

Student learning Challenges in Uganda: Hospitality Training

Lucy Ajambo¹, Ronny Sannerud², Leikny Øgrim³

¹ Educational Sciences for Teacher Education and International Studies, Oslo Metropolitan University

² Faculty of Education and International Studies, Oslo Metropolitan University

³ Faculty of Education and International Studies, Oslo Metropolitan University

Abstract

Background: The growing need to improve student learning is one of the critical concerns at all levels of their career and professional development particularly in hospitality training. As student learning is embraced, it is confronted with progressively unique challenges. This study, therefore, set to identify challenges students experienced during instruction in vocational institutions and workplaces in Uganda.

Methods: A qualitative research approach using a descriptive study design was used. A sample of 18 participants that included teachers, trainers and students were purposively selected from vocational institutions and workplaces. In-depth interviews were used to collect data. The responses from in-depth interviews were triangulated from different sources of students, teachers and trainers.

Results: The study found out that student learning challenges affected the instruction process in hospitality training. Challenges that included ineffective teacher-student relationships and insufficient teacher-student counselling were effective to facilitate student learning due to the teachers' heavy workload. The trainers' use of demand approach of communication and communication-on-corridor, trainer guidance and student engagement being confronted by trainers and employees' limited sharing of ideas and experiences before and after doing the tasks leading to difficulties in task-specific feedback from trainers affected student learning.

Conclusion: The learning strategies used strategies from vocational institutions and workplaces were not favourable, sufficient and suitable to facilitate student learning. The teacher-student relationship and teacher-student counselling were effective to facilitate learning due to the teachers' heavy workload. The trainers' use of demand approach of communication created feelings of fear and a lot of guesswork towards the assigned tasks and guidance strategies were not in effect to facilitate task-specific feedback from trainers.

Key words: student learning, challenges, hospitality training, vocational institutions, workplaces

Date of Submission: 03-01-2022

Date of Acceptance: 14-01-2022

I. Introduction

The growing need to improve student learning [1] is one of the critical concerns at all levels of their career and professional development [2]. Student learning is greatly influenced by the quality of teachers and trainers [3]. Regarding the emerging role of hospitality training, teachers and trainers are required to apply up-to-date strategies during instruction to be able to unearth student learning challenges [4]. In this study, student learning challenges denote all-encompassing disruptions of students not being able to demonstrate or participate effectively during instruction in the two learning arenas [vocational institutions and workplaces]. Universally, studies that point to student learning indicate that several strategies have been specifically engineered by teachers and trainers to support critical thinking as the new trend, increase interaction and engagement with peers and teachers [5], provide students with frequent feedback and offer students the opportunity to apply their learning situation, stimulate impactful and meaningful learning experiences [6], encourage higher levels of student performance, and motivate students to practice higher-level critical thinking skills [7].

Although several studies acknowledge the strategies used to enhance student learning, [8] and [2] have noted that it is confronted with challenges of lack of teacher-trainer collaboration and cooperation between vocational institutions and workplaces to enable the combination of different types of learning. Other student learning challenges include lack of motivation [9], career counselling [10], the attitude of parents [11], community perceptions [2], teacher and trainer competence [11], inadequacies of infrastructure resources [12]. Based on the above-mentioned challenges, [1] argued that improving student learning in vocational institutions and workplaces as a way of developing and strengthening knowledge skills and practices has therefore attracted a lot of attention. This, therefore, calls for an in-depth understanding of student learning challenges in vocational institutions and workplaces for hospitality training.

The benefit of effective student learning as a shared responsibility between vocational institutions and workplaces [13], improves cooperation and in particular hospitality training between vocational institutions and workplaces. Developed countries have strengthened student learning through the use of a combination of different types of student learning to increase essential and practical skills [14]. For example, countries such as Norway, Germany, Switzerland and Austria have adopted long-term and formal partnerships dual or apprenticeship systems between vocational intuitions and workplaces [15]. This cooperation enables the use of specific strategies and instructional practices that promote student learning as they permit them to feel comfortable, confident and allow them to form their own learning experiences during the learning process [7]. According to [2], vocational institutions rely on workplace training for students to critically reflect upon the challenges they are confronted with during instruction and find solutions for them during further training. As [16] opined that the need to take into account life-like learning activities for critical reflection and solution provision in vocational institutions were vital to allow student learning in workplaces. However, in Uganda, there are limited scholarly studies conducted and published on student learning challenges during instruction aligned with vocational institutions and workplaces in the hospitality industry. Therefore, to identify the student learning challenges within the hospitality industry, this study was guided by the following question: What learning challenges do students experience during instruction in vocational institutions and workplaces in Uganda?

1.2 Student learning and Hospitality Training– the Ugandan Perspective

The three-year National Diploma in Hotel Management (NDHM) as one of the vocational programs in Uganda was the focus of the study. The overall objective of the program is to equip the students with adequate knowledge, skills and positive attitudes that will enable them to become productive citizens by giving them essential and practical skills which will earn them a living and develop their personalities [17]. According to Muganga and Ssenkusu [18], a gradual teaching transformation from teacher-centered methods to student-centered approaches in which student learning is one of the key issues in vocational institutions is emphasized. To ensure effective student learning, the NDHM has got strategies that include group work, lectures, demonstrations, discussions, and presentations [17]. However, challenges of lack of funding; resource limitations, infrastructural challenges and high student-teacher ratios and high enrollment have affected student learning [19], depriving students of the appropriate and adequate training in the workplaces [18]. Workplace training is a practicum that is a vital component of the NDHM program during which the students are expected to appreciate the importance of human relationships, attitude towards work, and self-confidence [20]. Each student is supposed to be supervised by both the teacher and the trainer who collaborate during the duration of the training for mentoring purposes.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

