Higher Education, Employability and Future Managers:

The case of tourism management undergraduates in the UK.

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the University of Greenwich for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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DECLARATION

I certify that the work contained in this thesis, or any part of it, has not been accepted in substance for any previous degree awarded to me or any other person, and is not concurrently being submitted for any other degree other than that of PhD, which has been studied at the University of Greenwich, London, UK. I also declare that the work contained in this thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise identified and acknowledged by references. I further declare that no aspects of the contents of this thesis are the outcome of any form of research misconduct. I declare any personal, sensitive or confidential information/data has been removed or participants have been anonymised. I further declare that where any questionnaires, survey answers or other qualitative responses of participants are recorded/included in the appendices, all personal information has been removed or anonymised. Where University forms (such as those from the Research Ethics Committee) have been included in appendices, all handwritten/scanned signatures have been removed.

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List of Abbreviations

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Artificial Intelligence
(AR) 72
Association for Tourism in Higher Education
(ATHE) 155
Association of British Travel Agents
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Augmented Reality
(AR) 72
Britain's withdrawal from the European Union
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Conceptual Framework
(CF).. 19
Confederation for British Industry
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Continuous Professional Development
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Curriculum for Excellence
(CfE) 46
Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sports
(DCMS) 30
Department for Education and Skills
(DfES)... 30
Destinations of Leavers in Higher Education
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Emotional Intelligence
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Events, Hospitality, Sports and Tourism subject group
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Experience, Degree subject, Generic skills and Emotional intelligence
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General Data Protection Regulation
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Global Talent Programme
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Gross Domestic Product
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Higher Education
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Human Capital
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Hypertext Transfer Protocol Secure
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Small, emerging and technology-related Tourism Employers
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UK Government's Office for National
Statistics
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UK Higher Education Institutions
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UK Higher Education Statistics' Agency
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UK Quality Assurance Agency
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UK Universities and Colleges Admissions
Service
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UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural
Organization
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Virtual Reality
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World Economic Forum
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World Travel and Tourism Council
(WTTC).. 298

ABSTRACT

This thesis critically analyses the relationship between undergraduate tourism management education, the tourism industry's entry-level managerial turnover problems and the employability prospects of the current cohort of Tourism Management Undergraduates (TMUs) in the UK. Using a concurrent multilevel mixed methodology design, qualitative data were generated from semi-structured interviews with prominent tourism industry and academic experts and were analysed using content analysis. Quantitative data came from an online survey that utilised prior graduate employability models and the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) to examine both the experience and career intention of TMUs in UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). This dataset was analysed using a combination of descriptive and inferential statistics, including multiple linear regression analyses.

Findings suggest that tourism degrees are still perceived poorly by the industry, mainly due to an inherited low image related to a widely held belief about the seriousness of tourism management as a career and as a Higher Education (HE) degree. This poor image is then attached to tourism graduates and hence they are often not seen as highly employable, particularly by major tourism employers. Academia-industry liaison, a key strategy usually employed to resolve these issues, is also found defective and the implications of this and possible solutions are suggested. Small, emerging and technology-related Tourism Employers (STEs) show more interest in tourism graduates and the willingness to collaborate with academia in developing both the curriculum and TMUs' employability. However, they do not have the resources to fully engage in this process and thus a supportive collaborative graduate programme that includes policymakers and HEIs leading the procedure to engage these small businesses is also recommended. The tourism curriculum is also criticised for overall incoherence. This is manifested not only in problems in delivering core management content and keeping pace with

this industry's digital developments, but also in the proliferation of highly varied curricula for similarly titled degrees. This incoherence continues to confuse employers and graduates, while placing extra pressures on academics, who are also having to work within a neoliberal HE environment, under pressure from recruitment, retention, and employability metrics.

More positively, the TPB test results suggest that TMUs generally possess strong intentions to pursue long-term careers in tourism and, when combined other data, results indicate that TMUs hold sufficient managerial competencies. Thus, given the opportunity, TMUs can potentially contribute to reducing tourism's entry-level managerial turnover rate through this mix of encouraging career intention and competencies.

Finally, this study contributes to the literature in terms of both conceptual and practical gaps in tourism curriculum designs and the future employability of TMUs, who mainly belong to a largely unexplored age group. A new empirically informed Graduate Employability Model (GEM) is presented at the end of this thesis. This GEM has potentials to aid tourism academics and Human Resources Management (HRM) in resolving these issues, but understandably needs further testing.

1 INTRODUCTION

As the first of nine chapters, this introduction includes six subsections that start with the key issues of focus in this research. It begins with the key topic of tourism's high labour turnover problem at entry-level managerial positions, and the links to tourism graduate employability and undergraduate tourism management curriculum issues. This is then followed by the other 5 subsections, namely the research aim, objectives, questions, motivation for this study and the structure of the remaining eight chapters.

1.1 Tourism, labour turnover, curriculum and graduate employability

As an important economic activity, tourism continues to significantly contribute to the UK economy. This, according to the Tourism Alliance (TA) was not only limited to its £145.9bn contribution to the UK Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (TA, 2019), but also relevant to this research, it continues to generate approx. 10% of all jobs in this country (Deloitte, 2013) is continuing to increase according to the UK Government's Office for National Statistics (ONS) through the Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) and is expected to exceed 11% by 2025 (ONS, 2019; VisitBritain, 2019).

However, along with pre-existing tourism labour force issues, including HRM mismanagement (Baum, 2018) and turnover (People 1st, 2015; Stamolampros, et al., 2019; Kim, et al, 2020), recent wider events are posing more immediate and long-term problems for attracting and retaining talents in this sector (Taylor & Walsh, 2005; Johnson, Huang & Doyle, 2019). These include the current global pandemic of COVID-19 (Baum, et al., 2020), the imminent withdrawal of Britain from the European Union (Pappas, 2019; Hall, 2020) and the increased use of digital and automation technologies (Balula, et al., 2019). While Britain's withdrawal from the European Union (Brexit) and COVID-19 are emergencies amplifying enduring tourism labour

market issues (Baum, et al., 2020), advances in automated technologies are comparatively longer-term. Although the rapid advance in automated technologies was projected to incur negative impacts on most professions (Susskind & Susskind, 2015), particularly in their abilities to monopolise their 'unique knowhows' (Share & Pender, 2018: 54), it is possible to positively navigate through by including it in modernised pedagogical practices, while placing more emphasis on Continuous Professional Development (CPD).

In a tourism employment context, technology is not generally expected to replace tourism's human roles (Langford & Weissenberg, 2018), despite recent reports suggesting approx. 50% of UK jobs being at risk of automation in this sector (Travel Weekly Insight, 2020). In this, the outlook of tourism management is even more positive, where technology is anticipated to empower and support innovation, not only in serving the end customer, but also in attracting (Corbisiero & Ruspini, 2018; Orrheim & Thunvall, 2018), retaining and managing employees of this tech-savvy generation (Self, Gordon & Jolly, 2019). Yet, as a management profession (Hjalager & Andersen, 2001) and an important source of economic growth (Tribe, 2015; People 1st, 2017; Kim, et al., 2020), tourism has consistently encountered complex problems as it developed (Smith & Eadington, 1992; Hall, 2008; Farrell & Twinning-Ward, 2005; Stergiou & Airey, 2018). One of these problems is the costly high labour turnover, especially at entry-level managerial positions (Martin, Mactaggart & Bowden, 2006; People 1st, 2015, 2017; Goh & Lee, 2018, Xu, et al., 2018), which hinders the need for CPD and is pivotal to the future employability of the current cohort of UK TMUs and to their career aspirations (Ayikoru, Tribe & Airey, 2009; Ramakrishnan & Macaveiu, 2019).

This turnover problem is frequently explained as being caused by a combination of factors in industry and academia. From an industry perspective, a lack of strategic HRM and planning for sustainable labour (Madera, et al., 2017; Baum, 2018; Ndiuini & Baum, 2020), accompanied by

ineffective employee retention, quick-fixes and casualisations in recruitment practices (Davidson & Wang, 2011; Solnet, et al., 2014) are frequently cited. Such recruitment practices are recurrently described as 'problematic' and a key reason for the high turnover (People 1st, 2015; Ladkin & Kichuk, 2017, Xu, et al, 2018), with additional reasons relevant to this research, including the low number of suitable applicants with the relevant skills for the job, their negative attitude and not 'enough interest in the sector' (Ladkin & Kichuk, 2017: 77). This shows that TMUs' future employability could benefit from not only a change in employers' unfavourable recruitment practices (TUI, 2016), but also TMU's positive attitude (Petrova & Mason, 2004; Teng, 2008) and interest in a tourism career (Luo, et al., 2018; Amissah, et al., 2020).

Additionally, ongoing curriculum design issues that are related to the 'long tail' of tourism in HE (Airey, et al., 2015: 145), which is characterised by a focus on student recruitment, the production of increasing numbers of research outputs and very weak links with industry (Airey, 2019) are confounding these problems. HEIs are busy with the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) imposed upon them through neoliberal HE policies (Dredge, Airey & Gross, 2015; Jones, 2017), particularly on student recruitment and league tables, while placing less emphasis on the curriculum and teaching quality (Airey, 2019). Tourism courses often lack homogeneity and a shared orientation (Jafari, 2000, 2002; Séraphin & Mansfield, 2017. Indeed, while the UK Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) in 2014 showed 122 HEIs offering more than 370 undergraduate tourism courses (Stergiou & Airey, 2018), the latest UCAS publication shows as many as 487 of these courses, offered by 104 providers for the 2020-2021 intake (UCAS, 2020). Adding to both graduates and interested employers' confusion (Petrova, 2015), such courses continue to be marketed with similar titles, but varied contents (Elias, 1992; Dale & Robinson, 2001; Huang, 2014; Webb, et al., 2017).

Weak links between HE and the tourism industry help to explain why some major tourism employers do not pay particular attention to tourism graduates (UK 300, 2019), which is evident in recent graduate recruitment scheme publications' examples (e.g. TUI, 2016, 2020). This has been attributed to an inherited poor perception of tourism, both as an academic discipline and as a career (Pizman, 1982; Holloway, 1993; Baum, 2012; Amissah, et al., 2020). In this respect, tourism is recurrently viewed as '*something to which an educated young person should not devote a career*' (Pizam, 1982: 7), while those who presume to work in tourism are often seen as unskilled (ibid), unprivileged (Baum, 2012) novices (Walmsley, 2012). Thus, ccombined with poor working conditions that involve unsociable working hours and sometimes abusive supervision (Xu, et al., 2018) and a lack of career transition opportunities (Raybould & Wilkins, 2005) have contributed to low investment in tourism HRM and Human Capital (HC)and hence led to the persistence of its costly high labour turnover problem (Jones & Haven, 2005; People 1st, 2015; Ladkin & Kichuk, 2017). With various professional and academic literature highlighting that early managers often exit within their first year or before completing their initial training (People 1st, 2015), this not only destabilises the work environment and further widens the skills gap (ibid), but also costs individual firms and the wider economy. While managerial turnover costs individual tourism firms around £30,000 (McConway, 2019; Johnson, Stone & Lukaszewski, 2020), this turnover also costs the wider UK tourism industry in excess of £1.1bn per annum (People 1st, 2017; Goh & Okumus, 2020). Although the government has recently acknowledged these workforce issues in their Tourism Sector Deal (Industrial Strategy, 2019), including making tourism 'a career for life' as a key target for the sector (VisitBritain, 2019), they proposed a disappointing investment of only £1m for recruitment and retention programmes (TA, 2019).

Another key to the turnover problem in this sector is the lack of career development and progression opportunities (Hjalager, 2003; Walmsley, 2017), which signals to the early manager,

especially if not a tourism graduate (Jiang & Tribe, 2009), to leave, causing further undesirable costs and issues, including low productivity (Kim, et al., 2020). Echoing this, Stamolampros, et al. (2019) recently explored possible reasons, by examining the word of mouth of 297,933 employees through online reviews of 11,975 tourism and hospitality companies and found that the lack of clear career opportunities is critical to the turnover, as one unit increase in the rating of career progression reduces the likelihood of an employee leaving by approximately 15%.

Specifically focussing on entry-level managerial positions, the turnover is around 55% in the UK, which is exceptionally high at this level (People 1st, 2015) and is persistent in higher roles too (Blomme, Van Rheede, & Tromp, 2009; Brown, Arendt & Bosselman, 2014). Hence, this turnover continues to affect labour productivity in this industry, an important measure of economic growth (People 1st, 2017; Kim, et al., 2020). 35% of the UK tourism and hospitality workforce is under the age of 25, twice the proportion in other sectors (People 1st, 2017) and hence they lack experience (Baum, 2018). The 55% entry-level managerial turnover and 70% plus overall turnover, compared to the UK all-sector average of 15% (People 1st, 2017:11) is likely to push tourism businesses into continuing their quick fixes to the workforce issues (Goh & Okumus, 2020) and hence costing the industry and the economy (Kim, et al., 2020). The 21% deficit in essential skills in tourism (People 1st, 2015), compared to the UK economy's average of 15% (UK Commission for Employment Skills, 2014), reaffirms the people management problem that is specific to this sector (Baum, 2018), regardless of the recent externalities such as Brexit (Pappas, 2019; Hall, 2020) and COVID-19. Indeed, in considering the COVID-19 global pandemic, Baum, et al.'s (2020) assessment of its consequences on this sector's workforce is that the current employment crisis is an amplification of the '*existing known challenges'*, including the overall turnover reaching 75% irrespective of the pandemic. As this sector is one of the most affected, it continues to contribute to a plight of precarious work, including the introduction of zero-hour contracts in this and related industries (Rubery & Grimshaw, 2016)

that persisted long before the current global pandemic (Baum, et al., 2020). Thus, COVID-19's effect on '*contingent and precarious workers'* is a magnification of the unfortunate norms, raising questions over governments and employers, as to how they will emerge after this pandemic in terms of their attitudes towards this sector's work and workers (Baum, et al., 2020: 2816). Other important reasons to this turnover problem, include a fragmented industry structure (Weber & Chon, 2002; Littlejohn & Watson, 2004; Pritchard, 2018), in which tourism activity stretches over uncoordinated sectors (e.g. hospitality, leisure, transport). Yet, despite attempts to define its borders (VisitBritain, 2016), it is still inherently disjointed. Such fragmentation not only affects work quality, but also leads to an inability to retain qualified personnel that continues to disturb productivity in this important sector, leading to calls for a greater role by the UK government to reshape its industry and education agenda (Sheehan, Grant, & Garavan, 2018).

To develop a better understanding of the root-causes and possible solutions to these problems of costly labour turnover and graduates' employability, exploring the potentials of the current cohort of TMUs may present the key. In this, attracting the right employees to this industry is widely accepted to lead to efficiency and reduced turnover (Ladkin, 2018). In addition, given that the majority of TMUs belong to Generation Z, who are born around the mid-1990s (Peterson, 2014) and are largely unexplored (Dill, 2015; Crouch, 2015; Clark, 2017), this research contributes to literature in this area. However, because generational theory is not the focus of this thesis, the term cohort in Manheim's 1920s statement (Pilcher, 1994), is deemed more appropriate here. This also distinguishes social from blood-related generations, as a cohort of similar ages that has experienced notable historical events and avoids any deterministic claims in this context (Thorpe & Inglis, 2019). While recent literature identifies this cohort as more career focussed and technology-savvy (Clark, 2017; Goh & Okumus, 2020), this has relevance to academia too. In this, Femenia-Serra (2018) suggests that in order to produce well-prepared tourism graduates in this age of digital evolution, tourism academia needs to upgrade its curricula

using systems and processes that correspond to the dynamic technological trends in this industry. Along with innovative approaches such as The Tourism Education Future Initiative (TEFI) (Sheldon & Fesenmaier, 2014). As, Femenia-Serra (2018) argues that the key to this is to fill the applied research gap in this area, by shedding some needed light on this largely unknown cohort of TMUs, particularly in terms of their likely employment characteristics and career intention, this research provides implications to the industry's turnover, academic curricula and TMUs' employability issues.

1.2 Research Aim

This research aims to understand tourism management undergraduates' employability issues through a critical analysis of the relationship between the tourism curriculum and the tourism industry's needs and make recommendations for alleviating their employability issues and the industry's entry-level managerial turnover problem.

1.3 Research Objectives

1) To critically analyse UK academic's and industry's experience and perception of tourism management undergraduates' competencies and their degrees (chapters 6 & 7)
2) To critically evaluate current tourism management undergraduates' experience of the curriculum and their career intention for the tourism industry (chapters 6, 7, 8 & 9)
3) To develop an up-to-date graduate employability model for both tourism higher education curricula and HRM practitioners' use (achieved in chapters 4, 8 and 9).

1.4 Research Questions (RQs)

1) How tourism employers perceive the managerial competencies of UK tourism management graduates? (RQ1)
2) To what extent is the UK undergraduate tourism management curriculum aligned with the needs of tourism employers and graduate employability? (RQ2)
3) How do the current cohort of tourism management undergraduates' attitude and experience of the UK tourism management curriculum affect their career intention for the tourism industry? (RQ3).

1.5 Chapter Structure

This research comprises of 8 chapters. Chapter 2 focusses on the wider issues affecting tourism education and industry, presenting critiques of key arguments and issues related to neoliberalism in HE policy, the marketisation of UK HE, HC and their influence on tourism education and its labour market issues. This is then followed by chapter 3, which is more focussed on tourism education, industry and graduate employment issues, in relation to the current cohort of tourism management undergraduates and their likely employment characteristics.

Chapter 4, the Conceptual Framework (CF), focuses on the development of a new graduate employability model that guided and structured the entire research project. Chapter 5, the research methodology, then describes the chosen mixed methodology design and approach and justifies the rationale of such a choice. Accordingly, it comprises subsections on research philosophy, design, and methods used. Chapter 6 presents the qualitative data analysis, a detailed analysis of the interviews carried out for this research. Chapter 7 is the quantitative data analysis, which is based on an online survey focussing on TMUs in UK HEIs. Chapter 8, accordingly, presents the combined findings of both chapters 6 and 7, using the mixed methodology approach

detailed in chapter 5. Prior to its conclusion, chapter 8 also illustrates both the practical and theoretical contributions of this research, while presenting the final version of the new employability model and its usefulness to further research.

Finally, chapter 9 is the conclusion, which includes a summary of how the RQs were answered, the key findings, as well as a discussion of the wider implications of the research. Finally, it presents the new graduate employability models for further testing, while acknowledging its limitations and recommending other related areas for further research.

1.6 Motivation for this study

Growing up in Egypt gave me the opportunity to work and experience the issues of this industry first-hand for around eight years. This included being a member of the guest-relations team at one of the major hotel chains, working on the retail marketing side of tourism and as a tour-leader. In the latter and latest professional role in Egypt's tourism sector, I took an active part in organising and executing the entire package holiday programme for many groups of tourists, with varied nationalities.

Accordingly, given this extensive and rich hands-on experience in Egypt's tourism industry, a country where tourism is the backbone of the economy, I started to notice the need for qualified tourism professionals, who were at the time rare but highly regarded in such a context.. This is partially because of the high GCSE scores (equivalent to UCAS points) required to embark on a tourism and hospitality degree; at the time these were much higher than for studying law, for example. These were high because tourism is seen, in Egypt, as a prestigious career and from experience this view is held in many developing countries around the world, including in mainland Europe. However, upon moving to the UK and enthusiastically embarking on an

academic career, teaching tourism and general management, it became apparent that unlike these cultures' high regards for tourism, this is not the case here.

Indeed, through various interactions with tourism academics, employers and communities, tourism learners are in contrast perceived poorly, in terms of both abilities and knowledge. Accordingly, I thought to not only investigate the reasons, but also to take part in improving this image, if possible. That is why during my Masters' degree in marketing (University of Bradford, UK), I was the only student to apply it to tourism, and in my dissertation, I focussed on marketing triggering success for higher education tourism provision. In this, I explored alternative curriculum designs through collaboration with themed courses and drama school approaches, which could enhance tourism graduates' employability and the image of tourism in society. Unsurprisingly, this led to the current PhD research, focussing on graduate employability, higher education tourism and future managers.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW: THE UK HIGHER EDUCATION CONTEXT

As seen from the above introduction, RQs and objectives, the literature and issues concerning this research are both wide and complex. Accordingly, this literature review includes two chapters, commencing with chapter 2 that focuses on the key concepts, ideologies and related policies influencing UK HE and tourism education. This in turn creates implications for both tourism graduates' employability and the industry's labour issues. Accordingly, it is divided into 3 sections that review neoliberalism in terms of ideologies and related policy issues in HE, the marketisation of UK HE, HC, tourism education and tourism employer's recruitment practices.

2.1 Neoliberalism: ideology and policies in HE

To better understand the problems affecting contemporary tourism labour turnover and relationship to HE, it is necessary to examine the ideological and policy aspects of the phenomena itself (Airey, 2015) and the neoliberal systems that led to it (Ayikoru, Tribe & Airey, 2014; Airey, 2019).

With its ideological roots in 19th century liberalism (Kurtz, 2010; Ricardo & Marx, 2013) or liberalism proper (Dietze, 1985), the term neoliberalism was relatively recently coined in political economy by Rustow in the 1930s (Turner, 2008). Neoliberalism is a political-economic theory and policies that claim to advance human well-being through reduced state intervention, increased individual and capital freedoms and free competition through market deregulation, which has led to significant privatizations of previously public institutions and institutional arrangements, including in UK tourism (Kennell & Chaperon, 2013; Chaperon, 2017), with increased consumerism and competition in this context (Desmarais-Tremblay, 2020).

Although it emerged in the early 20th century (Harvey, 2005; Tight, 2019; Slocum, Dimitrov & Webb, 2019), the roots of this concept can also be attributed to the earlier 18th century's invisible hand or the 'laissez-faire' market economy (Olssen, 2020a), initiated by Adam Smith (in the Wealth of Nations, published in 1776. Thus, it was initially considered a resurrection of the '*treasured classic of political economy'* (Smith, 2010: 11), in which its idealised policy models truly valued free market competition (Harvey, 2005; Gabbard, 2017).

Unsurprisingly, this neoliberal capitalism, as opposed to its rival concepts of social democracy or Keynesian social justice systems (Scott, & Mooney, 2009), emphasise these market mechanisms through the advocation of minimal state intervention (Harvey, 2007; Ferguson, 2018). However, neoliberalism did not only reappear with similar principles of free market economy and minimal state intervention for the private sector, but also with added policies (Harman, 2008) that were no longer limited to the political and economic spheres (Saunders, 2010), but which were progressively extended to social domains (Tight, 2019). This new system is seen as leading to the commodification and marketisation of everything (Rubery & Grimshaw, 2016), including previously considered public goods, such as education (Saunders, 2010).

However, as many continue to argue (Harvey, 2005, 2017; Biebricher, 2020) neoliberalism did not fully implement its aims of bettering human wellbeing through market freedom, as it placed power with elites (Harvey, 2007). In an HE context, it has been accused of increasing market competition at the expense of other areas of HE's wider mission (Brown, 2013). In governing public services, including HE, the neoliberal inspired state's role was not in fact reduced to facilitating free-flowing markets, as it failed to avoid power-prone interests (Harvey, 2007; 2016) and caused intensified competition in HE, increased tuition fees, and involved a new focus on audits and metrics (Bunce, Baird & Jones, 2017; Morish, 2019), that have led to students protests (Wilkins, Shams & Huisman, 2013; Cole & Heinecke, 2020).

In the context of tourism in UK HE, this is evident in its discursive development (Ayikoru, Tribe & Airey, 2009), where such policies exert powerful pressures that force tourism education to 'respond to the needs' of industry, even if it means compromising the quality and values of liberal education. This is demonstrated in many UK tourism HE programmes only including miminal representations of tourism in their content (Stewart-Hoyle, 2003) and a focus on education for employment (Ayikoru, Tribe & Airey, 2009: 193). In a UK national survey that reviewed the aims and objectives of tourism undergraduate programmes, Ayikoru et al. (2009) found a dominant vocational focus, in which 77% of the tourism programmes' prospectuses explicitly emphasise career opportunities and 54% cite employment as to why prospective students may embark on tourism degrees. In line with Harvey (2016), Castles, De Haas & Miller (2013) and Castles (2018) arguments, these prospectuses were also found to apply less emphasis on the broader liberal education concepts, such as equipping learners with analytical skills, as these were cited by only around 20% of these programmes (Ayikoru et al., 2009). Unsurprisingly, in the light of this neoliberal dominance in HE, the essence of tourism education in the face of this is still being debated (Sheldon, Fesenmaier & Tribe, 2011; Airey, et al., 2015; Stergiou & Airey, 2018; Boluk & Carnicelli, 2019).

Tourism, as social phenomenon (Tribe, 2001) is embedded in the social and economic life (Hales, et al., 2018), and hence its issues are interwoven in the bigger challenges of these spheres. While some may see the traditional enriching university's role (Olssen & Peters, 2005; Smyth, 2017), others argue that this is just an 'ideological crisis', inflicted by the marketisation of HE (Altbach, 2016; Ainley, 2017) and its associated neoliberal zeal for KPIs imposed on HEIs (Dredge, Airey & Gross, 2015: 447), but threats and opportunities co-exist within the same dilemma. Accordingly, solutions are possible, but particularly in the context of tourism, are beyond the scope of any national boundary or a specific professional group to address (Dredge,

et al., 2014). Indeed, the global trend of HE marketisation, has created a much diversified ‘ecology of higher education’ (Hsu, 2015: 204), where the Asian societies, for example, show stronger responsiveness to the market signals in tourism education, combined with several emerging innovative and globally focussed initiatives, such as TEFI (Sheldon, Fesenmaier & Tribe, 2013; Prebežac, Schott & Sheldon, 2016). In this context, Airey, et al. (2015:11) also suggests that to ‘respond to the metrics thrown’ at HEIs (DeMartino, 2002) and to reemphasise the positives about tourism ‘as a subject for study’, global collaboration initiatives are the key to a better future. A research gap still exists in this area, particularly on how exactly neoliberalism has influenced tourism education and on workable strategies to overcome the resulting obstacles from this process (Slocum, Dimitrov & Webb, 2019). The dominance of this neoliberal model in HE, its cost-efficiencies and associated instrumental learning (Pike, Jackson & Wenner, 2015), as well as the recent policy-emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics’ subjects (STEM), but less on tourism as a social science in HE (Rayner & Papakonstantinou, 2015; Fletcher, et al., 2017), add more emphasis to the need to inform policy through empirical evidence that contributes to a progressive tourism management curricula (Caton, 2014). More concisely, in addressing a gap in tourism research that yet to ‘*adequately address the influence of neoliberalism on tourism higher education’* (Slocum, Dimitrov & Webb, 2019: 34).

It is envisaged that research addressing the UN-led sustainable practices in tourism (UNWTO, 2015) starts by supporting HE tourism as a catalyst to ensuring graduates have the competencies to ‘act as responsible and ethical stewards’ (Dredge, et al., 2013: 96). This is a key to working within neoliberal policies (Slocum, Dimitrov & Webb, 2019) to equip the next generation of tourism professionals with the competencies (Alexakis & Jiang, 2019) for their employability and to address the United Nations (UN) desire to achieve its’ 2030 sustainable development objectives. These UN Sustainable Development Goals (UN-SDGs), are a 17 interrelated framework that is explains how the world can be made a better through sustainable praxes. Hence, they are widely used by governments and organisations, including the United Nations’

World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), 2015) and tourism businesses to focus on specific targets linked to each goal. They have been described as an inclusive and concrete ethical framework, of which SDG1, SDG4 and SDG8 of poverty alleviation, quality education and decent work, respectively, are most relevant in this research context (UNWTO, 2017; 2018; 2019; Alarcón & Cole, 2019; Bianchi & de Man, 2020; UNWTO, 2017, 2018, 2019).

In UK HE, these neoliberal activities, which peaked during 1980s and 1990s, but which still continue (McNay, 2006), has led to free market rules, forcing UK HEIs to move on from their traditional culture of liberal and intellectual enquiries, to an institutional focus on KPIs and benchmarking, as '*the mantra*' of HEIs' funding is '*value for money*' (Hladchenko & McNay, 2015: 9) known as the marketisation of HE, which affects the funding for tourism education and tourism graduates employability and therefore is further explored below.

2.2 UK Higher Education Marketisation

As discussed above, neoliberalism began to affect UK HE the 1980s and 1990s (McNay, 2006), which in turns has led to a significant neoliberal shift in the role and functions of HE and HEIs in the new millennium. This shift from liberalism proper (Dietze, 1985) to neoliberalism (Harvey, 2016) has led to the borrowing of free-market measures and hence the marketisation of UK HE (Hladchenko & McNay, 2015). This is important to this thesis because it represented 'some difficulties for tourism' (Airey, et al., 2015:11), led to curriculum fragmentation (Stergiou & Airey, 2018) and influenced the volume, quality and effectiveness of tourism education and its role in preparing graduates, as the industry failed to plan for sustainable employment practices (Baum, 2018). It has led to the 'reduction in diversity where HE is seen as offered 'for sale' (Brown, 2015:7), at the expense of the working class (Hall, Massey & Rustin, 2013), leading to the corporate university (Taylor, 2017) and the student consumer becoming the main recipient of their services. This is also apparent at the subject knowledge level because the focus on performance measures, especially in areas such as tourism (Airey, et al., 2015; Airey &

Benckendorff, 2017), has led to its vocationalisation and the associated specialist downgrading of knowledge for skills development (Baum, Lockstone-Binney & Robertson, 2013). Recently, this has generated resistance to neoliberal policies (Denny, Ooi & Shelley, 2018), particularly in the form of counter-normative pedagogical approaches to the tourism curriculum (Boluk & Carnicelli, 2019), which are in favour of social justice and the production of more engaged and socially aware graduate citizens, as opposed to the neoliberal obsession with the narrow skills-based work-readiness (Barron & Ali-Knight, 2017; Wrathall & Richardson, 2019).

The marketisation of UK HE was initiated in England in the early 1980s (Brown & Carasso, 2013) as part of a broader societal paradigm shift. Triggered by governmental welfare system restructures, it included measures that inflicted significant change on the nature and dynamism of HE that significantly impacted the directions of its main stakeholders, expressly HEIs and their students (McNay, 2006; Taylor-Gooby, 2011; Brown, 2013, 2015). This followed a series of fundamental alterations to HE structures, including the elimination of the 'binary line' between universities and polytechnics in 1992 (Brown, 2015). Legislation to permit colleges without research degree awarding powers to obtain university titles, resulted in the expansion of the number of HEIs and therefore intensified competition among them (Blanden & Machin, 2004; Reay, Crozier & Clayton, 2010). Hence, leading to the phenomenon of the student-consumer (Naidoo &Williams, 2015) and the differing levels of labour market involvement in HE (Reay, Crozier& Clayton, 2010; Xu, Lo & Wu, 2018; Pham & Jackson, 2020). These developments necessitated a series of policy-level measures, including the initiation of the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), which later evolved from its mid-1980s objective of only informing funding, to adding a measure of quality in its latest version, called the Research Excellence Framework (REF), which emphasise the research impact on society (REF, 2014; Brauer, Dymitrow & Tribe, 2019), particularly in terms of public engagement (Page, et al, 2017) and economic benefits (Phillips, Page & Sebu, 2020).

However, McNay (2016), suggests that REF has ill-defined objectives on judging research impact and quality to the extent that culminated to research becoming '*what REF measures*' and not vice-versa (McNay, 2016: 8). In a tourism context, this is even more complicated, where tourism as an interdisciplinary sector of the economy and an academic discipline is often described as a 'marginal sector, at least politically', which is ironic given its 'economic and social benefits suggest otherwise' (Thomas, 2018:3, 9), as was also illustrated in the above introduction in terms of its massive contribution to the UK economy, in both employment and GDP (TA, 2019).

In terms of teaching, a subsequent Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) was introduced in 2017 and has since also been heavily criticised, where for example Canning (2019) describes it as purely quantifiable metrics that do not help the learning environment. According to the latter, it aims at policy targets as the key drivers of learning and teaching, which affect the relationship between staff and students, as it values the process more than the outcomes. However, this policy-imposed emphasis on 'research excellence' (Lugosi & Jameson, 2017: 14) such as the impact and ranking of journal publications, in the highly vocational tourism subject areas, means that research productivity will be pursued in parallel with the desire to maintain strong links with industry for the TEF 'employability-focused' experiences. Accordingly, with the resources available and added workloads (Gous & Robert, 2015), this is likely to increase pressures on academics inflicting more bureaucracy culture (Lugosi & Jameson, 2017; Mohd-Yusof, et al., 2020) that is likely to affect quality across the board. Accordingly, as many contend (Radice, 2013; Olssen, 2016; McNay, 2016), such measures changed the entire culture of UK HE to a corporate one that adheres to measured outputs and KPIs, losing the autonomy (Middleton, 2000) they enjoyed in the pre-neoliberal times.

Indeed, the contentious notion of academic audits (Bunce, Baird & Jones, 2017) to justify operational effectiveness and continue to receive funding are explained by the UK Higher Education Statistics' Agency (HESA), which explains the purpose and nature of KPIs for UK HEIs as statistical guides that use rigid measures to determine how publicly funded HEIs are performing (Jones, 2017). The main three KPIs relevant to this research are the UN Widening of Participation (WP) (UN, 2019), students' non-continuation rates and graduates' employment (Walmsley, 2012). More relevant to this research, the latter indicator is based on the Destinations of Leavers in Higher Education (DELHE) survey, which used to trace graduates' path into employment or postgraduate education six months after their graduation (HESA, 2019). However, due to the six months being considered as a short period and after consultation, this has been has recently replaced by the Graduate Outcomes (Graduate Outcomes, 2020). It produces statistical tables that show the percentage of graduates who are employed or in further study among all those who are employed, unemployed or studying, with further subsets of separate tables such as those produced for full-time and part-time first degrees and other undergraduates 15 months after graduation.

Accordingly, ranking organisations (e.g. The Guardian and Complete University Guide) compile the relevant data from entry standard to graduate's employability prospects, from various sources, including HESA and the individual HEIs to provide a final ranking score (Complete University Guide, 2020). However, despite these efforts, they do not always produce identical results, adding further confusion to students and their parents in this context. Unsurprisingly, this discrepancy shows that such quantifying measures do not always assess the exact educational performance (Decuypere & Landri, 2020), but often show discrepancies in enforcing competition between HEIs status and therefore are illustrative of the constant capitalisation of UK HE.

Some more evidence to these incongruities includes the latest published HEIs' rankings for the tourism and related subjects' league table, which shows Lincoln in 1st position, Surrey in 3rd and Greenwich in 16th (Complete University Guide, 2020), while The Guardian (2020) for the same period shows places Lincoln in 1st position still, but Surrey in 16th and Greenwich in 15th. Hence, despite its considerable advancements, especially in terms of income generation and improved research quality, the greatest challenge lies in the 'longtail' of HE tourism (Airey, et al., 2015b: 147).

Looking into the rise and progress of these neoliberal marketisation policies in UK HE, there are varying views on their effectiveness. While some are sceptic(Tooley, 2001; Olssen & Peters, 2005; Harvey, 2007), others see it as progressive, particularly in terms of WP in HE and the government, including the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the tourism-related Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sports (DCMS) commitment to this (DfES, 2003a; DCMS, 2011; Fidgeon, 2011; Ryan, Horton-Tognazzini & Williams, 2016). The critiques view on this include Colclough (1996) arguing that HE, in economics terms, should be regarded as a merit good and hence its benefits should extend to the wider society and not only to the seller and consumer of the service. That is because, in deciding what and how much to purchase, individuals compare only the personal benefits and personal costs, but from the viewpoint of the wider society, these individuals should be encouraged to take account of their own consumption and their effect on the well-being of others. Using this exact notion in HE, private or full cost recovery institutions practices, would result in the under-provision of HE, as it would be delivered only to those who have the means. In other words, merit goods, such as HE might be undersupplied, if left to such a market ideology. Hence, resulting in narrowing participation to only those who can afford it, excluding talents and potentials of all others within the society, when HE is supposed to be serving the important purpose of WP (Olssen& Peters, 2005; Naidoo & Williams, 2015). These WP issues of UK HE, became even more apparent during the 2010-

2011 students' activism against the rise in tuition fees and the wider neoliberal practices in HE, where their demands were taken optimistically and envisaged to serve educators towards a new road of positive change (Cole & Heinecke, 2020). On this, many scholars (e.g. Wilkins, Shams & Huisman, 2013) argue that there are cracks in this system that reveals neoliberal opportunism and provoke student activism. Moreover, in support of such activism, Cahill (2011) argues that it is not enough to bring radical changes to the neo-liberalisation of HE, but wider political and social movements. Nevertheless, this form of civil mutiny, according to Haiven (2014) and Cole & Heinecke (2020) is not primarily against the current marketisation of HE. It is, therefore neither against the privatised university, nor for the public university of late that these active students were aspiring to resurrect, instead, it was about young people's ideal future imagination in the so-called '*university of the commons*' (Haiven, 2014: 150).

2.3 Human capital and industry recruitment practices

The term HC was first introduced by Becker (1992), which refers to a concept that measures the link between education and earning potential, through the embodiment of resources in people. In this context, government, employers, and other interested stakeholders expect HE to develop a range of skills that enhance the so-called 'stock of HC (Knight & Yorke, 2003: 3) and hence contribute positively to the national economy. In the meantime, graduates' investment in HC (Stauvermann & Kumar, 2017) through education, should ideally enable them to 'receive the payment they deserve' (Thrane, 2008: 515). However, while this concept of HC may seem a new phenomenon, its roots are linked back to Adam Smith and Karl Marx arguments in the 18th and 19th centuries (Becker, 2002) in the context of economic growth through increasing the division of labour (Smith, 1895, 2010). Yet, while in labour-intensive economic systems (e.g. manufacturing) this division of specialisations was deemed useful to economic growth, it could equally be argued that this cripples the individual labourer (Young, 1990) for the benefit of the exploitative capitalist that seeks to continue despite inherent contradictions. This is relevant to

tourism as a field, with poor working conditions, low-pay (Thrane, 2008) and generally precarious work (Mooney & Baum, 2019) that still persist despite the emphasis on graduates HC. Thus, this neoliberally inspired HC, has not yet proven to turn graduates into social agents of positive change (Boluk & Carnicelli, 2019), but neoliberal agents and subjects of exploitation (Morrish, 2019) through the narrowly drawn professionalism of specific skills (Pool, Gurbutt & Houston, 2019). In a tourism context, it focuses on the 'professional' instead of the profession's development (Bladen & Kennell, 2014) and hence, despite some merits, this threatens to continue to create a 'crippled monstrosity' of labour (Henschen, 2020) that may well negatively impact society by continuing to bypass the importance of social factors and relations.

Indeed, it is this negligence of the social aspects of production that drove Marx to discuss the 'reproductive labour' in a more socioeconomic setting that is not primarily based on the nature of labouring as an activity per se, but labour that produces surplus value for capital within social relations (Brewer, 2010; Christophers, 2014). Even more relevant to this research, is Marx's assertion that the working-class family is the centre of this reproductive labour, where their contribution to the economy is not limited to this concept of factory settings. The tourism context further exemplifies this dilemma, particularly in being a people-centred service industry (Horbel, 2013; Wakelin-Theron, Ukpere & Spowart, 2019) that is female-dominated (Berno & Jones, 2001; Canada, 2018), and often associated with low-level and precarious employment (Lee, Hampton & Jeyacheya, 2015; Scheyvens & Hughes, 2019), as briefly illustrated in the above.

In graduates' labour context, HRM has so far focused on measuring a pool of HC (Ployhart & Moliterno, 2011) that is an aggregate amount of a unit-level resource, which attempts to quantify individuals' Knowledge, Skills and Other human capital characteristics (KSAOs), being relevant to a specific job and from employers' perspective (Zehrer & Mössenlechner, 2009; McArthur, et al., 2017; Eldeen, et al., 2018). Hence, these KSAOs are not simply an amalgamation of

individual aptitudes in isolation, but also it is shaped by a firm's processes that often lack strategic vision, evident in major tourism employers not keen in tourism graduates, despite their positive attitude to a tourism career (Petrova & Mason, 2004: Bibbings, 2005; Amissah, et al., 2020). Given that tourism, globally, continues to be a sector '*with the highest share of women employed'* and has not yet become the 'tool for women to unlock their potential' (UNWTO, 2015: 3), achieving the aforementioned UN-SDGs, particularly SDG4 and SDG8 (quality education and decent work for all) through TMUs' future contribution to the desired social change is yet to be realised (Baum & Nguyen, 2019; Bianchi & de Man, 2020). Thus, the traditional purely market-based capitalism (Marx & Engels, 1845–1846), including the obsession with HC KSAOs is still dominant in tourism industry's employment praxes (La Placa & Corlyon, 2014), evident in the likes of Airbnb and Uber-style sharing economy discourses that recurrently consolidates such precarity, which and counterproductivity to the idea of equitable sustainable economy (Martin, 2016; Robinson, et al., 2019). Indeed, it seems that the logics of capital are in the meantime the causes of its losses, which in this context, include the costly high labour turnover in tourism and hence corroborate with Melendez (2013) findings that the inherent conflictive working environment and its patriarchal social relations have affected capital accumulation. Again, this HC discrepancy is evident in the tourism context, where features of HR mismanagement are characterised by precarity, inequality and limited development opportunities (Baum, 2015; Robinson, et al., 2019).

2.4 Human capital and tourism higher education

To force the desired change within the dominant neoliberal frameworks (Holborow (2012; Marginson, 2019), a balance between obsession with HC and more liberal HE tourism is increasingly required (Tribe, 2002; Oktadiana, & Chon, 2017). Indeed, while Becker (2002) criticised the current ascendency of the knowledge economy (Brown, Hesketh & Williams, 2003) as the era of HC dominance, Olssen & Peters (2005) place more emphasis on balancing

these acts through HE soft skills (e.g. critical thinking) accumulation (Wilton, 2008), as opposed to continuing to turn it into a purely vocational training vehicle (Airey, et al., 2015) for HC KSAOs that has not served the economy or the wider society with enough good. Castelló-Climent & Doménech (2014) demonstrated an undeniable income inequality in 146 countries (between 1950-2010) through the focus on HC KSAOs alone, which was moderated by 'reductions in the inequality and the distribution of income' through HE attainment (Castelló-Climent & Doménech, 2014: 28). Accordingly, in a tourism HE context, this requires the balancing of the increasingly HC vocational curriculum, through more sustainability (Slocum, Dimitrov & Webb, 2019) and associated community-based critical pedagogies (Boluk & Carnicelli 2019). In this, Blendell, et al. (1999) reviewed the empirical estimations as to the true effect of individuals investing in HE on their earnings, employers investing in CPD and how this impacts national economies. Unsurprisingly, they found a substantial body of evidence on the positive contribution of HE to economic growth and hence concluded that this depends largely on the capacity and effectiveness of policymakers and business leaders investing in people and specifically driven by HE, which were later support to have a positive influence on the performance of UK new technology-based firms (Ganotakis, 2012). In this, business degree, including tourism management, were quoted to enhance entrepreneurial acumen, especially in combining heterogeneous skills (e.g. managerial competencies) with commercial experience, evident in the relative success of UK STEs during the recent recession (Cowling, et al., 2015) and current COVID19 pandemic (Mohamed & Weber, 2020). Importantly, the enduring focus on graduates' HC in HE, not only contributed to increased income inequality in tourism (Thrane, 2008), but also contributed to skills and qualifications mismatches (Slonimczyk, 2013; Ndiuini & Baum, 2020).

Even more relevant to this research context, Thrane (2010) investigated the role of obtaining a degree, on earnings in Norway's tourism industry and found evidence to suggest a positive

impact of direct effect or at least the signalling of HE degrees in the Norwegian labour market for tourism employees. The latter cites that for example, female employees with the highest HE degrees earned 53% more than those who possessed basic education. However, equality in this sector, including gender-related issues still requires substantive and meaningful attention to achieve the above illustrated SDG8 (Alarcón & Cole, 2019). Nevertheless, the renowned Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), 2014) agrees with this need for balance, by acknowledging that HC is necessary, but not sufficient to be fully relied upon and instead, emphasises learning as the main factor affecting return on education.

However, in addition to the attainment of a HE degree, there are many other societal factors that affect graduates' career and HC earnings, including 'family income' (Wolniak et al. 2008, 131), school attended prior to HE, family network and the '*status*' and '*resources*' of the university attended (Marginson, 2019: 294). Thus, the latter criticises the HC statistical methods that attempt to eliminate the effects of such factors on their future earning potentials, by stating that these methods 'flounder', given the factor's variations, interdependency and the impossibility of isolating each purely based on HC and related KSAOs. Hence, many are unsurprisingly sceptical that HEIs have any control over their graduates' career or wage outcomes, by simply adhering to neoliberal metrics and KPIs (Mora, 2003; Thrane, 2010; Marginson, 2019). Unsurprisingly, the consequences of the industry's obsession with HC KSAOs, paralleled with HEIs' focus on statistically addressing KPIs' requirements, is seen in the enduring tourism graduates' employability issues and industry's own problem of exceptionally high turnover at the graduate-relevant entry-level managerial positions (People 1st, 2015; Ladkin, 2018). Meaning, while tourism graduates continue to encounter employability issues, other graduates are finding it easy to enter and leave this industry (Jang & Tribe, 2009) causing a multifaceted HC loss to the individuals, educators, the industry and the wider economy. Indeed, the focus of tourism companies on HC and profit maximisation is a main reason for the persistence of the labour

issues in this context. This is evident in tourism employers seeing employees *'solely as a cost'* and accordingly *'to be minimised in the search for profit maximisation'* and that this *'remains the basis of poor working conditions in tourism'* (Walmsley, 2017: 7). Also, Human Resources (HR) development is seen as a cost, rather than an investment, especially in the tourism and hospitality sector (McCarthy, 2016), leading to a significantly high turnover and continuous skills gaps (Walmsley, 2017: 7; Luo, et al., 2018). This turnover also obscures the social and cultural determinants of economic actions (Warhurst, 1997; Beach, 2009). HC theory assumes that labour markets work rationally and efficiently and that the labour market will easily match individuals to occupations appropriate to their level of education and skills. However, in the context of this research and tourism undergraduates' employability issues, the tourism curriculum, as part of this dilemma is recurrently questionable, especially its ability to bridge theory and practice (Nhuta, et al., 2015) or put differently, to bridge 'the gap between the classroom and the real world' (Bowan & Dallam, 2020: 3), particularly in a tourism and sustainability context (Bowan & Dallam, 2020). In terms of HE courses and their relationship with the actual HC produced, Hérault & Zakirova (2015) found that return on education investment varies by the type of the course and HEI, which poses an even stronger critique to HC as concept as potentially ideological flawed (Klees, 2016). Indeed, this has been illustrated much earlier by Arrow (1973), who argued that HE produces sheepskins represented in certificates that only 'signal' that the holder is carrying the 'potential' capacity of performing specific tasks associated with well-paid jobs and hence may not be proven. Hence, in service field like tourism this differs, as Thrane (2008) found that despite overall rises in wages by experience, not qualifications, this is generally low compared to other sectors and that there still clear gender difference in earning, that is unrelated to either experience or qualification (male tourism employees earn 20% higher than their female counterparts). However, Clarke (2018) studied the relationship between HC and graduate employability and found that HEIs in the UK and Australia continue to follow narrow neoliberal agendas that focus on the skills-specific HC

as the basis for graduate career success, placing ‘very little’ importance on ‘social capital’ and ‘individual attributes’ (Clarke, 2018: 924). Thus, in line with this research context, the latter suggests such emphasis on HC have an undeniable impact on the labour market and graduates’ career outcomes. Moreover, this was echoed in job matching and entrepreneurial development (Ndou, Mele & Del Vecchio, 2019; Zhang, et al., 2020) as a critical problem to graduate employability, which was mirrored in recent UK economic policies requiring more meaningful collaboration (Williams & Vorley, 2014; Gherhes, Brooks & Vorley, 2020).

Thus, important to improving this situation is academia-industry trust (Cooper & Shepherd, 1997), where TMUs are enabled to focus on their chosen career, employers learning to use the appropriate HR recruitment methods (Petrova, 2015). In turns, tourism educators reduce focus on the immediate needs for entry-level employment (Airey & Tribe, 2006; Lashley, 2013; Baum, et al., 2016; Lugosi & Jameson, 2017) and instead establish talents’ development partnerships with industry (Johnson, Huang & Doyle, 2019). Therefore, the challenge of justifying tourism, as a distinct HE discipline, lies in its increasingly narrow vocational curriculum (Airey, 2005), which paradoxically requires broadening (Gross & Manoharan, 2016) to address the market requirements for HC (Airey, et al., 2015). Hence, a ‘paradigm shift’ is recurrently raised to justify how the production of tourism graduates could be navigate beyond the simplicity of data ‘metrics’ (Dwyer, 2018: 44; Airey, 2019). Last here, as this chapter reviewed the key concepts, ideologies and related neoliberal policies that led to the current praxes in industry and tourism HE, the following chapter (3) focuses on the resulting tourism curriculum. This is discussed under 7 subsections that include its historical development, content and design issues, TMUs’ employability, the future of the profession and characteristics of the current cohort in an increasingly digital and automated world.

3 LITERATURE REVIEW: THE TOURISM CURRICULUM

This chapter reviews literature on the tourism curriculum design and how it is developed for graduate employability, in light of the debates in chapter 2. Accordingly, it includes the subsections of the tourism curriculum and historical development, tourism curriculum and research, the tourism curriculum and tourism industry's needs, the tourism curriculum design and academic-industry liaison, the tourism graduates' employability, the tourism curriculum and the future of tourism, as a profession in relation to the current cohort of UK TMUs.

3.1 Tourism Curriculum & historical developments

While it has improved its position in HE (Airey, 2004), the historical development of, and influences on, the tourism curricula have received limited attention (e.g. Burkart & Medlik, 1974; Airey, 1979; Airey & Middleton, 1984; Airey & Johnson, 1999; Pearce, 2006). This is despite some very early texts that provided a foundation for tourism education including Ogilvie (1933), Brunner (1945) and Pimlott (1947). However, during this early period, only some aspects of hospitality and leisure were studied and mainly under other established disciplines such as sociology and geography (Cohen, 1972, 1984; Cohen & Cohen, 2019).

There remains some debate as to when exactly these historical developments began. For example, while Ogilvie (1933), is seen as the first social science article on tourism that is written in English (Cohen, 1984), there are other much earlier works that stretch back to the 19th century, notably Rae (1891), which was written in English too (Airey, 2002). Indeed, Airey (2004: 9), argues that while Pimlott (1947) attempted some '*serious scholarship in tourism*', Rae (1891) contributed to this knowledge development by providing an account of a '*burgeoning travel*

trade' during the Victorian era, which was not as industrialised (Airey, 2004; Oliveira, De Man & Guerreiro, 2015; Vallejo Pousada & Larrinaga, 2020).

Returning to the inter-war era, Cohen (1984) discusses other work, of which Von Wiese's (1930) article, albeit in German, was unsurprisingly sociology-dominated. Also written in English, Norval' s (1936) book on the tourist industry was a significant contribution to the literature and in turns to the curriculum (Airey, 2004), for when its development in UK academia accelerated in the late 1960s. More pertinent to curriculum designs, the rapid demand for tourism graduates in the late 1960s era (Airey, 2004) resulted in hasty academia reactions that led to tourism learning starting as optional modules on other programmes, markedly '*hotel and catering administration*' (Fidgeon, 2011: 24) and borrowing other disciplines' concepts and theories. This expansion is likely due to the 1963 Robins Report (Sutherland, 2008; Amaral, Tavares & Santos, 2012), which symbolised a milestone in guiding the entire UK HE system as it transferred from the elite to mass developments (McNay, 2006; Hay, 2019).

The Robins Report, despite critiques, will be remembered for making HE accessible (Sutherland, 2008) based on merits of academic ability, rather than privilege and affordability alone. This gave rise to unorthodox subjects such as tourism being offered and the associated widened HE access to more working-class people. The first Higher National Diploma was launched in the late 1960s, then swiftly followed by undergraduate degrees in tourism by the early 1970s, by the pioneers of Strathclyde and Surrey universities (Airey 2005; Fidgeon, 2011). In evaluating these earlier contributions to building tourism knowledge and informing the curriculum, Busby (2001) and Airey (2004) argue it was relatively fragmented, as the curriculum content often varied by sector focus and scholars' interests as detailed earlier (Airey, 2004; Fidgeon, 2010; Baum, 2018), which were influenced by wider developments related to contemporary capitalism (Wijesinghe, Mura & Culala, 2019).

Thus, tourism's recognition as a subject in HE and in the wider society, is more attributed to key developments in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Airey & Tribe, 2006). In this, tourism began to emerge, as a distinct area of both study and research, influenced by increases in student numbers. Indeed, Airey & Middleton (1984) argue that the foundations were laid for a distinct tourism curriculum, as the associated community of scholars was growing in volume and started to develop relevant research simultaneously. Such multifaceted growth included the rise of student admissions from about 20 to above 4000 in 1972 (Airey, 2004), while in parallel, building the tourism curriculum was informed by the resulting research knowledge, albeit more vocational and sociology dominated (Coles & Hall, 2006; Clarke, 2013; Swarbrooke, 2017; Wood, 2018).

Logically, this sociology-led knowledge inspired the early designs of the tourism curriculum, evident in Cohen's (1972) essay on the sociology of tourism and MacCannell's (1973) first theoretical conceptualisation within the same domain (Cohen, 1984). Another significant piece of tourism literature that influenced the tourism curriculum not only profoundly, but also for a long period, is the Burkart & Medlik's (1974) textbook that was fully dedicated to tourism learning. While this, again, was borrowing from other disciplines, mainly economics (Airey, 2004), it represents early attempts that, nevertheless, helped the systemisation of both the position and pedagogy of tourism as subject (Airey, 2008). However, it is surprising that despite this rapidly growing community of scholars, books like Burkart & Medlik (1974, 1981), dominated the curriculum in the decades leading to the new millennium (Clarke, 2018). As, this contradicts the immense development in academic tourism provisions (Airey, 2005) and given the massive increase in tourism degrees (487), as detailed earlier (UCAS, 2020), it is recommended that scholars prioritise this area of curriculum development (Clarke, 2013, 2018).

Moving forward, as the tourism industry started to progress from its 'native hospitality', through a 'predatory orientation' phase (Sutton, 1967:221) or the so-called 'anomie stage' (Cohen, 1984: 380), to a more opportunistic stage, driven by an economic orientation by the host community, this unsurprisingly led to the industrialisation of tourism. As more tourist infrastructures and tourism-specific businesses emerged and indexed (Leiper, 1989; Hall & Jenkins, 2003), more stakeholders and interest groups were established to discuss and influence policies (Church, et al., 2000; Tyler, & Dinan, 2001). Therefore, this these developments brought wider influences, most notably here, to tourism as an academic subject and field of research and on a larger scale (Kozak &Kozak, 2016; Brauer, Dimitrove & Tribe, 2019).

Moreover, this economically inspired evolution of tourism resulted in the need for work-ready graduates and subsequently the launch and expansion of undergraduate degree programmes from the early 1970s (Fidgeon, 2011), conceptualisations and curriculum informing activities increased. Examples include the launch of research journals in the early 1970s, including the Journal of Travel Research and Annals of Tourism Research (Airey & Tribe, 2007). Such increases in scholarly activities, resulted in further developments in the 1980s, when the nature of the tourism curriculum was marked by the search for uniqueness, while adaptation of theories from other more established disciplines continued (Tribe, 2002). Simultaneously, despite 'full-fledged' status being deemed impossible (Bodewes, 1981: 37), the search for this distinctiveness persisted and, in the meantime, this critique of the tourism curriculum was celebrated as versatility and hence a strength (Tribe, 1997). Hereafter, the development of undergraduate programmes paved the way to numerous other tourism degrees being offered by many UK HEIs and internationally (Pearce, 2006; Hall, Williams & Lew, 2014; Knight, Nian & Chen, 2020).

Thus, the 'key purpose of most tourism undergraduate programmes claim to prepare 'graduates for a career in the tourism industry' (Stuart-Hoyle, 2003:62). Yet, the latter points to discrepancy in the extent to which HEIs deliver the programmes that 'meet that aim varies significantly'. In this, tourism academics themselves hold different perspectives as to their own role, which is different from those vocational objectives that reemphasises the idea of 'uncertainty which is resolved through the unstated curriculum' (Airey, 2004: 11). This leads to debates over whether this vocational attraction, in the complexities of reality, would materialise, especially given that the success of tourism in academia depended on attracting students and scholars who offer diverse topics for teaching and research that can make a real difference to the wider human activities. This vocationalism led to the indiscipline of tourism (Tribe, 1997), which became an obstacle in its way to full recognition as a serious and established HE discipline (Airey & Tribe, 2006). Put differently, vocationalism seems to have been good for attracting students in terms of employment potentials, but not for academic reputation. As the resulting 'multidisciplinarity' stimulates programmes versatility and attract more learners, this does not particularly support the desired research impact, which may turn academic tourism into a 'victim of its own success' (Airey, 2004: 15), as the theoretical issues of tourism research impact are still critiqued as fragmented (Phillips, Page & Sebu, 2020).

3.2 Tourism curriculum and research

In response to these debates, a stream of applied tourism education research emerged and demonstrates that it can contribute to the construction of innovative thinking that not only informs the curriculum, but also brings new paradigms and positive changes in learners' mindsets (Tribe, 2002). Indeed, research with findings to improve tourism graduate competence in an unceasingly global business and work environment surged (Sheldon, Fesenmaier & Tribe, 2011). Suggestions to improve curriculum designs, included not only calls for fundamental

retooling and redesigning of tourism education (Wallis & Steptoe, 2006; Sheldon, et al., 2008), but continuing to critically improve the nature and methods of the knowledge delivered (Tribe, 2008). Indeed, the nature of tourism knowledge, has historically been characterised by a reactive paradigm to curriculum designs that had to, in fairness, adapt to both a multidisciplinary conundrum and imposed vocational framework for work-ready graduates (Tribe, 2000; Airey, 2005; Dredge et al., 2010; Goh & King, 2020).

Accordingly, the tourism curriculum and associated research have steadily evolved to focus on business and management, in its path to abandoning parts of its traditional contents, such as sociology and geography (Coles & Hall, 2006), as well as decreasing the related contents in the spheres of tourist typologies, cultures and impacts (Tribe, 2010). While this reactivity initially resulted in a plethora of specialised and similar tourism programmes (Collins, Sweeney & Green, 1994), evident in the advocation for more themed courses (Dale & Robinson, 2001), the fact that this has been criticised as a 'pick and mix' tactics to curriculum content and designs (Fidgeon, 2010: 709) shows awareness has been raised by academics as to the relevance of their programmes and the need to encourage input from industry (Griffin, 2020).

Unsurprisingly, Taylor & Watson (2003) suggested that these developments led to stakeholders advocating for more coordinated and structured tourism programmes that emphasise Lifelong Learning (LL). Echoing this, a 'spiralled approach' that ensures continuation across all levels of the UK tourism education system was recently suggested to instil sustainable values (Cuffy, Tribe & Airey, 2012: 11). Indeed, global calls for more effective sustainability content (Sheldon, Fesenmaier & Tribe, 2013; Cotterell, Arcodia, & Ferreira, 2017), and improved HRM to support this sustainability, while ensuring less precarity and better employability have recently intensified (Ali, Murphey & Nadkarni, 2017; Baum, 2015; Robinson, et al., 2019; Hayes, Tucker

& Golden, 2020). While the emphasis on work-readiness largely influenced the designs of the tourism curriculum in the UK, this could be attributed to the 1997 Dearing Report that emphasised a set of generic skills thought to enhance graduate employability, particularly in tourism (Petrova, 2015). Indeed, the Dearing Report (1997) manifested the wider neoliberal marketisation of UK HE and hence the tourism curriculum. It specifically outlined certain skills that HEIs would be judged upon, including work-readiness, such as Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) competency, lifelong skills and 'learning how to learn' (Osborne, Davies & Garnett, 1998: 11).

However, Winterton & Turner (2019), conducted a multidisciplinary analysis of the relationship between graduates and the labour market, including in tourism and hospitality contexts, and found that despite the zeal among stakeholders for graduates' work readiness through employability programmes, there is a discord as to how this is best achieved within the curriculum. Shepherd (1997) used academia-industry consultation methods to develop vocationally oriented curriculum designs. In this, they used a graduate tourism aptitude test 'to develop an international benchmark of student achievement' (Tribe, 2006: 34), which was part of an educational project between Bournemouth University and UNWTO. In turns, these activities resulted in hasty responses to address such requirements, accumulating to fragmented curriculum designs (Airey, 2004; Fidgeon, 2011), driven by a highly competitive consumer-oriented market among HEIs to satisfy the requirements of students and employers. Indeed, these multidisciplinary approaches were critiqued, as indiscipline (Tribe, 1997), where the key dimensions of the curriculum designs varied from tourist behaviour, host-visitor conflicts, to destination marketing, emphasising such divergence.

This discrepancy was evident in, for example Gunn (1991) advocating earlier that 'if elements of travel are to be understood, several disciplines and specialities are implied' and that any curriculum design 'success will be influence by how well the multidisciplinary or cross-disciplinary curriculum can be established' (Gunn, 1991:2, 9), the same scholar later (Gunn, 1998) highlighted issues of curriculum design, including marking a few voids, of which the ethical element of tourism was one. Following from this, tourism curriculum design was, accordingly, based on HEIs' interests and influenced by tourism being 'a complex phenomenon', and hence it was conceded that the curricula 'vary greatly among institutions' (Jafari, 2002: 131). This, in turns gave more value to Tribe's (2002, 2006), calls for the need to devise distinctive tourism knowledge to create a unique curriculum space (Dredge, et al. 2012) that transforms how undergraduates think about tourism and, ultimately, their behaviour in the real context, as future tourism employees (Hayes, 2019).

Indeed, the raising of vocationalisation issues of the UK tourism curriculum designs, generated considerable debates and subsequently progressive ideas over the balancing of its vocational and liberal aspects (e.g. Baum, 2001; Morgan, 2004). Referring back to Bailey's (1984) criticism of the notion of pure liberal education, being irrelevant to real life and society and an evasion from the 'present and particular', Tribe (2002: 20) justified the argument for the curriculum design balance and therefore suggested the embedment of Habermas's (1978) critical theory to develop tourism graduates' critical thinking abilities to make better sense of practical situation in the wider prospective. Accordingly, constant desires to review the future direction of this academic sector, have later intensified and hence include the need to develop a more organised 'curriculum space' Tribe, 2006: 48). This means continuously reviewing and evaluating all the possible knowledge that could be included and excluded. despite some persistent tourism curriculum issues that questions its very fitness for purpose of graduate employability (Cooper, 2012). Tourism education has overall advanced considerably or '*come of age*' and is growing in

maturity (Airey, 2005: 13; Airey, 2008). Evidence for this include recent HEIs' collaborative approaches to the curriculum including the Scottish HEIs' collaborative initiative called Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) that emphasise LL (Airey, Cuffy & Papageorgiou, 2017; Cuffy, 2017) and the Global Talent Programme (GTP) that supports career planning (Minocha, Hristov & Leahy-Harland, 2018). Also, successful community-based initiatives, such as the Academics for a Better World (AFBW) initiative (Boluk & Carnicelli, 2015). The AFBW, for example, uses Freirean problem-posing critical pedagogy in community-based settings (Boluk & Carnicelli 2019) to support sustainability and social change. Hence, is in line with SDG4, that focuses on quality education through stimulating critical thinking as part of improving wellbeing (Boluk, Cavaliere & Duffy, 2019).

Despite often being questioned in terms of fitness for the purpose of graduate employability (Teng, Horng & Baum, 2010), the role of tourism in HE, both in general and in this context, has improved (Cooper, 2012). On the wider spectrum, it also improved in terms of having a less vocational focus (Airey, 2005), as well as its contributions to and philosophical standing in academia (Tribe & Chambers, 2013; Airey, Dredge & Gross, 2015). However, this also means it is still, at least partially, a contested instrument that is continuously searching for purpose, as a feature of the aforementioned indiscipline (Tribe, 1997). There still the complexities of the 'the production of tourism knowledge' (Tribe, 2000: 2), scattered curriculum content and designs (Cooper, 2002), which can lack effective sustainability content (Sheldon & Fesenmaier, 2013) and which do not always address employability and HRM issues (Baum, 2018). Thus, despite some noted improvements (Airey, 2005), tourism education, compared to other academic fields, is still lacking adequate research-informed designs (Cuffy, 2017). Hence, it still unable to match the pace of changes and growth within industry. Indeed, in the context of the government agenda for LL, the aforementioned CfE between two renowned Scottish universities that took a holistic

collaborative approach among them to advance the national tourism curriculum and was reportedly successful (Cuffy, 2017; Airey, Cuffy & Papageorgiou, 2017).

In a similar context, admitting that the post-industrial regulatory neoliberal regime seems to be succesful in setting up KPIs' for HEIs to follow, this '*neoliberal zeal of performance measures*' (Dredge, Airey & Gross, 2014: 547) is restricting academics' innovation and decision-making to help them to bridge theory and practice. Benckendorff & Zehrer (2017) agree on the hope that tourism education is able and perhaps is on course to breaking these artificial boundaries and therefore contend that curriculum designers should continue to combine classroom and field work activities to avoid the risk of the hostile environment created by industrialising education in this context. Indeed, Hayes (2019b) found that the tourism curriculum still lacking the desired reflective practice (Boluk, Muldoon & Johnson, 2019) and, as discussed earlier, this is partially due to the 'McPolicy' formation of UK HE that 'devalues academic voices' (Hayes, 2019b: 148). Fortunately, some academics are tackling these issues, including Boluk & Carnicelli's (2015, 2019) transformative critical pedagogy that focuses on reflectivity in the form of AFBW initiative, thus reverting to the roots of liberal education, as opposed to skills-based vocationalism (Tribe, 2000, 2001; Oktadiana, & Chon, 2016, 2017).

As cross-border economic policies continue to emphasise graduates' competence through HE (Hayes, 2019a), sustainability in a tourism context is becoming increasingly a key component in the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) global action programme (UNESCO, 2015) and reasserted in the subsequent UN-SDGs brochure (UNWTO, 2015; UN, 2017). Accordingly, Cotterell, et al. (2019) suggest immediate changes in the development and activation of the tourism management curriculum frameworks, to particularly tackle the current climate of over-tourism worldwide. This may also be a reason why a 'paradigm shift' in thinking is still required (Boyle, 2015: 135) in this context, because the tourism industry and related

academia are still a distant away from understanding how to achieve sustainable tourism (Seraphin, Sheeran & Pilato, 2018) that effectively contributes to minimising the effect of over-tourism, through a five-pillars framework by TEFI (Cook, 2015; Cotterell, et al., 2019).

Despite all the above discussed issues, the interdisciplinarity of the tourism curriculum could be celebrated (Tribe, 1997) and encouraged to continue its significant positive evolution especially in terms of its designs, content and philosophies (Dredge, et al., 2014; Airey, 2019). Although such policies contributed to increased HEIs' competition for funding and recruitment, this has in the meantime intensified scrutiny to the subject that carried its positive development (Cotterell, et al., (2019). In hindsight, this brought both weaknesses and strengths to the surface and hence the challenge is to ensure the strengths are recognized and '*weaknesses are addressed*' (Benckendorff & Zehrer, 2017: 534).

While it has been recurrently argued that tourism's HE problems stem from its vocational routes (Tribe, 2002; Airey, 2008), this is yet to be fully realised, including overcoming the narrow skills' focus (Airey, 2015) and the wider scope of conceptual knowledge creation, a long process that requires alternative approaches to the current pedagogical structures in HE (Hall & Smyth, 2016). A reorientation of the tourism curriculum that emphasises and generate more social values, through initiatives such as AFBW (Boluk & Carnicelli, 2015, 2019). This AFBW tries to proactively address world injustice, through making tangible difference in environmental sustainability and positive social change, including engaging learners in community-based learning.

3.3 Tourism curriculum & tourism industry needs

The content of the tourism curriculum, despite the aforementioned low level of content that inspire critical reflections (Boluk, Muldoon & Johnson, 2019) is experiencing recent positive progress through improved academia-industry liaison, particularly in curriculum development (Petrova, 2015). This is seen in the form of updated contents and use of digital technologies as well as extracurricular work such as more focus on enterprising activities (O'Leary, 2017), critical thinking (Raybould & Wilkins, 2006; Abrami, et al, 2015), reflectivity (Boluk & Carnicelli, 2015, 2019), all of which can involve industry in forms. Indeed, in referring to the tourism curriculum's link to graduates' employability and the earlier lack of recognition by the industry, who are not so keen on recruiting tourism graduates, (Petrova & Mason, 2004; Amissah, et al., 2020), it has been recently noted (Petova, 2015) that the UK tourism curriculum has improved considerably to include digital knowledge and skills. However, according to the latter, this is still not enough to keep pace with the rapid industry development. This gives rise to another issue of academic debate, surrounding the so-called lack of synchronisation (Sheldon & Fesenmaier, 2014), which simply means the curriculum is not aligned enough to the rapid developments in the industry and hence poses a strong question about the tourism curriculum being fit for the purpose of solid graduate employability. Unsurprisingly, the highest tone of this discord is the tourism industry's insistence that universities are supplying unprepared graduates with over ambitious expectations that persisted from Purcell and Quinn (1996), Barrows & Johan (2008), through to Sheldon & Fesenmaier (2014) and are still being debated (Clarke, 2013, 2018).

Indeed, there still studies and labour market reports that corresponds to this lack of synchronisation in the tourism curriculum design, by illustrating a vicious circle of skills gaps (People 1st, 2015; (Walmsley, 2017; Luo, et al., 2018), which at least partially attribute it to this lack of synchronisation to tourism syllabi (Riley, 2014; People 1st, 2015). Even more recently,

Zhao (2019), argues that HE tourism management is still lacking synchronism with the industry's requirements and hence 'training mechanism' in collaboration with industry to qualify as 'professional managers' is suggested (Zhao, 2019: 348). However, it is not clear who to blame, where there is a noisy marketplace created in HE (DeShields, Kara, & Kaynak, 2005), a hostile academic environment (Smyth, 2017), a neoliberal conundrum (Airey, et al., 2015) and tourism HRM mismanagement (Baum, 2015) that all 'bamboozle' (Ainley, 2016, 2017) the young generation of graduates, which makes it possible to blame the victim (Torrance, 2017).

More rationally, others realised the need to improve the curriculum designs and contents through a meaningful academia-industry liaison as the key, including Walters, Burns & Stettler, 2015), in the Australian context. In the current global market environment and its rapid developments in ICT and expeditious advancements in digital automation (Courtois; 2018; Estlund, 2018), these graduates aiming at working and managing in a tourism sector, described as vulnerable (Stone, et al., 2017), need different skills and competencies to succeed (Alexakis & Jiang, 2019) and this has to be reflected and continuously updated within the tourism curriculum in HE. To achieve this (Wallis & Steptoe, 2006) attest an overhaul of the broader educational designs and explain that part of this is a change in the nature of the curriculum, or the difference between what is being offered and how it is delivered. Particularly the assumptions to how certain skills should be developed (Sheldon & Fesenmaier, 2014). Because of the rapid advances in ICT, the increasingly borderless world and the rise of Social Media (SM) as marketing tools, today's students, according to the latter, will be applying for tourism jobs that do not even exist today and that much of what being taught will be obsolete by the time they graduate. In such a continuous cycle, recent suggestions to improve the curriculum includes value-based tourism education that encapsulates reflexivity and critical thinking to prepare undergraduates for a career in the 21st century (Stone, et al. 2017), argue for focus on sustainability learning that should not be solely about teaching students industry-specific skills to protect them from

criticism of failure (Boyle, Wilson & Dimmock, 2014; Wilson, 2015), but truly reflexive and transformative pedagogy that effectively address the wider questions of ethics, especially in times of planetary crisis (Prince, 2020; Walker & Manyamba, 2020).

Furthermore, in assessing recent polices of UK HE that is related to the tourism curriculum, many still argue that there are recurrent strong emphases on skills and a reactive approach to requirement activities in the marketplace in HE, as a marketplace (Belhassen & Caton, 2011). This, according to the latter, has caused the modern HE to less focus on its core traditional aims and subdue them to the economic activities and business demands. On top of these elements, the ideas of understanding, wisdom and critical pedagogy are increasingly receiving less emphases. Expanding on this, Dehler (2007) corroborated with Belhassen & Caton (2011) that the recent methods of operationalising the knowledge production and how to acquire it, is changing the entire HE systems. In this, successive governments and policymakers, are influencing curriculum design by creating initiatives that primarily advance their wider economic interests, but not particularly applied with genuine interests for the society's benefits by businesses and not economic pressures alone that restrict the development of the desired critical pedagogy (Botterill & Maitland, 2014; Boluk & Carnicelli, 2019; Prince, 2020).

Hence, the rise of arguments for involving tourism businesses in the curriculum to develop a much-needed critical pedagogy, where exposing tourism undergraduates to social justice (McCabe, 2009) and 'sustainability' that would enable them to debate such issues and make their own 'moral commitments' (Belhassen & Caton, 2011: 1392). This in turns help develop informed judgements and hence, capability of workplace managers, rather than just knowledge (Botterill, & Maitland, 2014).

