From University to Work
Comparing Employment Opportunities for Graduates of Vocational Courses with Graduates of Degree Courses

High-quality Research Support programme (HQRS)

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Executive Summary

- Many factors influence choice of study including job prospects but students have a limited number of courses to choose from
- Nursing graduates are significantly more likely to find employment than business school graduates
- Employment prospects are greatly enhanced when educational institutions have good links with employers
- Employers and graduates alike are overly reliant on using personal networks to fill vacancies rather than advertising and responding to advertisements for positions
- Universities are overly reliant on providing social science courses
- Universities are not doing enough to understand and respond to the economic environment
- The Puntland Government, whilst recognising the benefit of vocational courses, is not tackling the issues effectively
- The Nursing course is experiencing a significant number of student drop-outs which needs to be urgently addressed
- There is a lack of research in this area in Somalia and further research is recommended

Introduction

This paper is aimed at investigating the challenges that young people face finding employment after graduation. The focus is on a small sample of students in Garowe, Puntland, a city of 500,000 people. Since they were in school, students have been told that university is the gateway to a better life which has instilled in a young generation much hope and expectation. However, with the increasing unemployment rate it is getting more and more difficult to step onto the career ladder.

This research aims to identify whether courses that include elements of workplace training increase the chances of graduates finding a job and increases their ability to transition more effectively to a workplace environment. This research concept note presents the findings of a comparison between the experiences of graduates from the school of nursing in Garowe with graduates from the business school, and explores the challenges and obstacles that are
hindering young graduates from both schools; the differences and similarities which exist and the reasons for the differences, if any.

If we better understand the challenges and any positive impact from each type of undergraduate course then we can start to make the transition to understanding those issues and finding proper solutions for them and can contribute to effective policy recommendations which will help universities to better support undergraduates, students to find the right courses and employers to be better placed to support graduate employees in the workplace.

**Glossary of Terms**

**For the purposes of this study, the following definitions have been used:**

Vocational courses are those that provide training on a specific area with elements incorporating practical experience and learning in real situations. Such courses typically prepare people to work in various trades and professions including nursing. The term “vocational education” was initially introduced in 1917 in the USA, to reduce unemployment and later expanded to other subjects beyond agriculture and industrial work. In the USA, the so-called The Perkins Act passed into law in 1984. It defines vocational education as “organized educational programs offering a sequence of courses which are directly related to the preparation of individuals in paid or unpaid employment in current or emerging occupations requiring other than baccalaureate or other advanced degree.” The nursing course in Garowe fits into this definition.

Business administration degrees on the other hand, focus on the management of business and prepare individuals to work in commerce. A typical course will include general knowledge of business principles and practices and again, this fits with the university course offered in Garowe.

**Aim**

The purpose of this study is to investigate and identify the challenges that are facing young graduates in Garowe and to assess whether these challenges differ according to different fields of study by examining if two different educational fields of study have a different effect on labor market opportunities. This is achieved by comparing graduates from the nursing school in Garowe to graduates with business qualifications from the University of
Garowe. It is hoped that this study will contribute to a body of knowledge which will help develop policy and strategies to make the transition easier.

**Specific objectives of the study**

To document the experiences of a small sample of current and recent undergraduates with insight from their tutors:

1. To understand the factors which influence the decision to choose a particular field of study
2. To know more about the benefits and challenges of studying
3. To determine the ease of finding a job after graduation

**Methodology**

The study utilised focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews to collect the required data. The sample included 8 respondents from university seniors in two discussion groups (four at the school of nursing and four at the school of business) and interviews with 6 post-graduates all of whom graduated a year ago. Three were from the nursing school and 3 from the business school. I also interviewed the programme managers of both the Schools to get an in-depth insight of the issue. I selected the respondents and arranged meeting with key informants (university deans) by using a snowballing sampling technique. I spoke to people I knew who were able to open doors and put me in touch with the right people. The research activity was carried out after an introduction letter was sent.

