current unit, section or division*

The duration officials have been working in their current positions is important to understand what informs their perceptions and behaviour when dealing with interns. A respondent who has been working for five months in the current position may respond to questions differently than one who has worked for more than 12 months in the same position. The duration of officials is presented below.

**Figure 97: The duration officials have been working in their current unit, section or division**

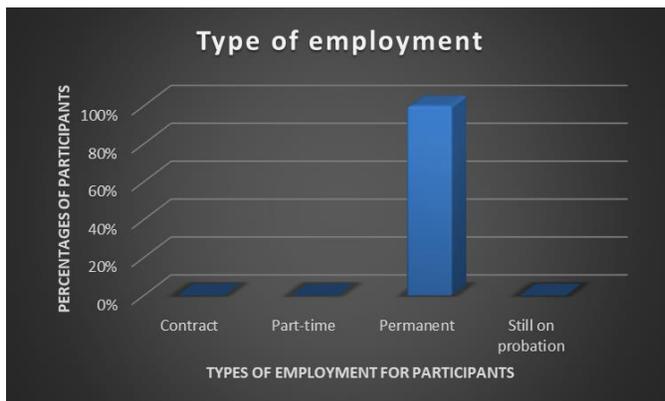


The results show that 12% of the participants have been working for a period of 1-3 years, 50% for more than 8 years and 38% for 4-7 years. There were no public officials who have been working for 0-5 (0%) and 5-12 months (0%) in their respective government departments. The majority of the officials have been occupying their current positions for more than 8 years. Their experience comes in handy for training interns.

*6.11.1.9 Type of employment*

Knowing the type of employment for public official engaged in the study helped to identify the relative social class positions of respondents in various categories about their qualifications. The type of employment of the respondents is indicated below.

**Figure 98: Type of employment**



In terms of the type of employment, the study probed whether officials were on probation, part-time, contract and to determine the percentage of those that have secured permanent employment. All participants were in permanent positions. There were no officials on contract, part-time or probation. It could mean that only permanent participants showed interest to participate in the study.

### **6.11.2 THEME 1: NATURE OF INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS**

The section provides the results of the respondents regarding the nature of the internship programme and skills development in public institutions. The study sought to establish how the internship programme was structured in public institutions as such directly impacts the skills interns would acquire.

#### *6.11.2.1 Nature of internship programme in the departments and its impact on skills development*

One of the objectives of the study was to investigate the nature of the internship programme in South African public institutions. Participants (public officials) within the government departments under study were asked about the nature of the internship programme and its impact on skills development. All participants agreed that the nature of the internship programme in their respective departments had impacted skills development. Some of the participants said that during the internship programme interns learnt how to perform different activities so they could become versatile in the near future. Also, participants indicated that the internship programme allowed interns to turn theory

into practice. Therefore, it would make them master certain jobs. Furthermore, the respondents said the internship programme enhanced the various skills of interns, such as communication, writing and reporting and their prior knowledge (semi skills).

One of the participants claimed:

*The internship programme is really helpful because interns acquire skills and the necessary exposure. Some interns join the department without any knowledge of how public institutions operate. Some of the interns got employment when they left here. One of the previous interns got employed in the Department of Sports, Arts and culture. The participant further said that unfortunately not all of them are getting employed after completing the internship programme. This is because of job competition.*

The participants further indicated that the internship programme and its nature impacted skills development because during meetings interns took minutes and some learnt to write formal reports. In addition, some of the interns learnt to draft memorandums.

One of the participants argued: *“Yes, the internship has impact because I am a product of the internship programme. It helps one to adjust to the work environment. It also helped me to get permanent employment.”*

Moreover, participants highlighted that the nature of the internship programme had an impact as some of the interns got the opportunity to rotate in different directorates during their internship period. However, another participant said that not all interns received the opportunity to rotate to other sections and directorates. For example, the departments first checked if there was a need to rotate interns. In most cases, interns were rotated when some of the sections in the departments lacked staff.

Other mentors said interns in their respective sections did well. Furthermore, interns in finance were granted the opportunity to undergo training on Basic Accounting Systems (BAS), Persal and Logistical Information System (Logis). These were some of the programmes that interns used to acquire specific skills. In conclusion, the findings showed that the nature of the internship programme had hugely impacted skills development and,

to a large extent, some of the interns were exposed to various activities per quarter to gain new knowledge about different sections or units in their respective government department.

#### *6.11.2.2 Nature of internship in the departments and how it can make interns to be employable and competitive in the near future*

It is argued that the internship programme may assist interns to be competitive and employable in the near future because of the skills and exposure they acquire. The study probed this belief and all participants (public officials) strongly agreed that the internship programme could make interns employable and competitive in the near future. Participants highlighted that some interns joined their departments without or with little knowledge about how public institutions functioned and operated. In addition, after a few months, some interns were employed elsewhere because of the exposure and experience received ever since they started working as interns.

One of the participants claimed: *“Internship programme can make interns to be employable and competitive because when they go to join other departments after the internship programme they already know what to do. The programme also provides them with knowledge about the work environment.”*

Another participant said: *“Especially those who work in finance are trained on Basic Accounting System, PERSAL and Logistical Information System through the training they are able to develop skills on how to operate the systems. Over and above, they are trained by qualified officials therefore competitive advantage is added.”*

Another respondent said: *“Yes, very competitive. The moment they know how the public sector works it becomes easier for them to be competent because they know the background of the public sector.”*

On the other hand, interns received certificates after attending a five-day training on Breaking Barriers to entry into the public service, which would allow them to be competitive and employable in the near future. Participants further indicated that the kind of exposure interns received made them competent and employable elsewhere. As interns are taken against an entry-level post, they do everything or the job functions of

that particular post. Additionally, previous interns have secured employment in various public and private institutions. For example, those who worked as interns in finance were now working in the financial sector (banks). Some did not even complete their internship, particularly those in finance. They did not stay for a long time without jobs. In conclusion, the findings indicate that the nature of the internship programme in the three selected government departments for this study has many advantages towards making interns more competent and employable elsewhere. Therefore, interns can still secure jobs in the near future because of the kind of training, exposure and nature of activities they did while working as interns.

#### *6.11.2.3 Training and workshop programme offered in the departments that can also boost interns' skills development and capacity building*

The Human Capital Theory states that there is a need for every organisation to develop and capacitate its employees in the form of training and workshops. For an employee to be productive, he or she must be offered regular training that will assist the individual to carry out his or her duties smoothly. Therefore, the study probed whether training and workshops were offered to the interns in their respective departments. The respondents said the interns were offered the opportunity to attend or go through various training and workshop programmes. In essence, all interns attended a mandatory or primary training called "Breaking Barriers to Entry into the Public Service", which took place three months after the commencement of the internship programme. Participants indicated that during the training interns learnt, amongst other things, roles of the Judiciary, the interaction of the three spheres of government, introduction to public sector legislation (Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1999, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa etc.). Furthermore, participants highlighted that interns learnt to draft an eye-catching Curriculum Vitae (CV) to market themselves. Also, the training provided interns with proper orientation, the mandate, vision and core functions of their respective government departments. Again, the training informed the interns about the meaningful and important role they had to play in their respective departments. The mandatory training was introduced by the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) and it was facilitated by the National School of Government (NSG).

