

**DETERMINANTS OF CAREER PATHS OF ECOTOURISM AND HOSPITALITY  
MANAGEMENT GRADUATES OF MASENO UNIVERSITY**

**BY**

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## ABSTRACT

In the recent past, there has been an influx of hospitality management university graduate employees into non hospitality organizations in Kenya. However, the main causes of this career change have not been examined. The purpose of the study was to investigate determinants of career paths of ecotourism and hospitality management graduates of Maseno University. The objectives of the study were to: determine the factors that affect career decisions of ecotourism and hospitality management graduates; ascertain the career change intentions of ecotourism and hospitality management graduates working within and outside the hospitality industry and assess the implications of the career decisions of ecotourism and hospitality management graduates on human resource management strategies of non hospitality organizations. The study also sought to find out how the graduates respond to the human resource management strategies of non hospitality organizations. The population of study was ecotourism, hotel and institution management graduates of Maseno University and their employers. The employees sampling frame was employees who graduated from Maseno University in the years 2005 to 2010 working within and outside the hospitality industry. The employers sampling frame consisted of non hospitality organizations that recruit ecotourism and hospitality management university graduates from Maseno University. Snowballing and convenience sampling were used to identify 150 employees and 4 employer representatives respectively. The survey tools used were self-administered questionnaires and structured interviews. Quantitative and qualitative data was analyzed and presented using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) 17 and thematic analysis respectively. The means, frequencies, percentages, regression and significance tests were computed and presented using tables. Exploratory factor analysis using principal axis factoring was used to identify key factors. Any themes, similarities and differences in the qualitative data were also established. The study revealed that the graduates main career path determinants are unpredictable events, career satisfaction, chance and permanency of employment. Most of the graduates (n=73, 69.50%) have also secured jobs in the hospitality industry where they work as either hospitality practitioners or tutors in academic institutions. The others working in non hospitality organizations (n=32, 30.50%) were graduate clerks, sales persons, management trainees among other positions. The findings indicate that a significant number of graduates (n=52, 49.50%) would like to build permanent careers outside the hospitality industry particularly in the banking sector. The findings further show that the graduates career decisions affect the compensation, training and recruitment strategies of employers and that the employers human resource management strategies also influence the graduates career decisions. The study was significant for several reasons. First, results arising from this study revealed why most hospitality graduates accept employment in non hospitality organizations and the value they offer to their employers. The study also established human resource management strategies non hospitality organizations use to make the graduates add value to the organization considering that most of the graduates hold hospitality management qualifications and thus are not professionals outside the hospitality arena. Further to this, information arising from it was added to the existing knowledge on the opportunities that exist in the prevailing business environment for managing the negative impact that career change amongst hospitality graduates has on employees, employers and the nation at large. Lastly, the study provided insights into the way the academic curriculum can be geared towards positively responding to the more general and flexible labour markets that exist in the modern business

world. The study recommended that further research should be conducted on the major career path determinants of graduates in all stages of their careers. The impact that hospitality management university graduates entry into non hospitality organizations has on hospitality employers should also be established and the industry's efforts towards managing this trend revealed. The career satisfaction levels and career progression of hospitality management university graduates working in non hospitality organizations should also be studied in detail.

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Tourism is one of the world's major international trade categories having provided 6-7% of the overall number of jobs both directly and indirectly in 2008 (UNWTO, 2009). In Kenya, tourism is a leading economic activity having generated 73.68 billion Kenyan shillings in earnings (Ministry of tourism, Kenya, 2011) and employed thousands in 2010. Among those employed are hospitality and tourism students who graduate from institutions of higher learning. Those working within the hospitality industry do so in places such as hotels, restaurants, clubs, game parks, theme parks, airlines and catering establishments. However, there has been an increase in the number of hospitality management graduates working outside the hospitality industry (O'leary & Deegan, 2005). Furthermore, a majority of those working in the hospitality industry have plans to leave the industry (Hjalager & Andersen, 2001). Researchers such as Wong & Liu (2009) have also established that most defectors eventually establish successful careers outside the hospitality industry. The new industries that these graduates venture into include the banking, insurance and information and communication technology industries.

Despite these trends, not many studies have been conducted to ascertain why most hospitality management graduates are not employed in the hospitality industry despite their competent qualifications. Previous studies (Garavan et al 1996 & Kniveton, 2004), conducted outside Kenya have focused on the graduates career anchors and career choices. Other studies conducted in Kenya, for example, Irungu (2006) have tackled employee satisfaction, dissatisfaction and turnover. However, there is much more to career decisions than career anchors, choice,

satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Factors such as general economy, labour market conditions, chance and unpredictable events can also impact on employees career decisions. But then, little research has been conducted on these factors.

The intentions of hospitality management graduates working in the hospitality industry to stay within the industry has not received adequate scholarly attention. Previous studies, for example, Weaver (2009) have addressed hospitality management graduates career perceptions with little regard to the graduates desired and actual career paths. In light of this, the current study purposed to investigate determinants of career paths of Maseno University's ecotourism and hospitality management graduates.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Despite the observed entry of hospitality management university graduates into non hospitality organizations in Kenya, very little research has been done to examine the root causes of these career deviations. Although these graduates hold competent qualifications in hospitality management, a significant proportion do not work in the hospitality industry. There has been an influx of hospitality management graduates into other industries with the highest entries being the banking industry. This could indicate either career changes or intentions to change careers among the graduates. It also highlights the possibility that the graduates may be holding competencies, skills and qualifications that are attractive and beneficial to non hospitality employers (O'leary & Deegan, 2005).

Career change often occurs when one decides to leave a job and subsequently an industry with an intention of never working in that industry again. Several factors have been cited as determinants of employee's career decisions and subsequent career paths. They include individual factors such as skills, personalities, academic qualifications, relationships, (Agarwala, 2008; Davies & Wilson, 1999), career anchors (Danziger & Valency, 2006), occupational choices, career perceptions, life events, job satisfaction levels, (Lau & Pang, 1995; Davies & Wilson, 1999) and external factors such as chance, (Agarwala, 2008) employer needs, general economy and labour market conditions.

Previous studies (Weaver, 2009; Rheede et al, 2009) have found that both perceptions of the actual job as well as characteristics of the hospitality industry are important considerations when individuals decide on whether to pursue hospitality related careers or to opt for employment in another industry. Carbery (2003) too posits that "there is abundant literature highlighting that hospitality employees report dissatisfaction with their career progressions and also intentions to leave".

Unfortunately, most organizations still focus on human resource policies in dealing with turnover problems despite studies, for example, Rheede et al (2009) that evidence that the policies on their own cannot ensure retention of employees within the hospitality industry. However, the concept of managing the root causes of employees' career deviations has not been widely studied. In addition, very little effort has been made to study the determinants of career paths of employees in Kenya. Previous studies, for example, Irungu (2006), have focused on employee turnover and career perceptions of hospitality management undergraduate students. Furthermore, the

researcher in this study found very little literature on factors affecting career decisions of hospitality graduates in Kenya. The root causes and impact of career deviations among hospitality graduates therefore need to be examined before they adversely affect the hospitality industry.

### **1.3 Purpose and Objectives of the Study**

#### **1.3.1 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study was to come up with strategies that would reduce the career change intentions of ecotourism and hospitality graduates of Maseno University with a view of stabilizing the human resource base in the hospitality industry and thus the relevance of ecotourism and hospitality management training in the university.

#### **1.3.2 Overall objective**

The overall objective of the study was to examine the determinants of career paths of ecotourism and hospitality management graduates of Maseno University and the human resource management implications.

#### **1.3.3 Specific objectives**

The specific objectives of the study were:

1. To determine the factors that affect career decisions of ecotourism and hospitality management graduates of Maseno University.

2. To ascertain the career change intentions of ecotourism and hospitality management graduates of Maseno University working within and outside the hospitality industry.
3. To assess the implications of the career decisions of ecotourism and hospitality management graduates of Maseno University on human resource management strategies of non hospitality organizations in Kenya.
4. To assess the implications of the human resource management strategies of non hospitality organizations in Kenya on the career decisions of ecotourism and hospitality management graduates of Maseno University.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

1. What are the factors that influence career decisions of ecotourism and hospitality management graduates of Maseno University?
2. What are the career change intentions of ecotourism and hospitality management graduates of Maseno University?
3. What implications do the career decisions of ecotourism and hospitality management graduates of Maseno University have on human resource management strategies of non hospitality organizations in Kenya?
4. What implications do the human resource management strategies of non hospitality organizations in Kenya have on the career decisions of ecotourism and hospitality management graduates of Maseno University?

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study was significant for several reasons. First, results arising from this study revealed to employers why most hospitality graduates accept employment in non hospitality organizations and the value they offer to their employers. The study also established human resource management strategies non hospitality organizations use to make the graduates add value to the organization considering that most of the graduates hold hospitality management qualifications and thus are not professionals outside the hospitality arena. Further to this, information arising from the study added to the existing knowledge on the opportunities that exist in the prevailing business environment for managing the negative impact that career change amongst hospitality graduates has on employees, employers and the nation at large. The study further provided insights into the way the academic curriculum can be geared towards positively responding to the more general and flexible labour markets that exist in the modern business world.

### **1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study**

Due to time and financial constraints, the participants chosen for the study were limited to Maseno University's ecotourism and hospitality management graduates of the years 2005 to 2010.

### **1.7 Conceptual Framework**

As illustrated in figure 1, the researcher conceptualized that the career decisions of graduates and subsequent career paths were determined by factors such as career perceptions, choice (Lau and Pang, 1995), career anchors (Danziger & Valency, 2006), chance (Agarwala, 2008), opportunity,

unpredictable events (Davies and Wilson, 1999), career stage (Dessler, 1997), general economy, employer needs and labour market conditions (Mondy, 1996).

The graduates were expected to establish careers in industries which they perceived satisfied their career needs and made career choices based on chances and opportunities available. In addition, the graduates may have been forced to change careers due to unpredictable events such as redundancies, accidents and injuries. They may also have responded accordingly to societal pressure from family members, coworkers, spouses and further reacted to human resource management strategies of employer organizations within and outside the hospitality industry. The graduates may have had to cope with periods of economic boom, recession and stagnation as well as changing labour market conditions which may have experienced periods of qualified employee shortage and surplus.

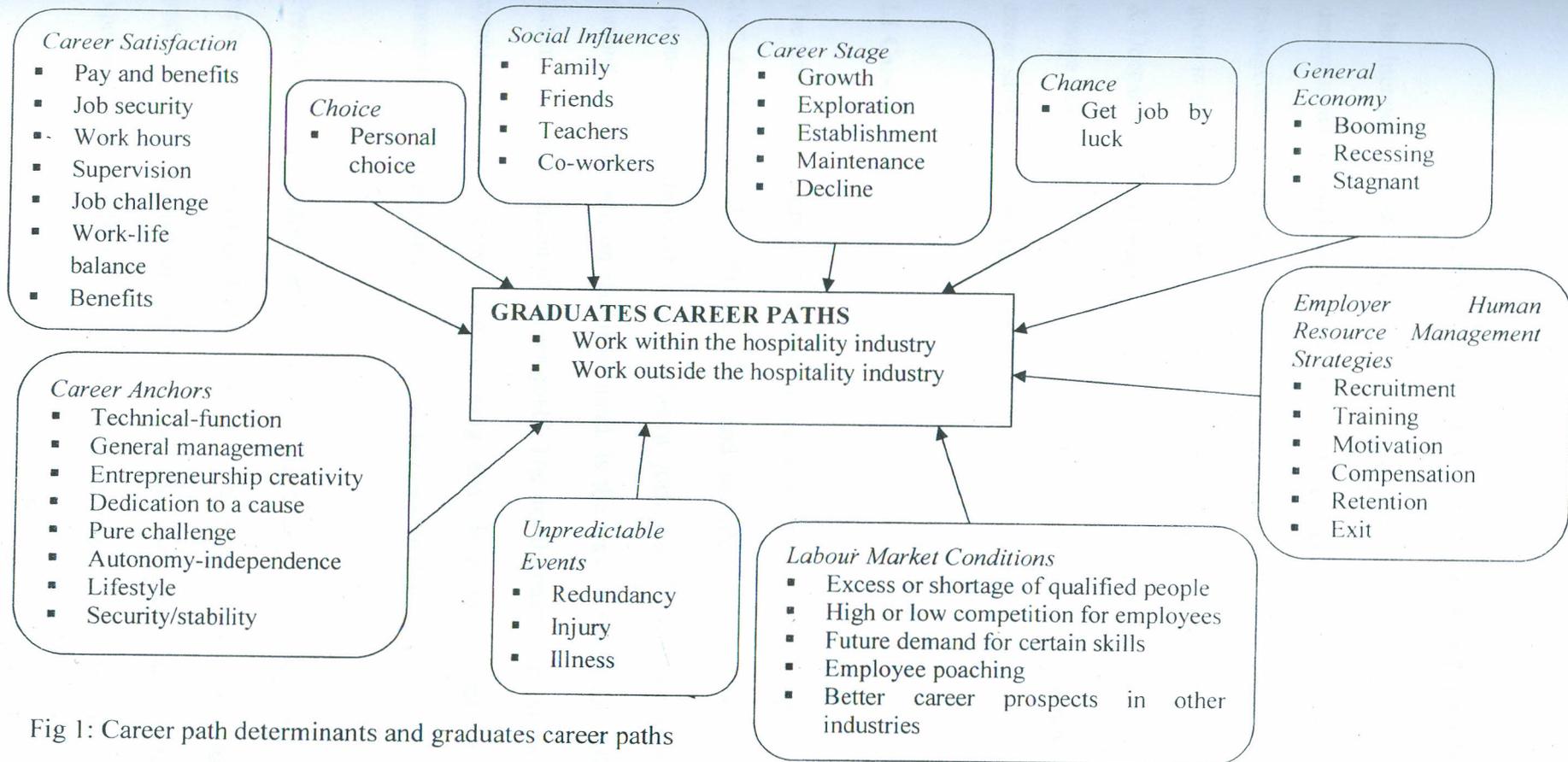


Fig 1: Career path determinants and graduates career paths

Source: Researcher's conceptual framework (2012)

## 2.0 CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review chapter critically analyses literature and previous studies conducted on determinants of employee career paths. The career decisions of employees and human resource management strategies of employers are discussed in detail. Although several studies have been given in the literature on career change intentions of hospitality employees for example O'leary & Deegan (2005); Hjalager & Andersen (2001), there have not been much literature on career change intentions of employees in Kenya. Few studies, for example by Irungu (2006) address career satisfaction and turnover.

