

Employability Attributes required for Entry-Level Marketing Jobs in Selected Sectors in South Africa

Thérèse Roux¹ & Johan de Jager²

Abstract

The diversification of the marketing industry offers graduates a whole range of new job opportunities in a variety of sectors. This study is one of the first to examine the employability attributes required from graduates across four large sectors in the marketing industry of South Africa. The data for this research were collected via an online survey with 390 respondents in marketing positions across South Africa. There were notable differences in the skills dimensions required for entry-level marketing jobs between the selected sectors. Integrity or ethics appear to be much more important than that which was documented in earlier research; while leadership was regarded as the least important skill. The findings have several implications for the development and redesign of curricula, in order to produce employable marketing undergraduates, and to assist universities in retaining the competitive edge in the Higher Education market.

Keyword: Marketing industry sectors, Higher Education, South Africa, Skills, conceptual knowledge.

1. Introduction

The intense competition amongst Higher Educational Institutions for human and financial capital has forced them to become more business-oriented. This has resulted in greater emphasis on marketing strategies, in order to gain a competitive advantage, and a larger national – as well as an international market share (Constantinides & Stagno 2011; Lee & Sehoole 2015). The increased focus on marketization in Higher Education, and the potential benefits of applying marketing theories –in addition to those concepts that have been effective in the business world – are also being recognised by prominent researchers in the field of Higher Education marketing (Hemsley-Brown & Oplatka 2006).

The current research literature focuses on three areas within the supply-side of Higher Education marketing: firstly, marketing communications, such as marketing communication techniques (Constantinides & Zinck Stagno 2011), communicating image and reputation (Lee & Sehoole 2015), as well as consumer behaviour or decision-making issues (De Jager & Du Plooy 2010). Secondly, there is the applicability of marketing models, such as transactional versus relationship marketing (Sultan & Yin Wong 2012) and marketing products versus service marketing (Hemsley-Brown & Oplatka 2006). And thirdly, there is strategic marketing that incorporates segmentation and targeting (Constantinides & Stagno, 2011), as well as positioning and branding (Pinar et al. 2011).

¹Department of Marketing, Logistics and Sport Management, Faculty of Management, Tshwane University of Technology, PRETORIA, 0001, Republic of South Africa, Telephone numbers: (+2712) 382 4761 / 082 826 2737 rouxat@tut.ac.za / rouxat@gmail.com

²Department of Marketing, Logistics and Sport Management, Faculty of Management, Tshwane University of Technology, PRETORIA, 0001, Republic of South Africa, Telephone numbers: (+2712) 382 4761 / 082 826 2737, dejagerjw@tut.ac.za

Whilst these are all vital issues in Higher Education marketing, there is a paucity of research on the demand-side of Higher Education marketing (de Boer & Jongbloed, 2012).

Consequently, the focus of this article is on the employability attributes of new marketing graduates, as demanded by employers in different marketing sectors. Some researchers have investigated the attributes required from students, in order to be successful in businesses in general (Andrews & Higson, 2008); as well as within marketing – such as the expertise needed for specific posts (Gray et al. 2007), at different levels (Shlee & Harich 2010; Kelley & Bridges, 2005), or at undergraduate-entry level (Davis et al. 2002; String fellow et al.2006; Walker et al. 2009; Wellman 2013). However, these have all been conducted in developed markets, such as Europe (Andrews & Higson2008; Wellman, 2013), the USA (Shlee & Harich 2010) and Australia (Walker et al. 2009), but not yet in a developing context, such as that of South Africa. Furthermore, none of these studies have determined whether the various sectors in the marketing industry differ with regard to their perspective on the skills and knowledge areas required from marketing graduates.

To fill this gap, this study investigates the employability attributes required of new marketing graduates seeking employment in different sectors. In the next section, the relevant literature on Higher Education marketing, and the employability of graduates, will be reviewed. It then discusses the research methodology and presents the results. Finally, the article provides conclusions, summarises the limitations, and recommends some areas for future research.