One respondent claimed:

*Because we are government departments, one of the prescripts of the National Development Plan (NDP) says we must make public institutions a career of choice. However, during the 5 days of training interns learn about government priorities, planning and budgeting processes in government. The training also allows interns to know how government generate revenue and the Medium Term Strategic Framework. Some of the interns learn about procurement processes, corruption and how a public servant should behave and operate on a daily basis. Furthermore, there are secondary training (Logis, Persal and BAS) that are open to interns in finance sections where they learn how to operate financial systems. Interns who manage to pass the assessment (Tests) during training are then given user IDs to do practical transactions. Those who fail will be given the second chance to attend the training and they will only be given user ID access to use BAS and Logis systems once they have passed the training.*

Furthermore, some of the training was only offered when there was a need. On the other hand, interns in the HR section were trained for five days in Persal for Phase 1. Then at a later stage, the same HR interns went for phase 2 training, which normally ran for two weeks. In conclusion, government departments provided interns with training and workshops even though some of the training programmes were not mandatory and, to a large extent, the training only accommodated certain interns in specific sections (finance and HR). Therefore, interns in other sections were trained through the mandatory training - Barriers to Entry into the Public Service.

#### *6.11.2.4 Interns' satisfaction with the nature of duties performed daily in their respective departments*

The problem statement of the study indicates that not every intern in the South African public institutions is satisfied with the nature of duties they are performing daily in the workplace. Some claim that they go to work daily only to make tea and copies for their line managers and colleagues. The study aimed to verify or dismiss this claim by probing

whether interns were satisfied with the nature of duties they carried out daily. The majority of the participants (public officials) said that interns were satisfied because they hardly received complaints from interns about not being comfortable with the nature of duties they performed daily.

One of the respondents said: *“They are satisfied because we try by all means as the officials to place them in the correct directorate in line with their qualifications.”*

Another participant said: *“Yes, they are satisfied because sometimes interns say they have learnt a lot. They can be able to work independently without any mentorship. While at first they were not able to work independently. Some of the interns even say they can now run the offices alone.”*

Another respondent emphasised: *“I would say yes interns are satisfied because we never had any complaint in the meetings. Furthermore, those that I have mentored are happy. To this far, I have never heard complaints from graduate interns.”*

Another participant further explained: *“So far so good, they are doing what is expected from them. They are learning. In October 2019 I checked interns they indicated that they are satisfied”.*

In conclusion, most of the interns were satisfied with the nature of duties they performed since their mentors and officials hardly received complaints.

#### *6.11.2.5 Complains from interns about the nature of the internship programme*

The study checked the frequency in which public officials received complaints, if there were any, from interns about the nature of the internship programme. The respondents indicated that there were no official complaints from interns about the nature of the internship programme.

Another respondent said: *“From our side as mentors we won’t know about the interns who complain, therefore those officials in Human Resources would know if there were complaints”.*

In conclusion, the findings show that interns may be satisfied since none has ever lodged an official complaint to their mentors and colleagues in HR.

#### *6.11.2.6 Interns who once left the internship due to discomfort with the nature of duties and how host departments respond*

The literature says some interns quit the internship citing discomfort as one of the reasons and that the nature of duties they carry out daily was not beneficial. On that note, public officials were asked if there were interns who once left their respective departments because of not being satisfied with the nature of duties the intern performed during working hours. All participants claimed that there was never an intern who left the internship programme because of being uncomfortable with certain duties.

One respondent articulated: *“Those who left got employment somewhere else while doing the graduate internship in our department.”*

Another respondent said: *“I don’t know of any.”*

Conclusively, all interns in the selected government departments were comfortable with the nature of the internship programme and did not quit.

#### *6.11.2.7 The duration of internship programme in the departments is sufficient for interns to acquire the requisite skills and experience*

The duration of the internship programme used to be one-year and for various reasons some interns claimed that 12 months was not enough for one to learn about and be exposed to how public institutions functioned. Some claimed that a one-year experience was not enough because most of the posts in government institutions required an individual to have at least a minimum of two years’ experience. Therefore, participants (officials) were asked whether the duration of the internship programme in their respective departments was enough for interns to acquire the requisite skills and experience. All participants indicated that the duration of the internship programme has been extended to 24 months and was enough for interns to acquire skills and experience.

One of the participants argued: *“Yes, 2 years is enough because in the past it was 12 months and we were not satisfied with 12 months.”*

Another participant said: *“I am happy now is 24 months of which is ample time for them to acquire skills. Considering the fact that interns still have to rotate from one section to the other.”*

Another respondent said: *“The President of RSA (Mr Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa) has requested that we must no longer advertise entry level posts with experience as a minimum requirement. So that graduates can work, because not all graduates can secure jobs with experience.”*

On that note, all participants fully agreed that 24 months was enough for interns to acquire various skills and experience. It is because interns perform different activities daily to learn about various functions in their respective units.

#### *6.11.2.8 The monitoring measures for the authorities who are responsible for internship programme in the departments*

The success and impact of the internship programme on interns largely depend on the monitoring measures adopted by public institutions to ensure relevant experience, skills and knowledge. If there are no proper monitoring measures, the internship programme may not have an impact on skills transfer. The study probed monitoring measures that were employed by authorities responsible for the internship programme in their respective departments. The majority of the participants outlined some of the monitoring measures. Amongst other things, officials indicated that they used quarterly monitoring meetings and reports submitted by interns to their mentors and the HR division.

One of the participants claimed: *“Interns complete monthly reports of the work they have done. Also, upon appointment interns sign a performance agreement. The performance agreement is reviewed every quarter against the intern’s target. Interns are also expected to sign time registers every day in the morning and when they knock off.”*

Furthermore, participants indicated that they also used tasks given to interns as one of the monitoring measures to check whether they met performance expectations. There are different monitoring measures executed by various departments and officials.

### **6.11.3 THEME 2: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME**

The study aimed to get an in-depth understanding of some of the challenges and opportunities associated with the internship programme in South Africa.

#### *6.11.3.1 The kind of opportunities for interns in the selected government departments*

According to Trotskovy and Sabag (2010), graduates have the opportunity to identify the differences in the traditional learning process in the academic environment and the real-design process in the work environment. Some of the participants explained that interns could secure permanent jobs if some of the posts were advertised while interns were still working in their respective host departments because the National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union (NEHAWU) urged the departments to prefer internal employees. Also, interns can acquire different skills such as computer, administration and to cope under pressure.

One respondent said: *“Internship programme gives interns exposure, so that they can get work experience, familiarise them with relevant experience according to their qualifications. Because some interns have certain qualifications but they don’t know what kind of jobs they have to do.”*

Furthermore, interns can benefit from certain information in public institutions for personal development while others have the opportunity to learn from the “Barriers to Entry into the Public Service.” Interns also get the opportunity to network, especially those who work at “Archives” because they sometimes conduct outreach programmes with secondary schools and municipalities. From the findings provided, there are various opportunities for graduates who work as interns.

