# Enhancing Graduate Teachers Employability in the 21st Century through Additional Skills Mix

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## ABSTRACT

There is a growing concern over the ever-increasing numbers of unemployed graduate teachers on the labour market. At the current pace we are going, if nothing radical takes place, there is a possibility for the teaching profession to suffer a great risk of extinction or the profession itself losing value and relevancy altogether. It has been commonly observed that the skills that are being imparted during the graduate education programs may not be enough. Graduate teachers do not have additional skills that would enable them have an added advantage to get employed beyond the classroom environment. This limitation has greatly contributed to high levels of unemployment on the labour market amongst the graduate teachers. The aim of the study was to establish whether there were any additional employability skills amongst the graduate teachers. The study employed a mixed methods research design. Data was collected using both probabilistic and non-probabilistic methods. It was established that graduate teachers lacked additional skills for enhanced employability. The study therefore recommended for both upskilling and reskilling of graduate teachers' education.

## INTRODUCTION

Society is ever involving. The community needs are constantly changing and they are becoming more and more complex while at the same time becoming highly unpredictable. An effective higher education system is anticipated to be proactive with respect to community needs. It is anticipated widely that there must be a strong link between society and the higher institutions of learning (Wermke et al 2019). Essentially, the higher institutions of learning are expected to provide solutions to the complex societal needs.

In view of this complex environment where graduate teachers are expected to work from, it is therefore critical that a thorough preparation for teachers must be done before they are released on the labour market. Modern graduate teachers require unique skills that resonates with the modern environment of work. Many studies however, have shown that there is already a skill mismatch between what is needed in society and what teachers are being equipped with (Martin 2019). This perceived gap has been largely attributed to lack of full attentions towards the dictates of the labour markets and the prevailing volatile trends on the supply and demand curve.

Within this complex society, the graduate teacher education must possess specific characteristics for success. The teacher education programs must be proactive, highly innovative and creative in nature while at the same time, it must thrive on solid research foundational skills with a firm touch on entrepreneurial drive. The teaching profession must undergo radical structural and content reforms that prioritize innovations over conservative pedagogical aspirations (Lipponen and Kumpulainen, 2011). The training must impart autonomy and critical thinking to enable the teaching profession to tailor teaching practice to meet the specific local needs. (Cribb and Gewirtz, 2007; Wermke et al., 2019). It must emphasize more of the practical skills as opposed to theoretical orientations (Kaur, 2019). This further suggests that there must be a complete overhaul of teacher upskilling techniques within the graduate education courses (Bhat 2020).

The science of upskilling has become the new 'training gospel' (Maithreyi, 2021). The rationale behind this new trend of thinking radically anchors on the need to cultivate new personalities, attitudes and mannerisms. Tracing these changes to the neoliberalisation of education and training shows how a range of skills development programs from social and personality development skills to employability and vocational skills, seek to cultivate

ethics of self- responsibility through upskilling, to overcome structural disadvantages existing among the marginalized youths (Sandhu, 2021).

The graduate teacher upskilling covers all salient subjects of encapsulating entrepreneurship skills into the mainstream of the teacher educations courses. Using the long arm of entrepreneurship, an ideal young person is called upon to engage themselves unquestionably and productively through education and employment, and demonstrate resilience by pulling themselves up by the 'bootstrings', even under worsening structural conditions of unemployment (Mitra & Singh 2019).

# LITERATURE REVIEW

### The Teaching profession is dynamic and demand driven

One of the professions that is ever fast changing and demand driven is the teaching profession. In order for this profession to remain relevant, it must always be realigned to the local and current trends both local and international labour markets (Schooley 2017). This could be a costly process and one where exceptional skills are required for the successful attainments of goals and objectives. It has been observed however that demand for changes in the teaching professional is mainly precipitated by changes in occupational practices, such as the digitalization of work, the specific requirements for workplace performance and the needs of working life, such as available work, how work is conducted and work practices, periodically prompt reappraisals of the goals and processes of vocational education (Billett, 2006).

### Upskilling in Context

In the job market, a skill is a specific ability, acumens, competence, capability, knowledge, or expertise that an individual possesses and can apply to perform tasks or functions in a professional setting. Skills can be broadly categorized into two types: hard skills and soft skills (Silva 2022).

•Hard skills: These are specific, teachable abilities or knowledge areas that are easily quantifiable and can be measured. Examples include programming languages, data analysis, foreign languages, or technical proficiencies related to a particular job or industry (Whiting 2022).

•Soft skills: These are interpersonal or behavioral skills that relate to how individuals interact with others. Soft skills include communication, teamwork, problem-solving, adaptability, and leadership. They are often more challenging to quantify but are crucial for job employability and **placements (Temple 2022).**

### Upskilling and Reskilling Graduate Teachers

upskilling in the context of job markets refers to the process of acquiring new or advanced skills to enhance one's professional capabilities. In the context of graduate teacher, it entails additional skills that resonates with demand both on the local and global market. it is a proactive process of acquiring additional and well predetermined pool of capabilities for success. it enables individuals to stay relevant in their current roles or adapt to evolving industry demands, increasing their employability and contributing to long-term career growth (Nursabaha et al 2022).

The process of upskilling is a dynamic response to the ever-changing job market and technological advancements. as industries evolve, the demand for specific skills rises. To address this, individuals engage in upskilling initiatives, which can include formal education, online courses, workshops, or on-the-job training. This concept is grounded in the idea that continuous learning and skill development are crucial for professional success, allowing individuals to adapt to emerging trends and stay competitive in their careers (Schoonen & Johnson 2017). Employers also recognize the value of upskilling, as it contributes to a more skilled and agile workforce (Green & Henseke 2016).