### 2.1 Career Path

The term career refers to "the general course a person chooses to pursue throughout the working life" (Mondy et al, 1996, p. 300) and includes specific jobs performed, the associated responsibilities, transformations between jobs and feelings of satisfaction with the career pursued. Career path, on the other hand, is the way in which an individual's career develops leading to the realization of career goals. The development depends on factors such as personal capabilities, skills, experience, training and development opportunities. Kniveton (2004) contends that few people hold onto a single career in their entire life.

Previous studies (Altman & Brothers, 1995; O'leary & Deegan, 2005) have been conducted on the career strategies of graduates. Arnold & Davey (1994); Lau & Pang (1995) noted that fresh graduates joined the labour market without concrete career plans due to lack of knowledge and experience that would otherwise facilitate strategic career development. O'leary & Deegan

(2005) also revealed significant drop-out rate from the tourism and hospitality industry. The study found that within five years of employment, most graduates had left employment in the hospitality industry or chose never to enter the industry. Hjalager & Andersen (2001) further established that “jobs in tourism are not the first career choice among young people in addition to being regarded as a temporary solution even for those with dedicated professional training”. As a result, most tourism professionals tend to look for jobs in other sectors and often end up establishing successful careers outside the hospitality industry.

## **2.2 Career Path Determinants**

Several factors can affect career decisions of hospitality employees. They include personal interests, aptitudes, occupational skills, career anchors, demographics, (Dessler, 1997, p. 388-389), employer needs, labour market conditions (Mondy, 1996), chance (Garavan et al, 1996), unpredictable events (Davies & Wilson, 1999), job and career satisfaction (O’leary & Deegan, 2005).

### **2.2.1 Career stages and anchors**

People go through various career stages that influence their career decisions. Dessler, (1997, p. 385-386) identifies these stages as “the growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance and decline stages”. Dessler (1997, p. 385-386) further describes “the growth stage as the stage where an individual’s career preferences are most influenced by personal interests and desires and occurs from birth to age 14. The exploration stage occurs between ages 15 and 24. In this stage, a person tries alternative occupations and starts developing realistic expectations of own

capabilities and interests. The establishment stage, which is the stage where most graduates would fall, occurs between ages 24 to 44 and is the stage where a person attempts to establish a permanent career in the chosen field. This stage is made up of the trial, stabilization and midcareer crisis sub-stages. The trial substage occurs between ages 25 to 30 and is the stage where most people would change jobs when not satisfied with the chosen field. Stabilization substage occurs between ages 30 to 40 and is the substage where a person establishes solid career goals and attempts to achieve these goals. The midcareer crisis substage occurs between ages 34 to 46. In this stage, a person critically analyzes the career goals that can be achieved in reality and identifies inevitable career sacrifices. The maintenance stage occurs between ages 45 to 65. It is the stage where most people actually establish permanent careers and experience minimal career deviations. The final stage, which is the decline stage, occurs as one approaches retirement”.

Dessler (1997, p. 383) defines career planning as “a continuing process of discovery in which a person slowly develops a clear understanding of preferred occupation and career based on talents, abilities, motives, needs, attitudes and values”. Career anchors are values, motives and competencies that dictate ones desires in pursuing a career (Danziger & Valency, 2006). When these values, motives and competencies are met, then career commitment is enhanced and career change intentions are minimized. Individuals usually discover a dominant career anchor, which is a value that a person will not give up if a choice is to be made, during their employment span. Consequently, managers often build their careers based on the dominant career anchor which then becomes the focus of their careers albeit this anchor may evolve over time as an individual further understands personal values. Garavan et al, (1996) also point that career anchors can

hinder personal growth. They argue that once an employee perceives that the desired anchor has been satisfied, then the motivation to move into and perform in a different area diminishes.

There are eight career anchors: "technical or functional competence, general management competence, autonomy and/or independence, security and stability, entrepreneurial creativity, pure challenge, lifestyle and sense of service or dedication to a cause" (Dessler, 1997, p. 389-390; Danziger & Valency, 2006).

According to Dessler 1997, p. 389-390 "the anchor for technicians is the technical or functional competence anchor in which an individual tends to be motivated by the talent or skill possessed. The employee also works best where jobs give autonomy and specialization in performing tasks. A person with general management competence anchor on the contrary detests specialization and is motivated by advancement. An employee holding the autonomy and/or independence anchor is driven by the need to do things at own pace and standards. Moreover, individuals concerned with security and stability would want predictable futures and seek jobs, organizations and careers that reflect a sense of employee's security as indicated by conditions such as geographical security, organizational security and the availability of retirement plans in the employment package. An individual's desires to create new things or reshape old ones will be the ideal reflection of a person with entrepreneurial creativity anchor. In contrast, a person with the pure challenge anchor is driven by challenge at the work place. People with the lifestyle anchor desire careers that are integrated with their total lifestyle and will seek organizations or industries that have cultures that respect personal and life concerns. Lastly, an individual

possessing the sense of service or dedication to a cause anchor is oriented towards values such as the existence of a match between organizational values and own personal values”.

Kniveton (2004) classified these anchors into three sets. The talent based anchors which are managerial competency, technical/functional competency and entrepreneurial creativity, value based anchors consisting of pure challenge and dedication and service to a cause and need based anchors which include autonomy, lifestyle and security.

Previous studies for example (Kniveton, 2004), have been conducted on employee career anchors. (Ross, 1997 in Hjalager & Andersen, 2001) found that most employees focus on autonomy, lifestyle and technical competence in favour of higher qualifications, challenge and entrepreneurial creativity. Kniveton (2004) nonetheless revealed that gender and age influence employee career anchors. The study found that younger workers preferred talent based anchors while need based anchors appealed more to older workers. It was further deduced that value based anchors mattered equally to both younger and older employees. Kniveton (2004) also established that male and female managers had different perceptions of their career anchors after the study showed that male managers valued talent based anchors particularly technical/functional competency more than female managers. The other anchors however had similar appeal to both genders.

### 2.2.2 Career satisfaction

Career satisfaction is derived when one is content with the job performed and career pursued. Studies (Erdem & Cho, 2007; Zheng & Sen, 2009; Tutuncu & Kozak, 2007) have been conducted on the factors affecting the job and career satisfaction levels of hospitality employees. A study conducted by Tutuncu & Kozak (2007) revealed that overall job satisfaction was determined by certain intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Among the numerous factors identified as causes of job dissatisfaction and subsequent career change intentions within the hospitality industry are poor remuneration, unsuitable working hours, lack of work-life balance, lack of career opportunities, insufficient staff development, seasonality, insecurity and unchallenging work (O'leary & Deegan, 2005). Some of these factors are industrial in nature in that they are specific characteristics of the hospitality industry notably the hotel's sector. They also affect all levels of staff. The industrial factors that enhance career satisfaction among hospitality employees include "food appeal, consumption of tourism products, assisting tourists, discovering the tourism industry" (Weaver, 2009), perks and global nature of tourism industry. Seasonality of business, job insecurity, unsocial working hours and insufficient staff development on the other hand are sources of dissatisfaction inherent to the hospitality industry.

For line managers, characteristics such as odd work hours, poor remuneration, continuous working hours, public contact, fluctuating demand, simultaneous production and consumption pose the greatest challenges while long work hours, staffing problems, supervisory challenges and perishability of inventory make working hard for the managers. Irungu (2006) noted that job challenge, conducive work environment, adequate compensation, satisfactory managerial

relationships and personal development opportunities are factors that enhance job satisfaction levels of middle and lower level hotel employees in Kenya. The study further concluded that harsh working conditions, inefficient remuneration practices, poor supervision, favouritism and bureaucracy are sources of job dissatisfaction.

Weaver (2009) in studying the perceptions of job quality in the tourism industry based on the views of recent graduates of a university's tourism management programme, established that graduates associate challenge and accomplishment at the workplace, adequate responsibilities and availability of learning and growing opportunities with good jobs and positive development as professionals. Job security then again becomes a concern to the graduates during periods of economic turmoil such as recessions.

Often, employees who are dissatisfied with their jobs and perceive this dissatisfaction to be a reflection of the general working conditions in an industry will attempt to change careers. Several studies (Gunlu et al, 2010; Rheede et al, 2009) have been undertaken to establish the link between job satisfaction and career decisions of hospitality employees. Ghiselli et al, (2001), studied satisfaction and turnover intent among foodservice managers, and found that satisfaction plays a major part in managers' career change intentions. Another study conducted by Tutuncu & Kozak (2007) also established that overall job satisfaction levels influence employees' decisions to build careers in the hotel industry. However, previous studies (Weaver, 2009; Irungu, 2006) have shown that workers would still remain in their jobs and industries despite not being satisfied. Irungu, (2006) concluded that this career change resilience could have been due to the poor economic conditions and high unemployment rates that prevailed in Kenya during the

study period. These findings clearly indicate that some of the factors that dictate employees' career decisions are beyond the control of the employee. These constraints include employers' needs, general economy and labour market conditions.

### **2.2.3 The economy and labour market conditions**

General economic conditions affect both employers and employees (Arnold & Davey, 1994). Careers thus need to be adapted to changing economic conditions and this may mean choosing a career in an entirely different field or modifying ones career path accordingly. Employment opportunities reduce in times of economic downturns since most companies try to cut down on staff numbers and costs. As a result, during recessions, employees tend to look for jobs that would help them meet their basic needs irrespective of whether the jobs are within or outside their professional industries. They may also opt to pursue further education or search for alternative specialist areas to work in during periods of job scarcity. At the same time, it becomes easier for organizations to recruit qualified workers since most jobless professionals would be willing to accept any employment conditions. However, a booming economy would witness increased levels of business activities and staff recruitment in line with the rise in customer demand. Employees would also become more confident and secure enough to reject unfavourable employment terms and jobs that do not appeal to their interests or are not in line with their career plans, with the hopes of getting better options later. Consequently, it becomes difficult for organizations to recruit qualified workers during periods of economic booms.

Labour market conditions influence both employees and employers (Agarwala, 2008). Mondy (1996) asserts that organizations workforces change in response to labour forces. Labour market

conditions often determine the payment rates, skills, experience and qualifications employers seek. Employers pay less when there is surplus of qualified staff in the labour market than they would when there is shortage of the same. An employee, on the other hand, may decide to pursue an occupation with high career prospects and shun one without a promising future.

Hjalager & Andersen (2001) further established that career change among employees could also be attributed to the tourism industry's inability and at times reluctance to take advantage of the highly dedicated and trained tourism professionals who also hold clear career prospects within the tourism industry. This is because most hospitality employers rely heavily on part-time employees who are considered to be more flexible and cost effective compared to their counterparts. In addition, employers wrongfully assume that hospitality employees require basic skills only to perform effectively and therefore see no need to hire professionals who they consider to be overqualified.

#### **2.2.4 Chance, unpredictable events and social influences**

"Chance is the availability of a job when looking for one" (Mathis and Jackson, 2008, p. 298). Garavan et al (1996), argue that chance can be a major career choice determinant and can make or break an individual's career. Chance can drive an employee towards accepting an unanticipated job or career. However, "an employee can also change careers when the possibility of finding employment in a chosen field is not promising" (Dessler 1997, p. 391).

Davies & Wilson (1999) suggest that unpredictable events could affect employees' subsequent career decisions and employees may consider changing careers when their lives have been affected by events such as divorce, redundancies, accidents and illnesses.

Employee career decisions can also be influenced by family, peers, spouse, friends, relatives, co-workers and managers (Agarwala, 2008; Garavan et al, 1996). These relations can directly or indirectly pressure an employee against pursuing certain careers in favour of others (Garavan et al, 1996).

### **2.3 Human Resource Management Strategies of Employers**

"Labour costs are among the highest costs for most hospitality establishments" (Boella, 1997, p. 21). As a result, efforts are always drawn towards effectively managing human resources. Employee costs rise when organizations experience high staff turnover, workplace accidents, poaching from competitors and low customer demand.

Human resource management strategies are moves and approaches that are directed towards optimal utilization of staff within existing legal, economic and financial constraints imposed on an organization. These strategies include recruitment, training, compensation, motivation, retention and exit strategies. Dessler, (1997, p. 383) believes that "manpower planning, which entails recruitment, placement, appraisal, compensation, training and development, plays a major role in an employee's career planning and development. Hence, many companies pursue human resource management strategies that focus on these activities".