To gain in-depth insight into the study, the boundary crossing theory developed by [21], [22] was employed. The boundary crossing theory emphasizes analysis of two interacting activity systems as boundaries between activity systems enable subjects to take expertise in one learning arena and expand it to an adjacent functional arena in the same occupational field to enable them to learn better. Supported by studies of [23] and [24], object interaction of two interconnected activity systems generates a partially shared object, develops new patterns and contradictions within the units of analysis due to the motive for the execution of activities. These contradictions that are historically accumulated by structural tensions within and between activity systems are regarded as a source of disturbances that create system instability and give rise to transformation in the object and motive of the activity that acts as sources of change and development [25]. [26] argues that the constantly growing and changing activity systems result in new problems and expect limited solutions can be quickly turned into routine repeatable procedures. However, boundary crossing being largely dependent on the subjects' effective use of appropriate tools to enable them to deal with new situations [25], [27], demands professional expertise to encounter new challenges [21]. According to [27] vocational institutions need to prepare their teachers as agents of boundary crossing between the vocational institutions and the workplaces to be able to bring new well-defined intellectual and practical tools as well as insights into the processes of change. Particularly related to the hospitality industry as one of the fastest-growing industries [28], requires to students develop their essential and practical skills in vocational institutions and further strengthen them in the workplace. However, students are challenged with several disruptions that do not enable them to demonstrate or participate effectively during instruction. Therefore, without understanding the nature of learning challenges students experience during instruction in vocational institutions and workplaces, their ability to develop and strengthen their essential and practical skills could be affected. The boundary crossing theory is linked to student learning challenges: vocational institutional based student learning challenges and the workplace-based student learning challenges.

1.4 Students learning Challenges in Vocational Institutions and Workplaces

From the reviewed literature, student learning challenges were identified] and considered because they directly affected them in both vocational institutions and workplaces. In this subsequent section, I build on the current categories to deliberate on student learning challenges of student demotivation, teacher-student counselling and guidance teachers' perceptions during instruction in vocational institutions [2], [9], [11]. In workplaces Generally, literature indicates that challenges of student learning include student induction [20], [43], trainer guidance and support and student engagement [44].

1.4.1 Vocational Institution-based student learning challenges

1.4.1.1 Student Demotivation

According to [9] vocational education and training (VET) programs are for students with inferior grades and low performing students [1], [29]. In Uganda [30] and [18] in their studies revealed similar findings but further also highlighted the outdated instructional practices from the outdated curriculum as could be one of the student learning challenges. However [31] argued that levels of students motivation were dependent on whether students liked their teachers, the degree to which they were engaged during instruction and how down to earth the teachers were. However in Uganda, little is also known about teacher-student relationships during instruction. Whereas this teacher-student relationship provides a compassionate underpinning for longstanding student learning [32], literature indicates student learning fluctuations in developing countries like Uganda are attributed to several factors that include; low attainment and underachievement [33], a reduced sense of belonging to vocational institutions [34], student disruption in classrooms [35], absence and non-attendance for learning [36], lack of attentiveness [34], lack of participation in the classroom [5] and misbehaviour and exclusion [2].

1.4.1.2 Teacher-Student Counselling and Guidance

Teachers' counselling and guidance of students in VET plays a vitally important role in encouraging students learning during instruction [2]. However, [33] attributed the low interest and enrolment in VET to a lack of awareness of the vocational programs and career opportunities. Subsequently, in hospitality training, Eunice et al [10] also argue that counselling is crucial for students to investigate in selecting their professional career based on strengths, weaknesses, resources and opportunities. [36] explains that students go who through stress and feelings of hopelessness tend to impact negatively on their career development or preparedness to further training. Akin to [1] argued that teachers inadequate counselling among VET students influence their career exploration behaviours. Hospitality training is dependent on the teacher-centred approaches [18] could be affecting student learning during instruction.

1.4.1.3 Teachers' Perceptions

Whereas VET programs are developed to improve student learning for further training [9], teachers emphasize academic achievement rather than the essential and practical skills as well as the interest of students [32]. Various literature about student learning acknowledges that students recognize constructive social support from their teachers [37], they show increased academic interest and higher levels of engagement compared to peers without such relationships [38]. Whereas studies haven't been conducted on students acknowledgement of productive social support from their teachers in hospitality training, [11] and [9] opine that negative feedback and negative perception influenced by the teachers cause low esteem, create fear, teacher-student and victimization among students during learning. On the other hand, [12] in their perceptions and satisfaction with online learning versus traditional face-to-face instruction also indicated that education is in a state of crisis as a result of many of the challenges that include budget cuts, increased teacher workload, diminishing quality, the rationalizing of faculty, and the revamping of the curriculum to fit the needs of student learning. In Uganda [30] and [39] [18] in their studies revealed similar to [12]. In addition, Uganda's case obsolete traditional learning processes have rendered student learning passive which calls for identifying their challenges during instruction.

1.4.2 Student learning Challenges in Workplaces

Recognition and interest in workplace training as a rich student learning environment has grown in recent decades due to the changing character that work is associated with learning has been almost universally accepted [40]. Several educational programs which support the association of workplace training have been applied in many countries, and governmental agencies and universities have endowed this fundamental recognition [41]. Similarly in Uganda, hospitality training as one of the educational programs that promote student learning in workplaces have been acknowledged to facilitate students essential and practical skills based on industry requirements [42].

1.4.2.1 Student Induction for Workplace Training

According to literature the issue of whether students undergoing workplace training should be inducted into the workplace culture at the beginning has been of interest [2], [45], [46]. [47] has argued that student induction to workplace training assists students to adjust and feel comfortable in the new environment, inculcate in them the ethos and culture, build bonds with peers and trainers as well as expose them to a sense of larger purpose and self-exploration. Although Uganda's [20] argued that before student induction to the workplace, students developed competencies from vocational institutions that ought to be applicable in the world of work, student induction challenges related to workplace training remain unknown. Akin to [48], appropriately planned induction strategies for workplace training teach the students undergoing training about the environment in several departments and connects them with the people in it. Whereas these strategies remain unknown in Uganda, [46] and [45] argued that they were meant to engage students in workplace policies, processes, practices, culture and values before the regular training started. While stressing the planning of induction processes for students [49] argued that they should be coherently systematized from simple to complex concerning workplace interest.