- **Desk review of literature:** By analyzing secondary data on the difference of job attainment between individuals from vocational course and individuals from general courses (policies, strategies, reports, textbooks, publications, magazines, and other related documents). The review helped me to get the required data and to shed more light on the research area. Validity and reliability of data were addressed to ensure credibility-reference check. The literature review covered global publications, such as International Organization for Migration (IOM) publications and International Labour Organization (ILO) survey reports to obtain the statistical data necessary for this report.
• **Perceptions:** Focus group discussion, as a qualitative method of data collection, is an excellent tool for exploring opinions, perceptions and experiences. Thus it allowed me to understand the challenges which faced university graduates and whether they are different from students with a different field of study. It enabled me to understand the key similarities and differences between the two groups. Two focus group discussions were conducted, one with students from the nursing school and another with students from the business school. The research agenda was explained to the respondents and both verbal and written and informed consent was obtained. Since the respondents were not fluent in English, Somali language was used as means of communication. An audio record was used to document the discussion. Data was then transcribed, interpreted into English and proof-read to check errors.

• **Semi-structured interviews:** were used to gain an in-depth understanding to the issue. This type of interview is more focused and flexible than standardised interviews. I developed an interview guide which I used to carry out the interview. It was a list of open ended questions of areas to be covered. As before, informed consent was obtained and the interview was conducted and recorded for analysis.

**Limitations**

Although this research was carefully designed it does not claim to be a comprehensive study but rather a concept paper for more detailed research. Somali people have a tendency towards suspicion of motives so I had to find people who have connections in order to introduce me and to gain their trust and assure them that no harm will come to them for giving me this information. This approach may be subject to bias, although I have worked hard to eliminate any bias. Another limitation of this study is the lack of prior research on this topic in a national context which made it difficult to build a solid foundation but which indicates the need for future research.

**Background and context**

Researchers in Somalia have identified high unemployment rates among youth in Somalia. According to a 2012 UN report, 67% of all 14-29 year olds are unemployed making it the highest rate in the world. This figure includes an ever growing number of graduates looking for work. Furthermore, the system of employment in Puntland lacks transparency, adding to the challenges. As Mohamud Isse Yusuf, a lecturer at East Africa University, writing for Horseed Media, pointed out, government and private sectors employment methods are based
on nepotism, favoritism and is clan based. It is not about what you know, it is who you know. Puntland graduates lack basic skills such as how to write and edit cover letters and letters of intent, and university systems do not include any skills training nor preparation for the workplace which makes the transition from higher education to work even more difficult.

Since higher education in Somalia was first established in 1954, the sector has witnessed numerous expansions and reforms in the areas of art humanities, social and natural science. Especially during the period 1970-1991, many technical institutions were established. However all these efforts for raising the education system came to an end with the political uprisings in 1991 and since all universities were situated in the south central region, there needed to be institutions providing higher education in other regions (Puntland Higher Education Policy Draft, 2010). The creation of Puntland as semi-autonomous state in 1998 marked a new era in the higher education system, one which embarked on the establishment of several higher education institutions. The institutions allowed many a chance to continue their studies in higher education inside the country but, with the absence of any effective educational policy, numerous challenges soon emerged. It was not until 2010 that the first policy draft was issued which addressed the weaknesses in higher education and it took two years to complete the document. Its findings included: Limited coordination among higher education institutions, weak training of managements staff, inadequate resources, un-harmonized academic standards, lack of quality assurance mechanisms, lack of common evaluation and promotion system, limited linkages and affiliation with similar institutions in the region and the globe, scarcity of institutionalized technical education, duplication and overlapping courses in most higher education institutions which will affect sustainable development process and market demands in the national level, lack of research and publication centers. Like any other country the purpose of a higher education policy is to strengthen and develop the economic areas which are the mainstay of Puntland economy, giving its citizens access to advanced knowledge and skills. The fact that the government of Puntland has identified these issues 6 years ago but has failed to tackle them has resulted in a continuation of the detrimental effects on the labor market, especially in the high number of unemployed graduates.