### Reskilling and Upskilling for Enhanced Employability

As the world is currently experiencing digital transformation as catalyzed by the Information communication

technologies within the modern industrialized era, there is a paradigm shift that has profound implications for the workforce and will continue to directly or indirectly affecting strategy, talent, innovation, and business models. The modern workforce is committed to the 21st-century technologies and skills (Li, 2020). To advance their work skills, the future ready workforce will take upskilling and reskilling continuously as they advance their career and secure their employment in line with the professional development and career advancement. The concept of Upskilling further means that employees gain new skills to help in their current job responsibilities. For example, an accountant, who used to use an abacus for accounting and computing, learns digital spreadsheets to balance the company's balance sheet. On the other hand, reskilling means employees need the knowledge and skills to take on different or entirely new roles (Schwab & zahidi 2020). For example, the switchboard operator position disappeared after the cell phone became a primary communication device. As a result, those operators will need to reskill to take on a new career (Temple 2020)

**The Future Work Environment Looks Complex**

The future job demand, promises a complex scenario quite different from the present days. The technological strides of recent years including digitalization, block-chains, artificial intelligence and other forms of technology would herald a new VUCA ((Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity) world (Li 2020). This would usher in new job opportunities on one hand while wiping out thousands of present-day jobs. However, the future workforce seems woefully unprepared for being industry-ready to meet the challenges of the fourth industrial revolution. Recent reports suggest that half of the 310 million school graduates that would form the next generation workforce will lack required job skills to lead the Fourth Industrial Revolution (Singh and Sharma 2020).

According to a recent report released in 2019 by UNICEF, Education Commission and Global Business Coalition for Education, it paints a crisis of skills where around 54 percent of youths for instance would complete their school education without the essential skills to be job ready for Industry 4.0 in the next decade (UNICEF 2019) . The youths of South Asian nations are projected to be sub-par in skills as compared to their counter parts in the other regions of the world (Sharma & Singh 2020).

**Priority Demand on Future Jobs**

There is a strong consensus among researchers that higher level of education and skill attainment is a key contributor to relative social mobility (Gloster, 2015). According to Singh & sharma (2020) future jobs would likely Centre on the following pillars.

1. Global. The more one is globally oriented, the more they are likely to succeed.
2. Innovation and creativity skills: The learning content shift that citizenship skills: These skills trains one to have multiple skills that go beyond the one border of residence in terms of culture, knowledge and competencies nurture skills promoting innovation, as well as skills of creativity, analytical thinking, complex problem-solving and analysis of systems.
3. Technology skills: The learning content shift towards inculcating digital skills as programming as well demonstration of responsible and ethical behavior while using technology.
4. Interpersonal skills: The learning content shift that reflects on curating emotional intelligence

**Skills are Dynamic and Volatile**

When skills are analyzed further, one would come to establish that they both dynamic and highly volatile. This reality predominantly suggests that if the graduate teacher education courses remain the same over a long period of time, there possibilities of striking mismatch remain statistically high. The table below gives a synopsis of the reality on the ground. It further shows how employable skills may change with time.

| 25/20/15 | in 2025 | 20/15* | in 2020 | in 2015 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Analytical thinking and innovation | 1, 1 | Complex problem solving | Complex problem solving |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | Active learning and learning strategies | 2, 4 | Critical thinking | Coordinating with others |
| 3, 1, 1 | Complex problem-solving | 3, 10 | Creativity | People management |
| 4, 2, 4 | Critical thinking and analysis | 4, 3 | People management | Critical thinking |
| 5, 3, 10 | Creativity, originality, and initiative | 5, 2 | Coordinating with others | Negotiation |
| 6 | Leadership and social influence | 6 | Emotional intelligence | Quality control |
| 7 | Technology use, monitoring, and control | 7, 8 | Judgment and decision making | Service orientation |
| 8 | Technology design and programming | 8, 7 | Service orientation | Judgment and decision making |
| 9 | Resilience, stress tolerance, and flexibility | 9, 5 | Negotiation | Active listening |
| 10 | Reasoning, problem-solving | 10 | Cognitive flexibility | Creativity |

Figure 1

Data Source: Gray (2016). The ten skills you need to thrive in the Fourth Industrial Revolution. World Economic Forum, January 19, 2016; and Whiting (2020). These are the top 10 job skills of tomorrow – and how long it takes to learn them. World Economic Forum, October 21, 2020.

* 25/20/15: skills in 2025, skills in 2020, and skills in 2015; 20/15: skills in 2020 and skills in 2015

The table above shows the top ten employable skills from 2015 and projected to the year 2025. The list ranks the most sought after employable from number 1 as being the top priority and the tenth being the least skill on the list of skills demand. In 2015 for instance complex problem solving was ranked number one, collaboration with others and people management came second and third respectively while creativity was the last one on the listing.

However, in 2020 complex problem solving, critical thinking and creativity came to the top of the list respectively. The projected employable skills in 2025 became suddenly different and the top three ranked analytical thinking and innovations, active learning and learning strategies and complex problem-solving skill respectively.

From the presentations above, we can see that the employability skills have been changing and they will keep on changing.