1. The literature review

Before reviewing empirical studies, it is important to distinguish between conceptual knowledge and skills, which pertain to the acquisition of employability attributes. Student employability refers to a set of achievements – understandings, skills and personal attributes– which make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations. These attributes benefit them personally, as well as the workforce, the community and the economy (Wellman 2010).

Understanding or conceptual knowledge refers to the subject areas found in most marketing curricula; and it focuses on the theoretical background of the discipline (Schlee & Harich, 2010). The focus of this article is on the skills required. There has been considerable debate in the literature about the terminology for skills, which can also be referred to as 'core skills', 'key skills', 'competency' or 'transferable skills. For the purpose of this article, those skills that are broad-based skill types are generally applicable to all jobs in businesses (Wellman2010).

A number of studies have been published examining the employability attributes required for success in the workplace – from the perspective of both the alumni and employers. Some authors have focused on the requirements at entry-level. Middleton and Long (1990) used the content analysis of advertised vacancies and surveys with employers, to assess the marketing curriculum, in order to produce graduates with the appropriate skills. Interestingly, employers were not really able to grasp or articulate the specific skills they required from these applicants. Perhaps even more worrying, is the extent to which employers could not distinguish between the performance of marketing and non-marketing trained entrants to their companies – either at the stage of recruitment, or when they are already in a post. Kelly and Gaedeke (1990) examined the student and employer evaluations of the potential hiring criteria for entry-level marketing positions. Oral and written communication, interpersonal skills, personal attributes, enthusiasm/motivation and related work experience were identified as being the most important criteria for filling entry-level marketing positions. The lack of communication skills, practical experience and clear career goals of newly graduates were a major concern for most of these employers. Davis et al. (2002) compared the importance of key skills and knowledge areas with the perceptions of marketing alumni in the USA on their academic preparation in these areas. The findings indicated that graduates seem to be underprepared in terms of skills and over-prepared in knowledge areas. The importance of skills was also confirmed in more recent studies. For example, Walker et al. (2009) conducted in-depth interviews with graduates and employers, in order to explore their perceptions of graduates and their employers as regards the skills, knowledge, and competencies that are essential to make any progress in a marketing position. Employers emphasized the importance of soft skills, such as communication and analytical skills, when entering the marketing industry. However, graduates have to be prepared to show an appropriate blend of these soft skills, together with some conceptual knowledge of marketing, in order to be effective.

Once again, it was revealed that knowledge *per se* is not the most sought after requirement; but the ability, comprehension, and experience to be able to use that knowledge in the correct way for a specific business situation constitutes the top priority. This ability should provide graduates with an explicit competitive advantage in the job market.

Shlee and Harich (2010) conducted a study to identify the skills and conceptual knowledge required; and they did so by analysing the content of vacancies advertised on Monster.com (highly visited employment website). Fascinatingly, personal ethics or ethical decision-making skills were indicated as far more important for entry-level jobs, than for all other job levels. The findings revealed that extensive and specific skills were required for success at entry- or lower-level marketing jobs. In addition to oral and written communications and the ability to work in multicultural teams, contemporary marketing graduates must now also possess significant technical skills to allow them to analyze information in databases and on the Internet. Thus, marketing graduates can no longer be taught solely about the importance of Internet marketing and CRM; but they should also be able to analyze the relevant information in those areas. It was emphasized that new and recent marketing graduates rely more on skills, than on marketing knowledge for their jobs.

Wellman (2010) also used content analysis of internet-advertised posts on a number of web sites to develop profiles of the common attributes required from new and early career marketing graduates. The value employers place on marketing degrees seemed to be a concern, as most did not demand a degree; but it was experience that was generally required. The most common skill areas required included communications, interpersonal relationships, information and communication technology, planning, self-management, decision-making and problem-solving. A number of personal attributes, such as creativity and confidence, were also commonly required.

