

NATIONAL ACCREDITATION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE AUTHORITY



Employer Skills Need Assessment Survey 2018
National Accreditation and Quality Assurance Authority

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

CBO	Community Based Organization
CSR	Country Status Report
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
GBoS	Gambia Bureau of Statistics
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSQF	Gambia Skills Qualifications Framework
IHS	Integrated Household Survey
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LGA	Local Government Area
MoBSE	Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education
MoHERST	Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology
NAQAA	National Accreditation and Quality Assurance Authority
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NTA	National Training Authority
PAGE	Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment
TVET	Technical Vocational and Education Training
WASSCE	West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination
WDI	World Development Indicators

Working Definitions

Establishment	A production unit engaged in one kind, or predominantly one kind of economic activity at a fixed physical location.
Sole Proprietorship	A business owned by an individual and is wholly responsible for its debt.
Limited Liability Company (Private)	A company that restricts the transfer of its shares, limits the number of its members to a maximum of 50, and prohibits any invitation to the public to own any shares or debentures of the company.
Limited Liability Company (Public)	A legal entity created by the Government to do commercial activities on behalf of the government.
Partnerships	A legal form of Business operation between two or more individuals who share management and profits.
Micro-Enterprise	A legal entity with 1 up to 4 paid employees
Small-Enterprise	A legal entity with 5 to 19 paid employees
Medium-Enterprise	A legal entity with 20 to 50 paid employees
Large-Enterprise	A legal entity with more than 50 paid employees
Recent Graduate	An individual who graduated from a tertiary or higher education institution within the last 5 years.

Executive Summary

Introduction

The Employer Skills Need Survey was commissioned by the National Accreditation and Quality Assurance Authority (NAQAA), as part of a broader objective of the Authority in the collection and dissemination of labour market information. The aim of the survey is to assess the match or mismatch between the skills acquired by graduates from tertiary and higher education institutions and the skills required in the labour market. It is envisaged that the survey will contribute to, and influence interventions, policy, and practice in addressing the skills challenge and offsetting the human resource gaps (skill gaps and shortages) and thus, advancing growth of the workforce.

Objectives

The general objective of the survey is to assess the match or mismatch between the skills acquired by graduates of tertiary and higher education institutions with the skills needed in the labour market.

Specific Objectives:

- To determine the factors that influence recruitment of graduate from tertiary and higher education institutions by Employers (both Public and Private establishments).
- To assess the human resource needs (skills shortage and gaps) in the labour market.
- Provide evidence for further development and institutionalization of a participatory quality assurance regime for the post-secondary education system.
- To determine employer contribution to the improvement of skills and capacity development of graduate recruits.
- Establish the levels of satisfaction of Employers on graduate recruits of different levels of education.
- Provide information on the level of cooperation between industry and training institutions.
- Build capacity to develop sustainable systems for the production of accurate and timely facts about the labour market to inform issues of quality, standards and qualification.

Main Findings

Characteristics of Establishments

A total of 294 establishments responded to the survey instruments. This represents 80 percent response rate (294 out of 367 sampled establishments). A vast majority of the establishments (70.4%) reported Kanifing as their main Local Government Area of operation, followed by Brikama (19.7%) and Banjul (9.9%).

Out of the total (294) responding establishments, the wholesale and retail sectors accounted for 25.5 percent of total respondents, the most per industrial sector. This is followed by Construction, 18.4 percent, Financial Services, 13.9 percent, Agriculture, 10.2 percent, and Information and Communications, 10.9 percent.

Of the total establishments that responded, 43 percent are Sole Proprietorships, 23 percent Limited Liability Companies (Private), 22 percent Partnerships and 8 percent representing Public Enterprises or Parastatals, and Non-Governmental Organizations local or international represent 2 percent of respondents.

With regards to firm size, majority of 41 percent (118) are small-sized with employees of 5 to 19, the Micro-sized establishments represent 27 percent (79); medium-sized firms, 19 percent (57), and large firms with more than 50 employees, 14 percent (50).

Among the respondents in the sample, male employees amount to **5,287**, almost twice the number of female employees of **2,915**. 24 percent of total recruitment targets diploma holders (ordinary diploma or advanced/higher diploma), followed by 11 percent with Bachelor's degree and 5 percent have Masters' degree.

Given their characteristics, the central government organs such as Ministries were not included in this survey; however, to provide a basis for comparison, public enterprises (such as parastatals known to have some degree of autonomy) were included.

Graduate Recruitment

64 percent of the establishments in the survey recruited tertiary and/or higher education graduates in the last five years. The fields of education accounting for the most recruited are: Business and Administration including Economics, Finance, Accounting, Management and Auditing (27.2%); Education (5.7%); Engineering and Computing each at 5.4 percent; and Physical and Life Sciences (3.4%).

Among the establishments that recruited in the sample, doctorate degree (about 1% of total respondents) is the least sought qualification in the labour market. In terms of the mean number of graduates recruited by educational level and gender, the average recruitment is higher for males than females, indicating men are more likely to gain paid employment than women.

54 percent of all respondent establishments indicate that university graduate employees are well prepared whereas 13 percent reported that the same are extremely poorly prepared for the jobs. At tertiary level, 39 percent expressed that staff with TVET qualifications are well prepared while 18 percent indicated they are poorly prepared for the labour market. Regarding employees with just a secondary school certificate (WASSC or equivalent), 30 percent of total respondents indicate “fairly prepared” whereas 17 percent reported very poorly preparation for labour market tasks.

The main considerations that influence graduate recruitment are: Practical skills acquired during training, result during recruitment test (where applied), conduct and performance during interview, Grade (Class) of qualification, personality and reputation of training center. The factors employers disregard in terms of staff recruitment are Gender (118 out of 294 considered as not important at all i.e. 40%), Ethnicity and Religious Affiliation (for each, 55 percent of total respondents reporting no importance given at all).

59 percent of total respondents reported that they plan to hire within the next twelve months. 48 percent of planned hiring require qualifications in the field of Business and Administration (e.g. Economics, Accounting, Management, and Finance), 13 percent are in the field of Engineering, Computing (8%); and Architecture, Building Construction, Education and Health each recorded 5 percent.

Among the establishments that did not recruit, the main difficulty for not recruiting is shortage of the right skills (43%), followed by lack of financial resources to adequately offer the job (41%), and right attitudes of employees (21%) as a result of prior experience.

Skills Assessment

The main domains of competency most valued by employers are occupation specific practical skills (61%), loyalty and integrity (60%), maintenance of institutional rules and regulations (59%), initiative (Ability to come up with new ideas and/or solutions i.e. 55%), accuracy and attention to detail (53%), Problem solving ability (48%), verbal communication skills (46%), and concentration ability (44%).

The overall results show that 25 percent of all categories of employers indicate major gaps in practical skills of graduate recruits, 22 percent reported verbal communication as a skills gap at the workplace, 16 percent reported right attitudes i.e. professionalism and ethics, and 11 percent reported writing skills (correspondence/reports) as main skills gap.

Fields with the most skills gaps are Automotive Engineering Specialist (23%) mainly in the wholesale and retail sectors; Food Science and Technology Specialist especially within Agriculture and hotel and restaurant sectors (11%); then Civil Engineers, Computer Technology Experts and Financial Management specialist with each recording 9 percent of respondents.

Cooperation with Tertiary and Higher Education Institutions

The Survey revealed an interesting finding relating to Tertiary and Higher Education Institutions cooperation with industry in designing and developing curricula; keeping and provision of career information services; participation in business forums and/or conferences organized by training providers and/or employers; and research activities/technical services agreement with training providers. On average 70 percent of establishments claimed to have never associated with training providers in respect of the foregoing.

The qualitative information providing foremost suggestions for the improvement of the tertiary and higher education system are summarized below:

- **Progression (5%):** The central findings in this category are lack of clear pathways for vertical and horizontal progression of employees to further their studies, and lack of customized/specialized short term courses required by employers .
- **Industry Linkage (9%):** Expand and improve public/private partnerships between industry and training providers, and provide incentives for smooth internships/apprenticeships by establishments.

- **Curriculum (30%):** In this category issues like inconsistent curricula, inadequate teaching materials and tools for effective teaching of curricula were the main challenges that needs to be addressed.
- **Support for effective practicals (24%):** Also suggested in the findings is the need to improve workshops/laboratories in terms of equipment and materials, and to ensure that programmes especially those technical in nature to include adequate practicals in the curriculum.
- **Improve Quality of Trainers in the System (8%):** Support trainers to be more qualified in terms of knowledge, teaching and assessment methodology.

Recommendations

The main findings of the study make the following institutional/policy recommendations crucial to improving quality and attain training relevance of post-secondary education in the country.

1. Improve the post-secondary Curriculum to meet current labour market requirements.
 - a) The NAQAA should review all standards of the Gambia Skills Qualifications Framework to meet labour market needs. The review should be done in consultation with employers taking into account specific characteristics of each sector.
 - b) The NAQAA and stakeholders should advocate for the promotion of viable dual apprenticeship scheme training. This will enhance competency-based training and guarantee the production of type of graduates ready for the labour market.
 - c) As employability is not simply obtaining a job, but about succeeding in the workplace, and contributing meaningfully to society through one's work, and given that, for inclusive development, society needs a competent, ethical and willing workforce that will contribute to the public good through professional activities and civic participation, curricula must include the promotion of these values in addition to the knowledge and skills they develop. Therefore, the government through MoHERST should legislate the inclusion of ethics and civic education as part of the curricula in post-secondary institutions.

2. In the drive to advancing training and instructional standards and quality aimed at enhancing educational outcomes, NAQAA should set up a fund for the promotion and development of research and development activities.
3. NAQAA should champion the creation of an Information System Platform that provides institutions, especially TVET providers, unrestricted access to open educational/training resources, and labour market information (employment opportunities) on TVET graduates. The platform should also help tertiary and higher education institutions build and strengthen networks.
4. For better coordination and preparation of feeders to the tertiary and higher education system, the MoHERST and MoBSE in partnership with NAQAA should establish a working committee that would guide the development of a scheme for standardized assessment of learning outcomes at all levels of education.

5. Improve Quality of Trainers in the System

- a) NAQAA should continue the organization of periodic capacity building programmes such as Training of Trainers workshops on Andragogy, Curriculum Development and Module writing to significantly improve the quality of delivery/instruction in the tertiary and higher education system.
 - b) The NAQAA should ensure all tertiary (excluding post-secondary non-tertiary) and higher education institutions establish a fully functional Internal Quality Assurance Unit within 2 years of operations.
6. The Higher Education Sector should strenuously work for a legislation to align all qualifications offered by education and training providers to the Gambia Qualifications Framework which should provide clear pathways and adequately cater for recognition of experiential learning. This will facilitate access, mobility and progression within education, training and career paths by opening opportunities for inclusivity and lifelong learning. It will also help students and employers dispel doubts and ensure realistic expectations about study or training programmes. Such policy and strategy will also guide decision-making by students, employers, and parents in overcoming educational gaps and personal needs.

7. In a bid to encourage graduates to become job creators instead of being job-seekers, the NAQAA should organize periodic National Skills Competition, and support outstanding performers with seed money to venture into entrepreneurship.

CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND COUNTRY CONTEXT

1.1 Introduction

The Employer Skills Need Assessment Survey was commissioned by the National Accreditation and Quality Assurance Authority (NAQAA) and the study forms part of a broader objective of the Authority in collecting and disseminating labour market intelligence. It is hoped to contribute to, and influence, interventions and policy, and practice in addressing the skills challenge and prompting positive growth of the workforce.

The NAQAA was established by an ACT of Parliament in 2015 and mandated to regulate tertiary and higher education institutions. The functions of the Authority as expressed in the NAQAA ACT 2015 include inter alia to:

- Advise the Minister of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (MoHERST) on technical issues related to accreditation and quality assurance in education;
- Develop criteria and standards for the establishment, registration and accreditation of post – secondary institutions;
- Promote the involvement of the community, employers, trade unions, private sector and international donors in tertiary and higher education;
- Provide policies and guidelines for the development of qualifications, credit accumulation and transfer, harmonization and streamlining of professional, tertiary and higher education programmes to reflect the human development needs of the country; and
- Collaborate with international counterparts and assist training institutions, trainers and other partners on international best practice on quality assurance.

The goal of the above functions is to ensure that tertiary and higher education institutions offer programmes and trainings that are relevant to the needs of the labour market and society in general. To attain this, a periodic assessment of the labour market is required with findings used to inform curricula and standards development and in establishing a robust quality assurance system.

Aware of the need for closing the skills gap and shortage in the transformative economy, the report provides empirical guidance on the development of more responsive programmes as well as suggestions for better coordination and collaboration between education, training, development and work in The Gambia.

The survey report reveals in-depth analysis of the issues faced by employers and their perceptions regarding the employability of tertiary and higher education graduates. It portrays the trend in skill gaps, skill shortages and changing tasks at the workplace/labour market. The study considered employers across several industrial sectors categorized by size as micro, small, medium and large establishments within local government areas.

The findings provide data that can be used by the government to justify its resolve to continuously engage development partners in skills development and post-secondary education. It also avails the higher education sector and stakeholders studiously researched and ground-breaking labour market information which can help inform decisions in relation to how education and skills development can improve employability and productivity of the workforce.

1.2. The Country Background

The Gambia is one of the smallest countries in West Africa with a total land area of a little more than 10,600 square kilometers. It is bounded by the Republic of Senegal on all sides except on the West by the Atlantic Ocean.

The total population of the country is estimated at 1.9 million inhabitants with an annual growth rate of 3.1 percent. Of these 943,426 (50.8 per cent) are females whilst males constituted 913,755 (49.2 per cent). Among the male population, 16.2 per cent are children under the age of five compared to 15.3 per cent of females in the same age-group; over 3 per cent of the population are aged 65 years or older and the population aged 15-24 years, has increased from 19.0 per cent in 2003 to 21.4 per cent in 2013¹. These statistics have significant implications in post-secondary educational planning and policy decision-making as enrolment is expected to increase thus putting more pressure on existing resources.

The population of the country is heavily concentrated in the Kanifing, Brikama, Kerewan and Basse administrative areas with a density of approximately 176 persons inhabiting every square kilometer² with the majority living in the urban centers.

According to the Human Development Report (2015), the country recorded a life expectancy at birth of 60.2 years, expected years of schooling of 8.8 years and a Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.441³.

¹ 2013 Population and Housing Census Report

² For details see 2013 Population and Housing Census Report

³ The HDI index (The Gambia ranked 173 out of 188) is a composite index measuring average achievement in three basic dimensions of human development – a long and healthy life, knowledge base of the population and a decent standard of living.

The HDI score suggests there is huge need for the country to align its national development plans to strengthening human capital formation as the country strives to upgrade its status from a low income to a middle income country.

This study on skill needs assessment of employers complements and supplements the series of surveys conducted by NAQAA to explore the dynamics of the labour market and to make informed decisions on training providers (skills centers, colleges and universities) and individuals in the wider skills supply system, to address the skills challenges for sustained economic growth in the country.

1.2.1 The Macroeconomic Status

The Gambian economy is mainly based on services, agriculture and tourism. In 2015, the services sector's contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was 65 per cent. Tourism is the country's main foreign exchange earner.⁴ According to the 2013 Population and Housing Census, 31.5 per cent of the employed persons were in the agricultural sector, mainly as subsistence farmers. 22.4 per cent of exports in 2015⁵ were recouped from the main cash crop i.e. groundnut.

Table 1: Key macroeconomic indicators

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016e	2017f	2018f	2019f	2020f
Nominal GDP (millions of GMD)	26,662	26,465	29,191	32,324	34,774	38,581	42,252	47,164	52,403	57,789	63,565
Real GDP growth (%)	6.5	-4.3	5.9	4.8	0.9	4.3	2.2	3	3.5	4	4.5
GDP per capita (US\$)	563	517	505	484	440	472	469	490	503	517	529
Revenue (millions of GMD)	5,026	5,619	7,397	5,980	7,720	8,333	8,450	10,800	12,629	13,869	15,001
Tax	3,528	3,780	4,221	4,590	5,529	6,790	7,056	7,169	8,856	10,171	11,569
Grants	1,065	1,355	2,611	711	1,287	733	718	3,066	3,144	3,005	2,733
Other revenues	433	484	565	679	904	810	676	566	629	693	699
Expenditures (millions of GMD)	6,292	6,871	8,675	8,760	11,128	11,459	12,591	14,055	14,778	14,967	16,145
Revenue as % of GDP	18.9	21.2	25.3	18.5	22.2	21.6	20	22.9	24.1	24	23.6
Total expenditure as % of GDP	23.6	26	29.7	27.1	32	29.7	29.8	29.8	28.2	25.9	25.4

Source: Public Expenditure Review of Education in the Gambia 2017: Page 17

⁴ GBoS (2016). National Accounts Statistics.

⁵ GBoS (2015). Foreign Trade Statistics

Macroeconomic stability is paramount to attracting the desired investment to spur economic growth. In terms of real GDP growth, the economy is recovering from the drastic drop in 2011 (-4.3%) mainly due to poor agricultural production season to 4.3 percent in 2015. Total revenue is also expected to increase until 2020 as can be shown by the forecasted values in the table above.

1.2.2 Poverty and Unemployment

Poverty rate, measured by the proportion of people living on less than USD1 a- day, has significantly dropped to an estimated 55.5 percent in 2008 from 69 percent and 58 percent in 1998 and 2003 respectively (Education CSR, 2012). In 2010, head-count index estimated with the US\$1.25 a-day poverty line was 48.4 per cent and the incidence of poverty in the rural and urban areas estimated at 73.9 percent and 23.7 percent respectively.⁶ This very high percentage difference in the incidence of poverty between urban and rural dwellings contributes to the high rural-urban migration currently witnessed in the country.

Remittances – Money sent home by Gambians abroad - continue to play an important role in poverty alleviation for many households. Of the estimated 280,659 households in the country, 35.9 per cent receive transfers from either a member of the household or another individual outside of the household⁷. Within the urban areas, 33.7 per cent of households reported to have received transfers from abroad.

The government has prioritized poverty reduction through employment creation especially among youth. A Labour Force Survey in 2012 indicated that youth unemployment stands at 35.3 percent. Youth unemployment challenges are multifaceted and can be tackled through public – private partnership investments that create jobs, increase access to productive resources particularly loans to the youth, and reshaping training to enhance employability prospects.

1.2.3 Tertiary and Higher Education System

The education sector of The Gambia is governed by the Ministries of Basic and Secondary Education (MoBSE), and Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (MoHERST). The MoHERST has the vision of playing a central role in terms of policy formulation in the drive to transform The Gambia into a skills-based economy and a knowledge society through the establishment of a tertiary and higher education system of reputable (world class) standing; a system that will turn tertiary and higher education

⁶ See PAGE Mid Term Evaluation Report, 2013.

⁷ For more details, see Integrated Household Survey, 2016/2016 by GBoS

institutions into centers of excellence for the production of well-educated and skilled citizens with competencies to lead fulfilled lives and compete nationally and globally⁸.

Since late 90s, TVET has been recognized by the government as a necessary and sufficient condition for development. Up to 2002, TVET was managed by the Directorate of Technical Education and Vocational Training (DTEVT) under the defunct Department of State for Education. The legislation governing TVET in the country stems from the National Training Authority ACT 2002, which establishes the National Training Authority (NTA).