1.4.2.2 Trainer Guidance and Support

Trainer support in workplaces significantly affects training transfer [40], [50]. Trainer guidance and support for student learning in workplaces are done through close guidance [51], direct interaction between trainers and students [20], more experienced workers and students [40], dialogues and group discussions aimed at assisting students to assess the scope and the limits of their knowledge and the possibilities of its transfer to new situations [40]. Similarly, [50] also observed that trainer guidance and support could take place through briefings, questions and answers, learning events and task delegation. In Uganda, as far as trainer guidance and support is concerned, different strategies have been used to facilitate student learning in workplaces, how they are used in hospitality training is scanty and unknown.

1.4.2.3 Student Engagement

Regarding time for students to engage in training activities and tasks, [52] and [53] recommended the demand for workplaces to access and plan training by involving trainers and students. Although [20] argued that sequencing of tasks in workplaces in which learning was enhanced has taken precedence as a means to provide of achieving the anticipated success, amidst the world of work complexities, the processes of student engagement remain unknown in Uganda. [20] argued that work had to become learning and learning had to become work. This calls for trainers need to be apportioned adequate time to plan for teaching and training to improve student learning. Akin to [54] study comparable findings were identified the significance of timely and guided intervention by the trainer in helping the students to understand the nature of the difficulties they are facing in particular tasks were further indicated. As opined by [55] and Lambert [56] teachers as boundary agents require thorough preparation to be able to use new well-defined intellectual and practical tools in form of experiences and knowledge to provide hands-on guidance, establish good relationships with the students as well as motivate them.

II. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted a qualitative study approach of descriptive design [57] to provide an in-depth understanding of the study. Being qualitative in nature, the descriptive design enabled us to observe, interview and describe the behaviour of participants without influencing them in any way. The students in vocational institutions and workplaces were located as the main units of analysis.

3.2 Sampling Strategy

Purposive sampling was used to gain access to 18 participants from two vocational institutions and two workplaces to gain a deeper understanding of the study. The teachers and trainers had an experience of eight to twelve years of teaching and training experience, prominently known and had exclusive training in hospitality institutions and workplaces. Students from two vocational institutions who were finalists of the national diploma in hotel management and underwent workplace training for a period of ten weeks at the end of the second semester were also purposively selected. These final year students were later followed during their workplace training.

3.3 Data Collection

In-depth individual interview guides that consisted of both semi-structured and open-ended questions were used to conduct interviews for about 45 to 60 minutes on the majority of the participants. Interviewees voluntarily and spontaneously comfortably expressed their opinions. The interview questions focused on the

following: challenges students experience during instruction in vocational institutions and challenges students experience during instruction in workplaces. Four sets of interview guides were used; categorised based on the respondents' roles and positions. The responses from in-depth interviews were triangulated from different sources, that is, students in vocational institutions, students undergoing workplace training, teachers and trainers. These helped to improve the credibility and validity of the study findings [58].

3.4 Participants of the study

All participants from two vocational institutions and workplaces voluntarily accepted to participate and shared their experiences to completion of the scheduled study interviews. Participants included twelve hospitality teachers (six from each vocational institution), four supervisors (two from each workplace) and eight students from the vocational institutions (four each from each vocational institution). The eight student participants (four from each vocational institution) were divided into two to form four groups of two members each to get detailed and relevant data for analysis in each learning environment. The use of small groups gave student participants more time to talk, feel comfortable and express themselves freely as we gained more insight into the study.

3.5 Data Analysis

All interviews were conducted in English, audio-recorded and later transcribed into text and read carefully as a whole to understand the participants' perceptions and excerpts for further analysis were selected based on how they satisfied the categories of data. Key themes of student learning challenges in vocational institutions, student learning challenges in workplaces and students solutions to the challenges were used to categorize common and recurrent patterns in line with the theory of boundary crossing [59]. To validate data, a comparison of findings from participants from vocational institutions and participants from workplaces showed some consistency. Furthermore, cross-examining of the transcribed data was done with the study participants for purposes of data reliability and validity. [59] support respondent validation as a source of ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative data. To connect to theoretical validity of the theory of boundary crossing was read and summarized to enable the logical organisation of data. To connect to ethical validity, approvals were obtained from the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) and the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) concerning ethical considerations relevant to obtaining data from participants. Also in reporting the data confidentiality and anonymity were maintained.

III. Results

3.1 Student learning Challenges in Vocational Institutions

3.1.1 Student Demotivation

Whereas the NDHM had strategies that included group work, lectures, demonstrations, discussions, and presentations strategies to facilitate student learning when asked what challenges they students experienced during instruction in vocational institutions,

Student group 1 said *"No matter how much you try to understand any activity given by the teacher, there are times when you fail to understand it, and when you ask some class members they shout at you.* In student group 2, one student said *"Sometimes fellow students laugh at the responses that we give, showing that the questions we ask are irrelevant"* while the second student mentioned that *"Because we are many in class, the teachers sometimes shout at us when we ask questions"*

In the second vocational institution, a student of student group 3 said that during instruction, each group was assigned to handle specific activities especially during practical sessions which affected competence acquisition in other groups. In the account surrounding the interview, the student stated:

"..... for the case of the practical sessions, the teacher assigns each group with specific activities, questions or recipes to handle. So the problem is, in case you are not in the other group, you may not get to learn the other activities, questions or recipes".