According to Dessler (1997, p. 383), "organizations that pursue organizational career development focus to managing human resources, adapt the following strategies. First, manpower planning is used to provide overall information on employees' career paths, interests and preferences. Second, performance appraisal takes into account personal goals and development plans. Third, recruitment and placement becomes a basis for matching employees and jobs depending on factors such as employee's career interests. Fourth, compensation involves rewarding non-job-related activities and lastly, training and development becomes geared towards employee growth orientation". When an organization employs graduates with little or no specialist qualifications in the industry, it is anticipated that the organization will have to recruit them based on desired qualities and qualifications, and then invest in effectively developing, motivating, compensating and retaining them, in order to make them assets in the new industry, thus the need for effective personnel management strategies. These human resource management strategies can in turn influence the graduates' career decisions by attracting them to industries that provide favourable employment and growth opportunities irrespective of whether the industries are within or outside the hospitality sphere.

#### **2.4 Gaps in Knowledge**

The first gap identified from the literature review is that despite a rise in the number of hospitality management graduates working in non hospitality organizations in Kenya, the factors affecting their career decisions have not been widely examined. Furthermore, little has been documented about the implications of these graduates' career decisions on human resource management strategies, notably recruitment, training, compensation, motivation, retention and

exit strategies of non hospitality organizations and how these strategies in turn affect the graduates career decisions. Some career choice determinants such as career perceptions, anchors, choice, social influences, life events, chance, general economy and labour market conditions also call for attention. These limitations highlighted gaps in knowledge that needed to be filled.

### 3.1 Research Design

The research design is a plan or blueprint for conducting a study. It outlines the methods and procedures that will be used to collect and analyze data. The design should be clear, concise, and easy to follow. It should also be flexible enough to allow for changes if necessary. The design should be based on the research objectives and the research questions. It should also take into account the resources available and the time constraints. The design should be approved by the appropriate ethics committee. The design should be documented in a research protocol. The design should be followed throughout the study. The design should be evaluated at the end of the study.

### 3.2 Target Population

The target population is the group of individuals that the researcher is interested in studying. It is the group of individuals that the researcher wants to generalize the findings to. The target population should be clearly defined and measurable. It should be representative of the population of interest. The target population should be accessible to the researcher. The target population should be willing to participate in the study. The target population should be diverse enough to allow for generalization. The target population should be stable over time. The target population should be free from bias. The target population should be representative of the population of interest. The target population should be accessible to the researcher. The target population should be willing to participate in the study. The target population should be diverse enough to allow for generalization. The target population should be stable over time. The target population should be free from bias.

### **3.0 CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter provides an overview of how the research was conducted by giving details of the measuring instruments, sampling and data analysis techniques used.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The researcher used descriptive survey design. Kombo (2006, p. 71) describes descriptive survey design as “a method of gathering information through the administration of questionnaires and conducting of interviews on sample representatives. It is appropriate for use when collecting information on social issues”. Subsequently, the researcher in this study administered structured questionnaires and interviews on selected graduates and employers in an attempt to establish their opinions and perceptions towards career decisions.

#### **3.2 Target Population**

“An effective population should have certain qualities that include representativeness, accessibility and knowledge of the issue being studied” (Cohen et al, 2007, p. 108-110). The population of study was employed graduates who studied ecotourism and hospitality management at Maseno University and non hospitality organizations which recruit ecotourism and hospitality management graduates. The first lot of students from the Department graduated in the year 2000. Since then, approximately 346 students have graduated.



The questionnaires administered were sent to the graduates by postal and electronic mail. Where possible, the researcher personally distributed them. The survey was accompanied by a cover letter that explained the study and how to complete it. 82 questionnaires were distributed via postal mail. A further 63 were sent via email. 5 questionnaires were hand delivered. A pre paid postage envelope was also provided so that the graduates could return their completed surveys to the researcher. Data from the questionnaires was collected in the months of March, April and May, 2011. The researcher had targeted 150 respondents. The total number of responses was 109 giving a response rate of 71.7%. There were 105 usable questionnaires thus giving a usable response rate of 69%. However, response rates may have been influenced by the use of email survey and the length of the questionnaire which was still long despite earlier efforts to reduce its length.

The answered questionnaires were thereafter analyzed and the industries that recruit hospitality management graduates identified. Selection of non hospitality organizations which recruit hospitality management graduates was done through purposive and convenience sampling. Purposive sampling has an advantage of accessing information rich respondents though it may lead to researcher bias due to researcher's perceptions of who the information rich candidate is. Convenience sampling was then used to identify managers working in the selected organizations. The managers were thereafter interviewed. However, convenience sampling relies heavily on chance and targets easy-to-find respondents, thus leaving room for respondent bias.

### **3.4 Data Collection Instruments**

The data gathering instruments used in this study were survey questionnaires and structured interviews since they enhance confidentiality, save on time and minimize interviewer bias. "However, unlike interviews, survey questionnaires often have low response rates and offer minimal researcher-respondent contact which may limit the amount of information gathered" (Kombo, 2006, p. 91) and prevent the chance to probe for clarity in the responses provided.

#### **3.4.1 Questionnaire development**

The questionnaires administered to the graduates entailed open and close ended questions on the graduates' demographic characteristics, career decisions and career change intentions. Likert scales were used to measure the graduates' job and career perceptions. Likert scales are often used in measuring negative, neutral and positive attitudes towards objects (Clark et al, 1998). Likert scales compute midpoint scores that indicate neutrality of opinion. Scales with at least five degrees of relative agreement, satisfaction and importance and assigned nominal values of 1 to 5, (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) were used in this study. 3 was the mid score. Any scores below 3 meant negative values while scores above 3 meant positive values.

The dependent variable was the graduates career paths. The career paths reflected what the graduates actually did during the time of this study while the desired career paths reflected what the graduates actually wanted to do in the future. The study examined graduates who wanted to work within the hospitality industry and those who would wish to change careers and work in non hospitality organizations. The dependent variable was therefore their career paths. In order

to measure the dependent variable, the respondents had to indicate the industries they were working in. They then had to indicate whether they would wish to establish permanent careers within the hospitality industry or whether they would wish to leave the hospitality industry. The graduates finally had to indicate the paths they wanted to adopt in the future.

The independent variable was the graduates career path determinants. These determinants were unpredictable events, career anchors, social pressure, permanency of employment, chance, labour market conditions, choice, economic conditions, opportunity and career satisfaction. The independent variables were each based on one statement to which each graduate responded using five-point likert scales to indicate agreement (1=Strongly disagree to 5= Strongly agree) and extent (1= To no extent at all to 5=To a very large extent).

Career anchors were measured using an instrument that asked the graduates to tick the most and least important career anchors. Career satisfaction was evaluated using 14 items on a five-point likert scale (1=Not satisfied at all to 5=Extremely satisfied) (Appendix A).

### **3.4.2 Interview schedule**

The structured interview administered to the managers moreover entailed open questions on the impact of the graduates' career decisions on human resource management strategies of the employers. (Appendix B). The researcher took two months (June and July 2011) to conduct interviews on four managers working in the banking, food production and insurance industries.

### 3.5 Reliability and Validity of Research Instruments

The reliability and validity of the measuring instruments were determined. According to Field, (2006, p. 666), "reliability is the consistency of a measurement device". It refers to the degree to which an instrument measures the same way each time it is used under the same conditions with the same subjects. Validity, on the other hand, is the extent to which an instrument actually measures what it is supposed to (Clark et al, 1998).

The reliability and validity of the measuring instruments were enhanced through pilot studies. Piloting helped identify and correct any problems on the questionnaires and interview schedules before they were administered to the final representatives. The ten graduates and manager who participated in the pilot studies were thereafter excluded from the final sample. Eventually, the numbers of questions in the questionnaire were reduced since the graduates who participated in the pilot tests complained of its long length.

The Cronbach's alpha for the different scales in the questionnaires were also computed as part of reliability testing. The Cronbach's alpha for the scale on the graduates perceived career path determinants was .72, for the graduates actual career path determinants .85, for the graduates career satisfaction levels .82, for the graduates perceptions on hospitality careers .71 and for the graduates entry into new industries .75. Thus these alpha scores were accepted since "a score of at least 0.70 is considered good" (Field, 2006, p 667-680). Face validity was also used to determine if the questionnaires and interview schedules actually measured the graduates' career

path determinants and consequent impact on human resource management strategies of employer organizations.

### **3.6 Data Analysis and Presentation**

Measures of distribution, dispersion and central tendency were analyzed. The means, frequencies, percentages, regressions and factor loadings were computed. The means were used to establish the average age of the graduates and rank the importance of the career path determinants, career satisfaction levels, perceptions towards the hospitality industry and desired new industries. An independent sample t test was used to establish the mean differences between the genders on the graduates perceived and actual career path determinants. The frequencies and percentages formed the basis of comparisons between the graduates' demographics and human capital characteristics, least important career anchors, most important career anchors and career change intentions. Cross tabulation was used to establish associations between variables such as age and career change intentions and industry and career change intentions.

Exploratory factor analysis was computed using principal axis factor and was used to identify key factors such as the graduates career path determinants, factors that influence the graduates satisfaction levels and characteristics of the new industries that the graduates would like to move into. "Factor analysis identifies underlying factors or latent variables present in the patterns among a set of measures" (Blaikie, 2009, p.220). Sample adequacy was ascertained using Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO). Blaikie (2009, p.221) "recommends a KMO value  $>.5$  for factor analysis". KMO values for perceived career path determinants was 0.59, actual career path determinants 0.71, satisfaction with various aspects of the current industry 0.65 and what the

new industries will offer 0.57. The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity values recorded for all the variable sets were highly significant (i.e.  $p < 0.001$ ) an indication that the R-matrices obtained were not identity matrices. Average communalities of  $>.5$  were recorded for all the observed variables. This means that the sample size for this study met the sample adequacy criteria for factor analysis. Varimax rotation was used.

Multiple linear regression was then used to identify the variables contributions to the various predictors. "Multiple regression is a multivariate explanatory analysis tool that indicates relationships between predictor and outcome variables" (Blaikie, 2009, p.146). Hierarchical multiple linear regression was used with entry and backward methods. The model fit was tested using F-statistics,  $p < .001$ . Beta values were used to determine the greatest and least contributor variables and how strongly each predictor variable influenced the criterion variable.  $R^2$  was used to determine the proportion of the variance in the criterion variable accounted by the model.

Thematic analysis on the other hand was used to analyze qualitative information on the graduates' career decisions and examine the impact of these decisions on human resource management strategies of employers in the banking, insurance and food production sectors. Thematic analysis was also used to determine the extent to which the employer's human resource management strategies in turn influence the graduates' career decisions. Consequently, career decisions and human resource management strategies (recruitment, training, compensation, motivation, retention and exit) of all graduates and employers were compared. Any themes, similarities and differences from which further deductions could be made were then established.

## 4.0 CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter provides results of the study which are presented in tables and discussed in detail.

### 4.1 Demographics and Human Capital Characteristics of the Respondents

Questionnaire responses were obtained from 105 graduates. Of the sample 65 (62%) were male and 40 (38%) female. Regarding marital status, 74 (70.50%) of the respondents were single and 31 (29.50%) married. None was separated, divorced or widowed. The age of the graduates ranged from 23 to 40 years with an average age of 27.35 years. Concerning year of graduation, 12 (11.40%) of the respondents had graduated with their first hospitality management degree in the year 2005, 21 (20%) in 2006, 8 (7.60%) in 2007, 6 (5.70%) in 2008, 18 (17.10%) in 2009 and 40 (38.10%) in 2010 (See table 4.1).

As regards further qualifications attained, 69 (65.70%) of the graduates had not pursued any further qualifications since graduating. However, 36 (34.30%) had pursued further qualification after graduating with 8 (7.60%) pursuing Masters in business administration (MBA), 8 (7.60%) Masters in hospitality management, 6 (5.70%) Certified Public Accountant (CPA), 2 (1.90%) Masters in arts, 2 (1.90%) Certificate in banking, 2 (1.90%) Certificate in project planning and management, 2 (1.90%) Certificate in French, 2 (1.9%), Diploma in entrepreneurship management and 2 (1.90%) Certificate in information technology. These findings highlight that a significant number of graduates who have pursued further qualifications have done so in subjects such as finance and business that are not directly linked to the hospitality industry.

Table 4.1: Demographic and human capital characteristics of respondents

Demographics	Frequency	Valid percent
Gender of respondents		
Male	65	61.90
Female	40	38.10
<b>Total</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Marital status of respondents		
Married	31	29.50
Single	74	70.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Year of graduation		
2005	12	11.40
2006	21	20.00
2007	8	7.60
2008	6	5.70
2009	18	17.10
2010	40	38.10
<b>Total</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Levels of experience in current industries		
Under 1 year	54	51.40
1 year	20	19.00
2 years	10	9.50
3 years	2	1.90
4 years	11	10.50
5 years	6	5.70
Over 5 years	2	1.90
<b>Total</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Levels of management in current industry		
Top level management	6	5.70
Middle level management	29	27.60
Lower level management	38	36.20
Operative	32	30.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Past industries the graduates have ever worked in included hospitality, tertiary education, security, technology, banking, non-governmental parastatal, fleet management and consultancy, commerce, research, entrepreneurship, food production, insurance, design, printing and health care. From the finding, it is apparent that some of the graduates have changed jobs several times indicating that there is significant job mobility amongst them.

About employment, 73 (69.50%) of respondents were at the time of the study employed within the hospitality industry and 32 (30.50%) were employed in non hospitality organizations. Those working in non hospitality organizations were involved in a variety of areas including banking (n=12, 11.43%), energy technology (n=4, 3.81%) information and communication technology (n=4, 3.81%), non-governmental organizations (n=4, 3.81%), fleet management and consultancy (n=2, 1.90%), commerce (n=2, 1.90%), revenue collection (n=2, 1.90%), design (n=1, 0.95%) and printing (n=1, 0.95%). These findings of the study highlight that hospitality management graduates are able to successfully secure employment in fields outside the hospitality industry thus presenting a clear indication that the hospitality industry shares its labour market with other trades.

