

**INFLUENCE OF EXISTING EDUCATION AND WORKPLACE-RELATED  
POLICIES ON THE ORGANISATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION  
INSTITUTION STUDENTS' WORKPLACE LEARNING IN UGANDA**

**ERIC DOUGLAS KALANDA**

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**DEDICATION**

This piece of work is dedicated to my wife Flavia, children Heather, Hanelle, Pethuel and Phaneul. My parents Mr and Mrs Kabarema Grandmother of 98yrs.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration .....	ii
Acknowledgement .....	iv
Table of Contents .....	v
List of Tables .....	x
List of Figures.....	xii
Abbreviations and Acronyms .....	xiii
Abstract.....	xv
<b>CHAPTER ONE.....</b>	<b>xv</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Introduction .....	1
1.2 Background to the Study .....	1
1.3 Statement of the Problem .....	12
1.4 Purpose of the Study.....	13
1.5 Objectives of the Study .....	13
1.6 Research Questions .....	13
1.7 Significance of the Study.....	14
1.8 Justification of the Study .....	15
1.9 Limitations of the Study .....	15
1.10 Delimitations of the Study.....	16
1.11 Assumptions of the Study.....	17
1.12 Theoretical Framework .....	17
1.12.1 Justification for Applying the Theory to the Study.....	19
1.13 Conceptual Framework .....	21
1.13.1 Independent Variables .....	22
1.13.2 Dependent Variable .....	23
1.13.3 Intervening Variable.....	23
1.13.4 Outcomes .....	23
1.14 Operational Definition of Terms .....	24
<b>CHAPTER TWO.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE .....</b>	<b>25</b>

2.1 Introduction .....	25
2.2 History of Higher Education Institutions in Uganda .....	25
2.3 Application of National Legislations on WPL .....	27
2.3.1 National Education -Related Legislations Applied on WPL in Uganda.....	28
2.3.2 National Workplace-Related Legislation for WPL .....	30
2.3.3 Role of National Legislations on Workplace Learning .....	31
2.4 Organisational Guidelines on Workplace Learning .....	37
2.4.1 Policies for Workplace Learning in HEIs .....	37
2.4.2 Guidelines for WPL in Hosting Workplace .....	45
2.5 Organisation of WPL Activities .....	48
2.5.1 Pre-workplace Learning Activities.....	48
2.5.2 Activities During Workplace Learning .....	51
2.5.3 Post-Workplace Learning Activities .....	57
2.6 Challenges of Workplace Learning .....	61
2.7 Summary of of Gaps of Knowledge .....	67
<b>CHAPTER THREE.....</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY.....</b>	<b>69</b>
3.1 Introduction .....	69
3.2 Research Design .....	69
3.3 Research Methodology .....	70
3.4 Variables.....	72
3.5 Location of the Study .....	73
3.6 Target Population .....	75
3.7 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size.....	76
3.7.1 Sampling Techniques .....	76
3.7.1.1 Purposive Sampling.....	76
3.7.1.2 Simple Random Sampling.....	77
3.7.1.3 Stratified Random Sampling .....	77
3.7.2 Sample Size and Sample Size Determination .....	78
3.8 Research Instruments.....	80

3.8.1 Interview Guides .....	81
3.8.2 Questionnaires .....	81
3.8.3 Document Analysis Guides .....	81
3.9 Piloting the Study .....	82
3.9.1 Validity of the Research Instruments .....	82
3.9.2 Reliability of the Research Instruments .....	83
3.10 Data Collection Techniques .....	84
3.10.1 Key Informants Interviews .....	85
3.10.2 Collection of Data through Questionnaires .....	85
3.10.3 Document Analysis .....	85
3.11 Data Analysis.....	86
3.11.1 Quantitative Data Analysis.....	86
3.11.2 Qualitative Data Analysis.....	87
3.11.3 Document Analysis Data Management .....	87
3.11.4 Unit of Analysis for the Study.....	88
3.12 Logistical and Ethical Considerations .....	88
3.12.1 Logistical Considerations .....	88
3.12.1 Ethical Considerations.....	88
<b>CHAPTER FOUR .....</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION</b>	
<b>.....</b>	<b>90</b>
4.1 Introduction .....	90
4.2 General and Demographic Information.....	91
4.2.1 Rate of Return.....	91
4.2.2 Demographic Data.....	92
4.3 National Legislations for Workplace Learning .....	100
4.3.1 Awareness about National Legislations for WPL .....	100
4.3.2 National Legislations Applied on WPL in Uganda.....	103
4.3.3 Role the National Legislations Play in Regulating WPL .....	108
4.4 Organisational (HEIs & Workplaces) Guidelines for WPL .....	125

4.4.1 Guidelines for Workplace Learning in HEIs .....	126
4.4.2 Workplace Learning Guidelines in Hosting Workplaces .....	151
4.5 Organisation of WPL Activities .....	165
4.5.1 Pre-workplace Learning Activities .....	166
4.5.2 During Workplace Learning Activities .....	172
4.5.3 Post-workplace Learning Activities .....	182
4.6 Challenges of Workplace Learning .....	188
4.6.1 Challenges Faced by Hosting Workplaces .....	189
4.6.2 Challenges of WPL Faced by HEIs .....	196
4.6.3 Challenges of Workplace Learning Faced by Students.....	203
<b>CHAPTER FIVE .....</b>	<b>213</b>
<b>SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>213</b>
5.1 Introduction .....	213
5.2 Summary.....	213
5.2.1 National Legislations that Regulate WPL in Uganda.....	213
5.2.2 Organisational Guidelines for Workplace Learning.....	215
5.2.3 Organisation of Workplace Learning .....	217
5.2.4 Challenges to Workplace Learning .....	219
5.3 Conclusion(s).....	220
5.4 Recommendation(s).....	223
5.4.1 Policy Recommendations .....	223
5.4.2 Recommendations Related to Practice .....	224
5.4.3 Model for Workplace Learning Policy Formulation and Implementation .....	226
5.4.4 Areas of Further Research .....	227
<b>References .....</b>	<b>229</b>
<b>APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>247</b>
Appendix A: Interview Guides.....	247
Appendix B: Questionnaires.....	255
Appendix C: Document Analysis Guides.....	292
Appendix D: Instrument Reliability Test results.....	296

Appendix E: Research Approval Letter .....	301
Appendix F: Ethical review Approval Letter .....	302
Appendix F Output for National Legislations for WPL.....	305
Appendix G: Role of WPL Legislations .....	306
Appendix H: Output Policy Gaps for WPL.....	307
Appendix I: WPL Policy for HEI 1 .....	308
Appendix J: Course outline for WPL for HEI 1 .....	312
Appendix K: Academic Staff WPL Supervision Guidelines HEI 2.....	313
Appendix L: Student Guidelines for WPL HEI 2 .....	314
Appendix M: Re-imburement for WPL from HEIs .....	316
Appendix N: Students Pay to HEIs for WPL .....	317
Appendix O: Output WPL Policies in HEIs.....	318
Appendix P: Aspects for Inclusion in HEIs WPL Policies .....	319
Appendix Q: Policies for WPL (Hosting workplaces) .....	320
Appendix R: Payments to Students for WPL .....	323
Appendix S: Output for Placement.....	324
Appendix T: Logbook outlay for HEI 1 .....	325
Appendix U: Logbook outlay for HEI 2.....	326
Appendix V: Output for WPL Supervision .....	327
Appendix X: Report writing guidelines for HEI 2 .....	328
Appendix Y: WPL assessment guidelines for HEI 3 .....	329
Appendix Z: WPL Assessment Guidelines for HEI 2.....	332
Appendix AA: Challenges of Workplace Learning .....	335
Appendix AB: Solution for Challenges of WPL.....	336
Appendix AC: Duration about WPL. ....	337
Appendix AD: Assessment or Evaluation Criteria.....	338
Appendix AE: The map of Uganda .....	339
Appendix AF: Consent form .....	340

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1 Forms of Workplace Learning .....	53
Table 3. 1 Showing the Location of the Study .....	74
Table 3. 2 Category of the Respondents, Sample Size .....	79
Table 4. 1 Rate of Return of the Different Categories of Respondents.....	91
Table 4. 2 Types of Sampling Units .....	92
Table 4. 3 Academic Programme Under which the Student Undertook WPL.....	93
Table 4. 4 Qualification of Academic and Workplace Staff Respondents .....	93
Table 4. 5 Number of Times Respondents have Participated in WPL .....	94
Table 4. 6 Experience of Workplace and Academic Staff in WPL.....	95
Table 4.7 Type of Ownership HEIs of the Academic Staff Respondents .....	97
Table 4.8 Main Supervisors of WPL in Hosting Workplaces .....	98
Table 4. 9 Ownership of Workplaces Hosting Workplace Learning .....	99
Table 4. 10 Annual Average Number of Students that Undertake WPL .....	99
Table 4. 11 Awareness of the Respondents about National Legislations for WPL	101
Table 4. 12 National legislations Applied to Regulate WPL in Uganda.....	104
Table 4.13 Aspects Covered by National Legislations for WPL in Uganda.....	108
Table 4.14 Importance of National Legislations on WPL.....	110
Table 4.15 Necessity of the National Legislation to Regulate Workplace Learning .....	112
Table 4.16 Effect of Lack of a National Legislation on WPL.....	113
Table 4.17 Availability of Insurance for Students During WPL.....	115
Table 4.18 Suggested Initiators of Students' Insurance for WPL .....	115
Table 4.19 When Students and HEI Staff get to know about National legislations for WPL.....	119
Table 4.20: Informers of HEIs Students and Staff about WPL National Polices...	120
Table 4.21 Support Aspects to be included in National legislation for WPL .....	122
Table 4.22 Influence of National Legislation on Effectiveness of WPL .....	124
Table 4.23 Category of Guidelines the Regulate WPL in HEIs.....	128
Table 4.24 Importance of HEIs Workplace Learning Guidelines .....	132
Table 4.25 Influence of HEIs guidelines on the Quality of WPL .....	135
Table 4.26 Necessity of HEI Guidelines Regarding WPL .....	137

Table 4.27 Effect HEI WPL Guidelines .....	140
Table 4. 28 whether HEIs require Students to pay for WPL.....	142
Table 4.29 Amounts (UGX) Paid by Students to HEIs for WPL.....	143
Table 4. 30 Whether respondents receive any facilitation from HEIs .....	144
Table 4. 31 Reimbursement to Students for WPL.....	145
Table 4.32 Aspects of HEIs Guidelines for WPL .....	148
Table 4.33 Aspects that HEIs Guidelines for WPL should Entail .....	150
Table 4.34 Awareness about WPL Guidelines in Hosting Workplaces .....	152
Table 4.35 Guidelines in Workplaces that Regulate Workplace Learning .....	154
Table 4.36 Importance of WPL Guidelines on Workplace Learning.....	157
Table 4.37 Influence of Hosting Workplace Guidelines .....	158
Table 4.38 Whether Workplaces without WPL Guidelines Need them.....	159
Table 4.39 Effect of WPL guidelines in Hosting Workplaces on the Expectations of WPL.....	161
Table 4.40 Aspects in Workplace guidelines for WPL .....	162
Table 4.41 Aspects that should be Entailed in WPL guidelines.....	163
Table 4. 42 Descriptive Statistics for Pre-workplace learning Activities .....	167
Table 4.43 Descriptive Statistics for During-workplace learning .....	173
Table 4.44 Whether the HEI Staff ever Supervised WPL.....	175
Table 4.45 Post-workplace learning .....	183
Table 4.46 Challenges of WPL faced by hosting workplaces.....	190
Table 4.47 Challenges of WPL faced by HEI .....	197
Table 4.48 Challenges of WPL faced by Students .....	204

**LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure 1. 1 Kolb’s Experiential Learning Cycle .....	19
Figure 1.2 Conceptual Framework of the Study .....	22
Figure 3. 1 The concurrent triangulation mixed methods design .....	71
Figure 4. 1 Age Range of the Respondents .....	96
Figure 4. 2 Gender of the Respondents by Category.....	97
Figure 4. 3 Respondents’ awareness about the HEI WPL Guidelines .....	126
Figure 5. 1 Workplace Learning Policy Formulation Model.....	226

**ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

ATLAS.ti 9	is a computer program used mostly, but not exclusively, qualitative data analysis.
AU	African Union
BTVET	Business, Technical, Vocational, Education and Training
CEDEFOP	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CHE	Council for Higher Education
CVI	Content Validity Index
ETUCE	European Trade Union Committee for Education
HE	Higher Education
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council of England
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
ICT	Information Communication Technology
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IUIU	Islamic University in Uganda
MoE&S	Ministry of Education and Sports
NCHE	National Council for Higher Education
NITA	National Industrial Training Authority
NTA	National Training Authority
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and and Training
UK	United Kingdom
WBL	Work-based Learning
WIL	Work Integrated Learning
WPL	Workplace Learning

SPSS

Statistical Package for Social Science

## ABSTRACT

Workplace learning plays a key role in transiting students from HEIs to the world of work by bridging the skills gap through supplementing and complementing institutional learning. It has been described as unappreciated, contradicting and complex making it insignificant and unrealisable without definite policies. The purpose of this study was to assess the influence of the existing education and workplace related policies on the organisation of HEI students WPL in Uganda. Examination of the national legislations, determination of organisational guidelines that affect WPL, evaluation of the activities involved in the organisation of WPL and ascertaining of challenges of workplace learning were the objectives. Guided by Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory, the results from the study generated knowledge for HEIs and other stakeholders to get an in-depth understanding of the WPL to strengthen the relevance of HE in Uganda. The descriptive design of a concurrent triangulation variant of mixed methods was used with a sample size of 419 selected using simple random, purposive, stratified and networking. The data was collected using interview guides, questionnaires and document analysis guides. Quantitative data were analysed using SPSS for windows version 23 to establish descriptive statistics. Qualitative data were analysed using ATLAS ti version 9. The findings indicated an equally divided level of awareness for national legislation, insufficiency of employment-related regulations and NCHE quality assurance guidelines to regulate WPL. The national legislation was indicated as being relevant, influential and necessary in promoting effective and meaningful WPL. There was a low level of awareness about the organisational guidelines for workplace learning and the dependence on mere practices to manage WPL instead of policies. The activities involved in the organisation of WPL were categorized into; pre, during and post WPL, most of which activities were being satisfactorily implemented and a few but critical like placement, assessment criteria and supervision requiring improvement. The challenges of WPL were indicated to include; unacceptability of students, limited vacancies, shunning of WPL, increased operational costs and ill-prepared students faced by hosting workplaces. Funding, coordination, supervision, assessment criteria, poor perception, unformalized relationships with workplaces, inadequate facilitation of participants as challenges to HEIs. Harassment, low interest, high cost and unavailability of insurance challenges experienced by students. The study concluded that; there was no national legislation to regulate WPL, HEIs and workplaces had gaps in their guidelines to meet the aspirations of WPL. Appropriate policies can be used to address the organisation and challenges of WPL. The following recommendations were deduced; A comprehensive national legislation may be formulated to regulate WPL, HEIs and workplaces can encourage for the establishment of a national legislation and institute organisational guidelines to facilitate WPL. Workplaces and HEIs may need to formalise their relationships with workplaces and improve the students training before undertaking workplace learning with basic skills and can continue to include WPL in their curriculum for its reciprocated benefits

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

The inclusion of workplace learning in higher education is one of the trends that is attracting interest for all the academic programmes offered in higher education institutions in Uganda. The effective implementation of workplace learning for the expected benefits to be realised requires clear policies at both national and organisational levels. However, in Uganda the existence of such policies and the challenges thereof is unknown. The organisation of workplace learning by the higher education institutions to be able to achieve the set objectives often appears unspecified. This chapter therefore, contains the background to the study, problem statement, purpose and objectives of the study in addition to the research questions and the justification of the study. It also includes; significance, limitations and delimitations, and assumptions of the study. Besides, the theoretical and conceptual framework and the operational definitions of the terms used are also comprised.

#### **1.2 Background to the Study**

According to Pop and Barkhuizen (2013) Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are positioned to play a significant role in fostering economic growth and stimulation of development with the responsibility to build both theoretical knowledge and skills needed in the professional requirements in the world of work. As recognised by United Nations (UN, 2015) in the sustainable development goal number four that advocates for inclusivity and equitable quality education and that promotes lifelong learning opportunities for all, the continued inability by the workplaces to utilise the

HEI students due to lack of the required skills and experience arising from the unpreparedness to fit in the workplace even when they undertook workplace learning during their course of study was described as baffling (Pop & Barkhuizen, 2013). Even then, interestingly Workplace Learning (WPL) continues to attract a lot of interest arising from the significance of the learning that takes place through the real work experience in transiting HEIs students to the working world (Hager, 1999). There are even suggestions that workplaces and HEIs should be compelled to invest in workplace learning to not only boost the benefits but also have a partnership for the future workforce (Pop & Barkhuizen, 2013). No wonder Boud and Garrick (1999) had previously observed that learning and work are no longer considered polarised. Therefore over time higher education has included elements of learning at work and through work as a way of amplifying learning for work (Brennan & Little, 1996).

As a historical shift, Hager (2011) observed that the industrial revolution accelerated the transfer of learning from workplaces to institutions and professional training in higher education and now into the knowledge economy, there has been a rising need to make learning in HEIs relevant again to work practices. This has accelerated issues of meaningful practices, assessing and continuous reshaping and rethinking by policy-makers to understand the significance of workplace learning. The growing interest and demand in making workplaces effective learning venues for Higher Education further originates from the rekindled understanding that effective learning can take place in workplaces. Workplace learning has therefore not only been used to complement and supplement learning in HEIs but also been identified as one of the crucial avenues for learning and training in higher education.

The appreciation of workplace learning has also become relevant due to changes in demography, skills demand and technologies subsequently transition from HEIs to work has lost its distinct and linear trends (Vaughan, 2008 & Billet, 2000). Workplace Learning is also meant to address the increasing concerns by governments, individuals, workplaces and educational bodies that no longer appreciate the separation of work and learning as desirable and applicable in the post-industrial and knowledge society. Accordingly, Vaughan (2012) noticed that the combination of learning in HEIs and workplaces is also seen as a way to filling the gaps that have been identified from one-sided education. In addition to providing for the requirement of combining theory, practice and general knowledge for effective learning, it also offers a mechanism to relate theory to practice (Mjelde, 2006 & Vaughan, 2012). Vaughan (2008) affirmed that without the fundamentals of workplace learning being contextualised the education system may prepare persons with current competence requirements ignoring the labour needs for the future.

Workplace learning takes different names in different institutions as described by several studies covering approaches that enable the integration of theoretical knowledge gained through formal study with the practice-based knowledge gained through participation in a work or professional context. These contexts include; action learning, apprenticeships, cooperative education, experiential learning, inquiry learning, practicum, intra and extramural placement, problem-based learning, work-integrated learning, placement, industrial training, internship, fieldwork, work-based, school or teaching practice and project-based learning (Council on Higher Education, 2011; Weible, 2010; Devins, 2013; Tynjala, 2008; Lindell & Stenström, 2005; Illeris, 2003; Costely & Armsby, 2007; Mcewen &

Trede, 2014; & Leslie,1991). Nottingham (2017) while identifying the existing issues and misunderstanding about WPL contended that it still requires further research and engagement in higher education to be able to improve its pedagogy as much is still unknown.

According to Devins (2013) the European perspective of WPL in the HEIs curriculum has been realised as being at the heart of the European Union effort to improve competitiveness and as a way of achieving smart and sustainable inclusive growth where employers are encouraged to co-invest and participate in the development and delivery of education. Ibid further identified the interest in workplace learning as expanding and the research thereof being wide-ranging and interdisciplinary amidst being influenced by several challenges including the rapid change in information technology, globalisation and internationalisation which have defied occupational and work structures. Subsequently, leading to the need to restructure learning strategies in higher education to find ways of producing a workforce that is not only relevant but also sufficient to meet such challenges.

Brennan et. al (2006) in their report for strategising workplace learning to Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) observed that there is an unwillingness by employers to play their roles in workplace learning yet the basic functions of higher education of teaching and research have to be underpinned through workplace learning. The boundaries between higher education and employment have been becoming faint as the workers in the modern knowledge-based economy are demanding relevant research and knowledge creation. The assertion in the backdrop suggests that workplaces need persuasion into participating through relevant or adequate policies that stipulate the expected roles,

benefits and motivation in effecting workplace learning. The persuasion strategies for the world of work to participate in workplace learning as it is in Europe could be the same in Uganda however without engaging the workplaces in ascertaining their needs for WPL less can be understood.

Mcewen and Trede (2014) confirmed that the popularity of workplace learning in Australian HEIs' academic programmes has increased after the realisation by the government and the industry that it facilitates the production of work-ready students. Additionally, Bates (2008) and Treuer et. al (2011) also opined that workplace learning is understood as an experience that allows students to practice their professional roles in real work settings which may be carried out using on-campus or off-campus facilities. Amplifying the importance of workplace learning, policies have been put in place to facilitate this form of learning as highlighted by the International College of Hotel Management (2012); Martin and Hughes, (2009) and the Department of Education (2016). According to Gribble et. al (2015) the necessity for a spelt out collaboration between governments, workplaces and HEIs emphasised the need for a multipronged approach that relies on cooperation between students, HEIs, employers and government to benefit from workplace learning. Whether HEIs in Uganda have functional policies for WPL is not fully known yet this is one of the key factors that facilitate meaningful learning in the workplaces.

In Africa on the other hand, the African Union (AU, 2007), recommends, among others linkage through the key policy of training in the training institutions with the world of work by establishing strong learning collaborations with employers. Some countries like South Africa, Rwanda and Gambia have established the required formalities to facilitate workplace learning. Glancing at their efforts still reveal a

lack of or unimplemented policies related to workplace learning yet these countries like Uganda are crippled with high levels of unemployment and challenges of skilling higher education graduates. It was noted however that governments ought to put HEIs and workplaces under pressure to improve, strengthen and provide WPL (Tudor & Mendez, 2014) yet without clearly formulated policies in place the motivation to do so may not be available.

In South Africa, workplace learning has been established as work-integrated learning to assist in curbing the rise of unemployment, employers have been encouraged and incentivized to offer learning opportunities through partnerships with education institutions amidst its being under-researched (Rajab, 2015). Unlike the situation in South Africa, the policy arrangement in Uganda that aims to use workplace learning as a strategy for minimising unemployment is unknown. However, Staden (2015), Mthembu (2013), Pop and Barkhuizen (2013) and Merwe (2013) as supported by Council on Higher Education ([CHE], 2011) maintained that workplace learning has been practised in a policy vacuum rendering it ineffective to offer its intended benefits. A similar policy vacuum may also be existing in Uganda hence affecting the intended benefits of workplace learning.

In Gambia like in Kenya, agencies have been established aiming at strengthening industry-institution partnership and provision of a nation-wide mechanism to address key skills demand and enhancing the training of the training institutions among others (National Training Authority [NTA], 2010 and National Industrial Training Authority [NITA], 2014). However, less is known about the efficiency of the implementation. The establishment of institutions like NTA and NITA is a manifestation of the understanding of providing a formalized relationship between

the HEIs and workplaces in addressing issues related to WPL. However, the practice employed in Uganda to manage workplace learning through a centralised agency or even the desire for its establishment to coordinate this undertaking has not been well established.

According to Mulder et. al (2011) in East Africa, the attention to workplace learning is still very limited but slowly gaining momentum. There is remarkable progress in some East African countries towards policy formulation for WPL has been taking place (*National Policy on Workplace Learning to Prepare Rwandan Youth for Employment (Workplace Learning Policy), 2015*). Without clear legislation East African countries especially Uganda will lag in their quest to becoming middle-income economies. Implementing the recommendations of the African Union can perhaps make higher education more appropriate, relevant and effective in addressing the workforce and human capital development needs.

Transforming Uganda from a peasant to modern and prosperous country pursuance of policies that advance human resource development through the improvement of higher education are highlighted as key areas that affect the country's competitiveness in her vision 2040. Higher levels of unemployment are attributed to the slow labour absorption arising from the existing mismatch of the skills needed in the labour market and training. Besides, more than half of Uganda's population are youths below 25 years equipping them with relevant skills through relevant education is envisioned to position the country in its strategic development plans. The review of all curricula to accommodate the training methods that can respond to market needs is emphasised (National Planning Authority [NPA], 2013). The inclusion of workplace learning in higher education curriculum could be one of the

strategies that is of significant importance in bridging the skills gap in higher education graduate however not much has been investigated to the effect.

The several tracer studies that were carried out by National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) of Uganda in 2015 and 2019 identified that employers were over a long period of time not satisfied with the knowledge and skills of the graduates. Employers further highlighted the need for improving hands-on training, attitude towards work and work experience or exposure, deficiencies that are expected to be addressed by workplace learning among others (National Council for Higher Education [NCHE], 2015 & 2019). This therefore raise the concern whether there is a conducive regulatory environment to allow effective workplaces learning to flourish and harness on its intended outcomes. The situation has also been escalated by continuous increase of the number of students enrolling to the HEIs for example there was a 68% increase in student enrollment from 2002/2004 (80,000) to 2013/2014 (247,473) (NCHE, 2016). The demand for vacancies and effective engagement in workplace learning could be relatedly affected but less attention has been accorded. Therefore even when , workplace learning was highlighted as one of the most relevant courses for inclusion in the academic programmes to ease students transition to the world of work to minimise the mismatch of the academic grades and skills without adequate information regarding its practices, policies and organisation less can be achieved.

Vaughan (2012) opined policies both systemic and organisational for WPL should help minimise the challenges that arise from the tensions between stakeholders (students, HEIs & employers). Hager (2011) had earlier emphasised that the challenges of WPL have to be looked at in the dimensions of how meaningful and

reliable assessment of learning during the undertaking is achieved. Additionally, it is worth noting that some HEIs still consider WPL as inferior learning hence giving it little or no attention (Costely, 2011). The existence of such challenges in the implementation of workplace learning elsewhere may be known but not in Uganda. Accordingly, Sweet (2014) argued that the need for legislation for workplace learning cannot be overemphasised in addressing its shortcomings. Most recently Kay et.al. (2019) supported by Bist et. al. (2020) again emphasised the need to have national legislations for workplace learning as one of the priorities for Higher Education. When evaluating the importance of policies in workplace learning in South Africa Mthembu (2013) contended that there is a direct relationship between systemic and organisational policies in the sense that organisational policies lack clarity when systemic or national policies are inarticulate. Amidst implementation of WPL in Uganda, less is known regarding the direction national regulations play in informing the organisational guidelines used in undertaking WPL.

In Uganda, Okello (2010) observed that policies for WPL can be severely blamed for its inefficiency and deficiencies. The situation has not been helped by the ill-equipped training facilities in HEIs which hope to expose their students to modern facilities in the world of work through workplace learning to bridge the gaps. The irony however is that even workplaces do not allow HEIs students to practice on their expensively acquired machinery and materials as it has been presumed that there are no mechanisms for compensation from HEIs or government given that there are no incentives for such undertaking thus making WPL contradiction and complexity. However such assertion have not been empirically studied through involvement of stakeholders to be able to completely unveil the relevancy of the

much desired policies to regulate WPL. Kasirye (2017) while exploring the lost opportunity that WPL provides also asserted that there was need to re-assess policies in Uganda to be able to fully underscore the benefits of workplace learning. A recent study also revealed that workplace learning as strategy lacked legitimacy but fell short of highlighting the impact of such legitimacy (Kintu et. al 2019). Such an assessment has not been carried out making the benefits of WPL unrealisable.

On the other hand, the organisation of WPL has been looked at as multidimensional or multifaceted as it is diverse. Besides, HEIs are no longer principal sites of learning but increasingly workplaces have become other venues that deliver even more meaningful learning (Boud & Garrick, 1999). Bates, (2008) has also highlighted that higher education is under increasing pressure to re-evaluate the place of practice in its programmes hence the demand for WPL. Realising the importance of WPL in higher education in reducing the grade mismatch with the output of fresh graduates NCHE recommended its inclusion in academic programmes under different names depending on the profession and particular institution (NCHE, 2014). Given the possible shortcomings of the policies that regulate workplace learning, how the HEIs organise and implement workplace learning in Uganda is unestablishable as less study has been found out. Yet understanding the activities involved in the organisation of workplace learning would bring out the extent to which policies have had an impact.

Subsequently, the challenges of workplace learning arising from the imprecise policies and organisation need to be determined to highlight their influence on the quality of learning by HEIs students in the workplaces. Brennan, et al. (2006) suggested that there were inhibitors to WPL which include; availability of

placement, financial and resource allocations and quality of training outcomes. Solnet et. al. (2007), had also indicated that the strategies for industry engagements in many HEIs are often discriminative, haphazard, lacking in focus, resources and commitment making WPL in the current form inappropriate or un aspiring to higher education. Vaughan (2012) further underpinned WPL in its prevalent implementation as usually implicitly rather than explicitly and always ad hoc as if to imply lack of known procedures and specific outcomes. Additionally, Costely (2011) while highlighting the deterring issues related to WPL interestingly described WPL as a "disturbing practise" in HEIs. The challenges that are faced while undertaking WPL by workplaces, HEIs and students have also been described as interlinked and related to planning or management, assessment and the kind of linkages, partnerships or relationships with the world of work (Rajab, 2015). Hora et. al. (2020) in their recent study discovered that there even possibilities of discrimination of students undertaking workplace learning along race, academic programmes and their HEIs. Similarly, in countries where the legislations are weak or non existing the attention to workplace learning ia always wanting (Reinhard et. al. 2020). However, the workplace learning challenges in Uganda can only be inferred without empirical deductions. There is therefore a need to address the issues regarding WPL regulations at a national level, examining the different guidelines used by the host workplaces and HEIs in the implementation of WPL, exploring the activities involved in WPL and highlighting the challenges of workplace learning.

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

The relevance of Workplace Learning in transiting HEI students to the work-life, enhancing their competencies, linking the HEIs to the world of work and bringing to the fore the usefulness of higher education is irrefutable. With the increased enrolment of HEI students by 68% over ten years without up-to-date and adequate facilities for training, Workplace Learning has been advanced to supplement and complement learning in the higher education curricula (NCHE, 2014 ). However, WPL continues to be deterred by complexities, contradictions, inefficiencies and less attention all being attributed to a lack of inadequate regulations and provisions by effective education and workplace-related policies (Okello, 2010 & Kasirye, 2017). Unlike Europe where it has been accorded intense research and its relevance emphasised, little is known about it in Eastern Africa and Uganda in particular (Mulder & Gulikers, 2011). Even with increased interest and inclusion of WPL in HEIs academic programmes, the mismatch of the academic grades and world of work competencies requirements has not been resolved hence requiring Workplace Learning to be evaluated (Okware & Kalanda, 2014 & NCHE, 2014). The legislation and policy framework in bringing the stakeholders together for the benefits that accrue from Workplace Learning and its organisation in Uganda has continuously been blamed for the defficiencies and ineffective organsiation and challenges in Uganda. Therefore, their role is in dispute. The undertaking of this study was therefore to assess the influence of the education and work-related policies on effective organisation and handling of the challenges of Workplace Learning in HEIs in Uganda.

#### **1.4 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to assess the influence of existing education and workplace-related policies on the organisation of workplace learning undertaken by Higher Education Institution students in Uganda.

#### **1.5 Objectives of the Study**

The the study sought to;

1. Examine the national legislations regulating the implementation of Workplace Learning in Higher Education Institutions in Uganda.
2. Determine the organisational guidelines followed in the effecting Workplace Learning of Higher Education Institutions in Uganda.
3. Evaluate the activities involved in the organisation of Workplace Learning integration into Higher Education Institutions' curricula in Uganda.
4. Ascertain the challenges faced in the undertaking higher education institution students' Workplace Learning in Uganda.

#### **1.6 Research Questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What national regulations are used for effecting Workplace Learning in Higher Education Institutions in Uganda?
2. What are the organisational guidelines used in the implementation of Workplace Learning offered by Higher Education Institutions in Uganda?
3. How are the activities of Workplace Learning organised for its effective integration in the Higher Education Institutions' curricula in Uganda?

4. What are the challenges that affect undertaking of higher education institution students' workplace learning in Uganda?

### **1.7 Significance of the Study**

The results of the study generate knowledge that is useful for HEIs and other stakeholders like the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour in managing policies or regulations regarding WPL for effective curricular improvement. This study increases the quality of research by providing information that will serve as a reference for other researchers for WPL. The study will also stimulate critical thinking, guide the establishment of policies and provides guidance about WPL implementation in HEIs in Uganda. The HEIs and workplaces that participate in WPL will find this study a source of insightful information about the organisation and the challenges of the undertaking to be able to find applicable solutions to make it effective and meaningful. The study recommendations will be useful to the stakeholders of higher education to push for policy formulation regarding WPL. The study also creates ground for possible further research into the related areas by other scholars. The research highlights the importance of integrating WPL in higher education as one of the strategies to improve its relevance in the production of work-ready graduates from HEIs. Additionally, the study strengthens the earlier theory (Kolbs experiential Learning Theory) and avails additional literature for the other researchers in higher education and in particular those interested in WPL.

### **1.8 Justification of the Study**

Workplace Learning is one of the strategies used in HEIs to supplement the training of the students in readiness for the world of work. Although WPL is integrated into several academic programmes using industrial training, internship, field attachment, community practice, teaching practise, practicum among others, the aim of providing the students with the real work environment to related theory to practice and gaining work experience is sought. The organisation of WPL as implemented by HEIs largely depends on the enabling policies that set out to regulate and set guidelines for its implementation. Whereas Workplace Learning has been adapted by many HEIs in Uganda as recommended by NCHE, coupled with the existence of unclear policies, the expected benefits of the undertaking among the graduates continue to be unrealised. Without a clear understanding of how the existing policies affect the organisation and challenges of WPL casts doubt on the possible attainability of the expected benefits.

### **1.9 Limitations of the Study**

The following were the limitations that affected this study:

It was difficult to meet all the sampled respondents particularly the purposively selected respondents who were not available due to the nature of their work. Time management and proper scheduling of the interviewees even outside their work schedules helped mitigate this shortcoming.

The interaction between the researcher and the respondents was limited by time due to the busy schedules of the respondents. The use of audio recorder was useful in minimizing this limitation.

Only a representative sample size was selected, hence some elements of data may have been left out. To mitigate this, the researcher used a varied and cross-sectional approach to sampling and data collection.

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic led to instituting strict Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) like social distancing, lockdown, minimised workers at a particular station to as low as 30% and suspicion of infections resulted in the cancellation of five interviews. This was mitigated after transcribing the already collected data that revealed a consistent trend in the data hence reducing the effect of the uncollected data.

### **1.10 Delimitations of the Study**

The study was delimited to the following:

The specific objectives included the policies related to workplace learning at national and organisational levels, organisation of workplace learning in HEIs and challenges faced by the students, workplaces and HEIs while undertaking workplace learning in Uganda.

The literature that covers the workplace learning for students on the university study programmes was covered as opposed to the training or learning of the regular workers.

Public universities that have been in existence for 10 years and private universities that have been chartered for 10 years were covered under this study as sourced from NCHE.

Workplaces or organisations that have been offering workplace learning to the selected HEIs in Uganda for at least five years were considered.

### **1.11 Assumptions of the Study**

The study proceeded on the assumptions that;

There was sufficient information in the field from which this study to get empirical data to use for analysis and inform the study.

Mixed methods (qualitative & Quantitative) of data collection and analysis were appropriate for this study to complement, supplement and mark up the weaknesses of either approach.

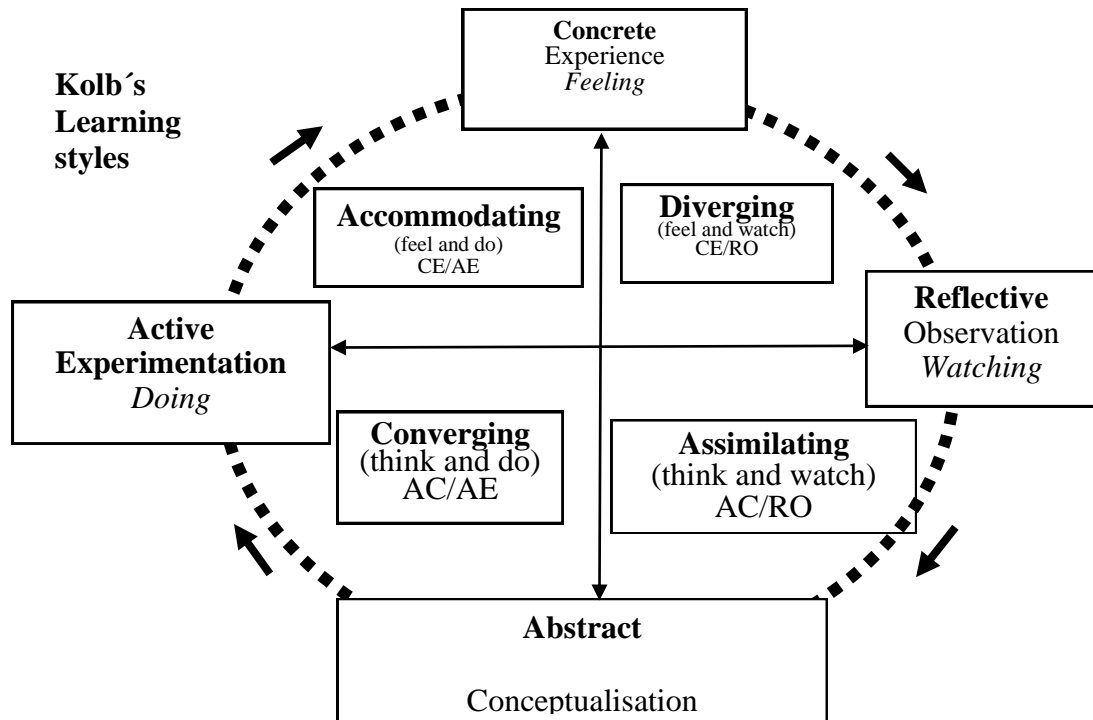
Some policies guide WPL to improve the organisation and minimise the challenges of Workplace Learning for a better quality of higher education. Prose.

### **1.12 Theoretical Framework**

This study was guided by Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) that accentuates that effective learning duly takes place through experience under suitable conditions. Kolb (1984) described the theory as experiential on two affirmations; to tie it to its origin (intellectual works of Dewey, Lewin and Piaget) and the prominence of the principal role experience plays in the learning process. As propagated, the Lewinian model of learning proposed that learning occurs in four stages where; immediate concrete experience forms the basis for the observation or reflection, observations assimilate to the theory from which fresh propositions for action are realized from which the new propositions guide the creation of new experiences. Precisely making the immediate personal experience the focal point of learning and subsequently leading to feedback that provides valid information for both assessment and continuous process of learning (Kolb, 1984).

On the other hand, Dewey's theory although similar to Lewin's further described feedback as to how learning transforms impulses, feelings and desires of concrete experience to higher purposeful action. Therefore, the learning process takes a cyclic form where the interaction between the individual and the environment form the essential part of learning. In his proclamation Kolb, therefore, derived that for the learner to be able to learn effectively all the abilities of Concrete Experience (CE/ feeling/experience) of being involved fully without bias, Reflective Observation (RO/ reflection/watching) use many perspectives to reflect and observe their experiences, Abstract Conceptualisation (AC/ thinking) make up concepts that use their reflections and Active Experimentation (AE/action) use concepts to make the decision and solve problems should be fully explored (Kolb, 1984).

Expounding on Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory Brennan & Little (1996) and Cassidy (2004) revealed that learning from experience takes four cyclic stages of Concrete Experience (CE), Reflective Observation (RO), Abstract Conceptualisation (AC) and Active Experimentation (AE) which have to be completed for learning to take place. The four stages have been re-enforced with Kolb' Learning styles as converger (AC/AE), diverger (CE/RO), assimilator (AC/RO), accommodator (CE/AE) as illustrated in Figure 1.1



**Figure 1. 1 Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle**

### 1.12.1 Justification for Applying the Theory to the Study

The study investigated the influence of the policies in setting the right conditions and environment for effective workplace learning through reflection, conceptualisation experimentation and experience (Hager, 2011). Similar to Sharlanova (2004) opined experiential learning is based on the assertion that learning is a process by which knowledge is created by transforming the experience within the right conditions and environment. Both national and organisational policies are essential in making the learning environment conducive for effective learning to take place. The right policies also establish a regulatory system that eases the process of active participation as a social phenomenon for effective workplace learning. The description of experiential learning that spirals from Dewey's 1915 "learning by doing" to Wolfe and Byrne 1975 experience-based learning clearly

emphasises that learning in the real work situation to take place necessary conditions for the application of concepts, ideas and theories in a very interactive setup are paramount hence the need to appropriate policies to set the right regulate the implementation and execution of workplace learning.

Regarding the importance of effective organisation of WPL, Gentry (1990) suggested that experiential learning is also attributed to the notions of the Confucius (*I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand*). He further highlighted the relevancy of efficient organisation of WPL by observing that Wolfe and Byrne in 1975 applied experiential learning in four structured phases that are also similar to the cyclic components of WPL as;

Design; that involves setting specific learning objectives, selecting the activities and create the scheme or schedule for learning.

Conduct; is meant to control the designed learning objectives and schedules to make a sustainable and favourable learning environment.

Evaluation; this is purposed to provide for the assessment of the learning gained from the workplace learning experience.

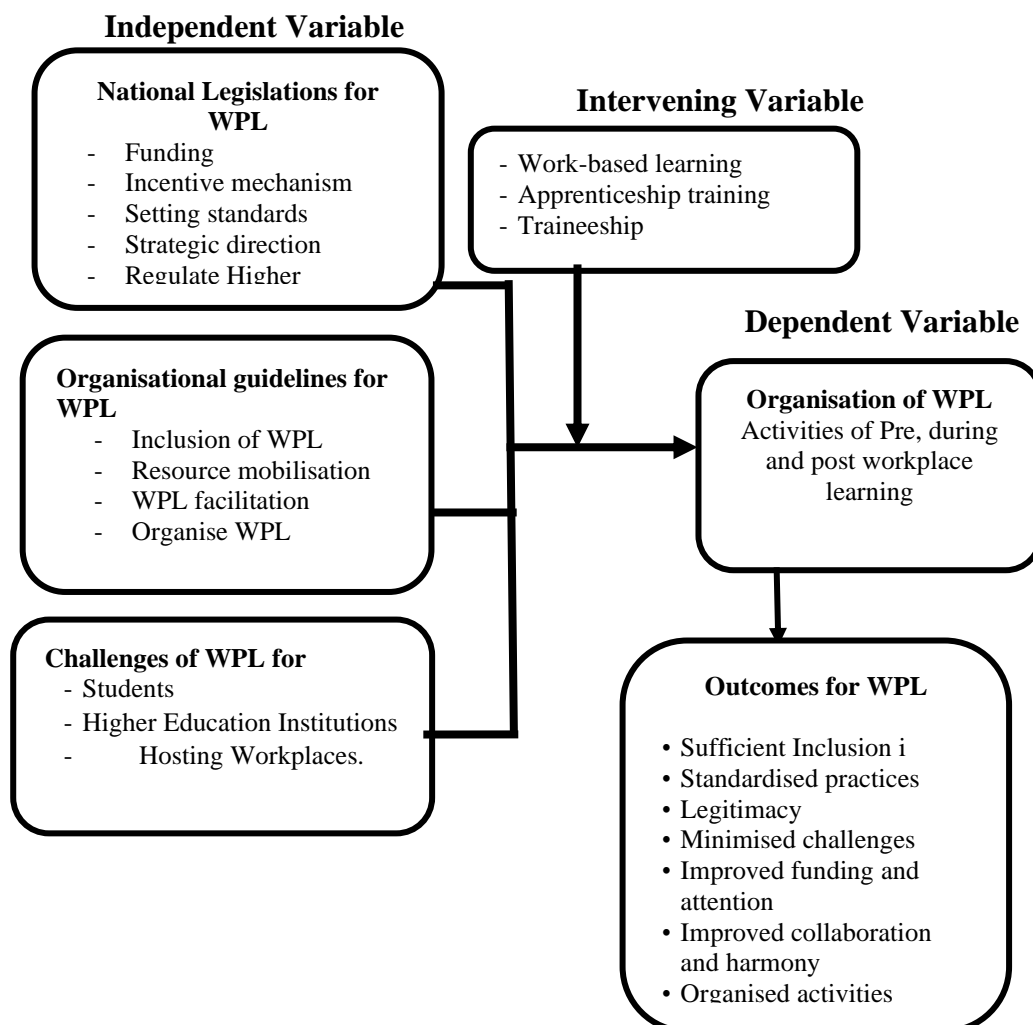
Feedback; the need for feedback throughout the process of workplace learning from the pre-workplace learning to the final debriefing of the students. Feedback involves monitoring so that positive aspects are enhanced and the negative ones are eliminated for effective learning.

Exploring experiential learning using the internship as an example Gentry (1990) supported by Council on Higher Education (2011), identified its critical components as curriculum-related, applied, participative (the students undertaking WPL have to be organised in the way that provides for their participation in each stage of the

process) and interactive; mentors-students, students-students, the students-the world of the work environment. Whole-person emphasis on the acquisition of soft, hard and cognitive skills workplace learning gives chance to students in acquiring the right competencies (skills, knowledge & attitudes), contact with the environment (without the contact with the real world there cannot be experienced), variability and uncertainty (during WPL students get exposed to the messiness and ambiguity the usually happens in the real world of work) hence enhancing the ability to learn how to manoeuvre. It is indeed this process that is made up of the highlighted critical components that gives rise to the challenges that students, workplaces and HEIs face while undertaking WPL.

### 1.13 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework that illustrates the relationship and the linkage between the variables of the study is shown in figure 1.2.



## **Figure 1.2 Conceptual Framework of the Study**

**Source: Author 2021**

### **1.13.1 Independent Variables**

The independent variables are national education, workplace or employment-related legislations, organisational policies in HEIs and workplaces, and the challenges faced by the students, HEIs and hosting workplaces in the implementation of workplace. The legislations regulate education generally and higher education in Uganda in addition to setting standards, giving the strategic direction and providing for ways of funding workplace learning. The other category of legislations are used to provide the regulatory framework for the workplace related issues in Uganda in particular by setting the national standard practices and procedures of all the persons involved in formal employment and work environment including those undertaking workplace learning.