However, the student was silenced by another in the same student group 3 by saying that he was supposed to get help from a colleague when group activities were going on. Talking about this issue, the student said:

"That's how it is but you are supposed to get assistance from a colleague in a different group to elaborate to you how the recipe was done in the other group and you also elaborate to him/her how your recipe was done. As simple as that..... If you want, try it on your outside classroom"

Key findings of student learning challenges that contributed to their demotivation during instruction in hospitality institutions included teachers shouting at students after failing to understand activities given to them, students laughing at fellow students after giving responses and asking that seemed irrelevant, reduced sense of belonging in the class and dissimilar tasks assigned in similar sessions and not rescheduling them.

3.1.2 Teacher-Student Counselling and Guidance

Whereas students experienced career counselling challenges, their responses significantly differed. In one vocational institution, they reported feelings of guilt and shame while in the second vocational institution, students expressed feelings of embarrassment and fright. In the following excerpts:

Student group 1 said, *“No matter how much you approach a teacher to talk to get direction towards improving our studies, they say they are very busy. It makes us afraid to approach them”*.

Student group 2 mentioned: *we fear to ask questions because when we do, some teachers or students use words that are not friendly. It is so hurting when you are not listened to”*

In the second vocational training institution, two discrete explanations. In their accounts of the events surrounding the interview, the following elements were highlighted:

Student group 3 stated: *“When we the weak ones try to ask questions related to our hospitality career, the bright students say we are embarrassing them with obvious questions about our future profession and this scares me”*

Student group 4 said *“..... When you ask questions about our hospitality career, many times the teacher looks at you with a sharp eye and this makes us get scared”*

To confirm the students' responses, when asked for teacher-student counselling and guidance, teachers' unanimous findings insisted on heavy workload due to the gradual increase of students and limited or no time to counsel them professionally.

From the findings of the study, key aspects of student learning challenges that affected teacher-student counselling and guidance in vocational institutions included students being afraid of approaching busy teachers for guidance in their studies, students fearing to seek career guidance from unfriendly teachers, students fearing to inquire about career guidance in hospitality training for fear of embarrassment from both teachers and students, students getting scared of the teachers' sharp eye when they asked about the hospitality training career.

3.1.3 Teachers' Perceptions

To further validate students' findings teachers were asked the challenges they encountered during instruction to ensure student learning, a variety of perspectives were expressed in the following excerpts.

Teacher 1 said *“There is a steady increase in numbers of students for both week and weekend programs yet the facilities are not enough to accommodate them. Teacher 2 stated that “The mindset of the students is negative. Some of these come without prior career guidance”*. Similarly teacher 8 said *“..... the recruitment of students to offer the hospitality program as a last resort affects their mindset”*. Teacher 3 asserted that *“It also starts from home with parents whose mindset is and think and call their children failures”* Teacher 4 stated that *“The only challenge we have are the numbers, the numbers are big and the teacher to student ratio is quite.....some classes let's say 45, 70 quite a big number”*. Teacher 5 added that *“.....classes are big and breaking their impacts on the other classes your meant to teach and also on your contact hours remain the same as a result you have a big workload”*. Teacher 6 mentioned that *“But some students come for the sake of the parents, they say someone sent me.... we have people of that kind Teacher 7 mentioned, “There are students who were forced to offer this course so they come with that negativity”*. Teacher 9 said *“Some of them come with good grades without a background in home management, home economics or nutrition and catering, meaning that are ignorant in aspects of hospitality. Some just come straight from senior 6 or senior 4 and because they failed almost all the subjects, the only option is hospitality..... Teacher 10 said, “In the beginning, it is a bit challenging to first give them the skill because some are student slow learners and some are fast learners”*.

In summary key findings of teachers' challenges, they encountered during instruction to ensure student learning included a gradual increase in the numbers of students that enrolled for the hospitality programs and big teacher-student ratio, negative mindset of students due to being referred to as failures, lack of interest for the hospitality training program and heavy instruction workload.

3.2 Student learning Challenges in Workplaces

3.2.1 Student Induction

When asked what challenges they experienced during induction in workplaces, students indicated varying views. Some of the students did not exactly give their perceptions about challenges but instead reported the procedures of induction in the workplace.

Student group 1 said *“trainers orientate us for a week [...] inform us about the way they do things and how our training will run for ten weeks but before that they must accept us”* the second student in the same group added, *“Trainers tell us what is expected as soon as they come into the workplace.*

Student group 2 stated, *“At the beginning of the training trainers teach us about the workplace rules and procedures so that if you don't follow them you are sent away”*. They also quickly added that *“we sometimes don't understand the way they communicate to us [...] we are told what to do from the corridor which is*

strange” They also expressed fear of the demand approach the trainer used while communicating to them. They said “we are sometimes afraid of trainers who give instructions using a demanding approach especially on busy days [...]the trainers’ communication style is completely different”

Student group 3 mentioned “the trainers teach us what is expected, how things are done and the culture of this place at the beginning of the training. They also quickly added that “After that, the trainer helps to design a work plan which we must follow step by step for the tasks in each department to be done”.

Student group 4 said “as soon as we arrive [...] we tour the workplace for a week while the trainer tells us the general do’s and don’ts, how they operate while expecting no mistakes”, they further added that “ but the way they communicate [...] one has to think fast and where possible make adjustments”. They also expressed that “we have to guess what the trainer expects us to do and this leaves us to sometimes seek nearby help”

Although key findings of student learning challenges during workplace training included not being able to understand the workplace communication processes, keeping time while performing tasks and lot of guesswork required to understand the assigned activities, the feeling of fear created as a result of the trainers using the demand approach during communication as well as communication of the expected tasks on the corridor, students acknowledged induction to understand workplace culture, processes, practices, culture and values.

3.2.2 Trainer Guidance and Support

When asked what challenges they experienced during induction in workplaces, trainers indicated varying discourses.

Whereas WS #001 said: “students do not understand and adapt to our rules”.

WS#002 mentioned that “whereas every week the students are briefed about our values to support them engage in tasks, their attendance is challenging”.

WS#003 stated “we do team feedback to ensure students ask questions and share strengths and challenges they encounter but they can’t express themselves”

Similarly, WS #004 also said “we do team feedback to support student dialogue but even if you create an environment of asking questions, they keep quiet”.