Some focused on the employability attributes required for being successful in businesses in general. For instance, Andrews and Higson (2008) analysed graduate and employer perspectives on business-graduate employability in four European countries (UK, Austria, Slovenia and Romania). Employers in all four countries expected the graduates to be employable or employment-ready; and thus, they should be equipped with the necessary skills and competencies, and able to practically apply knowledge to solve business problems. It was evident that both graduates and employers valued the experiences and knowledge gained during work placements, internships and other part-time employment. Both these role-players regarded written and oral communication skills as important factors impacting graduates' employability. A concern raised by graduates was that they had not been able to gain sufficient expertise or experience in making verbal presentations whilst in Higher Education, implying that the lack of communication skills inhibits employability, and should therefore form part of the undergraduate curriculum. An interesting finding is that graduates identified team-working skills as being a vital part of their portfolio; while employers appreciated graduates that are able to think independently and innovatively.

Other studies also documented the importance of training in oral and written communication and critical thinking skills – not only for entry-level jobs in businesses –but also for advancing into higher-level marketing jobs. Grey et al. (2007) surveyed marketing managers, academics and senior students in New Zealand on the skills essential for working as a marketing manager. An ability and willingness to learn about product-markets, to solve marketing problems, to communicate with any internal and external stakeholders, and to work in teams, in addition to the knowledge of a wide range of marketing subject areas, were regarded as essential skills. In order to progress from lower-level posts to higher posts, marketing graduates need to develop strategic thinking, leadership and management skills; and they must demonstrate some knowledge of strategic planning, product and brand management, communication and promotion, and consumer behaviour.

2. Purpose and objectives

In the light of the above discussion, the research object of this article is as follows:

To establish whether there are differences in the perspectives of potential marketing employers in each sector on the employability attributes required from marketing graduates.

From the research object, the following hypotheses were formulated:

- H₁: Marketing industry sectors differ regarding the personal attributes required from new marketing graduates seeking employment.
- H₂: Marketing industry sectors differ regarding the communication skills required from new marketing graduates seeking employment.
- H₃: Marketing industry sectors differ regarding the cognitive abilities required from new marketing graduates seeking employment.
- H₄: Marketing industry sectors differ regarding the interpersonal skills required from new marketing graduates seeking employment.
- H₅: Marketing industry sectors differ regarding the knowledge areas required from new marketing graduates seeking employment.

3. The research method

4.1 Data collection and sampling

The target population comprised respondents in marketing-related positions across seven sectors in the marketing area of South Africa. Selected industry members from the advisory board of the marketing department at a larger Higher Education institution helped the researcher with the designing of the sample plan, and to access the relevant sample databases. This sampling method was deemed most appropriate; since a reliable and professional authority in the marketing field helped with assembling a representative sample of the seven sectors in the marketing industry; and this resulted in saving time and money (Iacobucci & Churchill, 2010).

The sample was quasi-randomly drawn from three frames. Firstly, 400 questionnaires were distributed to clients in a marketing-related position of a reputable marketing and sales recruitment agency. Consequently, 600 questionnaires were sent to the subscribers of two specialist online publications in the marketing environment. The sample databases were screened, to avoid duplication, and to ensure that only one questionnaire was sent to each of those in marketing-related positions in each of the companies.

On online survey was distributed via email to the respondents on the databases. Continuous reminder emails were sent to the non-respondents until a 39% response rate, or a total of 390 questionnaires, had been received. This was deemed as adequate, based on the recommendations of Nulty (2008). This author maintained that online surveys are much less likely to achieve lower response rates (on average, 33%) compared to paper-based surveys (56%). A comparison of the results of the questionnaires submitted early (one month) and those returned later (after one month) was also done, in order to minimize any non-response bias. Since those replying later did not differ significantly from those who had applied earlier, it may be assumed there was no non-response bias from those who had previously failed to respond (Iacobucci & Churchill, 2010). The reasonable sample size helped to ensure data stability and to enable selective hypothesis testing.

4.2 The measuring instrument

The questionnaire consisted of two sections: (1) The characteristics of the sample; (2) the importance of skills areas. Dichotomous and multiple-choice questions were used for sections one, while the items in the scales of section two were measured on a five-point scale, with 1 representing 'Very important', and 5 representing 'Not important at all'; so that the researcher could establish the level of importance for the particular items included in each category.