As part of the government's reform agenda in Tertiary and Higher Education, the NAQAA was established by an ACT of Parliament in 2015. The NAQAA ACT repealed the NTA ACT. NAQAA aims at ensuring all programmes (Professional, Academic and Occupational) are relevant and responsive to individuals needs, labour market and national imperatives in general. Since inception, the Authority has been working towards a unified and coherent national post-secondary educational (qualifications) system as enshrined in its mission statement below:

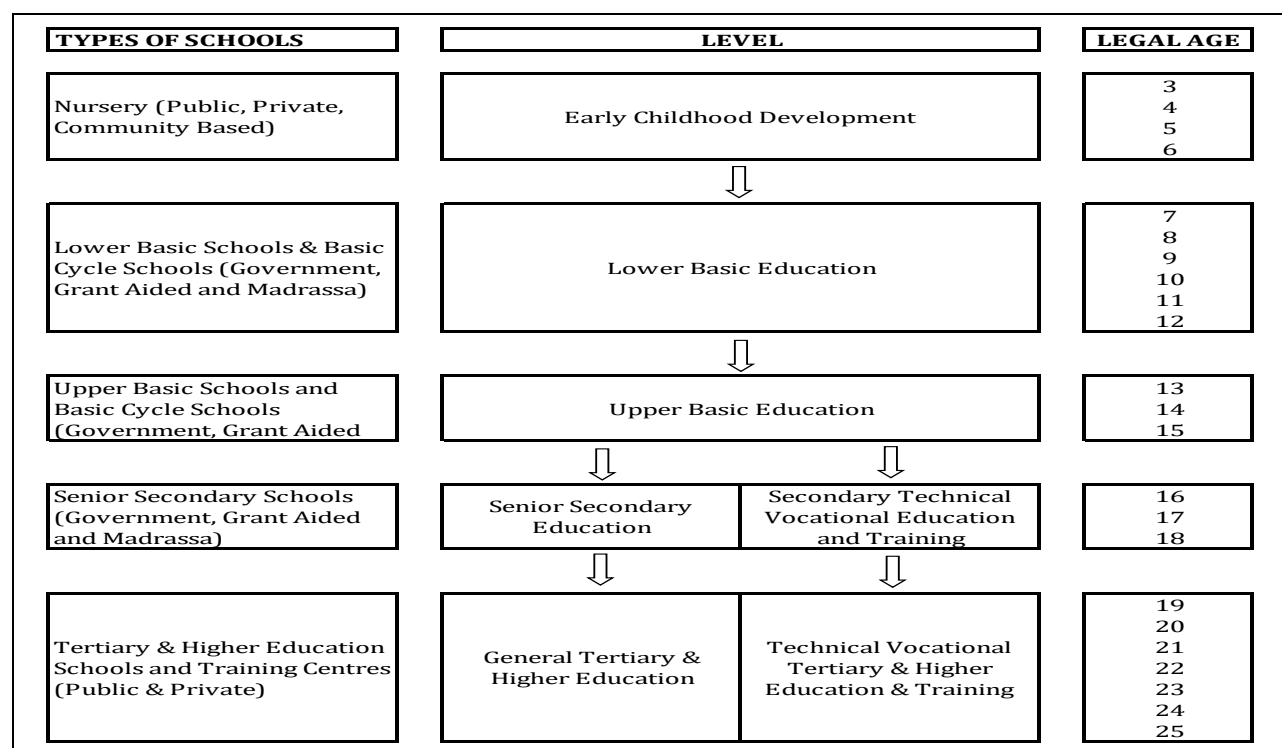
“To assure continuous quality improvement and efficient performance of Gambian tertiary and higher education institutions in terms of their systems and programmes; promote quality professional assessment and improve harmonization and benchmarking of accreditation and quality assurance practices in these institutions to internationally recognized standards and to ensure qualifications are valued for employability through the establishment of a coherent national qualifications system that will contribute significantly to the social and economic development of the country”.

This system encompasses all aspects of education and training at the national level to ensure recognition of learning. It includes developing and implementing policy on qualifications (e.g. GSQF and NQF), institutional quality audits, skills identification (skill gaps and skill shortages) arrangements and processes for assessment and awarding of qualifications.

Currently, there are four levels of education namely: Basic Education (nine years of uninterrupted learning – made up of lower and upper basic education); Senior Secondary Education; Tertiary Education; and, Higher Education. As part of the education-sector wide policy 2016 – 2030, a new structure of education is proposed as shown in figure 1.

⁸ See the tertiary and higher education policy (2014 – 2023).

Figure 1: Proposed Structure of the Gambian Education System



Source: Public Expenditure Review of Education in The Gambia (World Bank Group, 2017)

According to the NAQAA ACT (2015), tertiary education is mainly offered by institutes/colleges and consists of qualifications (including TVET) ranging from certificate to diploma levels while the higher education institutions are the degree awarding institutions.

The survey is therefore, an important and integral component of strategies aimed at achieving a quality assured and responsive tertiary and higher education system in the Gambia. It avails stakeholders within the education sector evidence that could be used to quantify the level of skills needs (skills gaps, skill shortages and skills mismatch) in the labour market to inform policy.

1.3 Justification

The youthful population (13 to 30 years)⁹ in the Gambia stood at 37.2 per cent. Between the two censuses of 2003 and 2013, the youth population increased—from 489,666 to 690,836, representing an increase of 41.1 per cent or an annual growth rate of 3.4 per cent¹⁰. This is slightly higher than the annual national average growth rate of 3.1 per cent over the same period. Also, (43%) of the youthful population is

⁹ Official youth age category as per the AU Charter on Youth

¹⁰ GBoS Final Census Report, 2016

economically active with (91.6%) of those in employment; whereas (57%) are economically inactive as per the Census Report (2013). This by implication, indicates the need for youth to be skilled, competent and enterprising if they are to cope with demands of the labour market, and to increase prospects for employability. The youth age category above comprises a range of seventeen years which implies diverse economic situations. Among them are early school leavers, new entrants to the labour market, experienced workers, unemployed persons, etc. These different categories of the youth population face remarkably different challenges, and show unique characteristics and consequently, necessitate distinct responses.

The Education Sector Policy (2016 – 2030) recognizes the need to focus on improving standards of educational outcomes. It states “Accessible, Equitable and Inclusive Quality Education for sustainable Development” as the main thrust of the policy. In addition, the Tertiary and Higher Education Policy (2014 – 2023) also emphasized the need for “Quality and Relevant” post-secondary education as one of its thematic priority intervention areas. Continuous quality improvement in the education system would ensure that professional, academic and TVET programmes are more responsive to national developmental needs and challenges. Employers, being part of the main players in the education system in terms of demand for graduates, makes their participation in the accreditation and quality assurance processes very essential. The views of employers about graduates and their skill needs informs the necessary development and reforms in standards and curricula for qualifications to spur socio-economic development.

In relation to access, all levels of education have experienced growth due to the growth in the country's population¹¹, however access has not meaningfully translated into quality and relevance of outcomes especially at the basic and secondary levels. To raise quality and relevance at all level of education, a 360-degree transformation is required. At the post-secondary levels, a participatory approach that ensures all players (specifically employers) in the education system are actively engaged, is needed for more action-oriented and result driven strategies in order to achieve the goal of matching skills and knowledge acquired by trainees with those needed in the workplace.

The impact evaluation of education is usually appraised through the workplace, which represents the equilibrium point between the demand and supply for skills. Education, especially of tertiary and higher education in nature, is expected to enhance the employability and productivity of the workforce. At

¹¹ Public Expenditure Review, (Word bank Group, 2017): Page 13

employer's level, education should have enhanced human capital and productivity in the production/services delivery processes. The labour market needs the supply of qualified labour in sufficient quantity to meet productive requirements. The labour market is non-static in nature as certain industrial sectors witness lack of competent labour while others may encounter over supply of labour. Regular assessment of the labour market through employer surveys can help in evaluating external efficiency of the education system as well as to detect early sign and symptoms of the dynamical system of the labour market.

The National Development Plan (**NDP 2018 – 2021**) is now finalized. In the national development blueprint, government prioritizes human capital stock formation through improved education and health services¹². Specifically, it aims to improve quality learning at all levels of education. Previously, in the PAGE (2012 – 2015), the government aimed to enhance employment creation and opportunities, provide sustainable social services and promote gender equity to bolster Gambia's economic competitiveness. Despite the interventions by the PAGE, youth face significant challenges with respect to prospects for employment, due by and large to a very difficult transition from school to work as evident by the high unemployment rate among youth¹³. Thus, the survey report will help address such challenges by gleaning pertinent information from employers in public and private establishments with the view of providing an accurate picture of graduate employability. It also provides the tertiary and higher education sector with evidence- for better planning, as well as advice prospective entrants to institutions and the labour market to make informed career choices.

Furthermore, increased productivity and competitiveness of firms/establishments rests on the availability of adequately qualified and skilled workforce. To this end, it is essential to have information about current developments in skill requirements in order to devise strategies and put up mechanisms to meeting those requirements more adequately in the future. The study is the first of a series by NAQAA aimed at strengthening the labour market information system by providing a detailed analysis of the labour market that will generate debate and inform public policy formulation.

The survey provides information and evidence as basis for discussion and analysis of policies and strategies to improve Gambian tertiary and higher education system by way of offering suggestions for:

- Strengthening programmes and aligning them to the requirements of the labour market.

¹² National Development Plan, 2018 – 2021. Abridged Version: Page 14

¹³ For more details see the Youth Report as part of Census 2013 Report.

- Improving approaches to the practice and development of quality educational programmes.
- Improving institutional activities and services to facilitate graduates' transition from learning institutions to the world of work.
- Strengthening cooperation between industry and training institutions.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the survey is to assess the match or mismatch between the skills acquired by graduates of tertiary and higher education institutions with the skills needed in the labour market.

Specific Objectives:

- To determine the factors that influence recruitment of graduate from tertiary and higher education institutions by Employers (both Public and Private establishments).
- To assess the human resource needs (skills shortage and gaps) in the labour market.
- Provide evidence for further development and institutionalization of a participatory quality assurance regime for the post-secondary education system.
- To determine employer contribution to the improvement of skills and capacity development of graduate recruits.
- Establish the levels of satisfaction of Employers on graduate recruits of different levels of education.
- Provide adequate information on the level of cooperation between industry and training institutions.
- Build capacity in developing sustainable systems for the production of accurate and timely facts about the labour market to inform issues of quality, standards and qualification.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

The main findings and analysis are based on the survey field quantitative and qualitative data. The report did not cover all establishments across the country. However, most formal entities across the country were covered especially those with main branches of operation within the Banjul, Brikama and Kanifing local government areas. Also, one set of questionnaires was applied to all industrial sectors, as a result, detailed specifications as per sector could not be made. It is important to note that a detailed sector-specific skill needs assessment and graduate survey could be explored to compliment this survey.

1.7 Structure of the Report

The rest of the document is structured as follows: Chapter two summarizes literature on labour market analysis within and outside the country; Chapter three discusses the methodology including the processes and methods of sampling, collection, organization, and interpretation of data. Chapter four reveals the analysis and main findings from the survey data and Chapter five gives the conclusion and recommendations for future actions.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Education, particularly tertiary and higher education is viewed as an integrated system. This is so, since as labour market patterns and structure changes, educational outcomes also changes over time. Tertiary and Higher Education is expected to respond to these changes for enhanced human capital formation and development. An externally efficient tertiary and higher education usually assessed through labour market studies such as employer skills need assessment surveys, tracer studies or simulation and projection models. This can lead to increased positive impact on the workplace (high level of productivity, higher returns, quality jobs etc.) and adoption of behaviors (health promotion, civic and social attitudes, professionalism etc.) beneficial to graduates and society in general¹⁴.

This section presents a review of literature from published books, journals, working papers, official government publications, policy documents and other related research findings with regards to labour market surveys and quality assurance.

Many studies on labour market analysis such as Tracer Studies, Mapping Studies of Master Craft Persons and Skills Development Studies have been conducted over the past years in the country. However, it has been found that limited research is done in establishing the linkage between tertiary and higher education institutions and employers, and in assessing skill gaps and shortages in the labour market. The survey contributes to the literature on employer skill needs survey in a bid to fill the labour market research gap in the country.

2.2 Recent Labour Market Surveys

In 2015, the results of a countrywide survey commissioned by Volunteer Service Overseas in collaboration with the defunct NTA to critically analyze TVET and its contribution to job creation in The Gambia revealed that 60.6 percent of household respondents with TVET qualifications had jobs leaving only 39.4 percent out of employment. The implication of these statistics is that most household heads do not necessarily obtain their qualifications recently (in the past ten years) and have explored labour market opportunities to enhance employability, leading to a higher employment outcome.

¹⁴ Education Sector Analysis Methodological guidelines, Volume 1, 2014 by UNESCO, World Bank, GPE

In 2013, the defunct NTA conducted a Tracer Study of TVET graduates through The Gambia Chapter of the Educational Research Network for West and Central Africa (ENWARCA). The findings show that 64.6 percent of the graduate respondents were unemployed and only 34.7 percent were employed.

In 2008, a mapping study of industries in The Gambia was conducted. The purpose of the exercise was to identify the main firms and industries that are employing five or more employees, their locations, and industrial sector. The findings indicate that most manufacturing firms are located in Kanifing Municipal area, followed by Brikama and the least is in Kuntaur. Moreover male workers form about 75% of the workforce while 25% consist of women in the responding firms.

Educational labour market information surveys carried out so far in The Gambia have either only focused on graduates of tertiary or higher education institution or they have only covered a small number of industries. The Employer skill needs survey focuses on all major industrial sectors and maps out key players to obtain their perceptions on employability especially on job – related issues.

2.3 International Employer Skills Survey

Internationally, two documents on employer skill needs assessment surveys are used as reference in the design and conduct of this study. These are the UK Commission's Employer Skills Survey Technical Report (2015) and European Union user guide for developing an employer skill need survey (CEDEFOP, 2013). The reports are used as reference during questionnaire development and sampling.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the overall process of the sampling and research methods used during the survey. The research methods include the data collection processes and the statistical approach to data analysis. The study targets responses from public and private establishments – firms with at least one paid employee – in the Banjul, Brikama and Kanifing LGAs. In a bid to achieve a representative sample, the selection of sampling units is conducted using scientific research methods.

3.2 Methodology and Sample Size

The sampling frame was provided by the Gambia Bureau of Statistics through the Economic Census (Phase 1, listing of establishments in 2014) and the Ministry of Justice through its registrar of businesses database. The sampling frame contains information about the location, address and type of establishment.

A multi-stage sampling technique was used. In this design, the “global” sample size was determined using the total number of establishments in Banjul, Brikama and Kanifing LGAs with at least one paid employee¹⁵. The final sample size was obtained by the product of sampling weights against the global sample size by LGA. Within each stratum, establishments were drawn at random systematically.

It is important to note that, such a probability sampling ensured that the selected sample is representative and thus, inferences/conclusion made will be much more robust and realistic for informed planning and decision-making by policy makers and stakeholders.

The focus of the survey was on private enterprises. However public enterprises (notably parastatals) were also included for purposes of comparisons.

The sampling methods take the form of the following¹⁶:

$$n = \frac{Nx}{((N - 1)E^2 + x)}$$

Where $n = \text{sample size}$

$$x = z(c/100)^2 r(100 - r)$$

¹⁵ These three LGAs are considered because almost 84 percent of economic activities involving firms with at least one paid employee occur in those LGAs.

¹⁶ See www.raosoft.com sample size calculator

$$E = \sqrt{(N - n)x/n(N - 1)} = \text{Margin of Error} = 5\%$$

$$z(c/100) = \text{Critical value for confidence level, } c = 95\%$$

$$r = \text{fraction of responses expected out of the global sample} = 50\%$$

Using the above concept and definition, the global sample size is given as:

$$n = 367$$

From the global sample size, proportional allocation is applied based on stratification by LGA. The stratum weight is given as:

$$W_i = \frac{N_i}{N}, \quad i = 1, 2, 3$$

where N_i = Number of establishments with at least one paid employee per LGA.

N = Total number of establishments with at least one paid employee in Banjul, Brikama and Kanifing LGAs.

This procedure resulted to the final sample size as shown in the table below:

Table 2: Population and Sample Size of establishments

LGA of Establishment	Population of establishments with one employee	Sample
Banjul	816	38
Brikama	2455	114
Kanifing	4628	215
Total	7899	367

Source: GBoS Economic Census (2014) and sample-size based on authors calculation

3.3 Sectors Covered

The following industrial sectors were considered base on the significance of their contributors to the economy and are deemed crucial for competitiveness of Gambian industries.

1. Manufacturing
2. Electricity, Gas, and Water
3. Construction
4. Transport and storage
5. Information and Communications
6. Hotels and Restaurants

7. Financial services
8. Agriculture
9. Education
10. Mining and Quarrying
11. Health and Social work
12. Whole Sale and Retail Trade including Repair of Motor vehicles, welding and fabrication, Tailoring, Carpentry etc.¹⁷

For a detailed description of the sectors, refer to **annex 2**.

3.4 Data Collection Instrument Development

A technical research committee was set-up to develop the instruments (tools). The data collection tools were designed to obtain detailed information on the following:

- Characteristics of Establishments
- Recruitment pattern of establishments
- Skills Assessment of graduate employees in establishments
- Assessment of establishments' cooperation with tertiary and higher education institutions.

3.5 Inception Workshop

An inception workshop was organized with a variety of stakeholders detailing the proposal including the methodology of the research methods, the sampling framework and analysis. The stakeholders approved the methodology before data collection commenced.

3.6 Enumerator Recruitment and Data Collection

A training manual to guide enumerators' training was developed by the technical team. Twenty (20) qualified personnel with at least a post-secondary diploma were recruited for the field work. Three supervisors including a representative of the GBoS facilitated the two-day enumerator training workshop on the data collection instruments and processes. The GBoS as the statistical agency of the government was involved because of their expertise in conducting surveys and censuses.

¹⁷ Note: The GBoS Economic Census (2014) does not include Agriculture and Mining and Quarrying. For these industrial sectors, information on establishments was obtained from the Registrar of Companies Database, Ministry of Justice.

Pre-test of the research tools was conducted to enable the enumerators familiarize with the survey tools before actual field data collection, and to have an overview of the likely challenges they may face during fieldwork. The major problem encountered was that some establishments included in the sample had closed and some had changed address. This information helped devise penetrative strategies to enhance timely filling of the questionnaires with the right information.

An advert was also placed in the daily newspapers (Foroyaa, Observer and The Point) to raise awareness of the general public on the survey in a bid to increase the response rate.

Enumerators were divided into three groups, headed by one experienced and knowledgeable supervisor. Each enumerator and supervisor was supplied with e – credit for their mobile phones in order to facilitate and ease communication between the enumerators, supervisors, and co-coordinator at the NAQAA office. The data collection started on 16th November and ended on 6th December, 2017, spanning a period of three weeks.

3.7 Organization and Analysis of Data

Six personnel from NAQAA were deployed to enter all data using CSPro Software. The entry was exported to EXCEL and SPSS before it is sanitized to address inconsistencies and missing values and readied for analysis.

The statistical data was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative techniques. The main form of data analysis is descriptive statistics in the forms of bar charts, pie charts and tables. Some analysis follow aspects of inferential statistics using the Chi-Square Pearson Test of association. The Pearson test is based on the following principle:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E} \quad 18$$

where $E = \text{Expected Frequency Value} = \frac{(\text{Row Sum})(\text{Column Sum})}{\text{Grand Total}}$

$O = \text{Observed Frequency Value}$

$\chi^2 = \text{Chi – Square Pearson test value}$

It can be (2×2) or $(k \times k)$ depending on the number of categories of the qualitative variables involved.

¹⁸ For more information of this test see Elementary Statistics (2009): Page 611

Under the null hypothesis

H_0 : There is no pattern of relationship between the variables

where degrees of freedom, $df = (number\ of\ columns - 1)(Number\ of\ rows - 1)$ and H_0 is rejected if the asymptotic p – value associated with the test value is less than the significance level of 0.05 (5 per cent).

The inferential statistical test above is used primarily to assess relationships between key variables of interest since the data are obtained from a random sample. Particular emphasis is given to industrial sectors against key employability enhancement indicators.

Also, in the process, key informant interviews and focus group discussions with key stakeholders in the education system and labour market were conducted to obtain valuable qualitative data to complement the quantitative data.

CHAPTER 4: MAIN FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the main results on skill gaps, skill shortages and changing tasks at workplaces of establishments in Banjul, Kanifing and Brikama Local Government Areas (LGAs) based on field data garnered. The study utilized both descriptive and inferential approaches in analyzing the data. The sampling unit engaged in the study is the establishment – i.e. entity with at least one employee.

