

FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS THE EMPLOYABILITY OF HUMAN RESOURCE GRADUATES: A CRITICAL REVIEW

Ngidi LZ*, and Chikukwa T

*Department of Human Resources Management, Faculty of Management Sciences, Durban University of
Technology, South Africa*

Abstract: South Africa is experiencing growth in its graduate labour force; however, the increasing rate of unemployed graduates, particularly those in the field of human resources, is a concern. Graduate unemployment is problematic because it wastes human capital, which is detrimental to the economy in the long run. This review aims to address critical challenges that Human Resources (HR) graduates face in the labour market by highlighting the gap between academic preparation and industry requirements, emphasizing the need for alignment. A broad literature search was conducted using academic journals and reputable websites. The review followed a systematic and narrative methodology to explore the skills gap between curricula and industry expectations. The results indicate a mismatch between academic skills and industry demands among all graduates; for example, many HR curricula do not adequately cover modern Human Resource Information Systems (HRIS). One key recommendation is that academic institutions conduct regular industry surveys to minimize skills mismatches.

Keywords: academic institutions, industries, unemployability, human resource graduates

Introduction

The employability of university graduates has emerged as a significant concern in various countries, underscoring the need to equip students with the skills necessary to meet the evolving demands of the labour market. In South Africa, this issue is particularly acute, as the national graduate unemployment rate reached a concerning 33% in the first quarter of 2024, with over 40% of those affected being youth aged 15-34 (Statistics South Africa, 2024). The high unemployment rate presents a significant challenge for both graduates and higher education institutions (HEIs) in effectively preparing students and enhancing employability. Despite increasing demand for skilled HR professionals, graduates encounter difficulties in securing employment or permanent positions post-graduation as evidenced by the widening gap between education and employment of HR graduates in South Africa. A key contributing factor is the disconnect/mismatch between the competencies developed through existing academic programs or curricula and the skills sought by industry. Generally, in most HEIs academic curricula often emphasises theoretical knowledge. There is an increasing need for graduates to acquire practical experience and soft skills such as emotional intelligence, problem-solving skills, and adaptability in dynamic work environments. According to Cloete & Butler-Adam (2012), researchers

*Corresponding Author's Email: LuciaNI@dut.ac.za



and scholars have identified the limited integration of academic learning with practical workplace skills as a primary barrier to employability. Despite HR graduates in South Africa possessing a strong theoretical foundation, they are sometimes inadequately prepared for the practical realities of the work environment.

The demand for Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) has increased significantly, as employers seek candidates with strong technical skills and the soft skills needed to operate effectively in complex, dynamic environments. However, soft skills such as effective communication, emotional intelligence, and problem-solving are often underrepresented in traditional academic curricula in HEIs (Griesel & Parker, 2009). This gap in preparation for real-world challenges, coupled with limited opportunities for practical experience during studies, has widened the disconnect between graduate qualifications and employer/industry expectations. This research study critically examines the factors influencing the employability of HR graduates and explores the relevance of WIL and the rising demand of certain specific competencies by employers/industry in South Africa. Through this analysis, the study aims to identify strategies HEIs can adopt to better align their curriculum with labour market needs, thereby improving the employability prospects of HR graduates. It is key to note that addressing the divide between education and employment is crucial for reducing graduate unemployment and ensuring HR professionals are adequately prepared to contribute to organisational success and societal growth.

Literature Review

Employability for HR graduates has become an increasingly important consideration, particularly in relation to graduate employment outcomes. Recent data in South Africa indicates that the unemployment rate for young people aged 15-34 with tertiary education exceeded 40% in early 2023 (Statistics South Africa, 2023). This trend aligns with global patterns, where obtaining a university degree does not necessarily guarantee employment, partly due to a skills mismatch between academic curricula and employer/industry expectations and demands (Tomlinson, 2017). Many scholars emphasise the importance of HEIs not only delivering academic content but also fostering employability through skills development and work readiness initiatives.