The scales by Gray et al. (2007) and Andrews and Higson (2008) were used as the basis to quantify the industry's perspective on the skill areas required from the marketing graduates. After a series of discussions with seven marketing managers from each of the sectors included, some items were added or adopted, in order to meet the context of contemporary marketing in South Africa. For example, the ability to communicate by using electronic means, such as emails, and to work in a multicultural team, had to be included in the skill dimension. A pilot test with the questionnaire was carried out with 20 subjects.

These were not included in the sample utilised to establish the reliability. Construct validity refers to the extent to which the variables in the study are accurately and completely identified before hypothesizing any relationships; while face validity is simply whether the test appears, at face value, to measure what it claims to measure (Hair, Bush & Ortinau, 2010).

For this study, construct validity was ensured by using a questionnaire based on a research instrument used in similar studies by Gray et al., (2007) and by Andrewss and hogs (2008). When pretesting, the questionnaire tested the face validity; and the feedback from the respondents was used to identify and address any potential problems. Reliability refers to the accuracy or precision of the measuring instrument (Hair, Wolfenbarger, Ortinau & Bush, 2010). In this study, the reliability was established by using a pilot test and collecting the data from twenty subjects who were not included in the sample – with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the four skill and knowledge dimensions meeting the minimum criterion of 0.7 (Nulty, 2008).

4.3 The data analysis

A statistical data analysis was performed using the IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 23 software. For the hypotheses, the assumption of normality was assessed through the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test; and via a visual examination of the histograms and normal-probability plots. This showed that the data deviated to a great extent from a normal distribution. Therefore, the non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis H test, using the SPSS Statistics' new non-parametric procedure, which includes a *post hoc* test to determine where the differences lie between the sectors that were used. The researcher relied on a 95% level of confidence, and a subsequent significance level of 5% ($p\text{-value} \leq 0.05$) to interpret the results of the hypothesis testing.

4. The results

5.1 Sample profile of employers in different marketing sectors

The profile of the sample in Table 1 reveals that involving selected industry members in designing the sample plan, and using the relevant sample databases clearly helped to obtain a high response rate and a sample representing a variety of marketing employers in each of the targeted sectors.

Most of the respondents had worked in companies of between 101- 500 persons (69; 18%) or large companies with more than 500 employees (94; 24%). Almost one third of the respondents had between two and five years' experience in a marketing position (123; 32%) and one third had between five and ten years (124; 32%); and only 8% had had more than twenty years.

The majority of these were males (225, 58%) and more than three quarters of them held university qualifications: 52% at degree or diploma level; and only 10 % were postgraduates with a Masters or PhD degree.

Table 1: Profile of sample

		Count	%
	Total	390	
Sector in marketing industry	Advertising /communications/ media	83	21
	Tele/direct marketing/sales	98	25
	Fast moving consumer goods/beverages (FMCG)	106	27
	Financial services/insurance/ banking	103	26
Size of company/business	1 - 10 persons	70	18
	11 - 50 persons	9	2
	51-100 persons	67	17
	101- 500 persons	69	18
	More than 500 persons	94	24
Gender:	Male	225	58
	Female	165	42
Years of marketing experience	2-5 years	123	32
	More than 5 -10 years	124	32
	More than 10 -15 years	73	19
	More than 15 - 20 years	41	10
	More than 20 years	30	8
Highest qualification:	Grade 12	51	13
	Degree/diploma	204	52
	Hons degree/ BTech	95	24
	Masters/MBA/PHD	26	7
	PHD	12	3
	Other qualification	2	1

5.2 Skills areas required from new marketing graduates in each sector

Respondents in all the sectors were asked to rate how essential a wide variety of skills were for marketing graduates when entering the market on a scale from 5 =very important to 1 = not important at all. The results are presented in Table 4; and they will be discussed by firstly considering the overall findings, where the different sectors will be compared.

As noted in the literature, personal traits are at times difficult to differentiate from associated skills (Wellman, 2010). Nevertheless, all traits and "trait-like" attributes were grouped together as "personal traits"; and they were generally regarded as the most important category (M=4,75, Rank mean = 2536.74). In this category, all the traits seem to be rather critical.