Pertaining to experience, 54 (51.40%) of the respondents had less than 1 year of experience in their current industries. 20 (19.00%) had 1 year experience, 10 (9.50%) had 2 years experience, 2 (1.90%) had 3 years experience, 11 (10.50%) had 4 years experience, 6 (5.70%) had 5 years experience and 2 (1.90%) had over 5 years experience (See table 4.1).

Concerning managerial positions held, 6 (5.70 %) of the respondents were top level managers, 29 (27.60%) middle level managers, 38 (36.20%) lower level managers and 32 (30.50%) operatives. 49 of the graduates working in the hospitality industry were managers while 24 were operatives. Of the 12 graduates working in the banking industry, 8 were operatives while 4 were managers. The other graduates working in the energy technology, fleet management and consultancy, commerce, information and communication technology, nongovernmental organizations, design, printing and revenue collection industries were all managers in their respective industries. The fact that some of the graduates (n=24) working in non hospitality organizations were able to secure managerial positions shows that the degree course offered to the graduates makes them flexible and successfully equips them with managerial skills that are transferable to sectors outside the hospitality industry. The degree course that the graduates studied while at Maseno University was aimed at equipping them with Ecotourism, hotel and institution managerial skills and from the findings, it is apparent that most (n=73, 69.50%) of the graduates have been employed as managers in line with their hospitality management qualifications.

## **4.2 Factors that affect Career Decisions of Ecotourism and Hospitality Management Graduates of Maseno University**

### **4.2.1 Perceived Career Path Determinants**

Table 4.2 presents the ranked means on the factors that the graduates perceived affect their career decisions. Any value greater than 3 was considered significant.

Table 4.2: Graduates perceptions of career path determinants

Perceived career path determinants	Both genders		Male	Female
	Rank	Mean	SD	Mean
Unpredictable events	1	4.26	1.00	4.35
Career anchors	2	3.99	1.22	4.02
Social pressure	3	3.91	1.20	4.11
Chance	4	3.72	1.23	3.68
Prevailing labour market conditions	5	3.58	1.29	3.85
Personal choice	6	3.40	1.19	3.31
Prevailing economic conditions	7	3.29	1.15	3.18
Opportunity	8	2.95	1.12	2.98
Career satisfaction levels	9	2.21	1.12	2.18

*Note:* 1. To no extent at all 2. To a small extent 3. To a moderate extent 4. To a large extent 5. To a very large extent

The findings illustrate that the graduates perceived unpredictable events (4.26) to be their most important career path determinant followed by career anchors (3.99), social pressure (3.91), chance (3.72), prevailing labour market conditions (3.58), personal choice (3.40), prevailing economic conditions (3.29), opportunity (2.95) and lastly career satisfaction levels (2.21). With regard to gender, the most important career path determinant as perceived by male respondents was unpredictable events (4.35) followed by social pressure (4.11) then career anchors (4.02) while that for female respondents was unpredictable events (4.10) followed by career anchors (3.95) then chance (3.80). Chance, personal choice, prevailing economic conditions and career satisfaction levels mattered more to the female respondents than to the male respondents. However, independent t test statistic using levene's test for equality of variance showed that the only significant differences between the means emerged under labour market conditions  $t(103) = -2.77, p = .000$  with men receiving more scores than women.

The data was further subjected to exploratory factor analysis with an aim of establishing key factors that the graduates perceive affect their career decisions. Only variables with mean scores above 3 were analysed. A principal axis factor (PAF) with a varimax rotation of the seven likert scale questions from the survey questionnaire was therefore conducted on data gathered from the participants. Three key factors were computed. These factors were choice and economic factors, value based and environmental factors and luck factors. The factors explained 57.03% of the total variance thus indicating that they are significant in explaining the graduates' perceptions towards their career path determinants. Factor one accounted for 23.61%, factor two accounted for 19.20% and factor three accounted for 14.22%. Two items loaded onto factor one (personal choice and prevailing economic conditions), three items loaded onto factor two (labour market conditions, career anchors and social pressure) and two items loaded onto factor three (chance and unpredictable events) (See table 4.3).

Table 4.3: Perceived career path determinants-factor analysis

Variable	Factor		
	1	2	3
Chance			.54
Unpredictable events			.67
Personal choice	.90		
Prevailing economic conditions	.82		
Prevailing labour market conditions		.68	
Career anchors		.69	
Social pressure		.52	
<b>Percentage of variance explained</b>	<b>23.61%</b>	<b>19.20%</b>	<b>14.22%</b>

The data was then subjected to multiple linear regression aimed at identifying the variables contributions to their respective factors.

**Factor one (Choice and economic):** Two items loaded onto factor one. They were: personal choice and prevailing economic conditions. This factor was therefore labelled “choice and economic”. The R square of the two variables was 0.99 indicating that the two variables explain 99% of the variation in the choice and economic factor. The F value (3723.44) and t values registered were highly significant ( $p < .001$ ). The beta values obtained for the predictor variables indicated that the statement in the five-point likert scale “personal choice” has the greatest contribution ( $\beta = .71$ ,  $t = 42.14$ ) towards factor one while “prevailing economic conditions” ( $\beta = .35$ ,  $t = 20.55$ ) has the least contribution (See table 4.4). This could be because intrinsic factors such as personal choice take precedence in decision making over extrinsic factors such as economics conditions which an employee has no control over.

Table 4.4: Regression coefficients for items predicting factor one-choice and economic

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	sig
(Constant)	-3.225	.04		-81.35	.000
Personal choice	.64	.02	.71	42.14	.000
Prevailing economic conditions	.32	.02	.35	20.55	.000

Note: B-unstandardized coefficient beta value;  $\beta$ -standardized coefficient beta value; t-t values;  $R^2 = 0.99$ ; F value = 3723.44 ( $p < .001$ )

**Factor two (Value based and environmental):** Three variables loaded onto factor two. They were: labour market conditions, career anchors and social pressure. The three items relate to labour market conditions which is considered to be an environmental factor and career anchors and social pressure which are value based items. This factor was therefore labelled “value based and environmental”. The R square of the three variables was 0.86 indicating that the predictor variables in value based and environmental factor explain 86% of the variation in the factor

structure. The F value (212.84) and t values registered were highly significant ( $p < .001$ ). The beta values obtained for the predictor variables indicated that the statement in the five-point likert scale “labour market conditions” has the greatest contribution ( $\beta = .56$ ,  $t = 13.10$ ) towards factor two followed by “career anchors” ( $\beta = .34$ ,  $t = 7.97$ ). “Social pressure” ( $\beta = .28$ ,  $t = 6.82$ ) on the other hand has the least contribution (See table 4.5). This could be because labour market conditions affect all jobs while social pressures do not affect all jobs. Social pressure is also a social need and similar to career anchors considered to be an intrinsic and value based factor towards career choice in contrast to labour market conditions which is an extrinsic and environmental factor that an employee has no control over.

Table 4.5: Regression coefficients for items predicting factor two-value based and environmental

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	sig
(Constant)	-4.248	.18		-23.19	.000
Prevailing labour market conditions	.52	.04	.56	13.10	.000
Career anchors	.33	.04	.34	7.97	.000
Social pressure	.24	.04	.28	6.82	.000

*Note:* B-unstandardized coefficient beta value;  $\beta$ -standardized coefficient beta value; t-t values;  $R^2 = 0.86$ ; F value = 212.84 ( $p < .001$ )

**Factor three (Luck):** Two items loaded onto factor three. They were: chance and unpredictable events. These two items relate to luck which is a factor that an individual normally has no control over. This factor was therefore labelled “luck”. The R square of the two variables was 0.13 indicating that the two variables explained 13% of the variation in luck factor. The F value (7.54) and t values registered were highly significant ( $p < .001$ ). The beta values obtained for the predictor variables indicated that the statement in the five-point likert scale “unpredictable

events” has the greatest contribution ( $\beta = .37, t=3.75$ ) towards factor three while “chance” ( $\beta = .22, t=2.27$ ) has the least contribution (See table 4.6). This could be because people cannot dictate and manipulate unpredictable events as they can chance. The graduates have no control over unpredictable events which is an extrinsic factor as compared to chance from which they can get options when dealing with. Unpredictable events also often have a big impact on employees as compared to chance.

Table 4.6: Regression coefficients for items predicting factor three-luck

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	sig
(Constant)	-1.86	.51		-3.65	.000
Chance	.18	.08	.22	2.27	.000
Unpredictable events	.34	.09	.37	3.75	.000

*Note:* B-unstandardized coefficient beta value;  $\beta$ -standardized coefficient beta value; t-t values;  $R^2=0.13$ ; F value=7.54 (p<.001)

#### 4.2.2 Actual Career Path Determinants

Each graduate indicated the reasons of joining their current industries, among a list of reasons presented to them. These reasons were based on the various career path determinants. The means on the career path determinants were then ranked. Any value greater than 3 was considered significant.

Based on the ranked means, the reason why most of the graduates joined their current industries and thus their most important career path determinant was unpredictable events (3.71) followed by career satisfaction levels (3.46), chance (3.38), permanency of career (3.30), labour market conditions (3.28), choice (3.23) and career anchor (3.07). Economic conditions (2.97),

opportunity (2.15) and lastly social influences (1.71) can be considered to be the graduates' minor career path determinants (See table 4.7).

Table 4.7: Graduates reasons for joining their current industries

Reason for joining current industry	Both genders		Male	Female
	Rank	Mean	SD	Mean
Unpredictable events forced me to join this industry	1	3.71	1.39	3.94
The industry offers high career satisfaction levels	2	3.46	1.32	3.31
I joined this industry by chance	3	3.38	1.55	3.00
I want to build a permanent career in this industry	4	3.30	1.14	3.37
Due to prevailing labour market conditions	5	3.28	1.47	3.72
I chose this industry	6	3.23	1.17	3.37
The industry is in line with my career anchor	7	3.07	1.42	3.23
Due to prevailing economic conditions	8	2.97	1.09	3.08
The job opportunity came along	9	2.15	1.29	2.00
Due to social pressure	10	1.71	.99	1.69

Note: 1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Uncertain 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree

The most important career path determinant for the male respondents was unpredictable events (3.94) followed by prevailing labour market conditions (3.72) then permanency of employment in the industry (3.37) and choice (3.37) while the most important career path determinant for the female respondents was chance (4.00) followed by career satisfaction levels (3.70) then unpredictable events (3.35). Career satisfaction levels, chance, opportunity and social pressure mattered more to the female respondents than to the male respondents. However, independent t test statistic using levene's test for equality of variance showed that the only significant differences between the means emerged under chance  $t(103)=-3.36, p=.000$ , unpredictable events  $t(103)=2.14, p=.000$ , personal choice  $t(103)=1.46, p=.000$  and labour market conditions,  $t(103)=4.23, p=.000$  with men receiving more scores than women in unpredictable events, choice and

labour market conditions. With regard to labour market, men tend not to be selective of the jobs and careers they pursue and do not pay much attention to the type of work and the risk and procedures the jobs entail. Unpredictable events could be more important to men because men are more open to risks that come with such conditions. Choice could matter more to male respondents because men tend to be more focused when making decisions on jobs and careers. Chance could matter more to female respondents because of the family roles that they play that may disrupt their careers thus making them settle for jobs and careers that come along when they need one.

The data was further subjected to principal axis factor (PAF) with a varimax rotation of seven likert scale questions from the survey questionnaire aimed at identifying the key factors that influence the graduates career decisions. Only variables with mean scores above 3 were analysed. Economic conditions, social pressure and opportunity were therefore excluded from the analysis. Two key factors were computed. These factors were value based and environmental factors and personal and career satisfaction factors. These factors explained 43.35% of the total variance thus showing that they are significant. Factor one accounted for 28.54% while factor two accounted for 14.82%. Four items loaded onto factor one (I joined this industry by chance, unpredictable events forced me to join this industry, I joined this industry due to prevailing labour market conditions and the industry is in line with my career anchor) while three items loaded onto factor two (I chose this industry, I want to build a permanent career in this industry and the industry offers high career satisfaction levels) (See table 4.8).

Table 4.8: Actual career path determinants-factor analysis

Variables	Factor	
	1	2
I joined this industry by chance	.67	
Unpredictable events forced me to join this industry	.56	
I chose this industry		.55
Due to prevailing labour market conditions	.67	
The industry is in line with my career anchor	.82	
I want to build a permanent career in this industry		.55
The industry offers high career satisfaction levels		.82
<b>Percentage of variance explained</b>	<b>28.54%</b>	<b>14.82%</b>

Multiple linear regression was then performed with an aim of identifying the variables contributions to their respective factors.

**Factor one (*Value based and environmental*):** Four items loaded onto factor one. They were: I joined this industry by chance, unpredictable events forced me to join this industry, I joined this industry due to prevailing labour market conditions and the industry is in line with my career anchor. These four variables relate to individual values and environmental conditions. This factor was therefore labelled “value based and environmental”. The R square of the four variables was 0.99 indicating that the predictor variables in this factor explain 99% of the variation in the factor structure. The F value (2705.65) and t values registered were highly significant ( $p < .001$ ). The beta values obtained for the predictor variables indicated that the statement in the five-point likert scale “the industry is in line with my career anchors” has the greatest contribution ( $\beta = .54$ ,  $t = 41.94$ ) towards factor one followed by “I joined this industry due to prevailing labour market conditions” ( $\beta = .32$ ,  $t = 26.64$ ) then “unpredictable events forced me to join this industry” ( $\beta = .11$ ,  $t = 10.08$ ). “I joined this industry by chance” ( $\beta = .10$ ,  $t = 7.62$ ) on the other hand has the least

contribution (See table 4.9). This could be because career anchors are personal values which would typically be taken to be more important than unpredictable events, labour market and chance which are external factors that an employee cannot have much control over.