Employability relates to "a set of achievements, skills, understandings, and personal attributes that enhance graduates' likelihood of securing employment and succeeding in their chosen careers" (Yorke, 2006; Kurbanoglu, Boustany, Spiranec, Grassian, Misrachi, Roy and Cakmak, 2016). This perspective emphasises the importance of a comprehensive approach to education that fosters both technical and soft skills that include self-management, team work and communication. Griesel & Parker (2009) and Steurer, van der Vaart and Rothmann (2023) conducted research on the views of South African employers regarding graduate attributes and found that graduates possess strong theoretical knowledge

and often lack essential employability skills such as problem-solving, teamwork, critical thinking, communication and adaptability. Since employers' value practical experience, it is of paramount consideration to value internships, work-based placements and other forms of WIL in an effort to prepare graduates for the workplace. In Sub-Saharan Africa, the disconnect between academic preparation and practical application has contributed to elevated unemployment rates among HR graduates, who often enter the job market without sufficient hands-on experience and basic soft or technical skills (Cloete & Butler-Adam, 2012; Mbanjwa, 2025).

Despite HR graduates requiring key competences such as emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills which are essential for mediating workplace conflict, managing teams and implementing organisational change and project management initiatives, traditional academic programs at universities still tend to prioritise theoretical knowledge over the development of soft and technical skills. This is acknowledged in a report by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA, 2018) which states that the disconnect between graduate attributes and employer/industry expectations represents a significant challenge impacting the employability of HR graduates. In order to address this skills gap/mismatch, some universities and/or vocational and technical colleges have integrated WIL into their curricula, offering students valuable opportunities to gain practical, real-world experience prior to graduation. Jackson (2013) and Mbanjwa (2025) emphasises that WIL is instrumental in enhancing workplace readiness and graduate employability by enabling students to apply their academic knowledge in professional environments. This experiential approach effectively bridges the divide between theory and practice, fostering the technical and soft skills highly valued by employers/industry.

Despite the relevance and significance of WIL and other related work-based programs, these initiatives remain underutilised and unevenly distributed across HEIs in South Africa (Nguyen, 2020). In addition, the knowledge-driven economy coupled with the rapid technological advancements have significantly influenced employer/industry expectations regarding digital competencies and literacy as essential HR skills (Mourshed, Farrell and Barton, 2013; Khatri, Duggal, Thomas and Varma, 2024). HR graduates are required to manage digital recruitment platforms, HR analytics and employee management systems yet many lack proficiencies in these areas due to outdated academic curricula. Various authors have identified several critical factors affecting the employability of HR graduates, including misalignment between academic programs and employer/industry needs, insufficient practical experience, limited development of soft skills and the rising demand for digital competencies. Addressing these challenges through curriculum reforms, expanded WIL opportunities and stronger partnerships between universities and industry are essential steps towards enhancing the employability of HR graduates in South Africa.

Research Method

For this research study, a comprehensive review of ten peer-reviewed journal articles pertaining to the employability of HR graduates. The ten selected articles were selected based on their relevance to the subject matter with an emphasis on publications from the past decade (2015 – 2025) to ensure that the findings are current and applicable to the contemporary context. The process that was adopted involved several steps, namely:

- **Search process:** a comprehensive search was conducted using academic databases including google scholar, JSTOR, SAGE, EBSCOhost, ProQuest and ScienceDirect. The keywords employed in the search comprised "employability of HR graduates," "graduate unemployment," "skills gap," and "work-integrated learning." Only peer-reviewed articles published in academic journals that specifically addressed the employability of HR graduates or related employability factors in higher education were included in the review.
- **Critical Analysis:** Each of the selected articles was examined thoroughly with particular emphasis on their key findings, methodologies and conclusions. Definitions of employability were evaluated as well as the factors influencing employment outcomes for HR graduates. Special consideration was given to recurring themes across the literature such as skills mismatch, WIL and the significance of soft skills in employability.
- **Synthesis:** After reviewing the articles, the findings were organised into common themes and critically examined the consistency of the evidence presented. Various studies were reviewed to identify areas of agreement or contention in the literature. This helped in developing a comprehensive understanding of the factors that contribute to HR graduate employability.