#### *6.11.3.2 The challenges officials normally experience regarding internship programme*

Stasz and Brewer (1998) state that some of the challenges associated with internship programme are that the programme requires money to pay interns and, as a result, public institutions are sometimes unable to hire interns due to a lack of financial resources. On that note, the study probed whether there were challenges related to the internship programme in the selected government departments. Some of the respondents said that ever since they started working with interns for the past four financial years, there has never been any challenges related to the internship programme.

One of the participants claimed: *“I have never worked with a stubborn intern. They had always performed their duties as expected. None of them was lazy.”*

Another participant argued: *“As people we differ, some interns do not like initiating. They are reactive instead of being proactive. They come with school mentality into government departments.”*

Furthermore, some of the participants indicated that the extension of the internship duration to 24 months initiated by the DPSA was a challenge because those who were already in the system signed a 12-month contract. Interns had to write a memorandum as a way of expressing their complaints. Therefore, one of the selected departments had the challenge to address the matter and there was no way it could extend their contracts to 24 months because the directive came after interns had already signed contracts. Therefore, interns did not leave peacefully. Other challenges included poor attendance of mentors to meetings. Mentors always said they were busy at the time of the meetings. Therefore, the officials said they held one-on-one meetings with mentors and some only came when they experienced challenges. In conclusion, some of the participants outlined challenges while some claimed that they had never experienced any challenges related to the internship programme. Most of the participants believed that they did not have any challenges and some interns in one of the selected government departments have started their work on 01 July 2019.

#### **6.11.4 THEME 3: PRESCRIBED LEGAL FRAMEWORK/ LEGISLATION/ POLICIES GOVERNING INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME IN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS**

The study looked at the legislative framework underpinning the internship programme to determine whether public institutions implemented the programme in line with its regulations.

##### *6.11.4.1 Policies governing internship programme*

Numerous legislative frameworks are underpinning the successful implementation of the internship programme. The study checked whether the officials were familiar with the prescribed legal framework/ legislation governing internship programme in government departments. The majority of the participants outlined the policies and legal framework governing the internship programme.

One of the respondents said: *“Skills Development Act, Human Resource Development Strategy for Public Service, South African Qualification Authority Act, which is normally used to check if the intern’s qualifications are recognised and registered with SAQA.”*

Furthermore, other participants outlined the Labour Policy, Labour Relations Act and the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

Therefore, from the findings, the majority of the participants had knowledge about the legislations governing internship programme. Only one participant did not know them. The participant claimed: *“I don’t know, but my colleague can assist to answer the question.”*

To conclude, the majority of public officials in the selected government departments were aware of legislation governing the internship programme while the minority were assisted by their colleagues to answer the question. Some of the participants referred to their laptops and files.

#### *6.11.4.2 The implementation of internship programme in line with the policies*

The study established whether public institutions implemented the internship programme in line with applicable policies and regulations. The participants highlighted that the policies and legislation were implemented accordingly.

One of the respondents said: *“The Skills Development Act requires all departments to hire interns and that is why we appoint them. Furthermore, work hours are regulated by Basic Conditions Act, some interns are able to take sick leaves and family responsibility leaves.”*

### **6.11.4 THEME 4: MEASURES FOR EFFECTIVE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME IN THE DEPARTMENTS**

The study probed measures that could enhance the internship programme experience in government departments. The study checked whether government officials in the Human Resources and Skills Development unit had plans for strengthening the internship programme to make it more impactful on graduate interns.

#### *6.11.4.1 The kind of planning the departments have for effective internship programme*

One of the objectives of the study is to provide possible solutions in line with the findings. Therefore, assessing the current development planning in the selected departments will allow the study to make further recommendations regarding the delivery of an effective internship programme that can impart new skills and knowledge to the interns.

One of the participants said: *“I think the only thing we are trying to do is to ensure that interns are always exposed to the necessary trainings if they are available. Even though sometimes funds are limited.”*

Another participant claimed: *“Yes, we want to introduce skills development trainings. But we don’t have money.”*

Furthermore, participants also said rotation should also be done with interns in administration for them to explore all the work duties in the department. At the moment, it is only interns in finance and labour divisions who rotate. However, one of the participants argued that he or she was not familiar with some of the planning activities that were currently taking place in the departments.

One of the participants said rotation was one the measures the departments used even though it was not consistent. The respondent added: *“For example, interns in finance rotate every 6 months. They can be rotated to the section of salaries, supply chain management, and budgeting and financial reporting.”*

In light of this, the majority of the participants emphasised that interns ought to be rotated to various sections in line with their qualifications to be exposed to various sections and functions. From the findings of this study, rotation was not consistent in the selected government departments.

#### *6.11.4.2 The kind of monitoring measures for ensuring that interns receive necessary skills*

Most government departments are divided into subdivisions and the same was the case with the selected department for this study. Each section has interns. Therefore, the study checked whether each of the divisions in each department had monitoring measures. The

study also established whether the monitoring measures (if available) were specific or followed a generic structure adopted by the Human Resources Development department.

The participants outlined the monitoring measures and said they were generic and not specific to sub-divisions. The majority of the participants highlighted that their division used monthly reports, where interns were rated through the use of questionnaires to express themselves if they were satisfied with their work descriptions. The monthly reports were submitted to mentors for authorisation and then to the Human Resources section for evaluation. During the evaluation stage, the HR section consulted with mentors regarding the action they might have taken to ensure that interns improved, particularly those that found it difficult to perform their daily work. The participants in one of the selected departments indicated that the HR section intervened only when there was a need, depending on the comments and responses provided by interns on their monthly evaluation reports. Also, one of the purposes of the monthly reports was to check how interns dressed up, their time management skills and how professional they were in the work environment. In conclusion, the monitoring measures used by various directorates within the departments under study were similar to those adopted by the HR division. Therefore, most of the directorates did not have division-specific monitoring measures and depended largely on the measures developed by the HR section.

## **6.12 CONCLUSION**

The chapter presented the findings of the study and outlined the importance of collecting data, interpreting and analysing the findings. Questionnaires were given to current and previous interns to assess the impact of the internship programme on skills development in the three selected government departments in Limpopo Province. Furthermore, face to face interviews were conducted with officials (in HRD and Skills Development as well as mentors of the interns) in the departments. The study found that the majority of the participants (both interns and officials) believed there was a positive impact of the internship programme on skills development. The study argues that in one way or the other, an internship programme is helpful towards preparing interns for the job market in the near future despite several challenges associated with the internship programme as outlined in the preceding sections. The next chapter summarises the research structure,

succinctly outlines the research findings and makes recommendations guided by the findings.