Key findings of the study indicated that trainers experienced challenges of students failing to understand and adapt to workplace rules, irregular attendance of briefings and not being able to express themselves.

3.3.3 Student Engagement

Responses of the same students while undergoing workplace training showed varying discourses about student engagement to facilitate student learning.

Student Group 1 reported that “when we are assigned tasks, we can discuss, participate and share ideas and experiences for a short time with both trainers and employees’ before and after doing the tasks.

Student Group 2 stated ‘...it is not easy for us to share ideas and knowledge before and after doing the tasks”.

Student Group 3 stated that “the workplace supervisors and employees’ rarely share experiences, which makes it difficult for us to ask questions and request feedback”.

Student Group 4 highlighted the challenge of task-specific feedback. They said “when supervisors assign us with tasks, they do it so quickly and we find it difficult to follow and understand the procedures”

Key aspects of the study indicated that student engagement challenges included limited sharing of ideas and experiences of trainers and employees’ before and after doing the tasks and difficulties in task-specific feedback from trainers.

IV. Discussion

4.1 Student Demotivation

Findings of the study found that student learning in hospitality institutions was challenged by demotivation. Contrary to what [31] categorized as levels of students motivation being dependent on teacher-student relationships during instruction, teachers shouted at students after failing to understand activities given to them. Teachers shouting at students during instruction could be attributed to fatigue. This could result in a negative teacher-student relationship, leading to undesirable behaviours. Similar to what [9] and [34] indicated as the would-be negative feedback, students laughing at fellow students after giving responses and asking that seemed irrelevant, reduced sense of belonging in the class and dissimilar tasks assigned in similar sessions and not rescheduling them-student relationship. Thus as suggested by Prewett et al. [32] and Cooper [35] teacher-student relationship has to provide a compassionate underpinning for longstanding student learning regardless of Banerjee (2016) and Chinyere et al. [29] argument of VET programs as the second choice after university is for students with inferior grades and low performing students. Once the teacher-student relationship is improved in hospitality training, students are motivated to engage and participate during instruction.

4.2 Teacher-Student Counselling and Guidance

Although findings confirm [1] argument of teachers inadequate counselling among students influenced their career exploration behaviours, [2] argued it played an indispensably significant role during instruction. As observed by [10], teacher-student counselling and guidance in hospitality training are central for students to scrutinise their fears of approaching busy teachers, relating with unfriendly teachers, being embarrassed teachers and students, getting scared of the teachers' sharp eyes when seeking teacher-student counselling and guidance. Although [33] attributed the low interest to a lack of awareness of the vocational programs and career opportunities, it is worth noting that the students feel hurt and afraid of responses from fellow students and teachers when seeking teacher-student counselling and guidance in hospitality training. Thus, in situations where students are afraid of approaching busy and unfriendly teachers for hospitality career counselling, they need to learn how to face their feelings of hurt and not be afraid to deal with them. Whereas [36] proposal of students going through stress and feelings of hopelessness impacted negatively on their career development, confronting difficult situations in hospitality training is a good way to have a healthy environment during student learning.

4.3 Teachers' Perceptions

Drawing on the teachers perceptions in hospitality training, it appears that they encounter several challenges during instruction to ensure student learning. In contrast to [9] and [2] argument of developing VET programs to improve student learning for further training, teachers highlighted challenges of gradual increase of students that enrolled for hospitality program that contributed to the increased workload as proposed by [12]. Gradual increase in student enrollment in hospitality institutions can be overwhelming for teachers because they need to spend too much time trying to instruct, reinforce and remediate essential and practical skills for each of the students. In support of [26] notion of constant transformations being quickly turned into routine repeatable procedures, it is also important to note that in any hospitality institution, regardless of the size classroom, teachers have a broad range of instructional strategies to ensure effective student learning. Akin to [31] and [11] arguments of limited social support from teachers, findings reflected students negative mindsets due to being referred to as failures, lack of interest in the hospitality training program. Therefore, instead of emphasizing academic achievement in hospitality training, teachers need to allow students to perceive their teachers' social support to upsurge academic interest and higher levels of engagement. Effective and regular sensitization of students is fundamental to providing students with constructive career development opportunities to enable them to make suitable decisions about the hospitality [NDHM] program.

4.4 Student Induction for Workplace Training

The main findings of student induction revealed an indication of what [46], [45] and [2] described as objective student induction to the workplace culture, processes, practices, culture and values at the beginning of training. Similarly, findings also suggest [47] argument of student induction at the beginning of the workplace training inculcates in them the values, beliefs, culture, build bonds with peers and trainers and exposes them to a sense of larger purpose and self-exploration. However, how trainers attempt to ensure student induction shapes task performance contrasted [49] notion of coherent and systematic processes from simple to complex concerning workplace interest. The trainers' use of demand approach communication that creates the feeling of fear and communication on-the-corridor that leaves students with a lot of guesswork to understand the assigned activities affect student induction especially at the beginning of the training need to be re-planned and adjusted as articulated [48]. Whereas [20] advocacy for students development of competencies in vocational institutions before induction in workplaces is vital, it is also imperative that trainers create comfortable training environments as well as organize effective strategies at the beginning to enable student induction comfort ability.

4.5 Trainer Guidance and Support

Main findings of trainer experienced challenges in the process of guiding and supporting students. Whereas [50] and [40] highlighted that trainer support ominously affected students training transfer, challenges of students failing to understand and adapt to workplace rules, irregular attendance of briefings and not being able to express themselves were highlighted. As [51] encouraged, trainer guidance and support for student learning in workplaces should be done through close guidance, direct interaction between trainers and students dialogues and group discussions to assist students to assess the scope and the limits of their knowledge and the possibilities of its transfer to new situations.

4.6 Student Engagement

Main findings of student engagement revealed challenges of limited sharing of ideas and experiences trainers and employees' before and after doing the tasks and difficulties in task-specific feedback from trainers.