By critically evaluating these ten journal articles, key factors and trends were identified that influence the employability of HR graduates, which formed the basis for the conclusions and recommendations presented in this review.

Table 1: Summary of findings on graduate employability in South Africa

Author(s) & Year	Title	Methodology	Sample size	Findings
Bezuidenhout, M.L., Rudolph, E.C. and Furtak, A.M. 2019	Self-perceived employability attributes of adult learners within an open distance learning environment	Quantitative	1706 Open Distance Learning students	The study emphasises several key employability attributes, such as emotional awareness, career resilience, self-development, cultural competence, innovation, perseverance, career self-directedness, reflection, proactivity, and networking. The findings revealed that white students generally assessed themselves more favourably in terms of career resilience and self-development, whereas Indian students reported comparatively higher levels of self-satisfaction than other racial groups. Furthermore, the research suggests that educational attainment has a limited effect on self-perceived employability.
Jowah, L.E. and Beretu, T., 2019.	The employability of human resources management graduates from a selected university of technology in the Western Cape, South Africa.	Mixed methods approach	CPUT HR graduates between 2014 and 2017	The absence of industry-relevant offerings presents a considerable challenge for university graduates, resulting in suboptimal service delivery and hindering their ability to secure employment or attain positions in Human Resource Management (HRM) after graduation.
Steurer, M., Van der Vaart, L. and Rothmann, S., 2023.	Managerial expectations of graduate employability attributes: An empirical study.	Qualitative content analysis	17 sample respondents from North West, Gauteng and Northern Free State provinces	Managers anticipate that new graduates will take initiative in their own professional development, showcasing self-motivation, commitment, and resilience when faced with challenges. They favour candidates who appreciate the importance of learning and knowledge acquisition, exhibit a positive attitude, and can make meaningful contributions to the organisation. Additionally, managers look for graduates who align with the company culture and foster strong relationships with colleagues. To aid in the development of these graduates, managers provide mentoring and coaching, focusing on cultivating six key attributes:

<p>Harry, T., Chinyamurindi, W.T. and Mjoli, T., 2018.</p>	<p>Perceptions of factors that affect employability amongst a sample of final-year students at a rural South African university.</p>	<p>Qualitative research approach</p>	<p>30 final year students at a rural South African university</p>	<p>self-determination, knowledge application, a positive outlook, self-confidence, relationship-building, and managerial skills through coaching and mentoring.</p> <p>The study identified several key factors influencing employability, including socio-economic status, the education system, curriculum design, higher education institutions, and social connections. The study also revealed that participants enrolled at HEIs in order to secure employment and that they felt unprepared for the workplace due to the curriculum that emphasises theoretical knowledge over practical skills and/or exposure. Participants also highlighted the challenges associated with navigating the job market and accessing career opportunities as well as the absence of social connections. These findings underscore the necessity for a more practical, industry-oriented curriculum and an increased focus on fostering professional networks to improve employability outcomes.</p>
<p>Beretu, T. and Charles, W.P., 2025.</p>	<p>An assessment strategy for the employability of HRM graduates in South Africa.</p>	<p>Case design</p>	<p>study 196 HRM graduates</p>	<p>Employers/industry have concerns about the sufficiency of existing assessment methods and the need for assessment standards that better align with industry requirements. In addition, sample respondents noted that assessments lack industry relevance, generalised and do not reflect the capabilities and competencies of graduates. The study also highlighted the significance of integrating industry perspectives into university assessment policies to ensure that graduates acquire the skills essential for addressing real-world challenges and making meaningful contributions. Moreover, the study revealed the importance collaboration between universities and industry. This has the potential to improve employability by facilitating connections between students and industry opportunities, as well as establishing industry-informed standards to increase the accuracy and relevance of graduate evaluations.</p>