## **CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The chapter outlines the summary of chapters and summarises research findings as well as provides recommendations guided by the research process. Also, the section details information on how each chapter was structured to achieve the set aims and objectives. The findings of the study were achieved through the research design and methodology and other processes that this section will briefly outline. It includes the phase of data presentation, analysis and interpretation. The chapter concludes with recommendations based on every finding of the study. The recommendations are hoped to contribute meaningfully to the efforts of strengthening the impact of the internship programme on skills development by the selected government departments in Limpopo Province that the study investigated.

### **7.1 SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS**

The study focused on the impact of the internship programme on skills development in three selected government departments in Limpopo Province. Skills shortage remains one of the challenges facing South Africa in modern society. Therefore, amongst other things, the internship programme was introduced to bridge the gap between skills development and skills shortage. The study had five research questions that were answered during the process of data collection. Also, the study investigated the nature of the internship programme and skills development in public institutions intending to evaluate the relationship between the internship programme and skills development in the selected government departments. The study also delved deeper into the impact of the internship programme on skills development. The research process also identified the challenges and opportunities for the internship programme. In light of this, the study, in line with the findings, made recommendations for the enhancement of the internship programme. Therefore, the study aimed at assessing the impact of the internship programme on skills development. In pursuit of the aim and objectives, the study was organised as follows.

## **Chapter One**

The first chapter provided an introduction and background, problem statement, the description of the study area, research design and methodology and some other important aspects. The aim, objectives, research questions and definitions were also clearly outlined. The problem statement was assessed through the impact of the internship programme on skills development in selected government departments in Limpopo province.

## **Chapter Two**

The second chapter provided a theoretical framework that underpinned the study. There was a need to strengthen the study by using a theory that supported skills development and capacity building. Therefore, the Human Capital Theory was adopted for the study. The theory believes that for every organisation or public institution to be developmental, there is a need for skilled personnel. The theory further suggests that every organisation must at all times invest in its workforce. Therefore, investment in such a workforce will assist the organisation to carry out its daily core functions. The theory further assumes that skills development and capacity building programme will, to a large extent, have a significant impact on public institutions of any country. Approaches to Human Capital Theory were outlined in Chapter 2, which further discussed the characteristics of Human Capital Theory. Again, the chapter provided a detailed background of the types of capacity found with the Human Capital Theory. The theory focused more on the relationship between skills development and institutional performance.

## **Chapter Three**

The third chapter reviewed literature relevant to the phenomenon under study. The literature was extracted from published articles, books, journals and government documents. The chapter only focused on the first three objectives: the nature of internship programme and skills development in public institutions; the relationship between internship programme and skills development in the selected government departments in Limpopo Province; and the impact of internships on skills development. The chapter also discussed the legislative framework underpinning internship programme and skills

development in South African public institutions. The study discovered that there was a relationship between the internship programme and skills development.

#### **Chapter Four**

The fourth chapter extended the literature review, focusing on the last objective of the challenges and opportunities for an internship programme in public institutions. Through the review of literature from different scholars, it was discovered that there were several challenges and opportunities for an internship programme, particularly in South African public institutions. Amongst other things, the internship programme provided interns with the opportunity to link theory with practice. Also, the internship programme prepared interns for the work environment both during the programme and in their future endeavours. Again, interns performed a variety of tasks that capacitated for the labour market. The challenges were also outlined through the review of the literature. Otherwise, budget constraints and inadequate Human Resources structures to support training were discovered as some of the challenges.

#### **Chapter Five**

The fifth chapter delineated the research design and methodology that was adopted in the study. The study employed a mixed-method research approach with specific reference to selected government departments, namely the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, the Department of Education, and the Provincial Treasury in Limpopo Province. The study used the mixed method as the methods complement each other when validating the research findings. The study also used random and purposive sampling technique. The random sampling technique was used to select current and previous interns, while the purposive sampling strategy was adopted to select public officials who dealt with the internship programme, skills development and human resources development in the three selected government departments. Through the use of a mixed-method, the study had 79 participants from the three departments. The initial sample size of 140 could not be reached as some participants did not return the data collection instruments. However, data collection instruments were clearly outlined and how they were used to collect the required data. Furthermore, the chapter provided ethical

considerations and the procedures that the researcher followed in obtaining the required data.

## **Chapter Six**

The chapter presented, interpreted and analysed the findings of the study from the data collected from the three selected government departments in Limpopo Province. Data were collected using questionnaires and face to face interviews. According to the findings, the majority of the previous interns remained unemployed upon completion of the internship programme. Notwithstanding this statistic, the sampling size of the previous interns was biased. Secondly, some of the public officials who mentored interns lacked knowledge about the legislation underpinning the internship programme in South Africa. Thirdly, the internship programme has been extended from one year to two years with the hope that interns would acquire more skills and knowledge through rotating in different units within their host departments. The study used graphs, pie charts, numbers and percentages as well as words to present, interpret and analyse the data into manageable proportions. The chapter also provided responses from current interns, previous interns and public officials from the three government departments in Limpopo Province.

### **7.2 RESEARCH FINDINGS**

The study aimed to assess the impact of internship programme on skills development in three selected government departments in Limpopo Province. This section outlines and elaborates the findings.

#### **7.2.1 Lack of knowledge about legislative framework for internship programme**

The findings of the study established a knowledge gap among the respondents (public officials) about the legislation underpinning the internship programme in the South African public institutions. Some of the participants failed to mention any of the pieces of legislation governing the internship programme. Some even passed on the questions to their colleagues for assistance with answering the investigated phenomenon. The knowledge gap could be attributed to the fact that some participants (particularly mentors) were not stationed in the skills development and human resources development directorates, meaning they never prioritised such since it was not their beat. Their

knowledge about the legislative framework underpinning the internship programme remained limited.

### **7.2.2 Interns are not comfortable with some of the activities assigned to them**

One of the research questions in the study probed whether participants were comfortable with some of the activities they performed daily. Not all respondents were satisfied. Some of the participants indicated that their line managers and mentors would normally assign them to frivolous task such as making tea. Even though it was not something that happened daily, the matter unsettled the interns. The researcher believes that there is nothing wrong with interns making tea for their colleagues, as long as the timing is right and they are not coerced. Furthermore, the study found that line managers and mentors delegated their work to interns throughout the internship programme. The excessive delegation could have also been a burden to interns as they had to deal with continuous work overload within a short space of time.

### **7.2.3 Insufficient stipend**

Although the amount of stipend is not necessarily a concern in the study, the researcher probed the matter to determine the level of satisfaction amongst participants concerning their monthly stipend. The study noted that few participants were not satisfied with the monthly stipend. Some argued that they were not paid in line with their level of education and training. For example, some of the participants possessed an honours degree, yet received the same amount of stipend as interns who had a diploma or a bachelor's degree.

### **7.2.4 Interns' dissatisfactions about how their mentors and line managers treat them**

The findings of the study established that not all participants were content with how they were treated by their mentors and line managers, particularly at the beginning of the internship programme. As a result, participants argued that sometimes they did not feel free around their mentors and seniors. The researcher contends that the challenge of this nature can sometimes badly affect the interns' productivity. Therefore, the challenge has the potential to curb the interns' creativity and full potential in the work environment.