4.2. Findings and Analysis

4.2.1 Characteristics of Establishments

As shown in Table 3 below, a total of 294 establishments responded from the targeted 367 establishments sampled. The survey attained a remarkable 80 percent response rate making the data adequate enough without requiring a “double-dipped” process espoused by Gall, Borg and Gall¹⁹ and supported by Tuckman (1999)²⁰. The majority of establishments (70.4%) reported Kanifing as their main Local Government Area of operation, followed by Brikama (19.7%) and then Banjul (9.9%). The high variation in the distribution of establishments by LGA is due to evidence that of total economic activity in establishments with one paid employee, 49.1 percent occur in Kanifing LGA, 26.1 percent in Brikama LGA, and 8.7 within Banjul LGA²¹. This suggests that cumulatively the three LGAs account for almost 84 percent of total economic activity of establishments with at least one paid employee in the country.

Table 3: Distribution of establishments by Local Government Area

Main LGA of Establishment	Frequency	Percent
Banjul	29	9.9
Brikama	58	19.7
Kanifing	207	70.4
Total	294	100.0

Source: Survey Field Data, 2017

Table 4 shows the distribution of the establishments by industrial sector. Out of the 294 respondents, wholesale and retail sectors account for 25.5 percent of total respondents, the highest per industrial

¹⁹ Gall, M.D., Borg, W.R., & Gall, J.P. (1996) Educational research: An Introduction (6th ed.). White Plains, NY: Longman.

²⁰ Tuckman, B.W. (1999). Conducting Educational Research (5thed.). Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace.

²¹ For information see Economic Census report, 2014 by GBoS

sector²². This is followed by Construction, 18.4 percent; Financial Services 13.9 percent, Agriculture 10.2 percent, and Information and Communications 10.9 percent respectively. The high variation in the distribution of response rate for wholesale and retail against other sectors could be attributed to the fact that most establishments are micro-enterprises which are cheaper to set up and sustain, and have high returns as prices for goods and services are highly flexible²³.

Table 4: Distribution of establishments by Industrial sector

Sector	Frequency	Percent
Agriculture	30	10.2
Construction	54	18.4
Education	8	2.7
Electricity, Gas and Water	3	1.0
Financial Services	41	13.9
Health and Social Work	15	5.1
Hotels and Restaurants	13	4.4
Information and Communications	32	10.9
Manufacturing	6	2.0
Mining & Quarrying	2	.7
Transport and Storage	15	5.1
Wholesale and Retail	75	25.5
Total	294	100.0

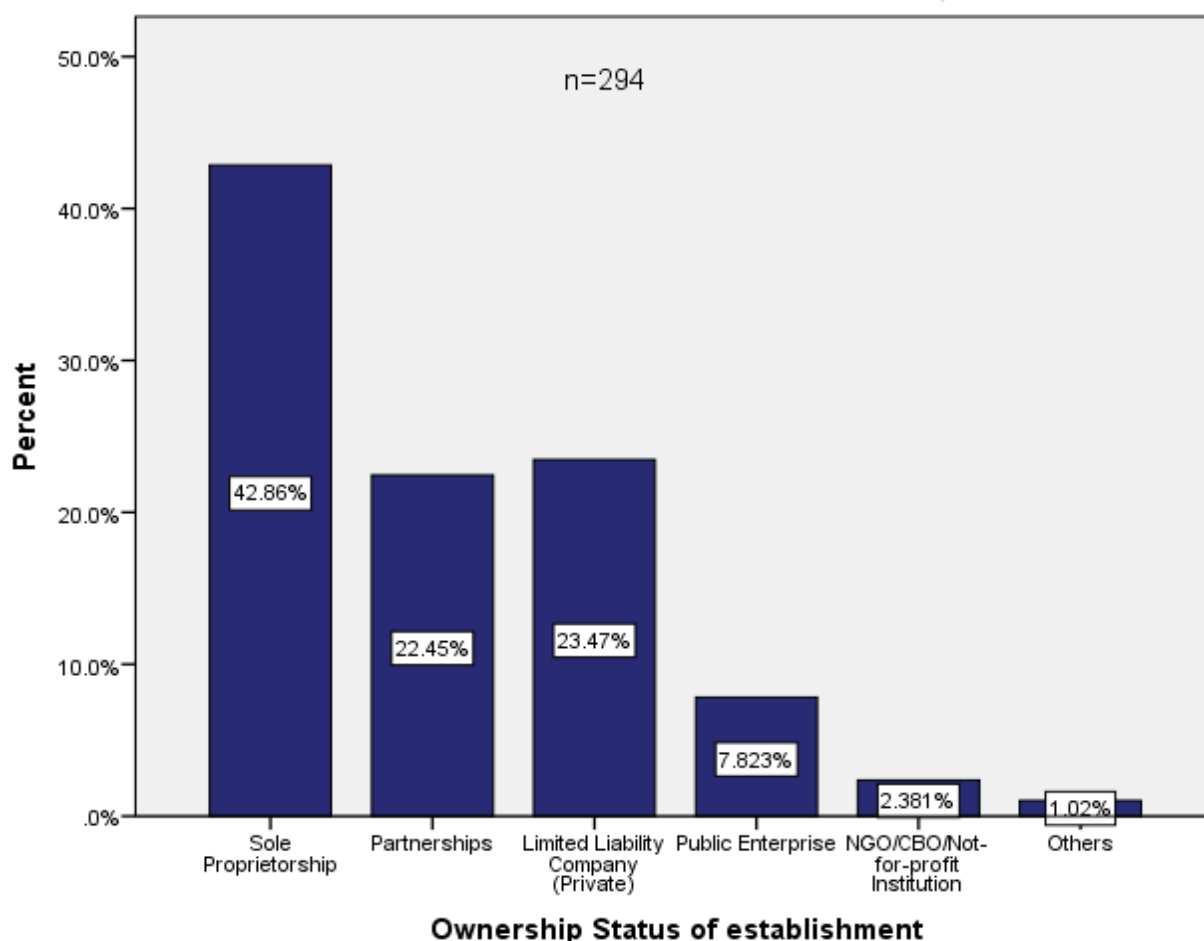
Source: Survey Field Data, 2017

²² The industrial sector classification is based on International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC version 4, 2009).

²³ This is couple with the fact that about 49 percent of establishments in the country are within the industrial sector classification of wholesale and retail trade. For more details see Economic Census Report, Phase 1, by GBoS (2014): Page 28.

Upon assessment of type of establishment, 43 percent are found to be Sole Proprietorships, 23 percent Limited Liability Companies (Private), 22 percent Partnerships, and Public Enterprises including Parastatals account for almost 8 percent. Non-Governmental Organizations in general represent 2 percent of total respondents and a negligible 1 percent represent others who claimed to be different from the above-mentioned types of establishment as shown in figure 2. The surge in sole proprietorships is attributed the fact that as per business registration in the Gambia, sole proprietorships are not considered legal entities – because they are operated and owned solely by one person who becomes liable to its debts personally. These findings are in accordance with the GBoS Economic Census Report (2014) published by the Gambia Bureau of Statistics.

Figure 2: Distribution of Establishments by type of ownerships

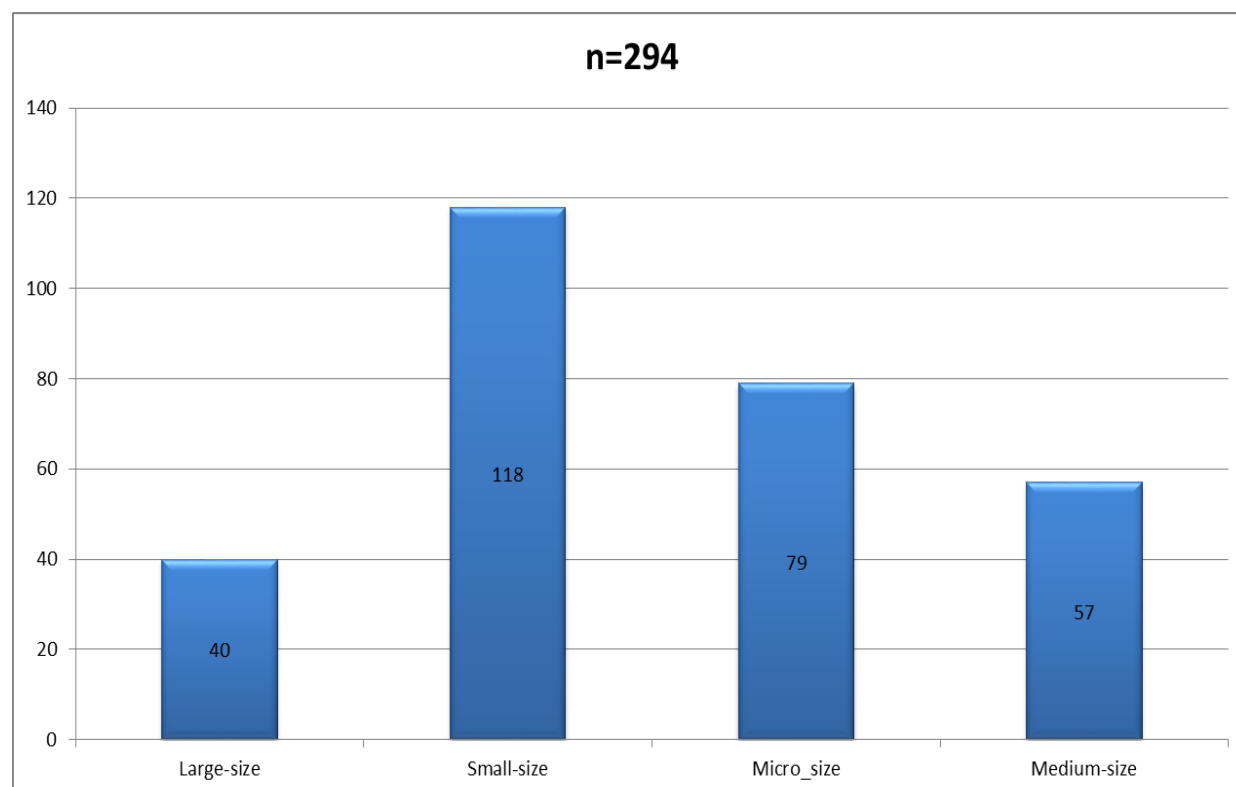


Source: Survey Field data, 2017

In relation to establishment size, majority of respondents had 5 to 19 employees (small-sized firms) which representing 41 percent (118); the micro-sized establishments represent 27 percent (79), medium-sized firms 19 percent (57) and large firms with more than 50 employees 14 percent (50). The large establishments are mainly public enterprises and private information and communication service

providers. The survey process ensures small-sized firms are well represented because they form the core of the private sector and are likely to provide more in-depth information on graduate employability.

Figure 3: Analysis of establishment size by category of number of employees

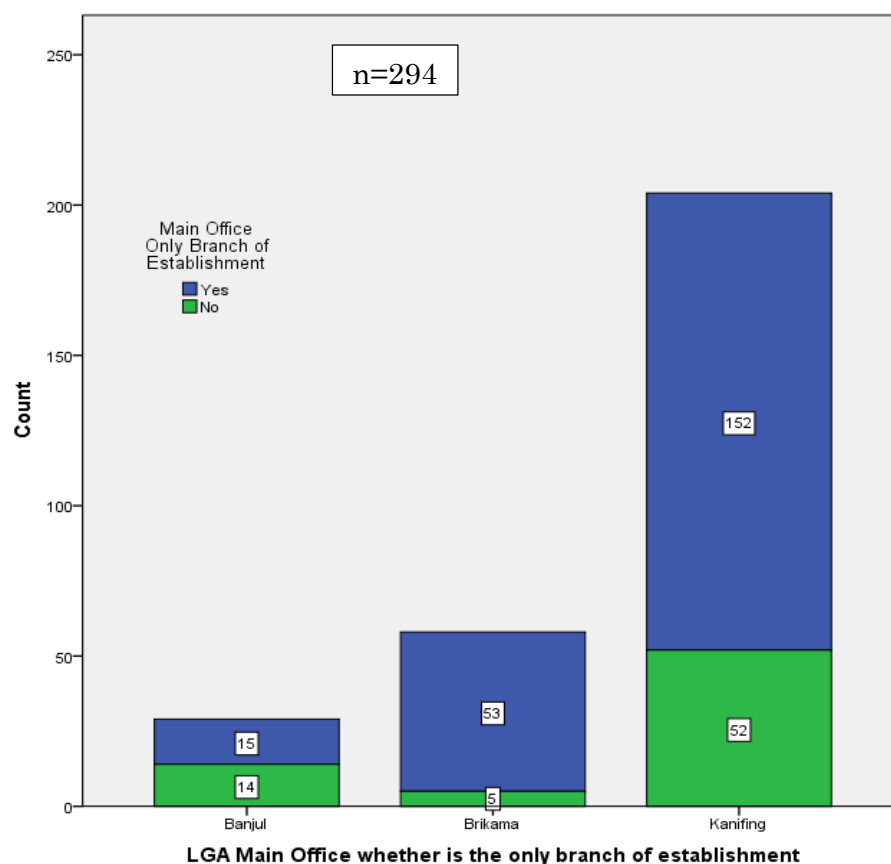


Source: Survey Field data, 2017

Note: Employers with 1 to 4 employees are considered Micro-sized, 5 to 19 employees considered Small-sized, 20 to 50 employees Medium-sized, and establishments with over 50 employees are termed as large-sized.

Furthermore, the study reveals that with regards to expansibility of establishments in the different local government areas, the majority (73%) of respondent institutions in Kanifing have one branch only within the same area whereas 25 percent reported to have in addition to their main branch in Kanifing other branches in different LGAs.

Figure 4: Analysis of whether establishments' main office by LGA is the only branch of the establishment



Source: Survey Field Data, 2017

For the responding establishments within the Brikama LGA, 91.3 percent have their main and only branch within the LGA, whereas 8.7 percent have their main branch in the same locality and branches in other LGAs notably Kanifing and Banjul. In Banjul LGA, 52 percent of the establishments have their main and only branch in the LGA; while 48 percent have main branch within the same and a branches in other LGAs. The high percentage of establishments in Banjul with other branches is because most of them are public enterprises that are monopolistic in their functions and serve nationwide.

The findings of the study also revealed that establishments in the country whether Micro, Small, Medium and Large are relatively not competitive with respect to international markets as shown in the table below. About 9 percent of the establishments that responded have their major product or service market(s) outside the country, of which 44 percent are sole proprietorships. Majority of establishments (52%) indicate their product or service markets are nationwide whereas 38 percent reported that their sales markets are largely confined within the Local Government Area that they operate in.

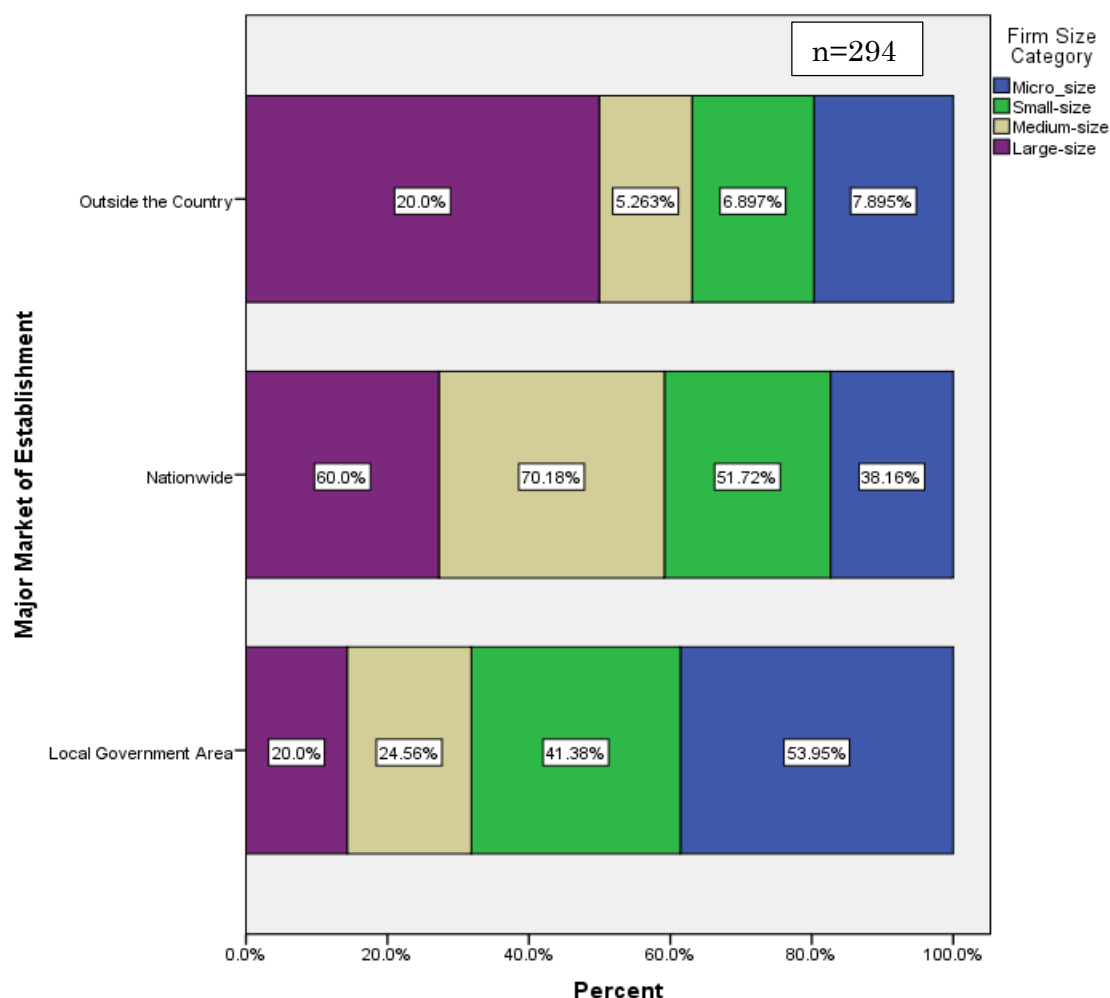
Table 5: Analysis of Major Market of establishments by Ownership Type

Ownership Type	Major Sales Market of Establishment			Total
	Local Government Area	Nation-wide	Outside the Country	
Sole Proprietorship	64	49	11	124
Partnerships	26	35	5	66
Limited Liability Company (Private)	15	45	7	67
Public Enterprise	4	17	2	23
NGO/CBO/Not-for-profit Institution	1	5	0	6
Others	1	2	0	3
Total	111	153	25	289

Source: Survey Field Data, 2017

Regarding the distribution of establishments according to their sales markets, differences are clearly evident according to the size of establishment. As can be seen from figure 5, majority of the sales of micro, small, medium and large establishments are nationwide. Only a few large and small-sized establishments indicate major sales product or services market outside the country. This further affirms low competitiveness of Gambian industries thus validating findings of other published reports such as ITC small and medium enterprise competitiveness survey (2017) to inform the Youth Roadmap Strategy development.

Figure 5: Analysis of Major Market of establishment by firm size



Source: Survey Field Data, 2017

Although these results are not surprising, the differences in the type of market that an institution is aimed at are a factor to be taken into account when comparing employers' views concerning the importance of graduate skills and their actual satisfaction with employees' skills and abilities. Market orientation also gives rise to different requirements in the labour market, such as foreign language skills and practical skills.

The labour market tends to be biased towards the services sector as indicated by the statistics in Table 6. Among the respondents, 54.1 percent indicate they provide services to other companies or individuals, 17.7 percent resells goods/products produced by other companies either locally or outside the country, 13.3 percent produce the final goods they sell, and 10.5 percent produce the final goods that they sell

and provide services to other companies or individuals. The statistics show that the manufacturing capacity in the country is very low and by implication, reveal the import-dependent nature of the economy.