Chweu, G., Schultz, C. and Jordaan, C., 2023.	Employability competencies of South African human resource development graduates.	Quantitative research design	134 professionals from the South African Board of Personnel Practitioners (SABPP)	A positive correlation was found between anticipated and current competencies of HR graduates and their employability. For instance, intra-cognitive generic competencies and intra-behavioural business competencies were found to be key predictors of expected interpersonal competencies of HR graduates. A range of cognitive and behavioural factors are essential in influencing the employability of HR graduates in South Africa.
Paadi, K., 2014.	Perceptions on the employability skills necessary to enhance the prospects of human resource management graduates securing a relevant place in the labour market.	Qualitative research design	Academics at a South African university, HR manager, organisation (municipality), HR graduate	Graduates should demonstrate effective communication skills, strong problem-solving abilities, cultural awareness and emotional intelligence as these are prerequisites in responding and managing workplace dynamics. Individual growth and independence were a common view shared by an academic and an intern. On this note, many respondents agreed that basic HR functions are a technical skill that every HR graduate should possess.
Ismail, S., 2017.	Graduate employability, self-esteem, and career adaptability among South African young adults.	quantitative, cross-sectional research design	332 students enrolled at a Further Education and Training (FET) college	The study found significant correlations among graduate employability skills, self-esteem, and career adaptability. When considered together, graduate employability skills and self-esteem demonstrated a meaningful connection with career adaptability. The research highlighted that graduate employability skills, which encompass continuous learning orientation, interpersonal skills, problem-solving abilities, entrepreneurial skills, goal-directed behaviour, information presentation and application, analytical thinking, and ethical and responsible conduct, are the primary factors influencing this relationship.

Marais, C. and Janse van Rensburg, C., 2024	Employers' expectations versus experiences on employability of entry-level human resource graduates in a South African context.	Quantitative	161 SABPP registered professionals	<p>The study indicates that prospective employers have clear expectations for entry-level Human Resources graduates. These expectations include participation in mentoring programs, committee and volunteer activities, and involvement in community initiatives.</p> <p>Graduates are expected to develop practical skills outside the classroom through work-integrated learning (WIL) opportunities and demonstrate flexibility and a willingness to adapt to changing circumstances.</p> <p>Additionally, employers desire graduates who resonate with their organizational culture from the outset, recognizing that this alignment may face challenges and evolve over time.</p>
Molamu, T.J., 2023.	<i>An employability competency model for human resource management (HRM) graduates: exploring HRM professionals' perspectives</i> (thesis)	Qualitative	HRM professionals with more than five years of experience	<p>The findings indicate that graduates in Human Resource Management encounter obstacles in obtaining employment, attributed to factors such as insufficient skills or work experience, individual job preferences, inadequate preparation, and employer perceptions.</p> <p>Human Resource Management professionals possess diverse definitions of graduate employability, which in turn affect the specific competencies they anticipate from graduates aspiring to join their organisations.</p> <p>Moreover, it is important to note that generic skills may not be universally applicable, as various industries require specific skills to ensure competence.</p>

Discussion

Key themes- Although not common across all groups, one study found that career preparedness may vary across different cultural and racial backgrounds. This finding aligns with a study by Botha and Coetzee (2017), which revealed a significant difference in employability based on gender, race, and age in South Africa. This may be a result of the historical challenges of inequality and social injustice in South Africa, which are evident in the form of poor socio-economic status, a poor education system, and an inappropriate curriculum (Harry, Chinyamurindi and Mjoli, 2018).