In the meantime, a rather shallow approach to responding to the industry's requirements has been also criticised, by Rotherham & Willingham (2010). For example, it has been suggested that more focus within the tourism curriculum on producing critical thinkers, rather than functional specialists, who may be good at performing specific tasks, but not have the strategic vision in managing such a dynamic sector. One of the earliest and known definition to critical thinking is the American philosophical association that defined it as 'purposeful, self-regulatory judgment that results in interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference, as well as explanations of the considerations on which that judgment is based' (Facione, 1990: 2). Hence, to create 'better curriculum', Rotherham & Willingham (2010), identify critical thinking as the skill for the 21st century and hence call for an overhaul of the entire tourism education system, which was later echoed in the aim to revolutionises the tourism industry for the better (Boluk & Carnicelli, 2019).

Moreover, Stone, et al. (2017) argue that to nurture critical thinkers, requires improvements to three major areas; the curriculum, teaching and assessment and synchronise it with modern methods that includes more exposure to technology within the curriculum. However, the latter argue that the tourism curriculum should move further away from its traditional vocational inclination (Airey, 2005) to focus more on generic skills such as idea creation, problem solving and making leadership decisions, which all stem from acquiring or enhancing the critical thinking ability (Stone, et al., 2017). Moreover, with the critical thinking skills as the main learning outcome within the tourism curriculum (Raybould & Wilkins, 2006), it is important to illustrate Stone, et al. (2017: 74) suggestion that *'critical thinking does not come naturally'* to many. Hence, according to the latter, it should be developed and practiced. In specific relation to tourism graduates' employability, Raybould & Wilkins (2006) also agree that critical thinking is highly desired, because it is the source of many other highly desirable skills (e.g. innovation and decision-making) and therefore it should be stressed upon within the curriculum to help

prepare undergraduates for a sustainable career in tourism (Hall & Williams, 2019; Prince, 2020).

In relation to the specific resources and instructions, Lai (2011) suggests encouraging collaborative learning among students, while de-emphasizing the role of the educator as the knowledge provider, but as an instructor. However, Stone, et al. (2017) stresses that so far there is no decisive agreement among scholars as to whether critical thinking should be taught as context-based or generic transferable skills. From practical implication points of view, many employers, however, argue that the curriculum content still do not prepare the future workforce to adequately think critically, at least at work. Reasons to this, as Joppe & Elliot (2015) and Abrami, et al. (2015) include that the above definition is seen as overly focused on specific skills and hence a call for a dualistic approach that include disposition of , i.e. attitudes, motivations and habits (Stone, et al., 2017), through meaningful reflexivity and ethical understanding (Prince, 2020) if the desired well-rounded critical thinkers to be developed for a better workplace.

Further in support of Joppe & Elliot's (2015) argument that the curriculum is being merely focused on skills and in the light of Barnett's (1994) prior argument about HEIs not engaging enough with the wider society in trying to solve real life problems, Belhassen & Caton (2011) contend that the problem with the current curriculum, through which HE adapts to society's technostructure, is that some of the main crucial features (e.g. understanding and wisdom) have faded and in danger of being gradually lost, in the obsession with certain competencies and skills that are benchmarked against a predetermined narrower criteria. Indeed, the tourism in UK HE curricula, is criticised for being overly vocational (Airey, 2005; Tribe, 2008; Airey, et al., 2015), as it continues to follow its discursive nature and the borrowing of theories and content materials from other disciplines, including business studies. Such views, especially Belhassen & Caton's (2011) are echoed by the work of Boluk & Carnicelli (2015, 2017, 2019) who work on innovative

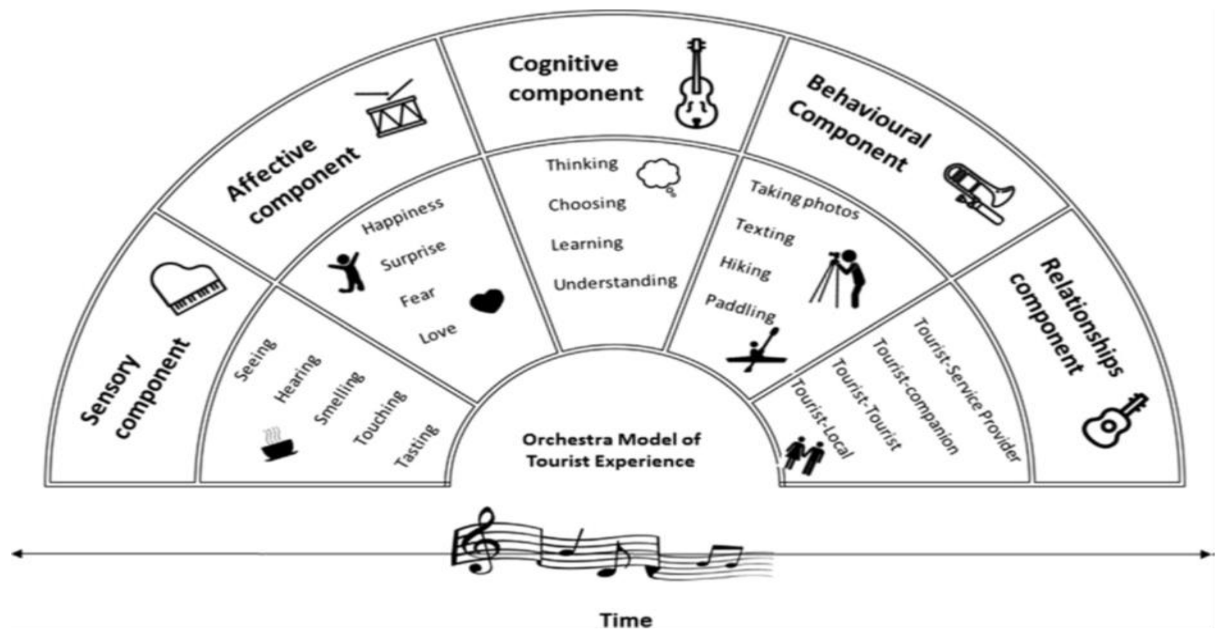
programmes that focus on community engagement, aiming to make the student a useful social agent and better professional for more sustainable career through the reactivation of critical pedagogy (Freire, 1970) and its embedded reflective activities through the problem-posing notion (Boluk & Carnicelli, 2019).

In a similar sphere, McGladdery & Lubbe (2017) agree that such specialisation arguments are weak, by suggesting it can only be found in what they call the 'grey literature'. Accordingly, they argue to keep pace with rapid industry's developments, while maintaining liberal tourism education, they produced a so-called process driven model to build some higher soft skills, such as compassion to tourist, while integrating the tourism-specific learning an a more direct academia-industry liaison. Thus, their model suggests, the educational environment is moved to the workplace. In this, students, backed by their educators, engage directly with the service consumers to learn about their experiences, as they collectively explore and contrast their own culture with the culture of the place. Trailed this empirically, they conclude that it can promote peace through cultural understanding, while addressing the 'compassion gap', a higher liberal skill that is professed to be lacking in the tourism curriculum (McGladdery & Lubbe, 2017:327). Accordingly, any innovative ideas in this realm, are required to help improve the widely debated tourism management curriculum designs by bringing together the contentions of the many scattered ideas (Barnett, 1994; Ritchie's, 2003; Stone, et al., 2017).

Moreover, similar arguments to tackle lack of liberal and higher skills' base, such as critical thinking and reflectivity (Abrami, et al., 2015), particularly in the tourism curriculum context (Boluk & Carnicelli, 2019), raised arguments related to multiple approaches to implementing the concept of experience and experience economy within the tourism curriculum (Pearce & Zare, 2017). Accordingly, they propose a so called 'orchestra experiential model' to form a conceptual background to the tourism curriculum. It simply claims to address the sensory and emotional

issues of experience (Myers, 2003), while shaping the social identity of the student. In short, the expediency of this orchestra model is that it is founded on empirical evidence in real-life Australian tourism, where the teaching content and designs are continuously created and improved. In this, a sample of students were mobilised and hence can be emulated in other similar contexts, especially in the UK.

In this, students observed and recorded what the customer did, collected evidence and case studies to be reflected upon when they head back to the classroom. In this, they record every detail, including whether the customer enjoys the experience, write and design everything (similar to architectural designing), then work on recreating, then improving the same model for future customers. It is therefore a dynamic model that is focused on both categories of business and sustainability skills, which would be continuously redesigned and managed. Accordingly, the orchestra model addresses both the need for shared-experiences (Pearce & Zare, 2017) and the sharing economy requirements (Hsu, 2018). More importantly, it contributes to the desired paradigm change (Dwyer, 2018) and in a tourism context. Although it is a useful model that promotes experiential learning and the higher reflective skills and a more market-oriented approach to tourism curriculum, it lacks the wider areas such as policy (see below).



Source: Pearce, P. L. (2011) in Pearce, P. L., & Zare, S. (2017: 59). The orchestra model as the basis for teaching tourism experience design. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management, 30, 55-64.*

Increasingly viewed as closely related to employability and work-readiness of graduates (Legrand, et al., 2011) sustainability is continuously gaining importance as a curriculum element (Rae, 2007). In this, reportedly 150 countries contributed to the UNESCO Bonn Declaration in 2009, which reiterated that sustainable development can only be achieved through HE that emphasises LL and enterprising (Jones & Iredale, 2010; Legrand, et al., 2011; Mulholland & Turner, 2018). Accordingly, it is argued that universities have always been at the forefront of change, and therefore they should play a leading role in achieving sustainability, starting with their curricula and expanding their campaigns to the wider societies by, for example, incorporating social entrepreneurship in curriculum learning, hence encouraging existing tourism and start-ups idea to create social and sustainability values (Legrand, et al., 2020), while developing the critical factors in this, especially creativity (Zhang, et al., 2020).

Indeed, in the context of HE tourism and its sustainability contents, Jennings, et al. (2015) studied how real-life learning engendered the principles and practice of sustainability through enterprising activities In this, the latter, focussed on 11 STEs, and 101 tourism undergraduates

across three Australian universities. Like Pearce & Zare's (2017) orchestra model of learning, this has been mainly through 'lived experience' in work environment. However, this approach also corresponds with Belhassen & Caton (2011) and Boluk & Carnicelli (2015) in that it also included 'reflexive team conversations' (Jennings, et al., 2015: 386) such as written notes and unsurprisingly concluded by criticising this Australian tourism education for not preparing graduates for work-readiness. These are also simply the application of Tribe's (2002) concept of creating a curriculum space that develops the philosophical and professional aspects to '*integrating real-world learning*' recommendation into the undergraduate curricula (Brundiers, Wiek & Redman, 2010: 309). Moreover, this, in the meantime, corresponds to the reflective action-oriented practitioner (Dredge et al., 2014), whereas the philosophical undergraduate practitioner is able to engage in both liberal and vocational reflection' to generate more rounded actions. In a nutshell, this has built and applied a useful '*practical learning-based model of curricula change*' (Jennings, et al., 2015: 390) that was successfully adapted, at least by these three HEIs, to increase their engagement with real world and improve both the curriculum and its subsequent graduate employability (Boluk, Muldoon & Johnson, 2019; Hayes, 2019a).

More recent examples of innovative approaches to developing the tourism curriculum include experimenting with the inclusion of storytelling within the tourism management curriculum in Japan (Bury, 2020) and the international sustainable tourism education model (Bowan & Dallam 2020) that employed fair-trade learning principles and experiential learning philosophies in the USA-Mexico Context. The latter, for example, employed a cross-border tourism curriculum that explored environmental, economic, and cultural issues and their impacts on global tourism, incorporating field experience to challenge TMUs to think critically about tourism issues from various perspectives, including meeting meeting farmers, fisherman, hospitality and tourism business leaders, government officials, regional non-profits, as well as local people to further consolidate such broader perspective. Consequently, Bowan & Dallam (2020) found the model

to be successful, not only in promoting effective learning and industry engagement, but also strategic partnerships across nations in tourism curriculum development. Likewise, Hayes, Tucker & Golding (2020), used cross-border collaboration in internships to encourage deep learning and heighten awareness of the complexities of real-world situations, including better future for more workable sustainable actions and better work ethics.

These innovative approaches and some recent academic research shows that the tourism in HE is advancing (Airey, 2015). This type of empirically informed holistic curriculum approach has attracted attention and testing, including through work-integrated learning by Seethamraju (2012) and work-based learning by Ramage (2014). The latter, for example, conducted qualitative research on local tourism entrepreneurs, who created successful STEs in Australia and concluded that educational philosophies that emphasise social processes of sensemaking can enhance sustainability education and profession-building for both in-work and entrepreneurial employability. Hussey et al. (2010) also argue that to enhance professionalism, is to develop continuing education for tourism SME managers through bespoke degree programmes, while engaging and inspiring undergraduates, who may want to be aim for employment or aspire to running a business alike. Deale (2016) also stresses a need for coursework that focuses on business communications, understanding risk, developing creativity and innovation strategies, along with an emphasis on ethical considerations (Power, Di-Domenico & Miller, 2017; Hayes, Tucker & Golden, 2020).

Deale's (2016) findings emphasise the more technical business skills. In the meantime, many tourism educators as well as their university students need to learn the practical aspects of these skills to build confidence. Hence, Deale (2016) contends that their findings should be of interest to hospitality and tourism educators and their learners to benefits in a two-way with business entrepreneurs who wish to study tourism and contribute to the development of tourism

curriculum by supporting fellow non-business owners' students. This type of content and design for the curriculum, allows tourism undergraduates to have more informed choices of career paths while further consolidating the desired policy-related LL, which is increasingly becoming a key term in the graduate labour market (Mulholland & Turner, 2018), and supported by the UK Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for HE (QAA, 2018). Accordingly, older and recent attempts to improve the tourism curriculum, despite being sound, show that there still more to be done in many aspects, including in entrepreneurship (Gurel, Altinay & Daniele, 2010), sustainability (Baum, 2015; Hayes, Tucker & Golden, 202), reflective practices (Boluk & Carnicelli, 2015) and digital contents (Balula, et al., 2019).

From the tourism industry perspective, this type of curriculum content and designs contribute to positive tourists' experiences, destination, and community development (Bardolet & Sheldon, 2008). In this, HE is seen as the catalyst, not only to raising awareness through research, but importantly to enhance critical thinking outside existing practices, a main characteristic of the entrepreneurial (Gurel, Altinay & Daniele, 2010; Zhang, et al., 2020) and vocational graduate (Tribe, 2000; Airey, 2005). However, despite recent improvements, tourism management curricula are still considered action-oriented (Airey, 2009) and hence some still question its potentials to prepare undergraduates to think critically and innovate (Bill & Bowen-Jones, 2010). Hence, it still needs development (Wright & McMahan, 2011; Ployhart & Moliterno, 2011), and coordination of fragmented curricula (Cooper, 2002) which continue to focus mostly on addressing the KSAOs (Ployhart & Moliterno, 2011) dictated by HRM and tourism companies, while lacking effective sustainability content (Sheldon & Fesenmaier, 2013) as recurrently and consistently recommended by the QAA (QAA, 2019).

Indeed, the latest benchmark statement for Events, Hospitality, Sports and Tourism subject group (EHLST) emphasises the importance of sound sustainability and ethics contents within these

curricula (QAA, 2019). In this, tourism is portrayed as an internationally recognised subject area that contributes to the wider interdisciplinary understanding of tourism development, management, and its broader contribution to society. In relation to its tourism-specific statements, this edition of the subject benchmark (QAA, 2019) states that an honours' graduate in tourism should demonstrate an understanding of the concepts and characteristics of tourism as an area of both academic and applied study. Moreover, starting with the subsection 6.22, details concerning tourism graduates include 13 required abilities that range from analysing and evaluating tourism concepts and characteristics (in relation to business, management and the wider social science) to the rather unclear ability to 'professionalise' the tourism industry as both processes and structures. Moreover, there are 3 more requirements to understanding the nature and characteristics of tourists (6.23), understanding products, structure of and interactions in the tourism industry (6.24) and a further 4 points on understanding the relationships between tourism, communities and the environment in which it occurs, including the issues and principles of sustainable tourism and social responsibility (6.25, ibid).

More notably, although this latest document (QAA, 2019) mentions digital skills in the generic and in each of the other subject areas, there is no reference to this under the tourism subject's -specific contents. Moreover, within the tourism-related award titles, the QAA's appendix 1 (QAA, 2019: 22), after stressing that EHLST subjects represent a much wider spread of courses and awards than the named titles, it illustrates 28 tourism-related titles that target certain tourism subsectors (e.g. international travel, European tourism and visitor economy). As many of these courses do not feature the word tourism management, except when preceded by specific subsectors such as "adventure" and "rural", this shows lack of coherence that may not help the graduates and interested employers (Ayikoru, 2014; Petrova, 2015; Airey, 2019). Even more interestingly, under sports subject, the title "Sports Tourism Management" (QAA, 2019) further illustrates the fragmented aspect of the curriculum and hence supports the call for a more

integrated curriculum design (Stergiou & Airey, 2018) that empowers tourism undergraduates to make a difference, both at work and in the wider society (Miller, Boluk & Johnson, 2019).

Unsurprisingly, the current fragmentation of the tourism curriculum (Baum, 2018) is still visible in today's wider context. For example, a popular workshop was held at a conference organised by the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services in 2013, involving about 600 HEIs' curriculum professionals (including post and pre-1992 UK HEIs' representatives) , employers, partners and various other interested stakeholders, such as graduates and undergraduates (O'Leary, 2017). They evaluated enterprising content of the tourism curriculum as means to enhancing graduate employability. The latter sums up their results in the emphasis on the need for more sound enterprising contents. Lewis (2004) argues that much degree content is generic and not always consistent with the needs of managers and therefore recommends more practice-based reflective approaches to developing analytical and critical thinking skills that are essential for tourism managers, who recurrently deal with unexpected and challenging events. This is in line with the critical pedagogy and experiential learning arguments (Belhassen & Caton, 2011) and its activation and modelling by Boluk & Carnicelli, (2015, 2019). Indeed, Aslan & Marc (2018) assert that universities need to initiate experiential learning, then relate this positively to both industry and society, while acting more swiftly. This requires reducing the red-tape associated in dealing with industry that has proven a barrier to some more recent innovative ideas to enhance tourism graduates employability such as the 2u2i, which simply mean closer collaborations where TMUs spend two years at university and two at industry alternatively (Mohd-Yusof, et al., 2020).

Away from the entrepreneurial education context, Torres Valdés, et al. (2018) examined the value of certain curriculum contents to skills development in real work situations, which involved tourism undergraduates being taken to industry, as part of a dynamic curriculum

delivery model (Hughes & Tan, 2017), whereby they led the process of acting as the prototypical link agent that enabled communication and enhanced the links between university, industry and society. Like Boluk & Carnicelli's (2015) approach, albeit the latter focus on community and social activities, as opposed to commercial companies. It was found that both types of approaches improve the curriculum content and design. For example, these engagement activities and its subsequent reflections often lead to initiating innovative management ideas, while creating stronger links with society. This, in the meantime allow freedom of choice for TMUs, particularly in the decent work they desire, while simultaneously developing socially responsible ethos that benefit both businesses and communities (ILO, 2013; UNWTO, 2017; UN, 2019). Indeed, Baum (2018) argues that to safeguard such noble agendas, while addressing the fragmented curriculum content and 'workforce themes', national tourism policies need to 'shaping key decisions', especially in developing the tourism curriculum (Baum, 2018: 881).

Indeed, the importance of enterprising curriculum content that is often promoted the 'silver bullet' to enhancing employability (O'Leary, 2017), a recent all-party parliamentary report on graduate employability (Anderson, et al., 2014), linked enterprise education across the UK, to work-readiness, with the thinking that an enterprising individual is likely to have also developed skills such as being forward thinking, innovativeness and teamwork and therefore, likely to be able to apply these in all contexts. While, the latter and some recent market surveys not only agree on the vital importance of enterprising education to the UK economy and graduate employability (HECSU, 2017), but also of pivotal importance to HEIs, as the main KPIs and benchmarking authority suggests (HESA, 2018). Accordingly, the tourism curriculum design and academia-industry liaison's issues in this regard are explored below.

3.4 Tourism Curriculum Design & Academic-Industry Liaison

Curriculum designs are both continuous and contentious especially in a tourism context, which is apparent in Tribe's (2001) search for paradigms for tourism curriculum design. In this, he refers to Koh (1995) who argued that the right curriculum design is one that is 'a cross-sectoral sample of tourism industry executives would approve'. Accordingly, Tribe (2001) argues it depends on philosophical underpinning of the curriculum developer, being positivist, interpretivists or critical by explaining that Koh in this case, is a positivist standing is focussed on bringing a theory to solve a problem rather than having a reality problem that forms a theory. However, many agree that the tourism curriculum should be broader to achieve a balance and not be tied to the philosophical view of the designer nor be it confided to the narrow specialisation of the tourism industry and knowledge too (Wattanacharoensil, 2014). In support of this balance, Dredge, Airey & Gross (2015) argue that tourism is not only an economic sector, but also a force in influencing political and social policies and hence the curriculum designs should account for this combination (Dredge, & Schott, 2013; Williams, 2019).

Another idea to improve tourism curriculum design is suggested by Barkathunnisha, Lee & Price (2017) who argue that a spirituality-based model aimed at raising graduates' awareness of their profession's being of multidisciplinary character is recommended. In this, spirituality is viewed from the angle of forming positive psychology in tourism settings to deepen mutual understanding, while developing new ideas for improving the tourist's experiences. This model was latter commended by Garcês, Pocinho & Jesus (2018), who argued that this model is positively aligned with the tourism consumer experience, as it is viewed as a spiritual activity, whereby the search for meaning is crucial to the tourist and hence could be addressed through the integration of psychology-driven tourism learning materials and activities. However, while this may sound useful, it may be unrealistic given that academics and their institutions are

surrounded by unforgiving market ideologies (Naidoo & Williams, 2015), and pressures of funding and recruitment that threatens their existence. Given that tourism academics have been accused of retreating to their 'ivory tower' (Pike & Schultz, 2009: 9), at a time of global competitiveness, these needs to pragmatically engage with this political and economic environment, to not only criticise or interpret, but also to positively join forces to change the world (Whitham, 2018).

In terms of academia-industry liaison, the focus despite being on curriculum development and designs, it is inextricably linked to employment and employability of graduates in such an applied field of study. Thus, the concept of academia- industry liaison is particularly relevant to the tourism discipline and indeed in this research context. In this light, many (e.g. Wang, Ayres & Huyton, 2009, 2010; Thapa, 2018) argue that the tourism management study programmes are business management oriented and uses academics' expertise in different areas to develop the courses and modules. However, the main issue is that the current system does not automatically make engaging the industry a requirement, especially in curriculum development in terms of content and design. The latter contends that despite some recent evidence of growing interactions with private tourism companies, these activities are primarily aimed at to developing relationships with industry to facilitate internships and undergraduates' placements, with recent evidence proving effective (e.g. Hayes, Tucker & Golden, 2020).

However, the desired active role in curriculum content and design by the industry, was in some case described as still non-existent (Thapa, 2018). According to Simonova (2018) and Sheldon, Fresenmaier & Tribe (2013), dynamic global challenges requiring changes to the tourism curriculum to address national policies, especially in light of global organisations emphasis on decent work (ILO, 2013), and the UN emphasis on sustainability as a mean for this, which is emphasised through tourism development (Espiner, Higham & Orchiston, 2019) and education,

where well-managed tourism can '*create decent jobs*'(UNWTO, 2017). Other means of effectively stimulating academia-industry liaison in curriculum development are a collaborative approach to more meaningful internship programmes that focus on the enterprising and entrepreneurial acumen of learners (Sukarieh & Tannock, 2017; Courtois; 2018), particularly in the light of the rapid advances in digital technologies (Balula, et al., 2019). In this context, Ndou, Mele & Del Vecchio (2019), conducted a web-based content analysis of European universities that introduced entrepreneurship related contents to their tourism programmes, particularly focussed on digital technologies. Their sample comprised 10 tourism educational programmes at 8 different European universities, with UK represented by 3 different programs at one university. They found two types of approaches to entrepreneurial education, of which one is limited to the general understanding and relevance of entrepreneurship to innovation (e.g. basic business plans and entrepreneurs' awareness of their role in society and the economy), called entrepreneurship 'awareness education' (Kirby, 2004b; Linan, 2007), whereas the other is a more detailed approach that is described as "educating for entrepreneurship" (Kirby, 2004b), action-oriented (Liñán, 2007), or a stand-alone, dedicating modules and practical contents within the curriculum (Ndou, Mele & Del Vecchio, 2019), which ranges from simulated processes of forming a new venture, to launching, positioning and managing it innovatively. Ndou, Mele & Del-Vecchio (2019) argue for a detailed and action-oriented approach that is found to help learners recognise real opportunities, identify and solve problems creatively, manage complex business situations, think strategically and build useful networks. In the meantime, this could arguably be linked to the in-employment enterprising acumen, as mean to improving their employability prospects, while serving the industry and their communities more effectively.

3.5 Tourism Graduates' Employability

The concept of employability has raised some fundamental questions about the purpose and value of HE in general and the tourism curriculum in particular (Inui, Wheeler & Lankford, 2006). This again, understandably varies from LL (Cuffy, Tribe & Airey, 2012), social constructivism and community development (Paris, 2011; Boluk & Carnicelli, 2019), the wider graduate employability (Petrova, 2015), to meeting the industry's immediate needs (Stergiou, & Airey, 2017). However, as a major contributor to the economy, neoliberalism gave more attention to employment and employability (Airey, et al., 2015) that focus HE on developing the skills and aptitudes in subject knowledge, LL (Lees, 2002) and sustainability for a better labour and future (Baum, 2018). As to the categorisation of the exact skills needed to learn and develop and those for obtaining and sustaining a job (Petrova, 2015), there are some arguments that are still unresolved (Lees, 2002; Petrova, 2015; Lee & Joung, 2017).

With regards to the clarity of the term itself, since Watts & Hawthorn (1992) there have been both difficulties and confusions as to what is exactly meant by the term 'Employability' and how it differs from the closely associated terms, such as enterprising and entrepreneurship. To set objective goals and targets for a healthier economy, clarifying this ambiguity is important to all parties involved, including government and policymakers, academics in charge of developing the curriculum, students and employers. A simple way to distinguish between these three terms (Watts & Wawthorn, 1992) advocate attaching the word 'business' to 'entrepreneurship' to distinguish between employability and entrepreneurship. Thus 'business entrepreneurship' in this case clearly means that HE is encouraging students to use their knowledge to simply set up their own businesses.

Yet, this is clearly different to the notion of preparing learners to be 'enterprising', which means working for firms that require employees to have high levels of business acumen, the courage to

explore new markets and the innovativeness to develop new products and of course the attitude to take calculated risks. Hence, 'Enterprising' does not mean starting a business *per se*, but working to create new opportunities, being innovative, commercially-sound and risk takers in employment. This is particularly relevant to the management disciplines in general, the service sector and in particular to the management of tourism industry, which requires continuous search for new products and packages to match the needs and expectations of the ever-changing tourists' needs , while serving the community for long term employability and sustainability of destinations (Aspinall, 2006; Mathew & Sreejesh, 2017).

On a positive note, Watts & Hawthorn (1992) argue that such confusion was needed and has been useful in the process of understanding employability. For instance, it allowed UK HEIs the freedom to implement the enterprise notion into HE policy in ways that matched their local needs, while not negatively affecting the liberty of the HE curriculum. This includes learning materials and activities that develop the social traits (Bolluk & Carnicelli, 2015) and critical thinking (Abrami, et al., 2015). Understandably, the rationale behind the latter's suggestion is that such ambiguity encouraged debates in the right places, which are HEIs. As a result, the term 'enterprise' was used for a number of years in HEIs to describe many activities that have recently been incorporated under the trending term of 'employability' that is used in HE, to mean more enterprising (Hug & Gilbert, 2013), and work-ready graduates (Seeler, 2019), who possess both the modern higher soft skills such as Emotional Intelligence (EI) resilience and the hard ICT skills the latest digital technologies.

To further elucidate this point, although, Dearing (1997) avoided producing a specific skillset list for employability, many others assert that a predefined employability skillset is useful for all stakeholders involved, including undergraduates themselves to identify their personal development strength and weaknesses and work on enhancing them, which has already started

at various UK HEIs, under the trending employability programmes. The rationale behind Dearing's (1997) reluctance to produce a specific employability skillset relates to the nature of HE, especially in the UK. According to the latter, each HE curriculum varies and therefore the learning objectives and desired skillsets should do too. However, the current research argues that this could be part of the problem and not the solution. Meaning, because of the varied curricula, employers will continue to be unclear about what each holder of a qualification is capable of and therefore will continue to prioritise those who hold generic degrees and more from the so-called prestigious universities. This is almost exactly merroring the current case concerning tourism graduates and major tourism employers (UK 300, 2019) recruitment ethos, contended in the above introduction (Riley, Gore & Kelliher, 2000; Walmsley, 2017), hence the continuation of the employability issues of tourism graduates that necessitated making it a priority in the UK tourism curriculum (Huq & Gilbert, 2013; Ali, Murphy, & Nadkarni, 2017).

Despite most of these debates over tourism graduates' employability is primarily focused on neoliberal policies and academic curriculum (e.g. Ayikoru, Tribe & Airey, 2009; Slocum, Dimitrov & Webb, 2019) or on the lost trust between academics and tourism employers (e.g. Ankrah & Omar, 2015), Pool & Sewell (2007) place the responsibility on the undergraduates themselves. In this, they see that learners should align the curriculum objectives with their learning goals to be more aware of their own personal development plans. More importantly, this alignment should help future graduates to pinpoint the type of skills required in their field and become more aware of any gaps in their own personal development plans (Bennett et al., 1999; Knight & Yorke, 2003; Pool & Sewell, 2007; Pool, 2017).

Yet, these differences are at least partially responsible for creating the current confusions over the exact content of employability models, especially when it comes to the practical solutions to enhance the actual graduates' employability. This, interns, affects the national strategies and of

course employers' recruitment initiatives, such as graduates' schemes. Thus, it may be better to revisit the basics of employability and research if it would be viable to make an umbrella definition, or various definitions to both clarify and solve such contentions. In this, the Confederation for British Industry (CBI) defines employability as *'a set of attributes, skills and knowledge that all labour market participants should possess to ensure they have the capability of being effective in the workplace – to the benefit of themselves, their employer and the wider economy'*. (CBI, 2009: 8).Yet, despite appearing as fully comprehensive, where it focuses on the broadly accepted business awareness, problem-solving, proficiency in ICT, self-management, teamwork, innovation and risk taking, the weakness of this definition (Gunn, 2010), especially in the context of the current research, is in being almost broad and generic. In other words, the inclusion of the words 'all labour market', makes it clear that it does not still fully apply to specific labours sectors (e.g. tourism) and the varied interests, experience and educational levels. More specifically, it does not focus on graduates nor on tourism management graduates. This labour segment is not only faced with the generic graduates' employability issues, but also, they encounter a low-imaged degree and the fact that the majority of TMUs are part of the so-called Generation Z, an emerging pool of professionals that are largely unexplored. Although is not of a particular focus in this research, their considerable proportion within this TMUs' cohort and the lack of empirical data currently available about them, particularly in terms of their employment characteristics, further weakens this specific employability definition and supports the rational for this exploratory study. Moreover, in another attempt to define employability, Pool & Sewell (2007) focus this time is from a graduate perspective that has relevance to TMUs. Hence, they define graduate employability as *'having a set of skills, knowledge, understanding and personal attributes that makes a person more likely to choose and secure occupations in which they can be satisfied and successful'* (Pool & Sewell, 2007: 280). As clearly noticeable, the relevance of this definition to TMUs is in its reference to their choice of an occupational path that they are interested in, as the basis for career success. Further takes on employability are that

it is not simply about work-readiness (Hoover, et al., 2010; Pool, 2017) and the 'narrowly-drawn professionalism' of specific skills, but the wider perspective of preparing a graduate that is well-rounded, 'whole person,', emotionally mature and ethically aware (Pool, Gurbutt & Houston, 2019: 542). This combination is also relevant to the tourism industry's requirements, where the need for a combination of skills and generic aptitudes has been recently noted (Seeler, 2019).

Despite its promising potential, employability is also seen as a 'performative function' (Boden & Nedeva, 2010) by UK HEIs adhering to state-imposed pressures, risking students understanding their identity, especially in terms of the 'exchange value' McArthur (2011, 743) for work as opposed to the roader humanistic and ethical values of HE. Unsurprisingly, some see such skills-focused employability programmes as 'dangerous' (Bessant, et al., 2015: 424).

According to Boden & Nedeva, 2010) these employability agenda seeks to replace the wider labour markets and according to the latter has three profound implications. Firstly, employability programmes reflect the state's further intervention in labour markets and may lead to adjusting power balances in favour of employers, legitimising measures of anti-social justice and could well be creating two different sets of HEIs, one that produces compliant workers, while the other yields employers and leaders. Most relevant to this research, Boden & Nedeva (2010) argue that employability programmes may lead to further intensified competition among HEIs and therefore could potentially affect the essentials of what a university should offer, especially in terms of pedagogies. Indeed, due to the ever-increasing emphasis on league table and its associated funding and scrutiny issues by the state, the competition between HEIs cause further confusion as to what the term employability itself means, to an extent it seen by HEIs, *as 'employment after six month of graduation'* (Ayikoru, 2014: 391), to fulfil their KPIs metrics. This continuation of the opportunistic stance inflicted on UK HE to produce papers and numbers of employable or 'work-ready graduates', represented in for example in the 'de-academisation'

of the ‘year abroad’ (Courtois; 2018: 3), in response to employers demands and their opinion of academic knowledge contributes to academics’ concerns and hence leads to undermining university degrees (Sukarieh & Tannock, 2017). This, according to (Courtois, 2018), allows employers to ‘justify low-pay’ or ’unpaid internships’, especially for new graduates entering the labour market and hence opens doors to labour exploitation, which may lead to graduates seeing little value of the academic capital, and hence may lack the confidence to defend their entitlement to well-paid work based on their degree’s discipline.

More pragmatically, this subordination of HE to economics, solely for employment, combined with advances in technology and the increase in job automation (Arntz, Gregory & Zierahn, 2016; Estlund, 2018), will not only have a profound effect on most profession, as it gives rise to enterprising education, but also a devaluation to the traditionally assumed academic capital (Sukarieh & Tannock, 2017; Courtois; 2018) and therefore needs more research and policy attention. This is particularly relevant to this emerging generation, a ‘perfect storm' of young and talented tourism managers who are technologically savvy (Clark, 2017) and ready to replace other generations at work (Goh & Lee (2018), that is increasingly becoming digital and requires less physical space (Thulin & Vilhelmson, 2019), as discussed in the next subsection.

3.6 Tourism Curriculum and the future of the tourism profession

In relation to the tourism curriculum and its link with the future of this profession, advancing from vocational routes, tourism education is successfully maturing (Airey, 2015) and as an industry highly driven curriculum (Xiao, Qiu & Cheng, 2018), for a technology adopting industry (Buhalis & Cobanoglu 2014; Xu, Buhalis & Wber, 2017) the continuous advances in digital and robotic technologies (Pfeiffer, 2017) are considered to not only improve the service within the industry, but also to advance travel planning, improve the speed and efficiencies of

decision-making, enhance tourists' experience and experience sharing. However, this will clearly influence jobs, especially in tourism, where adopting digital technologies in education would improve access to LL, while addressing the digital skills '*needed for employment, personal development and social inclusion*' (Carretero, Vuorikari & Punie 2017: 6). Indeed, according to the World Economic Forum (WEF), advances in digital transformation is projected to have a 'significant impact' (WEF, 2017: 5), on the tourism workforce that represents at least 1 in 11 jobs worldwide by 2025 (Balula, et al., 2019) and is estimated to affect around 50% of UK tourism Jobs (Travel Weekly, 2020). Unsurprisingly, many countries, especially OECD key members (including the UK), who represent around 80% of the world's trade and investment, identified policy-focused digital transformation to financing sustainable tourism growth, which includes education and employment (WEF, 2017; Balula, et al., 2019).

Regardless of whether this materialises in the near future, this increased role of technology within the tourism industry, in for example the use of Artificial Intelligence (AR), Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) content (Hsu, 2018), particularly for service management, is likely to result in new mobile-enabled engagement strategies in everything, including HE tourism (Ivanov, 2018). In this, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) for example, is one of its educational implications where this mode improves access and widens participation (Ryan, Horton-Tognazzini, & Williams, 2016) and hence brings positive changes in this context (Cole & Heinecke, 2020). However, MOOCs represent challenge for academics including added workloads (Xiao, Qiu & Cheng (2018), whereas VR intelligent solutions, using Web 3.0 were found to be as more effective (Balula, et al., 2019), especially within the tourism curriculum. Despite appearing to encourage students' engagement, improve employment prospects and enhance tourism education, the 'ubiquitous nature of digital technology' (Balula, et al., 2019: 64) is challenging to fully implement in tourism education (Xiao, Qiu & Cheng, 2018), not only in terms of added workload to academics (Gous & Roberts, 2015), but also the costs associated

with developing both learners' and academics digital competence (Morellato, 2014; Walker, Jenkins, & Voce, 2018; Alford & Jones, 2020).

In terms of the future of the profession, while some argue that this would not affect the management profession in general (Susskind & Susskind, 2015), especially given that tourism management and consultancy-types of professions, unlike the labour-intensive jobs, are projected to survive the digital monsoon. Hence, the future is not as bleak as originally implied (Peters & Jandrić, 2019) and the bamboozling of future generations (Ainley, 2016, 2017) is likely to ride this digital tide that starts by upgrading HEIs' learning facilities (Azmi, et al., 2018; Ivanov, 2018), to reach this endless, but exciting global dynamism of work (Simonova, 2018).

Although this still requires investing in the future of jobs (WEF, 2018), it has already proved increased effectiveness in tourism management and workplace (Watkins, et al., 2018). It would even provide more employment opportunities, especially to the socially less privileged groups of the society (Michopoulou, et al., 2015; Buhalis, et al., 2019), others warn that this is threatening this type of white-collar professions (Chelliah, 2017). However, most agree on the need for collaborative approaches between all stakeholders involved from the service management to education (Chelliah, 2017; Balula, et al., 2019; Buhalis, et al., 2019) and improved sustainability within the tourism industry (Moscardo & Benckendorff, 2015). Active global initiatives, in this context include the World Tourism Forum Lucerne (WTFL), which is thinktank that brings industry, academia, government ministers and many other organisations and talents together to generate ideas, about how better manage the future of tourism and challenges to future generation (WTFL, 2019). According to Walters, Burns & Stettler (2015), the curriculum still need attention and that its academic designers need to encourage industry involvement in this process to align with the industry's need for talent and improve their graduates' employability. For example, it was recommended that academia needs to appoint a senior industry leader in academic advisory boards to facilitate the liaison in the two sectors, in

both curriculum and research. However, more recently (Walters & Ruhanen, 2019) found a persisting reluctance amongst industry professionals to collaborate with academics in applied research, because of complex and lengthy bureaucratic procedures. The latter conducted 18 in-depth interviews with senior industry practitioners and found the main reason for this is 'past experiences' with academics, who '*failed to meet timeframes*', (Walters & Ruhanen, 2019: 108). According to the latter they were slow to respond and in some occasions delivered only part of the agreed research, 'demonstrating an inability to appreciate industry's need for immediacy and hence irrelevant research output to the industry, a bureaucratic barrier that has been recently critiqued (Mohd-Yusof, et al., 2020).

The importance and issues of academia-industry liaison continued to attract attention, for example Johnston & Webber (2003) stress that in a global 21st century business environment, the need for work-ready graduates, who can drive the information revolution, is necessary. Thus, it requires educational response that meets the '*scale and connectedness of the global information society*' to swiftly pinpoint growth areas (Johnston & Webber, 2003: 335). In this, guest-lectures is seen as an important feature of such liaison that does not only improve the connectedness between both sides, but also provides tourism learners with '*authentic learning'* (Albrecht, 2012:261) that supports choice and strategies for career success (Lee & Joung, 2017).

Specifically addressing tourism management education and the collaboration between the tourism industry and academia in curricula designs, Baum (2006: 231) argues that in various leading European countries, the prime focus has been on training and CPD at levels described as '*craft or skilled trade*'. Hence, the latter argues that the issue of training and CPD needs, for both existing and future tourism managers, has not been sufficiently addressed at this level of tourism in HE, but has been partially addressed in some companies' provisions. As per the relationship between tourism employers and tourism academics, it has historically been characterised by a 'lack of trust' (Cooper & Shepherd, 1997), however the two parties are increasingly recognising the mutual benefits of a co-operative relationship. This improvement is seen in the work of

Barnes, Pashby & Gibbons (2006). The latter identified eight universal success factors to improving the university-industry partnerships (Bruneel, d'Este, & Salter, 2010), of which the mutual trust comes first. Similarly (Ankrah & Omar, 2015), reviewed the literature and identified trust as both a success and barrier to education-industry cooperation factor. Last here, in search for a framework a sustainability framework and successful work-integrated learning relationships Fleming, McLachlan & Pretti (2018) found trust to be one of the deciding factors. Indeed, recent research suggest that from the tourism industry's point of view *'academic research is undertaken for the sake of other academics'*, where '…industry practitioners often see academic research as being of no or little relevance to them…' Walters & Ruhanen (2018:105). On the other hand, commercial research agencies were commended for their action-oriented research results, combined with a more engaging research presentations and a key factor in this, as quoted in the latter's work, is that the commercial research providers often employ someone, who is well-trained and dedicated to communicating research findings to clients, an easy and convincing manner and enable knowledge transfer in an easier and timely manner. While Cooper et al. (2006) argues that the knowledge transfer from academic world to the tourism industry is still lacking, Walters & Ruhanen (2018) identify the reason as mainly a market-positioning problem of universities. In other words, universities are not generally able to convey to industry how their services or products can address their needs.

3.7 The Current Cohort of UK Tourism Management Undergraduates

Given that most of the current cohort of TMUs are born around the mid-1990s they belong to the an emerging generation (Satchabut, 2018), who are largely unexplored professionally (Clark, 2017), particularly in terms of commitments to work (Lub, et al., 2016) and possible strategies to attracting and retaining them (Orrheim & Thunvall, 2018). Reports exploring this generation's possible employment characteristics come mainly from the USA (e.g. Crouch, 2015) and emphasise early job instability and high labour turnover, including the Bureau of Labour Statistics survey (BLS, 2018) showing 22% of this emerging generation worked one year or less with a single employer and 74% their current employer, with reasons for the turnover including employers' failure to address their expectations of sound Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), job flexibility and fair treatments (Rodriguez et al., 2019), Indeed, understanding this TMUs' cohort's experiences, employment characteristics and career intention for tourism has been described as pivotal to avoiding a potential 'bubble' that may burst if there is no enough new TMUs replacing maturing workforce that could cause a '*huge human capital vacuum*', in an industry that has traditionally suffered high labour turnover (Goh & Okumus, 2020: 5).

Although, there exist many common characteristics between the emerging generation and its predecessors, especially in their reliance on digital technologies (e.g. use of smartphones applications in learning) , because they were born when the digital revolution peaked (Palfrey & Gasser, 2013; Jaleniauskiene & Juceviciene, 2015), they are seen as more advanced in this to the degree they were described as the native speakers of the digital language (Helsper & Enyon, 2009; Susilo, et al, 2019; Priporas, Stylos, & Kamenidou, 2019).

Importantly, while Wiedmer (2015) argues that they are the most technologically savvy of any generation, they are as a workforce seen to mobilize more around global than previous

generations (Varkey, 2017; Seemiller & Grace, 2018; Thorpe & Inglis, 2019). Indeed, they have a global vision, are connected to wider peers more through SM, are insightful and have higher IQ scores (Clark (2017). Accordingly, compared to previous generations, they generally accept diversity and require less supervision efforts. With their main assets in fostering digital technologies and use of SM (Prakash-Yadav & Rai, 2017), employers who value commitment and focus on relationship building with their customers, would be able to reap the significant value and profits that the emerging cohort can bring to the table (Prakash-Yadav & Rai, 2017).

In terms of learning, Wiedmer (2015) not only support Prakash-Yadav & Rai (2017) argument that the emerging generation is tech savvy and connect more easily with their global peers, but also they prefer interacting using the digital media rather than passive classroom lectures in their learning and hence expect to work, learn and study wherever and whenever they choose. They have less need for direction, because they have access to plenty of online answers, especially on topics which they are passionate about, they are consistent multitaskers, like a challenge, have clearer goals, are used to the speed and dynamics of today's world (Renfro, 2012) and hence expect constant feedback in both learning (Clark, 2017) and job integration (Stevens, 2010) and pursuance (Johnson & Stone, 2019; Johnson, Stone & Lukaszewski, 2020).

In terms of employment prospects and characteristics, Brotheim (2014) argues that the emerging generation of graduates will be better employees because of their upbringing during the recent boom of digital advancements, which helped them to gain valuable characteristics such as accepting new ideas more freely than any previous generation. More specifically, due to the skills gained in advanced technologies, graduate will have a competitive advantage in employment and in terms of attitudes they are more prepared for the global business its dynamic work environment. Despite technological skills and virtual interactions, many scholars (e.g. Wiedmer, 2015; Dorsey (2016) assert that this emerging generation, surprisingly, prefers person

to person interaction. In terms of the impact of these characteristics on employers, Dorsey (2016) stresses that SM is the key to attracting them than any other previous generation and hence employers and policymakers need to devise new strategies, including the above-discussed eHRM and e-recruitment (Johnson, Stone & Lukaszewski, 2020).

As per specific the SM platforms, Dorsey (2016) discusses a US survey that illustrates' this emerging generation's preference to the quicker ones, especially those that focus on interactivity through videos and images (e.g. Vine 54% and Instagram 52%) and twitter (34%) for minimum use of text (Wiedmer, 2015; Dorsey, 2016). Unsurprisingly, this leads to preference to gaming and related occupations (King & Tang, 2018; Goh & King, 2020). However, the lack of available empirical evidence on recent TMUs is highlighted in a recent work by Goh & Lee (2018), where they argue that there is no single study in the literature investigating the attitudes or likely employment characteristics of TMUs' aspiring to work in this industry. According to Goh & Lee (2018), it is pivotal to try to understand this imminent workforce, especially by means of empirical investigations. This importance is due to earlier reports on past generations showing a critical human resource problem of high labour turnover (Goh & Lee, 2018). Accordingly, they used the TPB to test attitude and intention of TMUs to working in this industry in the Australian context and found positive attitudes to working in this industry. This positive attitude includes the excitement as well as being realistic about the problems they are about to encounter, especially those related to employment conditions (Goh& Lee, 2018). They also found that the negative attitude displayed in previous studies with earlier other generations (Richardson, 2008, 2009; Solnet, Kralj & Kandampully, 2012); Barron, Leask & Fyall, 2014) is no longer the case.

Hence Goh& Lee (2018) assert that this generation is not motivated by salary, but by the longer-term benefits such as the availability and clear career development opportunities. In terms of

attraction to working in the industry, Goh & Lee (2018) found that the role of family members, like Wan, Wong & Kong (2014) is critical to this generation's decisions to work in this industry. Thus, Goh & Lee (2018) recommend that the industry engage parents and family members more, by for example inviting them to career fairs and open days, to further support undergraduates' career planning (Goh & Okumus, 2020).

However, this rather contradicts with results of some earlier work, for example Hertzman, Moreo & Wiener (2015) emphasised reference groups as the most important factor in influencing undergraduates' decisions to join this industry, and not family. Regardless of it being the reference groups or family influencers, most results suggest that this emerging generation are more concerned with career planning and development opportunities, compared to focus on pay (Goh & Okumus, 2020), especially contrasted with their predecessors generation Y(GenY). In contrast, GenYshowed a majority of 57.7% not happy with the pay (Richardson, 2010) and scored low on turnover intention (Solnet, Kralj & Kandampully, 2012). Hence, in recommending strategic actions to tourism and hospitality employers to improve productivity and reduce the turnover, Goh & Lee (2018) emphasise the importance of engaging this cohort of TMUs' in *'discussions about their career',* planning for the longer-term, which not only includes addressing their desire for *'management training'* (Goh & Lee, 2018: 26), but also higher levels of professional development to successfully engaging and develop them (Goh & Okumus, 2020).

This is in line with earlier studies too (e.g. Aycan & Fikret-Pasa, 2003; Savicki, 1999), where for example Walsh & Taylor's (2007: 164) argued that *'money alone does not motivate a young manager'* in this sector. Indeed, Chuang & Dellmann-Jenkins (2010) examined the determinant factors influencing the career intentions of undergraduates in the USA context and after surveying 360 undergraduates, they found that career intentions of tourism and hospitality undergraduates were significantly associated with factors other than pay. This includes gender,

outcome expectations, where the most frequently reported rewards were career development opportunities and other intrinsic desires such as fulfilments, as opposed to the extrinsic financial rewards, such as pay (Chuang & Dellmann-Jenkins, 2010). This again is in line with both earlier and later recommendations to hospitality and tourism employers that include improving the work conditions, creating clearer development opportunities (Savicki, 1999; Aycan & Fikret-Pasa, 2003; Walsh & Taylor, 2007), as well as empowering and allowing voice for this generation to efficiently and successfully fit in the workplace (Lu, et al., 2016; Lu & Lu, 2020).

Despite this, there still is a paucity of empirical studies on tourism and hospitality workforce, which is evident in recent tourism workforce research reviews (Baum, et al., 2016; Baum, 2018), which highlight that workforce research was neglected in the top eight tourism and hospitality journals, rated by Impact Factor. Within this, it was found that this is often disjointed, especially in terms of topics, analysis, theory and method. Furthermore, Baum, et al. (2016) found that depending on the specific focus, whether tourism, hospitality or other subsectors of the tourism industry, the existing literature gives varied handling to the respective workforce issues. Baum (2018) argues that this stems from uncoordinated tourism policies, especially at national levels and identified 'the neglect' of workforce issues in tourism policies and at both the academic and professional levels. More relevant to this research, the latter found that the tourism workforce literature has a 'severe limitation', as it fails to consider work quality concerns, not only within policy, but also in societal context (Baum, 2018: 874). This has been empirically supported, with Robinson, Ruhanen & Breakey (2016), for example, finding that the gap in policies for sustainable tourism pertinent to the work quality has its effect on the industry and an even greater impact on tourism and hospitality undergraduates' values and career aspirations (Edelheim, 2020 for this sector. In this, the latter found that after undergoing internships and experiencing the quality of real-life work in this sector, many of these TMUs decide to switch career intentions and seek work elsewhere, in an endless cycle, which has also more recently been echoed by

Gebbels, Pantelidis & Gross-Turner (2020). As per the importance of higher broader skills' development, Robinson, Ruhanen & Breakey (2016) argue that despite research continuing to show that the 'apprentice' path to undergraduates' employment continues to be favoured by tourism employers, higher competencies (e.g. communication, critical thinking and reflective abilities) are also required, but still receive less attention. Moreover, Major & Evans (2008) and Dredge, Airey & Gross (2014) support Robinson, Ruhanen & Breakey's (2016) argument that these are necessary for dealing with key industry issues, such as the labour turnover, globalisation and changes in demographics. This clearly illustrates the importance and need for this research to inform policies that address the workforce issues in this sector (Mooney & Baum, 2019; Goh & Okumus, 2020). In relation to the current cohort of TMUs and the potentials of utilising the latest technology in both their education (Ivanove, 2018; Bowan & Dallam, 2020) and eHRM recruitment practices (Johnson, Stone & Lukaszewski, 2020) that is clearly in line with the aforementioned UN agenda for 2030 and its associated UN-SDGs goals of quality education (SDG4) and decent work (SDG8) (UN, 2019: Baum & Nguyen, 2019), which has not only been stressed as possible through technology (Boluk, Cavaliere & Higgins-Desbiolles, 2019), or relevant to the retention of this TMUs' cohort (Corbisiero & Ruspini, 2018; Goh & Lee, 2018; Goh & Okumus, 2020), but also support positive change (Cole & Heinecke, 2020).

Thus, based on the above research objectives, the wide range of literature reviewed, the complex aspects of tourism labour market praxes and issues, as well as the tourism management curriculum, graduate employability and related UK HE policies, a multifaceted mixed methodology approach is required for their further investigation. This requires a CF to act as a scaffold that guides and focuses its varied types of data collection and analyses. This framework is detailed and justified in the following chapter.

4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Given the aim of this research is to understand TMUs' employability issues through a critical analysis of the relationship between the UK tourism management curriculum and the tourism industry's need to alleviate its turnover problem, the breadth, depth and complexity of these phenomena, as set out in the preceding chapters, necessitated the construction of a conceptual framework that structures and guides the research inquiry. Thus, this chapter introduces and justifies the construction of the CF that guided the research methodology (chapter 5), as well as the qualitative and quantitative data analyses (chapters 6 and 7). Accordingly it includes 4 sections, starting with overview and justification and closing with the ensuing CF model.

4.1 Overview & Justification

Defined as *'an argument about why the topic one wishes to study matters, and why the means proposed to study are appropriate and rigorous*' (Ravitch & Riggan, 2016:5), a CF is also described as a network of linked concepts (Jabareen, 2009) that offers a procedure of flexibility to modification, and emphasis on understanding, rather than just prediction. This makes using a CF important, not only to structuring the research process, but also as a corrective mechanism to parts of the process, including its use in '*reframing the research questions*' (Maxwell & Loomis, 2003: 253) and hence is particularly useful in the generally recurring discursive nature of mixed methods research designs, such as the qualitative interviews used here and explained in the following chapter. Indeed, it unites the 'central concepts' of a research with 'their conceptual status' (Punch, 2009: 356) and 'runs throughout' the entire research project (Wisker, 2005: 82), to constantly illustrate 'the key concepts and theories' that guide the research. Other important support of the use of CF include Punch's (2009) recognition of it as an instrument that not only exhibits the research's central concepts, but also allows the contrasting of these concepts against one another. Moreover, it is used as both prospective and retrospective instrument (Smyth, 2004;

Cooksey& McDonald; 2011) that drives the research forward in a structured way, while allowing constant rechecks to improve or sharpen the process and components (methods of data collections and RQs).Thus, the use of a CF has been deemed important enough that was considered the "research matrix" (Maxwell & Smyth, 2010: 408) and 'the scaffold' of the research inquiry (Berman & Smyth, 2015: 133).

More specific to this research settings, it has also been argued that a CF is a vital part of the "intellectual requirements" (Berman& Smith, 2015: 127) to support learning and achievement and a reference point that guides and focuses the process of a doctoral project. Indeed, as predominantly a research training activity with the aim of contributing to knowledge of a specific discipline, a doctoral study is not an end per se, but a "learning process" (Sperka, 2018: 1) and the use of a CF helps to shape this learning. On the use of multiple theories within a CF (Sperka & Enright, 2018) found that only a limited number of studies did explain their theoretical frameworks in detail and that among those who did (e.g. Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Rogers, 2012), the use of multiple theories or 'bricolage' is recommended (Wolcott, 2005:180) to view the data and findings from various perspectives.

Indeed, since this research is focusing on a complex social phenomena that is linked to multidisciplinary bodies of knowledge (e.g. HE policies, the tourism management curriculum, labour issues in tourism, the current cohort TMUs' employability issues and their career intention), a bricolage of theories underpin this CF, mainly the combination of various employability models (Pool & Sewell, 2007; Felisitas, et al., 2012; Clarke, 2018) and the TPB (Ajzen, 2006) to guide the process to understanding the views of academics and industry professional and the experience and career intention of TMUs. Accordingly, part of its structured guidance, this CF was used to provide a reference point for the data collection, analysis and support sustained connection with the research objectives throughout (Halse & Malfroy, 2010).

Accordingly, the CF provided a systematic direction for the entire research (Leshem & Trafford, 2007), guided its methodology design (Berman, 2013), while frequently sharpening its methods (Smyth, 2004).

Yet, this CF is not simply a unification of theories (Leshem & Trafford (2007), but an applied instrument that is relevant to the above-contended complex tourism issues. Hence, while it allowed a structured and meaningful interpretation to the differing types of the data gathered, it was itself refined in the process. Accordingly, the final version of the CF (Figure 16.1 & 16.2, chapter 8), demonstrate the integration of the multiple versions of concepts (Knight & Cross, 2012) to establish both the practical and conceptual validity of findings. For now, a CF is needed, in a tourism research context, particularly for its knowledge-building capacity (Bakker, 2019) and utility as an objective epistemological approach to inform policy intervention.

In other words, while a CF is considered a suggestive theory (Edmondson & McManus, 2007) that invites further research testing (Kim, Wang & Mattila, 2010), this CF contributes to the much-needed tourism conceptual knowledge to overcome some of the narrow scopes of pure empirical data (Xin, Tribe & Chambers, 2013). Put differently, as the main value of a CF is in answering the more holistic questions through the merging of scattered concepts. For example, as shown in a study of the application of conceptual research in tourism, Xin, Tribe & Chambers (2013) noted the absence of enough conceptual content in tourism research and hence conducted a rigorous qualitative and quantitative content analysis to published journal articles in this context. As a result, the latter found that this is marginal in tourism, where for example articles focussed on conceptualisation contributed to only 15% to all work published in Annals of Tourism research between 2011-2012. Others also emphasise the need to better utilise the smaller empirical findings, by bringing them together to form a 'new or altered concepts'

(Dreher, 2000:3, 218), which is sought to advance the tourism knowledge as a life science, illustrating the 'broad spirit of the inquiry' (Xin, Tribe & Chambers, 2013: 8). Accordingly, the combination of the relevant models and theories adapted here are justified, as detailed below.

4.2 Previously applied models in tourism education

As the main aim of this research inquiry is to seek whether or not the UK undergraduate tourism management curricula fit the purpose of graduate employability and how it could serve tourism employers needs to alleviate the various costs of the turnover at this level, reviewing previously applied models of graduate employability to find the relevant model or components to use in this research was necessary. Thus, after thorough considerations to the relevant literature, given the existence of models in a tourism context is rare and the few found, are not only recent or in different contexts, but also are mostly, either focussed on the educational part of employability (McGladdery& Lubbe, 2017; Pearce& Zare, 2017) or theoretical conceptualisations (Clarke, 2018), three specific models were identified as more applicable here, but despite individual merits, none of which could solely serve the objectives of this research. as explained below.

Accordingly, in search of a better CF, a transitional theory (Shields & Tajalli, 2006) that could later be acknowledged as a theoretical model (Wellington, 2010; Berman & Smyth, 2015), a tailor-made combination of the relevant parts of three graduate employability models, formed the main basis of this CF. These are, Pool & Sewell's (2007) career EDGE, Bridgstock's (2009), career management model and Felisitas, et al.'s (2012) dual conceptual framework.

Hence, referring back to the techniques of conceptual knowledge-building (Xin, Tribe & Chambers, 2013), a procedure of evaluation that includes comparison, addition (Beany, 2003), reflection and abstraction to build the desired overarching conceptualisation from existing

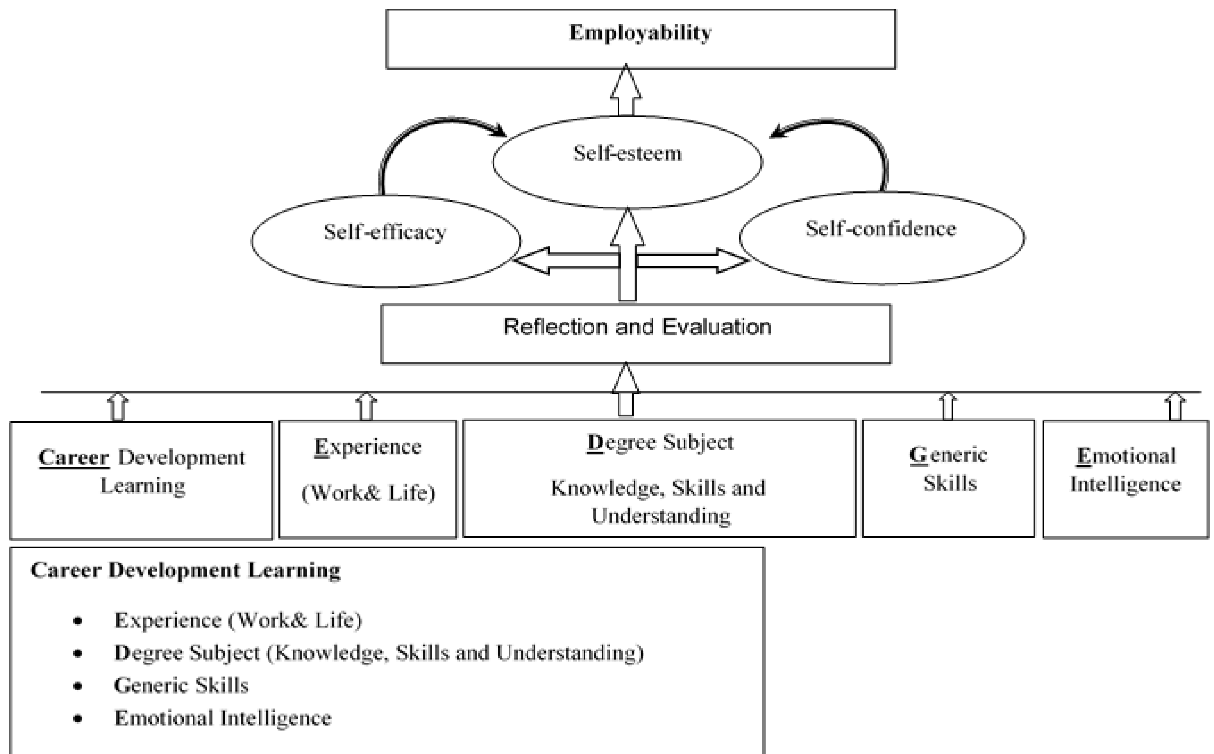
concepts (Savin-Baden & Howell-Major, 2010), was used here to evaluating, adding and subtracting from these models to construct this model as explained and justified below.

The first of these models is the widely recognised Career EDGE (e.g. Small, Shacklock & Marchant, 2018), a graduate employability model designed by Pool & Sewell (2007). This model, in addition to its broad career learning component, also includes at its lower end the mnemonic of four generic employability skills of Experience, Degree subject, Generic skills and Emotional intelligence (EDGE). However, despite the useful details, it is a more of an academic conceptualisation that admittedly remain theoretical (Pool & Sewell, 2007). Indeed, the same architects, later critiqued it for lacking operational clarity (Sewell & Pool, 2010; Bridgstock, et al., 2019). More specifically, it is set in a general HE curriculum context that requires 'all' undergraduates to engage in and be supported, while studying to develop all of these five generic competencies before taking the first step to advancing towards employability. In this, the following higher stages involve graduates engaging in reflection and evaluation to what they've accumulated (the EDGE), to advance further with self-efficacy and self-confidence and eventually reach the highest point of self-esteem that, according to the latter, lead to full and meaningful graduate employability (Pool, 2017). However, in addition to the admission that this framework is generic and only theoretical, Sewell & Dacre-Pool (2010) also explain that they developed this model with the assumption that the term employability was still in its infancy, where for example the confusion between enterprising and entrepreneurships were useful then to allow HEIs to tailor the model to their HE policy and match their employability programmes' needs (Dacre-Pool, 2010). Hence, it is a broad employability model that is more focussed on institutional needs, such as employability for ranking (Bui & Nguyen, 2019) and was developed in an educational context to mainly aid curriculum designs but not empirically supported or connected directly to a specific industry.

Thus, given that the graduate labour market is progressively congested (Tholen, et al., 2013) and is marked by persistent inequalities in class and gender (Tholen & Brown, 2017; Alarcón & Cole, 2019), which is specifically apparent in a tourism context (Baum, 2018), solely relying on these type of broad employability models that focus on skills for HE policies will not alone alter the deep-rooted market approach ideologies (Tribe, 2001; Tribe., Dann & Jamal, 2015) or the solve social problems in related to issues of this research (Tholen & Brown, 2017). Put differently, as the HE marketisation policies proved to affect tourism graduates (Ayikoru, Tribe & Airey, 2009), especially in the form of reactively to the market needs to curriculum designs, this accumulated to a congested tourism curriculum (Wilson & von der Heidt, 2013) that is constantly filled with contents from other disciplines to address the broad market skills' requirements that often replace the more academically valued higher skills, such as critical thinking (Slocum, Dimitrov & Webb, 2019). Thus, the issue of a supposedly market-oriented curriculum, dictated by the wider HEIs' priorities of KPIs, including focus on students' recruitment and position in the ranking table that has no more space, an imbalance that ironically continues to confuse employers and graduates (Ayikoru, 2014; Airey, 2019). Therefore, a both conceptually and empirically valid knowledge that strikes the balance between generic and discipline-specific competencies is needed, especially given the image of the tourism degrees and graduates (e.g. Holloway, 1993; Walmsley, 2012; Baum, 2012), who aspire to work in a fragmented industry, a combination that led to this knowledge dilemma (e.g. Stergiou & Airey, 2018; Bum, 2018) to say the least. As such and albeit comprehensive in covering aspects that the curriculum should include, leading to 'self-confidence' through 'self-efficacy' and finally 'self-esteem' through the curriculum alone doesn't particularly serve the aims of this research, that focus on tourism graduates who carry the burden of the aforementioned low-image (e.g. Holloway; 1993 Baum, 2012) and the more recent combination of skills' requirements in the tourism industry (e.g. Seeler, 2019). Indeed, this model cannot be used alone to support the objectives of this research, which seeks to develop a new model that bridges the gap between academics and professionals, along with

the wider market issues and in this specific context. Moreover, given that this Pool & Sewell (2007) model is a generic theoretical construct that was developed 13 years ago, does not particularly make it relevant to the current pool of TMUs and their distinctive characteristics as earlier discussed (See figure 1 below: the career EDGE, generic graduate employability model).

Figure 1: The Career EDGE, Generic Graduate Employability Model

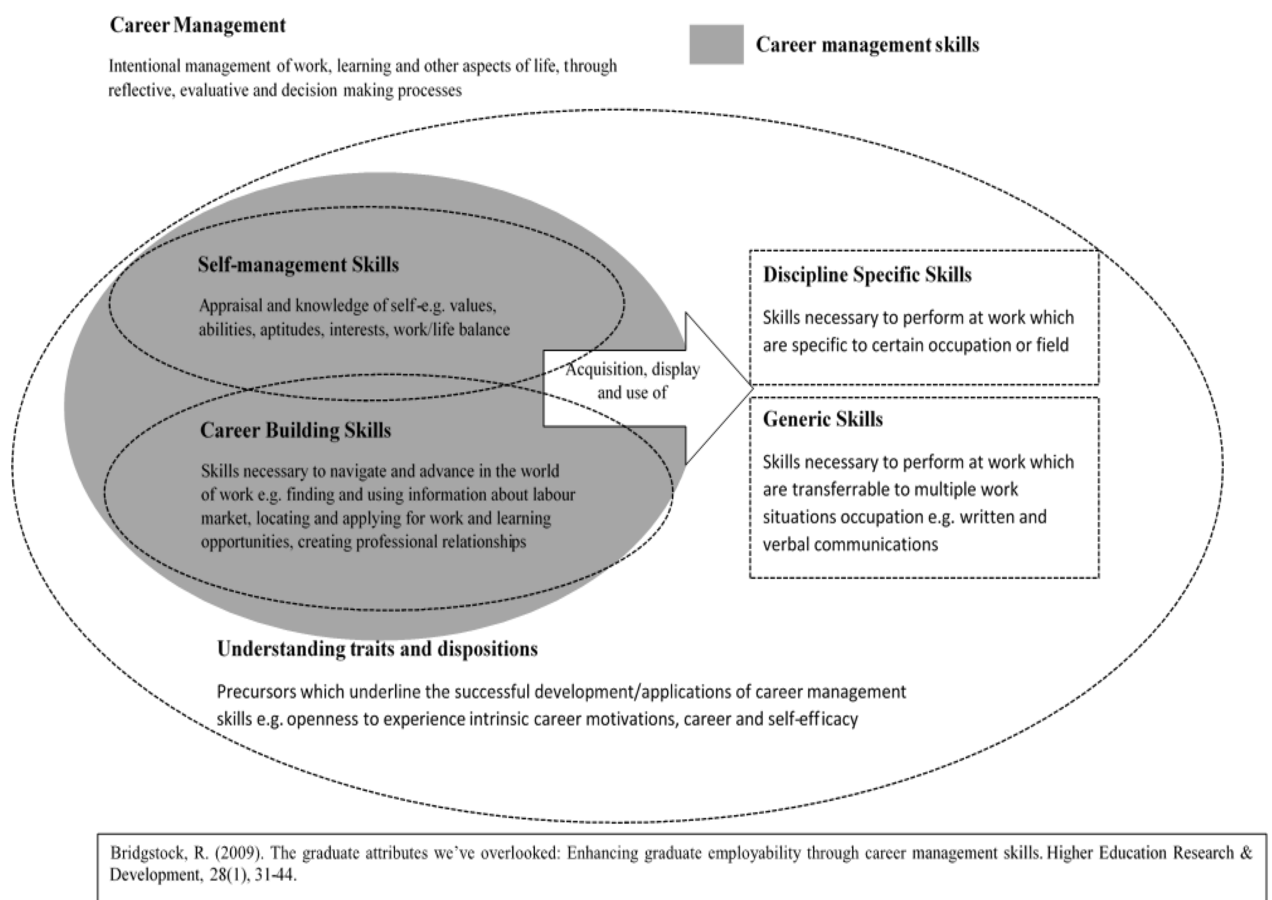


Pool, L. D., & Sewell, P. (2007: 280). The key to employability: developing a practical model of graduate employability. *Education+ Training*, 49(4), 277-289.

The second model reviewed here as a potential CF for this research is the Bridgstock (2009) career management model, which as the name indicates was developed to support the intentional management of career by the already employed graduate managers. This includes their on-job learning and other aspects of life through evaluative decision-making processes. This means, incorporating this model into this combination is essential as it overcomes the above illustrated weaknesses of the other two models. In short, despite discussing graduate employability, Bridgstock (2009) focuses on those who are already employed and hence contends that any attempt to enhance their employability should essentially include learning about and developing

personal career management skills. However, although it highlights the discipline's specific skills, as essential to performing at work, it does not mention the reason for the choice of a specific degree and associated curriculum and industry experience, especially in a fragmented industry like tourism, nor does it mention the importance of initial career intention (at study choice stage) to sustaining a career in a chosen industry, which is important to this research. Although this model mentions generic entrepreneurial skills and their positive influence on graduates, the relative proactive character and motivation, which are greatly impacted by society are not mentioned in this model either. While entrepreneurship is still encountering constraints, particularly in the gap between rhetoric and reality (Gherhes, Brooks & Vorley, 2020), this trait is still understandably advocated (Bothwell, 2015; Goh & Lee, 2018). Figure 2 below illustrates Bridgstock's (2009) graduate career management model.

Figure 2: The graduate career management model



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

The third main model evaluated here, is the Dual Conceptual Competency Framework, which unlike the above two, was developed in a tourism education context, by Felisitas, et al. (2012) through the adaptation of further three models. This is the combination of Dunne et al. (1999), Sandwith (1993) and Raybould & Wilkins (2005) employability models.

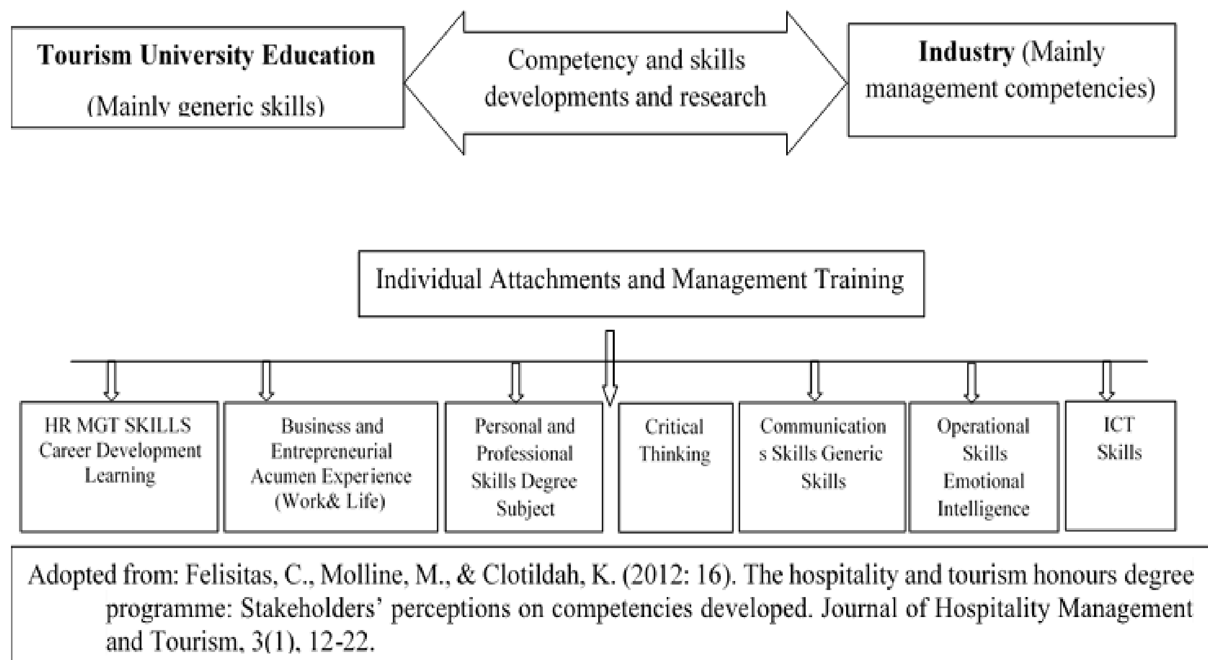
Before evaluating this model directly, it is important to shed light its component models. Dunne et al. (1999) is a generic skills model, which is similar to the above Career EDGE in being developed in an educational context to aid curriculum design, Sandwith (1993) model is more of training requirements for work-based management competencies and Raybould & Wilkins (2005) is another management competency model that was also criticised for adding limited value to curriculum development (Felisitas, et al., 2012) as it focused on advanced management skills not expected by employers to have been developed in an undergraduate. Moreover, Wilkins & Raybould (2005) argued that managers perception of graduates depends on their educational levels and experiences, which is evident in requiring new recruits to enrol on trainee programmes. Hence, placing less value on degrees, also evident in non-tourism graduates and lower-level qualifications being preferred by employers over tourism graduates (Dale & Robinson, 2001), a finding that again confirmed by Felistas et al., (2012). Hence, the inclusion of Felistas et al., (2012) model in this CF was necessary as the part of reducing the limitations of the above-contend generic skills models (Dunne, et al., 1999; Pool & Sewell, 2007), the work-related lower managerial skills (Sandwith, 1993) and higher management competencies (Raybould & Wilkins, 2005).