The organisational policies on the other hand include; HEIs guidelines for WPL, academic programme development guidelines, workplace guidelines for hosting WPL and human resource manuals. The organisation of WPL that entails the inclusion of WPL in the academic programmes, availing of WPL opportunities by the workplaces, financing, supervision, assessment and sequencing of WPL is the dependent variable. Additionally, the challenges encountered by students, HEIs and workplaces while undertaking, stakeholders perception towards WPL and the relationship between HEIs and workplaces may have a direct affect the organisation of WPL.

### **1.13.2 Dependent Variable**

The dependent variable of the study was the organisation of workplace learning that involves the activities of the three stages of pre-workplace learning; students' WPL orientation or seminars, placement, coordination and undertaking the course works before WPL. The during WPL stage that include; supervision, duration and undertaking the training its in the world of work. The post workplace learning stage that includes; overall assessment, provision of feedback and advocacy of workplace learning. these activities that are involved in the organisation of workplace learning are directly affected the independent variables of the study.

### **1.13.3 Intervening Variable**

The intervening variable on the other hand othe the other forms of learning that take place in the world of work that include; apprenticeship, traineeship, work-based learning or training for with this staudy did not address but may have an effect on the relationship between the independent and the dependent variable.

### **1.13.4 Outcomes**

When the relationship between the national legislations, organisational guideline and the challenges of WPL as the independent with the organisation of WPL is matching and proper the outcomes of the adequately funded, well included, acceptable standard practices, legitimacy, minimises challenges and improved collaboration for WPL are attainable as outcomes.

### 1.14 Operational Definition of Terms

The terms defined hereafter are definitions as have been used in this study and are not dictionary definition in any way.

**Workplace Learning:** the course in the academic programme obliging a student to spend a specified period of time in a workplace to gain knowledge and experience as part of the requirement for the completion of the study programme in a higher education institution.

**Legislation:** a set of national regulations set out to govern the inclusion and implementation of workplace learning.

**Policies:**, rules, guidelines or procedures, establish, regulate and facilitate the management of workplace learning in either the HEIs and workplaces.

**Higher Education Institutions (HEIs):** Institutions that are here described as universities in whose academic programmes include workplace learning.

**Host workplaces:** an organisations, establishments, agencies that offer students from HEIs opportunities for undertaking workplace learning.

**Challenges:** the issues that arise during the implementation of workplace learning negatively affect its effective undertaking hence limiting the expected outcomes.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The literature review was conducted to provide a context for related views about policies (national & organisation), organisation of WPL activities and challenges encountered by the students, HEIs and workplaces while undertaking WPL. Literature review pinpointed out gaps in earlier research, enhances further breadths to the research, questions and identifies related research and scholarly traditions. This chapter contains the review of literature related to the history of HEIs in Uganda, national legislations and their role in effecting WPL, HEIs and workplace guidelines that are used in the implementation of WPL, activities involved in the organisation of WPL and the challenges faced by HEIs, students and hosting workplaces while undertaking WPL.

#### **2.2 History of Higher Education Institutions in Uganda**

In Uganda, the development of higher education is inseparable from the country's political history that spans from the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial era. The education policy framework from the colonial period when higher education was introduced has been shaped by the political environment. The western-style education in Uganda came along with the missionaries in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the colonial government took up the responsibility through legislations for financing, curriculum development and control. Makerere College established in 1922 was turned into the University College of London University in 1949 setting the pace for higher education (Ssekamwa, 2000). This

was done through the education ordinance of 1927, the 1942 Education Ordinance, the Makerere College Ordinance of 1938, the Makerere College Act 1949 and the Education Ordinance of 1959 (Ssekamwa & Lugamba, 2001). The involvement of government is therefore historical and fundamental, whose national policies regarding higher education of the time are benchmarks that show the need for government's control or involvement.

After independence, the University of East Africa (Makerere University College, University College of Nairobi & University College of Dar-es-salaam) was formed through its Act of 1962. However, in 1970 the University of East Africa was dissolved and Makerere University was promulgated through an Act of parliament. As the only university in Uganda then, it formed the backbone of the present legislation regarding higher education. However not surprising, as Obone (2007), emphatically stressed the universities have maintained their inherited principles of structure, organisation and purpose as they were in the medieval age and are therefore challenged by the emerging trends like workplace learning.

National Education Policy Commission of 1987 resulted in the Government White Paper on Education Policy report of 1992 titled "Education for National Integration and Development" the recommendations of this report about higher education included; setting the objectives of higher education as teaching to produce high-level manpower. It further recommended the establishment of the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) to regulate higher education (Government White Paper on the Education, 1992).

### **2.3 Application of National Legislations on WPL**

Regulation of higher education is one way of ensuring that the national strategic objectives are achieved in a manner that is reliable, predictable and relevant not only to the citizens but also to the economic development of the country. Higher education in Uganda is regulated through different laws that have spanned over a long time. Like Brennan, et al, (2006) opined, the national policy direction of higher education and indeed workplace learning is shaped by the extent of government involvement; the free market or corporatist. The role of higher education in resolving the skills gaps and shortage has been highlighted as one of their cardinal responsibilities to be able to increase workforce productivity (Fisher & Scott, 2011). The absence of a clear national policy framework for workplace learning is not unique to Uganda but to many developed and developing economies (Blom, 2015). The involvement of governments in the management of workplace learning is through the enactment of national policy. Government policy has been described by several authors as either the free market or corporatist (Brennan, et al, 2006), who opined that national policy direction of higher education and indeed workplace learning is shaped by the extent of government involvement; the free market or corporatist. Through such debates, the Canadian example that identifies with the free market is under increasing pressure for state-driven strategies to be able to tap into the benefits of workplace learning (European Trade Union Committee for Education [ETUCE], 2012). The corporatist model on the other hand in Germany and others has not been examined to establish its efficacy. The description of government involvement in workplace learning in Uganda is undefined as less has been determined.

### **2.3.1 National Education -Related Legislations Applied on WPL in Uganda**

The legislations for WPL are categorised into higher education and workplace-related. The education-related policies are; Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act 2001, the Business Technical Vocational Education and Training Act 2008 and the Education Act 2008. The workplace-related policies are; The Employment Act 2006, Employment Regulations 2011, Occupational Safety and Health Act 2006 and Workers Compensation Act Cap 225.

#### **2.3.1.1 The Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act 2001**

*The Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act 2001*, purposed to establish the National Council for Higher Education, its functions, administration and to streamline the establishment, administration and standards of universities and other institutions of higher education in Uganda. The focus of this Act towards workplace learning in higher education institutions is incidental to the object of widening accessibility of high-quality standard institutions to students wishing to pursue higher education in addition to the functions of the council that include; co-operation with the relevant government departments, private sector to evaluate the overall national manpower requirement and recommend solutions to the requirements, ensuring minimum standards for courses of study are adhered to and promote national interests.

In pursuit of the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) mandate through Quality Assurance Framework, the recommends the basic requirements for all the awards of higher education to include aspects of workplace learning (NCHE, 2014). Indeed, ever since the enactment of this Act there has been increased regulation of

higher education and the establishment of several private and government universities in Uganda. There has also been increased student enrolment in higher education and the inclusion of workplace learning in most academic programmes is evidently. However, the debate of the quality of graduates continues to be a challenge as many employers continue to show discontent of the students' ability to easily transit in the world of work. Apart from the recommendation for inclusion of workplace learning in the academic programmes offered by HEIs in Uganda less or no specific attention has been accorded to the details of the implementation of workplace learning yet there could be having severe effects on the expected outcomes of this form of learning. The gap of the quality assurance framework of the NCHE needs to be filled so that the inclusion and implementation of WPL is enforceable by acceptable legislations at the national level.

### **2.3.1.2 The Business Technical Vocational Education and Training Act 2008**

On the other hand, *The Business Technical Vocational Education and Training Act 2008* established the Directorate of Industrial Training (DIT) and Council to regulate non-formal and informal learning. Although there has been an improvement in creating recognition of non-formal and informal learning, workplace learning carried out by higher education institutions is not considered in this national law. However, workplace learning in higher education is not addressed therein. The aim of promoting vocational education through informal strategies has been somewhat achieved through non-formal training schemes and the formation of the Uganda Business Technical Examination Board (UBTEB) emanating from this Act to formally assess post-primary vocational related programmes has also been achieved.

However, much as the intention was to promote competency-based education the reality seems to be a progression from one level to another and ultimately higher education institution increasing the pressure. Therefore, the assessment seems to be an alternative to Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB) that examine primary and secondary level for progression to higher education, therefore, the employers' needs of producing ready graduates for work through WPL has not been adequately addressed.

### **2.3.1.3 The Education Act 2008**

Similarly, *The Education Act 2008*, is set out to regulate pre-primary, primary and post-primary education in Uganda. Since its enactment supported with universal primary and secondary education there has been significant enrolment of pupils at primary and secondary levels resulting in further increasing the number of students at higher education. The systemic or national policies in Uganda are obscure about workplace learning as offered by higher education institutions. The incidental regulation of workplace learning from the education-related policies in Uganda with less known about their effect desires that more is studied to establish their impact on workplace learning.

### **2.3.2 National Workplace-Related Legislation for WPL**

*The Employment Act 2006, Employment Regulations 2011, Occupational Safety and Health Act 2006 and Workers Compensation Act Cap 225* are some of the legislations that cover workplace issues in Uganda. Apart from the employment regulations of 2011 which include issues related to the formalised apprenticeship

and addresses apprentices as a special form of persons in the workplaces the rest of the stated legislation can only be related to workplace learning as they are mainly concerned with the employees yet the students undertaking workplace learning are not categorised as such. The students from HEIs undertaking workplace learning are not directly addressed by the regulations. It is observed that the workplace-related legislation in Uganda remotely or can be incidental to workplace learning. The glaring existence of lack of inclusion of students' workplace learning the national workplace-related legislations is a manifestation of perhaps lack of regulation and control hence the need to exhaust the possibilities of filling such gaps. Therefore, the role they play in the implementation of workplace learning needs to be understood so that their contribution is in effecting meaningful workplace learning is evaluated.

### **2.3.3 Role of National Legislations on Workplace Learning**

National legislations play a fundamental role in the establishment and implementation of workplace learning. The key roles that a national policy plays include; powering workplace learning, informing organisation policies in streamlining workplace learning, formalizing and legitimizing workplace learning, offer protection to the stakeholders (students & higher education institutions), increase political attention and strategic action, create awareness, provide support to all the stakeholders (students, workplaces & higher education institutions) and set the national standards for workplace learning practices. As underscored in the subsequent section the without a clear national policy for workplace learning the benefits of workplace learning may not be attainable.

### **2.3.2.1 Powering Workplace Learning and Informing Organisational Policies**

Workplace learning power is a derivative of the benefits it offers to the stakeholders (students, HEIs and government). Without clear policies that empower WPL, the benefits may remain wishful. Mthembu (2013) while actualising the outcomes of the 18<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Cooperative and Work-Integrated Education that was held in Durban South Africa under the theme "WIL power from policy to Practice: exploring models of excellence", declared that the anticipated benefits of WPL were hopeless without adequate policies. He further described workplace learning power as a will without power in the absence of appropriate policies. Another study that aimed at analysing the policy framework for WPL in south Africa identified that benefits of WPL to the students, HEIs, employers, the community, government and the economy to be realised there is a need for a national policy (Blom, 2014). Kay et. al (2019) while underscoring the models for WPL in Australia realised that workplace learning ought to be taken as one of the national educational priorities through legislation. In a related study, where 195 workplace supervisors and 405 students were sampled in India, skills like problem-solving, analytical and communication skills were identified as most lacking amongst students that undertake WPL hence a need to be by legislation emphasised in HEIs curriculum (Bist et. al., 2020). Kalanda et. al (2020) explored the activities involved in organising workplace learning in Uganda without underscoring the role the policies play in informing such activities. Whereas the studies highlighted the value that policies added to WPL as power, the influence they impact on other aspects especially organisation and as a way of minimising the challenges of WPL were not alluded to, hence the need for this study to find the way of filling the gap of how legislations empower WPL. Regarding national policies informing the

organizational policies both national or systemic and organizational policy frameworks should be cognizant that organizational (institutional & workplace policies) lack clarity when national or systemic policies are blurry. How the organisational guidelines have a reflection of the national legislations of workplace learning is un defined. This assertion makes the national legislations central in making the foundation for organisational guidelines to be formulated and implemented.

### **2.3.2.2 Legitimizing and Formalizing Workplace Learning**

The implementation of workplace learning works through a partnership between the workplaces, students and HEIs how such relationships can be legitimized and formalized is critical. The realisation and need for legitimate partnership between higher education institutions and workplaces or employers for purposes of delivering sensible and meaningful workplace learning through a systemic or national legislation that supports the integration of work and learning in higher education have been an ongoing debate (Brennan & Little 1996). Boud & Garrick (1999) when emphasising the need to understand workplace learning and its relevance in education, observed that policy-makers in governments, HEIs and workplaces have to be beseeched to appreciate the complexities of workplace learning that require formal policy mechanisms to be able to legitimatise and make it meaningful. Kintu et. al. (2019) recently in their qualitative study that gathered responses from thirty respondents in Uganda regarding the strategies that are required to ease students' transition into the world of work observed that however much WPL plays a role, some hosting workplaces were underutilising the students due to lack of legitimacy. Although the need to legitimise and formalise WPL

through suitable policies has been severally observed, the role such legitimacy would play in HEIs curriculum has not been addressed hence the undertaking of this study.

### **2.3.2.3 Offer Protection Mechanism**

Workplace learning players or participates are vulnerable to among others exploitation, abuse and harassment. The government intervention is therefore necessary as contended by Bassanini et. al. (2005) to offer protection of the disadvantaged students, HEIs and even hosting workplaces. In their study that explored issues related to access, program design and outcomes using a mixed-method that incorporated a survey of a sample of 1,129 and a focus group of 57 students in some three USA Colleges Hora, Chen et. al. (2020) observed that discriminations along race, particular HEIs and academic programmes was significant. Other concerns that require protection are health and life risks that may be under threat during workplace learning where insurance cover ought to be articulated by the policy (*National Policy on Workplace Learning to Prepare Rwandan Youth for Employment (Workplace Learning Policy), 2015*). While highlighting the importance of insurance in their policy in Australia, the insurance of students when undertaking workplace learning was identified as one of the provisions that plays a vital role in ensuring their safety especially while undertaking potentially hazardous assignments in the hosting workplaces (Department of Education 2016). However, the need for a policy framework to detail with such incidences was not addressed yet without a clear national legislation on workplace learning the interests of the students, HEIs and hosting workplace may be unattainable.

#### **2.3.2.4 Increase Attention and Strategic Action**

The development of a national policy or legislation takes vigorous exercise that involves many direct and indirect stakeholders. The European report for workplace learning as an integrated curriculum, observed that a process of formulating policies regarding WPL was responsible for the increased general awareness, political attention and strategic action (Devins, 2013). In a comparative study of the best practices of workplace learning drawn from Germany, Australia and Korea using a mixed methods methodology, the differences of government involvement and commitment was concluded as evident. Hence the difference in the impact and attention in the three countries (Reinhard et. al., 2020). In the absence of a comprehensive national legislation, little is known about the levels of awareness regarding WPL in Uganda hence less attention and strategy could be affecting it.

#### **2.3.2.5 Provide Support for Workplace Learning**

The fulfilment of workplace learning has been identified as a very costly activity on the students, HEIs and hosting workplaces. In earlier studies, Bassanini, et al (2005) sought subsidies to hosting workplaces. Bates (2008) emphasised that funding of HEIs and perhaps workplaces by the government can be done through its agencies as one of the crucial aspects that can ease its implementation and monitoring. While Pyke et. al., (2009) realised that the need by governments to support workplace learning at both higher education institutions and workplace levels is increasing becoming inevitable to be able to improve their competitiveness. The European Centre for Development of Vocational Training ([CEDEFOP], 2011) in their report that was based on the aspects of; shared schemes for support measures, social partnerships, enterprise-based initiatives and professional development of learning

in the workplaces observed that the creation of awareness was more critical as opposed to the provision of subsidies that had earlier been promoted. However, Devins (2013) contended that the national legal frameworks should be able to support and incentivise the linkage between HEIs and the workplaces. The purpose of which should be aimed at improving and providing for the development of workplace learning. The need to support the students, HEIs and the hosting workplaces by government whether through its agencies or directly can be one of the much-needed mechanisms in workplace learning implementation in Uganda however with less known about the support needs not much can be done. This study, therefore, seeks to highlight the needs of the students, HEIs and hosting workplaces for which support through the national legislation can be provided.

#### **2.3.2.6 Set the National Standard of Practice for Workplace Learning**

The harmonisation and coordination of the practices for workplace learning are some of the key aspects of its successful implementation. Correspondingly Garrick (1999) underpinned that the systemic legislations are needed for workplace learning to set the framework of structuring learning that is well beyond given workplaces. The national legislation on workplace learning according to Sternstrom (2005) should be designed to detail how the co-operation between HEIs and workplaces should be organised. Tudor and Mendez (2014) beseeched governments to put HEIs and workplaces under pressure to improve, strengthen and provide workplace learning. The assertion in the backdrop is amplified by the national legislation on workplace learning draft of Rwanda as a reflection of the need for national regulation of workplace learning in higher education. In addition to the dire need for improving the management, the creation of sustainable financing and incentive

mechanism and student insurance is quite clear (*National Policy on Workplace Learning to Prepare Rwandan Youth for Employment (Workplace Learning Policy)*, 2015) and the Department of Education (2016). In one of the recent studies that sampled three Australian universities of Canberra, Wollongong and Flinders collected data from group discussions of students who had just returned from undertaking WPL cautioned flexibility ought to be provided as there was a great deal of learning that was situated, unstated, surfacing and may not be pre-set (Burford, et. al., 2020). Uganda's situation may not be exceptional to such a necessity but less is known of the expected standards of workplace learning. The existence of standard WPL practices set out by the existing policies is one of the key issues about WPL that is unexplored in Uganda.

## **2.4 Organisational Guidelines on Workplace Learning**

The HEIs and workplaces that participate in workplace learning have different but specific roles and responsibilities that they play for the effective, efficient and successful implementation of WPL. Organisational guidelines for workplace learning were determined by examining the guidelines that facilitate workplace learning in HEIs and hosting workplaces.

### **2.4.1 Policies for Workplace Learning in HEIs**

The policy-makers in HEIs were implored to recognize the complexities of WPL and be able to formalise this form of learning with the view of making it more legitimate and meaningful through instituting relevant policies (Boud & Garrick, 1999). In their paper that examined the design, implementation and effectiveness of

workplace learning in East Africa Mulder et. al., (2011) observed that there was limited attention to WPL and policy-makers at the institutional level may require strategies to raise the attention in their specific HEIs at different levels. While determining the policies for workplace learning in the HEI; the relevancy of the guidelines and the aspects that they entail were evaluated.

#### **2.4.1.2 Relevancy of HEI Workplace Learning Policies**

There can be a wide range of importance of HEIs policies in the smooth running of WPL. The HEIs guidelines can be at the institutional level, school or faculty, departmental or per the academic programme. The importance of such policies includes; setting direction for inclusion in the curriculum, outlining the organisation process, stating the responsibilities of key stakeholders, stipulating the relationship between the HEIs and hosting workplaces, articulating resource mobilisation and allocation avenues, setting the duration of WPL and providing for the independence of HEIs in offering WPL.

#### **Dictate inclusion of WPL in the HEI curriculum**

The motivations of including workplace learning in the curriculum of HEIs can be internal (institutional mission or philosophy & student recruitment) or external (traditions for specific professional areas, employment practice & systemic requirements) (Brennan, et al., 2006). Workplace learning inclusion in higher education was also revealed as being a way of shifting from the previously assumed position of HEIs providing general education or qualifications to the training of students with very specific skills required in the work world (Maclean & Pavlova,

2013). Like Mthembu (2013) advised institutional policies can not be clear without an encompassing national legislation to facilitate planning, funding and quality assurance for WPL and being in line with the national legislation (in terms of insurance, occupational health and safety) even then the value of HEI policies is also not well investigated. Addressing workplace learning at Murdoch University, their workplace learning policy details the guidelines for curriculum design (Murdoch University, 2011). In Uganda, Makerere University stipulates that the objective of workplace learning is a strategy that enables students to test the real-life experience in the world of work to which they are destined and to allow application of theoretical principles in solving real problems (Makerere University, 2014). Achieving the requirements in the backdrop HEIs have had to formulate policies to offer legitimate assistance. However, the extent to which such guidelines have shaped the curriculum is not well studied in Uganda.

### **Set the procedures for WPL**

The diversity of practice for workplace learning as set out in a comparative study by Reinhard et. al. (2020) realised that different countries have different acceptable practices. The differences are significant at the level of each HEI. Such differences are based on the predetermined objectives of the undertaking. Although the different versions of WPL were set out well, they did not address the differences in the policy regarding workplaces learning. Workplace learning has been studied as one pedagogy that pushes for more flexible processes that can accommodate a responsive curriculum according to Kay et. el. (2019) in their study that examined the innovative models of WPL in Australia. That particular need for flexibility in HEIs to be able to implement WPL may not be favourable in the known rigid

environment of higher education. Matters of the duration of WPL undertaking have also been debated unlike other HEIs La Salle College include in their guidelines, attendance and hours for the learning (La Salle College, 2009).

How much flexibility is provided in the organisation of WPL is not exhaustively deliberated and needs to be studied to be able to achieve the anticipated benefits of WPL. The other issue that requires clear cut guidelines is WPL assessment criteria that HEIs can be emphasised through setting the procedure so that the outcomes can be reliable and unbiased (Scholtz, 2020).

### **Set the responsibilities and expectations of the students and hosting workplaces**

Blom (2014) outlined the responsibilities of the students, hosting workplaces and HEIs as one of the key aspects of the desired framework for the implementation of workplace learning. When the policy clearly shows the responsibilities of the stakeholders the possibilities of anxiety is limited. Brennan, et al. (2006) while articulating their strategies for meaningful workplace learning identified students expectations in terms of entitlements, support and guidance as being settled in situations where the policies had them addressed. They became challenges in cases where the same had not been done. Without setting the students and the expectations of the hosting workplace the value of WPL may be missed by HEIs. The persistence of these unexplained entitlements or expectations were also discovered by Kiriri (2019) who found out that the student undertaking workplace learning expected to be treated like the other employees and offered similar access to hosting workplace facilities equally. The HEIs guidelines should be used to address stakeholders obligations however, how that is has been addressed is scanty.

**Stipulate the relationship between the HEIs and hosting workplaces**

Boud and Garrick (1999) affirmed that the need for a stronger link between HEIs and workplaces is one of the key strategies that can lead to significant learning. The institutional guidelines harness the intentions of HEIs to engage with the world especially small and medium enterprises that are naïve to WPL due to insufficient resources (Brennan, et al., 2006). Fleming et. al. (2018) while studying the sustainability of workplace learning raised concerns of effective workplace learning among which were legal and contractual mechanisms. An indication that the relationship between HEIs and hosting workplaces was not firmly established to create the expected outcomes. However, the forms of legal issues were not identified in that study hence the need for thi study.

Brennan and Little (1996) had earlier reasoned that the autonomy and the authority of HEIs in offering workplace learning is one of the issues that need to be taken care of as WPL tends to challenge this status. The realisation of HEIs as pivotal players of WPL could still be misunderstood. Sewell et. al. (2017) further affirmed that HEIs have not assessed the efficiency of their workplace learning policy frameworks to understand their efficiency. The guidelines from its inception, formulation and implementation ought to be cognizant of the need to uphold assertions of the central or pivotal role HEIs play if the intentions of WPL by the HEIs are to be realised. The pivotal role that HEIs play in ensuring that their status in the implementation of workplace learning is protected and whether the assessment of the efficiency of existing guidelines for workplace learning has not been carried out in Uganda hence the need to this study.

**Provide for resource mobilisation and allocation**

In his report to the department of higher education in South Africa Blom (2015) observed that in the absence of a national legislation HEIs were integrating WPL within their practices hence with the limited funding and the continued informal arrangements leading to poor resource mobilisation. He had previously beseeched Higher Education Institutions to among other responsibilities mobilise and allocate both financial and human resources in the implementation of WPL (Blom, 2014). Addressing workplace learning at Murdoch University, a workplace learning policy specifying institutional resource allocation and mobilisation have been developed (Murdoch University, 2011). Additionally, HEIs have been called upon to invest in activities of workplace learning to reap from the benefits that accumulatively accrue (Weible, 2010 & Mathews, 1999) but the avenues through which HEIs raise revenue to invest in workplace learning are inadequately tackled. The situation in Uganda's HEIs in terms of how resources for workplace learning are mobilised and allocated could be dire.

**2.4.1.1 Aspects Addressed by HEIs WPL Policies**

The aspects that the workplace learning policies should entail are; student eligibility, criteria for assessment, the procedure for placement, supervision, roles and responsibilities of the students, HEIs and hosting workplace and duration of workplace learning could be critical.

### **Student eligibility**

The International College of Hotel Management of Australia in her WPL policy sets the suitability of students engagement in WPL (International College of Hotel Management, 2012). Kyambogo University also sets the objectives of workplace learning and the eligibility of students to undertake WPL (Kyambogo University, 2005). The glaring possibilities of discrimination and other biases that Hora et. al. (2020) implored HEIs to ensure equitable access to workplace learning opportunities. The mechanism of achieving so was not identified as HEI policy yet this could be one of the ways to mitigate such tendencies in the due process of WPL.

### **Criteria for assessment**

Addressing workplace learning at Murdoch University, a workplace learning policy specified assessment. It is also professed as essential to the expected high quality of learning for students at both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes (Murdoch University, 2011).

### **Procedure for placement**

The International College of Hotel Management of Australia in her WPL policy sets the process of placement (by the college or students individually), students' safety, responsibilities (prior, during and after), workplaces and the institution (International College of Hotel Management, 2012). Addressing workplace learning at Murdoch University a workplace learning policy also specifying the institutional procedures for placement with the world of work (Murdoch University, 2011). The setup of the procedure for workplace learning in HEIs in Uganda is not well

established empirically hence the need to undertake this study to explore the strategies used in placing students for their WPL.

### **Supervision of workplace learning**

Supervision is meant to provide support to the HEIs students and the host workplaces (on part of the HEIs supervisors) and learners and workplace mentors (on part of the host workplace supervisor) (Brennan & Little, 1996) and it should be regular (Costely, 2011). Address workplace learning at Murdoch University a workplace learning policy specifies the frequency of supervision (Murdoch University, 2011). The occurrence and the adequacy of workplace learning supervision of the students undertaking WPL in Uganda are not well-reviewed yet adequate supervision is critical in ensuring effective WPL.

### **Roles and responsibilities of the students, HEIs and Hosting workplace**

The workplace learning policy for Murdoch University among others aspects outlines the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder as one of the measures of ensuring that each players' obligations are known beforehand (Murdoch University, 2011). Similarly, the responsibilities of students of The International College of Hotel Management of Australia prior, during and after workplaces were set out (International College of Hotel Management, 2012). Whether the stakeholders' responsibilities in HEIs in Uganda are set to be able to meet the intended WPL outcomes is not well-founded.

Policies and implementation guidelines are very crucial for the successful and efficient implementation of WPL (Taylor & Govender, 2013). The existence of WPL guidelines in the HEIs is an indication of how valuable it has become in

making higher education relevant. The realisation of these policy outlines may be unrealistic without a firm examination of their implementation in the workplace learning process. Further still, the extent to which such policies have shaped the organisation and helped in mitigating the challenges faced in undertaking WPL is understudied. The need, establishment and utilisation of the HEIs centralised or localised policies for managing workplace learning for its effective and efficient execution in Uganda is unidentified. The effectiveness of these policies on the expectations of workplace learning is also unknown. In the absence of a unifying policy at the national level regarding workplace learning the implementation of the institutional policies could be desired but unattainable hence the need to investigate.

#### **2.4.2 Guidelines for WPL in Hosting Workplace**

The understanding of WPL organisation as being complex to structure to conform with the learning in a classroom setting has been vindicated as a matter of perception since learning tasks can be sequenced by organising according to activities (Billet, 2013). The role that workplaces play in the implementation of workplace learning is very central as they provide vacancies, hosting, supervising, training and participating in the assessment of students (Murdoch University, 2011).

##### **2.4.2.1 Relevancy and features of WPL guidelines in hosting workplaces**

The policy-makers in workplaces were begged to recognize the complexities of WPL and be able to formalise this form of learning with the view of making it more legitimate and meaningful (Boud & Garrick, 1999). When underscoring the need to legitimise WPL even in the workplaces Billet (2013) advocated for the

institutionalisation of WPL through workplace policies as one of the recipes and fundamental inputs that may be used to address the poor perception.

The need for training and establishing a systematic structuring of the other workers in the hosting workplaces for purposes of offering mentoring to the students was highlighted as one of the critical issues. In addition to having the commitment and shaping the culture of the workplaces towards effective WPL (Brennan & Little 1996). Whereas Billett (2001) argued that for effective learning to take place there is a need for guidance from the expert either directly or indirectly what was left out was how such guidance can be instituted and made either voluntary or involuntary obligatory to the expert workers through a workplaces guidelines.

The paper that examined the design, implementation and effectiveness of workplace learning in East Africa Mulder et. al. (2011) observed that WPL is not only hardly studied by the HEIs but in hosting workplaces as well thus the need to increase the awareness for its promote. Workplaces have also been cautioned to examine their policies with the view of ensuring that they support and promote workplace learning (Mathews, 1999). As a way of promoting WPL, hosting workplaces were advised to establish within their operations procedures and mechanism of offering post-workplace learning employment criteria to be able to convince the sceptics of the value of the undertaking (Rose, 2020). The guidelines of workplace learning in Uganda are not well revealing on how they have taken care of the issues raised in backdrop.

Billett (2001) in his book chapter guided learning, stressed the presence of hidden curriculum in the workplaces that may not necessarily positively contribute to the intended learning and called out for measures that can curtail such tendencies as most of them do not favour WPL. Without measures being explicitly stipulated by

hosting workplace guidelines to detect, handle and mitigate such occurrences not much can be controlled. Burford et. al. (2020), in their article “stolen knowledge” described that most of the practices learnt in the hosting workplace can not be scripted and therefore are personalised to the student. What was not cleared though was how regulatory restrictions can inhibit such impromptu and no specific learning from taking place. The interests mentioned in the backdrop ensure that for the period the students are provided access to the premises of the hosting workplaces they can achieve the set objectives of WPL. Brennan and Little (1996) in their review of work-based learning argued that to realise the seriousness of governments in promoting workplace learning funding and support to the hosting workplaces has to become part of the agenda. The government support for hosting workplaces in Uganda is uncertain much has to be established.

The emphasis of the need for formal collaboration between HEIs and workplaces in delivering workplace learning as Sternstrom (2005) suggested should be pertinent, mutual, realistic with the understanding of what should be achieved. This may not be attained without a grounding guidelines in the workplaces when the HEIs and Workplaces are independent of each other in their core operations. The workplaces can operationalise hosting of HEI students for workplace learning through their policies like human resource manuals, the establishment of training positions in their structure, providing for the accepted practices for the students while undertaking (Uganda Law Society, 2014; Kyambogo University, 2014). The policies in the hosting workplaces form a basis for the provision of needs to the students like emotional, practical and political support to be able to meet the requirements of HEIs (Brennan & Little, 1996).

Furthermore, in another study that examined the influence of prior work placement experiences on workplace supervisors Martin et. al. (2019), recommended the development of guidelines to hosting workplace supervisors to be able to guide the students effectively for future benefits of effective mentoring. Whereas the existence of such policies can be traced and the extend to which workplace policies have impacted the organisation of WPL in Uganda is still undefined.

## **2.5 Organisation of WPL Activities**

Mthembu (2013) foretold that without understanding how workplace learning is organised there exists a risk of it being perceived as a hollow pedagogy against other pedagogy strategies for teaching in HEIs. Makerere University (2014) portrays workplace learning as a step-wise process. Similarly, Kalanda (2013) described the organization of workplace learning as a cyclical process and as steps that set out to determine the quality of learning. The stages of workplace learning in the assertions in the backdrop can be summed as pre-, during- and post-workplace learning activities. These stages need empirically examined to determine the organisation of workplace learning by HEIs in Uganda.

### **2.5.1 Pre-workplace Learning Activities**

The pre-workplace learning stage in the workplace learning cycle is very essential as it sets out the basics for the subsequent stages. This stage involves coordination by the HEI workplace learning coordinators, pre-workplace workplace learning seminars or student orientation and placement. Other activities are attachment (allocation of students and staff for supervision), availing the documentation to

students and staff and emphasising the objectives of workplace learning to the students and staff. On the other hand, the hosting workplaces also orient the students on reporting and issue them with the training schedule. These stages were described by Makerere University (2014) that the organisation of workplace learning first step as pre-placement that includes; verification of sites, briefing or re-orientation of students & academic staff. Kalanda (2013) considered the first stage to include; preparation of students, students placement and attachment.

#### **2.5.1.1 Pre-workplace Learning Seminars and Student Orientation**

Taylor and Govender (2013) while exploring the workplace readiness in offering WPL in South Africa, proposed that preparation of students before commencement of workplace learning by the HEIs and hosting workplaces as a vital and shared responsibility to enable students to transit the world of work for WPL seamlessly. This left out the impact that can be achieved in its implementation by either national or organisational policies. Preparing students before undertaking WPL was highlighted as the responsibility that rests on the HEIs and workplaces by issuing training schedules, availing report writing guidelines (Murdoch University, 2011). During the orientation, the clarity of workplace learning objectives for the students and staff should be upheld (Makerere University, 2014). The intent of pre-workplace learning seminars and orientation as standard practices that sensitise students about the whole cycle of WPL to be able to set their realistic expectations was also highlighted as critical (Parterson et. al, 2017). Although well stated the extent to which the practices are informed by such guidelines is unknown.

### **2.5.1.2 Workplace Learning Placement**

The mass enrolment in higher education arising from the universalisation of primary education and secondary education more students are going through to HEIs has challenged the previous assertion that higher education was for a small portion of students seeking to receive the academic type of education (NCHE, 2016). This could have not only led to increased demand for vacancies for workplace learning but also created a requirement for HEIs to modify their learning activities to become more comprehensive and diverse as delivering relevant education continues to be a challenge (Maclean & Pavlova, 2012). The academic staff and the students are also accordingly attached to the available sites during this stage (Makerere University, 2014). The practice in other HEIs is unknown yet an increased number of students in Uganda's HEIs could be exerting more pressure for workplace vacancies on the workplaces offering WPL hence the need to investigate.

### **2.5.1.3 Coordination of WPL**

Weible (2009), while studying the benefits of internships to HEIs through a survey of 619 respondents found out that the necessity of workplace learning coordinators in HEIs for purposes of ensuring that there is a focal person from which activities of workplace learning are traced is in disrepute. The WPL coordinators in the workplaces and the HEIs have therefore not been spared from being described as irrelevant and remain underappreciated in addition to little or no compensation for their input in the cycle of learning. Their role and responsibility in the HEIs WPL in Uganda are less unknown yet it may also be facing similar concerns in Uganda hence a need to find out.

#### **2.5.1.4 Relevance of Courseworks before WPL**

While studying the pathways to the profession (Bowman & Lund, 2007) realised that the training that the students undertake while still at their HEIs if work-related or relevant eases their learning and contribution to the hosting workplace. Subsequently WPL according to Vaughan (2012) avails the opportunity for students to apply their HEIs acquired knowledge and skills in the work situations hence bridging the gaps that may exist. Merwe (2013) while studying the workplace and lecture hall synergy suggested that gained knowledge by the HEIs students should be applicable in the world of work be able to produce a well-trained graduate through WPL. At the time of undertaking workplace learning the students should be able to transfer theory and basic skills acquired into the real world of work practice. The concerns of whether students undertaking workplace learning have been prepared with the required basic skills training by the HEIs or whether hosting workplaces expect so is still baffling (Okello, 2010). The gaps in the theory and world of work practices have been persistent as the relevance of the classroom to the work practices is still being questioned (Kiriri, 2019).

#### **2.5.2 Activities During Workplace Learning**

The particular activities involved the during workplace learning stage are those that are undertaken when the students have finally commenced learning from the assigned workplace. They include; supervision (site & university staff supervision), the length of time spent undertaking workplace learning (Duration of workplace learning) and sequencing of learning (Simple to complex). Other activities include; facilitation of HEI staff, guidance students through assigned tasks by both HEI and workplace staff, cooperation of students, mentors and other employees, use of set

criteria for assessment and training of workplace trainers for the handling of the students. Besides, cooperation of workplace supervisors, provision of facilitation by host workplaces, providing accessibility to workplace facilities for learning purposes record taking appreciation of suitability of WPL for skills acquisition.

### **2.5.2.1 Supervision of Workplace Learning**

Supervision is meant to provide support to the HEIs students and the host workplaces (on part of the HEIs supervisors) and learners and workplace mentors (on part of the host workplace supervisor) (Brennan & Little, 1996) and it should be regular (Costely, 2011). Students undertaking WPL need to be closely supervised as a duty of care by the hosting workplaces for the benefit of the student and the clients of such organisation have also been identified as a mechanism for ensuring its quality (Mcewen & Trede, 2014). Merwe (2013) also observed that regular interaction of the HEIs supervisors and those mentoring the students in the workplaces is one of the activities in the WPL activities that ensure the progress of the students' learning. The challenges are also attended to and resolved for the benefit of stakeholders, supporting the learning and information sharing regarding the process (Costely 2011). Supervision of WPL continues to be an issue of contention, its efficiency and sufficiency being questioned for the better delivery of learning in the workplaces. The demand for supervision by both workplace and HEIs requires adequate facilitation as observed by Merwe (2013). The supervision of students undertaking WPL as implemented by HEIs in Uganda has not been established as less if any has been empirically deduced thus the need to investigate.

### 2.5.2.2 Duration of Workplace Learning

Highlighting the forms of workplace learning that have been practised in HEIs Brennan and Little, (1996) summarises them as shown in Table 2.1

**Table 2.1 Forms of Workplace Learning**

Form of WPL	Characteristics	Ideal Duration	Core objective
Brief Encounter	Workplace visit	½ day to 7 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create awareness</li> <li>• Career taster</li> </ul>
Short Project	Module or unit of the programme undertaking	1- 7 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immersion in a real work responsibility</li> </ul>
Sandwich Placement	A job or quasi job in a potential employment situation	6-15 months	Introduction to professional responsibility and part qualification
Alternative Sequence placement (Concurrent/ Recurrent)	Common with teaching, social work and Nursing	Up to 50% of course time (eg 60 weeks out of 130 weeks)	Professional qualification as a licensed competent Practitioner
Employment-based Programme	Profesional employees/aspiring professionals.	In work most of the time Up to 20% release for study in HEIs	Professional upgrading

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Immediately Post Qualifying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-registration for professionals</li> <li>• Front line practice under the instruction</li> </ul>	1-2 years	Development of professional expertise Problem-solving
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**As Adapted from Brennan and Little, (1996. p. 7)**

As much as there are concerns about how long workplace learning should take place (Sweet 2014) little is known about the same in Uganda. The forms of workplace learning carried out by HEIs in Uganda need to be interrogated further to be able to compare with other trends.

**2.5.2.3 Sequencing of Learning (Simple to Complex task)**

While stressing the structure of learning in the workplaces Billet (2004) described WPL as one that should be organised in such a way the learning can easily take place from simple to complex tasks re-enforced by the individual's interest and cooperation within the workplace less of which participation will be limited and incoherent. Whether workplaces can underscore this need for sequencing learning for students from HEIs is not fully understood.

**2.5.2.4 Guidance of Students**

The organisation of effective workplace learning is dependant on the guidance that the mentors and HEIs staff offer to the students during the learning process. Billet (2001) observed the required guidance for learning is the one from the experts. Subsequently, the credibility of guidance or mentorship impacts the value of workplace learning. Therefore need to probe the existence of guidance to the

students when undertaking WPL may be one of the issues that need redress to strengthen the strategy.

#### **2.5.2.5 Cooperation**

The ingredient of cooperation for the stakeholders ensures that the needs of learning are met and achieved easily and harmoniously. Gribble et. al. (2015), emphasised the cooperation of the stakeholders especially students, HEIs and workplaces staff is key in the proper and productive implementation of WPL. Whether the key players in the implementation of workplace learning in Uganda appreciate this in executing workplace learning less is known.

#### **2.5.2.6 Training of Workplace Trainers**

The competencies of the mentors or trainers in workplaces to carry out training and assessment of the learning in the workplace were identified as one of the other issues that should be adequately addressed during the undertaking to ensure that the set objectives are achieved (Merwe, 2013). The workers in workplaces easily perceived to be competent (possess the knowledge, skill and attitude) for carrying out the tasks in the daily work routine which they can be able to pass on to the students however, this might not be happening creating a need for investigation.

#### **2.5.2.7 Host Workplace Facilitating and Providing Accessibility to Facilities**

The workplaces that have not prioritised workplace learning in their operations have been cautioned as doing it at the cost of their present and future success (Boud & Garrick, 1999). Accordingly, the evaluation of work contexts that have undergone several changes in recent times shows that learning occurs diversely and indelibly in

the workplace. Therefore, organising activities in which learning can be enhanced in the workplaces seems to provide the means of achieving the anticipated success, amidst a world of work complexities "work has to become learning and learning has to become work" (Barnett, 1999). The question of resource allocation by workplaces to promote and encourage learning has been highlighted as critical (Mathews, 1999) for the effective implementation of learning in the workplaces. In addition to workplaces providing the HEIs student access to different areas and facilities of expertise for learning purposes Pop and Barkhuizen, (2013), learning in the workplace takes place through doing, observation, listening and the workplace environment itself. However, Okello (2010) ironise the assumption that workplaces can easily offer access to the use of their expensive machinery to students without an enabling policy environment. Whether workplaces easily facilitate the process, those involved and give reasonable access to their facilities for purposes of workplaces learning in Uganda is still disputable.

#### **2.5.2.8 Use of Log or Record Book**

The log or record books are used in taking the outlined tasks, experiences that the students encounter during the execution and interaction with the work environment. It also provides them with daily reflection which can be used for future reference particularly report writing. At the same time, the use of logbooks or records has been highlighted as crucial in easing the process of self-assessment by the students and used by the supervisors for both continuous and summative assessment in WPL (Council on Higher Education, 2011). The investigation of the utilisation of this tool in the learning process of workplace learning in Uganda is therefore necessary.

### **2.5.2.9 Suitability of WPL for skills acquisition**

Pop and Barkhuizen (2013) and Bates (2008) observed that HEIs qualifications have been found to inadequately prepare their graduates with both soft skills and technical capabilities for the working and professional practices. Therefore, workplaces have to re-train graduates to be able to fill the workforce needs. Effective Workplace Learning is therefore assumed to play a central role in providing the HEIs students with the opportunities to develop the required competencies to seamlessly fit in the world of work. When Costely (2011) noted that; "the broader area of workplace learning in higher education draws its academic focus from high-level practical knowledge and learning in a workplace context." Thelen (2007) looked at WPL as providing solutions to the theoretical gaps at work. The contribution of WPL in equipping the HEIs students with both soft and technical skills cannot be underestimated and any form of WPL that doesn't lead to this achievement can be mischief to HE (Pop & Barkhuizen, 2013) and (Mcewen & Trede, 2014). Among the many purposes of WPL is to bring work and HEIs closer together to make the learner develop skills, attributes for reputable work and career development (Rajab, 2015). Without carrying out a study to find out whether workplace learning as implemented by HEIs in Uganda can meet the set outcomes in the backdrop may continue to be assumed.

### **2.5.3 Post-Workplace Learning Activities**

Post-workplace learning is concerned with report writing, overall assessment, provision of feedback and possible advocacy of workplace learning.

### **2.5.3.1 Report Writing**

According to Merwe (2013) the value of report writing in providing feedback for WPL is imperative for efficiency and effectiveness. In addition to encouraging analytical deliberation through WPL process reports are useful in providing a full reflection of the experiences that the students encountered undertaking workplace learning (Costely, 2011). Whereas the importance of report writing in WPL has been highlighted as valuable its emphasis and implementation by HEIs in the realisation of WPL is remotely known.

### **2.5.3.2 Overall Assessment**

The quality of the assessment criteria and the procedure is well understood and implemented by all involved (Byrom & Aiken, 2014) as well as highly integrated (Mathews, 1999) to reinforce and improve the quality of the students' learning process is ideal. Assessment in WPL provides evidence that learning has taken place (Brennan & Little, 1996). The assessment of workplace learning takes different modes that include; direct observation of the students at work, assessment of the students' log book, interviewing the students at work, surrogate assessment (obtaining the performance logbook others like the managers & peers), student assessment the report that contains the reflections of what has been learnt (Brennan & Little, 1996). Costely (2011) emphatically calls it documenting learning in an measurable form. Assessment during WPL using a clear criterion or documentation for both workplace mentors and HEIs staff for purposes of monitoring the students' strengths weaknesses and performance against the set objectives is paramount (Merwe, 2013). Martin and Hughes, (2009) while emphasising the importance of assessment of workplace learning suggested that competencies related to

communication skills, self-confidence, customer relations, participation, industry knowledge, ethics should be pivotal. The quality of assessment in workplace learning has also been observed as an issue that may affect the standards of academic programmes (Corrin & Smith, 2007).

Assessment of WPL forms the backbone of the purposes of which WPL is instituted without which meaningful learning may not have been measured and the assessment generates the basis for feedback concerning workplace learning (Murdoch University, 2011). Recently Scholtz (2020) while accenting to the significance of assessment in WPL the need to provide for the evaluation of all possible learning areas or tasks that the students may be exposed to during the undertaking. How the quality of assessment of WPL is ensured by the HEIs in Uganda may never be examined without undertaking a study of this nature.

### **2.5.3.3 Provision of WPL Feedback**

The relevance of feedback was also emphasised by Sewell et. el. (2017) as being an essential ingredient in promoting effective learning in workplace learning. when evaluating the importance of feedback in WPL in their study that aimed at understanding the application of debriefing in WPL from a sample of 35 practitioners in Australia, New Zealand and Canada Winchester-Seeto and Rowe (2019) identified its importance in helping the students deal with incidences of unease, worries, uncertainties and the tenseness that they could have encountered during the undertaking. Without carrying out a study of this nature to bring out the value that the stakeholders attach to feedback its importance in carrying out WPL in Uganda may be missed due to lack of information.