Contrary to what [52] and [53] highlighted as planning for time and sequencing of tasks as requirements for students to engage in training activities and tasks, student engagement challenges of limited sharing of ideas and experiences trainers and employees' before and after doing the tasks and difficulties in task-specific feedback from trainers in hospitality training were identified in the study. Trainers need to separate work from learning as well as apportion adequate time for learning to ensure effective student learning processes. If students are apportioned by the trainers, it will support them in understanding the nature of the difficulties they are facing in particular tasks that are assigned to them.

V. Conclusion

The study aimed at identifying learning challenges students experienced during instruction in vocational institutions and workplaces in Uganda, particularly hospitality training. Based on the findings the following conclusions were drawn:

The learning strategies used strategies from vocational institutions and workplaces that student motivation, teacher-student counselling, teachers' perceptions, student induction, trainer-student guidance and support and student engagement used to ensure effective instruction are unfavourable, insufficient and unsuitable to facilitate student learning particularly for hospitality training.

The teacher-student relationship and teacher-student counselling are effective to facilitate learning due to the teachers' heavy workload which impacts negatively on students' career development. The trainers' use of demand approach of communication to understand workplace culture as well as trainers' communication of expected tasks on the corridor left students creates feelings of fear and a lot of guesswork towards the assigned tasks. The guidance strategies used by trainers affect student learning. Finally, student engagement in the workplace is confronted by trainers and employees' limited sharing of ideas and experiences before and after doing the tasks leading to difficulties in task-specific feedback from trainers.

VI. Recommendations

The following recommendations that aimed to identify learning challenges students experienced during instruction in vocational institutions and workplaces in Uganda were drawn from this study

1. Teacher-student relationship plays a vital role in student learning. Therefore teachers need to provide an empathetic foundation during instruction to facilitate student learning. This, in turn, will motivate students to engage and participate during instruction
2. Students need to learn how to face their feelings of hurt and deal with them. They also need to know how to approach fellow students, teachers and trainers for support and help. Confronting these mentioned difficult situations is a good way to have a healthy environment during instruction.
3. In the workplace during student induction, trainers should not only focus on training workplace culture and fostering competencies. They also need to create comfortable training environments as well as establish operational strategies at the beginning of student induction to enable comfortability.
4. Trainers need to separate work from learning and apportion adequate time for learning. This will enable effective student learning processes whereby they will be able to comprehend difficulties they are faced with in particular tasks that are assigned to them.

References

- [1]. Q. W. Boon, R. A. Kok, and A. Aziz, "Integrating Pedagogical Model for Simulation-Based Learning in Hospitality TVET Students: Attitudes and Satisfaction," *Int. J. Acad. Res. Bus. Soc. Sci.*, vol. 11, no. 6, pp. 600–612, 2021, Doi: 10.6007/ijarbss/v11-i6/10195.
- [2]. C. F. Yeap, N. Suhaimi, and M. K. M. Nasir, "Issues, Challenges, and Suggestions for Empowering Technical Vocational Education and Training Education during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Malaysia," pp. 1818–1839, 2021, Doi: 10.4236/ce.2021.128138.
- [3]. P. West and F. Lunenburg, "Teacher Quality Variables and Efficacy for Teaching Minority Students.," *Educ. Leadersh. Rev. Dr Res.*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 39–57, 2014.
- [4]. L. Ajambo, L. Øgrim, and J. Nabaggala, "Linking Teaching and Training Methods: Classroom Teaching vis-a-vis Workplace Training within the Hospitality Industry," *Int. J. Res. Innov. Soc. Sci.*, vol. V, no. Xi, pp. 24–32, 2021, Doi 10.47772/IJRISS.2021.51103.
- [5]. J. Pennington, "Pre-Session English Language Course / 2006 The Importance of The classroom Environment in Positive Learning," no. November 2020, Doi: 10.13140/RG.2.2.29575.01449.
- [6]. E. Bouw, I. Zitter, and E. de Bruijn, *Designable elements of integrative learning environments at the boundary of school and work: a multiple case study*, vol. 24, no. 3, 2021.
- [7]. I. Placklé, K. D. Könings, K. Struyven, A. Libotton, J. J. G. van Merriënboer, and N. Engels, "Powerful learning environments in secondary vocational education: towards a shared understanding," *Eur. J. Teach. Educ.*, vol. 43, no. 2, pp. 224–242, 2020, Doi: 10.1080/02619768.2019.1681965.
- [8]. M. Abdullahi, N. Othman, M. Abdullahi, and N. Othman, "Influence of Different Learning Environments in the Implementation of Technical Vocational Education and Training policy in Nigeria Influence of Different Learning Environments in the Implementation of Technical Vocational Education and Training policy in," *Int. J. Acad. Res. Progress. Educ. Dev.*, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 687–702, 2021, doi: 10.6007/IJARPED/v10-i2/10028.