However, the difference in focus and context in Felisitas, et al.'s (2012) model makes it unrealistic to be fully utilised here. This, particularly given the lack of models that are specific

to tourism management education, industry turnover and the current cohort of TMUs in a UK context, necessitated the construction of the new model. Examples of this difference with Felisitas, et al.'s (2012) model is that it was based on a small case study of a specific Zimbabwean university department, where the degree itself is called bachelor of technology in hospitality and tourism, which does not include significant management content. Moreover, the latter highlighted one of the main issues to the lack of graduates' employability is the classrooms being congested with a high number of students that affected their interaction with academics, which is again different to a UK context. Furthermore, the latter's sample combined final years' students with graduates, which is different to the current research objectives and its QR3, that aims at exploring the widely unknown employment characteristics, attitude and intention of an emerging generation (Clark, 2017; Corbisiero & Ruspini, 2018) of TMUs. Hence, this is a different scenario in many respects, including not including not being specifically a tourism management degree, conceptualised in a different Zimbabwean educational context and system, where tourism education is still at a development stage, compared to the UK. Accordingly, in isolation, it neither addresses the multiple and different issues identified here, nor it is relevant to the UK's advanced educational system and its neoliberal underpinnings.

Although Felisitas, et al.'s (2012) dual model contains a band of seven broad competencies, again there is no specific attention to this emerging generation of TMUs that are projected to have both distinct educational and employment characteristics, including being technology savvy (e.g. Barron, Leask & Fyall, 2014) in an increasingly e-portfolio career settings (Bufton & Woolsey, 2010), as they prepare to join a diverse workforce (Corbisiero & Ruspini, 2018) while facing a distinct low-image (Pizam, 1982; Baum, 2012) and the associated societal impact on their career (see figure 3: The dual tourism graduates and undergraduates' employability model , below).

Figure 3: The dual tourism graduates and undergraduates' employability model



Adopted from: Felisitas, C., Molline, M., & Clotildah, K. (2012: 16). The hospitality and tourism honours degree programme: Stakeholders' perceptions on competencies developed. Journal of Hospitality Management and Tourism, 3(1), 12-22.

Accordingly, on one hand the reason to choosing managerial competency models is that they have been identified as more job-related (e.g. Felistas, et al., 2012). This is relevant here, especially given the persistence of vocationally informed tourism academic objectives and the fact that they are being used by employers to assess and screen applicants and in a UK context (Delamare Le Deist & Winterton, 2005; Airey, Cuffy & Papageorgiou, 2017). On the other hand, the use of generic skills models in this combination is to enhance the reliability of the competency models, while developing a comprehensively applied, model that overcomes the generic features of the curriculum-based models, which is in line with the current research objectives. This includes developing a better graduates' employability model that fully relates to the case of the current TMUs' cohort, the high entry-level managerial turnover in UK tourism industry (People 1st, 2015) and its possible implications to this management discipline. Having justified the need for this CF, a complementary table comparing these models, their key components, and unique elements, was developed to demonstrate the relevant parts used (see below table 1: Summary evaluation of employability models used in this CF).

Table 1: Summary evaluation of employability models used in this CF			
Model & Source	**Key components**		**Unique Elements & Evaluation**
1. The Career EDGE Graduate Employability Model A generic model of graduate employability through curriculum development	Self-esteem		Career Development Learning Experience (during university studies) The Baseline is the four skills categories EDGE, which are the prerequisites to advancing to the higher-level skills I sequence of self-efficacy, leading to self-confidence and in turns to self-esteem. Notes related to the baseline EDGE are: Degree Subject (discipline-specific knowledge, skills and understanding). While it sounds logically effective, this specific point doesn't apply to tourism employers, as literature shows they are not particularly attracted to tourism graduates because of image and other industry issues and therefore are not employable at this level, especially because of this component). Generic Skills, this is noted as particularly attractive and therefore used within the current CF. However, the collective generic skills vary in literature and industry EI. The focus on this element is more plausible, however not clear how to practically develop and subsequently measure through industry collaboration or any other schemes.
	Self-efficacy	Self-confidence	
2. Dacre-Pool, L., & Sewell, P. (2007) Page 280	Reflection and evaluation Career (Development Learning)		General Evaluative Notes This model is generally about curriculum development, not starting career and or dedication to a specifically chosen industry like tourism and the current case of TMUs. Hence, it is generic and doesn't focus on the employment characteristics of this TMUs' cohort, nor the specifics of tourism management graduates.

	The EDGE (the four lower-level skills) Experience (Work& Life) Degree Subject Generic Skills Emotional intelligence	However, it gives importance to Degree Subject (in terms of specific knowledge, skills and understanding). But the case of the tourism management degree and the field-specific knowledge it develops can sometime be a hurdle obstructing employment, as evident in the recent industry practices (E.g. TUI graduate scheme). Another criticism, contrasted with the CBI's definition, it clearly highlights the difference based on interests of either the supply or demand sides of employment and this is evident in its focus on the HEI's end and their needs. Further cementing the confusion about the concept of employability and therefore necessitates the search for a more inclusive model that include the clarification of and emphasis on enterprising and the degree subject, as well as undergraduates career intention for a specific industry, which is not included in this model. Additionally, while it may be conceivable that the EDGE and curriculum activities may support self-confidence, it is not clear how it would lead to self-efficacy and self-esteem, particularly with a young person going into a specific industry having to compete with others non-specialists and with a comparatively low image of self and degree.
2. The Career Management Model. Mainly for graduates' Professional development	**Career Management** (Personality & Skills) Personality (Understanding, traits, and disposition). These are precursors, which underlines the successful development and application of career management skills (e.g. openness to experience, intrinsic career motivation and self-efficacy) .	This is primarily a career management models that plausibly include personality and self-management traits (under career management) and generic and discipline-specific skills (under career management skills). Hence, suggest in-work graduates' learning through experience and training & CPD opportunities to improve both sets and better manage career. It highlights the discipline's specific skills, which according to this model are skills necessary to performing at work and are specific to certain profession or sector, combined with generic skills

<table>
<tr>
<td rowspan="4">Developed by: Bridgstock, R. (2009).

Page 31</td>
<td colspan="2"></td>
<td>that are transferable to multiple work situations, identifying written communications as a major one.

However, it does not particularly include enterprising skills, or the more pressingly required digital skills instead of focus on written skills

as seen from the literature review have a positive influence on graduates' employability and specifically at managerial and professional levels.

Accordingly, the broadly suggested combination of specific and generic skills is identified as relevant here, especially in relation to tourism degrees' learning, especially being criticised for being overly vocational and in the meantime having a low image of not being serious enough for work ready graduates. But whether this combination is required by tourism employers is not particularly convincing from the literature. Therefor this set is integrated in the current CF to investigate if one is preferred over the other and in what way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td colspan="2">Acquisition, display & use</td>
<td rowspan="3">General Evaluative Notes
This is clearly a useful model which is more relevant to professional practice. However, it requires precursors of traits, which may apply to already in-job managers who aspire to advance their career, unlike undergraduates, who need a specific curriculum and a whole host of support to reach this stage.

The intrinsic career motivation, as a precursor is particularly relevant to this research, given TMUs chose to study and work in this industry. Therefore, it is included, within the latent constructs of career intention aided by the TPB measures to examine whether this is the case.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-management Skills</td>
<td>Discipline-specific skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Building skills</td>
<td>Generic Skills</td>
</tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="2">3-The Dual Conceptual Competency Framework

Develped by Felisitas et al. (2012)</td><td colspan="2">Competency, skills developments and research</td><td rowspan="2">The most relevant aspects of this models are being in a tourism context and combining three employability model as none of which alone could not explain the tourism context in that case. It is a combination of the Sandwith (1993) and Dunne, et al. (1999) (a generic skills model focusing on educators’ needs to aid curriculum design and a competency model that is more relevant to work and employment rather than curriculum and educational settings)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Tourism University Education
Mainly generic skills</td><td>Industry
Mainly management competencies</td></tr>
<tr><td>Links curriculum to industry collaboration

Combination of Sandwith (1993), Dunne, et al. (1999)

Page 54</td><td colspan="2">Individual attachments to management training to develop the following employability skills:

HRM skills Career
Business and Entrepreneurial Acumen (Experience)
Personal and Professional Skills (Degree Subject)
Critical Thinking
Communications Skills (Generic Skills)
Operational Skills (e.g. EI)
ICT Skills</td><td>Was used by Felisitas, et al. (2012) and although tourism education-specific, was applied to a different case, situation, research problems, and questions and sample.

Zimbabwean tourism HE, different degree title with no management and includes graduates (see table 5.2 sample benchmarking for more details)
Different tourism industry environment, recruitment practice and economy.

No mention to enterprising or entrepreneurial skills/ aptitudes</td></tr>
</table>

Thus, based on this evaluation, the models’ reviewed here, do not individually nor collectively fully analyse the impact of the different factors surrounding the employability issues of this cohort of TMUs, including their reasons for choosing to study tourism, their experience of the curriculum, the low-image of their degrees, tourism recruitment practices (Martin, Mactaggart & Bowden, 2006) and the related industry turnover problem (Johnson, Stone & Lukaszewski, 2020). These are important public policy matters (Branchet et al., 2011) that necessitate testing TMUs career intention for tourism too. Hence, a new model was sought to account for this lack of relevance in the above models to this context and as one of the most widely used theory to explain behavioural intention, the TPB was deemed the relevant tool to testing TMUs’ career intention, as detailed in the next section (4.3).

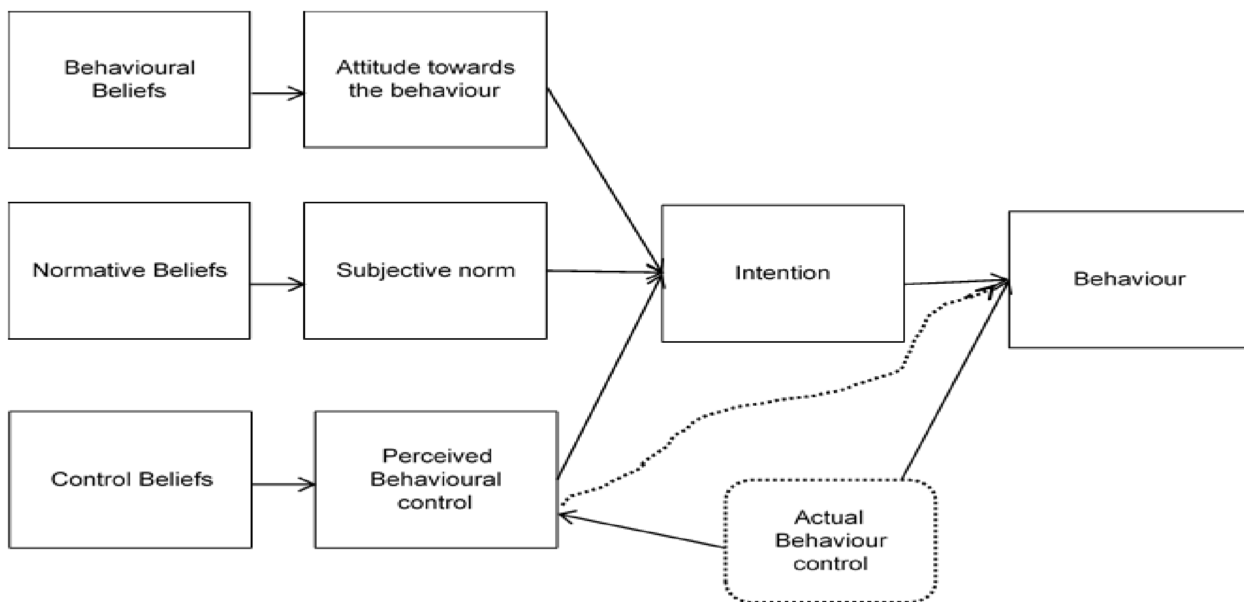
4.3 The Theory of Planned Behaviour and measuring career intention

Building on the earlier expectancy model (Vroom, 1964) that connected process-centric measures for explaining certain career intentions, the TPB has emerged from another improved model called the Theory of Reasoned Actions (TRA), which according to Fishbein & Ajzen (1977), as cited in (Ajzen, 1985, 1991), was developed further to include the psychological functions of volitional behaviour control (Arnold, et al., 2006; Rise, Sheeran & Hukkelberg, 2010) to enhance its wide use, as a tool to revealing behavioural intentions (Armitage& Conner, 2001; Yazdanpanah, & Forouzani, 2015), particularly in applied research (Armitage & Christian, 2003; Huang, Chang & Backman, 2019). The TPB is thus a theory that links beliefs and behaviour as influenced by individual-level attitudes and societal pressures, developed by Ajzen through work initially collaborated with fellow psychologist Fishbein (e.g. Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Ajzen, 1985; Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005). It, therefore, capitalises on TRA, but improves its predictive power by adding the TPB's construct of Perceived Behavioural control (PBC) within (Ajzen, 1991; Ajzen, 2002, Ajzen, 2006).

As per the remaining constructs in predicting intention, using of the TPB is, encapsulates an adaptable psychological questionnaire (Ajzen, 2006) that consists of the TPB's construct of Attitude (ATT), the TPB's construct of Subjective Norms (SNS), and the above-mentioned addition of PBC to predict the desired TPB's construct of behavioural Intention (INT) (Ajzen, 2006). Hence, the prediction according to this prominent psychological theory, lead to various human actual behaviours, from exercising on a treadmill to career and other human intentions (Ajzen, 2006). This theory is well-supported by empirical evidence and in various disciplines, with good levels of predictive accuracy of its constructs ATT, SNS and PBC predictor variables in influencing INT and likely the actual behaviour (Kiriakidis, 2015). However, some meta-analyses (e.g. Webb & Sheeran, 2006) in this context show such strong variance in leading to the actual behaviour may fluctuate due to other factors outside the person's control, of which

some examples are cited below. Focusing on the TPB's rationale, it builds on a wider three groups of human beliefs that yield the three behaviour predictors of SNS, ATT and PBC that collectively, with variations, influence INT, both directly and indirectly (Kiriakidis, 2015). Put differently, behavioural beliefs lead to attitudes towards the behaviour, normative beliefs lead to subjective norms influence attitude towards the behaviour and control beliefs yield the perceived control over the behaviour (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005; Ajzen, 2006). Thus, the resulting three (SNS, ATT and PBC), collectively lead to the eventual enactment or rethinking to the actual behaviour (INT). Hence, the solid and dotted line links with behaviour near the end of the TPB's conceptual model (see figure 4: the TPB conceptual Model, below).

Figure 4: the TPB conceptual model



Ajzen (2002) Revised Model of the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) From Ajzen (2006, p1). 'Constructing a theory of planned behaviour questionnaire. Available from: http://people.umass.edu/aizen/pdf/tpb.measurement.pdf [accessed: 14. 12. 2016)

In HE context, the use of the TPB was noted in various contexts that ranges from exploring students' choice of certain studies for HE's marketing purposes (Gatfield & Chen, 2006), professionalism in medical education (Archer, et al., 2008), to the more relevant undergraduates'

career intentions (Abrams, Ando & Hinkle, 1998; Lam, Lo & Chan, 2002; Arnold, et al., 2006; Schnake, Williams & Fredenberger, 2007; Van Gelderen, et al.., 2008 Hsu, 2012; Sundar, 2014; Farmaki, 2018). However, within the career intention focus, the TPB has more widely been used in entrepreneurial intention (Collins, Hannon & Smith, 2004; Hannon, 2007; Esfandiar, et al, 2019) as a planned behaviour and a career choice route (e.g. Miller, et al., 2009; Heuer & Kolvereid, 2014; Wach, & Wojciechowski, 2016; Mei, et al., 2016).

In tourism, while some scholars used it to determine intention towards the choice of a tourist destination (e.g. Lam & Hsu, 2006) or in an educational choice context (e.g. Fatima, et al., 2019), many used the TPB to measure entrepreneurial intention (e.g. Walmsley & Thomas, 2009; Chang, 2010; Hsu, 2012, 2013; Mei, et al., 2016; Goh & Lee, 2018). As per the career intention route, the latter focussed on tourism undergraduates, but in the Australian context and found that attitude to career is generally positive, but based on certain underlying subjective norms' motivating factors (e.g. family pressures) and working conditions was projected to fluctuate. More importantly here, Goh & Lee (2018) is in line with this study, by stressing that there were no single study focusing on this recent generation of tourism undergraduates, their career intention and indeed in a UK context this is similarly the case (Goh & Lee, 2018).

While, Arnold et al. (2006) argue for the need to examine and extend the use of the TPB, especially in the context of career choice and development, Huang (2011), who examined students' intentions to engage in temporary employment using the TPB, found that both attitude and subjective norms were significant in predicting intention and that subjective norms predicted intention indirectly through attitude as well. Accordingly, as one of two most influential behavioural-based models to predict career and entrepreneurial intentions (Sondari, 2014), the other is Shapero's model. However, Li, et al. (2008) compared both models and found that in

addition to overlapping, the TPB was more robust in both details and connections between its four factors (SNS, ATT, PBC and INT), hence the choice to utilise the TB here.

Thus, given the above illustrations and literature contentions, it is important that the development of new employability models, especially in a tourism context, makes meaningful contribution to both the literature and real-life practices (Eurico, Da-Silva& Do-Valle, 2015), including the competency dimension and its' role in career success (Wang, 2013; Kasa, et al., 2020). Indeed, the unique combination represented in the profile of the current cohort of UK TMUs and the above-illustrated unfavourable recruitment practices (e.g. tourism employers' graduate schemes), the significantly low image of tourism as both a degree and career, particularly in the UK, required in addition to guiding the research process, a CF that is more workable as an employability model in this context. This is further conceptualised under the new CF model below.

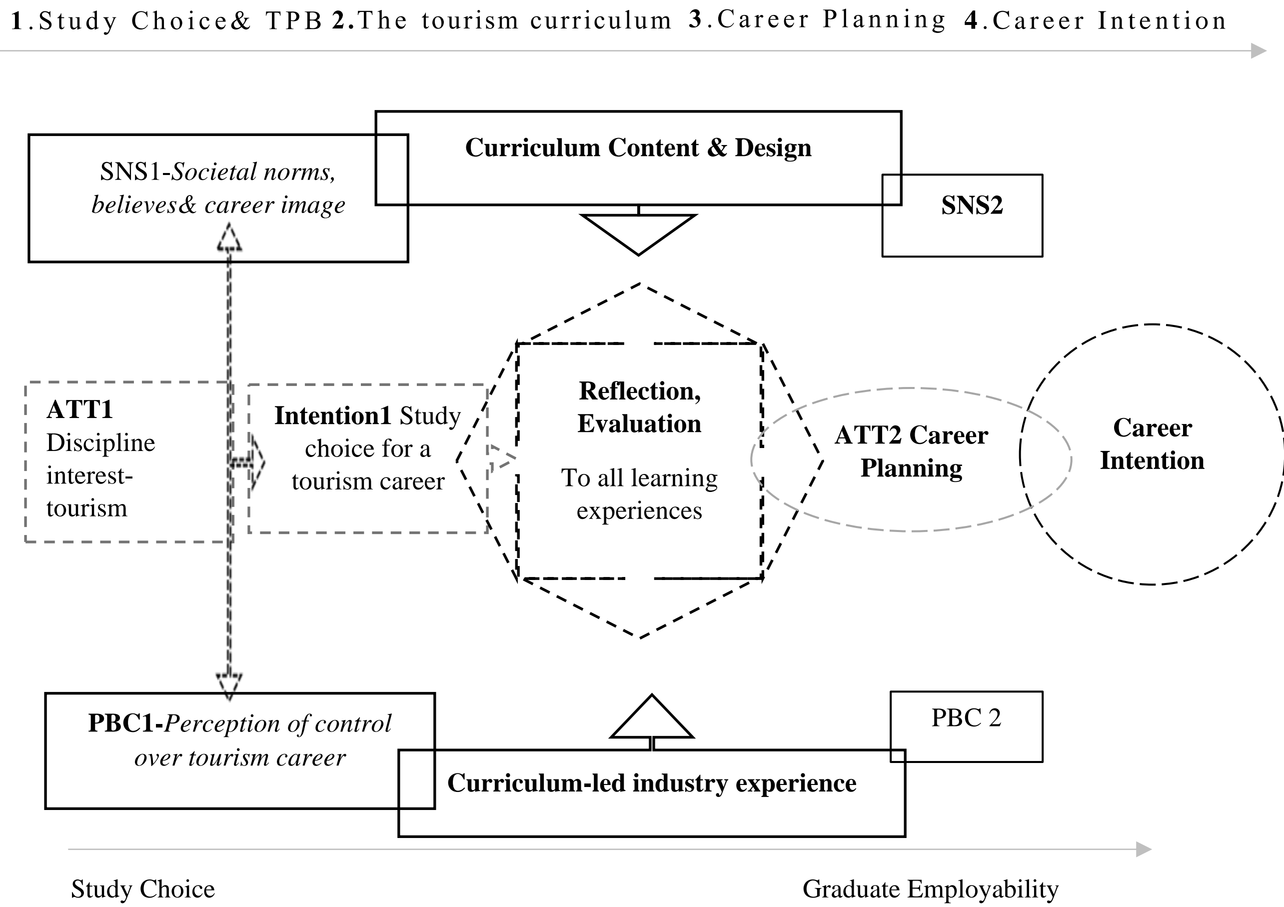
4.4 The Conceptual Framework for this research

As discussed earlier, the need for conceptual knowledge (e.g. Jabareen, 2009; Ravitch & Riggan, 2016) and in tourism research (e.g. Xin, Tribe & Chambers, 2013; Sperka, 2018; Bakker, 2019), as well as the lack of comprehensive empirically informed models in this research context, the newly developed CF model was constructed to address these gaps and guide the research process. Accordingly, the CF initially featured four phases that guided the collection and analyses of both sets of qualitative and quantitative data, then a fifth was added, as a result of the analysis and empirical findings, as part of the contribution to the holistic conceptual knowledge.

The current CF therefore includes parts of the above evaluated models, namely the Career EDGE (Pool & Sewell, 2007; 2010), the Career Management model (Bridgstock, 2009) and the Dual Conceptual Competency Framework (Felisitas et al. 2012). Notable, the latter model itself combined the three previously used models of Sandwith (1993), Dunne, et al. (1999) and Raybould and Wilkins (2005). For example, a combination of the aforementioned career EDGE (Pool & Sewell, 2007) competencies were used, along with the corresponding seven tourism curriculum content and design areas featuring in the dual conceptual framework (Felistas, et al., 2012) and Bridgstock's (2009) career management model to form two groups of competencies as required by the tourism employer and 6 curriculum content areas. In the current CF model, these feature as six groups of competencies forming phase two, that includes curriculum-led industry experiences and extracurricular activities, such as work-placements.

Moreover, the CF also include career planning and enterprising competencies, which as discussed in the above, was not made clear in the any of the evaluated models and admittedly so (e.g. Dacre-Pool, 2010), In a nutshell, the present model is combining the benefits of curriculum aiding models, the managerial competency and career planning models to overcome their partial deficiencies in this context and add value through both the addition and subtraction of certain elements to construct new or altered concept (Xin, Tribe & Chambers, 2013) that advances knowledge (Dreher, 2000, 2018). Within this, the main highlights are the undergraduates themselves, reflections on their curriculum experience and curriculum-led industry experience and how these, combined, impact their career intention. In more details, the new CF comprises four phases (See figure 5: The Initial CF Model, below).

Figure 5: The Initial CF Model



The first (from left), is the initial phase, where the prospective undergraduate chooses to study tourism, where the TPB's (1991, 2006) of societal subjective norms is assumed to influence candidates' attitude or preference in the choice of a degree specialisation. Such preference can be love for the subject knowledge, industry perks or initial career planning that lacks the real experience of both the reality of the study itself and more importantly the practicalities of the chosen industry. Hence the resulting tourism career intention is initial and hence the title "intention 1" that follows.

Accordingly, the relationship between TPB predictor variables (SNS, ATT and PBC) and career intention 1 (to study for a career in tourism), is hypothesised as follows:

-H_1: Subjective Norms have a positive influence on students' intention to study tourism.

-H_2: ATT has a positive influence on students' intention to study tourism

-H_3: Perceived Behaviour Control has a positive influence on students' intention to study tourism

The second section focuses on the knowledge and management competencies that the tourism degree curriculum (including extracurricular activities) instils and develops during TMUs' three year programme (or four in the Scottish case). In this, the top boxes of curriculum content and the managerial competencies outline the generic curriculum design. Then followed by the generic management knowledge content and its associated career planning content skills, the tourism-specific knowledge and entrepreneurial learning and its influence on the entrepreneurial inclination (Esfandiar, et al, 2019) as part of TMUs' career skills development. This was constructed from the revisions of the varied UK tourism management curricula contended in the above literature, as well as the combined elements from the evaluation of the above graduate employability and managerial competencies' models. This is to focus on their curriculum experience and its influence on both building the required competencies and raising TMUs'

awareness of the competencies required by tourism employers. Moreover, as part of their study journey, TMUs' go through a third phase (after study choice, and curriculum experience), in which they evaluate their experiences (curriculum and curriculum-led industry experiences) to reflect and plan their career. This section of the CF is a crucial part in the undergraduates' life, acting as a bridge between their study experience and career intention, which is the fourth and final phase of this initial CF. Importantly here, is that this leads to the fourth tested hypothesis (H_4) that relates to the importance of TMUs' experience of the curriculum to their career intention, which is:

-H_4- Undergraduates experience of the tourism curriculum has a positive influence on their intention to pursue a career in tourism.

After the third phase of reflection and evaluation of TMUs' experiences that is likely to enhance their career planning skills and in light of the influence of the TPB's predicting factors (SNS, ATT, PBC), phase four of this initial CF can reveal whether this helps them make an informed or otherwise career intention to pursue a long-term career this industry. Given the TPB assumption that intention is likely to lead to actual behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), the boxes SNS2, ATT2 and PBC2, represent TMUs' influencing factors and their role in formulating their final career intention for tourism within the CF. Accordingly, after experiencing the tourism management curriculum, evaluating and planning their career, most TMUs' should have a career intention. Hence, this leads to the final three hypotheses (H5, 6 and 7) that focus on the relationship between the TPB predicting factors and TMUs' career intention, after experiencing the curriculum, as follows:

-H_5: Subjective Norms has a positive influence on TMUs' Intention to pursue a long-term career in tourism after graduation.

-H_6: TMUs' Attitude has a positive influence on their intention to pursue a long-term career in tourism after graduation.

-H_7: TMUs' Perceived Behavioural Control over their career has a positive influence on their intention to pursue a long-term career in tourism after graduation. Each of these hypotheses have their relevant statistical tests that relates to the nature of the inquiry and include a combination of descriptive and inferential statistics, including crosstabulations, t-tests and multiple regression analyses, with the latter being more assigned to the last three hypotheses.

Thus, the conceptualisation of TMUs' entire journey, from potential tourism learners, to graduates and perspective tourism managers are organised in this CF, not only to guide the research process, but also a new employability model that should be further tested for validation as to its usefulness to the main stakeholders involved (Jackson, 2014; Ravitch & Riggan, 2016; Krouwel, van Luijn & Zweekhorst, 2019). In this light, Van der Heijde &Van der Heijden (2005) argued, employability can only be enhanced by absorbing up-to-date professional knowledge, planning professional development, and acquiring transferrable skills in this fast-growing and rapidly changing economy. In other words, employability requires not only the competencies demanded by the job market, but also effective career planning and career self-management. For example, Jackson & Wilton, 2017), albeit focused on the general business graduates in UK and Australia, found that HEIs still need to do more to, not only equip their undergraduates with the necessary skills to enter their chosen career sector, but also better collaboration with the relevant industry and above all develop detailed strategies to involve their learners in career planning and self-management, right from the start. Another example that is based on empirical evidence too, and albeit from a different country (Taiwan), Wang & Tsai (2014) found that not only from managers' assessment, but also both tourism undergraduates and graduates report that they lack confidence in their professional management skills and therefore their employability prospect.

This means, graduate employability as concept and its real-life operationalisation mechanisms are all new and hence still in the development phases to truly benefit those all involved and the wider economy. Evidence in support of this is the assertion that employability as a concept and its associated models have been initiated as recent as the late 1990s (Heijden & Bakker, 2011), especially following the more aggressive marketisation of UK HE discussed in the above literature (e.g. Sutherland, 2008) and the time around the Dearing Report (1997). Therefore, there is still more to be done to master it (Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006; Van der Heijden & Bakker, 2011). This is also partly because of the inherited theoretical or conceptual focus in employability models, as well as the scattered one-sided ones. Moreover, Dacre-Pool, Qualter & Sewell (2014: 310), in assessing their aforementioned EDGE model, assert that it contributes to the “limited literature on graduate employability development”. Therefore, there is a pressing need for models that are dynamic, up-to-date, multifaceted (e.g. educational, industrial and societal) and importantly based on empirical evidence (Wang & Tsai, 2014; Jackson & Wilton, 2016; 2017). The fourth and final phase of this CF is the resulting early career intention, which is fully dedicated to testing TMUs’ career intention, using the TPB (Ajzen, 1991, 2006).

Although, there are more employability models than the main three reviewed and critiqued here (Pool & Sewell, 2007; Bridgstock, 2009; Felisitas, et al., 2012), many of these other models, which were discussed in the above literature review, albeit innovative, were not identified as particularly relevant in this context. For example, the aforementioned process-driven and outcomes-based model of educational tourism (McGladdery& Lubbe, 2017) and the orchestra experiential model (Pearce& Zare, 2017), which are as names indicate, focussed solely on educational factors.

Another recently developed model that was constructed in a different context, but adds to modern skills required, the complexion of “social capital” and *“individual attributes”* (Clarke, 2018: 924) is only a conceptualisation based on a literature review and therefore, how exactly these social capital and individual attributes can influence employability, requires further testing that is beyond the scope of this research. Given that this research directly relates to the emerging workforce of current TMU’s in UK tourism curriculum context and an industry that suffers a significantly high turnover at entry-managerial levels, the current CF, and its combination is deemed more effective in addressing the research objectives and particularly in consulting UK tourism academics and industry experts, as well as testing the career intention of this generation of TMUs to find the relationships and implications to policies in this specific context. Last here, as a justified bridge between the literature review and the research methodology, the key concepts involved this CF continue to feature in the following research methodology (chapter 5), particularly in how the CF impacted the methodology design, the choice of the data collection and analysis methods. Thus, the following (chapter 5), includes 5 main sections, starting with the wider research philosophies and closing with research ethics applied here, as detailed below.

5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, consistent with Dewey's (1916) instrumental view of theory and Maxwell's (2013) account of CFs as both a suggestive theory and a step-by-step guide to answering the what, why and how of the research inquiry (Antonenko, 2015), ontology, epistemology and the methodology design (Da-Silva, 2017) is the focus of this chapter.

The above CF guided both the design and methods of this research. The applied nature and the diverse issues of this research necessitated the adaptation of a combination of graduate employability models (Pool & Sewell, 2007; Bridgstock, 2009; Felistias, et al., 2012), which were developed in different contexts and hence this methodology design incorporates such heterogeneity in a pragmatic approach. Thus, it rejects the forced choice between the one-sided approaches of positivism and interpretivism (Pansiri, 2005). This is in line with the emphasis on the need for 'pragmatic' approaches to understanding tourism labour (Ladkin, 2011) to develop interventional strategies (Boluk, 2011) that inform policy (Veale, 2017). Accordingly, this pragmatic philosophical standing resulted in a mixed-methodology design that is justified and detailed in sections 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4. Before this, section 5.1 focuses on the research philosophy and epistemology that led to these methodological choices.

5.1 Wider Research Philosophies

As the search for meaningful knowledge *'is as old as the history of mankind*' (Reichenbach, 1963: 5), scholars' prime mission has been to establish generalisable theories and rules that improve life and enlighten those in search for better understandings of reality (Latour & Woolgar 1986). This requires research philosophies that lead to effective research designs and guide future

scholars in advancing science (Neuman, 2014; Thornton, 2019). The importance of lucidity of the research philosophy, particularly in a tourism research context, is that it directly relates to axiology as an essential component of successful and meaningful tourism research and education (Edelheim, 2020). Philosophical lucidity eliminates any possible unreasonable fit between what one thinks, and how their thinking translates into the world (Denton, 1964), or the transformation between ontology and epistemology (Thornton, 2019). Put differently, disambiguating the researchers' position to the research audience, eliminates doubts (Howes, 2015), and consequently reinforces the credibility of the research findings (Tennis, 2008). Unsurprisingly, in search for this clarity, most contentions among researchers still centre on the main philosophical terminologies of ontology and epistemology, which lead to the justification of the chosen research designs, methods and their impacts on the type and quality of the data generated and therefore its findings (Morgan, 2007; Lawson, 2019; Edelheim, 2020).

A researcher's ontology or view of reality impacts their approach to research design and type of data needed (Feilzer, 2010), broadly classified as positivist and interpretivist paradigms that lead to varied epistemology and methodological approaches (Killion & Fisher, 2018). While in a positivist paradigm the world is seen through the observer's objective lenses, the same reality can differ according to human interpretations, hence the contrasting interpretivist research paradigm (Walle, 1997; Finn, Walton & Elliott-White, 2000). Paradigms influence the researcher's epistemology (Tribe, 2004) and its corresponding methodology for the collection and analysis of data (Veal, 2017; Wijesinghe, Mura & Culala, 2019).

Following from this ontological understanding, epistemology therefore concerns the nature of the desired knowledge (Evans & Easterby-Smith, 2011), being qualitative, quantitative or a mix of the two (Pansiri, 2005, 2006) and the broader directions to generating such data (Easterby-Smith, 2012). This, in turns, leads to the methodology design, which is the systematic approach

and procedures for addressing the research problem that entails the applicability of the quantitative, qualitative, or any pragmatic combination of methods used to address the research problem (Veale, 2017; Truong, Xiaoming-Liu & Yu, 2020).

Responding to the longstanding one-sided positivism and interpretivism debates, pragmatism, which is largely attributed to Sanders-Pierce (1878) in his essay 'How to make our ideas clear' (Scheffler, 2013: 21), which was later galvanised by the likes of Dewey & James (1909), is a transformative paradigm (Khoo-Lattimore, Mura & Yung, 2019) that is problem-oriented, and hence advocates the use of mixed methodology approaches (Tashakkori & Teddlie 2003, 2010; Kirkwood & Campbell-Hunt, 2007; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2011; Da-Silva, 2017). Therefore, it bypasses 'the contentious issues of truth and reality' (Feilzer 2010: 8), as it focuses on 'what works' (Tashakkori & Teddlie 2003b: 713) to address the research problem. Moreover, advocating the utilisation of this combined positivist and interpretivist paradigms, Smeyers (2006) states that *"the same experimental data can be explained by different theories*", and that eventually in any paradigm, the "*values of the researchers*" will inevitably influence the findings, regardless. Hence, a completely objective research is a myth and a rhetoric advocated by only those trapped in their philosophical ivory towers (Smeyers, 2006:479).

Furthermore, corresponding with this broader understanding of the counterproductive epistemological wars between the extreme positivist and interpretivist's paradigms (Onwuegbuzie, & Leech, 2005) and because of a desire to understand both the statistical and social significance of this research (Da-Silva, 2017), a pragmatist approach has been taken here. This research aimed at understanding a phenomenon of real experience in the form of the tourism industry and tourism graduates' issues, and to avoid the often-lengthy verbal ontological debates (Hawthorn, 2009) over, for example, the existence of ordinary objects (Jenkins, 2014). It aims

to balance the qualitative and quantitative approaches to tourism research (Melkert & Vos, 2010) and reach a common-sense verdict that bypasses 'priori restrictions' on how much a theory can justifiably be obtained from such pure exchanges (Kriegel, 2011: 178). The approach here is therefore explicitly anchored in pragmatism (Henderson, 2011), a common-sense ontology (Greene, Caracelli & Graham, 1989; Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2010; Wijesinghe, Mura & Culala, 2019) that focuses on solving the problems.

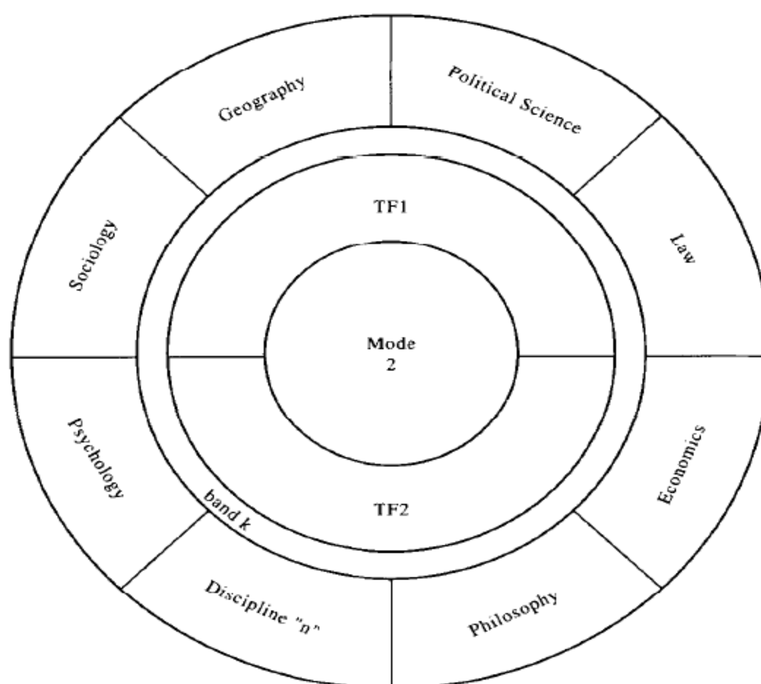
5.2 Tourism Research Epistemologies & Methodologies

In justification to the need for this type of pragmatic approaches to tourism research, tourism scholars, as discussed, are still searching for the relevant epistemologies to establish tourism as an independent field of research, particularly in the light of the neoliberal influences on research commercialisation and required impacts (Thomas & Ormerod, 2017; Thomas, 2018; Brauer, Dymitrow & Tribe, 2019) and this research is a step in this direction. Although in a critical literature review, Tribe (1997) earlier exposed the epistemological characteristics of tourism studies and later in the same analyses rejected the idea of tourism as an independent discipline, he conceptualised tourism studies as it then stood by dividing it into two main fields. These are the business and non-business fields of tourism, where the latter field (Tribe, 1997) is less purposeful than the former. In this, it is more atomized and lacks a unifying framework other than the link with tourism, including areas such as tourism's socio-economic and environmental impacts, perceptions and carrying capacity. More relevant to this research, the former is easily identifiable as tourism business studies, which borrows its identity from the relatively mature fields of business studies, in which tourism has recently established its own territory (Airey, et al., 2015), including in the traditional areas of marketing and management.

To produce a unifying paradigm, Tribe's (1997) work attests to the complex epistemologies associated with tourism studies, which result in four main methods of inquiry, namely multi-disciplinarily, interdisciplinarity, business interdisciplinarity, and extra-disciplinarily, of which some reside in the world of thought and the others in the world of practice. Accordingly, a conceptualisation of the various source of tourism knowledge is clarified in an imaginary circular model, as it borrows and relates to various source of knowledge, including other sciences. In this, the outer circle represents the broader disciplines (e.g. geography, political sciences, sociology), the middle circle represents the fields of tourism and inner circle represents the world of tourism, which is further divided into upper and lower parts that includes tourism business-related and non-business-related knowledge. This is called mode 2 knowledge production circle, as of following from the wider circle by its initiator (Gibbon, et al., 1994) and subsequently used by Tribe (1997). Hence, Gibbon, et al. (1994) argued that most of the tourism knowledge production happen in the upper part of this mode2 circle (TF1 area of the business-related tourism world), which includes those produced by the closer, but external world to tourism (e.g. government, industry and research institutions) and TF2 refers to the non-business-related tourism knowledge. Accordingly, given these varied knowledge sources of the tourism discipline and despite some hopeful projections to the future usefulness of this diversity in tourism knowledge (Khoo-Lattimore, 2019), it is viewed as 'more apt to talk of the 'indiscipline' of tourism' (Tribe, 1997: 53) that still in search of connectivity (Koseoglu, Mehraliyev & Xiao, 2019) and needs contribution to its knowledge, including methodologies (see figure 6 below: The Creation of Tourism Knowledge).

Figure 6: The Creation of Tourism Knowledge.

Source: Tribe, J., (1997:650). The indiscipline of tourism. Annals of tourism research, 24(3).



Even more relevant to this research, Tribe (2001) later exposed extreme epistemologies, in the form of positivism and found that such methods may only have limited application because of the lack of attention to meaning and values that are more relevant to tourism. Above all, the latter stressed the importance of being aware of the varied research paradigms, especially those related to the tourism curriculum and not primarily focus on the realist epistemologies and its associated quantitative methodological focus (Chambers & Rakić, 2015) that often lack depth in understanding such distinctive social phenomena like tourism and instead explore more questions and means of, as Tribe (2001) put it, meaning and values.

Thus, Tribe (2001), in one hand, criticised the use of positivist paradigm as applying methods from the physical sciences that are not fully relevant to the social phenomena tourism and for insisting that a completely free-of-bias researcher is possible to maintain (Tribe 2001). On the other hand, the latter found that tourism researchers focusing solely on qualitative approaches, which stem from various social sciences disciplines, is not the best option either. According to the latter, and recent work by other scholars (e.g. Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Rittichainuwat & Rattanaphinanchai, 2015), complete qualitative approaches makes it difficult to produce meaningful results as it requires more developed skills and experience, while it is not always the case with many of the tourism researchers being relatively new compared to other more established disciplines. Although some of these criticisms have been addressed through the emergence of the post-positivist paradigm in social sciences' research, post-positivists are open to using qualitative data too (Henderson 2011). However, like the original positivism, this paradigm continues to raise concerns on such methodological approaches, which paved some path to the arrival of the pragmatist's mixed methods, the more balanced position taken in this research (Goodson & Phillmore, 2004; Airey, 2008; Chambers & Rakić, 2015; Creswell & Clark, 2017; (Khoo-Lattimore, Mura & Yung, 2019).

Moreover, Pansiri (2006) asserts that as a result of the aforementioned weaknesses noted in a single positivist or interpretivist approach and their applicability to tourism as a distinctive social phenomenon, many scholars (Macey, 2003; Truong, Xiaoming-Liu & Yu, 2020) continue to call for the use of mixed methodology to overcome such weaknesses (Jogulu & Pansiri, 2011). This is strongly supported by Munar, et al. (2017), who focused on the recent development in tourism research epistemologies and specifically the three 'turns' in tourism research and their impact on research in this area. The turns are the critical, post-disciplinary and the motilities research movements. Because Munar, et al. (2017) found that these brave movements have enriched tourism scholars, concluded by urging tourism researchers to avoid creating tourism knowledge

by what the latter coined "the imitation game", and instead take the "noble" hard "routes" that originates from tourism scholars' reflections and experiences within their filed (Walker, 2010; Harrisons, 2017; Chambers, 2017: 195). Consequently, the ultimate point here can be revealed in Jogulu & Pansiri, (2011) recommendation that doctoral researchers should use the mixed methods approach to develop their collection and analyses skills in both the quantitative and qualitative veins, which are deemed important for their scholarly career. Accordingly, since the relatively newly evolving pragmatist paradigm and its associated mixed methodology approaches is clearly linked with both objective and constructive knowledge and capitalises on the merits of both quantitative and qualitative approaches to solve the problem in hand, the current research is no exception and hence it takes this pragmatic route to collect both rich and statistical data for more meaningful research findings. (Macey, 2003; Pansiri, 2006; Jogulu & Pansiri, 2011).

Thus, the importance and relevance of using a mixed methodology design in tourism research (Xiao & Smith, 2006) further consolidates the present methodological argument. In this, Ballantyne, Packer & Axelsen (2009), for example reviewed research on tourism as a recent discipline to find trends and highlight areas of research gaps in methodological approaches and found that recent rapid changes and improvements in tourism research focus and methodological erudition were noticed. In particular, Ballantyne, Packer & Axelsen (2009), found that 16% were either reviews or conceptual work and a 59% of articles used quantitative approaches, which represents the majority according to the latter, whereas 39% of this majority used the survey as the dominant instrument. It was also found that only19%, used qualitative designs, leading to calls for more interpretive research, as part of the critical turn in tourism research (Tribe, 2007; MacLeod, Shelley & Morrison, 2018). Even more relevant here, mixed methodology approaches, have only accounted for 6% in this area and hence this further strengthen the rationale for the current approach. Indeed, in supporting the need for mixed methodology designs

in tourism, Rittichainuwat & Rattanaphinanchai (2015), argue that while quantitative designs increase the possibility for more generalisation, they have their shortfalls and this is where the integration of qualitative methods provides better understanding of the recurrent *"contradictory findings"* (Rittichainuwat & Rattanaphinanchai, 2015: 142) that frequently leads to omitting the outliers during the data analysis from results, which is one of the reasons for the present mixed methodology design that is explored further below.

5.3 Research Design

As contended in the above section, pragmatism is the philosophical framework guiding this research, accordingly, a mixed methodology approach has been identified as relevant to both the nature of the phenomena under investigation and the research philosophy. To briefly reaffirm this, Johnson & Onwuegbuzie (2004) argue that this compatibilist position helps the researcher to design a mixed methodology research, a combination of quantitative and qualitative instruments that are mixed and matched to best answer the RQs. While many research methods are linked to certain philosophical paradigms, the link between its methods is not always untouchable (Howe, 1992; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Hence. to develop a mixed-methods design, the pragmatic researcher is recommended to choose the most appropriate quantitative and qualitative approaches that answer their RQs, then design their project using different approaches based on the merits of these methods and whether or not they inform and complement one another in such combination (Dunning, et al., 2008; Mertens, 2014; Lewis, 2015; McKim, 2017).As per specific design approaches, Creswell & Plano Clark (2007), argue not only to make the appropriate choice based on the researcher's own philosophy and skills in combining the differing data, but also the need to focus on the RQs and objectives. Therfore, in reviewing all different approaches to mixed methodology research, Tashakkori & Teddlie (2003), found around 40 different combinations and types of mixed methodology designs, which have been

further condensed by Creswell, et al. (2003), to four main types with variant procedures (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007) that are summarised below.The first type of mixed methodology research design, according to Creswell & Plano Clark (2007) is called explanatory design, which is a sequential two-phase design, where the quantitative data is collected first and informed by the latter, qualitative data collection proceeds with an eye on the analysis. Put differently, using these qualitative findings to further explain and interpret the quantitative ones. For example, a survey may be used to collect quantitative data from a larger group that is difficult to reach individually. Members of that group, especially those with distinctive answers, may later be selected to explain or provide more insights into their survey answers, hence the term “explanatory” denotation. Hence, this design is more suitable when the issues are not particularly resolved quantitatively (Morse (1991; Morgan, 1998), and thus the pragmatic researcher would need explanatory data (e.g. in-depth interviews, focus groups) to clarify and add value to significant responses or outliers in the quantitative data.

Although there are some elements of this within the current research design, this approach does not fully fit the current design, particularly given the knowledge required in each phenomenon and the one result informing the other was deemed irrelevant here. Moreover, this sequential approach was not pursued here, not only because of its irrelevance to the varying data required from different target audience (TMUs and both sets of experts), but also the researcher, as an academic with industry experience, acquired supporting networks on both sides, particularly from fellow academics to construct, pilot and design the survey and interviews simultaneously. In other words, the survey data was not needed to inform the interviews nor the reverse order.

The second type of mixed methodology designs is the Exploratory Design. This is, similarly, a two-phase design, where contrary to the latter approach, the qualitative data is this time collected

first, followed by the quantitative data collection. The rationale for this approach is to develop the quantitative data collection's instrument considering the qualitative data explored in the first phase, as to improve and identify the correct variables. An example is to use the researcher's notes or diary during and after the qualitative interviews to develop a quantitative survey for a larger sample of the main research audience (Morse, 1991, Tashakkori& Teddlie 1998; Goldenberg, Gallimore& Reese, 2005; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). Again, this is not exactly relevant here for reasons similar to those identified under the aforementioned approach, including the researcher's experience, networks and the research nature and settings. Instead, this design construction and instruments modifications has been already achieved as part of the exploratory pilot study, including micro surveys and expert panels who gave enormous and enriching feedback and areas for improvements.

The third type of these mixed methodology designs is the Embedded Design, which according to Creswell & Plano Clark (2007) is needed when a set of a certain data type is not enough to answer the RQs and objectives and hence requires another set of different data to play a supportive role. Thus, there is a main data type required and the other plays a supportive role, be it a quantitative with qualitative support or vice-versa (Caracelli & Greene, 1997). Moreover, this design mixes the data sets questions at the design level, with one data collection method being the main and the other is embedded within (e.g. open-ended questions within a quantitative survey). Yet again, there are some elements of this third approach within this research design, but it is not fully relevant for reasons contended under the above first and second approaches to mixed research designs and strategies. More specifically, Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) contend that the requirements to use this type should be planned at the design level for identifying which data set is the main and which one will play the supporting role. Given that this is not relevant in this case because each set of respondents' perspectives here has its own value, and none is necessarily playing a secondary or main role. The fourth approach to mixed methodology

research designs is called the Triangulation Design, which according to Creswell & Plano Clark (2007) is a commonly used approach to mixed methodology designs. Within this, there are further four subsets of the triangulation procedures, which are called the convergence model, the data transformation model, the validating quantitative data model and the multilevel model.

In critique, the first two differ in terms of how the researcher intends to merge the two data types, the third is to enhance findings from a predominantly quantitative data instrument (e.g. survey) and the fourth is used to investigate different levels of analysis in both. In the convergence model example, the researcher collects and analyses each of the different types of data on the same phenomena in isolation and during the interpretation phase, the researcher converges the different results, in a compare and contrast mode, to cross-validate and or confirm the findings from the varied data sets.

However, the key is that this uses varying data sets to describe the same issue, by different means, and should deliberately be planned from the onset. The data transformation model is, similarly, the collection and interpretation of each set of data separately, but in this case the researcher transforms one data type into the other. Depending on the research objectives, researcher's experience time and resources available, the researcher continues by either qualifying the quantitative or quantifying the qualitative results, which allows the mixing of the transformed data in one type to facilitate further analysis, interrelations and or comparisons of the transformed data (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007; Subedi, 2016). As per the third subset in this triangulation design, this is a predominantly a quantitative model, in which the researcher expands on or validate (Subedi, 2016) the findings from one quantitative data collection instrument (e.g. survey). This entails for example the inclusion of some qualitative open-ended questions in the survey to play a supportive role and hence does not result in an extensive qualitative data

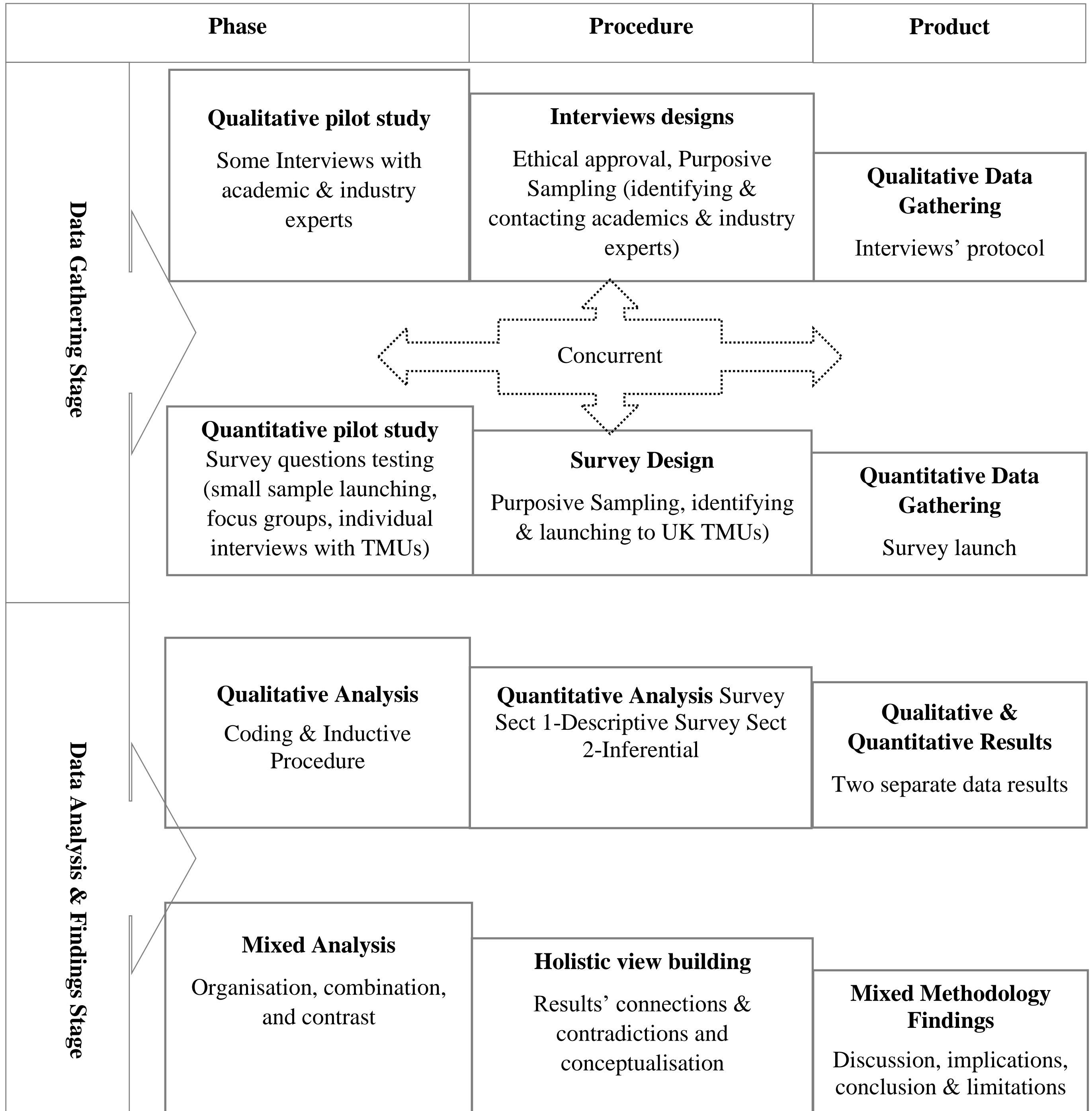
collection but an effort to clarify some ambiguities that the quantitative data is unable to fully reveal, which has been partially implemented here.

Thus, the fourth subset of this design, which is called concurrent multilevel mixed methods design and hence entails simultaneously collecting the differing datasets, then analysing each one separately in preparation for the mixing at the subsequent interpretation stage. Hence, this specific subset of the concurrent design was identified as more relevant to this research, as it includes most elements of the above three sub-designs, but the clear difference is that in this, choosing which respondents' group to collect quantitative or qualitative data from is important, while offering the flexibility of the concurrent approach, to simultaneously collect the different data types. This, mirrors Creswell & Plano-Clark (2017) recent assertion that the key in this mixed design approach is not collecting the same data by different means, but different data by different means.

Appropriately, it was more pragmatic to generate the relevant quantitative and qualitative data based on the anticipated quality and quantity required (Saunders, 2012). Therefore, the current research took the concurrent multilevel triangulation model as its vehicle for collecting and interpreting the varying data required from the experts and TMUs tourism concurrently (Elliott & Williams, 2002; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Creswell & Clark, 2017). In addition, there is also recent evidence that the concurrent approach to mixed methodology is lacking in tourism research, whereby a recent metanalysis to the 753 mixed methods articles published in 8 major journals of tourism between 1998 and 2019, which revealed that the sequential data collection of 94.2% was apparently dominant (Truong, Xiaoming-Liu & Yu, 2020) and hence indicating a need for balance in this context too.

Unquestionably, there are challenges to using this complex concurrent mixed methodology design, including not only having good expertise in both qualitative and quantitative collection and analysis, but also in balancing the weight given to each type of the data sets and the possibility of results not agreeing (Creswell & Clark, 2017). However, the latter point is invalid in this case because part of this research objectives is to find any discrepancy and as an exploratory study, if they do not agree, one ought to find out why and vice versa. As for the former, this research has prepared for any potential design weaknesses by conducting multiple pilot studies, taking additional notes within and after interviews and the inclusion of open-ended questions within the online quantitative survey. Moreover, similar to the work of Teddlie & Yu (2007), De Lisle (2011), and Onwuegbuzie & Collins (2007), this concurrent mixed approach included separate, but parallel qualitative and quantitative sampling strategies, as well as combining purposive and probability sampling for maximum respondents' variations (Creswell & Clark, 2017) that are detailed in the following section (5.3). Before this, an original diagram was constructed to visualise this mixed methodology design, from piloting questions, analysis to synthesising the findings (see Figure 7 below: Mixed Methodology: The Multilevel Concurrent Design Process).

Figure 7: Mixed Methodology: The Multilevel Concurrent Design Process



5.4 Research Methods

Given the above contended concurrent multistage mixed-methodology design, this research used a combination of semi-structured in-depth interviews as the qualitative data gathering method and an online survey as the quantitative methods to collecting data required from TMUs. At the analysis stage, content analysis and a combination of descriptive and inferential methods of statistical analysis were used, all of which are justified in the following subsections.

5.4.1 Qualitative data gathering method: Semi-structured interviews

Interviews are a type of in-depth data-collecting methods from human beings and they differ from the ordinary conversations, primarily in their systematic approaches (Kajornboon, 2005; Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018). Of course, as there is a variety of qualitative data gathering methods (e.g. focus groups), given that 'one method of data collection is not inherently better than another' (O'Leary, 2004:150) and that the choice would depend upon the research goals, relevance and accessibility of each method in the context. Despite its issues and demands (O'Leary, 2004), interviews are widely recognised as more relevant to collecting data that are richer and provide opportunities for 'highly personalised data' and 'probing' (Gray (2004: 214), for ensuring full details of the views have been captured (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018), as well as being fully understood, while looking for themes (Wilson, 2012). This, while avoiding some of the biases incurred, for example the social pressures (Albrecht, Johnson & Walther, 1993), group pressures (Wilson, 1997; Abrams, Ando, & Hinkle, 1998) and peer pressures (Lloyd-Evans, 2006) associated with other techniques such as focus groups and Delphi techniques. Given the level of tourism's academic and professional expertise required in this research, experts' interviews which, in the meantime offers 'good results', especially given the indirect usefulness of the interviewer and interviewee sharing common grounds that evidently increased the experts'

motivation to express their views (Bogner, Littig & Menz, 2009), interviews were chosen over other qualitative methods (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018).

As per the variety of approaches to interviewing, there are a variety of interviews techniques (Longhurst, 2003; Rowley, et al., 2012) but three main types are encapsulated in three approaches, namely structured, unstructured and semi-structured interviews (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009; Wildemuth, 2017). While the structured would result in the researcher dictating the entire encounter and hence affecting the rich data desired as well influencing the researchers' views, the complete lack of structure in unstructured interviews, which may be relevant in other disciplines, such as psychology (it can be 'serious disadvantage' Mueller & Segal, 2014: 1), as the researcher may not obtain all the needed data and hence the wider erroneous conceptualisation and increasing the complexities of obtaining the desired data and this is more relevant to research that needs the types of eavesdropping for conversation analysis (Roulston & Choi, 2018), which is apparently not relevant here. Nevertheless, as Qu & Dumay (2011) contend, it would be a highly ambitious to provide a comprehensive review of the literature on this topic, given the substantial body of research on the use of the interview-methods, particularly from the functionalist and interpretivist perspectives (Robin& Robin, 2005; Kvale, 2007; Qu & Dumay, 2011; Picken, 2018).

Given the lively world generated between the interviewer and the interviewee (Kvale, 1996), interviews are seen as the most exciting and enriching experience that generates new research knowledge instantly, through the inter dialogue between both, where the participant's views are the all-important. However, with 'interviewing' being considered as both 'an art and a science', it is critical that the researcher 'attends to both of these aspects', by structuring it as a mean of 'eliciting relevant, valuable and analytically rich data' (Barbour, 2013: 112). Accordingly,

deemed both ‘inductive and deductive’ (Liamputtong, 2013; Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005: 57), semi-structured interviews are identified here as the most suitable data collection method because it provided the versatility to examine the existing and emerging ideas, generating new concepts, while keeping the link with the research objectives and the CF active throughout (Jabareen, 2009), which is relevant at this level of study too. The semi structured approach too, is considered a learning and corrective mechanism to questions (Maxwell & Loomis, 2003). Furthermore, this semi-structured approach affords the researcher to both carefully word the questions and flexibly, (Opie, 2019) modify the order of the question with effective techniques such as probes to extract the fullest possible responses from the interviewee. Moreover, as it has proven to be the most effective and convenient means of gathering meaningful research data (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009), semi-structured interviews, also improve the structure in what, is in this case, is a multifaceted and complex combination of issues that is in line with Lingerden & Munch’s (2015) assertion that it generates the corresponding multifaceted issues and diverse views by having an element of both structure and flexibility.

Unsurprisingly it is one of the commonly used methods in similar types of qualitative research (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000). The popularity of this approach is primarily due to its user-friendliness (the semi-structure element) and flexibility (the in-depth), and accordingly its impending disclosure to key and often hidden facets of human demeanour (Qu & Dumay, 2011), In this, interviewees were allowed the freedom and flexibility to respond in the manner and language they prefer. Hence, the opportunity to go beyond the semi-structured format (Lauterbach, 2018), while structuring the researchers’ interviewing process to capture both the details and the broader meanings of themes prior to analysis (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018). Semi-structured interviews also involve prewritten questions, in a consistent and systematic manner (Qu & Dumay, 2011), while intervening with probes to encourage the richer input (Barbour, 2013), while following the structure of the CF in both subsets of interviews (with academics and

industry professionals) to keep the focus and dynamism all the way, as well as prepare for analysis by classifying responses under the deductive themes and spotting potential inductive themes. It is equally important to note here that these two sets of semi-structured interviews differed in content, but in the meantime have been designed with queries deliberately targeting the RQs and objectives, as embedded in the aforementioned CF. This included their differing perceptions of TMUs' choice of tourism as a study discipline, as well as their attituded to career in this industry (Phase 1). This semi-structured approach to in-depth interviews design, allowed both sets of participants to evaluate the current curriculum contents and designs, in both lights of the industry needs for competencies and the TMUs career needs. Although the interviewees attempted to shed some lights on TMUs attitude to career and their employment characteristics from both sets of participants, to inform the intention instrument, this was not the focus of the interviews, but the survey, which is detailed in the next subsection.

Within these interviews, a series of broad themes that are based on the current RQs (RQs 1, 2 and 3) were followed. Accordingly, without influencing the respondents' answers, the conversations were guided towards these themes, through the relevant on-the-spot probes to encourage both depth and flexibility, while ensuring the objectives of this research, set out in the introduction chapter (p 8) and in line with RQs within the same chapter (p 9). Thus, these enquiries included, firstly, possible reasons for the industry's high labour turnover, especially at entry-managerial levels, while in the meantime embracing the industry's representative perception of the competencies possessed by tourism management graduates, in terms of their observed abilities, attitudes and knowledge gained from the tourism management curriculum and other related activities. Secondly, the experience of tourism and higher education academics of their curriculum content and design, in relation to the industry's requirements at this level, as well as knowledge of their undergraduates' likely employment characteristics and attitude towards a career in this specific industry. Questions pertinent to phase three of the CF and to

RQs 1 and 2 included the importance of career planning and specific elements with both industry and academia, such as contents and mechanisms that enhances critical thinking, reflective practices and training or exposure opportunities at both ends. As mentioned above, the analyses and findings here are structured around and directly relevant to the current CF. Despite a wider sphere of data in the context of the current research issues, these interviews focused mainly on phases 1, reasons for TMUs study choice and phase 2, the tourism curriculum designs presented in the CF (see the above figure 5: The Initial CF Model).

In summary, phase one includes the varied views of each interviewee within each set of experts (Academics and industry) the characteristics of current TMUs as encountered in academic or internship settings. Questions about some of the industry's attitude were asked to academics and senior overarching industry experts, such as those from the Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA) and the TA, but not to employers. Phase two focuses on the curriculum contents and designs from both sides, as to its fitness for the purpose of graduate employability for academics and to the needs of the industry for employers. Hence, it is important to note that questions are not the same in both phases to academics and industry experts, as it would be counterintuitive to ask an industry manager if they underestimate the managerial competencies of TMUs. Equally, it would not make sense to ask a curriculum leader, if their curriculum is fit for purpose. Last here, although there is a document that include separate questions to each set of interviewees, these were almost different in each interview, to deliberately allow for deeper and more meaningful data gathering through the above contend multi-discursivity (e.g. Poldner, Shrivastava & Branzei, 2017). Thus, the two differing sets of interviews' (with academics and industry respondents) necessitated two guiding sheets designed to include questions on concepts within phase 1 and 2 of the CF, to categorise data in both inductive and deductive way, which is then used to structure the content analysis for this qualitative section of the mixed methodology.

Thus, in preparation for the analysis stage that requires systematically identifying and organising the data collected from interviews and the ability to offer insights into patterns of meaning (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017), otherwise called themes of the collective experiences of the respondents (Braun, Clarke & Terry, 2014), hence these sheets were used during the interviews to guide and maintain close relations with the RQs (Rabionet, 2011). Although Braun, Clarke & Terry (2014) recommend a highly unstructured interview to gather the depth required, in a semi-structured interview, a preliminary guide is recommended (Kallio, et al., 2016), especially to prepare for additional probes to extract the required data if it is not revealed within the answers to the main questions (Kvale, 2007; Rabionet, 2011). Accordingly, as a preplanner for the thematic content analysis, these semi-structured interviews were designed in a similar way and hence produced a set of interview questions which were used to create the interview guide for each participant. Although, interviews were not identical in terms of the semi-structure process, the 40-70 minutes' long semi-structured interviews (Bryman & Bell 2007) centred around the key themes (Kvale 1996; Holloway 2003), identified by the RQs and guided by the CF. However, as contended in the above, questions and probes varied according to the individual interviewee's understanding and focus on the question. Accordingly, a thematic design table was produced that shows both the academic and industry interviews questions and example probes, which were adjusted depending on interviewee's answers and focus on the question (see table 2.1: Thematic design of Interviews, Appendix 1: App. 1.1).

5.4.2 Interview Sampling

As widely recognised, there are two broad categories of sampling methods, which are probability and non-probability sampling. The former, may be understood that it requires each population members having equal chance to be selected (Bradley, 1999). However, in practice this is has not been always the case with complete probability sampling proving difficult in many cases. Accordingly, this has led to researchers to compromise and therefore create workable semi-probability sampling practices (Saunders, 2012), such as in stratified and cluster sampling methods, which are based on probabilities, but different units have unequal chances for practicality reasons, especially if the research population is a large number, whose characteristics vary considerably. In a tourism context for example, it is often difficult to obtain the right number, where many have to accept the small but informative number of respondents and rely on the researcher experience and other justification arguments to validated findings, examples include Jenkins & Poulston, (2014), who surveyed hotel managers using a convenience sample and hence the number was small.

Accordingly, there are a variety of sampling techniques to overcome this obstacle, including purposive sampling, which is often used in cases with relatively small populations (Devers& Frankel, 2000; Guarte& Barrios, 2006; Jupp, 2006) and when the researcher needs to select samples that are particularly informative, regardless of the size being clearly small or not (Devers& Frankel, 2000; Patton, 2002; Neumann, 2014). Hence, it is with confidence that the selected tourism academics, industry informants, current tourism undergraduates are the key informants in this field, who can provide rich insights into such a specialist issue. Unlike convenience sampling, however purposive sampling involves some structure and efforts to reach out for the difficult to access groups of the research audiences (Tongco, 2007; Saunders, 2012;

Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016), which is true in this research, especially given the difficulties reaching major tourism employers. Moreover, because this research focuses on tourism, as a specialist sector of the economy, with specific and detailed expertise held by its audience, non-probability sampling has been identified as more relevant to the nature and objectives of this research. In this, it is not necessary that different units have equal chance of being selected and mostly depends on researcher's knowledge and experience of the population under scrutiny. This is partially because it is difficult to identify every member of this research's population and in the meantime this specialist population have similar characteristics. In this light, the selected samples are more likely to hold a view that is held by the majority of the population. Within this broad non-probability category, the purposive sampling strategy as identified the most relevant in this research context, as detailed below.

In terms of the sampling method, purposive sampling was chosen as the relevant method of both interviews and survey respondent as all are groups and subgroups of the same specialised filed, as well as the ethical considerations of reaching students directly, who may be unwilling or accept to participate under pressure. Accordingly interviewing academics as well as reaching the students through them was more purposive and with ethical considerations. This purposive type of non-probability sampling, according to Richardson, (2009) is used when the characteristic of interest of a given research audience is low in the general population that a more targeted strategy is needed to find sufficient numbers of such a special-interest group of research audience. According to the latter, the power of purposive sampling is mainly in selecting information-rich cases for in-depth analysis to addressing the research problem under investigation and hence can also be used to gather both qualitative and quantitative data. Accordingly, focusing on the interviews the purposive sampling methods is more appropriate here, by targeting tourism academics and industry experts who are both knowledgeable and accessible.

Importantly here, there are a variety of subcategories of purposive sampling, which includes extreme or deviant sampling, heterogonous or maximum variation sampling, and homogenous sampling, which means there is another precise choice to be made here. To explain this, heterogonous or maximum variation purposive sampling is not relevant here, because in this the researcher uses own judgment to choose participants with clear diverse knowledge and characteristics to provide the maximum variations possible in the data collected (Saunders, 2012). The type of purposive sampling used here is homogeneous sampling, as it focuses on a homogenously specialist group of audience that share similar characteristics, in both subsets of the interviews (academics and industry professionals), who are in the meantime belong to small world of network that when accessed it is possible to gain referrals to other experts too.

Accordingly, to identify the research population, an internet research inquiry, resulted in number of UK HEIs offering tourism management courses degrees at undergraduate levels were identified. The search at the time (June 2018), yielded 44 active HEIs in this context. Accordingly, the names and details of programme and curriculum leaders were identified through a combination of online research as well as attending networking events and gaining some referrals. Then, for those hard to reach or less responsive academics, necessitated some elements of snowballing techniques that were used to in combination of this purposive approach, through the more responsive academics. Although snowballing sampling can introduce an "expert's bias", firstly it is not the mainstream sampling technique here and secondly it is particularly useful for capitalising on the experts' networks and wisdom, which is crucially needed in types of research, such as the current one that investigates a complex phenomenon involving human experiences and perceptions (Light and Pillemer, 1984; Suri, 2011). Secondly, in a similar way a combination of UK tourism and hospitality employers were identified to serve the objective and context of this research as tourism industry's informants (e.g. General

managers, recruitment and HRM managers, industry's voice informants such as ABTA and other tourism and hospitality professional associations and members.

As, the sample size in this type of qualitative inquiry, as many of its aspects is flexible and primarily dependent on researcher judgment (Robinson, 2014), especially in an experts' discipline like tourism (Juvan & Dolnicar, 2014) the term 'data saturation' is widely used, particularly in tourism research (e.g. Nimrod, 2008; Lumsdon & McGrath, 2011). This means, the point at which it is assumed that further data collection will not generate any added value (Strauss & Corbin) or deeper 'insight' (Juvan & Dolnicar, 2014: 80). As a guide to good practice in this, the latter provided table of a few pages that shows a review to articles recently published in one of the renowned tourism academic journals (Annals of Tourism Research), which shows an average sample size of 28 for a full study. Adding flexibility to this, the latter suggested an average of 25, as a guide. However, this is still flexible and depends on the research nature and data saturation point (Guest, Bunce & Johnson, 2006; Braun & Clarke, 2019). Additionally, as Creswell (1994) has earlier recommended 5-25 interviews to achieve an appropriate sample size for a qualitative study, hence with the 23 experts' interviews and as part of a mixed methodology, this study meets these guidelines (Rittichainuwat, et al., 2020).