In view of this conceptualization, it is very important to notice that there are two critical things that need to be noticed from this table. The first one is that skills are ever changing and second one being that there is need to have multiple skills in order for one to increase their chances of employability on the modern labour markets. This shows that upskilling is so critical in the modern labour markets. It should not end there only but reskilling is so critical even for those who were already in employment, they too need to continue upgrading.

It can be observed further that the lack of additional skills for graduate teachers contributed highly to high levels of unemployability. There is need to focus on both upskilling and reskilling of the graduate teacher education both in the long- and short-term basis in order to realize the high value of enhanced employability. The primary goal of the higher institutions of learning and the government authorities at large must be on the content, structure and the process of teacher education. The right skills and knowledge must be invested in the current and future workforce. Doing nothing about it is one of the greatest risks that we cannot afford to undertake.

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# METHODOLOGY

The study employed mixed methods research involving both qualitative and quantitative research design. Pragmatism research paradigm was used as it gives flexibility for both an in-depth and breadth of the findings (Maxwell 2016). Pragmatism is pluralistic in nature and allows a use of combination of both numeric and non-numerical data (Cresswell & plano Clark 2011). Quantitative data was collected using questionnaires involving a sample of 284 respondents who were selected using simple random technique. Qualitative data was collected using focused group discussions, systematic observations and interview guide. A statistical package software called SPSS was used to analyses quantitative data while thematic analysis was used to analyses qualitative data.

The Convergent Parallel Mixed-Methods Design was used that allowed data sets to be collected concurrently, and secondly, they are analyzed independently using quantitative and qualitative analytical approaches (Schoonenboom & Johnson, 2017)

**Conceptual Framework**

A Conceptual framework is a useful tool that can be used to show relationships and linkages in order to give more understanding to the phenomenon under investigation (Baxton and Jack 2008). There are interconnected relationships that exist in relation to student's participation in decision making in higher institutions of learning as depicted in figure 1 below. It can be seen that there are many positive benefits that accrue both to the institution and the individual students whenever they are engaged in institutional business.

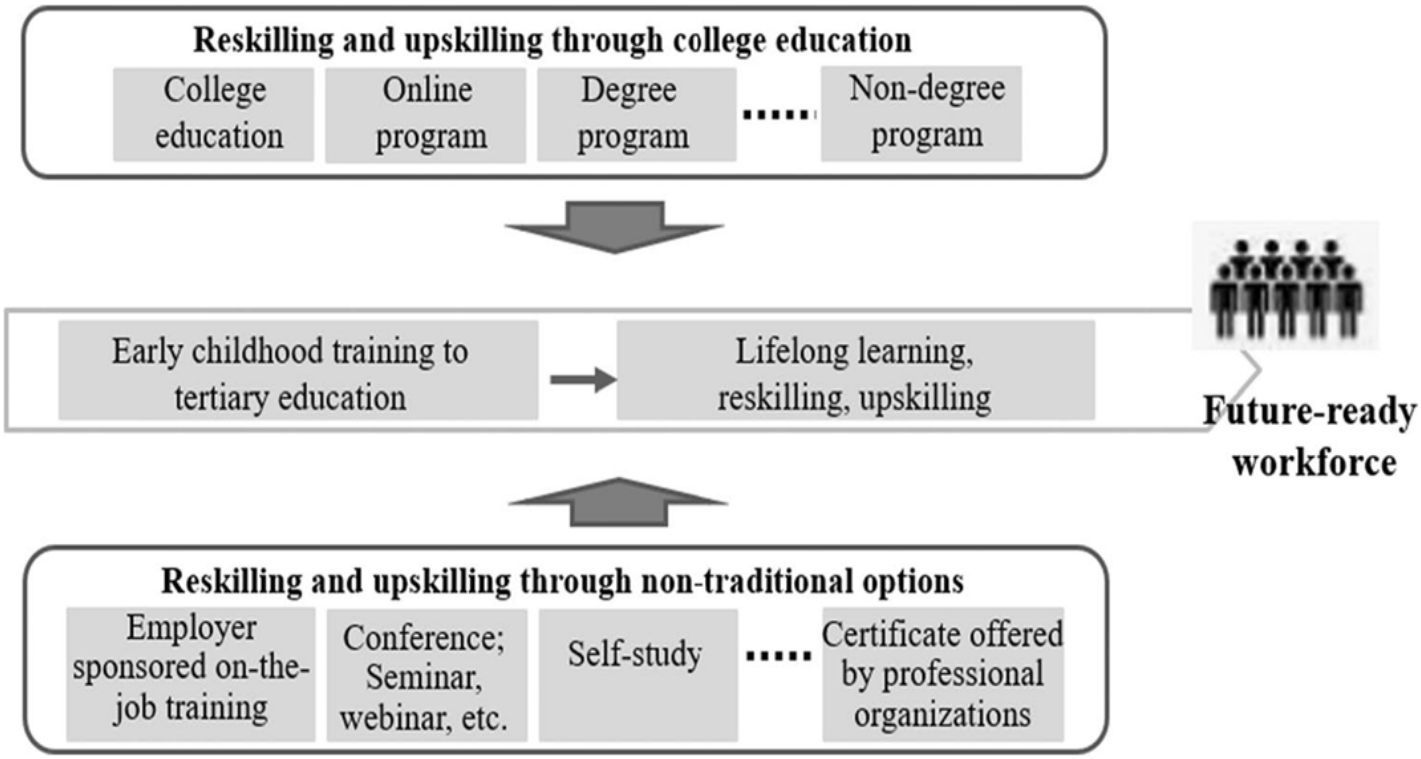


Figure 2 Source: Li 2022

The conceptual framework in figure 2 above brings out the understanding that in order to prepare candidates for the future jobs, it must be covering the whole value chain ranging from early childhood education to tertiary education levels. This is a fundamental theoretical knowledge that brings out the fact that human resources need to constantly be learning in order to remain productive, focused and profitable (Whiting 2022).