Table 6: Analysis of description of establishment by Industrial sector

Sector	Description of Establishment					Total
	Produces the goods it sells	Produces the goods that it sells and provide services to other companies or individuals.	Provides services to other companies or individuals	Resells goods produce by other companies	Others	
Agriculture	50.0%	16.7%	23.3%	6.7%	3.3%	100.0%
Construction	11.1%	11.1%	61.1%	16.7%		100.0%
Education			100.0%			100.0%
Electricity, Gas and Water			66.7%	33.3%		100.0%
Financial Services		7.3%	75.6%	9.8%	7.3%	100.0%
Health and Social Work			60.0%	26.7%	13.3%	100.0%
Hotels and Restaurants		7.7%	92.3%			100.0%
Information and Communications	6.3%	12.5%	71.9%	3.1%	6.3%	100.0%
Manufacturing	33.3%	33.3%		16.7%	16.7%	100.0%
Mining & Quarrying	50.0%	50.0%				100.0%
Transport and Storage	13.3%	6.7%	80.0%			100.0%
Wholesale and Retail	14.7%	10.7%	29.3%	40.0%	5.3%	100.0%
Total	13.3%	10.5%	54.1%	17.7%	4.4%	100.0%

Source: Survey Field Data, 2017

A look at the number of employees according to the respondent establishments irrespective of size, shows that male employees (**5287**) are almost twice as many as their female counterparts (**2915**) as seen from table 7. This phenomenon could partly be attributed to the fact that some of these employees are not recent graduates and as such cultural barriers and gender disparity may have impacted on recruitment. Analysis along educational attainment reveal that PhD holders (20) are the least sought in the labour market. This is not surprising as the qualification requires high-level specialization which by implication attracts greater pay as evidenced by the fact that the rate of return on higher education at national level stood at 87 percent²⁴.

Table 7: Descriptive Analysis of Number of Establishment employees by gender and educational level

	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Total Employees (Male)	0	535	5287	18.95	49.479
Total Employees (Female)	0	193	2915	10.72	24.238
Educational Level					
Primary/Non- formal	0	133	1046	4.73	12.388
Secondary Education	0	105	1327	6.98	14.525
Certificate	0	100	1354	5.94	12.198
Diploma	0	200	1479	6.94	20.571
BSc. Degree	0	93	678	3.46	8.852
Master's Degree	0	56	290	1.84	5.315
PhD	0	4	20	.15	.561

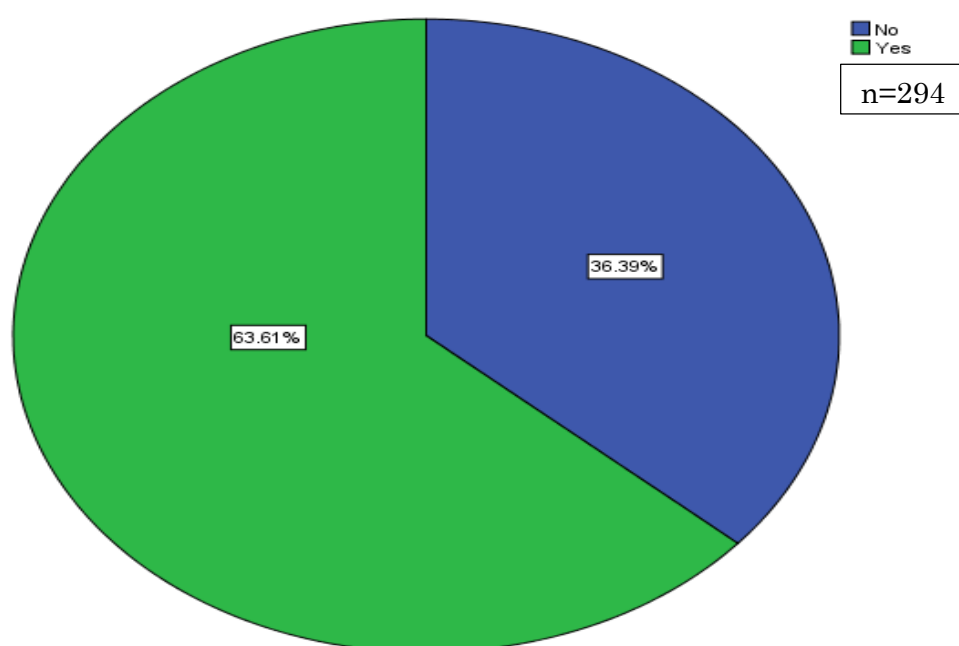
Source: Survey Field Data, 2017

²⁴ Public Expenditure Review, World Bank 2017, Page 62

4.2.2 Graduate Recruitment

About 64 percent of the respondent establishments recruited recent tertiary and/or higher education graduates in the last five years as shown in figure 7. Also a significant proportion (36%) did not recruit any recent post-secondary graduate. This could be attributed to the economic situation of the country in the last five years, for which public and private spending across all sectors had gone down leading to a decrease in the volume of economic activity making it difficult for graduates to gain paid employment²⁵.

Figure 6: Analysis of graduate recruitment in the last five years



Source: Survey Field Data, 2017

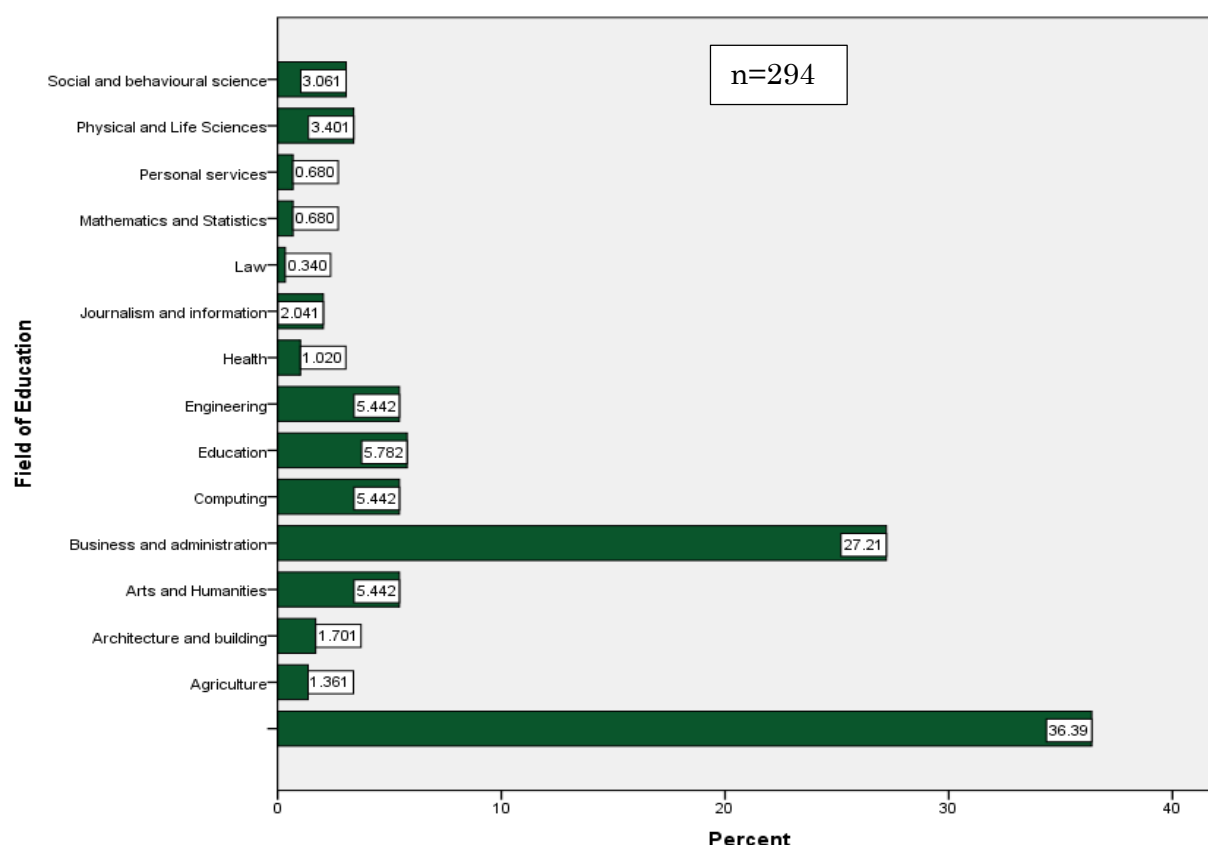
For establishments that recruited recent graduates as shown in Figure 8, the main field of education with most recruits are Business and Administration including Economics, Finance, Accounting, Management and Auditing (27.2%); Education (5.7%), Engineering and Computing each at 5.4 percent; and Physical and Life Sciences(3.4%). One reason these fields have the highest number of graduate recruits is that they produce the highest number of graduates and moreover, services sector being the main sector of the economy need such graduates – for example, Accountants, Auditors and Computing Specialist are needed by almost all establishments irrespective of industrial sector. This result is in accordance with

²⁵ For more information see the Public Expenditure review of Education in the Gambia (World Bank Group, 2017)

many studies on graduate employability by field of study such as Public Expenditure Review of Education in the Gambia.

There was a low level of graduate recruitment in Personal Services such as Catering and Hospitality, and Law and Journalism partly because of the socio-economic situation such as the poor tourist seasons of 2013 through 2016, and the repressive nature of the previous regime with regards to the practice of Law and Journalism.

Figure 7: Recruitment by Field of Education over the past five years



Source: Survey Field Data, 2017

For establishments that recruited recent tertiary and higher education graduates (those that graduate in the last five years), Doctorate degree is the least sought qualification in the labour market as shown below. In terms of the mean number of graduate recruits by educational/qualification level and gender, the average recruitment is higher for males than females. This finding is consistent with the supply side of the labour as more males are churned out of the tertiary and higher education system than females²⁶

²⁶ Public Expenditure Review of Education in The Gambia, 2017, World Bank, Page 26

with a gender parity rate of 69 percent from 2010 to 2015; and also, males tend to have higher average years of schooling than females²⁷.

Table 8: Description of recent tertiary and higher education graduates by educational level and gender

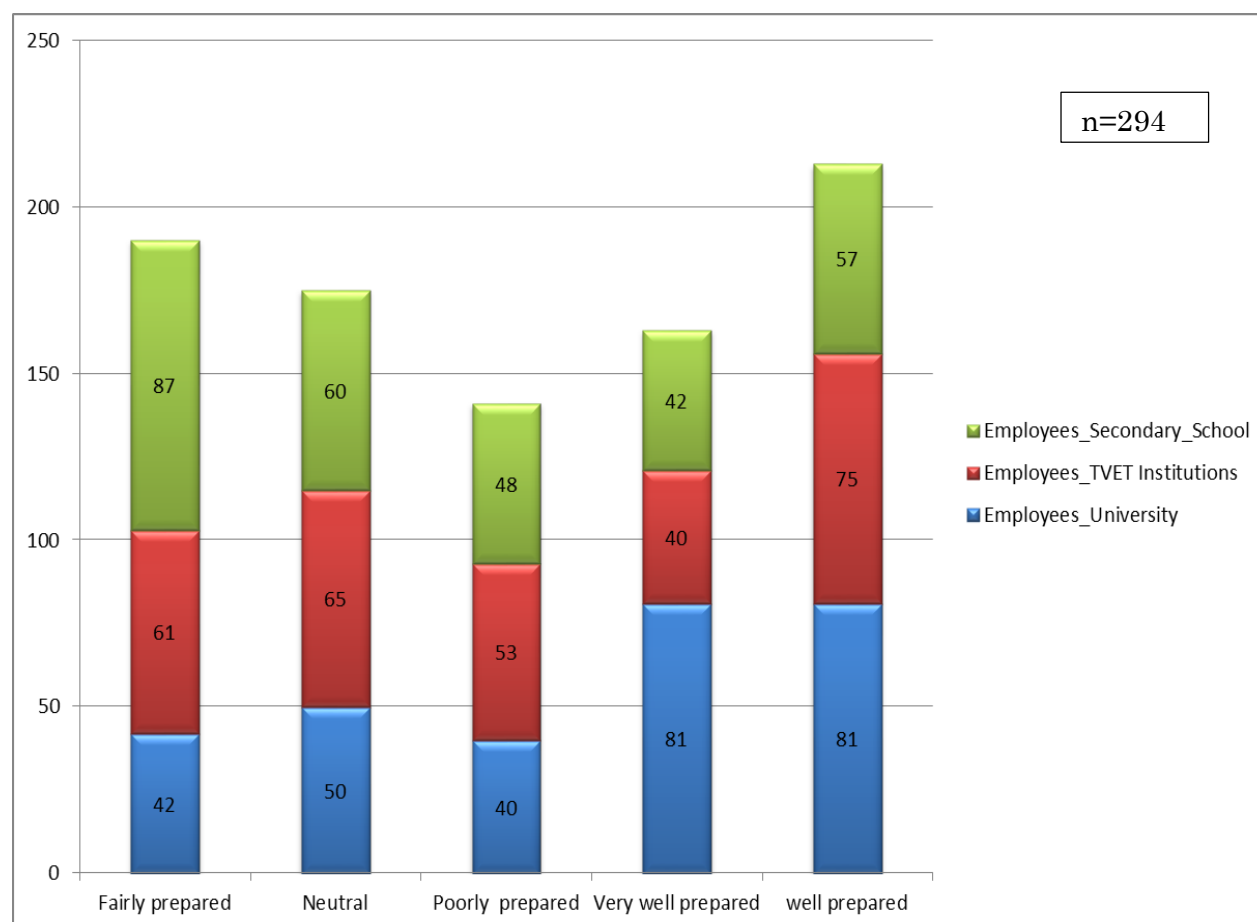
	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Certificate Male	0	60	4.80	9.608
Certificate Female	0	37	2.91	5.409
Diploma Male	0	109	4.27	11.181
Diploma Female	0	70	3.10	7.388
Bachelors Male	0	44	1.99	4.415
Bachelors Female	0	49	1.72	5.292
Masters Male	0	15	.94	2.306
Masters Female	0	9	.39	1.113
Doctorate Male	0	1	.03	.159
Doctorate Female	0	1	.01	.115

Source: Survey Field Data, 2017

Figure 9 shows the views of employers on the level of preparedness of staff from different levels of the education system with regards to labour market tasks. Overall 54 percent of all responding establishments reported that university graduates are very well prepared whereas 13 percent reported very poorly prepared. At tertiary (TVET) levels, 39 percent opinionated that staff with TVET qualifications are very well prepared while 18 percent reported that they are very poorly prepared for the labour market. Finally for staff whose highest attainment is secondary school qualification such as WASSC or equivalent, 30 percent of establishments revealed they are fairly prepared for the labour market whereas 17 percent said they are extremely poorly prepared as shown in the figure below. These findings in summary, partly explain the relatively higher economic returns to higher education than other educational levels as this is the level associated with more external efficiency.

²⁷ For more details see Integrated Household Survey Draft Report, 2015

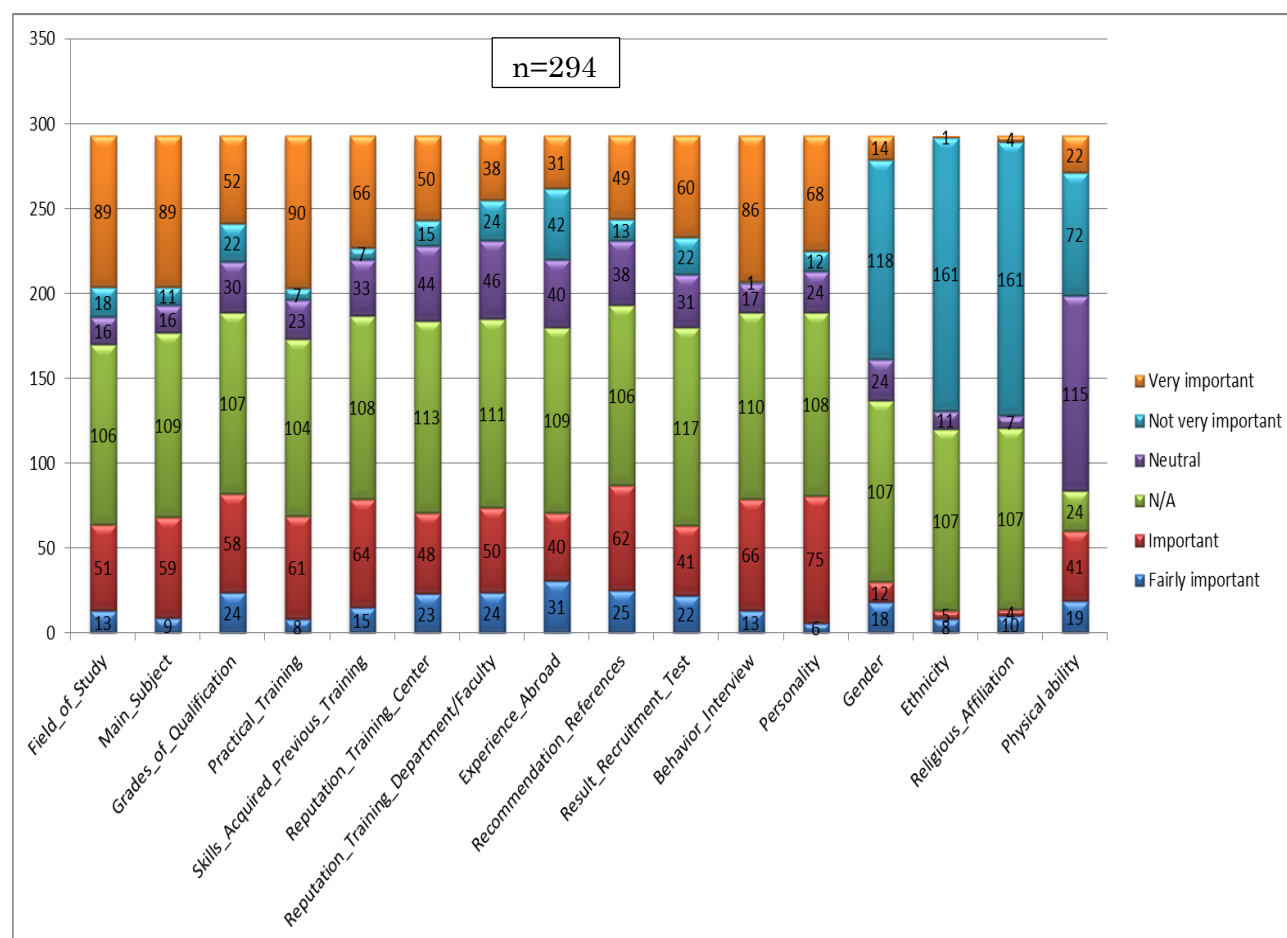
Figure 8: Analysis of employers views on the level of preparedness of employees from the education system



Source: Survey Field Data, 2017.

Employers revealed that the main factors considered in graduate recruitment are: practical skills acquired during training, being in possession of a qualification within specific subject areas, Grade (Class) of qualification, result during recruitment test (where applicable), behavior during interview, personality and reputation of institution/training center as shown in the cumulative stacked figure below. It is important to note that the factors the employers consider not important at all during recruitment are: Gender (118 out of 294 i.e.40%), followed by Ethnicity and Religious Affiliation (each a total of 161 out of 294 i.e. 55%) as shown below.

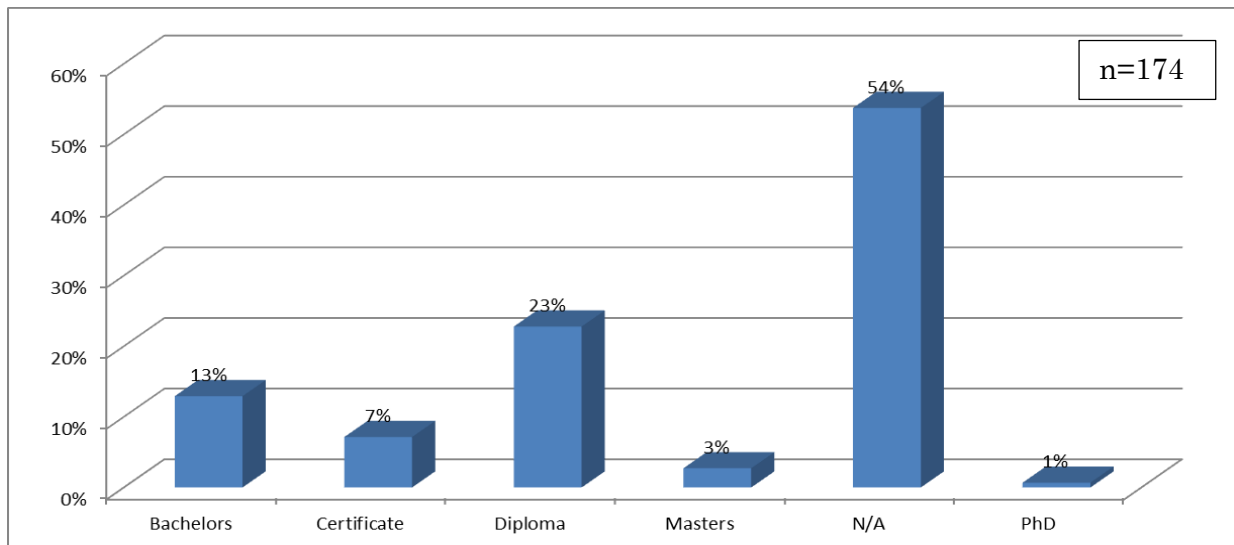
Figure 9: Characteristics taken into consideration during recruitment by employers



Source: Survey Field Data, 2017

To obtain a proxy for projected demand in the labour market, establishments gave their position on whether there are plans for recruitment within the next twelve months. The findings show that 174 establishments (59%) of total respondents claimed that they plan to hire within the next twelve months. Checking the required minimum educational level of those vacancies, it is observe that Diploma qualifications are most sought (23%), followed by Bachelors degree (13%), Certificate (7%), and then Master's degree (3%). The least recorded is a PhD degree representing 1 percent of respondents as shown in figure 10.