Moreover, given the considerable expertise and knowledge of the academics and industry experts' participants, the data saturation point was reached before the number 20 and hence these guidelines were met thoroughly. In terms of the selection criterion to enhance the validity and reliability the of findings, Silverman (2010) suggests that this again depends on the researcher's judgment, the potential size of this experts' context. Hence, given the researcher's experience in both sides of academia and industry of tourism, although saturation was reached around 20 number of interviewees, every effort was made to increase the volume to 23 and in the meantime

included interviewee that adds were judged to add more insights. Accordingly, within academics, their profile was read and those who had considering experience in curriculum development combined with equally a strong industry experience were targeted.

Thus, on one hand many of the academics interviewed here have considerable experience in both sides and therefore did provide rich and cross-referencing knowledge on the industry. On the other, many of the industry's interviewees represent a senior, executive as well as overarching industry-wide positions and experience, including those currently lobby the industry's views to the government and policymakers on issues directly related to this research. This involves the industry's productivity, employment and tourism education. Accordingly, there are two tables below to demonstrate the profiles of the academics and industry experts interviewed throughout the UK with mode of interviews, i.e. face-to-face or via an online recording application, along with professional profiles, but coded professional and organisation identities. As shown below, both tables show the diversity of respondents of various HEIs, all 4 countries of the UK for academics and the varied professional positions, types of companies and organisations of different sectors and subsector of the industry experts (see table: 2.2: Academics Interviewees' list and table 2.3: Industry Interviewees list, in appendix 1: App. 1.2 and App. 1.3). Within both tables, it is important to note that any possible professionally identifiable details (e.g. HEIs or companies names or acronyms, address where interviewed, etc.), have been deliberately removed or partly concealed for data protection and research ethics purpoases.

After each interview, verbatim transcriptions were carried out to increase the validity and reliability of this data and although there are a difference between the rules that govern oral and written languages, as (Kvale, 1996) contend, transcriptions are useful interpretive constructions of the recordings. Although, there are no universally agreed-upon standards for interview

transcription, the researcher endeavoured to record and transcribe the complexities and ambiguities of spoken language, using verbatim transcription, in tandem with the original recording, as well as the field notes taken during and after the actual interviews to add value and preserve the standpoint of the interviewee (Alby & Fatigante, 2014). Indeed, each interview transcripts were coded for the later analysis, using a combination, initially using pre-determined codes relating to key themes in the RQs, and codes that correspond to emerging themes in the data, as the process of openminded inductive analysis took place, as further detailed below. The two different sets of semi-structured interviews for academics and industry experts have been designed according to the thematic design process for interviews outlined by Kvale (1996). However, as Kvale (1996) also argued the design of in-depth qualitative interviews should normally be open ended, in which the researcher should be more concerned with extracting the true data 'being attuned to the participant' (Knox & Burkard, 2009: 2) rather than attempting to rigidly standardise, especially a case like this where audience are experts with versatile expertise.

Indeed, the rationale behind these questions being used for guidance, is that one of the important features of qualitative research interviewing is that they are discursive and wide ranging in nature and types. In terms of the possibility of viewing this type of discursivity as somehow negative (Mann, 2011), this may be relevant to other research areas such as health and psychology, but here it was deliberately planned to extract as much deeper insights as possible. Indeed, this approach is similar to the 'embodied multi-discursivity' concept advocated by Poldner, Shrivastava & Branzei (2017: 218) that is evident in generating deeper and more meaningful knowledge through the combination of discourse analysis in aesthetic inquiry. While this is not exactly any of these this approach was found useful here, in capturing more from the respondents, especially when some answers were deemed sensitive or more into the political realm. Moreover, the reciprocity between the interviewee and the interviewer more often results in divergent answers and emergent themes during such interaction. Although, this poses difficulties to the

researcher during both, the actual interview and more at the analysis stage, it is seen as a positive problem to have. Herein, Cooper & Burnett (2006), in the light of discursivity demonstrated that attention to the discursive processes of qualitative interviews may enhance its vigour in generating meaningful data by facilitating reflexivity, which is and should be central to this type of qualitative methodology. Accordingly, notes were taken during the interviews, especially if there is an important expression or quote that is either in line with the above CF or after the interview, where the researcher held informal discussion, attempting to extract clearer points, expressions on the noted issues during the interview. Academic interviews did not only include tourism academics but some distinctive HE academics who have been identified as having good expertise on the link between higher education, the new generation and the future of certain careers (Decrop, 1999; Ritchie, Burns & Palmer, 2005; Jennings, 2005; Silverman, 2015).

Thus, the guiding questions in table 2.1 (Appendix 1: App. 1.1) were collated in an interview guide, according to the principles outlined by Palmer (1928) as cited in Jennings (2004, 2005), as well as the work of Decrop (1999) and Silverman (2015), which simply suggest that there are areas of social reality that cannot be fully measured by quantitative means alone. Therefore, the guiding questions and the dialogue were flexible to generate as deeper insights into these issues as possible, while reducing the impasse between the objective and subjective aspects of research (Lewin, 1947/2016) by allowing free expressions (Alby & Fatigante, 2014) and keeping questions closely guided by the RQs, objectives and the CF. Also, anticipated probes were included to make sure this inquiry's objectives are addressed to the best possible degree. Thus, the resulting semi-structured interviews with academics and industry expert' sheets, as well as examples of typical emails and messages to academics and industry are attached separately (see Appendix 2-semi-structured interview guides). The next subsection focuses on the methods used for the analysis of the data generated from these interviews.

5.4.3 Qualitative data analysis methods

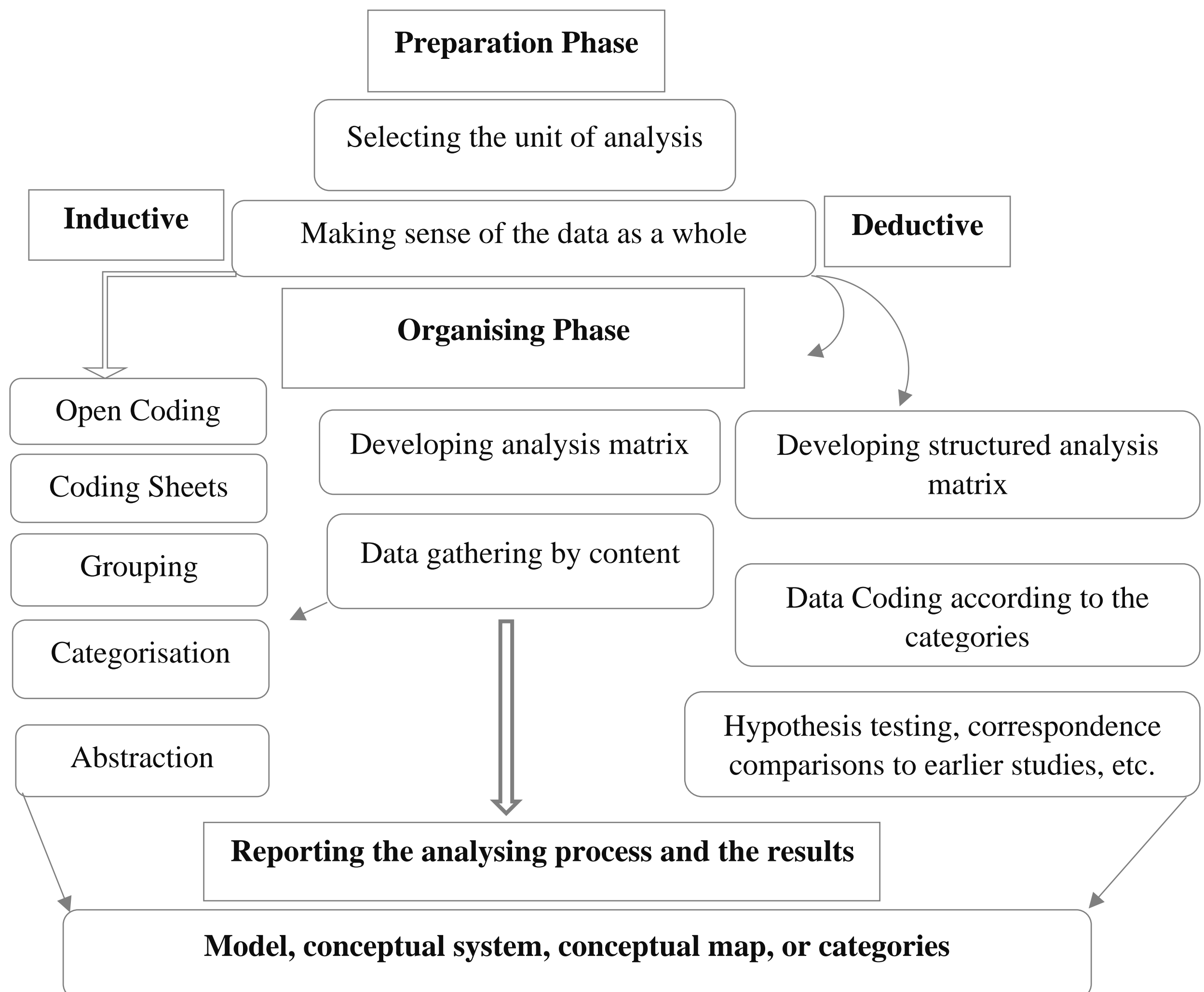
As frequently recommended for the analysis of communicative and interactive collection methods such as interviews, the data generated from the 23 semi-structured interviews was analysed using Content Analysis (CA), a useful and flexible method (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009) that allows the themes to emerge from the content (interviews transcripts here). Although this method was not adequately utilised in earlier tourism research, it has recently become more popular, as tourism academics gradually shifted their focus more towards qualitative methodologies (Camprubí & Coromina, 2016). A review of mixed methodology studies in tourism (Molina-Azorín & Font, 2016) revealed that CA has been mostly used as preliminary approach to develop and expand data (33%, 55%) but not to complement and triangulate (3.6%) with other data within the same study. It was also more prominent in the dominant sequential approaches, so the choice of content analysis in this mixed methodology concurrent design is appropriate to facilitate the analysis, while contributing to this gap in tourism research.

5.4.4. Content Analysis: The Process

As contended in the above subsection (4.4.3), CA can be used in an inductive or deductive way, but this is determined by the nature and purpose of the research inquiry. In this, Lauri & Kyngas (2005) and Elo & Kyngäs (2008) recommend the inductive process, particularly if there is either not enough knowledge about the phenomenon in question or if the existing knowledge is patchy or fragmented, which is true in this case. The former produced a model for the CA, which recommends the inductive process, but includes both the deductive and inductive paths to allow agility and adaptability to the case, an approach that was used here (see figure 8 below: The preparing, organizing and resulting phases in the content analysis process).

Figure 8: Preparing, organizing and resulting phases in the content analysis process.

Source: Lauri & Kyngas (2005). In Elo, S., & Kyngäs, H. (2008:110). The qualitative content analysis process. Journal of advanced



Accordingly, the above procedure was used to guide the current case and hence to conduct the content analysis, the coding procedure is presented below.

5.4.5 Content Analysis: Coding

Based on the above literature review and research problem, the anticipated data required a system of deductive and inductive codes that were employed to categorise the data under the relevant themes. These, deductive and inductive codes, according to Creswell (2009: 186-187) fall under four subcategories; namely “codes on topics that are expected”, “codes that were unanticipated”, “codes that are unusual” and “codes that address a larger theoretical perspective” or conceptual interest, as the case here. Hence, the construction of deductive codes, in this case, triggered an inductive process (Berg, 2007) to further categorise the data and allow for the emergence of additional relevant information and codes,

Accordingly, the main codes identified from the literature (deductive) were built into main themes based on the main RQs, which were further detailed under the relevant subthemes. Hence, in relation to (RQ 1 and 2, Chapter 1, 1.4), questions related to the industry’s entry-level managerial turnover, employers’ perception of tourism graduates’ competencies, attitude and motivation for the study, as well as curriculum-related issues were asked and analysed, initially using the predetermined deductive codes and then combined with inductive codes that emerged through the process of data gathering and analyses. Thus, the deductive codes under this these themes encapsulated the generic reasons for the high Turnover (TO), under which more specific deductive codes were developed to. Thus, organised under the main RQ1 and 2, the TO codes included the sub codes of major tourism Employers’ Graduate Schemes’ (EGS) issues, the possibility of tourism employers preferring to Employ Non-tourism Graduates (NTG),

Academia-Industry Liaison (AIL) issues, as a key to the turnover and Career Progression Opportunities (CPO) issues that affects tourism employees' retention and TMUs' intention. This also included perceptions of tourism graduates' attitude to a career in tourism in relation to the turnover, whereby TPA (Tourism graduates Positive Attitude) and TNA (Tourism graduates Negative Attitude) were coded. Hence, these deductive codes were used as guiding principles, with inductive codes generated later during the analysis of the two expert groups' responses.

The extraction of inductive codes here, which were generated through the process of interviews' content analysis, include for example: reasons why TMUs Choose to Study Tourism (CST), which generated subcodes, such as the Wider society influence (WS) of perceiving tourism as a career and similarly Recommendations from Circles (RC) close to TMUs. Moreover, reasons for TMUs choosing to study tourism led to further inductive codes, such as Interest in Tourism (IT) as a global phenomenon (e.g. travelling/ understanding the world issues, industry's perks of cheap travels, etc.). However, choosing to study tourism as Career Plan (CP) was separated, as an important theme that indicates possible TMUs' career intention, which in the meantime prepares for the quantitative results and data mixing at the interpretation stage. Similarly, themes and codes related to TMUs' attitude comes under the separate code of Other Reasons (OR) to studying tourism, which include any more reasons that experts' respondents may have observed dealing with the current cohort of TMUs.

Thus, the Other reasons for high Turnover (OT) questions generated inductive subcodes, such as Additional Liaison Issues (ALI) between academia and industry (e.g. structure), Sideways Career Progressions (SCP) opportunities, Employers Image of tourism graduates competencies (EI+/-), the Wider Industry's Attitude (IA+/-) and Employers Awareness of tourism graduate competencies (EA+/-). In addition, to mix and contrast expert's views with TMUs' reasons for

choosing to study tourism (CST), relevant questions were asked to academics and industry experts and hence generated new inductive codes, including Interest in Tourism (IT), Career Plan (CP), Recommendations from Close circles (RC), Other Reasons to choosing to study tourism (OR) and finally, TMUs' potential in reducing the turnover (TR). As per the curriculum content and design issues codes, this included the codes relating to the above-illustrated 6 main curriculum areas, as well as extracurricular activities for TMUs employability. In this, detailed questions as to the depth and relevance of each one of the six components were asked, as well as an overall assessment by both sets of academics and industry respondents. Accordingly, this included deductive codes such as the importance or lack of Curriculum-led Managerial Competencies (CMC), Generic Management (GM), Industry-specific Management (IM) content, Industry-specific (IS) content, Entrepreneurial& Enterprising (EE), Extracurricular (EX) activities and Career Planning Skills (CPS). Similarly, inductive codes includes Curriculum-led Managerial Experiences (CME), including ideas (emerging themes) in extracurricular activities that improve TMUs competencies, Digital Skills (DS) including the latest robotic and smartphones applications, SM skills for marketing and communication purposes, Managing graduates Expectations (ME) as a curriculum content, Managing Crisis (MC) and resilience contents, Reflective practice (RCM), as a career planning competency, which may lead to effective future Career Management (CM), including e-portfolio building and finally Other Curriculum Assessment (OCA), which could be features or issues that were not mentioned and the expert see important in the curriculum design. Thus, the ensuing deductive and inductive codes were classified under these themes and subthemes respectively (see table 3: industry and graduates' issues codes and table 4: curriculum managerial competencies codes below). These were used to facilitate the qualitative content analyses, after the quantitative data collection and analysis methods (subsections; 5.4.6-5.4.11) further below.

Table 3: Industry and TMUs' issues codes

Deductive Codes	Description	Inductive codes	Description
TO	Generic reasons for the turnover	OT	**Other reasons to the Turnover** (reasons other than the widely known ones of low pay and poor working conditions)
CPO	Career Progression Opportunities issue	ALI SCP EI+/- IA+/- EA/ +-	Additional Liaison Issues in academia-industry (e.g. structure) Sideways Career Progressions opportunities Employers Image of tourism graduates, positive/negative Wider Industry's Attitude/ positive or negative Employers Awareness of graduate competencies
TPA	Tourism graduates Positive Attitude	WS+/-	Tourism in the wider society and how its image as a career affects the turnover and tourism graduates' employability)
TNA	Tourism graduates Negative Attitude	**CST** <u>Subcodes:</u> IT CP RC OR TR	**Reason tourism undergraduates choose to study tourism** Interest in Tourism (travelling, industry perks, etc.) Career Plan Recommendations from Close circles (parents, friends, etc.) Other reasons to choosing tourism as a degree to study that is different from the above TMUs' potential in Reducing the Turnover
ENT	Employing non-tourism graduates		
AIL	Academia-Industry Liaison issues (structure, etc.)		
EGS	Major Employers' Graduate Schemes' issues		

Table 4: Curriculum managerial competencies codes

Deductive Codes	Description	Inductive Codes	Description
CMC	**Curriculum-led Managerial Competencies** (under this, the 6 main elements of the curriculum areas fall)	**CME**	**Curriculum-led Managerial Experiences** (e.g. any innovative ideas of emerging themes in extracurricular activities that improve TMUs competencies filed or related through experience
1.GM	Generic Management	DS	Digital Skills (use of latest robotic and smartphones applications)
2.IM	Industry-specific Management Content	SM	Social media skills for marketing and communication purposes
3.IS	Industry-specialist Content	ME	Managing graduates Expectations content plus activities recommended
4.EE	Entrepreneurial& Enterprising Content	MC	Managing Crisis and resilience Content
5.EX	Extracurricular Activities	RCM	Reflective practice
6.CPS	Career Planning Skills	CM	Career Management (e.g. e-portfolio building)
Overall Curriculum Assessment		**OCA**	Other features or issues that were not mentioned and the expert see important

5.4.6 Quantitative Data Collection: The Online Survey

The online survey questionnaire was designed for a sample of TMUs in UK HEIs. To measure how the attitudes, subjective norms, as embedded in the CF, influence TMUs in UK HEIs career intention for tourism as shaped by their curriculum and industry experience. Because this group of target respondents are geographically spread across various UK HEIs, as well as being mainly a generation who are inclined to use technology and the internet, as contended in the above, an online survey was identified as more appropriate in this research as opposed to postal mail and other types of survey designs.

As per the data collection approach, given that the population of interest for this part of the research is TMUs in UK HEIs, the advantage of an online survey is that most of this new generation use the Internet and other technology frequently for many practical reasons (e.g. Clark, 2017 as well as personal mobile phones (Skinner, Sarpong & White, 2018). Accordingly, it has been argued that this specific research audience group would prefer an online survey, as it can be incorporated into their normal day-to-day tasks, more user-friendly to them and therefore easily completed. In this light, Sills & Song (2002) argue that for populations that possess such technological skills, the cost and speed of generating responses as well as the swiftness and ease of data filtration and analysis, makes this type of survey a preferred delivery method for both the respondent and researcher.

On the principles of the design of this online survey, Brace (2018) suggests that the online survey questionnaire is a popular and widely used research instrument by whoever wants to collect data, including social research companies, individual researchers and government departments. According to the latter this medium offers many benefits to both respondents and researchers, including convenience, speed of completing and administration and importantly less bias incurred as the absence of the researcher may inflict, especially when the questions are about opinion and attitudes. Despite some potential disadvantages, pertinent to sample bias, and unforeseen technical that may adversely affect the response rate in demotivating the respondent to complete, Dillman & Bowker (2001) were referring to surveys put in the public domain aimed at a certain segment of the general public, where an intruder may access it, however, in this research the homogenous purposive sampling of undergraduates, having a link on their VLE, receiving emails from their professors, may act to avoid most of these anticipated weakness and increase response rates through the trust and clarification of the importance and objectives of the survey.

In light of these principles and critiques of the online survey design (e.g. Dillman, Tortora & Bowker, 1999; Dillman & Bowker, 2001), a series of generic, then individually tailor-made emails to academics, with a separate message for students were emailed to trusted academics and senior tourism curriculum leader in many UK HEIs offering tourism management courses at BA/BSc courses, as guided by the structure of the RQs and the CF. The latter messages also included a shortened URL and a QR code links to the survey to account for ease of access, via any internet enabled device, including mobile phones to also appeal to this technology savvy cohort of TMUs. In the survey settings too, any identifiable privacy concerns were locked as well as not allowing more than one response per IP address to avoid as much as possible multiple responses and any potential intrusion as recommended by Dillman & Bowker (2001). Having ensured that the method is viable, the following section discuss the design of this this survey.

5.4.7 The Online Survey; design

The survey started with an introduction, including the ethical considerations, such as the reassurance of data protection and the right to withdraw at any time, and encouraging responses by stressing the importance of the results to informing influencing their career (policymakers, academics and employers), which is also reflected in its title "My Future Tourism Career" (see appendix 3, app. 3.2: The 'My Future Career' Online Survey).

The survey in total included 34 questions that were divided into two sections. The first section comprised 14 queries, which ranged from screening queries, (e.g. Q1 being currently on a tourism management degree at UK HEI, Q33 on gender identity and Q34 (year of birth), to targeting their reason for choosing to study tourism at this level (e.g. Q4), their experience of the

tourism curriculum and evaluation to its main components (Q5) to evaluating the identified eight competencies (Q8), as extracted from the combination of the aforementioned employability models and others studies in the above literature. In addition, some questions within this survey, particularly in section one deliberately targeted the employment characteristics of the current cohort of TMUs, such as the preference of pay, development opportunities and other work conditions and how this applies to the aforementioned main issues of the industry of low pay and less development opportunities and implication to pedagogical development in HE (Fedosejeva, et al., 2018) as well industry attraction and retention (Goh & Okumus, 2020). Moreover, other questions were included as to pre-test the dedicated intention measures (section 2 of the survey).

The second section of the survey included 20 questions that focussed solely on TMUs career Intention and with 5 questions addressing each of the TPB's four constructs (Ajzen, 2006). These are the three independent variables of Subjective Norms (SNS), Perceived Behaviour Control (PBC) and attituded, whereas Intention (INT) represented the outcome variable (Ajzen, 1991) in this. Worth mentioning here, the questions in this section were not presented in the order marked in the researcher's documents but reshuffled to make it less explicit to the respondents, and considering the similarity in their wording, it was expected that they would not be clearly configured by the respondents, as recommended (Ajzen, 2006). Hence, the importance of interconnectedness among the TPB constructs within the content and design of survey are considered and is briefly illustrated below.

5.4.7.1 Attitude-testing constructs of survey

Referring back to the rational of using the TPB as a background and direct measure to both sections of the survey, Ajzen & Fishbein (2005) argue the role subjective norms and perceived behaviour control constructs attitude and hence influences behavioural intentions. Therefore, the likelihood of intention inspired by attitude of translating to an actual behaviour is that it is an internal interaction between a given phenomenon and the summary of evaluation of this in the human mind. Accordingly, these three constructs combined, given nothing else dramatically occurs, they, with varied level among them, are likely to be revealed in intention and translated to behaviour. In support, various studies that used survey in a similar context present adequate evidence that the use of TPB in this realm of career, including enterprising, useful and well established. For example, Bell, (2016), found that the intention results of students, inspired by graduates' motivation to achieve, were statistically linked to employment at managerial positions less than a year after graduation. Also Donald, Ashleigh & Baruch (2017), who earlier found that achievement motivation to be significantly related, not exactly to direct employment, but at least to the immediate undergraduates' career intention and their strong believe that they are more employable, but probably less so from a market perspective because of what they think an increasingly competitive graduate job market (Donald, Ashleigh & Baruch, 2018), which may require intervention to both improve these PBC and SNS, more from HE and policymakers perspectives. In relation to the turnover intention, which concerns the employer more directly, Staufenbiel & König (2010) found that despite more complex results that generally, job insecurity, which is relevant to the tourism case, is a factor of either hindrance or challenges to the turnover intention. Accordingly, the hypothesis here is that all the three components to TPB constructs (ATT, PBC, SNS and INT) should be considered in policy planning for this industry and discipline.

Hence, this understanding influenced the design of the survey in many aspects, including carefully designing, wording and piloting the survey questions several times, as well as including additional questions in section one to complement and cross-reference with those directly testing intentions in section two of the survey. Hence, ensure it generates credible results as much as possible, or at least ones that raise attention. For example, on one hand, given that those with more experience of the curriculum (e.g. year 3 or 4) may have a more mature account of the curriculum and perhaps industry, but not necessarily. However, the other hand, those with more industry experience, regardless of their experience of the curriculum, may have a more mature opinion about career in tourism. This features in the survey, in for example, the case of question 3, which inquired about the year of study. Similarly, question 6 queried whether their experience of the curriculum so far has changed the respondent's opinion about career in tourism and in what way, while question 7 alike asked about their industry experience if any. This, as planned, also influenced the data analyses, as responses to these questions within the first section of the survey, were used later to correspond with each individual career intention in the second section, by conducting t—tests and other cross-tabulation techniques to find any inferences of statistically significant variation in these respects.

5.4.7.2 Subjective Norms and the Survey

Subjective norm refers to the perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform a given behaviour (Ajzen, 1991; Han, Hsu & Sheu, 2010). Hence, represent the experience and opinion of individuals or groups that have an influence on one's decision making, such as important others (Ajzen, 2006), parents, the wider family and friends as well as the wider society held believes. As, several studies have reported that the subjective norm is an important determinant of intention that solicited actual behaviour, ranging from attitude to CPD training and intention

(Sanders, et al., 2011), tourism-related learning (Yamada, Heo & Hji-Avgoustis, 2014) entrepreneurial start-ups, job-seeking behaviours (e.g. Vinokur & Caplan, 1987), to other career decision such as the labour turnover (e.g. Abrams, Ando, & Hinkle, 1998; Lam, Lo & Chan, 2002), which are all relevant to this context, but apparently seldom in a UK context. Accordingly, in addition to the indirect testing of TMUs tourism intention in the first section of this survey, as mentioned in the above, five questions tested this constructs (e.g. Q14 'People around me think tourism as a career is very rewarding, especially for soon to be tourism graduate, like me, with rating of 1-5 false-true and Q27 'People in my life, whose opinions I value, would approve of me seeking employment and staying in the tourism industry after graduating', 1-5 false/true), which were as the rest of the constructs were reshuffled and mixed with other constructs in the order of questions to make it less explicit as recommended (Ajzen, 2006).

5.4.7.3 Perceived behavioural control-testing constructs of survey

According to Ajzen (1991, 2002), perceived behavioural control is a person's perceived ease or difficulty to perform a particular behaviour. Yet, an actual behaviour may occur (Zhou, et al., 2013)., when an individual has both the self-believe in own ability and motivation to perform it. According to the TPB model, developing perceived behavioural control prior to generating intention is essential and that is why they are featuring in the current CF to test the career intentions of TMUs, this research subject. For example, Peterman & Kennedy (2003) used the TPB to test the effect of a training programme in enterprising and found that student's participants reported significantly higher perceptions of both desirability and feasibility before and after the enterprising programme in Australia. Most importantly, the latter found that the degree of change in perceptions is related to the positiveness of prior work experience and the experience on this specific programme, which is similar to the current TMUs' experience of the

tourism industry and experience of the tourism management curriculum at their current UK HEIs. Closer to the tourism discipline, Chuang & Dellmann-Jenkins (2010) conducted a similar project to understand the career decision making by hospitality students at a USA University.

Accordingly, similar to the above SNS construct within the survey, the indirect testing of TMUs tourism intention, also included indirect questions (e.g.Q9, are tourism graduates likely to stay in tourism? and Q10, what career path do you plan to take after graduating', which includes with multiple choices, such as starting a tourism business, or the open choice of other). Direct PBC questions include Q29 options; 'with my tourism management degree, it would be easy for me to find an entry-level managerial position in any other industry, 'it is mostly up to me whether or not I seek employment and stay in the tourism industry after graduating', 1-5 agree-disagree rating), which were also reshuffled and mixed with other constructs, as the above SNS to make them less explicit as recommended (Ajzen, 2006).

5.4.7.4 Intention-testing constructs of survey

As contended in details and in several occasions throughout this work, the importance of intention to career planning and decisions and its interconnectedness with the other dependant variables within the TPB (e.g. Ajzen, 1991; Tan & Laswad, 2006) and its relationships the and the pre employment job search and the turnover as an actual behaviour later in career management (e.g. Schnake, Williams& Fredenberger, 2007), the importance in this subsection is the focus on the survey and how this importance influenced its content and design.

Again, given the detailed account of rational concerning the cohesion of techniques and the interconnectedness of the TPB constructs, intention is different as it is the outcome variable that's why it was not including in the pre-test of the first sections, but its specific five queries were piloted and improved more often. Its questions ranged from the obscure to the explicit, as well as the use of the aforementioned reshuffling technique used with all 20 questions, some other intention questions were left deliberately, towards the end, but not closer to each other to account for the psychological influence of going through more questions before answering the intention to For example Q25 'I plan to seek employment and stay at least 3 years in the tourism industry after graduating' and the more explicit 'Tourism management is my chosen sector and I intend to make it my long-term career' and finally 'I intend to seek employment and stay at least 3 years in the tourism industry after graduating' The latter is Q32, which is the final question of this intention and survey effectively, as the last two are screening questions of gender and year of birth that were reshuffled from the first section to both encourage more participation as well as reducing the distraction of the so many screening questions and surveys current undergraduates of any discipline, encounter on regular bases. The following subsection focus on the pilot testing of this survey instruments.

5.4.8 The Online Survey: Pilot testing

To minimise any errors and biases within the survey questions and design (Finn., Walton & Elliott-White, 2000) prior to formally launching this survey, a series of pilot trials was distributed locally, both as handouts and as an online link, to examine the content and design of this research instrument for relevance, validity and user-friendliness in a UK tourism career context. In fact, it was launched and pre-tested several times on different groups of TMUs, starting with the

University of Greenwich, where this research is based. The last two versions of these generated 37 and 106 responses respectively and the survey at that stage was accepted as valid and relevant. This comprises a few steps, from testing giving copies to tourism academics to pass on to their students for feedback, combination of several supervisory meetings for this, panels of tourism academics experts and the ethical approval application to the University of Greenwich Research Ethics' Committee (see appendix 4, Ethical Approval letter, dated 27th may, 2015). Given that the latest version in this context included 106 response, this meant adhering to the commonly cited rule of thumb to testing surveys for consistency and reliability (e.g. Sheatsley 1983), which is 12-50 responses prior to full-scale administration (Sudman 1983). Accordingly, this condition was met with enough volume for respondents and researchers to identify any recurring issue within constructs (McIntosh, et al., 2011; Rittichainuwat, et al., 2020).

Despite the absence of specific theoretical reasons to rule out different scale length, the use of 5-points Likert rating scale throughout this intention section instead of other options were preferred here due to practical reasons, as well as Likert himself opted for the same (Likert, 1932; Armstrong, 1987). It is also commonly used and sought to easier to administer and user friendly to respondents, which proved true from pilot respondents' comments and critiques. In addition, given that the details required here do not constitute a 10-points Likert scale, unlike testing, for example, objects in physical science, the former is more popular in social sciences and particularly in tourism research (e.g. Sánchez-Cañizares, & López-Guzmán, 2012; Ferri-Sanz, Durá-Ferrandis, & Garcés-Ferrer, 2019).

In this, options reflect an underlying continuum rather than a finite number of possible perceptions, attitudes or career intentions. The reason why five has become the norm, is probably because it strikes a compromise between the conflicting goals of offering enough choice. Put

differently, since only two or three options means measuring only the direction rather than also strength of opinion and making things manageable for respondents, as they likely to not clarity as to the difference between, say, the eighth and ninth point on an eleven points scale, research confirms that data from Likert scale items becomes significantly less accurate, when the number of scale points drops below five or rises above seven, the five also increase response rate (Davey, et al., 2007) because of the clarity and user-friendliness mention in the above. However, because these studies provide no solid grounds for preferring five seven or more, this research will adapt the 5-points Likert scale. While Lubke & Muthen (2004) support the use of parametric statistics for Likert scale, Jamieson (2004) insists using non-parametric statistics and claims it is more relevant. Having justified the use of the 5-points Likert scale, the sampling method, and issues such as sample size and response rate of the survey are detailed below.

5.4.9 The Online Survey: Sampling

As contended in some details, under the above interviews' sampling (4.4.2), the purposive homogenous sampling method was deemed relevant here as well. Hence, to briefly justify the selection here, as contended in the above interviews sampling subsection, this type of sampling methods is simply relevant, when the target audience of a given research population share wholly or partially similar characteristics relevant to the research inquiry (e.g. Richardson, 2009; Saunders, 2012). This includes being of certain societal group or professional status, which allows them to be researched in more depth and illustrate minor differences and this is exactly relevant to this research. Namely, TMUs in UK HEIs fulfils this criterion, studying the same degree and aspiring for the same career, in addition to mostly belonging to the younger cohort of TMUs (86%), as the results and analysis later revealed. As part of the purposive sampling and through online search (June 2018), 44 HEIs were offering tourism management at undergraduate

level at the time. However, only 26 responded to the researcher's messages and out of these 12 different UK HEIs generated a total 210 TMUs responses to the survey (193 complete responses). These 12 represent different regions and countries throughout the UK. The table below (5.1) exhibits UK HEIs offering undergraduate tourism management degrees in 2018. (see below table 5.1: Survey sampling-UK HEIs).

Table 5.1. Survey sampling: UK HEIs

No	University	Country	Responses
1	University of West of England	England	Yes
2	Bournemouth University	England	Yes
3	University of the West of Scotland	Scotland	Yes
4	Canterbury Christchurch University	England	No
5	University of Surrey	England	No
6	University of Westminster	England	Yes
7	Middlesex University	England	No
8	University of Coventry	England	No
9	Cardiff Metropolitan University	Wales	Yes
10	University of Strathclyde	Scotland	Yes
11	London South Bank	England	Yes
12	University of Derby	England	No
13	University of Bedfordshire	England	No
14	University of Brighton	England	Yes
15	University of Central Lancashire	England	No
16	Sheffield Hallam University	England	No
17	Leeds Becket University	England	Yes

18	Manchester Metropolitan University	England	No
19	Edinburgh Napier University	Scotland	Yes
20	University of Staffordshire	England	Yes
21	York St John University	England	No
22	Plymouth University	England	No
23	Aberystwyth University	Wales	No
24	Angelia Ruskin University	England	No
25	University of Sunderland	England	Yes
26	Queen Margaret University	Northern Ireland	Yes
27	Lincoln University	England	Yes
28	University of Herefordshire	England	Yes
29	University of Exeter	England	Yes
30	Ulster University	Northern Ireland	Yes
31	University of Wales Trinity Saint David	Wales	Yes
32	Oxford Brookes University	England	No
33	University of West London	England	Yes
34	University of Wolverhampton	England	Yes
35	Birmingham City University	England	Yes
36	University of Gloucestershire	England	Yes
37	Liverpool John Moores University	England	No
38	Glyndwr University	Wales	No
39	University of East London	England	Yes
40	Teesside University	England	No
41	University of Northampton	England	No
42	University of Chester	England	Yes
43	Liverpool Hope University	England	No
44	University of Cumbria	England	Yes

Accordingly, the following step involved the researcher sending a briefly constructed information sheet, accompanying an informed consent email to the academics to forward to their current TMUs, explaining the purpose and importance of this research to their future, with a hyperlinked URL of the survey for their convenience. The third and final step was to keep reminding various contacts of the importance of completing this survey, including sending reminder emails to increase response rates on a week and month intervals (Salant & Dillman, 1994; Fu & Wang, 2020). Although research retrieved through this channel could be influenced by the researcher's own probable bias towards the beliefs prevalent in this field, every effort was made to counter this argument including increasing responses, through experience, by a variety of techniques, including not directly contacting students to influence response rate and choosing variety of respondents profiles (e.g. various universities, representatives from the four countries constituting the UK, and students' year of study, etc.). Following Richardson (2009) survey guidance, the first step in the development of this survey process was to obtain permission from the purposively selected academics in UK HEIs to send the survey through them.

The survey was endorsed by the Association for Tourism in Higher Education (ATHE) in Winter 2018, who sent it out, including a supporting message signed by the ATHE secretariat to their member institutions and the relevant academics. This effort has generated 210 responses, of which 193 were counted as eligible. The remaining 17 did not complete the survey and hence were deemed ineligible. The following subsection focusses on constructs for testing subjective norms within TMUs' survey design (see appendix 3, app. 3.1: survey messages to academics and students, as well as the shortened weblink and QR codes).

5.4.10 The Online Survey: Sample size

Although increasing the sample size in a quantitative study generally reduces the sampling errors and improves its statistical power, in a purposive sampling approach, the more important point is not the sample size, but the purposively chosen population sample (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016) that is believed have the desired knowledge and able to answer the RQs. Indeed, a in mixed method concurrent research design, the researcher's ability to 'creatively combine these techniques in answering a study's questions is one of the defining characteristics of mixed methodology designs' (Tedie & Yu, 2007: 85). especially if it uses purposive sampling for a population of 'particular characteristics' (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016: 3), or expertise. In a tourism setting, Sloan, Legrand & Kaufmann (2014) argue that the size would largely depend on the case and there is no single or agreed formula to be applied while selecting a sample in such a specific purposive nature. Hence, the target for an adequate number TMUs respondents was identified through benchmarking other samples chosen for similar research in this field (e.g. Felisitas, et, 2012) and a consideration of the total TMUs' population in the UK, which was derived from UCAS data and other sources. Accordingly, based on the 44 number of UK HEIs offering undergraduate degrees (BA/BSc) in tourism management at the time of the launch (UCAS, 2018), and an average cohort of 130 (+/-50) the population average was estimated at around 5600. Accordingly, the sample size needed for the survey was calculated based on confidence level of 95% and a confidence interval of 5% (+/- 2% error). The resulting ideal sample size is approximately 360, hence given the actual respondents sample is 210, the confidence calculations show 6.6, instead of the 5%, which is still within the +/-2% error margin.

However, this recommended sample size rule of thumb does not strictly apply to estimation models (Dolnicar, et al., 2014) as the current case is. Accordingly, despite all efforts to be as accurate as possible, this calculation did not need to be strictly accurate as suggested by Agresti & Coull (1998) and recently by Koo & Li (2016). This is especially given the homogenous purposive sampling approach contended earlier here, the specialist characteristics of this TMUs' population and the limited resource available to this research. Moreover, this sample size was further benchmarked against the similar study (Felisitas, et al., 2012) from which one of the main three graduate employability models were used to build the current CF. As an example of a study in similar context table 5.2 demonstrates the benchmarking of this research's sample size and the relevant calculations (see below table 5.2: Survey sample size's benchmarking).

Table 5.2 Survey sample size's benchmarking

Study & Source	**Context**	**Sample Size & Main notes**
Felisitas, et al., (2012:15)	Undergraduate tourism students studying Bachelor of Technology in Hospitality and Tourism (year 3&4). Undertaken in a Zimbabwean tourism HE context but the degree title differed (no management). Hence, not exactly permitting the use of model or sample size.	70
Current Sample **Step1** **UCAS DATA (UCAS 2018)**	Varied course titles and academic levels (e.g. non-specialist courses, below level 6, top-ups, joint honours and international programmes offered overseas at 67 out of these 117 HEIs). Estimated undergraduate tourism course 117-67=50	117 HEIs found with tourism in course in title

2-Population Estimation and final sample size	44 HEIs of these 50 offered tourism management undergraduate courses, hence TMUs, the focus of this research. Given the number of TMUs' at the university of Greenwich was 130 (tourism and hospitality, excluding events), the estimated UK TMUs population in 2018 was: 44*130 (+/-5) =5720-5500, average=5610 Recommended sample: 360 (with 95% level of confidence, confidence interval of 5%/+/-2%) and the actual closing sample of 2010, confidence level was confidence 6.6 (within the +/-20%)	**Final Sample size 210**

5.4.11 The Online Survey; analysis methods

As, the final responses generated from this online survey goes automatically to Microsoft Excel spreadsheet format as a standard in Microsoft Online Forms for surveys, and given that there are some software applications that give more options and analytical sophistication, the resulting documents are then exported for analyses to the widely used software package called Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26. Data cleaning, sorting and coding, is carried out carefully and systematically, before conducting the various tests and statistical analyses.

As the specific tests carried out are explained in more details in chapter 6 that focusses on quantitative data analysis, it is briefly considered here. For example, Ukaga & Maser (2004) suggested that the paired sample t-test is used to examine differences between related or paired samples, such as when the scores or values whose means are to be compared case for case are from the same subject (e.g. reason for choosing to study tourism, based on year of study, generational classification, gender, experience of the industry, etc.). The usual null hypothesis is that the difference in the mean values is zero. A significant difference is found if an alpha level (p-score) is less than 0.05. This test is relevant in this study, as it aims at determining whether

there are significant differences between the rating of importance to various categories of the curriculum content and management competencies, as well as choosing a specific career path in tourism management.

Furthermore, ANOVA (analysis of variance) is relevant in estimating the variance between subgroups of the of target audience, which according to Hair, et al. (1995) is used to assess the statistical significance of the difference between two or more sample means on a single dependant variable. In this, the usual null hypothesis here is that the difference in the mean values are equal to zero. A significant difference is found if an alpha level (p-score) is less than 0.05. Accordingly, ANOVA tests were conducted to for comparisons of means, illustrate the differences in responses between students at different stages of their university degree (first, second and third year) and between those with or without experience in this industry or in other words at varied stages and knowledge of their career (Hair et al., 1995; Richardson, 2009; Tsirkas, Chytiri & Bouranta, 2020).

Last here, the coding and other additional anonymising techniques, were all used with strict confidence, as seen in the following analyses chapters. However, it is important to note some of the measures taken to ensure ethical practice in this research.

5.5 Research Ethics

In addition to reassuring emails and introduction at the start of every interview with academics and industry experts, written consent has also been obtained through the University of Greenwich Research Participation Consent Form, which was signed in advance. Although offices of tourism HR managers and tourism academics were identified earlier in this research as the ideal premises for the semi-structured interviews, many of these two sets of interviews have taken place online via Skype, especially when the aforementioned option proved difficult, but again consent forms were signed, recording permission was obtained, confidentiality was assured and strictly adhered to. At the analysis stage, their details were anonymised, except elements of their position as to demonstrate the relevance of the data generated, based on their expertise.

For the quantitative survey, as mentioned in subsection 5.3.8, pilot testing, formal ethical approval was sought and subsequently approved by the University of Greenwich Research Ethics' Committee with a letter, dated 27th may, 2015 and followed later by a confirming email (see appendix 4). Moreover, although the research investigates the perception of humans, tourism graduates, academics and industry experts are not, unless indicated, considered to be vulnerable adults, the scope of this research neither gathers personal or sensitive data, nor include any third-party involvement. Accordingly, in addition to the fact that neither the survey nor the interviews questions include any sensitive questions (e.g. race, income, family status), both sets of data gathering have been carried out in complete and strict confidentiality and anonymity.

Consistent with the data security and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), 2018), all materials were stored and secured on university computers' network, which provides multiple-factor authentication for maximum security, including secure sockets layer communication,

alternatively known as Hypertext Transfer Protocol Secure (HTTPS) that prevents most common cyber-attacks. The resulting data are also saved on the university's hard drive that is further protected by both its security systems with dedicated IT teams, guarding its safety and integrity.

Finally, regarding the security of information collected using Microsoft Forms for the online survey, while again there is no sensitive data collected, this has also been used through the University of Greenwich, where it requires username and a multiple step sign-in, such as two-steps mobile code and password verifications.

In summary, this chapter firstly reviewed and demonstrated the relevance of the wider research philosophies to tourism research philosophies and methodologies, and then provided a justification of the research design approach of concurrent multi-level mixed methodology. The applicability and specific detail of the selected research methods were then explained, as well as the steps taken to ensure that research ethics were being followed, including the recent GDPR requirements.

6 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

Prior to the actual content analyses, it is important to briefly identify the volume and quality of the data gathered and recap on the methods of data analysis, sampling and coding procedures identified in the above methodology chapter. The qualitative data generated here comprised a total of 23 interviews Of these, 11 were with some leading Tourism Academics' interviewees (ACA) and 12 with some renowned Tourism Industry experts' interviewees (IND). These will be used with added domination number to mark the coded academic or industry interviewee (e.g. ACA1, etc. and IND1, etc.) The interviews were designed to extract the required data from this pool of considerable variety of experts based on the above-identified research aim and objectives and were guided by the research RQs and the CF.As an exploratory study, these semi-structured interviews focussed on the links between industry problems, tourism curriculum and TMUs' employability issues and continued to generate the required data until the point of saturation, where no new theme or codes emerged (Braun & Clarke, 2019). After rigorous checks on the required data, saturation point was reached (Lumsdon & McGrath, 2011) and hence it was deemed unlikely that further interviews would generate any new insights (Juvan & Dolnicar, 2014; Silverman 2010). Therefore, after stopping interviews to pave the way to preparing and analysing the ensuing rich data, a combination of deductive and inductive codes (e.g. Kvale, 1996; Lauri & Kyngas, 2005; Cresswell, 2009; Braun & Clarke, 2019) were built to facilitate the qualitative content analysis. In this, the construction of deductive codes, triggered an inductive process (Berg, 2007) to further categorise the data and allow for the emergence of additional relevant information to this research under the deductive codes (see subsection 5.4.5 in the above chapter 5).

Accordingly, the analyses detailed in sections 6.1 and 6.2 and their resultant subsections are based on the above identified deductive and inductive codes. In this, section 6.1 focuses on

tourism graduates and the industry's perceptions and praxes and section 6.2 focuses on the tourism curriculum's issues. Lastly, section 6.3 presents a summary of the qualitative results, including perception of tourism graduates, career progression and curriculum design issues.

6.1 Tourism Graduates and the Industry

As discussed in the above, data analysed here are organised under the main deductive codes and corresponding themes, developed through the content analysis of experts' perception of TMUs' competencies in relation to the tourism turnover problem, the industry's career progression issues and academia-industry liaison issues, which in turns include issues related to STEs and the wider tourism industry.

6.1.1 TMUs' competencies, perception and the industry's turnover problem

There is a consensus among academics and industry respondents that tourism management undergraduate degrees are perceived poorly in the UK, especially compared to competing general business and management degrees and this view is particularly apparent in the case of major tourism employers. This perception is then attached to tourism graduates, and accordingly, they are often seen as not highly employable.

A research analyst at a tourism research organisation, IND1, explained that from experience, TMUs '*generally*' have a '*positive attitude*' to working in tourism, but there are wider negative perceptions that are more related to '*cultural heritage*'. The latter suggests that this is an unjustified view, by directly stating that major tourism employers *'underestimate the managerial competencies of tourism management graduates*' and that there is '*definitely…. something in the*

air'. Yet, IND1 also indicated that TMUs' positive attitude is more related to certain personality traits (Fabio, et al., 2013) that are more commonly identifiable with those who choose to study for a career in tourism (Papathanassis, 2020) such as enthusiasm, good interpersonal and people skills and the role of educational experience in this. Mirroring the above views on both this positive attitude and the low perception of TMUs and their degree, ACA1 too, suggests that their TMUs study tourism, because they have strong interests in tourism, and this what creates such positivity. The latter also argues the low image about their competencies is unfounded and that the graduates' employability and industry's issues are more related to a negative industry's attitude that stems from a wider societal perception. More explicitly, the latter stated '*there is still an element of snobbery involved in employment*' in the tourism industry.

Moreover, ACA1 further elaborates that tourism '*employers regard themselves as being in a position… to afford the very best'* and this best of graduates in their view is *'not necessarily being from the tourism',* but what in their view *'the more solid academic-based degrees*'. Importantly, ACA1 continued by asserting that one of the main reasons for the low perception and the resulting employability issues is employers lack of knowledge about tourism degrees and graduates. In this light, the latter directly stated that tourism employers '*do not know enough*' about tourism degrees and graduates and concluded that '*they are wrong… employers do not necessarily understand what tourism graduates can offer their particular industry*'. Surprisingly, this has been the main vogue of IND3's arguments too, who represent a major tourism and hospitality employer. Starting with the image of the industry as a career, IIND3 stated '*in general, hospitality and tourism not seen as a very attractive kind of industry*' to the wider pool of graduates and hence may be the reason for the high turnover.

As per tourism graduates' potentials, IND3 added '*it's a good predictor that a person went on'* to acquire '*the more relevant*' competencies by studying tourism management. In this, the latter, illustrates the importance of interests-related attitude by suggesting TMUs are '*willing to work in this sector*', despite its low image, pay and work conditions issues. Moreover, IND3 concludes here, by directly relating this to the turnover problem and the positive potentials of TMUs in this by suggesting, given the opportunity, tourism graduates would '*stay longer*'.

Importantly, IND4 too, with more focus on this emerging generation of TMUs, suggested that this generation of TMUs, in addition to their '*positive attitude'* to career in this industry, have global ethical interests by stating '*they are much more aware of global issues*', while displaying passion for this industry. Similarly, IND7 argues that this cohort of TMUs are suffering an unjustified low perception because of their choice of degree, by stating *'in the old days... tourism degrees suffered from a negative perception, they were the degrees that students who couldn't get into the marketing or finance degrees… and didn't have enough UCAS points, they ended up doing tourism'.* However, in commending both the competencies witnessed and attitudes of TMUs, IND7 added '*I am absolutely 100% sure that that is not the case these days'*.

While this suggests real improvements, it also indicates that this low perception may have been justified in the past. Moreover, IND7 also echoes IND4 commendation to this Generation of TMUs, by suggesting that TMUs ae more interested in and aware of the impact of global issues on this industry, which further consolidates their passionate attitude to resolving global issues, which is in line with TEFI's goals (e.g. Sheldon, Fesenmaier, & Tribe, 2011; Prebežac, Schott & Sheldon, 2016). However, some still argue, including IND1, that despite this positive attitude, whether tourism graduates can do the '*more serious*' managerial jobs, is still questionable. This is particularly interesting, given that IND1 is a recent tourism management graduate and is

successfully performing all those '*serious*' competencies, including the use of high analytical skills to deal with complex statistics. But in the meantime, IND1 agrees with most academics and industry respondents (e.g. ACA1, 3, 6 and IND4, 7, 8 and 9) that UK TMUs need more attention, especially from major tourism employers. Hence, the latter expressed forcefully that most of the major tourism employers are not particularly concerned about TMUs, by stating '*they fill their vacancies internally'* and '*not necessarily look for tourism graduates*'.

As to the possibility that TMUs not being seen as competent enough for such roles, IND1 strongly suggested that it may not be fully due to the curriculum or TMUs attitudes issues, by asserting, the prevalence of the low-image dilemma that is ingrained in the subjective norms of the wider society about anyone associated with tourism, which influence employers' decisions. Moreover, it has also been generally suggested by many academics (e.g. ACA6) and industry experts (e.g. IND4) that there is a link between this low image issue and the industry's senior management being primarily '*non-tourism*' graduates and that this, in turns, is broadly related to a societal low image of tourism as both a study discipline and a career. For instance, while ACA1 relates it to '*a snobbery element*' held by those at the top of the industry, ACA3 states '*a negative perception from employers, ... the big players*'.

Moreover, ACA3 further elaborated that these employers '*do not show enough of interest in communication with academics*' and that this is perhaps one of the reasons academics are not clear *'about their requirements as much as they themselves do not know enough about tourism degrees*' or graduates. Indeed, ACA4 too, in discussing possible reasons behind major employers preferring non-tourism graduates, stated '*a lot of them do not know enough about tourism degrees'.* Moreover, IND2 suggests that it is clear '*the industry doesn't seem to give*' tourism degrees '*any additional recognition*', while in support of tourism graduates' credentials and

attitude, the latter suggests that employing them can improve both the image and efficiency of the industry, by stating '*it would help the industry itself, the turnover*' and give the *'whole sector more credibility'* if they recruit more tourism graduates.

Furthermore, IND2 echoed the aforementioned argument about the low image and the resulting major employers' attitudes (e.g. ACA1, ACA6, IND4), by concluding that the 'status quo' is dominated by this low perception, arguing that such employers would go as far as accepting a 'law degree' graduate, if the only option to recruit tourism one. Similarly, IND3, after giving positive example of their specific major employer being more interested in tourism graduates, agrees that the low image is an issue, not justified and is particularly stronger in 'this country', the UK. In terms of change strategies, the latter simply advocated that major tourism employers, in their graduates' schemes 'prefer' tourism graduates and reaffirmed '*because this is going to be good for them'* and beneficial *'on the longer run*', hence suggested that they should directly state '*preferably a degree in tourism*' degree. Moreover, IND4 too agrees on the low perception and mirrors these views by stressing '*from experience*', this generation of TMUs *'have long-term career plans'* and that they '*have a better attitude*' to career in tourism, especially compared to other non-tourism graduates.

Likewise, ACA4, who is a senior tourism academic and a former HR and graduates schemes leader for a major tourism employer, further strengthen the low image argument, by stressing '*it leads to*' the lack of effective communications in the academia-industry liaison, which according to the latter, is all part of the image problem '*its reputation, of the industry'* and that part of this image issue is that most of the industry's managers are likely to be '*non-tourism graduates*', who '*prefer a general management degrees…as opposed to something as specific as tourism'.* Moreover, the latter, suggested that this is clear in reality by adding *'from my experience, we*

preferred a management degree'. More in line with the above-contended lack of knowledge-related attitude held by major tourism employers (e.g. ACA1, 6 and IND3), ACA4 recapitulated the reasons to not focussing on recruiting tourism graduates is that these major tourism employers '*do not know enough about tourism degrees*' and further elaborated that '*they don't know'* for example that *'we teach sustainability*'.

While this shows lack of interest that further consolidates the negative attitude argument, the last line, to the surprise of ACA4, has been refuted by many in the industry in this research (e.g. IND4, 7, IND8). They simply express (as detailed in the next section) that 'sustainability' is no longer a desired content, especially by private employers, as '*opposed to public policy*' type of employers (e.g. destination management organisations), as expressed by IND8. Significantly here, this broadly expressed lack of interest in sustainability learning by private tourism employers, clearly contradicts with the interests of young TMUs and recent tourism graduates, here and in the literature, including, Deale's (2016) argument for collaborative learning, Pearce & Zare (2017) orchestra model and Fleming, McLachlan & Pretti's (2018) work-integrated learning, which all support the need for sustainability learning and practices to engage this generation and improve the industry through academia-industry.

Accordingly, this strongly consolidates the reactive and opportunistic attitude of some major employers expressed here as well as in the literature's assertion that '*industry practitioners often see academics'* as of *'no or little relevance to them*' (Walters & Ruhanen, 2018:105) and in the meantime further validates Cooper et al.'s (2006) argument that knowledge transfer from academia to the tourism industry is still lacking. The latter also argue that this and the corresponding employers' attitude is causing a market-positioning problem for universities offering tourism, especially being generally unable to convey to industry how their research

services and graduates, as neoliberal products (e.g. Aslan & Kozak, 2019) can address their needs (e.g. Fuchs, 2011; Walters & Ruhanen, 2018).

Likewise, ACA5 explains that as employers continue to recruit non-tourism graduates, this predicament will continue, as non-tourism graduates will learn the skills and *'leave to use it in other sectors*', since those graduates '*know from the beginning about the salaries*' and accordingly '*see it as a stepping stone*'. Meanwhile, ACA5 clearly commends the positive attitude of tourism graduates and from real work experience, by stating, '*what I've seen so far is that people, who love tourism, are the ones who mainly stayed',* adding that tourism graduates *'do not mind waiting 5, 6 or 7 years'* to excel in this industry. Again, this is echoing the literature contentions on tourism companies frequently employing non-tourism graduates with the assumption that they may be better qualified (Dewar *et al.*, 2002; Jiang &Tribe, 2009), who in turns leave after they have gained the experience needed start their non-tourism career. This, while paradoxically, tourism graduates are still seen as less competent (Hjalager& Andersen, 2001; Bibbings, 2005; Chalkiti& Sigala, 2010; Mohd-Yusof, et al., 2020). In terms of advantages to the industry, ACA6, estimates that employing TMUs, because of their attitude, establishes positive future for this industry. Thus, ACA6 mirrors the majority (e.g. IND4, 7, 8 and ACA4), by summing up the industry's low perception of tourism degrees and TMUs in an explicit example that occurred with a current TMU encountering a major employer in ACA6's presence. The latter explained that they had an end-of-year party, to which a senior professional from a major tourism employer was invited, by stating '*one of the students asked*' the tourism employer '*how do you select for your management training programme?'* and surprisingly the employer replied, '*what we do is: first-class-honours…*' then '*the rest'* and that *'all the rest go in the bin*'. ACA6 further elaborates that this employer further expounded '*among the first we go for Oxford, Cambridge',* and again *'the rest goes in the bin*'. Moreover, ACA6 elaborated that when the

employer was challenged by the TMU hypothetically suggesting, '*so if I*' graduate from this modern university, secured a '*2:1*' grade and in tourism, '*I may not even be considered*?', against someone who is '*from one of these'* universities *and perhaps 'in religious or Greek studies?'* and to their surprise, the employer '*said yes, that's right*'. Yet, despite such strong evidence and the corroboration with ACA1 and IND1 '*snobbery*' and '*something in the air*' comments, ACA6 still did not exempt the attitude of some academics in contributing to this dilemma. In this, the latter explained that some academics need to change both their attitudes and approaches to engaging employers, by stating *'there is a tendency among some academics to pat themselves on the back and say what a great job we're doing'* and explains that this is their focus on *'conceptual and intellectual issues'*. Hence, according to ACA6, while this maybe *'academically very interesting',* but in referring to those academics, the latter asserts *'you've got to be prepared …to listen'* to the industry's requirements and deliver, but for many of these *'high-fly academics, that's very difficult to take'.* More on some academics' attitudes to the industry, ACA6 stresses that this type of academics *'see themselves as the experts'* when *'some'* of them *'never worked in the industry in their lives'* and hence detached from the reality and dynamism of tourism.

Still, within directly related to RQ1, the possibility of tourism employers underestimating the managerial competencies of tourism graduates, IND7 who is a senior leader in a major overarching industry-representing organisation and with considerable experience with both sides, explained that one of the reasons triggered the launch of their recent tourism internship programme (see details in the next section), is because of the low perception of tourism as a career graduates by employers. Thus, the latter agrees with the majority that this is part of an inherited societal image, but reckons is improving, by stating '*in the past',* the society *'used to associate working in tourism, as the job you did until you grew up'* and that, in reality this is a clear unjustified perception. Moreover, IND7 explicates that this initiative improves academia-

industry liaison as it aims at helping the industry understand the potential of those graduates, adding that historically tourism qualifications too, were seen '*the degrees that students, who couldn't get into marketing, finance…*' and likes of degree studies, because these *'didn't have enough UCAS points, they ended up doing tourism*'. Then, referring to tourism senior leaders, IND7 argues that part of the image and attitude issue, is that these '*senior executives*' entered tourism '*not necessarily*' with a '*tourism, but the likes of accounting degrees'*. However, attempting to justify this tourism employers' attitude, IND7 suggests that they may '*lack the awareness*' of what a tourism degree entails, '*rather than a purely negative attitude'*. Anyway, continued to challenge the dominance of this low image of tourism degrees and graduates, by stressing that from experience '*sure that is not the case*' and that TMUs are competent, have a 'career *plan*', are *'serious* and that this was revealed frequently in their internship programme, where TMUs '*have been top class*'. Accordingly, IND7 agrees with most here that this perception '*ought to change'*, adding that they encourage their '*members to consider those students*' on their tourism *'graduate programmes*', which also indicates that IND7 is aware of this reluctance, evident in the recent graduate schemes' publications where some major tourism employers, explicitly specify non-tourism degrees.

However, IND7 adds some unexpected scope to this argument, by suggesting that part of this *'problem'* is that their members state that TMUs and recent tourism graduates *'aren't applying*' to their graduate schemes and hence suggest that academia and industry '*need to work on*'. However, despite their substantial efforts in rectifying this predicament, IND7 suggests that HEIs need to look at those programmes' published criteria, not primarily to improve liaison with industry for example, but to 'see if' these criteria are as acting as '*possible deterrent*' to tourism graduates, which is more likely the case. In fairness, IND7, later rectified this argument by reckoning, that currently, from tourism graduates' perspectives '*it looks like…there's no point in*

applying', which still emphasise the need for better academia-industry liaison to improve employers' attitudes, HEIs' understanding and importantly the TMUs' and industry's issues. Consolidating IND3, IND4 and IND5's arguments and IND1 as a practical case of TMUs' positive attitude and high competencies that evidently can improve the industry, IND7 gave a working example by stating that their '*first intern',* who is a female, not only secured *'a job at a major airline' and in 'product pricing',* which according to the latter is *'quiet mathematical type of work'*, but also this recent tourism graduate was *'perfectly capable'* and even more importantly *'she stayed in the industry*'.

Accordingly, while this clearly contradicts with the rationale behind the industry's low perception and some respondents' partial scepticism here (e.g. ACA2 and 8), it indeed consolidates the many other academics and industry respondents' arguments (e.g. ACA1 and 6, IND3, 4, 8, 9), within which tourism graduates are considered competent and the low image is unfounded. Indeed, this working-example clearly consolidates the notion that tourism graduates can potentially reduce the industry's turnover. More interestingly, this example is, inadvertently addresses the gender quandary of this industry that is well reported in the in the tourism literature (Carvalho, et al., 2014; Cole, 2018; Carvalho, et al., 2018a). This is perhaps also related to some of the negative footprints of the market ideologies, where for example, it has been less able to cope with some fundamental bigotries, such as genderism (Gabbard, 2017), as the case here probably indicate. Moreover, recent gender differences in managing projects also undermine such stereotypes and in the context of tourism employment (Chuang & Dellmann-Jenkins, 2010). The latter, for example, found TMUs career intentions to be positively and significantly associated with three factors, of which their gender came first. Given that this industry tend to employ more females (Pritchard, 2014), it does offset such prejudice that also the most frequently desired rewards are career development and other intrinsic dispositions such as care

for the ecological, local and global developments, and less of extrinsic desires, such as financial rewards that usually leads to the turnover as contended in the above literature (e.g. Jiang &Tribe, 2009) and this is the main theme expressed by the majority of interviewees here.

More in relation to RQ1, ACA9 agrees that these issues are orchestrated because there is *'an image about this degree*', which is then attached to tourism graduates and that '*it's a perception that somehow*' affected them, but '*from my experience that is not the case'*. Hence '*they are underestimating'* tourism graduates. Indeed, IND8 too agrees that the image is low and is not justified and, accordingly, calls for actions to rectify it '*it's about turning it around*'. The latter suggest that when major tourism businesses hear the word tourism graduate '*they would expect you to come from a social science, not a business management faculty*' and like ACA1 and 9 suggests that this low image is then attached to tourism graduates, as of '*you haven't got the business acumen, not good with facts and figures, HR…all those key attributes of being successful in management'*. Indeed, IND8 continues, that a tourism graduate is therefore viewed as '*of a more touchy-feely kind of looking at things'* and that these social interests *'like sustainability, CSR*' are less desired in serving their profitmaking mindset. In disproving such notions, IND8 advocates that tourism graduates have these business skills *'but the recognition in the industry'* is needed and to change this perception, unorthodoxly proposes '*a change in title*', as the degree title currently signals '*the type of management, related to how you plan tourism for an area from public policy point of view, not a business management*' to those profitmaking employers. Whether this is a valid proposal, debating these degrees' title is beyond the scope of this research and hence it is left as thought-provoking to further research.

More relevant to the current research, IND9 also agrees that the image is problematic and tourism graduates would be a valuable addition, by stating '*I think the problem lies in perception'* and

'lack of awareness' by employers and relates both to the wider society's low perception of tourism as a field of study and as a career. According to IND9, it is '*absolutely, a perception*', rather than a reality and unwarranted. To prove this, the latter gave an example from recent experience, economics graduate '*who've come straight out, from…*' and stated the name of one of the top two classic universities, then explained '*we've seen that they were not well-prepared*', compared to tourism graduates also encountered.

However, in contrast to most here, ACA2, despite agreeing with the image dilemma, seems to support justification for tourism employers not being interested in tourism graduates and their degrees by stating '*do you need a tourism and hospitality degree to be successful? The answer is no, you do though need a degree, but does it have to be a tourism and hospitality? No'* and further explains that many of the industry professionals that the latter is contact with *'say they'd rather have someone who started at the very bottom when they were 17, 18 and work their way up'.* Hence, ACA2 suggests *'you can make an argument for not having a tourism or hospitality as an undergraduate course*', a view that is shared only with ACA8, who argues that the study of tourism management, may not be relevant at undergraduate levels, by stating '*they would have been better served doing one of the traditional disciplines*' and that *'if they want to continue in more specific terms*', meaning to focus on tourism, they then need to do so at postgraduate levels. While this may sound negative expressed by two academics, it may also be viewed as objective assessments, specifically given the general agreement on the tourism curriculum still having content and design issues (e.g. Ayikoru, Tribe & Airey, 2009; Airey, et al., 2015) and particularly in relation to its fitness for graduates' employability purposes (e.g. Cooper, 2012). In the same section too, a similar view from one of the industry's respondents is only expressed once more by IND6, as they state, '*it doesn't really matter, which degree, more important they have'* one.

However, the main theme here, corresponds with the literature on the low image of tourism degrees (Walmsley, 2012; Castles, 2018) and that tourism employers often recruit non-tourism

graduates as a result of a perception that they lack broader managerial competencies, which reconsolidates the idea that this image dilemma is deeply rooted (Pizam, 1982; Holloway, 1993), where a tourism worker is often regarded as *'uneducated, unmotivated, untrained, unskilled and unproductive'* (Nachmias, Walmsley & Orphanidou, 2017: 135). Thus, the sector often attracts the unprivileged in society, such as immigrants (Baum, 2012), females, the 'young' and novices (Walmsley, 2012: 215). The latter also found that social perception of work in tourism can deter undergraduates from seeking employment in this industry. Even a milder perception of tourism graduates suggests that they mainly graduate with vocational knowledge that can only be achieved through on-the-job learning and not necessarily through an academic degree (e.g. Dale & Robinson, 2001; Cassel, Thulemark & Duncan, 2018).

Furthermore, IND5 also suggests that there is an image problem affecting tourism degrees and graduates '*seen as less*' but criticises this notion by stating '*I don't think so*', this is a '*growth industry*' that needs the right personnel and suggests that for better development, policymakers need do a lot better. Accordingly, IND5 suggests '*the government should invest a lot more in tourism*', especially in '*developing the people who work in the industry…we need people to market*' the products more effectively and that the government should invest in developing programmes to improve the 'relationship between industry and universities' to produce the right graduates. IND10 and IND11, in similar statements too suggest that tourism degrees '*do not have a high status'* and that is due to the low image of tourism itself. While IND10 explained that the society '*think you do not need a degree to work in tourism',* IND11 asserts that tourism employers in turns are '*more dismissive*', especially when they hear the word tourism, whereas the word 'economics' astonishingly to '*many tourism employers',* sounds more 'sophisticated'. But the latter argues that tourism employers '*know the curriculum,* they are likely to *'change their opinion*'. Furthermore, both IND10 and 11, as well as the above-lustrated IND2, 4, 7, 8 and 9, along with most academics, all suggest that tourism graduates, combine their positive attitude

with enough competence for this type and level employment and that the problem is in the lack of employer's awareness. IND10 in this, for example, stress '*having met some tourism students'* the latter was *'surprised at the level and depth of knowledge they have',* adding that most *'tourism employers are not aware of this*', which adds width and depth to the aforementioned assertions. Last here, IND12 too agrees with the majority that the low-image is widespread, but tourism graduates have the positive attitude, competencies and above all, career plans for this industry, regardless. In this the latter, sustained '*definitely ...tourism graduates'* are 'committed' and patient enough to wait *'to climb the ladder',* which to the latter a *'career plan',* adding that evidently *'the plan to them is more important than pay*', but whether they are 'desired' for these roles or there are '*career progression'* opportunities for them, is another matter.

Accordingly, the volume of evidence here is overwhelmingly underscoring the unjustified low perception of tourism degrees and graduates, while consolidating the rational and applicability of the current research aims. Even with some unusual views from ACA2 and ACA8, that seemingly accept the current situation, the majority agree with Baum (2015) assertion that the reputation of tourism as an employer remains in doubt, especially in terms of certain aspects of people management. This, according to the latter is evident in the limited career and progression opportunities it offers to tourism graduates, which sheds some lights as to why HRM dimensions of this industry remained frozen in time (Ladkin, 2011; Baum, 2015), which reveals some reasons to the industry's problems. This further supports this research, particularly in relation to the turnover and skills' gap (Lu, et al, 2016; Stamolampros, et al., 2019) that feeds into low productivity (People 1st, 2019; Kim, et al, 2020) and at this level (People 1st, 2015; Luo, et al., 2018). Moreover, this analysis, combined with those pertinent to the low image, should stimulate further debates on desired improvements and provide HEIs, tourism employers and policymakers

with empirical grounds to act upon, including policies that incorporate the apparent issue of career development opportunities at both the curriculum and industry levels.

6.1.2 Tourism Career Progression Issues

As one of the main problems of the tourism industry, that is frequently cited along with the low pay and poor working conditions, the lack of career progression and development opportunities are seen as problematic and one of the reasons for high turnover in the industry (Ladkin, 2011, 2013; Baum, 2015; Ladkin & Kichuk, 2017; Baum & Nguyen, 2019) and this was reflected in the content analysis of the interview data, which generated the theme of this section.

Baum (2015) found that between 2007 and 2015, the reputation of tourism as an employer remained 'very mixed' due certain persistent issues, of which limited opportunities for growth and development, especially for women and disadvantaged groups prevailed. Unsurprisingly, this is echoed in these findings, with for example IND1 and IND3 stressing lack of *'career roadmaps*', where this industry '*don't have a development*' routes or at least '*do not show'* graduates how to *'start from here'* to progress and *'end up, where and how*' and this is recurrent in the research findings. Moreover, ACA2 also, suggests there is '*something about career progression*' and routes that is *'lacking*' in this industry and importantly the latter relates this also to the turnover problem, by stating a '*graduate wants their career to progress*', hence if employers '*want to hold on*' to them, they need to include, for example '*a 5-year plan'* with specific actions as to where and how. The latter further elaborates, if graduates '*could see the point of staying in an organisation for a longer period'* they need to attract and motivate graduates and hence *'staff retention would increase*'. ACA3 too consolidated this point by stating '*opportunities for growth*' are limited in this industry and that this '*have an impact on*' any

graduate ‘decision to stay within a business’. However, from different perspective, ACA4 somewhat disagree with this, by stating ‘*the beauty’* of working in *‘tourism’* is that ‘*often instead of going straight upwards, you can go across or horizontally*’, which suggests that such routes are at least unclear. Indeed, IND3, while suggesting that ‘career roadmaps’ need to be made ‘*clear, for each role*’ also agrees with ACA4 that there are many other opportunities and that these are ‘sideways progressions’ that needs to be emphasised. While this may be disputed by graduates and some academics, the literature also suggests that career progression ‘can be taken loosely’ Ladkin & Kichuk, 2013: 73), others take a more assertive but pragmatic approach by suggesting this is closely related to the turnover problem and that a strategy of engagement that starts at aligning the curriculum to industry’s requirements (Sheehan, Grant, & Garavan, 2018).

IND4 also agrees that this lack of clarity is an important issue affecting both graduates and the industry ‘in the last 10 years, that's probably one of the most common complaints that’ employers ‘*don't have enough room for progression’*. While IND5 as a heritage SME suggests *‘we've got lots of development opportunities’* that includes ‘being supportive’ and ‘offering training’, argues that perhaps part of the reasons to the turnover is that some ‘*people want to be more mobile*’. This is also mirrored by IND7 *‘it's not as clear as it should be’* and IND8, who agree that the industry ‘*needs to do a better job in career development for the kind of graduates coming through’* and make it clearer. However, the latter suggests that such opportunities are often associated with major employers, but as there are *‘not that many big companies in the tourism industry’, the sheer number of STEs, according to IND8 ‘makes it difficult for career development’* opportunities to be clear or easily communicative.

Still, more forcefully, ACA6 argues that such *‘opportunities aren't often there’* to improve’ graduates’ *‘career’,* which according to the later, working in this industry tends to be *‘a bit of*

dead end' to any graduate and hence the turnover. Moreover, ACA9 similarly stresses '*I don't think there is enough*', but the reason according to the latter is similar to that expressed by IND8, as to the low number of companies that can offer that and puts in a questionable way, by stating '*how many employers they have graduate schemes? or how many of them actually give the opportunity to those who are graduating?'*. Hence, ACA9 suggests that in addition to this industry structural issue, these opportunities are limited too. Moreover, ACA9 further explains that while there may be some 'progression routes', getting into the *'ladder'* is made 'very difficult', by employers requiring fresh graduate to have experience beforehand, a critique that was also mirrored in some literature (e.g. Felisitas, et al., 2012)

However, IND9, as example of an emerging tourism SME, suggests that while this may apply to those traditional employers, 'without a doubt', they focus on career development opportunities that are different and may suit this generation of TMUs more by stating '*we are like the Facebook of tourism, a social media platform*' and hence the opportunities expected to be 'endless'. Moreover, while IND10, was initially not sure about this, the latter reckons it is at least '*not clear*' by comparing with *'banks'* who make career progression clear by specifying to their new recruits *'what to do to go where*', and further consolidates that the tourism industry '*clearly'* has *'an issue with people leaving*' that this is also be related to the lack of emphasis on career development opportunities in the wider industry, due to persistent academia-industry liaison issues, which are explored in the subsection below.