Ability to work under pressure and integrity clearly stand out, and they are regarded as the most important traits, followed by personal drive and time management. Interpersonal skills were generally regarded as the least-important category (M=4,10; Rank mean =1570.22). Skills, such as the ability to motivate team members (M= 4.00), and leadership skills (M=4.12) were regarded as the least-important. These skills are probably not expected by employers for entry-level jobs; but they would be required for managerial positions in marketing.

Hypothesis 1: Personal traits

In terms of the personal traits required from new marketing graduates seeking employment in the different marketing industry sectors, there were no significant differences between the groups. The alternative hypothesis (H_1) was thus rejected, as there is support for the null hypothesis, $H_{1(0)}$.

Further inspection revealed that personal traits are very important for employers in all the sectors included noteworthy aspect is that the ability to work under pressure and /work ethics were the most important traits for all the sectors sector.

Table 2: The marketing industry's perspective on the skills required from marketing graduates

	Total		Advertising & Media	Sales	FMCG	Financial services	
Skills dimensions	Mean	Std	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	
Personal traits	4.75	0.6	4.66	4.76	4.81	4.77	< 0,001
Integrity/work ethics	4.85	0.42	4.84	4.8	4.86	4.89	
Ability to work under pressure	4.85	0.68	4.88	4.83	4.86	4.81	
Personal drive / ability to work independently	4.65	0.6	4.48	4.77	4.73	4.61	
Time management	4.79	0.66	4.68	4.75	4.84	4.87	
Dedication	4.72	0.56	4.61	4.73	4.81	4.72	
Enthusiasm/passion	4.74	0.54	4.61	4.75	4.81	4.8	
Flexibility/adaptability	4.67	0.71	4.51	4.72	4.78	4.68	< 0,001
Communication skills	4.32	0.76	4.62	4.51	4.00	4.13	
Communication with customers/clients	4.44	0.71	4.68	4.8	4.2	4.06	
Interpersonal communication with co-workers	4.35	0.58	4.65	4.61	4.16	3.98	
Oral presentation skills	4.35	0.78	4.78	4.75	3.72	4.14	
Negotiation/persuasion skills	4.36	0.77	4.56	4.71	3.89	4.29	
Electronic/IT communication	4.28	0.82	4.38	4.22	4.21	4.3	
Business writing skills	4.13	0.94	4.69	3.98	3.80	4.03	< 0,001
Cognitive abilities	4.25	0.86	4.27	3.86	4.49	4.37	
Problem-solving skills	4.39	0.75	4.26	4.19	4.71	4.41	
Ability for analytical reasoning	4.18	0.8	3.89	3.8	4.45	4.59	
Ability for strategic thinking/insight	4.11	0.83	4.16	3.32	4.62	4.34	
Creativity/innovativeness	4.30	0.83	4.77	4.13	4.18	4.12	
Interpersonal skills	4.10	0.95	4.02	4.32	4.19	3.87	
Ability to motivate team members	4.00	0.97	3.97	4.38	3.98	3.67	< 0,001
Ability to work in a multicultural team	4.18	1.05	4.12	4.42	4.04	4.14	
Leadership skills	4.12	0.81	3.96	4.16	4.55	3.8	

Hypothesis 2: Communication

There is a significant difference in the level of importance of communication skills required from new marketing graduates across the marketing industry sectors ($H(4) = 75.24, p < .05$). The second hypothesis ($H_{2(0)}$) was thus rejected; as there is support for the alternative hypothesis (H_2), which states that marketing industry sectors differ regarding the communication skills required from new marketing graduates when seeking employment. Within the communication category, similar views were held by all the sectors about the importance of communication with clients and electronic/IT communication. However, the post hoc test revealed that there are significant differences in the views of the groups, as to how essential a number of communication skills are, with a rank mean in this category of 425.52 for the advertising and media sector; 413.10 for the sales sector; 366.33 for the Fast-moving consumer goods/beverages sector; and 346.33 for the Financial services/insurance/ banking sector.

A notable difference in the ranking order was evident in the importance attached to business writing skills across the various sectors. Within the communication category, business writing skills were deemed the least important for the sales sector. In this sector, entry-level employees seem to rely more on oral presentation skills to perform their job. Writing was rather regarded as essential in the advertising & media sector (1st); because of the nature of the industry, which is characterized by a constant demand for proposals to the clients.