- [9]. M. K. Omar, N. Ismail, M. A. Rauf, and M. H. M. Puad, "Factors on Deciding Student., TVET for First Choice Educational Journey among Pre-Secondary School," *Eur. J. Mol. Clin. Med.*, vol. 7, pp. 609-622., 2020.
- [10]. F. A. Eunice, A. O. Mensah, I. Mensah, and E. Gamor, "Students' Perceptions of Careers in Ghana's Hospitality and Tourism Industry Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Education Vol 32, No 1," *J. Hosp. Tour. Educ.*, vol. 32, no. 1, pp. 1-13, 2020, Doi: 10.1080/10963758.2019.1654884.
- [11]. K. Ismail, Z. Mohd Nopiah, and R. Mohd Sattar, "Challenges Faced by Vocational Teachers in Public Skills Training Institutions: A Reality in Malaysia.," *J. Tech. Educ. and-Training*, vol. 10, pp. 13-27, 2018, Doi: 10.30880/jtet.2018.10.02.002.
- [12]. D. M. A. Baker and R. Unni., "USA and Asia Hospitality & Tourism Students ' Perceptions and Satisfaction with Online Learning versus Traditional Face-to-Face Instruction," vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 40-54, 2018.
- [13]. K. Smit, C. J. de Brabander, and R. L. Martens, "Student-centred and teacher-centred learning environment in pre-vocational secondary education: Psychological needs, and motivation," *Scand. J. Educ. Res.*, vol. 58, no. 6, pp. 695-712, 2014, Doi: 10.1080/00313831.2013.821090.
- [14]. A. Stellmacher, S. Ohlemann, J. Pfetsch, and A. Ittel, "Pre-service teacher career choice motivation: A comparison of vocational education and training teachers and comprehensive school teachers in Germany," *Int. J. Res. Vocat. Educ. Train.*, vol. 7, no. 2, pp. 214-236, 2020, doi: 10.13152/IJRVET.7.2.5.
- [15]. OECD/ILO, *Engaging Employers in Apprenticeship Opportunities*. Paris: OECD Publishing, 2017.
- [16]. A. Boersma, G. ten Dam, W. Wardekker, and M. Volman, "Designing innovative learning environments to foster communities of learners for students in initial vocational education," *Learn. Environ. Res.*, vol. 19, no. 1, pp. 107-131, 2016, Doi: 10.1007/s10984-015-9203-4.
- [17]. Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, "National Diploma in Hotel Management Curriculum; National Diploma in Tourism Management Curriculum; National Diploma in Pastry and Bakery Curriculum," Kampala, 2013.
- [18]. L. Muganga and P. Ssenkusu, "Teacher-Centered vs . Student-Centered," *Cult. Pedagog. Inq.*, vol. 11, no. 2, pp. 16-40, 2019, Doi: 10.18733/cpi29481.
- [19]. M. Ddungu-Kafuluma, S. John, and S. Wanami, "The role of training philosophy in the training of quality technical teachers and instructors in Uganda," vol. 4, no. 5, pp. 580-585, 2018.
- [20]. E. D. Kalanda, F. L. Malenya, and E. J. Otiende, "An Exploration of Students Workplace Learning Placements Practice of Universities in Uganda," vol. IV, no. Xi, pp. 203-211, 2020.
- [21]. Y. Engeström, *studies in Expansive Learning: Learning What is Not Yet there*, 1st Ed. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016.
- [22]. Y. Engeström, *Learning by Expanding, An Activity - Theory Approach to Developmental Research.*, 1st Ed. Helsinki: Orienta-Konsultit, 1987.
- [23]. N. Hashim and M. L. Jones, "Activity Theory: A framework for qualitative analysis," *4th Int. Qual. Res. Conv.*, no. May 2007.
- [24]. A. Macpherson, O. Jones, and H. Oakes, "Mediating Artefacts, Boundary Objects and the Social Construction of Knowledge," *OKLC Conf. Univ. Warwick, March 22, 2006*, pp. 1-29, 2006.
- [25]. Y. Engeström and A. Sannino, "Studies of expansive learning Foundations, findings and future challenges - ScienceDirect," *Educ. Res. Rev.*, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 1-24, 2010, Doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2009.12.002>.
- [26]. R. Konkola, T. Tuomi-Gröhn, P. Lambert, and S. Ludvigsen, "Promoting learning and transfer between school and workplace," *J. Educ. Work.* vol. 20, no. 3, pp. 211-228, 2007, Doi: 10.1080/13639080701464483.
- [27]. R. Konkola *et al.*, "Promoting learning and transfer between school and workplace Promoting learning and transfer between school and workplace," vol. 9080, 2007, Doi: 10.1080/13639080701464483.
- [28]. W. Nazriah, W. Nawawi, W. Nor, H. Wan, and N. M. Razali, "The Generic Skills Required by Malaysian Hotel Industry : A Study of Perception and Needs," *J. Appl. Environ. Biol. Sci.*, vol. 7, no. 2S, pp. 15-19, 2017, [Online]. Available: www.textroad.com.
- [29]. A. Chinyere Shirley, P. Chijioke, Okwelle, and O. Benjamin Chukwumaijem, "Towards Quality Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Programs in Nigeria: Challenges and Improvement Strategies," *J. Educ. Learn.*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 25-34, 2015, Doi: 10.5539/jel.v4n1p25.
- [30]. A. B. K. Kasozi, "The African universities capacity to participate in global higher education for supply and production: A case of Uganda," *Uganda J. Educ.*, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 45-63, 2003.
- [31]. G. Duffy and J. Elwood, "The perspectives of ' disengaged ' students in the 14 - 19 phase on motivations and barriers to learning within the contexts of institutions and classrooms," *London Rev. Educ.*, vol. 11, no. 2, pp. 112-126, 2013, Doi: 10.1080/14748460.2013.799808.
- [32]. S. L. Prewett, D. A. Bergin, and F. L. Huang, "Student and teacher perceptions on relationship quality : A middle school perspective," *Sch. Psychol. Int.*, vol. 40, no. 1, pp. 66-87, 2019, Doi: 10.1177/0143034318807743.
- [33]. P. A. Banerjee, "A systematic review of factors linked to poor academic performance of disadvantaged students in science and maths in schools," *Cogent Educ.*, vol. 27, no. 1, pp. 1-17, 2016, Doi: 10.1080/2331186X.2016.1178441.
- [34]. S. Niittylähti, J. Annala, M. Mäkinen, and M. Mäkinen, "Student engagement profiles in vocational education and training : a longitudinal study," *J. Vocat. Educ. Train.*, vol. 00, no. 00, pp. 1-19, 2021, Doi: 10.1080/13636820.2021.1879902.
- [35]. C. Cooper, "How are vocational institutions innovating, evolving and changing as a result of Covid-19?," no. June. British Council, London, pp. 1-31, 2021, [Online]. Available: www.britishcouncil.org ©.
- [36]. A. Abdollahi, M. Abu Talib, S. N. Yaacob, and Z. Ismail, "The role of hardiness in decreasing stress and suicidal ideation in a sample of undergraduate students," *J. Humanist. Psychol.*, vol. 55, no. 2, pp. 202-222, 2015, Doi: 10.1177/0022167814543952.
- [37]. D. Raufelder, S. Scherber, and M. Wood, "The interplay between adolescents' perceptions of teacher-student relationships and their academic self-regulation: Does liking a specific teacher matter?," *Psychol. Sch.*, vol. 53, no. 7, 2016, Doi: 10.1002/pits.21937.
- [38]. K. Wentzel, "Multiple Goals in Learning Contexts," *Handb. Res. Student Engagement.*, vol. 61, no. 4, pp. 513-722, 2012, Doi: 10.1007/978-1-4614-2018-7.
- [39]. S. Bunoti, "The quality of post-secondary education in developing countries needs professional support," *Cent. Educ. Innov. An Initiative. Results Dev. Inst.*, pp. 1-10, 2010.
- [40]. S. Mikkonen, L. Pylväs, H. Rintala, P. Nokelainen, and L. Postareff, "Guiding workplace learning in vocational education and training: A literature review," *Empir. Res. Vocat. Educ. Train.*, vol. 9, no. 1, 2017, Doi: 10.1186/s40461-017-0053-4.
- [41]. L. Fergusson and L. Van Der Laan, "Work + learning : unpacking the agglomerated use of pedagogical terms," *J. Work. Manag.*, vol. 13, no. 2, pp. 302-314, 2021, Doi: 10.1108/JWAM-12-2020-0053.
- [42]. Ministry of Education and Sports, "The Technical Vocational education and Training (Tvet) Policy Implementation Guidelines," Kampala, 2019.
- [43]. A. Nassazi, "Effects of Training on Employee Performance. Evidence From Uganda," Vaasan Ammattikorkeakoulu University of Applied Sciences, 2013.