### **7.2.5 Interns want to be absorbed after undergoing internship programme**

During the process of data collection, participants also indicated that public institutions ought to absorb them upon completing the internship programme. The finding was substantiated by the fact that public institutions had vacancies that could be filled by the same individuals whom they have trained. Participants also argued that there was no point in developing and nurturing interns while, at a later stage, they would stay at home with the knowledge, experience and skills acquired through the internship.

### **7.2.6 Interns are limited to certain work activities**

The study found that some of the participants (interns) wanted to be exposed to a variety of tasks in the workplace. Participants highlighted that being limited to certain work activities limited their knowledge, experience and exposure.

### **7.2.7 Lack of proper and regular measures for performance monitoring and management of interns**

Although the results in this research are not explicitly clear about all performance monitoring measures that government departments use to appraise and evaluate interns, common performance monitoring and evaluating measure of the participants (interns) was identified. Government departments relied only on quarterly performance reports. Participants also highlighted that sometimes they did not even receive feedback on how they have performed throughout. The researcher argues that the challenge might emanate as a result of having senior officials in the Human Resources Development (HRD) who did not understand the main objective of monitoring and evaluating the performance of interns. Secondly, senior officials could be lacking interest in facilitating and coordinating the whole process of performance management.

### **7.2.8 Lack of ample training programme**

One of the questions under investigation was to check whether government departments invested in training programmes. The question was directed at current and previous interns and public officials in the study. Some of the participants argued that there were no sufficient training programmes for interns in the procurement directorate and those in Personnel and Salary System (PERSAL). Furthermore, participants have also indicated

that there was only one common compulsory training programme (Breaking Barriers to Entry into the Public Service), which was provided to all interns at the beginning of the internship programme.

### **7.2.9 Unclear and imprecise job description**

The study established that not all participants had a clear understanding of the job description of their internship programme. A vague job description could leave interns confused as they would not know exactly what to do and the nature of duties to perform daily in government departments. The researcher argues that indistinct job description may grind down interns' sense of belonging and create edginess.

### **7.2.10 Lack of certificates after attending certain training programme**

The study noted that not all training programmes awarded certificates of competency to the participants (interns). Certificates of competency are crucial for interns as they serve as evidence of their training record. Participants indicated that training programme such as Basic Accounting Systems (BAS) did not have certificates to show specific areas of competency of the individual and to acknowledge that the interns have undergone such a training.

### **7.2.11 Inconsistent rotation of interns in different directorates**

Although the study was grounded on the impact of the internship programme on skills development, the researcher also noted that interns were sometimes rotated to different directorates and sections within the same institution. For instance, an intern who works in the directorate of budget and expenditure can sometimes be rotated to procurement after a certain period. Therefore, participants indicated that interns were rotated to different directorates after four months even though it was not a consistent practice; they were only rotated when there was a need. The researcher argues that inconsistent rotation could sometimes limit interns from being exposed to various work-related activities.

### **7.2.12 Internship programme has been extended**

One of the objectives of the study was to investigate the nature of the internship programme in the three selected government departments in Limpopo Province. The study found that the internship programme was initially a one-year programme but later extended to two years. Therefore, participants indicated that 24 months was ample time for interns to acquire a variety of skills and, to a large extent, the amendment allows interns the privilege to be rotated to various sections over two years.

## **7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The recommendations as proposed below are in line with the findings of primary and secondary data gathered in the study. It is significant to make recommendations based on the literature reviewed in the preceding chapters. The recommendations could assist government departments in the area of study and, most importantly, government institutions assigned with the execution of the internship programme function.

### **7.3.1 Clear job description**

The imprecise and undistinguishable job description is a cause for concern in the South African government departments. Given the importance of defining job descriptions, it is unfortunate that some of the government departments fail to clearly outline what interns have to do daily upon signing contracts of employment with respective government departments. It affects interns as they do not have a clear picture of what is expected of them in the workplace. To a large extent, failing to provide interns with job descriptions has a moral question - it is wrong to evaluate and appraise the performance of an individual who does not have a clear understanding of the nature of duties to fulfil. Therefore, the study urges the investigated government departments, and others with a similar challenge, to provide clearly defined job descriptions to interns upon induction into the internship programme. To help the interns remain on course, the departments should remind them about the institution's aspirations and goals every quarter. Such will assist interns to have a sense of belonging and strive to do more in their respective institutions.

### **7.3.2 Revisiting importance of internship programme**

There is a need for government departments to revisit and have a clear understanding of the aspirations of an internship programme that was introduced in the South African public institutions. The internship programme could have value if only public institutions understood the significance of the programme. It is not helpful to run an internship programme just for the sake of complying with the policies of the government and filling the gaps within departments. As far as the internship programme is concerned, public institutions need to realise that the programme should have a meaningful contribution to every intern. Interns should be able to hold the programme highly with requisite skills and relevant industry knowledge. In this regard, revisiting the importance of internship programme will assist public institutions to execute an internship programme that has a positive impact on skills development.

### **7.3.3 Knowledge of legislative framework**

Various pieces of legislation governing the internship programme were stated in chapter 2 of the study, including the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996. In essence, the internship programme was introduced, particularly in the South African public institutions as mandatory to cap the skills gap among new graduates. To a large extent, the legislative framework outlines how the internship programme should be executed. The premise of this recommendation is grounded on the fact that public officials implementing internship programme should have a clear understanding of the programme. The result of such an understanding would open an opportunity for a successful and meaningful implementation of the internship programme.

### **7.3.4 Stipend adjustment**

Although the issue of stipend is not necessarily a concern for the current study, the researcher saw it fit to probe the amount of stipend interns received as it arose as one of the challenges that could potentially inhibit the programme's efficiency. Also, the question aimed to establish the level of satisfaction amongst participants (current and previous interns). The findings showed that not all participants were satisfied with the amount of stipend they received, as some argued that a person who held a diploma ought not to be

paid the same amount of stipend as someone with a higher certificate such as an honours degree. To a large extent, participants argued that the magnitude of work they performed throughout the internship programme was more than what they were paid monthly. The researcher argues that public institutions should consider economic conditions and the standard of living as well as the level of education when determining a monthly stipend for interns.

### **7.3.5 Change of attitude by mentors and line managers towards interns**

The findings of the study established that not all participants were satisfied with how their mentors and line managers treated them, particularly at the beginning of the internship programme. The interns said the officials were rude and did not welcome them with benevolence. As a result, participants argued that sometimes they did not feel free around their mentors and seniors. Therefore, the study recommends a change of attitude by line managers and orientate the interns with kindness and high professionalism. The premise of the recommendation is grounded on the fact that the challenge has the potential to dim the interns' light in the workplace and erode their sense of belonging in the institution. As a result, having a sense of not belonging in the institution may lead to interns' decreased level of productivity. The researcher acknowledges that conflict will always arise in the workplace; however, colleagues should find amicable ways to deal with disputes effectively.