Table 4.9: Regression coefficients for items predicting factor 1-value based and environmental

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	sig
(Constant)	-1.72	.06		-28.32	.000
I joined this industry by chance	.19	.01	.10	7.62	.000
Unpredictable events forced me to join this industry	.09	.01	.11	10.08	.000
Due to prevailing labour market conditions	.24	.01	.32	26.64	.000
The industry is in line with my career anchor	.42	.01	.54	41.94	.000

Note: B-unstandardized coefficient beta value;  $\beta$ -standardized coefficient beta value; t-t values;  $R^2=0.99$ ; F value=2705.65 ( $p<.001$ )

#### 4.2.2.1 Chance, unpredictable events, labour market conditions and career anchors

Luck can either be good, bad or both good and bad (Chen, 2005). Some of the graduates disclosed that they joined their current industries by chance after being on attachment in the organizations (n=8, 7.62%) or after volunteering for sometime (n=8, 7.62%). Others (n=6, 5.71%) could not get jobs in the hospitality industry and therefore had to settle for the first opening that came along irrespective of the industry. This they believed was because the hospitality industry is overcrowded with diploma holders and employment opportunities for graduates are scarce. Other graduates (n=8, 7.62%) joined their current industries by luck after being referred to employers by friends or after applying in many organizations.

Davies & Wilson (1999) suggest that unpredictable events could affect employees' career decisions. Some of the graduates (n=9, 8.50%) reported that they never anticipated unemployment rates to be so high. The graduates actually thought they would get jobs immediately after graduating. They however had to look for work for a while and settle for the first job that was available irrespective of the industry. The graduates also never anticipated that they would end up working in non hospitality organizations and were surprised to get employment offers from non hospitality organizations and in sectors such as the tertiary education within the hospitality industry. They felt that the reluctance of hospitality employers to give them a chance in employment drove them to seek and secure employment in non hospitality organizations. The graduates observed that employees who possess diploma qualifications were being favoured and preferred by employers since graduates were considered to be overqualified for the various positions in the hospitality industry. These observations replicate Hjalager's and Andersen's (2001) views on the tourism industry's reluctance to employ tourism professionals. Some graduates (n=2, 1.90%) were also made redundant after the organizations they were working for shut down. One graduate reported that he secured a job outside the hospitality industry but was forced to leave and rejoin the hospitality industry after he failed to perform due to lack of skills and knowledge. Another graduate indicated that he was poached from his last employer by his current employer.

The global recession experienced in 2008 led to many hospitality establishments especially those related to accommodation and food and beverage provision cutting down on staffing costs through staff layoffs and stalling recruitment. There was thus a surplus of qualified hospitality professionals in the labour market. Yet, industries such as the insurance and banking industries

and tertiary institutions within the hospitality industry had shortage of qualified staff and as a result recruited graduates of all fields in large numbers. Some graduates therefore opted to join these industries and sectors.

Some of the graduates (n=6, 5.71%) also sought industries that assured job security. Such industries include the banking industry which they believed was more secure and had more employment opportunities than the hospitality industry. They felt that the banking industry which has been growing rapidly in the recent past had room for them and actually employed them on permanent basis thus providing job security. The hospitality industry is known for its high levels of job insecurity portrayed by factors such as employment terms where most employees are employed on contract and casual basis. This trend is evident especially during the off peak seasons of tourism where employers try to minimise costs by sending employees home. Most employees in the hospitality industry, unlike the banking industry, are also not unionised. This is due to several factors that include the reluctance of hospitality employers to join unions which they believe will work against their organizations. It is also difficult to unionise employees who are on contract and casual basis due to high job mobility.

Some of the graduates joined industries which they believed were in line with their career anchors. The graduates were thus asked to indicate their least and most important career anchors as these would help establish how career anchors influence their career decisions. When ranked, tables 4.10 and 4.11 illustrate the various positions of the career anchors.

Table 4.10: Respondents most important career anchors

Most important career anchor	Both genders		Female		Male	
	Rank	n	Rank	n	Rank	n
I would pursue a career that utilizes my talents	1	41	1	12	1	29
I would pursue a career that gives me a sense of security and stability	2	14	2	8	4	6
I would pursue a career that gives me the opportunity to exercise my entrepreneurial creativity	3	14	5	4	2	10
I would pursue a career that gives me autonomy and independence at work	4	12	6	4	3	8
I would pursue a career that offers me a sense of service and dedication to a cause	5	12	3	6	5	6
I would pursue a career that enables me to exercise my general management competencies	6	8	4	6	6	2
I would pursue a career that offers pure challenge	7	2	7	0	7	2
I would pursue a career that is integrated with lifestyle	8	2	8	0	8	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>105</b>		<b>40</b>		<b>65</b>

The most important career anchor for both genders after ranking was technical function followed by security and stability, entrepreneurial creativity, autonomy and independence, sense of service and dedication to a cause, managerial competence, pure challenge and lastly total lifestyle. This finding is somehow similar to Kniveton's (2004), who found that younger people preferred talent based anchors which are managerial competency, technical/functional competency and entrepreneurial creativity and value based anchors which are pure challenge and dedication and service to a cause. Technical competence (talents and skills) was also selected as the most important anchor by both male and female graduates. This finding could be because most hospitality graduates believe that one cannot manage what he does not know, they therefore believe that they have to master technical skills before managing them.

The least important career anchor for both genders on the other hand after ranking was pure challenge followed by autonomy and independence, total lifestyle, sense of service and dedication to a cause, technical competence, general management competence, entrepreneurial creativity then security and stability.

Table 4.11: Respondents least important career anchors

Least important career anchor	Both genders		Female		Male	
	Rank	n	Rank	n	Rank	n
I would pursue a career that offers pure challenge	1	24	2	8	1	16
I would pursue a career that gives me autonomy and independence at work	2	16	6	2	2	14
I would pursue a career that is integrated with my total lifestyle	3	16	1	10	6	6
I would pursue a career that offers me a sense of service and dedication to a cause	4	16	3	6	3	10
I would pursue a career that utilizes my talents and skills	5	10	8	2	4	8
I would pursue a career that enables me to exercise my general management competencies	6	10	7	2	5	8
I would pursue a career that gives me the opportunity to exercise my entrepreneurial creativity	7	8	4	6	7	2
I would pursue a career that gives me a sense of security and stability	8	5	5	4	8	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>105</b>		<b>40</b>		<b>65</b>

**Factor two (*Personal and career satisfaction*):** Three items loaded onto factor two. They were:

I chose this industry, I want to build a permanent career in this industry and the industry offers high career satisfaction levels. These three variables relate to personal satisfaction and career satisfaction. The factor was therefore labelled “personal and career satisfaction”. The R square of the three variables was 0.95 indicating that the predictor variables in this factor explain 95% of the variation in the factor structure. The F value (633.25) and t values registered were highly significant ( $p < .001$ ). The beta values obtained for the predictor variables indicated that the

statement in the five-point likert scale “the industry offers high career satisfaction levels” has the greatest contribution ( $\beta=.86$ ,  $t=33.08$ ) towards factor two followed by “I want to build a permanent career in this industry” ( $\beta=.10$ ,  $t=4.05$ ). “I chose this industry” ( $\beta=.10$ ,  $t=2.75$ ) on the other hand has the least contribution (See table 4.12). This could be because career satisfaction matters in any job. Career satisfaction is also a job security need. It would thus be considered more important than choice which is a personal value and esteem need. Security needs are often satisfied before esteem needs.

Table 4.12: Regression coefficients for items predicting factor two-personal and career satisfaction

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	sig
(Constant)	-2.40	.13		-18.79	.000
I chose this industry	.10	.02	.10	2.75	.000
I want to build a permanent career in this industry	.11	.03	.10	4.05	.000
The industry offers high career satisfaction levels	.76	.02	.86	33.08	.000

*Note:* B-unstandardized coefficient beta value;  $\beta$ -standardized coefficient beta value; t-t values;  $R^2=0.95$ ; F value=633.25 ( $p<.001$ )

#### 4.2.2.2 Choice, permanency of employment and career satisfaction levels

Some of the graduates reported that they wanted to work in their current industries because the industries were in line with their skills and qualifications ( $n=4$ , 3.81%), they were interested in the industries ( $n=4$ , 3.81%), they were curious about the industries ( $n=4$ , 3.81%), they liked the industries ( $n=4$ , 3.81%), they preferred the industries ( $n=4$ , 3.81%) and they enjoyed working in them ( $n=4$ , 3.81%). Some of the graduates ( $n=3$ , 2.86%) however felt that they did not have

much of a choice and simply needed jobs and financial security thus settling on the first industry that offered them an employment opportunity.

Some graduates (n=6, 5.71%) joined industries in which they hoped to establish permanent careers due to the job security that comes with such status. A permanent job often comes with benefits such as insurance covers and guaranteed employment which would draw any employee to an industry. Other graduates joined industries which they felt would offer them career satisfaction. All the graduates were thus queried about their satisfaction levels with various aspects of their current careers. The means were computed and ranked (See table 4.13).

Table 4.13: Graduates satisfaction levels with various aspects of their current careers

<b>Graduates career satisfaction levels (N=105)</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Satisfaction with availability of opportunities to meet different people this career offers	1	3.90	1.15
Satisfaction with challenges that careers in this industry offer	2	3.63	.96
Satisfaction with sense of service derived from working in this industry	3	3.41	1.09
Satisfaction with variety of tasks that careers in this industry offer	4	3.33	.89
Satisfaction with autonomy and independence careers in this industry offer	5	3.31	1.31
Satisfaction with the way careers in this industry utilize ones talents and skills	6	3.28	.99
Satisfaction with entrepreneurial opportunities of careers in this industry	7	3.19	1.30
Satisfaction with excitement and adventure levels offered by careers in this industry	8	3.16	1.01
Satisfaction with range of benefits that careers in this industry offer	9	3.08	1.14
Satisfaction with life-work balance careers in this industry offer	10	2.90	1.43
Satisfaction with managerial responsibilities offered by careers in this industry	11	2.89	1.16
Satisfaction with job availability in this industry	12	2.81	1.00
Satisfaction with levels of pay that careers in this industry offers	13	2.73	1.00
Satisfaction with the job security that careers in this industry offer	14	2.70	1.26

*Note:* 1. Not satisfied at all 2. Slightly satisfied 3. Moderately satisfied 4. Very satisfied 5. Extremely satisfied

The analysis reveals that the graduates were most satisfied with availability of opportunities to meet different people, challenge, sense of service, variety of tasks and autonomy and independence in their current industries. The graduates were however least satisfied with pay, job security, work-life balance, managerial responsibilities and job availability in their current industries.

The respondents' overall career satisfaction levels in their respective industries were also established and the means ranked (See table 4.14).

Table 4.14: Overall career satisfaction levels of graduates working within and outside the hospitality industry

Current industry	Overall career satisfaction			
	Rank	N	Mean	SD
Revenue collection	1	2	5.00	.00
Nongovernmental organization	2	4	4.00	.00
Design and printing	3	2	4.00	.00
Fleet management and consultancy	4	2	4.00	.00
Information and communication technology	5	4	3.50	.58
Banking	6	12	3.50	.52
Hospitality (Tertiary education)	7	24	3.33	1.13
Hospitality (Restaurants, hotels, bars etc)	8	49	2.86	1.08
Energy technology	9	4	2.00	1.16
Commerce	10	2	1.00	.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>105</b>	<b>3.12</b>	<b>1.10</b>

*Note:* 1-Not satisfied at all, 2- Slightly satisfied, 3—Moderately satisfied, 4-Very satisfied, 5-Extremely satisfied

The results show that most graduates working in non hospitality organizations were more satisfied with their overall careers than the graduates working within the hospitality industry.

The data was then subjected to principal axis factor (PAF) with a varimax rotation of the fourteen likert scale questions on career satisfaction levels from the survey questionnaire with an aim of identifying the key factors that influence the graduates career satisfaction levels. Five factors were computed. These factors were value based, personal, reward, social and risk factors. These factors explained 58.57% of the total variance showing that they are significant. Factor one accounted for 16.95%, factor two accounted for 11.79%, factor three accounted for 11.06%, factor four accounted for 10.16% and factor five accounted for 8.61%. Four items loaded onto factor one (satisfaction with the way careers in this industry influence ones talents and skills, satisfaction with sense of service derived from working in this industry, satisfaction with managerial responsibilities offered by careers in this industry and satisfaction with variety of tasks careers in this industry offer), two items loaded onto factor two (satisfaction with work-life balance careers in this industry offer and satisfaction with autonomy and independence careers in this industry offer), three items loaded onto factor three (satisfaction with range of benefits careers in this industry offer, satisfaction with levels of pay careers in this industry offer and satisfaction with the job security careers in this industry offer), two factors loaded onto factor four (satisfaction with availability of opportunities to meet different people and satisfaction with excitement and adventure levels offered by careers in this industry) and three items loaded onto factor five (satisfaction with entrepreneurial opportunities careers in this industry offer, satisfaction with challenges careers in this industry offer and satisfaction with job availability in this industry) (See table 4.15).