### **2.5.3.3 Advocating for Workplace Learning**

Brennan, et al. (2006) and Treuer et. al. (2011) gave an account of workplace learning in the higher education programme spectrum at different levels as one that is steadily growing from the undergraduate to master and doctoral programmes. The need for the structured Workplace Learning has been emphasised with the view that HEIs student can then be provided with workplace and work cultural experience for the mastery of working (Pop & Barkhuizen, (2013). This was also explained by Sweet (2013) who argued that; "... the incorporation of students' experience and learning outside of the school is a powerful way to motivate them and to engage them in learning." Also, Vaughan (2012), observed that learning is increasingly and significantly becoming a challenge to the education professionals and institutions attributing this to the continued notion of separating learning from work which has found itself irrelevant to individuals, governments, industry and HEIs in the knowledge societies requiring a bridge through Workplace Learning.

The benefits include; improved enrollment of the students, acceptability of the institutional graduates by the world of work, improved reputation, networking with the community, external curriculum assessment and practitioner input (Weible, 2010 & Rizzo, 2013) and consequently reducing unemployment (Taylor & Govender, 2013; Brennan, et al., 2006) can be forfeited. Mthembu (2013) further opined that well-implemented workplace learning is vital in differentiating HEIs with unique graduates with attractive attributes, a curriculum that is labour market-oriented, improved learning environment that infuses teaching and learning methodologies with problem-based approaches and bridge gaps of theory and practice. Sewell et. al. (2017) emphasised that workplace learning provides the students with knowledge

from both the academic institutions and the workplaces which are important and essential. Others like Kintu et. al. (2019) have identified workplace learning as playing an important role in transiting HEI graduates to the world of work. According to Kadoodooba (2009) programmes offered are expected to include workplaces learning strategies. After participating in workplace learning and realising the benefits thereof against the challenges of the same it is critical to find out if the stakeholders can recommend workplace learning to others. Martin et. al. (2019) carried out a qualitative study on 21 respondents who had undertaken workplace learning and their approach of supervising other students that they are charged to mentor as they carry out their WPL found out that; such workplace supervisors were very helpful in the execution of workplace learning because their prior experiences. Further still, without a well-intentioned organisation, the benefits of workplace learning to the workplaces include but not limited to; best selection for future employees, better hiring decisions, exposure to new ideas, creation of the networks with the HEIs, fulfilment of social responsibility and receipt of part-time help from the students' participation can be lost (Weible, 2010). Therefore among the many aspects that needed assessment was whether advocacy could be possible from the stakeholders of WPL in Uganda.

## **2.6 Challenges of Workplace Learning**

According to Brennan, et al (2006), described the challenges of workplace learning as inhibitors Kalanda (2013) in his study of industrial training as a form of workplace learning for hotel students described the challenges of the undertaking as constraints but that study was limited by being a case study and only qualitative hence the challenges that were identified may not be easily generalised. Sewell et.

al. (2017) observed that the challenges of workplace learning were usually about effective alignment, coordination of stakeholders, unrealistic expectations and the competing institutional and employer demands. It is imperative to study the challenges faced by students, HEIs and workplaces undertaking Workplace Learning in Uganda to find out how they affect the intended organisation of WPL.

The challenges of workplace learning include;

Harassment, unacceptability, abuse and other unacceptable behaviour in the workplace need to be explored in a sense that the HEIs students are exposed to them when they interface with the world of work (Billett, 2000). These challenges can be a community of practice-based practices or behaviours (Wenger, 1998) that may be detrimental to the learning process.

Billett (2000) highlighted the need for learning to be organised from simple to complex task undertaking to ease the learning by the students. The quality of learning has also been discredited as being compromised due to a lack of commitment and the absence of a common approach to content and procedure (Sweet 2014). The requirement for sequencing, clear training content and procedure to be able to realise the expected learning outcomes for the period of the undertaking is thus a concern that needs to be underpinned.

The understanding that real learning should be guided by the approved or highly trained educators in HEIs, as opposed to the experts in the world of work, has also portrayed workplace learning as being weak and irrelevant hence questioning the competencies of trainers in the world of work (Billet, 2004). On the other hand workplace learning continues to be viewed as being inferior (Billet, 2004) by the elites hampering its development and consequently the traditional HEIs have been reluctant to embrace it and give it less attention (Devins, 2013; Hyland, 2001).

Costely, (2011) emphasised WPL as a "disturbing practise" in HEIs. Vaughan, (2012) underpinned WPL as usually implicitly rather than explicitly and always ad hoc as if to imply lack of known procedures and specific outcomes.

The possibilities of exploiting students as providers of cheap labour while undertaking workplace learning is also a claim that has featured frequently (Sweet, 2014). Rose (2020) in her study of workplace learning in South Korea also included the well-known challenge of student exploitation as cheap labour as being rampant and counter-productive. The possibility that the students can easily be exploited as cheap labour cannot be ruled out unless a study is undertaken to prove otherwise. The hosting workplaces need not pay HEIs students undertaking workplace learning Sweet (2018) but as to whether the students should be paying for WPL is underrated and not addressed yet it could be happening at the demerit of intended benefits of WPL.

The financial constraints that host workplaces face in the execution of WPL is also another aspect that has been identified. In the same particular regard, WPL has been described as a never a soft option since hosting students for WPL expands the regular needs of the premises hence increasing the operational costs in form of materials, utilities and tools (Brennan & Little, 1996). Significant resources are required to organise WPL particularly in selecting workplaces for placements, supervision, assessing and governance by HEIs (Sweet, 2014). How higher education institutions able to manage the resource allocation, access vacancies for their students and ensure adequate facilitation of their staff to undertake workplace learning in Uganda is undetermined.

The fear by the regular employees who view the HEIs students undertaking WPL as possible replacers hence the resentment, non-cooperation and control on access to

the host workplace facilities (Billet, 2004). Since workplace learning is dependant on guidance from the other employees the resentment could be a hindrance to achieving the expected outcome.

The workplaces that offer HEIs students opportunities for workplace learning have to contend with the high number of students as other possible workplaces shun the engagement. As observed by Sewell et. al. (2017), some workplaces are unfamiliar with workplace learning others have not been approached by HEIs while some do not have enough experience.

Workplace learning has also been challenged by the kind of linkage, partnership or relationship between HEIs and the hosting workplaces which have over time not been formalised to effect meaningful learning (Rajab, 2015). Sewell et. al. (2017) added that the quality of workplace learning might also be affected due to a lack of bidding arrangements with other stakeholders that stipulates the expectations of the learning organisation and outcomes hence affecting the intensions of WPL.

The quality of the assessment criteria and procedure should be well understood and implemented by all involved (Byrom & Aiken, 2014) as well as highly integrated (Mathews, 1999). This is born from adequate supervision by both the HEI and workplace staff to be able to provide evidence that learning has taken place (Brennan & Little, 1996). This is usually done by directly observing the students at work, interviewing the students at work, surrogate assessment (obtaining the performance views from others like the managers & peers) when adequate supervision has been done (Merwe, 2013). The satisfaction of the Workplace Learning assessment forms the credibility of the undertaking by the students. However, how this is done in Uganda's HEIs is yet to be empirically done.

Unavailability of vacancies to absorb the students, coordination of all the activities mobilization and allocation of resources have been highlighted. Brennan, et al. (2006) looked at some of the unavailability of placement, financial and resource allocations and quality of training.

Similarly, Solnet et. al. (2007) noted that the strategies for industry engagement in many HEIs are often discriminative, haphazard, lacking in focus, resources and commitment making it inadequate in the up-to-date education where a community or industrial engagement is imperative for curriculum relevance.

The coordination of workplace learning plays a role in managing the responsibilities of the students, HEIs and workplaces is one that has been questioned yet it seems to be a pivotal responsibility that can not be underestimated. The WPL coordinators in the workplaces and the HEIs have not been spared from being described as irrelevant and remain underappreciated in addition to little or no compensation for their input in the cycle of learning (Weible, 2010).

According to Sweet (2014) the duration of workplace learning being subjected to the institutional holidays can result in limited engagement and the students may not be able to become part of the team community of practice (Wenger, 1998) or be able to experience all the aspects of the work cycle on a weekly, monthly or annual basis to be able to develop enough competences. The sufficiency of the duration of workplace learning could also be disputable by the hosting workplace as a challenge.

The impediment of workplace learning has also been issues related to the organisation at HEIs level, absence of clear policies to support the learning experience, insufficient resource allocation for WPL for quality control and monitoring (Sweet, 2013). The interplay of the existing policies in HEIs about workplace learning and the challenges that are faced can be exposed by studying

their implication of the execution of workplace learning. Murdoch University, (2011) while addressing the issue of resource allocation underlined that HEIs are under specific responsibility to provide all the needed resources in terms of staffing, professional development, load allocation and financing for WPL. The responsibility of ensuring workplace learning is equitably facilitated by the HEIs needs to be further interrogated to be able to bring out the issues that could be affecting workplace learning that arises from the same.

Misunderstanding between employability resulting from WPL and employment as asserted by seeming to be one of the demotivating issues to the students (Rajab, 2015). Students need to be sensitised that although WPL improves employability by developing their attributes, understanding and capabilities of finding employment there is no guarantee for employment offers. The work experience gained by the students after undertaking WPL improves their employability in the sense that it reduces the duration of job seeking (Thang & Wongsurawat, 2016) and (Mcewen & Trede, 2014). Workplace place learning has also been understood to strengthen employability (Fiacco & Alvarez, 2014). Workplace learning undertaking does not, therefore, guarantee employment but instead smoothens the processes of securing or exploiting employment opportunities but the understanding of the HEIs in Uganda is not fully established.

Learning in the workplaces is embedded in a particular community where participation, mutual engagement and the social acceptability of the HEIs students by other employees in the workplaces becomes pertinent (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998; Garrick, 1999). Therefore where students' acceptability in workplaces can be challenging there is a need to find out if their learning is impaired during workplace learning where acceptability is limited.

The impact of these challenges in the quality of WPL are unidentified in Uganda's HEIs yet they could be a setback to its intended effectiveness. The existence and effect of similar challenges on workplace learning in Uganda is unknown hence the need to investigate and contextualize to the particular setting.

## **2.7 Summary of of Gaps of Knowledge**

The review of the literature revealed several gaps of knowledge that the study filled; First, National policies for workplaces are meant to provide an enabling environment within which workplace learning can take place by informing the organisational policies and setting general guidelines for the undertaking. The absence of a single national legislation for WPL in Uganda the undertaking is regulated through several legislations although they have been in existence and perhaps used in the regulation of Workplace Learning little is known about how they inform institutional guidelines, their influence or effect on workplace learning, their actual utilisation for regulation of WPL and whether they have been used to set generally acceptable WPL practices in Uganda.

Second, the national legislations have been incidental to workplace learning particularly those intended to regulate education in HEIs and employment therefore little is known about how they affect workplace learning in terms of organisation and minimizing the challenges hence need to carry out this study.

Third, the organizational guidelines are meant to ground the WPL in the HEIs and hosting workplaces by articulating the processes, roles and responsibilities involved among others not much has been studied to stipulate their role in managing workplace learning in Uganda.

Four, whereas students' insurance, competence of workplace trainers, incentives to host workplaces, facilitation of the HEI staff and limit access for workplace learning

continue to be concerned less has been studied to highlight the existence of these challenges in Uganda' context.

Five, organisation guidelines have been informed or guided by the national legislation is also not fully known and how they guide the implementation of WPL is scantily addressed hence the need for this study.

Six, the description of organisation workplace learning as cyclic, the effective organisation of activities in the pre, during, and post-workplace learning has been studied elsewhere and a few studies that have been carried out in Uganda have been case study based and qualitative making it difficult to highlight the general practices in HEIs in Uganda and in particular how they are influenced by policies.

Seven, the challenges that HEIs, students and workplaces face while undertaking workplace learning could be affecting its efficiency. The challenges that include financing or resource allocation, duration of the WPL, perceptions, harassment of students, issues related to supervision and assessment, quality of training and level of commitment have been studied and identified in other places. The challenges faced by HEIs, students and hosting workplaces have not been contextualised to be able to minimise them through policy and how their effect on the organisation of WPL in Uganda requiring this study.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter specifies the procedure undertaken to conduct the study that includes the research design (descriptive design) with mixed research methodology, location of the study sites, sampling techniques sample size, research instruments and piloting of the study. Data collection techniques and data analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, logical and ethical considerations of the study are also included.

#### 3.2 Research Design

A descriptive research design was used for this study. The choice of the design was intended to explore the state of affairs, determine, describe and identify the key issues regarding policies, organisation and challenges of workplace learning (Amin, 2005). Also, the descriptive design offered an appropriate opportunity to integrate the qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis methods to underscore the key issues related to the study (Kothari, 1990; Schoonenboom & Johnson, 2017). Just like Creswell (2009) asserted the research design facilitated the stipulation of the procedures for data collection, analysis, interpreting and reporting. It also proved effective in analysing both quantified and non-quantified issues in the study in addition to enabling the researcher to explain and cast details about the issues related to the influence of policies on the organisation of workplace learning (Gorard & Taylor, 2004). Using the pragmatism paradigm, the study aimed at finding out what works and provides solutions to the challenges of workplace learning (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019). The choice of the paradigm also enabled the study to focus on the

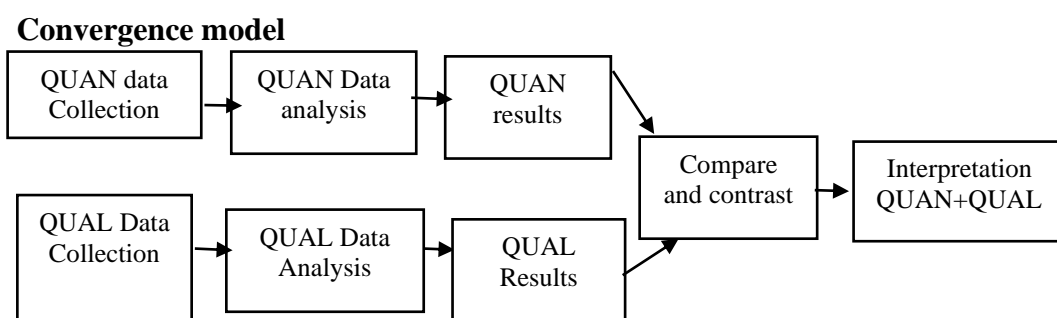
research questions as the focal point that affects the more successful interaction with the world of work as the physical environment (Parvaiz et al., 2016).

### **3.3 Research Methodology**

The determination of the appropriate research method to use in the execution of this study was reached through a literature review of the different research strategies. Whereas the quantitative and qualitative research methodologies ascend and are used in research to address different views but as pointed out by Amin, (2005) and Gorard & Taylor, (2004) the choice of the appropriate method to use depended on the researcher prior conceptualization of the research stated objectives. The mixed research method was therefore chosen and used for this study to help the researcher gain a broader perspective of all the stated objectives of the study and make use of its advantages (Creswell, 2013; Almalki, 2016). The method further permitted the researcher to use interviews, document analysis for the qualitative and questionnaires for the quantitative for data collection (Schoonenboom & Johnson, 2017; Dawson, 2002; Gorard & Taylor, 2004). The choice of the method was also informed by the need for data from both approaches to be substantiated, shaped, elucidated and better still generalised to make meaningful or applicable conclusions and recommendations.

According to Creswell (2009) the mixed methods of research have four major types; Triangulation, embedded, explanatory and exploratory designs. Each of the designs has alternatives or variants that can be employed according to the topic being undertaken. The convergence of (Creswell & Plano, 2011) or convergence parallel (Creswell,2013) or concurrent triangulation (Terrell, 2011) variant of the triangulation design was chosen for this study. This design enabled the researcher to

at the same time collect both quantitative and qualitative data giving each equal weight in a single or one phase within the same timeframe. The convergence strategy helped compare and contrast quantitative statistical results with the qualitative findings, cross-validating, confirming, corroborating both qualitative and quantitative results, validating and substantiating conclusions about the study and using a short data collection time. Also, the variant permitted validation and expansion of quantitative results with the qualitative data and bringing together the differing strengths and overlapping weakness of the quantitative methods (large sample size, trends & generalization) with those of the qualitative methods (small sample, details and in-depth). The triangulation variant is illustrated in Figure 3.1



**Figure 3. 1 The concurrent triangulation mixed methods design**

**Source;** (Creswell & Plano, 2011).

The use of triangulation mixed-method research promoted diversity, emphasised prevalence, highlighted prudence and evolution in studies related to workplace learning (Fleming & Zegwaard, 2018; Cameron, 2018). The data triangulation method was used in this study to enrich the datasets of the study, refute the findings from other sources and explain the results (Noble & Heale, 2019). However, the use of mixed research in this study proved complicated requiring both qualitative and

quantitative data management skills, time-consuming, expensive in terms of resources needed to implement (Terrell, 2012).

### **3.4 Variables**

The independent variables of the study were the national legislations, organisational guidelines and challenges of workplace learning. The national legislations included educational, workplace -related legislations. These legislations included: Universities and other Tertiary Institutions Act 2001 (UOTA), the Business Technical Vocational Education and Training Act 2008 (BTVET Act 2008) and Education Act 2008, Employment Act 2006, Employment Regulations 2011, Occupational Safety and Health Act 2006, and Workers' Compensation Act Cap 225. The organisational guidelines on the other hand include; HEIs guidelines for WPL, academic programme development guidelines, workplace guidelines for hosting WPL and human resource manuals. The challenges were those experienced by the students, higher education institutions and hosting workplaces in undertaking workplace learning.

The organisation of WPL was the dependent variable that entails the the pre, during and post workplace learning activities of workplace such as financing, supervision, assessment and sequencing of WPL. The relationship between the two is that the existence of appropriate policies for WPL would lead to effective implementation of WPL hence maximisation of its benefits.

The researcher investigated the funding, incentive mechanism, standard setting, strategic provisions and regulation of higher education as regards workplace learning from the national legislations in Uganda. Organisational guidelines on the otherhand were interrogated to find out the inclusion, resource mobilisation,

facilitation and organisation of workplace learning. The study further investigated the challenges of faced by the students, higher education institutions and hosting workplaces while undrtaking workplace learning.

On the otherhand, the independent variable for the study which was organisation of workplace learning was measured using the different activities involved in the implementation of workplace learning from the pre-workplace learning stage through the during workplace learning phase to the post workplace learning stage. The activities in the workplace learning were assessed to establish the influence the national legislations, organisational guidelines had on their implementation and how the differente challenges were manifested.

### **3.5 Location of the Study**

The study was carried out in Uganda and the sites as shown in table 3.2. The locations were chosen because offered a good representation of the whole country and as they host the targeted HEIs and workplaces in Uganda. The locations are further highlighted on the map attached as appendix AE.

**Table 3. 1 Showing the Location of the Study**

<b>Type of entity</b>	<b>Name of Entity</b>	<b>Location</b>
A Public Universities	01 Makerere University (Mak) 1922	Kampala, Central Uganda
	02 Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST) 1989	Mbarara Town Western Uganda
	03 Kyambogo University (KyU) 2002	Kampala, Central Uganda
	04 Gulu University 2002	Gulu Town Northern Uganda
	05 Busitema University 2007	Tororo district Eastern Uganda
B Private Universities	06 Uganda Martyrs University 2005	Mpigi District Central Uganda
	07 Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU) 1988	Mbale Town Eastern Uganda
	08 Uganda Christian University 2004	Mukono town Central Uganda
C Government agencies	09 Ministry of Education, Sports and Labour	Kampala city central division
	10 National Council for Higher Education	Kampala city Nakawa division

	11	The parliamentary committee of education	Parliament Kampala city
	12	Directorate of Industrial Training	Kampala city
D Others	13	Workers and employers' union	Kampala city
	14	Workplaces	May be scattered across Uganda

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**Source: Author, 2021**

### **3.6 Target Population**

According to Kombo and Tromp (2006) and Dawson (2002) the target population is the population from which a sample for the study is selected. The target population of the study therefore comprised of workplace learning coordinators in the workplaces that host WPL. The academic registrars, academic staff, students and coordinators of WPL from the selected HEIs whose institutions initiate WPL that rolls out the workplaces. The officials at NCHE, ministers and commissioners for higher education and labour, officials at the Directorate of Industrial Training (DIT), committees for education at Uganda's parliament, officials at Federation of Uganda Employers (FUE) and Uganda Workers Union(s) as policy influencers and formulators. This population was targeted because they were the main stakeholders of workplace learning either as policymakers or implementers.

### **3.7 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size**

#### **3.7.1 Sampling Techniques**

As supported by Gorard and Taylor, (2004) the use of mixed methods require the use of combined sampling techniques. The choice of the varied sampling techniques in mixed methods was justified as appropriate and consistent with workplace learning studies (Cameron, 2018; Fleming & Zegwaard, 2018) The researcher therefore, used purposive sampling to be able to generate respondents for qualitative data whereas simple, stratified random sampling and a snowball or network sampling assisted the researcher to generate respondents for quantitative data.

##### **3.7.1.1 Purposive Sampling**

The respondents that were selected using the purposive sampling technique are; academic registrars, staff in charge of workplace learning, officials of workers' and employers' union, ministers and commissioners of higher education and labour, NCHE and DIT officials. This kind of sampling technique supported the researcher to obtain information from the respondents that were expected to have the information regarding workplace learning in Uganda as policymakers or implementers (Amin 2005; Nachmias & Nachmias, 2001).

Public Higher Education Institutions and private Higher Education Institutions were purposively selected as those that had been in existence or chartered for 10 years respectively as sourced from NCHE.

They were also selected since they are responsible for policy formulation and strategy development for higher education in Uganda.

### **3.7.1.2 Simple Random Sampling**

Simple random sampling was used to select the university faculty staff who had participated in WPL to minimise bias and provide an equal chance of being selected (Odiya, 2009; Amin, 2005). The sample selected by this techniques provided the generalised data from the population regarding WPL (Dawson, 2002). This sample was targeted because they had participated actively in the activities of WPL hence the study would benefit from the experiences. The names of the faculties of each university as recommended by the academic registrars were written in pieces of paper folded and shaken. Two pieces were picked at random the staff in charge of WPL of the selected faculties were the respondents of this study as shown in table 3.1 nine universities yielded 18 (9 universities X 2 faculties). The coordinators of the selected faculties recommended ten workplaces from which three workplaces were randomly selected. The nine universities therefore, resulted in 54 workplaces (9 universities X 2 Faculties X 3 workplaces) the staff in charge of workplace learning in the selected workplaces were the respondents.

### **3.7.1.3 Stratified Random Sampling**

To be considerate regarding gender and providing equal opportunity to the respondents of different gender, the researcher used a stratified random sampling technique. This provided the study with data that was unbiased based on gender (Dawson, 2002). The workplace learning coordinators of each of the selected faculties or schools or colleges provided a list of staff that have participated in workplace learning activities. A list was separated into two (male & female). Three staff were then selected randomly using ballots from each of the list therefore nine universities resulted in 108 staff (9 universities X 2 Faculties X 6 staff).

#### **3.6.1.4 Stratified and Snowball or Network Sampling**

This sampling technique helped get data from both genders with equal representation. This helped locate difficult respondents who have completed their studies and maybe in the scattered location (Amin, 2005). Each of the WPL coordinators of the selected HEIs provided contact of four students (2 female & 2 male) that had undertaken WPL within the previous 3 consecutive years. These students were used to establish a contact of three other students each resulting in twelve (six males and six female) students for each of the selected faculty that had participated in WPL. Therefore, the total number of students that were sampled for this study were 216 (12 students' X 2 faculties X 9 universities).

#### **3.7.2 Sample Size and Sample Size Determination**

As shown in Table 3.3, using Krejcie & Morgan (1970), the confidence interval of 5% and the confidence level of 95% was considered. A sample size of 378 respondents from a target population of 25,000 was determined for the collection of the quantitative data. As supported by Mugenda (2013) the sample size for qualitative data collection of as many as forty respondents was selected using the purposive sampling technique. This also provided for the saturation sample recommended for such a phenomenological study for qualitative data collection (Claser & Strauss,1967; Morse,1994; Creswell, 1998).

**Table 3. 2 Category of the Respondents, Sample Size**

No	Category of the population	Sample Size	Sampling method	Data collection methods & tools
1	Ministers of HE and Labour	2	Purposive	
2	Commissioners HE and Labour	2	Purposive	
3	Education Committee of Parliament	2	Purposive	
4	CEO and NCHE Programme Accreditation Officer	2	Purposive	Interview/interview w guide
5	Director Directorate of Industrial Training (DIT)	2	Purposive	
7	Uganda Employers Federation CEO & members	1	Purposive	
8	Uganda Workers Union CEO	2	Purposive	
9	Academic Registrars of HEIs	9	Purposive	
10	HEIs faculty staff in charge of WPL	18	Purposive	
11	WPL coordinators in	54	Purposive/	Questionnaires

	workplaces		Simple random	
12	Students who had undertaken WPL	216	Stratified and Snowball/ network s	Printed Questionnaires
13	HEIs academic staff involved in WPL	108	Stratified and random	Printed Questionnaires
	Total	419		

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**Source: Author, 2021**

### **3.8 Research Instruments**

The researcher intended to obtain data from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data was obtained using interview guides and questionnaires while secondary data was sourced using document analysis guides. The study used interview guides to be able to generate qualitative data from purposively selected respondents whereas questionnaires assisted the researcher to generate quantitative data from respondents selected using simple, stratified random sampling and network sampling. Document analysis guides were used to collect qualitative data from the accessed documents from the research sites. The combination of these instruments is supported by Gorard and Taylor (2004).

### **3.8.1 Interview Guides**

Interview guides (appendix A) were developed and used in form of a mix of questions and asked during the key informant's interviews as shown in table 3.3. The interview guides eased the researcher's quest to obtain in-depth responses for the study regarding policies, organization of workplace learning and challenges faced during workplace learning from the purposively selected respondents. The interview guides were instrumental in generating in-depth perceptions, ideas and experiences for the stated objectives of the study. The guides were developed with key questions which were meant to be probed further with other questions during the interview (Odiya 2009; Mugenda, 2013).

### **3.8.2 Questionnaires**

Appropriate questionnaires (appendix B) were developed with open, close-ended questions and Likert scale questions following the key themes of all specific objectives. This instrument was used for the collection of data from students, HEIs and the workplace staff in charge of WPL. The questionnaires were chosen to collect adequate and sufficient data from the large samples (Amin, 2005; Dawson, 2002, Kothari, 1990).

### **3.8.3 Document Analysis Guides**

The document analysis guides (appendix C) were developed and used to locate the required data in workplace learning-related documents for this study (Amin, 2005). The researcher formulated document analysis guides for students' and staffs' reports, policies at the institutional and any other record about workplace learning in the

workplaces that were availed by the respondents. These guides were helpful to the researcher in obtaining documented data regarding the workplace learning-related policies, activities and challenges in HEIs.

### **3.9 Piloting the Study**

The instruments (students and academic staff questionnaires) were piloted in Nkumba University a site that had similar characteristics as the selected HEIs. This was done to establish the reliability of the questionnaires to be used in the study (Amin, 2005). The reliability test results (appendix D) of ten respondents of the students and academic staff were targeted for the piloting of the questionnaires.

#### **3.9.1 Validity of the Research Instruments**

According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007) as supported by Amin (2005) and Nachmias and Nachmias, (2001) considering that workplace learning is among the emerging learning phenomena, face and content validity were used to establish the appropriateness of the interview guides, questionnaires and the document analysis guides. The researcher reviewed the instruments to ensure that the items covered the variables under the study. In addition, the researcher consulted five judges to assess the face validity of the instruments and where there was agreement the instrument considered as valid (Muijs, 2004). The items in the instruments that were indicated as being clearly understood to be addressing the intended study objectives were retained while those that were viewed as irrelevant or similar to the already existing items in the instruments were removed. The face valid also gave rise to the following adjustments;

Re-arrangement of the items related to the organisation of WPL into a table, sequencing into pre-WPL, during WPL and Post workplace learning activities in addition to using the same Likert scale to make it easy for the respondents to answer, ease the data entry and analysis. The questions regarding the challenges for workplace learning were also adjusted and categorised into the challenges faced by HEIs, students and workplaces while undertaking workplace learning.

Using the Content Validity Index (CVI), the researcher subjected the instruments (questionnaires, interview guides & document analysis guides) to ten education researchers as experts or judges (Amin 2005). The inter-judge Coefficient of validity was determined and the overall validity of the instruments was 0.8 and 0.75 for the students, workplace staff and academic staff instruments respectively against CVI  $\geq 0.7$  hence the instruments were valid. The items that were scored below CVI of 0.7 were removed from the instruments.

### **3.9.2 Reliability of the Research Instruments**

Reliability is an indication of the extent to which a measure contains variable errors i.e. errors that differed from observation to observation during any one measuring instance and varied from time to time for a given unit of analysis measured twice or more by the same instrument (Nachmias & Nachmias, 2001). The reliability of qualitative data collection tools (interview guides & document analysis guides) was ensured by the validity of the research tools in addition to the provisions of the external reliability through clearly specifying my status (personal background), detailing the information about the respondents showing how and why they were selected and meticulously detailing the data collection and analysis procedures

(Amin, 2005). Also, the study was delimited by the study objectives, specific data collection and analysis procedures. Internal reliability was achieved through the use of mechanical recording devices that will include audio with permission from the respondents (ibid, 2005).

The split-half method was used to test the reliability of questionnaires the correlation coefficient was separated into two sets (odd number questions and the other of even number questions) after its administration and correlating the Spearman-Brown prophecy formula was used to determine the reliability as the instruments were too long to be administered for more than once and also to minimise sources of errors based on the different conditions (Amin, 2005). The results as shown in appendix D Spearman-Brown split-half coefficient for the questionnaire for students was 0.7, the one for academic staff was 0.85 as indicated in appendix D.

### **3.10 Data Collection Techniques**

Gorard and Taylor (2004) advocated for use of varied data collection techniques in the mixed research methods. The use of multiple data collection tools was critical for this study as it was helpful in triangulating the collected data and offering reinforcement and or a supplementary support of the data collected using the varied methods. The following techniques were therefore used in this study; key informant interviews, document analysis and collection of data through questionnaires for quantitative data.

### **3.10.1 Key Informants Interviews**

According to Sekaran (2003), Dawson (2002) and Mugenda (2013) the flexibility of the questions made it possible to clarify the responses by rephrasing and repeating them for the same purpose to obtain qualitative data about all the set objectives of the study. During the interviews, the audio recording was used after seeking permission from the interviewee(s) to be able to capture all the responses adequately for transcribing at a later stage. The researcher used key informant interviews with purposively selected respondents. The respondents that were targeted for this method of data collection were high profile individuals or officials of government or agencies whose insights about the study had to be sought amidst their busy schedules (Mugenda, 2013).

### **3.10.2 Collection of Data through Questionnaires**

The data from the students, staff who had ever been involved in workplace learning in HEIs and workplaces were collected using a questionnaire of open, closed-ended and Likert scale questions. These questionnaires were distributed and later collected from the selected respondents in the different research sites. The method helped collect data from a large sample size (Amin, 2005).

### **3.10.3 Document Analysis**

As supported by Amin (2005) the researcher analysed official documents from the target institutions, workplaces, students and staff reports regarding WPL to be able to underscore the regulation, organisation and challenges of workplace learning for qualitative data. The following documents were also analysed; WPL guidelines in

the HEIs where they were available, WPL assessment criteria academic programme and faculty or school guidelines for WPL. During document analysis the researcher was guided by looking for aspects of the guidelines that highlighted the financing, eligibility of participation, assessment criteria, facilitation of the staff and dictation of inclusion of WPL in the higher education institution's curricula. Document analysis was used in this study in a bid to seek for convergence and corroboration hence providing for the triangulation of the findings (Bowen, 2009; Triad 3, 2016)

### **3.11 Data Analysis**

While analysing both qualitative and quantitative data the researcher aimed to identify the conditions that set the conducive environment for learning during WPL as described by Kolb's experiential Learning Theory as an enabler for effective learning. subsequently, the during data analysis the researcher looked out for the interactions of the national legislations, organisational guidelines, and specific activities involved in the organisation and challenges of WPL as independent variables their influence on the organisation of effective WPL in Uganda.

#### **3.11.1 Quantitative Data Analysis**

The quantitative data collected using the questionnaires were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) for windows version 23 as supported by Orodho et. al. (2016). The package was useful in easing entry, cleaning and combining the datasets for the students, academic staff and workplace staff for synchronised analysis. Descriptive statistics were generated in charts, tables, percentages, means, grand means and standard deviation to assess the trends.

### **3.11.2 Qualitative Data Analysis**

Analysis of qualitative data was based on the text transcribed from the interviews of workplace learning coordinators and academic registrars in HEIs, officials from workers' and employers' unions, officials from National Council for Higher Education, Parliament, ministries of education and labours under the study. The responses of the interviewees were recorded in a digital audio recorder and notes were taken. All the responses were transcribed into text. The transcribed text was reviewed severally to have an understanding of the responses to the questions. Using ATLAS ti version 9, significant statements and phrases about the study were extracted and formulated into meaningful statements. Meanings were organised into themes based on the basic questions. The themes were also organised into patterns associated with the specific questions for analysis. The details and statements elicited from the interview guides with the key informants in the field were quoted verbatim to elucidate crucial points for the emerging themes as advocated by Amin (2005) in the report they were used to compare with the findings from the quantitative analysis.

### **3.11.3 Document Analysis Data Management**

Data from the documents (students WPL reports, WPL assessment guidelines, policies from the hosting workplaces and HEIs) was analysed using document analysis guides where the concepts related to the study were extracted from the availed documents to generate meaning for the purposes of answering the stated research questions. The findings from this analysis were used to corroborate with the findings from the interviews and questionnaires.

### **3.11.4 Unit of Analysis for the Study**

The unit of analysis can be individuals, groups of people, organisations or institutions and a macro level a country or state (Dolma, 2010; Sedgwick, 2014). This study was focused on assessing the influence of existing education and workplace related policies on the organisation of HEI students' workplace learning and the unit of analysis was at group level of the participants of workplace learning. Embedded in this group were the students and staff from HEIs, workplace staff and policy-makers that effect workplace learning implemented by HEIs in Uganda (Dolma, 2010; Sedgwick, 2014).

## **3.12 Logistical and Ethical Considerations**

### **3.12.1 Logistical Considerations**

An approval letter was obtained from the graduate school of Kenyatta University (appendix E) which was presented to the Ethics Review Committee of Mbarara University of Science and Technology and ethical approval was obtained (Appendix F). Subsequently to Uganda National Council of Science and Technology obtain a research permit (appendix G) was obtained to research in Uganda.

### **3.12.1 Ethical Considerations**

The researcher carried out overt research where the respondents were informed of the purpose of the study. Anonymity was guaranteed by not using any names or addresses but codes for the respondents in the final report so that the information provided cannot be traced back to the respondents (Amin, 2005). The approved consent forms where the respondents acknowledged acceptance to participate in the

study were also used refer to attached appendix AF. Confidentiality of the respondents was guaranteed as the information provided was not directly disclosed to third parties as advanced by Dawson (2002).

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings, interpretation and discussion according to the objectives of the study. The purpose of this study was to assess the influence of the then existing guidelines on the organisation of workplace learning undertaken by HEIs in Uganda. The objectives of the study were to: identify the existing national legislations that regulate Workplace Learning in HEIs, determine the organisational guidelines guiding the implementation of WPL, review the activities involved in the organisation of WPL that is integrated into HEIs' curricula and identify the challenges faced by students, HEIs and hosting workplaces while undertaking Workplace Learning in Uganda. Both quantitative and qualitative findings are simultaneously presented and discussed under each objective.

## 4.2 General and Demographic Information

### 4.2.1 Rate of Return

**Table 4. 1 Rate of Return of the Different Categories of Respondents**

Type of Data Collected	Category	Distributed	Returned	Rate of Return (%)	Average Rate of Return
Quantitative Data	Students	216	205	94.9	93.03
	Academic Staff	108	97	89.8	
	Staff in the workplaces	54	51	94.4	
Qualitative Data	HEI WPL Coordinators	16	09	56.3	65.26
	AR/DVC AA HEIs	8	4	50	
	Government Officials	10	2	20	
	Employers federation	01	01	100	
	Workers Union	01	01	10	

As indicated in Table 4.1, there was a high rate of return on all three categories of the questionnaires. Although there may not be a great significance of the response rate to the merits of the study, the high rate of return registered indicated the high interest that the study generated from the respondents. The response rate in this study was therefore commendable as observed by Mugenda (2013).

## 4.2.2 Demographic Data

### 4.2.2.1 Types of Sampling Units

**Table 4. 2 Types of Sampling Units**

<b>Sampling Unit</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
HEIs Administrators	7
Government Officials	4
Hosting Workplace Staff	13
HEIs Academic Staff	25
HEI Students	51

As shown in table 4.2, the data collection targeted Policy-makers (HEIs administrators, government officials) and participants in workplace learning (student, academic and workplaces staff). The students comprised the majority followed by the academic staff and the staff in the workplaces as respondents for the study.

#### 4.2.2.2 Educational Level of the Respondents

**Table 4. 3 Academic Programme Under which the Student Undertook WPL**

Academic Level	Percentage (%)
PhD	1.0
Master degree	3.0
Bachelor	77.2
Diploma	12.9
Certificate	5.9
Total	100.0

As indicated in Table 4.3, the majority of the respondents were those undertaking the undergraduate bachelor programme. There is also a clear indication the workplace learning has been integrated into different academic programmes.

**Table 4. 4 Qualification of Academic and Workplace Staff Respondents**

Category of Respondents	Academic Level	Percentage (%)
Academic Staff	PhD	22.7
	Master degree	51.5
	Bachelor	22.7
	Diploma	3.1
Workplace Staff	PhD	0.0
	Master degree	35.3
	Bachelor	47.1
	Diploma	15.7
	Certificate	2.0

As shown in Table 4.4, slightly more than half of the academic staff that participated in the study were master holders followed by those with PhDs and Bachelors who were near a quarter. On the other hand, most of the respondents of the workplace staff were bachelor holders followed by those with master degrees and no PhDs.

#### 4.2.2.3 Workplace Learning Experience of the Respondents

**Table 4. 5 Number of Times Respondents have Participated in WPL**

Category of Respondents	Number of times	Percentage Frequency (%)
Students	Once	40.7
	Twice	38.2
	Thrice and above	21.1
Academic Staff	Once	12.8
	Twice	9.6
	Thrice and above	77.7

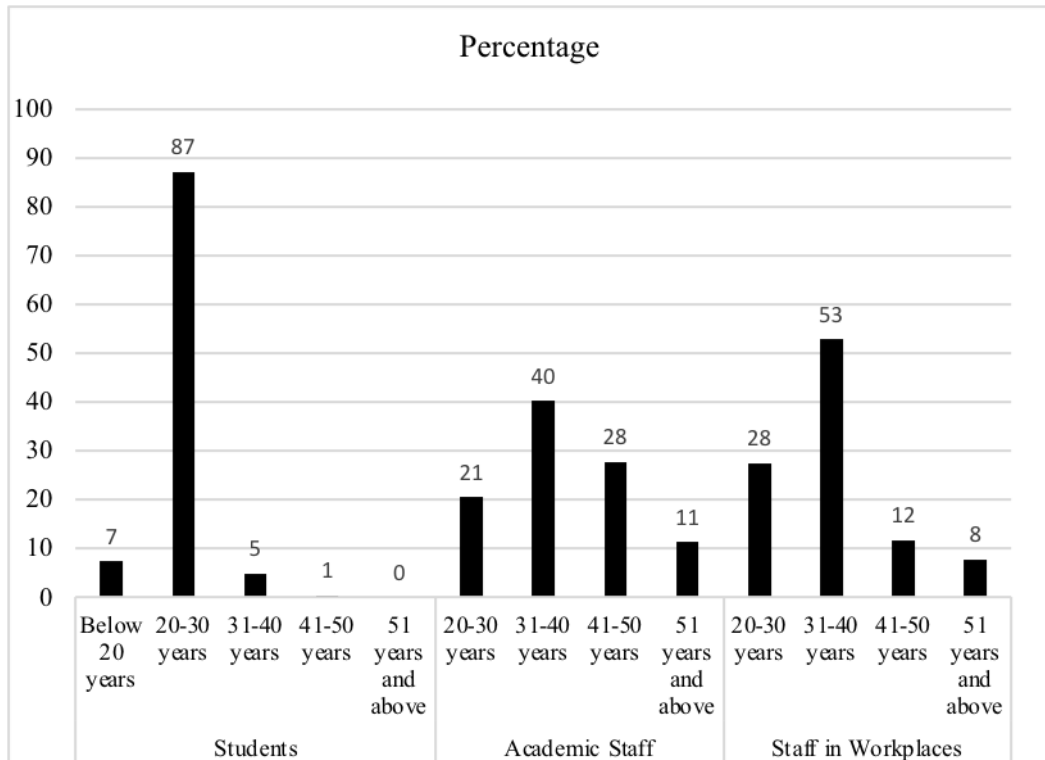
As indicated in Table 4.5. nearly half of the students had undertaken workplace learning once and more than a quarter had participated in workplace learning twice. For the case of the academic staff, slightly more than three quarters had participated in workplace learning three times or more.

**Table 4. 6 Experience of Workplace and Academic Staff in WPL**

<b>Category of Respondents</b>	<b>Duration in Years</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Workplace Staff	Less than one year	2
	1-2 years	18
	3 and above	80
Academic Staff	Less than one year	17
	1-2 years	20
	3 and above	62

As indicated in Table 4.6, the majority of the workplace staff had experience of three years and above and almost none with less than one year. Similarly, almost two-thirds of the academic staff had participated in workplace learning for more than three years.

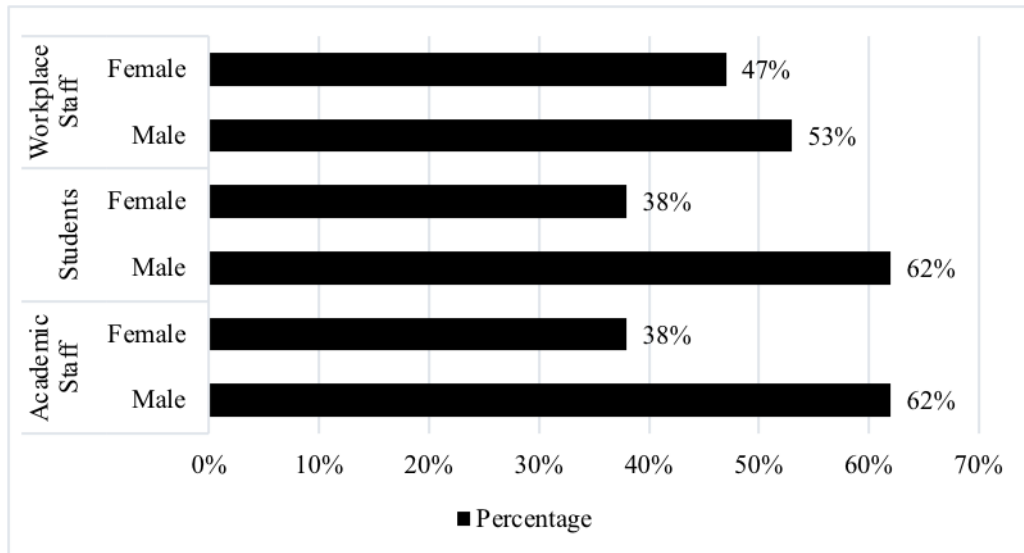
#### **Age of the Respondents**



**Figure 4.1 Age Range of the Respondents**

As shown in Figure 4.1, the majority of the students were in the age range of 20-30 years and none was 50 years and above. The academic staff were mostly between 31 and 40 years followed by those in the range of 41 to 50 years and some 51 years and above. The workplace staff respondents slightly more than half were between 31 and 40 years and a few were 51 years and above.

#### **4.2.2.4 Gender of the Respondents by Category**



**Figure 4.2 Gender of the Respondents by Category**

As shown in Figure 4.2, in all the categories of the respondents the males were more than the females. Among the workplace staff, the females were nearly half while among the students and academic staff the female respondents were more than a quarter.

#### 4.2.2.5 Types of ownership of HEIs

**Table 4.7 Type of Ownership HEIs of the Academic Staff Respondents**

Category	Percentage (%)
Public	55.7
Private	42.3
Mixed	2.1

As shown in Table 4.7, the ownership of most HEIs were public institutions slightly above half while the private institutions were nearly half the ones that are mixed were the least represented in the study.

#### 4.2.2.6 Supervisors of WPL in Hosting Workplaces

**Table 4.8 Main Supervisors of WPL in Hosting Workplaces**

Respondents	Main Supervisors	Percentage (%)
Academic	HR manager/HR director/Head of	52
Staff	HR department	
	General	17
	manager/Director/Managing Director	
	Others	31
Students	HR manager/HR director/Head of	26
	HR department	
	General	28
	manager/Director/Managing director	
	Others	46
Staff	HR manager/Head director	30
Workplaces	General	16
	manager/Director/Managing director	
	Others	54

As shown in Table 4.8, there was a clear discrepancy about the main supervisors of workplace learning in the workplaces as the students and the staff in the workplaces indicated that other personnel in workplaces were the main supervisors of workplace learning yet the academic staff indicated that the human resources managers were the main supervisors. This is vital as it could be an indicator the academic staff from HEIs interact with staff in workplaces that are not necessarily directly supervising the students undertaking workplace learning.

#### 4.2.2.7 Ownership of Workplaces

**Table 4. 9 Ownership of Workplaces Hosting Workplace Learning**

Category	Form of ownership	Percentage (%)
Students	Public	44.6
	Private	49.5
	Mixed	5.9
Workplace Staff	Public	55.7
	Private	42.3
	Mixed	2.1

As shown in table 4.9, the students and the staff in the workplaces that were sampled the workplaces that offer workplaces learning are; public, private and mixed (government and private controlled), the private and public provided workplace learning by nearly half. This composition was crucial in revealing how the existing guidelines influence workplace learning in all sectors of the industry in Uganda.

#### 4.2.2.8 Annual Size of WPL Undertaking in Workplaces

**Table 4. 10 Annual Average Number of Students that Undertake WPL**

Average Number of Students Workplaces Recruit	Percentage (%)
Per Year	
1-100	84
101-200	0
201-300	4
301-400	0
401-500	0
Above 501	4

As indicated in table 4.9, the annual average number of students that undertake workplace learning in the hosting workplaces are mainly between one to one hundred. Very few organisations can take on more than one hundred students annually. This could indicate that most of the workplaces that participate in workplace learning of HEIs are small and medium-sized enterprises.