Essentially, both reskilling and upskilling of human capital takes place either from the college setup or from actual place of work. Institutions of higher learning are better positioned to scan the societal needs and correctly understand the relevant skills needed to meet the job demand. The institutions of higher learning have a

mandatory responsibility to prepare human capital for both current and future jobs. The quality of graduates is determined by the institutions of higher learning (Wilson-Clark & Saha 2021).

Once the skills are imparted, it remains the responsibility of the respective employers through the department of human resources to continue orienting, mentoring, coaching and retraining staff (Rojko 2017). The training must be continuous throughout the life line of every worker.

At institutional levels, skills can be imparted through workshops, seminars, inductions, secondments and attachments. It takes systematic process and strategic planning to ensure that human resources are adequately prepared for both current and future jobs (Schwab & Zahid 2020).

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

To begin with the study shall focus on the perception of graduate teachers with respect to skills and employability. Using the Likert scale, the perception of graduate teachers was analyzed systematically and the figure 3 below gives the findings that were obtained in that survey. The Likert scale was developed by Rensis Likert in 1932 as a method to assess and quantify people's attitudes and opinions (DeVellis, R.F(2017). It has since become a common tool in surveys, questionnaires and psychological research to collect and analyze data related to people's perceptions and preferences. Researchers often use Likert scale to gauge the intensity and direction of the respondent's feelings or beliefs, making it easier to analyze and compare data quantitatively.

**The Perception of Respondents on the Graduate Techer Education and Employability.**

Please note that; A =Agree, PA=Partly Agree, SA=strongly Agree; D=Disagree, PD=Partly Disagree, SD= strongly Disagree. The table below summaries the key results from the questionnaire that was administered on Graduate teacher employability.

| Item | A | PA | SA | D | PA | SD | mean | SD | WM | D |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The Graduate Teacher Education program is Not meeting the local needs | 36 (12.7) | 41 (14.4) | 15 (5.3) | 88 (31) | 31 (10.9) | 73 (25.7) | 3.90 | 1.707 | 3.24 | High perception |
| The Graduate Teacher Education program does not offer additional employable skills | 68 (23.9) | 35 (12.3) | 41 (14.4) | 79 (27.8) | 20 (7) | 41 (14.4) | 3.25 | 1.699 | 3.24 | High perception |
| The Graduate Teacher Education Program Lacks innovations & creativity | 67 (23.6) | 29 (10.2) | 38 (13.4) | 75 (26.4) | 18 (6.3) | 57 (20.1) | 3.42 | 1.790 | 3.24 | High perception |
| The Graduate Teacher Education program focuses | 114 (40.1) | 24 (24) | 80 (80) | 28 (28) | 13 (13) | 25 (25) | 3.61 | 1.700 | 3.24 | High perception |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| on producing employees rather than employers | | | | | | | | | | |
| I recommend the Graduate Teacher Education to be discontinued | 45 (15.8) | 31 (10.9) | 53 (18.7) | 77 (27.1) | 19 (6.7) | 59 (20.8) | 3.60 | 1.673 | 3.24 | High perception |

Note: N=284; A =Agree, PA=Partly Agree, SA=strongly Agree; D=Disagree, PD=Partly Disagree, SD= strongly Disagree. Weighted Average Mean=42,19/13=3.24. Therefore, the weighted mean was calculated at 3.24 as shown in the calculations above.

Figure 3 Source: field data

When graduates were interviewed as indicated in figure 3 above, it was established that the majority held a high perception that the graduate educations systems was not meeting the local needs. There was a clear separation between the prevailing available skills and what the local communities were in need of. Further, the studies showed that the majority of the respondents held a view that graduate teachers did not have additional employable skills

that would enable them acquire employment. Additionally, the most sought-after skills of innovations, creativity, critical thinking and problem-solving skills were lacking. The current graduate education was more into producing employees rather than employers. It was clearly established that the graduate teachers' education be modified so that it could impart additional skills for alternative employment prospectus creation for livelihood and survival.

**Levels of Employability Amongst Graduates Teachers**

A further analysis was undertaken to assess the levels of employability amongst the graduate teachers and the pie chart below shows the results.