Table 4.15: Respondents satisfaction levels with various aspects of their current industries

Variables	Factor				
	1	2	3	4	5
Satisfaction with the way careers in this industry utilize talents and skills of respondents	.75				
Satisfaction with sense of service derived from working in this industry	.78				
Satisfaction with entrepreneurial opportunities careers in this industry offer					.52
Satisfaction with work-life balance careers in this industry offer		.65			
Satisfaction with challenges careers in this industry offer					.61
Satisfaction with autonomy and independence careers in this industry offer		.52			
Satisfaction with managerial responsibilities offered by careers in this industry	.62				
Satisfaction with job availability in this industry					.69
Satisfaction with variety of tasks careers in this industry offer	.63				
Satisfaction with levels of pay careers in this industry offer			.68		
Satisfaction with the job security careers in this industry offer			.51		
Satisfaction with excitement and adventure levels offered by careers in this industry				.68	
Satisfaction with availability of opportunities to meet different people this career offers				.89	
Satisfaction with range of benefits careers in this industry offer			.88		
<b>Percentage of variance explained</b>	<b>16.95%</b>	<b>11.79%</b>	<b>11.06%</b>	<b>10.16%</b>	<b>8.61%</b>

Multiple linear regression was then carried out on the factors in order to determine the variables contributions to each factor.

**Factor one (Value based):** Four items loaded onto factor one. They were: satisfaction with talents and skills careers in this industry offer, satisfaction with sense of service and dedication to a cause careers in this industry offer, satisfaction with managerial responsibilities careers in this industry offer and satisfaction with variety of tasks careers in this industry offer. Most of the

variables represented career anchors. This factor was therefore labelled “value based”. The R square of the four variables was 0.85 indicating that the four variables explained 85% of the variation in this factor. The F value (144.29) and t values registered were highly significant ( $p < .001$ ). The beta values obtained for the predictor variables indicated that the statement in the five-point likert scale “satisfaction with talents and skills” has the greatest contribution ( $\beta = .46$ ,  $t = 7.53$ ) towards factor one followed by “satisfaction with managerial responsibilities” ( $\beta = .28$ ,  $t = 6.12$ ) then “satisfaction with sense of service and dedication to a cause” ( $\beta = .26$ ;  $t = 3.69$ ). “Satisfaction with variety of tasks” ( $\beta = .12$ ,  $t = 2.35$ ) on the other hand has the least contribution (See table 4.16). This could be because talent and skills are intrinsic factors and like managerial responsibilities and sense of service and dedication to a cause represent career anchors which indicate personal value in comparison to variety of tasks which is an extrinsic factor, job related and often beyond the control of an employee.

Table 4.16: Regression coefficients for items predicting factor one-value based

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	sig
(Constant)	-3.88	.19		-20.79	.000
Satisfaction with the way careers in this industry utilize talents and skills of respondents	.52	.07	.46	7.53	.000
Satisfaction with sense of service derived from working in this industry	.26	.07	.26	3.69	.000
Satisfaction with managerial responsibilities offered by careers in this industry	.27	.05	.28	6.12	.000
Satisfaction with variety of tasks careers in this industry offer	.15	.07	.12	2.35	.000

Note: B-unstandardized coefficient beta value;  $\beta$ -standardized coefficient beta value; t-t values;  $R^2 = 0.85$ ; F value = 144.29 ( $p < .001$ )

**Factor two (Personal):** Two items loaded onto factor two. They were: satisfaction with work-life balance careers in this industry offer and satisfaction with autonomy and independence careers in this industry offer. These two variables identified personal factors that would determine employee satisfaction levels. This factor was therefore labelled “personal”. The R square of the two items was 0.66 indicating that the predictor variables in personal factor explain 66% of the variation of the factor structure. The F value (64.35) and t values registered were highly significant ( $p < .001$ ). The beta values obtained for the predictor variables indicated that the statement in the five-point likert scale “satisfaction with work-life balance” has the greatest contribution ( $\beta = .49$ ,  $t = 7.17$ ) towards factor two while “satisfaction with autonomy and independence” ( $\beta = .16$ ,  $t = 2.52$ ) has the least contribution (See table 4.17). This could be because work-life balance is a physiological need and often takes precedence over autonomy and independence which is an esteem need. Physiological needs are often satisfied before esteem needs are satisfied. Autonomy and independence is also a personal value that varies in importance to different individuals and can be sacrificed at the workplace.

Table 4.17: Regression coefficients for items predicting factor two-personal

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	sig
(Constant)	-2.78	.23		-12.12	.000
Satisfaction with work-life balance careers in this industry offer	.40	.06	.49	7.17	.000
Satisfaction with autonomy and independence careers in this industry offer	.15	.06	.16	2.52	.000

*Note:* B-unstandardized coefficient beta value;  $\beta$ -standardized coefficient beta value; t-t values;  $R^2=0.66$ ; F value=64.35 ( $p < .001$ )

**Factor three (Reward):** Three items loaded onto factor three. They were: satisfaction with range of benefits careers in this industry offer, satisfaction with pay careers in this industry offer and satisfaction with security careers in this industry offer. These variables represent aspects that are related to compensation and motivation. This factor was therefore labelled “reward”. The R square of the three variables was 0.93 indicating that the predictor variables in reward factor explain 93% of the variation in the factor structure. The F value (480.29) and t values registered were highly significant ( $p < .001$ ). The beta values obtained for the predictor variables indicated that the statement in the five-point likert scale “satisfaction with range of benefits” has the greatest contribution ( $\beta = .81$ ,  $t = 24.89$ ) towards factor three followed by “satisfaction with pay” ( $\beta = .17$ ,  $t = 4.87$ ). “Satisfaction with job security” ( $\beta = .09$ ,  $t = 3.04$ ) on the other hand has the least contribution (See table 4.18). This could be because job security is a long-term security need that may be considered to be less valuable than range of benefits and pay which are physiological needs and satisfy immediate needs. Physiological needs are often satisfied before security needs are satisfied.

Table 4.18: Regression coefficients for items predicting factor three-reward

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	sig
(Constant)	-3.09	.09		-34.30	.000
Satisfaction with levels of pay careers in this industry offer	.18	.04	.17	4.87	.000
Satisfaction with the job security careers in this industry offer	.08	.03	.09	3.04	.000
Satisfaction with range of benefits careers in this industry offer	.77	.03	.81	24.89	.000

Note: B-unstandardized coefficient beta value;  $\beta$ -standardized coefficient beta value; t-t values;  $R^2 = 0.93$ ; F value = 480.29 ( $p < .001$ )

**Factor four (Social):** Two variables loaded onto factor four. They were: satisfaction with opportunities to meet different people careers in this industry offer and satisfaction with excitement and adventure offered by careers in this industry. These two variables are related to social aspects of careers. The factor was therefore labelled “social”. The R square of the two items was 0.93 indicating that the predictor variables in social factor explain 93% of the variation in the factor structure. The F value (657.23) and t values registered were highly significant ( $p < .001$ ). The beta values obtained for the predictor variables indicated that the statement in the five-point likert scale “satisfaction with the availability of opportunities to meet different people” has the greatest contribution ( $\beta = .78$ ,  $t = 23.71$ ) towards factor four while “satisfaction with excitement and adventure” ( $\beta = .28$ ,  $t = 8.38$ ) has the least contribution (See table 4.19). This could be because excitement and adventure are both factors that could easily fall under leisure activities at the workplace and can be considered by employers not to be as important as opportunities to meet different people which is a feature of the job and cannot be separated from the job.

Table 4.19: Regression coefficients for items predicting factor four-social

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	sig
(Constant)	-3.79	.11		-34.53	.000
Satisfaction with excitement and adventure levels offered by careers in this industry	.29	.04	.28	8.38	.000
Satisfaction with availability of opportunities to meet different people this career offers	.73	.03	.78	23.71	.000

*Note:* B-unstandardized coefficient beta value;  $\beta$ -standardized coefficient beta value; t-t values;  $R^2 = 0.93$ ; F value=657.23 ( $p < .001$ )

**Factor five (Risk):** Three variables loaded onto factor five. They were: satisfaction with entrepreneurial opportunities careers in this industry offer, satisfaction with challenge careers in this industry offer and satisfaction with job availability in this industry. These three variables relate to risk. The factor was therefore labelled "risk". The R square of the three variables was 0.88 indicating that the predictor variables in risk factor explain 88% of the variation in the factor structure. The F value (253.49) and t values registered were highly significant ( $p < .001$ ). The beta values obtained for the predictor variables indicated that the statement in the five-point likert scale "satisfaction with job availability" has the greatest contribution ( $\beta = .55$ ,  $t = 14.38$ ) towards factor five followed by "satisfaction with challenge careers in this industry offer" ( $\beta = .49$ ,  $t = 13.03$ ). "Satisfaction with entrepreneurship opportunities" ( $\beta = .17$ ,  $t = 4.60$ ) on the other hand has the least contribution (See table 4.20). This could be because job availability is a security need which is more important than entrepreneurship opportunities which is a self actualization need that may be considered risky, expensive to venture into and not important in early career development. Security needs have to be satisfied before self-actualization needs are satisfied. Challenge could also be more important than entrepreneurship opportunities because the graduates are still young and would enjoy challenges as part of the job.

The graduates were further asked about additional factors that affect their career satisfaction levels. Fifty three respondents gave no other factors while the other fifty two identified the following significant factors, career and personal growth opportunities ( $n = 12$ , 11.43%), management style ( $n = 10$ , 9.52%), work hours ( $n = 10$ , 9.52%) and co-workers ( $n = 6$ , 5.71%).

Table 4.20: Regression coefficients for items predicting factor five-risk

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	sig
(Constant)	-4.58	.18		-25.69	.000
Satisfaction with entrepreneurial opportunities careers in this industry offer	.16	.03	.17	4.60	.000
Satisfaction with challenge	.61	.05	.49	13.03	.000
Satisfaction with job availability in this industry	.67	.05	.55	14.38	.000

Note: B-unstandardized coefficient beta value;  $\beta$ -standardized coefficient beta value; t-t values;  $R^2=0.88$ ; F value=253.49 (p<.001)

#### 4.2.2.3 Economic conditions, opportunity and social pressure

These three factors emerged as the least important career path determinants. Some (n=5, 4.95%) of the graduates indicated that they joined their current industries because they needed jobs and were in pursuit of financial security. There was a global recession in 2008 that affected employment. However some industries and sectors such as the banking industry and tertiary education sector of the hospitality industry were not greatly affected and still recruited in large numbers. Other sectors in the hospitality industry such as hotels and restaurants were on the other hand firing people. Eleven (10.48%) graduates also reported that they joined their current industries because the job opportunity came along while some graduates (n=8, 7.62%) reported that their relatives influenced their career decisions.

### **4.3 The Career Change Intentions of Ecotourism and Hospitality Management Graduates of Maseno University**

#### **4.3.1 Graduates perceptions towards the hospitality industry**

The graduates' perceptions towards the hospitality industry were first established. The ranked means in table 4.21 indicate that the graduates perceived that hospitality careers have the following characteristics. Hospitality careers are global, offer opportunities to meet different people, are challenging in nature, offer accumulated work experience, offer variety of tasks, offer self employment opportunities, are exciting and adventurous in nature, offer wide career prospects and offer managerial opportunities. The graduates however felt that hospitality industry careers are characterised by inadequate benefits, poor pay, scarce employment opportunities and job insecurity. Nickson (2007, p. 17) outlined similar personnel problems in the hospitality industry which included "low wages, unsocial hours and shift patterns, casual and seasonal employment that lead to job insecurity".

Table 4.21: Respondents perceptions of the hospitality industry

Characteristics of hospitality industry	Rank	Mean	SD
Hospitality careers are global	1	4.50	.64
Hospitality careers offer opportunities to meet different people	2	4.48	.84
Hospitality career offer challenging work	3	4.11	.73
Hospitality careers offer accumulated work experience	4	4.00	.78
Hospitality careers offer variety of tasks	5	3.87	1.00
Hospitality careers offer self employment opportunities	6	3.63	1.06
Hospitality careers are exciting and adventurous	7	3.61	.99
Hospitality careers offer wide career prospects	8	3.45	.99
Hospitality jobs offer managerial opportunities	9	3.32	1.05
Hospitality careers offer adequate benefits	10	2.77	.82
Hospitality careers offer good pay	11	2.42	.96
Hospitality careers offer readily available jobs	12	2.30	.84
Hospitality careers offer job security	13	2.17	1.03

Note: 1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Uncertain 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree

#### 4.3.2 Graduates career change intentions

Entry into a new industry does not warrant career change. With regard to career change intentions, 52 (49.5 %) of the respondents said that they would wish to build permanent careers outside the hospitality industry while 53 (50.5%) said that they would wish to stay in the hospitality industry. This finding is similar to what O'leary & Deegan (2005) discovered, that there is significant drop out from the tourism and hospitality industry.

With regard to gender, 30 male and 22 female respondents desired to leave the hospitality industry while 35 male and 18 female respondents had no intentions of leaving the hospitality industry. The hospitality industry has always been seen as demanding especially to women who have family roles to play. Therefore turnover and career change intentions amongst women are

often higher than amongst men working in the hospitality industry. However, the results of this study indicate that more men than women intend to leave the hospitality industry, which is a deviation from the norm and could be explained by the high number of male respondents who participated in this study.

With regard to age, most of the graduates (n=50) who wanted to leave the hospitality industry were aged between twenty six and thirty years while most of those (n=45) who had no intention of leaving the hospitality industry were aged between twenty six and thirty years. (See table 4.22).