Hypothesis 3: Cognitive abilities

It was also revealed that there was a significant difference between the marketing industry sectors regarding the cognitive abilities required from new marketing graduates seeking employment. ($H(4) = 76.05, p < .05$). Therefore, H_3 can be accepted.

Further inspection of the sector means ranks suggests that the ability for analytical reasoning in the sectors, such as the Advertising & Media, FMCG and Financial services, are significantly more important than the Sales sector. In contrast, their agreement regarding the ability for strategic thinking/insight was indicated as the least-important skill across all the different sectors.

Hypothesis 4: Interpersonal skills

There is a significant difference in the level of importance of the skills required from new marketing graduates across the marketing industry sectors ($H(4) = 128.65, p < .05$). The fourth hypothesis ($H_{4(0)}$) was thus rejected; as there is support for the alternative hypothesis $H_{4(1)}$ which states that marketing industry sectors differ regarding the interpersonal skills required from new marketing graduates seeking employment. Post hoc tests revealed that there are significant differences in the views of the group. For example, leadership skills are less important in the advertising & media and financial services sectors, when compared with the sales and FMCG sectors. Furthermore, the sales sector regards the ability to motivate team members as essential; while most others does not.

There also is a significant difference in the level of importance of interpersonal skills between the different company sizes. In particular, the mean rank in companies with more than 500 employees (383.50) is higher than the mean rank for companies with 1-10 employees (345.91) and those with 11- 50 employees (325.65); and the difference is significant ($H(4) = 4.61, p < 0.05$).

5. Discussion

The results of this survey support many previous studies with respect to the importance of softer or transferable skills (Davis et al. 2002; Kelly & Gaedeke 1990, Walker et al. 2009). However, some discrepancies between the findings and other studies were also revealed. The relatively low rankings of interpersonal and cognitive skills are contradictory to the results of the European study by Andrews and Higson (2008). The explanation for the low rating is probably that these skills become more important when moving to higher levels of employment. The relative high ranking of integrity or ethics contradicts the findings of Gray et al. (2007), but is aligned with the more recent study by Schlee and Harich (2010), in which personal ethics or ethical decision-making skills were the most-cited skill listed in marketing jobs on the largest employment website in the USA. Thus, marketing ethics is viewed as important, now that it has been linked to financial performance and because of marketing's interface with many diverse stakeholders.

Previous studies revealed that employers require different skills for marketing positions at different levels (Shlee & Harich 2010) and for a specific context (Gray et al. 2007). The findings of this research revealed that even at the entry level, there are significant differences between the sectors in terms of the importance they attach to the respective skills areas. Consumer groups and the social media have contributed to raising public awareness of ethically questionable corporate activities. Marketing is often blamed for corporate misbehaviour. Contemporary marketing students must, therefore, be equipped to deal with the ethical challenges and paradoxes faced by organisations. The teaching and learning of marketing ethics cannot be achieved by lecturers alone; but it must be combined with case studies, videos, group discussions and blogs – to allow students to actively contribute to, participate in, and reflect on.

It is also recommended that subject areas included in the curricula must be adopted for specialization in the marketing discipline. In addition, potential interventions to transfer the critical skills identified must be developed in consultation with industrial bodies incorporating, building and assessing employability skills in the curriculum. These specialist offerings should be delivered by staff with personal experience of these sectors and/or research interests in these areas. It is essential that practitioners must not consider it the duty of academics to supply graduates who are employment-ready, but should rather help them to incorporate more opportunities for practical experience in the marketing curriculum.

6. Conclusions and Limitations

The focus of this study has been on the employability attributes required of new marketing graduates, and specifically from the perspective of employers in seven marketing sectors in South Africa. Research, therefore, could be extended to include other stakeholders within Higher education, such as students or alumni, as well as academics supplying the services, such as lecturers and tutors. This could help to overcome the gaps between practitioner requirements, academic teaching and student interests, in order to produce the relevant marketing programmes. It might be sensible to replicate the study in other African and developing countries and other institutions, in order to assess the generalisability of the results. Another worthwhile future research would be to explore alternative pedagogical approaches for instructing marketing undergraduates about ethics and work-integrated, or project-based learning options.