There is very little literature specific to Puntland but what does exist, corroborates the issues. A recent report by the IOM (Nicolle and Majidi, 2015) suggests that the system of vocational training in Puntland and Somaliland is very outdated and only has a limited impact on
employment. They also pointed out that most students study a very limited range of courses (IT, business) when there are other marketable career choices.

Vocational training is considered one of the most important policy solutions for tackling unemployment around the world. Werner Eichhorst, a policy advisor at the Institute for the Study of Labor in Germany states “To be sustainable and have a major impact, dual vocational training needs to be actively supported by a sufficient number of employers, trade unions, and policymakers, which takes time to develop” (Eichorst, 2015)

Savage et al (2009) suggests that universities and hiring agencies should work together more effectively. They state.

...findings highlight the importance of establishing stronger links between academia and practice to ensure ... graduates have the necessary technical and social skills to productively engage and contribute to their discipline during the critical transition-to-work phase of their careers (p. 1).

Markus Klein writes widely on educational policy. He argues that the type of degree and the tertiary institution are important factors which contribute to the effect of the field of study on employment prospective, (Klein, 2010).

Despite considerable research which has been undertaken elsewhere in the world, the desk review for this study found only limited literature which considers the impact of the field of study on a graduate’s transition from higher education to work in Somalia. It is against this background that this paper considers whether Puntland graduates from social science fields have a longer transition time than those on vocational courses.

**Field Research Findings**

The field research was designed to gather information from a small sample of students in regard to the following outcomes:

1. To understand the factors that influence students to chose their field of study.
2. To get the students’ perspective of the quality of Puntland’s higher education system
3. To determine the approximate time it takes youth from both fields to find a job after graduation
4. To understand the challenges facing students in both fields.
5. To understand the differences and similarities between the two fields

**Participant perspectives**

**Outcome 1:** To understand the factors that influence students to chose their field of study.

The focus group discussions revealed that many factors can influence students in choosing the path they want to take in their careers. Those students I spoke to had taken into account factors which included an interest in the field of study, family advice, quality of life, and the prospect of a rewarding career. For some students they knew what they wanted to do but felt they had to shift direction due to a various factors that they cannot control.

Participants from the business school spoke of the reasons that led them to choose their field:

“**Firstly, when you are in school there are certain subjects that a person is good at which shapes the direction that he/she will take next, but when the person is about to graduate from secondary school he gets a lot of advice from teachers, family and experts all of which he takes into account……The country is rising from ruin and business is improving. When you see the markets in Garowe you see business is booming and the population is growing fast. This is one of the reasons which encourages a lot of students to study business. Another factor is the influences of friends. When a lot of your friends head to a particular field you tend to love that field too.”** [Abdinur, business]

“**When you are in secondary school, especially in your last year, you will do a lot of thinking on what you will choose to study in university, and people usually assess on what has a market value at that time. I think that is the most influential factor for most of the people, there are some people who choose their major based on family advice or a friend.”** [Aydarus, business]

“**We are limited by what is available in the country, since we don’t have many field specialties and most people are not financially able to travel to study abroad. This has become a major obstacle…..when you are unable to study the field of your dreams, eventually you will think of what would be an alternative from what is available to you...Business is available in most of Puntland universities and economics...Every person has dreams, when you graduate from secondary school with these dreams and desires and when you see the...**
reality and what is available for you in the table... in this region that we live there is no diversity in fields; it is very restricting.. this is one of the reasons why many go for business, the chances available for graduates is either to start his/her own business or find employment in the government or private sector... and the good thing about being employed by the government or a company is that you will not undergo as many expenses compared to those who start their business.” [Ahmed, business]

“The reason why I chose Business is that it’s a field I like and because it is a field which has many opportunities and it is very broad field. It encompasses many courses such as management, accounting and marketing. You would have an idea about topic. Business is crucial and every person is somehow involved in it. The business sector is the largest sector even though a lot of those who work have not studied the field and if they study it will make them function even better.” [Najma, business]

Participants from the nursing course gave their reasons for their decision in choosing their field:

“I loved nursing, it was my favorite subject and because there was only small number of nursing professionals at that time... the need for qualified nursing professionals was very high. Secondly, what encouraged me further was my best friend who asked me to join the course with him, all these contributed in my decision in taking the nursing course.” [Saed, nursing]

“At the time there was scarcity in the number of nursing professionals so I felt that I am needed to fill the gap. We first completed the diploma and now we are about to finish the degree.” [Halima, nursing]

“My family members are from a health education background and advised me to study the field, but I have always been interested to study in this field from when I was young.” [Abdirahman, nursing]

Without a doubt there are noticeable similarities between the two groups, in terms of family and friends’ influence on their decision in selecting their course of study and a general desire to study that particular subject. Nevertheless there is a striking difference in that the high demand for nurses in the labor market was a significant factor for those choosing the nursing course albeit that some business students were also sure of the opportunities a business degree would give them.
**Outcome 2:** To get the student’s perspective of the quality of Puntland’s higher education system.

It was an objective of this study to understand the quality of higher education from the student’s point of view; whether they are content with the quality of service they are getting. In general participants had an optimistic and positive outlook of the quality of higher education in the Puntland region. Here are some of their responses:

“Puntland universities have many international university collaborations when it comes to curriculums and policy. For example PSU (Puntland state university) has the same curriculum as Joma Kenyatta University...maybe with little difference, with better quality or may be with a better instructors, but overall I think the quality of our country’s education is not bad considering the situation of the country now. There might be insufficient books or libraries but there is no lack of effort”. [Aydarus, business]

“As the old Somali proverb goes “everyone depends on what’s in his power” I think that we are a lot better off compared to those who are unable to get education, though some things needs improvement, such as the library. Settling the study curriculum is one of the important things”. [Ahmed, nursing]

“Education aims to produce a thinking person; everyone has a right to education. The teacher can only teach you a little, the rest is up to the person to seek his destiny. I think it is capable of supporting and producing functioning individuals, if a person has a desire to be educated he needs to make a lot of effort and do extra learning and research on his own but it will not be sufficient to just stick to only what he is given in class”. [Abdirahman, nursing]

“I think that the quality of Puntland’s education is progressing, in terms of teaching, schools, libraries but it is not quite there yet.” [Saed, nursing]

There were no significant differences in the views of both groups regarding the quality of education they are receiving and they were overall positive, but one respondent pointed out earlier that the courses that Puntland universities offer are very limited: “...in this region that we live there is no diversity in fields; it is very restricting.” There are six universities in Puntland and all of them offer the same courses, which are mainly social science courses.
There is also considerable overlap with the tutors. You will find that the same instructors that teach in east Africa University also teach in Bosaso University. This is one of weaknesses highlighted in the Puntland higher education policy draft (2010), produced by the Ministry of Education which states: “duplication and overlapping courses in most higher education institutions which will effect sustainable development process and market demands in the national level”. It must be emphasized that it has been three years since the policy was completed and implemented but the challenges that Puntland government identified are yet to be seen.

Outcome 3: To determine the approximate time it takes youth from both fields, to find a job after graduation

The tendency that students enroll in nursing believing that there is a high demand for qualified nurses in the market is justified by the fact that most nursing graduates do find jobs within the first six months of graduating whilst for business graduates it can take considerably longer – even up to two years. This is clear evidence that the graduates of business school have a longer transition period than those of nursing.

Figure 1: The Approximate Time of Business Students Find a Job

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8-11 months</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 and more</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2: The Approximate Time Nursing Students Find a Job

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4-7 months</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the interview with the Dean of the Business Faculty in the East Africa University, he confirmed that he shared the view that business students have unrealistic expectations. He explained that everyone is expecting a personal office on the top floor because s/he has a baccalaureate degree without giving much effort to stand out from the rest, however the real world is not a wish granting factory: “The problem is that these graduates wait... they wait to be hired while, they should have been creating their own opportunities...the individual must learn the things that could progress him, like the language; should do volunteer work; learn to master the required skills – and now with the modern technology the knowledge is available on the in the internet.” [Mohamoud Abdi Omar, Business Dean].