Table 4.22: Cross tabulation of respondents' age and intention to build permanent career outside the hospitality industry

		Intention to build permanent career outside the hospitality industry		Total
		Yes	No	
Age of respondents	Below 26	0	2	2
	26-30	50	45	95
	31-35	2	2	4
	36-40	0	4	4
	Over 40	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>105</b>

These results indicate that most (n=103, 98.7%) of the graduates are in the establishment career stage in which a person attempts to establish a permanent career in a chosen field. However, this stage is crippled by high career change especially in the trial sub stage that occurs between ages twenty five to thirty. This career change is often due to career dissatisfaction. The stabilization sub stage which occurs between ages thirty to forty on the other hand is the stage where a person

establishes solid career goals and attempts to achieve these goals. Career change intentions in this sub stage as illustrated by the results are minimized and most people consider it too late to risk building a new career and would rather invest on what they already have.

With regard to industry, thirty of the seventy three graduates employed in the hospitality industry wanted to leave the hospitality industry while forty three of them had no intentions of quitting the industry (See table 4.23). This observation reinforces Hjalager's and Andersen's (2001) views that "jobs in the tourism industry are not the first career choice among young people and are regarded as a temporary stepping stone even for those with dedicated professional training".

Table 4.23: Cross tabulation of current industry the graduates are working in and intention to build permanent career outside the hospitality industry

		Intention to build permanent career outside the hospitality industry		
		Yes	No	Total
Current industry the graduates are working in	Hospitality (Hotel, restaurants, clubs, game parks, catering and related fields)	22	27	49
	Hospitality (Tertiary education)	8	16	24
	Banking	10	2	12
	Energy technology	2	2	4
	Information and communication technology	2	2	4
	Non-governmental organization	2	2	4
	Fleet management and consultancy	2	0	2
	Commerce	0	2	2
	Design and printing	2	0	2
	Revenue collection	2	0	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>105</b>

It was earlier reported that most graduates working in the hospitality sector were moderately satisfied with their overall careers yet the results show that a significant proportion choose to

stay in the industry. The study thus indicates that career resilience, which is the tendency to hold onto a job and career despite being dissatisfied, is evident among the graduates, who would rather hold onto a job that offers a reasonable and comfortable degree of satisfaction irrespective of the industry. The findings also indicate that career change among hospitality graduates is significant and measures may need to be taken to ensure retention of hospitality graduates within the hospitality field.

When asked why they would like to leave the hospitality industry, 41 respondents gave reasons which included the fact that they wanted to leave the hospitality industry because the hospitality industry is characterised by long working hours and poor pay (n=12, 23.08%), the hospitality industry is not satisfying (n=8, 15.38%), the graduates had already deviated from the hospitality industry (n=4, 7.69%), hospitality careers in Kenya do not offer much opportunities (n=4, 7.69%), the graduates are not satisfied with entry positions offered to graduates in the hospitality industry since they are more operative than managerial (n=4, 7.69%), hospitality careers are boring (n=4, 7.69%), the graduates would like to start their own businesses (n=4, 7.69%) and because success in the hospitality industry requires personality (n=1, 1.92%). These findings are similar to O'Leary & Deegan's, (2005) and Hjalager & Andersen's, (2001) who identified poor remuneration, unsuitable work hours, lack of career opportunities, insufficient staff development, insecurity and unchallenging work as some of the causes of career dissatisfaction in the hospitality industry. Other studies (Weaver, 2009 & Rheede et al, 2009) have also found that both perceptions of the actual job as well as characteristics of the hospitality industry are important considerations when individuals decide on whether to pursue hospitality related careers or to opt for employment in another industry. Carbery et al, (2003) too posits that "there

is abundant literature highlighting that hospitality employees report dissatisfaction with their career progressions and also intentions to leave”.

With regards to the new industries that the graduates would like to move into, 49.50% (n=52) of the respondents indicated that they would like to build permanent careers in industries such as banking (n=16, 30.77%), any industry that offers managerial responsibilities (n=6, 11.54%), entrepreneurship (n=4, 7.69%), commerce (n=4, 7.69%), nutritional health (n=3, 5.77%), academics or non-governmental organizations (n=2, 3.85%), real estate (n=2, 3.85%), community development (n=2, 3.85%), civil service or banking (n=2, 3.85%), branding (n=2, 3.85%), accountancy (n=2, 3.85%), consultancy (n=2, 3.85%), corporate business (n=2, 3.85%) and civil service (n=1, 1.92%). Two of the graduates were not sure of the industries they desired to join. These findings indicate that the graduates were more attracted to the banking industry.

As illustrated in table 4.24, most of the graduates felt that the new industry will offer them increased range of benefits, more job and career security, more work life balance, better working conditions, better pay and more autonomy and independence. The analysis thus indicates that most defectors from the hospitality industry seek security, adequate compensation, work life balance and better work conditions in non hospitality organizations. This also indicates that career dissatisfaction in the hospitality industry is a major cause of career change intentions among hospitality graduates. That is why most of these graduates are willing to quit the hospitality industry if given the chance and secure employment in fields they perceive will satisfy their career needs.

Table 4.24: Graduates perceptions of what the new industries will offer them

What graduates believe new industry will offer	Rank	Mean	SD
New industry will offer me increased range of benefits	1	4.38	.49
New industry will offer me increased job and career security	2	4.35	.56
New industry will offer me more work life balance	3	4.27	.59
New industry will offer better working conditions	4	4.19	.63
New industry will offer me better pay	5	4.15	.67
The new industry will give me autonomy and independence	6	3.96	.82
New industry will offer me increased sense of service and dedication to a cause	7	3.88	1.02
New industry will offer me self employment opportunities	8	3.88	.94
New industry will give me greater managerial responsibilities	9	3.85	.96
New industry will offer me enhanced managerial skills	10	3.77	1.02
New industry will offer me more challenges	11	3.77	.81
New industry will offer me variety of tasks	12	3.58	1.02
New industry will offer me excitement and adventure	13	3.31	1.00

*Note:* 1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Uncertain 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree

Factor analysis was then performed with the aim of establishing the factors driving the graduates into the new industries. A principal axis factor (PAF) with a varimax rotation of thirteen likert scale questions from the survey questionnaire was conducted on data gathered from the participants. Five key factors were extracted. These factors were growth, value, motivation, personal development and reward factors. These factors explained 69.59% of the total variance thus showing that they are significant. Factor one accounted for 17.73%, factor two accounted for 16.51%, factor three accounted for 12.68%, factor four accounted for 12.61% and factor five accounted for 10.06%. Two items loaded onto factor one (the new industry will offer me greater managerial responsibilities and the new industry will offer me enhanced managerial skills), four items loaded onto factor two (the new industry will offer me more challenges, the new industry will offer me increased sense of service and dedication to a cause, the new industry will offer me

variety of tasks and the new industry will offer me excitement and adventure), three items loaded onto factor three (the new industry will offer me better working conditions, the new industry will offer me increased job and career security and the new industry will offer me better pay), two items loaded onto factor four (the new industry will offer me self employment opportunities and the new industry will offer me autonomy and independence) and two items loaded onto factor five (the new industry will offer me increased range of benefits and the new industry will offer me work-life balance) (See table 4.25).

Table 4.25: What the new industries will offer the graduates-factor analysis

Variables	Factor				
	1	2	3	4	5
New industry will offer me self employment opportunities				.73	
New industry will offer me increased range of benefits					.85
New industry will offer me more work life balance					.54
New industry will offer me more challenges		.68			
New industry will offer me increased sense of service and dedication to a cause		.70			
New industry will give me greater managerial responsibilities	.86				
The new industry will give me autonomy and independence				.81	
New industry will offer better working conditions			.86		
New industry will offer me increased job and career security			.59		
New industry will offer me better pay			.69		
New industry will offer me variety of tasks		.69			
New industry will offer me excitement and adventure		.63			
New industry will offer me enhanced managerial skills	.84				
<b>Percentage of variance explained</b>	<b>17.73%</b>	<b>16.51%</b>	<b>12.68%</b>	<b>12.61%</b>	<b>10.06%</b>

Multiple linear regression was then performed with the aim of identifying the contributions of various items to their respective factors.

**Factor one (Growth):** Two items loaded onto factor one. They were: the new industry will offer me greater managerial responsibilities and the new industry will offer me enhanced managerial skills. These two variables relate to employee growth. The factor was therefore labelled “growth”. This factor explained for the greatest percentage of the total variance. This is because the items that load onto it relate to management which is the main focus of the graduates’ degree qualifications. However, the other factors should not be disregarded. The R square of the two variables was 0.85 indicating that the two variables explained 85% of the variation in the growth factor. The F value (91.65) and t values registered were highly significant ( $p < .001$ ). The beta values obtained for the two predictor variables indicated that the statement in the five-point likert scale “the new industry will offer me greater managerial responsibilities” has the greatest contribution ( $\beta = .49$ ,  $t = 4.69$ ) towards factor one while “the new industry will offer me enhanced managerial skills” ( $\beta = .34$ ,  $t = 3.12$ ) has the least contribution (See table 4.26). This could be because the graduates have managerial qualifications and would like to settle for jobs that offer them managerial opportunities in line with their qualifications.

Table 4.26: Regression coefficients for items predicting factor one-growth

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	sig
(Constant)	-5.02	.39		-12.59	.000
New industry will give me greater managerial responsibilities	.55	.12	.49	4.69	.000
New industry will offer me enhanced managerial skills	.36	.12	.34	3.12	.000

*Note:* B-unstandardized coefficient beta value;  $\beta$ -standardized coefficient beta value; t-t values;  $R^2=0.85$ ; F value=91.65 ( $p < .001$ )

**Factor two (Value):** Four variables loaded onto factor two. They were: the new industry will offer me more challenges, the new industry will offer me increased sense of service and dedication to a cause, the new industry will offer me variety of tasks and the new industry will offer me excitement and adventure. Two of the variables relate to career anchors. The factor was therefore labelled "value". The R square of the four factors was 0.84 indicating that the predictor variables in value factor explained 84% of the variation in the factor structure. The F value (61.60) and t values registered were highly significant ( $p < .001$ ). The beta values obtained for the four predictor variables indicated that the statement in the five-point likert scale "the new industry will offer me more challenges" has the greatest contribution ( $\beta = .44$ ,  $t = 6.53$ ) towards factor two followed by "the new industry will offer me increased sense of service and dedication to a cause" ( $\beta = .38$ ,  $t = 4.67$ ) then "the new industry will offer me variety of tasks" ( $\beta = .16$ ,  $t = 1.68$ ). "The new industry will offer me excitement and adventure" ( $\beta = .16$ ,  $t = 1.48$ ) on the other hand has the least contribution (See table 4.27). This could be because the graduates are still young and would enjoy challenges as part of their development at work.

Table 4.27: Regression coefficients for items predicting factor two-value

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	sig
(Constant)	-5.18	.34		-15.09	.000
New industry will offer me more challenges	.62	.09	.44	6.53	.000
New industry will offer me increased sense of service and dedication to a cause	.42	.09	.38	4.67	.000
New industry will offer me variety of tasks	.18	.11	.16	1.68	.000
New industry will offer me excitement and adventure	.18	.09	.16	1.48	.000

**Note:** B-unstandardized coefficient beta value;  $\beta$ -standardized coefficient beta value; t-t values;  $R^2 = 0.84$ ; F value = 61.60 ( $p < .001$ )

**Factor three (Motivation):** Three items loaded onto factor three. They were: the new industry will offer me better working conditions, the new industry will offer me increased job and career security and the new industry will offer me better pay. These three variables relate to employee motivation. The factor was therefore labelled “motivation”. The R square of the three items was 0.94 indicating that these variables explained 94% of the variation in the motivation factor. The F value (258.78) and t values registered were highly significant ( $p < .001$ ). The beta values obtained for the three predictor variables indicated that the statement in the five-point likert scale “the new industry will offer me better working conditions” has the greatest contribution ( $\beta = .64$ ,  $t = 15.54$ ) towards factor three followed by “the new industry will offer me better pay” ( $\beta = .42$ ,  $t = 10.77$ ). “The new industry will offer me job and career security” ( $\beta = .13$ ,  $t = 3.29$ ) on the other hand has the least contribution (See table 4.28). This could be because employees prefer better working conditions and better pay since they are physiological needs and enhance performance at work which is a prerequisite to job and career security in the long-term. Job and career security is a security need which is often satisfied after physiological needs are satisfied.

Table 4.28: Regression coefficients for items predicting factor three-motivation

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	sig
(Constant)	-8.26	.33		-25.37	.000
New industry will offer better working conditions	1.06	.07	.64	15.54	.000
New industry will offer me increased job and career security	.25	.08	.13	3.29	.000
New industry will offer me better pay	.66	.06	.42	10.77	.000

*Note:* B-unstandardized coefficient beta value;  $\beta$ -standardized coefficient beta value; t-t values;  $R^2=0.94$ ; F value=258.78 ( $p < .001$ )

**Factor four (Personal development):** Two items loaded onto factor four. They were: the new industry will offer me self-employment opportunities and the new industry will offer me autonomy and independence. These two variables relate to personal growth and development. The factor was therefore labelled “personal development”. The R square of the two variables was 0.99 indicating that these variables explained 99% of the variation in the personal development factor. The F value (288.56) and t values registered were highly significant ( $p < .001$ ). The beta values obtained for the predictor variables indicated that the statement in the five-point likert scale “the new industry will offer me autonomy and independence” has the greatest contribution ( $\beta = .64$ ,  $t = 13.33$ ) towards factor four while “the new industry will offer me self employment opportunities” ( $\beta = .44$ ,  $t = 9.22$ ) has the least contribution (See table 4.29). This can be attributed to recent changes at the workplace where more employees enjoy freedom at work. Autonomy and independence is also an esteem need, a personal value and career anchor while self employment opportunities is a self actualization need that may not matter much to everyone on employment. In addition, self employment ventures are not always successful and would be considered to be risky ventures especially to these graduates who are at early stages of their careers.