6.1.3 Tourism academia-industry liaison issues

As the majority agree that academia-industry liaison is a major factor in solving the industry's issues, while improving graduate employability, they also concur it is an issue that still needs improving. IND4, for example, suggests improvements to '*the ways we teach the undergraduates*' that should include '*increasing liaison with industry*', and more emphasis on guest-speaking activities (Albrecht, 2012; Lee & Joung, 2017), via alternative routes. These, according to the latter, should include tourism Alumni '*we should bring back those graduates to the university and get them to show their success stories*', which instils 'confidence' in the next generation to help them 'succeed in their chosen field'. While many academics may argue that they are already doing this, many are in agreement that this more still needed. This includes, ACA4., who is a curriculum leader at one of the top-ranked UK Universities in this discipline, stresses that this has proven to be effective, not only in teaching settings, but also proven to build '*positive attitude*' and in the meantime helps TMUs to construct '*realistic career plans*'. Similar arguments were also put forward by more academics and some industry informants such as ACA5, 6 and IND7 and 8 to improve the academia-industry cooperation, through developing more structured programmes to the so-called extracurricular activities.

It is the views of (e.g. IND1, IND3 and IND4) that having sound understanding of the real world is one of the key drivers to the mutual understanding that influence decisions. For example, while IND4 stress that TMUs have the competencies and positive attitude, they argue that there still a need for closer collaboration between employers and HEIs to encourage TMUs to focus more on what the industry requires. Indeed, this would also halt the published criteria by major employer acting as a deterrent to TMUs applying to graduate scheme, as suggested by IND7 and the unjustified perception of lack of competence stressed by IND8, while in the meantime

improves the attitude of some academics suggested by ACA6. Indeed, IND4 argues that this would work both ways, improve the curriculum, while providing the industry with interested graduates that would stay and that this achievable through better engagement with HEIs, as the latter stresses '*if I were one of those tourism companies, if I have a high turnover*', instead of '*blame the university, I would blame my company*'. This lack of effective liaison is contributing to the problem '*we either recruiting completely the wrong people, or so we've got the wrong people in the wrong jobs*'. The latter also mirrors, ACA2 and 6 in that employers should pay more attention to TMUs potential by engaging more with HEIs, not particularly in a 'graduate Scheme' per se, through collaborative apprenticeship.

The idea of recruiting the wrong people too, was agreed upon by most respondent here and perhaps it is more significant, when the criticism comes from the industry itself. For example, IND10, in a clear reference to major graduate schemes *'so to mention business and economics degrees*' in tourism *'graduate schemes, but not mention the tourism degree, is a bit crazy'* to be aiming for the wrong people. While this being in harmony with the literature (e.g. Baum, 2015) assertion of the tourism employers continuing to have negative reputation in people management, as detailed earlier, it also mirrors more literature on employers' lack of effective engagement with academia and preference to non-tourism graduates who tend leave (Jiang &Tribe, 2009). As this may have been understandable at the beginning of tourism in HE (Amoah & Baum, 1997), the same is difficult to comprehend, when the proportion of tourism graduates getting those opportunities (Raybould & Wilikins, 2005) is not increasing still (Cassel, Thulemark & Duncan, 2018).

However, as plans to improve the image through a more comprehensive academia-industry liaison may require longer termed strategic policies, many here suggest opening new channels

with emerging STEs, where HEIs and policymakers collaborate to support them by means of collaborative graduate schemes. While this was more explicitly suggested by IND7, ACA10 also agrees that this may also be facilitated by this generation being more technology savvy and having been born in the knowledge economy (Wilton, 2008; Bastalich, 2010), hence mirroring IND4's earlier argument as per TMUs positive attitudes and global values. This is also in line with the literature, where it is suggested that different types of jobs are constantly created as tourism aligns more with the creative and tech industries (OECD, 2014), where engaging with this type of STEs and indeed other global partners would be made easier (Wiedmer, 2015), as the current generation have a global vision, being insightful and scoring higher IQs (Clark, 2017). Yet, while this clearly signifies the recent literature that the widely available and easily accessible information can enhance graduate employability through new opportunities creation is perhaps one of the positives of neoliberalism (Rademakers, 2005; Asongu & Tchamyou, 2018). However, this does not necessarily improve major tourism employers' attitude to engaging with academia or change their perception of tourism degrees and TMUs, as also evident here.

Thus, engaging STEs with this more technologically savvy generation (Clark, 2017), through some form of collaborative schemes of apprenticeships that are less problematic and resonates with recent literature. This includes Hindle; Pearce & Zare's (2017) music improvisations' industry-based curriculum models, or the reciprocal apprenticeship (Neck & Greene, 2011; Deale, 2016; Milman, 2017), in which tourism educators and their TMUs can engage with industry more, while learning with them to overcomes the lack of practical knowledge of academics and image-related negative attitudes of some employers.

Moreover, IND5 is also positive that through better liaison with HEIs, the industry would gain more, by stating *'if tourism companies'* liaise more with HEIs and recruit *'more tourism*

graduates', who have the skills and positive attitude, as the latter recently observed '*should help reduce their turnover*'. While in contrast with IND4, ACA2 and ACA6 apprenticeship alternatives, the example drawn by ACA11 resounds the better academia-industry liaison, and in more harmony with IND5 assertion to improve this liaison, based on the rationale that '*universities need to develop the right people for employment*' and employers '*need to help universities'* by communicating, for example, '*the changing skills' requirements'*. Echoing this assertion, IND8, whose overarching role includes '*representing the industry's voice'* to and '*lobbying the government on behalf of the tourism industry'* to bring accelerate *'positive changes to government policies'* that supports the *'growth of the UK tourism industry*', views this academia-industry liaison as pivotal to their agenda and agrees that collaborative graduate schemes with STEs is a good idea. Hence, akin to IND3, IND4 and 7, IND8 stressed that '*the skills gap*' and labour '*turnover*' problems relate to graduate recruitment and that this would dramatically improve through better academia-industry liaison, where the onus is on major employers to do more (Walmsley, 2017: 7; Luo, et al., 2018) and particularly in the form of modern eHRM and the more communicative e-recruitment practices (Johnson, Stone & Lukaszewski, 2020). This is also echoing the literature, where the value of synchronising the learning with industry (Sheldon& Fesenmaier, 2014), to alleviate the '*hollow cliché'* in universities' frequently claiming that they prioritise the production of *'work-ready graduates'*.

ACA7 too, argues that industry need to engage with HEIs and communicate better in making the required skills clearer. A view that is clearly mirrored by ACA3's experience in liaising with tourism employers to for example facilitate work experience for their TMUs, as the latter argued despite their efforts and the relevant opportunities available, none of the tourism employers contacted did *'confirm any job whatsoever*', and '*I know people who don't have a travel and tourism degree, got the job*'. Hence, better liaison to improve the persistent trusts issues between

both sides (Cooper, Shepherd, 1997; Ankrah & Omar, 2015), particularly in relation to the relevance of academic research to the industry (Walters & Ruhanen, 2018), while educating tourism employers to use the appropriate methods of recruitment selection (Petrova, 2015).

Moreover, ACA11, who has considerable experience dealing with some employers, agrees that while 'you've got this perception' somehow, while many tourism graduates are highly skilled, a view that is also mirrored by ACA10, as they place the onus more on HEIs by stressing employers need and take steps to liaise with them. While this is, again, corresponds with other academics (e.g. ACA2 and ACA6) and industry (e.g. IND11) is mirroring the literature on many fronts, including the attitude of some academics major employers mindsets in, for example, being led by pure accountants who see employees merely as a cost (Walmsley, 2017), which is more evident in tourism (McCarthy, 2016; Fleming, McLachlan & Pretti, 2018).

Accordingly, the volume of evidence here, is reminiscent of how enormous, still, the task of bridging the gap between tourism academics and this industry in this context. Indeed, while some major tourism employers continue to lower their risks by opting for what is in their view the safer option of non-tourism graduates and accordingly refrain from effective communications with HEIs, the latter are none the wiser as suggested by ACA11. As this relationship between tourism academics and employers has historically been characterised by a 'lack of trust' (Cooper & Shepherd, 1997), it is evident here this still contributes to a lack of academia-industry knowledge transfer contended by Cooper et al. (2006). While Barnes, Pashby & Gibbons (2006) and Fidgeon (2011) reported some improvements and workable initiatives respectively, the current research and recent literature indicate there still evidence to suggest that the deciding factors of effective communications and trust still lacking (Ankrah & Omar, 2015). Though it has been argued here (e.g. IND1, 4, 5, 8, 9 and ACA1, 4, 5 7) that industry need to do more,

others (e.g. ACA6, 11) and recent literature also highlights that academics too need to improve their communication with industry. They need to produce a more meaningful research, or at least one that is better communicated to and understood by the industry, they cannot continue to undertake research '*for other academics*' and instead illustrate '*the relevance*' of their research to employers (Walters & Ruhanen, 2018: 105).

In a similar light, IND6, despite affirming that a better academia-industry liaison is still needed to help students '*put a foot in the real world*', placed the responsibility on HEIs. The latter explained that despite having good relationships with a specific university, they've never been approached to contribute to curriculum development and that the reason is '*it's just not done, it's academic, it has to come from the university*'. IND10, also suggest the academia-industry liaison needs improving, as they do communicate in terms of work experience '*but in curriculum development not as yet, but we are willing to*' and argues that '*there still need for more*' academia-industry liaison and especially from HEIs '*to raise the profile of their degrees'* and that tourism employers, as a result of this lack of communications '*don't know enough about it*'. While ACA10 also suggests that the low image dilemma, contributes to this lack of effective academia-industry liaison, by stating '*no bridge in communications between the industry, students ... and the higher education providers*'. Indeed, IND11 too supports this idea of HEIs needing lead this process, by arguing that industry managers are busier and while admitting that most employers '*do not know enough about tourism degrees*', the latter states '*involvement in curriculum development with HEIs, not yet'* and the burden is on *'universities'* having to approach the industry, *'because how many meetings I've got today?, I'm busy here, juggling different bowls, there is little time for anything else*'. While, understandably academics may disagree with this, it is suggested here that based on the widespread of the above contended market ideology and the dominance of its associated opportunistic mindset, the onus maybe more

on HEIs to improve their research impact and communicate its relevance to employers' more effectively, afford academics some time to ensure this, while policymakers can also pressurise industry to act similarly.

Accordingly, the data here shows there are both opportunities and obstacles to improving academia-industry liaison for the benefits of all parties, a paradox that is shaped by the complexities of the phenomena, difficulties to measure or quantify its varied aspects and the conflict of interests, mainly in relation to HEIs' and major employers. There are always differing and conflicting views, for example, while IND11 stressed 'there is still a need for closer collaboration between employers and universities' caused by the low '*image issue*' and that these issues '*can be resolved through better collaboration*', IND7's overall assessment is that a better future is predicted, but via '*the quality of tourism graduates coming through.* Hence, the latter suggest this would impose '*changes in perception of how the industry sees tourism degrees',* hence not as a direct improvement to the academia-industry liaison, but improvements to the curriculum and perhaps policy pressures.

However, IND8 provides a more balanced view that the onus on both academia and industry and that this would be helped by the already witness qualities of new cohort of TMUs, but again in partial agreement with IND7 and 11, IND8 stated, '*universities need to show businesses how their degree has changed*' and '*industry also need'* to be *'going to universities and explaining what the kind of skills they require*'. This is remarkable, because the general atmosphere, at least in the tourism academia (e.g. ACA6 and academics 'patting themselves on the back' metaphor), is that liaison with employers has improved and that employers are largely aware of the relevance of their tourism management degrees, the quality of their recent graduates. Moreover, IND8, also

adds '*there need to be more liaison*'. In this '*universities*' need to take the initiative and industry then '*do its job, not just giving some students a placement*', but to show effective cooperation.

However, more interestingly, IND9 and other STEs' positive assertions (e.g. IND10, 12) are also mirrored by many academics (e.g. ACA11), which suggest a better career prospects, or an alternative route for TMUs to explore (Pittaway & Thedham, 200) opportunities with STEs, particularly those tech related. Yet, they need support in terms of provisions and training from academia and policymakers (e.g. Dewhurst, Dewhurst & Livesey, 2007; Milman, 2017; Fleming, McLachlan & Pretti, 2018), as further explored in the next subsection.

6.1.4 Academia-industry liaison with STEs

With reference to the argument raised by IND4, 6 and IND9, ACA11 also suggests HEIs and their TMUs need to focus more on STEs, because they would have a better chance not only securing a job, but also progressing there. Hence, the latter firmly suggests to TMUs '*don't go into a big pot… a large company even though you think that might be better*' and instead '*go to an SME that is really active in what they do in the area that you want , because you'll be more valued*'. Likewise, ACA4, which is perhaps more interesting given that until recently they worked for a major tourism employer recruiting and training graduates, argues that there are plenty of 'sideways progression' that are more available mainly with STEs '*small tour-operators*' and hence these where academics and TMUs should turn to. IND7 as well states that their recently launched internship programme '*is sort of partnership with universities to try and promote all of that to our industry members*' and agrees with the idea of collaborative graduate

schemes among STEs to '*come together and make a graduate scheme*' but argues that they '*will probably need help'* and suggests that this should come through HEIs.

Likewise, IND8 stressed that the bigger number of tourism businesses are STEs and therefore need creating '*development programmes*' with HEIs and policymakers help. As SME, IND9 too, suggests a positive future for tourism graduates, with STEs, who are 'eager' to collaborate and have 'more opportunities', they are willing '*recently we have started to be invited to speak to students and lecturers, this is a new thing for us ... it gives us some insight into what these students are learning*'. The latter added that they didn't 'know enough', about tourism degrees and graduates and relates this to slow processes from HEIs '*whether it's to do with red tape or anything*', but '*our perspective, it's more fun'* to engage with universities. The latter also acknowledges the TMUs employability problems by stating, *'I'm invited to speak on this recruitment problem',* at HEI and will be emphasising '*a job in tourism is not necessary, what you might have previously considered*'. IND10 too supports the idea of engaging more and help STEs, by stating '*they still have not worked out a proper…*program for graduates' and that they need to be 'supported' through HEIs collaborating with the relevant policymakers, which is in harmony with similar suggestions by IND7 and IND8 in the above. This is, also in line with recent literature, including the assertion that this can potentially tackle the skills mismatch (Slonimczyk, 2013), the two-way collaboration of work-integrated learning (Seethamraju, 2012) and successful STEs programmes in Australia (Jennings, et al., 2015), and in some non-tourism cases in the UK (Allen & Newman, 2016), which could be replicated in a tourism context.

Even more relevant to tourism as a profession in search for identity (Jennings, et al., 2015), concluded that these educational philosophies that emphasise social interaction and real world learning, would provide a solid platform for profession-building processes, through academia-

industry liaison that in turns enhances graduate employability. Indeed, Allen & Newman (2016) case studies of internship programme through collaboration with some UK STEs, found that this generated compelling positive results and hence concluded that the barriers between the virtual world, universities and businesses have been raptured in a positive sense. However, a warning comes from the literature too, where HEIs have been noted to display a rush to an overly vocational curriculum design and hence such short sidedness to immediate employer's requirement, combined with emphasis on the techniques appropriate to major organisations and traditional employment (Hindle, 2007; Deale, 2016) may create a rather an overly specialised curriculum that major employers themselves disapprove, as evident in some recent graduate schemes. This further illustrates the persistence of wider liaison constraints between academia and industry and according to the current data, this is explored further below.

6.2 The Tourism Management Curriculum: content and design issues

Following from the above section and based on the earlier identified themes, this section focusses on analysing data related to the UK tourism management curriculum. Hence, these are analysed under the following 6 main thematic areas that emerged on this topic through the content analysis to responses on the curriculum's 6 main areas of content and design. These are respondents' views on generic management content, industry-specific managerial competencies, entrepreneurial and enterprising content, tourism-specialist knowledge, career planning and extracurricular activities.

6.2.1 Respondents' views of the generic management content of UK tourism degrees

In this part, most academic and industry respondents agree that the broader management competencies, such as deeper knowledge of finance, accountancy and HR is more important, as a curriculum content, to preparing entry-level managerial than tourism-specific skills and knowledge. However, while some academics, understandably, argue for the tourism-specific content, less industry respondents agree. ACA1, for example, asserts that they do recognise the importance of the broader management competencies and knowledge to the future of their graduates and therefore stresses that their tourism management degree teaches 'management' at a very good level. ACA1 summed it all up by claiming that their tourism degree is in essence a general *'management degree with a tourism flavour'* and accordingly claimed *'it competes with any other similar kind of degrees'* adding *'what we are offering are skills development and those skills are general and transferable'*, including *'…HR…business management'*, it is detailed that makes it similar to *'a business administration degree'*. The rationale behind this content is, latter continued to assert, is to widen the graduate's horizon, which is reminiscent of literature arguments to improve and justify its existence in HE, tourism curricula and academics need to broaden the managerial gaze in HE tourism (Airey, et al., 2015).

Interestingly, despite being a research analyst for a well-known research organisation in this field, IND1 thought that the content of this specific curriculum was not detailed enough and not exactly industry-informed in terms of certain management competencies, as will be further explored below. This theme of emphasis on the broader management content has been repeatedly affirmed by more industry respondents, however the size and nature of the business is a clear fact in such preference as would be argued further below under tourism-specialist content. In other words, while many in the industry, specially major employers and those with overarching

roles, call for a more focus on the broader management competencies within the tourism curriculum (e.g. Finance and HR) and less of the tourism-specific knowledge (e.g. Sustainable Tourism), some academics still, understandably, defend such content. This is perhaps as part of defending their positions or seeking respect for their work (Pearce, 2005), or between academics' notion (Walters & Ruhanen, 2018), but morer likely in line with the collaborative learning (Dale, 2016), the orchestra model of Pearce & Zare (2017) and the work-integrated learning of Fleming, McLachlan & Pretti (2018) that requires sustainability content.

With specific reference to the broader management content, IND1 stressed that TMUs do not study the more '*serious*' modules such as '*business finance and accountancy…in enough depth'* and claims that other business graduates know more *'how to do a specific calculation with specific software'* and can better '*work with specific metrics'*. This is quite significant, especially expressed by a recent tourism management graduate who is currently performing at such a level. However, IND1 later suggested that the tourism curriculum is improving by arguing that their recent investigation to the curriculum that tourism graduates started to 'learn enough' of this content and therefore they can be considered for the *'more managerial, office-based roles'*, but stressed that this should be *'only at entry-levels'*. Thus, it may be conceivable to employ tourism graduates in these roles, but states 'it's *not necessarily a huge problem'* and that it all depends on the specified *'target list of skills*' required by the major tourism employers. Now, while IND1's suggestions may seem sympathetic with tourism graduates, they in the meantime cast doubts over the preparedness of tourism graduates through the current curricula. Indeed, IND1 made such doubts clearer, by stating there is *'a discrepancy'* between what students learn and the '*reality'* of the workplace requirements, drawing the example of their own writing skills as a tourism graduate. In this the latter states *'the writing, I learned on the tourism curriculum… my manager always tells me; stop it's too academic tone*' and accordingly suggests there should be

a better *'link between businesses and universities'* to improve the curriculum, as universities *'do not exactly*' develop the required skills that employers need. However, the latter stressed that tourism employers too need to do more to improve their communications with HEIs, by stating *'universities are giving more time'* and are *'trying more to connect with businesses'*, where *'businesses are focused on their own immediate needs of productivity and performance'.*

Indeed, IND1 continued by explaining the low perception of tourism degrees that from their applied market research '*holding a degree is not a priority*' in employers' recruitment. Yet, the latter rationalises why tourism employers do not specify tourism degrees 'it's different when it comes to the recruitment process …having a tourism degree *doesn't necessarily mean you are creating a critical mentality…qualifications and grades play a low to medium-level role'* in employers recruitment decisions and that it '*depends on the part …of the tourism industry*' they need. The latter explains that for employers it is different, in this they *'look for the best*' regardless and sums up the weaknesses of the tourism curriculum to 'lacking *depth in* ***analytical*** **skills'** and added '*having the tourism degree does help you understand the industry'* and it might be relevant for some sort of consultancy roles, but does *not necessarily mean possessing the 'level of analytical skills I now know*'. In defending tourism graduates, IND1 suggests that the employability of tourism graduates will depend largely on their 'personality' and positive attitude, but not specifically on the curriculum content. Moreover, the latter argues that this generation of TMUs have more of what is '*needed at senior levels*' such as '*developing business strategies*, they *are not less in terms of ability*', but the curriculum needs to improve. IND3, similarly argued that *'the tourism curriculum should give a bit more on areas, like finance'*. IND4 too, who is a an authoritative professional in HR and talent acquisition stated '*it's the usual stuff*', meaning the broader management competencies that still needs to be further emphasised within the UK tourism management curricula, adding '*it has to be critical*

thinking…communication is absolutely critical…negotiation skills' and with an even firmer pronouncement, the latter added '*change management*' content and practice as a priority. However, IND4 specified that '*leadership skills*', would be '*difficult to ask for*' at this stage '*because until you're actually doing it*' it would be 'hard to prove' or establish in a fresh graduate. Accordingly, IND4 thinks that the challenges of managing change in an industry that changes quickly is 'critical' and that this should include subtopics such as 'crisis management', as well as 'everything' from dealing with 'an external influence' to what course of actions is taken when the 'unexpected' occurs, which according to the latter is 'quite frequent in this industry'.

Indeed, this is echoing the many literature on change and crises management, where the tourism as an industry and individual organisations are more susceptible to sudden crises that can have devastating impacts on all stakeholders involved. Recent literature provides clues that enable tourism organisations to respond to such disruptive changes through resilience mechanisms that include processes of routine transformation and resource allocation with minimum disruptions (Jiang, Ritchie, & Verreynne, 2019). Such disruptive change ranges from political reforms, including Brexit (Pappas, 2019), natural disasters, epidemics, and terrorism (Santana, 2004; Jiang, Ritchie & Verreynne, 2019), to mismanagement and complicity, with the recent collapse of Thomas Cook collapse the heightened example in this case (Kollewe, 2019), such tactics and processes needs including in the curriculum through applied academic research combined with consultation with the industry.

Both IND7 and IND4 stress the importance of the broader digital skills (e.g. professional SM interaction, tracking, transacting and online security) are '*real strength*' and that fortunately, as this according to IND4 '*the first true digital natives*' group entering the workplace, '*born into it*' and therefore it should be integrated into their curriculum. Although being exposed to the latest

technologies does not necessarily mean that they possess all the skills to manage and strategically lead the tourism industry, a digital focus in tourism curriculum is projected to achieve this (Shariman Razak & Noor, 2012; Adeyinka-Ojo, et al., 2020). However, IND4 reemphasised '*the ability to manage change*', being the most '*striking*' skillset in this industry at any time, while agreeing with some employers in valuing such broader management content. Inadvertently concurring with this industry's assessment of the current UK tourism curricula, ACA7, was direct to suggests that they do not think their tourism management modules have '*enough depth*' in terms of the broader management learning, especially compared to general business and economics degrees. ACA7 stated *'we actually send our students to the business school for some of their management training*'. Hence, it is worth pointing out that tourism curricula, in this case, not being in a business school, giving conflicting signalling message to employers as to what a tourism management is and what it develops. Indeed, ACA7 has further elaborated that their programme is not under the business school and that their TMUs 'effectively do a joint-degree', where their main programme's focus '*tends to be more on policy…sort of planning policy, sociological approach*' and that their management dedicated part is taught in liaison with the Business School.

Echoing IND8, this is a clearly classic example that illustrates one of the reasons that maybe causing the low perception of the tourism management degrees, being under different schools, while their contents varied depend on the interests and resources available to academics. Indeed, ACA8 too, argues their view of tourism '*from largely a sociological position',* and stresses that *'tourism as a context for study'* does not necessarily *'have to be utilitarian in scope*'. This discrepancy, especially in academics' view of tourism, further consolidates the negative image issue raised earlier by IND8 that employers may rightly hold about TMUs not being able to manage a profitable business for productivity and profitability, but have a good idea about public

policies, including sustainability and CSR, which is in line with IND1 and ACA2 arguments that they may not be able to do the serious work.

As per the literature, this belongs to the historical development of tourism as an industry and as discipline in HE. It originally focussed solely on sociology of development, such cultural impact (Tribe, 2010; Wood, 2018). However, continuing in this frame as discipline in today's HE encounters the neoliberalism forces of productivity and KPIs, it is deemed to understandably suffer from a crisis of identity representation (Fletcher, et al., 2017). However, IND5, as a representative of a visitor attractions company, unsurprisingly argues more for the customer-facing skills, criticised in the above. Indeed, IND5 states '*what we look out for in a fresh graduate*' for an entry-level managerial job is '*people skills first and foremost*', which is likely because of the nature of the business that IND5 manages being less a not-for-profit organisation, compared to a major privately owned travel company. Moreover, the latter explains that their desire for people skills means '*good communications, positive attitude'.* IND5 argues that this generation of fresh graduates is *'much better prepared*' compared to previous ones and but only lacking 'experience' of actually '*managing… doing the job*' and therefore suggests improvements to the current broader management modules by including more activities that involve employers to give them opportunities to gain the necessary experience while studying.

Relatedly, IND7 mirrored most of the aforementioned industry respondents, by specifically suggesting '*more in-depth finance'* and *'digital learning*' to be added and in the meantime resolutely added '*less of sustainability*' content. In justification, IND7 explained that although '*I would say understanding sustainability is important'*, it should be '*interwoven within the curriculum*', rather than '*trying to produce*' too many '*sustainable tourism experts*', as to avoid '*over saturating the market*' of graduate employment in this area. This is fascinating, given the

real demand for sustainability content comes primarily from TMUs, but not from employers and hence a better understanding to their mindset requires better collaboration with HEIs. Moreover, IND7 stressed that sustainability then '*should be a choice if you want to specialise in that*' and suggest that the main reason for employability issues '*is very often a lack of financial understanding…the broader management skills such as HR…digital learning*' and concluded as much as the tourism industry, especially major employers '*need to know more about the value of tourism degrees*' and although it is the responsibility of both sides, IND7 indicates that the onus is more on HEIs to rectify this.

Nevertheless, STEs are offering some promising alternatives to tourism graduates and the curriculum they study, as IND9, who's an example of the pool of modern tech and unorthodox STEs, firmly contends that '*since founding the company and setting up the team, we have recruited people from tourism background'*, whether this is for '*marketing* or *management*', and found this to complement their '*tourism-specific'* skills needs, which also suggest that tourism graduates have, according to the latter, developed both the broader and tourism-specific competencies. Moreover, IND9 further explains that in recruitment 'we look at the needs' and prefer UK qualified, '*those who understand tourism*' and are '*tourism graduated…these people already have the tourism qualification, … the theory, the knowledge*', adding that '*tourism is a people business*' and reckons the current cohort of TMUs are more likely to possess the desired '*interpersonal skills'…I'm sure current students…have this all day long…it's a huge advantage'* to recruit tourism graduates. Moreover, the latter reemphasises that support is required to these unorthodox STEs as important for the TMUs future. This also indicates to HEIs and policymakers that they may finally have an industry that prefers, hires and nurtures tourism graduates, but needs some support (e.g. IND5, 9) and this is also evident in the literature (Holden & Jameson, 2002; Ball, 2005; TA, 2019) with more recent literature suggesting despite the

government set out to support STEs in this, these policies has not been operationalised or well-executed, as some STEs expressed their concerns here about not being able to compete with the larger ones (Ball, 2005; Page, et al., 2017).

In the same context, ACA10 too, despite arguing it is covered to a high standard in their particular curriculum, acknowledges that the broader management content needs improving in the wider tourism curricula context, by stating '*there are institutions,* who delivers the *'best practice'* in this but others who probably, need help with that and haven't moved as fast with the times in their curriculum development, especially '*making sure it reflects the dynamic needs of the industry'*, especially in the depth of the broader management content. Accordingly, ACA10 suggests 'we need to improve the management modules, because we are management degrees', which need to concurrently '*meet the benchmarks'*.

In this, making sure topics such as 'organization studies, managing people, marketing…accounting and business research' modules are up to the required standard. Moreover, ACA10 adds that in final year, focus should be on 'strategy modules' coupled with the relevant tourism-specific content '*all set, in context'*. However, unsurprisingly, IND11, as a tourism SME stresses 'communication skills is the most important managerial competency', they need and value at this specific company and further elaborates that being able to both 'talk to and manage people', adding 'personality traits' are the essential competencies to this business. Although IND11, suggests 'good command of the broader managerial competencies such as HR' is important to support a successful manager, IND11 argues that the current UK tourism management curricula 'already' contains 'enough' of both the broader and industry-specific managerial competencies expected.

However, IND12, mirrors a few views here, especially the assertion of IND6 on experience being the most desired aspect in a fresh graduate, by stating '*the first thing you look at is experience…then personality, attitude*', followed by hard skills, such as 'verbal and written communications' and added 'qualification and grades come last' and as 'added bonus' suggesting better academia-industry liaison to support work experience rather than a specific content, which is in line with the above suggestions from IND5 and ACA6. This is also mirroring some employability literature (Mason, Williams & Cranmer, 2009; Artess, Hooley & Mellors-Bourne, 2017). Mason, Williams & Cranmer (2009), for example, found that curriculum-led structured work experience, involving tourism employers has positive effects on graduates' ability to both find and secure employment at the desired level and that many relevant employability skills are best learned in workplaces rather than in classroom settings. Moreover, McCulloch (2013) assertion that work experience is key to meaningful employability development and that this can potentially improve the image of HEIs and their degrees simultaneously (Eurico, Da-Silva& Do-Valle, 2015).

6.2.2 Respondents views on industry-specific management content of tourism degrees

There was a variation of views between academics and industry respondents, as well as within each subgroup as to what tourism-specific management skills are and how they differ. However, the widely held view is that this is probably less important than generic management content, especially from an employability perspective and given the low perception of the degree. For example, ACA2 states, 'tourism is viewed as a narrow field' and hence this may not be perceived well by the industry and IND7 see too much of tourism-specific learning, can be restrictive as 'it produces too many specialists…sustainability experts' that are not all needed. However, ACA1,

supports the continuation of teaching tourism-specific management, but invariably alongside the broader management knowledge, and states, *'tourism is an industry like any other, need specialist skills, but also need, predominantly the more general managerial graduate-level skills*'. With a more critical view, IND2 also agrees on a combination of both generic and tourism-specific managerial competencies, but critically overlooked both sets as determinants in the required managers. Instead, IND2, in line with literature (e.g. Neal, et al., 2012; Fabio, Palazzeschi & Bar-On, 2012, Fabio, et al., 2013), argued that the more natural personality traits come first and that no matter what's included in curriculum '*there is the person who can address things*' and accordingly put them in order of priority, *'I would say personal characters first, then general competencies, i.e. marketing, HR …*' and '*third is if you do have knowledge of tourism and how it operates, that's even better*' but 'you can learn that on the job'.

Hence, the latter appears to be advocating that this would be an added value, but not a requirement, which is clearly echoing the major employers. preference as expressed by, for example IND1 and IND6, but in the meantime in contrast to IND3, IND5 and IND12 who prefer tourism-specific management context and those that are initiated at the curriculum levels before entering the world of work. One of those respondents that values tourism-specific knowledge and explicitly requires it in TMUs is IND3 but combines this with the right attitude. Hence, IND3's argument is that this is a specialist industry that needs a specialist pool of graduates, who have the attitude and intention to accept work conditions and hence remain useful and truthful to this industry. IND5, too did emphasise that they would prefer those with tourism-specific management knowledge, especially for tourism marketing activities '*We would want more specialisms, so in our marketing, travel, trade tourism…, I wouldn't be looking at general stuff*'.

While this may correspond with some specialisation literature, which McGladdery & Lubbe (2017:327), call the 'grey literature', it makes some academics fixated on the narrower skillsets for their students' instantaneous employment needs (Busby & Huang, 2012; Huang & Turner, 2018) and hence contradicts the widening to the managerial gaze argument by Airey, et al., (2015). Hence, coincides with the aforementioned literature on major tourism companies frequently employing non-tourism graduates with the assumption that they may be better qualified, possessing those broader competencies, as any graduate would easily learn these industry-specific specialisms through on-the-job CPD training (Chalkiti & Sigala, 2010).

Accordingly, such paradox, agrees with the literature on the recurrent disparity of understanding between employers and undergraduates' expectation of the skillset that makes a graduate employable (Tibby, 2012). Indeed, a paradox of expectations that concurrently exists among tourism employers themselves (Eldeen, et al., 2018: 963), which is further consolidated here, centres around specialised versus generic skills. Hence, this perhaps gives the dualistic approach (Joppe & Elliot, 2015) that aims at finding a balanced combination of these in curriculum content. Nonetheless, IND6 and IND7 presented a similar argument that they would be more interested in the generic management skills and personality traits combined (Neal, et al., 2012), rather than industry-specific knowledge. For IND6, the most important managerial competency, if to be involved in developing a new tourism management curriculum is '*personnel training… HR'*. adding '*in a manager, your most important thing is to manage people… understand how to get the best out of people*' and unsurprisingly, IND6 elaborated that they wouldn't only focus their search for entry-level managers on tourism graduates and that '*we would be looking at experience with people*', which indicate that they would be open to take anyone who has experience in manage people, regardless of their qualification '*is not the priority*', even if it was

a tourism degree with an improved HR content. However, IND6 also mentioned that such experience also includes those gained while studying.

Perhaps more interestingly, when IND6 stressed on research skills '*they also have to be inquisitive enough to want to find out*' more about what is included and required in the industry. While, this may seem contradictory, it perhaps indicates an advantage to tourism graduates, who show enough interest and *inquisition* by investing their time, money and efforts to study for a career in this industry and this clearly coincides with IND7's assertion of their positive attitude that made some TMUs so successful on the latter's internship programme. However, opposed to IND5's argument that requiring leadership is step too far at this stage, IND6 reemphasised that fresh graduates should show '*leadership*', in *apply*ing the '*practical skills*' they learnt. Perhaps more importantly is the latter's assertion that these skills do not have to be tourism-specific, and that 'people skills' are valued regardless of the source '*not where you've worked or what you studied*'. According to the latter, the best candidate, should be able to apply their '*transferrable skills*' in the relevant context., where '*tourism companies are no different*' to those financial institutions in desiring for example economics' graduates, because they have their own *'finance departments*'. Hence, IND6 summed it all up by indicating that they'd 'be open to recruit anyone' and it doesn't matter what their degree is '*it's how they come across*', which clearly consolidates their argument for the broader management competencies. Contrasting with the likes of IND3, IND5 and IND10. For example, IND10, suggests that the tourism curriculum 'should automatically' focus on the tourism-specific management skills, especially marketing and field-specific research skills. Herein, IND10, clearly prefers tourism graduates due to their tourism-specific knowledge and attitudes by voluntarily adding '*If you recruit a graduate from the industry*' referring to tourism graduate, it would be '*better'* for the industry, because such graduate *'understands the industry and it is their ambition*' whereas a non-tourism graduate for

example *'a business graduate',* may have some skills to *'do the job up-to a point, but it might not be their dream job*', hence they may not perform or be as productive as tourism graduates.

Accordingly, IND10 suggest that these are likely to leave, constituting loss of HC, which again corresponds with many in the literature (e.g. Jiang & Tribe, 2009). Hence, IND10 further consolidated their preference to the inclusion of tourism-specific knowledge and context management within the tourism curriculum which is useful on the longer run. IND10 conclude on this by rationalising that this way, tourism employers would acquire *'more suitable people'* and hence should *'mention the tourism degree*' in their recruitment criteria. Mirroring these IND11 views, but somewhat differently, IND12 as a tourism SME representative, stressed on their desire for tourism-specific curriculum content, that is more a management-related, rather than purely tourism-specific knowledge, by stating that they '*need some specialisation'* including management modules that are more focused on tourism-specific contents, adding '*if you are planning to work'* in this industry, specialism in this field is required, '*perhaps in the final project*' . While this suits STEs, as well as those in the less private tourism (e.g. heritage) and academics may say that this is exactly what they encourage their TMUs to do, however, this is not exactly mirrored by major tourism employers that is evident in for example ACA6, IND1 and IND8 in the above. Hence, this may reaffirm the positivity and the alternative opportunities presented by STEs to both liaise in curriculum development and employ tourism graduates.

Given the recent collapse of the iconic Thomas Cook, one of these major tourism employer, coupled with the uncertainty of political reforms, such as Brexit, tourism graduates, as the example of IND9 and ACA10's indicate, may have to focus more on STEs. Indeed, this is also in line with recent literature (Holden, Jameson & Walmsley, 2007) assertion that trends are shifting towards the importance of STEs in the real graduate employment and the all-familiar

policy rhetoric. In this, academics are urged to better prepare their future graduates to working in STEs (Woods & Dennis, 2009) and that this, in the meantime can potentially restore the importance of sustainability in the tourism curriculum, an aspect that is threatened by the domination of the neoliberal ideologies (Slocum, Dimitrov & Webb, 2019) often represented in major employers' attitude and opportunistic stances, if universities to contribute to meeting the UN's 2030 sustainable development goals with the next generation of tourism professionals.

6.2.3 Respondents' views on entrepreneurial & enterprising content of tourism degrees

As, most academics are aware and stress the importance of including entrepreneurial learning that is up to date and relevant, industry respondents generally agree on this, but understandably differentiate between being entrepreneurial and enterprising individuals and of course prefer the latter. Hence, the confirmative '*corporate citizen*' rather than the dragon (Deale, 2016: 32).

Importantly, academics, who experienced dealing with the current pool of TMUs, positively express that this generation is more entrepreneurial than most previous generations and hence the importance of such curriculum content. ACA2, for example, did not only stress the importance of this set of skills' development in their curriculum design, but also indirectly and perhaps inadvertently established that this generation of TMUs have more entrepreneurial inclination and are also more enterprising, compared to previous generations, by stressing '*a lot of our students want to setup their own businesses',* and accordingly they include the relevant content to improve their abilities to for example to build *'creative business plans',* and associated skillsets, including *'profit and loss balance sheets'* and that also include '*people who are going to work in organisations, so we have modules around setting up small businesses…we do spend*

a lot of time on that…'. Similarly, ACA1 stresses that they recognise the importance of both enterprising and entrepreneurial skills for employability purposes, both in terms of jobs and starting businesses by stating *'we offer our undergraduate whole courses on innovation, employability and entrepreneurship'* and focus diligently *'on giving them these skills'* and that their TMUs do learn and develop enough of the necessary entrepreneurial aptitudes, by stating '*we value entrepreneurship and focused upon more with the tourism curriculum'.* This again resonates with the literature and provide support to both, graduate employability (Allen & Newman, 2016) and solid platform for social and profession-building processes between university students, academics and the industry (Jennings, et al., 2015), it instils innovation and self-motivation, whilst preparing TMUs for the global world of business (Deale, 2016).

In this, ACA1 also mirrors ACA2's idea that this cohort of TMUs have more entrepreneurial inclination than their predecessors, by stating *'I think they are much more entrepreneurial than my generation ever was'*. Moreover, ACA4 is no different and confirms both the inclusion and importance of entrepreneurial learning within their curriculum '*Yes, we do teach that*' and the latter also decreed that, from experience, especially major tourism employers want enterprising graduates, who can open new fields and suggest new areas, the type of candidate they look for is 'exactly, risktakers …'. However, IND4, suggests that one hand tourism employers while expressing interest, they also need to show 'fantastic opportunities', especially for those enterprising graduates, and on the other hand the curriculum should cater for those people who do want to setup their own business too. However, IND4 suggests that the curriculum need a content that helps them become more realistic *'it's about managing their expectations',* because from experience, some think it's just 'fun' and 'sometimes' they have '*a fundamental lack of understanding*' of the risk included by stressing, they need to learn and expect the worst 'it's

hard work and it's wildlife across' and that 'the same goes with those looking for employment', the wrong expectations has to be addressed by all, especially at the 'curriculum' levels.

IND4, continued to press on the importance of emphasising entrepreneurship in the curriculum, but doubts that employers would actually desire it in a fresh graduate, hence more of producing business entrepreneurs 'the industry welcomes and has lots of opportunities for true entrepreneurs', but for employers, they may be seen as 'the next disruptor'. Hence, the tourism curriculum would 'be highly valued', but managing such young people with entrepreneurial inclination 'can be quite challenging' and from experience, the latter witness more of 'creative thinkers', who are unrealistic that wouldn't 'necessarily make the best manager'. Hence, this also needs to be embedded within the curriculum. This clearly in agreement with the literature on the importance of embedding the generic entrepreneurial skills and its positive influence on graduates' employability, especially at graduate and managerial levels (Bell, 2016).

ACA6, stresses the importance of including entrepreneurial learning and preparation in their tourism management curriculum, by stating that they have *'modules on enterprise and business development',* which proved effective in this context. To cement that, the latter mentioned two examples of some of their former TMUs successful entrepreneurs. First a female graduate that *established a cookery business in Italy'* and another male graduate of the same programme *'has setup an ecotourism company in South of Spain'*. Thus, ACA6 stresses that they place a great emphasis on this particular element of their curriculum and perhaps more importantly they engage employers in such process *'we do have it and incorporate it in our curriculum'* and encourage '*employers to come a long and set briefs for students*', which proved effective with both students and employers alike. The latter emphasises the importance of engaging employers and that this is the responsibility of HEIs more than the employer, by stating, *'engagement with*

industry, is everything'. In this the latter added that this should not only be focused on developing the *'curriculum structure',* supported by the industry, but also '*tourism education actually has a responsibility here too',* which again echoes argument made earlier by some industry professionals, including IND7 and IND11.

Likewise, IND6 too stresses the inclusion of such skills within the curriculum and differentiates between being entrepreneurial and enterprising, by stating 'some roles will require that, if you're going to manage' adding '*let's talk about the enterprising person rather than entrepreneurial*' and that they highly desire this type of graduate '*who doesn't need nurse-maiding'* and can see the *'opportunities for the business'*, look to open new territories, take that next opportunity for the business and interestingly called them the '*enterprising entrepreneurs*'. The curriculum needs to produce '*people who treat it as their business*' and accordingly suggests '*using the word enterprising'* and the intention to activate this in their *'future criteria*'. In addition, IND6, suggests that these are 'more engaging' to fellow managers and teams and hence would contribute to reducing the turnover, especially by being 'innovative', it keeps them engaged more. While these assertions, inadvertently coincides with the literature, it reflects the reality in the workplace and that at least some academic research makes sense to some tourism employers. This is, for example, coined in research as 'intrapreneurship' (Kuratko & Montagno, 1989) that is desired in the curriculum content for better graduate employability as it is for employers' growth. In the context of the tourism industry, this has been suggested to encourage growth and profitability, by attracting young recruits (Mottiar & Boluk, 2017), who are spontaneous, innovative and with a vision to challenge the status quo.

However, IND6 stresses that 'there are people that will do that' and ' there are some people that just will sit there and just go through the same old agenda', and hence 'not for everybody' and

encourages young graduates by stating 'when you are going for a job, if you're intelligent, bright, keen, enthusiastic, do it to the best of your ability' and if you have a positive character and can-do attitude', which again coincides with the managing expectation argument raised here (e.g. IND4 and IND9). IND9, too expressed the importance of entrepreneurial skills to their survival, by stating that enterprising is 'absolutely important' for their company and 'definitely' in their search for new recruits. The latter also stresses that this should be combined with 'problem-solving', activities, by stating '*because we're trying to add new things in existing markets, so we need people who can think on their feet, work at any level and in different parts of the world*' and hence can face varied daily problems 'you need people who are comfortable' dealing with that. Although following the same line of industry support to the inclusion of effective entrepreneurial content and activities within the tourism management curriculum, ACA10, took a slightly different stance on this. Instead of stating independent entrepreneurial modules, ACA10 suggests implanting this in the body of the curriculum, which exactly mirrors IND7's 'interwoven' ideas, by stating '*we would embed entrepreneurship all the way through the degree*', especially within phases, when they are '*not practically on placement*'. The logics behind this, according to ACA10, is that graduates can 'then come back into final year, with a choice', namely, 'students can either do a research project or a business plan' and gave an example that 'one of our students, who took the business plan route exercise, used it 'to set up his own restaurant' that proved successful. Indeed, ACA10, stressed the importance of entrepreneurship as part of graduates' employability planning by illustrating the more formal and widely supported at HEI, as opposed to departmental levels, the more successful it proves.

Even IND10, despite being a non-for-profit representative, sees the inclusion and emphasis on enterprising activities and materials within the tourism curriculum would generally be desirable to them, by stating '*yes that fits, its important in our case someone, who is business savvy who*

understands markets, who is an innovator, and risk-taker'. However, the latter unsurprisingly explained that they take this very prudently, because of the nature of their enterprise by stressing '*in our case, there is quite a lot of rigidity, being a charity, we have to justify every penny'* to their funders, hence they *'can't be too risky*'. Perhaps the latter, like IND6 meant to state intrapreneurial content as they continue to argue '*I would write marketing skills*' instead '*because of the rigid structure*', and the nature of their business. Such intrapreneurial spirit (Kuratko & Montagno,1989) is claimed to be part of the blueprint of entrepreneurial acumen, which is relevant to the current cohort of TMUs, young, innovative and as, IND7 for example witnessed and as Mottiar & Boluk (2017), put it, are prepared to challenge the status quo.

6.2.4 Respondents' views on tourism-specialist knowledge content of tourism degrees

Similar to their assessment of the above tourism-specific management content, there was an even wider agreement as to the lesser importance of tourism-specialist knowledge content, especially in industry's views and despite some tame defensive comments, academics too broadly agree on this. One of those who cautiously support the inclusion of only some tourism-specialist knowledge content in the tourism management curriculum is IND1. The latter expressed that this may help tourism graduates '*stand out*' but later stressed that '*not too much focus on this*' is required, for example the '*visitor destinations*' module, where the tourism curriculum does '*differently*' by '*creating a mindset for the tourists, that you do not learn on any other accountancy or financial*' degrees. IND2 too, argued that there should be a balance between the broader and the '*sector-specific*' knowledge content in the tourism curriculum and therefore such skills gained by graduates are '*useful to understand how the sector may work' and added 'the difference between the subsectors; retail attractions, hotels, transport' are 'helpful*'.

Though, IND2 stressed that the skills '*currently needed to apply to the sector'*, are '*the broader* and in their view, '*the more important*'. Hence, corroborating with other interviewees here IND2 in concluding that tourism graduates need the broader skills, coupled their people skills, would present 'a real strength' and the 'blend of both the sector-specific knowledge and the broader understanding of 'customer care, marketing,', which is a slightly more balanced view compared to IND3, who stressed the importance of the tourism-specific knowledge. IND4, perhaps surprisingly, reckons that tourism-specialist content is important by suggesting '*industry knowledge*' are important, but as '*contributing factors*', especially understanding 'how it survives in times of crisis' in such a volatile sector and that the industry needs this 'new generation of tourism graduates', who can rectify these issues. IND4, accordingly suggest adding content on '*how to learn from mistakes and missed opportunities'*. Indeed, as contended in the above this is relevant to the tourism industry and the collapse of Thomas cook is a clear example of mistakes and mismanagement (Kollewe, 2019).

IND5 too, explained that tourism-specialist knowledge is desired *'in most jobs we have, we would want more specialisms'* and outrightly expressed their preference 'I would prefer tourism' graduates who can market this trade. However, IND6 suggests the less importance of tourism-specific knowledge per se, but may be interested in their work experience while studying or if they focus their thesis on 'something in tourism that is relevant to us' and in the meantime urges academics to continuously synchronise their '*curriculum with 'the real world*', stressing that for TMUs to be attractive, tourism academics must make sure that their curriculum is '*valid for today's world*', and warned 'they can't just run on the same old curriculum that they had 10 years ago …as they often do'. Thus, if this is not exactly the case, it may be a matter of perception that is not helped by the lack of effective communications between at least this employer and HEIs. While recognising there some modules with very tourism-specific knowledge, there was a clear

consensus among academics that tourism-specific knowledge, although may seem important to some other academics, are not as important to most of them as they aim at satisfying employers' requirements. For example, ACA6, an expert in both tourism curriculum development and TMUs employability, reckons *'knowledge of the industry isn't necessarily required'*, while ACA1 too, does not think tourism-specific knowledge is always necessary to include in the main curriculum. The same applies to ACA2

IND7, cautiously suggests that tourism knowledge is 'needed' and that is not to entail the focus upon tourism-specialist knowledge per se, but to only nominate the relevant and up-to-date pieces '*I can't see an argument for why not*', because according to the latter, '*surely 'if you've got somebody coming into the industry',* referencing to tourism graduates by stating *'who has a degree and spent several years understanding this very industry',* tourism graduates should be preferred because through their positive attitude they would provide *'an advantage*', but again IND7 suggest that the curriculum still needs improving by stating '*it's ensuring that the content of those courses is up-to-date and relevan*t'

However, IND7 agrees with IND3 and many academics in suggesting that despite its history, the tourism curriculum is improving, it needs to perhaps be more 'responsive agile' to respond to the industry's dynamic needs. However, the latter continued to support TMUs' competencies, by stating '*seeing young students giving presentations at various events, there seemed quite up to date with their knowledge'*, but also mirrors the aforementioned 'serious' topics stated by IND1 such as 'financial management, marketing', combined with 'the tourism-specific knowledge', such as the 'impact of global financial and political issues on the industry' may provide a valuable and sound combination. Similarly, IND8 have a balanced view on the curriculum content, by suggesting for tourism to 'grow' tourism employers 'need more of

graduates who have' both the general 'business acumen' and 'tourism understanding'. However, like IND1 and 7, IND8 suggests that this has to be less and selective suggesting that tourism graduates and their educator still have to do more to convince the unconcerned industry and hence resonates with some literature too (e.g. Petrova & Mason, 2004; Petrova, 2015; Amissah, et al., 2020).

As an emerging tourism-related tech STEs, IND9 more clearly expressed interests in tourism graduates with tourism-specialist knowledge, by explaining that when they look at increasing the number of recruits 'of course we would prefer tourism graduates' and specifically for their knowledge and attitude. Perhaps more convincingly, IND10 suggests that they do not only prefer tourism-specialist knowledge, but also were impressed with tourism graduate interns and how they demonstrated their sustainability knowledge and expertise, by stating 'we had a tourism student from the sustainable tourism course, it was really interesting … he was actually looking at biological control on crops, which I would never have thought was part of sustainable tourism'. IND10 too, argue for a balance in the content and suggest that after encountering a TMU intern they prefer tourism, for both their '*interest and expertise*', adding they have the '*marketing skills, people skills, good organisation…again, a tourism*' graduate '*would be more suitable to marketing*' their services '*because a business student may be accustomed to marketing products*'. Accordingly, it may be extracted here that, while major tourism companies may prefer the broader management (e.g. tour-operators), STEs of visitor attractions and small operators and tech firms (e.g. IND2, IND9, IND10, IND12), as well as hotels regardless of size (e.g. IND3) prefer more tourism-specific content. However, the overarching organisations such as those that represent the industry and play roles in bridging the divide between academia and industry may have a more balanced view, one that advocate for the combination of the two sets of knowledge bases as well as management competencies (e.g. IND1, IND4, IND7 and IND8). Thirdly, while

some academics view the tourism-specific skills as needed, the majority are in favour of the broader management knowledge with just a hint of tourism.

6.2.5 Respondents' views on career planning skills' content of tourism degrees

While it is argued that the rapidly changing employment market requires graduates to possess a much greater ownership of their personal career (Maher, 2010), which is a major difference between employment and employability skills (McNair, 2003), gaining the desired confidence and resilience to cope with such volatile job market and recurrent economic calamities requires this to be part of graduates' learning. Given the above-contended employability issues, especially the low image, tourism graduates, perhaps are in need to develop career planning skills, more than other competing graduates. These career planning skills include identifying and utilising career development opportunities, enhancing the ability to reflect and review, researching and using information resources more efficiently, taking and creating career openings, planning and making effective lifelong career decisions (QAA, 2001b; Maher, 2010), while relying on other external forces, such as academics and policymakers to help improve their image that is deeply rooted (Holloway, 1993). As an important component of the curriculum that could potentially have a lasting impact on graduates' career, career planning is skills and its relevant curriculum content is scrutinised here and again as part of the quantitative analysis to the TMUs survey. In this, ACA4, who has a considerable expertise in planning a major employer's graduate scheme and their training programme, stressed that this experience was subsequently transferred to their current role at their current HEI and utilised in their tourism management curriculum to help their TMUs plan their career.

Thus, ACA4 asserted the importance of instilling career planning skills, combined with positive attitude in their TMUs and accordingly further suggests that this should be based on engaging student's directly with industry '*The one thing we try and do is engage our undergraduates with industry, as much as possible'* and added that certain extracurricular activities contribute to their career planning, of which being realistic is important, by stating *'what we try and do is be realistic about the industry'* by showcasing that *'these are people who've come from industry, engage with them! find out what it is really all about!'* and that this does not only enthuse their '*positive attitude*', but also help them to have a '*realistic career plan*'. In the same regard, the industry's views and provisions for career planning, is not widely spread as many employers appears not to greatly understand a curriculum-led career planning. On one hand, those who understood and indicated to value it, for example IND3, who is a HR manager at a major hotel chain, expressed, '*I think it's really good to have that roadmap, career roadmap…I think there's benefits'* to including such content within the tourism management curriculum that should emphasise that progression routes, for example, are *'not only upwards, it can also be sideways'*.

This echoes the aforementioned assertion by ACA4, especially as both respondents have experience of recruiting graduates and with major tourism employers. IND3 also demonstrated that career planning preparation is not only important for graduates' future, but also relevant to this major employer by stating that they have a programme specifically tailored to this '*we have career development plans that every employee*' must complete, even those who join the graduate scheme. In this, it is an important fact, '*how mobile*' the graduates are. IND3 continued that this '*roadmap*' sets out clearly '*where do you see yourself in the future and how can we help you as an employer to get you to that next level?'*. Accordingly, the latter also forcefully recommends that academics should include similar content in curriculum and extracurricular activities to prepare their undergraduates for both the immediate employment and managing their careers.

This, expressed from a major employer, clearly shows the importance of career planning learning that many, but not all employers stress upon and in line with the literature, especially the personal development planning (PDP) guidelines and its subsequent toolkit (Miller, et al., 2009) recommended by the QAA for HE (QAA, 2001, 2009; Race, 2015). According to Miller, et al. (2009), this PDP have been developed, after extensive consultation with academics, employers and other relevant interest groups and it capitalises on existing practice and the experiences developed since the first edition of the QA Guidelines for HE. Indeed, Martin (2018), who comprehensively analysed 308 Higher Education Review reports (of which 59 HEIs featured), explains that some of the lessons learned from this analysis is that employers expect graduates of the 21st century to be autonomous learners, thinkers, '*self-aware*' and more profoundly, in addition to the emphasis on employers' engagement and '*research-informed teaching*', graduate employability, according to the latter's report, is not only embedded in the curriculum, but also '*mapped to learning outcomes*' (Martin, 2018:1).

Similarly, IND5 asserts that it is important to see that the graduate they employ are prepared and '*have the intention to develop a career',* not necessarily in '*this same place*', but '*we don't want anyone standing still*'. In clarification, the latter stated that they meant having a 'career plan' is mutually beneficial. IND5, further explained that without a career plan '*it would mean*' that such an individual may not be demotivated, not '*enthusiastic*' enough '*working for us*' and hence likely to leave. The latter gave a real example t elucidate this, by stating '*at the beginning, I have encountered two major problems when arrived*' at the current role, of which one is more relevant here, '*I found those academic*' employees, who resisted training and with negative attitude, as of saying '*thank you very much, I don't need to train anymore, I've already got my degree*' and that attitude is, to the latter a '*career planning skills*' issue. However, to what level this importance

is matched by tourism academics and the curriculum, it is not fully clear, as many academics, would understandably say it is important, but the problem is in the inconsistency of its inclusion in the curriculum. Most pressingly, the above-contended structured coordination with employers and any other stakeholders, which is clearly in line with the literature, in which it is recurrently argued that tourism in HE, has not yet overcome some of its synchronisation issues and that this perhaps part of the reasons that the industry is not so keen on recruiting tourism graduates (Inui et al., 2006, Airey, 2008; Barrows and Johan, 2008; Sheldon, et al., 2008; Petrova, 2015).

Yet, career planning skills, to some tourism employers, e.g. IND6, does not seem important, but expressively '*beneficial*' to the individuals themselves. Moreover, IND6 explained that their understanding to career planning includes, for example if they recruit a graduate '*in a smaller role*' they then, '*monitor their performance*' and when an upgrade-level job arises, '*they would be the first to know about it*', especially if they *'performed well'*. Despite this, the latter recommends the idea of career planning learning '*coming out of University, you have to have a plan, as to where you want to get to*', which may mean to *'take a job*' that '*may not be the ideal to start with*' but in line with your career plan and hence it would be beneficial for both, employers and graduates in the longer terms as a curriculum content and a hence a graduate aptitude and despite *'not make any difference'* to an employer, it would be useful to give the employer an idea, by stating '*if you have a career plan, it's good to make it known … so if you need help and advice*'. From an academic point of view, most academics argue that their TMUs learn and therefore have a career plan inspired by the curriculum. Examples ACA6, stating that their TMUs have *'sort of plan'* and that they are *'flexible within the overall confines of where they wanted to go' and* added, these graduates *'have distinct career goal'* and on how do they get to that goal, especially compared to previous generations *'in the past people used to sort of go in the linear fashion to achieve their career goal and often within one company'.* However,

the latter suggests that especially this generation is more mobile, they likely to *'move between companies… and between countries' as well. They understand* the current *'global market'*, which again illustrates the importance of curriculum-led career planning to build and set goals right from the start.

However, as ACA8 doesn't agree that TMUs have a career plan and are only 'looking for a job, any job', and in this disagrees not only by including a career plan in the curriculum, but also suggest that tourism and other management degrees shouldn't be taught at undergraduate levels. In contrast, ACA7 suggested that this is supported all the way on their programme, from *'first year study skills…'* through to keeping *'a reflective log'* that requires them to *'sum up their experiences and get them thinking about their transferable skills'*. ACA7 reasserts the important of career planning and reflective practice by stating '*in the final year, there is also an optional module'* that includes *'work-placement through the summer*' and in which '*final year*' undergraduates '*log some kind of records'* as to their career plans.

That's, according to ACA7, is enough curriculum-led '*managerial career planning*', where additionally they can consult '*personal tutors'* and accordingly *'take the placement module in the final year'* as a career planning vehicle. Although, it is still unclear why such an important module is compulsory in first year and optional in the final, ACA7 stressed the importance of career planning skills development in general and shown evidence of good liaison with employers, but again, acknowledged that it is not as structured and systematic as it should be. Other examples include ACA11, who among other responsibilities, who explained that career planning is important for their TMUs future employability and it is a very a '*central*' element in their curriculum development. Perhaps surprisingly, compared to most expressions here, ACA11

stressed that their '*modelled industry-led programmes*' follows a much more structured path. by stating *'they just want a job.* A view this is echoed by ACA8 too.

Accordingly, the former continued '*I firmly believe,*' in this and despite *'may sound controversial' the latter suggests ' that we shouldn't teach any business or management degree',* especially at *'undergraduate level'* because, the latter further elaborates that they do not agree that '*these kids' are 'necessarily very interested in how industries work*'. While, ACA8 doesn't support the idea of targeting a tourism career starting from undergraduate levels, ACA9, agrees with ACA10 by explaining that they encourage and instil career planning *'yes it's extremely important…we introduced' new* module specifically dedicated to that, which was inspired by the current academic's own teaching experience to general business undergraduates, called *'reflective practice' and* it inspired them to make a structured plan to developing their graduates' career planning skills and ACA9 positively suggests that as a result, many of their students have '*a career plan*', but admittedly not very direct and therefore is more of a *'progression routes plan'*. On a positive note, the latter emphasised that this cohort of TMUs *'are not reluctant to change'*, despite having some overhyped expectations that 'working in the industry maybe *'fairly easy'* and concludes that *'the majority are linking'* their studies *'to their career'* plans.

IND3 too is much in support of curriculum-led career planning, showing some enthusiasm about it, by responding, '*that's brilliant question*', then stated that in the light of the rise of '*portfolio style*' of work patterns ' the latter stresses '*career planning skills would be very important*' and that this should start at the curriculum level '*yeah, learning and training at university … would be good rather than you have to initiate it*', in employment. Even more significantly, IND3 stresses that they actively look for this '*career planning*' skills, especially when interviewing candidates '*to stay around so long then you need to know, why that is and how long are you*

going to be here and what can we do' as employer to help. Accordingly, the key to the latter is, when the interviewee asks about existing '*development opportunities*', which demonstrates passion and commitments to their own career plans and to the employer simultaneously and probably to the wider industry.

Agreeing with this, ACA11 stresses that their aforementioned successful programme, made TMUs '*really, really committed and wanting to put the work in*', which can also be indicative to employers. ACA11 continues such positivity about TMUs by reasoning *'it is not worth risking disengaging such a promising generation*' they, through this programme '*know what the industry love, so that when they turn to be graduates, they know exactly what they are going to do, they carved out their sector'. ACA11* also added that from experience working with them, this generation TMUs have a career plans for this industry and that '*keyword is passion'.* Furthermore, according to the latter, if and when this group of '*promising undergraduates*' are given the opportunity to work in managerial-level positions '*recruiting people who have a passion for the industry, who really, ... really want that career*', is going to be '*in the industry's interests*' and that '*companies are starting to realise the importance of our graduates,.... but we still got a long, long way to go...'.* IND4, too stresses that '*there's more pressure on this next generation to get out there and cement their career as early as possible*' and that has to '*start from the curriculum*' to alleviate such challenges, but they are a stronger generation because '*they have grown up in a recession*' while born *'into the Internet, they're living their lives online…*' and that they are '*more prepared*', in both planning their career and understanding workplace issues '*early on*', hence ACA4 suggest that career planning activities and materials within the curriculum need to them. Like ACA4 and 6, IND11 too stresses the importance of focusing on and updating curriculum-led career planning skills, but recommends '*sticking to the basic*' activities, such as '*CV writing and making good applications'*. Although contemplative

that it may not be of as much direct benefits to employers *per se*, career planning skills to IND9 are important and hence would prefer that to be emphasised within the tourism curriculum. In this the latter stated, '*if they have the ability to plan their careers' and that this is 'helpful for us too, to understand their'* career *'longevity …understand if we fit with their long-term plans'* and therefore argues, it '*would be helpful to know from the outset, to understand what their longer term plans and, how to help their roadmap if we can*'.

More noteworthy, IND9 thinks career planning skills are the key to improving the turnover and in the meantime urges fellow industry leaders to do more in this by stating '*it goes back to*' the importance of '*career planning*' and '*understanding the needs of the graduates, as much as understanding the roles we need to fill*' and equally suggests that more up-to-date career planning activities should be embedded within the tourism curriculum, but with the '*industry's input*' and encouragement.

Like IND4, IND9 suggest better communications on this and stressed that although '*at that age it's very difficult for anyone to know exactly what they want to do with the rest of their lives*', if both universities and employers '*collaborate better*' in devising such materials and activities it would be sounder and more supportive. A view that is indeed echoed by IND12, another tourism SME, who too values the importance of career planning content inclusion in the tourism curriculum by stating '*we prefer graduates to be ambitious first, then we step in to help them*' and argues that it would be '*very beneficial to focus on career planning'* learning and skills '*within the curriculum and during their studies*', to help employers themselves avoid wasting their time and efforts in CPD training, by stating 'so we don't start from scratch' and that they this employer is currently preparing to consult with academics on that.

Unsurprisingly, some literature too values the idea of career planning content and liaison across the board, from HEIs with industry to parents and reference groups support to enthuse undergraduate. Goh & Lee (2018), for example, recommend that the industry should engage parents and family members in career fairs and open days. Regardless, most respondents here suggest that TMUs have clearer career ambitions structured curriculum career planning content is suggested, as ACA11 case proved and may even contribute to reducing the costly turnover, as IND4 and IND9, contended. Indeed, (Goh& Lee, 2018: 26) argue to improve productivity and reduce the turnover, it is equally important to *'engage them in discussions about their career pathways and planning for long-term success'* and this according ACA11 and mirrored by IND4, 7 and 8, is through academic supporting initiatives to source management training opportunities, by referring to their successful *' graduate management traineeship program'* and CPD courses, a view that is recurrently recommended (e.g. Barron, Leask & Fyall, 2014).

6.2.6 Respondents' views on extracurricular content of tourism degrees

The distinction between curricular and extracurricular content, has been made by many scholars in different classifications. In this, the curriculum is seen as the learning designs that includes the formal syllabus, theories, teaching methods and assessment criteria (Hsu, 2018), whereas the extracurricular are activities that include informal learning, such as guest-speaking, visits to companies, business plan contests, organising events, Alumni returns and field trips (Collins, Hannon & Smith, 2004; Morris, et al., 2013; Arranz, et al., 2017). While curricular activities comprise those designed within the main formal syllabus, extracurricular are additional instrumental activities designed to enhance graduates' employability, including the enterprising content (Etzkowitz, 2004). Although this has been partially addressed throughout this analysis

section, some academics and industry respondents have given extracurricular activities more attention, expressly as to its applicable usefulness to enhancing graduate employability. For example, ACA1 stresses the importance of including extracurricular activities to their graduates' prospects by explaining that they offer various extracurricular activities to develop their graduates' broader management skills and deepen understanding, represented in the *'sandwich year…field trips… short visits'.* ACA5 too, confirms the importance of extracurricular activities, specifies *'work placements'* as the more importance by making it compulsory *'although it is extracurricular, no exam for example, it is mandatory',* more interestingly explains that such activities *'are popular with students'* too and adds *'year after year, we see that more students … value it more'*. The latter complements, this other work to better TMUs future employability, by adding *'professional accreditation'* is key, in addition to '*internships*' and further elaborates that this has proved more popular with employers too.

Furthermore, ACA6, after proudly stating that their tourism curriculum *'have 94%'* gradate employment '*conversion rate'* particularly getting *'jobs in tourism'* and that they are *'the leading university in the country for that',* explained that extracurricular activities are one of the keys to this success. However, this also indicates that extracurricular vary in nature and design across tourism management programmes and its specifics fluctuate too, which poses a problem to employers not knowing, which graduates possess what skills and competencies by holding a tourism management degree. Then there are those who do not separate such activities and make it part of the curriculum, or the 'zero extracurricular' trendy academic term.

ACA4, for example, states '*our employability programme*', and its '*vocational activities*' are not classed as extracurricular anymore, but now *'part of the curriculum'* and hence are *'compulsory from year one'* and that '*for extracurricular, we hold master classes*'. Such discepency may give

inaccurate impression to employer, especially when they ask a tourism graduate, what extracurricular activity did they experience during their studies and they subsequently state only masterclasses. Hence, employers are left confused, as to what the title of their degree indicate, unless they know, which often occurs through personal contacts with some individual efforts from some academics.

However, for the mainstream TMUs, most employers without these unstructured efforts, would perhaps be disadvantaged. Indeed IND5, who epitomises the tourism subsector of visitor attractions, expressed that they require more of extracurricular activities, particularly stating *'work placements'* and although admitted that they know from close contacts that specific '*universities are doing more these days*', yet the latter added, '*but most employers do not know enough'*. That is to argue that this does not only highlight that tourism employers need to know or do more, but also shows that there still a lack of clarity and communication barriers between industry and universities. IND7, unsurprisingly stressed the importance of increasing 'extracurricular activities' within the tourism management curriculum, while accentuated their recently launched '*more structured extracurricular initiative, the internship programme*' and hence suggests more of the same. According to the latter, this is an innovative '*internship programme*', in which they take TMUs to work and develop with them 'to demonstrate' to 'tourism employers' that they are 'as good', as other graduates.

Accordingly, IND7 concludes here by suggesting more focus on extracurricular activities and TMUs need '*that little bit of groundwork first*' because despite proving to be '*top class*' on this programme, employers according to the latter would not put someone in such position, without '*experience in a management role*'. Despite being a good effort, the reason for this internship programme, also presents evidence that tourism graduates particularly viewed as less

employable, especially when the latter added that 'those they happened to give an opportunity, *do not necessarily stay there very long*', in a clear reference to non-tourism graduates. Thus, while IND7 suggests; to provide more meaningful work-placements is to increase extracurricular collaboration, through archetypal internship programmes like theirs, IND4 advocates apprenticeships. However, given most academics ideas and other industry's views here, the key, as the literature also suggests (Milman, 2017), is in tourism educators and their TMUs engaging more with industry and learn together as (e.g. Pearce & Zare 2017).

This was echoed, again here, in ACA6's referring to some academics some of them *'never worked in the industry*' and ACA10's advocation to start developing TMUs employability *'from the first year*'. ACA10 stressed their TMUs follow a '*structured programme of extracurricular activities'* to achieve this', adding '*employability is built into every module'* and ACA10 stressed, '*every week they are doing things, from preparing, CVs to getting placements, a whole set of things programmed in behind ...preparing for their graduate careers*'. ACA10, then continued that their graduates are highly employable as a result of effective liaison with employers, who *'didn't make the decision solely based only on the title*' of their degree, but on the efforts and the performance of their TMUs while on placement. And that this is reflected in their recent employability and employment statistics *'this year for example, our hospitality program a has something like 75% graduate employability and culinary arts management is a 100%'*.

Nevertheless, the latter warned educators to be careful, especially '*coming towards the award stage*', by focusing on the basics of '*working with people, getting things done under time pressure',* while '*speaking the employer's mind*' and added an emphasis on the enterprising competencies '*creativity and innovation that will come with new and younger people to your organization*' and this would *produce the 'competent and professional graduate'*. In summing

this up, IND10 argued *'if you asked me what really matters, I would say actually placement and internship*' are the key to employability. Accordingly, it can be extracted here that despite the prevalent understanding of its importance and the immense efforts to implement more effective extracurricular programmes, the inconsistency of the extracurricular contents, their variations based on where offered and who is offering them, is perhaps part of the problem not the solution. This has been highlighted here, where what is an extracurricular element at one institution, is part of the main curriculum at another, some offer more activities, others offer less, some have employability programmes some don't, some make employability programmes compulsory and part of the main curriculum, some look at it differently, some follow a clearly defined and structured programmes and most rely on the discretion of and efforts of individual academics contacting people they know in the industry or former alumni, which can be problematic and may cause a barrier to career planning to the current and future TMUs.

Consequently, the above analysis and respondents' quotations, illustrates the importance of including extracurricular activities within and alongside the main syllabus, as agreed upon by most academics and industry respondents. However, the inclusion of extracurricular activities as seen here, has been in many cases, scattered activities, perhaps except in ACA10's case, are lacking the strategic coordination of structures. Accordingly, a call for more coordinated efforts, between academics and industry, perhaps a policymakers-supported consortium that is focussed on the mutual benefits of create better graduates' employability prospects, supporting STEs growth though engagement and helping major employers reduce their costly turnover.

Indeed, this is in line with the previously trialled and tested employability development programmes (Harvey 2005), where universities devise these programmes, including extracurricular activities in coordination with employers and effectively assimilating these

within their curriculum design (Huang & Turner, 2018). However, despite good efforts this still has weaknesses, for example, most programmes being under the more centralised career services that coordinates the wider graduates' professional development (Harvey, 2005; Boden & Nedeva 2010; Pegg, et al. 2012; Huang & Turner, 2018), have not proved to be effective enough or at least in the case of tourism management programmes. These centralised career development structures or employability programmes, as consolidated here, did not inveterate the idea of employability programmes having a more permanent or a long-lasting impact (Harvey, 2005; Cole & Tibby, 2013). Instead, proved not only to lack focus, but also to be a combination of scattered attempts by individual academics that are fixated on the narrower skillsets for the instantaneous employment needs of their TMUs, while studying or immediately after graduation (Cole & Tibby, 2013). Despite some universities recently recognising this calamity (Lau et al. 2014; Huang & Turner, 2018), especially in the form of extracurricular award schemes, the formalisation and recognition of the extracurricular activities (Stuart et al. 2008; Huang & Turner, 2018) such as involvement in various academic societies, communities and trades, while at universities steel needs improvements. Hence, it may be extracted here that to synchronise these activities within each individual university at programme levels, tourism academic cooperation with industry through, for example ATHE, may provide a steppingstone. Last here, although the term 'extracurricular' was relevant at the start of this study, as the research developed, it became increasingly outdated and similar terms started to emerge, especially within the academic environment. These include the zero 'extra' curricula (e.g. ACA4), which simply means that activities such as hosting guest-speakers, internships, local and international field visits are still held, but as part of the main curriculum. The also echoes recent literature that adds engaging reference groups and parents in the process (Hertzman, Moreo & Wiener, 2015), encouraging *'discussions about their career pathway'* and organising *'management training opportunities'* (Goh & Lee, 2018: 26), which are thought to improve their career planning skills.