This view was backed up by the fact that when asked how many jobs have they applied for so far the max number from any respondent was 5. That is a low number compared to other countries. Australian job seekers for example, send 40 job applications a month due to changes in employment services (Nick Evershed, 2014), although it may depend on the number of jobs advertised and whether they fit the job-seeker’s specialization and skills. In the US, the average unemployed person spends 41 minutes per weekday searching for a job (Alan B. Krueger and Andreas Mueller, 2008). The comparatively low number of job applications made by respondents in this study can be explained by the fact that majority of Somali people do not exactly follow the internationally recognized procedures when it comes to job search, via an application process, but rather searching through family, relatives and friends networks is a common and more traditional way among the Somali people.

A very enthusiastic participant from the discussion pointed out the same issue that the business dean stated “… so why is it so many of us don’t live the life they desire? One is this person waits, by waits I mean he says ‘now that I have graduated I am going to talk to my uncle and ask him to find me a job, my father’s friend knows the new minister in the planning he will connect me to him’ they make a simple calculation and decide to wait for help from someone else. But life is not about waiting, you need to go after what you want.” [Abdinur, business]

Another possible reason for this low level of activity in finding work then, is that Somali culture is a very dependant culture. Nobody starves for a day or becomes homeless because you can always turn to your uncle or your great-great relative, which instills in a person that they need not give
much effort in order to have a decent life. They look at life from a narrow perspective of their own networks just as Abdinur described.

The extent that local organizations are involved in the career development activities of students may also have an effect on student’s transition to a work environment. After comparing the different collaborations that the two faculty managers have with community organizations, I found that nursing has developed many more relationships compared to the business faculty. The business Dean stated:

“There is a new program sponsored by ILO in which we are connecting students with local agencies. Although there were not many participants from community organizations, Amal bank and the local government were two of those who took part and recruited 9 graduates from social sciences and business. It is such a small number compared to the number of graduates. 30 students graduated from business and 100 from the social sciences in that semester alone”.

The most common type of business in Somalia is small companies. They do not advertise their vacancies in the media, rather they rely on family and clan to find candidates. This is, in large part due to general distrust and misconception that business owners have of people from different clans.

This is not the case however for the nursing graduates. The Nursing manager explained how they prepare and train students and connect them with hiring organizations:

“Our institute has a direct relationship with Garowe General Hospital; our students start the practical training in semester 2 and in semester 4 they start their internship at the general hospital where they are given placements at the different hospital departments. After a month they switch departments. For example, the student who worked in the maternity department will be switched to the emergency department. While the student is enrolled on the course s/he will get his/her practical experience in the hospital...As far for the private health centers and pharmacies they come to us and ask for a certain amount of qualified nursing students. We set a criteria and when the students graduate and the results come out we select for them the students who hold the highest marks and the middle students as they are the most qualified ones. This serves as an incentive for the students..... I would say 98 percent of the students work. The other day we got a call from the International Red Cross saying they need
a female nurse in Jalam (a rural village) so we called the students who graduated from the school but we could not find one available as they were all working. I think the percentage of unemployment in this field very low.” [Abdifata Ali, nursing manager]

The Business school then can learn a lot from nursing, especially in terms of integrating study and work since students that gain experience while in school have proven to have a greater chance of employment after they graduate. It also helps to break down issues of clannism and nepotism.

**Outcome 4:** To understand the challenges facing students in both fields

Since the nursing and business are two different fields they vary in the type of challenges that students face during and after graduation. The two main challenges that nursing respondents stated was the emotional challenges, and difficulties in achieving a work/study balance. Nursing requires advanced education, skills, practice and experience. It is also emotionally demanding and challenging; nurses learn to manage not only their own emotions but also those of others.