Table 4.29: Regression coefficients for items predicting factor four-personal development

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	sig
(Constant)	-5.39	.23		-23.56	.000
New industry will offer me self employment opportunities	.51	.06	.44	9.22	.000
The new industry will give me autonomy and independence	.86	.06	.64	13.33	.000

*Note:* B-unstandardized coefficient beta value;  $\beta$ -standardized coefficient beta value; t-t values;  $R^2 = 0.99$ ; F value = 288.56 ( $p < .001$ )

**Factor five (Reward):** Two variables loaded onto factor five. They were: the new industry will offer me increased range of benefits and the new industry will offer me work-life balance. These two items relate to employee recognition and compensation. The factor was therefore labelled “reward”. The R square of the two variables was 0.92 indicating that the predictor variables in reward factor explained 92% of the total variation in the factor structure. The F value (273.12) and t values registered were highly significant ( $p < .001$ ). The beta values obtained for the predictor variables indicated that the statement in the five-point likert scale “the new industry will offer me increased range of benefits” has the greatest contribution ( $\beta = .85$ ,  $t = 18.53$ ) towards factor five while “the new industry will offer me work life balance” ( $\beta = .21$ ,  $t = 4.59$ ) has the least contribution (See table 4.30). This could be because benefits and work-life balance are both physiological needs. However, benefits are naturally a greater attraction to employees as compared to work-life balance.

Table 4.30: Regression coefficients for items predicting factor five-reward

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	sig
(Constant)	-9.99	.44		-22.86	.000
New industry will offer me increased range of benefits	1.90	.10	.85	18.53	.000
New industry will offer me more work life balance	.39	.08	.21	4.59	.000

**Note:** B-unstandardized coefficient beta value;  $\beta$ -standardized coefficient beta value; t-t values;  $R^2=0.92$ ; F value=273.12 ( $p < .001$ )

The ease of successfully establishing permanent careers outside the hospitality industry was also examined and 6 (11.50%) respondents believed that it would be “extremely easy” to build a permanent career outside the hospitality industry, 10 (19.20%) said it would be “very easy”, 28

(53.80%) said it would be “moderately easy”, 4 (7.70%) said it would be “slightly easy” and 4 (7.70%) said it would “not be easy at all”. These results show that most of the graduates were confident that they could establish successful careers outside the hospitality industry. The graduates however felt that their career change intentions would be hindered by lack of capital, lack of time and opportunity, lack of work experience in the new industry, complicated entry levels needed to join the new industries, competition from co-workers and similar businesses and their experience and professional training in the hospitality industry. Otherwise factors that they believed would facilitate their career change intentions include their interest in the new industry, their dynamism due to their training in the hospitality industry, availability of opportunities for graduate recruitment in the new fields, their networking abilities and the fact that some of them already hold permanent jobs in the new industries.

#### **4.4 Implications of the Graduates Career Decisions on Human Resource Management Strategies of Non Hospitality Organizations in Kenya**

Thematic data analysis was used to analyse qualitative data on the implications of the graduates' career decisions on human resource management strategies of non hospitality organizations. The strategies included the recruitment, staffing, training, development, compensation, motivation, exit and retention strategies.

##### **4.4.1 Recruitment and staffing strategies of employers**

Managers working in the food production and insurance agencies reported that Ecotourism, hotel and institution management graduates were employed as sales persons and team managers. They

felt that the Ecotourism, hotel and institution management course equipped them with business skills that could be applied in their current industries.

In the recent past, there has been tremendous growth in the insurance and banking industries with organizations expanding, opening hundreds of branches and bringing forth innovative products thus leading to growth in customer numbers. Increase in customer demand has been accompanied by the need for more competent staff and higher service quality standards. Thus, in order to remain competitive most employers are replacing their employees with university graduates. Before, the firms would employ secondary school graduates and college graduates from different fields, most of whom were diploma holders, for the positions of sales persons, graduate clerks and managers. However, there has been a shift in employment patterns and most firms are targeting university graduates who are considered to be more competent and cost effective in the long run.

The firms have been recruiting ecotourism and hospitality management graduates as part of the organizations recruitment procedures. Recruitment in the insurance and banking industries is unique since graduates of all disciplines can be selected though priority is given to graduates who possess degrees in education and business administration. All graduates must first meet the minimum criteria for employment depending on the positions that they are applying for. Most ecotourism and hospitality graduates working in the banks are employed as graduate clerks, graduate trainees, management trainees, managers or sales persons. The entry position depends on the graduates academic qualifications and experience levels. Sales persons need to have at least a C+ in their Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examination. Graduate clerks,

graduate trainees and management trainees need to have attained at least a second class upper in their undergraduate degree and an aggregate of B in their Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examination with B in both English and Mathematics. Managers need a masters degree or three years managerial experience preferably in the banking industry or any related field.

Employers in the banking, food technology and insurance industries generally target graduates who possess customer service, communication, analytical and interpersonal skills. The graduates must also be flexible, responsive, reliable, committed, honest, hard working, self driven and team players. Further to this, the graduates should have basic knowledge of the industry and good computer knowledge. Most ecotourism and hospitality management graduates already possess managerial, customer service, personnel, financial management, strategic management, human resource management, communication and interpersonal skills on employment therefore the banks, insurance and food production firms only need to build on these. The graduates must also take numerical tests, talent assessment tests, aptitude tests, psychometric tests and interviews as part of the selection process.

#### **4.4.2 Training and development strategies of employers**

The entry of Ecotourism and Hospitality management graduates into the banking, insurance and food technology industries affects the training and development strategies of the organizations. The employers try to utilise and build on the skills and knowledge the graduates possess and groom and empower them as managers where necessary. However, the industries procedures are

standard and fixed in nature and most fresh graduates do not know them, thus the graduates need further orientation and training. The firms therefore have invested a lot of resources in training and developing the graduates. This training is done through e-learnings, job rotation, staff empowerment and classroom sessions. Attention is also given to talent development where the focus is on building individual strengths rather than weaknesses.

Graduates working in the food production industry as sales persons and managers only need to get information technology training since the graduates enter the industries with managerial and customer service skills acquired from their undergraduate course. The efforts to build on these come from both parties thus cutting down on training and development costs in the long run. It therefore becomes easier for these graduates to quickly climb up the career ladder and secure managerial positions.

#### **4.4.3 Compensation and motivation strategies of employers**

The graduates entry into the industries affects the compensation strategies of the employer organizations. All graduates in the insurance and banking industries are compensated fairly based on the employment terms which are standard throughout the job clusters and are based on the labour market conditions. But it should be noted that these graduates are replacing diploma holders who are and were often compensated at a lower rate. The result is that the compensation costs have increased.

The graduates' entry into the banking, insurance and food production industries affects the motivation strategies of the organizations. It is noted that hospitality graduates are not professionals in the new industries and job insecurity including fear of early redundancy in case the growth in the banking industry ceases are apparent. The organizations therefore use incentives such as unionized employment, international job transfers, insurance coverage, cars, loan schemes, share options, retreats, bonuses, commissions, annual salary increments, international trips and study scholarships as rewards to entice them to stay in the organizations. For example, graduates working in the food production industry are often given international job offers after working for the organization for three years. Promotions, recognition and pay rise are also awarded based on aptitude and success of the candidate.

#### **4.4.4 Exit and retention strategies of employers**

There is high staff turnover and job mobility in the insurance and banking industries as employees move between organizations. Staff poaching is also apparent. This mobility is often due to boredom caused by monotony that is a characteristic of most banking duties. Most employers try to retain their graduates within their organizations since the graduates may leave their organizations with their customers. The firms allow and encourage employees who leave their organizations to return later should they wish or alternatively provide them job rotation options. All graduates also have to take exit interviews when they leave the firm.

Turnover is often higher among diploma holders and older employees who become redundant and most of who are being replaced by the university graduates. Thus the entry of these graduates into the industries has increased turnover among diploma holders and older employees.

The banks may have incurred some costs in the process, in form of redundancy fees, but the benefits of having the university graduates has outweighed these costs.

It thus appears that the graduates entry into the new industries has affected the human resource management strategies of the employers and that the organizations still recruit them despite the increased staffing costs indicating that it is worth the trade-off. The graduates are also able to secure jobs and establish successful careers in these industries. This indicates that these trends may grow in future.

#### **4.5 Implications of Human Resource Management Strategies of Non Hospitality Organizations on Graduates Career Decisions**

Human resource management strategies, notably recruitment, compensation and training strategies of non hospitality organizations affect career decisions of ecotourism and hospitality management graduates. The brands, images and recruitment strategies of the new industries attract the graduates into the industries. Most of the graduates are aware of the new industries recruitment procedures. This is evidenced by the way the graduates apply in large volumes for positions such as graduate clerk, sales person, management trainee, graduate trainee and managerial positions. For example, the graduates seem informed on qualifications needed for one to enter the industries.

The insurance and banking industries are also known for their status, job security and competitive remuneration consisting of commissions and bonuses which attract the graduates. The industries offer benefits such as academic scholarships for their employees. By doing so,

employees are able to dedicate their resources towards training and becoming professionals in the industries. Some graduates also invest in attaining further qualifications in the new industries. They do so by pursuing courses such as Certificate in Banking operations (n=2, 3.85%), Certified Public Accountancy (n=2, 3.85%) and Certificate in project planning and management (n=2, 3.85%) which are courses outside the hospitality industry.

In the end, the graduates in the new industries are able to move up the career ladder to managerial positions. Some of them eventually change their careers and forget about the hospitality industry while others decide to adopt "portfolio careers" where they harness variety of skills that make them more flexible in the employment world. But in addition to building on their customer service skills, the graduates are able to competently work in sections such as operational management that is deeply rooted in the new industries and is considered a specialized field.

The banking, insurance and food production industries further train their employees on the industries thus equipping hospitality management graduates with the skills and knowledge needed to build successful careers in the industries. In addition, the industries offer the graduates career development opportunities via promotions and all round training. The graduates are thus able to rise up the career ladder to managerial positions which are the graduates' area of specialization. By doing so, the organizations are able to retain them.

The study thus shows that employer needs and staffing strategies significantly impact the graduates career decisions. Notably the compensation, motivation, recruitment, training and

development strategies of employers seem to impact the graduates career decisions and subsequent career paths.

## 5.0 CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Summary of Findings

Previous studies on hospitality careers have focused on undergraduates' career perceptions. Graduates career paths have however not been widely studied. This study thus intended to investigate the career decisions of ecotourism and hospitality management graduates of Maseno University. The results of the study highlight that some of these graduates did not get jobs that match their career goals and expectations and a significant percentage work in non hospitality organizations with the highest numbers being in the banking sector. A significant percentage also have intentions to leave the hospitality industry and join other industries such as the banking industry. Most of these graduates further use their current industries as stepping stones to more desirable jobs and careers. It is also apparent that the hospitality industry shares its labour market with other trades.

The graduates perceived three key factors influence their career paths. These factors are choice and economic factors consisting of personal choice and economic conditions, value based and environmental factors consisting of labour market conditions, career anchors and social pressure and luck factors consisting of chance and unpredictable events.

The analysis further reveals that the major career path determinants of the graduates are unpredictable events, followed by career satisfaction, chance, permanency of career, labour market conditions, choice and career anchor. These determinants fall into two categories, value based and environmental factors and personal and career satisfaction factors. Their minor career

path determinants are economic conditions, opportunity and social pressure. However, the value of these determinants may vary as an individual's career progresses.

The findings also illustrate that a significant percentage of the graduates would like to leave the hospitality industry. Some respondents reported what they believed the new industries that they would like to move into would offer them. Most graduates felt that the new industry will offer them increased range of benefits, more job and career security, more work life balance, better working conditions and better pay. They however did not feel that the new industries will offer them either variety of tasks or more excitement and adventure.

The results also indicate that the human resource management strategies of non hospitality organizations affect the graduates' career decisions and that the career decisions of the graduates affect the human resource management strategies of non hospitality organizations.

## **5.2 Conclusions of the Study**

The study has implications for various stakeholders. Employers within the hospitality industry should strive to ensure that there is no managerial skills shortage in the hospitality industry. This can be achieved by employing hospitality management professionals rather than driving them into sectors outside the hospitality industry. Employers also need to shift their focus from diploma holders to university graduates when recruiting managers in order to avoid future managerial skills shortage and to attain competitive advantage, trends that have been widely embraced by other sectors. Academic institutions should align their curriculum towards

producing graduates who are able to meet the modern employment trends that call for flexibility in job performance. The graduates should therefore be open minded when seeking employment within and outside the hospitality industry since employment opportunities in non hospitality organizations are also available. Hospitality management students should strive to understand factors that could influence their career decisions and paths in future. By gaining an insight into how graduates make their career decisions, an effort can be made to guide students towards more realistic career decisions.

### **5.3 Recommendations for Further Research**

1. Further research should be conducted on the major career path determinants of graduates in all stages of their careers.
2. The impact that hospitality management graduates entry into non hospitality organizations has on hospitality employers should also be established and the industry's efforts towards managing this trend revealed. This would help clarify the role that hospitality employers play in shaping the graduates careers.
3. The career satisfaction levels and career progression of hospitality management graduates working in non hospitality organizations should also be studied in detail. This would provide a clearer picture on the extent to which these graduates succeed in the new industries.

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