6.3 Summary of qualitative findings

6.3.1 Perception of tourism degrees and graduates

- Tourism degrees are perceived poorly, especially by major tourism employers. Influenced by a wider societal view, as to the seriousness of content, the negative portrayal of tourism in the media (e.g. in terms of career paths, pay and tourist behaviour) adds more negativity
- This poor perception is then attached to tourism graduates, helping to explain why they are not seen as highly employable, mainly by major employers. However, small tourism employers and those in the relative tech-sector seem to have a more positive perception of tourism graduates, but do not have the resources to fully engage with academia in this
- Generally, both small and major tourism employers have a lack of knowledge of the content or aims of the tourism management degrees and find it difficult to engage with academics in curriculum development, despite academics reporting that this works well.

6.3.2 Career progression in the tourism industry and labour turnover

- There is still a lack of clear career progression opportunities and routes in the tourism industry. Hence, major tourism employers were urged, mainly by academics to make these clearer, along with underlining the reported sideways progression routes more.
- Employing tourism management graduates, particularly from the current pool of TMUs, as recurrently stressed by the expert respondents, may well contribute to reducing the labour turnover at this level, or at least be beneficial to all

- While structured Graduate Schemes (GS) may not be affordable to each of the STEs, more structured programs (i.e. HEIs and government sponsored), to support those enthusiastic companies has been suggested by respondents to contribute to better graduate employability
- Graduate employability solutions, in this context, were found to possible by most interviewees, with varied emphasis on who should take the initiative. However, the responsibility was places more on HEIs engaging more with the new and emerging STEs, while working with policymakers and the relevant stakeholders to improving image the image held major ones.
-

6.3.3 Curriculum design

- Generic management content is still universally preferred, by industry. But, while some academics agree, others claim to already have enough within tourism-specific content.
- Industry-specialist knowledge, although some academics insist upon its importance, is the least valued by many academics and industry experts. However, industry-specific management skills are comparably desired and suggestions to include content on change or resilience management was stressed upon, especial in the light of the digital advances, the emergence STEs, political issues such as Brexit and more relevant to this industry cases of mismanagement (e.g. collapse of the iconic Thomas Cook).
- Extracurricular activities are hailed by both academics and industry in principle, but the term itself is becoming obsolete as many of such activities are becoming increasingly part of the main curriculum, hence the rise of terms such as zero ‘extra curriculum’.

- Career planning skills. It is unclear what this is exactly include and more importantly, there is no agreed structure as to what and how to implement it. Hence, every small team of tourism academics, like with employment statistics, handle this differently.
- Academics are urged to better manage graduates' expectations, by mostly industry experts and academics interviewed here too. This includes a combination of theoretical career planning, management content as well as more meaningful industry exposure.
- Entrepreneurial& enterprising content is largely desired by both academics and industry. Academics agree the need for up-to-date industry input, but this requires better liaison
- Identified as the key to reducing both employability and turnover issues, better academia-industry liaison, through enhanced communication structures has been largely validated.
-

Having begun to address RQ 1 and 2 based on the above qualitative data, to address the remaining RQ and objectives and enable the mixing of results to generate more meaningful findings, chapter 7 includes an introduction to the survey (3 sections and 18 subsection) and focuses more on RQ3 in analysing the data generated from TMUs' quantitative survey. This looks at how TMUs' experience of the tourism curriculum, the industry, as well as behavioural factors (attitude, societal norms and perceived control over their career), influence their career intention for tourism and the implications of this for tourism academics, graduates and industry.

7 QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

This chapter begins by introducing the online survey and then goes on to analyse the data that it generated, using a range of statistical tests. These tests are used to address the hypotheses set out in chapter 4 regarding TMUs experience of their studies, and their future career intention for tourism. The survey contained a total of 34 questions, ranging from screening eligibility and demographic queries, to the 20 questions focused on career intention-focussed in section two (see appendix 3: app. 3.2: The ‘My Future Tourism Career’ Online Survey Questionnaire). The survey received a total of 210 responses between 14/06/2018 and 10/10/2019 and due to time and resources limitations, it was closed to responses on 15/10/ 2019.

193 (92%) complete responses were eligible, all of whom completed the survey to the end. Nonetheless, there was an eligibility concern about a few unexplained responses within these 193. The concern is specifically related to question 3 that queries the year of study, with options of year 1 to year 4 (to include the Scottish 4-year degrees) and an additional option of other to account for breaks in study. However, 13 out of the 193 complete responses selected ‘other’, where some unexpected responses were found (e.g. year 0, year 5 and Graduate). Although it was made clear in the introduction and everywhere relevant that this research is only applicable to current TMUs at UK HEIs and given that they’ve already ticked ‘yes’ to this first question, these statements were assumed unintentional inaccuracies and therefore presumed eligible. Accordingly, this chapter is, therefore, divided into three main sections: respondents’ profiles (7.1), analysis to the survey section1-my experience (7.2) and section2-my career plan (7.3).

7.1 Respondents' Profiles

As briefly illustrated in the above, this section includes the analysis to responses from three questions that screened respondents' profiles. Hence, it is structured under three corresponding subsections that show results in terms of the HEIs attended, age and gender.

7.1.1 Respondents by HEIs

This question (number two of the survey) required respondents to name the UK HEI they are currently attending and generated responses from 11 UK HEIs offering tourism management at an undergraduate level. Of these, 7 HEIs are based in England, 3 in Scotland and 1 in Wales. Although, there is no responses from Northern Ireland here, HEIs perspectives from that region were included in the qualitative interviews.

A limitation to the current research is the uneven balance of responses between these 11 HEIs. This was primarily due to the time and resources' limitations of the current research, especially being a PhD project, and offering few incentives to completing the survey. In addition to the survey's being sent to respondents several times, this should be placed in the context of TMUs being constantly inundated with requests to complete surveys from all directions, including the NSS, professional bodies, academics and peer surveys. Additionally, 61% of responses were generated from the University of Greenwich, where this research is based. However, adhering to the research ethics as explained near the end of chapter 5, this was without the researcher being involved in promoting the survey or applying any pressure, and this limitation is dealt with below.

As well as 118 Greenwich responses, 32 responses were generated from the University of Strathclyde, 10 from Edinburgh Napier University, 8 from University of Chester, 8 from Cardiff Metropolitan University, 5 from University of Sunderland, 4 from Canterbury Christ Church University, 4 from University of East London, 1 from University of Westminster, 2 from University of the West of Scotland and the remaining response came from the University of Central Lancashire (Table 6 below illustrates respondents by 11 HEIs, in no particular order).

	Table 6: Respondents by HEIs	
	HEI	**Number of responses**
1	University of Sunderland	5
2	University of the West of Scotland	2
3	Canterbury Christ Church University	4
4	University of Central Lancashire	1
5	University of Westminster	1
6	University of East London	4
7	Cardiff Metropolitan University	8
8	University of Chester	8
9	Edinburgh Napier University	10
10	University of Strathclyde	32
11	University of Greenwich	118

7.1.2 Respondents by Age group

To enable the grouping and classification of respondents based on their age, this question required respondents to only state the year of birth and not the full date. This research assumed the year 1993 as the birth year of the majority of the current cohort of TMUs and hence respondents born before this threshold (1959-1992) were classified under a separate age group, as detailed below.

Given that TMUs responses to this screening question show that out of the 193 eligible responses, 192 did state their year of birth, only one respondent did not, by stating 'n/a', which is a commonly used acronym for not applicable, or in other words reluctance to state their year of birth. Accordingly, of these 192 responses, 165 (86%) were classified under Younger TMUs age group, while the remaining 27 varied and were accordingly classified under the Mature TMUs age group (14%). This also means that the age of all the 192 respondents ranged from 18-61, with the youngest 5 respondents being 19 years old (born 2001) and the earliest 2 being 61 years old. Nevertheless, another limitation here is that it was not possible to verify respondents' age, as this was identified as a potentially ethical and GDPR issue. Hence, reliance on academics' mediators and respondents' trustworthiness was assumed (see table 6 below: Respondents by Age Group).

Table 7: **Respondents by Age Group**			
TMUs Age Group	Stated year of Birth	Responses	Approx. %
Mature TMUs	1959-1992	27	14%
Younger TMUs	1993-2001	165	85.5%.
Unclassified	n/a	1	.5%
Total Responses		**193**	**100%**

7.1.3 Respondents by Gender

As the above qualitative analysis and literature review suggest, responses to this UK survey, are a reflection of the female domination in tourism, both in the field of study and work. Indeed, despite its size and geographical distributions limiations, responses to this survey show 163 out of 193 eligible responses (83%) were females, only 28 (15%) were male and the remaining 4 responses (2%) preferred not to say. Worth noting here that the aforementioned respondent, who did not state their year of birth, did state their gender, hence the return to 193 eligible respondents. More importantly, the sheer dominance of female TMUs in this, is clearly in line with the above literature review (e.g. Savicki, 1999; Aycan & Fikret-Pasa, 2003; Walsh & Taylor, 2007).

Table 7: **Respondents by Gender**		
Gender	Responses	%
Female	161	83%
Male	28	15%
Prefer not to say	4	2%
Total Responses	193	100%

As seen from above table 7, there is a clear gender imbalance in tourism management undergraduate level, where females (83%) for the clear majority. This is both in agreement with the literature on tourism being a female-dominated industry (e.g. Canada, 2018)) and in terms of a UK HE academic course, recent reports show, for example, 81% of BA tourism management students are female at the university of Greenwich, in 2018/2019 academic year (HESA, 2020), and similarly 79% at Liverpool Hope University, 79% Lincoln and 81% Edinburgh Napier university (ONS, 2020).

7.1.4 Respondents by Year and Phase of Study

As mentioned in the above introduction and under respondents by HEIs subsection, the initial responses to question 3 (the year of study) were 51 for year 1, 56 for year 2, 62 for year 3, 11 for year 4 and a further 13 miscellaneous responses under ‘other’. Notable, under latter option, there were some unexplained responses, especially contradicting with answering ‘yes’ to the first question, being a current TMU at UK HEI. To explain, the first question clearly and directly asked respondents to confirm being a current UK TMU (years 1-4) as a prerequisite to completing the rest of the survey. Despite that, some respondent ticked ‘other’ and then stated some indifferent responses to the year of study (e.g. year 0, 5, foundation and graduate). Thus, on assumption that these may be unintentional errors, three newly modified categories were produced to reclassify these 13 responses to the nearest appropriate year of study.

Accordingly, the newly modified classifications, were termed phases of study. Hence, First Phase, instead of year 1, Middle Phase, instead of year 2 and Final Phase instead of year 3 and 4. Henceforth, the First Phase, now includes all the year 1 responses of 56, plus the 1 response of ‘year 0’ and the 2 responses of ‘foundation year’, hence (56+1+2), equalling 59 (approx. 30%). Likewise, the Middle Phase includes the 51 responses of year 2, plus the only 1 response of ‘placement year’, equalling 52 (approx. 27%). The Final Phase includes the 62 responses of year 3, the 11 of year 4, in addition to the 1 response of ‘year5’, the 6 responses of ‘graduate’, the 1 ‘postgraduate’ and the 1 response that only stated the word ‘final’. This clearly shows that the majority of the respondents (approx. 43%) are at the final phase of their study, have perhaps developed a more mature opinion or in-depth knowledge or at least being more career-ready TMUs, especially compared to their first-phase counterparts (tables 8 and 9 below demonstrate respondents by year phase of study, respectively).

Table 8: Respondents by Year of Study

Year of study	**Number of Responses**
Year 1	56
Year 2	51
Year 3	62
Year 4	11
Other	13

Table 9: Respondents by Phase of Study

Phase of Study	Number of Responses	%
First Phase	59	30.5%
Middle Phase	52	27%
Final Phase	82	42.5%
Total responses	193	100%

7.2 Analysis to the survey's section 1 (My Experience)

After the above screening analysis, questions 5-12 consulted TMUs reasons for choosing to study tourism, their evaluation of their curriculum and industry experience through to some initial intention questions. Section two is solely focussed on TMUs' career intention and hence directly addresses RQ3: How the current cohort of TMUs' attitude and experience of the UK tourism management curriculum affect their career intention for the tourism industry. Before this, section one, which starts with TMUs' reasons for choosing to study tourism and includes experience of the curriculum and industry as well as some pre-tests to career intention, is divided into 9 subsections based on the survey questions, as follows.

7.2.1 Reasons for Choosing to study Tourism Management

In the survey's question 4, TMUs were asked to choose the most relevant reason as to why they decided to study tourism management. The main three choices were Personal Interests (e.g. enjoy travelling, meeting new people, new places, etc.), Career Planning (e.g. starting a rewarding career, building international experience, planning to start a tourism business, etc.) and Advice and Guidance (e.g. influence of parents, university open days, career services, college tutor, etc.). They were enabled to rate all options, as relevant to their reasons for choosing to study tourism management. Based on the literature and market reports (e.g. Crouch, 2015), these options were identified as more relevant to this survey, especially anticipating that current TMUs would mainly be from the younger cohort (born around mid-1990s). Henceforth, TMUs rated the importance of each reason to their study choice on a 5-points Likert-scale, where '1' is 'not important', and '5' 'very important'. Correspondingly, the total sum points for each option shows personal interests scoring the highest (888 points), followed by career plan (790) and the lowest

was advice and guidance (549), averaging 4.6, 4.1 and 2.8 (92%, 82% and 56% out of the scales' max. 5-points), respectively. Hence, these results mean TMUs are a professionally determined cohort, as they focus on sector interest and career plans, much more than advice and guidance.

Thus, all three related hypotheses, h_1 (TMUs' subjective norms have positive influence on their intention to study tourism), h_2 (TMUs' attitude has positive influence on their intention to study tourism) and h_3 (TMUs' perceived control over their career has positive influence on their intention to study tourism), were accepted with varied degrees. This variation is clearly in favour of TMUs' attitude and perceived control over their career and less for societal subjective norms, which mirrors the above qualitative results, including TMUs' positive attitudes and career determination, witnessed and accentuated by most academia and industry experts (e.g. ACA4, 10 and IND4, 7 and 8). Accordingly, given that interest in tourism, as a discipline and career option, accounted for 40% of the total score (92% average out of 5-points Likert scale) and the interrelated career plan accounting for 36% (82% out of 5-points Likert scale), makes accepting hypotheses 2 and 3 with confidence. However, given that career guidance (hypothesis 1) accounted only for 24% of the total score (56% out of 5-points Likert scale) this, comparatively, casts some doubts over this hypothesis at this stage. As the latter relates to the effect of societal influence on TMUs' study choice, this is likely due to the inherited image issue of tourism as both a field of study and a career (see table 10 below).

Table 10: TMUs' Reasons for choosing to study tourism management				
Reason	Total score	% of total score	Average rating (out of 5)	Approx. % (out of 5)
Personal Interest	888	40%	4.6	92%
Career Plan	790	36%	4.1	82%
Advice and Guidance	549	24%	2.8	56%
Total	**2227**	**100%**	**5-points Likert scale**	

7.2.2 Curriculum Content Evaluation

In question 5 of the survey, TMUs were requested to evaluate the six main curriculum content categories of their respective tourism management degree, as extracted from the above literature and contributed to the formation of the CF. Accordingly, the 6 broad elements of the tourism management curriculum content included in this question were evaluated by TMUs on a 5 point Likert-scale, as to their value to their future career, where 1 means 'not valuable' and 5 'very valuable'. Despite the variation of the responses, the sum-total of each valuation shows minor differences with tourism-specific topics scoring the highest (834) and entrepreneurship topics surprisingly the lowest. Which is a point of comparison between what TMUs value, compared to academics and industry experts and highlights part of the curriculum issues, in terms expectations' input.

There could also be various reasons, including the relatively low number of responses, misunderstanding of the question, despite being checked and piloted several (see pilot studies above). However, other reasons to this, could be explained in the number of survey's that TMUs having to complete as contended in the above interviews. Moreover, this could be because TMUs, perhaps, thought that the question is about which topic they enjoy more, or interested in the most, hence the tourism-specific topics. Indeed, this was made clearer in the lowest score, as given the relatively lower number of people having interest in entrepreneurship, that's perhaps why the latter received the lowest score. Nevertheless, these are results of TMUs' experience and understanding to the curriculum in relation to their future career, which indicates that expectations and awareness of employers' requirements is an area of the curriculum that needs more attention, which is again in line with the above qualitative results, including the views of IND4, IND9 and ACA6.

As per the moderate difference in valuation, this could also be interpreted as TMUs placing a high valuation on each of their curriculum components, indicating having positive curriculum experience, or perhaps they cannot quite pinpoint the exact significance of each to their career and may have partially voted based on their interest, experience or enjoyment of the topic itself (hypothesis 4-experience of the curriculum and its contribution to TMUs' career intention). The latter point is can be seen in their rating of the "Entrepreneurial" content area of the curriculum being relatively lower than the other 5 components, despite the above literature (e.g. Johnson, 2001; Bothwell, 2015; Skinner, Sarpong, & White, 2018; Goh & Lee, 2018: Ndou, Mele & Del-Vecchio, 2019), as well experts interviewed emphasising its importance to their future career, whether in employment or as archetypical entrepreneurs. Accordingly, as shown in table 10, table 11 below illustrates TMUs' valuations to each of the six main components of the tourism curriculum based on their experience. In this, it shows the total number of points allocated to each curriculum area evaluated by TMUs, as per value to their future career. In this, TMUs value tourism-specific knowledge and skills the most, which contradicts with the experts' views in the above and hence casts some doubts about their understanding to the competencies required. See table 11 below: TMUs' curriculum content evaluation.

Table 11: TMUs' Curriculum Content Evaluation

Curriculum Area	Tourism-specific	Broader management	PPD	Work Placements	Entrepreneurial	Extracurricular
Total Score	834	788	732	778	693	800

7.2.3 Career preference after studying tourism

Question 6 required respondents to choose one of four optional statements concerning if studying tourism at this level has changed their views about a career in tourism, in addition to the open fourth under other to allow more in-depth data generation. Choosing the first option indicates

being very positive 'yes, I now view a tourism career more positively (106 responses, 55% very positive), the second is being positive 'no, it has not changed my views, still at the same positive level', (63 responses, 33% positive), and the third option the negative one 'yes, I now view tourism as a career more negatively' (13 responses, 6.7%), but the fourth and final option of 'Other' (11 responses, 6.3%) has generated mixed results, some of which have been reclassified under the relevant one of the above three options. These 11 respondents, like under the year of study, gave answers similar to the main three options, which is contradicting the choice of 'other'. In this, respondent 2 typed 'No, it has not changed my views at all', but didn't state whether this is positive or negative. Presumably, choosing to study tourism management and no change of view suggests that this comment belongs to option 2, which makes it positive. In the same direction, respondent 3 stated 'It has changed the type of job I want to do as a career within the industry', again suggests that their views either changed to more positive or not but still on the positive side because they have changed the type of job they want to pursue and within the same industry, and hence this is reclassified under option 1.

Likewise, respondent 4 and 5 both also, identically, stated 'No, it has not changed my views at all', option 1. However, respondent 27 stated, '*I have understood I no longer wish to pursue a career in tourism because of personal inclinations*'. Although this is not specifically related to the curriculum or industry experience and is not exactly clear, it is on the negative side, because the respondent is no longer pursuing a career in tourism, hence option 3. In a clearer statement, respondent 30 stated, '*my course didn't really give me an insight, it has made me not really want to do anything with it*', which is because of their study, makes the reclassification under option 3 easier. Respondent 60 stated '*I didn't really have plans for a career yet, was hoping that during the studies, i could find out about a role that would fit me*'. Although, the latter respondent did not clearly explain whether this was a lost opportunity, it could be deducted that this response is more towards the negative side. Moreover, respondent 65 was neutral, in stating, 'As I have just

started, I do not have an opinion yet', while respondent 172 stated, 'I still have an interest in Tourism but I want to focus on something else'. Hence, because of the desire to focus on something else, this makes it more on the negative side, option 3. However, 186 and 187 stated 'It hasn't, I still view it as something that could be positive or negative' and 'I understand both the negative and positive aspects of the industry more clearly than before.' respectively, which indicates that 186 is neutral, option 4 and 187 is positive, option 3. To reclassify these 3 responses would be added to first choice, very positive (106+3=109), then two to the second positive option (63+2=65) and 5 reclassified under the negative option 3 (13+5=18) and final one response will be neutral. After reclassifying the rese responses, the very positives would form 109 (57%), the positive of 65 (34%) and the negatives 18 (9%). As this makes the total of positive over 90%, which is indicative of the positive attitude and career intention and supports the career intention tests in the next section and the associated hypotheses further below.

More importantly here, is that the fourth hypothesis, which relates to TMUs' experience of the tourism curriculum having a positive influence on their intention to pursue a career in tourism is accepted, with some caution, as illustrated under the above subsection of TMUs' curriculum Content Evaluation. Although this positivity does not necessary mean it will makes them successful in their career endeavour, it at least offers both academics and employers some sound indications on their positive attitude, which requires more attention to their potentials may support reducing the turnover, especially if based on enhanced curriculum and recruitment practices. The two tables below (12 and 13) illustrate these results, where table 12 shows TMUs' career views (after studying tourism-1) and table 13 illustrates the adjusted responses (after studying tourism-2, where 'Other' responses were reclassified and all positive and negatives grouped.

Table 12: **TMUs' Career Views,** after studying tourism-1		
Opinion	Number of responses	Approx. %
Very positive	109	57%
Positive	65	34%
Negative	18	9%
Total	193	100%

Table 13: TMUs Career Views after studying tourism-2 ('Other' responses reclassified &all positive and negatives grouped)		
Opinion	Number of Responses	Approx. %
All Positives	174	90.5%
All Negatives	18	9%
Neutral	1	.5%
Total	193	100%

7.2.4 Respondents by Tourism experience

Question 7 investigates whether TMUs have work experience in the tourism industry in order to see if this influences their other answers, especially in preparation to triangulate with the results from the intention test in section two as contended in the above introduction to this section. Within these responses, those who stated 'yes', they currently work in the tourism industry were 34 (17%), have previously worked in the tourism industry were 65 (34%), those who marked 'no experience', were 82 (43%) and those who chose other were 12 (6%). This clearly shows there is a significant proportion (43%) to the no experience enquiry, which is an important indicator of the problems of both the curriculum design and more specifically the academia-industry liaison issues contended in the literature and found in the above qualitative analysis. In addition, based on the cross-tabulation of generational responses, most of these who stated that they have no experience fall under the younger two generations, where around half of them do not have industry experience. This either contradicts with some of those academics in the above analysis, who defended their curriculum design, especially in terms of the abundance of extraarticular

activities claims (e.g. ACA1, 6 and 10) or may consolidate the ideas hat academia-industry liaison is scattered and unstructured, where each case is different. The more important point here is that a considerable proportion of respondents stated that they do not have any industry experience. Indeed, apart from the acclaimed sound management learning as well as effective course evaluation, having no experience can have a profound effect on their future employability and is in line with the lack of academia-industry liaison as well as the low image about tourism degrees and tourism graduates contended in the above chapters (e.g. De Fuentes & Dutrénit, 2012; Sheldon & Fesenmaier, 2014). In this, the latter especially argue for an overhaul to the entire curriculum design. Such as changing the nature of the curriculum, what is being offered and how it is delivered, must include changing the assumptions of how certain skills should be developed and this should include the importance of a more structured academia-industry liaison. This includes more government support and engaging more of promising small businesses, including STEs (OECD, 2014), which was further mirrored and triangulated in the above qualitative results. Moreover, in technical terms, responses to the option 'other' under this survey question, suggests an unclear rationale behind such selection. In this, most of them stated that they have experience within tourism or tourism-related sectors, hence they should have chosen the industry experience options. While this may refer to a few areas of curriculum content (e.g. critical thinking or attention to details,) these responses were reclassified and included under categories one and two respectively. For example, respondent 12 stated '*college internship*', so if this was organised by their course leadership, it is likely to be in tourism or tourism related sectors (hence reclassified under option 1-current experience). Also, respondent 15 stated, '*Hospitality*' (1), 20 stated '*Hospitality so let's say 50/50 tourism environment*' (1). However, respondent 30 stated 'there is no opportunity for work experience or placements in university, they focus on just teaching you about sustainability over and over and over' (3).

The latter, albeit negative, is also in line with the above qualitative results, especially employers and major industry professionals stressing they need less of this sustainability content. Moreover, respondent 46 stated Events security (1), 60 stated 'Did two weeks in a hotel, but working with the restaurant/bar' (2) , 68 stated 'Customer service' (1), 91 stated 'I worked in the hospitality industry' (2), 98 stated 'Hospitality' (1), 111 stated 'Voluntary work experience' (2), 136 stated, 'Events & Hospitality Industries' (1), 148 stated, '*Work experience in a Formula 1 team, which is the career path I am planning on taking- has many links to tourism*' (2). Hence, are all mostly tourism or tourism-related experiences and therefore reclassified under option (7 current experiences, 4 previous and 1 no experience). This is cogently leading to the next subsection, where TMUs evaluate the main 8 managerial competencies stemming from the literature review. While at different stages in experiencing the tourism management curriculum, it is important to gain some insights into what TMUs expect employers look for in a fresh tourism graduate, which leads to better understanding, as to how this was influenced by their curriculum experiences.

Hence, this is organised under two tables, as table 14 exhibits TMUs' respondents by tourism experience (1), where the responses to the 'other' option is included and table 15 exhibits TMUs' respondents by tourism experiences (2), where responses to the 'other' option's responses were reclassified under the relevant main options (see tables 14 and 15 below).

Table 14: TMUs respondents by Tourism Experience

Type of Experience	Number of Responses	Approx.%
Currently Work in Tourism	34	17%
Previously Worked in Tourism	65	34%
No Experience	82	43%
Other	12	6%
Total	**193**	**100%**

Table 15: TMUs' respondents by Tourism Experience 2 ('Other' responses reclassified)		
Type of Experience	Number of Responses	Approx. %
Currently Work in Tourism	41	21%
Previously Worked in Tourism	69	36%
No Experience	81	43%
Total	**193**	**100%**

7.2.5 Graduate-level Competencies' Evaluation

This is question 8 in the survey, where TMUs were asked about what they think tourism employers are looking for in a fresh graduate. Again, this is in line with the CF and the literature, especially the career management model (Bridgstock, 2009) career management model, which is more competencies' and work related, compared for example to the career EDGE that is more educational, or curriculum based. The requested evaluation is again on a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 is least important and 5 most important. Tourism-specific knowledge (e.g. tourism operations management, destination management, tourism policy and planning, etc.), Tourism-specific skills (e.g. confidence in using booking systems, reservations, cancellations, organising transfers, etc.), Interpersonal Skills (e.g. teamwork, leadership, flexibility, etc.), Communications Skills (e.g. foreign languages, public-speaking, telephone manners, SM, etc.), IT Skills (e.g. Microsoft Office, Desktop Publishing, etc.), HR knowledge (e.g. understanding organisation structure, job roles, appraisal, payroll, recruitment, etc.), General accounting and finance knowledge (e.g. budgeting, profit and loss accounts, forecasting, taxes, etc.) and finally General sales and marketing competencies (e.g. marketing plans, competitors knowledge, pricing, etc.). Although they've rated communications skills highly, they've rated the accounting and finance skills the lowest, which *Ceteris Paribas* the aforementioned limitations, this is in the opposite direction to what employers expressed in the aforementioned interviews. While this clearly relates to TMUs' curriculum content evaluation in the above subsection (7.2.2), their

positive experience of the curriculum and its relative connection to hypothesis 4 (TMUs' positive career intention, as a result of experiencing the tourism curriculum), highlight clear discrepancies between TMUs' valuation of the importance of graduate-level competencies and the experts' views on these. Therefore, this poses strong questions as to the curriculum being fit for the purpose of TMUs' employability and relates directly to the qualitative suggestions, especially in managing expectations within curriculum content and increasing both the volume and quality of the extracurricular activities, through more meaningful academia-industry liaison. Table 16 below shows TMUs' Graduate-level competencies' evaluation (Average weight of the 5-Likert scale used and the total sum score for each competency identified in the above CF chapter. In this, TMUs rank communications, interpersonal and tourism-specific competencies in the top 3, which clearly contradicts with employers and industry experts' emphasis on IT, HR and accounting competencies that make the bottom three respectively.

Table 16: TMUs' Graduate-level competencies evaluation

Skills/ Competency	**Average Weight** (out of 5)	**Total (sum score)**
Communications skills/ competencies	4.62	893
Interpersonal skills/ competencies	4.60	879
Tourism-specific skills/ competencies	4.15	801
Tourism Specialist Knowledge	4.04	780
Marketing & Sales skills/ competencies	3.91	755
IT skills/ competencies	3.88	750
HR skills/ competencies	3.53	681
Accounting skills/ competencies	3.30	637

7.2.6 Tourism Management Undergraduates initial inclination to stay in tourism

This subsection relates to question 9 of the survey, which is again a multiple-choice inquiry testing TMUs career intention and hence the collective response to intention hypotheses 5, 6 and 7 (relating to the possible positive contribution of subjective norms, attitude and perceived

behaviour control of their career intention respectively). In response to whether they are likely to stay longer working in the tourism industry, especially compared to other non-tourism graduates, TMUs responses were generally positive, where 131 (68%) chose 'yes', 50 (26%) chose 'no' and 12 (6%) chose 'other'. With the majority (68%) showing positive career intention, this is only indicative, as it does not exactly show the effect of each of the TPB constructs (SNS, ATT and PBC) on their career intention (hypothesis 5, 6 and 7) as is the case in the next section.

However, especially given that the majority are in the final study phase (year 3, 4 and the integrated others), who are likely to have formed a more mature opinion about the industry through direct or curriculum-led industry experience (related to hypothesis 5), these results should also be considered positive in this light. The fact that they still wish to start work and stay in tourism, despite knowing about the low pay and experiencing poor working conditions (Ladkin, 2011; Baum, 2015, 2018), indicates positive attitude (hypothesis 6) and perceived control (hypothesis 7) over their future career. This also concurs with responses to question 4 in this section, where the vast majority reported to have chosen to study tourism management either because of professional interests or a clear career plan for this industry, accumulating to approx. 76% combined.

As per the specific statements under 'other', many of which were again positive, apart from the respondents 3, 5 and 34 identical response's comments of ('*Don't kw / t sure*'). Accordingly, other statements include respondent 9 stating; '*Depend on the person interest and the other reasons such as salary, profit of own business*'. The last part of the latter statement could be interpreted as indication of their entrepreneurial inclination too. Moreover, respondent 12 and 31 stating '*maybe'* and '*Don't kw, I stayed in the industry for 20 plus years with degree initially*', respectively. With the latter indicating that indeed tourism graduates are likely to stay.

Furthermore, respondent 60 stated '*tourist graduates is too big of choices, but I think it depends on what tourism section they decide to work in.. my t continue with it for too long*', which again, could clearly be interpreted as a positive statement in support of hypothesis 7 (perceived behavioural control contribution to career intention).

Nevertheless, respondent 96 has indirectly explained that the industry's recruitment doesn't probably give much attention to any degree, or maybe is indirectly explaining their own low image of work conditions within this industry, by stating 'a*s you don't need an education to work within the industry, but the graduation gives you opportunities that can take the graduate further than others*'. Perhaps more interestingly, respondent 102 stated, '*other people enter the tourism industry from other degrees and are very successful, also people that have worked in the industry for many years without degree, experience can have more applicable and hands on knowledge that can be applied to problems within the service encounter*'. This is again reemphasising the role of experience stressed in the above qualitative analysis, perhaps as a prerequisite (e.g. IND6) and the counter argument by ACA9 that this is making it difficult to tourism graduates as well, which could be classed as negative effect of the curriculum experience in this specific respondent's case.

Moreover, while respondent 128 typed the word '*opinion*' only, the last one to tick 'other' here was respondent 136, who stated '*Entirely depends on the person and their motivations*', which adds little to the argument, unless it is considered under the role of their perceived behavioural control and related contribution to career intention (hypothesis 7), factor that is tested in the next section. Before that, table 17 below illustrates TMUs' inclination to stay longer in the tourism industry, as they compared themselves to other non-tourism graduates; see table 17: TMUs inclination to stay in tourism: comparing themselves to other graduates.

Table 17: TMUs inclination to stay in tourism: comparing themselves to other graduates		
Answer	Number of responses	Approx. %
Yes	131	69%
No	50	26%
Other	10	5%
Total	193	100%

7.2.7 TMUs Career Path Plans

This section relates to question 10, a multiple-choice item, in which TMUs explore their preferred career path as part of their career plan, based on their experience of the curriculum and therefore further tests hypothesis 4. In this question, respondents were allowed a multiple choice making sure to mark their first choice in the process to see which option is their first, then which one chooses alternative, second or third options and why. Hence, the reason some numbers may seem more than the total number of responses (i.e. 273 instead of 193), which also relates to how the analysis is organised later.

In terms of results and analysis, responses by first choice showed that out of the 193, 126 (65.3%) chose the option “working for a major tourism employer”, followed by 24 “working outside of the tourism industry” (12.4%), 23 starting own tourism business (12%) and the relatively less of 20 for those who chose “work for a small tourism employer” (approx. 10.4%). The multiple-choice results showed an increase of the number who chose working for a major employer as their first choice (127 instead of 126). Moreover, in this multiple-choice, an increase to 51 for “working for a small tourism employer” in the combination (but not first choice, which is already 20/10.4%) and similarly “starting my own tourism business” (50) and “working outside of the tourism industry” (45) occurrences within all combinations of multiple choices. This simply

demonstrates that not only working for a major employer is the preferred option for the majority, but also this almost not included at all as a second option and hence demonstrates TMUs' determinations as well. In more depth, respondents who chose a combination of the two options of working for a major tourism employer (as first) and start their own tourism business were 15. This further reconsolidates the determination and independence to either work for a major tourism employer or start their own business. Although they strongly prefer major employer, but also shows the enterprising inclination desired mostly by these types of employers too. This, in the meantime should interest STEs, as both stressed such as competency in the above qualitative analysis, but seemingly their message is not effectively communicated to TMUs, which again gives rise to the aforementioned issues and solutions (chapter 6), including the need for collaborative graduate scheme tailored to both TMUs and STEs needs.

Following from this, those who chose all options and in their original order (1, 2, 3, 4) were only 4 respondents. Accordingly, while this partially shows flexibility and determination to work in any part of tourism, it may be also deducted that these are organising their career path in terms of priority. In other words, while the majority still prefer to work for a major tourism employer as a first choice, some are flexible enough they may be willing to start with a small tourism employer and so on. However, this may also indicate a lack of a career plan in the meantime, especially combined with the majority (126) preferring major employers and the least (20/ or 50 in multiple combinations preferring STEs. Hence, again this should be of interests to STEs and has implications for curriculum leaders to reassess its career planning contents liaison with STEs.

Accordingly, while this may be showing commitment to tourism by the majority, a sizeable proportion of TMUs may consider alternative industries if their aspirations were not to be met. Yet again, this is probably showing a lack of clear or realistic career plans, which, as in the

qualitative analysis, is better resolved through the more effective academia-industry liaison. This includes engaging TMUs in more meaningful internships and increasing this with STEs, while maintaining the pressure on major employers to do more, perhaps modifying their current unfavourable graduate schemes (e.g. TUI, 2016, 2020). This echoes the above qualitative analyses in the need to put TMUs more in touch with the real work environment, to learn and to take more ownership of their career (e.g. ACA4, IND7). This is also in line with the literature, where it was argued that the rapidly changing employment market requires graduates to possess a much greater ownership of their career, to enhance their longer-term employability skills (McNair, 2003), their sound career decisions (QAA, 2001b; Maher, 2010) and education-work transition (Minocha, Hristov & Leahy-Harland, 2018). These career planning skills, as previously contended, are more relevant here, as they do not only include more effective initial career decisions and LL (QAA, 2001b; Maher, 2010), but also better future career management (Airey, et al., 2015; Robinson, Ruhanen & Breakey, 2016).

However, for this to materialise, academics and policymakers need to engage employers and find solutions to improving academia-industry-liaison. This should not only focus on major employers, but also STEs that promise more opportunities (OECD, 2014), while finding ways to improve the wider deeply rooted low image of tourism (Holloway, 1993) that contributes to deep social cleavages of economic inequality (Robinson, et al. 2019) and hence, better inform employers and graduates (Dashper, et al., 2020). However, TMUs' survey results relating to their career path preferences show tha they clearly prefer working for major tourism employers (approx. 65%), followed by working outside tourism (12.5 %), starting their own tourism business (12%) and their lowest preference is working for STEs (11%). Although the ranking marginally improves in favour of working for STEs under the multiple-choice analyses (total occurrence of each option in any combination), TMUs still significantly prefer major tourism

employers over working for STEs. This contradicts with the above qualitative results, including STEs' positivity and interest in TMUs and hence supports the collaborative graduate scheme suggested by industry experts that requires HEIs and policymakers' support. These TMUs' career path preferences, in terms of first choice, then multiple-choices are exhibited in the subsequent two tables (see table 18: TMUs' Desired Career Path after Graduation-by first choice and table 19: TMUs' desired career path after graduation-by multiple-choice, below).

Table 18: TMUs' Desired Career Path after Graduation-by First Choice		
By First choice rank	**Responses**	**Approx. %**
Working for a major tourism employer (MTE)	126	65%
Working outside of the tourism industry (OTI)	24	12.4%
Starting own tourism business (STB)	23	12%
Working for a small tourism employer (STE)	20	11%
Total	193	100

Table 19: TMUs' Desired Career Path after Graduation-by Multiple-choice		
By Multiple-choice rank	**Responses**	**Approx. %**
Working for a major tourism employer (MTE)	127	46.5%
Starting own tourism business (STB)	51	18.7%
Working for a small tourism employer (STE)	50	18.3%
Working outside of the tourism industry (OTI)	45	16.5
Total Occurrence	**273**	**100%**

7.2.8 TMUs opinion of 'long term' employment in the tourism industry

This subsection relates to responses generated from question 11, which investigates TMUs opinion, as to the length of a 'long term' employment in the tourism industry, which is too in preparation for the intention tests that follows from question 13. It was important to investigate how TMUs envisage long-term employment in tourism, especially given there were no data

available at the time of this research and particularly in a UK context. Table 20, below, shows TMUs' choice of how long is 'long-term' employment in the tourism industry.

Table 20: TMUs' choice of how long is 'long-term' employment in the tourism industry		
Option	Responses	%
1 year	2	1%
2 year	9	5%
3 years	31	16%
4 years	20	10%
5+ 130	131	68%

7.2.9 TMUs priority in first job, after graduation

Again, inspired by the survey on this generation (Crouch, 2015), question 12 and the last of this section investigates whether a significant difference exists, not particularly comparing the two nations, but specifically considering if TMUs differ from the wider young cohorts. As, the American survey compared the emerging generation's employment plans in their preference to high salary, career development opportunities, friendly working environment, job stability, question 12 focusses on UK TMUs to contemplate their priority in their first job after graduation. This is particularly relevant to the tourism industry, which has been characterised in the above qualitative analysis and indeed in the literature, by low pay (Baum, 2018) and lack of career development opportunities. To encourage open responses and uncover any possible hidden choices, the option of 'other' was added, which is also in preparation for the second section on career intention as illustrated in the above. Perhaps, surprisingly, responses to the high salary option were only 16 (8.3%), higher but similar to the Americans (6%). However, it is important to note the difference and limitations of this survey. In short, these are TMUs, of whom not all, but 86% fall in the younger age group than are similar in characteristics. Moreover, perhaps convincingly, responses to career development and promotion opportunities were 113 (58.5%),

which is not only corresponding with the importance of such a factor to current UK TMUs, but also much higher than the Americans 36% (Crouch, 2015). This also mirrors the above qualitative findings and therefore has implications to all stakeholders involved, from policymakers, academics, through to employers, who need to focus more on what motivates them (Eissner & Gannon, 2018) and not undermine academic degrees (Sukarieh & Tannock, 2017) to justify low pay (Courtois, 2018). In brief, this clearly demonstrates that this is a positive cohort of TMUs, who in comparison with previous age groups (Solnet, Kralj & Kandampully, 2012) have clearer career plans and value career development opportunities over pay. Accordingly, while this should not deny them the opportunity to receive the payment they deserve at graduate-level (Thrane, 2008; Stauvermann & Kumar, 2017; Cortois, 2018), this is also in line with more recent literature suggesting they are not only less focused on the extrinsic financial needs (Chuang & Dellmann-Jenkins, 2010; Varkey, 2017), but also, are considered determined agents of change in their global ethical interests (Pritchard, 2014, 2018; BLS, 2018; Boluk, Muldoon & Johnson, 2019).

Moreover, job stability, as contended earlier, is not a trait associated with the tourism industry, but UK TMUs demonstrated more commitment to their career plans by scoring 30 (15.5%). However, for the friendly work environment option, TMUs scored 18 (9.3%) and for the flexible working hours the lowest score of 9 (4.7%). The latter result show an even more commitment to organisations and industry (Sturges, Guest & Mac Davey, 2000) by UK TMUs, particularly given it is one of the weaknesses of the tourism industry (Vandekerckhove, 2009; Booyens, 2020) and part of its turnover issue (Johnson, Stone & Lukaszewski, 2020).

In terms of responses to ‘other’ option, 7 (3.6%) with varied statements that again were similar to certain multiple-choice options within the same question. Accordingly, were reclassified

under the nearest relevant choice. For example, '*all of the above*' respondent number 30, which makes it a neutral response of no priority, hence stays under other. Moreover, respondent 82 stated '*Opportunities to work abroad',* which makes it more towards the career development opportunities (option 2*).* Perhaps more interestingly, respondent 91, stating *'Ethics of the host organisation and fulfillingness of job*' and 187 *'Making a difference and having a positive impact on tourism'*. This clearly resonates with some early literature (Rhenman, 1964; Vandekerckhove, 2009) on managerial ethics, showing great understanding from this cohort and generation, while demonstrating positive attitude and perhaps more preparedness to serve this industry better that is in line with the above qualitative results (e.g. IND4 and 7) represented in employers' requirements too. Moreover, this mirrors recent literature on the emerging generation, particularly having interests in the global issues (OECD, 2014; Wiedmer, 2015), being insightful (Clark, 2017), determined to ethically solve the industry's issues (Dredge, et al, 2013; Pritchard, 2018), have good level of resilience and EI (Seeler, 2019; Pool, Gurbutt & Houston, 2019).

Last here, additional responses under others that were reclassified, include respondent 82, and 100, suggesting the ability to travel, and international experience, hence were reclassified under option 2. Adding this to the above (cases 82 and 187), 4 out of the 7 responses were reclassified under option 2 (career development opportunities). This also means that the neutral responses were reduced from 7 (3.6%) to 3 (1.5%). In turns, this indicates that career development opportunities increased from 113 (58%) to 117 (approx. 61%), which makes it even more a significant (table 21 below illustrates the original TMUs' priorities in first graduate-level job-1 and table 22 shows the adjusted TMUs' priorities in their first graduate-level job-2). Both tables clearly demonstrate TMUs' focus on the intrinsic career development opportunities (61%), particularly compared to extrinsic high salary (8%), which is in line with the literature (Chuang

& Dellmann-Jenkins, 2010; Solnet, Kralj & Kandampully, 2012; Varkey, 2017), while demonstrating TMUs strong interest in tourism too (Boluk, Muldoon & Johnson, 2019).

Table 21: TMUs Priority in First Graduate-level Job 1		
Priority option	Responses	Approx. %
Career Development Opportunities	113	58.6%
Job Stability	30	15.5%
Friendly Work Environment	18	9.3%
High Salary	16	8.3%
Flexible Working Schedule	9	4.7%
Other	7	3.6%
Total	**193**	**100%**

Table 22: TMUs' Priority in First Graduate-level Job-2 (adjusted-'Other' option)		
Priority option	Responses	Approx. %
Career Development Opportunities	117	60.6%
Job Stability	30	15.5%
Friendly Work Environment	18	9.3%
High Salary	16	8.3%
Flexible Working Schedule	9	4.7%
Neutral	3	1.6%
Total	**193**	**100%**

This undoubtedly demonstrates significant interest in career development opportunities (61%) results over all other options, especially the pay, already show a positive career intention for tourism. This is further consolidated given this industry's well-documented issues of low pay and poor working conditions, which may otherwise deter non-tourism graduates and could indeed be one of the reasons to the high labour turnover at this level. In addition, the second highest score of 15% is their desire for job stability, which again indirectly indicates their intention to stay at least longer than the mass exodus reported by the People 1st (2015), where around 55% leave within their first year of employment. Indeed, this is also in line with literature, particularly on the job satisfaction context as part of the ethical commitment of employers (Rhenman,1964; Vandekerckhove, 2009). In a more recent work, Van Der Heijden et al. (2018),

used a longitudinal survey in the context of the European health care sector and found that the influence of work environment and opportunities for development predicted career turnover intention for nurses and in turns, predicted their actual turnover behaviour.

This also gives rise to the importance to argument raised by De Vos & Van Der Heidjen (2015) in the context of understanding and therefore attaining a sustainable career. Although, mirroring these contentions, it is still early stages to find a best systematic approach to the multidimensional phenomenon of sustainable career and in such a volatile industry with a deep-rooted low-image, as it is formed in a variety of contexts, within '*the multiple life transitions'* (De Vos & Van Der Heijden, 2015: 7, 45). Thus, the work conditions that cause job satisfactions or lack of include, as advocated by the latter, personal preferences, sector issues, the wider labour market, society and culture in which a profession evolves, which as is found in other sectors, intense in tourism and contribute to the turnover problem Lu, et al., 2016; Stamolampros, et al., 2019). Importantly, this is to relevant to the tourism labour issues, recruitment practices (Solnet, et al., 2014; TUI, 2016, 2020) and particularly relevant to TMUs employability and the tourism industry issues of recruitment (Johnson, Stone & Lukaszewski, 2020), which has been thoroughly emphasised in this research. Indeed, such results make it even more important to try to understand how such individuals deal with opportunities and constraints in these different layers of contexts, given the image of their degree, among other issues contended here that necessitated investigating their career intention, as detailed below.

7.3 TMUs' Career Intention Analysis (survey section 2-My Career Plan)

As briefly introduced in the above, this section focuses on the results of the final 20 questions of this survey that were specifically tailored to test the Career Intention of the current cohort of UK TMUs, using the TPB (Ajzen, 2006). This is analysed in the following 5 subsections, comprising data validity and reliability procedures, tests of normality, Multiple Linear Regression (MLR) analysis, cross-validation through a bootstrap MLR analysis and additional relevant descriptive statistics of comparing means.

7.3.1 Data validity and reliability procedures

As a custom procedure in MLR analysis, measuring the reliability of the questionnaire constructs should be carried out to validate its use and therefore the meaningfulness of its results. While the validity of an instrument means it measures what it intends to measure, its reliability means it does so consistently, which are not the same but closely related (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). In this, Cronbach Alpha is the most commonly used estimate of reliability (Van Voorhis & Morgan, 2007: Bonett & Wright, 2015) has been used here to assess the internal consistency of the scales used in each of the four TPB constructs, which are (ATT, SNS and PBC as predictor or independent variables and INT the dependant or outcome variable. While it is important to note that there is no absolute value as to the exact Cronbach Alpha reliability test score is or should be, a reliability coefficient of .70 or higher is considered acceptable. However, depending on the research context, the acceptable coefficient may vary, in which a lower than .70 may be acceptable too (Hair, et al., 1995; George & Mallery, 2003; Boley & McGehee, 2014). The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficients for each of the TPB's four constructs in this case were .779 for ATT, .729 for SNS, .491 (adjusted at .599) for PBC and .912 for INT.

As clearly noticeable, the predictor variable PBC's reliability score is low, even after adjustments were made using Cronbach Alpha's recommended test tools in SPSS (George & Mallery, 2003; Du Preez & Heath, 2016) to increase the 'score if item deleted'. Accordingly, upon investigation and rerunning the test, the score increased to 5.71 after deleting PBC1 '*It is mostly up to me whether or not I seek employment and stay in the tourism industry after graduating***',** where its scale is a 1-5 agreement (1 strongly disagree and 5 strongly agree). The Cronbach Alpha increased even further to .599, after the deletion of item PBC5 too '*With my tourism management degree, it would be easy for me to find an entry-level managerial position in any other industry*'. This item also had its original scale in a reversed order, whereby 1 meant referred to 'extremely unlikely' and 5 'extremely likely', which was reversed using SPSS (Version 26) transformation function. The following 5 tables show a multiple Cronbach's Alpha reliability tests' results to all four constructs of the TPB (see below tables: 23 for INT reliability score, table 24, ATT reliability score, table 25 SNS reliability score, table 26 PBC's 5-items reliability score and table 27 PCB 3-items reliability score after deletion).

Table 23: Reliability Statistics for Intention (INT)	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.912	5

Table 24: Reliability Statistics for Attitude (ATT)	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.779	5

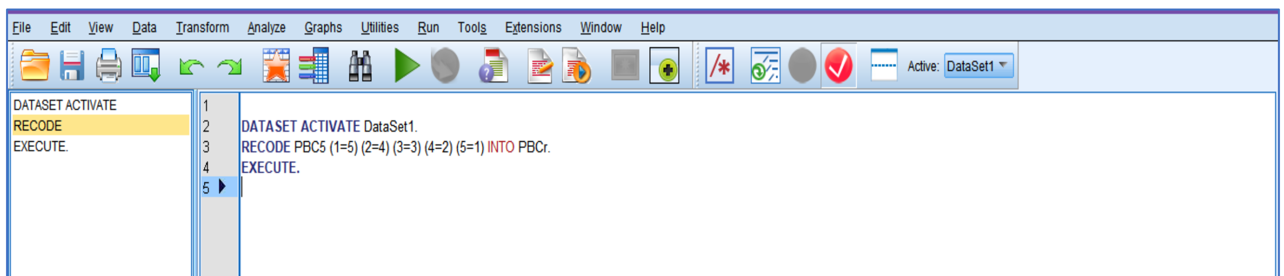
Table 25: Reliability Statistics for Subjective Norms (SNS)	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.729	5

Table 26: Reliability Statistics for Perceive Behavioural Control (PBC-all 5 items)	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.491	5

Table 27: Reliability Statistics for Perceive Behavioural Control (PBC-3 items)	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.599	3

Moreover, as noted in the above, the validity for PBC5 scale, which was reversed to PBCr, maybe questioned as it may have indirectly influenced some responses, especially given the respondents being subject to many surveys, as discussed earlier. However, despite PBCr results largely corresponding with other analyses throughout, including the above qualitative analysis, it remains part of this research limitations (figure 9 below shows a screen shot to the Syntax generated by SPSS (version 26) in PBC5r's reversed operation).

Figure 9: PBC5r's reversed operation: a screen shot to the SPSS syntax



In terms of the overall reliability of these constructs, it is firstly important to note that Cronbach Alpha is not a statistical test per se, but a calculated coefficient of reliability that is written as a function of the number of test-items and the average inter-correlation among them (Graham, 2006). This tests the internal consistency among the more purely statistical scale items and sub-constructs, but less strict in the tests of human behaviour as the nature dictates variations and unpredictability, which is almost always violated (Miller, et al, 2019). Put differently, given that Cronbach Alpha is rooted in the so-called 'tau equivalence' theory model (Hancock & An, 2018), which assumes that each test item measures the same attribute on the same scale, it requires items to be completely independent of each other (Cortina, 1993) and with similar degree of precision,

including non-correlation of errors (Cho, 2016). However, if multiple traits of such latent human behaviour constructs underlie the scale items, as the current case, this assumption is violated and accordingly Cronbach Alpha score may appear low, even though the testing constructs may be otherwise reliable. Indeed, as the inferential statistics' results (subsections 7.33-7.3.5) echo their related descriptive statistics and the above qualitative results, other combined means to support validity and reliability in similar cases, such as the inclusion of face values (Chen, Gully & Eden, 2001; Yang & Green, 2011) and experts' validation (Mahmood, 2017) have been used here to further compensate for the low Cronbach Alpha scores noted in the case of PBC items here.

Thus, in short, while Cronbach Alpha's internal consistency results are important for reliability in pure statistical settings, it is not always enough a condition for measuring the homogeneity or unidimensionality of test items, especially if both the sample and test items are small (Bernstein & Nunnally, 1994) and more importantly if these items test unpredictable human behaviour and hence the need to combine it with face value and experts' validation (Mahmood, 2017), which has been applied here. Evidence to this human unpredictability and extreme variation include responses to PBC constructs that contributed to the low Cronbach Alpha score (e.g. cases 2, 11, 182 and 188), where, for example, respondent 2 rated the 5 PBC items as 2,2, suddenly 5 and then 1 and 1, when all these reshuffled items ask about the same behaviour (see figure 10: Response discrepancies below).

Figure 10: Response discrepancies and outliers

*Dataset final Gen coded-PBC5r&outlier.sav [DataSet1] - IBM SPSS Statistics Data Editor

File Edit View Data Transform Analyze Graphs Utilities Extensions Window Help

2 : ID 3 Visible: 34 of 34 Variables

	PBC1	PBC2	PBC3	PBC4	PBC5r	INT1	INT2	INT3	INT4	INT5	FAC1_1	FAC2_1	FAC3_1	ATT	SNS
1	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	.32808	.83713	.44685	4.60	4.20
2	2.00	2.00	5.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	2.00	-.75854	1.23415	-2.33976	4.20	2.40
3	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	.74255	.74850	-1.02658	4.00	3.00
4	4.00	4.00	5.00	3.00	2.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	.95849	-.62770	.82278	3.80	3.60
5	5.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	-.08026	-1.54996	-.25529	3.00	2.40
6	5.00	2.00	5.00	2.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	2.00	4.00	2.00	-.81637	1.82340	-2.19989	4.60	1.60
7	5.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	.21534	-1.07283	-1.04191	3.00	2.00
8	4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	.78995	.28674	1.62063	4.60	4.40
9	4.00	3.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	-.49278	1.50362	-.80498	4.80	3.20
10	5.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	1.38851	-.58372	-.21357	3.60	4.20
11	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	.61801	.91752	1.65929	5.00	5.00
12	4.00	3.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	2.00	-1.17661	-1.02036	-.73298	3.00	2.80
13	5.00	4.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	-.31484	-.83771	1.35753	3.60	4.20

182 : ID 199 Visible: 34 of 34 Variables

	PBC1	PBC2	PBC3	PBC4	PBC5r	INT1	INT2	INT3	INT4	INT5	FAC1_1	FAC2_1	FAC3_1	ATT	SNS
178	3.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	2.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	.67822	.16919	1.89957	4.40	4.80
179	4.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	2.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	.09378	-.60028	.20273	3.60	3.80
180	5.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	-.36547	.37856	.38057	4.40	3.80
181	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	2.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	-.01024	.00909	.22613	4.00	3.80
182	4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	1.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	.41745	.94724	1.71037	4.80	4.60
183	4.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	-.77981	.69482	.02813	4.40	3.40
186	5.00	4.00	4.00	2.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	.43071	-.52634	.62282	3.60	3.20
187	5.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	-.83807	-1.20814	.20422	3.00	3.00
188	5.00	4.00	5.00	1.00	2.00	4.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	2.00	.54319	.23395	-3.42010	3.60	2.00
189	5.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	2.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	-.24051	.26511	.70415	4.20	4.00

Accordingly, it is reemphasised here that Cronbach Alpha is not detrimental alone, especially in a study of a mixed methodology design and exploratory nature, in which the quantitative data generated is combined with rich descriptive and qualitative results. Indeed, the variety of sources here, all point to the reliability of the data as they produce corresponding findings in support of the main intention results (subsections 7.3.3-7.3.5 below), which is supported through, a combination of pilot studies, face-validity (Wilbourn, et al., 2018), as well as experts' validation (Mahmood, 2017). Having justified the validity and reliability of the test constructs here, below is brief justification to MLR assumptions of normality of data distribution.

7.3.2 Data normality and descriptive statistics

Following from the above detailed Cronbach Alpha reliability, face value and experts' assessments to validate this data, there are still other several assumptions in conducting MLR analyses that includes those related to sample size and the varied intercorrelation (e.g. multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity) between variables, which are detailed in this subsection.

As per the sample size adequate to conduct MLR, one common rule of thumb is that it requires a minimum of 20 records per predictor variable, which can be lowered or increased based on concerns that any blanket rule is too simplistic for the diversity of research focus and approaches (Riley, et al, 2019). Given that there are 3 predictor variables here (ATT, SNS, PBC), a minimum of 60 records were needed to address this general rule and perform the MLR tests, an assumption that was clearly met with 193 completed records of TMUs' complete responses. However, this rule only applies if the dependent or outcome variable (INT) is normally distributed. Hence, the main test for normality (Shapiro-Wilk) was conducted on the outcome variable INT. In addition, more intercorrelation assumptions rules are needed in MLR, which also include an absence of outliers in all variables, a linear correlation between the independent variables and the dependent variable and an absence of multicollinearity between these independent variables (Kraha, et al., 2012). All these assumptions were checked as part of the MLR procedure, except for the normal distribution of the dependent variable that was examined first and separately as a recommended practice. Accordingly, the first result of the normality of distribution of the dependant variable (INT) shows a significant *p value* to both Kolmogorov-Smirnov and the widely trusted Shapiro-Wilk tests of normality, as seen demonstrated below (table 28: Tests of Normality).

Table 28: Tests of Normality						
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	Df	Sig.
INT	.130	193	.000	.910	193	.000
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction						

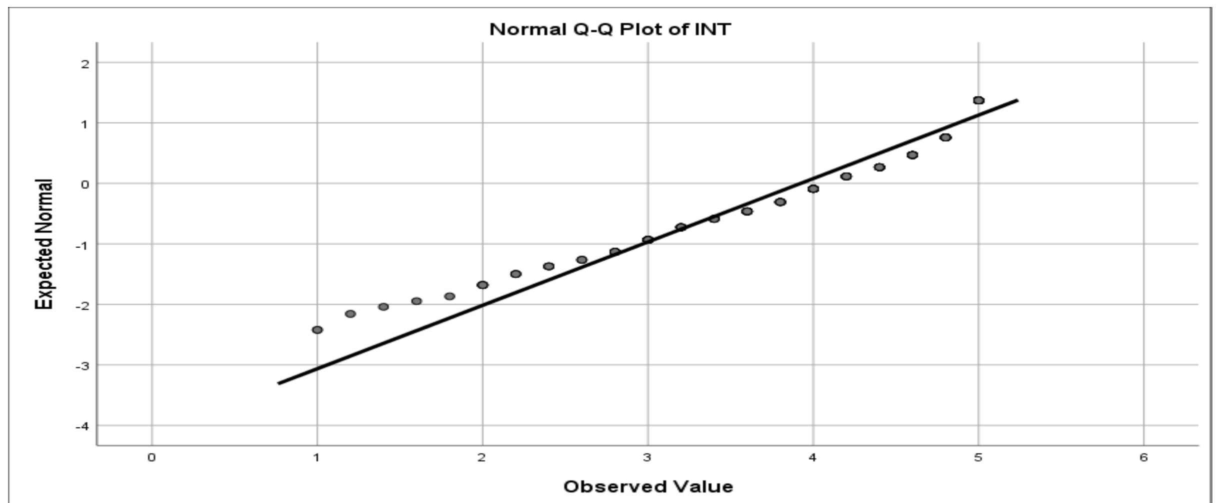
As per skewness, the literature (e.g. Garson, 2012), suggests, based on the rule of thumb for skewness of < -1 or > 1), the data is considered highly skewed, but if it is between -1 to -0.5 or 0.5 to 1, the distribution is considered moderately skewed, which is the case here (see table 29: Descriptive Statistics).

Table 29: Descriptive Statistics				
			Statistic	Std. Error
INT	Mean		3.9233	.06869
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	3.7878	
		Upper Bound	4.0588	
	5% Trimmed Mean		3.9934	
	Median		4.0000	
	Variance		.911	
	Std. Deviation		.95434	
	Minimum		1.00	
	Maximum		5.00	
	Range		4.00	
	Interquartile Range		1.60	
	Skewness		-.869	.175
	Kurtosis		.189	.348

Most importantly it has been also well-documented that moderate violations of parametric tests rules have little or no effect on the conclusions of most instances and specifically in psychometric measures of human behaviour (Cohen, 1969; Garson, 2012). Another evidence to the moderate skewness of INT data can be seen below in the Normal Q-Q Plot, which shows an almost normally distributed variable. But the subsequent histogram is roughly clearer in pointing out the moderate skewness to the left. However, the standard deviation, as recorded by SPSS (version

26) to the top right of the histogram is .954, which again shows moderate skewness (see figure 11: Q-Q plot for intention below).

Figure 11: Normal Q-Q Plot of Intention

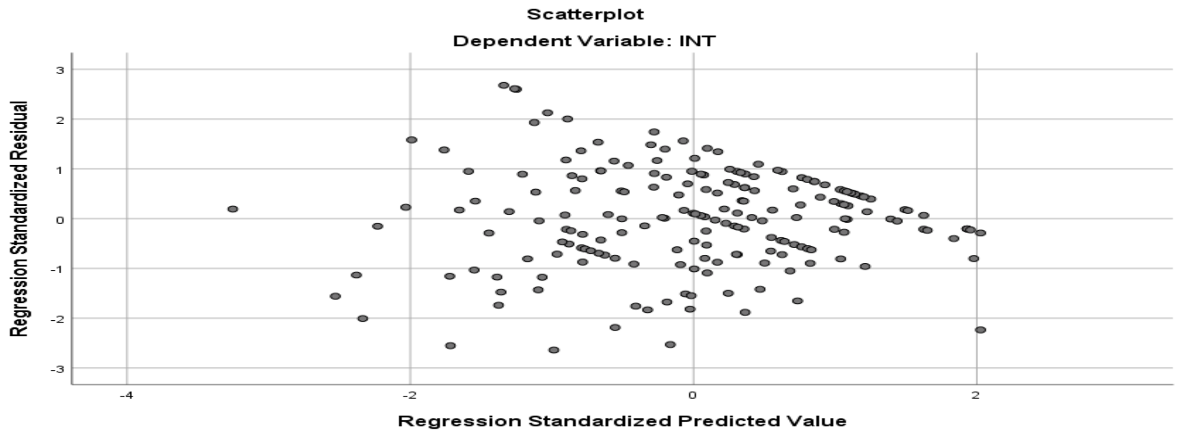


Likewise, the scatterplot also shows this with a clear one single outlier that upon investigation has been identified in the subsequent analysis, as case 89. As a rule of thumb, in the scattered plot of Regressions Standardised Predicted Value, none of the values should be above 3 or below -3, which as seen from the above is almost within.

However, upon further investigation there is only one point that falls just outside -3 and upon investigation this was identified as the item with ID number 89, who is a female, in phase 3 of their study and belongs to the younger group of TMUs. This is not a major issue, especially if the outlier is simply an extreme observation, which can also be reported that it is simply an outlier observation that did not follow the pattern of other observations. More specifically, case 89 gave the extreme low score of 1 to two of ATT items and the same to 3 of PBC items. This, while scoring an extreme 5 to each of the 5 INT items. As with bigger and the more quantitative

data, there is two recommended options, to either discard the problematic observation or use a robust test that retain the outlier but give it a less weight or acknowledge this in interpretation, which is the case here, as this specific outlier, although in the middle of the box to the left side of the plot, is clearly visible (see figure 12 below: Scatter Plot of dependent variable INT).

Figure 12: Scatter Plot of Dependent variable INT



Given that the initial descriptive statistics for MLR to all occurrences Accordingly, as a first option to avoid grossly misinterpreting the traditionally parametric results of MLR, the test was rerun after removing outlier case 89 (see table 30 and 31 regression descriptive statistics below).

Table 30: Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
INT	3.9233	.95434	193
ATT	**3.9192**	.72865	193
SNS	**3.5098**	.77698	193
PBC	**3.7264**	.56437	193

Table 31: Regression Descriptive Statistics (outlier removed)			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
INT	3.9177	.95364	192
ATT	3.9271	.72220	192
SNS	3.5135	.77731	192
PBC	3.7354	.55181	192

As seen from the above table, it is important to note the total number under column 'N' shows 192 instead of 193, as the outlier removed. The table also shows the relatively lowest mean score is for SNS (approx. 3.5 out of maximum 5 points Likert-scale). This can be interpreted as TMUs defy the societal and important others' low image of tourism as a career, which is also evident in attitude's mean score of above 3.9 and career intention's similar positive strength score. In terms of their regression correlation with intention with outlier removed, both predictor variables ATT and SNS are significantly correlated with INT (.307 and .633) respectively and this is reflected in their respective *p values* of .000 and .000. However, the predictor variable PBC's correlation of -.023 is insignificant with its *p value of* .836. The latter results, pertinent to PBC shows insignificant contribution to variations in TMUs' career intention, which not only illustrate potential weakness in the constructs itself, but also as a latent human behaviour this is also attributed to the above discussed rationales, including the curriculum-led lack of understanding to real-life recruitment practices and employers' competency requirements (see table 32: Regression Coefficients below).

Table 32: Regression Coefficients (note: PBC not significant)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.467	.376		1.241	.216
	ATT	.307	.086	.233	3.556	**.000**
	SNS	.663	.078	.540	8.549	**.000**
	PBC	-.023	.109	-.013	-.207	**.836**

a. Dependent Variable: INT

As per the intention data and its reliability in terms of normality of distributions, this can also be seen from the histogram below after the removal of the above identified outlier (case 89). It shows a better bell-shaped data, which is also further consolidated in the resulting P-P plot of regression's standardised residuals to TMUs career intention, where, as visible, the data is almost

normally distributed (see figures 13: Histogram of Dependent variable INT, and figure 14: Normal P-P Plot of Regression standardised residual for dependent variable INT, below).

Figure 13: Histogram of Dependent variable INT

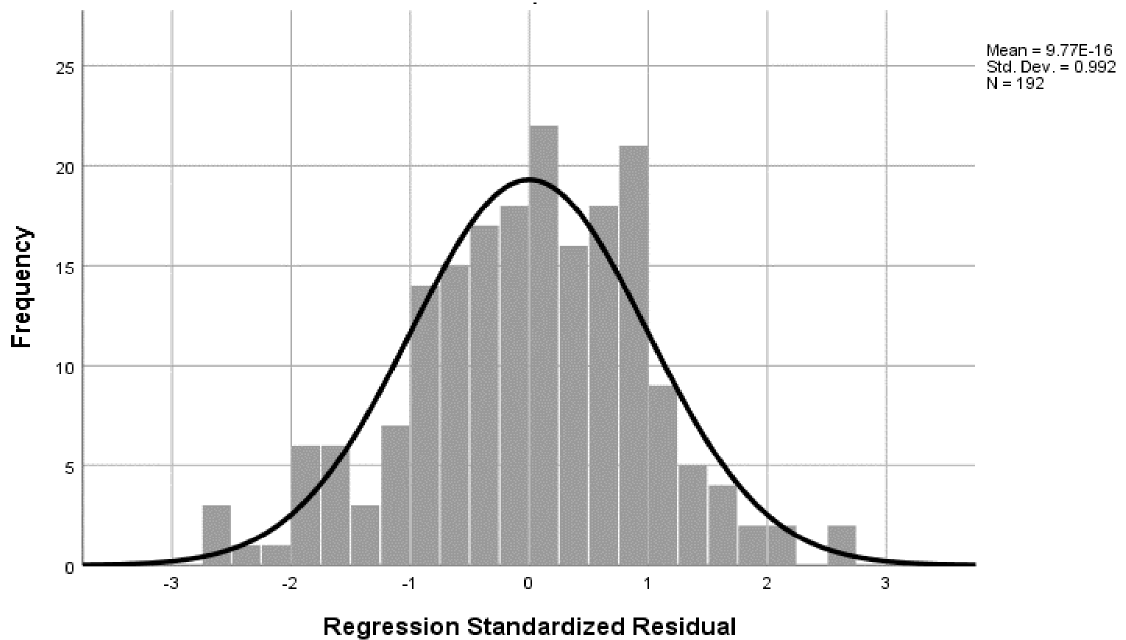
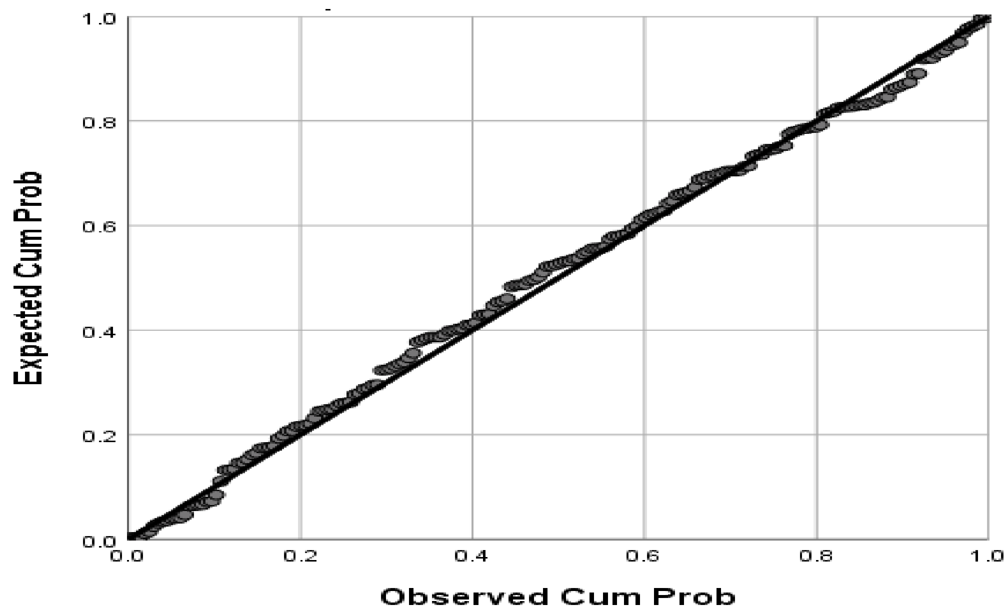


Figure 14: Normal P-P Plot of Regression standardised residual for dependent variable INT



Last here, it is important to raise the point that the normality assumption will not always be exactly true, especially with real data and that independence and homoscedasticity. The latter, simply means that variance around the regression line Y, being the same for all values of the predictor variable X or data values are scattered to about the same extent, which is a more important assumption than normality. Considering this, coupled with the above illustrated data limitations, including sample size and geographical distribution, it has sometimes been proved that even extremely non-normally distributed data can still be validated (Lumley, et al., 2002) through the above discussed other means, human approaches, such as face values and experts' validation. In addition, another statistical measure includes the maximum estimator test, which simply relies more on the median (rather than on the mean) as the measure of centre tendency for the robust estimation of probable normal distribution, and therefore reduce the effect of extreme outliers (Blanca, et al., 2017; Wang, Su & Weiss, 2018). In terms of correlations between constructs, one needs to check the for the objectionable multi-collinearity between the predictor variables, whereby if a correlation is greater than .7, especially for the purpose of regression, it is said that these variables are multicollinear. This multicollinearity means, they are correlating within and among each other to a such a high degree that influences the ultimate results of the outcome variable. This, in pure quantitative cases, adversely affects the validity of interpretation. However, in this case, all three independent variables were found to be scoring less than the recommended multicollinearity value of (.7) or higher among them. However, the minimum of .3 was not met and this again was in the case of PBC (.299), which is almost the minimum (see table 33: Pearson Correlations, below).

Table 33: Pearson Correlations					
		INT	ATT	SNS	PBC
Pearson Correlation	INT	1.000	.467	.638	.299
	ATT	.467	1.000	.486	.498
	SNS	.638	.486	1.000	.424
	PBC	.299	.498	.424	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	INT	.	.000	.000	.000
	ATT	.000	.	.000	.000
	SNS	.000	.000	.	.000
	PBC	.000	.000	.000	.
N	INT	193	193	193	193
	ATT	193	193	193	193
	SNS	193	193	193	193
	PBC	193	193	193	193

Hence, it could be said that they are not multicollinear enough to violate such assumption. In addition, there is a varied standard as to the threshold of multicollinearity, especially connected with the nature of the research and the various technical tests employed. A commonly used technique to measure multicollinearity is called the Variance Inflation Factors (VIF). In this if for example tolerance is less than .2 (e.g. .1) or VIF value exceeds .7 (e.g. .8), it indicates that there is a multicollinearity problem as the figure increase closer to 1, but again these levels of multicollinearity were neither found here nor are agreed upon, where some argue for this maximum figure to be .5 (Hair, et al., 1995) and others argue for even higher (e.g. Giacalone, Panarello & Mattera, 2018).

Hence, given the above-illustrated limitations, nature and scope of this study, focus will shift towards the MLR correlations between each of the 3 predictor variables (ATT, SNS and PBC) and the single outcome intention variable (INT), but not among them as this has been justified. The correlations of each of the predictor variables ATT and SNS with INT were found to be positive and strong in the Pearson Correlation Coefficient scores (.467 and .638), which are greater than the rule of .3 in both cases (see Pearson correlations: highlighted in the above table

35). Despite PBC showing VIF figure of lower than .3 (.299), flexibility is applied with caution and is justified on grounds related to the nature of such latent constructs that are dealing with human behaviour and hence is further defended in due course. Turning the attention back to the MLR results, the SPSS table of MLR descriptive statistics (see the above table 35: descriptive statistics) shows the mean and standard deviation of the rating to all four variables, resulting from responses to the 5-Likert scale for all the 193 eligible records for all the sub constructs of each of the measurement items ATT, SNS, PBC and INT (5 each, 20 in total). In this, the results show high valuations overall, with the highest mean score of all the predictor variables belonging to attitude towards a career in tourism (ATT-mean score of 3.9192 out of 5), followed by PBC (3.7264) and SNS (3.5098). Importantly, as the main variable, the average mean score for INT (the outcome variable) is even higher (3.9233 out of the 5-points Likert scale used), which suggests a strong intention of approx. 78% to pursuing a long-term career (minimum of 3 years) in tourism.