“When you are studying nursing we are taken to health centers for practice. People are different; soft hearted people cannot study this field, because you will be exposed to unusual situations like accidents and death that can traumatize you. This causes some students to drop out from the course”. [Saed, nursing]

In addition to that, nursing students struggle to balance between their studies and their work. They reported that it is even harder when their shifts conflict with their course time. The respondents who participated in the discussion were preparing for their final degree in nursing but the number of students in their class was only 13 from the initial intake of 35 students. Most dropped out because of the conflict between work and study time and some could not handle the stress of managing the two.

“Some of the challenges we have faced is maintaining the balance between work and study; some actually dropped out from the course because their work time conflicted with their study time and some just couldn’t handle it”. [Abdirahman, nursing]

This is an interesting finding. Although the nursing course has an outstanding employment prospective it has a 63% rate of dropouts for the year group I interviewed and the suggestion
was that it was similar in other years. They are expected to work hard as well as studying full time. There may also be other underlying reasons which will require further research.

As for the business students, some of the challenges that participants mentioned were:

- Large number of graduates compared to a low number of available jobs
- Unfair employment procedures
- Language barrier
- Lack of work experience

There are therefore, considerable variances between the two courses in terms of this outcome.

**Outcome 5:** to understand the differences and similarities between the two fields

Any business administration course usually involves theoretical learning of administrative process while a nursing course involves both theoretical and practical process. Not only do the two courses differ in terms of study and practice but also in terms of employment prospects. According to the findings, most of the nursing students who participated in the discussion were employed whilst on the course, only one of the students from business was working and gaining experience. To get an additional perspective from those who have graduated, I conducted a survey of students from both fields (a total of six respondents, 3 from nursing and three from business) who graduated a year ago and found that 2 of the nursing students were working compared to only 1 of the business graduates. Whilst this is a low number it does support the evidence found elsewhere and is a useful basis for further research.

The reasons for this variance in job opportunities are:

- Nursing is more narrow and specific than business administration.
- There are much greater numbers of graduates in business compared to the small number of companies hiring business graduates.
- Nursing encompasses both the theoretical and practical training, while business is only based on theoretical study.
- Nursing is less susceptible to corrupt hiring practices.
Conclusion

This study aimed to answer the central question: Is there a difference in the ability to find jobs between those graduating from nursing at Bosaso University and those graduating with a general business degree from Garowe PS University. By examining the experience of both groups during school and after graduation it found that there is a higher demand for qualified nurses in the market and most nursing graduates found jobs within the first six months of graduating whilst for business graduates it was considerably longer; even up to two years. This was found to be for a number of reasons. Nursing students acquire work experience while in school which makes it easy for them to enter the labor market more easily, in addition to that the number of graduates from the business faculty is substantially greater than those graduate from nursing which makes the market competition tougher than that for nursing.

Although nursing graduates have greater employment prospects this study revealed that they also experience a very high dropout rate due to emotional stress and the difficulty of managing school and work. Nursing is known to be an emotionally challenging task and it is difficult enough to be a student let alone to juggle between work and study if both are full-time requirements. It may be far better to recognize the need for more flexible work schedules for students and reasonable working hours.

The study has also found that lack of collaboration between local organizations and the business faculty is an important factor contributing to youth unemployment in that field and in direct contrast, students that are exposed to work while in school have less difficulty in finding a job than those who graduate with no work experience. This suggests the need for well-designed transitional programs. It is probable that the benefits of these programs in the future would outweigh any costs of investment and will help to provide smoother transition for students. Universities need to take the initiative in designing effective transition programs in collaboration with both local and international organizations. There is a need to do carry out further research on the kind of courses needed in the economic market and to provide a well-designed curriculum which will give options to employers and opportunities to graduates rather than the present state of course duplication.

The Puntland Government has been making efforts to develop the education system and to address the challenges that surface, and has produced a policy to tackle these issues but there seems to be considerable gaps between policy and what is being achieved in practice. That
said, it is important to recognize that policies require time to be adopted; they do not succeed on the first implementation, it requires follow ups and several trial and error to adjust and this is particularly true of fragile and emerging states. The Puntland government must however learn from experience and develop more effective policies that stand a better chance of achieving the desired outcomes.

Finally, students have a responsibility themselves to create their own opportunities rather than being dependent on a narrow circle of friends and family.