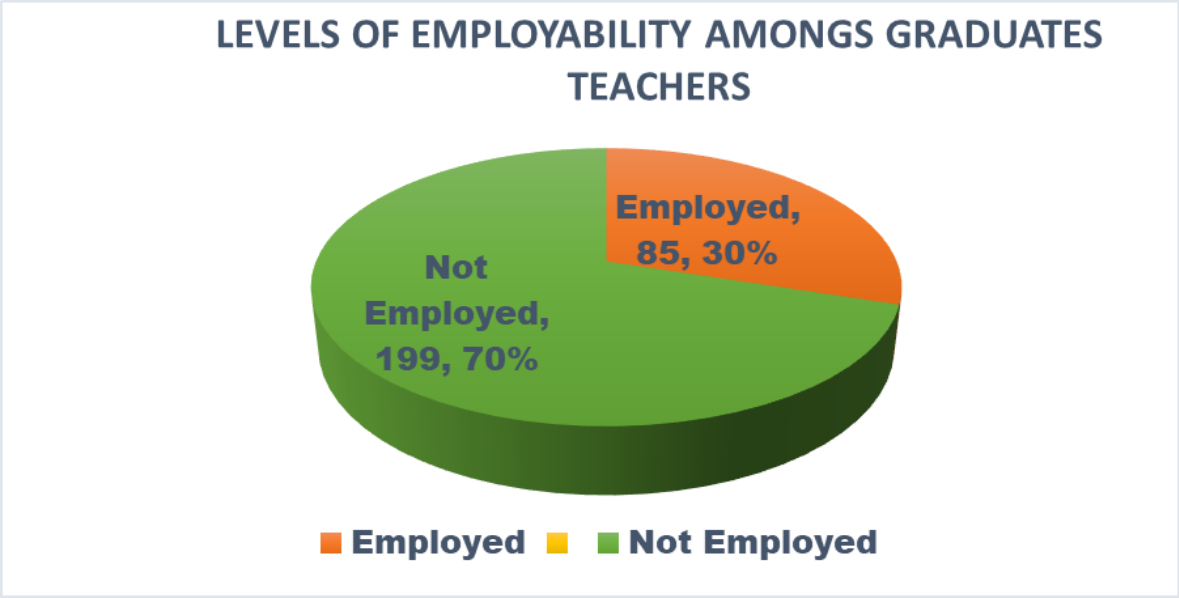


Figure 4 Source: Field data

The figure 3 above shows that 70% (199) of the graduate teachers were not employed while 30% (85) were employed. This shows that the majority of the graduate teachers were not in employments at the time of the

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research work.

**Specific sectors where graduate teachers were employed**

A further analysis was undertaken on the graduate teachers to establish the specific sectors where they were possibly employed after graduation. The graph below shows the results of the survey in the summarized view.

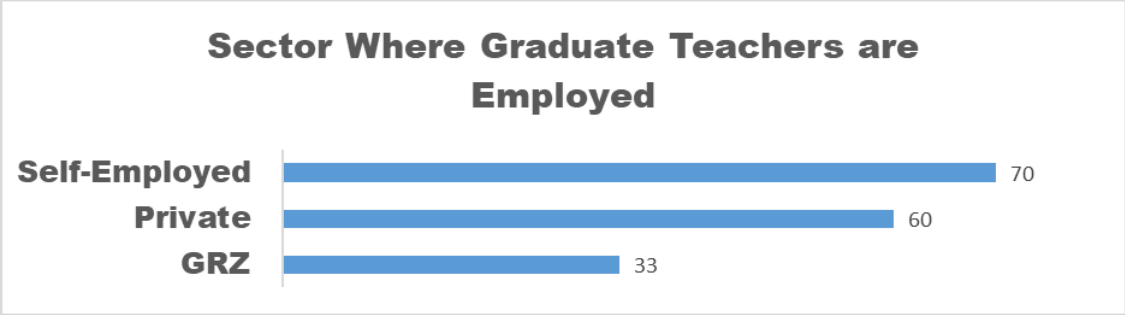


Figure 5 Source: Field Data

The graph above in figure 5 shows that 42.9% (70) were engaged in the self-employment, 36.8% (60) were in the private employment and 20.2% (33) where in the Government form of employment. The illustration above shows that self-employment had higher numbers followed by the private employment while the GRZ had the lowest numbers of those who were employed as Graduate Teachers.

**The industry where Graduate Teachers Were Employed**

The analysis went further to investigate the specific industry where graduate teachers were employed for the period under review. The pie chart below summarizes the results of the survey.