This study is one of the first to examine the employability attributes required from graduates across sectors in the marketing industry. Further value will be obtained if this paper is used as part of the re-engineering of specialist marketing programmes in each of these sectors. In conclusion, the findings of this study make some important contributions to the body of knowledge on marketing education, and might help in the updating of marketing curricula, so that marketing graduates are better prepared for many of the jobs available in the emerging sectors within the marketing discipline.

References

- Andrews, J., & Higson, H. 2008. Graduate employability, 'soft skills' versus 'hard 'business knowledge: A European study. *Higher education in Europe*, 33(4), 411-422.
- Constantinides, E., & Zinck Stagno, M. C. 2011. Potential of the social media as instruments of Higher Education marketing: a segmentation study. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, 21(1), 7-24.
- Davis, R., Misra, S., & Van Auken, S. 2002. A gap analysis approach to marketing curriculum assessment: A study of skills and knowledge. *Journal of Marketing Education*, 24(3), 218-224.
- de Boer, H., & Jongbloed, B. 2012. A Cross-National Comparison of Higher Education Markets in Western Europe. In *European Higher Education at the Crossroads* (pp. 553-571). Springer Netherlands.
- De Jager, J., & Du Plooy, T. 2010. Information sources used to select a Higher Education institution: Evidence from South African students. *Business Education & Administration*, 2(1), 61-75.
- Gray, B. J., Ottesen, G. G., Bell, J., Chapman, C., & Whiten, J. 2007. What are the essential capabilities of marketers? A comparative study of managers. *Marketing intelligence and planning*, 25(3):271-295.
- Hair, J.F., Ortinau, D.J., & Bush, R.P. 2010. *Essentials of Marketing Research*. New York McGraw-Hill Irwin.
- Hemsley-Brown, J., & Oplatka, I. 2006. Universities in a competitive global marketplace: A systematic review of the literature on Higher Education marketing. *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 19(4), 316-338.
- Churchill, G. A., & Iacobucci, D. 2010. *Marketing research: methodological foundations*. Mason, OH, USA: South-Western Cengage Learning.
- Kelley, C. A., & Bridges, C. 2005-. Introducing professional and career-development skills in the marketing curriculum. *Journal of Marketing Education*, 27(3), 212-218.
- Lee, J. J., & Sehoole, C. 2015. Regional, continental, and global mobility to an emerging economy: the case of South Africa. *Higher Education*, 1-17.
- Middleton, B., & Long, G. 1990. Marketing skills: critical issues in marketing education and training. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 5(3), 325-342.
- Mourad, M., Ennew, C., & Kortam, W. 2011. Brand equity in higher education. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 29(4), 403-420.
- Nulty, D. D. 2008. The adequacy of response rates to online and paper surveys: what can be done? *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 33(3), 301-314.
- Pinar, M., Trapp, P., Girard, T., & Boyt, T. E. 2011. Utilizing the brand ecosystem framework in designing branding strategies for Higher Education. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 25(7), 724-739.

- Pinheiro, R., Langa, P. V., & Pausits, A. 2015. One and two equals three? The third mission of higher education institutions. *European Journal of Higher Education*
- Shlee, R.P., & Harich. K. R. 2010. Knowledge and skill requirements for marketing jobs in the 21st century. *Journal of marketing education*, 32(3): 341-352.
- Stringfellow, L., Ennis, S., Brennan, R. & Harker, M. J. 2006. Mind the gap: the relevance of marketing education to marketing practice. *Marketing intelligence & planning*, 24(3): 245-256.
- Sultan, P. & Yin Wong, H. 2012. Service quality in a Higher Education context: an integrated model. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 24(5), 755-784.
- Wellman, N. 2010. The employability attributes required of new marketing graduates. *Marketing intelligence & planning*, 28(7): 908-930.
- Saint, W. 2015. Tertiary education and economic growth in Sub-Saharan Africa: The World Bank report. *International Higher Education*, (54). Accessed online on February 8, 2017, at: <http://ejournals.bc.edu/ojs/index.php/ihe/article/view/8417>