Employability attributes – According to the majority of the results in Table 1 above, several crucial employability attributes are essential for HR graduates. These include effective communication, self-esteem, problem-solving capabilities, cultural and emotional intelligence, career resilience, self-development, commitment to continuous learning, cultural competence, innovation and entrepreneurial skills, perseverance, career self-direction, reflective practice, proactivity, and networking skills. Furthermore, technical HR skills are deemed a foundational requirement for HR graduates as they enable individuals to transition and adapt to the changing environment and make meaningful contributions to the organisation. Mtawa, Fongwa, and Wilson-Strydom (2021) concluded that attributes such as critical thinking, effective communication, and the ability to work in diverse teams are critical for graduates. Despite employability attributes being contextual, HR graduates who equip themselves with the aforementioned employability skills are better equipped to navigate challenges and adjust to an evolving work environment (Shivoro, Shalyefu, and Kadhila, 2018; Steurer, van der Vaart, and Rothmann, 2022). Moreover, according to Table 1, it is also evident that soft skills and other factors outside of education are vital, as educational attainment does not significantly influence employability, as graduates continue to encounter challenges in feeling prepared for the workplace.

Employer/manager expectations and responsibilities – employers have established specific expectations for entry-level HR graduates, which include participation in mentoring programs, involvement in committee or volunteer activities, and engagement in community initiatives. It is also evident that HR graduates are anticipated to acquire practical skills beyond academic settings through work-integrated learning (WIL) opportunities. Employers expect graduates who are willing to take initiative, demonstrate flexibility, adaptability, a positive attitude, and a strong alignment with the organisation's culture to be better equipped to adapt and succeed in the working environment. This finding aligns with the results of studies by Steurer, van der Vaart, and Rothmann (2022), Nogqala (2023), Steurer, van der Vaart, and Rothmann (2023), and Marais and van Rensburg (2024). Moreover, Table 1 illustrates that managers and mentors play a crucial role in enhancing workplace preparedness by bridging the gap between academic learning and practical application. Managers and mentors play a crucial role in the development of graduates through mentorship and coaching, as they cultivate

essential qualities such as self-determination, the application of knowledge, a positive attitude, self-confidence, relationship-building skills, and managerial abilities.

Challenges for graduates in securing employment – The findings in Table 1 indicate that HR graduates face numerous challenges, including a lack of work experience, inadequate preparation, personal job preferences, and differing perceptions among employers. Moreover, the findings in Table 1 also show that graduates are dissatisfied with the curriculum as it emphasises knowledge rather than a practical and industry-focused curriculum. In addition, the findings show that the current assessment methods at higher education institutions are generalised and may not be aligned with industry requirements. There seems to be a lack of industry-relevant offerings within university curricula. This has severely impacted the employability of HR graduates in South Africa, as well as the quality of service delivery. This is supported by Wolhuter (2020), ILO (2023) and Akoobhai (2024) who highlighted that South Africa has a skills mismatch of more than fifty percent and one of the lowest employee productivities which is a result of inappropriate curriculum and a lack of synergy and collaboration between industry and higher education institutions. Studies by Shivoro et al. (2018) and Cheng, Adekola, Albia and Cai (2021) in Namibia and the United Kingdom respectively concluded that there is a lacuna between what employers need (soft skills and attitudes) and what government promotes as relevant for graduate employability i.e. development and accreditation of knowledge and vocational skills.

Conclusion

In South Africa, factors such as skills gap, limited practical expose/experience, underdeveloped soft skills and low/insufficient digital competencies influence the employability of HR graduates. It is key to acknowledge that despite HEIs providing theoretical knowledge, they may not fully equip graduates to meet the fast-evolving demands of the 21st century workforce. This gap is particularly evident in the misalignment between academic curricula and industry requirements which presents challenges for HR graduates in meeting or exceeding employer expectations. In addition, the high unemployment, poverty and inequality levels in South Africa underscore the need for HEIs to place greater emphasis on employability skills. Whilst employers in South Africa value practical experience and soft skills that include communication, emotional intelligence, adaptability, critical thinking and problem-solving, HR graduates often demonstrate deficiencies in these areas due to limited opportunities for experiential learning, mentorship and exposure to real world workplace environments. In order to improve HR graduates' professional/work readiness and employability, it is of paramount consideration for HR graduates to engage in internships, community initiatives and other practical training experiences.