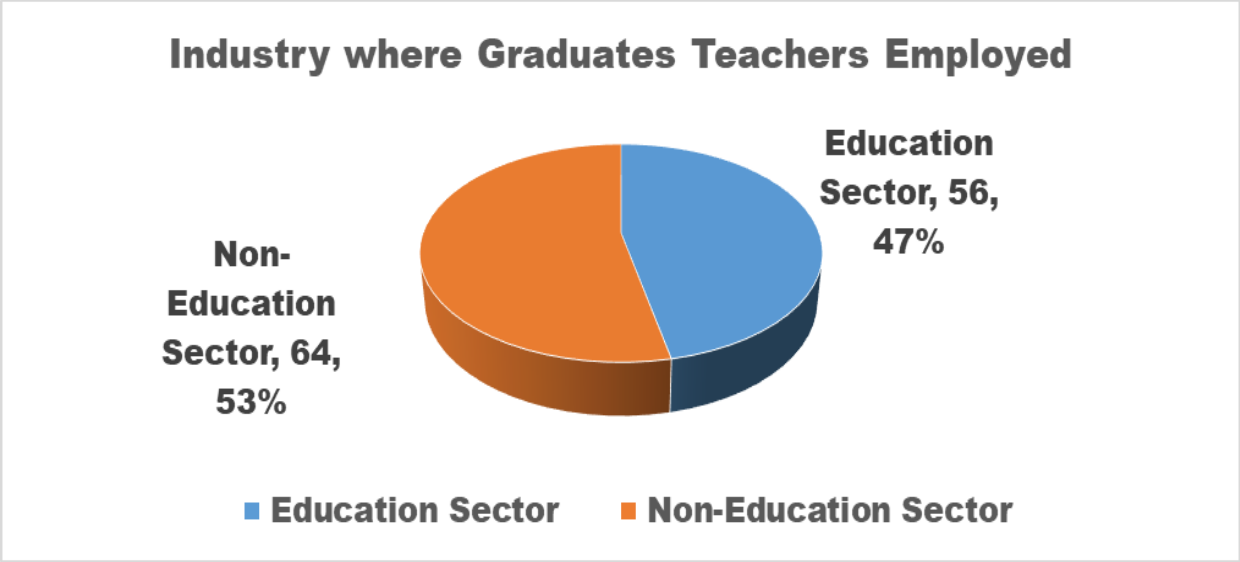


Figure 6 Source: field data

When those who were employed were asked the specific industry where they were employed 53% (64) indicated that they were employed in the non-education sector while 47% (56) got employed within the education sector. This shows that more than half of those who were employed worked in the sector that was not dealing with education industry.

**An analysis to investigate whether graduate teachers were willing to work abroad**

The study further investigated whether the graduate teachers were willing to work abroad if possibilities of employment were found. The results of the survey are shown in figure 6 below.

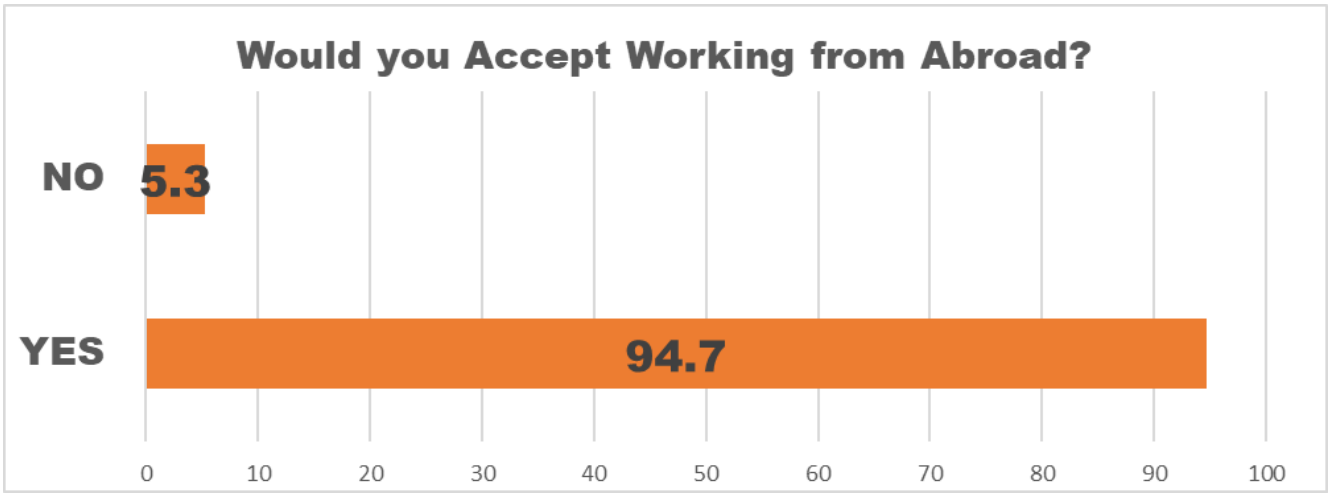


Figure 7 Source: field

data from the graph above in figure 6 above, it shows that 94.7% (269) were willing to accept employment abroad while 5.3% (15) indicated unwillingness to get employment abroad. It can be observed that the majority of the graduate teachers were willing to get employed in case jobs opportunities were available on the international job markets.

The study indicated that of the total participants 70.1% were unemployed while only 29.9% had found employment. However, of the 29.9% who had found employment only 46.7% had found employment in the education n sector while 53.3% had been employment outside the education industry. Further break down showed that 20.2% were in employed in government,36.8% in the private sector while 42.9% were in self-employment. The above statistics clearly indicate that the self-employment had more numbers that the private or the government.

The study went further to inquire what kind of income generating activities did those in self-employment engage in and the most common one included those holes were in the mobile money services as agents, trading in second hand clothes, selling food stuffs such biscuits and chips, farming, charcoal trade, conductors and bus drivers as well as private tuition services.

Further from those who were employed only 46.1% claimed to be independence while 53.9% were still depended on their guardians or spouses for those in marriages.

## DISCUSSION

It is fundamentally clear that most recent graduates' teachers are not in employment. A minority that had managed to get into formal employment had remained struggling for relevance. The labour markets on one hand have limited opportunities for formal employment. The majority of the graduate teacher graduates have remained without jobs for many years. The main issue that stands out so clear is the fact that graduate teachers do not have additional skills that would enable them secure alternative employment opportunities outside the classroom environment. What the graduate teachers have in terms of skills are so limited and this development makes it very difficult for them to find alternative jobs outside the education industry (Li 2022).

The teaching career is expected to highly innovative, creative and dynamic in nature. Institution of higher learning have a key responsibility to generate a new crop of graduates that meet the modern challenges with confidence. It is nolonnger enough to have a higher qualification. There is more that is needed to change the paradigm shift (Whiting 2022).

Teachers cannot be trained the same way they used to be trained about a decade ago. This is because the market dynamics are ever changing and the complexities of the societies is getting new twists each and every day (Rojko 2017). We cannot be talking about reducing the unemployment burdens if the nature of graduate teacher education is still the same yesterday, today and tomorrow.