- [44]. E. M. Azila-Gbetor, C. Mensah, E. A. Atatsi, and M. K. Abiemo, "Predicting students' engagement from hope and mindfulness," *J. Appl. Res. High. Educ.*, vol. ahead-of-p, no. ahead-of-print, Jan. 2021, Doi: 10.1108/JARHE-02-2021-0068.
- [45]. T. C. M. Lam, "Training Methods: A Review and Analysis," no. April, pp. 10–35, 2016, Doi: 10.1177/1534484313497947.
- [46]. S. Anjum, "Impact of internship programs on professional and personal development of business students: a case study from Pakistan," *Futur. Bus. J.*, vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 1–13, 2020, Doi: 10.1186/s43093-019-0007-3.
- [47]. G. A. Stone, L. N. Duffy, H. P. Pinckney, and R. Templeton-Bradley, "Teaching for critical thinking: preparing hospitality and tourism students for careers in the twenty-first century," *J. Teach. Travel Tour.*, vol. 17, no. 2, pp. 67–84, 2017, Doi: 10.1080/15313220.2017.1279036.
- [48]. D. Merwe, "Workplace and lecture hall synergy," *African J. Work. Learn.*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 23–27, 2013.
- [49]. J. Billet, "Workplaces participatory practices: Conceptualising workplaces as learning environments," *J. Work. Learn.*, vol. 16, no. 6, pp. 312–324, 2004.
- [50]. Å. H. S. D. Bakkevig, R. J. Mykletun, and S. Einarsen, "'We're not slaves – we are actually the future!' A follow-up study of apprentices' experiences in the Norwegian hospitality industry," *J. Vocat. Educ. Train.*, vol. 67, no. 4, pp. 460–481, 2015, Doi: Doi /full/10.1080/13636820.2015.
- [51]. M. R. Weber, J. J. Lee, and A. Crawford, "A suggested best practices for enhancing performance of soft skills with entry-level hospitality managers," *Routledge Taylor Fr.*, vol. 31, no. 1, pp. 76–87, 2020, Doi: 10.1080/13032917.2019.1703770 A.
- [52]. L. Svensson and M. Bennich, "Organising workplace learning: perspective," *J. Eur. Ind. Train.*, vol. 33, no. 8, pp. 771–786, 2009, Doi: 10.1108/03090590910993625.
- [53]. T. Hellstro, "University – industry collaboration: A literature review and synthesis," 2019, doi: 10.1177/0950422219829697.
- [54]. M. Fjellström, "Vocational education in practice: a study of work-based learning in a construction program at a Swedish upper secondary school," *Emp Res Voc Educ Train*, vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 1–20, 2014.
- [55]. R. Konkola, T. Tuomi-Gröhn, P. Lambert, and S. Ludvigsen, "Promoting learning and transfer between school and workplace," *J. Educ. Work*, vol. 20, no. 3, pp. 211–228, 2007, Doi: 10.1080/13639080701464483.
- [56]. P. Lambert, "Learning tasks producing developmental transfer," in *At the boundary-zone between school and work: new possibilities of work-based learning*, T. T.-G. & Y. Engeström, Ed. Helsinki: Polytechnic University Press, 2001, pp. 96–147.
- [57]. D. Silverman, *Doing Qualitative Research*, 4th Ed. Los Angeles: Sage, 2014.
- [58]. B. Yazan, "Three Approaches to Case Study Methods in Education: Yin, Merriam, and Stake Three Approaches to Case Study Methods in Education: Yin, Merriam, and Stake," vol. 20, no. 2, pp. 134–152, 2015.
- [59]. V. Braun and V. Clarke, "Using thematic analysis in psychology," *Qual. Res. Psychol.*, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 77–101, 2006, Doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>.

Lucy Ajambo, et. al. "Student learning Challenges in Uganda: Hospitality Training." *IOSR Journal of Research & Method in Education (IOSR-JRME)*, 12(01), (2022): pp. 47-57.