Even more importantly, the lowest mean out of the three predictor variables is SNS score of 3.5098, which corresponds with the above qualitative analysis that despite the negative perception of their degrees, TMUs are indeed defying such societal and close circles' low perception of their degrees and tourism as a career. Like the positive intention reported earlier (in the qualitative results) and the literature pertinent to TMUs' positive personality traits (Fabio, et al., 2013), these intention results reconsolidates and aligns with all the results including the descriptive statistical results in the above analyses of section 1 of the survey (see table 32: Descriptive Statistics table, in previous subsection 7.3.1).

7.3.3 Multiple Regression Model and TMUs' career intention results

As the coefficients results (in table 36 below) shows significant contribution to the variance in career intention (INT), by the predictor variables' unstandardized beta coefficient (B) figures, wherein attitude (ATT) causes (.292) in their career intention for tourism (INT) variations. In other words, attitude is responsible for approx. 30% positive increase in the tourism career intention of current UK TMUs. Nevertheless, PBC shows insignificant effect (-.075) under unstandardized coefficients and a statistical significance of .491, which is much higher than the recommended *p value* of less than **.**05, hence insignificant. Accordingly, both hypothesis h_5 (TMUs' subjective norms have positive influences on their intention to pursue a long-term career in tourism after graduation) and H_6 (TMUs' attitude has positive influences on their intention to pursue a long-term career in tourism after graduation) are accepted with varied degrees. However, this clearly shows that subjective norms have the greater influence, represented in the important role of the their important others (family), friends and the wider societies in altering their such behavioural intention, despite the low image (e.g. Pizam, 1982; Holloway, 1993; Walmsley, 2012) and precarious work conditions (e.g. Lee, Hampton & Jeyacheya, 2015; Mooney & Baum, 2019; Booyens, 2020) that are frequently cited in describing tourism as a poor career (e.g. MaCarthy, 2016; Baum, et al., 2020).

However, h_7 (TMUs' perceived control over their tourism career having a positive influence on their intention to pursue a long-term career in tourism after graduation) is rejected in this specific case, because of its statistical insignificance (-.075) and is illustrated in the test results below (Table 34: Coefficients). This, despite TMUs' indicating its relative importance in the mean-score ratings to PBC statements, which was a higher mean score than SNS (see above tables 30 & 31: regression descriptive statistics). However, as a contributor to their career intention, it

proved insignificant (table 34 below). Thus, this illustrates the importance of managing TMUs' expectations and raising awareness of employers' competency requirements (Eldeen, et al., 2018) at the curriculum stage, which also corresponds hypothesis 4 results (TMUs' experience of the curriculum leads to positive career intention), where phase 3 of study scored marginally less than phase one in the following career intention's t-tests (7.3.5) and in the above (e.g. 7.2.2).

This means, the other two predictor variables relating to hypothesis 5 and 6 (ATT and SNS) are statistically significant with ATT contributing .292 (approx. 30%) and subjective norms being the highest to their overall positive tourism career intention (3.9233/ approx. 78.5%) contributing .674 (approx. 67%). While these subjective norms coefficient results may seem contradicting with the means scores in the above, it also shows that the effect of important others (e.g. close circles of friends and family), may be different to those career guidance's professionals such as tutors and career advisors. In a nutshell, although the immediate and wider societal influence, as a factor, is the least important in themselves to TMUs, they still contribute to the highest variance in their career intention somehow. In addition, the Zero-order or gross correlations, which is the correlations of each of the predictor variables (ATT, SNS and PBC) with the outcome variable (INT), without controlling for the influence between independent variables (e.g. SNS & PBC) shows an even higher contribution of ATT (.467/ approx. 47%) to the positive variance in intention, where SNS were slightly reduced to .638 (approx. 64%) and this increased PBC contribution to .299 (see below table 34: Coefficients).

Table 34: Coefficients [a]									
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Correlations		
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part
1	(Constant)	.694	.373		1.860	.064			
	ATT	.292	.088	.223	3.335	.001	.467	.236	.181
	SNS	.674	.079	.548	8.556	.000	.638	.528	.465
	PBC	-.075	.109	-.045	-.690	.491	.299	-.050	-.038
a. Dependent Variable: INT									

Again, with keeping in mind the above cautions, as to the limitations of the current data (e.g. sample size and geographical distribution), at least SNS and ATT's MLR results are clearly significant. Thus, given these limitations, it cannot be largely ascertained that these are generalisable results. However, combined with the qualitative findings and other corresponding results in the above section 1 (e.g. question 4 and 9), these results can, at least, support the triggering of further research in this area that attempts to minimise such limitations. Moreover, the ANOVA (analysis of variance) is another test that the above r-square is significant, when it is between 0 and .05, which is the case here. The statistical test to the overall model's significance shows the p value of.000 and hence the regression model in TMUs' case is significant at 99% confidence in conveying such results (see table 35, ANOVA below).

Table 35: ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	77.097	3	25.699	49.679	**.000**[b]
	Residual	97.769	189	.517		
	Total	174.865	192			
a. Dependent Variable: INT						
b. Predictors: (Constant), PBC, SNS, ATT						

Accordingly, an important point to emphasise here is that, away from the parametrically restrictive assumptions of multicollinearity and so on, the model summary shows that the current regression model is fit and at a significant level. It specifically shows the Pearson R-Square's

value is .441, which a significant strength of association, compared to the rule thumb of around .26 to the r-square metrics for high effect size (Cohen, 1992). In other words, the result here simply indicates that 44.1% of the variance in the outcome variable INT (TMUs career intention), can be predicted from the collective influence of all the 3 predictor variables ATT, SNS and PBC (see table 36, model summary below).

Table 36: Model Summary [b]									
				Std. Error	Change Statistics				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.664[a]	.441	.432	.71923	.441	49.679	3	189	**.000**
a. Predictors: (Constant), PBC, SNS, ATT									
b. Dependent Variable: INT									

As it clearly demonstrates the overall strength of association and model fitness, this model summary does not exactly reflect all the predictor variables association with the outcome variable (INT), particularly in relation to the data moderate multicollinearity and skewness (-.869) that could have affected the results. Hence, this remains a limitation in these results, but not in the entire research, because of the wide range of rich and corresponding data that were justified earlier (Cohen, 1969; Davison & Hinkley, 1997). Indeed, this is confirmed in the case of PBC insignificant coefficient of -.075 (see the above coefficients, table 34). However, looking at the model's summary, whereby the minimum requirement of 20 cases per independent variable (total of 60) was met with a good size sample (193) and because the skewness is moderate, it is possible to interpret the r-square results of .441 and *p value* of .000 as both fit and significant at 99% confidence. In other words, given the mean rating to their intention's 5 items being very positive (3.9233/78%), combined with their accumulative effect of all predictor variable in the model summary contributing to approx. 44.% (compared to the minimum .26/26%) and the above analysed descriptive and qualitative data, this demonstrates with caution that TMUs have a positive career intention for the tourism industry despite all the issues and constraints they are

facing including the low image and unfavourable recruitment practices. Hence, the two hypotheses (5 and 6) were accepted, as contribution to TMUs positive career intention by the wider subjective norms and their attitude were clearly significant. However, their perceived control over their tourism career (hypothesis 7) was rejected due to PBC insignificant contribution to TMUs' career intention for tourism. However, the regression model's is fit and valid with approx. 44% (compared to the threshold of .26/26% overall). Accordingly, figure 15.1 below shows the raw or gross correlations between TMUs' career intention for tourism and all the three predicting variables (ATT, SNS & PBC), where their PBC was insignificant contributor Below the threshold of .3/30%), and figure 15.2 shows the final regression model, as TMUs' PBC contributions were removed due to their insignificance. (see figure 15.1 & 15.2; TMUs' Career Intention Regression Model's two version of raw and partial correlations below).

Figure 15.1: TMUs Career Intention Regression Model (gross/ raw correlations)

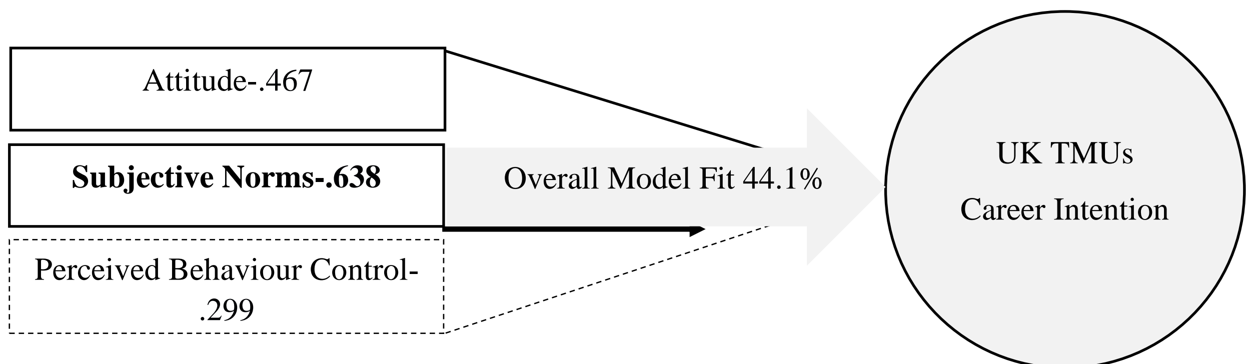
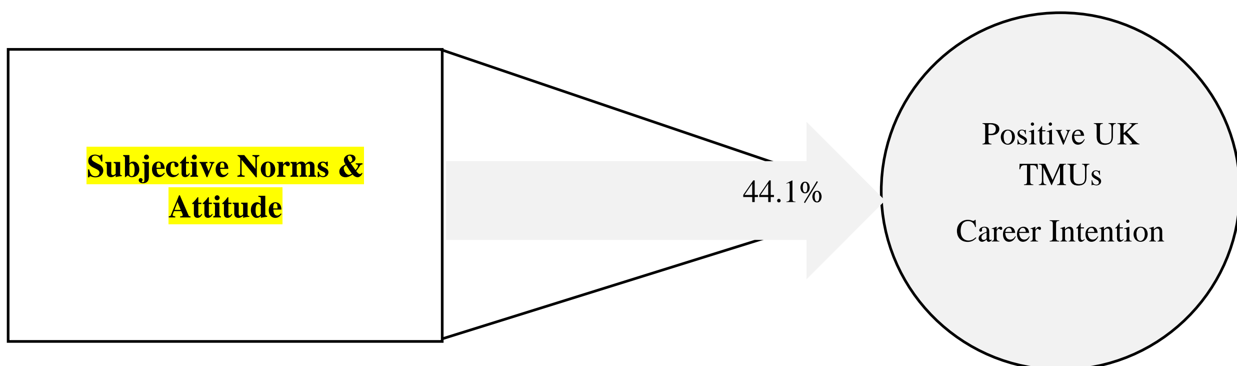


Figure 15.2: TMUs Career Intention Regression Model (partial correlations)



In further justification to the fitness and significance of this model, it has been argued that while non-normality may have some varied degrees of impact on the precise p-values of the coefficients, if the distribution is not too irregular, the test still provides good estimates, especially in human behaviour-testing cases (Royston,1991). However, to add more value and remove any doubts about the data in question, especially given that normality of distribution is one of MLR assumptions (Blanca, et al., 2017), it would have been insufficient to solely rely on the generic MLR to interpret the results with full confidence. Thus, to further assess these results, another but more parametrically lenient technique of MLR was also employed. This is the Bootstrap technique, which is an increasingly popular alternative (Kirk & Stumpf, 2009) that is recommended, especially in cases where normality of distribution could be an issue and is detailed below.

7.3.4 Bootstrap analysis-cross validation

As briefly introduced in the above, Bootstrap is a robust and parametrically lenient form of MLR, especially in dealing with real data and reducing the effect of the often-restrictive assumptions, as to the absence of heteroskedasticity and multicollinearity. While the latter relates to the undesirable correlations between the independent variables, the former relates to the variability of the dependant variable (INT) being an unequal across the range of values of the independent variable (ATT, SNS, PBC). As this occurs in both pure quantitative and human behavioural studies, but more common in the latter, Bootstrap is a way of mitigating these issues to provide a more meaningful and holistic results. Accordingly, it is a broader approach to statistical inference that specifically finds probable alternative distribution of errors out of the same data in-hand. In simpler terms, software applications like SPSS randomly increases the sample or resamples multiple times. Hence, it gives possible results, based on a number of possible bigger

samples, as opposed to the single occurrence of the original sample in a purely parametric test. This, in turns, reduces the probability that such results did happen by chance, unsurprisingly Bootstrap has been widely reported to improve the estimates, especially in data that does not fully conform with the common parametric assumptions, including normality of distribution (Efron & Tibshirani. 1993; Davison & Hinkley, 1997; Kirk & Stumpf, 2009). Thus, considered a relatively recent development in its application to tourism research, Bootstrap analysis has increasingly been used (Song, Kim & Yang, 2010) and demonstrated its 'capacity to provide accurate and reliable confidence intervals' (Tribe & Xiao, 2011: 21), especially in similar tourism studies (Papathanassis, 2020).

Accordingly, the bootstrapping MLR test was run by resampling 2000 times (double the default in SPSS version 26) and at 95% confidence intervals. The results show the *p values* for both attitude and subjective norms' effect on intention variations were still statistically significant at (.001 & .000) respectively. Also, like in the original sample's MLR results, perceived behavioural control was again statistically insignificant predictor of TMUs career intention (*p-value*=.518). This is, as demonstrated in table 37 below, the same applies to the Bias-Corrected and accelerated (BCa) bootstrap results. In this, BCa, which adjusts for both bias and skewness in the bootstrap distribution, both the upper and lower confidence intervals for attitude (.114-.487) and for subjective norms were positive (.488-.852) and results were around the original Beta (B) points estimate of the original predictors of (.292) and (.674) respectively. Hence, it is concluded here that under the bootstrap MLR, results still show that both attitude and subjective norms as statistically significant predictors of UK TMUs' career intention for tourism, whereas perceived behaviour control was not. The remaining statistics in table 37 are identical to the earlier reported MLR results, which reconsolidates the fitness and significance of this regression model (see table 37 Bootstrap for coefficient table below).

Table 37: Bootstrap for Coefficients							
Model		B	Bootstrap[a]				
			Bias	Std. Error	Sig. (2-tailed)	BCa 95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower	Upper
1	(Constant)	.694	-.019	.386	.076	-.005	1.410
	ATT	.292	.002	.097	.001	.114	.487
	SNS	.674	-.003	.093	.000	.488	.852
	PBC	-.075	.006	.119	.518	-.332	.186
a. Unless otherwise noted, bootstrap results are based on 2000 bootstrap samples							

7.3.5. Additional results and summary

In this final subsection of the quantitative analysis, further t-tests were run to compare means of certain aspects of TMUs respondents' profiles, to determine if there is a difference in career intention for tourism by TMUs age groups, by phase of study (cross tabulation, e.g. year 1 vs 3, etc.) and the role of experiencing the curriculum in influencing TMUs career intention for tourism, which directly relates to hypothesis 4. In addition to earlier justifications, the additional t-tests were run to eliminate any doubt related to both the dominance of females as respondents and the geographical distribution issue of data (Greenwich vs non-Greenwich).

The first t-tests, the younger age group of TMUs (1993-2001) intention mean scores (out of the 5-points Likert scale) was 3.9491 (79%), compared to TMUs' Mature age groups (1959-1992), which combined have positive, but lesser career intention (3.7429/ 75%). This does not only mean the younger age group of TMUs have stronger career intention for tourism and by a margin of 4%, but also indicate if all respondents were from this group, the already strong overall career intention in this sample (78%), could have been higher (see table 38: group statistics below).

Table 38: Group Statistics					
	Group	**N**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error Mean**
ATT	Younger TMUs	165	3.9491	.69936	.05444
	Mature TMUs	28	3.7429	.87578	.16551

As per t-tests examining TMUs' intention means, based on phase of study, results are different, albeit marginal. It shows an overall negative effect of curriculum experience on career intention and therefor hypothesis 4 is rejected, with clear implications for the curriculum designers. In this TMUs in phase 1 show the highest career intention's mean score (4.1254/ 82.5%), which is marginally reduced to 3.9451 in phase 2 and further reduced in the case of phase 3 (37663/ 75.3%). However, the sample size for each phase also varies, which is 59, 51 and 83 respondents for phase 1, 2 and 3 respectively. This means that it is also important to note the difference in sample size, particularly when comparing phase 3 (83) with phase 1 (59), which could have made a difference particularly if both were equal and perhaps larger. However, in this case the means' difference in intention between these TMUs' sub-groups, suggests a needed attention. Put differently, despite the above qualitative results and the difference in groups' sizes here, this indicates that hypothesis 4 is rejected, as the more TMUs experience the curriculum, the less career intention for tourism they showed (phase 1 vs phase 3). Given the above t-test's positive difference in favour of the younger group of TMUs, perhaps those experts recollections were more about this younger group and therefore the results would have been different if the sample consisted only of them.

Thus, combined with the clearly strong younger TMUs' career intention, this indicates that TMUs in general make mature evaluations to their career options as they move through the curriculum phases, which is in line with the literature too (e.g. Richardson, 2008; De Vos & Van

Der Heidjen, 2015). In either case, this presents some warning to those concerned, because experience of the curriculum, particularly extracurricular is negatively correlated with experiencing the industry that sometimes acts as a demotivator (Robinson, Ruhanen & Breakey, 2016), particularly when such activities are not meaningful enough. Again, these results further reemphasise the need for practical initiatives that yield meaningful internships and encourage more reflective curriculum designs (Belhassen & Caton, 2011), including the above illustrated community-based based experiential learning AFBW initiative (Boluk & Carnicelli, 2015, 2019). Thus, requires academics to work on enhancing TMUs' longer-term career planning and management, as pivotal aspects of their employability skills (McNair, 2003), which in the academic part, highlights the importance of both the need for more career expectation management content, though more meaningful extracurricular activities and internships (Allen & Newman, 2016; Stansbie, Nash & Chang, 2016). This, while encouraging employers to develop new job opportunities (Asongu & Tchamyou, 2018), chiefly utilising the increased potentials of STEs (Mohamed & Weber, 2020). These results below (table 39: TMUs' mean intention by phase of study and table 40: phase 1 vs phase 3 of TMUs' mean intention).

Table 39: TMUs' Mean Intention by Phase of study

INT

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Phase 1	59	4.1254	.72578	.09449	3.9363	4.3146	2.60	5.00
Phase 2	51	3.9451	.87551	.12260	3.6989	4.1913	2.00	5.00
Phase 3	83	3.7663	1.11260	.12212	3.5233	4.0092	1.00	5.00
Total	193	3.9233	.95434	.06869	3.7878	4.0588	1.00	5.00

Table 40: Phase 1 vs Phase 3 of TMUs' mean intention

	PHASE	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
INT	Phase 3	82	3.7805	1.11183	.12278
	Phase 1	59	4.1254	.72578	.09449

In addition, independent sample t-tests were conducted to reveal if there is any significant difference between TMUs' responses based on HEIs and the geographical imbalance of the sample. As results showed insignificant *p*-value of .671, thus, equal variance was assumed and hence the null hypothesis as to the similarity of responses by UK TMUs, regardless of the HEI they are attending, was accepted. Moreover, as female respondents represented a clear majority in this sample (83.4%) and despite this being in line with recent reports on the current UK cohort of TMUs (e.g. 81% at the University of Greenwich, 79% at Lincoln and 81% at Edinburgh Napier (HESA, 2020; ONS, 2020), a t-test was run to compare their responses. The results show that the mean intention responses for males TMUs (28 responses) compared to females (161 responses) were negligible. This includes Levene test of equality of variance's (sig.=.362) and the independent sample t-test (2tailed sig. =.180), hence all pointing to the insignificance of variations between two groups, thus, the null hypothesis was also is accepted in this context.

In summarising these quantitative analyses, the data generated from the online survey focussed on current UK TMUs were analysed using a combination of descriptive and inferential statistics, where t-test, crosstabulations and MLR were employed. The key results show 5 out of the 7 tested hypotheses were accepted and hence two were rejected, which offer some sound implications for both tourism education and the industry. In this, hypotheses 1-3 (TMUs' subjective norms, attitude and perceived behaviour control all led to positive intention to study for a career in tourism management (intention1), were all accepted (CF-Phase1), but with varied degrees of significance. In brief, TMUs' attitude was the strongest factor, followed by their perceived their control over their future tourism career and the least was the effect of societal norms' influence (closer and wider circles of TMUs' networks, including image held by employers). However, intention mean-scores by phase of study showed TMUs in phase 3 have

less strong career intention for tourism compared to phase one as they experienced the curriculum and hence this led to hypothesis 4 being statically rejected (TMUs' experience of the curriculum leading to positive career intention (CF-phase 2 and 3). Yet, some of this partially contradicts with the last three hypotheses 5-7 (TMUs' societal influence, attitude and perceived career control all lead to positive career intention) in different ways. This contradiction is seen in TMUs strong final intention for a long-term career in tourism with hypotheses 5 (the positive contribution of societal influence) and 6 (the positive contribution of their attitude to their career intention) being both accepted with varied levels of significance, in favour of the former.

However, hypothesis 7 was rejected, due to the test results that suggest TMUs' perceived control over their career proving insignificant contributor to their final career intention for tourism. Thus, as TMUs' perceived control over their career was an insignificant contributor to their otherwise very positive career intention, this combined with their overall positive curriculum experience and the varied level of intention strength (based on phase of study), raise questions and possible solutions as to the contents and designs of the current tourism undergraduate curriculum, particularly in terms of its ability to manage graduates' expectations and instil awareness of what competencies tourism employers actually desire at this level of employment.

Moreover, the clear and significant importance of the societal influence contribution to TMUs' career intention as seen in the above regression model (approx. 67%) and their attitude (approx. 30%), compared to the insignificant contribution by their perceived control over career, again raise the question, as to what if they encountered a more positive image, favourable recruitment practices and good working conditions on the industry's part and how the curriculum should be developed to support their future employability. In such a case, would they contribute reducing the industry's turnover, how this could be quantified and the corresponding implications to both

academia and industry. Last here, this also raises a technical question about the effectiveness of the TPB in such a unique context, particularly considering other alternatives, such as the recent, but less tested, interest-based models (Nabi, Holden & Walmsley, 2010; Nabi, et al., 2017; Ramakrishnan & Macaveiu, 2019). This also illustrate the influence of neoliberal HE and economic policies on such a unique case (Slocum, Dimitrov & Webb, 2019), that is the combination of unfavourable inherited societal factors influencing the tourism curriculum, graduate employability and the industry's turnover. As further detailed in the next two chapters, this still requires attention, including more meaningful experiential learning (Pearce & Zare, 2017) and community-based solutions (Boluk & Carnicelli, 2019). Accordingly, extracts from both the above qualitative and quantitative analyses are further contrasted and synthesised to reach the overall interpretation of the combined and contrasted findings in the following discussions (chapter 8), which precedes the final conclusion and includes 8 subsections that contain discussion, interpretation to the combined findings and conceptualisation in the form of the resulting GEM.

8 DISCUSSION

In line with the above illustrated research aim (chapter 1, 1.2), understanding TMUs employability issues through a critical analysis of the relationship between the tourism curriculum and the tourism industry's needs to make recommendations for alleviating both their employability issues and the industry's entry-level managerial turnover problem, this chapter is the final stage of the above detailed mixed methodology design (chapter 5) that mixes both sets of the qualitative semi-structured interviews with academics and industry experts and TMUs' quantitative survey data results (chapters 6 and 7). This is particularly relevant to this research quality and ethics, as the rationale for a mixed methodology approach should be 'used where the combination of qualitative and quantitative data more fully answers the research question' (Halcomb, 2019: 499) than would be possible by either type of data alone (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011). Thus, the methodological plan to answer the above RQs followed the logics of academic and industry experts' ability to provide more qualitative insights into graduate employability and industry issues than the relatively novice students, but in the meantime cannot provide the same insights into the real TMUs' experience of the curriculum or their career intentions. Hence, this anticipated discrepancy was considered in this plan and therefore TMUs' were consulted and the mixed methodology of collection and analysis was justifiably employed, in preparation for this combined holistic interpretation phase.

Recent literature echoes this approach, whereby the mixing and contrasting of varied results allows the researcher to creatively use and integrate this variation of datasets to best answer the research questions (Halcomb, 2019). Thus, the benefits provided by such combination include

opportunities to enhance the data validity, compare, contrast, integrate and expand the depth and breadth in the final interpretation (Bryman, 2006b; Wisdom, et al., 2012; Halcomb, 2019). More specifically, the mixing in this case follows the first type of integration referred to by Zhang & Creswell (2013), an approach whereby different sets of qualitative and quantitative data are concurrently collected, analysed separately and integrated at the interpretation stage.

Thus, the approach used here, as recommended by Halcomb (2019) considers the various aspects of the data combination to provide detailed exploration of the issues, discrepancies and corroborations among experts and contrast it with TMUs' perspectives. Likewise, Ashley, et al. (2017) combined survey and interview data to explore why specific care nurses transfer into primary healthcare employment and found that the data integration generated more insights in their specific context. This also mirrors the recommendation of adopting a novel approach to data transformation in a specific context (Fetters & Freshwater, 2015a) to address the challenge of integration and reap the synergetic rewards of the mixed-methodology's flexibility, where the sum of the insights generated from such integration becomes greater than the individual interpretation of each set of results separately. Hence, the view here, as recommended by Timans, Wouters & Heilbron (2019) is not to follow the problematic standardisation of mixed-methodology approaches, nor combine data originating from the same view of reality that is '*blending two gradations of the same colour paint*' (Timans, Wouters & Heilbron, 2019: 212) or mixing methods of distinct causality assumptions, but the conceptualisation of the combined data that is of more value to this unique context (Timans, Wouters & Heilbron, 2019).

This is particularly relevant here, given that integrating multiple data results during the interpretation process, especially when the preceding analysis strategies are ‘‘inherently mixed’’ (Bazeley, 2012) and have been articulated from the philosophical onset (Fetters, Curry & Creswell, 2013; Greene, 2015; Fetters & Freshwater, 2015a, 2015ba). Indeed, in an original mixed-methods design, such as the case here, it is recommended to integrate the varied results to draw further inferences from such combination (Creswell, 2015), particularly after the analyses of separate data components (Bryman, 2006b), which was explicitly framed in pragmatism, the philosophical and epistemological framework adopted in this case.

Hence, as a continuation of this multi-level concurrent mixed-methodology design, this chapter utilised the strength of the varying data (Feilzer, 2010) extracted from the above two chapters (6 and 7), by merging and contrasting the relevant elements in both to synthesise its key findings (Johnson, & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; De Lisle, 2011). Thus, it reemphasises pragmatism as a useful and needed research paradigm, particularly in tourism research (Khoo-Lattimore, Mura & Yung, 2019), by merging and contrasting the main results, as well as those that did not only address the CF’s initial four phases (figure 5, subsection 4.4 above), but also accrued a fifth phase, in a unified new model, called the GEM. Put differently, combining the main results with additional findings that emerged and did not directly fit under the initial CF (e.g. 8.2.3 and 8.5), the varied sections of this chapter did not only provide critiques tothe TPB as a behaviour testing tool in this context (8.6), but also justified the ensuing GEM, as to its value in supporting TMUs’ journey from deciding to study tourism to career planning and beyond (subsections 8.7 and 8.8).Thus, these discussions are organised under 8 sections and their relevant subdivisions below.

8.1 Tourism Management Undergraduates' Study choice (Phase 1)

Mixing and analysing the relevant results from the above analyses chapters, the key findings of relevance to this phase are related to TMUs' level of competencies and their general attitude to careers in this industry. Along with experts' views on the reasons and possible solutions to the relevant industry issues (e.g. poor work conditions, lack of career development opportunities and the significantly high labour turnover). Secondly, findings relevant to this phase are related to why and how TMUs choose to study tourism. This includes whether they have career focus at the start and the influence of their individual-levels characteristics (attitude and perceived behaviour control) and the wider influences, such as pressures from their close circles (e.g. families and social groups) as well as the wider societal image of their degrees and career in tourism (subjective norms).

Accordingly, based on the qualitative data (particularly academics), TMUs mainly choose to study tourism because of a strong interest in tourism as well as career plans, an aspect which was almost identically corroborated by the TMUs' survey results. For example, results from question four of the first section of the survey shows 40% of TMUs chose to study tourism management because of interest in tourism and a further 36% because of a career plan from the inception. Thus, these individual-level decisions, combined, account for 76% of TMUs' attitude to tourism as an interest sector and career, whereas only 24% resulted from the influence of others in their surroundings (e.g. close relatives and career advisors). Moreover, the results of question 6 within the same section of the survey (their views about a career in tourism after experiencing both the curriculum and industry) shows TMUs astoundingly positive about career in tourism (90.5%).

This illustrates that they are yet confident about their study choice and despite illustrating some specific examples of negative employers' attitude (e.g. ACA6), both sets of qualitative findings show that these are mainly influenced by a wider inherited societal low-image of tourism (e.g. Pizam, 1982; Holloway, 1993; Baum, 2012; Walmsley, 2012). However, industry and academic experts also suggest that TMUs' study choice is still justified and that if employers know more about their positive attitudes and competencies upward developments for this will eventually materialise. The evidence in this case are overwhelming, especially in the qualitative data, demonstrating where this low perception accumulated certain subjective norms, including the degree being described as lacking the "serious" content, 'social' learning and not 'sophisticated'. In terms of tourism as a career '*the job you did until you grew up*', the 'candyfloss industry' and the 'touchy-feely' kind of work '*you do not need a degree to work in tourism'* or and in relation to TMUs, those who could not qualify to other subjects and '*ended up studying tourism'*.

Accordingly, while this may suggest that choosing to study tourism becomes less attractive to those who aim for a more sustainable career (Raybould & Wilkins, 2006), findings here indicate it doesn't seem to affect those who continue to choose tourism, or at least the current cohort of TMUs, as evident in the above-demonstrated choice of interest and career plans as well as their insistence to pursue a tourism career regardless of both, issues experienced and the wider low image. Nevertheless, the paradox is that despite a study choice that is clearly based, primarily on TMUs' interest in tourism and career plan, combined with experts' assertions that they are 'absolutely 100%' competent and demonstrating 'top class' on an internship programme, this image is still attached to them. Indeed, as a key factor culminating to issues affecting both the industry and TMUs' employability. Findings show more evidence to major employers' attitude, *'we preferred a management degree'* and in current tourism employers' graduate schemes publications, overlooking tourism degrees, while specifying others (e.g., TUI, 2016, 2020), which raise the question, if study choice based on strong interests in the field, career plans and

intention, what else is required. Findings also show that this general perception still holds, where if they recruit tourism graduates this is mainly on the merits of their 'personality' (e.g. IND1), not because of what they might have learned on the curriculum, which is still at least perceived as ''*lacking depth in analytical skills',* as expressed earlier here (chapter 6), but also is linked to their study choice and associated image that contributes to tourism graduates having to later accept semi-skilled customer-facing roles (expressed in chapter 6) that are described in the literature as lower paid and often short-lived (Ball, 1988; Jian & Tribe, 2009; Wu, 2013).

In sum, these qualitative findings suggest that while TMUs continue to display positivity and competence, but tourism has a low status that creates negative image, which makes it difficult to pursue their career aspirations for this industry. However, in this case, and particularly more explicit in quantitative data, the social pressures were shown to have the least effect on TMUs study choice. Although, of course, it would be difficult to quantify with the current data and sample limitations, how many never chose to study tourism because of its low image. More pragmatically, as improving this low image may require time and wider interventions, more immediate work, within the tourism management curriculum was suggested and therefore needed. Further research is also needed to, particularly, shed more lights on the noticeable difference between a weakened social effect at the study choice phase and its significance at the career intention stage (phase 4). To illustrate this briefly here, the same social influences (SNS), despite being comparatively low rated at the study choice stage (average score of 3.5 out of 5 compared to 3.9 for ATT), it proved the strongest influencing predictor of TMUs' career intention for tourism, compared to the other two predictors (approx. 67%, compared to 30% for ATT) and the insignificance of their perceived career control in this context. However, after a few years of experiencing the curriculum and industry, it does moderately influence TMUs career intention for tourism, as seen in the comparison by stage of study detailed in the above the quantitative analysis.

Even more convincingly here, these findings are mirroring some literature as to the varied effects of the TPB constructs based on different scenarios and situations. For example (Sheeran, Trafimow & Armitage, 2003) surveyed 172 undergraduates at a UK university to assess if eating a low-fat diet is determined by their perceived behavioural control using a TPB test and later found that the test results did not reflect the participants' failure to enact their intended behaviour demonstrated in the test results. Even more relevant to this research findings, Piçarra & Giger (2018) recently studies human behaviour desires in working with social robots and found that goal-directed and latent motivational factors, such as interest to do the act, like the TMUs' strong interest in tourism here (76%), predicted intention better than the TPB constructs altogether. Hence, these findings, in the meantime, form part of the theoretical contribution related to the use of the TPB in this and similar contexts.

Accordingly, informing policymakers, HEIs and industry, the continuation of non-tourism graduates being recruited contingently, then leave (Jiang & Tribe, 2009) and within the first year after they have costed the industry in recruitment, training and the continuous destabilisation of the work environment (People 1st, 2015), while tourism graduates find it difficult to be accepted at this level. Correspondingly, this is not only a double-edged loss of HC (e.g. Ladkin, 2005; Hanapi & Nordin, 2014), but also can deter future recruits and may have already affected the study choice of many others. In a nutshell, the practical values of these findings inform HEIs to be clearer in their recruitment campaigns, more interactive with industry by means of structured efforts to better understand their requirements, educate major tourism employers to use better recruitment and selection methods, while improving their own curriculum, particularly in the digital and analytical skills' frame.

In terms of its theoretical contributions, in addition to addressing the conceptual gap in tourism knowledge (Xin, Tribe & Chambers, 2013), enhancing the wider tourism's philosophical standing in academia (Xin, Tribe & Chambers, 2013; Dredge, & Schott, 2013; Williams, 2019), while illustrating the potential TPB's weakness in testing interest-based intentions, this first phase of the CF has proved more useful in understanding the underlying issues affecting TMUs' issues, compared to the aforementioned generic graduate employability models. In this, for example, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches, while following TMUs full journey from study choice to career intention. Moreover, understanding TMUs' individual-level as well as the wider societal issues influencing their choice, through to experiencing work, and how this influenced their intention of some, as is seen later in the added CF phase. Hence, issues related to the tourism curriculum for TMUs' employability, the experience and evaluation by the varying types of respondents here, are the focus of phase two below.

8.2 The UK Curriculum Content and Design Issues (Phase 2)

Like the above, this phase includes views and appraisals from all the research audience (academics, industry and TMUs) to the current tourism management curricula and whether it is fit for the main two purposes of graduate employability and the industry's needs. In short, it has generally been found that most tourism employers lack knowledge of ,at least, recent development in the tourism management degrees and that the curriculum itself still needs improvements in both contents and designs. Moreover, TMUs' ratings to certain areas of this curriculum differs considerably from those suggested by both academics and industry experts. In this, a consensus was established between both sets of interviewees that this curriculum still needs development and that the key to doing so is in more effective academia-industry liaison. In terms of findings related to the current curriculum contents and designs, agreements and discrepancies related to each of the six curriculum areas identified in the phase 2 of this CF, are

briefly explored below. As this section is focussed on phase 2, it combines findings from the qualitative and quantitative evaluation data of the six curriculum areas by both interviewees and TMUs, which are organised under the following subsections.

8.2.1 Broader/generic versus tourism-specific and management content

As detailed in the above analyses' chapters (6 & 7), the findings here suggest there is a wider agreement that the broader management content (e.g. HR & Marketing) is still preferred employers and supported by academics, especially by major employers. Evidence include, ACA2's argument for the broader management content by suggesting tourism-specific content makes it 'viewed as a narrow field' and hence degraded by employers, ACA10's assertion 'we need to improve the broader management modules', IND2's focus on 'marketing' and IND6 stressing on '*managing people, HR'* contents and competencies. However, while some argued for the tourism-specific content, including managing visitor attractions and sustainability policies, the majority on both sides, including those quoted here suggest the need for more of these broader management content and the generic skills (e.g. critical thinking and reflection). This, again, coincides with the literature emphasising the higher generic skills, which includes critical thinking and innovations (e.g. Major & Evans, 2008; Dredge, Airey & Gross, 2014). Other academics research (e.g. Robinson, Ruhanen & Breakey, 2016) argue that the higher softer part of generic skills are becoming more necessary, particularly for dealing with key recurring tourism issues such as managing the chaotic environment resulting from the persistent labour turnover (People 1st, 2015), the increased global connectedness and its implications for the emerging tourism's 'workforces' (Gössling, Cohen & Hibbert, 2018:6). This includes changes in demographics (Corbisiero, & Ruspini, 2018) and the required steps to attract and retain this emerging pool of TMUs, including catering for their interest in employers with active CSR

policies, which can avoid the expected *'human capital vacuum'* if this is not prioritised (Goh & Okumus, 2020) that is relevant to the current research and its main findings.

However, while some academics concur with this, others claim to already have enough of the generic content and it is particularly covered within the tourism-specific management modules (IND11). The latter view is mainly supported by STEs, who emphasised a desire for more tourism-specific content (e.g. IND9), where in the meantime, umbrella organisations interviewees reckon that major employers criticise the same curriculum for focusing, perhaps too much on CSR and sustainability type of management content. Indeed, these industry experts, who are in regular contact with major tourism employers, stress that part of the current content is more suitable to public policies type of management (e.g. IND8) and accordingly it is not particularly desired by the more profit-making corporates such as tour operators, hotels and cruises. A finding that is also mirrored in recent literature (e.g. Ali, Murphy & Nadkarni, 2017), where they found that sustainability is not particularly prioritised as an employment skill by employers. However, despite a consensus ostensibly been established here, it was only possible to interview one of these major employers and hence most of these represent senior leaders' views of umbrella organisations. Hence, with cautions, this is a significant finding.

In terms of contrasting quantitative data in this context, while the curriculum was also criticised for not having enough depth in the "serious" topics (e.g. HR, accountancy) qualitatively, this was not particularly echoed quantitatively. Instead, TMUs' rated the tourism-specific content as the highest curriculum content in terms of employers' requirements (Zehrer & Mössenlechner, 2009; Eldeen, et al., 2018), but also rated enterprising as surprisingly the lowest, which is high on policy agenda (e.g. the Guardian, 2011, Anderson, et al., 2014), academics (e.g. Arranz, et al., 2017) and evident in major employers' graduate schemes requirements (e.g. TUI, 2020). To recall TMUs' evaluation to the CF's curriculum areas here, findings of query 5 in their survey

differed considerably from academics and industry valuation. Remarkably, contradicting with most academics and industry experts' assessments. In this, they rated tourism-specific knowledge the highest, followed by extracurricular activities, then the broader management, personal and professional development and entrepreneurial content was the lowest (see table 41: order of TMUs ranking to the CF 6 areas of the tourism management curriculum, below).

Table 41: Order of TMUs ranking to the 6 areas of the tourism management curriculum	
1	Tourism-specific
2	Extracurricular
3	Broader/ generic management content
4	Work placements
5	Personal and professional development
6	Entrepreneurial

8.2.2 Work Placements, Extracurricular and Enterprising Content

As these three areas of the curriculum are more connected and this was evident in the qualitative data as interviewees evaluated them almost always in-tandem, the current findings suggest they are not only closely interrelated, but also this, as found here, is an area where curriculum is seen as needing development. Part of this required improvements included TMUs' ranking to the aforementioned curriculum areas, although differences are not very large (perhaps because of the aforementioned sample size and data limitations), important is the ranking order from TMUs point of view. To put this more into perspective, the average score from all the 193 eligible responses to tourism-specific knowledge is approx. 4.4 out of the maximum 5-points scale (88%), broader management and the related tradition PPD modules average was 3.9 (78%). While TMUs gave entrepreneurial and enterprising content the lowest rating (72%), clearly contradicting with enterprising being highly desired by both academics and industry, as explained in their interviews. This does not particularly mean that these are the least important

curriculum content, but instead perhaps another latent effect of the society not expecting every individual to become or be interested in being an archetypal entrepreneur (Johnson, 2001). However, as Johnson (2001), contended, as well as found here, most graduates would need to display some elements of enterprising, if not for business start-up, it is at least needed as reportedly desired by both small and major tourism businesses here. It is also a possibility that this is due to the lack of effective career expectation contents within the tourism curriculum found here, which is explored in its dedicated subsection further below.

Moreover, findings in this context also show that TMUs' high rating to tourism-specific content and low to enterprising found here is likely to be due to their strong interest in global values related to tourism (e.g. sustainability), which further supports the above phase 1 findings on their strong tourism interest-based career plan and hence the contributary value of this CF in terms of conceptual and practical implications to the curriculum. Moreover, the practical implications of these findings, include the need to improve the academia-industry liaison through extracurricular collaboration processes that are more structured.

A key finding here also concerns the importance of extracurricular activities, as they were not only hailed by both academics and industry experts, but also were the second highly rated area of the curriculum by TMUs, after ICT. However, the term itself, in academic context, is becoming obsolete as many of such activities are increasingly submerged under the main curriculum, hence the rise of concepts such as "zero extra-curriculum". On one hand, this may suggest that UK HEIs are demonstrating awareness to such importance and have already taken the practical measures to support the extracurricular effectiveness in enhancing graduates' employability, by embedding it within the main curriculum. However, on the other hand, this could also be interpreted as contradicting with both the industry's and TMUs' assessments, where HEIs maybe viewed as mainstreaming it and making it invisible or less significant to all.

Indeed, the importance of meaningful extracurricular activities to enhance graduates' employability, especially led by HEIs, has been reemphasised by more recent literature. Given that tourism is mostly offered by Post-1992 HEIs, Vigurs, et al. (2018) found empirical evidence to suggest that recent graduates of these HEIs achieved less in terms of their employability that culminated to being anxious about their labour market prospects. Yet, their Russell Group counterparts had mostly secured graduate-level jobs through extracurricular activities, even prior to graduation to the extent they saved money whilst studying. Unsurprisingly, the latter group had a positive view of their labour market projections. Accordingly, this does not t only fit the wider conceptual link with the persisting image issue, found by this research, but also illustrate the importance of effective extracurricular content and activities, where for example internship should support retention, not encourage turnover.

8.2.3 Additional curriculum content and design findings

This research and its mixed methodology design generated supplementary findings in curricular contents and designs, which were not included in the above-illustrated six curriculum areas synthesised from the literature on previous employability models. These additional findings range from emphasis on the traditional approach to graduates' career expectations management, to placing more value on integrating the latest digital contents associated with Industry 4.0 (i4) within the curriculum. This i4, or the 4th industrial revolution (Peters & Jandrić, 2019) has recently become a globally recognised term that describes the convergence of the Internet of Things (IoT), including its complex networks of data exchanging sensors over the internet with AI tools (VR and AR) that support robust augmented decision and advance productivity through automation. Hence, while i4 offers great opportunities in new types of jobs and higher productivity, it poses challenges to existing jobs and hence HE needs to synchronise its curriculum infrastructures for digital learning content (Ivanov, 2018; Goh & King, 2020).

8.2.4 Digital content

In this, it has been emphasised by many here that as businesses are increasingly transitioning online (IND4, ACA10, 11), digitising their operations and desiring to streamline their day-to-day management, digital learning content (e.g. i4, robotic simulations, automated ticketing, etc.) is increasingly required. Indeed, with the younger cohort representing 86% of the current survey sample, and their capacities of being more technology savvy (Clark, 2017), they echoed these assertions and assumptions by rating ICT competencies the most valuable to their career. Moreover, certain qualitative data, such as those generated from overarching tourism experts, academics and tech-related STEs suggest the need for more digital learning and these findings are further mirrored by more recent literature. This includes, the industry's desire for equipped graduates as it continues to adapt to the latest technology (Pfeiffer, 2017), especially in light of the emerging new types of tourism products such as space tourism (Cohen & Spector, 2019) and associated new jobs in preparation and execution. Again, findings here mirror more literature, where these developments require better academia-industry liaison to synchronise the curriculum (Sheldon & Fesenmaier, 2014), with the desired global dynamism (Simonova, 2018), more investment to upgrade the tourism HE learning facilities (Ivanov, 2018; Azmi, et al., 2018) and the wider increased emphasis on this being the future of jobs (WEF, 2018).

Hence, these findings make such updates more necessary, however as the cost of such resources may prove challenging to HEIs, which again informing the industry to collaborate and policymakers to support HEIs in terms of resources and possibly more funding for these costly digital infrastructures. Indeed, this perpetual digital revolution, the emergence of modern STEs, the recurring political issues such as Brexit and the rise of mismanagement cases, such as the recent collapse of the iconic Thomas Cook (Kollewe, 2019) or the global coronavirus pandemic

that, not only brough all the tourism industry to a halt, and is expected the entire sector is expected to shrink by as much as 25% with massive implications for job-related losses in the UK (BBC, 2020), as suggested by figures from the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), which estimates a 75 million job loss globally and 1 million in UK tourism (WTTC, 2020), especially because of the decreased direct contacts, online mode of work and measures of social distancing (Gössling, Scott & Hall, 2020). Thus, this demonstrates the value of this CF, which was developed before this change of events, to revealing the need for work-related digital skills developments, crisis and expectation management needs within the tourism curriculum design.

8.2.5 Managing graduates' expectations

As detailed in the above analysis, expectation management as a needed curriculum content, which was suggested by some academics and industry experts, through collaborative curriculum activities with the industry is sought to enhance career planning for TMUs and productivity for the industry. This is also in agreement with some recent literature findings (e.g. Wan, Wong & Kong, 2014) that found this to enhance satisfaction and reduces the turnover rate. This is also echoed in more recent work, such as the work integrated tourism learning activities (e.g. Taylor & Geldenhuys, 2018). These activities, lead to bridging the gap in curriculum reflexivity, which was more explicitly suggested by ACA10 here and indeed in line with recent literature, such as the AFBW initiative (Boluk & Carnicelli, 2015), the outcomes-based model of educational tourism (e.g. McGladdery& Lubbe, 2017) that in turns support the development of 'social capital' (Clarke, 2018: 924), a longer term investment through a 'transformative pedagogy' that nurtures the future 'social agent' in the tourism graduate (Boluk & Carnicelli, 2019: 179) and therefore improved ethical practices in industry and the wider society (Boluk, Muldoon & Johnson, 2019 Walker & Manyamba, 2020).

Hence, while findings here generally support the need to better understand the persistence of this labour market's undifferentiated accounts of the graduate labour (Tholen, 2014), it also echoes issues in tourism curriculum contents that are yet to truly produce the desired well-rounded managers that are fit for the increasingly global labour market (Sheldon, Fresenmaier & Tribe, 2013; Simonova2018), which TMUs aspire to.

8.3 Career Planning (Phase 3)

Similar to the above analysis, this phase combines the qualitative views on the importance of career planning, TMUs' choice of career plan as one of the reasons to studying tourism and their assessment to curriculum areas, of which career planning content is one.

Evaluated by both sets of interviewees, career planning, as a curriculum content, was found to be an elusive term, especially to the industry experts. Both sets of interviewees echoed the literature in viewing career planning as important to TMUs, especially in instilling the skills and confidence that enables them to make the effective transition from education to workplace (Maher, 2010). However, to some employers, career planning, as desired competency, was not seen as less relevant to them. As a curriculum content it was not agreed upon by academics either. In this, it was found as unclear, especially in terms of it exactly should include. Unsurprisingly, this lack of clarity caused small teams of tourism academics, like with their graduates' employment statistics, to handle this differently and in a largely arbitrary fashion. These findings again highlight the importance of clarifying the concept of career planning, as it can potentially contribute to improving many related issues found here, including the low image, the need for managing TMUs career expectation, the production of well-rounded managers (Sheldon et al., 2008), curriculum synchronisation and involving the industry in curriculum updates (Sheldon & Fesenmaier, 2014). Unlike (Goh & Lee, 2018) emphasising the importance

of parents and career advice to graduates' career planning, findings here suggest that interest-related reference groups (Hertzman, Moreo & Wiener, 2015), for this generation and industry represented 40% of TMUs reasons for choosing to study tourism, the latter's findings seems more applicable here, especially in relation to the potentials of successful STEs connecting with TMUs. Whilst a general agreement among most academics and industry respondents on the importance for career planning to graduates, the clarity of what it exactly includes and its importance to certain employers, were questioned. However, to better understand how TMUs plan their career and what competencies they understand to be valued by tourism employers, they were asked to weigh the value of each of the eight managerial competencies in the first section of the survey (Q8). Unsurprisingly, these quantitative findings were in line with their previous valuation to the six curriculum content areas under the previous phase. In this ICT again were the highest valued competencies and more than the above. It averaged 4.6 (total 893) out of the maximum 5 (approx. 93%). More convincingly and in a clear contradiction with experts' views here, HR and accountancy to TMUs were the lowest valued (averaged 3.3).

Again, this is almost the opposite or at least contradicting with the above-mentioned employers' emphasis on HR and Accountancy, to the limits of calling it the "serious" competencies. Once more, this could be interpreted in two ways, either a curriculum problem not preparing them to understand employers' requirements enough, or TMUs have developed a more mature and forward-thinking understandings to the future of jobs, illustrated in the above and stressed in recent literature (WEF, 2018), where ICT, digital and higher skills would be more desired. Even more interestingly, TMUs preference of career paths show 65% interest in working for major tourism employers, which is similar to the aforementioned USA results (Forbes, 2015), where the younger cohort preferred corporate employers. This also matches expressions from academics and industry here, especially their suggestions for managing career expectations.

However, their low interest in working for STEs (11%), is clearly contradicting with some important interviews' findings, where STEs, especially the tech-related ones, show strong interest and willingness to cooperate with HEIs to support and recruit TMUs. Accordingly, this indicates to all those involved to improve the curriculum in terms of career expectation, through better communications with different industry players. Furthermore, the 12% interest in starting their own tourism business is higher than national average of 4% (Greene & Saridakis, 2007) but because not all who express such desire would do so (Nabi, Holden & Walmsley, 2010), efforts are still needed to increase such interests. Again, this, as found here, is achievable through better academia-industry liaison, especially in improving the curriculum and extracurricular programmes. The more alarming finding here is that 12% would look for work outside the tourism industry, comparing this with medical students for example (e.g. Spooner, et al., 2017), where no one reported to want to work outside their profession and in Poland only 1.1% reported that they do not mind what they do after graduation, but still within. These findings are also linked with the aforementioned results related to poor work conditions and low image, and collectively further consolidate the need for better career planning content and activities that starts from recruiting the right undergraduates, through to improving their career expectations and better liaison with industry, especially in terms of making more and clarifying the existing career development opportunities.

Furthermore, more findings relevant to this career planning phase, include those related to what TMUs consider a long-term career in this industry. Surprisingly and in contradiction with both academics and industry respondents here, especially in relation to their perception of the younger cohort of TMUs' employment characteristics, 68% of TMUs consider a 'long term' employment in tourism to be 5 or more years. Adding the 26% who consider it between 3-5 years, this makes the total approx. 94% of TMUs aim for more than three years in this industry and hence provides strong signals to those major tourism employers, who are not particularly interested in tourism

graduates in both literature (e.g. Amoah & Baum, 1997, Petrova & Mason 2004, Baum, 2007, 2015) and the intervenes findings here. For example given the 55% entry-level tourism managers leaving before completing their initial training (People 1st, 2015) and that only 1% of the current TMUs' considering it to be one year, this supports the views emphasised in the above by both academics and industry experts that recruiting more tourism graduates may help reduce this turnover problem, while benefits all those involved.

Indeed, another set of data generated from the same survey, clearly in agreement with this TMUs' positive career plans, as their priorities in first job shows more focus on career development opportunities (61%), the related job stability (15.5%) and much less on high salary (8%). While this sounds promising, it may in the meantime be indicative of TMUs' lacking understanding to changes in the workplace and their career expectations Or, their realistic understanding of wage in the sector (Baum, 2015), which in turns reemphasises suggestions to improve the curriculum in preparation, through collaborative work with industry (Tran & Soejatminah, 2016; Taylor & Geldenhuys, 2018).

In fact, more literature echoes these findings, including Van der Heijden (2005) stressing that employability requires not only the competencies demanded by the job market, but also effective career planning and career self-management. Indeed, Jackson & Wilton (2017), albeit focused on the general business graduates in the UK and Australia, they found that HEIs still need to do more to, not only equip their undergraduates with the necessary skills to enter their chosen career sector, but also better collaboration with the relevant industry, while developing detailed strategies to involve their learners in career planning and self-management right from the start of their programmes. While some academics may argue that they already do so (e.g. ACA1, 6 and 11), another recent applied example, which albeit from a different country (Taiwan), Wang & Tsai (2014) found that not only from managers' assessment, but also both tourism

undergraduates and graduates continue to report that they lack confidence in their professional management skills, therefore their career planning and employability prospect are persistently at risk. While a pre-test to their career intention here shows that after studying tourism, 91% of TMUs are still positive about a career in tourism management (57% very positive, 34% positive and only 9% negative), TMUs' respondents by experience in the tourism industry show a cause for concern especially to academics. In this, it has been found that 43% of the current TMUs' cohort have no curriculum-led industry experience, only 21% currently work and 36% have previously worked in this industry. Again, this gives rise to the need for better academia-industry liaison and the utilisation of the positivity and potentials of STEs found here. Unlike the more aggressively profit focussed, these STEs in particular, mirrored by recent literature (e.g. Jennings, et al., 2015) have local interests and hence can potentially contribute to enhancing TMUs' employability, while caring for the social and sustainability issues.

To sum this all up, the triangulated evidence and findings here suggest that TMUs show strong and long-term career plans, but both academics and industry players need to do more to improve career planning, which is projected to benefit all. As digitisation continues, portfolio careers are expected to dominate (Bothwell, 2015) and hence requires more up-to-date career planning and management skills. This, accordingly, should include initiatives such as the above discussed NUS programme, which incorporates curriculum-led coaching sessions and psychological testing to enhance undergraduates career planning skills, while building an e-portfolio to later share with future employers. Thus, this research findings give even more importance to Goh & Lee's (2018) recommendation of engaging undergraduates in workshops about their career pathways, while activating initiative such as their suggested GTP to encourage career planning learning in collaboration with employers (Minocha, Hristov & Leahy-Harland, 2018). This is particularly relevant here, as it has shown to support the transition from planning to career intention and therefore better employability for TMUs.

8.4 Tourism Management Undergraduates' Career Intention (Phase 4)

This phase focusses on TMUs' career intention's test findings and like the above these are cross-validated with the above indirect intention tests, including those from the first section of the survey as well as the former qualitative interviews. It therefore contextualises the valuations' outcomes of the three predicting constructs of the TPB and the influence of each of these on TMUs' career intention for the tourism industry. As contended in the above quantitative analysis, TMUs' initial valuation to each of the TPB constructs suggests that their attitude to career in tourism is the most influential (78.4%), followed by their perceived control over pursuing their desired career (75%) and the least is others' opinion (70%). However, while their actual career intention strength (79%) was the highest rated compared to other constructs, the influence of each of the aforementioned 3 factors on this resulting strong career intention differed considerably. In this, their attitude continued to contribute significantly to their career intention, but not as high as their initial valuation to statements comprising the factor itself. Put differently, while attitude was valued 78.4% in importance, its contribution to their career intention was less than 30%.

Perhaps, even more surprisingly, while opinions of or pressures from others was the least important valued factor by TMUs, it was the highest contributor to TMUs career intention (67%). Even more, while their perceived control over their career was highly valued (second after attitude), it contributed insignificantly to their career intention in the same context. These differing findings, despite accumulating a strong career intention in the end, simply show significant shift between knowing what is being evaluated and instinctively valuing their effect. This again, corroborates with other findings here on many fronts, including the interviewees recommending better career expectations and planning as a curriculum content. In a nutshell,

this indicates that the latter findings on the effect of these three factors maybe more realistic than those original valuations as to the importance of each factor separately, giving more support to the qualitative recommendations of managing career expectations, while mirroring recent literature findings (e.g. Ruhanen & Breakey, 2016). However, findings here also suggest that TMUs' career intention does marginally decrease, as they progress through their studies, whereby TMUs in phase three of their studies (year 3, 4 and some of those under other) show lowest career intention average (3.7663), followed up by phase two (3.9451) and in phase one TMUs' showed the strongest career intention (4.1254) for this industry. Indeed, recent literature suggests, the more experience in the industry (Richardson, 2008; Luo, Lee & Qiu, 2015), the less intention to stay develops. More literature agrees, for example, Robinson, Ruhanen & Breakey (2016) empirical findings shows that many of their tourism undergraduates, after experiencing internships and real-life work in the sector, switched their intentions and decided to look for work elsewhere. While this may signal to the industry to improve their work conditions and development opportunities that were found in the qualitative analysis here as well, this also feeds back to academics to manage their TMUs career expectations with an improved curriculum through better liaisons with industry and the importance of involving more STEs, as contended in the above.

8.5 Additional Findings & the development of the Conceptual Framework

As briefly introduced in the above, both qualitative and quantitative findings suggest that employing more of this younger cohort of group of TMUs may well contribute to reducing the labour turnover at this level. Accordingly, it was asserted that TMUs need to be given the opportunities to contribute to reducing the turnover and that one of keys to this is introducing more career development opportunities for them. Such views, in combination with both sections of the survey's findings here, are also supported by recent literature, including, Barron, Leask &

Fyall (2014), Milman (2017) and Goh & Lee (2018), suggesting curriculum-led hands-on programmes with employers to improve their professional learning and career expectations. Accordingly, this yielded additional findings that was not included in the original CF, which are discussed in the following subsections.

8.4 Career development opportunities

As this was beyond the scope of current model, the lack of career opportunities was found as decisive issue, particularly in relation to TMUs career plans and is directly related to the turnover (e.g. Jiang & Tribe, 2009) which is an important finding. This also supports the model's additional fifth phase. Thus, regardless of those who persistently leave this industry prematurely (People 1st, 2105) are tourism or non-tourism graduates, the clear lack of career development opportunities, at least in the case of TMUs found here, is evidently a problem that contributes to the high turnover. Moreover, findings here also suggest that rectifying these issues, is not only possible through better academia-industry liaison, but also by adding STEs to the same equation. However, as TMUs have largely (65%) shown to prefer working for major tourism employers, improving TMUs career expectations through the curriculum, suggested by most experts to utilise the potentials of STEs found here, makes it even more necessary. This would in turn require better academia-industry liaison that was also found here to be, at least, defective. In the meantime, this academia-industry liaison has been identified as both the panacea and plight that one hand contributes to graduates and the industry's problems, while on the other hand could itself potentially alleviate these. As less of intentional, but due to lack of coordinated effective communications to master such liaison was found here, this also contributed to both small and major tourism employers being knowledge-deficient of recent developments in tourism management education and hence their graduates. As findings point towards the need for implementing new and innovative ideas, such as the orchestra experiential learning for TMUs

and academics at the same time (Pearce & Zare, 2017), activating such ideas may help raise awareness of and clarify the professed existence of career development opportunities. However, the continuation of the current dilemma of recruiting anyone for quick fixes, coupled with a low perception of tourism graduates would almost certainly generate the same results of employability issues, a costly turnover and continuous losses to UK economy. This is represented in the misallocation and therefore waste of HC to both tourism and non-tourism graduates. Accordingly, while perceived behaviour control was removed from the current CF due to the insignificant effect found on TMUs' career intention, an additional fifth phase was added to the current model, as detailed below.

8.6 Findings and the theory of Planned Behaviour

Despite the seemingly surprising insignificance of TMUs perceived control over their career, findings here corroborate with other empirical research in certain aspects, including the contemporary concerns about precarious labour as a result of globalisation, the shift towards services and other neoliberal economics' features. The great British survey, for example (Savage, et al., 2013), highlight an emergent subgroup of a resulting precariat class in this society that is characterised by lack of job security, intermittent and underemployment. Indeed, this contemporary capitalism issue has been recently related to tourism workers and despite being in developing countries, evidence here suggest that this may extend to the UK. Indeed, more recently, the literature highlights that precarious work practices (Lee, Hampton & Jeyacheya, 2015) have become the norm in his sector (Baum, et al., 2016) and that there is still a pressing need to implement a more sustainable tourism and hospitality workforce strategies that particularly supports females and young workers in this context (Mooney & Baum, 2019).

In relation to the varied effect of each of the TPB predicting factors, and as a contrasting case, Atombo, et al. (2016) found perceived behavioural control to be the strongest predictor of drivers' intention to violate speed and other road rules, this is clearly a different scenario to a career intention of management graduates, as found by Piçarra & Giger (2018). Unlike such drivers, TMUs set their career goals not based on reckless desires, but and decide to study tourism to work in an industry that is described as a people-centred service industry (Horbel, 2013). This is primarily based on their strong interest and career plans in tourism that include positive global values (e.g. interest in sustainability), combined with certain personality traits found here, such as enthusiasm and interpersonal skills. Hence, strong interest and career plan that comprise performing managerial roles within this industry and in the meantime fulfils their underlying emotional desires. Indeed, having a strong desire to work in a certain trade and setting goals was evident in, for example Piçarra & Giger (2018) that echo the current findings.

The latter found that their Goal Directed Model (GDM), which includes measures of the more underlining motivational factors such as desire to do the act and anticipated emotion from doing so (e.g. enjoy the type of work), predicted behavioural intention to work with social robots better than the TPB. Thus, this has some relevance to TMUs here, showing a strong desire to work in this trade, not only in the explicit survey reasons for choosing, but also their apparent commitments to study in terms of time, efforts, tuition costs, despite the low perception. This is not to argue that all constructs of the TPB would generate equal influence on their career intention, but the insignificant of their perceived control results here are probably significant. Accordingly, TMUs perceived control over their career may be unsuitable to predicting their career intention in such a unique situation and hence the TPB general assumption for behavioural control, would probably have been true if the industry views TMUs differently. Indeed, looking at examples of PBC items used here, PBC2 for example states "*For me, seeking graduate-level employment and staying in the tourism industry after graduating, would be easier compared to*

non-tourism graduates", they may think they can perform, but could still rate it low, because they may in the meantime think of the above contended inauspicious employers' recruitment practices. Similarly, PBC4 item states "*With my tourism management degree, it would be easy for me to find an entry-level managerial position in any other industry*". Again, they may rate it low, given that it is already difficult to find a job in tourism, especially at the appropriate graduate level. Even if some think they can, their ultimate career intention tests revealed that this may have been an element of over wrong expectations, which again in line with the above qualitative findings and recommendations. This also mirrors literature findings. For example, Sheeran, Trafimow & Armitage (2003) tested the strength of the TPB factors' assumptions and found that intention based on PBC does not particularly determine the actual behaviour originally claimed. More specifically, they developed a proxy measure of actual control, where their participants were firstly subjected to measures of intention through the TPB's PBC constructs and subsequently tested their subsequent actual behaviour (eating a low-fat diet for a month) and found that their "*post-behavioural attempt assessment of actual control",* or the Proxy Measure of Actual behavioural Control (PMAC) was a valid measure, as it moderated the intention-behaviour relationship.

However, their PMAC did not reflect why some participant failed to pursue their originally intended behaviour (Sheeran, Trafimow & Armitage, 2003: 395). Although it sounds more useful, due to the time and resources limitations of this research, a similar test has not been possible to replicate to see, for example why entry-level managerial recruits stay or leave and whether they are tourism or non-tourism graduates. Accordingly, this is one of the limitations here and a recommendation for further research. Notably, PBC was removed from the statistical model due to its insignificant effect on TMUs career intention, SNS has taken a more central position and an additional fifth phase was added to account for the weight of career experience found here, discussed in the above and further rationalised below.

8.7 The value of the conceptual framework as an analytical tool

Despite its clear sample size limitations, findings here (even after resampling 2000 times), still confirms the statistical significance of both the contributions of subjective norms and attitude's to TMUs' career intention variations for this industry, and indeed the insignificance of TMUs' perceived control over their career prospect. Hence, the current model was found fit and significant and, despite some limitations, academics and industry need to consider these findings to support the above development suggestions and initiatives.

Accordingly, this CF model is useful in describing, with a mix of data sources, the key phases TMUs go through, from the main reasons to choosing to study tourism management, their curriculum and the related industry experience, their career plans and preparation as they reach the career intention phase for this industry. Thus, based on the current findings, particularly the main reasons TMUs chose to study tourism and the final positive career intention under this phase, combined with experts' proclamation to their positive attitude and developed competencies from close encounters with some of them, collectively this indicates that given the opportunity, tourism graduates would contribute to reducing the costly labour turnover problem of this industry at this level. While this employability model does not exactly explain the reasons for this turnover and whether or not those who are leaving are tourism or non-tourism graduates, the data generated more findings that better explain some of these underlying issues, but in the meantime did not fit under the initial CF. Accordingly, a modified version is suggested, using these different findings as further explained below.

8.8 Final CF: The Graduate Employability Model (GEM)

By adding the fifth phase of career experience, TMUs strong career intention, coupled with investment in more career development opportunities, improvements to academia-industry liaison and the utilisation of the STEs' potentials, the current employability model is extended to include issues related to turnover, especially given that graduate employability as a concept is relatively new (since the Dearing Report, 1997). As employability's real-life operationalisation mechanisms still need more to be mastered (Van der Heijden & Bakker, 2011), the empirical contribution of the current model can, at least, add value. Indeed, recent works in this context suggest there's *"limited literature on graduate employability development"* (Dacre-Pool, Qualter & Sewell, 2014: 310) and that it still needs contributions that are based on empirical evidence (Wang& Tsai, 2014; Jackson & Wilton, 2016; 2017). Accordingly, combined with the understandably conceptual nature of the aforementioned recent employability models (McGladdery & Lubbe, 2017; Pearce & Zare, 2017; Clarke, 2018), the current research, despite its clear data limitations, provides some of this empirical evidence, which were explicitly expressed by some academics and industry experts. Correspondingly, this fifth phase was to account for these findings, particularly those that did not fit under the original version CF version. Particularly, the importance and influence of career experience in tourism to TMUs and their potentials in reducing the turnover problem, giving their strong career intention findings. Additionally, for more clarity and user friendliness to assist further research, another simplified version was designed. This is the proposed employability model, as it presents clearer layout with some details reduced, notably in the curriculum area and the top-line boxes describing the 5 phases (see below figure 16.1: the final CF and figure 16.2: The Graduate Employability Model-GEM).

Figure 16.1: The Final Conceptual Framework

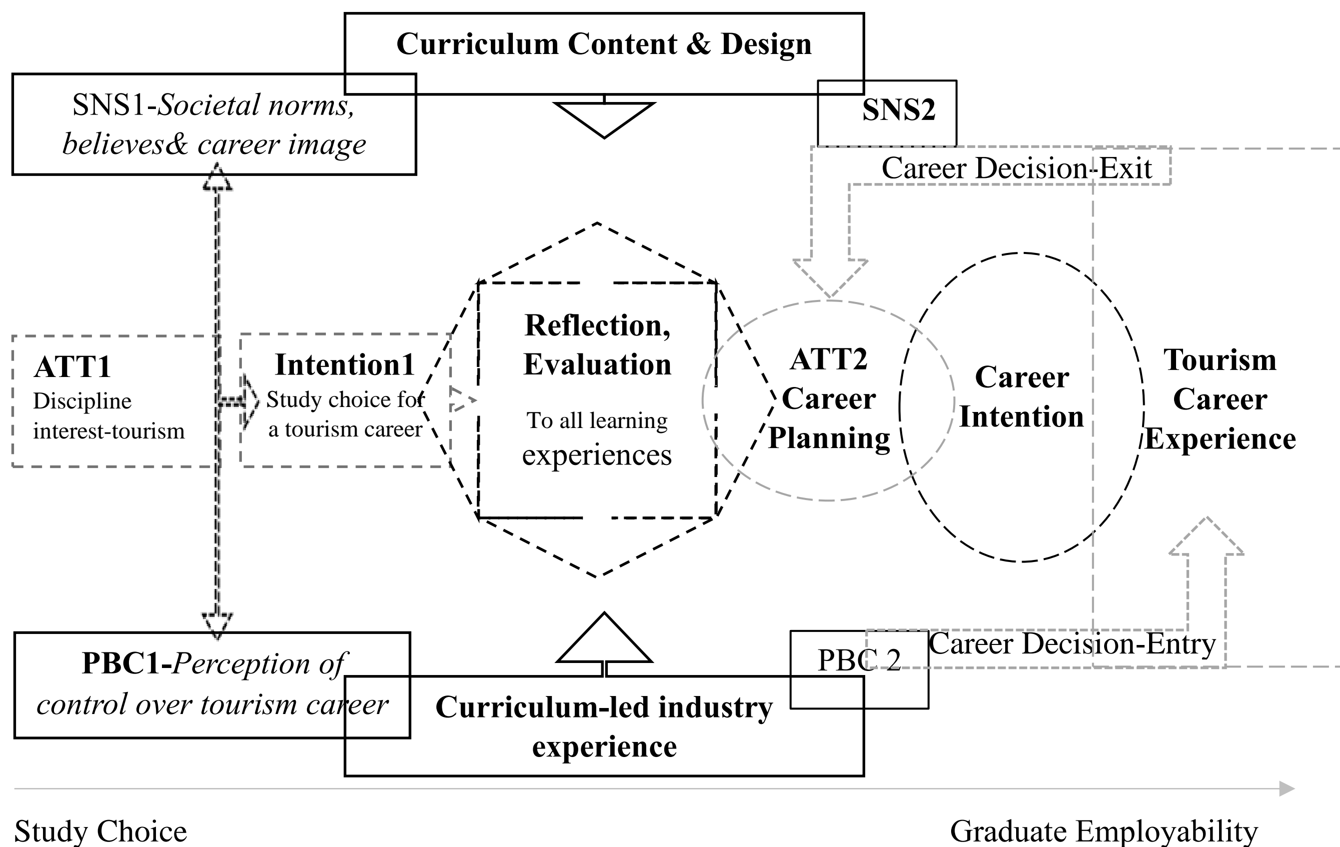
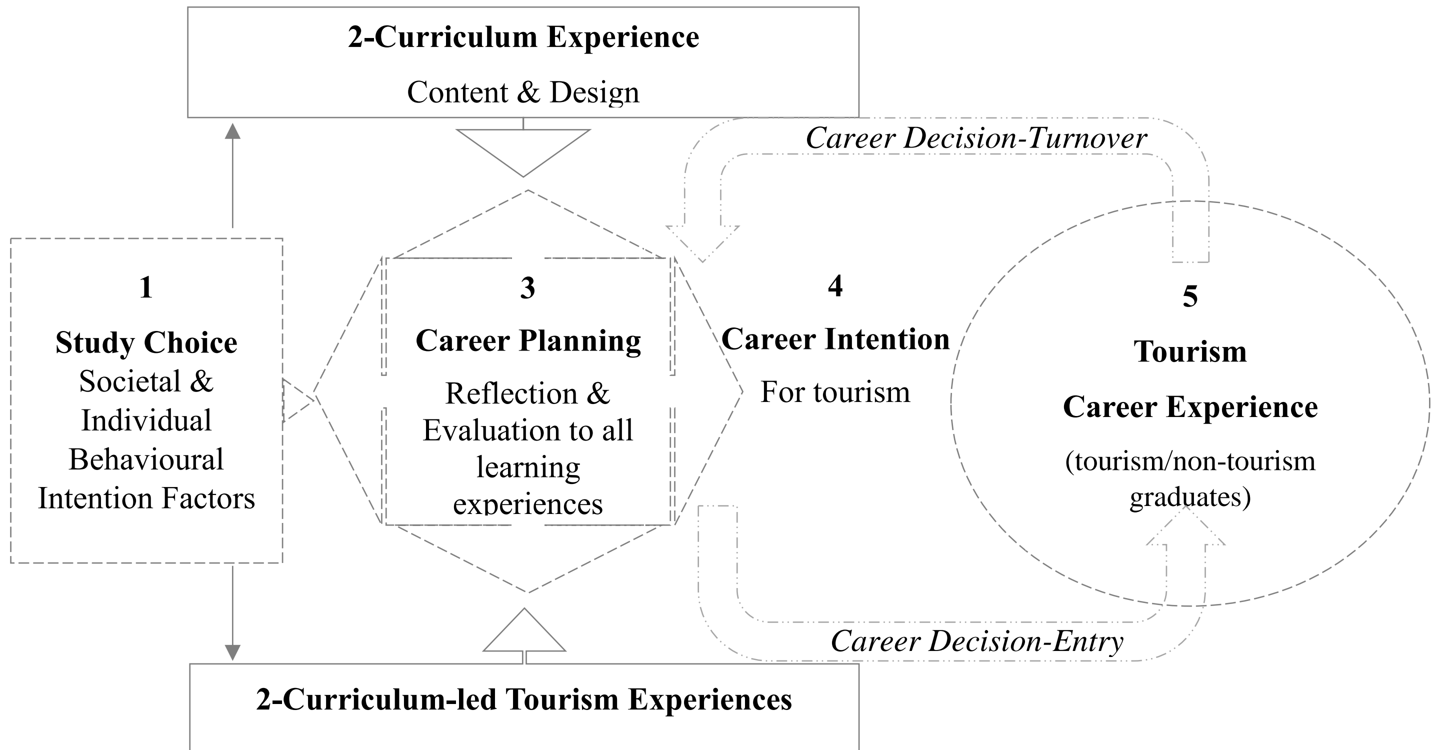


Figure 16.2: The Graduate Employability Model-GEM



9 CONCLUSION

This conclusion chapter includes four sections, which in turn include subsections that are introduced at the beginning of each. The four sections are, how the RQs were answered by the research findings (9.1), originality and contribution to knowledge (9.2), practical recommendations for HE and the industry (9.3), limitations and areas for further research (9.4).