Employability skills are ever changing and job demands are dynamic. Scenarios in different communities may also be unique. This further suggests that even those who are already employed are not completely safe. What they have today to offer may not be the same as what society may need for tomorrow. The future must not surprise us. If the current professional teachers are not constantly reskilling, they will soon force themselves out of employment.

Technically, what this means is that there is an ever-increasing pressure for excellence. This essentially predominantly demand that the teaching profession should ever be undergoing radical upskilling and reskilling in order to survive both the internal and external forces on the labour markets. Those who are already working as teachers must constantly add on to their skills. The process of reskilling must be robust this time than ever before. The teaching profession needs to realign its technical skills in line with current local and international

needs. This would enable graduate teachers to secure high leverage of competence and relevance within and outside the classroom environment. One dimension of quality service or product demands that the product or service must satisfy customer expectations (Sandhu 2021). Society expects more from the current teaching profession and their expectations are dynamic and ever changing.

Furthermore, there is need for strategic efforts that aim at upskilling graduate teaching education at all levels.

This technically means that the teaching profession must be built with a full knowledge of the community needs at heart. The contents of the education programs for graduate teachers itself must be specifically crafted to respond to both current and future needs. Graduate teachers must be prepared for both the local and international labour markets. Human capital is the greatest investments so far known all over the world. The graduate teacher education must deliberately be an integrated process where multiplicity of skills must be the norm and the order of doing business during the training process.

Of all the skills to be inculcated during the graduate teacher education course, heavy investment must be made to attain those essential skills such as critical thinking, innovations and creativity, complex problems solving skills, analytical thinking, leadership and social influence, technical design and programming, emotional intelligence, judgement and decision making, resilience, stress management and tolerance, people management, customer care and quality management.

Besides, professional teacher education program must be also knight together with integrated knowledge of comprehensive and practical entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship skills help teacher not only to be employers themselves but also skillful in using the entrepreneurial knowledge and acumens to build their own businesses or use their skill in solving their day-to-day challenges.

Comprehensive entrepreneurial knowledge must be integrated into the graduate professional teacher education from the institution of higher learning beginning from the 1st year of their studies until the end of their programs of study. The training must be comprehensive and practical in nature. Once students are equipped with relevant entrepreneurial skills, they are more likely to get both to create and identify numerous opportunities for themselves.

The majority of the graduate teachers are out of employment and have struggled to get meaning livelihood for their survive. Since they have only limited skills, it shows that it is very difficult to get employment outside the education sector. However, some of the graduates who managed to find employment outside the education sector further indicated that their jobs were completely different from their trainings and were often underemployed.

Nevertheless, it is quite clear that the government cannot employ everyone. There are only limited opportunities available within the government. The private sector however, has more opportunities. The potential also to create room and space for everyone is huge outside the government domains. This therefore gives more hope to graduate teachers to have at least an opportunity either to find employment or to create employment for themselves.

What is needed therefore is the right drive towards upskilling and reskilling that would empower the graduate for possible placements within the labour markets. There is always something for everyone at any one time. The

labour markets have potential to accommodate everyone. What is critical are the right skills and the interest to enable someone to get a meaningful livelihood.

The additional skills to be imparted must be holistic, dynamic and also current with local needs. Graduate teachers are willing to work anywhere. They are prepared to get employed anywhere either within the country or abroad. One of the problems identified was that the graduate teachers were not getting the right preparation that would help them acquire the relevant skills and the psychological preparedness for a new life in the diaspora.

One of the factors that has been attributed to such unfortunate development directly relates to the failure of the higher institutions of learning to link specialization to the identified community needs. This lack of connectivity between the labour market and the higher institutions of learning is ever widening thereby contributing to very high unemployment levels while the shortages are still there within the centers of services delivery countrywide. This development further suggests that institutions of higher learning could be offloading specialties that the market could not be in need of. (Silva 2022). If therefore, this situation is not properly handled, it has the potential to cause a huge crisis in the near future that the state may not be able to easily correct given the limitations that they face on the daily basis. Kral (2021) has argued further that due to uncoordinated efforts for the relevant authorities, graduate teachers have acquired skills which the community may not need thereby leading to a mismatch of skills for employability.

This gap has further led to greater low-quality employment (Hadjivassiliou et al., 2016). What this further means is that even though students may be provided with employability skill training, the training may not be what the employers desire (ILO, 2017; National Association of Colleges and Employers [NACE], 2020) or the training is inadequate and a total misplacement of human resources (Hadjivassiliou et al 2016). Tulgan (2016) further found that without the correct and appropriate employability skills training, graduate teachers, business leaders and managers could not only be termed as loss of resources but also a creation of more complication to the already existing unemployment crisis. What was documented clearly were real situational challenges for instance, a specific number of science-based teachers were needed while the majority had non-sciences-based courses. In the cases where art-based subject was needed it was also found that only a small number could be taken on against the huge numbers that had similar skills or art specialties.

Specifically, with issue of the contents and the structure of the teacher education programs, the majority of the respondents claimed that it was necessary to modify the contents and the structure of the education course so that it could meet the current trends and be able to respond to the latest trends dictated on the labour markets so as to make graduate teachers more relevant and current.

The current graduate teacher education seemingly does not offer much skills to prepare graduate for foreign employments. We are living in the global labour economy where there is need to begin to produce graduate not only for the local markets but also for the international markets. The world has now turned into a global village due to globalization and information and telecommunication boom. The implication of this reality suggests that the graduate teachers must be comprehensive in terms of language, culture, skills and mental preparedness. The institutions of higher learning need always to have a global market in mind when training the graduate teachers.