### **4.3 National Legislations for Workplace Learning**

To identify the existing national legislations for workplace learning, the study carried out followed the following criteria about national legislations regarding WPL in Uganda; level of awareness, forms of guidelines that regulate workplace learning and the roles national legislations play in regulating WPL were solicited.

#### **4.3.1 Awareness about National Legislations for WPL**

Before indulging in soliciting data regarding national legislations for WPL, the researcher sought to establish whether the respondents were aware of the existence

of national legislations that regulate WPL in Uganda. The findings are indicated in table 4.11.

**Table 4. 11 Awareness of the Respondents about National Legislations for WPL**

		Valid			
		Frequency		Cumulative Percent	
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	175	49.6	50.0	50.0
	No	175	49.6	50.0	100.0
	Total	350	99.2	100.0	

As shown in Table 4.11, the same number of respondents indicated that they were either aware or not aware of the existence of the national legislations regarding the regulation of workplace learning in Uganda. Similarly, as shown in appendix F, even some of the key informants indicated that some were aware and others were not aware of the existence of the national legislations regarding WPL in Uganda. Similarly, when the key informants were asked whether they were aware of any national legislation regulating workplace learning in Uganda, the prominent responses were;

As far as am concerned I don't know because I have not come across it. The National Council for higher education programme development guideline is the one available (MCo08-23/09/19-MUBS).

Another HEIs workplace learning coordinator added;

I am not aware of any (MCo05-15/10/19-GU).

Emphasizing the non-existence and the remoteness of the national legislation regarding workplace learning another coordinator supplemented:

No, we have not accessed any policy but we have the routine. To be fair I have not found any policy (MCo01-15/10/19-GU).

Another indicated:

I am not aware of any law or policy regarding workplace learning at a national level. What we have, are practices that we follow while executing the activities of workplace learning (MCo02-18/9/19-KyU).

Pointing out the deficiency of awareness another workplace learning coordinator said that:

I have not heard and I have not read but when you mentioned it now makes me believe that there is one but I have not read it and I don't know of its existence at least not at this moment (MCo09-10/10/19-UMU).

One academic registrar responded with scepticism that;

I think it must be there because there must be some guideline because ideally industries have a role to play in training so there should be that collaboration between the industry and training institutions ... So, there must be a policy that should guide workplace learning (FAR03-15/10/19-GU).

Emphasising the unclarity of the national legislations regarding workplace learning another coordinator added that;

Sometimes I think even the national legislation is there but maybe it is not emphasized because sometimes they say those who offer a place for workplace learning to university students are offered waivers but a policy itself doesn't come out clearly (MCo03-25/9/19-KyU).

The unclarity of the national legislations regarding workplace learning as supposed by Blom, (2015) is a common phenomenon in many countries it is therefore not surprising that the same is happening in Uganda. It is significant to note that the responses about the awareness being split by half indicated the extent of the indistinctness to which the awareness about national legislations was among the respondents.

#### **4.3.2 National Legislations Applied on WPL in Uganda**

The respondents that indicated awareness of the national legislations that regulate WPL were asked to identify the legislation(s) that applied to WPL from a list that

included; the employment Act, employment regulation, occupational health and safety or choose all and if none of the provided to specify. The findings are shown in Table 4.12.

**Table 4. 12 National legislations Applied to Regulate WPL in Uganda**

		Freq	Valid	Cumulative
Form of policy			Percent	Percent
Valid	Employment Act 2006	47	27.6	27.6
	Employment Regulation 2011	24	14.1	41.8
	Occupational Health and Safety Act Cap 2	50	29.4	71.2
	All the above	47	27.6	98.8
	If none of the above; specify	2	1.2	100.0
	Total	170	100.0	

As indicated in Table 4.12, although other legislations are being used in the operations of workplace learning, occupational health and safety were highlighted as the most applied in Uganda by the respondents. There was also an indication that a combination of the regulations (Employment Act, Employment Regulation 2011, Occupational Health and Safety) was applied in workplace learning. In exploring more on the multiple application of the different national legislations in the regulation of workplace learning, some significant responses were obtained. One respondent, responding to a question about what national legislations facilitate WPL said:

The Employment Regulation of 2011 provides for apprenticeship as a special but does not cover the

forms of workplace learning provided through higher education institutions (MWk01-10/9/19-K'la).

Others indicated BTVET Act of 2008 was being applied;

But what I can say is BTVET Act 2008 provides for the informal and non-formal assessment and learning in the world of work in Uganda (MDit01-23/10/19-K'la).

Another emphasised the application of the BTVET Act 2008 that;

There are legislations under BTVET Act 2008 but the government is not championing the implementation (MWk01-10/9/19-K'la).

Yet to others the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act (UOTA) was the law from which workplace learning emanates for HEIs;

As a public university and we subscribe to all national legislations under the guardianship of the National Council for Higher Education and the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act (MDvc02-8/10/19-MUST).

Another further added that;

... use is the "Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act (UOTA)" which is one of the guiding documents. It is where the mandate for most of the

universities come so most of the other legislations that we have in place must fall within the UOTA (FAR05-3/10/19-MUST)

The NCHE was also highlighted as the one that set the guidelines for the integration of workplace learning through its guidelines for academic programme development.

Some of the respondents pointed out that;

I have no specific policy in mind but the national council for higher education guidelines and benchmarks for programmes, the guidelines for academic programme development all emphasize the requirement for practical training and placements. If you look at the quality assurance framework it has guidelines on the development of programmes. I don't know the particular legal national framework for placements (MDvc01-10/10/19-UMU)

I think it is there, I cannot tell you that I know about it but I think maybe in Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act sets guideline that allows students from training institutions to go and join the industry and be able to apply the knowledge that they have studied and relate the training with what is required in the world of work (FAR03-15/10/19-GU).

As a requirement from the National Council for Higher Education before any academic programme workplace learning has been recommended as one of the requirements (MCo06-29/10/19-BU)

The seemingly confusing or multiple understanding of the application of several legislations in the implementation of workplace learning further highlights the nature of government involvement as being unsettled and in agreement with Brennan et. al. (2006) there is no clearly understood policy for workplace learning. Therefore, as ETUCE (2012), suggested there could be a need to indicate to the government of Uganda the requirement to establish a systemic policy for workplace learning for the stakeholders to be able to reap the anticipated benefits. The findings agree with the assertions of the NCHE (2014) whose guidelines set out the inclusion of WPL in the academic programmes and the remote reference in application of BTVET Act 2008, employment Act 2006, employment regulation 2011 and the Occupational Safety and Health act cap 225. With such an almost distant position of the national legislations, the assumption of the Kolb's theory of effective learning being able to take place under the right conditions and environment set by appropriate legislations may not be realisable (Sharlanova, 2004). At some time, the impact of such a policy framework the anticipated impact on the organisation of WPL in the conceptual framework may also be scarcely attainable. Therefore, the probable input of WPL in HEIs' role of solving the skills gap and shortage highlighted by Fisher and Scott (2011) may not be adequately reachable.

### 4.3.3 Role the National Legislations Play in Regulating WPL

Assessing the role that national legislations play in regulating WPL, the respondents were asked to identify the aspects that were being covered or should be included in such legislations. This was used to inform the different roles that the national legislations may be playing in the organisation of WPL. The following responses as shown in Tables 4.13 were obtained

**Table 4.13 Aspects Covered by National Legislations for WPL in Uganda**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Training	121	34.3	69.9	69.9
	Financing	13	3.7	7.5	77.5
	Insurance	19	5.4	11.0	88.4
	Payments of students	5	1.4	2.9	91.3
	All the above	14	4.0	8.1	99.4
	None of the above,	1	0.3	0.6	100.0
	Total	173	49.0	100.0	

As shown in Table 4.13, the respondents that had indicated that they were aware of the national legislations that regulate workplace learning in Uganda, most showed that the regulations mainly cover the training aspect. Furthermore, as indicated in appendix H the key informants highlighted the policy gaps at the national level as being obvious for effective inclusion of workplace learning aspects in the

development of academic programmes. When asked about the aspects that ought to be included in the national legislation one notable response was;

Of course, there are so many things; for example, financing, accessibility to establishments, the responsibility of the stakeholders and incentives (MAr08-29/10/19-BU).

Boud and Garrick (1999) had earlier observed that WPL was confronted by several competing interests of the stakeholders and other complexities while Devins (2013) and Sternstrom (2015) confirmed that the cooperation between the hosting workplaces and HEIs need to be streamlined through a policy. These were consistent with the role of the national legislation to providing funding (Bates, 2008) to HEIs, incentives (Devins, 2013) to hosting workplaces and students' insurance (Workplace Learning Policy 2015) were strong. When the aspects that form the basics of workplace learning like financing, organisation of training and insurance are left unregulated the benefits of workplace learning may remain unattainable. The insufficiency of The Universities and other tertiary institutions Act 2001, BTVET Act 2008, Education Act 2008 and the academic development programme guidelines regarding workplace learning (NCHE, 2014) is profound. Therefore, the several aspects that can be addressed by the national legislation regarding workplace learning that includes funding, incentives and setting standard practice are critical. In order to identify the existing national legislations that regulate WPL in HEIs the role played by the national legislations in regulating WPL were appraised accordingly. They include; powering WPL and informing organisational guidelines,

legitimisation and formalisation of WPL, offer protection to some of the stakeholders, increase attention, provision of support, and setting the national standards for WPL.

### **2.3.3.1 Powering Workplace Learning and Informing Organisational Guidelines**

Appraising how WPL legislations empower WPL and inform organisational guidelines, the respondents were asked to rate their importance to their expectations of WPL. Using the Very Important, important, rather important and not important at all as a scale in descending order the responses as shown in Table 4.14 were obtained.

**Table 4.14 Importance of National Legislations on WPL**

				Valid	Cumulative
	Level	Frequency	Percent	Percent	Percent
Valid	Very important	119	33.7	68.8	68.8
	Important	47	13.3	27.2	96.0
	Rather unimportant	7	2.0	4.0	100.0
	Total	173	49.0	100	

According to table 4.14, almost all of the respondents indicated that the national legislations for workplace learning were either important or very important in the implementation of learning by HEI students in the workplaces. Similarly, the key respondents in their responses when asked how the national legislations affect WPL some the responses were that;

It is because there is no proper policy such challenges would no arise. Workplaces would be offering workplace learning as part of their corporate responsibility (MDit01-23/10/19-K'la)

Another highlighted how the national legislation would adjudicate the participation of the different players that;

When there is a policy, the universities and workplaces would have to conform to the dictates of the law in implementing WPL (MDvc02-8/10/19-MUST)

As regards informing the organisational guidelines, when the interviewees were asked about the other role that national legislations would play some of the key responses were that it would guide curriculum development to include WPL, guide the formulation of MoUs between the HEIs and hosting workplaces, obligate the world of work to participate in WPL. This was affirmed by one of the coordinators of WPL who said;

...when we are developing the curriculum, we would make sure we follow the set requirement like the inclusion of placement (FCo02-18/9/19-KyU)

Hosting facilities should be put to the obligation to participate in the skills development of the nationals (FCo04-3/10/19-MUST)

Privately owned facilities should be facilitated by the government to offer workplace learning opportunities to students (MCo01-15/10/19-GU)

The findings agree with the earlier assertion of Mthembu (2013) that WPL guidelines give means of achieving the benefits of WPL. Also affirming the observation that to guarantee gains from WPL by the stakeholders a policy is needed and their instituting ought to be treated with priority (Kay et. al., 2019). The findings further agree with the notion that national legislations inform organisational guidelines particularly curriculum designing (Bist et. al., 2020) and clarifying them (Mthembu, 2013). The agreement shows that the role of powering WPL through the establishment of appropriate national legislations is clearly understood and is evident. This further affirms the conceptual framework illustrated the indeed national legislations can influence the organisation of workplace learning.

### **2.3.3.2 Legitimizing and Formalizing Workplace Learning**

When the respondents were asked a yes and no question to consider the need for national legislations to legitimise and formalise WPL the findings shown in Table 4.16 were obtained. The respondents were also asked to rate the effect of lack of a national legislation on WPL on a scale of strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree in descending order the findings obtained are shown in Table 4.15.

**Table 4.15 Necessity of the National Legislation to Regulate Workplace Learning**

				Valid	Cumulative
		Freq	Percent	Percent	Percent
Valid	Yes	169	47.9	93.9	93.9
	No	11	3.1	6.1	100.0
	Tota				
	1	180	51.0	100.0	

Findings in Table 4.15, indicated that the need for a national legislation to legitimise workplace learning is clear as almost all the respondents indicated its necessity.

**Table 4.16 Effect of Lack of a National Legislation on WPL**

				Valid	Cumulative
		Frequency	Percent	Percent	Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	73	20.7	40.6	40.6
	Agree	80	22.7	44.4	85.0
	Disagree	19	5.4	10.6	95.6
	Strongly disagree	8	2.3	4.4	100.0
	Total	180	51.0	100.0	

The findings in table 4.16 show that nearly all the respondents agreed that the absence of the national legislation affects workplace learning. In expanding the need for a national legislation for workplace learning the key informants perceived it through the role such a policy would play in streamlining the organisation of workplace learning in Uganda. The notable responses highlighted that the general policy would help in operationalising their community engagements and help in

governing both the HEIs and hosting workplaces in the implementation of workplace learning. In addition, the other remarkable responses were;

Yeah, there should be a regulation to provide checks and balances for the stakeholders (FCo04-3/10/19-MUST).

If you have a national legislation put in place to regulate the operations of the private sector then the training will be streamlined in supporting the development of skilled labour (Mar08-29/10/19-BU).

Like Brennan and Little (1996) had initially observed the importance of a national legislation for workplace learning among many was legitimising and formalising its existence and operations for all the stakeholders. Legitimising workplace learning also set the standard of implementation as Garrick (1999) later asserted. As Fisher and Scott (2011) suggested without the role of higher education in resolving the skills gaps and shortage through strategies like workplace learning without clear national legislations could be counterproductive and none rewarding. When there is an appropriate national legislation the incidences of underutilisation of students undertaking WPL due to lack of legitimacy as recently detected by Kintu et. al. (2019), may not arise. The lack of a national legislation for workplace learning could explain the uncoordinated implementation by HEIs in Uganda. The legitimacy and formalising WPL are critical in helping the students, HEIs in setting out meaningful workplace learning without which their foundation of including WPL would be loose therefore not surprising the findings are non-contradictory to the earlier observations.

### 2.3.3.3 Offer Protection Mechanism

There are several ways that guidelines can offer protection to the stakeholders but one of the strategies is accessibility to insurance when undertaking WPL. When the respondents were asked whether the students were required to take any form of insurance when undertaking WPL, the findings shown in Table 4.18 were acquired.

**Table 4.17 Availability of Insurance for Students During WPL**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	59	16.7	21.0	21.0
	No	199	56.4	70.8	91.8
	Don't Know	23	6.5	8.2	100.0
	Total	281	79.6	100.0	

As the findings in Table 4.17 suggest that most of the students are not covered by any form of insurance while undertaking workplace learning yet some of the tasks that students participate in during WPL pose risk to both their lives and health. When the respondents were asked about who should initiate the insurance for students the responses obtained a shown in Table 4.18.

**Table 4.18 Suggested Initiators of Students' Insurance for WPL**

	Frequency	Percen	Valid	Cumulative
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		t	Percent	Percent
Valid				
	Personal	14	4.0	16.5
	Hosting			
	Workplace	31	8.8	36.5
	HEIs	37	10.5	43.5
	Others	2	0.6	2.4
	Total	85	24.1	100.0

Findings in Table 4.18 suggest that HEIs should be the initiators of the insurance cover for their students when undertaking WPL. Highlighting the low possibility of having the students insured before undertaking WPL one of the key informants clarified that;

The level of uptake of insurance in Uganda is generally low even though of course we have the workers' compensation Act but its implementation has remained weak now in a situation where existing employees, full-time employees are not covered it's very difficult to expect that the trainee will be covered (MEfu01-16/9/19-K'la).

Another added that;

Safety is also not well taken care of when they are in the field. They don't have insurance; they don't have almost any protection (MCo01-15/10/19-GU).

Some interviews revealed other forms of vulnerabilities that the stakeholders especially students need protection from are sexual harassment, abuse and exploitation and exposure to risky tasks during WPL. The notable ones were stressed as;

Those companies are happy, they receive free labour and most of them do not want to pay them sometimes you know some of the workplaces give them very difficult tasks that are usually shunned by the regular workers (MCo03-25/9/19-KyU).

Another one was added that;

By the way, sexual harassment has been reported by both female and male students (FCo02-18/9/19-KyU).

Addressing the issue of exploiting students through hosting workplaces charging them for WPL one said;

I think that that is wrong and it is driven by desperation. Such things should be stopped through a law. Surely some things need to be regulated. No students should be required to pay to undertake learning in any workplace (MEfu01-16/9/19-K'la)

The findings in the backdrop are in line with the insurance cover that the Department of Education (2016) and Workplace Learning Policy (2015) advocated for. Hora et. al. (2020) had observed the occurrences of discrimination taking place during the undertaking of WPL and Bassanini et. al. (2005) having earlier called for the protection of the vulnerable stakeholders in workplace learning through policy. The absence of insurance cover for the students and occurrence of incidences of exploitation, harassment and discrimination may be a manifestation of perhaps a much bigger problem affecting the students when undertaking workplace learning that requires the enforcement of the policy that can offer them protection so that they can conveniently benefit from the undertaking.

#### **2.3.3.4 Increase Attention and Strategic Action**

Assessing that attention availed to WPL, the respondents were asked related to; stage at which they obtained information regarding the national legislation for WPL and the sources of that information. The responses obtained are shown in Tables 4.19 and 4.20.

**Table 4.19 When Students and HEI Staff get to know about National legislations for WPL**

			Freq	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Students	Valid	Before WPL	46	13.0	54.8	54.8
		During WPL	26	7.4	31.0	85.7
		After WPL	10	2.8	11.9	97.6
		I don't know	2	0.6	2.4	100.0
		Total	84	23.8	100.0	
HEIs Staff	Valid	Before WPL	21	5.9	37.5	37.5
		During WPL	27	7.6	48.2	85.7
		After undertaking WPL	8	2.3	14.3	100.0
		Total	56	15.9	100.0	

Findings indicated in Table 4.19, suggest that most students got to know about national legislations for WPL before commencing the workplace learning. However, some students got to know after undertaking WPL. On the other hand, almost half of HEI staff came to know about the national legislations regarding workplace learning when undertaking workplace learning.

**Table 4.20: Informers of HEIs Students and Staff about WPL National Polices**

			Valid		Cumulative
			Freq	Percent	Percent
Students	Valid	Fellow students	7	9.6	9.6
		University supervisor(s)	28	38.4	47.9
		Workplace			
		employee(s)	8	11.0	58.9
		Workplace			
		supervisor(s)	25	34.2	93.2
		If others specify	5	6.8	100.0
	Total	73	100.0		
HEI staff	Valid	Fellow staff	17	31.5	31.5
		University			
		Coordinator[s]	11	20.4	51.9
		Workplace			
		employee[s]	6	11.1	63.0
		Workplace			
		supervisor[s]	13	24.1	87.0
	Others,	7	13.0	100.0	
	Total	54	100.0		

Findings in Table 4.20, indicate that university workplace supervisors were the main source of information about national legislations followed closely by the workplace supervisors to the students. Fellow academic staff were the lead source of the information regarding national legislations for WPL to the HEI staff. Similarly, the

findings of the interviews showed that the national legislation would promote the required attention through streamlining roles of the different agencies of government, establishing WPL mechanisms and bodies, clearly advocating for its inclusion in higher education curriculum and establishing the mechanisms for sensitisation to the realisation of intended benefits. Some of the notable responses regarding attention and strategic actions include;

We have realised the gaps in the internship of workplace learning as you prefer to call it. There is, therefore, a need to advocate for the establishment of a skills development authority to manage such issue (MWk01-10/9/19-K'la)

And for purpose of strategic action, he proposed;

Students for HEIs need to be required to undertake compulsory placement before obtaining any qualification such that it is not left to the individual institutions to decide (MWk01-10/9/19-K'la)

Similar to what Devins (2013) observed the findings also show that the national legislation through its formulation process and implementation promote attention to WPL for strategic and political indulgence. And as Reinhard et. al. (2020) asserted even in the diversity of practising WPL the management of WPL needs a national legislation to differentiate government involvement and commitment. The non-contradictions are an indication of the availability of a national legislation thus WPL

can find its well-established locus in both HEIs and the world of work where it can be well understood and promoted by the concerned.

### 2.3.3.5 Provide Support for Workplace Learning

The respondents were asked to identify the aspects that should be included in the national legislation some of which provided for the basis of the form of support and the responses obtained are indicated in Table 4.21.

**Table 4.21 Support Aspects to be included in National legislation for WPL**

		Valid	Cumulative
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Training	12	20.3
	Financing	5	8.5
	Insurance	3	5.1
	Payments of students	2	3.4
	All the above	37	62.7
	Total	59	100.0

The findings in table 4.21, suggest that the support aspects need through a national legislation are Training, financing, insurance and student payment as almost two-thirds of the respondents indicated that a policy that includes all of them would be ideal for WPL. Similarly, when the key informants were asked what they sought a national legislation should address the issues regarding the responsibility of the

stakeholders, incentives to the hosting workplaces, funding to HEIs, insurance mechanism were raised. Some of the key responses were;

This would mean that students would only have their workplace learning in organizations where an understanding has been put in place where the issues of finance, assessment, supervision and responsibilities of each player are well laid out (FCo02-18/9/19-KyU).

The financing of workplace learning should also be detailed because it's very expensive for the students, hosting organisations and the HEIs (MCo03-25/9/19-KyU).

The aspect of financial support through a national legislation to HEIs, Students and hosting workplaces are similar to what Bassanini et. al. (2005), Bates (2008) and Pyke, Ashton and Riordan (2009) had observed. Devins (2013) had also similarly advocated for support and incentivising the linkage between HEIs and hosting workplaces. However new trends demand the establishment of insurance mechanism, spelling out the responsibilities of the players in the undertaking and facilitating students have also come up. The national legislation is necessary to provide the much-needed support for workplace learning to have workplace learning that for better employability of HEI students, commitment and well-regulated participation of the hosting workplaces.

### 2.3.3.6 Set the National Standard Practice for WPL

The respondents were asked to determine the influence of the national legislation on the quality of WPL following a predetermined scale of Strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree in descending order. The generated responses are indicated in Table 4.22.

**Table 4.22 Influence of National Legislation on Effectiveness of WPL**

		Freq	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	69	40.6	40.6
	Agree	82	48.2	88.8
	Disagree	15	8.8	97.6
	Strongly disagree	4	2.4	100.0
	Total	170	100.0	

The findings in Table 4.22 show that almost all the respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that national legislations contribute to the quality of the WPL. On the other hand, the key informants when asked about the influence of the national legislations on the quality of WPL emphasised the setting of minimum national standards for the undertaking for the HEIs, hosting workplaces and students. Some of the prominent responses were;

A national legislation would set minimum standards of  
practice for all the institutions (FCo04-3/10/19-MUST)

Another added and said that;

The national legislation governing both the universities and workplaces would go a long way to improve WPL (MCo05-3/10/19-GU)

The findings concur with the approach of using national legislations to set the standards for the operationalising WPL advanced by Garrick (1999) and what Sternstrom (2005) asserted as detailing the cooperation between HEIs and hosting workplaces. Similarly, Tudor and Mendez (2014) had also observed the standards could be achieved through a policy to pressurise HEIs and Hosting workplaces to improve WPL. Subsequently, the Workplace Learning Policy (2015) and guidelines of the Department of Education (2016) are coherent. This could be because of the shared views that a national legislation is a unifying mechanism of WPL. However, this is not cognisant of the emerging issues Burford et. al. (2020) of stolen knowledge. This contradiction could be because WPL is still evolving and much is still in the offering.

The findings regarding the role of national legislations corroborate the direct influence of the national legislations on WPL as illustrated in Figure 1.2 of the conceptual framework. Similarly, they coincide with the implication of Kolb's theory of experiential learning that effective learning in the hosting workplaces through WPL can effectively take place when the right conditions and environment have been established.

#### **4.4 Organisational (HEIs & Workplaces) Guidelines for WPL**

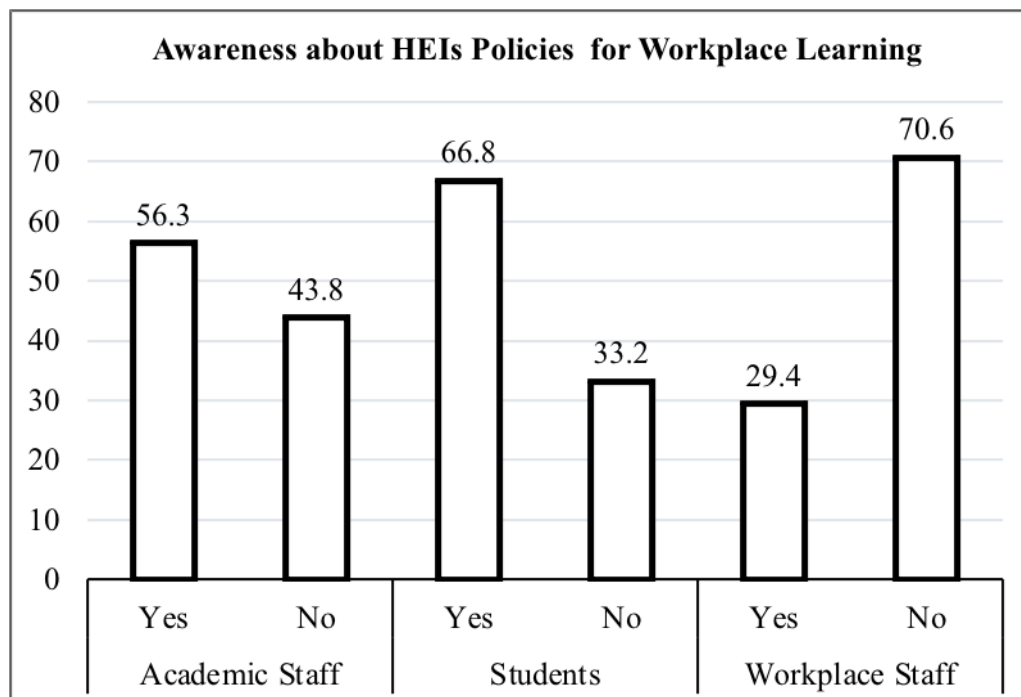
The implementation of workplace learning involves the HEIs and the hosting workplace. These two entities in workplace learning work and operate independent of each other but cooperate to deliver workplace learning for the students. The HEIs

have their guidelines to organize and implement workplace learning and so do hosting workplaces. To answer the research question about the organisational guidelines that are used in the implementation of WPL offered by HEIs in Uganda, the study examined the guidelines in both HEIs and hosting workplaces separately.

#### 4.4.1 Guidelines for Workplace Learning in HEIs

Higher Education Institutions may have guidelines at different levels (institutional, school, departmental or per academic programme) to be able to implement and organize workplace learning. In the endeavour to determine the guidelines for WPL in HEIs, the researcher sought to establish the level of awareness, categories of guidelines that regulate workplace learning, their relevancy and the aspects of such guidelines regarding WPL.

##### 4.4.1.1 Awareness of HEI Guidelines Regarding WPL



**Figure 4. 3 Respondents' awareness about the HEI WPL Guidelines**

The findings in Figure 4.3 indicate the awareness of each of the categories of the respondents about the existence of HEI guidelines for workplace learning. Slightly more than half of the academic staff were aware of the guidelines of workplace learning however nearly half of them were not aware of the existence of such guidelines in their institutions. On the other hand, more than two-thirds of the students indicated that they were aware of the guidelines for workplace learning used by their education institutions. Of the sampled workplace staff some were aware of the existence of workplace learning guidelines in HEIs but almost three quarters were not aware that they existed. On the other hand, the key informants indicated that HEIs were mainly depending on practices other than well-established guidelines in executing workplace learning as shown in some of the key responses.

I am not aware of any policy regarding workplace learning at the university. What we have are practices that we follow while executing the activities of workplace learning (FCo02-18/9/19-KyU).

As emphasis another added that;

Some practices have been in place that we follow in implementing workplace learning. The documented policy doesn't exist per se. The practices are included report writing formats, assessment forms and introduction letter. They are not in any form of policy (MCo08-23/9/19-MUBS).

Another intimated that;

There are just practices that we have followed over a long time (MCo06-29/10/19-BU).

The responses in the backdrop are further illustrated in appendix O. The level of awareness about workplace learning guidelines provides a glimpse of how the stakeholders have been able to utilize such guidelines if they exist in the implementation of workplace learning. A high level of awareness would indicate the corresponding possibility of utilization and vice versa. In this case, there are all indications of a low level of awareness yet Taylor and Govender (2013) argued the value of workplace learning guidelines is critical for its success and efficiency so is the awareness.

#### 4.4.1.2 Categories of HEI Guidelines that Regulate WPL

**Table 4.23 Category of Guidelines the Regulate WPL in HEIs**

Category of HEIs guidelines	Freq	Valid	Cumulative
		Percent	Percent
Valid			
University guidelines	86	42.8	42.8
College/Faculty guidelines	44	21.9	64.7
Departmental guidelines	36	17.9	82.6
Academic programme guidelines	29	14.4	97.0
None of the above	6	3.0	100.0
Total	201	100.0	

Findings in Table 4.23 show that nearly half of the respondents that were aware of the existence of workplace learning guidelines in HEIs indicated that the general university guidelines regulated workplace learning. It is however it is worth noting that there are guidelines at other levels in HEIs at faculty or school or college and departmental that regulate WPL and others as guidelines for a particular academic programme. Correspondingly, as indicated in appendix I one of the selected HEI has established the institutional policy for workplace learning and as shown in appendix J the guidelines are detailed in the course outlines. In some HEIs as indicated in appendix K and L, the guidelines are formulated to guide the academic staff supervisors and students respectively. It was also evident from the responses of some of the key informants that there were indeed some institutions that have developed institutional guidelines to regulate workplace learning at the HEI level and in academic programmes as indicated herein;

We have this policy which is also general and comprehensive it pays attention to these differences in disciplines but it gives a general guide for the intention of the university why we want our students to go out and have practical engagement and practical experience with the relevant organisations and also a guide to the students themselves, staff, supervisors and also a guide to the workplace (MDvc01-10/10/19-UMU)

Other respondents pointed out that the requirement was programme inbuilt as stated in the response herein;

It is in the curriculum and it is part of the programme and at the end of every year, students are going into the community to get placements to do industrial training (FCo04-3/10/19-MUST).

Others added that;

The practices are scattered in the academic programmes. We don't have a policy for that matter. But our policy would be necessary to guide in many aspects (FAr03-15/10/19-GU).

Workplace learning is based on the academic programme requirements so there is no policy specifically for workplace learning par say (FAr05-3/1019-MUST).

The existence of the institutional guidelines regarding workplace learning is indicative of the necessity of HEIs to be cognisant of the circumstances in the operations of workplace learning that require regulation at the institutional level. To operationalise the institutional guidelines, the formulation of guidelines at other levels such as faculties and academic programmes as indicated in appendices J and K and L are commendable. Establishing institutional guidelines conforms with what Boud and Garrick (1999). It further improves the attention of WPL in HEIs which Mulder and Gulikers (2011) had found inadequate. It is no surprise that without clear guidelines frameworks regarding workplace learning in Uganda at the national level could be crippling the formulation of HEIs guidelines as some of the HEIs are

without any clear guidelines but mere practices. As Mthembu (2013) advanced HEIs ought to agitate for a national legislation regarding workplace learning to be able to have their guidelines well guided, clear and unblurred.

#### **4.4.1.3 Relevancy of HEI Workplace Learning Guidelines**

In the endeavour to consider the relevancy of HEI workplace learning guidelines, the researcher sought to establish how the HEI guidelines dictated the inclusion of WPL in the HEI curriculum, set the procedures for WPL, set responsibilities and expectations of WPL, stipulated the relationship between HEIs and hosting workplaces and provided for resource mobilisation and allocation.

##### **Dictate inclusion of WPL in HEI Curriculum**

Determining how the institutional guidelines have helped in the inclusion of WPL in HEIs, the respondents were asked to rate the importance of such guidelines in their institutions using the very important, important, rather important, and not important at all in the descending order. The responses obtained are shown in Table 2.24.

**Table 4.24 Importance of HEIs Workplace Learning Guidelines**

Category of Respondent			Fre q	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Academic Staff	Valid	Very important	31	57.4	57.4
		Important	21	38.9	96.3
		Rather unimportant	1	1.9	98.1
		Not important at all	1	1.9	100.0
		Total	54	100.0	
Students	Valid	Very important	84	62.7	62.7
		Important	49	36.6	99.3
		Rather unimportant	1	0.7	100.0
		Total	134	100.0	
Workplace Staff	Valid	Very important	9	60.0	60.0
		Important	6	40.0	100.0
		Total	15	100.0	

Findings in Table 4.24 suggest that majority of the respondents in all the categories that were aware of the existence of guidelines in HEIs regarding workplace learning indicated that they were either very important or important in the implementation of workplace learning in HEIs.

Emphasising the importance of HEIs WPL guidelines, the interviewees were asked how their programmes had to include WPL, some of the key findings were that it was a general requirement for some academic programmes to include it, its inclusion was meant to boost what students learn in HEI, WPL helps students to relate the

theory learnt while in HEI with the requirements of the world of work. This was made clear in some of the responses that;

When we are developing the curriculum, we make sure that we follow the mission and the philosophy of the university which are; which is community engagement. This is done by including industrial training (Far05-3/10/19-MUST)

I may not say I know of any policy but students who are do engineering programmes must do workplace learning (industrial training) that is, they must be able to do hands-on learning and it is part of the requirements for the academic programme that means the real fieldwork which is not offered at the university but in industries (MCo03-25/9/19-KyU).

Another answered that:

Workplace learning gives students the hands on to convert the theory into practice because they do a lot of theory and a little bit of practice but not in the real world so when they go there, they get authentic tasks (MCo01-15/9/19-GU)

The findings indicate that several motivations have made the inclusion of WPL in the HEI curriculum an embraced activity. Although there was no direct reference to the policy that dictates WPL inclusion this was akin to Brennan et. al. (2006) observations. The findings also affirm the assertions of Maclean and Pavlova (2013)

and Makerere University (2014) that HEIs are using WPL as a way of shifting from only offering knowledge to the students but also the applicable skills for the world of work and guiding curriculum design which was highlighted by Murdoch University (2011). The consistency with the opinion of the Kolb's theory of experiential learning of how the right conditions for WPL to take place is apparent. The direct relationship between guidelines and the organisation of workplace learning as proposed in the conceptual framework was distinctive. The conformity of the findings with the earlier claims is an indication of how the expected benefits of WPL have influenced the curriculum of HEIs in Uganda.

#### **Set the procedures for WPL**

In seeking to find out how the HEI guidelines set the procedures for undertaking workplace learning the respondents were asked to rate the influence of the guidelines on the quality of learning during WPL on the scale of strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree. The obtained responses from the three categories are shown in Table 4.25.

**Table 4.25 Influence of HEIs guidelines on the Quality of WPL**

Category of respondent			Freq	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Academic Staff	Valid	Strongly agree	24	45.3	45.3
		Agree	26	49.1	94.3
		Disagree	2	3.8	98.1
		Strongly disagree	1	1.9	100.0
		Total	53	100.0	
Students	Valid	Strongly agree	62	45.9	45.9
		Agree	69	51.1	97
		Disagree	3	2.2	99.3
		Strongly disagree	1	0.7	100.0
		Total	135	100.0	
Workplace Staff	Valid	Strongly agree	4	26.7	26.7
		Agree	11	73.3	100.0
		Total	15	100.0	

The findings in Table 4.25 show that all categories of respondents agreed (strongly agreed & agreed) that the guidelines for workplace learning in HEIs influence the quality of WPL.

The other aspects of the procedure for WPL like duration were measured as sufficient, assessment criteria available, the frequency of supervision and streamlining HEI internal mechanisms were also pointed out by the key informant when asked the guidelines in the HEIs were being utilised to guide the procedures of

WPL. And they were not the same across the HEIs. Some of the notable responses were;

To regulate our internal mechanisms, yes, it is necessary to streamline the practice. Such a policy would also provide a good start for the process for predictable results (MCo06-29/10/19-BU)

It takes eight to twelve weeks that is about three months. Done two times for both diploma and bachelor programmes. That time I think is enough (MCo08-23/9/19-MUBS)

Regarding the number of times for supervision one coordinator said;

From two to four times is ok (FCo04-3/10/19-MUST)

The difference in the procedures for WPL learning was similar to the discovery of Reinhard et. al. (2020) of the variations of the WPL model. The duration as set out by La Salle College (2009) was also similar to the situation in HEIs in Uganda while undertaking WPL as well as the provision of the assessment criteria for use in grading learning. However, contrary to what Kay et. al. (2019) noted, the need for flexibility in providing WPL none existing as WPL could only be carried during holidays due to the rigid nature of the HEIs operations. Undoubtedly, this is similar to what Murdoch University (2011) professed that higher education institutional guidelines for workplace learning are essential in improving the quality of workplace learning for the students in all academic programmes. Higher education institutions must realise that to be able to maintain, improve and obtain the

impressive quality of workplace learning establishment of institutional guidelines is paramount.

### **Set responsibilities and expectations of WPL**

While seeking to determine the relevancy of HEI guidelines in setting the responsibilities and the expectations of WPL the respondents were asked to answer a yes or no question as to whether HEI guidelines for WPL were a necessity. The generated responses are shown in Table 4.46.

**Table 4.26 Necessity of HEI Guidelines Regarding WPL**

Category of Respondent			Freq	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Academic Staff	Valid	Yes	39	90.7	90.7
		No	4	9.3	100.0
		Total	43	100.0	
Students	Valid	Yes	59	85.5	85.5
		No	10	14.5	100.0
		Total	69	100.0	
Workplace Staff	Valid	Yes	27	100.0	100.0
		No	0		

The findings in Table 4.26, reveal that for all the categories of the respondents, the majority of them showed that it was very necessary to have these guidelines or guidelines in place to ease the implementation of workplace learning. Categorically,

all the workplace staff respondents indicated that there is a need for guidelines for workplace learning. On the other hand, the need for HEIs to develop and utilize guidelines for workplace learning was supported by the following views of some of the key respondents;

The policy is very much needed to answer some of the concerns in workplace learning (Mco01-15/10/19-GU)

Another added that;

I agree with you because like we have different faculties you might even find that the way it is done is not uniform within the university but we don't have general guidance and I believe if we had one it would be helpful so that we all know like it's a standard (FAr05-3/10/19-MUST)

Regarding setting out the responsibilities of the key stakeholders through the HEI guidelines one coordinator said;

It would spell out the responsibilities of different stakeholders for the execution of industrial training (FCo04-3/10/19-MUST)

Correspondingly another coordinator said;

It is an activity that is within the programmes but it involves so many stakeholders that means they need guidelines (MCo01-15/10/19-GU)

One of the Ministry of Education and Sports clearly stated that;

Yeah, there should be a policy to provide for checks and balances for the stakeholders (MDit01-23/10/19-K'la)

The findings are in line with the observations of Blom (2014) who acknowledged that when the responsibilities of the stakeholders are spelt out possibilities of anxiety are minimised. The expectations of the students for the entitlements raised by Brennan et. al. (2006) and Kiriri (2019) can be settled. The HEIs ought to be acquainted with the many players in the undertaking of WPL hence the need to stipulate the different roles, expectations and obligations to limit overzealousness that may affect the intended outcomes.

#### **Stipulate the relationship between HEIs and Hosting Workplaces**

While determining the effect of HEI workplace learning guidelines on the relationship between HEIs and hosting workplaces the respondents were asked to show whether they strongly agreed, agreed disagreed and strongly disagreed that such guidelines had any effect. The responses generated are shown in Table 4.27.

**Table 4.27 Effect HEI WPL Guidelines**

	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly agree	58	43.0	43.0
Agree	69	51.1	94.1
Disagree	6	4.4	98.5
Strongly disagree	2	1.5	100.0
Total	135	100.0	

The findings in Table 4.27 suggest that majority of the respondents that had indicated that they were not aware of the higher education guidelines regarding workplace learning showed that lack of guidelines to regulate workplace learning in higher education institutions affected the learning during the undertaking of learning from workplaces. Similarly, when the key informants were about the impact of their guidelines on the efficiency of WPL they highlighted that the guidelines helped in streamlining their relationships with the hosting workplaces. Some of the prominent responses were;

Yes, the policy for the university sets out how we relate with the community (MCo01-15/10/19-GU)

Another added that;

Workplace learning is a complex activity that requires collaboration between institutions of higher learning and the industry the policy that spells out that relationship should be useful (FDit03-26/9/19-K'la)

The findings confirm what Taylor and Govender (2013) observed that the need for guidelines for the implementation of workplace learning is crucial for the success and efficiency besides, the claim by Boud and Garrick (1999) who observed that guidelines are needed to establish better and stronger links between the HEIs and world of work. In a growing economy like Uganda the proposal by Brennan et. al (2006) where the engagement with the world of work that is dominated by naïve small and medium enterprises HEI guidelines are pertinent and valuable for sustainability that was pointed out by Fleming et. al (2018). Further still, with the HEIs guidelines in place the position of HEIs can be well negotiated as pivotal and answering Sewell et. al (2017) concerns of HEIs evaluating their guidelines for efficient WPL. It can therefore be realised that HEIs that have not established their guidelines to guide workplace learning risk low levels of efficiency, low success, poor sustainability, loss of pivotal role and weakened linkages with the workplaces.

#### **Provide for resource mobilisation and allocation**

While seeking the sources of resources that are required for WPL the students and the academic staff were asked whether students were required by their HEIs to pay for WPL. And the responses generated are shown in Table 4.28.

**Table 4. 28 whether HEIs require Students to pay for WPL**

Category of respondent			Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Academic Staff	Valid	Yes	45	47.9	47.9
		No	29	30.9	78.7
		Don't Know	20	21.3	100.0
		Total	94	100.0	
Students	Valid	Yes	105	53.6	53.6
		No	91	46.4	100.0
		Total	196	100.0	

Findings in Table 4.28 suggest that in some cases students are required to pay for WPL to their institutions of learning. this could one way of raising the needed finances to undertake WPL. However, the findings also indicate that some students are not required to pay for WPL this could be because such fees have not been established or those that are not charged are government students whose fees are met through a government sponsorship scheme. To substantiate the payment for WPL to HEIs by the students the academic staff and students were further asked the amounts they are required to pay in ranges. The responses obtained are shown in Table 4.29.

**Table 4.29 Amounts (UGX) Paid by Students to HEIs for WPL**

		Freq	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Below 100,000	16	10.9	10.9
	Between 100,000 below 200,000	51	34.7	45.6
	Between 200,000 below 300,000	49	33.3	78.9
	Above 400,000	31	21.1	100.0
	Total	147	100.0	

*1US\$ is equivalent to 3700UgX*

The findings in table 4.29 reveal that to realise the required revenue to fund workplace learning activities students are charged workplace learning fees by higher education institutions of the amount equivalent to between US\$ 27 to US\$ 108 per year. When seeking to establish the resource allocation for WPL the respondents were asked whether they received any facilitation from HEIs. The responses obtained are shown in Table 4.30.

**Table 4. 30 Whether respondents receive any facilitation from HEIs**

			Cumulative		
Category of respondent			Frequency	Valid Percent	Percent
Academic Staff	Valid	Yes	47	51.6	51.6
		No	44	48.4	100.0
		Total	91	100.0	
Students	Valid	Yes	78	41.5	41.5
		No	110	58.5	100.0
		Total	188	100.0	
Workplace Staff	Valid	Yes	8	22.2	22.2
		No	28	77.8	100.0
		Total	36	100.0	

The findings in Table 4.30 indicate that some academic staff and students had either received or not received any facilitation from their institutions to undertake WPL. Whether it can be understood that students meet their need during WPL, it is not clear therefore how academic staff go about the activities of WPL without being facilitated. On the other hand, the majority of the workplace staff were not being facilitated to participate in WPL by HEIs. Aiming at further differentiating student's facilitation for WPL from their HEIs the academic staff and the students were asked whether the students were being reimbursed any money to undertake WPL the responses obtained are shown in Table 4.31.

**Table 4. 31 Reimbursement to Students for WPL**

Category of respondent			Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Academic staff	Valid	Yes	21	21.9	21.9
		No	48	50.0	71.9
		I don't Know	27	28.1	100.0
		Total	96	100.0	
Students	Valid	Yes	41	20.7	20.7
		No	157	79.3	100.0
		Total	198	100.0	

Findings in Table 4.31 disclose that some HEIs were reimbursing their students to undertake WPL although most of the students were not. Accordingly, some institutions reimburse some funds to students to undertake workplace learning with amounts slightly above one US dollar. The occurrence of reimbursement could be for the government-sponsored students where government channels their financial facilitation through their respective HEIs. Comparably, when key informants were asked whether students were being charged by HEIs to WPL, they indicated that HEIs were charging students through the established fees structures. The notable responses were;

As part of functional fees, there is some amount which is paid to cater for their industrial training to be

specific it is 100,000 Ug Shs per year (FAr05-3/10/19-MUST)

As part of the fees structure, the students are required to pay some for industrial training (MDvc01-10/10/19-UMU)

Others confirmed that;

Currently, it is 100,000/= (hundred thousand shillings) per year but effective next academic year it is going to be increased to 250,000/= (two hundred and fifty thousand shillings) per year (MAr08-29/10/19-BU).

When asked about the resource needs of WPL the respondents indicated that WPL was an expensive activity that requires financing for all the stakeholders as some of the outstanding responses show.

Financing of workplace learning should also be detailed because it is a very expensive process for students hosting organisations and universities (MAr08-29/10/19-BU)

Industrial training is a very expensive exercise, the university invests a lot of money in the whole exercise (FCo02-18/9/19- KyU)

As regards government financial input for WPL one of the clear responses obtained showed that government offers support according to the number of government-

sponsored students and for the privately sponsored HEIs and students have to fully meet the required financial resources.

It (Government) only provides for financial support for government-sponsored students which is very little because they are few the rest is generated from the fees of students (MDvc02-10/10/19-MUST)

Related to the observations by Blom (2015), HEIs in Uganda regardless of the absence of a comprehensive national legislation for WPL have integrated WPL into their curriculum. Incidentally, this has also not been spared from the limited government funding and persistent informal arrangements to raise resources. In their response to mobilise resources as advised by Blom (2014) HEIs have incorporated WPL in their fees structures thereby answer the call by Weible (2010) and Mathews (1999). The HEIs that have negated policy formulation for WPL may continue to be left behind in having meaningful and realistic workplace learning for their students. As postulated in the conceptual framework there is a relationship between HEI guidelines and the organisation of workplace learning. Linked to Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory, HEI guidelines are critical in establishing the required situations and setting within the HEIs to offer meaningful WPL.