In order to address the mismatch, HEIs should realign their curriculum to reflect the evolving demands of the HR industry, 4th industrial revolution and the 21st century by emphasising not only technical

expertise but also the development of key essential soft skills, a positive attitude and digital competencies. To enhance employability, it is key to highlight the importance of practical experience as well as increase opportunities for work integrated learning/in-service training/experiential learning. In addition, HEIs should seek to deepen their understanding of the changing labour market to ensure that their programs remain relevant and responsive to industry needs and environmental changes. A collaborative triple helix approach involving HEIs, industry stakeholders and government entities is essential for effectively improving employability. By working in tandem, the triple helix approach has the potential to ensure better employability of HR graduates, better alignment of educational outcomes with labour market demands and that HR graduates are well equipped to make meaningful contributions to the labour market, organisation, country and the SDGs.

References

- Akoobhai, B. 2024. Swiss South African Cooperation Initiative (SSACI). Identification of Skills Gaps in South Africa: A Technical Research Report. Produced for the Department of Higher Education and Training as part of the Labour Market Intelligence research programme. Available: <https://lmi-research.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/LMI-1-11-C2B-Popular-ID-SkillGapSA-WEB.pdf> (Accessed 1 February 2024).
- Beretu, T. and Charles, W.P., 2025. An assessment strategy for the employability of HRM graduates in South Africa. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, 23, pp.1-8.
- Bezuidenhout, M.L., Rudolph, E.C. and Furtak, A.M., 2019. Self-perceived employability attributes of adult learners within an open distance learning environment. *Journal of Contemporary Management*, 16(1), pp.106-139.
- Botha, J.A. and Coetzee, M., 2017. The significance of employee biographics in explaining employability attributes. *South African Journal of Economic and Management Sciences*, 20(1), pp.1-9.
- Cheng, M., Adekola, O., Albia, J. and Cai, S., 2022. Employability in higher education: a review of key stakeholders' perspectives. *Higher Education Evaluation and Development*, 16(1), pp.16-31.
- Chweu, G., Schultz, C. and Jordaan, C., 2023. Employability competencies of South African human resource development graduates. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 37(4), pp.40-61.
- Cloete, N. and Butler-Adam, J., 2012. Rethinking post-school education and skills training. *University World News*, 22.
- Department of Statistics South Africa 2024. Statistics South Africa. <https://www.statssa.gov.za> > m=24 Accessed 11 March 2024
- Griesel, H. and Parker, B., 2009. Graduate attributes: A baseline study on South African graduates from the perspective of employers. Pretoria: Higher Education South Africa.
- Harry, T., Chinyamurindi, W.T. and Mjoli, T., 2018. Perceptions of factors that affect employability amongst a sample of final-year students at a rural South African university. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 44(1), pp.1-10.
- Hosain, M.S., Mustafi, M.A.A. and Parvin, T., 2021. Factors affecting the employability of private university graduates: an exploratory study on Bangladeshi employers. *PSU Research Review*, 7(3), pp.163-183.
- Ismail, S., 2017. Graduate employability capacities, self-esteem and career adaptability among South African young adults. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 43(1), pp.1-10.

Jackson, D., 2013. The contribution of work-integrated learning to undergraduate employability skill outcomes.

Jowah, L.E. and Beretu, T., 2019. The employability of human resources management graduates from a selected university of technology in the Western Cape, South Africa. *Journal of Economic and Administrative Sciences*, 35(4), pp.251-266.