### **7.3.6 Provision of diverse and sufficient training programme**

Government departments should invest in capacity building programmes. Hence, the study was grounded in the Human Capital Theory and skills development to consolidate the fact that investment in interns' capacity and skills can enhance the individual's performance and productivity in the workplace. The literature or empirical evidence also proves that investing in human resources could improve an institution's overall efficiency and productivity. Therefore, the study recommends government departments provide various capacity-building programmes to allow interns to acquire various operational skills and be exposed to different, relevant skills.

## **7.4 CONCLUSION**

The study aimed to assess the impact of the internship programme on skills development in selected government departments in Limpopo Province under study. The study was prompted by the dissatisfactions regarding the nature of job tasks that interns performed in their respective government departments, which ended up compromising a variety of skills that ought to be acquired by the incumbents. The findings of the study indicated that there were a variety of tasks to be performed by interns. However, it is worth a deliberation that training programmes need to be instituted by public institutions for interns' skills development enrichment were not sufficient. Therefore, interns should view the internship programme as an opportunity to acquire skills. Their enthusiasm to learn during the 24 months is paramount for their development. Meaning, the programme should not only be seen as a vehicle to gain monthly income but a step in the direction of cutting teeth as a professional. Through the data collected and presented in this report, the study managed to answer the critical research questions outlined in Chapter 1. However, further meaningful contributions can be made in this discourse in the South African public sector to address skills development challenges.

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## APPENDIX A

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CURRENT INTERNS

I Selaelo John Mabeba, student number (201415370) a registered Masters student of Public Administration at the University of Limpopo. I am conducting a research project on **“The impact of internship programme on skills development in selected government departments in Limpopo Province.** The purpose of this questionnaire is to get an in-depth understanding of the impact of internship programme on skills development in selected government departments in Limpopo Province. This questionnaire will require 10 to 15 minutes of your time. Please note that all information collected will be used for academic purposes only and will be treated confidentially in accordance with the ethical standards of the University of Limpopo (UL), South Africa. Your name will not be recorded and will not appear in any report. If you need any assistance in answering the questions, please do not hesitate to ask. We appreciate your participation in this research project, Thank you. **PLEASE USE A TICK OR CROSS THROUGHOUT TO ANSWER THE QUESTIONS.**

Contact details: 0790987234

Email address: [selaelojohnmabeba@gmail.com](mailto:selaelojohnmabeba@gmail.com)

## SECTION A

### A. Demographic Information

#### 1. Gender

Male		Female	
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## 2. Ethnic /historical racial group

African/ Black South African	White South African	Coloured South Africa	Indian South African
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## 3. Age group

18-22 years		23-27 years		28-35Ears	
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## 4. Province you are coming from

WC	EC	NC	KZN	FS	NW	G	M	L

WC- Western Cape EC- Eastern Cape NC- Northern Cape L-Limpopo

FC- Free State NW- North West G- Gauteng KZN- Kwa Zulu Natal M- Mpumalanga

## 5. Home language

English	IsiXhosa	IsiZulu	Tswana	Swati	Sepedi
IsiNdebele	Afrikaans	Xitsonga	Sotho	Tshivenda	

## 6. Marital status

Single	Married	Divorced	Widowed

## B.Education and training

Certificate/ Diploma	Undergraduate degree	Honours degree	Post graduate: Masters degree	Post graduate: PhD/ Doctoral

**C.Employment status**

1. How did you hear about the availability of this internship at the Department you are working in?

Walked into the department and asked for work	
I heard about it from a friend or family member	
I saw an advertisement of the position	
An agent referred me to the position	
I sent my CV to the department	
Other	

2. How long have you been working in this department as an intern?

0-5months	5- 12 months	2 years	3 years

3. Under which unit, section or division are you working as an intern? For example, Human Resource, Revenue and Expenditure, Supply Chain Management, Skills Development, Information and Communication Technology or? Please specify

.....  
 .....

### D. The impact of internship programme on skills development

Please indicate the importance of the following skills for your current position at your work place, on a 5- point scale.

<b>My current position helps me to:</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
Be confident					
Be able to control my emotions					
Be organized					
Have a good memory					
Be able to work in a team					
Develop leadership skills					
Solve problems					
Work under pressure					
Develop time management skills					
Be flexible in the work environment					
Be committed to my daily work					
Improve my computer skills					
Be physically strong for the work					
Improve my basic mathematics					
Be punctual to work					

Have knowledge about the work environment					
Communicate effectively (speak, read, write)					
Prioritise my work duties					
Develop reporting skills					

## E. Reasons for working as an intern and opportunities behind

### Internship programme

Please indicate the importance of all the following reasons why you are working as an intern, based on the 5 point scale below.

<b>I work as an intern because:</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
To gain experience, Knowledge and skills					
Because of my passion to serve the public					
To meet different people and create network					
To prepare myself for the corporate world					
Source of income					

It is not easy to get a job without experience					
Some interns were absorbed at the host department after completing the internship programme					

**F. Perception about the nature of the internship programme and skills development opportunities in the department.**

<b>Perceptions</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>agree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
The stipend of the internship is not enough					
The stipend sometimes de motivates me to do my work					
This internship programme can make me to be more competent in the near future (Skills, exposure and knowledge)					
The department give interns enough support in terms of training and workshops					

I am satisfied with the nature of duties I am doing during work hours as per the job description					
The duration of the internship is enough for one to get experience and knowledge					
I have learnt so many different things ever since I started working as an intern					

G. If there is anything that you wish you could change in your current position as an intern, what would that be? Motivate your opinion.

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**Thank you for your participation!**

## APPENDIX B

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PREVIOUS INTERNS

I Selaelo John Mabeba, student number (201415370) a registered Masters student of Public Administration at the University of Limpopo. I am conducting a research project on **“The impact of internship programme on skills development in selected government departments in Limpopo Province.** The purpose of this questionnaire is to get an in-depth understanding of the impact of internship programme on skills development in selected government departments in Limpopo Province. This questionnaire will require 10 to 15 minutes of your time. Please note that all information collected will be used for academic purposes only and will be treated confidential in accordance with the ethical standards of the University of Limpopo (UL), South Africa. Your name will not be recorded and will not appear in any report. If you need any assistance in answering the questions, please do not hesitate to ask. We appreciate your participation in this research project, Thank you.