#### **4.4.1.4 Aspects Entailed in the HEI Guidelines for WPL**

Related to exploring HEI guidelines for workplace learning, the researcher further sought to find the aspects that are included in such guidelines where they exist and what respondents would suggest to be included where WPL guidelines were non-existing. The findings are shown in Table 4.32 and Table 4.33.

**Table 4.32 Aspects of HEIs Guidelines for WPL**

		Valid Frequenc	Valid t Percent	Cumula tive Percent
Valid	Expectations of WPL	20	13.9	13.9
	Teamwork	11	7.6	21.5
	Student harassment	4	2.8	24.3
	Students Discipline	11	7.6	31.9
	Attendance	4	2.8	34.7
	Relations with others in the workplace	7	4.9	39.6
	Duration of WPL	12	8.3	47.9
	Vacancy seeking	4	2.8	50.7
	Required logistics	8	5.6	56.3
	Supervision procedure	23	16	72.2
	Report writing	13	9	81.3
	Responsibilities	12	8.3	89.6
	Safety provisions	13	9	98.6
	Working conditions for Students	1	0.7	99.3
	Academic requirements	1	0.7	100.0
	Total	144	100.0	

The findings in Table 4.32, indicate that the guidelines in HEIs regarding workplace learning included aspects related to respecting other workers in the workplaces, observance of safety, the learning period and time management, discipline and

teamwork and use of equipment in the workplaces. Document analysis of a policy of one of the HEIs as indicated in appendix I highlighted the following included aspects;

Objectives of the workplace learning policy include among others streamlining the management and provide a framework within which to run the workplace learning program in the institution.

Obligations of the university include; placement and placement approval, supervision of students, recruitment of workplaces to host workplace learning, assessment and evaluation of students' performance during workplace learning and facilitation of workplace learning supervision.

Requirements for workplace learning such as; workplace learning being compulsory to all students as partial fulfilment for their academic programmes, the timing of and the duration that should be at least 6 weeks and not more than three months.

Roles and eligibility (students & hosting workplaces) in the implementation of workplace learning. The roles for the students include; formally register for the workplace learning program, follow the set guidelines of the host workplaces, attend all meetings seminars related to workplace learning and complete all the reporting requirements for the workplace learning offer. The roles of the host workplaces were highlighted as; provision of position description of students undertaking workplace learning, assign the work related to the student's field of study and participate in the assessment and evaluation of the students' performance while undertaking workplace learning. Only legally registered entities after the approval of the workplace learning coordinators qualify to participate.

Relatedly when the respondents that had no guidelines in their institutions were asked about the aspects that ought to be included. The responses in Table 4.33 were obtained.

**Table 4.33 Aspects that HEIs Guidelines for WPL should Entail**

Item	Freq	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Timing/scheduling of workplace learning	12	11.7	11.7
Ensuring basic skills training	15	14.6	26.2
Duration of the training period	6	5.8	32.0
WPL chargeable Fees	5	4.9	36.9
Proper work plan	22	21.4	58.3
Code of conduct	17	16.5	74.8
Facilitation of students and staff	12	11.7	86.4
Report writing	4	3.9	90.3
Placement procedure	3	2.9	93.2
Health insurance	4	3.9	97.1
Assessment criteria	2	1.9	99.0
Supervision procedures	1	1.0	100.0
Total	103	100.0	

The findings in Table 4.33 reveal that there are similar requirements to be included in the HEI guidelines for workplace learning. Correspondingly, the key informants

highlighted ideal aspects that can be included in the workplace learning guidelines by HEIs as shown in the layout of appendix P. The aspects are; stakeholder roles, private sector players, qualification for students to undertake workplace learning, financing and matters related to payments.

The findings concur with the assertions of student eligibility highlighted by the International College of Hotel Management (2012), Kyambogo University (2005) and equitable access for WPL by Hora et. al (2020). Similarly, the details of the placement procedure are shared with the International College of Hotel Management (2012) and Murdoch University (2011). Relatedly, clear articulation of the supervision details is also shared with Brennan and Little (1996), Costely (2011) and Murdoch University (2011). The need for the inclusion of assessment criteria conforms with Murdoch University (2011). The enclosure of responsibilities and obligations of the stakeholders (students, HEIs & hosting workplaces) is similar to what Murdoch University (2011), International College of Hotel Management (2012) and Taylor and Govender (2013) advocated for. The coincidence of agreement of the findings with the earlier shared views is a manifestation of the similar fundamental issues that can be addressed by the HEI guidelines for WPL. The aspects that HEIs need to be included in their guidelines for workplace learning provide a clear basis of the magnitude of the appropriateness of the need that should be filled to have eased management of workplace learning.

#### **4.4.2 Workplace Learning Guidelines in Hosting Workplaces**

This study intended to further determine the organisational guidelines guiding the implementation of workplace learning offered by HEIs in Uganda in the hosting workplaces. The researcher, therefore, sought to establish the level of awareness,

forms of guidelines, relevancy and features of WPL guidelines in hosting workplaces to be able to evaluate their effect or influence on the organisation of workplace learning.

#### 4.4.2.1 Awareness of WPL Guidelines in Hosting Workplaces

The respondents were asked whether they were aware of any guidelines that hosting workplaces were using in the undertaking of workplace learning. The responses obtained are shown in Table 4.34.

**Table 4.34 Awareness about WPL Guidelines in Hosting Workplaces**

Category of respondent	Response	Freq	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Academic Staff	Valid Yes	43	45.3	45.3
	No	52	54.7	100.0
	Total	95	100.0	
Students	Valid Yes	107	54.0	54.0
	No	91	46.0	100.0
	Total	198	100.0	
Workplace Staff	Valid Yes	25	62.5	62.5
	No	15	37.5	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	

Half of the academic staff were not aware of the existence of workplace learning guidelines in the hosting workplaces. Half of the student and only nearly two-thirds of workplace staff indicated that they were aware of the existence of workplace

learning guidelines in hosting workplaces as shown in Table 4.34. On the other hand, there were some respondents among the workplace staff that indicated that they were not aware of workplace learning guidelines in their workplace. This is an indication that perhaps some of the hosting workplaces were not following any known guidelines in the implementation of workplace learning. Clarifying the existence of WPL guidelines in the hosting workplaces, when asked whether such guidelines were known to exist an official from the employers' federation suggested that actually, most workplaces had to establish them. This view intimated that;

... indeed, most of the workplace have not put in place such important guidelines. so, I would encourage as much as possible the employers to put in place the necessary guidelines and we are happy to support them in their process (MEfu06-16/9/19-K'la).

Similar to what Mathews (1999) emphasised, the level of awareness about workplace learning guidelines provides a basis for how the participants in workplace learning have encountered and utilised such guidelines in the implementation of workplace learning. A high level of awareness would indicate the corresponding possibility of utilisation and vice visa.

#### **4.4.2.2 Forms of WPL guidelines in hosting Workplaces**

Regarding the possible guidelines that regulate WPL the respondents were asked to choose the most applied policy as they host students from HEIs for workplace learning. The findings are indicated in Table 4.35.

**Table 4.35 Guidelines in Workplaces that Regulate Workplace Learning**

Category of			Valid	Cumulative	
Respondent	Regulations	Freq	Percent	Percent	
Academic Staff	Valid	Workers compensation act	4	9.3	9.3
		Employment act	9	20.9	30.2
		Employment regulation 2011	4	9.3	39.5
		Occupational health and safety act	3	7.0	46.5
		Human resource manual	9	20.9	67.4
		All the above	14	32.6	100.0
		Total	43	100.0	
	Students	Valid	Workers compensation act	10	9.7
		Employment act	14	13.6	23.3
		Employment regulation 2011	16	15.5	38.8
		Occupational health and safety act	40	38.8	77.7
		Human resource manual	7	6.8	84.5
		All the above	14	13.6	98.1
		Others	2	1.9	100.0
		Total	103	100.0	
Workplace	Valid	Workers compensation act	3	12	12
Staff		Employment act	6	24	36

Employment regulation			
2011	1	4	40
Occupational health and safety act	4	16	56
Human resource manual	2	8	64
All the above	7	28	92
Others	2	8	100
Total	25	100	

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Most of the academic staff and the workplace staff respondents that were aware of workplace learning guidelines in hosting workplaces recognised that the workers' compensation act, employment act, Employment regulation, occupational health and safety and the human resource manual as the guidelines that contribute to the management of workplace learning in hosting workplaces. On the other hand, the majority of the student respondents indicated that the occupational health and safety act was the policy most applied during workplace learning undertaking as shown in Table 4.35. Analysis of some documents that were availed by some workplaces revealed that indeed some workplaces have documented guidelines to use when participating in workplace learning. The notable ones according to appendix Q workplace A, B and C (human resources manual) recognise that workplace learning is offered to provide students for HEIs an opportunity to gain hands-on experience. Incidentally, the application or utilization of the *Employment Act 2006*, *Occupational Safety and Health Act 2006* and the *Employment Regulation 2011* in the implementation of workplace learning students is misplaced as the students are not in any strict or implied sense categorised as those that should be covered in those

legislations. Therefore, workplaces need to appreciate that there is a definite gap in those legislations that do not in any form articulate the aspirations of workplace learning. The inclusion of aspects of workplace learning aspects in the human resources manuals of some workplaces Kyambogo University (2014) Uganda Law Society (2014) is a step in the right direction and a manifestation of the need for clear guidelines to regulation this form of learning in workplaces.

#### **4.4.2.3 Relevance of WPL Guidelines in Hosting Workplaces**

In the bid to consider the relevance and features of WPL guidelines in the hosting workplaces, the researcher sought to establish the importance of such guidelines in regulating workplace learning, the influence of such guidelines on the quality of workplace learning, the necessity of such guidelines where they have not been instituted and whether their absence affected the expected outcomes of workplace learning.

#### **Importance of WPL guidelines in hosting workplaces**

As one of the measures, the respondents' view of the relevance of WPL guidelines in the workplaces, the respondents were asked to rate the importance of such guidelines. The responses obtained are shown in table 4.36.

**Table 4.36 Importance of WPL Guidelines on Workplace Learning**

Category of respondent			Freq	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Academic Staff	Valid	Very important	20	46.5	46.5
		Important	21	48.8	95.3
		Rather unimportant	2	4.7	100.0
		Total	43	100.0	
Students	Valid	Very important	60	60.6	60.6
		Important	38	38.4	99.0
		Rather unimportant	1	1.0	100.0
		Total	99	100.0	
Workplace Staff	Valid	Very important	15	57.7	57.7
		Important	11	42.3	100.0
		Total	26	100.0	

Almost all the respondents in each of the categories that were aware of the existence of guidelines for workplace learning in hosting workplaces indicated that such guidelines were important (important & very important) for the smooth implementation of learning in workplaces as shown in Table 4.36. The vitality of workplace learning guidelines was also highlighted by Boud and Garrick (1999) as a way of legitimising and making WPL meaningful. The view by the respondents further affirms what Billet (2013) advanced that for WPL to gain legitimacy there should also be intended mechanisms to institutionalise it in the workplaces.

### Influence of Workplace Learning Guidelines in Hosting Workplaces

To establish whether workplace learning guidelines had any influence on the quality of WPL, the respondents were asked to rate that influence. The results obtained are shown in Table 4.37.

**Table 4.37 Influence of Hosting Workplace Guidelines**

Category of respondent		Valid	Freq	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Academic Staff	Valid Strongly agree		17	40.5	40.5
	Agree		23	54.8	95.2
	Disagree		2	4.8	100.0
	Total		42	100.0	
Students	Valid Strongly agree		49	46.7	46.7
	Agree		48	45.7	92.4
	Disagree		5	4.8	97.1
	Strongly disagree		3	2.9	100.0
	Total		105	100.0	
Workplace Staff	Valid Strongly agree		13	52	52
	Agree		9	36	88
	Disagree		3	12	100
	Total		25	100	

The findings in Table 4.37 suggest that in all the categories of the respondents that were aware of the existence of guidelines for WPL in the host workplaces most

indicated that they influence the quality of learning. Akin to what Brennan and Little (1996) observed that WPL guidelines influence the quality of learning in the workplaces through establishing commitments and structures. The influence would also be achieved by determining the form of guidance that the mentors would offer to the students as argued by Billet (2001).

### **The necessity of WPL guidelines in workplaces**

In an effort to further explore the relevancy of guidelines for workplace learning in hosting workplaces, the researcher sought to find out whether workplaces without such guidelines needed them. The respondents were asked to indicate whether such guidelines were necessary. The response obtained are shown in table 4.38.

**Table 4.38 Whether Workplaces without WPL Guidelines Need them**

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	150	42.5	89.8	89.8
	No	17	4.8	10.2	100.0
Total		167	47.3	100.0	

Findings in Table 4.38, reveal that most of all the respondents that were not aware of the existence of guidelines for workplace learning in the hosting workplaces indicated that they were necessary for the smooth implementation and management of learning. Relatedly, while detailing the need for workplace learning guidelines in the hosting workplaces one of the respondents indisputably stated that;

There are no guidelines or guidelines apart from the traditional organizations that were established much earlier which had training as part of their responsibilities but the most recent ones which are also the majority don't have these guidelines. At the moment the higher education institutions have to be very cognizant that these workplaces may not offer the expected learning for their students and come out clearly through documented relationship to get the needed outcomes (MWk01-10/9/19-K'la)

The demand for WPL guidelines in the hosting workplaces is a confirmation of what Mulder et. al (2011) observed when they noted that WPL is still understudied by both the HEIs and hosting workplaces in East Africa. The findings further concur with Mathews (1999) that workplaces need to examine their guidelines to provide a place for WPL.

#### **Effect Workplace Learning Guidelines on Learning Expectations**

In pursuit of an additional understanding of the relevance of WPL guidelines in the hosting workplaces, the respondents were asked whether the existing guidelines were influencing the expectations of WPL. The responses obtained are shown in table 4.39.

**Table 4.39 Effect of WPL guidelines in Hosting Workplaces on the Expectations of WPL**

		Fre			Cumula
		q	Per cent	Valid Percent	Per
Valid	Strongly agree	85	24.1	49.7	49.7
	Agree	73	20.7	42.7	92.4
	Disagree	10	2.8	5.8	98.2
	Strongly disagree	3	0.8	1.8	100.0
	Total	171	48.4	100.0	

Almost all the respondents agreed (strongly agree & Agree) that the existence would influence the expectations of learning as shown in Table 4.49. This is in line with the opinion of Billet (2001) who identified the occurrence of the hidden curriculum that requires regulation to minimise its negative effect on the outcomes of WPL. The findings also confirm what Rose (2020) who advanced for post-workplace learning employment criteria to win over the sceptics of workplaces learning, and regarding “stolen knowledge” revealed by Burford et. al (2020) there could be some limitations that the guidelines could instil.

#### **4.4.2.4 Features of WPL Guidelines in Hosting Workplaces**

The features of the guidelines for WPL in hosting workplaces describe the issues that are addressed by such guidelines. To determine the features of the WPL guidelines, the respondents that had indicated that they were aware of the existence

of such guidelines were asked to list some of the aspects that those guidelines contained. The responses obtained are shown in Table 4.40

**Table 4.40 Aspects in Workplace guidelines for WPL**

Aspects	Freq	Valid Percent	Cumulativ e Percent
Valid Management of sickness	1	1.4	1.4
Time management	3	4.2	5.6
Guidelines for work opportunities	1	1.4	7.0
Code of conduct of the trainees	7	9.9	16.9
Aspects work overload	1	1.4	18.3
Dressing code	1	1.4	19.7
Penalties against work rules,	1	1.4	21.1
Supervisors roles	1	1.4	22.5
Safety procedure for trainees	13	18.3	40.8
Duties and responsibilities of trainees	8	11.3	52.1
Use of tools and equipment	20	28.2	80.3
Medical check-ups requirements	4	5.6	85.9
Acceptance and recommendation letter	2	2.8	88.7
Health insurance of trainees	7	9.9	98.6
Payment procedure	1	1.4	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

According to Table 4.40, the respondents who acknowledged awareness of guidelines in the workplaces indicated that the most prominent aspects in the guidelines that are in hosting workplaces regarding workplace learning are; use of tools and equipment, safety procedures, duties and responsibilities of trainees. To explore more aspects, the respondents that had indicated that they were not aware of the guidelines for WPL were asked to suggest the aspects that should be included. The responses obtained are shown in Table 4.41.

**Table 4.41 Aspects that should be Entailed in WPL guidelines**

		Freq	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Funding of WPL	16	4.5	13.8	13.8
	Communication channels for WPL	15	4.2	12.9	26.7
	Punctuality	10	2.8	8.6	35.3
	Respect for each other	7	2.0	6.0	41.4
	Facilitation for students and staff	4	1.1	3.4	44.8
	Code of conduct	23	6.5	19.8	64.7
	Demonstration programmes	7	2.0	6.0	70.7
	Working conditions specified	9	2.5	7.8	78.4
	Professionalism	6	1.7	5.2	83.6
	Payment by students for WPL	3	0.8	2.6	86.2
	Proper work plan	6	1.7	5.2	91.4

Assessment of students' learning	1	0.3	0.9	92.2
Training schedule	1	0.3	0.9	93.1
Duration of the training period	1	0.3	0.9	94.0
Health Insurance	6	1.7	5.2	99.1
Hygiene and safety	1	0.3	0.9	100.0
Total	116	32.9	100.0	

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As indicated in Table 4.41, the key aspects that the students, academic staff and the workplace staff respondents that were not aware of the existence of workplace learning guidelines in the workplace places include; code of conduct, communication channels, and funding of WPL. There are several similarities in the features that the guidelines for WPL contain and should entail. This is a sign that workplace learning guidelines can be generalised and modified for a specific particular profession or workplace. Document analysis of the human resource manuals obtained from some of the research sites as indicated in appendix Q workplace A, B and C revealed the following features;

The hosting workplace assigns a staff member to supervise and assess the performance of the student when undertaking workplace learning, coordinates the learning process.

The obligations of the students that include; applying for workplace learning, make and prepare workplace learning report at the end of the training period, attend to all planned activities of learning and pay a determined fee to undertake workplace learning to the hosting workplace.

The responsibilities of the HEIs are to; determine the duration of workplace learning, provide assessment guidelines for their students and ensure that they visit

the student during the period of undertaking workplace learning to monitor and assess the progress of the student.

As supported by Brennan and Little (1996) the workplace learning guidelines in workplaces ought to provide for the funding of WPL. Workplaces ought to be part of the training agenda by the inclusion of workplace learning guidelines and guidelines in their operations as well as use such guidelines as a basis to provide students with emotional, practical and political support during WPL. When features like the responsibilities of HEIs are included in the guidelines of hosting workplaces they affirm the opinion advanced by Sternstrom (2005), Costely (2011) and Rajab (2015) of formalising the relationships between HEIs and workplaces for effective delivery of WPL. When hosting workplaces have in place guidelines that contain relevant features to guide effective WPL then the propositions of Martin et. al (2019) of preparing effective future student mentors in the hosting workplaces can be attained.

Findings show that organisational guidelines can be used in setting the conducive environment and right conditions to facilitate learning through transforming experience and promoting active participation as Sharlanova (2004) studied the application of Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory. The organisational guidelines and organisation of workplace learning are directly linked as had been assumed in the conceptual framework.

#### **4.5 Organisation of WPL Activities**

The activities involved in the organisation of workplace learning as shown in table 4.42 can be categorized into three stages; pre-workplace, during and post-workplace learning. The pre-workplace learning phase is characterised by activities that the

students, HEIs and the hosting workplaces undertake in preparation for the commencement of learning in the workplaces. Such activities include placement (securing places for learning), the orientation of students among others. In the stage during workplace learning, the students, the academic staff and the staff in the hosting workplaces get in the actual learning, mentoring and supervision. Finally, post workplace learning involves the activities that happen after undertaking to learn in the workplaces like report writing and final assessment among others. This study examined these activities to be able to describe the organization of workplace learning by the HEIs in Uganda and disclose how the existing guidelines influence or affect the implementation of workplace learning.

#### **4.5.1 Pre-workplace Learning Activities**

The pre-workplace learning activities were used to prepare the students for the whole cycle of Kolb's Learning Styles (reflective observation, Abstract Conceptualisation, Active Experimentation & Concrete Experience). The stage of WPL also applies what Gentry (1999) advanced as the first phase of design that sets the objectives, selection of the expected activities, creation of the scheme or schedules for learning. The respondents were asked to rate the predetermined statements regarding the pre-workplace learning activities using a 5-point Likert scale where 5 for strongly agree, 4 for agree, 3 for neutral, 2 for disagree and 1 for strongly disagree. The results obtained are shown in table 4.42.

**Table 4. 42 Descriptive Statistics for Pre-workplace learning Activities**

Stage	Activity	Mean	Std Deviation
	Pre-workplace learning seminars are required	4.37	0.93
	WPL orientation by HEIs is valuable to students	4.15	1.16
	WPL coordinators in HEIs are resourceful	4.09	1.05
	Coursework is resourceful	4.04	1.09
	Host workplaces orient students	3.97	1.14
Pre- WPL	Report writing guidelines are availed to students	3.93	1.07
	Training schedules are issued to students	3.91	1.18
	Workplace learning objectives are clear	3.90	1.15
	HEIs should be the only ones to seek WPL vacancies	3.82	1.44
	Students easily got placements themselves	2.56	1.50

Findings in Table 4.42 indicate that almost all the statements were rated above the average rate of three apart from one statement (students easily got placements themselves). This suggests that the activities involved in pre-workplace learning were being well executed according to the respondents. To substantiate the findings in Table 4.42 the qualitative findings for each activity was subsequently done.

#### **4.5.1.1 Workplace Learning Placement**

As indicated in Table 4.42, the respondents showed that students find it difficult to secure workplace learning vacancies for themselves and higher education institutions should not be the only ones to secure vacancies for workplace learning for their students (placement). Higher education institutions should devise options for placements as the students have limited success in securing workplace learning vacancies on their own. Although most of the HEIs engage in different approaches to carry out placements, most institutions depend on students as opposed to the supposed mixed approach. The several approaches used include; students' self-placement, by HEIs initiatives (through MoUs & Scouting) as illustrated in Appendix S. The responses from the key informants were also affirmative.

Regarding student self-placement the notable responses were;

The university used to secure vacancies for the students but with the increasing numbers that are no longer possible so students have to get places for themselves. Normally students get places where they easily get accommodation facilities or where they expect to be paid some stipend (MCo03-25/9/19-KyU).

We usually evaluate the places that the students get before allowing them to go there for learning purposes.

With education students, they have to go to registered schools, with architect students have to go to architect workshops and so forth (MDvc01-10/10/19-UMU).

Regarding HEIs being responsible for seeking placements for students the respondents affirmed the use of Memoranda of understanding and scouting and said that;

The university has the main responsibility of getting places for training for the students. Students are also encouraged to participate in looking for training opportunities through their networks.” (FAr05-3/10/19-MUST).

... we have MoUs with some establishments (MAr08-29/10/19-BU).

Normally staff are facilitated and sent out to seek vacancies (MCo08-23/9/19-MUBS).

As Maclean and Pavlova (2013) predicted and confirmed by NCHE (2016) the increase in the number of students in HEIs has necessitated modification of learning strategies approaches to be able to meet the increased demand workplace learning not being spared as well. The institutions that become cognisant of the need and establish diversified methods of placement will register remarkable success in securing reputable vacancies for the students to undertake workplace learning while those that remain none accommodative to the mixed approach will be doing so on their peril.

#### **4.5.1.2 Pre-workplace Learning Seminars and Orientation**

Findings in Table 4.42, the respondents showed that pre-workplace learning seminars and orientation are necessary and valuable for both the workplaces and HEIs. Similarly, training schedules and report writing guidelines were being issued to students during the orientations by both the HEIs and hosting workplaces. These activities are in line with the opinion of Taylor and Govender (2013), who emphasised that the commencement of workplace learning should be preceded by seminars and orientation to prepare the students for the undertaking. Also, Murdoch University (2011) stressed higher education institutions and workplaces should use these seminars and orientation to issue training schedules and report writing guidelines to students and academic staff (Makerere University 2014). While Parterson et. al (2017) argued that these seminars and orientation should be a standard practice used for sensitising and setting realistic expectations. Also, the pre-workplace learning seminars and orientations ought to be used by the HEIs and hosting workplace to clarify the objectives of WPL as advocated by Makerere University (2014) and Paterson et. al (2017). The HEIs and hosting workplaces explore the benefits of pre-workplace learning seminars and orientation to ease the commencement of workplace learning for both students and staff. Relatedly the clarification of WPL objective to especially the students by the HEIs and hosting workplaces should helpful in setting the expectations of all the players. Workplaces and HEIs that carry out this activity can ultimately exhibit improved organisation of workplace learning.

#### **4.5.1.3 Coordination of WPL**

Findings in Table 4.42 indicated that the WPL coordinators in HEIs were useful according to the respondents. The complexity of workplace learning requiring the coordinators was also highlighted by the key respondents who indicated that it was a time-consuming exercise and having several difficulties in coordination. The notable responses when asked the relevancy of coordination were;

Overall coordination is not easy and the persons in charge find it hard to execute the tasks of the workplace learning it involves a lot of communication (MDvc02-8/10/19-MUST).

This is contrary to Weible (2009) had claimed that workplace learning coordinators were being described as being irrelevant and unappreciated. The work of workplace learning coordinators in the implementation of workplace learning cannot be underestimated. The role they play is indeed resourceful and required. Higher education institutions that have not established these positions need to reconsider. In any case, for ease in the overall coordination, institutions should establish fully-fledged departments that handle and manage workplace learning activities.

#### **4.5.1.4 Coursework in Preparing Students for WPL**

Findings in Table 4.42 indicated that coursework that the students undertake before the commencement of workplace learning is fundamental in preparing them for WPL. This was however contradicted by the key respondents that indicated the student was ill-trained lacking even basic skills from HEIs before undertaking workplace learning. The respondents highlighted that;

The workplace expects students to have some basic or initial skills from the university but this is not usually the case (FCo04-3/10/19-MUST).

The students are too theoretical so they come to the organization you have to start from zero it doesn't matter which year even you can get finalists who are not even aware of the existing technologies that are used, operation of machines so you find they get challenges (FDit03-26/9/19-K'la).

Correspondingly, Bowman and Lund (2007), Vaughan (2012) and Merwe (2013) had also suggested the importance of ensuring the teaching and training of the students before undertaking workplace learning by the HEIs has to be applicable and relevant in the world of work to ease WPL. The responses from the key informant were also in tandem with the assertions of Okello (2010) and Kiriri (2019). Students should have the theory and knowledge to compare and contrast when undertaking workplace learning or else the basic objective of workplace learning of relating acquired knowledge and skills to the world of work can easily become immaterial.

#### **4.5.2 During Workplace Learning Activities**

At the stage of during-workplace learning students' interface with the world of work for Reflective Observation (RO), Abstract Conceptualisation (AC), Active Experimentation (AE) and Concrete Experience (CE) therefore actualising the whole of Kolb's Learning Styles. This stage also applies the second phases of

experiential learning of conducting within which control of the designed learning objectives and schedules for a sustainable and favourable learning environment as advanced by Gentry (1999). It also follows the conceptual framework in a sense of the dictates of the guidelines on the organisation of workplace learning to provide for sequencing of learning activities, supervision and duration of WPL. The respondents were asked to rate the predetermined statements regarding the during-workplace learning activities using a 5-point Likert scale where 5 for strongly agree, 4 for agree, 3 for neutral, 2 for disagree and 1 for strongly disagree. The results obtained are shown in Table 4.43.

**Table 4.43 Descriptive Statistics for During-workplace learning**

Stage	Activity	Mean	Std Devi ation
	Log or record book was useful in WPL	4.10	1.21
	WPL is suitable for skills acquisition	4.23	0.99
	Other employees in workplaces are helpful during WPL	4.01	1.08
During WPL	Mentors in workplaces are cooperative to ease the learning	4.01	1.11
	Organisations adequately facilitate WPL activities	3.96	1.22
	HEIs workplace supervisors were cooperative	3.89	1.10
	Workplace trainers need training for effective mentoring	3.86	1.22

Students from HEIs are cooperative during WPL	3.78	0.99
Guidance by the HEI supervisor was adequate during WPL	3.65	1.27
HEIs adequately facilitate staff to undertake WPL activities	3.62	1.20
Learning is organised from simple to complex in WPL	3.58	1.24
Supervision of WPL by workplaces supervisors is adequate	3.50	0.92
Duration of the WPL is sufficient for learning objectives	3.49	1.32
Supervision by HEIs staff is adequate	3.49	1.12
Students are given adequate access to organisation facilities	3.43	1.37
HEIs and host organisations share information about WPL	3.34	1.18

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#### 4.5.2.1 Supervision of Workplace Learning

Supervision by workplace supervisors and HEI staff was indicated as adequate as shown in Table 4.43. As regards to whether WPL supervision was being carried out the student respondents were asked whether they had been supervised by HEI staff. The responses obtained are shown in Table 4.44.

**Table 4.44 Whether the HEI Staff ever Supervised WPL**

Category of respondent	Valid	Respos		Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
		e			
		Yes	Freq	Per cent	
Students	Valid	Yes	166	81.0	89.2
		No	20	9.8	100.0
		Total	186	90.7	100.0

Findings in Table 4.44, reveal that supervision of WPL was taking place. The occurrence of supervision of workplace learning by the academic staff from HEIs was also affirmed by some of the key informants who said that;

We used to supervise students three times especially those who are nearby those upcountry two times but these days as the financial situations are not very good, we supervise them once especially towards the end of the training (MCo08-23/9/19-MUBS).

As Brennan and Little (1996) suggested, student undertaking WPL need support from the HEI through supervision which ought to be regular according to Costely (2011) and as a duty of care (Mcewen & Trede, 2014). The findings affirm that supervision of WPL was taking place and the benefits of supervision could be realised. When students are supervised more than once as indicated in the findings the regular interactions and information sharing between the students and the HEIs staff as suggested by Merwe (2013) and Costely (2011) can be achieved. Supervision of workplace learning is one of the very crucial areas of workplace learning that needs to be strengthened and harnessed. The frequency of the

supervision provides adequate time for interaction for better outcomes of the undertaking.

#### **4.5.2.2 Duration of the Workplace Learning**

The period that the students get to be subjected to learning activities in the workplaces enhances their target of gaining the needed experience, transfer knowledge to practice and gain other skills within the workplace environment. The findings in Table 4.43 reveal that the duration of WPL was adequate. Regarding the duration of workplace learning the key informants indicated that the period is between four to twelve weeks (one-three months) on average. This can be realised in the following responses;

It takes eight to twelve weeks about three months  
(MCo08-23/9/19-MUBS)

There is so much learning that takes place even within  
a week or a month or two months but it depends on the  
disciplines, faculties because having internships every  
year so you have three years so cumulatively when you  
say end of the first year two months end of the second  
year two months which is a total of some six months  
(MDvc01-10/10/19-UMU).

Since workplace learning is offered by HEIs as one of the course units or modules of the academic programme, the period ranging from four to twelve weeks (appendix AC) is fitting well in what Brennan and little (1996) envisaged as a short project.

Whereas there are concerns of the period being insufficient as Sweet (2014) argued, any increase in the duration should be cognizant of the trends for other forms of workplace learning like sandwich placement (lasting between six to fifteen months) or concurrent placement (taking 50% of the duration of the course) or employment-based programme (20% of which is only done in the HEI). Better still can consider the immediate post qualification form of workplace learning (lasting 1 to 2 years which is a pre-registration requirement for some professional like medicine).

#### **4.5.2.3 Sequencing of Learning**

The ideal sequencing of learning in the workplaces ought to be organised from simple to complex tasks as proposed by Billet (2004). The learning during workplace learning was indicated to be organized in conformity as shown in the findings in Table 4.43. There is a need to emphasise the practice such that students get exposed to complex tasks in a gradual and systematic process.

#### **4.5.2.4 Guidance by Higher Education Institution Supervisor**

Findings in Table 4.43, suggest that the guidance from HEI staff to students undertaking workplace learning was being done to the satisfaction of the respondents. This highlighted the necessity to enhance the staff's responsibility of guiding the students during workplace learning in line with Billet (2001) who opined that the effectiveness of workplace learning also depends on the guidance that the students receive. The participating staff from the HEIs and workplaces need to be encouraged to continue offering the needed guidance to students during the

undertaking of workplace learning to be able to contribute fully to its successful implementation.

#### **4.5.2.5 Cooperation During Workplace Learning**

Findings in Table 4.43, indicate that the items related to cooperation during workplace learning were responded to above the average mean. This implied that other employees in workplaces were helpful, mentors in the workplaces and higher education supervisors were cooperative. Related to what Gribble et. al (2015) advocated for the smooth implementation of workplace learning. The success of workplace learning highly depends on the contribution of other employees in the workplaces, cooperation of the workplace staff and the HEI staff among other factors. The indication that this cooperation is taking place ought to be fortified and enhanced.

#### **4.5.2.6 Training for Workplace Trainers**

Learning in the workplaces depends on the competence levels of the trainers. Merwe (2013) had opined that effective workplace learning was not taking place as the competence of the workplace trainers was one of the problematic issues. On the contrary findings in table 4.43 suggest that the trainers in the workplaces were competent to deliver the required training for the students from the higher education institutions. This disagreement could be due to the experience that the workplace trainers attain along with their duties over a long period. Better still, in-service training of the workplace trainers is critical and ought to be continuously carried out to better workplace learning and its assessment.

#### **4.5.2.7 Facilitating WPL**

Findings in Table 4.43 suggest that the accessibility to facilities and facilitating WPL by the workplaces was sufficient. On the contrary, when the key informants were asked to comment on the facilities accessibility by the student undertaking WPL they indicated that it was limited due to fear of technology theft as clearly stated by one respondent that;

Some industries are so mean to the point that they do not allow students to access even the basic areas of operation for fear of competition they think that they will steal their technology or take it somewhere else  
(MCo08-23/9/19-MUBS)

This is similar to what Okello (2010) prophesied that workplaces don't grant students adequate access to their facilities to undertake to learn but as Boud and Garrick (1999) advised they do so at their own future risk. Such workplaces ought to heed Barnett (1999) caution that work has become learning and learning has become work to embrace the undertaking. This contraction could be attributed to the insufficient resource allocation that was highlighted by Mathews (1999). The workplaces need to provide reasonable and adequate access to their facilities to the students undertaking workplace learning for them to demonstrate their obligation to the process.

#### **4.5.2.8 Use of Log or Record Book**

Findings in Table 4.43, reveal that the respondents affirmed the usefulness of log and record book in workplace learning and this was accordingly supported by the following views of the key respondents.

We have forms and logs that the students use and they can say what they did in terms of hands-on, supervision so every student gives a full narrative (MCo09-10/10/19-UMU).

Yes, they use the log/record book where they can keep recording daily routines (MAr08-29/10/19-BU)

The use of logbooks was further affirmed in some of the HEIs as shown in appendix T and U which are issued to students at the commencement of the workplace learning to take note of the daily learning experiences, challenges identified and suggested solutions as the main content. Similar to what Council on Higher Education (2011) asserted, the use of the log or record books during workplace learning by the students is helpful for their further analysis and critical evaluation of the daily experiences. The recording of daily tasks and experiences encounter during workplace learning is necessary for reflection of the learning. The use of log or record books for purposes of recording their learning experience is also useful in compiling workplace learning reports at the end. Their use therefore should be encouraged and upheld for effective organisation of workplace learning.

#### **4.5.3.9 Suitability of Workplace Learning for Skills Acquisition**

The findings in Table 4.43 suggest that the respondents affirmed the suitability of workplace learning for skills acquisition among HEI students. This was supported by the opinions of some of the key respondents who confirmed that workplace learning builds the confidence of the students, offers them an opportunity to gain experience and also transfer theory into practice as evidenced in the following responses;

... as it would be when they qualify and even the confidence and they can assert what they have learnt (MCo01-15/9/19-GU)

At the university students are given basic skills, workplace learning offers them exposure and real hands-on work environment experience opportunities (FCo04-3/10/19-MUST)

Most of the students gain more; employment opportunities, work experience and practise what they studied theoretically (MCo03-25/9/19-KyU).

We give the students the hands-on to convert the theory into practice because they have done a lot of theory and a little bit of practice but not in the real world so when they go there they get authentic tasks (MCo01-15/9/19-GU).

Indeed, as Thelen (2007), Bates (2008) and Costely (2011) suggested WPL augments higher education and supplements it further with the much-needed skills that could have been missed in the classroom or through demonstrations. Workplace learning also equips the students with soft skills through interaction with people and processes in the real world of work as had been observed by Pop and Barkhuizen (2013), Mcewen and Trede (2014) and Rajab (2015). Students that undertake purposeful workplace learning are substantiated with unique competencies and some work experience that make them reliable. Since workplace learning provides the students with the opportunity to related theory with actual work practices the skills acquired through such a process are deep and transferable.

#### **4.5.3 Post-workplace Learning Activities**

At the stage of post-workplace learning students concretising or feeling the experience (Concrete Experience (CE)) obtained during the undertaking of workplace learning as advanced by Kolb (1984). This stage also applies the third and fourth phases of experiential learning of evaluation (a provision of assessment of the learning gained from the workplace learning experience). The fourth stage is feedback (providing the feedback mechanism for WPL to be able to enhance the positive aspects and eliminate the negative ones) as advanced by Gentry (1999) when applying experiential learning. It also follows the conceptual framework in a sense of the dictates of the guidelines on the organisation of workplace learning to provide feedback and assessment. The respondents were asked to rate the predetermined statements regarding the post-workplace learning activities using a 5-

point Likert scale where 5 for strongly agree, 4 for agree, 3 for neutral, 2 for disagree and 1 for strongly disagree. The results obtained are shown in table 4.45.

**Table 4.45: Post-workplace learning**

Stage	Activity	Mean	Std Deviation
	WPL should be recommended to all HEIs students	4.59	0.82
	Report writing is useful for WPL reflections	4.36	1.02
	Post Workplace learning seminars are useful	4.33	2.35
Post-development	Overall WPL is relevant for career development	4.31	1.05
WPL	Report writing guidelines are useful to students	4.30	1.07
	A Set criterion of assessment is used for WPL	3.82	1.13
	Overall assessment of WPL was satisfactory	3.85	1.03
	HEIs usually give feedback to the host workplaces	3.02	1.44

#### **4.5.3.1 Report Writing and Report Writing Guidelines**

Findings in Table 4.45 indicate that the writing of workplace learning reports by the students was rated as useful for the reflection of learning that would have taken place during the undertaking. Emphasising the usefulness, when the key informants

were asked to highlight the use of report writing they indicated that reports were some of the outputs of the learning and the following responses were elaborative;

... at the end students have to write the report as part of the outputs of what they will have learnt during the undertaking (MCo08-23/9/19-MUBS).

Maybe what I can say is that we advise our students that when they have finished their training, they write a report and in writing the report they capture so many things 99% of what they capture is what they have done while undertaking the industrial training (FCo02-18/9/19-KyU)

The other aspect of report writing is the role report writing guidelines play in providing the basics that students can follow so that they are cognizant of the need to detail every learning experience. The findings in Table 4.45, affirmed the usefulness of the guidelines as it was rated above the average mean. The sample guidelines from one of the HEI as indicated in appendix X stipulate the details that the students should capture when writing up the workplace learning reports. These guidelines are necessary for helping the students capture vital information for reflection as they undertake workplace learning. In some of the institutions where report writing guidelines were not available for the students, the demand was undeniable as indicated by one of the institutions' workplace learning coordinator that;

... the students raised an issue which we think was genuine enough that it should be spelt out clearly about students are expected, how they should present their report (MCo05-15/10/19-GU)

Similar to what Merwe (2013) and Costely (2011) underscored that workplace learning report writing is critical in providing feedback and learning reflections of the students. The institutions that have their students write workplace learning reports and have established the guidelines for report writing are commendable as it eases the compilation of students learning experiences, provides a means of keeping records and practising meaningful workplace learning.

#### **4.5.3.2 Assessment**

Findings in Table 4.45, reveal that the respondents were satisfied with the overall assessment and the criteria used in the assessment of workplace learning. Regarding the overall assessment one of the key informants detailed the practice as follows;

The first assessment is done by a workplace supervisor who fills the assessment template form allocates marks and stamps it for authenticity. The criteria of checklists which has the marks attached for the academic supervisor when he visits the field he is supposed to evaluate based on interactions with the student and the workplace supervisor and then the students write the report which is also assessed. Finally, the three assessment outcomes are combined into one (MCo08-23/9/19-MUBS)

... then at the end, they write the report which is also assessed and then lastly combination of the assessment and the other three into one (MCo08-23/9/19-MUBS).

On the contrary, the assessment by the workplace supervisors was described as being biased and greatly affecting the overall assessment of students' learning as revealed in one of the responses that;

The assessment from the field supervisors is usually very biased even when we train them on assessment (MCo01-15/10/19-GU).

Additionally, as indicated in appendix Y and Z HEIs provide assessment guidelines and forms (appendix AD) to the supervisors of workplace learning to use to evaluate the performance of the students while undertaking workplace learning. As Bryom and Aiken (2014) realised that the quality of workplace learning assessment is subject to being understood and following a known and appreciated criterion. Concurring with Mathews (1999) who reasoned that the assessment of workplace learning ought to be integrated and incorporating assessment by the academic staff, workplace supervisors and written reports. In line with Merwe (2013), Corrin and Smith (2007) and Scholtz (2020) the overall output of workplace learning depends on the quality of assessment without doubt when there are loopholes in the assessment process that workplace learning will be greatly affected. The workplace supervisors involved in assessing need continuous sensitisation in the same regard to better their contribution.

#### 4.5.3.3 Provision of WPL Feedback

The findings in Table 4.45 reveal that the respondents rated the feedback mechanism as adequate. Relatedly the when the key informants were asked how feedback was being handled some of the notable responses were that;

When the university supervisors visit the training sites, they are required to share their critical findings of the learning process with the ones in charge of training in those sites (FCo02-18/9/19-KyU)

... in writing the report they capture so many things 99% of what they capture is what they have done while undertaking the industrial training and, in the reports, they usually make recommendations to the host organisation depending on their own empirical experiences and challenges so I hope the workplaces can easily follow that for feedback from the copies that the students leave with them (FCo02-18/9/19-KyU).

While affirming the absence of clear systematic feedback to the hosting workplaces one stated that;

Honestly no we don't I have and I have not seen it happen because apart from the feedback we share with the hosting workplaces during the supervision there is no other (FAr05-3/10/19-MUST).

The value of feedback in workplace learning was well articulated by Sewell et. al (2017) as being an essential ingredient in promoting effective learning. Hosting

workplaces need feedback from the HEIs to improve their contribution to workplace learning. The findings are also akin to the value of feedback in dealing with unwarranted incidences of worries, uncertainties and tenseness encountered by students as had been identified by Winchester-Seeto & Rowe (2019). The information-sharing during workplace learning and feedback after the undertaking to the workplaces participating in workplace learning is implied practices yet a systematic clear and outright method would be engaged by the institutions for the advancement of workplace learning.

#### **4.5.3.4 Advocating of Workplace Learning**

The findings in Table 4.45 reveal that the respondents recommended workplace learning to all HEIs students. The commendation for inclusion of workplace learning in the academic programmes in HEIs by NCHE (2014), Kadoodooba (2009), Brennan et. al (2006) and Treuer et. al (2011) was supported by this finding. Similar to the advocacy for the provision of environment for comparison (Sewell et. al 2017), transition to the world of work (Kintu et. al 2019) future meaningful WPL mentoring and supervision (Martin et. al 2019). The benefits of workplace learning aggregated together make workplace learning not only attractive but also desirable. Every HEI student is a work in progress for the work world and any chance of interfacing with that environment is undeniably defining and should be harnessed.

#### **4.6 Challenges of Workplace Learning**

The challenges of workplace learning are the hindrances to the benefits that are expected of workplace learning faced by the hosting workplaces, higher education

institutions and the students during the undertaking. The study sought to identify the challenges faced in undertaking workplace learning offered by higher education institutions in Uganda.

#### **4.6.1 Challenges Faced by Hosting Workplaces**

The hosting workplaces face several challenges when they offer WPL. The challenges faced by hosting workplaces affect the prescriptions of the existing guidelines on the organisation of WPL as illustrated in Figure 1.2 of the conceptual framework. They could also affect the required conducive environment and the conditions that were anticipated by Kolb (1984) in Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory for effective learning to take place. The respondents were asked to rate the predetermined statements regarding the post-workplace learning activities using a 5-point Likert scale where 5 for strongly agree, 4 for agree, 3 for Not sure, 2 for disagree and 1 for strongly disagree. The results obtained are shown in Table 4.46.

**Table 4.46 Challenges of WPL faced by hosting workplaces**

Statement	Strongly agree		Agree		Not sure		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Mean	Standard Deviation
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%		
	Hosting workplaces are the main sources of WPL challenges	47	13.4	97	27.6	100	28.4	62	17.6	46		
WPL procedures are usually clear to the students	60	17.0	106	30.0	83	23.5	74	21.0	29	8.2	3.27	1.21
Workplaces commit sufficient resources to WPL	65	18.5	128	36.3	80	22.7	58	16.5	21	6.0	3.45	1.14
Training content in host workplaces is usually sufficient	73	20.7	122	34.7	75	21.3	56	15.9	26	7.4	3.45	1.20
Host workplace trainers are competent to train students	70	19.9	131	37.2	67	19.0	62	17.6	22	6.3	3.47	1.17
Other workers easily accept	57	16.2	115	32.7	78	22.2	79	22.4	23	6.5	3.30	1.17

students undertaking WPL

Host administration respond

timely to WPL challenges

57	16.2	122	34.8	70	19.9	60	17.1	42	12.0	3.26	1.26
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The findings in Table 4.46 reveal that according to most of the respondents hosting workplaces do not face WPL challenges related to the clarity of procedures, resource allocations, training content, the competence of the trainers, and acceptability of students by other workers and response to the challenges that arise. When the key informants were asked to highlight the challenges that hosting workplace face, they indicated the following; student absenteeism, student indiscipline, inferiority complex feeling of some of the workers who train students above their academic attainment, material wastage, tools and equipment damages, increase operational costs, ill-prepared students, shunning of WPL by other potential workplaces and poor attitude of some workers towards students undertaking their WPL. The notable responses from the key informants were as follows;

Regarding poor attitude by the workers towards the students;

And they also have this attitude that this a student/trainee you're not competent enough yet you have come to acquire competencies so that you're able to join the world of work. So even the students withdraw because if you're attached to a supervisor and you're not helped so you also observe and at the end of the day you just make your report what you have observed and not actually what you have done (FDit03-26/9/19-K'la)

The poor attitude of the staff towards the students discourages the students (MCo05-15/10/19-GU)

For the inferiority complex they noted that;

We get a challenge with trainers who have lower qualifications than the students are undertaking to qualify (say a diploma holder training a bachelor student (FCo04-3/10/19-MUST)).