There is need for deliberate actions on the part of the training institutions to expand the spectrum of their education so that, it could cover much more in-depth exposure to different cultures, ethics, multiple foreign languages such as French, Portuguese and Spanish for the teachers to have a chance to penetrate the foreign labour markets with easy more especially for the non –English speaking countries. Many studies have shown that language and culture are most important elements that give both the abilities and confidence for employability on the foreign markets. Without language and culture, it becomes a huge barrier for the graduate teachers to penetrate the foreign job markets. It is not enough to have only professional qualifications without soft skills that could increase the chances of employability for the graduate teachers (Lauwers 2019).

It can further be observed that entrepreneurship has been known now for years to be a fundamental building block in the quest for job creations and wealth creation. Fundamentally, the private sector needs a conducive environment for growth and stability. The government must not be the sole employer in a normal economy. It is the duty of the government to find a striking balance that enables the private entities to thrive and grow without necessarily compromising the maximum potential of the economy to raise its revenue through the established

systems of governance. Though there are traces of entrepreneurial activities that are currently being championed in higher institutions of learning, it must be critically emphasized that the initiatives are brilliant but not enough. There is need for a more robust mechanism to create a solid platform for entrepreneurial efforts to yield the maximum results. Foundational courses must be introduced as compulsory in all the terminally learning institutions to grow and nurture entrepreneurial talents, abilities and acumens and monitor its transitioning from theory into practice so that the art of entrepreneurship could be used as solid tool for employment creation and wealth accumulations. Thousands of jobs can be created by successful entrepreneurship ventures. Today the giant developed economies are able to thrive due to the entrepreneurial efforts and undertakings. Once individuals are properly groomed to embrace entrepreneurial skills and abilities, they tend not only to use their levels of innovations and creativity in their current job search but they are also more likely to create their own. The 21st century requires constant realignment of employable skills. This must be an ongoing process. In order for this process to be coordinated effectively, there is need for the ministry of labour in conjunction with institutions of higher learning to take a proactive deliberate responsibility of ensuring that a system is put in place to monitor the versatility of the employability skills.

Many studies have shown that amongst the top ten employability skills that must always be taken care of include critical thinking, problem-solving, cooperation and teamwork, self-confidence,

and lifelong learning as important skills that assist students to succeed in the job market (Yusof et al. (2004) and Othman et al. (2009).

On a wider view, it has been observed that many leaders in management and labour industry feel that it is easier to train employees for the technical skills needed on the job than the employability skills (Pasnicu & Ghinararu, 2019; Pope, 2017. When one critically looks at the labour market, individuals are often hired based on their employability skills since these skills give companies an edge over competitors (Ritter et al., 2018). Pasnicu & Ghinararu, (2019) postulate that employability skills contribute to an individual's and an employer's performance and ability to be innovative.

However, the prevailing thought continues to demand that educators facilitate employment by enabling the development of these employability skills (Nirmala & Kumar, 2018) with relevant and appropriate employability skills curriculum that permeates all levels of education systems (AbuJbara & Worley, 2018; Ritter et al., 2018; Schooley, 2017). It can further be stated that developing employability skills by embedding them throughout each course in students' curricula provides long-term practice that is key for graduates gaining employment locally or abroad (AbuJbara & Worley, 2018; Talley, 2018).

Several studies have shown however that only 11% of 152 countries investigated upon can provide descriptions of the progress or development made in employability skills in their country's educational levels (Care et al., 2018). In real essence, this should be of major concern in educational circles since it seems employment skills are being overlooked or the plans for implementing them into curriculum are overlooked even though employment is vital for the futures of students (Nimmi & Zakkariya, 2016). AbuJbara and Worley (2018) suggested the gradual introduction of employability skills into education curricula or the implementation of the curricula in stages with diverse means of introduction. In a related study conducted by Homan et al. (2019), it is articulated that sometimes in the past graduates were highly competent in employability skills, but these recent ones had not yet gained employment or experienced how their skills measured up to what was required of them in the workplace. Moreover, Martin (2019) found that having students report that they are competent and ready for the workplace and have the necessary employability skills is not uncommon until they enter the workplace and recognize they are ill-prepared and lacking in communication skills, critical and creative thinking skills, and teamwork skills, primarily. Though most research regarding employability skills still seem dire, there are examples of schools and school districts that are finding ways to teach employability skills in ways that make a lasting impression (Jagannathan et al., 2019; Messer, 2019; Villarreal, 2016).

## CONCLUSION

Graduate teachers did not have adequate additional skills that would resonate with local needs. There was a skills gap between what was being offered at the institutions of higher learning and what the community needed. the

ever-escalating levels of unemployment amongst the graduate teachers answers to the questions of skills mismatch and lack of appropriate skills needed for employability in society. Society is ever changing and the needs are ever changing. The graduate teachers' education must be flexible in order to meet the demand. It is not enough to have higher papers that impart higher qualification description yet lacking the necessary demands for success.

It is recommended that graduate teachers need additional skills that would enable get employed locally or anywhere else where there are job opportunities could be found. Graduates' teacher education is expected to be very robust on terms of solving societal problems. Teachers themselves are believed to be game changers. If there are no opportunities for jobs, they must be in the best position to find alternative solutions to navigate out of the challenges.

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