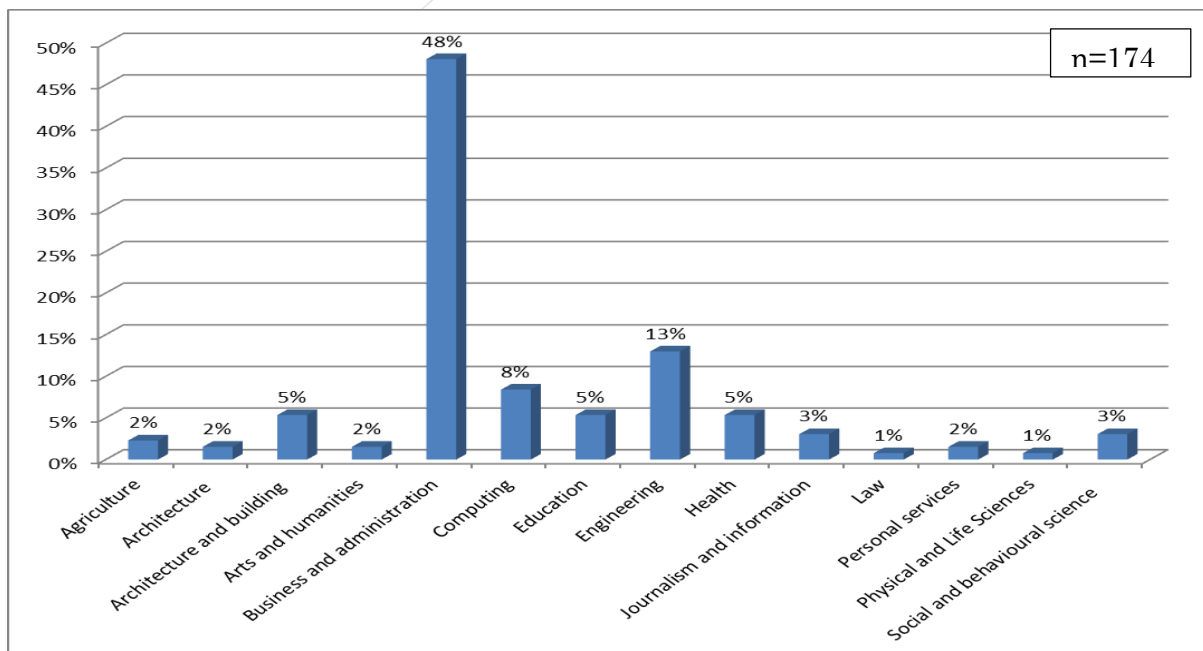
Figure 10: Projected Vacancies by Minimum Required Qualification in the next twelve months



Source: Survey Field Data, 2017

For the establishments that intent to hire, majority of them would be looking up for graduates in fields of Business and Administration (48% e.g. Economics, Accounting, Management, Finance related courses etc.), Engineering field in particular Mechanical, Electrical and Civil Engineers (13%), Computing (8% mainly Network Administrators) and then Architecture and Building, Education and Health each recorded 5 percent of total planned hiring. The results reveal that the dominant field in terms of employability is non-science based.

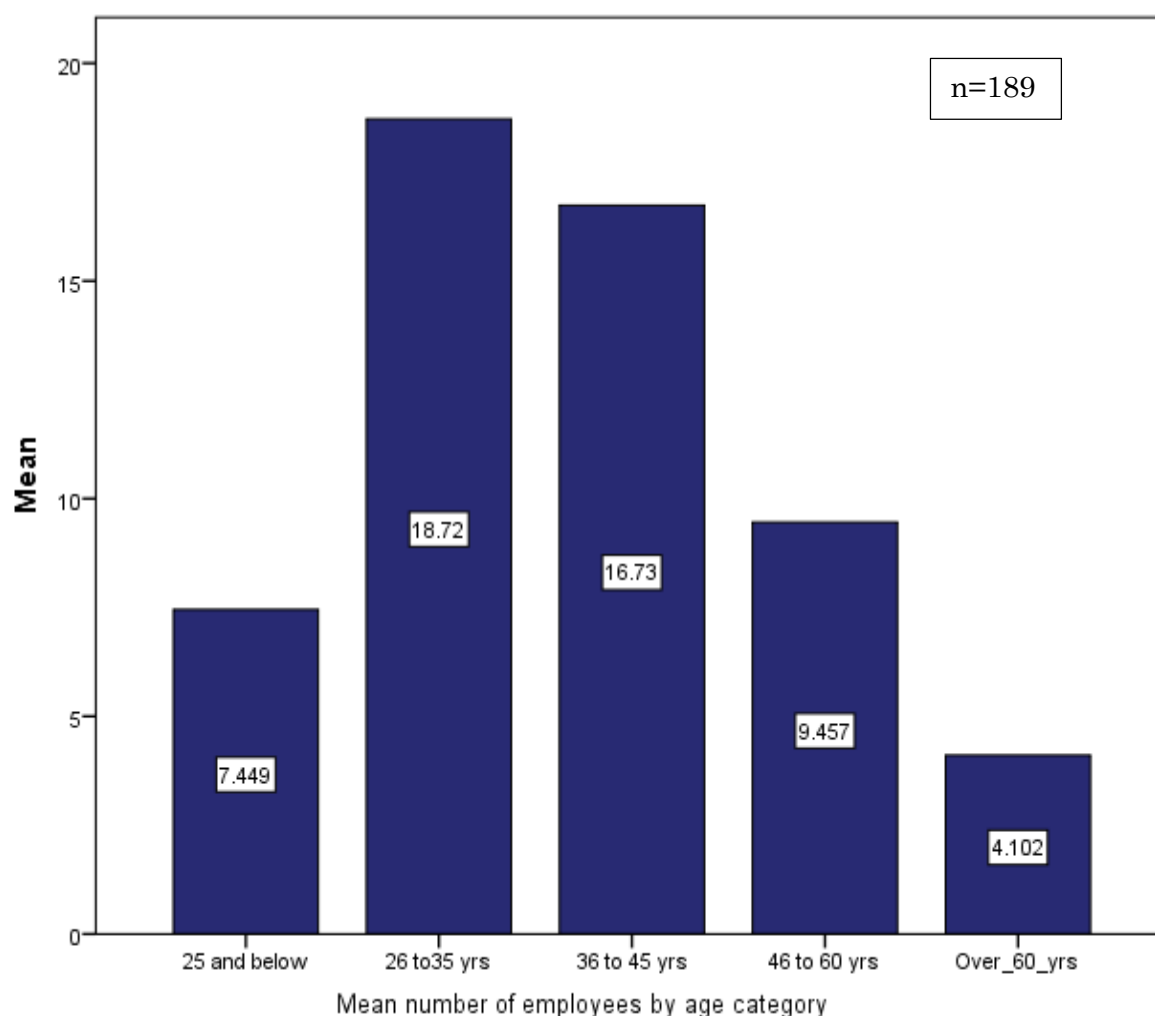
Figure 11: Distribution of Projected vacancies by field of education



Source: Survey Field Data, 2017

As can be observed from Figure 12, employers tend to hire more young people of 26 to 35 years, followed by those between 36 to 45 years and then 46 to 60 years as depicted by the mean values. On the other hand, the mean values suggest employers are less inclined to recruit those that are over 60 years and those below 25, as these age groups are likely to be associated with inefficiency and inexperience respectively.

Figure 12: Distribution of mean number of employees categorized by age group

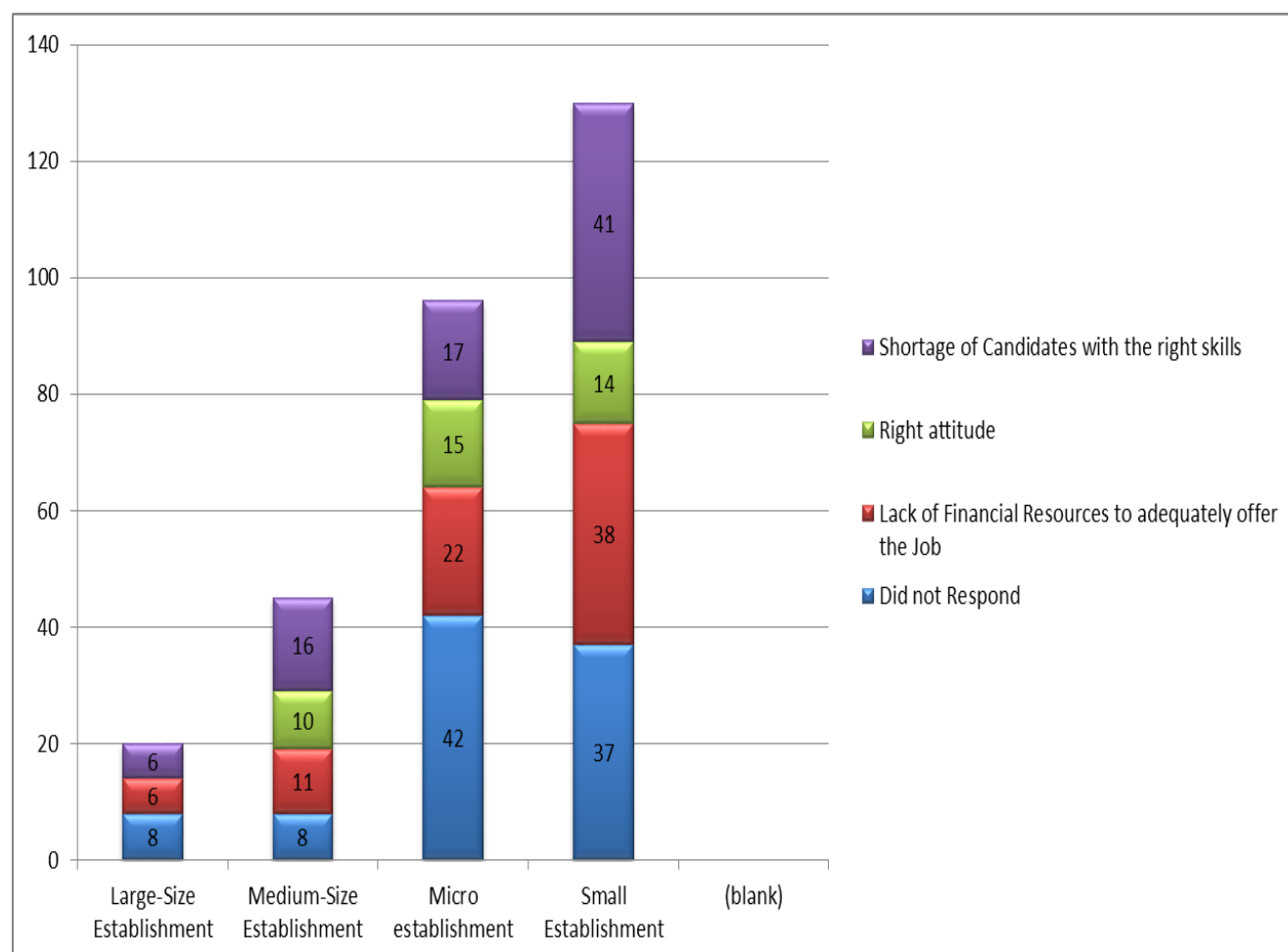


Source: Survey Field Data, 2017

Employers expressed different reasons employers have difficulties recruiting recent tertiary and higher education graduates. Among the recruiting establishments in the sample, the main difficulty was the lack of the right skills (43%), followed by lack of financial resources to adequately offer the job (41%), and attitude of employees (21%) mainly because of prior experiences with staff as depicted by the figure below.

Other negligible reasons include lack of vacancies; willingness of potential employees to accept salary, and also due to seasonal cycles experienced in the economy with regards to specific sectors particularly agriculture and tourism. In addition, micro-sized establishments are more affected by lack of funds to recruit than others as shown in the figure 13 below.

Figure 13: Main reasons for not recruiting graduates

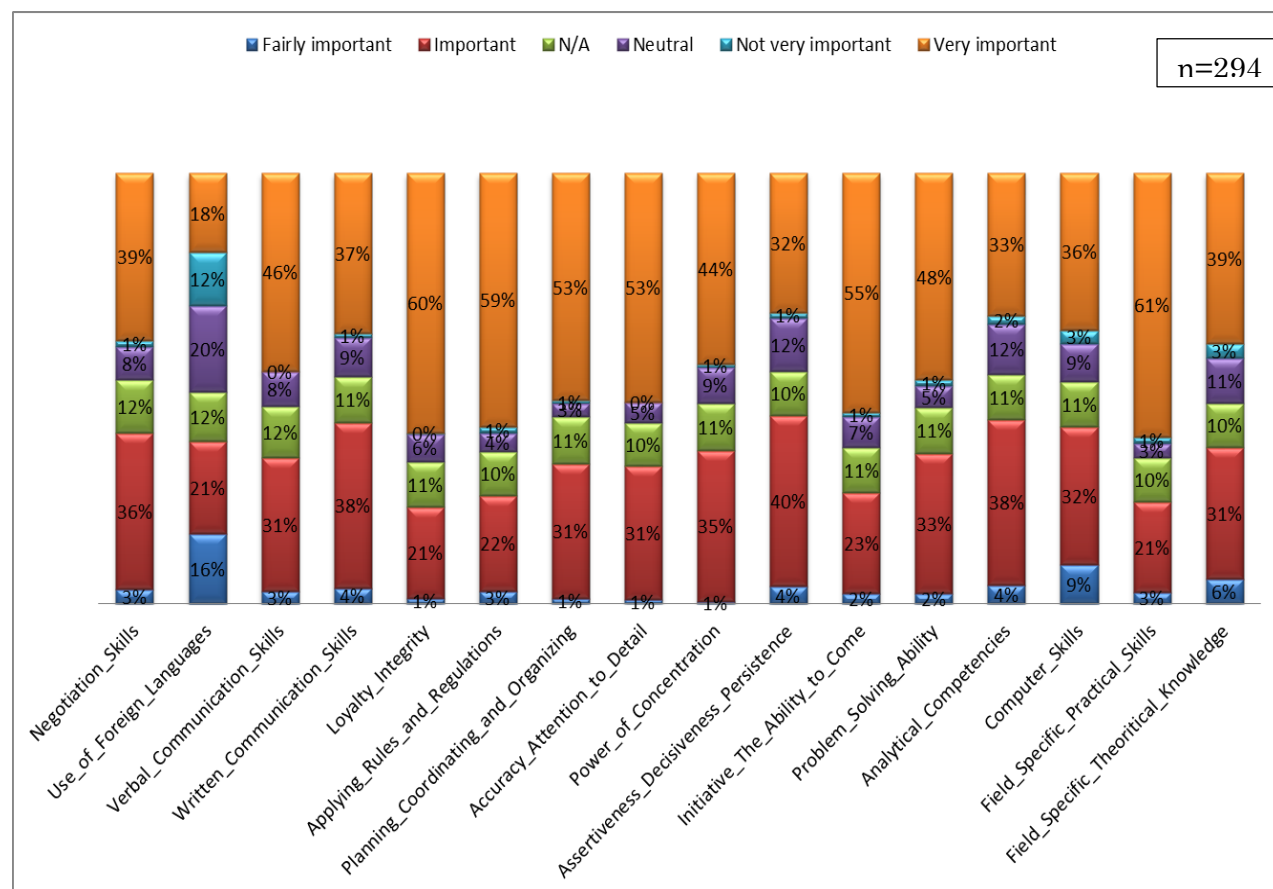


Source: Survey Field Data, 2017

4.2.3 Skills Assessment of Graduate Recruits

In order to assess the competencies of recently graduated recruits, the study sought the views of employers on the following domains: theoretical and practical skills, cognitive skills, interpersonal skills and attitude and professionalism skills. The results hereunder is gleaned from establishments (employers) that recruited new graduates in the last five years as described in the previous section. Since the survey focuses on employers and their evaluation of the skills of graduates from different fields of study, only skills deemed relevant in relation to work in general terms were considered.

Figure 14: Analysis of Competencies required by employers

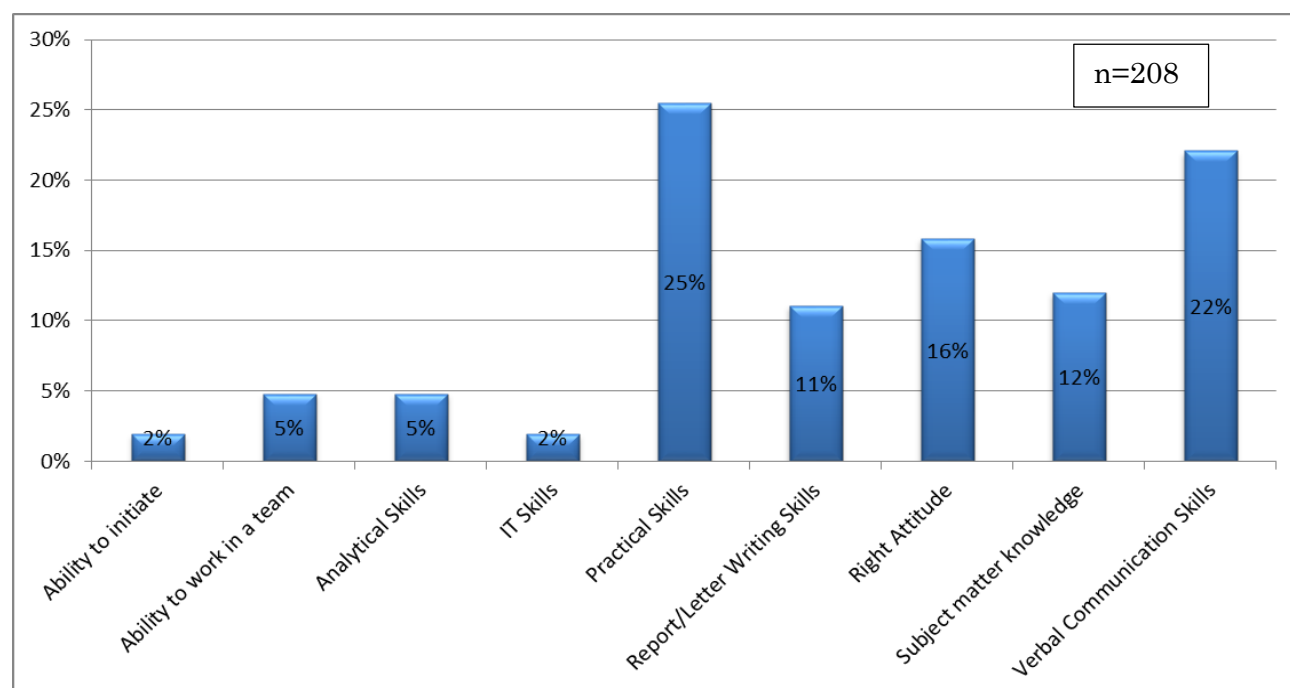


Source: Survey Field Data, 2017

Figure 14 shows that the competencies more valuable by employers during recruitment are occupation specific practical skills (61%), loyalty and integrity (60%), obedience to institutional rules and regulations (59%), initiative - ability to come up with new ideas and/or solutions (55%); accuracy and attention to detail (53%), problem solving ability (48%), verbal communication skills (46%), and concentration ability (44%).