Kadhila, N., Shalyefu, R.K. and Shivoru, R.S., 2018. Perspectives on graduate employability attributes for management sciences graduates. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 32(1), pp.216-232.

Khatri, M., Duggal, H.K., Thomas, A. and Varma, A., 2025. Increasing digitalization of the workplace: is the workforce ready? *Journal of Asia Business Studies*, 19(1), pp.182-203.

Kurbanoglu, S., Boustany, J., Špiranec, S., Grassian, E., Mizrachi, D., Roy, L. and Çakmak, T. eds., 2016. *Information literacy: Key to an inclusive society*. Springer International Publishing.

Mabunda, N.O. and Frick, L., 2020. Factors that influence the employability of National Certificate (Vocational) graduates: The case of a rural TVET college in the Eastern Cape province, South Africa. *Journal of Vocational, Adult and Continuing Education and Training*, 3(1), pp.89-108.

Marais, C. and Janse van Rensburg, C., 2024. Employers' expectations versus experiences on employability of entry-level human resource graduates in a South African context. *Journal for New Generation Sciences*, 22(2), pp.0000-0002.

Mbanjwa, S.T., beyond the degree: understanding the high graduate unemployment rate in South Africa—a case study on bachelor of applied science in nature conservation graduates—a cross-sectional study. *Student's Journal of Health Research Africa*, 6(6): 1 – 10.

Molamu, T.J., 2023. An employability competency model for human resource management (HRM) graduates: exploring HRM professionals' perspectives (Doctoral dissertation, North-West University (South Africa)).

Mourshed, M., Farrell, D. and Barton, D., 2013. *Education to employment: Designing a system that works*. Nueva York: Mckinsey center for government.

Mtawa, N., Fongwa, S. and Wilson-Strydom, M., 2021. Enhancing graduate employability attributes and capabilities formation: A service-learning approach. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 26(5), pp.679-695.

Nguyen, T. T. 2020. Challenges in accessing internships for disadvantaged students in South African universities. *Journal of Education and Work*, 33(1), 44-59.

Nogqala, A. 2023. Employer expectations of requisite skills of graduates of the master's in psychology with specialisation in research consultation (marc) graduates. Master of Art in Psychology, University of South Africa.

Ohei, K.N. and Brink, R., 2021. Employability distress: factors affecting ICT graduates' employability and work integration in the workspace. *Research in World Economy*, 12(1), pp.138-149.

Paadi, K., 2014. Perceptions on employability skills necessary to enhance human resource management graduates prospects of securing a relevant place in the labour market. *European Scientific Journal*.

SAQA. 2018. Skills Development and Employability in South Africa: An Overview of Challenges. South African Qualifications Authority.

Statistics South Africa. 2023. Quarterly Labour Force Survey, Q1:2023. Retrieved from <http://www.statssa.gov.za>

Steurer, M., van der Vaart, L. and Rothmann, S., 2022. Mapping managerial expectations of graduate employability attributes: A scoping review. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 48, p.1990.

Steurer, M., Van der Vaart, L. and Rothmann, S., 2023. Managerial expectations of graduate employability attributes: An empirical study. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 49(1), pp.1-12.

Steurer, M., Van der Vaart, L. and Rothmann, S., 2023. Managerial expectations of graduate employability attributes: An empirical study. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 49(1), pp.1-12.

Tomlinson, M. 2017. Forms of graduate capital and their relationship to graduate employability. *Education + Training*, 59(4), 338-352.

Wolhuter, C., de Beer, Z.L., Niemczyk, E., Botha, J., Gore, O., Marimo, A., Neethling, M., Santhakumar, V., Seleti, J., Steyn, H.J. and Taylor, B., 2020. Critical Issues in South African Education: Illumination from international comparative perspectives from the BRICS countries (p. 402). AOSIS.

Yorke, M. 2006. Employability in higher education: What it is – what it is not. Learning and Employability Series 1. York: Higher Education Academy.