**Further areas of research:**
This is a fertile topic, there is still much to be discovered, not least, the fact that while vocational training is clearly paying off in terms of employment prospects, it also, in this nursing college at least, has a very high dropout rate and further research is recommended to understand whether this is true elsewhere and the reasons for it.

**Recommendations**

1. Universities should invest in providing career preparation programs for students, sending students for part time internships while in course will help them understand the work environment and gain the skills and the experience they need to land a job when they graduate.

2. Universities should keep track of their graduates, keep records, and hold reunions to know how they are doing in the real world and to collect statistics which will help inform future programs.

3. For vocational education to work there should be the right number of organisations prepared to hire outside of their family and friends otherwise it is doomed to fail. More job opportunities will help reduce the number of graduates seeking to emigrate and better qualified graduates may help the case for foreign investors.

4. The government should monitor the quality of service that universities provide, control the duplicity and overlapping of courses.

5. There should be greater correlation between courses offered and the skills required in the labour market rather than a high dependency on social sciences rather than continuing with the old adage “we will teach what we have.” Universities should take a risk, collaborate with other universities and adopt new courses.
6. Universities should work on pursuing partnerships with the business community to offer training and employment to students.

7. There should be a greater focus on providing field specificity options. Field specialization allows individuals to learn more closely what they are good at and increases the quality of their education, thus spreading the large number of students into different occupations which increases their chances of employability.

8. Universities should take greater responsibility to ensure that the students they are teaching are adequately prepared for the real world and have the necessary skills to not only perform in jobs but to apply for them in the first instance.

9. The nursing administration must listen to student complaints and problems and identify effective solutions to reduce the number of dropouts.

10. Nursing students should be better trained to cope with the hospital environment and to deal with sensitive cases.

Acknowledgment
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IZA


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APPENDIX 1B

TRANSMITTAL LETTER FOR THE RESPONDENTS

A research study to compare employment opportunities for graduates of vocational courses with graduates of degree course

Dear Sir/madam

As part of my HQRS course I am currently conducting a research study entitled “Comparing employment opportunities for graduates of vocational courses with graduates of degree courses”, the purpose of the study is to examine if the graduates of these courses have a different transition to the labour market.

I am kindly requesting your assistance in one or more of the following ways: taking part in a focus group discussion, completing a questionnaire, being interviewed.

Please be advised that the data collected will only be used for the purposes of my research. Furthermore, the data will treated as confidential and will be anonymized to protect individual identities although the different fields of study, the colleges of study and a differentiation between undergraduates and postgraduates will be made.

If you have any questions or concerns, you may contact The HQRS Mentorship Coordinator Latif Ismail

latif.ismail@btransparencysolutions.co.uk, +252 633 610 915 +242 615 289179

Please read the following and sign below to confirm your agreement to participate

- I confirm that I am 18 years old or above
- I confirm that I understand the nature of the research and the extent of my involvement
- I understand that my participation is wholly voluntary and I can choose to withdraw my participation at any time
- I understand that the information I provide will only be used for the purposes this research.
- I understand that my course and place where I study/studied will be identified but my name will not be used (you will be referred to as, for example, student 4)
APPENDIX 11

CLEARANCE FROM ETHICS COMMITTEE

Date______________

Candidate’s Data

Name____________________________________

Reg.# ___________________________________

Course ___________________________________

Title of Study

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

Ethical Review Checklist

The study reviewed considered the following:

___ Physical Safety of Human Subjects

___ Psychological Safety

___ Emotional Security

___ Privacy

___ Written Request for Author of Standardized Instrument

___ Coding of Questionnaires/Anonymity/Confidentiality

___ Permission to Conduct the Study

___ Informed Consent
___ Citations/Authors Recognized

Results of Ethical Review

___ Approved

___ Conditional (to provide the Ethics Committee with corrections)

___ Disapproved/ Resubmit Proposal

Ethics Committee (Name and Signature)

Chairperson ___________________________

Members

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Appendix III

Pictures