Skills mismatch is a major factor affecting the performance of employers in the country. Figure 15 presents a breakdown of the main qualitative information related to skill gaps (mismatch) of graduate recruits that need reinforcement to enhance employability. The results show that 25 percent of all categories of establishments indicate practical skills as a major skill gap that need strengthening at institutional level; 22 percent reported verbal communication skills as a skill gap at the workplace, followed by right attitude (16% i.e. professionalism and ethics), and writing (corresponding/report writing) skills (11%).

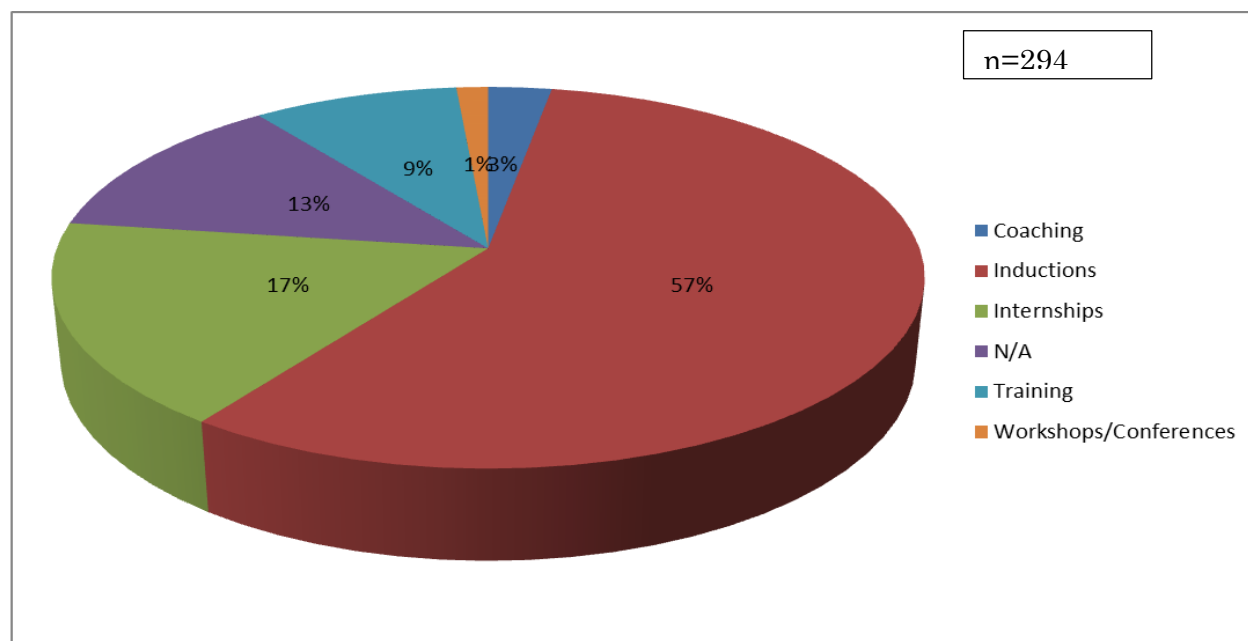
Figure 15: Analysis of skills mismatch



Source: Survey Field Data, 2017

The training providers' role is to offer training that inculcates knowledge and skills useful to the labour market. They cannot be responsible however for all of their training and much less so when this needs to be highly specialized and either sector or job-specific. Establishments should also take into consideration this responsibility to train their graduate recruits to compliment the skills and knowledge acquired during training. As shown in Figure 16 below, majority of establishments in the sample that recruited tertiary and higher education graduates provided them with some kind of support. Fifty-seven percent (57%) provide induction services, followed by internships (17%) and then training (9%). The training range from certificate to Bachelor's degree levels with most of them occurring in the public enterprises. This implies that establishments especially private entities do not contribute much to staff training whether short term (between 3 to 6 months) or long term (9 months and above).

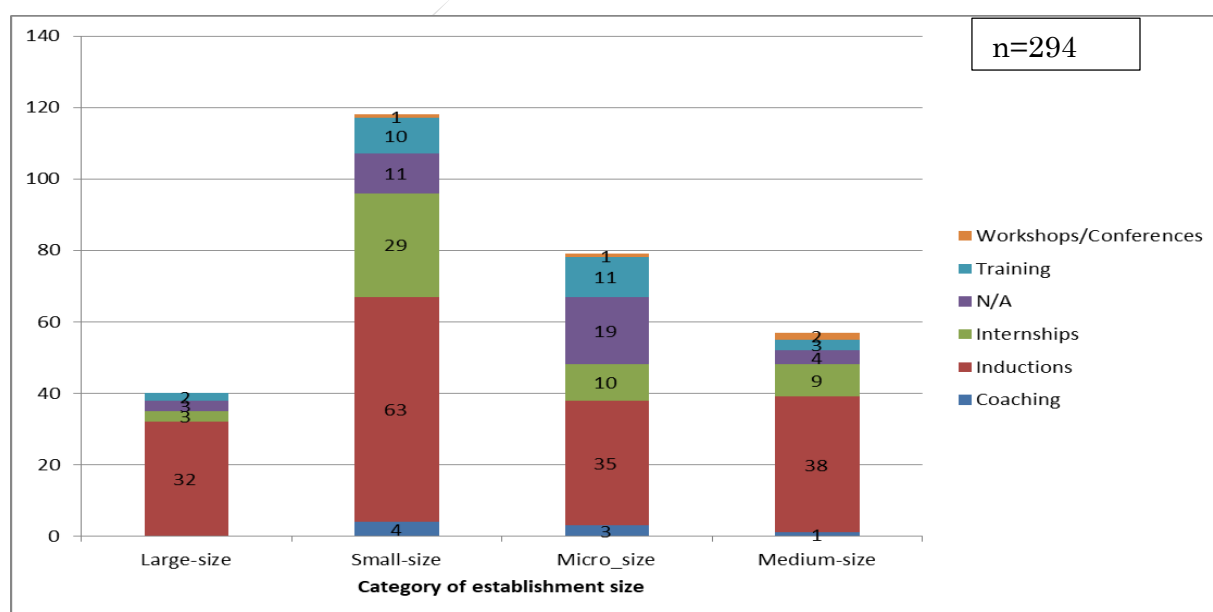
Figure 16: Support to new employees



Source: Survey Field Data, 2017

By respondent's views according to category of employees, the results show irrespective of size, the main support offered to graduate employees is induction as shown in figure 17. This result is in agreement with ITC SME competitive survey (ITC draft report, 2017) results especially for the Information and Communications, Agriculture and Tourism sectors.

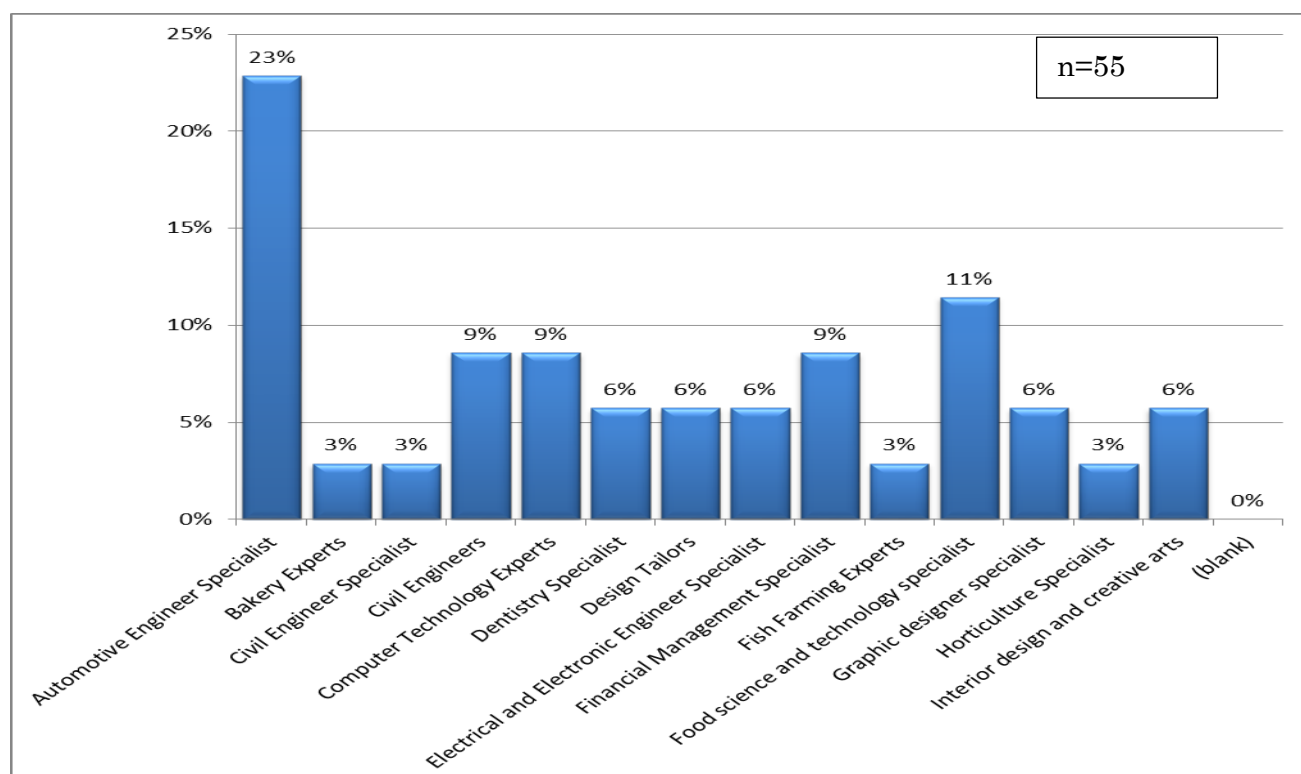
Figure 17: Support to new recruits by category of establishment size



Source: Survey Field Data, 2017

In Figure 18, the main skills shortages claimed by employers is Automotive Engineering Specialist (23%) mostly affecting the wholesale and retail trade sectors, Food Science and Technology Specialist (11%) especially Agriculture and Hotel and Restaurant sectors; and Civil Engineers, Computer Technology Experts and Financial Management Specialists with each recording 9 per cent as shown below.

Figure 18: Analysis of skills shortages in the labour market



Source: Survey Field Data, 2017

Table 9 gives a summary of the main challenges why establishments did not recruit by industrial sector. The five sectors experiencing more skill shortages are: Construction, Information and Communications, Agriculture, Wholesale and Retail (including Tailoring and Auto-mechanical workshops) and Health and Social Work. Among the respondents, the industrial sector mainly affected by professionalism and ethics (right attitude) on proportional basis is education as shown.

Table 9: Main challenge face in recruiting

MAIN_CHALLENGE_RECRUITMENT					
Industrial Sector	Did not Respond	Financial Constraint	Right attitude	Shortage of Skilled Personnel	Total
Agriculture	10	8	3	9	30
Construction	19	10	10	15	54
Education	3	2	2	1	8
Electricity, Gas and Water	1	1	0	1	3
Financial Services	17	15	4	5	41
Health and Social Work	2	4	1	8	15
Hotels and Restaurants	5	2	1	5	13
Information and Communications	10	9	3	10	32
Manufacturing	2	1	1	2	6
Mining & Quarrying	1	0	0	1	2
Transport and Storage	4	7	1	3	15
Wholesale and Retail	23	18	13	21	75
Total	97	77	39	80	294

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	332.833 ^a	60	.000
Likelihood Ratio	73.888	60	.107
N of Valid Cases	294		

Source: Survey Field Data, 2017

Furthermore to investigate statistically the level of independence of industrial sector of establishment and the finding on main challenge on why there was no recruitment, the chi-square test for independence is used.

The asymptotic p-value for the test is 0.000 which is less than the significance level of the test (0.05 or 5%). Therefore, based on the sample data, there is enough evidence that the reasons for not recruiting varies depending on nature of the industrial sector. Therefore, Specific-sector skills study could explain the dependency in detail.

4.2.4 Assessing cooperation with Tertiary and Higher Education Institutions

One of the main objectives of tertiary and higher education is to supply the labour market with low-hanging-fruits type of graduates. Training providers and employer's cooperation will generally improve quality and relevance, i.e. the likelihood that trainees will obtain the necessary skills and attitudes that the labour market requires. This will improve the chances of employment, and thus build public confidence in the outcomes of tertiary and higher education.

The outcomes of the education system is also influenced to a large extent by those services that assist in matching the supply of labour with the demand for skilled workforce in the labour market, mainly through information and career services and job placement services²⁸. These services can aid graduates to make informed decisions on career choices and to connect them to future employers.

4.2.4.1 Training provider Employer cooperation

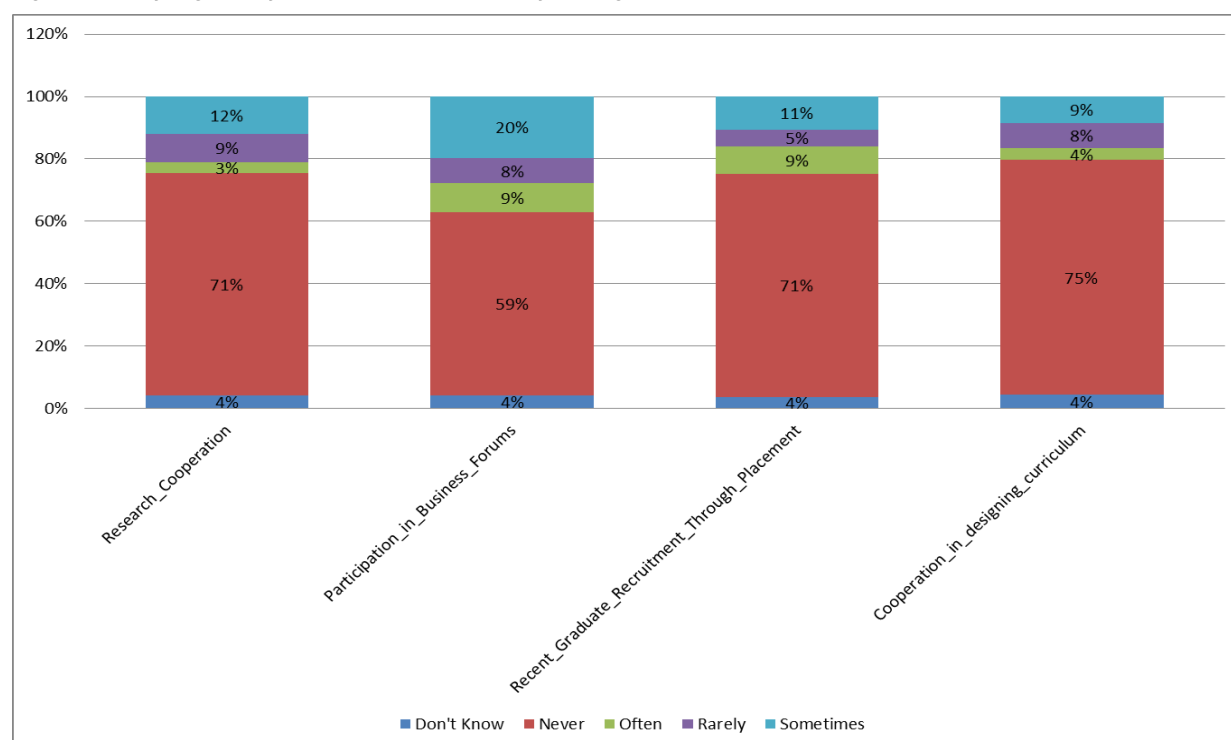
Majority of the establishments (an average of 70 % of total responding establishments) claim to have never associated with training providers in respect of the following:

- Discussing and designing curricula.
- Recruit graduates through training provider's career and information services.
- Participate in Business forums and/or conferences organized by training providers.
- Research activities/technical services agreement with training providers.

These findings suggest that training provider-industry linkage is very low which could affect curriculum and subsequently the output, and employability of graduates.

²⁸ Education Sector Analysis, Methodological Guidelines, 2014, UNESCO: Volume 2: Page 202

Figure 19: Analyzing employer's cooperation with tertiary and higher education institutions



Source: Survey Field Data, 2017

Further assessment of industrial sector that raised concerns on the above show that Construction and Information and Communications are the main technical sectors to suffer from the loose system. It is important to note that the Gambia Skills Qualifications Framework currently being implemented by the NAQAA deals with competency-based training (occupation specific qualifications) and the development of standards and curriculum are industry-led. However, the challenging issue is that not all TVET institutions are adopting the GSQF standards largely because there is no legislation currently to serve as basis for mandatory adoption.

In relation to ownership type of establishment and research cooperation with training providers, the table above shows that majority of all types of ownerships indicate they never had any association with training providers in respect of research and/or technical services.

Table 10: Research Cooperation by type of establishment

Research Cooperation						
Ownership Status	Don't Know	Never	Often	Rarely	Sometimes	Total
Sole Proprietorship	1	106	0	11	8	126
Partnerships	5	46	1	4	10	66
Limited Liability Company (Private)	4	45	4	9	7	69
Public Enterprise	1	8	4	3	7	23
NGO/CBO/Not-for-profit Institution	0	4	0	0	3	7
Others	1	1	1	0	0	3
Total	12	210	10	27	35	294

Chi-Square Tests

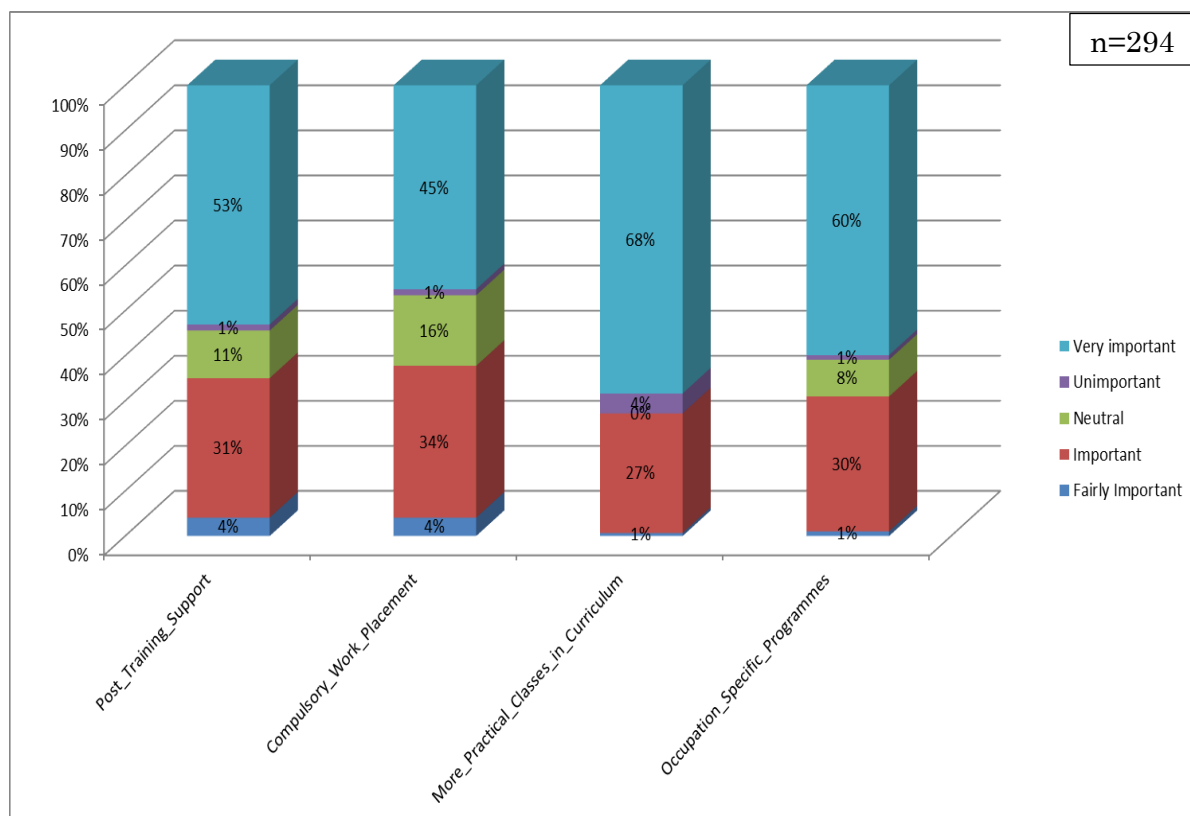
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	68.076 ^a	20	.000
Likelihood Ratio	57.066	20	.000
N of Valid Cases	294		

Source: Survey Field Data, 2017

4.2.4.1 Action by training providers to increase employability

The graph below gives analysis of actions to be taken by the tertiary and higher education sector as per employer's opinions. Almost all the establishments are in favor of (either very important or important) training providers running occupation specific qualifications (90%); include more practical classes in programmes offered (95%), and include compulsory work placement as part of the curriculum (79%), and also, help with post-training support (84%) such as facilitating graduate contacts with potential employers.