The inferiority complex of the low academic qualified trainers feeling job insecure when training university students (MCo06-29/10/19-BU).

Considering material wastage, tools and equipment damages one noted that;

Some also complain that students spoil their machines, waste a lot of material (MCo03-25/9/19-KyU).

About increased material costs one observed that;

The host organization as students add to the cost of operation in terms of welfare, equipment because some of them don't know how to use certain equipment, there is breakage which is also a problem as the issue of funding also comes in (MDit01-23/10/19-K'la).

This is contrary to Merwe (2013) and Billet (2004) who questioned the competency of workplace trainers to deliver the required training to the students from HEIs, the trainers in the hosting workplaces were rated as being competent to carry out the training. The competence (possession of the right knowledge, skills and attitude) is attained through work experience, exposure and continuous training the trainers that are usually allocated to the students are the most experienced to guide them

adequately hence the contradiction. Although Sweet (2014) had observed that due to lack of commitment and common approach the quality of the training content for workplace learning is uncertain, Sewell, mason and Venter 2017 conceded that details of arranging content can be re-affirmed through having bidding arrangement between the HEIs and the workplaces. Workplace learning is based on the routine work processes which are usually aimed at the production of a particular item or outcome, therefore as long as there is work or tasks to be executed workplace learning content is available for the students.

This contrary to what Brennan, et al, (2006) had prepositioned that workplaces avail limited resources for workplace learning the situation in Uganda is different as the participating workplaces have been complimented for allocating their resources for learning purposes to students. This contradiction arises from the fact that hosting workplaces is required for undertaking workplace learning. The findings confirmed what Billet (2004) had observed that the regular employees perceive students undertaking workplace learning as possible job replacers resulting in their resentment and non-cooperation. Even when the trainers in the workplaces are experienced and therefore more competent (knowledge skill & attitude) than the students they are meant to train, need to be sensitised about the benefits of workplace learning to them and the students so that they offer their guidance and share their expertise in the students' learning process.

Hosting workplaces need to avail vacancies for students to undertake learning in their facilities. Comparable to what Brennan, et al (2006) cautioned the availability of workplace learning vacancies in workplaces are limited and a challenge to synchronize. Higher education institutions ought to be cognisant that the increase in

student enrolment in their institutions leads to an increased demand for vacancies for workplace learning. Similarly, other organisations shun workplace learning and the few that participate are left with the burden of offering access to their facilities to the students for learning purposes. Workplaces that shun offering higher education institution students workplace learning opportunities even if they unfamiliar with this form of learning like Sewell, Mason and Venter (2017) proclaimed they should be aware of doing so at the cost of their present and future success (Boud and Garrick (1999)). As many workplaces shun offering workplace learning opportunities to the students, HEIs should also be looking out for such workplaces and familiarizing the learning strategy for the benefit of both the students and the workplaces. This can be done by highlighting the benefits that stem from the workplaces that participate in workplace learning like eased recruitment and training of new staff, reliable sources of potential future employees, provision of social responsibility and contribution to human capital development.

Concurring with Brennan and Little (1996), workplaces incur extra costs when hosting students for workplace learning in form of materials, utilities, tools and sometimes damages. The demand for financial support by the workplaces is rooted in this challenge and when the HEIs are unable to meet this demand workplaces have found a way of charging the students directly to host them. This trend can be curtailed through a national legislation that also provides realistic incentives to the workplaces that offer workplace learning to students from higher education institutions. One of the main benefits of workplace learning to the students is to be able to transfer acquired theory and basic skills from HEIs to the world of work (Merwe 2013) similarly, Vaughan (2012) further emphasised that workplace

learning facilitates bridging the possible gaps and Bowman and Lund (2007) highlights that when the skills acquired for HEIs are not relevant then workplace learning becomes difficult for the students. It is therefore imperative that HEIs align their teaching and prepare their students well with relevant, applicable and some basic skills using up to date facilities before sending them for workplace learning.

#### **4.6.2 Challenges of WPL Faced by HEIs**

The HEIs face several challenges when they offer WPL. The challenges faced by hosting workplaces affect the dictates of the existing guidelines on the organisation of WPL as illustrated in Figure 1.2 of the conceptual framework. They could also affect the required conducive environment and the conditions that were anticipated by Kolb (1984) in Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory. The respondents were asked to rate the predetermined statements regarding the post-workplace learning activities using a 5-point Likert scale where 5 for strongly agree, 4 for agree, 3 for neutral, 2 for disagree and 1 for strongly disagree. The results obtained are shown in Table 4.47.

**Table 4.47 Challenges of WPL faced by HEI**

Statement	Strongly agree				Agree				Not sure		Disagree		Mean	Standard Deviation
	Strongly agree		Agree		Not sure		Disagree		Strongly Disagree					
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%				
HEIs staff adequately supervise WPL	79	22.4	117	33.2	67	19	62	17.6	27	7.7	3.45	1.23		
HEI administration timely response to WPL challenges	35	9.9	96	27.3	67	19	68	19.3	86	24.4	2.79	1.34		
HEIs are the main sources of WPL challenges	57	16.2	63	17.9	89	25.3	81	23.0	62	17.6	2.92	1.33		
HEIs have formalized linkages with the World of Work	63	17.9	100	28.4	77	21.9	62	17.6	50	14.2	3.18	1.31		
Assessment criteria used in WPL needs improvement	155	44.0	116	33.0	37	10.5	25	7.1	19	5.4	4.03	1.15		
WPL is inferior to other HEIs	58	16.5	58	16.5	56	15.9	65	18.5	115	32.7	2.66	1.48		

learning strategies

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Findings in Table 4.47 reveal that HEI administrations offer a slow response to the challenges of WPL, HEIs are not the main sources of WPL challenges and WPL is not inferior to other learning strategies offered by HEIs. Relatedly, findings from the interviews indicated that HEIs face other challenges while offering WPL that include; insufficient funding, complexity in coordination, inadequate supervision, biased assessment from the supervisors in the hosting workplaces, the existence of poor perception towards WPL, weak linkages with the world of work regarding WPL and inadequate facilitation of WPL activities. The outstanding responses from the key informants were as follows;

Concerning insufficient funding of WPL in HEIs;

Funding is still a big challenge, students pay very little money, inadequate revenue from both government for the government-sponsored students and the privately sponsored (FAr03-15/10/19-GU).

Industrial training is an expensive exercise, the university invests a lot of money in the whole exercise (FCo02-18/9/19-KyU).

About the complexities of coordination, the notable view was;

Overall coordination is not easy and the persons in charge find it hard to execute the tasks of the workplace learning it involves a lot of communication (MDvc02-8/10/19-MUST).

Placement is tedious and time-consuming requiring a lot of coordination to manage the cyclic operations of workplace learning (MCo01-15/10/19-GU).

The challenge of inadequate supervision was highlighted with the views that;

The ratio of the student to the workplace supervisor is very high hence the deficiency in the learning process sometimes we have so many students 40 students in the field to supervise in a short period (MCo01-15/10/19-GU).

The academic staff sometimes don't supervise the students undertaking workplace learning at all. You find cases where a student complains about a supervisor not being seen and if a student is seen he could probably not have given his or her total commitment to the student it becomes a challenge to the university because the university would expect a lot of commitment to the person they have chosen to go and supervise the students in the field (FCo02-18/9/19-KyU).

Concerning biased assessment, the significant response was that;

The assessment from the field supervisors is usually very biased even when we train them on assessment (MCo01-15/10/19-GU).

About the facilitation of WPL activities the distinguishable responses were;

The facilitation is usually not enough to cover the period as well (MCo01-15/10/19-GU).

They normally have issues and the issues with financial facilitation which is usually not sufficient to meet the requirement of workplace learning (MCo03-25/9/19-KyU).

Higher education institutions organise workplace learning in the aspects of placement supervision and monitoring, the funding for these activities as Murdoch University (2011), Sweet (2013) and Sweet (2014) suggested is one of the key ingredients to effective delivery. The work of workplace learning coordinators being perceived as irrelevant, coupled with their role being less appreciated as reported by Weible (2010) was defeated by the findings. Indeed, as expressed by one of the respondents, the execution of workplace learning coordination through all the stages by the stakeholder is complex and relies on the roles played by the coordinators in HEIs. It is, therefore, essential that the coordinators are considered relevant, necessary and should be appreciated to have effective workplace learning.

The quality of workplace learning is well measured through adequate and sufficient supervision by both higher education institutions and workplace supervisors as they gather all the needed concerns in the undertaking as suggested by Merwe (2013) and Brennan and Little (1996). Supervision is a key activity in workplace learning ideally carried out two way, that is, by both the HEI and the workplace. Supervision is one of the key activities of workplace learning through which assessment and monitoring are done by both higher education institution and workplace supervisors. Without

adequate or in the absence of proper supervision then workplace learning is fruitless. The need for continuous improvement of the criteria used in the assessment is fundamental. Like Byrom and Aiken (2014) and Matthews (1999) the quality of workplace assessment or procedure depends on how well its criteria are understood by the supervisors. Continuous engagement and training are vital in aligning the assessment to acceptable levels. Higher education institutions that have not developed the assessment criteria for their workplace learning assessment need to emulate such a practice to be able to ease the process.

This is similar to what Billet (2004) observed that workplace learning continues to be perceived as inferior by the elites, reluctance of many higher education institutions to embrace (Devins 2013) and according to Hyland (2001) they continue to resist workplace learning. The insight that workplace learning is perceived as inferior to other learning strategies is proof of a disturbing practise to higher education institutions that Costely (2011) emphasized. There is a need to realise that workplace learning is not inferior to other learning strategies employed by higher education institutions. This finding could be the reason behind less attention, commitment, less financing and motivation by the stakeholders. Higher Education Institutions and workplaces have not fully formalized their relationship regarding workplace learning. As witnessed by Rajab (2015) that workplace challenges arise from the kind linkages and partnership or relationship between HEIs and workplaces. Similarly, without clear, strong and elaborate linkages between HEIs and workplaces, the response to the challenges thereof cannot be bound in time. Formalised relationships with the world of work regarding workplace learning are critical in ensuring that the aims of workplace learning are achieved. As workplace

learning continues to be integrated into most of the higher education institutions, there is a need to formalise the relationship to be able to both organise and achieve the intended outcome of workplace learning. Similar to what Solnet et. al (2007) Brennan et al (2006) and Sweet (2014) workplace learning indeed continues to attract less facilitation in both workplaces and HEIs not necessarily because of limited resources but as Hyland (2001) and Billet (2004) observed the poor perception that it is inferior not deserving the agitated attention in form of funding and other forms of support.

#### **4.6.3 Challenges of Workplace Learning Faced by Students**

The students face several challenges when they offer WPL. The challenges faced by hosting workplaces affect the dictates of the existing guidelines on the organisation of WPL as illustrated in figure 1.2 of the conceptual framework. They could also affect the required conducive environment and the conditions that were anticipated by Kolb (1984) in Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory. The respondents were asked to rate the predetermined statements regarding the post-workplace learning activities using a 5-point Likert scale where 5 for strongly agree, 4 for agree, 3 for neutral, 2 for disagree and 1 for strongly disagree. The results obtained are shown in Table 4.48.

**Table 4.48 Challenges of WPL faced by Students**

Statement	Strongly agree		Agree		Not sure		Disagree		Strongly	Mea	Standard	
	Disagree								n	Deviation		
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	n	n
World of work readily avails												
vacancies for WPL	48	13.6	61	17.3	43	12.2	88	25	112	31.7	2.56	1.43
WPL provides a pathway to												
employment	152	43.2	110	31.3	50	14.2	25	7.1	15	4.3	4.02	1.12
WPL improves the												
employability of HEIs												
students	177	50.3	122	34.7	31	8.8	8	2.3	14	4.0	4.25	0.99
Students undertaking WPL												
are usually exploited	110	31.3	124	35.2	48	13.6	37	10.5	33	9.4	3.68	1.27
Students undertaking WPL												
are usually exploited	146	41.5	107	30.4	42	11.9	27	7.7	30	8.5	3.89	1.27

provide cheap labour

Duration of WPL is always

sufficient for learning	70	19.9	79	22.4	59	16.8	82	23.3	62	17.6	3.04	1.40
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Guidelines help minimize

WPL challenges	143	40.6	138	39.2	36	10.2	17	4.8	18	5.1	4.05	1.08
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Challenges of WPL don't

originate from HEIs and

workplaces	68	19.4	82	23.4	107	30.5	55	15.7	39	11.1	3.24	1.25
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Findings in Table 4.48 suggest that the students face the challenges of accessing vacancies for WPL, they easily exploited by the hosting workplaces and are sought to provide cheap labour as they undertake WPL. The findings from the key informants also generated a lack of insurance during WPL, high costs, the low interest of students, harassment, mistaking WPL for employment as challenges that students face when undertaking WPL.

Concerning insurance of students while undertaking workplace learning the prominent responses were that;

The level of uptake of workplace insurance is generally low even though of course we have the workers' compensation Act but its implementation has remained weak now in a situation where existing employees, full-time employees are not covered it's very difficult to expect that the trainee will be covered (MEfu06-16/9/19-K'la).

Safety is also not well taken care of when they are in the field. They don't have insurance; they don't have almost their protection. The students are not covered by any insurance (MCo01-15/10/19-GU).

The need for insurance for the students whole undertaking workplace learning was highlighted as being necessary by Workplace learning Policy (2015), Department of education (2016) and Murdoch University (2011). In workplaces where students undertaking workplace learning are exposed to the

risk of injury, infections and even death need to be insured to be able to conveniently participate in the work-related process for their learning. The insurance cover can be one for health instituted by the HEI to the students or the life one to particularly cover the period of workplace learning undertaking. About the high cost of undertaking WPL incurred by the student the prominent views were;

For students, it is quite expensive since they sponsor themselves now, they have to hire a place where to stay and also transport to go to those places of work and when they go to the place of work (MCo03-25/9/19-KyU).

The other problem is the cost which students complain about it is costly and indeed it is costly they are coming from home and they travel long distances from their places of aboard to the places where they undertake training (MCo08-23/9/19-MUBS).

As expressed by Brennan and Little (1996) realization of workplace learning is not a cheap option for students as well in terms of financing to meet the need. Higher education institutions and indeed participating workplaces must find options of smoothening the financial burden of students while undertaking workplace learning. The dispensing of some stipend to students as they participate in the productive work or tasks in the workplaces or providing them with basic welfare needs (especially food and shelter) is critical.

The low interest of students was highlighted that;

Now what am realizing is that our students just want to go through the system. They are after completing they are not interested in learning (MCo06-29/9/19-BU).

Late coming of students during workplace learning, some students don't exhibit a good attitude and interest in the training (FCo02-18/9/19-KyU).

The low interest by the students while undertaking workplace learning underscores what Billet (2004) avowed that the for effective learning to take place in the workplace cooperation, personal commitment are fundamental ingredients. The students need to be cognizant that most of the benefits of workplace learning accrue to them in a way of offering them work experience, exposure to the work process and improving their employability. Their interest in the undertaking of workplace learning is thus ultimate for them to be able to reap maximally for workplace learning.

Student harassments were re-counted as being most sexually related in the expression like;

It is a very big issue. The major challenge mostly is from ladies which is sexual harassment when they go there almost every staff, the manager be looking at them as sexual pride so that is the challenge from ladies. I have not heard from male students but ladies come complaining and some even reach the extent of

not completing the workplace learning undertaking  
because of the situation (MCo08-23/9/19-MUBS).

As communities of practice that Wenger (1998) described tolerating such behaviours risks the dignity of the potential victims. Such hidden issues that Billet (2001) pointed greatly affect the intended outcomes of learning in the workplaces.

The duration of WPL was as sufficient amidst hosting workplaces finding it insufficient. As observed from the views that;

The duration is very insufficient (MDit04-23/10/19-  
K'la).

According to my opinion, it is okay although some  
organisations tend to want to have some more time  
with our students (FCo02-18/9/19-KyU)

The implementation of workplace learning during the holiday period of the higher education institutions as articulated by Sweet (2014) that are short and subject to the programs of the institutions is the main reason workplace learning is carried out for a limited period. Yet according to Wenger (1998) any form of workplace learning that does not allow the student to experience the full spectrum or rhythm of the work processes from daily to weekly to monthly and annually does not guarantee development and acquisition of expected competence. Therefore, HEIs need to examine the scheduling of workplace learning to be able to provide additional time for workplace learning. Regarding the exploitation and the assertion that students

from HEIs provide cheap labour while undertaking workplace learning, the findings from the key informants confirmed the occurrences that;

It is not exploitation as such because our students also exploit the opportunity and some of them gain a lot (MCo03-25/9/19-KyU).

I don't call it exploitation maybe what I could call exploitation which is under deployment where students are made to do petty tasks instead of their cores and they end up not learning anything but if you go somewhere and you're given more work than usual. to me, that is still training because you gaining experience so people who complain about working too much don't subscribe to it (MCo08-23/9/19-MUBS).

As much as there were respondents that expressed a contrary view about the existence of exploitation of students during workplace learning, many supported the observation of Sweet (2014) that students undertaking workplace learning can easily be targets of exploitation by the hosting workplaces. These aspects may be arising from the fact that workplaces want to maximise the work of ambitious students and in other instances workplaces under deploy the students by involving them in petty tasks unrelated to their core learning objectives during workplace learning undertaking.

About mistaking WPL for employment instead of improving employability the key informants pointed out that;

... they have done a lot of theory and a little bit of practice but not in the real world so when they go there, they get authentic tasks. In the process easing their future transition into work (MCo01-15/10/19-GU)

When they go to the workplaces, they learn from them and they get more equipped on how to handle issues at work and in doing that they get prepared on how to face the field after they have completed their programmes (FCo02-18/9/19-KyU)

Contrary to what Rajab (2015) had asserted that there is always a misunderstanding between employability and workplace learning the findings indicated that the respondents were aware that workplace learning instead reduces the duration of job-seeking as asserted by Thang and Wongsurawat (2016) improves chances of employment (Mcewen & Trede (2014). Likewise, as Fiacco and Alvarez (2014) had observed workplace learning strengthens chances of employment as one of the tangible benefits. This is can be attributed to the inherent experiences that the respondents have regarding workplace learning as one of the ways that the students can potentially get employed as opposed to guaranteeing employment.

This is an affirmation that when students are involved in meaningful workplace learning the better their chances of getting jobs using the reference of experience gained. The potential employers could be their previous workplace

learning hosts or other establishments that always hold the experience gained from workplace learning in others organisations.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

The study set out to assess the influence of the existing education and workplace related policies on the organisation of workplace learning as practised in HEIs in Uganda.

The study sought to answer the following questions; What national regulations are used for effecting Workplace Learning in Higher Education Institutions in Uganda? What are the organisational guidelines used in the implementation of Workplace Learning offered by Higher Education Institutions in Uganda? How are the activities of Workplace Learning organised for its effective integration in the Higher Education Institutions' curricula in Uganda? and What challenges are faced while undertaking workplace learning offered by higher education institutions in Uganda? This chapter, therefore, consists of the summary of research findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

#### 5.2 Summary

##### 5.2.1 National Legislations that Regulate WPL in Uganda

The first objective of the study was to examine the national legislations regulating the implementation of Workplace Learning in Higher Education Institutions in Uganda. the findings under this objective are eight. They are;

First, there is no comprehensive national legislation to regulate workplace learning in Uganda but the higher education institutions and hosting workplaces manage

workplace learning using multiple legislations that are not necessarily related to the undertaking.

Second, level of awareness regarding national legislations for workplace learning in Uganda was indecisiveness indicating the extent of the blurriness and ambiguity to which workplace learning is being regulated in Uganda. The unclarity of the national legislations regarding workplace learning is not an uncommon phenomenon in many countries like Uganda resulting in uncertainty of workplace learning regulation.

Third, apart from the employment regulation of 2011 that addresses the apprenticeship training program the rest of the workplace related legislations (Employment Act, Employment Regulation 2011, Occupational Health and Safety) being used to regulate WPL were remote to the undertaking. The misapplication of several legislations in the implementation of workplace learning highlighted the nature of government involvement as being scattered and unsettled lacking a clearly understood direction of legislation regarding workplace learning in Uganda.

Fourth, Business Technical and Vocational Education and Training Act of 2008, Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act (UOTA) the education related legislations that regulate higher education in Uganda were also not detailing any form of regulation for WPL. The Quality assurance guidelines of the NCHE only recommended the inclusion of WPL in higher education academic programmes with no other details for its implementation and control.

Fifth, although national legislations for workplace learning play roles that include; powering WPL, informing organisational policies, legitimising, formalising WPL, offering protection mechanism for the vulnerable in undertaking WPL, increase attention from other players, provide for strategic action, provide support to the

stakeholders and set national standard practices for WPL, the undertaking of workplace learning in Uganda was inadequate in the absence of a comprehensive legislation.

Sixth, there is no incentive mechanism for the participating workplaces to be able to meet their additional costs and even attract others to offer vacancies for learning for the students from high education institutions in Uganda.

Seventh, higher education institutions are not offered any financial support to undertake workplace learning and therefore continue to grapple with inadequate facilitation.

Eighth, the students that are involved in workplace learning are not offered any insurance during the undertaking therefore risking their lives without any form of protection during WPL.

### **5.2.2 Organisational Guidelines for Workplace Learning**

The second objective of the study was to determine the organisational guidelines followed in the effecting Workplace Learning of Higher Education Institutions in Uganda. The findings under this objective are seven. They are;

First, there was a low level of awareness about the HEIs guidelines regarding workplace learning of the sampled higher education institutions only one had a comprehensive institutional level policy for workplace learning the rest were depending on the practices in the different schools or faculties or having scattered aspects that guide different aspects like supervision, report writing without properly formulated guidelines at all levels of implementing learning in workplaces.

Second, some institutions were depending on the academic programme course outlines to implement workplace learning which was indicated to be inadequate to address the enormous requirements of undertaking workplace learning.

Thirdly, students were being charged administrative fees by higher education institutions to meet the financial needs of workplace learning and only students on government sponsorship were being reimbursed some funds to cater for their workplace learning requirements.

Fourth, the HEIs that were not having any forms of guidelines to regulate workplace learning indicated that it was affecting the quality and the organisation of learning for their students. Fifth, the findings suggested the following aspects that should be included in the HEIs' policies for workplace learning; stakeholder roles, private sector players standards to participate in workplace learning, qualification for students to undertake workplace learning, financing and matters related to payments to students and the staff that take part in the activities of workplace learning. The aspects that HEIs need to be included in their policies for workplace learning provide a clear basis of the magnitude of the appropriateness of the need that should be filled to have eased management of workplace learning.

Sixth, most of the workplaces had no formulated guidelines to facilitate their participation in workplace learning, students undertaking workplace learning had been include in a special category of temporary staff in some human resource manuals. The other regulations being used include the workers' compensation act, employment act, Employment regulation, occupational health and safety act which are devoid of the specifics for workplace learning requirements.

Seventh, workplace learning was not being sufficiently regulated suggesting the following to be included in such policies for the realisation of the intended benefits; facilitation of students undertaking workplace learning, allocation of staff to handle students concerns in the workplaces, specifying the terms of learning as the students learn and health insurance during workplace learning undertaking. In addition to, time management, code of conduct for the students, proper and clear work plans or schedules for learning during workplace learning and need to have demonstrations for the students during the workplace learning.

### **5.2.3 Organisation of Workplace Learning**

The third objective of the study was to evaluate the activities involved in the organisation of Workplace Learning integration into Higher Education Institutions' curricula in Uganda. The findings under this objective are nine. They are;

First, regarding pre-workplace learning activities, the findings indicated that the requirement for pre-workplace learning seminars and orientation to students about workplace learning by the HEIs and hosting workplaces were being carried out satisfactorily. The HEIs coordinators of workplace learning and the course unit undertaken before undertaking workplace learning were resourceful in ensuring effective learning. Students were also being issued with the training schedules, report writing guidelines and the learning objectives were being well spelt out before commencement of the training.

Second, securing vacancies for WPL by the students and the HEIs alone was found to be inadequate requiring a mixed approach that utilises scouting, memoranda of understanding by HEIs and participation of students in the placement.

Third, the use of a log or record book to note key daily learning experience, cooperation of the mentors and other staff during workplace learning and the competence of the workplace trainers were indicated to be useful, sufficient and adequate in ensuring learning by the students. In addition, the sequencing of learning from simple to complex tasks for ease or systematic progression of learning, duration of the workplace learning was highlighted as being sufficiently done.

Fourth, access to organisation facilities, set criteria for assessment of learning during workplace learning, the guidance from HEI supervisors for workplace learning and supervision of workplace learning by both workplace supervisors and supervisors from the HEIs were shown as being deficient.

Fifth, supervision of students by HEIs staff one of the key components of workplace learning was insufficiently taking place in some instances highlighting the deficiency of the practices being relied on.

Sixth, there was a firm recommendation of workplace learning to be included to all students undertaking higher education by the respondents on the realisation of being beneficial and necessary, workplace learning was noted as suitable for skills acquisition and relevant for the career development of the participating students.

Seventh, further still, the findings indicated that workplace learning report writing by the participating students was a fundamental basis of reflection of learning that should be upheld.

Eighth, post-workplace learning seminars for both students and academic staff were not being adequately carried out by the workplace learning hosting

workplaces and HEIs denying workplace learning an opportunity to complete the evaluation.

Ninth, the overall assessment of workplace learning was also indicated as not being satisfactory on top of HEIs not instituting a systematic approach to providing feedback to the hosting workplaces.

#### **5.2.4 Challenges to Workplace Learning**

The fourth objective of the study was to ascertain the challenges faced in the undertaking higher education institution students' Workplace Learning in Uganda.

The findings under this objective are eleven. They are;

First, the study found out that the competency of workplace trainers, workplace learning procedures and training content were sufficient and adequate for the students that undertaking workplace learning.

Second, however was that the acceptability of HEI students by other employees was highlighted as being poor and characterized by suspicion and distrust to facilitate equitable learning from the workplaces by the HEI students.

Third, workplaces continue to offer limited vacancies for workplace learning the situation that is made even worse when some potentially well-equipped and reputable organisations shunning participation in workplace learning.

Fourth, the workplaces that host students from HEIs have to bear with the increased operational costs while offering workplace learning arising from wastage of materials, damaging and repairing of tools and other equipment.

Fifth, host workplaces are faced with the challenge of ill-prepared students who have little or nearly no basic skills for the tasks in the work world.

Sixth, insufficient funding to meet the financial need for effective workplace learning, the complexity of the coordination of workplace learning activities,

supervision of workplace learning by the HEIs staff that is insufficient and the assessment criteria that has been criticised for being deficient to provide a reliable overall assessment of learning.

Seventh, continued perception of workplace learning as being inferior, unformalized relationships between workplaces and HEIs have not facilitated effective workplace learning. Eighth, HEIs were associated with a slow response to the challenges of workplace learning and providing inadequate facilitation to the staff participating in workplace learning.

Ninth, students continue mistaking workplace learning for employment instead of employability the assumption the workplace learning leads to spontaneous employment.

Tenth, the possibility of exploiting students for cheap labour by the hosting workplaces, the duration of workplace learning was described as being insufficient for the students to achieve the set objectives, harassment was rampant against both male and female students and exhibition of low interest in learning by the students.

Eleventh, workplace learning was regarded as being very costly in terms of upkeep during the period of workplace learning and exorbitant charges imposed by workplaces for hosting the students for workplace learning and the unavailability of insurance against any eventualities during workplace learning.

### **5.3 Conclusion(s)**

The study aimed to assess the influence of the existing education and workplace related policies on the organisation of higher education institution students' workplace learning in Uganda. Considering the findings, the following conclusions were made.

Firstly, based on the findings that there was an equally divided level of awareness about national policies regarding workplace learning, the claimed forms of policies that regulate workplace learning were blurred, scattered and the aspects covered by the existing policies did not apply to workplace learning. Low applicability the Employment Regulation 2011, Employment Act 2016, occupational health and safety Act in regulating workplace learning, the negative effect on the organisation of workplace learning in the absence of a national legislation and the necessity of a national legislation to influence the quality of workplace learning, it is reasonable to conclude that there is no direct, appropriate, clear and comprehensive national legislation to regulate workplace learning as implemented by the HEIs in Uganda. The policy-makers at the national level might need a basic model to guide in the formulation of national legislation to guide workplace learning in Uganda. This could have led to forfeiting the expected benefits of workplace learning, haphazard implementation of workplace learning and unclear policies related to workplace learning in HEIs and hosting workplaces.

Secondly, based on the findings that the organisational (HEIs & workplaces) guidelines being used to manage workplace learning were insufficient to meet the expected implementation of workplace learning in Uganda it is logical to conclude that; The use or application of the universities and other tertiary institutions Act 2003, NCHE quality assurance guidelines, *Employment Act 2006*, *Occupational Safety and Health Act 2006* and the *Employment Regulation 2011* in the implementation of workplace learning were incidental and inadequate or misplaced. Therefore, higher education institutions and workplaces need to recognise that there is a definite gap in those policies that may not articulate the aspirations of workplace

learning. The formulation of institutional policies and or guidelines by some HEIs and inclusion of aspects of workplace learning aspects in the human resource manuals of some workplaces is a step in the right direction and a manifestation of the need for clear guidelines to regulation this form of learning in workplaces. Having noticed that most of the HEIs and hosting workplaces are devoid of guidelines to regulate workplace learning a model to show basics that can be followed in the formulation of such policies or guidelines is critical.

Thirdly, based on the findings regarding the organisation of workplace learning that most of the activities in the pre, during and post workplace learning being carried out effectively apart from the placement procedures requiring harnessing, set criteria for assessment of learning during workplace learning necessitating improvement, the guidance from HEI supervisors for workplace learning and supervision of workplace learning by both workplace supervisors and supervisors from the HEIs requiring improvement. Post-workplace learning seminars for both students and academic staff needing emphasis, overall assessment of workplace learning being unsatisfactory and workplace learning general feedback being unsystematic and informal it is reasonable to conclude that the activities involved in the organisation of workplace learning by HEIs in Uganda have been organised with some and very critical areas that need streamlining through appropriate policies.

Fourthly, based on the findings of a wide range of challenges that include: the unacceptability of HEI students; untimely response to workplace learning challenges offering of limited vacancies for workplace learning, funding, unsatisfactory overall assessment, lack of insurance, ill-prepared students and inadequate supervision of workplace learning. It can be concluded that without appropriate policies to mitigate

the effect such challenges would imply on workplace learning and its sustainability may not be achieved.

#### **5.4 Recommendation(s)**

Based on the conclusions of the study, the following recommendations can be suggested;

##### **5.4.1 Policy Recommendations**

- The government of Uganda through the ministries of Labour and education in consultation with the National Council for Higher Education, HEIs and the world of work can formulate a comprehensive national legislation to impress the organisation and implementation of workplace learning, inform others policies at lower levels particularly at HEIs and hosting workplaces for the effective implementation of workplace learning. Such a legislation ought to highlight the aspects of incentives to the host workplaces, funding the students and the HEIs for WPL, insurance of the students undertaking WPL, setting the national requirement for inclusion of WPL in all HEI academic programmes and dictating the duration of each specific programme depending on the professional requirements and require the world of work to participate in the human capital development agenda as part of the contribution to the country and
- Higher Education Institutions and hosting workplaces intending to participate in meaningful and effective workplace learning can advocate and participate in the establishment of a national legislation. This they can do through their umbrella associations like the federation of employers' workers' unions, NCHE as the

regulator highlight the need to have a national legislation to govern WPL for the mutual benefits of the stakeholders and government.

- Higher education institutions can establish and facilitate the formulation of guidelines at different levels (colleges, faculties & departments) and even further to each academic programme involved in workplace learning for ease implementation of workplace learning. Higher education Institutions can utilise the different professional bodies, representatives of the different sectors of the world of work, employers' federations and alumni associations in the formulation of their WPL guidelines.

#### **5.4.2 Recommendations Related to Practice**

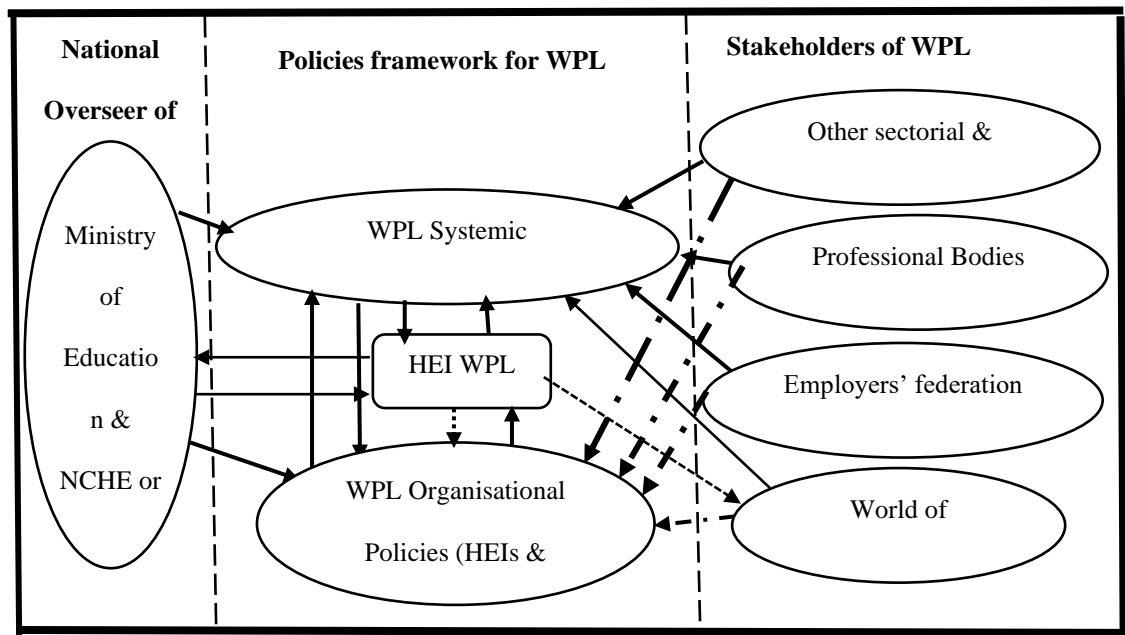
- Higher education institutions and workplaces may formalise their relationships through memoranda of understanding so that critical areas about placement, supervision, guidance, synchronization of learning, assessment and facilities access by students are improved, easily monitored and established for the organisation of workplace learning. The MoUs could also include the aspects of students' facilitations by the hosting workplaces during their WPL and the training of the workplace trainers on the assessment and supervision of the students.
- Higher Education Institutions can synchronise their academic programme such that before students undertake workplace learning they have been exposed to the execution of basic tasks using up to date tools and the right materials in the demonstration laboratories. This can be done by ensuring that the aligning of the HEIs academic programmes is cognisant of the expectations of undertaking WPL

with the involvement of the world of work during academic formulation and reviews with emphasis to WPL.

- Higher Education Institutions may need to continue to include workplace learning in their academic programmes as one of the learning strategies that provide for skills acquisition and career development of their graduates and other benefits that link higher education to the world of work. The HEIs can also consider increasing the frequency of engagement in WPL to enhance the student interaction with the world of work.
- Higher Education Institutions and hosting workplaces may need to better manage WPL in their institutions by establishing WPL coordination sections or departments at different levels. Through their established structures that hosting workplaces can create personnel positions in charge of training for students from HEIs and such departments can ensure that they initiate and deal with all the concerns and implementation of WPL in the particular Workplace. On the other hand, the HEIs departments or directorates for WPL can be responsible for the coordination of all WPL activities and issues in the particular institution in addition to keeping in constant collaboration with the world of work regarding WPL on behalf of their institutions.
- Staff from HEIs and hosting workplaces may need continuous sensitisation highlighting and emphasizing their roles, responsibilities and required contributions towards effective and meaningful workplace learning undertaking. The sensitisation can be done by organising seminars and or workshops where the staff from the world of work make presentations regarding WPL and the other way for the HEI staff to the staff in hosting workplaces.

- Higher education institutions need to review the overall assessment criteria in consultation with the hosting workplaces to be able to make it credible, acceptable, reliable, understood and satisfactory to minimise biases and meet the intention of workplace learning.

#### 5.4.3 Model for Workplace Learning Policy Formulation and Implementation



**Figure 5. 1 Workplace Learning Policy Formulation Model**

The workplace learning policies model illustrated in figure 5.1 shows the ideal linkage national overseer, policies framework and stakeholders of WPL in the formulation of a effective policy framework for workplace learning. The stakeholders of WPL can be consulted by the National overseer of WPL in the formulation of the systemic legislations of WPL with the view of maximising the aspects of the roles that national legislation play in the management of WPL. Such roles include; provision of the legally options for funding workplace learning,

setting incentive for the participating workplaces, spelling out the roles of the host workplaces, higher education institutions and students, setting the national standards for learning in the workplaces and establishing requirement for insurance for students undertaking workplace learning. The systemic legislation further legitimizes and formalises workplace learning, offer national legal protection and empower WPL. When national legislation for WPL have been instituted they can be used to inform the policies of workplace learning at the organisational levels. The other aspects of the national legislation can be used directly in the implementation of WPL (HEI WPL).

Having been informed, empowered and legitimatised, the HEIs and workplaces can formulate their policies setting the requirements for workplace learning, qualifications for workplaces, students and staff to participate in the processes of workplace learning and putting in place and dispatching the required facilitation to staff and students for undertaking workplace learning in consultations with the stakeholders with the guidance or involvement of the overseer. The review of WPL policies can be carried out from the feedback provided from the implementation of workplace learning to the organisational policies, systemic legislations and the overseer agency of WPL.

#### **5.4.4 Areas of Further Research**

- Financing of workplace learning may need a further detailed study to establish the effective mobilisation, distribution and utilisation of funding possibilities. Such a study would look at the different options the government can financially

facilitate the world of work and HEIs in executing WPL and possibilities of facilitating students during their WPL.

- A study of workplace learning supervision and assessment may be necessary to determine appropriate practices for undertaking workplace learning. Since supervision and assessment form some of the core aspects of WPL a complete study would highlight their significance in workplace learning so that the HEI staff and hosting workplace staff that carry them out would underscore their contributions to the implementation of meaningful WPL.
- The utilisation of a centralised agency to manage, coordinating and controlling WPL in the education system has been suggested elsewhere and even bodies established to do so but how such an agency would be involved in the WPL of the students in Uganda may need a separate study to establish its feasibility.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Interview Guides

#### General Instructions

Dear **respondent**, currently I am undertaking a PhD Thesis titled “*Influence of Existing Policies on organization of Workplace Learning in Higher Education Institutions in Uganda*”.

You have been selected as a **Key informant** respondent to this study so that the researcher obtains in-depth reliable data to facilitate the study through an in-depth interview about the set objectives.

The data obtained from this study will be treated with utmost confidentiality that it deserves and will only be used for academic purposes.

**Main Purpose of the study:** *to examine the influence of the the existing policies (national & organisational) on the organisation of workplace learning in Higher Education Institutions in Uganda.*

#### The specific objectives are:

1. To identify the existing national policies that regulate workplace learning in higher education institutions in Uganda.
2. To scrutinise the current organisational (HEIs & workplace) policies affecting workplace learning in Uganda’s higher education institutions.
3. To examine the organisation of workplace learning by higher education institutions in Uganda.
4. To find out the challenges affecting students, higher education institutions and workplaces undertaking workplace learning in Uganda.

For Purposes of this study the terms below are described

**Workplace Learning;** practicum, internship, attachment or field attachment, placement, industrial training, school or teaching practise

**Challenges;** constraints, restrictions, restraints, limitations, constrictions and bottlenecks.

**Policy;** the set of laws, rules, guidelines, procedures, regulations that establish, regulate and facilitate the management of workplace learning.

Attached is the questionnaire and a consent form .

I honestly appreciate the time, the knowledge and contribution you have made to the study.

**Eric Douglas Kalanda**

PhD Student/Researcher

Mob 0703993878/779457566

Email: kalandaericd@gmail.com

### **Interview guide for the Academic Registrars and DVCs in HEIs.**

#### **Section A: National policies affecting Workplace Learning**

1. What are the national policies that facilitate the implementation of workplace learning in your institution?
2. Through your experience, how do(es) they (it) affect workplace learning?
3. Are they sufficient or adequate for the intended benefits to be realized? How and how not?
4. Do you think a comprehensive national policy is necessary?
5. What issues would such a policy address or entail?
6. What kind of support do you get from government to implement workplace learning?

**Section B: Organisational (HEIs & Host workplaces) policies affecting workplace learning.**

7. a) What are the university policy(ies) that inform(s) workplace learning in your Institution?  
 b) Do you have any other policies at other levels like faculty or school or departmental or for each academic programme?
8. What do (es) it (they) entail?
9. What has been its (their) impact on the efficiency of workplace learning?
10. What are the gaps in the policy that need to be filled?
11. How do workplaces regulate workplace learning for your students?

**Section C: Organisation of workplace learning**

12. Briefly; what are the activities involved in workplace learning?
13. What, (if any), is involved in preparing students for workplace learning? Are these preparatory activities necessary in your opinion?
14. How do students, HEIs staff and workplaces participate in the entire workplace learning program?
15. What documents are used in workplace learning?
16. How do you share feedback (s) with the workplaces? How do you use such feedback?
17. What do you think is the need and relevance of workplace learning?
18. In your opinion is the duration sufficient to achieve the intended objectives?
19. What is the frequency workplace learning through the duration of the study programme?
20. What is your comment on the timing visa vi the intended benefits?

21. How do students secure vacancies for workplace learning and what is the institutional policy? And what are some of the implications of this strategy?

**Section D: Challenges faced by students, HEIs while undertaking workplace learning**

22. What are the challenges faced by your Institution while undertaking workplace learning?
23. What are the challenges faced by your students while undertaking workplace learning?
24. How do you and the Institution provide solutions to these challenges?
25. Could there be any linkage between the challenges and the policies [national or institutional (HEIs& host workplaces)]?
26. In your opinion, how can a policy framework solve some of the issues raised?

**Thank you Very Much for accepting to share your experience.**

**Interview guide for the Minister, commissioner of Higher education, NCHE and DIT**

**Section A: National policies affecting Workplace Learning**

1. What is the government's view on workplace learning provided for by HEIs to students?
2. What role is played by government in workplace learning as offered by Higher Education Institutions?
3. Is there a policy framework that ensures that workplace learning adequately takes place?
4. What do they (it) entail?
5. Are these policies comprehensive enough, in your opinion?

6. Do you think a comprehensive national policy to address workplace learning is necessary?
7. What issues would such a policy address or entail?
8. How does government secure the interests of students during workplace learning?
9. What (if any) incentive (s) does government accord to HEIs and workplaces to carryout workplace learning?
10. In ministerial Statement to Parliament FY 2012/2013 there was commitment to continue supporting universities in carrying out workplace learning, Is this still the practice?
11. What are other policies that can affect this form learning? Are they sufficient or adequate for the intended benefits to be realized?

**Section B: Organisational (HEIs & Host workplaces) policies affecting workplace learning.**

12. How should HEIs and the Host workplaces regulate workplace learning?
13. What is the relevance of involving the world of work in Higher education in Uganda?

**Section C: Challenges faced by students, HEIs undertaking workplace learning in Uganda.**

14. Are you aware of any challenges are faced in workplace learning?
15. What is the linkage between the challenges and the policies [systemic or institutional (HEIs& host workplaces)]?
16. How does the government provide solutions to these challenges?
17. How can a national policy framework solve some of the challenges raised?

**Thank you Very Much for accepting to share your experience**

**Interview guide for the Co-ordinator(s) workplace learning in HEIs.**

**Section A: National policies affecting Workplace Learning**

1. What are the national policies that ensure the implementation of workplace learning?
2. In your opinion, how do(es) they (it) affect workplace learning?
3. Are they sufficient or adequate for you intended benefits to be realized?
4. Do you think a comprehensive national policy is necessary?
5. What issues would such a policy address?

**Section B: Organisational (HEIs & Host workplaces) policies affecting workplace learning.**

6. Do you have any university policy(ies) that inform(s) workplace learning in your Institution?
7. What has been its (their) impact on the efficiency of workplace learning?
8. What are the gaps in the policy that need to be filled?
9. How do workplaces regulate or guide workplace learning?

**Section C: Organisation of workplace learning**

10. What is involved in workplace learning?
11. How are students, HEIs staff and workplaces involved in the process of workplace learning?
12. What documents are used in workplace learning?
13. How do you share feedback with workplaces about workplace learning?
14. What are the pull and or push factors for workplace learning?

15. In your opinion, how is the duration sufficient to achieve the intended objectives?
16. How many times do your students undertake workplace learning?
17. What is your comment on the timing visa vi the intended benefits?
18. How do students secure vacancies for workplace learning and what is the institutional policy? And what are some of the implications of this strategy?

**Section D: Challenges faced by students, HEIs undertaking workplace learning in Uganda.**

19. What are the challenges that are faced by the HEIs while undertaking workplace learning?
20. What are the challenges that are faced by the students while undertaking workplace learning?
21. What about the challenges of workplaces ?
22. How do you and the Institution provide solutions to the challenges?
23. What is the linkage between the challenges and the policies of workplace learning?
24. How can a policy framework solve some of the issues raised?

**Thank you Very Much for accepting to share your experience**

**Interview guide for staff of Workers union, Employers federation and skilling Uganda.**

**Section A: National policies affecting Workplace Learning**

1. As the policymaker(s) for labour in the country, HEIs (Universities) students have been undertaking workplace learning as part of their academic requirement. What is the national policy framework concerning this practice?
2. How are the interests of higher education students undertaking workplace learning assured?
3. How are host workplaces incentivized to offer workplace learning?
4. The Employment regulations of 2011, articulates the legislation of informal apprenticeship (as one of the special employees). What could be the implication of this to the learning process?
5. How do other policies affect workplace learning?
6. How can comprehensive national policy address workplace learning?
7. What issues would such a policy address or entail?