Contact details: 0790987234

Email address: [selaelojohnmabeba@gmail.com](mailto:selaelojohnmabeba@gmail.com) or [selaelo.mabeba@ul.ac.za](mailto:selaelo.mabeba@ul.ac.za)

**NB: USE A TICK OR CROSS WHERE IT IS NECESSARY TO ANSWER**

#### A. Demographic Information

##### 1. Gender

Male		Female	
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## 2. Ethnic /historical racial group

African/ African	Black South	White South African	Coloured South Africa	Indian South African
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## 3. Age group

18-22 years		23-27 years		28-35 years	
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## 4. Province you are coming from

WC	EC	NC	KZN	FS	NW	G	M	L

WC- Western Cape EC- Eastern Cape NC- Northern Cape L-Limpopo

FC- Free State NW- North West G- Gauteng KZN- Kwa Zulu Natal M- Mpumalanga

## 5. Home language

English	IsiXhosa	IsiZulu	Tswana	Swati	Sepedi
IsiNdebele	Afrikaans	Xitsonga	Sotho	Tshivenda	

## 6. Marital status

Single	Married	Divorced	Widowed

**B. Education and training / Highest qualification**

Certificate/ Diploma	Undergraduate degree	Honours degree	Post graduate: Masters degree	Post graduate: PhD/ Doctoral

**C. Employment status**

1. How did you hear about the availability of the internship at the Department you once worked at?

Walked into the department and asked for work	
I heard about it from a friend or family member	
I saw an advertisement of the internship	
An agent referred me to the position	
I sent my CV to the department	
Other	

2. How long have you worked in that department as an intern?

0-5months		5- 12 months		2 years		3 years	
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3. Under which unit, section or division were you working as an intern? For example, Human Resource, Revenue and Expenditure, Supply Chain Management, Skills Development, Information and Communication Technology or? Please specify

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### D. The impact of internship programme on skills development

Please indicate the importance of the following skills for your previous position (intern), on a 5- point scale.

<b>My previous work as an intern helped me to:</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
To develop oral and presentation skills					
Enhance my creativity skills					
Develop problem solving skills					
Develop self confidence					
To work independently					
Develop social interaction skills					
To deal effectively with conflict					
To develop team work skills					
To develop managerial skills					
Be flexible					
To develop reporting skills					
Improve my computer skills					

To develop time management skills					
To breakdown complex tasks into manageable tasks					
To develop listening skills					

### E. Reasons for working as an intern and opportunities behind

#### Internship programme

Please indicate the importance of all the following reasons why you were working as an intern, based on the 5 point scale below.

<b>I worked as an intern because:</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
To gain experience, Knowledge and skills					
Internship programme provide graduates with the opportunity to link theory					
To meet different people and create network					
Because I wanted to prepare myself for the work environment in the near future					
Source of income					

It is not easy to get a job without work experience					
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4. Ever since you finished your internship are you currently working?

YES	NO

5. At which institution are you working? And as what?

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**F. Perception about the nature of the internship programme and skills development**

Perceptions	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Strongly disagree	Disagree
The Internship gave me the opportunity to examine and explore possible career opportunities					
Internships are important for work experience					
Through the internship programme I have managed to acquire a variety of skills					

The internship provided me with professional foundation for performing duties at the workplace					
Internship programme made me to be independent and ambitious					
There is a relationship between internship programme and skills development					
The nature of duties I used to do as an intern had a positive impact on me					
The internship programme helped me to prove my abilities					
I felt proud to work as an intern					
During the internship my duties were the same everyday					
If I was to be given second chance to work as an intern in that particular department, I would still take the opportunity					

My participation in the internship was worth the effort					
During the internship, my daily duties were clearly outlined by my line manager/ superior/ supervisor/ Mentor					

**G. Departmental support**

	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
My line manager (supervisor, mentor) was always helpful and supportive					
My performance was always monitored					
The department provided me with real job experience and exposure					
Developmental training programme were provided to me					

**H. If there is something that you wish you could change with internships, what would that be? Motivate your opinion.**

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**Thank you for your time, cooperation and participation!**

## APPENDIX C

### SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PUBLIC OFFICIALS

I Selaelo John Mabeba, student number (201415370) a registered Masters student of Public Administration at the University of Limpopo. I am conducting a research project on **“The impact of internship programme on skills development in selected government departments in Limpopo Province.** The purpose of this questionnaire is to get an in-depth understanding of the impact of internship programme on skills development in selected government departments in Limpopo Province. This questionnaire will require 10 to 15 minutes of your time. Please note that all information collected will be used for academic purposes only and will be treated confidentially in accordance with the ethical standards of the University of Limpopo (UL), South Africa. Your name will not be recorded and will not appear in any report. If you need any assistance in answering the questions, please do not hesitate to ask. We appreciate your participation in this research project, Thank you.

Contact details: 0790987234

Email address: [selaelojohnmabeba@gmail.com](mailto:selaelojohnmabeba@gmail.com)

#### SECTION A

##### A. Demographic information

###### 1. Gender of the respondent

Male		Female	
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###### 2. Ethnic /historical racial group

African/ Black South African	White South African	Coloured South Africa	Indian South African
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###### 3. Age group

18-25 years	26-30 years	31-35 years	36-50 years	51-65 years
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**4. Home language**

English	IsiXhosa	IsiZulu	Tswana	Swati	Sepedi
Afrikaans	Xitsonga	Sotho	Tshivenda	IsiNdebele	

**5. Marital status**

Single		Married		Divorced		Widowed	
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**B. Education and training**

Matric	Certificate/ Diploma	Undergraduate degree	Honours degree	Post graduate: Masters degree	Post graduate: PhD/ Doctoral

**C. Employment status**

1. Under which section are you working? Human Resource Development, Skills Development, Capacity building or?

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2. How long have you been working in the current unit, section or division?

0-5 months	5-12months	1-3 years	4-7 years	More than 8 years
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3. What type of employment do you have?

Still on probation	Part –time	Contract	Permanent
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**SECTION B**

**Theme 1: The nature of internship programme and skills development in public institutions.**

1. Do you think the nature of internship programme in your department has any impact on skills development? If yes/ no, how?

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2. Do you think the nature of the internship programme in your department can make interns to be competitive and employable in the near future? Motivate

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3. Does the internship programme in your department offer some kind of training and workshop programme that can also boost the interns with regard to skills development and capacity building? If yes, what kind of programme?

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4. Are interns satisfied with the kind or nature of duties they are performing on daily basis in your department?

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5. Does the department receive complains from the interns about the nature of the internship programme? And how does the department respond to them?.....

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6. Is there any intern who once left the internship in your department because of not being comfortable with the nature of duties he or she was doing? And how did you respond to that situation?

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7. Do you think the duration / period of the internship in your department is good enough for interns to acquire the requisite skills and experience? If yes/no then motivate your answer

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8. What are the monitoring measures for the authorities who are responsible for internship programme in your department? To ensure that interns develop and acquire the relevant skills.

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**Theme 2: Challenges and opportunities for internship programme in your department.**

1. What kind of opportunities do you think interns could get if they are working as interns with specific reference to your department? Please explain in detail

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2. What kind of challenges do you normally experience with regard to internship programme in your department? Please explain in detail

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**Theme 3: Legal prescribed framework/ legislation/ policies governing internship programme in the South African public institutions.**

1. Mention any of the policies governing internship programme?

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2. Does your department implement the internship programme in line with those policies?

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**Theme 4: Measures that can make the internship programme to be more effective in your department.**

1. What kind of planning does the department have which can bring the effectiveness of internship programme?

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2. What kind of monitoring measures does your Unit/ Directorate/ Division use to ensure that interns get the necessary skills? Is there any performance management contract for interns?