Figure 20: Research Cooperation by type of establishment

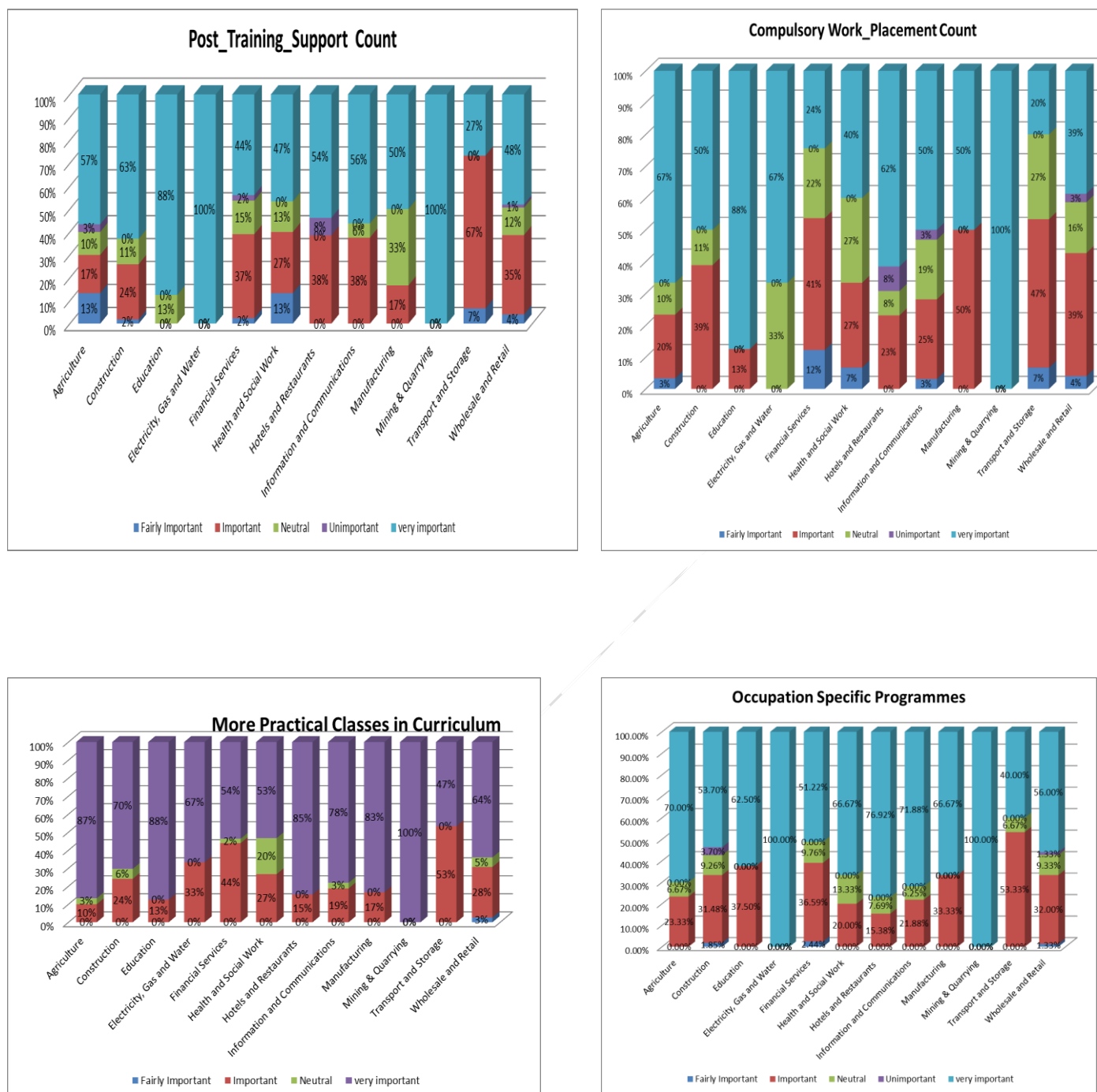


Source: Survey Field Data, 2017

The top five industrial sectors that claimed the findings shown in figure 20 are: Wholesale and Retail, Construction, Information and Communications, Financial Services and Agriculture. These sectors are critical enablers for the realization of the National Development Plan (NDP)²⁹ thus laying the foundation for success in building a transformative economy that would lift the country from low income to middle income status as enshrined in the NDP.

²⁹ For more details see the National Development Plan, Abridged Version, 2018: Page 10.

Figure 21: Analysis of action to improve graduate employability by industrial sector



Source: Survey Field Data, 2017

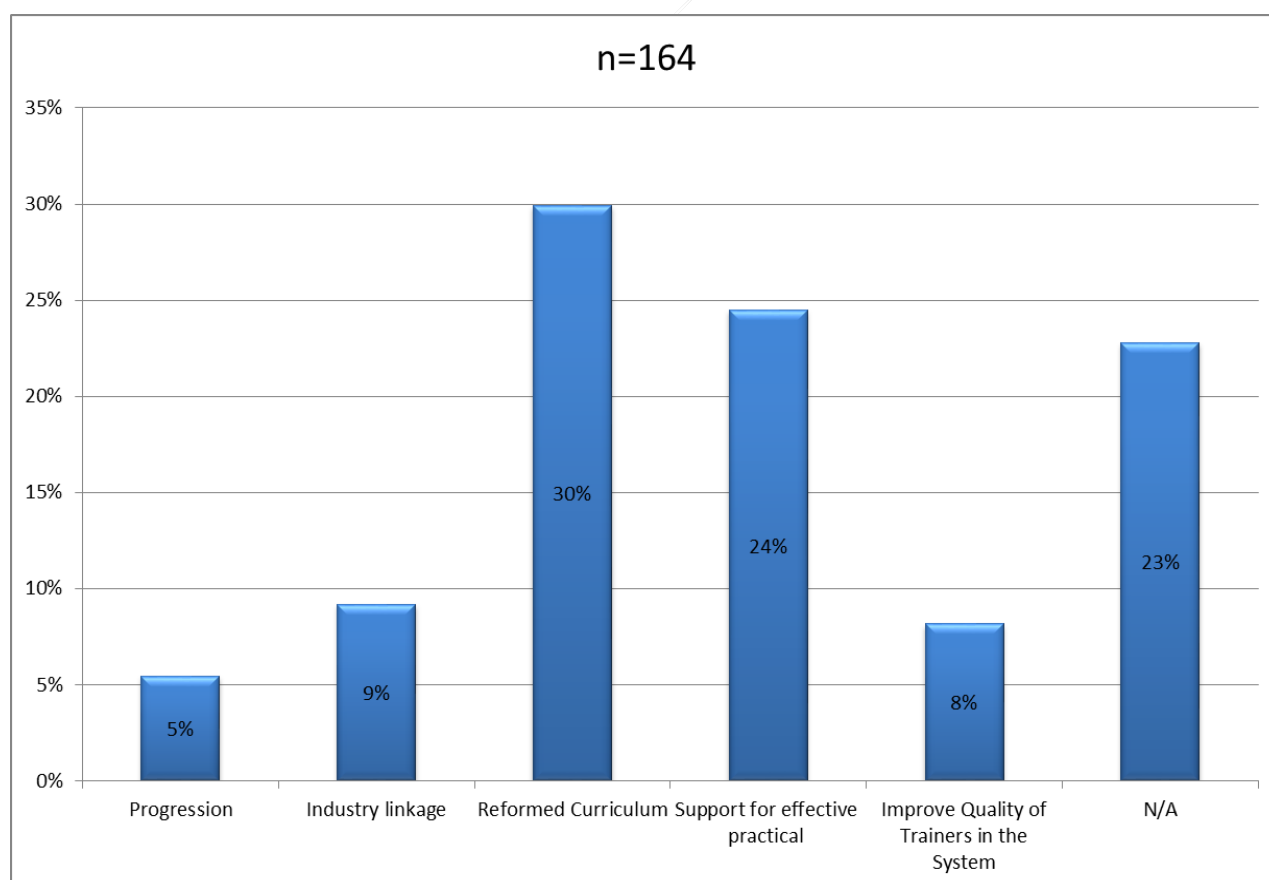
Generally, the qualitative information obtained on the main suggestions put forward by establishments for the improvement of the tertiary and higher education system are summarized and shown in figure 22:

- **Progression (5%):** The central findings in this category are lack of clear pathways for vertical and horizontal progression of employees to further their studies, and lack of

customized/specialized short term courses required by employers .

- **Industry Linkage (9%):** Expand and improve public/private partnerships between industry and training providers, and provide incentives for smooth internships/apprenticeships by establishments.
- **Curriculum (30%):** In this category issues like inconsistent curricula, inadequate teaching materials and tools for effective teaching of curricula were the main challenges that needs to be addressed.
- **Support for effective practicals (24%):** Also suggested in the findings is the need to improve workshops/laboratories in terms of equipment and materials, and to ensure that programmes especially those technical in nature to include adequate practicals in the curriculum.
- **Improve Quality of Trainers in the System (8%):** Support trainers to be more qualified in terms of knowledge, teaching and assessment methodology.

Figure 22: Analysis of General suggestions to improve the Tertiary and Higher Education System



Source: Survey Field Data, 2017

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

The Employer Skill Needs Survey is designed to provide detail labour market assessment on the skills of graduates from tertiary and higher education institutions in the country. The Survey provides a vital source of data on skills and the labour market. It offers a unique insight into the factors that influence the decisions employers make about recruitment, training investment and use of skills in the workplace, which underpin the macro-level trends that drive economic growth and productivity levels.

The aim of the study is to provide evidence-based information on views of employers in the Gambia on the skills and competencies of graduates from post-secondary institution, in order to gain insight into the actual situation of employers and to determine the factors that influence graduate recruitment. The findings of the survey reveal a series of challenges of the tertiary and higher education system in terms of the employability of graduates. The findings can be used as a basis for analysis policies and practical discussion on ways to improve and enhance relevance of programmes, as well as strengthen the cooperation between training providers and employers.

The survey results show that employers in the Gambia encounter skill challenges in different industrial sectors; the results also form the benchmark to allow these changes to be tracked over time through periodic similar surveys. On average, employers in the sample are satisfied with post-secondary graduates especially those who hold university qualifications. This is a good sign in terms of efficiency, but at the same time, there are concerns with practical abilities and communication skills of graduates.

The study results will inform the education system, in particular TVET, for improved quality and relevance. TVET – educational process involving the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to specific occupations – is considered **master-key** for development because it stimulates poverty alleviation, promotes peace, conserve the environment, improve the quality of life for all, and promotes sustainable development³⁰. A well-structured, regulated and quality TVET system endows people with the necessary tools – occupational skills and competencies in a particular trade or profession – to become productive and well-meaning citizens that will contribute effectively and efficiently to nation building, and prosperity of humanity in general. With TVET poverty alleviation is possible

³⁰ Bonn declaration on TVET, UNESCO 2014

because trainees are competent in professional/trade areas and can encourage support in the form of seed capital they can to set up their own business entities thereby reduce unemployment. A structured and coordinated TVET has the potential to producing job creators instead of jobseekers. TVET promote peace because it empowers people to become secure economically; it also aids environment conservation by inculcating life skills in people to become more aware of their surroundings (environment).

5.2 Recommendations

The main findings of the study make the following institutional/policy recommendations crucial to improving quality and attain trending relevance of post-secondary education in the country.

1. Improve the post-secondary Curriculum to meet current labour market requirements.
 - a) The NAQAA should review all standards of the Gambia Skills Qualifications Framework to meet labour market needs. The review should be done in consultation with employers taking into account specific characteristics of each sector.
 - b) The NAQAA and stakeholders should advocate for the promotion of viable dual apprenticeship scheme training. This will enhance competency-based training and guarantee the production of graduates ready for the labour market.
 - c) As employability is not simply obtaining a job, but about succeeding in the workplace, and contributing meaningfully to society through one's work, and given that, for inclusive development, society needs a competent, ethical and willing workforce that will contribute to the public good through professional activities and civic participation, curricula must include the promotion of these values in addition to the knowledge and skills they develop. Therefore, the government through MoHERST should legislate the inclusion of ethics and civic education as part of the curricula in post-secondary institutions.
2. In the drive to advancing training and instructional standards and quality aimed at enhancing educational outcomes, NAQAA should set up a fund for the promotion and development of research and development activities.
3. NAQAA should champion the creation of an Information System Platform that provides

institutions, especially TVET providers, unrestricted access to open educational/training resources, and labour market information (employment opportunities) on TVET graduates. The platform should also help tertiary and higher education institutions build and strengthen networks.

4. For better coordination and preparation of feeders to the tertiary and higher education system, the MoHERST and MoBSE in partnership with NAQAA should establish a working committee that would guide the development of a scheme for standardized assessment of learning outcomes at all levels of education.

5. Improve Quality of Trainers in the System

- a) NAQAA should continue the organization of periodic capacity building programmes such as Training of Trainers workshops on Andragogy, Curriculum Development and Module writing to significantly improve the quality of delivery/instruction in the tertiary and higher education system.
 - b) The NAQAA should ensure all tertiary (excluding post-secondary non-tertiary) and higher education institutions establish a fully functional Internal Quality Assurance Unit within 2 years of operations.
6. The Higher Education Sector should strenuously work for a legislation to align all qualifications offered by education and training providers to the Gambia Qualifications Framework which should provide clear pathways and adequately cater for recognition of experiential learning. This will facilitate access, mobility and progression within education, training and career paths by opening opportunities for inclusivity and lifelong learning. It will also help students and employers dispel doubts and ensure realistic expectations about study or training programmes. Such policy and strategy will also guide decision-making by students, employers, and parents in overcoming educational gaps and personal needs.
 7. In a bid to encourage graduates to become job creators instead of being job-seekers, the NAQAA should organize periodic National Skills Competition, and support outstanding performers with seed money to venture into entrepreneurship.

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ANNEX

ANNEX 1: Description industrial sectors based on ISIC

ISIC Industrial Sector	Description on ISIC
1. Agriculture	A - Agriculture, forestry and fishing (01-03) Including farming, hunting and other related service activities, forestry and logging, fishing and aquaculture
2. Mining & Quarrying	B - Mining and quarrying (05-09) Including mining of coal, metals, sand/stone/clay, and extraction of crude petroleum and natural gas
3. Manufacturing	C - Manufacturing (10-33) Including manufacture of food and beverage, textiles, chemicals and chemical products, basic pharmaceutical products, other mineral products, manufacture of metals and metal products, machinery, computer and electronic products and equipment, motor vehicles and other transport equipment, furniture, and repair and installation of machinery and equipment
4. Electricity, Gas and Water	D - Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply (35) E Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities (36-39) Including electric power generation, transmission and distribution, manufacture of gas and distribution of gaseous fuels, steam and air conditioning supply, water collection, treatment and supply, sewerage and waste collection
5. Construction	F - Construction (41-43) Including the construction of buildings, civil engineering (constructing roads, railways and other utility projects), demolition, and specialised activities such as electrical installation, roofing and scaffold erection
6. Wholesale and Retail	G - Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles (45-47) Including sale, maintenance and repair of motor vehicles, parts and accessories, non-vehicle wholesale (for example agriculture, food, household goods), and the retail trade of all products whether in stores, stalls, markets, mail order or online
7. Hotels and Restaurants	I - Accommodation and food service activities (55-56) Including hotels, campsites, youth hostels, holiday centres, villages and other short stay accommodation, restaurants and takeaways, event catering and licensed clubs, pubs and bars
8. Transport and Storage	H - Transport and storage (49-53) Including land, water and air transport (passenger and freight), warehousing and support activities for transportation, postal and courier activities,
9. Information and Communications	J - Information and communication (58-63) Including publishing (books, journals, newspapers etc. and software/computer games), television, film and music production, broadcasting, telecommunications, computer programming and consultancy, information service activities (e.g. data processing and hosting)

10. Financial Services	K - Financial and insurance activities (64-66) Including banks and building societies, activities of holding companies, trusts, funds and similar financial entities, credit granting, pensions, and insurance
11. Education	Education Including pre-primary, primary, secondary and higher education, other education (such as sports, driving schools, cultural education), educational support activities
12. Health and Social Work	Human health and social work activities (86-88) Including Hospitals, medical and dental practices, residential care, social work activities
<i>NOT COVERED IN SURVEY</i>	T - Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods and services producing activities of households for own use (97-98) U - Activities of extraterritorial organisations and bodies (99) Including households as employers of domestic personnel, private households producing goods for own use

ANNEX 2: Fields of Education

Field	Description
Education	Teacher training for pre-school, kindergarten, elementary school, vocational, practical, Non-vocational subject, adult education, teacher trainers and for handicapped children. General and specialized teacher-training programmes. Education science: curriculum development in non-vocational and vocational subjects. Educational assessment, testing and measurement, educational research, other education science.
Humanities and arts	Fine arts: drawing, painting, sculpture; Performing arts: music, drama, dance, circus; Graphic and audio-visual arts: photography, cinematography, music production, radio and television production, printing and publishing; Design; craft skills. Religion and theology; foreign languages and cultures: living or 'dead' languages and their literature, area studies; Native languages: current or vernacular language and its literature; Other humanities: interpretation and translation, linguistics, comparative literature, history, archaeology, philosophy, ethics.
Physical and Life sciences	Biology, botany, bacteriology, toxicology, microbiology, zoology, entomology, ornithology, genetics, biochemistry, biophysics, other allied sciences, excluding clinical and veterinary sciences. Astronomy and space sciences, physics, other allied subjects, chemistry, other allied subjects, geology, geophysics, mineralogy, physical anthropology, physical geography and other geosciences, meteorology and other atmospheric sciences including climatic research, marine science, volcanology, paleoecology. Environmental conservation, control and protection, air and water pollution control, labour protection and security.
Social and behavioural science	Political science, sociology, demography, anthropology (except physical anthropology), ethnology, futurology, psychology, geography (except Physical geography), peace and conflict studies, human rights.

Journalism and information	Journalism; library technician and science; technicians in museums and similar repositories; Documentation techniques; Archival sciences.
Business and administration	Economics, Retailing, marketing, sales, public relations, real estate; Finance, banking, insurance, investment analysis; Accounting, auditing, bookkeeping; Management, public administration, institutional administration, personnel administration; Secretarial and office work.
Law	Local magistrates, ' <i>notaires</i> ', law (general, international, labour, maritime, etc.), jurisprudence, history of law.
Mathematics and statistics	Mathematics, operations research, numerical analysis, actuarial science, statistics and other allied fields.
Computing	Computer sciences: system design, computer programming, data processing, networks, operating systems – software development only (hardware development should be classified with the engineering fields).
Engineering and engineering trades	Engineering drawing, mechanics, metal work, electricity, electronics, telecommunications, energy and chemical engineering, vehicle maintenance, surveying.
Manufacturing and processing	Food and drink processing, textiles, clothes, footwear, leather, materials (wood, paper, plastic, glass, etc.), mining and extraction.
Architecture and building	Architecture and town planning: structural architecture, landscape architecture, community planning, cartography; Building, construction; Civil engineering.
Agriculture	Agriculture, crop and livestock production, agronomy, animal husbandry, horticulture and gardening, forestry and forest product techniques, natural parks, wildlife, fisheries, fishery science and technology. Veterinary medicine, veterinary assisting.
Health	Medicine: anatomy, epidemiology, cytology, physiology, immunology and immunohematology, pathology, anaesthesiology, paediatrics, obstetrics and gynaecology, internal medicine, surgery, neurology, psychiatry, radiology, ophthalmology; Medical services: public health services, hygiene, pharmacy, pharmacology, therapeutics, rehabilitation, prosthetics, optometry, nutrition;

	Nursing: basic nursing, midwifery; Dental services: dental assisting, dental hygienist, dental laboratory technician, odontology. Social care: care of the disabled, childcare, gerontological services; Social work: counselling, welfare not elsewhere classified.
Personal services	Hotel and catering, travel and tourism, sports and leisure, hairdressing, beauty treatment, and other personal services: cleaning, laundry, dry-cleaning, cosmetic services, domestic science.
Transport services	Seamanship, ship's officer, nautical science, air crew, air traffic control, railway operations, road motor vehicle operations, postal service.