**Section B: Institutional (HEIs & Host workplaces) policies affecting workplace learning.**

8. How do host workplaces regulate or guide workplace learning?
9. Since training or teaching is understood as more as social service, do you think that workplace learning is feasible?

**Section C: Challenges faced by students, HEIs undertaking workplace learning in Uganda.**

10. What are some of the challenges faced by workplaces in hosting workplace learning?
11. What solutions does government provide to these challenges?
12. Could there be any linkage between the challenges and the policies [systemic or institutional (HEIs& host workplaces)]?
13. How can a policy framework solve some of the issues that arise?

**Thank you Very Much for accepting to share your experience**

**Appendix B: Questionnaires**

**Questionnaire for University academic staff involved in workplace learning**

**A. Section A: Biographical and Background data (Tick appropriately)**

1.1 Gender: Male  Female

1.2 Age range in years:

a). 20-30 years  b). 31-40 years  c). 41-50yrs  d). 51 years

and above

1.3. How many times have you been involved in workplace learning activities?

a). Once  b). Twice  c). Thrice and above

1.4. How long were you involved in workplace learning activities?

a). Less than one-year  b). 1-2 years  c). 3-5yrs  d). 5 years

and above

1.5 Which Academic programme level have been engaged in workplace learning?

a) PhD  b) Master degree  c) Bachelor  c) Diploma  d)

Certificate

1.6. What is your highest Academic qualifications?

a) PhD  b) Master degree  c) Bachelor  c) Diploma  d)

Certificate

1.7 What is the ownership of your institution?

a)  Public  
 b)  Private  
 c)  Mixed

1.8. Who are the main supervisor of workplace learning in the workplaces?

- a)  HR manager  HR director/Head of HR department
- b)  General manager/Director/Managing director
- c)  Other
- d)  If others, specify;  
.....

**Section B: National policies for Workplace Learning**

The next part of the survey will ask you questions about national policies that facilitate your organization involvement in workplace learning.

Answer accordingly by ticking against the most appropriate answer

2.1 Are you aware of any national policy that regulate the undertaking workplace learning?

- Yes                       No

**If YES: answer questions 2.2 to 2.7**

**If NO; Answer questions 2.8 to 2.10**

2.2 What are those policies?

- a) Employment Act
- b) Employment regulation
- c) Occupational health and safety
- d) All the above
- e) If None of the above: specify:  
.....

2.3 Which of the following aspects are covered by those policy(ies)?

Training  Financing  Insurance  Payments of students  All

the above

If none of the Above; Specify;

.....

2.4 How important are these policies to your expectations when offering workplace learning?

Very important  Important  Rather unimportant  Not

important at all

2.5 Do you think the national policy (ies) influence the quality of workplace learning?

Strongly agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly

disagree

2.6 At what stage did you get to know about the national policies under which workplace learning was operating?

- a) Before workplace learning
- b) During workplace learning
- c) After undertaking workplace learning

2.7 Who informed you about the policies of workplace learning?

- a) Fellow staff
- b) University coordinator(s)
- c) Workplace employee(s)
- d) Workplace supervisor(s)
- e) If others, specify .....

2.8 Do you think it would be necessary for workplace learning to be covered by a national policy?

Yes

No

2.9 Which of the following aspects should be covered by such a policy?

Training  Financing  Insurance  Payments of students  All

the above

If none of the Above; Specify; .....

2.10 Do you think that lack of a national policy on workplace learning affects workplace learning?

Strongly agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly

disagree

2.11 Are students required to take any insurance cover while undertaking workplace learning?

YES  NO

2.12 If YES, who is expected initiate it?

- a) Student
- b) Your organisation
- c) Institution of learning
- d) If Others Specify .....

2.13 Does your university pay/ reimburse students to undertake workplace learning?

YES NO

2.14 How much are they reimbursed or pay?

- a) Below 100,000/=
- b) Between 100,000/= below 200,000/=
- c) Between 200,000/= but below 300,000/=
- d) Above 400,000/=

2.15 Do companies/organisations charge your students any fees for workplace learning?  YES  NO

2.16 How much are usually required to pay?

- a) Below 100,000/=
- b) Between 100,000/= below 200,000/=
- c) Between 200,000/= but below 300,000/=
- d) Above 400,000/=

2.17 Are students required to pay any fee to the university for workplace learning?

YES  NO

2.18 How much are they required to pay?

- a) Below 100,000/=
- b) Between 100,000/= below 200,000/=
- c) Between 200,000/= but below 300,000/=
- d) Above 400,000/=

### **Section C: Organisational policies for Workplace Learning**

The next part of the survey will ask you questions about your organisational (Higher Education Institutions & Workplaces) policies that facilitate workplace learning.

#### **Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) policies**

3.11 Are you aware of any policy (ies) regarding workplace learning in your Institutions?

Yes  No

**If YES: answer questions 3.12 to 3.17**

**If NO; Answer questions 3.18 to 3.1.1**

3.12: Which one of the followings?

- a) University policy on workplace learning

- b) College/Faculty/ School policy on Workplace learning
- c) Departmental guidelines on workplace learning
- d) Academic programme policy on workplace learning
- e) None of the above

3.13 Outline any aspects that such policy (ies) entail?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

3.14 How important are these policies to expectations of workplace learning?

- Very important       Important       Rather unimportant       Not

important at all

3.15 Do you think the institutional policy (ies) influence the quality of workplace learning?

- Strongly agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly

disagree

3.16 When do you inform students about workplace learning policy (ies)?

Before undertaking workplace learning

During workplace learning

After undertaking workplace learning

3.17 Who informs the students about such policy (ies) workplace learning?

Students

University supervisor (s)

If others specify .....

3.18 Do you think it is necessary for institution of higher learning to have policies regarding workplace learning?  Yes  No

3.19 If YES, what aspects would you expect in such a policy?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

3.1.1 Lack of higher education institutions' policy regarding workplace learning affects its expectations?

Strongly agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly disagree

3.1.2 Do you get any form of facilitation from higher education institution for workplace learning?  YES  NO

3.1.3 If YES,

Specify.....

**Policies regarding workplace learning in the workplace**

3.21 Are you aware of any policy used by hosting workplaces regarding workplace learning?

YES  NO

**If YES: answer questions 3.22 to 3.27**

**If NO; Answer questions 3.28 to 3.2.10**

3.22 Which one of the following policies?

- a) Workers Compensation Act
- b) Employment Act
- c) Employment regulation
- d) Occupational health and safety
- e) Human resource manual
- f) All the above
- g) If others specify;

.....

3.23 Outline any key aspects that such policy regarding workplace learning?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

3.24 How important is that policy(ies) in meeting the expectations workplace learning?

Very important       Important       Rather unimportant       Not

important at all

3.25 Do you think the workplace policy influence the quality of learning you offer?

Strongly agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly

disagree

3.26 When did you come to know about the existence of workplace learning policy in the workplace where you undertook learning?

a) Before undertaking



### Section D: Workplace Learning activities

The next set of questions will be about the workplace learning process or procedures or activities (**Pre, During and Post workplace learning**) Using the scale provided below, respond honestly to the following statement about your workplace learning process. 1= Strongly disagree, 2= Somewhat disagree, 3= Neither agree nor disagree 4= Somewhat agree, 5= Strongly agree, NA= Not applicable

S/N	Item	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor	Somewhat	Strongly disagree
<b>Part I Pre-workplace learning preparation(s)</b>						
4.1	The university considers workplace learning orientation program valuable.					
4.2	The objectives of workplace learning are clearly articulated to students and workplaces					
4.3	The university should secure workplace learning vacancies for their students					
4.4	Academic courseworks prior to undertaking workplace learning should prepare students for successful workplace learning					

4.5	Workplace learning coordinator(s) was resourceful					
4.6	The workplace learning seminars are very useful in preparing students.					
4.7	It is easier for students to find their own placement for workplace learning than the university.					
<b>Part II During workplace learning Activities</b>						
4.8	Workplaces orient students before commencing workplace learning.					
4.9	The training schedule is issued to the students					
4.10	The duration for the training is usually sufficient for the set objectives					
4.11	The workplace supervisors (mentors) are cooperative					
4.12	Other employees are helpful in the workplace learning process					
4.13	The learning in the workplace is usually organized from simple to complex					
4.14	The university coordinator(s) are usually cooperative					
4.16	The supervision by workplace supervisor(s) is usually adequate					

4.17	Students are given un reservedly access to handle, operate, and work with equipment and materials.					
4.18	Assessment of learning is done using a set criterion					
4.20	Students are encouraged use the logbook/record book to record their learning activities					
4.21	The guidelines for report writing are given to the students prior.					
4.22	Trainers (mentors) workplaces are trained to be able to train students effectively					
4.23	The university adequately facilitates the staff for workplace learning					
<b>Part III Post-workplace learning Activities</b>						
4.24	Workplace learning is suitable to achieve the required skills					
4.25	The universities and workplaces share information to improve the quality of workplace learning					
4.26	Post workplace learning seminar with students for feedback is vital					
4.27	Report writing is useful reflection of workplace learning					

4.28	I would recommend all the student to undertake workplace learning					
4.29	The overall assessment of workplace learning is satisfactory					

**Section E: Challenges of encountered in Workplace Learning**

The next part of the questionnaire will ask you questions about challenges you faced while undertaking workplace learning. By challenges the researcher means; constraints, restrictions, limitations, constrictions and bottlenecks.

5.0 Outline the challenges you face while preparing students for workplace learning.

.....  
 .....

5.1 Suggest any solution(s) to the challenges faced while preparing students for workplace learning.

.....  
 .....

5.2 What challenges do you face when supervising students undertaking workplace learning?

.....  
 .....

5.3 What should be done to minimise the challenges you face while supervising students undertaking workplace learning?

.....  
 .....

5.4 Outline the challenges you face related to workplace learning after undertaking it.

.....  
.....

5.5 Suggest any solutions for the challenges in 5.4

.....  
.....

**THE END. THANK YOU VERY MUCH**

**Questionnaire for Workplace learning coordinators in workplaces**

**A. Section A: Biographical and Background data (Tick appropriately)**

1.1 Gender: Male  Female

1.2. Age range in years:

- a). 20-30 years
- b). 31-40 years
- c). 41-50yrs
- d). 51 years

and above

1.3. How long have you been involved in workplace learning activities?

- a). Less than one-year
- b). 1-2 years
- c). 3-5yrs
- d). 5 years a

above

1.4. Academic qualifications:

- a) PhD
- b) Master degree
- c) Bachelor
- c) Diploma

d) Certificate

1.5. How long has your organization been offering workplace learning to university students?

- a). Less than one-year
- b). 1-2 years
- c). 3-5yrs
- d). 5 ye

and above

1.6. What is the main activity of your company?

.....

1.7. What is the ownership structure of your company/organization?

- a)  Public
- b)  Private
- c)  Mixed

1.8. What is your position in your company/organization?

- a) HR manager/HR director/Head of HR department
- b) General manager/Director/Managing director
- c) If Other, Specify;  
.....

1.9 On average how many students undertake workplace learning in your organisation annually?  
.....

**Section B: National policies for Workplace Learning**

The next part of the survey will ask you questions about systemic national policies that facilitate your organization involvement in workplace learning. Answer accordingly by ticking against the most appropriate answer

2.1 Are you aware of any national policy that covers your organisation while undertaking workplace learning?

- Yes  No

**If YES: answer questions 2.2 to 2.7**

**If NO; Answer questions 2.8 to 2.10**

2.2 What is/are that/those policies?

- a) Employment Act
- b) Employment regulation
- c) Occupational health and safety
- d) All the bove
- e) If None of the above: specify:

.....

2.3 What is the main aspect covered by that or those policies?

Training  Financing  Insurance  Payments of students  All the above

If none of the Above; Specify; .....

2.4 How important are these policies to your expectations of workplace learning?

Very important  Important  Rather unimportant  Not important at all

2.5 The national policy (ies) influence the quality of workplace learning?

Strongly agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly

disagree

2.8 Do you think the national policy is necessary?

Yes  No

2.9 Do you think that lack of a national policy on workplace learning affects workplace learning?

Strongly agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly disagree

2.10 What do you require from the students to be able to undertake workplace learning?

.....  
.....  
.....

2.11 Do you pay students while undertaking workplace learning? YES

NO

2.13 How much are students usually paid?

- a) Below 100,000/=
- b) Between 100,000/= below 200,000/=
- c) Between 200,000/= but below 300,000/=
- d) Above 400,000/=

2.15 Are students required to pay any fee to your company/organisation for workplace learning?  YES  NO

2.16 How much are they required to pay?

- a) Below 100,000/=
- b) Between 100,000/= below 200,000/=
- c) Between 200,000/= but below 300,000/=
- d) Above 400,000/=

**Section C: Organisational policies for Workplace Learning**

The next part of the survey will ask you questions about your organisational policies that facilitate your organization involvement in workplace learning.

The next part of the questionnaire will ask you questions about organisational (Higher Education Institutions & Workplaces) policies that facilitated your involvement in workplace learning.

**Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) policies**

3.11 Are you aware of any policy (ies) regarding workplace learning from higher education Institutions?

Yes  No

**If YES: answer questions 3.12 to 3.17**

**If NO; Answer questions 3.18 to 3.1.1**

3.12: Which one of the following?

University policy on workplace learning

College/Faculty/ School policy on Workplace learning

Departmental guidelines on workplace learning

Academic programme policy on workplace learning

None of the above

3.13 Outline any aspects that such policy (ies) entail?

.....  
.....  
.....

3.14 How important are these policies to expectations of workplace learning?

Very important  Important  Rather unimportant  Not important at all

3.15 Do you think the institutional policy (ies) influence the quality of workplace learning?

Strongly agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly

disagree

3.16 When do you get to know about higher education institution policy regarding workplace learning?

Before undertaking workplace learning

During workplace learning

After undertaking workplace learning

3.17 Who informs you about such policy (ies) regarding workplace learning?

Students

University supervisor (s)

If others specify .....

3.18 Do you think it is necessary for institution of higher learning to have policies regarding workplace learning?  Yes  No

3.19 If YES, what aspects would you expect in such a policy?

.....  
.....  
.....

3.1.1 Lack of higher education institutions' policy regarding workplace learning affects its expectations?

Strongly agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly disagree

3.1.2 Do you get any form of facilitation from higher education institution to undertake workplace learning?  YES  NO

3.1.3 If YES,

Specify.....

**Policies regarding workplace learning in the workplace**

3.21 Are you aware of any policy used by your organisation regarding workplace learning?

YES  NO

**If YES: answer questions 3.22 to 3.27**

**If NO; Answer questions 3.28 to 3.2.10**

3.22 Which one of the following policies?

- a) Workers Compensation Act
- b) Employment Act
- c) Employment regulation
- d) Occupational health and safety
- e) Human resource manual
- f) All the above
- g) If others specify; .....

3.23 Outline any key aspects that such policy regarding workplace learning?

.....  
.....  
.....

3.24 How important is that policy(ies) in meeting the expectations workplace learning?

- Very important       Important       Rather unimportant       Not

important at all

3.25 Do you think the workplace policy influence the quality of learning you offer?

- Strongly agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly

disagree

3.26 When do inform students about the workplace learning policy (ies)

- a) During orientation
- b) During undertaking assigned tasks
- c) After undertaking workplace learning

3.27 Who informs them about that policy (ies) regarding workplace learning?

- a) Fellow students

b) University supervisor (s)

c) Workplace supervisor(s)

d) If others specify .....

3.28 Do you think it is necessary for workplaces to have policies regarding workplace learning?

Yes

No

3.29 If YES, what aspects would you expect in such a policy?

.....  
.....  
.....

3.2.10 The existence of a policy regarding workplace learning influences the expectations?

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly

disagree

3.2.1 Did you get any form of facilitation from your organisation to undertake workplace learning?   Yes No

3.2.2 If YES,

Specify.....

**Section D: Workplace Learning activities**

The next set of questions will be about the workplace learning process or procedures or activities (**Pre, During and Post workplace learning**) Using the scale provided below, respond honestly to the following statement about your workplace learning process. 1= Strongly disagree, 2= Somewhat disagree,

3= Neither agree nor disagree 4= Somewhat agree,

5= Strongly agree, NA= Not applicable

S/N	Item	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor	Somewhat	Strongly disagree
<b>Part I Pre-workplace learning preparation(s)</b>						
4.1	Students show adequate orientation from the universities about workplace learning program					
4.2	Students exhibit knowledge about the objectives of workplace learning					
4.3	I would have preferred the university to secure a place for workplace learning for their students					
4.4	Academic courseworks prior to undertaking workplace learning show that they prepare students well to be successful in workplace learning					
4.5	Workplace learning coordinator(s) in workplaces was resourceful					
4.6	The workplace learning seminars can be very useful in preparing students.					
4.7	My organisation prefers students placement					

	on their own than the HEIs					
<b>Part II During workplace learning Activities</b>						
4.8	The orientation is carried out before commencing learning.					
4.9	The training schedules are issued to the students					
4.10	The duration for the training is usually sufficient for the set objectives					
4.11	Students from Higher education institutions are usually cooperative					
4.12	The workplace supervisors (mentors) are cooperative					
4.13	Other employees were helpful in the learning process					
4.14	The training is organized or scheduled from simple to complex					
4.15	The university supervisor(s) are usually cooperative					
4.16	The supervision by university supervisor(s) is usually adequate					
4.17	Students are given un reservedly access to handle, operate, and work with equipment and materials.					
4.18	Assessment of learning is done using a set					

	procedure					
4.20	Students are encouraged use the logbook/record book to record their learning activities					
4.21	The guidelines for report writing is given to the students prior.					
4.22	Trainers (mentors) workplaces are trained to be able to train students effectively					
4.23	The organisation adequately facilitates workplace learning activities					
<b>Part III Post-workplace learning Activities</b>						
4.24	Workplace learning is suitable to achieve the required skills					
4.25	The Higher education institutions usually share the feedback with the host organisations					
4.26	Post workplace learning seminar for feedback to the host workplace					
4.27	Report writing is useful reflection of workplace learning					
4.28	I would recommend all the student to undertake workplace learning					
4.29	The overall assessment of workplace learning is satisfactory					

**Section E: Challenges of encountered in Workplace Learning**

The next part of the questionnaire will ask you questions about challenges you faced in the conducting of workplace learning in your organization.

5.0 Outline the challenges you face while preparing students for workplace learning.

.....  
.....

5.1 Suggest any solution(s) to the challenges faced while preparing students for workplace learning.

.....

5.2 What challenges do you face when supervising students undertaking workplace learning?

.....  
.....

5.3 What should be done to minimise the challenges you face while supervising students undertaking workplace learning?

.....

5.4 Outline the challenges you face related to workplace learning after undertaking it.

.....  
.....

5.5 Suggest any solutions for the challenges in 5.4.

.....

**THE END. THANK YOU VERY MUCH**

**Questionnaire for Students who have ever undertaken workplace learning,**

**A. Section A: Biographical and Background data (Tick  $\surd$  appropriately)**

1.1 Gender: Male  Female

1.2 Age range in years:

- a). 20-30 years
- b). 31-40 years
- c). 41-50yrs
- d).51 years and above

1.3. How many times have you been involved in workplace learning activities?

- a). Once
- b). Twice
- c). Thrice and above

1.4. How long were you involved in workplace learning activities?

- a). Less than one-month
- b). 1-2 months
- c). 3-6 months
- d). 6 months and above

1.5 For what academic program level have you undertaken workplace learning?

- a) PhD
- b) Master degree
- c) Bachelor
- c) Diploma
- d) Certificate

1.6 What is the main activity of the institution/company/organisation for your last workplace learning?

.....  
.....

1.7 What is the ownership structure of host company/organization for your last workplace learning activity?

- a)  Public
- b)  Private
- c)  Mixed

1.8. Who was your main supervisor during workplace learning?

- a) HR manager  HR director/Head of HR department
- b) General manager/Director/Managing director
- c) Other (specify);  
.....

**Section B: National policies for Workplace Learning**

The next part of the questionnaire will ask you questions about national policies that ensured your undertaking in workplace learning. Tick  $\surd$  the most appropriate.

2.1 Were you aware of any national policy that was covering you while undertaking workplace learning?

YES  NO

**If YES: answer questions 2.2 to 2.7**

**If NO; Answer questions 2.8 to 2.10**

2.2 Which one of the following?

- a) Employment Act
- b) Employment regulation
- c) Occupational health and safety
- d) All the above
- e) If none of the above: specify:  
.....

2.3 Which of the following policy aspects were covering you and your workplace learning?

Training  Financing  Insurance  Payments of students  All the above

If none of the above: specify; .....

2.4 How important were those policies to your expectations during workplace learning?

Very important  Important  Rather unimportant  Not   
important at all

2.5 Do you think the national policy (ies) influenced the quality of learning you received during your workplace learning?

Strongly agree  Agree  Disagree   
Strongly disagree

2.6 At what stage did you get to know about the national policies under which workplace learning was operating?

- a) Before workplace learning
- b) During workplace learning
- c) After undertaking workplace learning

2.7 Who informed you about the policies or laws that covered you while underrating workplace learning?

- a) Fellow students
- b) University supervisor (s)
- c) Workplace employee(s)
- d) Workplace supervisor(s)
- e) If others specify .....

2.8 Do you think it would be necessary to be covered by a national law of some kind when undertaking workplace learning?

Yes  No

2.9 Do you think that lack of a national policy on workplace learning affected your expectation?



- a) Below 100,000/=
- b) Between 100,000/= below 200,000/=
- c) Between 200,000/= but below 300,000/=
- d) Above 400,000/=

**Section C: Organisational policies for Workplace Learning**

The next part of the questionnaire will ask you questions about organisational (Higher Education Institutions & Workplaces) policies that facilitated your involvement in workplace learning.

**Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) policies**

3.11 Were you aware of any policy (ies) regarding workplace learning by your institution?

- Yes                       No

**If YES: answer questions 3.12 to 3.17**

**If NO; Answer questions 3.18 to 3.1.1**

3.12: Which one of the following?

- a) University policy on workplace learning
- b) College/Faculty/ School policy on Workplace learning
- c) Departmental guidelines on workplace learning
- d) Academic programme policy on workplace learning
- e) None of the above

3.13 Outline any aspects that such policy (ies) entailed?

.....  
.....  
.....

3.14 How important were those policies to your expectations during workplace learning?

Very important  Important  Rather unimportant  Not important at all

3.15 Do you think the institutional policy (ies) influenced the quality of learning you received during your workplace learning undertaking?

Strongly agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly disagree

3.16 At what stage did you get to know about that your institution had a policy regarding workplace learning?

a) Before undertaking workplace learning

b) During workplace learning

c) After undertaking workplace learning

3.17 Who informed you about that policy (ies) regarding workplace learning?

a) Fellow students

b) University supervisor (s)

c) Workplace learning coordinator

d) If others specify .....

3.18 Do you think it is necessary for institution of higher learning to formulate policies regarding workplace learning? YES  NO

3.19 If YES, what aspects would you have expected in such a policy?

.....  
.....  
.....

3.1.1 Do you think the lack of an organisational policy regarding workplace learning affected your expectations?



.....  
 .....  
 .....

3.24 How important was that policy in meeting your expectations during workplace learning?

Very important       Important       Rather unimportant       Not

important at all

3.25 Do you think the workplace policy influenced the quality of learning you received during your workplace learning undertaking?

Strongly agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly

disagree

3.26 When did you come to know about the existence of workplace learning policy in the workplace where you undertook learning?

a) During orientation

b) During undertaking assigned tasks

c) After undertaking workplace learning

3.27 Who informed you about that policy (ies) regarding workplace learning?

a) Fellow students

b) University supervisor (s)

c) Workplace supervisor(s)

d) If others specify .....

3.28 Do you think it is necessary for workplaces to formulate policies regarding workplace learning?

     Yes            No

3.29 If YES, what aspects would you have expected in such a policy?

.....  
.....  
.....

3.2.10 Do you think the existence of a policy regarding workplace learning would have influenced your expectations?

Strongly agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly disagree

3.2.1 Did you get any form of facilitation from your workplace while undertaking workplace learning? Yes  No

3.2.2 If YES, Specify.....

**Section D: Workplace Learning activities**

The next set of questions will be about the workplace learning process or procedures or activities (**Pre, During and Post workplace learning**) Using the scale provided below, respond honestly by ticking(√) in the provided spaces in the table the following statement about your workplace learning process according this scale.

1= Strongly disagree, 2= Somewhat disagree, 3= Neither agree nor disagree

4= Somewhat agree, 5= Strongly agree, NA= Not applicable

S/N	Item	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor	Somewhat	Strongly disagree
<b>Part I Pre-workplace learning preparation(s)</b>						
4.1	The university workplace learning orientation program was valuable.					
4.2	The objectives of workplace learning were well set out					
4.3	I would have preferred the university to secure a place for my workplace learning					
4.4	My academic courseworks prior to undertaking workplace learning prepared me well to be successful in my workplace learning					
4.5	Workplace learning coordinator was resourceful					
4.6	The workplace learning seminars can be very useful in preparing students.					
4.7	Getting a place for learning by myself was easy					
<b>Part II During workplace learning Activities</b>						
4.8	The workplace orientated me well before commencing learning.					

4.9	The learning schedule was issued at the commencement of learning					
4.10	The duration for the training was sufficient to achieve the set objectives					
4.11	The workplace supervisors (mentors) were cooperative					
4.12	Other employees were helpful in the learning process					
4.13	The programme was organized from simple to complex					
4.14	The university supervisor(s) was cooperative in enhancing my learning					
4.15	The guidance of university supervisor(s) was adequately					
4.16	During the training I was un reservedly allowed to handle, operate, and work with equipment and materials in the workplace.					
4.17	Assessment of learning done by the workplace trainers was fair					
4.18	The logbook/record book was useful					
4.19	The guidelines for report writing were helpful in the compilation of the workplace learning report					
4.20	Trainers (mentors) in the workplaces need					

	training to be able to train students effectively					
<b>Part III Post-workplace learning Activities</b>						
4.21	The programme is suitable to achieve the required skills					
4.22	The overall quality of the programme is relevant to career development					
4.23	Would you recommend a post workplace learning seminar for feedback to the University and the host workplace					
4.24	Report writing is useful reflection of workplace learning					
4.25	I would recommend all the student to undertake workplace learning					
4.26	I was satisfied with the overall assessment of workplace learning					

**Section E: Challenges of encountered in Workplace Learning**

The next part of the questionnaire will ask you questions about challenges you faced while undertaking workplace learning.

5.0 Outline the challenge(s) you faced while preparing for workplace learning.

.....

.....

.....

5.1 Suggest any solution(s) to the challenges faced while preparing for workplace learning.

.....  
.....  
.....

5.2 What are the challenges you faced during workplace learning?

.....  
.....

5.3 Outline what should be done to minimise the challenges faced during workplace learning.

.....

5.4 Outline the challenges you faced related to workplace learning after undertaking it?

.....

5.5 Suggest any solutions for the challenges in 5.4

**Appendix C: Document Analysis Guides**

**A Guide for Document Analysis workplace learning Attachment Request and Introduction Letters**

<b>Elements</b>	<b>Analysis</b>
Addressing	
Subject	
Content	
Authenticity and endorsement	

**A Guide for Document Analysis workplace learning Reports Written by Students**

<b>Elements</b>	<b>Analysis</b>
Preliminary pages	
Introduction chapter	
Content as regards the learning experiences from the workplace	
Challenges and recommendations made by trainees	
Authenticity and endorsement	

**A Guide for Document Analysis Workplace Learning Assessment Forms used by the HEIs Staff and Staff in Charge of Training in Workplaces.**

<b>Elements</b>	<b>Analysis</b>
Criteria	
Score guides	
Authenticity and endorsement	

**A Document Analysis Guide for other workplace learning Documents used by the Department/University. Eg Guidelines for students and Supervising Staff**

<b>Elements</b>	<b>Analysis</b>
Objectives of document for workplace learning	
Obligations/duties of the supervisor	
Other issues raised in the document regarding the workplace learning	

## A Document Analysis Guide for Department/University Policy/ Guidelines

### Regarding workplace learning

Elements	Analysis
Introduction and background of workplace learning in the University	
Objectives of workplace	
Obligations/duties of the Department/ University	
Other issues raised in the document regarding the workplace learning	

### A document analysis guide for workplace policy/ guidelines regarding workplace learning

Elements	Analysis
Introduction and background of workplace learning in the establishment	
Objectives of workplace learning	
Obligations/duties of the establishment	
Obligations/expectations of the trainees	
Obligations/duties of the University	
Other issues raised in the document regarding the workplace learning	

A document analysis guide for Government policy/ guidelines regarding workplace learning

<b>Elements</b>	<b>Analysis</b>
Introduction and background of workplace learning in the establishment	
Objectives of workplace learning	
Obligations/duties of Government	
Obligations/duties/benefits of the establishment	
Benefits/Obligations/expectations of the trainees	
Obligations/duties of the University	
Support mechanism to All Involved	
Other issues raised in the document regarding the workplace learning	

### Appendix D: Instrument Reliability Test results

Spearman Brown Prophecy Formula:  $N*r/(1+N-1)*r$

Where,

N is 2, got by for instance 24/12 is 2

r is the correlation between forms

So, For example.  $2*0.604/1+(2-1)*0.604$

The Spearman-Brown Coefficient will be 0.753.

#### I. The reliability test on students' Questionnaire

##### Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	24	100.0
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	.0
	Total	24	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

##### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Part 1	Value	.462
		N of Items	13 <sup>a</sup>
Cronbach's Alpha	Part 2	Value	.456
		N of Items	13 <sup>b</sup>
		Total N of Items	26
Correlation Between Forms			.604
Spearman-Brown Coefficient		Equal Length	.753
		Unequal Length	.753

### Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	24	100.0
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	.0
	Total	24	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Guttman Split-Half Coefficient	.749
--------------------------------	------

a. The items are: Qn4.1, Qn4.3, Qn4.5, Qn4.7, Qn4.9, Qn4.11, Qn4.13, Qn4.15, Qn4.17, Qn4.19, Qn4.21, Qn4.23, Qn4.25.

b. The items are: Qn4.2, Qn4.4, Qn4.6, Qn4.8, Qn4.10, Qn4.12, Qn4.14, Qn4.16, Qn4.18, Qn4.20, Qn4.22, Qn4.24, Qn4.26.

The sample size of students used is 24, using the split half reliability the correlation between forms is 0.604. The Spearman-Brown Coefficient is **0.753** thus the test is reliable.

### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Part 1	Value	.192
		N of Items	11 <sup>a</sup>
Cronbach's Alpha	Part 2	Value	.370
		N of Items	10 <sup>b</sup>
		Total N of Items	21
Correlation Between Forms			.529
Spearman-Brown Coefficient		Equal Length	.692
		Unequal Length	.692
Guttman Split-Half Coefficient			.692

a. The items are: Qn5.1, Qn5.3, Qn5.5, Qn5.7, Qn5.9, Qn5.11, Qn5.13, Qn5.15, Qn5.17, Qn5.19, Qn5.21.

b. The items are: Qn5.21, Qn5.2, Qn5.4, Qn5.6, Qn5.8, Qn5.10, Qn5.12, Qn5.14, Qn5.16, Qn5.18, Qn5.20.

The sample size of students used is 24, using the split half reliability the correlation between forms is 0.529. The Spearman-Brown Coefficient is 0.692 which is approximately **0.7** thus the test is reliable.

## II. The reliability test on Academic staff Questionnaire

### Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	12	100.0
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	.0
	Total	12	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Part 1	Value	.875
		N of Items	14 <sup>a</sup>
	Part 2	Value	.646
		N of Items	13 <sup>b</sup>
Total N of Items			27
Correlation Between Forms			.770
Spearman-Brown Coefficient	Equal Length		.870
	Unequal Length		.870
Guttman Split-Half Coefficient			.809

a. The items are: Qn4.1, Qn4.3, Qn4.5, Qn4.7, Qn4.9, Qn4.11, Qn4.13, Qn4.15, Qn4.17, Qn4.19, Qn4.21, Qn4.23, Qn4.25, Qn4.27.

b. The items are: Qn4.27, Qn4.2, Qn4.4, Qn4.6, Qn4.8, Qn4.10, Qn4.12, Qn4.14, Qn4.16, Qn4.18, Qn4.20, Qn4.22, Qn4.24, Qn4.26.

The sample size of academic staff used is 12, using the split half reliability the correlation between forms is 0.770 which indicates a high correlation. The Spearman-Brown Coefficient is 0.870 thus the test is reliable.

### Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	12	100.0
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	.0
	Total	12	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Part 1	Value	-.209 <sup>a</sup>
		N of Items	11 <sup>b</sup>
	Part 2	Value	.483
		N of Items	11 <sup>c</sup>
	Total N of Items		22
Correlation Between Forms			.734
Spearman-Brown Coefficient	Equal Length		.846
	Unequal Length		.846
Guttman Split-Half Coefficient			.811

a. The value is negative due to a negative average covariance among items. This violates reliability model assumptions. You may want to check item codings.

b. The items are: Qn5.1, Qn5.3, Qn5.5, Qn5.7, Qn5.9, Qn5.11, Qn5.13, Qn5.15, Qn5.17, Qn5.19, Qn5.21.

c. The items are: Qn5.2, Qn5.4, Qn5.6, Qn5.8, Qn5.10, Qn5.12, Qn5.14, Qn5.16, Qn5.18, Qn5.20, Qn5.22.

The sample size of academic staff used is 12, using the split half reliability the correlation between forms is **0.734** which indicates a high correlation. The Spearman-Brown Coefficient is **0.846** thus the test is reliable.

## Appendix E: Research Approval Letter



KENYATTA UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL

E-mail: [dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke](mailto:dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke)

Website: [www.ku.ac.ke](http://www.ku.ac.ke)

OUR REF: E83EA/33902/15

P.O. Box 43844, 00100  
NAIROBI, KENYA  
Tel. 8710901 Ext. 57530

Date: 25<sup>th</sup> March, 2019

The Executive Secretary,  
National Council of Science & Technology  
P.O. Box 6284,  
KAMPALA

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION FOR MR. ERIC D. KALANDA REG. NO. E83EA/33902/15

I write to introduce Mr. **Kalanda** who is a Postgraduate Student of this University. He is registered for Ph.D. Degree programme in the **Department of Educational Foundations** in the School of Education.

Mr. **Kalanda** intends to conduct research for Ph.D. Thesis entitled, "**Influence of Existing Policies on Organisation of Workplace Learning in Higher Education Institutions in Uganda**"

Any assistance given will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

**PROF. ELISHIBA KIMANI**  
**DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL**

RM/cao



**KENYATTA UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL**

E-mail: [kubps@yahoo.com](mailto:kubps@yahoo.com)  
[dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke](mailto:dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke)  
 Website: [www.ku.ac.ke](http://www.ku.ac.ke)

P.O. Box 43844, 00100  
 NAIROBI, KENYA  
 Tel. 810901 Ext. 57530

**Internal Memo**

**FROM:** Dean, Graduate School **DATE:** 25<sup>th</sup> March, 2019  
**TO:** Mr. Eric D. Kalanda **REF:** E83EA/33902/15  
 C/o Department of Educational Foundations  
 Kenyatta University  
**SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL**

We acknowledge the receipt of your revised Research Proposal entitled "Influence of Existing Policies on Organisation of Workplace Learning in Higher Education Institutions in Uganda" as per recommendations raised by the Graduate School Board of 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2019.

You may now proceed with your Data collection, subject to clearance with the Executive Secretary, National Council of Science & Technology.

As you embark on your data collection, please note that you will be required to submit to Graduate School completed supervision Tracking Forms per semester. The form has been developed to replace the progress Report Forms. The Supervision Tracking Forms are available at the University's Website under Graduate School webpage downloads.

By copy of this letter, the Registrar (Academic) is hereby requested to grant you substantive registration for your Ph.D. studies.

Thank you.

**REUBEN MURIUKI  
 FOR: DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL**

c.c. Registrar (Academic) Att; Mr. Likam  
 Chairman, Department of Educational Foundations  
 Supervisor

1. Prof. Augustine Karugu  
 C/o Department of Educational Foundations  
 Kenyatta University
2. Dr. Francis Likoye  
 C/o Department of Educational Foundations  
 Kenyatta University

RM/cao

*Committed to Creativity, Excellence & Self-Reliance*

## Appendix F: Ethical review Approval Letter



### MBARARA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

p. o. Box 1410, Mbarara Uganda. Tel: +256 485433795; Fax; +256 4854 20782

#### RESEARCH ETHNICS COMMITTEE

E-mail: [sec.rec@must.ac.ug](mailto:sec.rec@must.ac.ug)

Our Ref: MUREC 1/7

Date: July 1, 2019

Mr. Eric Douglas Kalanda  
Postgraduate Student

**Re: "Influence of existing policies on organisation of workplace learning in higher education institutions in Uganda" 04/05-19**

Type:  Initial Application  
 Protocol Amendment  
 Letter of Amendment (LOA)  
 Continuing Review  
 Material Transfer Agreement  
 Other, specify: \_\_\_\_\_



Reference is made to the above protocol which was resubmitted to the Research Ethics Committee for reconsideration and approval under expedited review process.

It is noted that you have addressed all the concerns earlier raised by the Committee.

I am pleased to inform you that your study has been approved for a period of one year from **July 2, 2019 up to July 1, 2020**.

As Principal Investigators of the research, you are responsible for fulfilling the following requirements of approval:

1. All co-investigators must be kept informed of the status of the research.
2. Changes, amendments, and addenda to the protocol or the consent form must be submitted to the REC for review and approval **prior** to the activation of the changes. The REC application number assigned to the research should be cited in any correspondence.
3. Reports of unanticipated problems involving risks to participants or other must be submitted to the REC. New information that becomes available which could change the risk: benefit ratio must be submitted promptly for REC review.
4. Only approved consent forms are used in enrolment of participants. All consent forms signed by subjects and/or witness should be retained on file. The REC may conduct audits of all study records, and consent documentation may be part of such audits.
5. Regulations require review of an approved study not less than once per 12-month period. **Therefore, a continuing review application must be submitted to REC eight weeks prior to the above expiration date of July 1, 2020 in order to continue the study beyond the approved period.** Failure to submit a continuing review application in timely fashion may result in suspension or termination of the study. at which point new participants may not be enrolled and currently enrolled participants must be taken off the study.

e-mail: [sec.rec@must.ac.ug](mailto:sec.rec@must.ac.ug)

Website: [http:// www.must.ac.ug](http://www.must.ac.ug)



## MBARARA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

p. o. Box 1410, Mbarara Uganda. Tel: +256 485433795; Fax; +256 4854 20782

### RESEARCH ETHNICS COMMITTEE

E-mail: [sec.rec@must.ac.ug](mailto:sec.rec@must.ac.ug)

Our Ref: MUREC 1/7

Date: July 1, 2019

Mr. Eric Douglas Kalanda  
Postgraduate Student

**Re: "Influence of existing policies on organisation of workplace learning in higher education institutions in Uganda" 04/05-19**

Type:  Initial Application  
 Protocol Amendment  
 Letter of Amendment (LOA)  
 Continuing Review  
 Material Transfer Agreement  
 Other, specify: \_\_\_\_\_



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It is noted that you have addressed all the concerns earlier raised by the Committee.

I am pleased to inform you that your study has been approved for a period of one year from **July 2, 2019 up to July 1, 2020.**

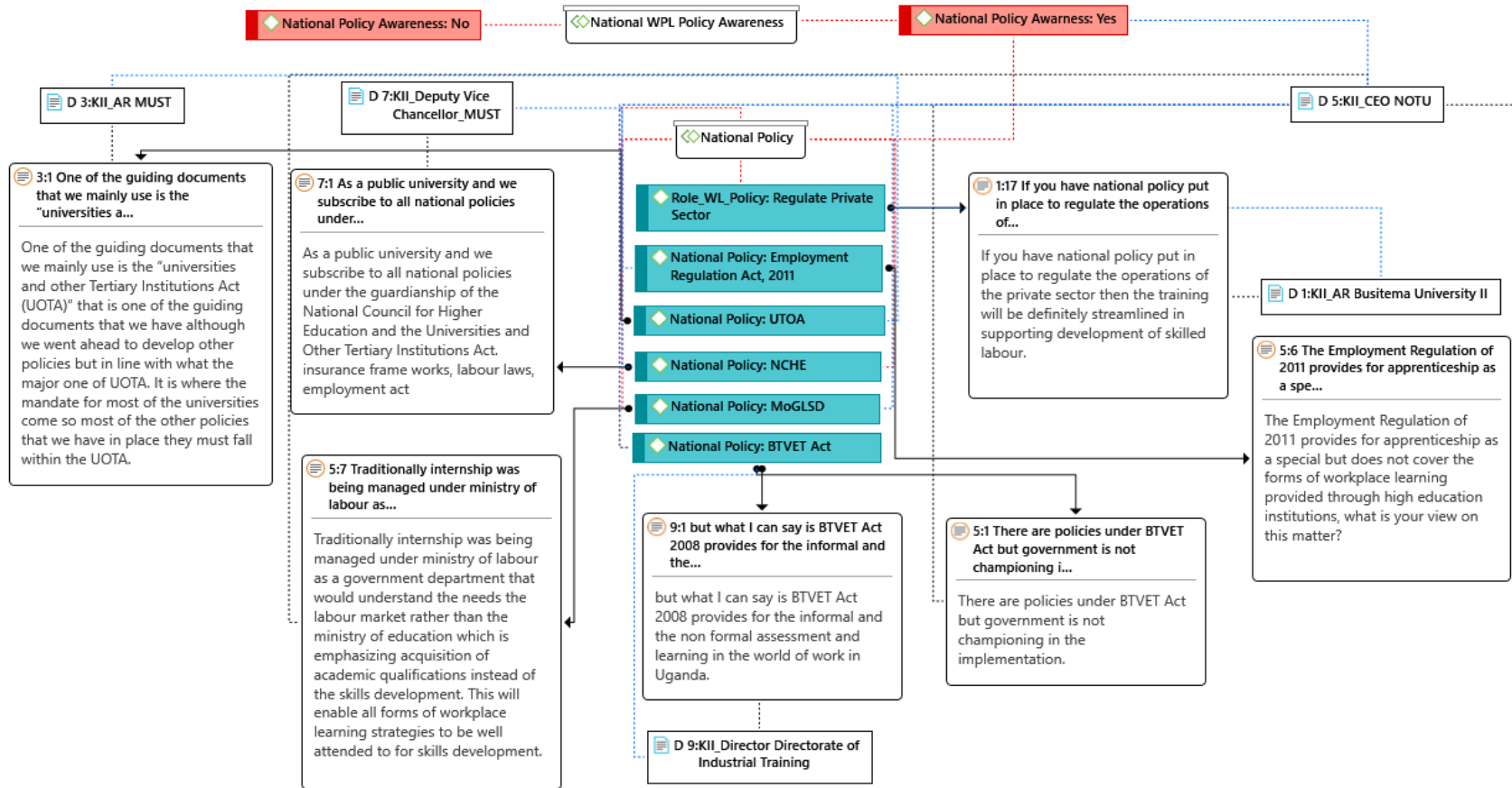
As Principal Investigators of the research, you are responsible for fulfilling the following requirements of approval:

1. All co-investigators must be kept informed of the status of the research.
2. Changes, amendments, and addenda to the protocol or the consent form must be submitted to the REC for review and approval **prior** to the activation of the changes. The REC application number assigned to the research should be cited in any correspondence.
3. Reports of unanticipated problems involving risks to participants or other must be submitted to the REC. New information that becomes available which could change the risk: benefit ratio must be submitted promptly for REC review.
4. Only approved consent forms are used in enrolment of participants. All consent forms signed by subjects and/or witness should be retained on file. The REC may conduct audits of all study records, and consent documentation may be part of such audits.
5. Regulations require review of an approved study not less than once per 12-month period. **Therefore, a continuing review application must be submitted to REC eight weeks prior to the above expiration date of July 1, 2020 in order to continue the study beyond the approved period.** Failure to submit a continuing review application in timely fashion may result in suspension or termination of the study. at which point new participants may not be enrolled and currently enrolled participants must be taken off the study.

e-mail: [sec.rec@must.ac.ug](mailto:sec.rec@must.ac.ug)

Website: [http:// www.must.ac.ug](http://www.must.ac.ug)

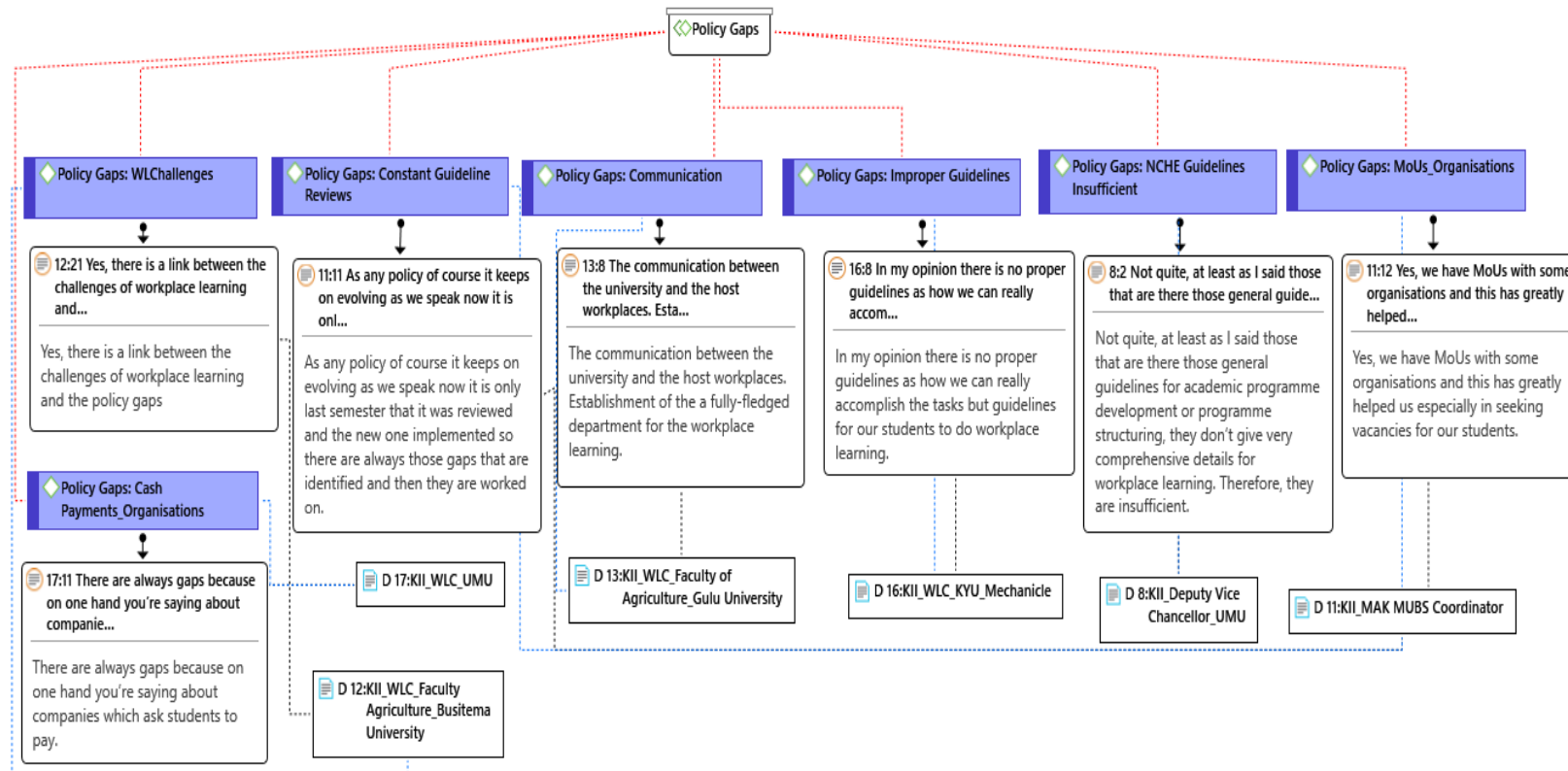
Appendix G Output for National Legislations for WPL



**Appendix H: Role of WPL Legislations**



**Appendix I: Output Policy Gaps for WPL**



**Appendix J: WPL Policy for HEI 1**

Elements	Analysis
Introduction and background of EPL in the University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishes a baseline for all departments, faculties and schools in the university for WPL programmes.</li> <li>• Provides guidelines for all stakeholders, student, workplace and HEI dept. (Three – Way partnership)</li> <li>• Recognizes the benefits of WPL to make the most of it.</li> </ul>
Objectives of Workplace policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To streamline the management of internship programmes at the university.</li> <li>• To give students an opportunity to interface with the real life work experience through hands on learning.</li> <li>• Practice a framework within which to run the internship programme.</li> </ul>
Obligations/ duties of the department/ University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Placement/ placement procedures.</li> <li>• Supervision</li> <li>• Recruitment of the host workplaces.</li> <li>• Assessment &amp; Evaluation of the interns performance.</li> <li>• Facilitation of supervision staff.</li> </ul>

<p>Other issues raised in the document regarding the WPL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internship/ WPL is compulsory to all students of the university. ( partial fulfilment for HEIx programmes).</li> <li>• It shall be a graded course.</li> <li>• HEIx also offers internship opportunities to students from other HEIs</li> <li>• Takes forms of community engagement, field attachment, industrial training ( situation identical with those they are expected to work in after their training for hands –on experience to confront the world of work.</li> <li>• Duration 2<sup>nd</sup> &amp; 3<sup>rd</sup> year 2<sup>nd</sup> semester holiday (recess period). Atleast 6 weeks not more than 3 months.</li> <li>• Assessment and Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Done according to the set guidelines in the internship programme course outline.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Supervision ( Follow-up meetings/ engagements/ debriefs with workplace supervisors. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Period of supervision shall be throughout the period of internship.</li> <li>- Each student shall be assigned a supervisor.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Internship Advisor/ Supervisor shall be</li> </ul>
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	<p>responsible for;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mentoring the student.</li> <li>- Visiting the hosting workplace.</li> <li>- Giving an evaluation and performance report of the student.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workplace Supervisor shall be responsible for;</li> <li>• Coordination to be managed by the university. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create database for potential workplaces, prepare terms of reference.</li> <li>- Prepare periodic seminars for WPL, develop MOU, provide feedback.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Placement; is a responsibility of the student but can be advised by HEI management.</li> <li>• Financing; Budgets drawn by the Faculty/ Department &amp; fees for internship charged the students.</li> <li>• Roles of hosting organization; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide position description for each student.</li> <li>- Assign work related to student's field of study.</li> <li>- Assess and Evaluate student's performance.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Roles of students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Register and subscribe to the programme.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Perform work quality and effort.</li> <li>- Follow host organization policies and guidelines.</li> <li>- Attend all meetings for internship.</li> <li>- Complete all reporting requirements for the employer.</li> <li>• Role of the Department/ Faculty <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assist with placement.</li> <li>- Refer qualified student to potential hosts Institution/ organization.</li> <li>- Monitor progress of student during internship. actively recruit students &amp; potential host organization into Internship Programme.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Qualification of students for internship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Must have accumulated ACPA &gt;2.5</li> <li>- Complete any required intern contract.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Qualification of host workplace <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Registered entity</li> <li>- Require approval by the Workplace Coordinator at HEI.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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**Appendix K: Course outline for WPL for HEI 1**

Elements	Analysis
Introduction and background of WPL in the University/ Course Unit	Name of unit. ends Field experience II
Objectives of workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage in one construction site to explore, document and analysis</li> <li>• Relate theory to practice.</li> <li>• Acquire understanding of materials &amp; their influence on design.</li> <li>• Interact with players in the various layers in construction.</li> </ul>

**Appendix L: Academic Staff WPL Supervision Guidelines HEI 2**

Elements	Analysis
Objectives of documents for Workplace learning	Guidelines for supervision of students undertaking WPL
Obligations/ duties of the supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call upon the supervisor to be cognizant of the areas to look out for while supervising the student.</li> <li>• Highlights areas of assessment.</li> <li>• Highlights the aspects in the different sections/ possible attachment departments.</li> </ul>
Other issues raised in the document regarding the workplace learning	

Other comments

- He guidelines suggest that HEI supervisor isn't familiar with workplace operations hence the need for a brief.
- Opinion that such supervisors of staff are not familiar with workplace operation may not be fair for workplace learning implementation.