9.1 How the research questions were answered

This part of the conclusion chapter focuses on the 3 RQs and how they were answered using the mixed methodology approach to data gathering and analysis in the following three subsections below. In this, each focussing on a specific RQ, which are summarised in the following:

9.1.1 RQ 1

'How tourism employers perceive the managerial competencies of UK tourism management graduates?'

Findings here, both explicitly and indicatively, suggest that tourism employers do underestimate tourism management graduates' competencies, particularly where a clear consensus among interviewees that this is related to the inherited low-image findings in phase 1 of the CF, coupled with tourism employers of different sizes being knowledge-deficient of tourism management programmes and graduates. This also evident in recent recruitment practices, where for example graduate schemes publications overlook tourism degrees (e.g. TUI, 2016, 2020) and tourism graduates as shown in chapter 3. As to chapter 6 qualitative analyses, which were summed up chapter 8, this perception is based on negative stereotypes such as the degree lacking the

"serious" content and graduates 'who could not do anything else". This does not only mirror literature on tourism HRM mismanagement (e.g. Baum, 2015), but also goes against strategic plans set for this specific sector to create sustainable business (Hashemkhani-Zolfani, et al., 2015), the International Labour Organisation (ILO) aim of decent work (ILO, 2013; Baum, 2018) and the UNWTO agendas for sustainable tourism development that includes enhanced graduate employability (Ali, Murphy & Nadkarni, 2017). Thus, these findings support recent contentions that workforce matters have been rarely seen as a driver in tourism employers' practices (UNWTO, 2017; Aslan & Marc, 2018; Torres Valdés, et al., 2018). Indeed, evidence here also suggest that at least some HRM facets of this industry remain frozen in time (Ladkin, 2011; Baum, 2015) and further support the longstanding need to rectify these serious workforce issues, especially the poor working conditions and lack of development opportunities, caused mainly by focus on profit maximisation, which in turns contributes to the costly staff turnover for the industry and tourism graduates' employability problems. The frequently reported customer-facing and semi-skilled jobs that are often offered to tourism graduates, which are often short-lived (Jian & Tribe, 2009; Wu, 2013), were mirrored here. Thus, if this is not considered a human rights' case (Baum & Nguyen, 2019), at least calls for more effective strategies to align with the UN-SDG8 that stresses decent quality work 'for all' and within full and productive employment (UN, 2019: Baum & Nguyen, 2019).

In summary, many tourism employers have an extremely low perception of the value of tourism graduates to their business, which results in overlooking a highly motivated and competent section of the workforce. This persistence of staff turnover, combined with seemingly irrational recruitment practices by some, does not only inflict financial costs on the industry, but also entry-level managers exiting the industry prematurely leaves behind skills gaps and chaotic work environments (People 1st, 2015). This, further damages tourism graduates' employability.

9.1.2 RQ2

"To what extent the UK undergraduate tourism management curriculum is aligned with the needs of tourism employers and graduate employability?"

Again, findings here, represented in the experts' views, experiences, and undergraduates' assessment of the curriculum, suggest that the vocational training heritage of the tourism curriculum (Airey,2005; Ayikoru, Airey & Tribe, 2007) is still having a profound effect on both the industry's recruitment practices and therefore graduates' employability. This longtail of vocational heritage (Airey, et al., 2015b) and sociology-dominated contents (Cohen, 1984; Clarke, 2013) portray a negative image, as to its narrowness in scope (Tribe, 2002), which may be attributed to the wider narrowed managerial gaze of neoliberal influences, where for example emphasis is placed on work-readiness, turning this part of HE into a training process.

Indeed, findings here demonstrate that this is still the case in the varied content of the congested tourism curriculum (Slocum, Dimitrov & Webb, 2019), particularly depending on which academic department that it falls under. For example, being focussed on business management, socio-geography or other non-business disciplines that influence varied contents. This in turn reinforces the low image, leading to some major employers' reluctance to recruit tourism graduates (e.g. Petrova & Mason, 2004; TUI, 2020) or to collaborate in curriculum development, anticipating slow process, confusion and restrictions on what they can suggest. Hence, this led to the above-illustrated scattered attempts by individual academics to liaise with industry through personal contacts as contended earlier (chapters 6 and 7). However, they are generally fixated on the narrower skillsets for their TMUs' instantaneous employment needs (e.g. Cole & Tibby, 2013). Unsurprisingly, some HEIs have recently recognised this calamity, including initiating

extracurricular award schemes (Huang & Turner, 2018) to encourage more structured collaboration in this context.

Although some positive progress reported in this area in the literature, including Airey's (2005:13) suggestion that the tourism curriculum is growing in maturity and "*has come of age*", this research provides strong evidence that it still needs further development, not only in more meaningful content, but also in the consistency and coordination of the similarly named tourism programmes, throughout the UK that continues to confuse both employers and graduates (Petrova, 2015). This has been agreed upon and reemphasized by both sets of qualitative data here and was mirrored by TMUs' responses to the survey, particularly where they rated the areas curriculum differently.

Indeed, the very nature and future direction of tourism in HE, especially in terms of knowledge and the associated academic approaches (e.g. Airey, 2008; Hsu, 2018) are still being debated and therefore still need attention. More specifically, findings here give rise to those concerned with the scholarly research focused on the neoliberal policies' pressures on tourism in HE (Airey, Dredge, & Gross, 2015). Indeed, results here suggest that these neoliberal policies and its associated obsession with KPIs criteria for funding in the part of HEIs and profit-maximisation on the employers' side, where they require more market-related skills such as marketing and financial accounting, not solely focussed on the ethical curriculum and graduate employability preference, illustrated in a global university employability survey, where this was described as British paradox (Bothell, 2015). However, a word of caution here, is that if academics continue to adjust their tourism curriculums contents based on what students want or think employer needs, as found here, mainly for recruitment and student's satisfaction score pressures, they could continue to cause themselves unnecessary pressures, while further consolidating the above contended confusion (Petrova, 2015) to both employers and graduates.

Nevertheless, findings here strongly suggest that the scattered curricula's contents that confuses employers and graduates, while causing extra pressures on academics, are at least partially causing the noted disengagement of major tourism employers from the curriculum development process and therefore their reluctance to recruit tourism management graduate. Put differently, because of the "indiscipline" of tourism disciplines in HE (Tribe, 2004), which is still as diverse as the difference between management and geography, the resulting "*confusion about what's on offer*" from the employers' perspective (Petrova, 2015: 386) has been further consolidate here, particularly discouraging effective development to the curriculum through a meaningful academia-industry liaison. Hence, the current empirical findings suggest that one of the keys to developing the tourism management curriculum is through more empirical research that focus on finding workable solutions. Moreover, these findings' implications also include the need for attention to the emerging STEs, who show support and willingness to collaborate. However, they asserted the need for support in terms of the necessary resources, particularly with issues of obtaining financial support proving more recently difficult (OECD, 2019, 2020).

Indeed, findings here suggest that the potentials of small tourism and tech-related businesses, which were also echoed by Jennings, et al. (2015), can be utilised through educational philosophies that emphasise social processes (e.g. Bulok & Carnicelli, 2019) through work-integrated learning (Fleming, McLachlan & Pretti, 2018) that establishes the lost trust between employers and HEIs, while improving graduate employability. Accordingly, the current findings support such philosophies, coupled with real-life learning, to build a more solid platform for social and profession-building processes that supports undergraduates, academics and the tourism industry combined. Moreover, findings here also mirror Hussey et al. (2010) and Deale (2016), in stressing the need for curriculum contents that focus on business communications, understanding risk, developing creativity and innovation, while engaging with the tourism

community to facilitate meaningful extracurricular collaboration. In this, both tourism educators and their undergraduates can build confidence, especially engaging with small tourism businesses to simultaneously learn how to apply strategies to the real-life risks of both learning and working, while developing both the good corporate citizens (Hamidi, Wennberg & Berglund; 2008), and the social agent (Boluk & Carnicelli, 2015, 219).

Overall, suggestion for improvements to the current curriculum include more emphasis on generic management content, enterprising skills, change management, and career expectation, as well as improved educational infrastructures to accommodate the digital skills requirement. Except for their high ranking to ICT and digital skills, most of these aspects were poorly ranked by TMUs, in terms of what they think employers want. Accordingly, this underlines the pressing need to reemphasise these in both curriculum content and extracurricular activities by curriculum leaders and designers. These, as supported by the above interviews' findings, are possible through better academia-industry liaison and more focus on engaging small tourism employers.

9.1.3 RQ3

"How the current cohort of UK tourism management undergraduates' attitude and experience of the UK tourism management curriculum affect their career intention for the tourism industry?"

Given the poor perception of tourism as a career, as well as the difficulties in starting and developing a career in tourism, the qualitative and quantitative findings here suggest that UK chose to study tourism mainly because of a strong interest in tourism as well as a career plan.

Such a positive attitudes has shown through experience, not only with academics, but more importantly in their encounters with industry experts and some employers in real-life work situations. In relation to their career intention, TMUs again demonstrate, as in chapters 6 and 7, a strong intention to pursue a career in the tourism industry, echoed by 91% of them still being positive about a career in this industry after experiencing the curriculum and 94% aim for more than three years of employment in this industry. Accordingly, findings here demonstrate at least the potential of tourism graduates in reducing the industry's turnover problem.

Furthermore, based on the current career intention findings and the effectiveness of the CF in elucidating the deep-rooted issues, as well as practical implications to TMUs' employability, it also raises questions about the TPB construct of perceived behaviour control in predicting career intention in this case and setting. Given that tourism TMUs showed contradiction in valuing this highly in the first section of the survey, then PBC proving insignificant in the intention test results and its possible interpretations ranging from their PBC playing less of a role if employers are reluctant to employ them regardless of their attitude intention, to the possibility that TMUs' opinion matures as they experience the curriculum and its associated industry experience that and change their career focus on tourism, as discussed in the above discussion (chapter 8), it is therefore recommended that further studies to retest the model with a bigger sample and in both similar contexts, particularly in undergraduates' scenarios, to find if the TPB can still be used to reveal individual-level interest-based career intention, like this case, or find other alternatives that are more robust (Nabi, et al., 2017).

Overall, findings here (discussion, chapter 8) have answered RQ3, in particularly revealing that the emerging younger subgroup of TMUs (86%), have strong potentials to improve their own employability prospects, while given the opportunity they could contribute significantly to the reduction of the tourism industry's costly turnover problem (e.g. 76% preferring career

development and job stability, compared 8% for salary). Thus, TMUs' strong interest in tourism matters and their plans for a career in this industry, are offsetting the difficulties encountered. In other words, they still want to work and stay in tourism, despite not only knowing about the low pay and poor working conditions (Ladkin, 2011; Baum, 2015, 2018), but also the poor perception from both the wider society and tourism employers that they have to cope with. Given such a technology savvy generation (Clark, 2017), the preference of employers to soft skills over the functional ones (Finch, et al. 2013), digitisation offer more opportunities to tourism graduates than threats. This may equip them to be more employable, as the industry continues to adapt to the latest technology (Pfeiffer, 2017), especially in the light of the emerging new types of tourism products such as space tourism (Cohen & Spector, 2019). Moreover, as the collective intelligence of society to self-organise digitally advances, they would gradually be able to create digital values through designing their own portfolio career without having to fall to the control of capital and capitalists (Terranova 2000; Kologlugil, 2015). Indeed, these findings suggest that tourism graduates would be able to improve their employability prospects, through managing their own portfolio career as well as through entrepreneurship, especially as the sharing economy expands to tourism consumers (Skinner, Sarpong, & White, 2018).

However, this poses more challenges to HEIs, who need expensive resources, facilities' and curriculum content and delivery updates to cater for the 4th industrial revolution. While they will need to find better ways to bringing the major tourism employers in support, they have a great opportunity presented in the form of 200,000 small tourism businesses (Creative Industries' Sector Deal, 2019), and a government policy in support of these businesses (HM Treasury, 2011) as well as graduates. However, as found here, are willing and prepared to engage, . Examples to curriculum updates include innovative programmes such as developing their intrapersonal and interpersonal skills through the online sharing and continuous update of their career e-portfolio

(Bothwell, 2015), which enables them to share with future employers, while they study and after they graduate.

To sum these up, while improving the low image (RQ1) may take considerable efforts and a long time, these findings mirror more literature, where improvements to the curriculum (RQ2) require better academia-industry liaison to synchronise the curriculum (Sheldon & Fesenmaier, 2014), while catering for this generation of future graduates (RQ3), their global scopes (Simonova, 2018), by upgrading the learning facilities (Ivanov, 2018; Azmi, et al., 2018) to cater for the future patterns of jobs (WEF, 2018).

9.2 Originality and Contributions to Knowledge

In answering the above RQs and addressing the corresponding objectives, this thesis makes contributions to knowledge in this context. In addition to critically analysing the influence of neoliberalism on tourism HE, which has not yet been '*adequately addressed'* (Slocum, Dimitrov & Webb, 2019: 34), the need for more conceptualisation (e.g. Xin, Tribe & Chambers, 2013), enhancing the philosophical standing of tourism in HE (Williams, 2019) and the empirical multidimensional stakeholders' views' gap (Simonova, 2018), the three main contributions include producing an new graduate employability model to aid all stakeholders in curriculum developments and HRM practices, addressing the gap in tourism research curriculum on content and design (Tribe, 2006; Fidgeon, 2010) and the need for research on TMUs' career intention in a UK context. Accordingly, these are explained in turns in the following subsections.

9.2.1 The new Graduate Employability Model

Given that employability as a concept and its associated models have been initiated as recent as in the late 1990s (Van der Heijden & Bakker, 2011), mainly due to the Dearing Report (1997), the limitation of the narrow neoliberal HC focus (Marginson, 2019) and the critiques to previous employability models of being both broad and unidimensional that still needs contribution (McCulloch, 2013; Wang & Tsai, 2014; Tsitskari, et al., 2017), along with the need to address the conceptual gap in tourism research (Xin, Tribe & Chambers, 2013) and its impact (Brauer, Dymitrow & Tribe, 2019), this makes a strong case as to the value of this empirically supported model. This has been further consolidated by the 'limited literature on graduate employability development' models (Dacre-Pool, Qualter& Sewell, 2014: 310) and hence still needs contributions that is more holistic and empirically informed (Jackson & Wilton, 2016; 2017; Costa, et al, 2019; Prince, 2020).

Moreover, this needed holistic feature is represented in the collective views of stakeholders on tourism issues is still lacking in tourism research (Felisitas et al., 2012), the recent changes in the labour market (Pham & Jackson, 2020) and in the light of the narrowly viewed dominance of neoliberal policies and its relationship with graduate employability in the UK. These policies, despite attracting wide criticism, are proven useful in many areas (Tight, 2019), including WP in HE (Sutherland, 2008; Ryan, Horton-Tognazzini, & Williams, 2016), evident in the rise of unorthodox disciplines, such as tourism. but in the meantime, its associated KPIs' metrics are placing extra pressures mainly on academics and graduates (Tight, 2019).Thus, the key is working within these policies (Slocum, Dimitrov & Webb, 2019) to equip the future tourism professionals with the competencies that address the relevant UN-SDGs (UNWTO, 2015).

Although it is acknowledged that this model is based on a UK tourism context and that future research need to confirm its value, it is expected to add value to tourism education, industry and graduate employability issues across national boundaries and contribute to the body of knowledge in this and other management disciplines, particularly in an increasingly global labour market (Sheldon, Fresenmaier & Tribe, 2013; Simonova2018; Pham & Jackson, 2020).

9.2.2 Contribution to the tourism curriculum content and design gap

The tourism curriculum still requires further development, particularly in light of debates on the incompatibility of the neoliberal practices in HE (Bergland, 2018) that intensifies competition (Davies, 2014; Naidoo &Williams, 2015; Olssen, 2016) and the resulting interdisciplinary knowledge creation at both academia and industry levels. This includes a fragmented curriculum (Dredge, Airey & Gross, 2015; VisitBritain, 2016; Jones, 2017; Pritchard, 2018) coexisting with widespread precarious work in the sector (Rubery & Grimshaw, 2016; Canada, 2018; Scheyvens & Hughes, 2019), adding more to the HRM issues affecting this industry (Baum, 2018; Baum, et al, 2020). Hence, by shedding more lights on this with empirical evidence, the above identified gap in research on how neoliberalism has influenced tourism education and workable strategies to overcome the resulting obstacles (Slocum, Dimitrov & Webb, 2019) has been, at least partially addressed here. (Selwyn, 2019).

Moreover, this research contributes to the previously identified significant gap in tourism's curriculum design and content issues (e.g. Tribe, 2006; Fidgeon, 2010; Simonova, 2018). More specifically, research that investigates stakeholders' views and those with empirically supported contributions and in areas that address the tourism curriculum design and planning. Indeed, Tribe (2006), for example, found that out of the 86% of tourism education research that investigated

the curriculum, almost half of these were reviews and only around 5% concentrated on curriculum design and planning issues. Even more relevant to this research, Tribe (2005, 2006), asserted the imbalance in tourism research focus, by showing that only 7% of concerned TMUs progression and achievement, 3% on quality, a further 3% related to teaching and learning and 1% on the need to upgrade the learning resources and hence still needs homogeneity and organisation (Séraphin & Mansfield, 2017). With more emphasis on this, this clearly demonstrates that shedding more light on both the longer-term tourism curriculum development and the immediate needs of managers (Zhao, 2019) and synchronisation (Sheldon & Fesenmaier, 2014) to accommodate this current cohort of TMUs in both education and industry is important (Buhalis, et al., 2019; WTFL, 2019; Balula, et al., 2019).

Moreover, these findings, address the need for research that asks fundamental questions about tourism education (Tribe, 2015), specifically research that empirically focuses on graduates competencies (Alexakis & Jiang, 2019) with emphases on higher generic skills, such as critical thinking and career management (Airey, et al., 2015; Robinson, Ruhanen & Breakey, 2016). Furthermore, there has been numerous calls for less reliance on the 'grey literature' (McGladdery & Lubbe, 2017:327) that advocates tourism degrees to solely focus on vocational skills (Cooper & Shepperd, 1997; Airey, et al., 2015) and instead turn the emphasis on those that ostensibly keep pace with the rapid industry developments. Certainly, the dynamics of global challenges require immediate changes to tourism programmes, particularly in terms of higher skills, including supporting innovation (Simonova, 2018; Robinson, Ruhanen & Breakey 2016; Hall & Williams, 2019; Prince, 2020).

To sum this up, this thesis shows that the arguments made by various scholars and in various UK and international contexts, including the Australian context (Robinson, Ruhanen & Breakey, 2016), the Czech (Simonova, 2018) and the Hong Kong (Hsu, 2018) contexts, combined with

prominent tourism educations experts such as Tribe (2015) and Airey, et al. (2015), all support the current findings in the context of tourism management curriculum still needs developments. In particular, this research has exposed the fragmented tourism curriculum and the need for cooperation at both the UK level and globally in areas such as sustainability (Sheldon & Fesenmaier, 2014) and community-based designs (Boluk & Carnicelli, 15, 17, 2019) as opposed to solely focusing on the neoliberal-imposed specific workplace skills that are constantly changing (Barron & Ali-Knight, 2017; Wrathall & Richardson, 2019).

Thus, combined with TMUs interest in global values, found here, it further consolidates this research's contribution to the need for enhanced tourism curriculum (Tribe, 2002, 2006), through research that integrates *'real-world learning'* (Brundiers, Wiek & Redman, 2010: 309), particularly in undergraduate's curriculum designs. Hence, the integration of global efforts to enhance and coordinate the tourism curriculum, through both policy-level collaborative initiatives, such as the UK CfE initiative among HEIs (Cuffy, 2017), the knowledge of up-to-date models (e.g. McGladdery& Lubbe, 2017), collaborative programmes involving industry, such as the GTP (Minocha, Hristov & Leahy-Harland, 2018), which as discussed in the above literature, supports the transition from career planning to career intention and hence better employability prospects for TMUs. Other ideas that informed this research and further consolidate its findings of enhanced employability through the curriculum (Taylor & Geldenhuys, 2018; Ndou, Mele & Del Vecchio, 2019) also include the on-campus tourism industry-operated businesses for the mutual employment needs (Hay, 2019). The latter is particularly important in a digitally dominated work environment (Buhalis, et al., 2019; Adeyinka-Ojo, et al., 2020), giving more value to the contribution of this research in building bridges between academia and industry to address these gaps in the tourism curriculum and related research (Bowan & Dellam, 2020).

Indeed, the combination of both qualitative and quantitative findings here contribute to both the gap in the tourism curriculum research (e.g. Tribe, 2005: Fidgeon, 2010) and its practical implications, as it further consolidates the fundamental shift required in content, design and overall coherence of the tourism curriculum (Sheldon, et al., 2008). More specifically, these findings suggest the need for the tourism curriculum to develop in both graduates' traditional preparation, such as crisis management, career expectations, planning and management and the continuous synchronisation of its contents with the industry's digital developments (Sheldon & Fesenmaier, 2014; Ivanov, 2018), where digital learning is recurrently emphasised as the future of jobs in the 21st century (Barley, Bechky & Milliken, 2017; WEF, 2018; Balula, et al., 2019).

However, the persistence of both the low image of tourism education and the industry's turnover found here, suggest that the industry is not particularly adhering to these recent government policies of engagement while indicating that academics too need to work on improving their tourism management curriculum. More positively and in line with the government's enterprise-led economic recovery and growth agenda (HM Treasury, 2011), small and tech-related tourism employers, who form most tourism businesses (ibid), show more interest in tourism graduates for their attitude and expertise and are more willing to engage with academia but understandably cannot afford the resources required as contended in the above findings.

9.2.3 Contribution to TMUs' employability

Given that the current TMUs are mainly a young cohort, there is still a gap in literature, especially on the employment characteristics that can influence an increasingly multigenerational workplace (Wiedmer, 2015; Clark, 2017; Prakash-Yadav & Rai, 2017). As Goh & Lee (2018) recently pointed out, there is no single study that investigated the attitude of TMUs towards work

in this industry, this research contributes to filling this and the above-illustrated multidimensional stakeholders' views gap (Simonova, 2018). Namely, the perspectives of tourism HE educators, undergraduates, and industry's experts. Thus, this is one of the earliest piece of research to generate empirical evidence on this specific TMUs cohort's attitude and career intention, combined with the views of some authoritative experts in the field. Therefore, this model also contributes to the need for conceptual understanding of these issues (Dredge, & Schott, 2013; Williams, 2019).

9.3 Practical Recommendations for HE and Industry

This section makes key practical recommendations for enhanced curriculum design, graduate employability through more structured academia-industry liaison, more developed industry recruitment practices, government support to tourism graduate through STEs, and curriculum design initiatives by academia, which are detailed below.

9.3.1 Enhanced curriculum design

Although, of course, it would be difficult to quantify with the current data and sample limitations, how many people never chose to study tourism because of its low status, it is more pragmatic to focus on the more urgent practical implications on curriculum designs. Accordingly, this requires more immediate work, within the tourism management curriculum, including better collaboration with industry to implement i4, while including elements of change management, and managing career expectations by inviting experts to provide the latest trends. This does not only support the sustainable development of tourism by enhancing its ability to adapt to these emerging socio-economic and technological trends, but also help to address its skills shortage (Davidson & Wang, 2011; People 1st, 2015), recognised as a key issue that requires immediate

actions to raise ‘awareness and attractiveness’ of tourism as a career (OECD, 2018: 4). While this requires the availability of more relevant opportunities for development (Stamolampros, et al., 2019), it also supports the effective mapping and preparation of the future tourism talents that can collectively reduce its problem of productivity and turnover (Johnson, Huang & Doyle, 2019; Kim, et al, 2020).

9.3.2 Graduate employability through more structured academia-industry liaison

It is also suggested that efforts to improve employability provisions at universities, require better collaboration with and from the industry, especially involving more of the small and tech-related tourism businesses, by means of a more structured collaborative graduates’ scheme suggested in the above findings (chapter 8). Internships and work placements need to be more meaningful as can be a double-barrelled conundrum. Meaning, while the intention is to give the graduate experience and motivate them to work and stay in this industry, it could be a major counterintuitive factor. Based on the insignificant effect of perceived behaviour control on the intention to pursue a career in the tourism industry, it could be also suggested that both HEIs and employers work together on developing a programme to improving self-efficacy and EI of such digital-savvy generation that show strong evidence of progressive employees and entrepreneurs.

9.3.3 Developing the industry’s recruitment practices

This includes the need for understanding to the process through which tourism employers’ practices can affect occupational turnover intention and exit behaviour. This requires, more proactive strategies and tactics and hence it is suggested here that major employers start to, at least, specify tourism degrees as one of the requirements to entry to their graduate schemes and

in the meantime specify a quota of tourism graduates to be admitted and in roles such as HRM and finance and not only in frontline roles. Combined with this, a system should be placed to analyse their performance, especially compared to none-tourism graduates and those who are leaving. Such data should then be provided through more regular and structured academia-industry contacts for academics to continue develop their curriculum design and contents.

In terms of how to progress the image issue of tourism as a career and academic discipline, it is recommended that a consortium is formed and led by the likes of ATHE coordinating their HEIs' members and including the likes of ABTA, TA, the Tourism Society, some major tourism employers, STEs' representatives and policymakers (e.g. DCMS, DfES) to launch media campaigns, similar to the successful chef TV programmes (Wang & Huang, 2014). In this, highlighting the quality of tourism management education, tourism's significant contribution to the economy, the sideways' career progression routes and development opportunities found here, while demystifying some of the widely held myths illustrated in the above (e.g. the candyfloss industry). This while reducing the variety of the holiday representatives' TV programmes (e.g. holiday from hell) that further consolidates the low image and make those, who may like the idea of working in tourism, look less competent. Also learn the lessons from the hospitality sector, which includes illustrating good practice and green image (Yadav, Dokania & Pathak, 2016), investing in mentoring programmes and promoting good practices, while encouraging some reverse mentoring, as suggested by Eissner & Gannon (2018). The latter, found that younger generation of hospitality mentees, supported the mentors in upgrading their ICT and digital skills, while learning from them how to improve their techniques in dealing with customer. This would also improve some of the people management HRM issues, which contribute to reducing customer loyalty and further deepens this sector's low image.

9.3.4 Curriculum design and initiatives

According to these findings, including the many individual and departmental-level disjointed efforts to improve their respective curriculum designs for employability, it is also recommended that a wider and more structured type of initiatives are more coordinated between HEIs to develop a more recognisable tourism management curriculum design through collaboration between HEIs and between academia and industry. This includes, the Scottish-based CfE (Cuffy 2017), the on-campus employers (Hay, 2019) and the '2u2i' curriculum design ideas (Mohd-Yusof, et al., 2020). Hence, given the above findings, particularly TMUs' being career focussed and technology savvy, this would allow tourism academics to collaborate more effectively to develop the tourism management curriculum and hence recommendations may include a tailor-made system that is backed with digitally run online platforms. This includes, but not limited to discussion forums on best curriculum designs, decisions and structured activation processes that are based on the relevant experience of academics' representatives and informed by empirical research that involves learners' input to be impactful and more effectively contribute to society.

Meanwhile, this should save some academics the time chasing individual employers for mostly semiskilled opportunities that are short-lived and hence can have the foresight to embrace future changes through adhering more to their core principles of impactful curriculum, teaching and research (Goh & King, 2020). This also mirrors the need for participatory collaboration through HE (HM Treasury, 2011; Industrial Strategy, 2019; Walters & Ruhanen, 2019) that would, through a more synchronised curriculum design, contribute to the desired economic growth and productivity (HM Treasury, 2020a; Heald & Hodges, 2020), particularly in response to the current Covid19 pandemic and Brexit transition. Put differently, as the current findings are in line with the UK government plan, especially the emphasis on tourism being a "predominantly driven by small businesses" (VisitBritain, 2019; ONS, 2019), the recent increase in STEs'

contribution to GDP (Mohammed & Weber, 2020), further supports the need to engage them in curriculum development.

Thus, this can at least start with a more well-coordinated dynamic curriculum designs (Hughes & Tan, 2017) that are up to date and encapsulate the collective thinking and applied research of many talented academics, which requires more balanced approaches, in particularly not be directly influenced by individual academics, nor by a departmental-level educational policy as found here. Instead, it should seek a balance between the current narrow skills' focus and the desired critical pedagogies (Boluk & Carnicelli, 2019), through a perseverance to design a tourism curriculum that makes tourism a truly internationally recognised subject area that supports the achievement of UN-SDGs the wider tourism development, including quality education, poverty alleviation and decent work for all (UNWTO, 2017; UN, 2019). This should, in turns, accumulate to better national and global society (Baum & Nguyen, 2019), raise understanding, peace promotion and equality (Boluk, Cavaliere & Higgins-Desbiolles, 2019; Scheyvens & Hughes, 2019), while ensuring tourism continuity in HE (Airey, et al., 2015; Vigurs, et, al, 2018) and meeting the required subject benchmark (QAA, 2019).

9.4 Limitations and recommended areas for further research

In terms of the qualitative findings, the views and knowledge extracted from tourism academics were significantly rich and this is evident in their considerable expertise, academic interests, research and leadership positions, involvements in the tourism curriculum, relevant industry experience and representing all four countries of the UK. However, a survey focussed on academics across the country that build on the current issues and findings is an area for further research. As per industry-related findings, again these represented wide variety of industry views related to this research, including the diversity of tourism subsectors, as well as not only

employers or HR managers, but also senior and overarching industry leaders. Although the data saturation points of both qualitative sets of data, was reached much earlier than the sample used, the fact that only one major tourism employer was represented here, is another area for further research that builds on both the current findings and limitations, as well as testing this employability models.

As per the quantitative findings, a clear limitation is the sample size and response rate distribution issues. Despite the prominent ATHE endorsing this survey, the main limitations, therefore were in the survey responses, as it was both relatively low response rate as well imbalanced geographically. It is worth pointing here that despite this, however, there is no clear reason to suspect that these responses are not typical of most UK TMUs. A more pragmatic view, therefore, recommend that further research should be carried out with major tourism employers to test this model. Although the variety of techniques used to minimise biases, including in data gathering, where researcher refrained from communicating directly with TMUs to not influence or increase responses, coupled with the use of various analysis techniques (e.g. Bootstrap resampling to overcome the sample issues, with the results generated being almost identical to the original sample), these findings need to be treated with caution. In the meantime, considering the sample size limitations here, combined with the qualitatively found lack of realistic career expectations in TMUs, this is therefore a recommended area for further research too.

Moreover, research is also needed to, particularly shed more lights on the use of TPB in testing career intention, especially the noticeable difference between a weakened social effect at the study choice and its significance at the career intention stage by the TMUs' respondents. In brief, while they valued the societal and close circles influence of on their career choice the least compared to their attitude and perceived control of their career, the eventual career intention test shows that these contributed the most to variations in their career intention, more than double

that of their attitude and far higher than their perceived control over their career which proved insignificant. Hence, the insignificance of PBC effect on TMUs' career intention, requires further testing to the above statistical model to decide whether the TPB is wholly or partly relevant to this context of more complex issues, compared to the wider societal norms. Put differently, as TMUs shown that their interests in tourism is the strongest factor in their study choice, their positive attitude tests and the strong career intention, more research is needed to also see if other alternatives to the TPB, such as goal-directed motivational factors models (e.g. desire and interests), were found in some occasions to influence intention more than the TPB in general and its PBC predictor in particular (Piçarra & Giger, 2018).

As the above findings suggest, research complementing this case is also recommended, for example, by adding more variables to the instruments of inquiry (e.g. social background, parents' educational level), while importantly comparing TMUs' attitude and intention with those of the competing economics, business and general management undergraduates. This would allow the accumulation of deeper insights into the subjective norms of TMUs, particularly compared to their competing undergraduates' counterparts for jobs in tourism, while reducing the chances of the above-illustrated limitations recurring.

As per tourism's labour market and workforce issues, further research is recommended to survey the number of current employees in UK tourism, who are tourism graduates. Moreover, research is also needed on how the experience of the curriculum-led tourism experience influence, the tourism graduates to pursue a career in tourism and how they differ in this compared to competing non-tourism graduates (e.g. general business, economics' counterparts, etc). This should start by focusing first on the final year tourism undergraduates career intention for the tourism industry, how it is formed and the critical success factors to making the transition from intention to an actual career. Moreover, given that TMUs' experience of both the curriculum and

industry moderately affected their career intention, further research is still needed to investigate how a more tourism professional experience could be linked to occupational turnover, regardless of the audience being tourism or non-tourism graduates. This can also enable comparisons and can include accessing records of entry interviews and conducting exit interviews or survey to address two main points, the individuals' qualification, and the reason they are leaving. Similarly, research that includes a sample of competing UK undergraduates is recommended to remove possible discipline-related bias and better inform academia, industry, and policymakers.

Accordingly, this would shed more lights into how to resolve the tourism industry's wide and complex HRM issues, particularly considering the continuous digital advancements altering the nature of jobs and the dynamics of the modern multigenerational work environment. This would, as well, inform specific adaptive strategies to accommodate the arrival of the emerging young cohort of tourism managers, points to where resources, such as funding and certain expertise should be allocated, while overcoming some of the limitations illustrated here.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1- Interviews' design and sampling

App. 1.1-Table 2.1: The thematic design of interviews

RQ& Related Objectives	Link to CF & Key Literature themes (KL)	Questions for Academics	Questions for Industry
RQ1-How tourism employers perceive the managerial competencies of UK tourism management graduates? 1.1To explore whether tourism employers underestimate the managerial competences of TMUS/TMG in the UK from the perspective of tourism academics and industry 1.2 To find any specific underlying	**CF-Phase1-Attitude1 and study choice** Linked to societal norms, attitude and perceived behaviour control. In light of their prior to studying experience, academics' views and employers' perceptions and the turnover problem at this level KL-Image, turnover and graduate competencies Key Literature (KL): (Jiang & Tribe,	From your experience, why most tourism undergraduates embark on a tourism degree? e.g. deliberate career plan, love traveling, industry perks or the only option/ easy degree? Is prior study/industry experience a factor in accepting them? If so, does it give those individuals any advantage during their study/ eventually career prospect? What managerial competencies do you develop in TMU during their studies? Please give at least 3 modules/ activities examples What are your main industry-specific managerial competencies modules? And how important to TMUs future managerial career? Compared to general managerial knowledge, like those included in general business degrees, do you think this is being taught in enough depth? What are the career planning skills in your curriculum? Please give examples of modules or activities that you include to instil this in TMU? Some major tourism employers highlight being "Entrepreneurial" as a top requirement to GS acceptance, how do you instil this in your TMU? What programme/ extracurricular activities? Why is managerial turnover exceptionally high in this industry? Is it likely to stay as such? Why?	What is your three main competencies/ skills in deciding to accept a fresh graduate on GS or entry-managerial positions? Is entry-level managerial turnover in your company as high as the industry's average? If yes, why? If you want to reduce this at your company-level, how or what you suggest? e.g. what could be done during or after their initial company training that could help reduce this problem if possible? If not, what do you exactly/differently do to keep it low? What specific competencies do you require in an entry-level manager, is it generic (leadership qualities, critical thinking) or is it specific to this industry (knowledge of certain operations and or software specific to this industry) -Either way, who exactly do you assess that in an entry to graduate scheme or a job interview? End of section: Do you think tourism graduates possess the managerial competencies you require (especially compared to other graduates)? Please

reasons if this is the case or other reasons to TMGs employability and industry issues and solution to this from both academics and industry's point of view	2009;Ayikoru, Tribe & Airey, 2009; People 1st, 2015, 17; Holloway, 1993; Baum, 2012; Walmsley, 2017; Slocum, Dimitrov & Webb, 2019)	What could be done during their study time (e.g. extracurricular activities) to work on reducing this problem in the future? In your view, why major employers do not specify tourism degrees in their entry requirements for Graduate schemes (GS)? Do you consider your/UK TMUs build the right knowledge during their study to enter the industry in entry-managerial positions? Do you think tourism employers underestimate the managerial competencies of TMGs? End of section: do you wish to add any comment here?	explain either way and what specific competencies you would like to see developed End of section: do you have any additional comment/ suggestion you think is necessary here?
RQ2- To what extent the UK tourism management curriculum is aligned with the needs of tourism employers for graduate employability? 2.1 To critically analyse UK employers and academics knowledge/ experience/ perception of the curricula being fit for managerial competencies and what improvements needed.	**CF-Phase2** (tourism management curriculum content and managerial competencies) -acquiring knowledge& managerial competencies during study (General vs Industry-specific knowledge/ competencies KL- Dacre- Pool, 2007; Bridgstock, 2009; Felistas, et al., 2012; Xin, Tribe& Chambers, 2013;)	What are the main managerial competencies you target, while designing and compiling the content of your tourism management curriculum? Please tell me what you currently do, not how it should be. Curriculum content: which is the most important part of your current tourism management curriculum that you think prepares your undergraduates for future managerial position and why? Do you measure your TM graduates' path into employment after graduation? If yes, how? What specific measures do you use and what do you do with these records? If yes, of those, who gain work in the tourism after graduation, at what level do they normally start? If no, why not? And what's your take on the usefulness of such measures/ activities? Given major employers do not currently specify TM degrees in their graduates' schemes, has this anything to do with the content/ design of your TM curriculum? -Have you ever tested your curriculum with employer requirements, especially managerial competencies? -If yes, when was the last time? What were the results and what did you change? (e.g. evaluation metrics)	To you, how important is industry-specific knowledge in accepting a GS applicant? Which one is more important to your company's success and why: General managerial knowledge/competencies like those included in general business degrees? Or industry-specific (e.g. operations' management, etc)? If I say "Career Planning Skills", what does this mean to you? How important? Is it a requirement? Do you find it in TMUS/TMG? Some major tourism employers highlight being "Entrepreneurial" as a top requirement to GS acceptance, do you agree? How do you find or otherwise in an interviewee? Do you liaise with HEIs/ participate in curriculum development? How, why and what difficulties you normally encounter if any? What are the most sought after "managerial competencies" that you desire in a fresh graduate or entry-level managerial applicant?

2.2 To scrutinize the actual and perceived disparity between tourism management curricula, and the tourism industry's competency requirements for entry-level managers 2.3 To identify the critical success factors to creating the desired full-match between the tourism curricula and the industry's competency requirements for managers	Other background curriculum development models and literature (KL) include (Airey, et al, 2015; McGladdery& Lubbe, 2017; Pearce & Zare, 2017; Clark 2018; Carnicelli, 2019)	-If no, why not? From your knowledge of major tourism graduate schemes and job publications, what do employers really want from graduates? And what do you think is missing in your TM curriculum to satisfy their requirements? Having seen that enterprising/eneurial aptitude one of the main skills repeatedly emphasised in major graduate schemes: Are these skills included in your programmes? Please identify modules where these skills are taught. What is TMUs' overall evaluation of your curriculum relevant to their career? Do you think the HE tourism curricula are still having design and or content issues? Apart from its actual content and design, do you think your Tourism Management degree is currently in line with industry's requirements at this level? If so, is it conveying the correct managerial competency signals to employers? If not why and what are the CSFs in your view? End of section: do you wish to add any comment/ suggestion to this curriculum section or any comment on your current liaison activities with tourism employers? -If yes, or no, please, explain in points, what are the differences between your tourism management curricula and employers' requirements for entry-level managers?	In terms knowledge, what is the most important piece of managerial knowledge you prefer in a GS applicant? Do you particularly find it lacking/in abundance in a TMUS/TMG? Do you keep records of how many you employ/ accept on a GS that are TM graduates? At what level do they normally accept TMUS/TMG to start at your company? Would you accept many of them on entry-level managerial positions straight from university? If yes, why and if no, what do you require academics to change or add to their curriculum for you to accept/ prefer TMUS/TMG? From your experience in this labour market, what are the CSFs to reducing the turnover at this level e.g. if there still a need for a closer collaboration between employers and HEIs to improve curriculum or adjust to your needs, how and what needs doing? End of section: do you think there still a mismatch/imbalance between the current tourism management curricula and your managerial competency needs in current TMUs/ recent grads? -If yes, or no, please, explain in points, what exactly is needed to align the curricula to your needs?
RQ3) How the current generation of tourism management undergraduates' attitude and experience of the UK tourism	**CF-Phase3& 4** Reflection and evaluation on curriculum and reasons to study tourism in preparation for career (career planning)	From your experience teaching TMUs. is career planning among those reasons your TMUs embark on a TM degree? And how this is encouraged/revealed towards the end of their studies? -e.g. how do you encourage/ teach self-reflection and evaluation to career options, etc.? If a TMU, nearing graduation is to reflect privately on their learning-for-career experience, what do you think they would say or write in their final evaluation?	What is your experience of dealing with current Gen. of TMUs/TMUS/TMGs (psychometric test results, interviewed some, seen them at work experience, etc.)? Compared to non-tourism graduates, is there anything significant that you noticed, from dealing with them or viewing their test results? E.g. Attitude, etc. Do you agree that this emerging generation may have or prefer early-career instability to build experience?

management curriculum affect their career intention for the tourism industry? 3.1 To assess current TMUs attitude and intention to a tourism career and likely characteristics) **Note1:** TMUs employment characteristics, are assessed here from experts' views (see note 2)	**Phase4:** Evaluation to curriculum and its led industry experiences on future career KL- (O'Leary, 2017; Boluk & Carnicelli, 2015, 2019) **Note2:** for TMUs attributes& career intentions, see methodology and analyses chapters and the use of key tests (e.g. TPB, Ajzen, 2006).	Do you agree that the current cohort of TMUs include a considerable percentage of an emerging generation of professionals (born 1993-2001) and if so, what are their likely employment characteristics? (e.g. in terms of their interests in growth opportunities, pay, etc.? -If yes, please explain how do you plan to reinforce/change these characteristics to influence their attitude/intention for a longer-term career in this industry? To ensure industry interests in your students, while ensuring repeat business and more students for your HEI. If you do not agree, please explain why. Do you think "opportunities for growth" is a clear problem specific to tourism industry? If yes, what could be done to improve? If no, which other problems related to the turnover at this level? Do you think your current cohort of TMUs are likely to have long term career plans for tourism? Explain -how long is long-term? Should tourism employers include long-term commitment for this industry in entry requirements?	If yes, what would be your strategies/incentives as tourism employer to retain the right candidate? What specific opportunities for growth/ promotion do you offer to GS trainees/ entry-level managerial candidates? Do you wish to add any comment or suggestion to your answers in this final section? Do you visit universities (e.g. to milk-round or raise awareness of career options at your company? If, yes, what do you think of the TMU attitude to this industry? What do you think they may write in their career options evaluation? Should your company, as a tourism employer include long-term commitment intentions for this industry in entry requirements? If yes, how would you find this out? E.g. specific psychometric tests, screening, etc If not, why?
3.3. To develop graduate employability model, tested for usefulness to key stakeholders and in line with recent curriculum synchronisation curriculum initiatives	**CF-phase 5** Career decision& turnover KL-(Xin, Tribe & Chambers, 2013; Wiedmer, 2015; Sheldon & Fesenmaier, 2014; Cuffy, 2017; Balula, et al., 2019)	Given that the current cohort of TMUs mostly belong to an emerging generation of tourism graduates/ professionals, are they, as some recent literature anticipates, expected to have early job instability to build experience? How is this in TMUs' context? What would be your strategies (e.g. employability curriculum/ extracurricular activities) to help improve this or similar attitudes? Do you think, given the opportunity, your TMUS/TMG would stay longer in the industry compared to other non-tourism graduates? How? What are your plans to support TMUs' positive attitude to advancement in digital technologies?	From your experience, do you think TMUs/TMG are as qualified for entry-level managerial positions/ GS as other non-tourism graduates? In terms of attitudes/ intention to stay on the job, what is your overall view/ experience of TMUs/TMGs in this respect, esp. in comparison? From recent your experiences, do you think TMUs are prepared for the recent advancement inn digital technologies in this industry to be productive and stay in this industry at this level? If no, what do you suggest HEIs can do to improve the skills' quality of their graduates?
Overall Comments/ quotes	Do you have any final message to convey to industry/within academia in this context? What do you suggest for this final section/ the wider research reliability of results?		Do have any final suggestion that you think would improve this research findings from industry/employer's point of view? Or a quote to convey to academia or policymakers?

App. 1.2- Table 2.2: Academics Interviewees' List

Table 2.2: Academics Interviewees' List		
Code/No	Professional Profile	Mode interviewed
ACA1	Senior tourism academic with curriculum development experience and students' admissions responsibility, at a London-based University	Face-to-face
ACA2	Senior tourism and hospitality academic and a curriculum expert with departmental leadership role, at a Southern England-based University	Skype
ACA3	Tourism academic with industry experience, at a Northern England-based University	Skype
ACA4	Senior tourism academics with vast experience at senior HRM roles, the latest with a major tourism employer, developing their graduate scheme programmes, at a Southern-eastern England-based University	Skype
ACA5	Senior tourism and hospitality academic with vast industry experience globally, at a Midlands-based University, England	Skype
ACA6	Professor of tourism, with focus on tourism education and curriculum development, as well as industry experience, at a London-based University	Skype
ACA7	Senior tourism academic with departmental leadership role and curriculum development experience, at a London-based University	Face-to-face
ACA8	Senior tourism academic, involved in quality assurance and curriculum development, at Scottish University	Skype
ACA9	Senior tourism and hospitality academic, programme leader for tourism and events, with experience in curriculum development, at Northern England-based University	Face-to-face
ACA10	Professor of hospitality and tourism with tourism HE leadership roles, at a Northern Ireland University	Skype
ACA11	Senior tourism academic with departmental leadership roles, at a Welsh University	Telephone

App. 1.3- Table 2.3 Industry Interviewees' List

Table: 2.3 Industry Interviewees' List		
No	Name	Mode Interviewed
IND1	Market research analyst at an overarching tourism research and HR organisation	Face-to-face
IND2	CEO of a not-for-profit tourism company, in the tourist information, visitor attractions and destination management sector	Face-face
IND3	Learning and development manager at a major hospitality company-a multinational hotel chain	Face-to-face
IND4	CEO and senior leader of an overarching tourism industry organisations, as well as HR and talent management director	Skype
IND5	Director of Human Resources at national visitor attraction company	Face-to-face
IND6	CEO and managing director of a tourism company, in the cruise sector	Face-to-face
IND7	Senior leader and HEIs' liaison manager at an industry leading overarching tourism organisation.	Face-to-face
IND8	CEO of an overarching tourism organisation with tourism policy-influencing focus	Face-to-face
IND9	CEO of an emerging travel and tourism tech-related company	Face-to-face
IND10	HR and community engagement manager at a not-for-profit tourism company, in the community development and regeneration sector.	Face-to-face
IND11	Crew and recruitment manager at a tourism company, in the exploring and package holiday sector.	Face-to-face
IND12	General manager at travel and tourism company, in the excursions and coach tours sector	Face-to-face

Appendix 2: Semi-structured Interview Guides (Industry and academics)

App. 2.1 Industry interviews' guide

<u>Section 1:</u> Turnover& how Tourism Employers perceive the managerial competencies of UK TMUs/ TMG

1. For your company, what are the main competencies/ skills required in deciding to accept a fresh graduate for entry-level managerial positions?

2. To you, how important is tourism industry-specific knowledge in accepting an applicant?

3. Which one is more important to your company's success and why: General managerial knowledge/competencies like those included in general business degrees? Or tourism industry-specific (e.g. operations' management, etc)?

4. If I say "Career Planning Skills", what does this mean to you? How important is it? Is it a requirement for recruitment? Do you find it in TMG?

5. Do you consider that UK TMG have developed the right knowledge and experience during their study for the industry's needs in entry-level managerial positions? -If yes/ no, Why?

6. Some major tourism employers highlight being "Entrepreneurial" as a top requirement to GS acceptance, do you agree? Do you see this in the TMG candidates that you interview?

7. The industry average for turnover in the entry-level managerial post in tourism is 55%, meaning that 55% of all new entry-level managers leave before they finish their training. Is this the same in your company?

   -If yes, or no, why?

8. If you want to reduce this at your company-level, how or what you suggest?

-e.g. what could be done during/after their initial company training to help reduce this problem if possible?

9. If not, what do you exactly/differently do to keep it low?

10. **End of Section 1**: **Overall**: Do you think tourism graduates possess the managerial competencies you require (especially compared to other graduates)? Explain either way

Section 2: Possible Curriculum Mismatch

11. Do you, or your colleagues, liaise with HEIs/ participate in curriculum development?

12. How, why and what difficulties you normally encounter if any?

13. What are the most sought after "managerial competencies" that you desire in a fresh graduate or entry-level managerial applicant?

14. In terms of knowledge, what is the most important piece of managerial knowledge you prefer in an applicant? Do you particularly find it lacking/in abundance in a TMG?

15. Do you keep records of how many you employ/ accept on a GS that are TM graduates?

16. At what level do you normally accept TMG to start at your company? Would you accept many of them on entry-level managerial positions straight from university?

17. If yes, why and if no, what do you recommend academics to change or add to their curriculum for you to accept/ prefer TMG?

18. In your opinion, is a TM degree one with a high status, when compared to more general management degrees? SENSITIVE – prompt (I don't have a TM degree)

19. Is there still a need for a closer collaboration between employers like yourselves and HEIs to improve curriculum or adjust to your needs? Explain

20. **End of Section 2:** Overall, do you think there still a mismatch/imbalance between the current tourism management curricula at UK universities and your managerial competency needs in a recent graduate?

<u>Section 3:</u> TMUs- Likely Employment Characteristics& Experience dealing with them

21. Do you have experience/ encountered the current cohort of TMUs the workplace?

22. Do you encourage self-reflection and evaluation on your initial training/ GS?
-What is their overall evaluation of your initial work experience/ training?

23. Do you think there are sufficient opportunities for career development and personal growth in your part of the tourism industry / in your company to help to retain staff?
-If yes, what could be done to improve?
-If no, which is the clearer problem related to the labour turnover at this level?

24. In your experience, do you think the current cohort of TMUs have long-term career plans for this industry? Explain
-how long is long-term?

25. Should your company/ other tourism employers include long-term commitment intention in their entry requirements? If yes, how would you ensure this. If no, why not?

26. Given that future graduates are expected to have early job instability to build experience, what would be your strategies (e.g. new selection processes, on-the-job

training programmes, leadership or motivation activities, etc.) to help improve this or similar attitudes?

27. Do you think, given the opportunity, TMG would stay longer in your company/ industry compared to other non-tourism graduates? Explain either way

28. **End of Interview:** Finally, do have any suggestion for better accuracy/ reliability to the entire research findings, or a quote to convey to academia or the rest of your industry?

App. 2.2 Academic interviews' guide

<u>Section 1:</u> Turnover& how Tourism Employers perceive the managerial competencies of UK TMUs/ TMG

1. From your experience, why do most tourism undergraduates choose a tourism degree?

-e.g. deliberate career plan, love traveling, industry perks or the only option/ easy degree?

2. Is prior study/industry experience a factor in accepting them? If so, does it give those individuals any advantage during their study/ eventual career prospect?

3. What managerial competencies do you focus on developing in TMU during their studies? - Prompt – can you name specific modules that aim to develop managerial competencies?

   -are these managerial modules are taught in as much depth to tourism students as to general business/ management students?

4. What approach do you take to supporting tourism students with their career planning?

   Prompt - can you give any examples of specific modules that aim to do this?

5. Some major tourism employers highlight being "Entrepreneurial" as a top requirement to GS acceptance, how do you instil this in your TMU? E.g. specific programme/ extracurricular activities?
6. Why, in your view, is managerial labour turnover exceptionally high in the tourism industry? -Is it likely to stay as such? Why?
7. What could be done during their study time (e.g. extracurricular activities) to work on reducing this problem if possible?
8. In your view, why do major employers not specify tourism degrees in GS entry requirements?

9. **End of Section 1: Overal**l, do you think tourism employers understand the managerial competencies of TM graduates? Explain either way

Section 2: Possible Curriculum Mismatch

1. How do you involve industry in the design of your tourism management curriculum?
2. What are the main managerial competencies you target, while designing and compiling the content of your tourism management curriculum?

-Please tell me what you currently do, not how it should be.

3. In terms of content, which is the most important part of your current tourism management curriculum that you think prepares your TMUs for future managerial position? &why?

4. Do you measure your TM graduates' path into employment after graduation? If yes, how? What specific measures do you use and what do you do with these records?

   -Also, of those who gain work in the tourism industry after graduation, at what level do they normally start?

5. Have you tested your curriculum with employer requirements for managers?
   -If yes, when was the last time? What were the results and what did you change? (e.g. evaluation metrics) -If no, why not?
6. Do you consider UK TMU build the right knowledge and experience during their study to enter the industry in entry-level managerial positions?

Section 3: the current cohort of TMUs' likely Employment Characteristics& Experience

7. From your experience, what is the main reason/s your current cohort of TMUs embark on a TM degree?

8. Is career planning among those reasons? Explain

9. Do you encourage/ teach self-reflection and evaluation on your TM programmes?

10. Do you encourage your current TMUs to respond to programme evaluation survey? What is their overall evaluation of your curriculum/main trend? -SENSITIVE

11. Thinking about your current TMUs, do you think they have any specific characteristics in terms of priorities towards their future employment?
Prompt – Do you think this has anything to do with them being of this cohort (mainly Generation Z)?

12. Based on those characteristics, do you think there are sufficient opportunities for career development/personal growth in the tourism industry to attract you're the emerging pool of TMUs?
-If yes, is there anymore rooms for improvements?
-If no, what is the clearer problem related to the labour turnover at this level?

13. Do you think the current cohort of TMUs are likely to have long term career plans for this industry? Explain -how long is long-term?
-Do you think, given the opportunity, they would stay longer in the industry compared to other non-tourism graduates? Explain either way

14. Given that the emerging generation of graduate employees are expected to have early job instability to build experience, what would be your strategies to tackle this/ similar?

15. **Overall**, please sum up/ give a quote on what you think the current cohort of TMUs as future tourism managers, especially in terms of possible turnover reduction!

Appendix 3: Survey messages and My future Career Online Survey

App. 3.1-Student Survey-Messages

Dear…
My name is Khairy Eteiwy, a PhD candidate at the University of Greenwich's Business School.

I wonder if you could spare some of your precious time for a research interview that focuses on the employability of current tourism undergraduates in the UK (being of a cohort, mainly Generation Z)?

This is a PhD project that is currently being supervised by Dr James Kennell and Professor Victor Newman at the University of Greenwich. Myself and my supervisory team have identified you as a key informant and hence I would be very pleased to obtain your valuable contribution to this research. In addition, I have a brief information pack, which I can forward to you upon request.

I hope you'll find this interesting and that you'll agree to be interviewed.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Best Regards

Khairy Eteiwy
PhD Candidate
Editor-ITSA Newsletter: http://intltourismstudies.com/
TRC and TS Member

Dear…….

Thank you very much for your precious time and contribution to my PhD research.

As agreed, below are two different links to completing the survey, along with two sets of suggested text to forward to academic colleagues (if possible) and to your current tourism management undergraduates (i.e. includes hospitality management).

As you know, this project has been ethically approved by the University of Greenwich and was recently endorsed by ATHE (please see ATHE's email to members- the last message below).

Please let me know if this is clear or I can just send you the message for students only.

Because sometimes the QR code image cannot be read in an email message, I additionally attach it in a PPT slide too.

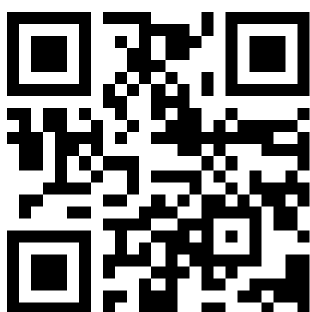
Many thanks again
I appreciate all your help
Kind regards
Khairy Eteiwy

Suggested text to fellow academics

Khairy Eteiwy is a PhD candidate at the University of Greenwich's Business School and his PhD project is currently being supervised by Dr James Kennell and Professor Victor Newman. He's nearing completion and currently carrying out research into the relationship between the design of the tourism curriculum in UK Higher Education and the tourism industry's recruitment needs.

In particular, Khairy has a survey that examines the experience and career intentions of current tourism undergraduates (Generation Z) in the UK and how this relates to issues of high staff turnover in the tourism industry. The survey's weblink is here: https://tinyurl.com/MyTourismCareer

There is also a QR code, which you can scan with a smart mobile phone to go directly and check the survey for yourself, before forwarding to students:



For reassurances, this project has been ethically approved by the University of Greenwich and was recently endorsed by ATHE (please see ATHE's email to members below). Besides, the survey doesn't ask sensitive questions such as name or date of birth.

Finally, for your convenience, the following is a suggested text for your students, which you can copy and paste in an email or in a social media post.

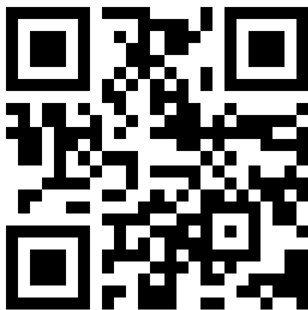
Many thanks in anticipation

Suggested Text for Students

Dear tourism students,

A PhD student at the University of Greenwich is carrying out research into the relationship between your tourism education and the needs of the tourism industry. The findings of the research are going to be widely distributed and will help to inform the design of tourism degrees in the future too. This will also help employers to understand more about the skills, knowledge and attitude you develop as tourism students, which would be vital for your future career. The weblink is: https://tinyurl.com/MyTourismCareer and

The QR code, which you can scan with your mobile phone and go directly to the survey on your phone, is:



If you have any questions about the survey, or how this information will be used, please do not hesitate to contact the researcher. His name is **Khairy Eteiwy** and here's his email address: k.eteiwy@gre.ac.uk.

Many thanks on your valuable contribution to this research

ATHE endorsement email

From: ATHE secretariat [mailto:secretary@athe.org.uk]

Sent: 03 October 2018 13:43

To: ATHE Members

Subject: ATHE: Research Survey request from University of Greenwich

Dear ATHE members,

A PhD student at one of our member institutions, the University of Greenwich, is carrying out research into the relationship between the design of tourism curriculum in HE and the needs of industry. In particular, he is examining the career intentions of tourism students and how this relates to issues of high turnover of staff in the industry. As part of this research, a survey of tourism undergraduates is being carried out, which you can see here: https://tinyurl.com/MyTourismCareer

We would be very grateful if you were able to distribute this survey to your undergraduate students, via email or social media. The results of this survey will be shared with ATHE and the researcher also aims to present their findings at the next ATHE conference.

At the end of this email, you will see some suggested text that you can cut and paste to introduce the survey to your students.

If you have any questions about the research, please contact the student, Khairy Eteiwy directly at k.eteiwy@greenwich.ac.uk.

Kind regards,

……………………………………………………………

Many thanks, I hope you'll be able to help with this.

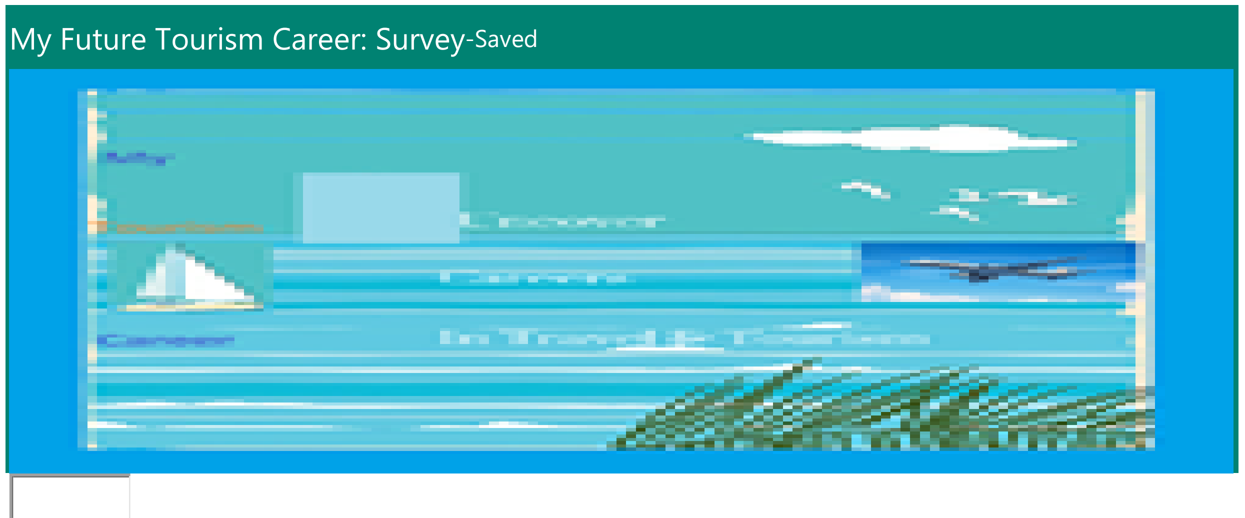
Best Regards

Khairy Eteiwy
PhD Candidate
Editor-ITSA Newsletter: http://intltourismstudies.com/
TRC and TS Member

Business School
University of Greenwich
Old Royal Naval College, Park Row
London. SE10 9LS

App. 3.2- The ‘My future Career’ Online Survey Questionnaire

My Future Tourism Career: Survey-Saved



Questions

Responses

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My Future Tourism Career: Survey

Dear Tourism Management Undergraduate, This survey is about your employability and aims to produce findings that are useful for industry and education. Therefore, your responses are invaluable for this research. It should take you less than 10 minutes to complete. *Important Notes* DATA PROTECTION: although no personal details are required, please be assured your responses will be made anonymous, kept under the strictest confidentiality and used for research purposes only. Please also note that you do not have to participate in this survey and can withdraw at any time. If you are interested to know the result of this research, have any concern or wish to withdraw, please email Khairy Eteiwy at the University of Greenwich: k.eteiwy@greenwich.ac.uk MANY THANKS FOR YOUR TIME AND VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION TO THIS RESEARCH

1.I am a current, or soon to graduate, tourism undergraduate, at a UK University or a Higher Education Institution

- Yes
- No

2.The name of my University or Higher Education Institution is:

Please type the name in the box below

3.The year, I'm currently in, is:

Please tick just one option as appropriate (some degrees in the UK are more than 3 years long). If you tick "other" please explain or specify

- Year 1
- Year 2
- Year 3
- Year 4
-

4.Why did you choose to study tourism?

Please rate the importance of each of the following reasons for choosing to study tourism, to you, where "1" is "not important", and "5" is "very important"

	1 Not Important	2	3	4	5 Very Important
Personal interests (e.g. love travelling, meeting new people, seeing new places)					
Career Planning (e.g. starting a rewarding career, building international experience, planning to start a tourism business, etc)					
Advice and Guidance (e.g. parents, university open days, career service, college tutor, etc.)					

5.Please evaluate the following areas of your degree in terms of their value to your future career

Please rate each option, where 1 means "Not Valuable" at all and 5 means "very Valuable"

	1 Not Valuable	2	3	4	5 very Valuable
Studying tourism-specific topics (e.g. tourism operations, destination management, tourism policy and planning, etc.)					
Studying the broader management topics (e.g. Marketing, HR, Finance, etc.)					
Studying personal and professional development courses(e.g. study skills, career development, presentation skills)					
Work Placements					
Studying Entrepreneurship (e.g. business start-ups, innovation, etc.)					
Extracurricular activities (e.g. field trips, site visits, networking events, public lectures, etc.)					

6.Has studying tourism changed your views about a career in tourism?

Please select the option that mostly represent your current view, If you tick "other" please explain or specify

- Yes, I now view a tourism career more positively
- No, it has not changed my views (still positive)
- Yes, I now view a tourism career more negatively
-

7.Do you have work experience in the tourism industry?

Please choose as appropriate and if you have experience in another industry, tick 'other' and specify the industry

- Yes, I currently work in the tourism industry
- Yes, I have previously worked in the tourism industry
- No experience
-

8.What do you think employers of tourism graduates are looking for?

Please rate each of the following , in terms of how important you think they are to tourism graduate employers?

	1 Least important	2	3	4	5 Most important
Tourism-specific knowledge (e.g. tourism operations management, destination management, tourism policy and planning, etc.)					
Tourism-specific skills (e.g. confidence in using booking systems, reservations, cancellations, organising transfers, etc.)					
Interpersonal Skills (e.g. teamwork, leadership, flexibility, etc.)					
Communications Skills (e.g. foreign languages, public-speaking, telephone manners, social media, etc.)					
IT Skills (e.g. Microsoft Office, Desktop Publishing, etc.)					
Human Resources knowledge (e.g. understanding organisation structure, job roles, appraisal, payroll, recruitment, etc.)					
General accounting and finance knowledge (e.g. budgeting, profit and loss accounts, forecasting, taxes, VAT, etc.)					
General sales and marketing competencies (e.g. marketing plans, competitors knowledge, pricing, etc.)					

9.In your opinion, are tourism graduates likely to stay longer working in the tourism industry than other non-tourism graduates?

Please tick as appropriate and if you tick "other" please explain or specify

- Yes
- No
-

10.After graduating, what kind of career path do you plan to take?

- Working for a major tourism employer
- Working for a small tourism employer
- Starting my own tourism business
- Working outside of the tourism industry

11.In your opinion, what length of time do you consider 'long term' employment in the tourism industry to be?

Please choose the option that best represent your view and if you tick "other" please explain or specify

- 1 year
- 2 years
- 3 years
- 4 years
- 5 or more years
-

12.After you graduate, what would be your priority in your first job?

Please choose one from the list below. If you tick "other" please explain or specify

- High salary
- Career development and promotion opportunities
- Job stability
- Friendly work environment
- Flexible working schedules
-

13.The following questions ask about your career plan after you graduate. -For my future career, starting in an entry-level managerial position in the tourism industry would be:

Please rate the above statement, where 1 means "Totally Unsuitable" and 5 means "Totally Suitable"

	1 Totally Unsuitable	2	3	4	5 Totally Suitable

14.People around me think tourism as a career is very rewarding, especially for soon to be tourism graduate like me

Please rate the above statement, where 1 means "Completely False " and 5 means "Completely True "

	1 Completely False	2	3	4	5 Completely True
	○	○	○	○	○

15.For me, the work conditions in the tourism industry, at an entry-level managerial position, would be:

Please rate the above statement where 1 means "Very Unpleasant" and 5 means Very Pleasant

	1 Very Unpleasant	2	3	4	5 Very Pleasant
	○	○	○	○	○

16.It is mostly up to me whether or not I seek employment and stay in the tourism industry after graduating

Please rate the above statement, where 1 means "Strongly Disagree " and 5 means "Strongly Agree "

	1 Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5 Strongly Agree
	○	○	○	○	○

17.I intend to make my future career in tourism, either with an employer or running my own tourism business

Please rate the above statement, where 1 means " Extremely Unlikely" and 5 means "Extremely Likely "

	1 Extremely Unlikely	2	3	4	5 Extremely Likely
	○	○	○	○	○

18.It is expected of me that I should seek employment and stay in the tourism industry after graduating

Please rate the above statement, where 1 means "Completely False" and 5 means "Completely True"

	1 Completely False	2	3	4	5 Completely True
	○	○	○	○	○

19.For my future career, the experience gained at an entry-level managerial position in the tourism industry would be

Please rate the above statement, where 1 means "Worthless" and 5 means "Very Valuable"

1 Worthless	2	3	4	5 Very Valuable
○	○	○	○	○

20.I will try to seek employment and stay at least 3 years in the tourism industry after graduating

Please rate the above statement, where 1 means "Definitely False" and 5 means "Definitely True "

1 Definitely False	2	3	4	5 Definitely True
○	○	○	○	○

21.For my future career, working in an entry-level managerial position in the tourism industry would be:

Please rate the above statement, where 1 means "Very Bad" and 5 means "Very Good"

1 Very Bad	2	3	4	5 Very Good
○	○	○	○	○

22.Most people who are important to me, think that I should seek employment and stay in the tourism industry after graduating.

Please rate the above statement, where 1 means "Completely False" and 5 means "Completely True"

1 Completely False	2	3	4	5 Completely True
○	○	○	○	○

23.For my future career, committing to long-term employment in the tourism industry after starting in an entry-level managerial position, would be:

Please rate the above statement, where 1 means "Very Risky" and 5 means "Very Safe"

1 Very Risky	2	3	4	5 Very Safe
○	○	○	○	○

24.People like me, who graduate in tourism, seek employment and try to stay as long as possible in the tourism industry

Please rate the above statement, where 1 means " Extremly Unlikely" and 5 means "Extremely Likely"

1 Extremely Likely	2	3	4	5 Extremely Unlikely
○	○	○	○	○

25.Tourism management is my chosen sector and I intend to make it my long-term career

Please rate the above statement, where 1 means "Extremely unlikley " and 5 means "Extremely likely"

	1 Extremely unlikely	2	3	4	5 Extremely Likely
	○	○	○	○	○

26.For me, seeking graduate-level employment and staying in the tourism industry after graduating, would be easier compared to non-tourism graduates entering the same industry

Please rate the above statement, where 1 means "Impossible " and 5 means "Very Possible"

	1 Impossible	2	3	4	5 Very Possible
	◉	○	○	○	○

27.People in my life, whose opinions I value, would approve of me seeking employment and staying in the tourism industry after graduating

Please rate the above statement, where 1 means "Completely False" and 5 means "Completely True"

	1 Completely False	2	3	4	5 Completely True
	○	○	○	○	○

28.I am confident that I can easily perform well in entry-level managerial employment in the tourism industry after graduating

Please rate the above statement, where 1 means "Strongly Disagree " and 5 means "Strongly Agree"

	1 Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5 Strongly Agree
	○	○	○	○	○

29.With my tourism management degree, it would be easy for me to find an entry-level managerial position in any other industry

Please rate the above statement, where 1 means "Totally disagree" and 5 means " Totally agree"

	1 Totally disagree	2	3	4	5 Totally agree
	○	○	○	○	○

30.I plan to seek employment and stay at least 3 years in the tourism industry after graduating

Please rate the above statement, where 1 means "Strongly Disagree" and 5 means "Strongly Agree"

	1 Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5 Strongly Agree
	○	○	○	○	○

31.Tourism employers prefer tourism graduates for graduate schemes and entry-level managerial positions

Please rate the above statement, where 1 means "Totally Disagree " and 5 means " Totally Agree"

	1 Totally Disagree	2	3	4	5 Totally Agree
	○	○	○	○	○

32.I intend to seek employment and stay at least 3 years in the tourism industry after graduating

Please rate the above statement, where 1 means "Extremely Unlikely" and 5 means " Extremely Likely"

	1 Extremely Unlikely	2	3	4	5 Extremely Likely
	○	○	○	○	○

33.How would you describe your gender?

Please tick one of the following options

○ Female

○ Male

○ Prefer not to say

○

34.Finally, the year you were born was:

Please type the year number only (e.g. 1996, 2002, etc.)

Appendix 4: Ethical Approval

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of
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Khairy Eteiwy
Faculty of Business
Dept. of International Business and Economics
University of Greenwich
Park Row
Greenwich SE10 9LS

Direct Line 020 8331 8842
Direct Fax 020 8331 8824
Email research_ethics@gre.ac.uk
Our Ref UREC/14.4.5.18
Date: 27 May 2015

Dear Khairy,

University Research Ethics Committee – Minute 14.4.5.18

TITLE OF RESEARCH: Higher Education and Employability issues: The case of tourism graduates in the UK

I am writing to confirm that the above application has been **approved** by Chair's Action on behalf of the Committee and that you have permission to proceed.

I am advised by the Committee to remind you of the following points:

- You must notify the Committee immediately of any information received by you, or of which you become aware, which would cast doubt upon, or alter, any information contained in the original application, or a later amendment, submitted to the Committee and/or which would raise questions about the safety and/or continued conduct of the research;
- You must comply with the Data Protection Act 1998;
- You must refer proposed amendments to the protocol to the Committee for further review and obtain the Committee's approval thereto prior to implementation (except only in cases of emergency when the welfare of the subject is paramount).
- You are authorised to present this University of Greenwich Research Ethics Committee letter of approval to outside bodies in support of any application for further research clearance.

On behalf of the Committee may I wish you success in your project.

Yours sincerely

John Wallace
Secretary, University Research Ethics Committee

Cc: Dr Katia Iankova
Dr Alice Lau
Professor Victor Newman

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