ANNEX 3: Survey Questionnaire



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ESTABLISHMENT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (EIN)

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*Hello, my name is..... I am from The **NATIONAL ACCREDITATION & QUALITY ASSURANCE AUTHORITY (NAQAA)**. NAQAA is established by an ACT of Parliament in 2015 and is mandated to regulate tertiary and higher education institutions. We are conducting a survey aimed at identifying skill gaps, skill shortages and changing tasks at the workplace/labour market.*

Your contribution is highly valuable because it will help the education sector to formulate good policies and inform national human resource planning and curriculum reform in tertiary and higher education institutions to offer relevant and quality programmes to better serve the skills requirement of employers in the country.

All responses will be held entirely with confidence and will only be used for research purposes and to inform policy. Neither your name nor the name of your entity will be used in any published document related to this survey.

*I would like to talk to you about these subjects. This interview usually takes about **30** minutes. Any information collected from this survey will remain **strictly confidential and anonymous**. If you do not wish to answer a question or stop the interview, please let me know. May I start now?*

ESTABLISHMENT INFORMATION PANEL	
Establishment name: _____	
Establishment email: _____	
Establishment Contact No.: _____	
Address of Establishment: _____	
Name of Respondent _____	
Position of Respondent _____	
Respondent's Telephone No: _____	
Respondent's Email _____	
Interviewer's name and number: Name _____	Supervisor's name and number: Name _____
Day / Month / Year of interview: ____ / ____ / <u>2 0 1 7</u> Area: Urban..... 1 Rural..... 2	Local Government Area (LGA)/Region Banjul 1 Kanifing 2 Brikama 3 Mansakonko 4 Kerewan 5 Kuntaur 6 Janjangbureh 7 Basse 8
Results of Interview	
Completed..... 1 Partially completed..... 2 Person to complete is not available..... 3 Establishment could not be traced..... 4 Refused..... 5 Other (specify): _____ 96	

SECTION 1: ESTABLISHMENT DETAILS

1.1. Is the Establishment Registered: 1. Yes 2. No

1.2. Main Economic Activity of Establishment:.....

1.3. Main **Secondary** Economic Activity of Establishment:.....

SECTION 2: CHARACTERISTICS OF ESTABLISHMENT

2.1. Which year did activities begin in this establishment? |_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|

2.2. Please specify the type of ownership of this establishment.

Type of ownership	No
Sole Proprietorship	1
Partnerships	2
Limited Liability Companies – Private	3
Public Enterprise (Parastatals and Public Limited Companies)	4
Non-Government Organizations/Community based Organizations/Non-Profit Institutions/Associations	5
Other, specify:.....	6

2.3. Specify the Local Government Area (LGA) where the main office /headquarters of the establishment is located.

LGA	Code	LGA	Code
Banjul	1	Kuntaur	5
Kanifing	2	Janjangbureh	6
Brikama	3	Kerewan	7
Mansakonko	4	Basse	8

2.4. Specify, if the main office /headquarters of the establishment:

Is the only branch of the establishment	1. Yes Skip to 2.6
Is one of the branches of the establishment	2. No Skip to 2.5

2.5. If the establishment has other branches, specify where they are located: *Select as more than one option if applicable*

LGA	Code	LGA	Code
Banjul	1	Kuntaur	5
Kanifing	2	Janjangbureh	6
Brikama	3	Kerewan	7
Mansakonko	4	Basse	8

2.6. Where is the Major Market of the Establishment?

Local Government Area	1
Nationwide	2
Outside the country	3

2.7. Which statement best describes this establishment? This establishment (select more than one option if applicable)

Produces the goods it sells	1
Resells goods produce by other companies	2
Provides services to other companies or individuals	3
Produces the goods that it sells and provide services to other companies or individuals.	4

2.8. How many employees (both full-time, part time and staff under contracts) are currently working in this establishment?

Number | | | | |

Please write zero if the establishment does not currently have any Employee **skip to section 5**

2.9. How many of the employees specified in 2.8 are on full time by Gender?

1. No. Female:	2. No. Male:
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2.10. How many employees (full-time, part-time and contract) in this establishment attained the following as highest level of education:

Non formal/Primary	
Secondary education	
Post-secondary certificate	
Diploma	
Bachelors' Degree	
Masters' Degree	
PhD	

2.11. How many of the employees (full- time, part –time and contract) working in this establishment is/are:

Up to 25 years	
Between 26 and 35 years old?	
Between 36 and 45 years old?	
Between 46 and 60 years old?	
Over 60 years	

2.12. In the last 5 years, did the number of employees:

Increase?	1
Decrease?	2
Remain the same?	3
Don't Know	98

2.13. Please, specify how many of your employees (full-time, part-time and contract) belong to the following major Professional categories

Professional Group	Number	Gender
Management (Directors, CEOs, Managers, Other Senior Mgt Officers etc)	_ _ _	Male: _ _ _ Female: _ _ _
Administrative Support (E.g. Secretaries, PAs/Reception, HR Officers and Assistants etc)	_ _ _	Male: _ _ _ Female: _ _ _
Financial Management/Accounting (E.g. Finance Officers/Assistants, Accountants etc)	_ _ _	Male: _ _ _ Female: _ _ _
Sales/Services/Communication (E.g. PR Info Officers/Assistants, Communication Officers, Sales and Marketing agents etc)	_ _ _	Male: _ _ _ Female: _ _ _
Engineering/Technical Services (E.g. Electrical/Mechanical/Electronics officers)	_ _ _	Male: _ _ _ Female: _ _ _
Computing/IT (E.g IT Officers/Assistants, Software Developers, Programmers etc)	_ _ _	Male: _ _ _ Female: _ _ _
Other support staff (E.g. Cleaners, Drivers, Messengers, Gardeners etc)	_ _ _	Male: _ _ _ Female: _ _ _

2.14. What percentage of your total employees (Full-time) did you train in the past 5 years?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1 – 10%	11-20%	21-30%	31-40%	41-50%	51-60%	61-70%	71-80%	81-90%	91-100%

SECTION 3: RECRUITMENT

This section assesses the recruitment and absorptive capacity of employers with regards to tertiary and higher education graduates and to evaluate relevance of studies to labour market.

3.1. Did you recruit any tertiary and higher education graduate(s) from 2010-2016?

1. Yes	Skip to question 3.2
2. No	Skip to question section 5

3.2. Of those recruited over the last 7 years, please specify how many have the following as highest qualification:

Qualification	Gender	
Certificate	Female: _ _ _ _	Male: _ _ _ _
Diploma	Female: _ _ _ _	Male: _ _ _ _
Bachelor's degree	Female: _ _ _ _	Male: _ _ _ _
Master's degrees	Female: _ _ _ _	Male: _ _ _ _
Doctorate degree	Female: _ _ _ _	Male: _ _ _ _

3.3. What field of education did your graduate recruit(s) obtain their qualifications at? *You can choose more than one option.*

Fields of Education	Code
<i>Education (E.g. Teacher training qualifications)</i>	1
<i>Arts and Humanities (Religion, Theology, Fine arts, Language, Comparative Literature etc)</i>	2
<i>Physical and Life Sciences (Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Meteorology, Environmental Sciences etc)</i>	3
<i>Social and behavioural science (E.g. Development Studies, Political Science, Sociology etc)</i>	4
<i>Journalism and information (E.g. Journalism, Library Science, Museum Technicians etc)</i>	5
<i>Business and administration (E.g. Acc, Banking, Auditing, Economics, Mgt Sciences etc)</i>	6
<i>Law</i>	7
<i>Mathematics and Statistics (E.g. Mathematics, Statistics, Actuarial Science etc)</i>	8

Computing (E.g. Computer Science, Software Development, Networking, Database etc.)	9
Engineering (Mechanical, Electrical and Electronics)	10
Manufacturing and processing (Mining and Extraction, Carpentry and Joinery etc)	11
Architecture and building (E.g. Architecture, Construction, Civil Engineering etc)	12
Agriculture (E.g. Agriculture, Fishery, Forestry and Veterinary etc)	13
Health (E.g. Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing , Care of the disable, Welfare etc)	14
Personal services (E.g. Catering, Travel and Tourism, Hairdressing, Beauty Therapy etc)	15
Transport services (E.g. Post service, Seamanship, Air Cabin Crew, Air Traffic Control etc)	17
Security services (E.g. Police Work, Criminology, Forensic Science etc)	18

3.4. What kind of procedures does the establishment/organization use to recruit graduate employees? (You can choose more than one option)

Advertisements of vacancies in newspapers (daily papers, special periodicals, etc.)	1
Internal advertisements of vacancies	2
Unsolicited applications by graduates	3
Placement service unit at the training institutions	4
Personal contacts to graduates	5
Private employment agencies	6
Binding students by scholarships	7
Job fair	8
Other, Specify.....	96

3.5. How prepared are each of the following categories of staff for the work they do at the establishment? Give a score for each of the categories (1 = poorly prepared, 2=fairly prepared, 3= Neutral, 4=well prepared, and 5 = Very well prepared)

Staff coming from secondary School	
Staff coming from Tertiary (TVET) Institutions	
Staff coming from University	

3.6. How important in general are the following aspects for the recruitment of graduate employees? *Please indicate with the help of the 5-grade scale from 1 = not very important, 2=fairly important, 3=Neutral, 4= important and 5 = very important)*

	<i>Circle as appropriate</i>				
Field of study (e.g. commerce, statistics, forestry etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
Main focus of subject area/specialization	1	2	3	4	5
Grades of qualification (e.g. 1st class, upper second, lower etc)	1	2	3	4	5
Practical experience acquired during the course of study	1	2	3	4	5
Practical experience acquired previous to the course of study	1	2	3	4	5
Reputation of candidate's training institution	1	2	3	4	5
Reputation of the training department/faculty	1	2	3	4	5
Experience abroad	1	2	3	4	5
Recommendations/references from third persons	1	2	3	4	5
Results of recruitment tests	1	2	3	4	5
Behaviour during interview	1	2	3	4	5
Personality	1	2	3	4	5
Gender	1	2	3	4	5
Ethnicity	1	2	3	4	5
Religion (i.e. belonging to a particular religion)	1	2	3	4	5
Physical ability (e.g. having no disability)	1	2	3	4	5
Other (Specify):	1	2	3	4	5

3.7. How difficult is it for your establishment to recruit from each of the following professional groups?

Professional Group	Level of Difficulty (Response: from 1 = very difficult 2=difficult, 3=Neutral, 4=fairly difficult, 5 = not at difficult)				
Management (Directors, CEOs, Managers, Other Senior Mgt Officers etc)	1	2	3	4	5
Administrative Support (E.g. Secretaries, PAs/Reception, HR Officers and Assistants etc)	1	2	3	4	5
Financial Management/Accounting (E.g. Finance Officers/Assistants, Accountants etc)	1	2	3	4	5

Sales/Services/Communication (E.g. PR Info Officers/Assistants, Communication Officers, Sales and Marketing agents etc)	1	2	3	4	5
Engineering/Technical Services (E.g. Electrical/Mechanical/Electronics officers)	1	2	3	4	5
Computing/IT (E.g IT Officers/Assistants, Software Developers, Programmers etc)	1	2	3	4	5
Other support staff (E.g. Cleaners, Drivers, Messengers, Gardeners etc)	1	2	3	4	5

3.8. What major challenges does the organization face in recruiting skilled and well-trained personnel?

1.
2.
3.

3.9. Are you planning on hiring additional staff in the next 12 Months?

1. Yes ☐	Go on to question	3.11
2. No ☐	Skip to question	3.12

3.10. State the current vacancies that exist in your establishment:

Title of Vacancy	Minimum Qualification Level (e.g Diploma, BSc, MSc, PhD)	Preferred Field of study (E.g Education, Economics, Law etc)

3.13. Did you know NAQAA functions as a Qualifications Verification Centre for employers?

Yes	1
No	2
No Response	3

3.11. Specify the major areas of study that the establishment is planning to hire additional staff. You may choose more than one option.

Fields of Education	Code
<i>Education (E.g. Teacher Training and Education Science etc)</i>	1
<i>Arts and Humanities (Religion, Theology, Fine arts, Language, Comparative Literature etc)</i>	2
<i>Physical and Life Sciences (Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Meteorology, Environmental Sciences etc)</i>	3
<i>Social and behavioural science (E.g. Development Studies, Political Science, Sociology etc)</i>	4
<i>Journalism and information (E.g. Journalism, Library Science, Museum Technicians etc)</i>	5
<i>Business and administration (E.g. Acc, Banking, Auditing, Economics, Mgt Sciences etc)</i>	6
<i>Law</i>	7
<i>Mathematics and Statistics (E.g. Mathematics, Statistics, Actuarial Science etc)</i>	8
<i>Computing (E.g. Computer Science, Software Development, Networking, Database etc.)</i>	9
<i>Engineering (Mechanical, Electrical and Electronics)</i>	10
<i>Manufacturing and processing (Mining and Extraction, Carpentry and Joinery etc)</i>	11
<i>Architecture and building (E.g. Architecture, Construction, Civil Engineering etc)</i>	12
<i>Agriculture (E.g. Agriculture, Fishery, Forestry and Veterinary etc)</i>	13
<i>Health (E.g. Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing , Care of the disable, Welfare etc)</i>	14
<i>Personal services (E.g. Catering, Travel and Tourism, Hairdressing, Beauty Therapy etc)</i>	15
<i>Transport services (E.g. Post service, Seamanship, Air Cabin Crew, Air Traffic Control etc)</i>	17
<i>Security services (E.g. Police Work, Criminology, Forensic Science etc)</i>	18

SECTION 4: SKILLS ASSESSMENT 4.1. How important are the following **competencies for the recruitment** of graduate employees? Please indicate the importance of each of the following aspects with the help of the 5-grade scale where 1 = not important, 2=Fairly Important, 3=Neutral, 4=Important and 5 = very important. **Circle as appropriate**

Competency	Not Important	Fairly Important	Neutral	Important	Very Important
Field-specific theoretical knowledge	1	2	3	4	5
Field-specific practical skills	1	2	3	4	5
Computer skills	1	2	3	4	5
Analytical competencies	1	2	3	4	5
Problem-solving ability	1	2	3	4	5
Initiative (The ability to come up with new ideas and solutions)	1	2	3	4	5
Assertiveness, decisiveness, persistence	1	2	3	4	5

Power of concentration	1	2	3	4	5
Accuracy, attention to detail	1	2	3	4	5
Planning, coordinating and organizing	1	2	3	4	5
Applying rules and regulations	1	2	3	4	5
Loyalty, integrity	1	2	3	4	5
Written communication skills	1	2	3	4	5
Verbal communication skills	1	2	3	4	5
Use of Foreign Languages	1	2	3	4	5
Negotiation/Technical skills	1	2	3	4	5

4.2. Support to new employees- What specific arrangements does your organization have in place to equip fresh graduates with the necessary competencies? *Circle as appropriate*

Arrangements	Codes
Inductions	1
Internships	2
Workshops/Conferences	3
Training	4
Coaching	5
Study Tours	6
Others (specify):.....	96

4.3. Please, rate the professional competency of recent university graduates of various disciplines/job categories (e.g. engineers, IT specialists, Accountants etc.) employed by this organization? **1 = Not competent at all, 2=fairly competent, 3=Neutral, 4=Highly Competent, 5 = Very highly competent**

Professional Group/Discipline	Not Competent at all	Fairly Competent	Neutral	Highly Competent	Very highly Competent
Management	1	2	3	4	5
Administrative Support Staff	1	2	3	4	5
Financial Management/Accounting	1	2	3	4	5
Sales/Marketing/Communication Specialist	1	2	3	4	5
Engineering/Technical Specialist	1	2	3	4	5
Computing/IT Specialist	1	2	3	4	5
Others Specify and Rank:	1	2	3	4	5

4.4. Please, rate the professional competency of recent tertiary (Non-degree) education graduates employed by this organization?

1 = Not competent at all, 2 = Fairly competent, 3=Neutral, 4=Highly Competent, 5 = Very highly competent

Professional Group/Discipline	Not Competent at all	Fairly Competent	Neutral	Highly Competent	Very highly Competent
Management	1	2	3	4	5
Administrative Support Staff	1	2	3	4	5
Financial Management/Accounting	1	2	3	4	5
Sales/Marketing/Communication Specialist	1	2	3	4	5
Engineering/Technical Specialist	1	2	3	4	5
Computing/IT Specialist	1	2	3	4	5
Others Specify and Rank:	1	2	3	4	5

4.5: Are there graduates of certain training institutions that appear to perform better than others in your view?

1. Yes ☐ Go to 4.6	2. No ☐ Skip to 4.7
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4.6: If Yes, Which Higher/Tertiary education training institutions seem to produce graduates who are better performers?

Name(s) of Institution (List by order of Performance)
1.
2.
3.
5.
6.
7.
8.

4.7. Considering the graduates of various disciplines employed by this establishment, what aspects of their training do you feel needs strengthening?

Training Aspects that need strengthening
1.
2.
3.
4.
5

4.8. Are there skills and competencies needed by this establishment that are not readily available in this country?

1. Yes ☐ Skip to 4.9	2. No ☐ Skip to 4.10
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4.9. State skills and competencies needed by this establishment but are not readily available in country?

Type of skills lacking in the country and needed by your establishment
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

4.10. What suggestion(s) do you have that can make Tertiary/Higher education in the Gambia more relevant and responsive to the needs of the labour market?

1.
2.
3.
4.

SECTION 5: ASSESSING THE COOPERATION WITH TERTIARY AND HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

5.1. For the activities below, assess the frequency of involvement of your establishment with tertiary and higher education institutions. **Responses (1=Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Often, 5=No Response)**

Options	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Don't Know
Cooperation with tertiary and higher education institutions in discussing and designing curricula	1	2	3	4	5
Recent graduate recruitment through tertiary and high education institutions career and information services	1	2	3	4	5
Participation in business forums and conferences organised by tertiary and high education institutions	1	2	3	4	5
Research cooperation agreement and /or use of a tertiary and higher education institution's technical services	1	2	3	4	5

5.2. Rate from 1 to 5, the following actions your establishment would want tertiary and higher education institutions to undertake in order to enhance employability of graduate recruits. **Responses (1 indicates unimportant, 2=Fairly Important, 3=Neutral, 4=Important and 5 very important)**

Action(s)	Unimportant	Fairly Important	Neutral	Important	Very Important
Run courses that are more relevant to the needs of your establishment	1	2	3	4	5
Include more practical classes in courses	1	2	3	4	5
Include compulsory work placement experience as an integral part of the curriculum	1	2	3	4	5
Provide Post-training support to graduates after they have obtained their qualifications (facilitate relations between graduates and establishments)	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION 6. ESTABLISHMENTS THAT DID NOT RECRUIT TERTIARY AND HIGHER EDUCATION GRADUATES

NB: This section should only be completed by respondents who do not recruit any graduate for the past seven years.

6.1. What are the reason(s) for your establishment not recruiting tertiary and higher education graduates during the last seven years? Where applicable, you may choose more than one option.

Reason(s)	Code
a) Lack of vacancies	1
b) The enterprise's activities do not call for recruitment of employees with this level of qualification	2
c) Shortage of graduates	3
d) Shortage of candidates with the right skills for the job	4
e) Shortage of candidates willing to adapt to the work schedule	5
f) Shortage of candidates willing to accept the type of contract	6
g) Shortage of candidates willing to accept the salary	7
h) Shortage of candidates willing to relocate	8
i) There were no applicants	9
j) Others (Specify): _____ _____	10