**Appendix M: Student Guidelines for WPL HEI 2**

Elements	Analysis
Introduction and background of WPL in the University	<p>WPL defined;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work experience relevant to the academic/ professional development of a student before graduation.</li> <li>• Duration 10 weeks (21/2 months)</li> <li>• A must read for students before commencing IT</li> </ul>
Objectives of WPL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide a framework through which students may work in an organization to enhance the experiences through practical work tasks.</li> <li>• To provide hosting workplaces with highly motivated, energetic and talented students to execute work and are potential future workforce.</li> <li>• To enable students explore employment opportunities with or without hosting organization.</li> </ul>
Obligations/ duties of the student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct of the student to facilitate WPL; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Protect HEI reputation.</li> <li>- Guard against damage of hosting workplace, material &amp; property.</li> <li>- Follow the prescribed rules by the hosting workplace.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Other expectations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep daily records of the learning experience in the workplace.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Write an IT report.</li> </ul>
Other issues raised in the document regarding the WPL	<p>Emphasis of the planning of WPL in phases</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Orientation</li> <li>- Organization</li> <li>- Implementation</li> <li>- Completion</li> <li>- Assessment phase</li> </ul>
Other highlights to students	<p>Benefits of WPL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop communication skills.</li> <li>- Practice safety practices.</li> <li>- Develop sense of responsibility.</li> <li>- Learn the ways of the organization.</li> <li>- Understand real life situations at the workplace.</li> <li>- Learning process theory/ knowledge- practice.</li> <li>- Execution of informed decisions.</li> <li>- Taking responsibility.</li> <li>- Understand formal &amp; informal relationships at work.</li> <li>- Appreciate that learning is life long.</li> <li>- Understand the world of challenges.</li> <li>- Recognize role played by financial &amp; economic.</li> </ul>

**Appendix N: Re-imbursement for WPL from HEIs****Table Showing Response of whether Students were Reimbursed by HEIs for****WPL**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	62	17.6	21.1	21.1
	No	205	58.1	69.7	90.8
	I don't Know	27	7.6	9.2	100.0
	Total	294	83.3	100.0	
Total		353	100.0		

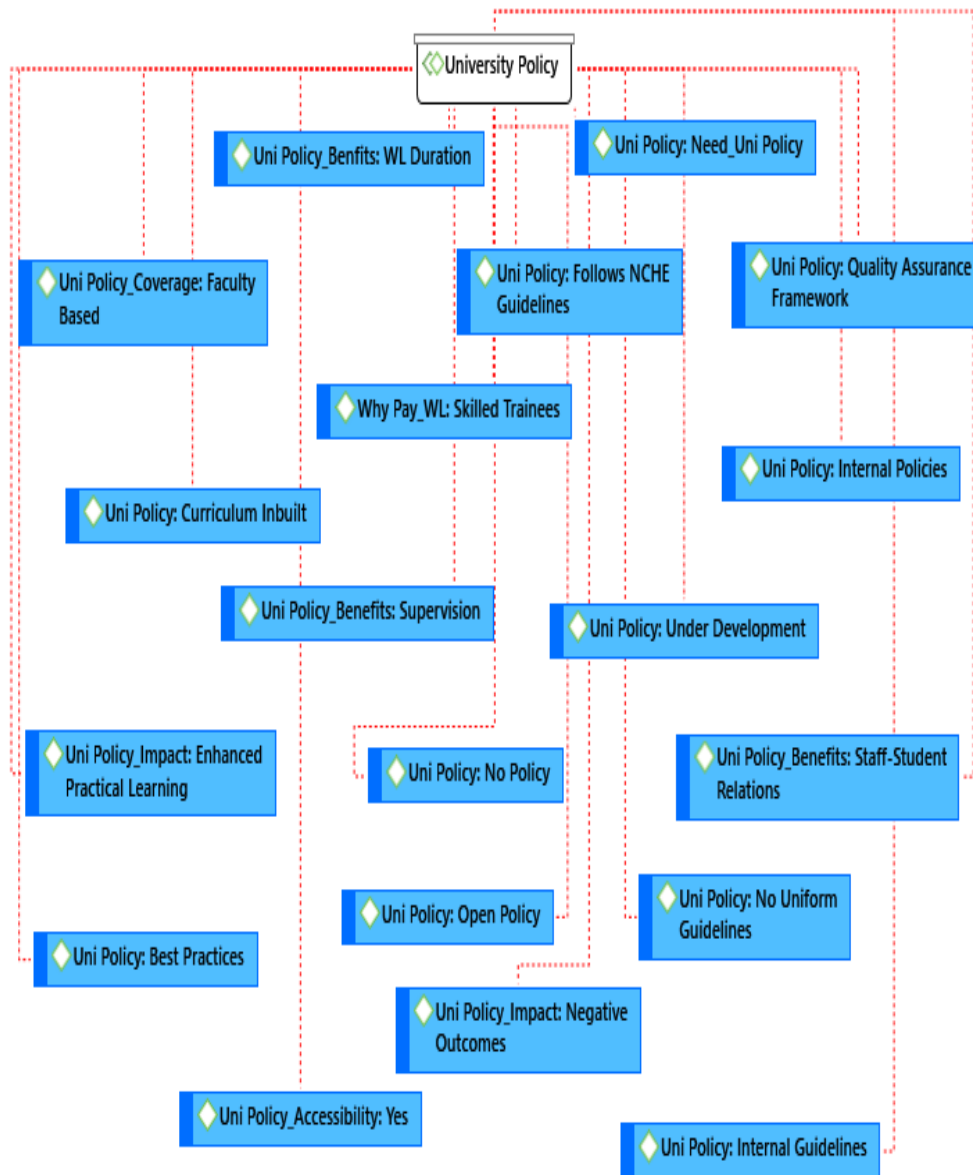
**Table Showing Amounts paid out or Reimbursed to Students by HEIs to****undertake WPL**

		Amounts in UgX	Freq	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Below 100,000		9	2.5	15.0	15.0
	Btn 100.000 below 200,000		19	5.4	31.7	46.7
	Btn 200,000 but below 300,000		19	5.4	31.7	78.3
	Above 400,000		13	3.7	21.7	100.0
	Total		60	17.0	100.0	
Missing	System		293	83.0		
Total			353	100.0		

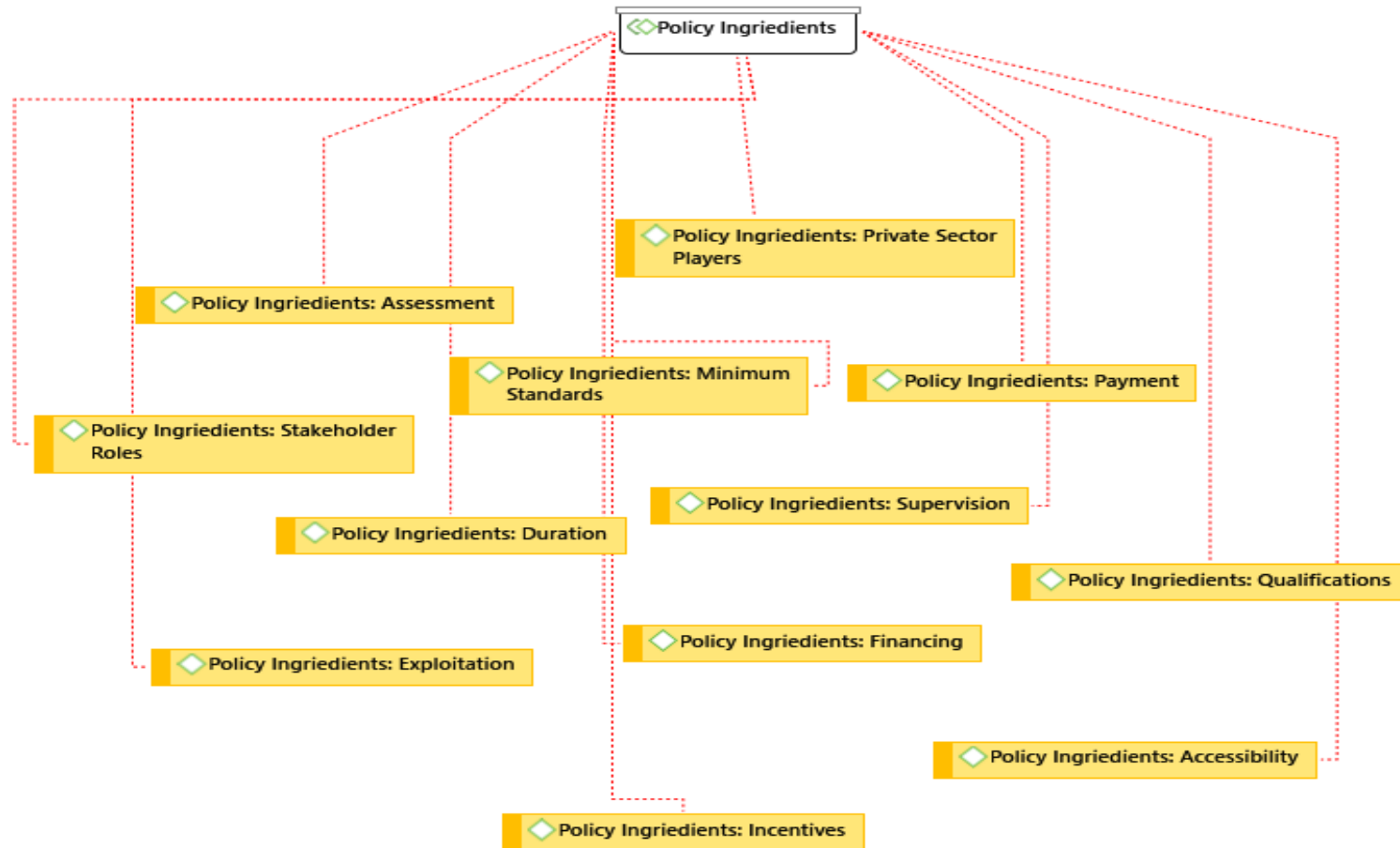
**Appendix O: Students Pay to HEIs for WPL**

		Freq	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	150	42.5	51.7	51.7
	No	120	34.0	41.4	93.1
	I don't know	20	5.7	6.9	100.0
	Total	290	82.2	100.0	
Total		353	100.0		

**Appendix P: Output WPL Policies in HEIs**



## Appendix Q: Aspects for Inclusion in HEIs WPL Policies



## Appendix R: Policies for WPL (Hosting workplaces)

### Workplace A

Elements	Analysis
Introduction and background of workplace learning in the establishment.	Re-organize workplace learning as an opportunity for students to gain hands on experience in the workplace.
Objectives of workplace learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assign a staff member to supervise the student</li> <li>• Assign the supervisor to assess the performance of the students as guided by the HEI.</li> </ul>
Obligations/ duties of the establishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination of workplace learning by the organization.</li> <li>• No payment of salary but appreciation at the end in case.</li> </ul>
Obligations/ expectations of the trainees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student required to formally apply.</li> <li>• Make/ prepare WPL report at the end of the duration.</li> <li>• Pay for WPL.</li> <li>• Accommodation provided at the cost of the student</li> <li>• Provide lunch.</li> <li>• Determine the charge for undertaking WPL.</li> </ul>
Obligations/ duties of the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit and interact with the student supervisors.</li> </ul>

university	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide assessment guidelines.</li> </ul>
Other issues raised in the document regarding the WPL	Duration subject to the set guidelines of the HEI

### **Workplace B Workplaces HR Manual**

Elements	Analysis
Introduction and background of Workplace learning and establishment	
Objectives of workplace learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide a work experience for requirement of an award.</li> </ul>
Obligations/ duties of the establishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accept attachment or placement to any of the departments for training.</li> <li>• Period of WPL not exceeding six months.</li> <li>• Offer WPL in writing.</li> <li>• Allocate a mentor( oversee, support and assess)</li> <li>• No salary payments but allowances must be offered.</li> </ul>
Obligations/ expectations of the trainees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students should apply formally to HR</li> <li>• Indicate programme of strict,</li> </ul>

	<p>duration of WPL department of preference.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare a report (learning experiences, challenges and recommendations for improvement).</li> </ul>
Obligations/ duties of the university	
Other issues raised in the document regarding the WPL	Defines an intern; industrial trainee; authorized in writing to gain work experience for satisfaction of requirements for a qualification.

### **Workplace C**

A Document Analysis Guide for Workplace / Guidelines Regarding Workplace Learning.

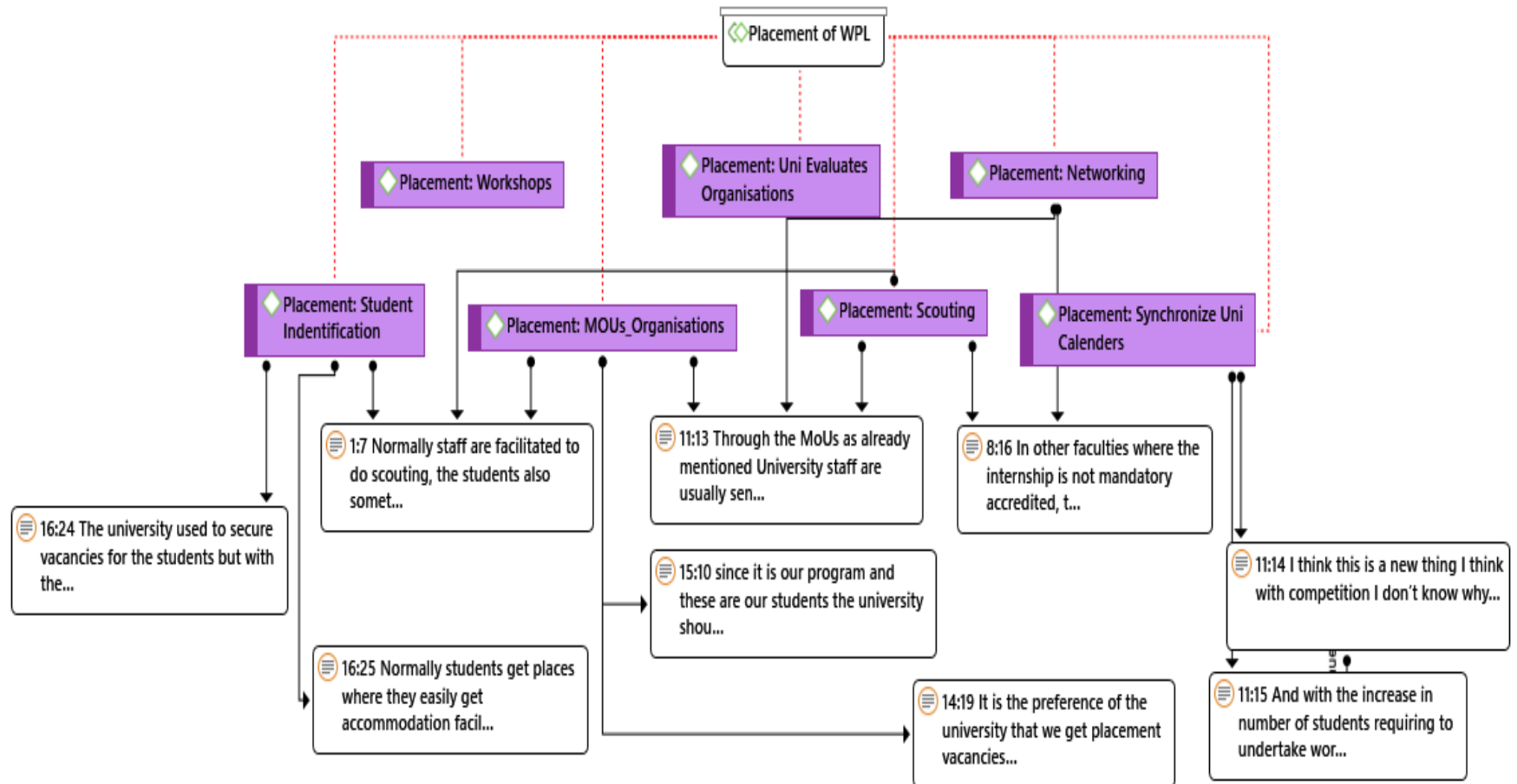
Elements	Analysis
Introduction and background of Workplace learning and establishment	Human Resource Manual for Lawyers Society Secretariat.
Details entailed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only recognizes workplace learning student as a special category of temporary staff</li> <li>• Highlights that the matter regarding their management while undertaking WPL shall be determined by the head of secretariat.</li> </ul>

**Appendix S: Payments to Students for WPL**

	<b>Amounts in UgX</b>	<b>Freq</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Valid %</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
Valid	Below 100000 Ug Shs	2	3.9	11.1	11.1
	Btn 100000 below 200000	7	13.7	38.9	50
	Btn 200000 but below 300000	4	7.8	22.2	72.2
	Above 300000 Ug Shs	5	9.8	27.8	100
	Total	18	35.3	100	
	Missing system	33	64.7		
	Total	51	100		

*1US\$ is equivalent to 3700UgX*

## Appendix T: Output for Placement



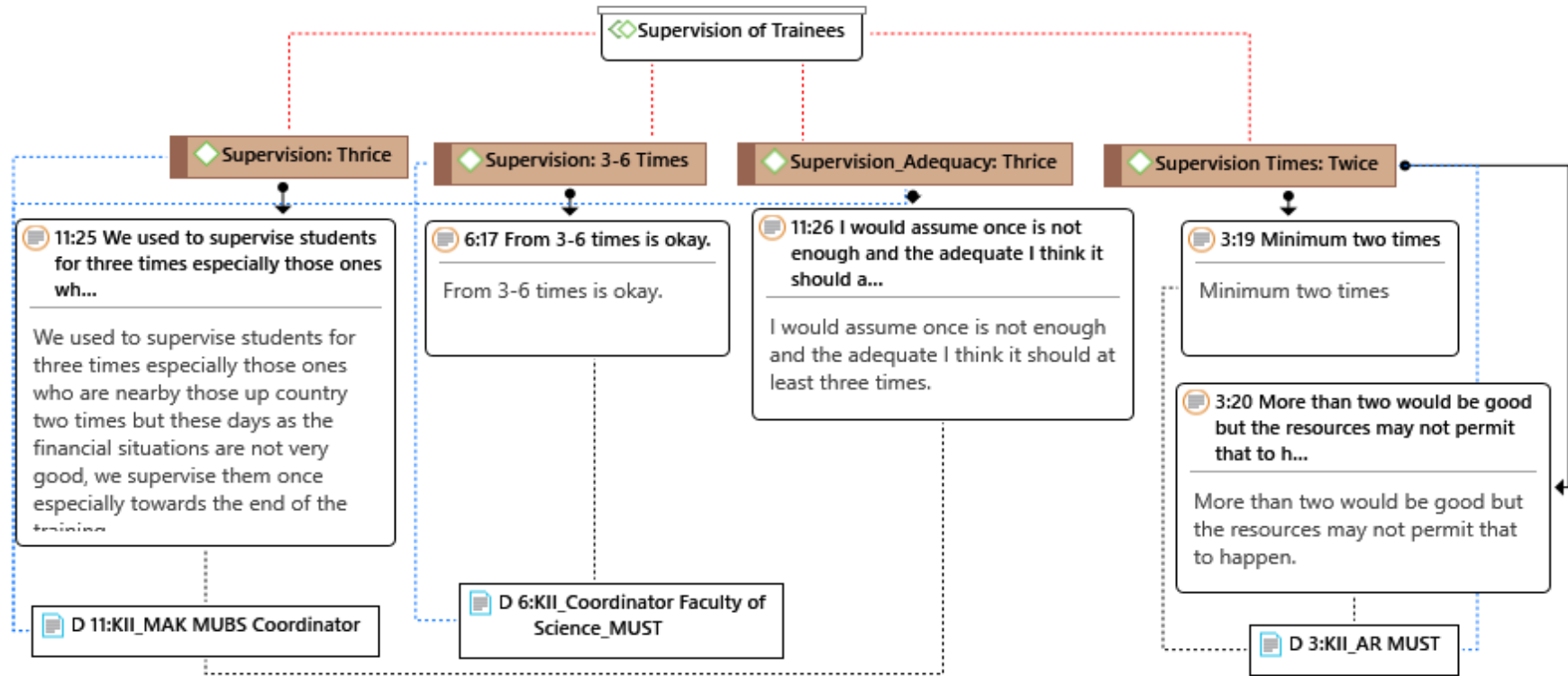
**Appendix U: Logbook outlay for HEI 1**

Elements	Analysis
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Details of the workplace.</li><li>• Date and time in and out.</li><li>• Activities of the day.</li><li>• Materials used.</li><li>• Problems encountered &amp; possible solution(s)</li><li>• Other issues that need investigation.</li></ul> <p>Signed off by the supervisor.</p>

**Appendix V: Logbook outlay for HEI 2**

Elements	Analysis
Title of document	Industrial training/ internship longbook for students.
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Details of the; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Students</li> <li>- Organization (host)</li> <li>- Contracts &amp; address.</li> </ul> </li>   <li>• Other items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Daily Log/ Time – Activity/ Remarks</li> <li>- Highlighting lessons learnt.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Other issues related in document regarding the WPL	

Appendix W: Output for WPL Supervision



### Appendix X: Report writing guidelines for HEI 2

A Document Analysis Guide for other Workplace Learning Documents used by the Department/ University. E.g guidelines for Students and Supervising Staff.

Elements	Analysis
<p>Objectives of documents for Workplace learnings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stipulates the guidelines to be followed by the student in report writing.</li> <li>• Details the expected areas of emphasis when writing the report;               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Preliminary papers.</li> <li>- Introduction i.e Background of the Hosting Organisation, Objectives of WPL</li> <li>- Main activity (ies) of the hosting workplace.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Sets the standard formatting for the report.</li> <li>• Work plan for the WPL.</li> <li>• Lessons learnt/ experiences of different assignments/ departments.</li> <li>• Challenges faced during WPL.</li> <li>• Recommendations to other students, HEI &amp; hosting workplace</li> </ul>
<p>Other issues raised in the document regarding workplace learning</p>	<p>Formatting guidelines for the report</p>
<p>Comments</p>	<p>Commendable for easing students work of report writing</p>

### Appendix Y: WPL assessment guidelines for HEI 3

Document Analysis Workplace Learning Assessment Forms used by the HEIs Staff and Staff in charge of Training in Workplaces.

Elements	Analysis
<p><b>Criteria</b></p> <p>Academic Staff Supervisors' Assessment guidelines</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment guidelines for Academic Supervisors</li> <li>• Contains ten set items for assessment covering ;               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Awareness of WPL objectives.</li> <li>- Extent of involving the field supervisor.</li> <li>- Familiarization with the Host organization.</li> <li>- Decision making ability.</li> <li>- Ease of communication</li> <li>- Record keeping</li> <li>- Experiences obtained</li> <li>- Clear about tasks and assignments taken.</li> <li>- Exhibition of maturity and ethical behavior.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><i>Needs improvement = 1</i></p> <p><i>Good = 2</i></p> <p><i>Very Good = 3</i></p> <p><i>Excellent = 4</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Other areas like students personal qualities, work-related competencies, level of learning, quality of field supervision are rated on a scale.</li> </ul> <p><i>Needs improvement = 1</i></p> <p><i>Good = 2</i></p> <p><i>Very Good = 3</i></p>

	<i>Excellent = 4</i>
Score guide	Scale of;  Needs improvement = 1  Good = 2  Very Good = 3  Excellent = 4
Authenticity and endorsement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Picks details about the student, organisation, supervisors ( workplace &amp; HEI)</li> <li>• Student and Academic staff counter sign.</li> </ul>

A Guide for Document Analysis Workplace Learning Assessment Forms used by the HEIs Staff and Staff in charge of Training in Workplaces.

Elements	Analysis
Criteria WPL Supervisor Assessment guideline	20 (twenty) Assessment items in the form  Covering areas of;  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal grooming, punctuality, interest of staff willingness to learn and work, problem solving, communication (staff and clients), teamwork, discipline, sense of responsibility, application of acquired skills, leadership ability, reliability, record keeping, decision making, theory practice e.t.c</li> </ul>

Score guides	Score scale;  Excellent = 05  Very Good =04  Good = 03  Fair = 02  Poor = 01  Unacceptable = 0
Authenticity and endorsement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assessment form given to the HEI Supervisor on the visit</li><li>• Counter signed by different department heads and Officer in-charge of Training of the Host workplace</li></ul>

## Appendix Z: WPL Assessment Guidelines for HEI 2

Document Analysis Workplace Learning Assessment Forms WPL reports.

Elements	Analysis
<p><b>Criteria</b></p> <p>WPL Report Assessment guideline</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The guide provides for the areas of assessment of the WPL reports written by the students.</li> <li>• Set a clear guideline for assessment of WPL report for student against a score is allocated.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Score guides</b></p>	<p>The report is scored against 15%</p> <p>From:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction – 2%</li> <li>• History of organization – 2%</li> <li>• Description of work done – 7%               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Methods of approach</li> <li>- Organization and presentation</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Challenges and solutions – 2%</li> <li>• Summary and conclusion – 2%</li> </ul>
<p>Authenticity and endorsement</p>	<p>Signal off by the Academic Supervisor.</p>

**Document Analysis Workplace Learning Assessment Forms Field supervisors used by the HEIs**

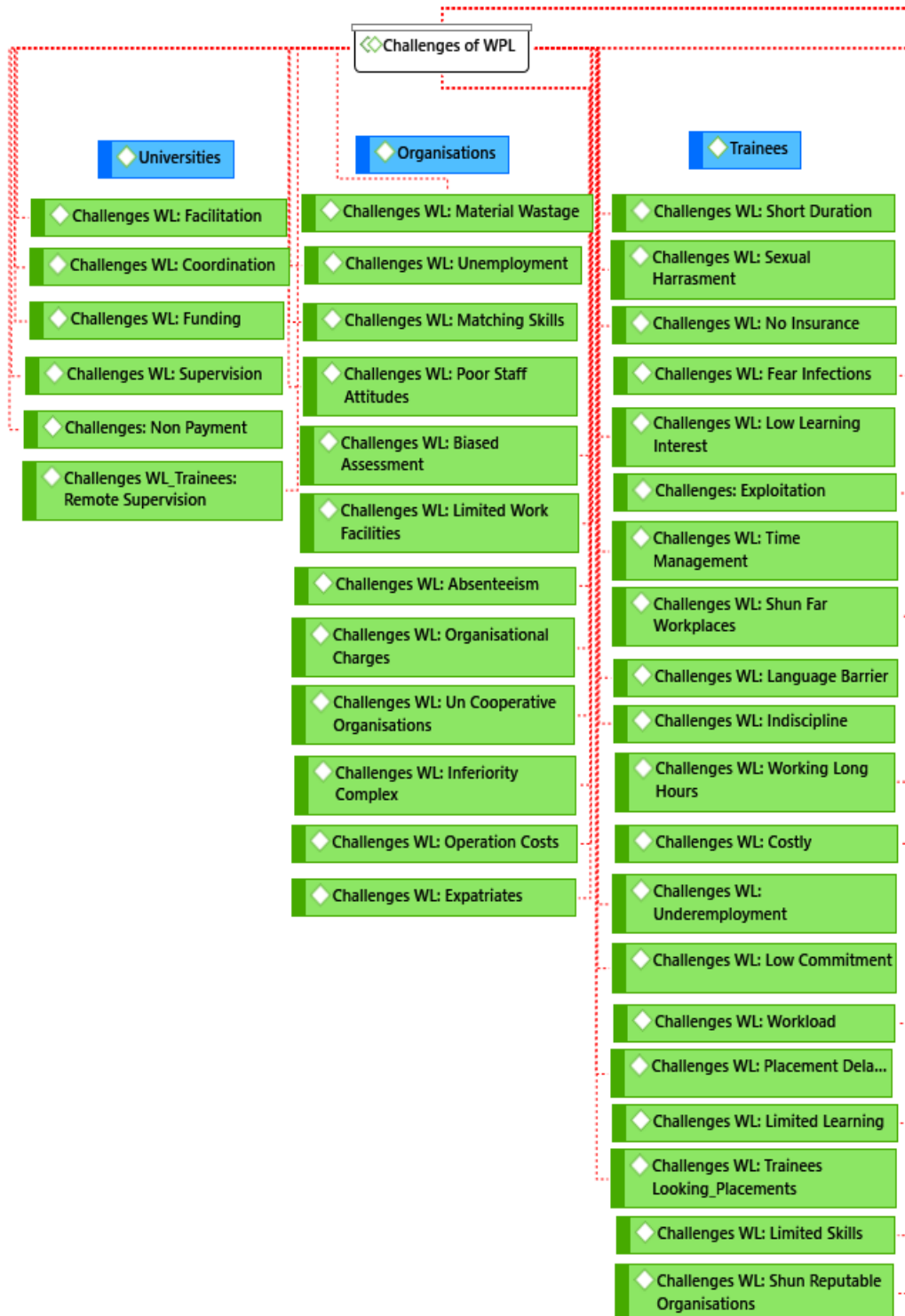
Elements	Analysis
<p>Criteria</p> <p>Field Supervisor(s) Assessment Form</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sectioned in 5 areas according to the expected departments of allocations of allocation in the Host Workplace.</li> <li>• One section being general areas to be assessed (attendance, punctuality, personal conduct, time management, willingness to learn from different areas, cooperation with staff and meeting deadlines)</li> <li>• Each section is broken into items to score against that include; use of equipment and tools, hygiene and safety practices, innovation and intuitiveness work with minimum supervision.</li> </ul>
<p>Score guides</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each item is given a maximum score.</li> <li>• Space for comment to justify the score provided.</li> </ul>
<p>Authenticity and endorsement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counter signed by overall supervisor in the workplace host and stamp.</li> <li>• Counter signed by the HEI Academic staff.</li> </ul>

## Document Analysis Workplace Learning Assessment Forms for Academic

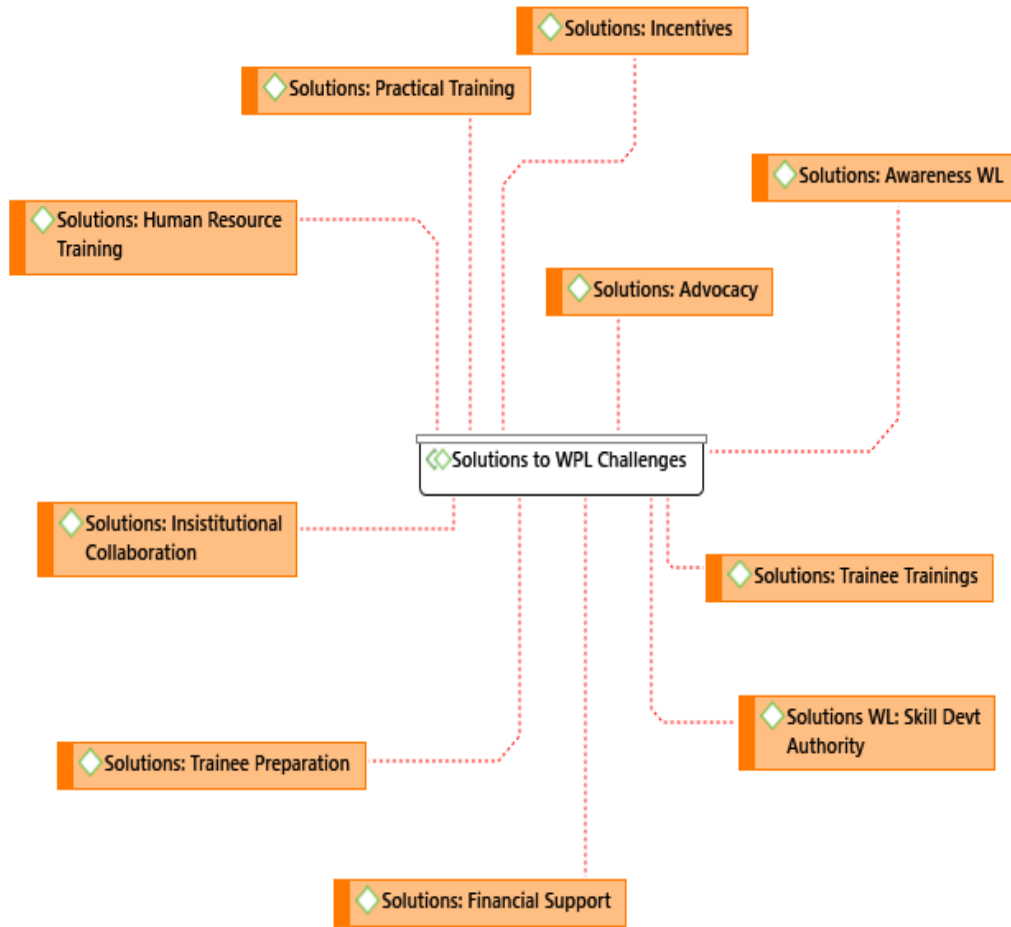
### Supervisors used by the HEIs

Elements	Analysis
Academic Supervisors Assessment Form	20 items (Attendance, grooming, adaptation, attitude to work, respect of supervisors, relationships with other workers, theory to practice, confidence e.t.c) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easy to score by just ticking against a preset score.</li> <li>• Space for comment provided for each item.</li> </ul>
Score guides	Each item on a scale 1-5 rated as; Lacking = 01, Poor = 02, Average 03, Good= 04, Excellent = 05
Authenticity and endorsement	Un provided on the form

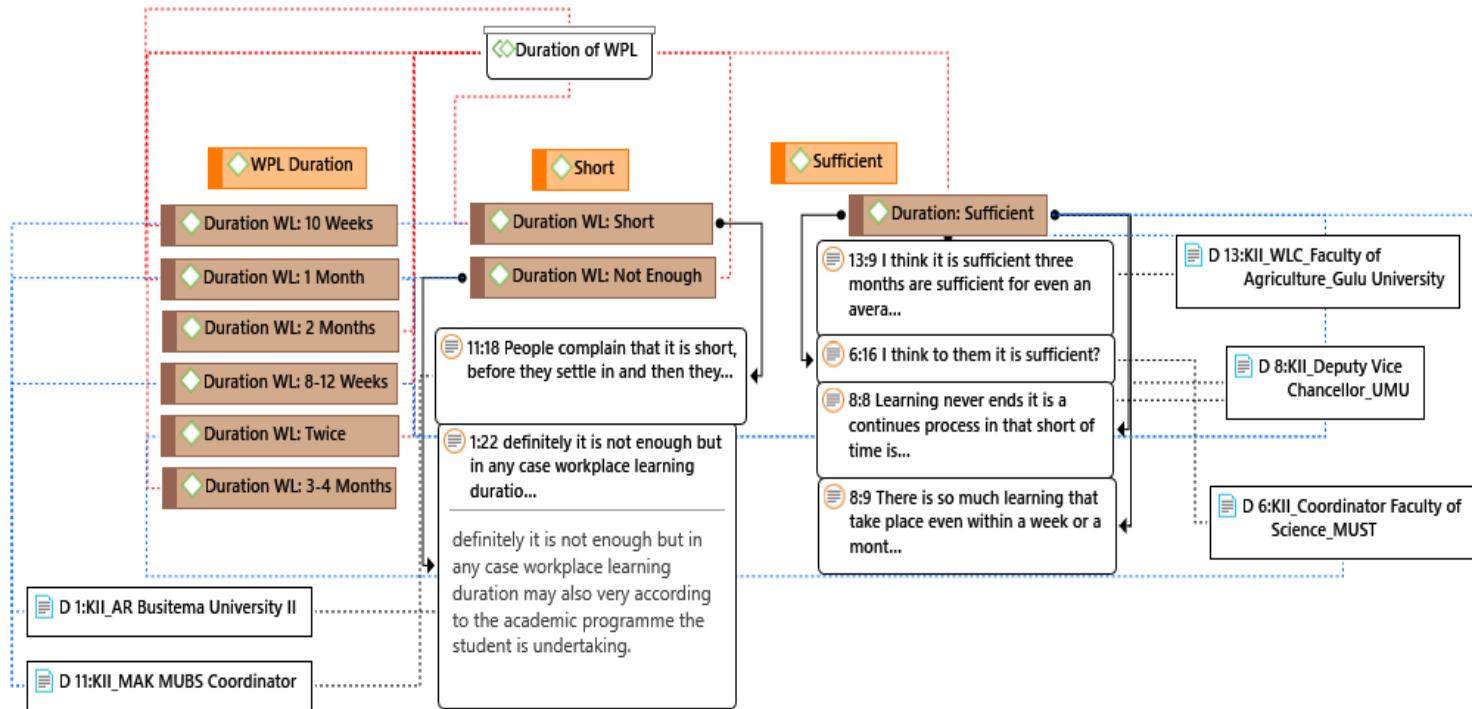
**Appendix AA: Challenges of Workplace Learning**



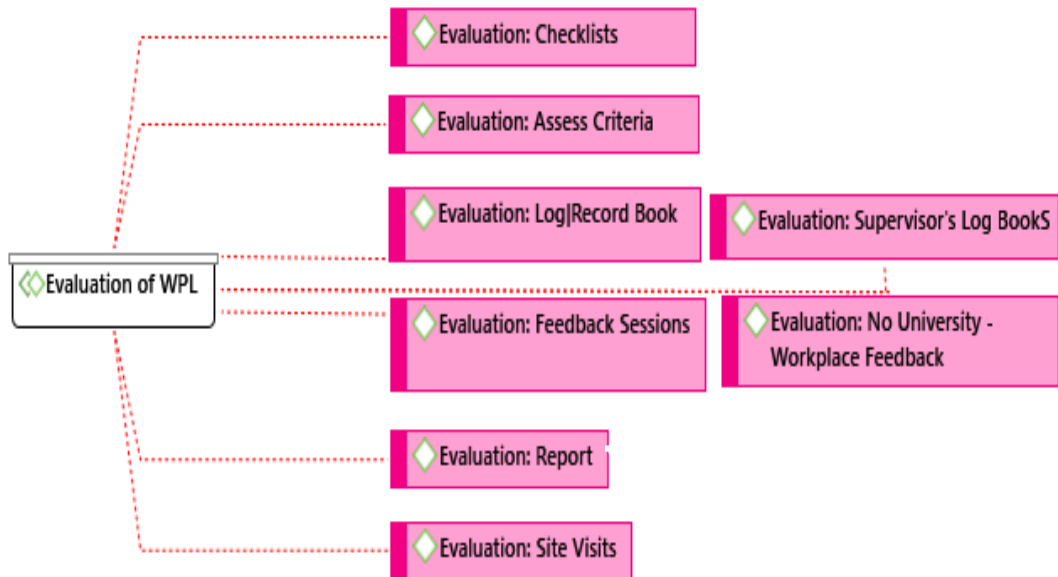
### Appendix AB: Solution for Challenges of WPL



**Appendix AC: Duration about WPL.**



### Appendix AD: Assessment or Evaluation Criteria





## **Appendix AF: Consent form**

### **General Instructions**

Dear **respondent**, currently I am undertaking a PhD Thesis titled “***Influence of Existing Policies on organization of Workplace Learning in Higher Education Institutions in Uganda***”.

You have been selected as a **Key informant** respondent to this study so that the researcher obtains in-depth reliable data to facilitate the study through an in-depth interview about the set objectives.

The data obtained from this study will be treated with utmost confidentiality that it deserves and will only be used for academic purposes.

**Main Purpose of the study:** *to examine the influence of the the existing policies (national & organisational) on the organisation of workplace learning in Higher Education Institutions in Uganda.*

### **The specific objectives are:**

5. To identify the existing national policies that regulate workplace learning in higher education institutions in Uganda.
6. To scrutinise the current organisational (HEIs & workplace) policies affecting workplace learning in Uganda’s higher education institutions.
7. To examine the organisation of workplace learning by higher education institutions in Uganda.
8. To find out the challenges affecting students, higher education institutions and workplaces undertaking workplace learning in Uganda.

For Purposes of this study the terms below are described

**Workplace Learning;** practicum, internship, attachment or field attachment, placement, industrial training, school or teaching practise

**Challenges;** constraints, restrictions, restraints, limitations, constrictions and bottlenecks.

**Policy;** the set of laws, rules, guidelines, procedures, regulations that establish, regulate and facilitate the management of workplace learning.

Attached is the questionnaire and a consent form .

I honestly appreciate the time, the knowledge and contribution you have made to the study.

**Eric Douglas Kalanda**

PhD Student/Researcher

Mob 0703993878/779457566

Email: kalandaericd@gmail.com