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**Thank you for your time, cooperation and participation!**



**University of Limpopo**  
Department of Research Administration and Development  
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa  
Tel: (015) 268 3935, Fax: (015) 268 2306, Email: anastasia.ngoba@ul.ac.za

**TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**  
**ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE**

**MEETING:** 6 August 2019

**PROJECT NUMBER:** TREC/207/2019: PG

**PROJECT:**

**Title:** The Impact of Internship Programme On Skills Development in Selected Government Departments in Limpopo Province.  
**Researcher:** SJ Mabeba  
**Supervisor:** Prof MP Sebola  
**Co-Supervisor/s:** N/A  
**School:** Economics and Management  
**Degree:** Master of Administration in Public Administration

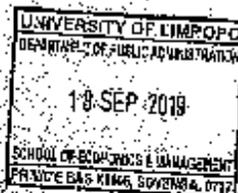
**PROF P MASOKO**  
**CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: REC-0310111-031

**Note:**

- i) This Ethics Clearance Certificate will be valid for one (1) year, as from the abovementioned date. Application for annual renewal (or annual review) need to be received by TREC one month before lapse of this period.
- ii) Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee, together with the Application for Amendment form.
- iii) PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.

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University of Limpopo  
School of Economics & Management  
Department of Public Administration  
Tel: +27 (15) 268 3157/3994; Fax: 015 268 3522 E-mail: [richard.chauke@ul.ac.za](mailto:richard.chauke@ul.ac.za)

To : Whom it may concern  
From : Dr Richard Chauke  
Acting HoD: Public Administration  
Date : 18 September 2019  
Subject: Request Letter to Conduct Research: Mr SJ Mabeba (201415370)

1. This serves to confirm that the above-mentioned candidate, is a registered Masters student in our Department of Public Administration Masters Programme in the University of Limpopo.
2. The student is conducting a study on: *"The Impact of Internship Programme On Skills Development in Selected Government Departments in Limpopo Province"*.
3. The study is solely meant for academic research purpose only and to obtain his Masters in Public Administration.
4. I therefore as a study leader of this project, request your office to approve his request to conduct research in your area of demarcation.

Yours Sincerely

Signature:   
Dr Richard Chauke  
Acting HoD: Public Administration

Date: 18/09/19



**LIMPOPO**  
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**PROVINCIAL TREASURY**

Enq: Kenneth Ugoda

Date: 17 October 2019

Mr SJ Mabeba  
P.O BOX 320  
MOGWADI  
0715



Dear Mr. Mabeba

**PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

The above matter refers.

Please be informed that your request to conduct a research on "The impact of internship programme on skills development in selected government departments in Limpopo Province" has been approved.

You are thus advised to visit the institution within the period of 12 months. For further information, please contact me on 015 298 7125 or e-mail me on [ugodamk@treasury.limpopo.gov.za](mailto:ugodamk@treasury.limpopo.gov.za)

Hope you find this in order.

Kind regards

**KENNETH UGODA**  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
EMPLOYEE UTILISATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING



# LIMPOPO

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Ref: 2/2/2

Enq. Mabogo MG

Tel No: 015 290 9365

E-mail: [MabogoMG@edu.limpo.gov.za](mailto:MabogoMG@edu.limpo.gov.za)

Mabeba SJ  
P O Box 320  
Dendron  
0715

### **RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

1. The above bears reference.
2. The Department wishes to inform you that your request to conduct research has been approved. Topic of the research proposal: **"THE IMPACT OF INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME ON SKILL DEVELOPMENT IN SELECTED GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE."**
3. The following conditions should be considered:
  - 3.1 The research should not have any financial implications for Limpopo Department of Education.
  - 3.2 Arrangements should be made with the Circuit Office and the schools concerned.
  - 3.3 The conduct of research should not in anyhow disrupt the academic programs at the schools.
  - 3.4 The research should not be conducted during the time of Examinations especially the fourth term.
  - 3.5 During the study, applicable research ethics should be adhered to; in particular the principle of voluntary participation (the people involved should be respected).
  - 3.6 Upon completion of research study, the researcher shall share the final product of the research with the Department.

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH MABEBA SJ

CONFIDENTIAL

Chr. 113 Biccard & 24 Excelsior Street, POLOKWANE, 0700, Private Bag X9469, POLOKWANE, 0700  
Tel: 015 290 7600, Fax: 015 297 6920/4220/4484

***The heartland of southern Africa - development is about people!***

4 Furthermore, you are expected to produce this letter at Schools/ Offices where you intend conducting your research as an evidence that you are permitted to conduct the research.

5 The department appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wishes you success in your investigation.

Best wishes.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ms NB Mutheiwana  
Head of Department

20/9/19  
Date

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: MABERA 51

CONFIDENTIAL



**DEPARTMENT OF  
SPORT, ARTS & CULTURE  
HEAD OFFICE**

Ref: S.5/8  
Enq: Makgoka K.S  
Tell: 015 284 4223  
Date: 28 October 2019

To: Head of Department

**REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: MABEBA SJ**

1. The above matter refers.
2. The Human Resource Development section has received a special request from one of the post graduate students, Mr Mabeba SJ (student number **201415370**) from University of Limpopo (in the field of Economics and Management) to conduct research for academic purposes only.
3. The research is titled "The impact of Internship Programme on Skills Development in selected Government Departments in Limpopo Province" (see attached).
4. Mr Mabeba SJ will sign the oath of secrecy before commencing with the study and also share the research findings with the department. We therefore recommend that permission be granted for him to conduct research and fulfil his academic requirements.
5. The permission will also serve as part of enabling and promoting the nation to be skilled as provided by Skills Development Act 97 of 1998.

**Recommended/ Not Recommended**

  
.....

**Rakumako AM**  
**Acting Director: Human Resource Management**

30/10/2019  
.....  
**Date**

Mabebasj2019

21 BICCARD ST, POLOKWANE, 0699. Private Bag X9549, POLOKWANE, 0700  
Tel: (015) 284-4000 • Fax: (015) 284-4508  
Website: [www.limpopo.gov.za](http://www.limpopo.gov.za)

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PHONE: 015 004 1101 | FAX: 086 681 7699

EMAIL: [info@informationgiants.co.za](mailto:info@informationgiants.co.za) | WEBSITE: [www.informationgiants.co.za](http://www.informationgiants.co.za)

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TO: WHOM IT MAY CONCERN  
SUBJECT: Language Editing  
DATE: Sunday, 28 March 2021

#### PROOF OF LANGUAGE EDITING

This is to certify that a research project titled *"THE IMPACT OF INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME ON SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN SELECTED GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE"* submitted to us by SELAELO JOHN MABEBA (201415370) has been duly edited for language by Information Giants (Pty) Ltd.

It is hoped that if all the editorial aspects suggested therein were considered, the target readers of the work would find the document decipherable.

For any enquiries relating to the above, please contact the office during working hours at 015 004 1101 or [info@informationgiants.co.za](mailto:info@informationgiants.co.za).

Kind Regards,

Ms Sheryl Lawrence  
Accounts Manager

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Lawrence', written over a light blue horizontal line.

